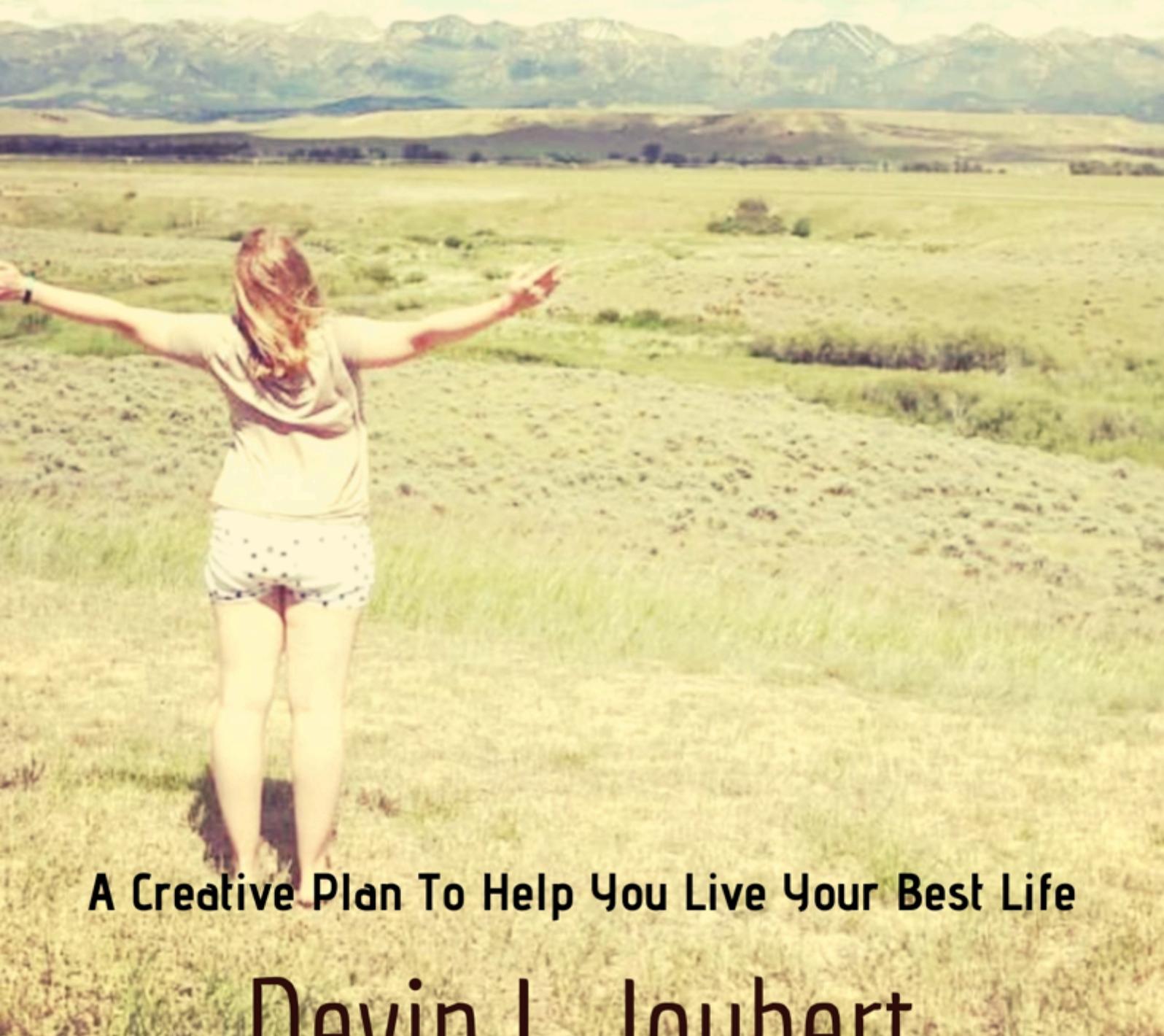


between creativity and fitness that will improve every area of my life.

AMY LATTA, Author & Artist

Creating The *Best Me*



A Creative Plan To Help You Live Your Best Life

Devin L. Loubert

Creating The Best Me

Devin L. Joubert

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*This book is for you. I hope it helps you in your journey to being the “YOU”
you’ve always wanted to be.*

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My Letter To You

When I originally sat down to write this book, I wanted to write a book that would help other women create their best lives possible because we only have one life, right?

