

# Journaling for well -being

- **Morning Pages technique**, Julia Cameron
- **Expressive Writing technique**, James Pennebaker, PhD
- **Daily diary and topic journals**, Derek Sivers

# Morning pages

- Morning Pages are **three pages of longhand, stream of consciousness writing, done first thing in the morning**. There is no wrong way to do Morning Pages - they are not high art. They are not even “writing.” They are about anything and everything that crosses your mind - and they are for your eyes only. Morning Pages provoke, clarify, comfort, cajole, prioritize and synchronize the day at hand. Do not over-think Morning Pages: just put three pages of anything on the page... and then do three more pages tomorrow. (Julia Cameron, *The Artist's Way*)

# Morning pages: results

- Anecdotal reported results:
  - Kept my **productivity up** the rest of the day
  - **Reduced the feeling I was letting something fall through the cracks**
  - Made me feel **more positive and capable** for the rest of the day
  - Helped me **process worries** weighing on my mind
  - **Captured new ideas** for stories, blog posts, business strategies, and creative leisure activities
  - **Expressed emotions** I hadn't realized I was feeling
  - **Helped me complain less** (at least aloud)
  - Allowed me to **be more forgiving** of others
  - **Gave my morning a kickstart**

# Expressive Writing

- Expressive writing is a form of writing therapy developed primarily by James W. Pennebaker in the late 1980s.
- The seminal expressive writing study instructed participants in the experimental group to **write about a 'past trauma', expressing their very deepest thoughts and feelings surrounding it.**
- The timescale was **15 minutes of continuous writing repeated over four consecutive days.**

# Expressive Writing: Results

- Several measurements were made before and after, but the most striking finding was that **relative to the control group, the experimental group made significantly fewer visits to a physician in the following months.**
- Although many report being upset by the writing experience, **they also reported finding it valuable and meaningful.**

# Daily diary and topic journals

- "Every day at some point, **just open up this diary, write today's date, then start writing**. Write what you did today, and how you are feeling, even if it seems boring." ([sivers.org](http://sivers.org))
- "**For each subject that you might have ongoing thoughts about, start a separate 'Thoughts On' journal**. Whenever you have some thoughts on this subject, open up that file, write today's date, then start writing." ([sivers.org](http://sivers.org))

# Daily diary and topic journals: Results

- "I find it so useful to keep my thoughts on each subject together, because **I can see my past thoughts and current thoughts in one place**. I can see how my thoughts on this subject have evolved or keep repeating. Sometimes I think I have a new thought on a subject, so I open up the file and write it down, then afterwards I see I had that same thought a year ago and had forgotten about it."
- "Almost all the thoughts I have on any subject are the result of **writing in my diary and journals, then questioning myself and working through alternate ways of thinking about it, and finally returning to the subject days or months later with a clear head and updated thoughts**, seeing how they've changed or not over time."

# Conclusion

- Different forms of journaling have demonstrated positive impact on subjective well-being, organization and clarity of thought, and even immune system function.
- As little as 15 minutes a day can deliver measurable results.

- <https://juliacameronlive.com/basic-tools/morning-pages/>
- [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Writing\\_therapy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Writing_therapy)
- <https://sivers.org/dj>