

# Morning Pages

by Julia Cameron, *The Artist's Way*

<https://juliacameronlive.com/basic-tools/morning-pages/>



***The bedrock tool of a creative recovery is a daily practice called Morning Pages.***

Morning Pages are three pages of longhand, stream of consciousness writing, done first thing in the morning. \*There is no wrong way to do Morning Pages\*—they are not high art. They are not even “writing.” They are about anything and everything that crosses your mind— and they are for your eyes only. Morning Pages provoke, clarify, comfort, cajole, prioritize and synchronize the day at hand. Do not over-think Morning Pages: just put three pages of anything on the page...and then do three more pages tomorrow.

## **These 3 Pages Might be Your Key to a Clearer Mind, Better Ideas and Less Anxiety**

by Chris Winfield

Is she crazy? How the heck am I supposed to find the time to sit down and write out 3 pages each morning?

That was my gut reaction when I first heard about Julia Cameron's [Morning Pages](#). And if you aren't someone who is already doing morning pages, your reaction is probably going to be along the same lines....

But I'm happy to say that I was dead wrong.

Since I have been doing this practice for the last 241 days, Morning Pages have changed my life in a myriad of ways:

- I've come up with ideas that changed my businesses
- I've worked through issues that were bothering me and seemed overwhelming
- I've been better in tune with my intuition and listening to my heart
- They have shown me what's most important in my life and helped me to focus on that

- They have helped me to leave situations and people that weren't good for me
- I've been able to unlock a lot of the chains of my mind and open up the dam so that creativity can flow
- They bring me more serenity and help to quiet my overactive mind each day

Morning Pages are one of these things that sound so simple that you don't think they could ever work for you. One of the things that I have realized in life is that many of the best things are really simple but our complicated minds want to tell us they won't work for us.

What are Morning Pages?

[Morning Pages](#) are three pages of longhand, stream of consciousness writing, ideally done first thing in the morning.

There is no wrong way to do Morning Pages— they are not high art. They aren't even "writing." They are about anything and everything that crosses your mind— and they are for your eyes only. Morning Pages provoke, clarify, comfort, cajole, prioritize and synchronize the day at hand. Do not over-think Morning Pages: just put three pages of anything on the page...and then do three more pages tomorrow.

What are the Benefits of Morning Pages?

In the 241 days since I started doing Morning Pages, I have missed doing them twice. On both of those days, I was a bit more anxious, my thoughts were muddled and I just felt off. Could it be the [Placebo effect](#)? Possibly but I don't think so.

Morning Pages have become an integral part of my [Daily Routine](#) and ultimately have made me a better person. Heavy claim, right? Here are some of the benefits:

#### **They center you and clear your mind.**

We wake up with a ton of stuff floating around in our minds. We need to channel that energy and get it out. Morning Pages act as a 'brain dump' that will clear your mind to focus on other things. Whether it's the small distracting thoughts that can take our attention or bigger, more challenging issues that can at times hijack our thoughts, Morning Pages allow us to ["dump" all the "stuff"](#), making way for more constructive and creative thinking.

#### **They help you discover your creativity.**

In order to retrieve your creativity, you [need to find it](#). And it's through this seemingly pointless process that you are able to find it. You discover things that have been hidden inside you and stuffed down in the business of life.

#### **They help to silence your biggest enemy.**

Your inner critic.

#### **They make you less anxious.**

Writing helps [sweep away anxiety](#). Envy, anger, fear, vulnerability, procrastination...all those emotions can be put on paper and seen for what they are. By getting this stuff out and looking at it, you realize it's not so bad and it helps to ground you.

#### **They will help you become a better idea generator.**

I've [talked a lot](#) about the [power of generating ideas](#) on a [daily basis](#). Your Morning Pages practice will help you take this to a [new level](#).

#### **The Beauty of Longhand**

If you're reading this blog post, there is a good chance that you do a lot of your work on a computer and/or mobile device. There's a good chance that you haven't written anything in depth or meaningful on paper in a long time. So it would make sense to you to simply type your Morning Pages out each day. You figure that you can get it done faster (since you type so much faster than you write).

Don't do this.

[Velocity is the enemy](#). It takes longer to write by hand, and this slowness helps connect us to our emotional life.

This was hard for me to understand at first.

Writing by computer is more emotionally detached practice. It helps keep our Inner Critic alive and well since we are so easily able to go back and fix our mistakes. It yields us speed and distance, but not the depth that we are looking for. Velocity is more often our enemy than our friend.

Think of writing morning pages on the computer as if you are [driving 80 miles an hour](#). “Oh—wait, was that my exit?” we exclaim, glancing back over our shoulder at the destination we have blown past.

When we write by hand, it is more like we are driving 60 miles an hour. “Here comes my exit,” we say, well before we get to it. “Look, there’s even a gas station there. And what beautiful foliage...” In other words, we notice ourselves and our surroundings.

And in doing this, the paradox is that we are ultimately more effective— and, yes, efficient—throughout our day.

