

# Daily Journal

Excerpt from

*Beauty and the Yeast Beast: from Fat to Fairy Tale*

by Francine Hemway

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**1999**



**2006**



**2007**

# How To Use This Journal

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Numerous books have been written about the benefits to journaling and how to journal. Later, you may wish to investigate journal writing further. For the purposes of this journal, the pages are set up simply with very little structure; this allows you the freedom to structure your entries to suit your individuality.

Do put the date on each page. Entering your weight is optional; if putting the numbers in print is traumatic for you, don't do it at first. Some people like to weight themselves every day, some once a week. All kind of advice is available on this: how often to weigh yourself, and when, and under what conditions, and most of it is conflicting. Do what works for you.

I believe that one should weight one's self daily, naked or in a night gown or whatever you chose, at about the same time of day. I weigh myself in the morning after I've had my coffee. It doesn't matter when you weigh yourself, but it does matter that you weigh yourself about the same time every day. When I did Weight Watchers, I would always go to meetings first and eat dinner afterwards; what can I say, I was 14 and thought that not eating first made a difference. When you weigh yourself daily, you need to keep a mental average in your head, as not only do daily weights fluctuate, but weights taken at different times of the day do as well. I find I get a more accurate picture – and an earlier wake up call if I'm going too far – when I keep that in my head rather than take the one measurement once a week.

Strengths and weaknesses are vague categories you can utilize to record where you're feeling successful and where you're feeling like you are not doing as well. Strengths are things like passed up dessert, protein spread evenly throughout the day, survived Aunt Tillie's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday party without sharing her cake; you can use this to record whatever information will be helpful to you to keep your resolve strong, and to acknowledge your successes.

Weaknesses can be recordings of slips – oops: that piece of cheesecake just got me; it can be times of the day you notice you have more difficulty. It can record thoughts about yourself, others, the program, etc. The list of uses for the journal is endless and is meant to be personalized. Make this journal yours; make it work for you. You will be directed throughout the program to review your journal for information; the more you put into your journal, the more you will get from it later.

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Affirmations are statements you repeat to yourself until they become unconscious thoughts. Throughout the journal are scattered suggested affirmations; they appear in italics: *I will not let the Yeast Beast win today*. We internal chatter all the time. Direct this chatter into supportive messages to yourself. This may seem forced at first, but it becomes easier.

Saying something positive to yourself in front of the mirror five or six times each morning will re-train your thought pattern about your body and weight loss. Several affirmations are given in the quotes at the end of various journal pages. You can use these, or make up your own. Affirmations are not given for every day, but do try to spend five minutes in the mirror each morning repeating these and other phrases to yourself – out loud if you can. (Go ahead; run the water).

One note about affirmations: the mind does not know what is true and what is not, and it believes what you tell it. If you repeat to yourself mentally that you are fat and it's never going to get any better, your mind will internalize this information and actually work to make it so. If you feed your mind one-liners about getting thin, getting healthy, not needing so overeat, etc. your mind will work to make those things reality.

Some of my favorites are *I don't need much food at a time to be satisfied. I graze throughout the day because my body performs optimally on small amounts ingested frequently. The Yeast Beast stole much of my life; I am in charge of my life now, not the Beast*. My all time favorite and the hardest one sometimes, is *I deserve to be healthy and fit*. Don't be afraid to make up your own; don't be afraid to make them big statements; when I was at 165 pounds, I started telling myself, *I only weighted 135 and it is easy to choose food types and quantities to maintain that weight*. Of course, I still weighted 160. But I kept saying it, and eventually did weigh 135.

You might make note of any compliments you receive, thoughts about yourself that you noticed (positive and negative), and reactions to various situations. Experiment with what you write, and don't worry if it seems silly or boring. What you write today will provide insight tomorrow, no matter how unimpressive the information seems on the day written. Let your mind flow when you journal.

Try to take ten to twenty minutes for yourself daily in a quiet place to do this journaling. If you have kids, you can get them composition books and let them do their own journals with you; it will entertain them, make them feel like they're doing what you're doing, and give them practice in their writing skills. Who knows – you may have a budding writer in the family!

A word about photos: no one hated having photos taken more than I did. (I still am not thrilled by it and tend to freeze up when confronted with a camera.) I am in almost no family pictures, particularly since I learned about *taking* pictures: the person with the camera is safe from the camera. I became the family photo historian out of self protection.

Take a before picture now. Wear something that fits you now, and don't choose that one dress or pants set that makes you look slimmer; take a hard straight on shot with no tummy holding and no forced posturing. Let the real you get put on film. I kept my before picture safe, but well hidden, for years.

Try to get someone to take your picture from front, back and side. We may not *see* what the mirror reflects, but we surely don't see what others see behind us!

Take new photos whenever you see noticeable differences; I suggest you put the date on each picture, and, if you're not shy about it, the current weight. Make up an alphabet code if you have to, or simply write minus 3 (whatever number) pounds; you can always figure it out from that later! Keep the photos with your journal (you can glue an envelope inside the back cover). These will be of great help when resolve wanes, or on days the Yeast Beast is bellowing so loudly you're ready to empty the shelves at Dunkin donuts to quiet it!

Make this your journal; no one ever need see it. Do it for *you*.

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