

HOW TO WRITE YOUR WAY TO A

Rock-Solid Mindset

IN JUST A FEW MINUTES EACH DAY!



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Lesson 4: Consciously Create & Confidently Become the Next Level Version of You

Learning Objective: Identify who you want to become and what level of success you desire.

No matter what we discuss here in this lesson, remember that you are awesomely unique and one-of-a-kind. Sometimes the phrase “personal development” or “self-improvement” can rub people the wrong way, as if they’re being criticised for not being perfect or like somebody else.

You shouldn’t aim to be exactly like somebody else, but you can admire certain characteristics they possess, such as their confidence or approachable personality. Self-improvement is simply a process of enhancing your inherent personality characteristics and pushing yourself to achieve great things that once seemed impossible.

STEP ONE

Be willing to explore your inner workings

Who do you want to become? It seems like a benign question but when you really sit and think about the type of person you want to be, it's not that easy a question to answer.

Even though the self-help section of any bookstore is overflowing with titles from various gurus, many people don't pay attention to themselves and just roll through life, day by day, surviving whatever gets tossed their way. But if you keep a personal development journal, you can explore all the pieces that make you who you are, set personal goals and challenge yourself to take actions that are outside of your comfort zone.

Regular journaling prevents you from staying static. When you have a journal, your goal should be to consistently find out how to "level up" and become the next level version of you. Although journaling will likely become a valuable part of your identity, thriving as a business owner demands finding ways to consistently improve, both personally and professionally. Having a mind toward the future will fuel you to become even better over time.

Your journal can serve as a powerful centerpiece for your transition to a new, brighter and more exciting life.





What's Holding You Back?

Levelling up requires setting goals, but perhaps the most important step is finding out what's holding you back personally and professionally. In particular, you can use journaling to find out what self-limiting beliefs are holding you back from realising your true potential. Dedicate some of your journaling time to focusing on your beliefs, both positive and negative, and question whether some of these limiting beliefs are actually based on reality.

Although you might not have a breakthrough every time you sit down and write in your journal, you'll learn, through experience, which of your beliefs are stopping you from reaching the next level of you. This process might take some time but uncovering what's holding you back is essential for growth.

To conquer limiting beliefs, write it down in your journal and realise that this is just a belief, not a truth or fact. In your journal entry, list the reasons why the belief is holding you back. Turn this negative belief into a positive by writing affirmations that help you banish the limiting belief out of your mind. Just because you "believe" you can't do something (or aren't good at something, etc.) doesn't mean it's true.

Visualise yourself living outside of that belief and boost your mood by rereading client testimonials. We are our own worst critics and often it takes the kind words of others to see the truth.

The Story of You

We all tell ourselves stories about ourselves, and often have a pre-planned version of these

stories that we share with those we meet.

By journaling, we can set aside the time and energy needed to more deeply examine the stories we tell and how they shape our view of ourselves.

Be as detailed as possible, and make sure to be bold enough to examine parts of your story that might make you feel somewhat uncomfortable. Remember that your journal is intended for an audience of one: Yourself. Don't be afraid to touch on uncomfortable topics, as journaling gives you control over your narrative and helps you identify potential barriers to thriving.

Identify Barriers

Over time, journaling will help you feel more comfortable uncovering your barriers in a frank and empowering manner. It's important to focus on your strengths and how they can improve over time, as building on your strengths can lead to a better version of yourself.

However, you'll also need to identify your weaknesses, as knocking down barriers is key for your growth.

Journaling provides a unique means of serving as your own therapist and asking tough questions can lead to breakthroughs. Again, don't expect life-changing revelations every time you sit down to journal. Feel free to ask questions about yourself that you can't answer right away. Addressing them over time can help you find the solutions you're looking for and giving yourself the time needed to uncover answers is essential.



STEP TWO

Write a new story

Now that you've explored some of your current beliefs and hang ups, it's time to turn those negatives into positives and write a new story. Journaling about yourself isn't just about addressing who you are today, so make sure to spend some of your journaling time focusing on who you want to become in the future. Tell a story about yourself you'd like to see realised in both the near and distant future and flesh out this story as much as possible.

