

# CONTENTMENT JOURNALLING

## Overall Instructions

Journaling has long been known to promote happiness and resilience – people who keep a journal or diary are happier. Journalling forces us to structure our thinking in a way that helps resolve troublesome issues, more so than talking or merely thinking about the topic.

Psychological research has identified other factors that positively influence happiness, and this journaling exercise incorporates some of those. Journal at least five times a week, cycling through the topics indicated below. Be as imaginative and elaborate as you like. Five to fifteen minutes a day should suffice.

## Journal Topics

1. **List three things that you are grateful for.** How did you attract them into your life? What benefit do they bring yourself and others? How else might you express that gratitude? Is there a way to pay it forward?
2. **Discuss a high point in your life.** What did it feel like? Why was it important to you? What roles did you play in making it happen? What effect, if any, did this high point have upon others?
3. **Imagine a positive and realistic future for yourself.** For any realm of your life – relationships, career, health, community, family, etc. – describe a positive but plausible scenario for yourself. What did you do to make this happen? What obstacles did you have to overcome? Why is this important to you? How will others notice this change in you?
4. **Write a letter to a loved one, as if it were your last.** The intent here is to pour all your love and appreciation into the letter. Don't hold back.
5. **List three things that have gone well in the last week.** What did these things mean to you? What credit can you take in these outcomes? What might be the longer-term impact?

Adapted from *59 Seconds*, by Richard Wiseman