

Better Health for Life from  
Lehigh Valley Hospital and Health Network



## Journaling Tips

### What to Write About

**Write down a quote that made you think**—something you heard or read somewhere, or perhaps a line from a song. Then write about how you feel about the message in the quote.

**List your greatest challenges, past and present.** Write about how you faced the past ones, and your ideas on dealing with the present ones.

**Paste into your journal** a photo or image from a magazine (or a collage of several images), and write about how it makes you feel.

**Write about something that happened** today that made you feel happy, sad or angry.

**Choose a friend or relative,** put his or her name at the top of the page, and write about what this person means in your life.

**Revisit an episode from your past.** Write down what you learned from the experience and how you would have done things differently if given the chance.

**Make a list of losses and disappointments** in your life and write about how you are dealing with them.

**Write a letter that you'll never send.** Writing to a person who has passed away can comfort you if you are grieving. Writing to express anger with a person still living can help defuse feelings you might regret actually saying to the person, or clarify your thoughts into something you can deal with constructively.

**Write an imaginary letter from another person to yourself.**

**Take a tip from Oprah, and keep a "gratitude journal."** Each evening, write down five things you are grateful for.

### How to Write

- Use a notebook and pen or your computer—whichever you prefer.
- Keep writing for 15 to 20 minutes, or for a set number of pages.
- Try to write every day. If you miss some days, simply pick up again with the present day.
- If the words just aren't coming, draw a picture of how you feel instead.
- Write down your true feelings; resist the urge to edit out things that aren't "nice."
- If privacy concerns you, lock your journal away when you're not writing in it.
- Grammar and spelling are not important.



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