It was super eye-opening this year when I pulled together to update this book for print. 2020 was hard for everyone and helped us all see what was most important — our health, family, and friends. It’s so easy to take health for granted when you’re healthy. So I felt it was

a great time to update the book.

While we strive for our best lives, we get bombarded by fiery arrows and a cannonball of hate. You'd be amazed where these attacks come from. They come from inside. Not saying you're setting out to sabotage yourself because no one knowingly sets out to do that. This enemy hides inside us — for many years they've gone behind the dossier of the Inner Editor or the Critic.

You know that voice right? Well, I wanted to play with that voice while writing this book.

In High School, I read the book *The Screwtape Letters* by C.S. Lewis. I'm not sure if you've read it, but it follows a man (throughout his life) and the Demon that's been assigned to him, Wormwood. The story is masterfully told through letters to and from Wormwood and his Uncle Screwtape, a higher-up Demon. That book really inspired me while working on the Little Critic's journal entries in this book. When reading these, I need to make a trigger warning and share that the character Nameless, the Little Critic is not a reliable character. She isn't even trustworthy. So do not believe the negative things she says. It's all lies. These letters are meant to give you insight into the enemies camp. Her letters aren't intended to make you feel good, as her statements about yourself probably don't make you feel good either. At the end of these sections I do share a few tips you can use to combat your Little Critic.

My mission is to reach out and offer encouragement for you to move toward your best life while helping to put out fires inside your mind, silence the inner critic, and encourage you to chase your dreams.

I am a writer. Many of you might know that if you've been following me for awhile now. And some of you are probably saying "Of course you are. You wrote this book." Haha... which is true. In my line of business I've heard many people tell me things like: "I want to be the next J.K. Rowling." or "I'm going to be the next Hemingway." Have you ever thought this? If not for Rowling or Hemingway, insert the hero in your line of business that you look up to. Think of someone that's the equivalent but in your line of work.

Sure, I get that they are and were creative geniuses, but I don't want to be the next J.K. Rowling. And I don't want to be the next Hemingway. I want to be the first me. Yes. Let that marinate for a moment.

Say it with me: I want to be the first me.

I've had some people sit over that sentence for a while and then agree with it. Isn't it funny how we are constantly comparing our lives to others? We compare our lives to our family, friends, competition, and more.

The secret is that anyone you've ever compared yourself to has probably compared themselves to someone else, or has cried while driving somewhere, or scrolled through Instagram wishing their life was easier. Yes, even those high-profile Instagram influencers.

That's the big lie I want to pour a huge bucket of water on.

Throughout this book:

- I want you to see your worth
- Love who you are
- Talk to yourself like you would to your best friend
- Not compare yourself to anyone but your past self.
- To revel in being your utterly unique and lovely person — that is the only you on the Earth.

Does that sound awesome or what?

You are the first and only you. If you struggle with doing any of the things listed above, don't worry. I'll help you find a way back to loving yourself and your creative purpose.

Best,

Devin L. Joubert

1

Chapter 1. Intro To The Sections In This Book

Chapter 1.

An Intro to The Sections In This Book

Whenever I read a book about self-improvement, I love when the book has different sections that you can apply to all areas of your life like your inner thoughts, physical, and spiritual health, as well as your creative journey.

When I went to the Chiropractor the other day, he was telling me how the tendons, muscles, and bones are all connected and how when everything is in alignment you are bound to be happier and healthier, because everything works together correctly. That's also the same for your health and wellness—in all areas of your wellbeing.

Here's a brief summary of what you'll find between these pages:

Little Critic's Letters—PSA: As I mentioned earlier the Little Critic is a liar. Please don't listen to or believe what you read in her guidebook. You'll feel like a spy when reading this section. Be careful your Little Critic doesn't catch you.

The Little Critic is that voice you hear when you look in the mirror and get the negative thoughts that come to mind about how you look. Or after you've written or drawn something, the voice says you're not good enough. I know you've heard that voice before. That's the Little Critic. She hates you and doesn't want you to succeed. Her primary mission in life is to confuse you and get you off track from your life's purpose.

In these sections, you'll find letters from Nameless, a higher-up Little Critic who writes a letter to younger Little Critics. You'll find which masks and disguises your Little Critic may wear. Learn how to deal with and triumph over the Little Critic. That is your goal to a happy and healthy life because, if you believe great things about yourself, so will others.

