

JOHN BAKER

# Celebrate Recovery<sup>®</sup>

JOURNAL



*Presented to:*

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*From:*

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## ZONDERVAN

*Celebrate Recovery Journal Updated Edition*

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Requests for information should be addressed to:

Zondervan, 3900 Sparks Dr. SE, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49546

ISBN 978-0-310-13623-1

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*Cover design: Brand Navigation*

*Cover photography: 123rf.com*

First Printing May 2017 / Printed in the United States of America



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# INTRODUCTION

BY JOHN BAKER

## *Journaling—Starting a Healthy Habit!*

In Celebrate Recovery we talk about our hurts, hang ups, and habits. We focus on the habits that have affected us and others in a negative way. We discovered that with God's healing grace and working the Celebrate Recovery program we can break the chains that the destructive habits have had on us. As we continue to grow in our recoveries, we also learn that there are some healthy habits that we need to start doing. The following are the positive habits we need to form if we are going to work our program successfully:

- Attending our Celebrate Recovery meetings regularly
- Talking to our sponsors and accountability partners
- Doing a daily inventory
- Getting into God's Word daily
- Having a daily quiet time
- Giving back by serving others

These are all positive habits! The best way to know how we are growing in recovery is to keep a daily journal; a daily record of our interaction with others, our feelings, our victories, and areas that we still need to improve.

Lamentations 3:40 exhorts us to "Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the LORD."

If you haven't used a journal so far in your recovery, I believe you will find this recovery tool a great help! I encourage you to make journaling a daily habit, a daily part of your program.

It has been said that it takes 21 days to form a habit. Commit to giving journaling a three week try. Ask your accountability team to help hold you accountable. By the end of the third week you will discover that this is a necessary and helpful addition to your recovery program!

First Corinthians 10:12 puts it this way: "So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!"



## *How to Get Started Journaling*

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**Y**our journal is not for you to just record a recap of your daily schedule. It's not as much about "what" you did today as much as it is about "how" you did today. Your journal is a tool for you to review and write down your good and bad behaviors and what happened to you today.

In John 3:21 Jesus tells us, "Whoever lives by the truth comes into the light...." Journaling, on a daily basis, helps bring us into the light.

I know for many of you this may be the first experience in writing down your thoughts on a daily basis. It is important to recap your day in written form. Some of you may have trouble getting started. Let me give you three hints that will help you get started putting the ink on the paper:

1. Start out by writing down one thing that you are thankful for from your experiences from the day. Just that one thing will get you started and it will also help you sleep better that night.
2. Ask your accountability partner/sponsor to hold you accountable for writing in your journal every night.
3. This is the one that really works for me! Memorize Galatians 5:22–23, the "fruit of the Spirit": "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control."

Daily ask yourself any of these questions to prompt your writing, starting each question with the word "today":

- How did I show love to others?
- Did I act in an unloving way toward anyone?
- Did others see in me the joy of having a personal relationship with the Lord? If not, why not?

- How was my serenity, my peace? Did anything happen that caused me to lose it? What was my part in it?
- Was I patient? What caused me to lose my patience? Do I owe anyone amends?
- Would anyone say that I was kind/good? In what ways did I act unkind?
- How was my faithfulness? Did I keep my word with everyone?
- How was my gentleness and self-control? Did I lose my temper, speak a harsh or unkind word to someone?

Our goal in recovery is to humbly live each day—in reality, not denial. Through God's guidance, we can learn to make choices about the emotions that affect our thinking and actions. We start to take action—positive action—instead of constant reaction.

We desire to grow daily in our relationship with Jesus Christ and others. Instead of attempting to be in control of every situation and every person we come in contact with, or spinning out of control ourselves, we are starting to exhibit self-control, the way God wants us to be. Remember, self-control under God's control is what we are striving for. Journaling will help us stay on track.

Also, remember to keep your daily inventory, your journaling, balanced. Be sure to include the things that you did right throughout the day. It is important to write down even small victories. The best way to stay balanced is to journal.





## *Conduct a 90-Day Review of Your Journaling*

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Every three months, I get away on a “mini-retreat”! I would encourage you to try it. Bring your journal with you, and pray as you read through the last ninety days of your journal entries. Ask God to show you areas in your life that you can improve on in the next ninety days and celebrate the victories that you have made.

Look for negative patterns, issues that you are continually writing down and having to promptly make amends for—again and again. Share them with your sponsor or accountability partner, and set up an action plan for yourself, with God’s help, to overcome them. With God’s help we can keep our side of the street clean.

