

Self Improvement Journal

The purpose of this journal is to record my satisfaction of how the day went in terms of going towards the life I prefer. I think it is important to note that this journal has been born out of the issue that my life doesn't look the way that I want it to, and because of this, I am continually setting goals to improve it. However, while I do set these goals, I often fail at them, never reattempt them, and forget the goals I have set. In order to combat this, I am creating a daily journal to help identify patterns in my behavior which keep me from achieving my goals. Each day, my aim is to write 500 words about my day so I am better at setting, prioritizing, and achieving my goals.

Writing prompts:

What goals did you have for the day?

Why did you not achieve these goals?

Why did you achieve these goals?

If you lived every day like you lived today, would your life look the way you want it to by 25?

If you lived this week like you lived today, would you burn out on sunday?

What thoughts went through your mind today? What mindset/ person are we required to be to reach our goals? Were you being that person?

Did you pray? If so, why?

Day 1:

Today was pretty bad honestly. I didn't set any goals for today, even though I should have. I didn't write out my list, or make a checklist, or set my mini smart goals. I didn't think of what I needed to have my self prescribed "recipe for success" (coming prepared, coming on time, and coming with the right attitude). I forgot my breadboard kit and my pencil at home. I spent two hours on reddit. I studied though for my exam tomorrow. That I am happy about. I did set a goal of finishing my lab in class, which I didn't do. In fact, I cheated on my lab, and "faked" some of the data. However, some positive things today I did, which was only for 30 minutes in the beginning of the day was set a goal to learn two new things for the exam. This is good because it allowed me to focus on the fact that studying for an exam is all about trying to fill in my gaps of knowledge, not covering them up. I am still working through the practice exam, but I did learn

about matrix multiplication, iterating through a dictionary, and I practiced my critical thinking skills. Honestly, I feel this strong attachment to the idea that I want to be an extraordinary human, while simultaneously not being one. This often makes me feel quite sad. I try to make myself feel better- or I have tried to make myself feel better about this- by telling myself I will try to be extraordinary just in these next 5 minutes, or the next hour. While this works for a time, I often fail at it long term.

Anyway, I've spoken a lot about what I have done poorly, so I will speak to the good. I attended my classes today, I ate healthy (chickpeas, rice, nuts, and a bagel), I have plans to see my best friend over fall break, and will be getting some sweet treats with some new friends next monday, and I will be reconnecting with an old friend from freshman year the following week along with my long time friend who I haven't been able to see much. So, its good to know that socially I'm doing quite well, and that I have people to hang out with. Speaking of, I need to make sure I make some plans with Riddhi. I also replaced my morning youtube watching sessions with listening to podcasts that talk about self improvement, so thats good.

Anyway, I have failed at my last goal, which I set to prove to myself I can stick with goals I set for myself, but I think that now that I've realized that, I can simply just try to do it again. Its not like school with a time limit. The goal that I had was to simply do my morning routine, keep my screentime down, and doing readings before my class, and not using AI. I literally didn't make it a day. But I think I will try to attempt it tomorrow again. I don't know if I will be able to do the readings, but I think its better to try to get to accomplish at the very least the morning routine. I think I want to revise my priorities, because I dont think I'll necesarily benefit from being really strict about my screentime and never using AI for assignments, but instead improving my hygiene and applying to jobs. So I will refine it in that way, and do it again tomorrow.

I think I need to let go of the "extrodinary" idea for now, because thinking that I need to be amazing and impressive just leads me to set way to many unachieveable goals, fail at all of them, hurt my self confidence, and then I just set more unachieveable goals. I think its more important to recognize where I am at now- doing okay, not perfectly, and with a lot of room to grow before I'm even just "above average". So I think for now, its best that I accept that Im normal at some things, good at others, and below average at all things. Not to say Im satisfied with that, but that thats where I am, and it doesnt make me a terrible person.

Effort in school - above average

Hygiene- below average

Social life - average (for an electrical engineering student)

Physical health - average (for an american, so not great)

Performance in school - average

Anyway, thats all I have to say. I guess the only actionable thi

Day 2:

Goals:

- Read notes for practice exam xxxx
- Take 3 practice exams for dif eq, focus on the problems i got wrong, and redo them until i get them right
- Finish lab for 270
- Pray 3 times
- Do this journal

Events:

8:30-9:30: 2k2

3:30-5:30 d4p & 270

6:30-7:30: test

Ok, so I made it to all my classes, I read the notes for my exam, and I finished 2 of the 3 practice exams I would like to do. I need to still redo 3 more practice exam questions, but thats it. Something that helped me was listening to music, but I realized that listening to really “hype” music distracts me. Also, I don’t study well anywhere on campus except for the walc library because of the lack of distractions, the large windows, and the easy access to water. I noticed really, thats the only place I can study well. However, I was kinda set off course when I went to eat lunch, and tried studying in the STEW building. This is a good thing to realize. I also began to dissociate a bit, and did the 5-4-3-2-1 technique in order to bring myself back, which I am pretty happy with. Overall, I did well, but I think some future improvements would be to implement a pomodoro timer, making sure I stay in the walc, and setting mini smart goals for myself during the time that I am studying.

One thing I am less proud of is the fact that I spent an hour on my phone as soon as I woke up. I have always struggled with my phone usage, only really going down when I began sending it to ana gracia. I also spent time on reddit today. I waste time surfing the web as well. I think that it may not be helpful to block these things out of my life, but rather being mindful of my actions and being present when I do them, realize this is something I don’t want to do, and go back to the task. This will be a more difficult skill to develop. So, I don’t know if this is something I will focus on in the moment, but rather, I would like to keep it in my “goals” bank? I think I would rather focus on my current goals, which is just finishing up my daily tasks. Otherwise, it might be nice to incorporate into my consistency journal. I will start a new “goals” google doc so that I can actually see the goals that I have and help prioritize them better.’

