PLANT-POWERED JOURNAL

Writing Tools to Unleash Your Healthiest, Most Authentic Self



Angela Crawford, Ph.D.

Second Edition

How journaling transformed my vegan journey

One of the most meaningful experiences of my life was becoming vegan. I started on this path after seeing a program that opened my eyes to the realities of industrialized animal agriculture. This led me to read every book I could about veg living. Over time, I discovered the health, ethical, and environmental benefits of leaving animals off my plate and choosing plants instead. On my veg journey, I discovered a sense of peace in aligning with my deepest values, along with improved health, fulfillment, purpose, and mind-body-spirit well-being.

At the same time, this journey was not without challenges. Early on my vegan path, I was struggling emotionally with all that I had learned about the impacts of factory farming – on animals, workers, human health, and the planet. I was in shock about what I had discovered – and disillusioned that others around me couldn't see what was now so obvious to me. I also felt out of place in social situations where animal foods dominated the menu. At moments, I found myself wanting to return to what was familiar and socially accepted, just because it seemed easier - even though I was fully committed to veganism.

Turning to my journal was a healing salve and guiding light that saw me through these initial struggles. I wrote about my feelings, challenges, discoveries, and insights. I explored new ways to handle social situations, while honoring my vegan values. Writing in my journal not only kept me sane, it also reminded me of my WHY for change when my commitment faltered. It showed me which approaches and patterns were working or not working for me, and it guided me to new, creative solutions.

I've found journaling to be incredibly helpful throughout my life – through all kinds of changes, transitions, losses, and accomplishments. It is such a powerful way to connect with yourself, live more authentically, accomplish goals, heal from emotional trauma, and overcome challenges. Not only have I found journaling personally beneficial, I've frequently recommended it to clients and students.

Because journaling is so accessible, and yet so healing and transforming, I wanted to share some writing tools to support YOU on your plant-powered journey.

Who is this e-book for?

- You are **veg-curious** and considering a plant-based lifestyle. This e-book offers suggestions for drawing on the power of journaling to connect you with your motivations for change.
- You are in the process of **transitioning to a plant-based lifestyle.** This e-book provides insights and writing prompts to empower you, track your progress, and connect with your inner guidance to make the shift in the ways that work best for you.
- You are already **plant-based, vegetarian, or vegan**, and you want to be as healthy as possible and thrive emotionally. This e-book offers writing prompts that help you connect with yourself and your inner wisdom to discover insights that reveal your healthiest, most authentic, and impactful self.

What is journaling?

In general, journaling is a process of writing out our feelings, thoughts, concerns, questions, and insights. Regular journaling has been shown by research to improve emotional and physical health. There are many different approaches to journaling, which are described below. But first, let's review some of the mind-body-spirit benefits.

What are the benefits of journaling?

- Decreased anxiety and depression
- Improved coping with stress
- Improved emotional well-being
- Decreased ruminative thoughts
- Decreased PTSD symptoms
- Improved physical health
- Decreased doctor visits
- Decreased blood pressure
- Improved immune functioning
- Decreased work absenteeism

How does journaling help?

- Releases emotions
- Facilitates mental and emotional processing
- Helps to make sense of significant events
- Reorganizes inner narratives, creating more adaptive beliefs
- Gives space from negative thoughts
- Helps gain clarity about next steps to take
- Self-awareness and self-discovery

Journaling Approaches

There are many different types of journaling. Let's review some helpful techniques and approaches you can consider.

Tracking Progress. If you are seeking to change eating patterns, nutritional intake, physical activity, or health, it can be invaluable to track relevant behaviors and outcomes for a period of time – for 1 week, 4 weeks, 8 weeks, or longer. This gives incredible insight into your current eating and lifestyle patterns, and how changes in diet, exercise, or other lifestyle practices impact your physical and emotional well-being. You may discover that certain foods or activities negatively impact your symptoms or well-being, or you may uncover sabotaging patterns you had not previously recognized. You'll also see which lifestyle changes create positive change. Health and fitness apps such as Fitbit, Apple Health, and Google Fit can be helpful tracking resources, or you can simply keep a written log.

Expressive Writing (see *Opening Up* by James Pennebaker, Ph.D.) – There has been considerable research showing that expressive writing can improve physical and emotional health. This type of journaling typically involves writing for 15 to 20 minutes about an emotionally significant, stressful, or traumatic experience. While writing, express your feelings and thoughts; how this experience affects your relationships and other aspects of your life; insights and learning; and what you would like to see happen. Notice how you feel afterward. You may feel temporary distress as you express your feelings. However, most people report relief and clarity after writing for a few days. This type of journaling can be an ongoing practice or used as needed.