You will find “My 90-day Journal Review” sheets starting on page 238.

*“Search me, God, and know my heart;  
test me and know my anxious thoughts.  
See if there is any offensive way in me,  
and lead me in the way everlasting.”*

PSALM 139:23-24

## How to Use Your Prayer Journal

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In the last section of the journal, you will find several pages for you to use as your prayer journal. A prayer journal is simply writing down your prayer requests. It is divided into two sections – “Prayer Request” and “God’s Answer.”

*”Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”*

PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

*”Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for.”*

MATTHEW 7:7 NLT

It is exciting to look back and review your prayer journal and see how faithful God has been in answering your prayers. Just remember, God will answer your prayers according to his purpose and plan for your life.

*”And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.”*

PHILIPPIANS 4:19



## *My Personal Journaling Journey*

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I would like to close the introduction to the Celebrate Recovery Journal by sharing some of the excerpts from my personal journal. These are just some of the “turning points” in my recovery journey. If I had not written them down I may have forgotten their impact on my life. It is my hope and prayer that they will help you see the great benefits in keeping a daily journal.

### *February 14, 1991 — Made my amends to my wife, Cheryl*

I asked Cheryl to meet me for lunch today. I simply told her that she was not responsible for my drinking, and I was truly sorry for all the pain and heartache that I had caused in her life. I told her that I still loved her, and that if I could ever do anything for her—anything—all she had to do was ask. She graciously accepted my amends. I’m not sure what God has planned for us; however, we will be going on the journey together.

### *November 21, 1991 — First meeting of Celebrate Recovery at Saddleback*

“WOW! Forty-three brave people came tonight. The band was great and the four small groups went well. Thank you, God. I was very nervous. I would like to say it was all the excitement, but I was filled with a lot of old fears and self-doubt. When I gave the talk in the large group time, my mouth was so dry that I could hardly talk. But we made it. The ministry is launched. After all we have been through, it’s great that Cheryl and I can serve God together. I pray that God brings everyone back next week. I still can’t believe or understand “why” God chose me to start “Celebrate Recovery.”

### *December 23, 1991 — Argument with Laura, my daughter*

“I blew it today. My daughter wanted to have her boyfriend join us for Christmas dinner. I said that I wanted our first Christmas that we were back together as a family to just be the four of us. We got into an argument. I now see that I was being selfish. I did not consider her feelings and my old friend ‘pride’ wouldn’t let me back down. Just when I think that I’m growing in my recovery, I take a giant step backwards. I owe Laura an amends. God help me stop slipping back to my old behaviors.”

Note: I learned from my journal that for years I couldn't admit when I was wrong. I couldn't admit my mistakes. My refusal to offer amends blocked all my relationships, especially with my family. As I grew and matured in the Word and recovery, I discovered that I had to own my mistakes and take responsibility for my actions. I couldn't do that if I didn't take time daily to journal and allow God to show me where I missed the mark.

### *October 25, 2000 — My Dad's death*

"What I remember most about my Dad was his gentleness. He was a true gentleman. He was soft-spoken and very kind. He loved the Lord and the Word. When I was growing up, he would leave for work hours before my Mom and I got up. He would always have a hand-written Bible verse waiting for us to read at breakfast. He taught me, he didn't just tell me, how to live a Christ-centered life. He taught me, he didn't tell me, how to love your wife and children.

Through all the years that I struggled with my sin-addiction to alcohol, and through all the pain and heartache I caused, he never gave up on me. He truly showed me unconditional love. I will miss my model, my friend, my dad. But he was more than ready to go home. I thank God that he didn't have to suffer."

### *March 3, 2003 — Meeting with President Bush*

"This has been a day that I will never forget! To think that four other recovery leaders and I would ever have a chance to sit down and share for 40 minutes with the President of the United States! What a gentleman. He really cares about those struggling with a hurt, hang up, or habit. In his speech after our meeting, he said, 'Then there's John Baker, the founder of Celebrate Recovery. Big John is with us.... He and I shared something in common.... We used to drink too much. And our hearts changed. And then we quit. That is a tried-and-true formula.'"

### *June 18, 2004 — Maggie, our first grandchild's birth*

"Thank you God! What a gift. She's beautiful! Johnny and Jeni are going to be great parents. She's healthy and definitely a 'Maggie'. I pray that she has a life full of joy and peace, and that she loves and grows closer to her parents and You more every day. Please protect her and bless her. At Celebrate Recovery tonight, I was showing off her pictures.

Special Note: God blessed me with a second granddaughter, Chloe, who was born March 26, 2006.