I caught myself comparing myself to the guy that I sit next to in class, good to be mindful of, and to remind myself that everyone is on their own journey with God.

Ok, I finished my exam. Didn't really go as I wanted it to, but I won't think about it anymore, I have my next exam tomorrow I need to prepare for. Ok, basically, now I need to do buy a new bus ticket because apparently the one I have will cause me to miss my class that is completely unskippable. UGH! I feel absolutely horrible. My friend cancelled her Saturday plans and I may not be able to make it. I want to lie and cover up my tracks, but I need to be better and get the balls to do the bare minimum and come with the truth that I booked a bad ticket. I feel awful.

Also, I should get DRC accommodations. I do have ADHD, which means I could receive accommodations which let me get better grades. I will do so as soon as possible, perhaps this Saturday or something, so I can get more time on my future exams. Tomorrow at 7 am I will look into DRC accommodations.

I chatgpted some of my lab. I got into a really bad habit of chatting my work because I don't manage my time and just study study study for exams. I must come up with a way to fix this.

I think one way I can improve my mentality is by getting obsessed with mundane tasks. I know that sounds weird. But often I get bored of doing mundane things. Like, I skip over them, and then start dreaming about a life abroad or having kids or finding the love of my life. But I promise you the love of my life won't want me if I get lazy with my hair washing or my room is a complete mess. I need to start being "obsessed" with doing the boring, adult things which I don't do- like being clean, having a calendar, setting alarms, and all of that boring adult shit. Because I haven't been doing a lot of the bare minimum, so I really need to focus on doing the fundamentals.

I think something that's important for me to remember, is that even if I do fail at a goal, I can try again and change my approach. A failure (as corny as it sounds) is an attempt, not something that has to stick with me forever. Especially a lot of my goals are things like setting reminders for a week, or making a calendar for a day. That's something I can absolutely do.

Another mentality shift I can have is remembering that when times get tough, I need to be tougher. It kinda goes back to a speech I got in like 4th? Grade, which said that you can either be like a potato or an egg- a potato gets soft when things start to get heated, while an egg goes hard. You want to be like an egg.

Summary:

Priorities:

1. Find a way to get ADHD medication
2. Go to the DRC and get accommodations

Identifying Issues:

1. I studied too much for the exams and neglected my homework

DAY 3

- Emails the drc office for accomodations
- Add improve self talk in my goals list

Day 3

Time bound events:

- 270 lab
- Dif eq
- Dif eq exan

Goals:

1. Take dif eq exam, score 90% or above
2. Redo the mass problem dif eq
3. Pray 3 times
4. Finish quizzes
5. Finish lab report
6. Buy tickets

I feel fucking disgusting, i literally got up at 8:30 am and was on my phone until 2:40 pm. This behavior is beyond repulsive and i am so disapointed in myself, especially due to how well I was doing yesterday. I will continue to study for my tests, but I am very disappointed in myself.

I will make a system change. This isnt happening because I want to be on my phone. Its happening due to a system issue. I always spend time on my phone before big tests because im nervous, in turn, self sabotaging myself. I spend my time on my phone at night or in the morning. And if im on my phone in the morning I wont get off of it.

Solution: buy an alarm clock and keep my phone out the door next to my shoes. Be at the walc within 30 minutes of waking up. Instead of rice adn beans, just eat straight beans in the morning, maybe buy bread next week instead of just rice.

I guess its worth noting that brushed and washed my hair today for the first time in months. Well, washed it for the first time in maybe a month, and brushed it for the first time in maybe 3? Surprisingly it looks pretty normal know, and I doubt anyone would be able to tell that I did that to myself. I also showered and wore deodorant. I know its the bare minimum, and Im not proud of this, but I did want to document my lack of self care for my hair.

Also, in terms of being honest of where I am at, I regularly go to food banks to eat, and feel ashamed of it, but knowing I dont have the bandwidth to have a non desk job at the moment. I only applied for a few at the beginning of the year and promptly gave up.

Also, I wanted to put down that I dont have a drivers license, even though I am 20 years old. This is also something I feel shame about, and something that I must change.

Also, I think I will reach out to caps to ask for support. I feel ashamed, but I think thats one of those classic barriers that people have when seeking mental health help. I experienced a psychotic break about 7 or 8 months ago and didnt take my meds after. I guess it may be worth reaching out to the CAPS office at purdue and can help me and make some referrals.

So, in the past 30 minutes I made these strides to improve/ avoid the mistakes I made earlier today:

1. Submitted an accommodation request form
2. Emailed my mother for my adhd documentation
3. Ordered alarm clock

I just bought lemonade from a fundraiser to benefit a child-peer mentor program, and it did make me feel good about myself.

Did i pray: i prayed in the bathroom at 4:45 pm

What I ate: ½ can of chickpeas, 1 table spoon of olive oil, 1 cup of uncooked rice, a granola bar (130 calories), a cup of ramen noodles (330)

DAY 4

- Call caps about getting therapy, and maybe an appointment
- Call bcbs to get a place that can give me medication
- Call CAPS and schedule immunizations
- Time: right after my first class. (around 9:30 in the morning)
- Caps: hi i would like to schedule a preliminary appointment with CAPS. I am looking for adhd support with schooling, along with tips for managing anxiety and depression. I also am looking for help finding a provider or clinician for outpatient counseling to be monitored for warning signs of psychosis.
- BCBS: hi, i am looking for a psychiatrist or doctor near me who can prescribe me adhd medication.