Journal prompts

How to use these prompts. There's no right way to do this. Pick one prompt, set a timer for five minutes, and write whatever comes. One prompt a day, or a few a week, is plenty. If a prompt stirs up more than you want to hold right now, stop and come back another day.

When you don't know what to write

1. Right now I'm sitting in ___, and the thing I notice most is ___.
2. What has taken up the most room in your head today, even if it's small?
3. Describe the last hour as if you were telling a friend who wasn't there.
4. Scan from your jaw down to your feet. Where is there tension, and what one word would you give it?
5. What is something you keep meaning to write down and haven't?
6. Finish this sentence five different ways: "Today I..."

Morning, before the day starts

1. What is the one thing that would make today feel well spent?
2. How do I want to treat the people I see today, including myself?
3. What might get in the way today, and what will I do if it does?
4. The part of today I'm least looking forward to is ___. The smallest step that makes it easier is ___.
5. How did I sleep, and what does my body need from this morning?
6. What am I carrying over from yesterday that I could set down until later?

Evening, looking back on today

1. What happened today that I'd want to remember a year from now?
2. When did I feel most like myself today, and who was I with?
3. What drained me today, and what gave a little energy back?
4. One thing I handled better than I expected today was ___.
5. What did I say yes to today that I'd say no to next time, or the other way around?
6. What's still on my mind as the day ends, and when tomorrow could I give it ten minutes?

When your head is full

1. Write the worry down in one sentence, as exactly as you can.
2. What do I expect will happen, and on what date will I know whether it did?
3. Which part of this can I do something about today, and which part can only wait?
4. Where do I feel this in my body right now, and does it shift as I write?
5. If a friend brought me this exact worry, what would I say to them?
6. I can't settle this tonight. What I can do instead is ___.

People and relationships

1. What did they say, as close to word for word as I remember, and what did I hear in it?
2. What did I want from that conversation that I didn't get?
3. Who did I feel at ease around this week, and what were we doing?
4. Something I haven't said to someone is ___. The first sentence I'd use, if I did, is ___.
5. How would the other person describe what happened between us?
6. Where in this relationship do I give more than I get, or get more than I give?

Getting to know yourself

1. What did I choose to do the last time I had a free hour?
2. What do people tend to come to me for, and how do I feel about that?
3. What advice do I give others that I find hard to follow myself?
4. A value I say matters to me is ___. The last time I acted on it was ___.
5. What did I believe five years ago that I don't believe now, and what changed it?
6. What question do I wish people asked me more often?

Work and the load you carry

1. What took most of my energy this week, and was it the thing that mattered most?
2. A task I keep putting off is ___. The first five minutes of it would look like ___.
3. When did time pass quickly this week, and what was I doing?
4. What would I quietly stop doing if nobody would notice?
5. What did I do well this week that no one else saw?
6. What would "enough" look like for me this week?

Good moments worth keeping

1. Who made this week a little easier, and what exactly did they do?
2. What is something ordinary I'd miss if it were gone tomorrow?
3. A small win from this week was ___, and it took ___ from me.
4. What did I dread this week that turned out fine?
5. Describe one good moment from today in full detail: the sounds, the light, who was there.
6. What can I do now that I couldn't do a year ago?

Made by Joel Dean, Joyful AI Journal. joyfulaijournal.com/journaling/journal-prompts

If you are thinking about harming yourself, call or text 988 (US) or contact local emergency services.