One of my greatest joys is to know that my granddaughters will never see their Grandpa take a drink of alcohol. One of my greatest sorrows is that my kids saw me drink way too much."



## *Key Verses for Journaling*

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### LAMENTATIONS 3:40

Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the LORD.

### 1 CORINTHIANS 10:12

So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall!

### JOHN 3:21

But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what they have done has been done in the sight of God.

### GALATIANS 5:22-23

The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control...

### PSALM 139:23-24

Search me, God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

### PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

### MATTHEW 7:7 NLT

Keep on asking, and you will receive what you ask for.

### PHILIPPIANS 4:19

And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of his glory in Christ Jesus.

# CELEBRATE RECOVERY'S EIGHT RECOVERY PRINCIPLES BASED ON THE BEATITUDES

BY PASTOR RICK WARREN

1. Realize I'm not God. I admit that I am powerless to control my tendency to do the wrong thing and that my life is unmanageable.

Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor.

2. Earnestly believe that God exists, that I matter to Him, and that He has the power to help me recover.

Happy are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

3. Consciously choose to commit all my life and will to Christ's care and control.

Happy are the meek.

4. Openly examine and confess my faults to myself, to God, and to someone I trust.

Happy are the pure in heart.

5. Voluntarily submit to every change God wants to make in my life and humbly ask Him to remove my character defects.

Happy are those whose greatest desire is to do what God requires.

6. Evaluate all my relationships. Offer forgiveness to those who have hurt me and make amends for harm I've done to others, except when to do so would harm them or others.

Happy are the merciful. Happy are the peacemakers.

7. Reserve a daily time with God for self-examination, Bible reading, and prayer in order to know God and His will for my life and to gain the power to follow His will.
8. Yield myself to God to be used to bring this Good News to others, both by my example and by my words

Happy are those who are persecuted because they do what God requires.



## TWELVE STEPS AND THEIR BIBLICAL COMPARISONS<sup>1</sup>

1. We admitted we were powerless over our addictions and compulsive behaviors. That our lives had become unmanageable.

*"For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out." (Romans 7:18)*

2. Came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.

*"For it is God who works in you to will and to act in order to fulfill his good purpose." (Philippians 2:13)*

3. Made a decision to turn our lives and our wills over to the care of God.

*"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship." (Romans 12:1)*

4. Made a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

*"Let us examine our ways and test them, and let us return to the LORD." (Lamentations 3:40)*

5. Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

*"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed." (James 5:16)*

6. Were entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.

*"Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up." (James 4:10)*

7. Humbly asked Him to remove all our shortcomings.

*“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)*

8. Made a list of all persons we had harmed and became willing to make amends to them all.

*“Do to others as you would have them do to you.” (Luke 6:31)*

9. Made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

*“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.” (Matthew 5:23–24)*

10. Continued to take personal inventory and when we were wrong, promptly admitted it.

*“So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don’t fall!” (1 Corinthians 10:12)*

11. Sought through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and power to carry that out.

*“Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly.” (Colossians 3:16)*

12. Having had a spiritual experience as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and practice these principles in all our affairs.

*“Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted.” (Galatians 6:1)*

1. Throughout this material, you will notice several references to the Christ-centered 12 Steps. Our prayer is that Celebrate Recovery will create a bridge to the millions of people who are familiar with the secular 12 Steps (I acknowledge the use of some material from the 12 Suggested Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous) and in so doing, introduce them to the one and only true Higher Power, Jesus Christ. Once they begin that relationship, asking Christ into their hearts as Lord and Savior, true healing and recovery can begin!

# PRAYER FOR SERENITY

God, grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change,  
the courage to change the things I can,  
and the wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time,  
enjoying one moment at a time;  
accepting hardship as a pathway to peace;  
taking, as Jesus did,  
this sinful world as it is,  
not as I would have it;  
trusting that You will make all things right  
if I surrender to Your will;  
so that I may be reasonably happy in this life  
and supremely happy with You forever in the next.

Amen.

REINHOLD NIEBUHR



# PRINCIPLE I



REALIZE I'M NOT GOD. I ADMIT THAT I AM  
POWERLESS TO CONTROL MY TENDENCY TO  
DO THE WRONG THING AND THAT MY  
LIFE IS UNMANAGEABLE.

*Happy are those who know they are spiritually poor.*

MATTHEW 5:3 GNT

Dear God, Your Word tells me that I can't heal my hurts, hang-ups, and habits by just saying that they are not there. Help me! Parts of my life, or all of my life, are out of control. I now know that I cannot "fix" myself. It seems the harder that I try to do the right thing, the more I struggle. Lord, I want to step out of my denial and into the truth. I pray for You to show me the way. In Your Son's name, amen.