Think about your limiting beliefs and envision a future where you aren't bound by these limitations. Take a view of the big picture: How will you be writing about yourself once you've uncovered how to level up your life and become the next iteration of yourself? How will your life differ, and how will the changes you make lead to improved happiness and success?

Setting Goals Through Journaling

One of the most powerful tools for becoming the next version of you is setting goals that help you become your ideal version of yourself. Every morning take some time to journal your goals for the day and the upcoming days. Doing so helps you define your goals and sets concrete elements for levelling up.

Also set aside some time to look over your goals from the previous day. Did you reach all of your goals? What helped you succeed, and what are some things that held you back? Are there steps you can take today to improve the odds of reaching all of your goals? Planning is an essential part of success, and journaling is a powerful way to make your planning more definitive and personal. Use journaling

as a means of tangibly setting your goals and exploring how to achieve them.

Go one step further and create long-term goals for your future. Dream big; think about where you want to live, what your dream home looks like, and what activities fill your ideal day. Knowing what you want to accomplish in the future allows you to lay out a road map with smaller milestone goals that will lead you there.

Remember, goals can change at any time; they are not set in stone so don't be afraid to put those goals down on paper. Sometimes reaching those smaller milestones will help you realise the bigger goal wasn't really what you wanted to pursue after all.





Make Your Journal an Extension of You

Goal-setting journaling shouldn't just be a routine you go through in the morning. Although dedication is necessary, setting your goals daily in a journal will eventually become a framework through which you view your minute-by-minute activities and plan for success.

Eventually, your journal will become an extension of you, a conduit through which you strive for and reach the goals you need to level yourself up. The process will take some time, so make sure to be patient and forgive yourself if you don't make progress every single day.

What's Your Definition of Success?

No matter who you speak with, every one of those people will have a different definition of success. Some might aim for that six-figure business while others might aim for living off the grid in a hunting cabin. Others may be focused on raising strong, independent children or retiring early at age 55.

Your personal definition of success will ultimately aid you in making decisions. Knowing this definition and your ultimate goals in life – and keeping these thoughts foremost in your journaling – will help you recognise opportunities and conversations that can propel you toward this success.



STEP THREE

Execute change

We all know our comfort zones; it's that space where you are content and comfortable with the way things are in life. There's nothing wrong with enjoying life in your comfort zone but if you stay in it, you won't see any of the changes you've dreamed about. No increase in clients or income. No release of your signature product or planning an exclusive tropical retreat. For any changes to occur, you need to step away from that comfort zone.

Think about the next level version of you that you've addressed in your journal. How does this person differ from who you've been in the past? How does she tackle tasks in ways that are new to you? Journaling provides a framework for asking yourself important questions about levelling up before tackling individual tasks, and you'll eventually use your journaling to find out which questions to ask about yourself to proceed as the "next level you". View your journal as a catalyst and use it to serve as a guide.

Next Level Habits

Just as building the habit of daily journaling takes time, so does forming the habits of becoming a new version of yourself. Use your journal to find out which habits you want to build over time and use it to track your progress during the days and weeks. Don't just think about habits as obligations; think of them as activities you perform as your idealised version of yourself.

There are two popular but different strategies for building habits, so the choice is yours as to which you follow. The first is based on doing the new behaviour for a very short period of time every single day. For instance, doing one push-up a day in the hopes of working up to 50 push-ups a day. Increase the number each week until you reach your goal.

The second strategy for forming a new habit is to complete the new behaviour every day for 21 days. While this may not work well for the 50 push-ups a day example, you can choose another habit, such as clean eating or increasing your water intake. By the time you've completed your 21 days, you'll be reaching for your water bottle on Day 22 without even realising.

When you embody this new version of yourself that you're aiming to achieve, you signal to your mind that you're becoming a new person and that the habits you've focused on are a part of your life. Again, change won't happen overnight, but journaling helps you make steady progress.

