

A Gentle Introduction to the Art of Noticing

1. Welcome: You Can Start Right Now

Feeling like you don't have enough time for a new practice like journaling? I understand completely. The good news is that you can begin right now, without any special tools or extra time set aside. We're going to explore the art of 'noticing'—a simple, powerful practice that can be done anytime, anywhere, even during "concurrent activities" like your walk to the car. This simple practice is built on one transformative question:

Could simply noticing change the way you see yourself — and the natural world?

Let's explore what this gentle practice truly involves and how you can begin cultivating it in your own life, one small moment at a time.

2. What is Noticing? More Than Just Seeing

At its heart, noticing is an intentional act of presence that goes far beyond simply seeing what's in front of you. It is a conscious choice to connect with the world in a deeper, more meaningful way. The practice is built on three simple, yet profound, components:

- **Slowing Down:** This is the simple act of pausing, even for just a moment, to break from the rush of your day.
- **Opening Your Senses:** This means engaging with the world more fully—not just with your eyes, but with your ears, your sense of touch, and your awareness of the environment around you.
- **Allowing Curiosity to Guide You:** This is about shifting your attention outward with a gentle, open mind. It's the mindset that helps you catch the small details that others might overlook.

By embracing these simple steps, you can start building a practice that is rooted in wonder and presence. Let's explore why this simple practice is so deeply worthwhile.

3. The Quiet Power of Paying Attention

So, why should you try noticing? In our busy lives, taking a moment to simply pay attention can feel like a radical act, but its rewards are quiet yet deeply restorative, offering a direct

path back to yourself. This simple practice offers a direct path to a more centered and inspired state of being.

Here are three of the most important outcomes you can experience:

1. **Build a Practice of Wonder and Presence** By training your attention on the small details of the world, you begin to find beauty and fascination in the everyday. A simple leaf or the way light falls on a wall becomes a source of wonder, grounding you firmly in the present moment.
2. **Restore Calm and Creativity** Shifting your focus outward provides a gentle break for a busy mind. This act of quiet observation can soothe mental chatter and create the mental space needed for new ideas and creative insights to emerge.
3. **Deepen Your Connection** When you truly notice the natural world, you begin to see the intricate web of life you are a part of. Observing signs of wildlife or the patterns in a flower fosters a greater sense of belonging and connection to the world around you.

Ready to experience these benefits for yourself? Here is a simple, guided journey to help you begin.

4. Your 7-Day Journey into Noticing

Welcome to a simple, guided mini-challenge. There is no journal required and nothing to write down unless you wish to. Your only invitation is to take a minute each day to simply *notice*.

Day 1: The Whisper of Leaves

- **Your Invitation:** Find a leaf that catches your eye. Take a moment to observe its shape, texture, and color in detail.
- **A Gentle Question:** What story does this leaf tell you about its journey?

Day 2: Morning Light

- **Your Invitation:** Notice how the morning light filters through the trees or a window. Capture this moment in your mind.
- **A Gentle Question:** How does this specific quality of light make you feel?

Day 3: Signs of Life

- **Your Invitation:** Look for, and perhaps even listen for, signs of wildlife—tracks on the ground, a lone feather, a hidden nest. Simply notice their presence.

- **A Gentle Question:** How does this connection to wildlife deepen your sense of belonging in the world?

Day 4: Textures of Nature

- **Your Invitation:** Gently touch and explore different natural textures—the roughness of bark, the smoothness of a stone, the softness of moss.
- **A Gentle Question:** Which texture was most surprising or comforting to you?

Day 5: The Sounds Around You

- **Your Invitation:** Sit quietly for one minute and just listen. What natural sounds do you hear that you didn't notice before?
- **A Gentle Question:** How do these sounds affect your mood?

Day 6: Patterns in the Wild

- **Your Invitation:** Observe patterns in your surroundings—the spiral in a shell, the symmetry in a flower, or the repetition of waves.
- **A Gentle Question:** What does finding this hidden order feel like?

Day 7: Your Personal Ritual

- **Your Invitation:** Think about a simple noticing ritual you could easily return to. Perhaps it's observing the clouds for a minute each day.
- **A Gentle Question:** How will this small ritual support your sense of calm and creativity moving forward?

After these seven days of practice, you can begin to make this gentle art a lasting part of your life.

5. Weaving Noticing into Your Life

Congratulations on completing your 7-day journey! You've taken the first and most important step in cultivating a new way of seeing the world.

The key to making noticing a sustainable practice is to follow the guidance from Day 7: design a simple ritual that you can return to again and again. It doesn't need to be complicated. It could be noticing the first bird you hear each morning, observing the shape of the moon each night, or paying attention to the feeling of your feet on the ground as you walk to your front door.

This simple, restorative practice is always available to you. You now hold a simple, powerful key to restore calm, spark creativity, and deepen your connection to the world. Use it at any moment, simply by choosing to notice.

How to Start a Nature Journal

Simple tools. Deep noticing.



Created by

Daryl Dancer

Welcome to Your 7 Days Restorative Nature Journaling

Welcome to your restorative journey. This simple guide is designed to help you begin a practice of nature journaling, offering a gentle prompt each day to help you "slow down, observe, and create."

You don't need any special skills or artistic talent to begin; all that is required is a little curiosity and a willingness to see the world around you with fresh eyes.

Embrace the next seven days as a mini-challenge, a quiet invitation to restore your sense of calm, awaken your creativity, and deepen your connection to the natural world.

This practice is a simple yet powerful way to find moments of peace and wonder in your daily life.

The following pages will guide you through a simple daily rhythm, making it easy to build a new and rewarding habit.

The Gentle Rhythm of Your Practice

7 Days of Restorative Nature Journaling

Welcome to Your Restorative Journey
Each day offers a simple prompt to help you slow down, observe the natural world, and create.

Day 1: The Whisper of Leaves
Observe a Single Leaf
Find a leaf that catches your eye. Notice its unique shape, texture, and color, then sketch or describe it in your journal.
Reflect: What story does this leaf tell you about its journey?
Challenge: Write a haiku or a short poem inspired by the light.

Day 2: Morning Light
Capture the Light
Notice how the morning light filters through the trees and capture this moment in words or images.
Challenge: Write a haiku or a short poem inspired by the light.

Day 3: Animal Tracks
Look for Signs of Wildlife
Search for tracks, feathers, or nests. Document your findings with sketches or detailed notes.
Reflect: How does this connection to wildlife deepen your sense of belonging?

Day 4: Textures of Nature
Explore Different Textures
Touch and explore the feel of bark, stone, and moss. Create a "texture map" in your journal.
Challenge: Use descriptive words to bring these textures alive on the page.

Day 5: Sounds Around You
Listen Quietly
Sit still and listen to the natural sounds you hear. Record them as words, symbols, or sketches.
Reflect: How do these sounds affect your mood or creativity?

Day 6: Patterns in Nature
Observe Natural Patterns
Look for spirals, symmetry, and repetition in plants or landscapes. Sketch or write about what you see.
Challenge: Try to replicate a pattern using simple lines or shapes in your journal.

Day 7: Your Nature Ritual
Design Your Ritual
Create a simple nature journaling ritual that you can return to regularly. Describe or illustrate it.
Reflect: How will this new ritual support your calm and creativity moving forward?
Share Your Experience
Share Your Experience: You're encouraged to share your journey in the group and look out for upcoming workshops and challenges.

NotebookLM

Each day's activity is built around a simple, three-part structure designed to guide your attention and inspire your creativity.

The Three Parts of Each Day

1. **The Prompt:** This gives you a gentle focus for your observation, helping you tune into a specific detail of the natural world.
2. **The Creative Challenge:** This is a simple task that encourages you to express what you have observed through words, sketches, or other creative marks.
3. **The Reflection:** This is a thoughtful question designed to deepen your personal connection to your experience and your surroundings.

Note that while most days include all three parts, some may focus only on observation and creation to give you more space for your own reflections. Let's begin this quiet exploration together, starting with your very first day.

Your Seven-Day Journey of Discovery

Here you will find seven days of gentle prompts to begin building your nature journaling practice. Follow them in order or choose the one that speaks to you most today.

Day 1: The Whisper of Leaves

Prompt: Find a leaf that catches your eye. Observe its shape, texture, and color.

Creative Challenge: Sketch or describe it in detail.

Reflection: What story does this leaf tell you about its journey?

Day 2: Morning Light

Prompt: Notice how the morning light filters through the trees.

Creative Challenge:

- Capture this moment in words or images.
- Write a haiku or short poem inspired by this light.

Day 3: Animal Tracks

Prompt: Look for signs of wildlife—tracks, feathers, or nests.

Creative Challenge: Document your findings with sketches or notes.

Reflection: How does this connection to wildlife deepen your sense of belonging?

Day 4: Textures of Nature

Prompt: Touch and explore different natural textures—bark, stone, moss.

Creative Challenge:

- Create a texture map in your journal.
- Use descriptive words to bring these textures alive on the page.

Day 5: Sounds Around You

Prompt: Sit quietly and listen. What natural sounds do you hear?

Creative Challenge: Record them as words, symbols, or sketches.

Reflection: How do these sounds affect your mood or creativity?

Day 6: Patterns in Nature

Prompt: Observe patterns—spirals, symmetry, repetition—in plants or landscapes.

Creative Challenge:

- Sketch or write about what you see.

- Try to replicate a pattern using simple lines or shapes in your journal.

Day 7: Your Nature Ritual

Prompt: Design a simple nature journaling ritual that you can return to regularly.

Creative Challenge: Describe or illustrate it.

Reflection: How will this ritual support your calm and creativity moving forward?

Having completed these seven days, you now have the tools and experience to continue this practice in a way that feels authentic to you.

Beyond Seven Days: Your Personal Practice

The goal of this seven-day challenge is not to reach a finish line, but to build a foundation for a lasting, personal habit.

As you saw on Day 7, the final step is to design a ritual that you can return to again and again. This isn't about rigid rules, but about creating a gentle structure that brings you back to the page and to the present moment.

Your ritual might be a quiet cup of tea in your garden each morning, a weekly walk in a favorite park, or simply the act of opening your journal by a sunlit window. The key is to find what works for you.

As you consider how to continue, let this question from your final day's prompt be your guide:

How will this ritual support your calm and creativity moving forward?

Your Journey Continues

You have taken a wonderful step by completing this seven-day journey. Be proud of the pages you have filled and the moments of quiet observation you have carved out for yourself.

This journal is a testament to your curiosity and your connection with the world around you. This is not an ending, but the beginning of a beautiful and restorative practice.

I encourage you to carry this new habit forward. Keep looking closely, keep listening quietly, and keep allowing yourself the simple, profound joy of observing, creating, and connecting with nature.

Your journey continues with every page you turn, and every observation you share with yourself or the world.