I'm sure you've had a scratch with, or even a few fights with, your Little Critic. She is always with you, curling her nose in disgust at everything you do. Nothing is ever

good enough for her.

She can take on any shape or form, depending on the situation, which makes her a great shapeshifter.

First off, choose yourself, before anyone else is going to.

**Here are some things you've probably heard your Little Critic say:
(Remember they are liars...)**

- “That doesn’t look good.”
- “Who would buy that trash?”
- “Suzy Conner’s book is way better than yours.”
- “No one will ever like your writing.”
- “ISH, your sentences are like puke on the page.”
- “You are so ugly.”
- “You are fat ... you should seriously lose weight.”
- “Nobody will ever love you like this. I don’t see how you can even love yourself.”
- “Girl, do you see that muffin top?”
- “Your face resembles a pepperoni pizza.”

Those may have been quite difficult to read. But remember that voice is a liar. It’s a habit you need to train, if you practice a lot of negative self-talk. Whenever you hear something like that, say nope. I am not listening to your lies.

We struggle with statements and doubts like that daily. It’s so easy to get

insecure about those issues. True, right?

When you are insecure, you are actually becoming a weaker version of yourself. Being confident will make you a stronger and happier person. You'll also become a better creator. You know the confidence that glows when a positive person walks into a room you're in? That's the confidence I'm talking about.

Your Little Critic will try to make you feel insecure, like a failure, and like you'll never reach your dreams. That's their goal in life.

Here are a few of your Little Critic's different masks you'll see:

Anger—Known also as Wrath. Making you angry is one of her purest forms of joy. She loves it when you hate yourself and others enough to get angry.

Greed—If she can make you desire something selfishly, she feels like she's won the battle.

Sloth—We all know this one as laziness. The Little Critic loves making her host (you) avoid spiritual, mental, or physical work. Sometimes it's so easy to believe her.

Lust—She loves making you crave things, even if it's unhealthy.

Envy—Making you jealous is one of her pride-filled joys. It's the cherry on top of the sundae, if you will.

Gluttony—This one fits very well with greed, above. If she can make you hide your feelings by eating more than you know you should, she's been successful.

When I read C. S. Lewis' book "The Screwtape Letters" there was a part where a character is complaining and wanting her drink just right.

In the book, Screwtape mentioned how this is also gluttony. Which makes sense. AKA being a complainer and nit picking everything others do. It's almost a version of gluttony where nothing appeases you where you are greedy and annoyed with anything other than what you like or make.

Pride—There is a reason there is the saying "Pride comes before the fall." Did you know this saying is inspired from a Bible verse? *Pride goes before destruction, a haughty spirit before a fall.* - Proverbs 16:18. "Haughty" adds an extra layer to this kind of pride. "Haughty" is described by Merriam-Webster's Dictionary as "blatantly and disdainfully proud: having or showing an attitude of superiority and contempt for people or things perceived to be inferior". Those are words I'd never want to be used to describe me.

Before each chapter, you'll see a page from Nameless' Little Critic diary. She wrote it as a guidebook for younger critics. She's pretty good at doing her job and loves talking about you, but not how you'd think. Remember, she's a liar.

Buckle up and hold on. This is going to be an adventure!!

Music Box Moments — I really enjoyed writing these sections. I delve deeper into some of my thoughts and memories around certain topics and themes throughout the book. Did you ever have a safe place where you'd keep your memories or the things you loved?

As a little girl, I had a special music box that I kept things I loved or cherished. After my favorite dog passed away, I put her collar in there. I was a sentimental little child. I missed that dog. It was mementos like that, or pretty rocks I found while on vacation, or even a letter from a friend. They were the things that made a difference in my life, that I wanted to keep and remember forever. That's what would end up in that music box.

Later my parents bought me a hope chest with gorgeous rosemåling (a Norwegian painting technique) of birds, hearts, and leaves on the side. If you aren't familiar with hope chests, they are huge in Scandinavian culture (I've also heard they are big in the German heritage too.) It's a place where girls could put things they hoped for, for their future.

Since then, I've filled it with precious memories and hopes for my future, like—my grandma's hand-sewn quilt from the dirty thirties, crocheted blankets from great-grandparents, crocheted baby clothes, and then also more memory-filled items such as photo albums and my graduation diplomas.

I bet you also have a spot where you keep things that are dear to you, whether that's a music box, a hope chest, or even a memory box in your closet. Wherever it may be, I hope you enjoy these memory-filled stories called—Music Box Moments.