### **The Basics Behind Morning Pages**

The idea behind the morning page is so simple. Wake up and write three letter-size, handwritten pages each morning.

You write in the morning because that’s when the [veil of the ego](#) is said to be the thinnest. It’s almost as if your ego needs extra time to wake-up and start with all of its demands for the day. Take advantage of this.

Write about whatever you want. Don’t think you have anything to say? That’s fine. Simply start writing “This is so stupid, I have no clue why I listened to that guy Chris Winfield and am sitting here writing in a notebook right now.” Don’t worry, I won’t get offended

The amazing thing is that stuff will start coming to you. I can’t explain it but it does. To help you practice writing Morning Pages, I made a FREE worksheet you can use. Click the image below to download it right now!

### **How Can I Make Time for Them?**

I’ll be honest with you, I don’t think that I would do any of the practices in my [Daily Routine](#) if I didn’t think they were making me a better person and ultimately improving my life.

One of the biggest shifts for me came with how I [approached time](#). I no longer viewed it as just quantity and looked at it from a quality viewpoint. Each one of the things that I do helps me in some way to better use my time. They make my mind clearer, sharper and more ‘quiet’. This allows me to focus better and ultimately be more productive.

Morning Pages are a great example of this. Yes, they take time to do (about 30-40 minutes), but they actually [make more time](#) than they take because we move more efficiently through our day.

So the tradeoff of an extra 30 minutes of sleep for a clearer, more alert mind become an easy one for me.

### **Here’s My Personal Morning Pages System**

Just like everything else I do, I had to experiment to find the right way to use this tool. Something that would work for me. I encourage you to do the same.

For something that has no wrong way to do it, there sure does seem to be a lot of rules or suggestions for the ways to do the Morning Pages. I break a lot of them... Here's exactly what I do each day.

I start my Morning Pages after I wake up (obviously), meditate and make myself a cup of coffee.

The first two pages are focused on clearing my mind. I write about whatever pops in there. It can be mundane stuff or very serious issues, something inspiring or something that might be depressing. It's based on completely where I am at that moment in my life. I try hard not to judge myself and just do it.

I try to keep my writing positive but that's not always possible. And that's also okay.

Some of the writing is in the first person. Sometimes it switches to the third person. Some of it is me talking to my Higher Power/the Universe/Creative Intelligence and some is me 'listening'.

The first words I write on paper are exactly the same as the first words I say in the morning "Today is going to be the best day ever."

If I come up with an idea that I want to revisit later (so that I can flesh it out), I either make a mark on the page or I stop and jot it down in a different notebook or put it into Evernote. You're not really supposed to re-read your Morning Pages but if I didn't come back, I would miss out on a lot of great ideas.

I use the third page to mentally plan out how my day is going to go. I always keep this page completely positive so that I can visualize a successful, happy day. I write in statements like this:

I will meet with John Smith and it will be amazing! I will really be able to help him and there will be a great reason for us to work together.

In this example, I know that I have a meeting scheduled with John Smith later in the day and I want to get my subconscious mind working on ways to make that as productive and positive as possible.

Here's another example:

I will finish writing my Morning Pages blog post and I will love doing it. This post will really help people.

This last page of intentions is absolutely crucial to me because it helps me to focus my day even more and gives me a rough outline of the most important parts for later.

### **Action Idea**

Before you even start, remember this: There is no wrong way to do morning pages. As with any new habit or practice, it's important to be gentle with yourself. And with a practice like morning pages, it's really important to [let go of the results](#):

When we start some new course of self-improvement, whether an exercise program, a spiritual practice or morning pages, we tend to expect immediate results. At least I do. And if I don't see results pretty quickly, I tend to find reasons to stop doing the exercise. I decided this morning that I'd commit to doing morning pages for 30 days without any expectation of results.

Here's an easy way to approach this practice and help to develop this habit:

- 1) Focus on doing the morning pages tomorrow. Just focus on one day.
- 2) Get a pen and a notebook ready and laid out the night before.
- 3) Wake up 30 minutes earlier than you normally would. Be okay with that. Tell yourself the night before that you are doing this and that you will feel well-rested in the morning (that simple statement will really help).

- 4) Wake up, say “This is going to be the best day ever!” (you can skip this part if you want) and write three pages. Be proud of yourself for this.
- 5) Try to do it again the next day. Use Jerry Seinfeld’s productivity secret here and [don’t break the chain](#).

As you do this, you will start to notice things happening in your life. Things that you can’t explain.

These are your dreams and desires manifesting. From three simple handwritten pages...

Are you ready to get started? Please share your thoughts about the Morning Pages in the comments below.

### **Want to go further?**

Have you started to do Morning Pages and want to know how to make the rest of your day even better?

Well, you’re in luck! I created this worksheet that will show you exactly how to discover your creativity, center and clear your mind, and become a better idea generator.

<https://www.chriswinfield.com/morning-pages/>