## 3 Quick and Easy Ways to Generate Story Ideas & 5 Benefits of Keeping a Personal Journal

There are many ways you can generate ideas you can use for your stories, articles and other creative pieces. Start with the three ways given below:

1. Put Your 5 Senses to Work

A simple but effective way to generate fresh ideas from a single concept, idea or object is to describe or illustrate it using the 5 senses -- sight, smell, touch, taste, sound.

For you to do: Generate 5 specific images or concrete examples (one example for each sense) for the following:

•    Vindication (what's the smell of vindication? how does it taste? how does it sound? what does it look like? how does it feel?)

•    hesitation

•    celebration

2. Take Advantage of Your Conflicts

Conflict is a part of life. It's also a source of creativity. You only need to look at yourself and examine your experiences to come up with ideas based on conflicts.

For you to do: What's stopping you from doing something? Who is in the way of you getting what you want? What's stopping you from taking a career leap? Brainstorm for conflicts in your life and come up with at least 15 in your list.

3. Its OK to Call People Names

Generate nicknames or terms that capture the lifestyles, attitudes or characteristics of certain groups of people.

For example, the nicknames I came up for the kind of people I encountered on the bus when I used to commute to work and back were: space-hog, slumped, fidgeted and refined. The terms described how the people on the bus behaved as they sat. [They were useful because I was able to avoid the space-hogs and the forgetters when choosing a seat. Sitting beside a slumped was all right, since most slumbers kept their slumps within their space ;o)]

For you to do: Generate nicknames or terms for the following groups of people:

•    cashiers

•    waiters

•    teachers

•    employees

•    actors

Begin using these 3 simple ways of generating ideas today. Before long, you'll be churning out one idea after another with ease. That's creativity at work!

5 Benefits of Keeping a Personal Journal

Everyone who has kept a personal journal knows that writing is a therapeutic process that helps integrate seemingly unconnected life events. Some believe the process works because the physical act of writing (using your hand-eye coordination) occupies your left brain, leaving your right brain free to access emotions, intuit connections, and create new insights.

How else can journaling help?

1. Journaling reduces stress by getting “monkey mind” thoughts out of your head. Mind chatter is a powerful stressor, stressor is a powerful health-buster, and journaling the chatter is a proven chatter-buster.

2. Writing about problems gives your right brain food for creative problem-solving. It’s amazing what happens when the creative part of your nature starts working on a problem—you’ll soon find solutions bubbling up from your subconscious.

3. Keeping a daily diary is one of the best techniques for discovering patterns, particularly those that are self-defeating. For example, a diary kept over the course of several months will clearly show any reoccurring difficulties like overeating, stress eating, poor (but similar) choices in relationships.

4. Want to better know yourself? Journal. Writing can help clarify your thoughts, your emotions, and your reactions to certain people or situations. In addition, as you read back through past journals, you’ll have ample evidence of the things that make you happy and those that are distressful.

5. Journaling can help clarify events, problems, or options. When you’re beset with a mind full of fuzzy, disconnected thoughts flitting here and there, writing about the event or issue will help bring focus and clarity. It will also help you decide on which action to take, or option to choose.

## About the Author

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