Making Better Decisions

Another part of journaling is focusing on how you make decisions and conditioning yourself to make better decisions than your previous self might have made. We make more decisions during the day than we realise, and we rarely have the time to sit down and think carefully about all of them. Journaling to make better decisions involves thinking through how your mind works when you're faced with a decision to make.

How do you recognise when you're venturing down the path of making suboptimal choices? How can you realise when you need to slow down and spend time thinking through factors more carefully? Levelling up involves focusing on your decision-making process, and you'll eventually develop habits more in tune with the next level version of you.

Again, this is not a time to feel shame about decisions or to wonder "what would have happened if." Acknowledge your emotions around making a decision and the process your brain goes through. Examine the possible outcomes if you had done something differently and if those outcomes would have been better or worse than what actually happened.

Saying Yes

Journaling helps you focus on many of the small things in your life. However, you'll also want to take some time to think about bigger issues. What is the new version of you more inclined to say "yes" to that previous versions of you would be afraid to take on? How does the levelled up you face challenging and even potentially frightening issues?

Growth often requires going outside of your comfort zone, and journaling helps you identify previous boundaries that you need to push past. Saying "yes" to every opportunity or invitation that comes your way doesn't make sense; but saying "yes" to the things that challenge you to get out of your comfort zone should be definite commitments.

If you need even more inspiration about how saying "yes" can change you, check out this ['Year of Saying Yes' TED Talk](#) by Grey's Anatomy creator Shonda Rhimes.

Saying No

Similarly, becoming a new version of you requires practising self-discipline and learning how to say "no" in certain situations. What are some sources of distractions that have hindered your productivity in the past, and how can you prepare yourself to say no when faced with temptations?

Also, think about which elements the new version of you will say "no" to that your previous version would have accepted. Refusing an opportunity can be difficult but thriving as a business owner means prioritising which opportunities to focus on. Your journal serves as a means of managing your priorities and tracking your successes and temporary setbacks.

Remember that saying "no" is its own sentence. You don't owe anyone an explanation for saying "no". This is often a difficult habit to begin with but you'll feel liberated once you stop making excuses for saying "no".



STEP FOUR

Daydream about how your life would differ?

After you've worked out what the new version of you looks like, think about how it compares to your current life. How would you feel waking up in the morning, and how would you address struggles along the way?

In the morning or evening, think about how things would have gone differently if you were already the new version of yourself. What are the elements of your days that would feel better?

Note that change sometimes requires sacrifice, so also consider what you might give up in order to become the new version of yourself. Think about what change will mean for your life and use it as motivation for focusing on your goals.

Being Happy and Grateful

Similar to keeping a gratitude journal, a journal starting with the prompt "I'm so happy and grateful for..." can be an invaluable tool for reaching your next level.

Write in the present tense but write as the person you aim to be in the future. Use this exercise to fully embody who you want to become and focus on the feelings you experience and how they make you both happy and grateful.

Practice this exercise every morning, as it's a powerful technique for giving yourself the motivation you need to level up.

Consider a Dedicated Approach

Think about starting a journaling practice dedicated to focusing on your future self. Although the journaling techniques you develop can be more than enough for levelling up yourself, practising techniques developed by others might provide a fresh outlook for gaining a new perspective on yourself.

The Holistic Psychologist, for example, offers a free "Future Self Journal" program that offers a framework for helping you become aware of subconscious patterns affecting your life and uncovering how to shift them towards productive thinking techniques.

Make sure to spend some time reading about journaling techniques developed by others, as trying out new ideas can lead to better results.





Redefine What Journaling Means to You

Journaling doesn't offer a one-size-fits-all approach, and you'll need to take some time to find out which journaling techniques work best to meet your needs. However, you'll also want to think about what journaling means to you and how you can better use it to meet your goals with living a happier, more fulfilling life.

