This journal belongs to
Getting started

Expressing yourself can bring you to a richer understanding of yourself. We don't always know how we feel, what we would like or who we should be in a situation. Coming to our feelings, likes and identity can take time. And your feelings, likes and other aspects of who you are can and will change. Therefore, journaling is not something to perfect, but something to practice. In time, your scribblings will fall into their own current. The hardest part can be making it over the first hump and getting started. This journal has written and visual components that may help with that. They can be used as prompts or trigger points for reflection or creativity. Here are a few suggestions on how to start your pen moving:

- Turn to any page and choose a single word that stands out for you. Write it somewhere on a page, and then surround it with memories, words or feelings you associate with it.

- Select a phrase at random. Argue for it and against it. Can you think of an example from your own experience when it was true? Can you think of a time when it was false? Is there a truth that encompasses both positions?

- Open the journal to one of the images. Helena Nelson-Reed's artwork is full of symbology. Find a symbol you aren't familiar with or don't know the meaning of. Copy that or another symbol and colour it in whatever hues you choose. Repeat the drawing in different colours or sizes and see where it takes you.

- Write a short story, poem or memory to match one of the images.

- Make lists. Holiday destinations, embarrassing moments, top qualities, people you hope to grow closer to, things you would like to try … anything at all.

- Have a dialogue with your pens. For example, if you are in two minds about something, make a black pen take one side and a blue pen the other. You might ascribe aspects of yourself to different pens and have a conversation with your inner child, rebel or sage.

- Record your dreams, your card readings or your meditations.

- Engage your senses. I bet you can quickly recall the smell of a rainforest or the taste of the ocean. We are always hearing, seeing, touching, smelling and tasting the world around us, but are not always conscious of it. What does driving your car taste like? What does checking your emails smell like? Does folding the laundry have a melody? What colour was a discussion? What flavour is a memory?

- Look for new ways to tell past stories.

Our Sacred Earth is a healer, a teacher and a muse. Consciously connecting to this tremendous resource can awaken us to deeper truths and bring us closer to divinity. Just being in nature is enough to deepen our humility, gratitude and awe. Communing with our living planet can be transformative.

Through the wisdom, love and sanctity of Earth, the dull, monotony of the mundane can transform into a rich chorus of splendour. From the colour and form of the artwork, to the beat and sound of the text, this journal is here to expand your experience of our planet and yourself as divinely wise and loving beings. It comes with the reminder that we are all connected. What Earth knows, you can know. What you know, the world can know.

Enjoy!

Leela
Within the garden of your heart a beautiful soul exists
that beautiful soul is you

This moment
with no beginning or end
no point of entry

no leaving
coming or going
just uncontainable life

unpredictable
like these words
trying to express the inexpressible

like light flickering through clouds of illusion
like a flame glowing inside us
and every leaf and blade of grass

for we are all flames of the sacred fire
burning our way through time
and all that lies beyond it

we are this most sacred Earth
and air
and water

the faint memory
of an ancient sun
that still glows inside us

and crimson leaves
falling through
gold light

— Toni Carmine Salerno
“If we wish to understand the nature of the universe, we have an inner hidden advantage: we are ourselves little portions of the universe and so carry the answer within us.”

— Jacques Boivin