**PRINCIPLE I** ~ Realize I'm not God. I admit that I am powerless to control my tendency to do the wrong thing and that my life is unmanageable.

*For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature.  
For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out.*

## ROMANS 7:18

A notebook page with horizontal blue lines. On the right side, there is a purple rectangular box containing the text "You can't heal a wound by saying it's not there!" in a cursive font, and "JEREMIAH 6:14 TLB" in a sans-serif font below it.



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*They promise them freedom  
while they themselves are  
slaves of destructive habits—  
for we are slaves of anything  
that has conquered us.*

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2 PETER 2:19 GNT



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**PRINCIPLE 1** ~ Realize I'm not God. I admit that I am powerless to control my tendency to do the wrong thing and that my life is unmanageable.

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*They cried to the Lord in their troubles, and he rescued them! He led them from the darkness and shadow of death and snapped their chains.*

PSALM 107:13–14 TLB

*God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. If we claim to have fellowship with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth.*

*But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.*

1 JOHN 1:5–7

*Stop lying to each other;  
tell the truth, for we are  
parts of each other and when  
we lie to each other we are  
hurting ourselves.*

EPHESIANS 4:25 TLB

[illegible]

JEREMIAH 30:17 TLB





*Jesus said, "Whatever is covered up will be uncovered, and every secret will be made known. So then, whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in broad daylight."*

LUKE 12:2–3 GNT

*Jesus said, "Whatever is covered up will be uncovered, and every secret will be made known. So then, whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in broad daylight."*

LUKE 12:2–3 GNT

*Jesus said, "So don't be  
anxious about tomorrow.  
God will take care of your  
tomorrow too. Live one day  
at a time."*

MATTHEW 6:34 TLB

*Jesus said, "So don't be  
anxious about tomorrow.  
God will take care of your  
tomorrow too. Live one day  
at a time."*

MATTHEW 6:34 TLB

[illegible]

**PRINCIPLE I** ~ Realize I'm not God. I admit that I am powerless to control my tendency to do the wrong thing and that my life is unmanageable.

*For light is capable of “showing up” everything for what it really is. It is even possible (after all, it happened to you!) for light to turn the thing it shines upon into light also.*

EPHESIANS 5:13–14 PHILLIPS



*Continue to love each other  
with true brotherly love.  
Don't forget to be kind to  
strangers, for some who have  
done this have entertained  
angels without realizing it!*

*Jesus said, "My purpose is to  
give life in all its fullness."*

JOHN 10:10 TLB

[illegible]

LUKE 17:33 TLB



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**PRINCIPLE I** ~ Realize I'm not God. I admit that I am powerless to control my tendency to do the wrong thing and that my life is unmanageable.

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*I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from his love. Death can't, and life can't. The angels won't, and all the powers of hell itself cannot keep God's love away.... Nothing will ever be able to separate us from the love of God demonstrated by our Lord Jesus Christ when he died for us.*

ROMANS 8:38–39 TLB

*Pity me, O Lord, for I am weak. Heal me, for my body is sick, and I am upset and disturbed. My mind is filled with apprehension and with gloom.*

PSALM 6:2–3 TLB

[illegible]

*Jesus said, “You cannot be a  
slave of two masters; you will  
hate one and love the other;  
you will be loyal to one and  
despise the other.”*

MATTHEW 6:24 GNT

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**PRINCIPLE I** ~ Realize I'm not God. I admit that I am powerless to control my tendency to do the wrong thing and that my life is unmanageable.

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*Jesus said, "With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible."*  
MATTHEW 19:26



*If you wait for perfect  
conditions, you will never  
get anything done.*

*My heart is troubled and  
restless. Waves of affliction  
have come upon me.*

JOB 30:27 TLB

*My heart is troubled and  
restless. Waves of affliction  
have come upon me.*

JOB 30:27 TLB

*My heart is troubled and  
restless. Waves of affliction  
have come upon me.*

JOB 30:27 TLB







*My good days are in the past.  
My hopes have disappeared.  
My heart's desires are broken.*

*I am worn out with pain;  
every night my pillow is  
wet with tears. My eyes are  
growing old and dim with  
grief because of all  
my enemies.*

PSALM 6:6–7 TLB

*I am worn out with pain;  
every night my pillow is  
wet with tears. My eyes are  
growing old and dim with  
grief because of all  
my enemies.*

PSALM 6:6–7 TLB

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.