Morning Pages – Julia Cameron, author of *The Artist's Way*, recommends writing three pages each morning. This writing is meant to be hand-written, stream-of-consciousness, and not to be edited or critiqued. Being consistent with Morning Pages opens up creativity, increases connection with the Self, and improves emotional well-being. Several of my friends and colleagues swear by this process for gaining greater insight, creativity, and self-awareness.

Deep Soul Writing (from *Writing Down Your Soul* by Janet Conner). This approach was recommended to me by a coach when I was going through a major life transition. It's been my go-to journaling approach ever since. In this approach, you write journal entries to your Higher Power or your Higher Self – expressing your thoughts and feelings, asking questions about issues that trouble you, seeking guidance, and writing down the insights and responses you receive. An important aspect of this approach is intentionality – setting the intention to connect with the Divine, your Soul, or Higher Wisdom through your writing. This approach for connecting to Higher Wisdom has been a guiding light through turbulent times.

Three Blessings Exercise (from *Flourish: A Visionary New Understanding of Happiness and Well-Being* by Martin Seligman, Ph.D.) Write about three things that went well today and why they went well. Research finds emotional and physical benefits from writing down the positives in our lives, and this is further accentuated when we take a moment to connect with how and why these positive experiences have occurred.

Guided Journaling - This involves responding to prompts asking about your feelings, thoughts, perspectives, concerns, and desires. You can find guided journals on a variety of topics. Below, I offer some guided journaling questions for thriving on your plant-powered journey.

Reflection Questions

Of the journaling approaches described above, which are most appealing to you?

Are you willing to commit to regular writing over the next 3-4 weeks?

Research suggests that journaling consistently for 30+ days can contribute to positive change as this sustained exploration allows the brain to forge new neural connections.

How does journaling help on the plant-based/vegan journey?

Journaling can be a life-changing tool that helps to identify and release feelings, reach greater self-awareness, get through tough times, and gain new insights. When I previously worked as a therapist, it was a tool that I commonly "prescribed" to my clients, who found great benefit, including increased self-awareness, more authenticity, healing from stress and trauma, and improved emotional and physical well-being.

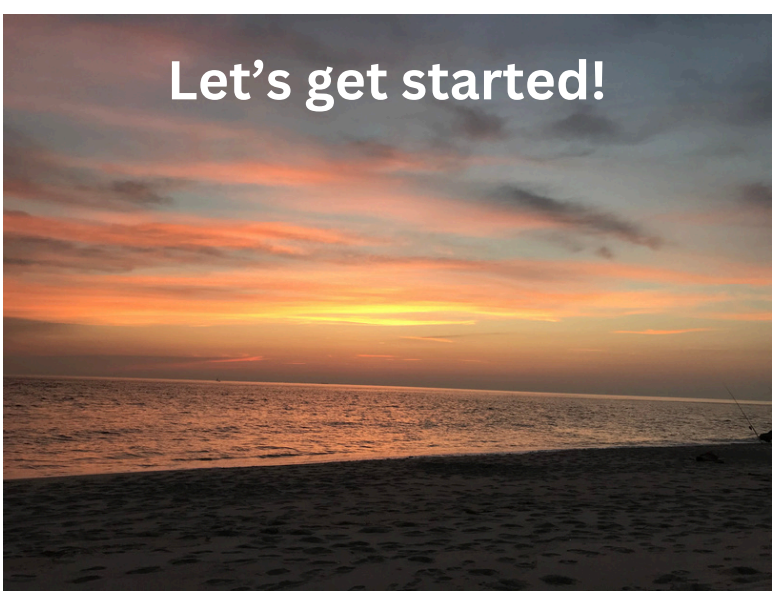
Now as a vegan educator and author, I find that journaling also helps to thrive on the path to a plant-based lifestyle. Here are some of the ways it can help:

- Track and celebrate progress toward your goals
- Recognize obstacles, and explore how to get back on track if you have a setback
- Express and process the range of feelings that come up along your vegan journey
- Write about emotional and social challenges, how you handled them, and what you might do differently in the future
- Write about your discoveries and all the positives that come with your new lifestyle
- Document your change journey – this helps to connect with your resilience and commitment
- Seek guidance from your Inner Wisdom for challenges or questions you are wrestling with
- Get more in touch with your truest, most authentic Self

Are you ready to give it a try? Let's dive into some journaling prompts you can use to get started.

Journaling Prompts to Unleash Your Healthiest, Most Authentic Self

The following questions are designed to help you connect with your values, feelings, visions, and desires. Some are drawn from my book, ***The Vegan Transformation***. Respond to the questions that most resonate. You can print out this booklet or write in your own journal or notebook.



1. Why have you chosen to move toward a plant-based / vegan lifestyle?

2. What benefits have you noticed so far (e.g., physically, mentally, emotionally, or spiritually?)

3. What do you find challenging about adopting or living a plant-based lifestyle? How might you address any challenges or obstacles?