Girl Chat — Do you enjoy sitting on a couch with a cozy blanket, sipping on a

yummy hot chocolate while having a beautiful conversation with your best friend? I do. I can almost imagine it. You can smell cookies baking in the kitchen as you both giggle and catch up. It's as if no time has passed since you last saw each other.

I wanted this section to feel like that. A chat with the creative ladies who are bloggers, authors, artists, and entrepreneurs.

Creative Activities — These will be creative ways to apply the lessons and topics into your life. If you enjoy these, you'll also find other creative activities in the Book Club Booklet that accompanies this book. Find it on my website, at: www.lifewritingwanderlust.com/shop

In the next chapter, I will walk you through ideas for journaling and some tips you'll want to keep in mind when choosing a journal and a pen. Yes, choosing the right pen is super important.

Chapter 2. A Word About Journaling

Chapter 2.

A Word About Journaling

I'm a nerd when it comes to journaling and even when it comes to talking about journaling. I've learned so much about myself through journaling and I believe you will learn tons about yourself too.

As I write this, a round hat box filled with my childhood journals sits next to my feet. Those journals are filled with my precious inner-most thoughts, fears, happenings throughout my days, and the things I wondered about. In a way, journaling was one way that I was able to work out everything going on in my head and life.

It makes me think about Anne Frank journaling in the attic back during WWII. She wrote down her thoughts, imaginings, and what she and the others in the attic were up to daily.

Honestly, that's what journaling is, but it's not JUST that. Journaling is a curious kind of magic. When you embrace it, it has the power to change your life.

Are you ready to change your life?

What You'll Need to Journal

When it comes to journaling, you don't need much. You do need a journal and a writing utensil. Easy peasy. Right?

Well, not exactly. I am super picky when it comes to my journals and also my pens. I say pens, because I love writing with pens, but they have to be comfy. They can't be scratchy or sticky on the paper. They have to glide. I suggest going to a store that lets you try the pens out before buying them. You can do this at art stores. If that's something you can't do, just pick up a few different ones at the store and try them out. You may like something different than I do.

BUT, my FAVORITE pens are the Papermate Flair Pens (Seriously my favorite, you guys. It's that felt tip and how it glides so well across the paper.) You might think I'm crazy, but if you've never tried it, you'll know why after writing with one for the first time. Plus, they come in tons of colors. Who doesn't love color?

When it comes to journals, there are all kinds. I love when they lay open flat. I love this. Also another thing I look for is that they are big enough and small enough to fit in a bag.

There are also other journal types:

- Ruled (college rule, single ruled, and double ruled)
- Dotted
- Graph
- Grid
- Plain paper

Journals are also bound differently:

- Perfect bound
- Lay Flat

- Stitched
- Coil bound

When should you journal?

Is there a best time to open that book and journal? No. It just depends on what works best for you. Some people like to journal during their prayer/devotional time. That's when I use mine. Others like to write in theirs before bed or even before lunch. I recommend putting your journal some place you'll see it and where it'll be easy to remember.

Some of you may have never journaled before and some of you have — don't mind me as I catch those, who haven't, up.

Did you know there are different kinds of journals you can choose from? The significant thing is that no journal is like the other. Every person is unique, and that makes every journal/diary unique. That's what I love about journaling. Or you can use a journal for multiple things. Many people have something like this called a Bullet Journal.

Bullet Journal-(Also known as BuJo) These are great for personal development and reaching your goals. They can be as simple or as colorful and artistic as you want. That's the glorious thing about journaling though, you make it what you want it. Ryder Carroll created this journaling method. You can write in it as a journal, fill out to-do lists in it, create graphs to track your mood or habits, and even track your health journey with it. Think of it as all the journals in one.

Here are other journal options:

Art Journal-I know countless artists that draw daily in their journal and fill the pages with thoughts and notes. But it's more of a combination between writing and drawing. But then again, it doesn't have to be just drawing or writing. Some artists draw daily in a journal and they write nothing but a date. You don't have to write, but to better understand yourself and your feelings. As a companion for this book, writing in your journal will help you understand more about yourself.

Mood Journal-This is a journal you can write daily about how you are feeling. Some people like to track their moods daily. One writer friend said that she marks down a number (from 1 to 10) that she feels stands for her healthiest self. In her journal she marks the number she most feels like every day to track her feelings and how close to her healthy self she feels. I thought that was an interesting idea for tracking mental health.

