



Hopeful-Self Journaling

Abigail Cole Hardin's Faith-Based Version

Hopeful-Self Journaling is almost like physical therapy when the mind has been injured. In order to heal our mind's patterns of negative thinking and negative perspective towards ourselves and or others, we must work with its neuroplasticity and carve a new neural pathway. Think of it as the road less travelled that you start to travel on. It's like going to "mental therapy" every day to heal those thoughts and rewire them. This practice is inspired by Dr. Nicole LePera's "30-Day Future-Self Journaling."

Challenge yourself to **commit to 30 days of Hopeful-Self Journaling**, as this will form a new neural pathway. Continue this practice to anchor truth and positive self-talk. Make this a routine first thing in the morning or right before you go to bed to project your *future self* into the day.

Basing this practice in faith helps us recognize that everything we long to be in the future can be claimed right now. This is our hope. We have Christ in us—His power is real. We might first think of this practice as who we are becoming, but as we develop, we will come to realize that we are claiming the identity that Christ has already purchased for us. This identity is what we claim in our "Hopeful-Self Journaling." We are setting our mind on His truth and making this neural pathway our automatic response to how we view ourselves.

Use a notebook or journal to dedicate each day (at least 30 consecutive days) to The Hopeful-Self Journaling. If you miss one day, continue the numbering but make it your aim to not skip a day.

Each day will adhere to this list that includes the following:

1. Daily Affirmation
2. Pattern Shift
3. Grateful For
4. My Future Traits
5. Will Experience More
6. Opportunity Today
7. My Feelings Now by Doing This Exercise



Explanations & Examples:

1. Daily Affirmation

A daily affirmation is laying down the foundation of what you will set your mind on for that day. If you're having a difficult time to find an affirmation, or you're not sure where to start, use a devotional, Bible verse or an inspirational quote to influence your affirmation. Imagine looking at yourself through the lens of this verse or quote.

"Daily Affirmation" Example:

"It is God who arms me with strength and makes my way perfect." Psalm 18:32

I am strong because I have the power from God arming me with strength. That strength is always available to me, and I can use it when I make a choice, follow through with action, and rest with the outcomes. I will be able to handle anything that comes my way today because I am armed with strength from God. And whatever happens today will all be restored with perfect placement from His view because He makes my way perfect. I trust Him.

2. Pattern Shift

The act of recognizing our patterns of thinking and changing them is the root of seeing ourselves differently. This is when we are able to acknowledge our past patterns and defaults and be consciously active to choose a different way that we truly desire. When we are aware of our choices, we can act consciously to choose a direction versus going the "autopilot" route.

"Pattern Shift" Example:

Typical Pattern: I worry that I'm not going to get everything done on my list.

Pattern Shift: Instead of anticipating that I won't get everything done on my list, I'm going to face the two things that are the most critical to finish. I will not let the fear of failure or the temptation to avoid keep me from accomplishing these two things. Plus, I know, He has given me the strength to complete these tasks. If it doesn't all get done, it will be ok because He makes my way perfect. I am more than what I get finished in a day. I will not let worry or any uncomfortable feeling keep me from moving forward.



3. Grateful For:

Where there is gratitude, anxiety cannot exist. The more we list what we are grateful for, the more we will change not only our thoughts, but also our brain chemistry. If you have time, focus at least 20 seconds on each gratitude item listed and savor how it makes you feel. This is always something you can come back to or think about when you start to worry.

“Grateful For” Example:

I am grateful for my friends, family, health, the fact I am healing; I’m being proactive about my mental health; I’m changing patterns; I’m doing this journal; my faith, etc.

4. My Future Traits:

Future traits are the personality attributes you would like to have. It’s what you desire to be and or exhibit.

“My Future Traits” Example:

I am becoming a person who is calm, efficient, fearless, lighthearted, wise, patient, and proactive.

5. Will Experience More

When we start to think of our future selves or living out the identity Christ purchased for us, we can look at our lives and scenarios and imagine what we will experience more of. Thinking of what we will experience starts to motivate our practice and mold our “future traits” into our present.

“Will Experience More” Example:

With all my pattern shifts and future traits, I will experience more peace, enjoyment, accomplishments, hope and rest.



6. Opportunity Today

While we have put our focus on the future, we can now enter into our present. We recognize an opportunity to focus on how we can apply our “future traits” and “pattern shifts” to our present day.

“Opportunity Today” Example:

While I have a lot to do today that I don't know how it's going to get done, I know that I am strong with God's strength and my worth is not defined by what I do. So my opportunity is to not worry, but do what I can with at least 2 important tasks. I'm going to move forward regardless of my uncomfortable feelings.

7. My Feelings Now by Doing This Exercise

While we are now tuning back into the present, it's good to get in touch with our emotions. Hopefully, you're already experiencing more positive emotions because you've affirmed with truth and hope, and you are already feeling those future traits and experiences. This is another way to savor good feelings like how you savor what you are grateful for.

“My Feelings Now by Doing This Exercise” Example:

By now completing this exercise, I feel hope. I feel like I will already be resilient when problems arise, and I feel peace because I am confident that I will be able to handle the outcomes. I feel excited about who I am becoming and joyful knowing it is all possible. I'm grateful I'm taking hold of my true identity in Christ with this practice.



Hopeful-Self Journaling

Date: _____. Day _____ out of 30.

1. Daily Affirmation:

2. Pattern Shift:

3. Grateful For:

4. My Future Traits:

5. Will Experience More:

6. Opportunity Today:

7. My Feelings Now by Doing This Exercise: