SELFGROWTH.ORG

My Self-Growth Journal

Prompts about how you're changing, in eight themes. Do one section per sitting, skip anything that doesn't fit, and come back to the 'looking back' set after a month or so.

01 Check in before you start

How settled do I feel right now?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not settled at all — Very settled

Today's date, and the theme I'll write about today:

02 If journaling starts to make you spiral

Journaling should leave you a little clearer, not stuck in a loop. If you notice you're writing the same worry over and over, feeling worse after each session, or the prompts bring up something heavy that doesn't settle, stop and talk to someone. These prompts are for self-reflection, not therapy. A GP or family doctor, or a therapist, can help with what a journal can't. If you have any thoughts of harming yourself, please reach out now: call or text 988 in the US, call Samaritans on 116 123 in the UK and Ireland, or find a free helpline at findahelpline.com.

If this gets heavy, the person I'll talk to is:

Something that helps me reset (a walk, music, a shower, a call):

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03 Where I am right now

A snapshot of today, so you have something to compare with later. Write it plainly, without dressing it up or running it down.

If I had to describe this stage of my life in one sentence, what would it be?

What's going better than it was a year ago?

What's taking up most of my energy at the moment, and is that what I'd choose?

Which part of my life feels most stuck, and what does stuck feel like there?

What am I quietly proud of that nobody else has noticed?

What do I want to be different by this time next year, in one area only?

04 What I'm learning

Growth is mostly learning, and not only the classroom kind. Think about skills, but also things you've understood about yourself or other people.

What have I learned recently that changed how I see something?

What am I getting better at, even slowly? How can I tell?

What's a mistake from the last month that taught me something useful?

Who have I learned from lately, and what exactly did they show me?

What's something I used to be sure about that I'm less sure about now?

What do I want to learn next, and what's one small way to start this week?

05 What I'm outgrowing

Growing usually means leaving something behind: a habit, a belief, a role, sometimes a way of being with people. You don't have to act on any of this yet. Just notice it.

What used to fit me that feels a bit too small now?

Which old story about myself ('I'm just not the kind of person who...') is starting to feel untrue?

What am I still doing mainly because I've always done it?

What would I stop doing if I didn't worry about what people would think?

What am I scared to let go of, and what's the fear really about?

What have I already outgrown, and how did I know it was time?

06 Habits and the small daily stuff

Most change happens in ordinary days. Look at what you actually do, not what you plan to do.

Which daily habit is helping me most right now?

Which habit is quietly working against what I want? When does it usually show up?

What did I do this week that the version of me from a year ago wouldn't have?

When I drop a good habit, what's usually going on (tired, busy, low, bored)?

What's the smallest version of a habit I want, small enough that I'd still do it on a bad day?

How do I treat myself when I slip, and how would I like to?

07 Relationships and how I show up

You grow in relation to other people as much as on your own. Think about specific people and moments, not relationships in general.

Who brings out the version of me I like most? What's different around them?

When did I last handle a hard conversation better than I would have before?

What pattern keeps showing up in my relationships, and what's my part in it?

Where am I saying yes when I mean no?

Who do I want to be more present with, and what gets in the way?

What do I need from people that I'm still finding hard to ask for?

08 Setbacks and hard stretches

Pick a recent setback that's small or medium, not the hardest thing that's ever happened to you. If a prompt pulls you somewhere painful, skip it.

What didn't go the way I hoped recently? Just the facts first.

What was in my control, and what wasn't?

What did I tell myself about it at the time, and is that fair?

What would I say to a friend who'd had the same setback?

What helped me get through the last hard stretch I had?

Is there one thing I'd do differently next time? (It's fine if the answer is no.)

09 Values in action

It's easy to say what matters to you. These prompts look at the gap between your values and your week, without beating yourself up about it.

Name two or three things that matter most to me. Where did I act on one of them this week?

When did I act against something I care about, and what pulled me there?

If someone watched how I spent my time this week, what would they guess I value?

Which decision coming up would be easier if I let my values decide?

What's one small thing I could do tomorrow that fits who I want to be?

Have my values changed in the last few years? Which one has grown, or faded?

10 Looking back over a month or a year

Save these for the end of a month, a birthday or the end of a year. Re-read a few old entries first if you have them.

What's different about me now compared with the start of this stretch?

What am I most glad I did, tried or said?

What did I worry about that turned out fine, or never happened?

What was the hardest part, and what did it teach me?

Who helped me along the way, and have I told them?

What do I want to carry into the next month or year, and what do I want to leave behind?

If this stretch were a chapter, what would I call it?

11 More prompts for another day

Tick one off each time you use it. One prompt is plenty for a sitting.

- [ ] What does growth actually look like for me, in plain words, not someone else's?
- [ ] What am I avoiding, and what would it cost me to keep avoiding it?
- [ ] Where am I comparing my progress with someone else's, and is it a fair comparison?
- [ ] What's one thing I'm better at handling now than I was five years ago?
- [ ] What am I tolerating that I could change?
- [ ] What advice would I give the version of me from a year ago?
- [ ] What would I attempt if I were allowed to be a beginner at it?
- [ ] When did I last surprise myself?
- [ ] What do I hope I'll write when I look back at this page in a year?

When you're done, a moment to reflect

- Which prompt was the easiest to skip, and is there something in that?
- Reading back what you wrote today, what's one thing you'd want to remember in six months?
- Is there one small, concrete step your answers point to this week?

Free worksheet from selfgrowth.org. Free self-growth worksheets for real life. Fill it in online and it saves as you go: selfgrowth.org/worksheets/self-growth-journal-prompts

If things feel heavier than a worksheet can hold

These are self-reflection tools, not therapy. If you're struggling, especially if you have any thoughts of harming yourself, please reach out to someone now. In the US, call or text **988**. In the UK & Ireland, call **116 123** (Samaritans). Elsewhere, find a free helpline at **findahelpline.com**. If you're in immediate danger, call your local emergency number.