Tracking your mood is also super helpful for women who want to spot patterns during menstrual cycles. Or if you deal with anxiety or depression, this can also help you track the days you're feeling off.

Gratitude journal-Writing what you're thankful for is a great way to stay grateful, especially through hard times. If you want to try this, write one to five things you are grateful for daily.

Dream Journal-Do you get crazy dreams? In this kind of journal, you can write all your dreams. Might even spark some ideas for projects or story ideas. I know I get a lot of ideas from this.

Travel Journal-These are great for keeping track of the places you go, the things you see and experience. You can fill the pages with pictures from the trip, ticket stubs, and postcards. In high school, whenever we went on a trip, my mom had us write about each day in a journal. It was a cool way for us to think about the things we were seeing and experiencing.

Prayer Journal-There are a few different prayer journals out there. You can write in it as though you are talking to Jesus, as I do with mine or you can list all your prayers out. When prayers get answered you can write in the date, they were answered. It's quite intriguing to look back over when you're going through hard times. These also make exceptional gifts.

Scrapbook Journal-This is a fun and creative way to document special moments, memories, and occasions with pictures, stickers, and fancy paper.

Memory Journal-Write your memories. Write about your childhood, school days, your parents, or things that happened in your life. You could use this to write stories or memories about your children and funny things they did and said as kids. You'll be thankful you wrote it down someday. Journals are so much fun to reread after the years. This would also make a splendid gift to your child when they get older. If your grandparent or great aunt has wonderful gripping stories about your family and ancestry, think about asking them if they'd write those memories and stories for you in a memory journal.

Here are some prompts to get them started:

1. Write/draw your family tree:
2. What are a few of your favorite memories about your family and their traditions?
3. People in my mother's family who came to America (also record: Old Country, When Ancestor came to America, Birthdate and death?) If you don't live in America, substitute America for the country you live in.
4. People in my father's family who came to America (also record: Old Country, When Ancestor came to America, Birthdate and death?)
5. Who was your best friend, growing up?
6. What was your favorite childhood toy?
7. Did you ever meet any of your great grandparents? Who were they and where'd they come from?
8. Who was the oldest relative you remember meeting as a child?
9. What was your favorite family vacation as a child? What made it so memorable?
10. Did you have a nickname growing up? What was the origin of your nickname?
11. Which relatives did you live close to? Did you see each other often?
12. Did you ever go on long trips to visit a relative? Who and where?
13. What is your favorite school memory?
14. What stories do you remember from your grandparents?

(For more on creating a memory journal look out for our up-and-coming memory journal at lifewritingwanderlust.com/shop)

Weight Loss/Health/Workout Journal-A journal where you can keep track of measurements, weight loss, before and after pictures, and your feelings throughout the weight loss journey. This is also a good place to keep your food diary. Just write everything you eat in a day. Keep track of your weights, reps, and how much you lifted. Or what your workout was and how long you did it. Tracking your habits daily is inspiring, because you can see a change in your habits quicker than you'll see change on the scale or in the mirror.

Letters to Yourself Journal-Write letters to your future self or your past self. You can even write letters to your present self from your past self or future self.

Healing Journal-these are wonderful for healing, but you definitely want to make sure if you write about things that hurt which might involve other people—make sure you hide it or destroy it so others don't see it. That'd be bad if they saw it.

Affirmation Journal-A journal you write your “I am...” affirmations in. Positive affirmations are known to boost your self-confidence and for helping you achieve your dreams.

Want to Track All The Things?

If you want to track multiple habits and would rather keep it all in one journal instead of having five different journals, I completely understand. The Bullet Journal is the answer to your problems, and it's quite simple to do.

You can track all things in a Bullet Journal like:

- Mood Tracker
- Daily/Weekly/Yearly Spreads (This will be what you're usually used to seeing in a day/week/yearly planner that you'd buy at a store. Only thing is different—you are writing it down or drawing the calendar spreads in the journal yourself.
- Food Diary
- Menu Prepping
- Grocery List
- Your Goals for the month/quarter/or year.
- Your exercise plans and what you did.

A simple Pinterest search will inspire you. I always get lost in the rabbit hole of Bullet Journaling.

That's what I love about journaling though, is that you get to make it what you need at the moment. So if you want to draw in your journal as well as write, you can do that. If you want to write prayers or would rather follow prompts to encourage daily writing in a journal, that's great too.

What Do I Write About?

