REACHING YOUR POTENTIAL: KNOW YOURSELF— DAILY JOURNAL PROMPTS

We don't bat an eye at spending countless hours researching and figuring out how to use our new cell phone and all the awesome applications we've downloaded. We invest our time, money, and resources in getting the best gadgets on the planet, forgetting that we are our most valuable resource.

Imagine the difference you could make for yourself if you stopped to notice what's working (and not working) in your life by consistently carving out time to reflect. Such information aids greatly in overall energy, enthusiasm and excitement for work, team members, and life. Your surroundings are consistently providing feedback—the challenge is in stopping long enough to benefit from the wisdom you receive.

The following are four topics you can use for daily journaling. Pick one or two to get started, commit to writing every day, and build from there.

Gratitude — what are you most grateful for and why? (i.e. I get to swim at an awesome facility, I have wonderful friends, and awesome cats. I'm grateful for Byron Katie, Michael Singer, Rachel Naomi Remen, and many others for putting their wisdom in books I get to read.)

Learning — what did you learn about yourself, the world, or your surroundings in this day? (i.e. I laugh loudly when I'm at a networking event where no one knows me, and coal and charcoal are derived from different substances.)

My Qualities — what positive qualities did you demonstrate in this day? (i.e. I'm a good listener, joyful, and patient.)

Contribution — whose life did you contribute to today? (i.e. Karen got a listening ear, Mike got ice cream and a meaningful conversation, complete strangers got to hear authentically kind words about themselves.) The key here is to focus on what others are getting, rather than what you're giving.

Now, let's take studying yourself to a whole new level. The following are specific questions to answer if you're having problems getting going. Pick one or two and explore your answers as you reflect quietly with yourself, pen to paper.

- What most inspired (or frustrated) me in this day, or during this time in my life, and why?
- When do I most feel joyful, happy, and filled with positive energy (or irritable, anger, or frustrated)? What's happening, and what's going through my mind during these times?
- Who do I most enjoy sharing time with, and why?
- If I could go back to school and push the restart button on my career, what would I study, and why?
- If I could build a life I never needed a vacation from, how would I structure my days? What are some of the elements I know I'd want to include?
- What am I most proud of and why?
- Who are the top three most inspirational people I've experienced in my life, and why?
- Where do I most want to forgive myself?
- In a year from now, I will be...
- Describe someone who is a hero and describe why.
- Describe the culture of your work environment.
- What kind of a day did you have and why?
- What is a book, movie, song, or television program that has influenced you, and how?

Your answers to these questions may change over time, so be sure to come back to this list periodically, review your answers, and make changes and updates where appropriate.

Ready to take this process to yet another valuable level? Once you've written for a couple of weeks, conclude your writing time by going back and reading one or two journal entries. Over time you'll begin to notice patterns, empowering you with the information you need to make important adjustments.

Get from each day by reflecting, processing, and discovering your greatness every day.

> *"Don't just get through the day, get from the day."*
>
> -Jim Rohn

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Kevin Frick
Professor and Dean, Johns Hopkins Carey School of Business