

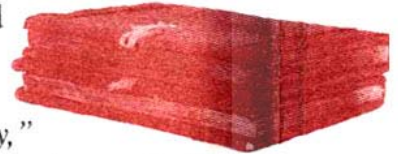
The New Word on Diaries

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Keeping a diary could provide some unexpected perks.

Researchers now say writing in a diary or journal offers a range of benefits, from helping people lose weight to organizing their finances and from providing insight into daily problems to busting stress. One study at the University of Texas even says regular journaling strengthens immune cells, helping to fight off illness.

Some feel diaries may soon become even more important as hard economic times force people to look inward for rewards, rather than relying on external payoffs. Such was the case for best-selling author and artist Philipp Keel, who says his new book, *“Keel’s Simple Diary,”* was his personal response to having “too much information and not enough meaning,” and needing to remember what made him smile.



But despite what its title implies, keeping a diary that’s “simple” doesn’t mean the answers are always easy. Instead, the book tickles readers’ minds and asks that they look at things in a different way—or at things they never looked at before.

For instance, one section challenges people to describe their ideal selves by checking off a word from a list including “meteor,” “matchbox,” “springtime” and “kosher” or to describe their day as either “colorful,” “bleached out” or “black and white.”

With his book, Keel answers some of his own questions about life and engages the reader in what he feels is our ultimate quest: to gain insight into who we are and why we do what we do.

Other sections invite the reader to make choices among images and symbols that stimulate further reflection, along with fill-in-the-blank sentences such as “A secret passion you are dying to share with those who deserve it” and playful and inspiring suggestions for dealing with life’s ups and downs.

Say, for instance, you’re dealing with a broken heart—certainly not an uncommon topic for a diary. The book offers eight simple solutions: “1. Cry like a river. 2. Think of the good stuff. 3. Breathe. 4. Kindly proceed to the end of the tunnel. 5. Sigh. 6. Wear sunglasses. 7. Set boundaries. 8. Send flowers.”

“Our lives are so complicated, at the end of the day we always have more to do, but time for less,” says Keel. “Everyone can use a break to remember what’s truly important in a day, a year, a moment.”

For more information, visit www.simplediary.com.

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