
my
next...
in MS™
journal
NextInMS.com

Confidence grows one honest moment, one brave choice, and one journal page at a time.

An MS diagnosis is a big deal! It's a lot to process and a lot to think about.

So take a moment. Take a breath. And let it out.

Then get it all out in this journal. **Be honest. Be messy. Be real.** This is your place for self-reflection. So take as much time—and as many pages—as you need.

In the true spirit of Next In MS, it's time to have honest conversations with yourself. That's what journaling is for. It can also be the first step toward having the honest conversations you need to have with others—in your life, on your care team, and in your future.

SO LET'S GO THERE.

LET'S GO JOURNALING.

MS, multiple sclerosis.

Start by
doing what's necessary;
then do what's possible;
and suddenly you're doing
the impossible.

DATE

Getting **started**

Your diagnosis is a chapter of your story—not the title of your life.
So, start where you are, use what you have, do what you can.
Here are your first thought starters to get this journal journaling!

What's the scariest thing for you right now?

What questions have you been afraid to ask up until now?

What parts of your story remain unchanged? What parts do you hope to write next?

NOTES AND FREE THOUGHTS

Sometimes the smallest step in the right direction **ends up being the biggest step of your life.**

DATE

Embracing **change**

Some days, courage is simply showing up for yourself.
And being honest about it.

What is one thing you did today that took courage, even if no one else noticed?

What is one possibility you're willing to stay open to this week?

Are you feeling any symptoms that you didn't expect?

Is there anything you need to research or ask your care team about?

NOTES AND FREE THOUGHTS

You are not your symptoms.

You are your future.

DATE

Telling people & **building a team**

There is strength in asking for help and wisdom in accepting it.
Telling other people about your MS diagnosis can be stressful. Asking for help can be even harder. Use this space to think through who you plan to tell and how.

Who will you tell first? And how will you explain it differently to your friends, family, and more?

After you reveal your diagnosis, what else do you want them to know? What support would you like: A shoulder to lean on and a sympathetic ear? A ride to your next appointment? Someone to play cards and laugh with? Or maybe just some personal space and time alone?

Who's on your healthcare team? Who's your main point of contact? Who are your specialists and when should you see them? In addition to a list of names and numbers, ask yourself this question and then journal about it: "What does my ideal care team look like, and who's the first person I'll reach out to?"

Ask your care team for advice communicating the medical details to friends and family if you want to share. Write your notes here:

It does not matter how slowly you go as long as you do not stop.

DATE

Persevering & moving ahead

The person you were before MS still lives within you—and so does the person you're becoming.

Think about where you are and where you want to go. Write your reflection on these thoughts: Healing isn't about becoming who you were. It's about discovering who you will be.

What are 3 things your body helped you experience today/this week, no matter how small?

What are 3 things you want your body to help you experience tomorrow/next week?

Thinking of the above, what are 3 (or more) things you need to follow up with your provider about to improve your current situation and pursue your goals?

NOTES AND FREE THOUGHTS

The future may look
different than you imagined,
but it can still be full
of purpose, joy,
and possibility.

DATE

Focusing on the joy

Find more room for what makes you feel like you, and enjoy every moment big and small.

What brings you joy? And what are your goals for even more joy? List things you still enjoy and things you still want to do (travel, hobbies, career goals, relationships).

Note one small step toward each goal. Write about: What parts of my life do I want to protect and grow?

Dream big and write it all down. Then share what you want to with your loved ones and work with your care team to achieve what's possible.

NOTES AND FREE THOUGHTS

The story doesn't end if you keep on writing.
Every page you write is proof that your story is still unfolding.

Want even more reflection and journaling ideas?

Inspirational quotes are meant to inspire!

Feel free to go back and revisit each quote in this journal. Then try writing:

- What this means to me right now. What rings true? What feels hard to believe?
- One small action I can take this week that matches this idea. How can I live it in a small way?
- One way I'm already stronger or more aware because of living with MS

Getting to the last page is not the end of this journal. From time to time, look back at all your answers and consider how they've changed. Then write new answers that reflect your newer reality and what your "best next" could be.

For more ideas and inspiration, visit:

- Newly Diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis
- Newly Diagnosed Checklist

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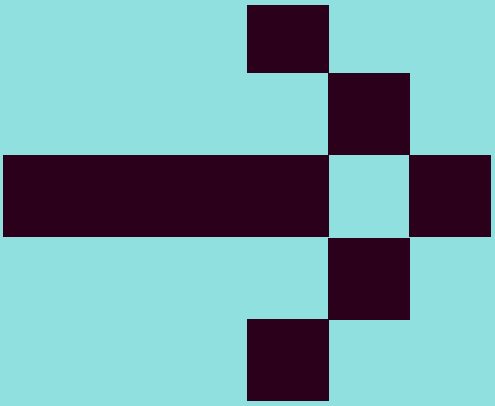

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