4. What are your deepest values? What matters most to you? How does veganism or plant-based living reflect your values?

5. What brings you a sense of purpose? Are there any steps you would like to take to feel more aligned with your purpose? How does vegan or plant-based living fuel your sense of purpose?

6. What would an ideal day look like if you were your healthiest and most authentic self? What activities would you do, how would you feel, and who would you spend time with? What would you eliminate from your life, and what would you add? What‘s one step you can take toward this vision?

7. When have you listened to your inner guidance and found greater insight or clarity about something important to you? Write about what happened and how you felt. How can you draw on your inner guidance to help with any challenges you are facing now?

AFTER COMPLETING THESE REFLECTIONS, WHAT NEXT STEPS DO YOU FEEL CALLED TO TAKE?

After exploring the benefits of journaling, and trying out some reflective writing, I hope you are inspired to continue this powerful practice on your journey to greater health and fulfillment. If you would like further information or support, below are some suggestions.

STEPS FOR GOING DEEPER

1. Commit to journaling daily (or at least a few times per week) – using the approach that most appeals to you. Notice any insights or personal growth that occurs over the course of your writing.
2. .Check out one or two of the suggested books and articles below.
3. For more resources on thriving in mind-body-spirit with a plant-powered, vegan lifestyle, I invite you to sign up for my **newsletter**, where I share blog articles, new releases from my **YouTube channel** and periodically offer workshops and classes.

May your plant-powered journey bring you authentic fulfillment. And may you be fueled by the power of journaling to unleash your healthiest and most authentic Self.

Resources

Books:

- *Opening Up By Writing it Down: How Expressive Writing Improves Health and Eases Emotional Pain* by James W. Pennebaker and Joshua M. Smyth, 2016
- *Writing Down Your Soul: How to Activate and Listen to the Extraordinary Voice Within* by Janet Conner, 2008
- *The Artist's Way: A Spiritual Path to Higher Creativity* by Julia Cameron
- *Plant-Positive Journal* by Kate Galli, https://strongbodygreenplanet.com/
- *The Vegan Transformation* by Angela Crawford, Ph.D.

Articles:

- Jeremy Sutton, May 2018, https://positivepsychology.com/benefits-of-journaling/
- Healthline, https://www.healthline.com/health/benefits-of-journaling
- Karen Baikie and Kay Wilhelm, Jan. 2018, https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/advances-in-psychiatric-treatment/article/emotional-and-physical-health-benefits-of-expressive-writing/ED2976A61F5DE56B46F07A1CE9EA9F9F

About the Author

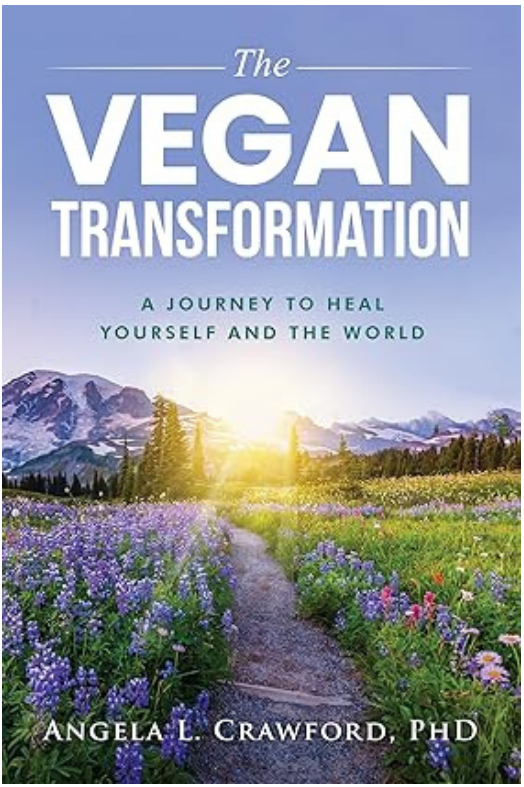
Angela Crawford, Ph.D. is a psychologist, author, and vegan educator. She is passionate about the benefits of plant-powered living for physical and emotional well-being, compassion for all sentient beings, and caring for the planet. She is the award-winning author of *The Vegan Transformation: A Journey to Heal Yourself and the World* (Lantern, 2025).

Dr. Crawford writes, teaches, and offers programs on thriving emotionally and socially with a vegan lifestyle. She holds certifications in Plant-Based Nutrition, as a Master Vegan Lifestyle Coach and Educator, and Transformational Coach. She has a doctorate in Clinical Psychology and previously worked as a psychotherapist for 25 years.

Follow Dr. Crawford through her website, **www.angelacrawfordphd.com** or her **YouTube channel**.

Other resources:

Vegan Emotional Resilience Toolkit
Guided meditations
Newsletter
Resources for Plant-Powered Living
***The Vegan Transformation* book**



[*The Vegan Transformation*]

(Lantern Publishing & Media, 2025)

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