Journaling isn't just about writing down events and how you feel; it's also a means of thinking about who you want to become and envisioning your future self. It's about finding out how to transform from the person you are today to the person you want to be in the future. Journaling can be meditative, and it can serve as an invaluable source of motivation and a catalyst for real change.

Don't just go through the motions: Make journaling a part of your identity and a framework for achieving your dreams.

Becoming the Next Level Version of You

Complacency can feel comforting, but business owners often find that complacency can lead to malaise and stunted growth. Although journaling is great for being the best version of your current self, it's also an excellent technique for deciding who, exactly, you want to be, and it helps you visualise the next level version of yourself and what it would mean to you.

Above all, it's great for developing the skills you need to achieve your goals and enjoying the process of becoming a new, improved person. Although the road can be a bit frustrating at times, the results are well worth the effort.



STEP FIVE

Get started with one simple prompt each day

If you've started any of the other journals by now, you'll know that a personal development journal starts off the same way.

Begin by dreaming about your levelled up self and your ideal life (a carryover theme from Lesson 1). Now think about the steps you need to take in order to become the newest version of yourself. Put those into action and continue journaling your successes and struggles as you break through barriers.

As your journaling habit becomes reinforced, you may decide to get bold and write a journal entry for all these topics. Journaling is your process and it will be different from others, so stick with what works best for you. Choose the journal topic that is on your mind that day or make a point of alternating a different journal every day. There's no right or wrong, so long as you continue journaling.

Choose ONE prompt each day and dedicate 5-10 minutes writing your answer. If your time runs longer because you have a lot to write, so be it.

- Are you happy with your life right now?
- What's one thing you want to change about yourself?
- Who is your biggest inspiration? Why?
- When you feel down, how do you cheer yourself up?
- What do you like to do for fun?
- Are you happy with your work/job? Why or why not?
- Write about a fear you have. How do you overcome it? Do you need help overcoming it?
- What do you need more of in your life?
- What do you need to let go of?
- Explore why/if you have difficulty letting go.
- What are 5 ways you can get out of your comfort zone this month/year?
- What are 3 things you're passionate about?
- What are 5 things you're really good at?
- What motivates you to keep going?
- How can you show yourself more love?
- What negative mindsets do you need to let go?
- What would you do if you knew you couldn't fail?
- How can you add happiness or joy to your daily life?

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STEP FIVE

- What are 10 things you love about yourself?
- What makes you unique?
- Create a forgiveness list of those who have wronged you.
- Have you been the best spouse, friend, sibling, etc. to others? Create a forgiveness list for yourself.
- What is your favourite self-care activity? Do you practice self-care enough? How can you add more to your day/week?
- What is one thing you always wanted to learn? Why? Why haven't you followed through?
- What are 5 insecurities about yourself? What can you do to overcome them?
- Do you let other people's opinions affect you? Why? How can you deflect their negativity?
- Write 10 positive affirmations about yourself.
- Do you make decisions based on confidence or fear? Why?
- Do you like change or find it difficult to adapt? Why?
- Describe your life in one word.
- What is one behaviour that is holding you back? How can you change it?
- What do you want to be remembered for?
- What is the first thing you think of when looking in a mirror? How does that make you feel?
- What is the scariest thing you've done? Did that change you?
- How do you handle stressful situations? What would you like to do differently?
- How do you handle confrontation? What would you like to do differently?
- Do you feel you have a voice in all your relationships? How can you make yourself heard more?
- Visualise your dream life. Write about how it makes you feel.
- What changes do you need to make to achieve your dream life?
- Do your family and friends support your dream life goals? Why or why not?
- What are your biggest distractions?
- What skills do you have that others don't?
- List 4 things that come easily to you and 4 things that do not.
- What is your biggest reason for getting up in the morning?
- Are your current routines getting you closer to your goals?
- List 30 things that make you smile.
- Name something you wish others knew about you.
- Describe yourself using 10 words.
- What is the nicest thing someone has said to you? What was your reaction?
- What's your purpose in life?

Happy Journaling!

MB.