You can write about whatever you want to write about. But I know some people who get anxious when they see a blank page and then they blank out on what to write.

Here Are Some Writing Prompts to Get You Started:

1. What is your earliest memory?

2. Is there something you regret doing or not doing? Is there something you can do to fix this?
3. Something you wish you'd known 2 years ago? What is it, and why do you wish you'd known it then?
4. Write a letter to your 15-year-old self.
5. What is your personal mantra for the year?
6. What's your word for the year?
7. What are 5 things you want to achieve this year? Write the steps you need to take to achieve those goals.
8. If you were your truest self, what would that look like? Write some things you'd have to do to become that best version of you. Then do it.
9. What does true love look like to you?
10. How do you define success? How'll you know when you reach it?
11. Where do you see yourself in 2 months? Be specific.
12. Where do you see yourself in 6 months? Be specific.
13. Where do you see yourself in 12 months? Be specific.
14. What are you grateful for today?
15. List and describe the 5 best days of your life and why they were the best?
16. How would your life be different if you stopped living in the past, worrying, or being anxious? Brainstorm some ways you could achieve this.
17. What scares you most? Why? Can you use that fear to improve your life or learn from it?
18. Is there anyone you need to forgive? Or any grudges you need to let go of?
19. If you could go back in time to change something you did or said, what would it be? Can you fix that now in any way?
20. If you were your biggest fan and believed in yourself fully, how would your life change?
21. What is the best advice you've ever received?
22. What do you love most about yourself?
23. What would you do to improve yourself? And what are steps to doing that?
24. Who do you care about the most in the world? Write about them and what you can do to show them how much they mean to you?

25. What did you love doing as a child? Are you doing that still? If not, why? Journal about how you can insert that into your life again.
26. What are your favorite childhood memories?
27. What things could you give up to gain more time or energy?
28. What does your ideal day look and feel like? Be specific. How can you achieve this every day?
29. When was the last time you cried? What did it teach you?
30. What's something you'd love to learn? Lookup and list ways you can learn it.
31. What are the top 5 most important things in your life? How are you prioritizing those things? How can you prioritize those things better?

Speaking of journal prompts, there will be some more throughout these pages, but you'll find more in a journaling book on my website. www.lifewritingwanderlust.com/shop. You'll want to make sure you get your hands on that as there will be more in-depth journaling ideas and also prompts galore in there.

In the next chapter, we will get a sneak peek into Nameless the Little Critic's letters to your Little Critics. Remember, she's a liar. Don't believe what she says about you. I need you to remind yourself of this when you are standing in front of the mirror as well. After her letter, you'll see a few things that you can do to combat your Little Critic.

Little Critic's Intro to Envy

Little Critic's Guidebook

Action: Envy

Hello Little Critics,

The secrets in this guidebook are the best ways to earn your Little Critic badge of horror. While I'm writing this, my host hasn't found me out yet. Just make sure you follow my steps, and you'll be closer to making your host fail at reaching their greatest potential.

I want to keep this up without my host or yours finding out. One of the best ways is by placing things in her life she'll be envious of.

If I can make her envious of the people placed in her life, she'll spend more time trying to be like them thus forgetting about being her unique self.

Then I can tell her that she won't be any good at those things. And you know what's hilarious?

She actually believes every word I say. I don't know why?

All of this won't work if she believes in who she is and if she's confident in her skin and in her creativity. You see, each creative woman in the world has a voice. If every woman used it properly, they'd change the world they are living in. It would be cool for them, but not for me and you, Little Critics.

I just can't let my host have all that success. I can't let her think she has a gift. It's important to make my creative feel worthless and like everyone else is better than her because then I reap the "Oh, so sweet!" rewards.

There are two categories of envy that I absolutely love:

1. Envy of Talent

When you get your host jealous of other creatives, it'll be a bloodbath. Once she starts, she won't be able to stop.

No matter how much she tries. It's a vicious circle. It'll also affect how she treats those creatives, when jealous, it's easy for her to be mean and hurtful to others.

In their world, I think they have a saying about becoming a green-eyed monster, and that's so true. This will make the other Little Critic's hosts feel bad. That's an added bonus, because it helps that creative's critic. What is the saying our hosts have? Kill two birds with one anvil? Or something like that?

2. Envy of Appearances

My host has another stupid saying in her world that goes something like “Don’t judge the person by their face.” Actually I think it is, “Don’t judge a book by its cover.” I honestly like my version better.

But is she serious? Everyone does it... I think humans are utterly clueless.

I’d rather turn my host into a “green-eyed monster” (ha, see how I used that there?) when she sees a creative who seems better than her at something. This works for people who might be healthier than your host.

What’s even better is if you can get her to be jealous and hateful, while keeping her from living her best and healthy life (mentally, physically, and spiritually.) If you can, you’ll get 30 awesome points.

The worst thing that could happen in this kind of situation is that she sees what she wants to change in her life. When hosts see those healthy creatives, it might spark an urge in your host to make healthy changes. I’ve seen it happen before. It makes the host do some crazy things: like working out more, pacing around the house at 11:30 pm to reach her 10K steps, eating green crunchy food (I still haven’t figured out what that stuff is...), or dropping those deadly habits that we love so much.

Making her envious is the best way to rot her, from the inside out. I believe it might also be the easiest.

Until next time... Keep spreading poison,

Nameless

Xoxo

How to Combat Your Little Critic - Envy

- What areas of your life do you want to change?
- What steps do you have to take in order to make those changes?
- When jealousy kicks in, kick it to the curb and look for ways to complement that person instead.

Chapter 3. Where The Story Begins

Chapter 3.

Where The Story Begins

Truth. It's sometimes so hard to find in our world today. I want to be as upfront and truthful with you as I can, here. Isn't it nice when you know you can trust what you're reading?

In many books and on social media there are people of influence that tout certain magical products (some share these products because they just love the product which is great) but some are just sharing it because either the company paid them to or they will make money if you buy it from them. You won't find any of that kind of stuff here. I'll be as open and honest with you as I can be.

Alot of the stories you'll read throughout these pages are either mine, or others were experienced by women from other corners of the world who I interviewed and who agreed to share their stories with you. Some having gone through good experiences and some going through bad ones. It's through sharing our stories that we heal and grow stronger. So, here goes...

Before writing this book, I came to a moment in my life where I felt lousy about myself. I stepped onto the scale. It didn't make me feel any better! An unfriendly neon number flashed before me. If I hadn't already disliked how I felt about myself, that number didn't help. I was at the heaviest weight I'd ever been. It made me upset with myself. *How was it I let myself get to this point?* Many questions filled my mind and that's when I decided I couldn't live like this any longer. I picked up the pieces and started constructing a path back to the "me" I wanted to be.

I'd made a bunch of small choices in my life that became bad habits that turned into bad results. It's the same way for improving your life—you just need to change your habits and do good things each day and soon enough the continual practice of those habits will lead to progress and great results.

Seeing It in Others

Not too long ago, I was out shopping with my husband trying to get a coupon off the store app, but my phone connection was awful. I went outside to get a better signal. I was trying to get a coupon off the app so I could check out. Got to love how

unreliable technology is sometimes.

I love to watch people, (and not in a creepy way!) so I resort to that while waiting for the spinning wheel to calm down. I hate the spinning wheel.

As I stood there a heavier woman walked toward the store entrance (let's call her "Sue"), as an average woman in a bright dress walked out of the store (how about we call her "Anna").

"I love your dress!" Sue said.

"Thanks!" Anna smiled, walking past Sue.

Once Anna was far enough away, Sue uttered in a hopeful yet doubtful tone, "I wish I could wear a dress like that ..."

I don't think she knew I'd heard her. It struck a chord in my heart. I knew how she felt. That intense need to feel beautiful and happy with who I am. I think we've all felt that way at one time or another.

Sue disappeared into the store, but I really wanted to run after her and give her a hug. I wanted to tell her, "You can wear the dress. You are worthy. You are beautiful. You have everything you need to succeed. You just need to see what you want and decide what you're going to do to get there. You need to choose yourself." We all need to choose ourselves.

The crazy thing is that becoming the best you isn't just about your battle to become your fittest self physically. It's a mental game as much as a physical one and it's all connected — physical health, mental health, and spiritual— just as my chiropractor said. Once you get all those areas going in the right direction you are already on your way to a better you.

I Did It. You Can Too.

You can achieve anything you want if only you start. That's the true heart of this book. The Chinese poet and philosopher Lao-tzu said, "A journey of a thousand

miles begins with a single step.”

Are you ready to take that first step?

In the next chapter, you’ll find creative ideas and projects to get you started on your journey. I’ll share with you how changing my mindset and habits helped me change my life and how doing the same will help you become your best self as well.