

JOURNAL FOR CONTROL FREAKS



God grant me the

serenity

to accept the things I cannot

change;

courage

to change the things I can; and

wisdom

to know the difference.

Journal Prompts for Control Freaks or Those Who Need to Control Things

1. How does it make you feel when life takes an unexpected turn? Why do you feel like this?
2. Is it important to you to have an efficient routine and have things go according to plan. If so, why? What would happen if things don't go according to plan?
3. Do you have extremely high standards for yourself and others? Although this can be advantageous at times, do you find that this causes problems for you sometimes?
4. Do people often let you down? How do you react when they do? Do you ever over react? How would you like to react?
5. Describe how you felt as a child. Were things unpredictable? Did you feel like you had very little control over your life? Do you ever try to overcompensate by tightly controlling your own life today? Is it really necessary?
6. Do you catastrophize or imagine the worst will happen if things don't go the way you want/expect? Is this really true? Could things actually improve from unexpected changes?
7. Do you ever get stuck in all-or-nothing thinking? Give a few examples and discuss how they have affected you.
8. When things don't go as planned, does this cause fear? Describe your fears. Are they rational or are you catastrophizing? Are you stuck in all-or-nothing thinking?
9. Do you every let your emotions cloud your thoughts. Describe a situation where this happened. How could you have avoided it?
10. Describe your biggest fear. How likely is this to happen? What evidence do you have that it could happen? How does assuming the worst hurt you?
11. Do you find yourself focusing on the negatives and not placing enough focus on the positives?
12. When you are in a relationship, do you find yourself criticizing your partner more often than you complement? How does/did this affect the relationship? How could you change this?
13. Can you be demanding and critical with people? How does this affect your relationships? How could you change this?
14. How does control and certainty make you feel? How do you feel when you lose either?
15. Do you have trouble relaxing? Why? What could you do to change this?
16. Has anyone every told you something that you didn't like to hear and you overreacted. How should you have reacted?
17. Sometimes unexpected change can seem frightening at first and then it turns out that it actually improved your life. Describe a situation where this happened.
18. We cannot control the majority of things in life and trying to control them doesn't necessarily make our lives better. In fact, being controlling can create new problems such as stress and strained relationships. Has this ever happened to you? Describe what happened and how trying to control things actually made the situation worse.
19. Has anyone ever told you that you are bossy, critical, and judgmental of others? Do you think you are? Would you like to change this? If so, what could you do to change?

20. Do you see only one right way to do something or one way to be successful? Is there only really one way?
21. Do you prefer to do it yourself than delegate? Why? How can you learn to delegate?
22. None of us are perfect and we all make mistakes sometimes. Is there anyone in your life who disappointed you? Did they behave this way to hurt you or could there have been another reason? Can you forgive them?
23. When you think about all the things that are out of your control and all the things that can go wrong – do you feel scared or anxious?
24. Relentlessly demanding perfection from yourself increases physical and emotional stress. You might even experience common symptoms of stress such as neck or back pain, sleeping problems, headaches, etc. Does this ever happen to you? What would you tell a friend if they felt this way?
25. There are many ways that people use to relieve stress and achieve peace of mind such as yoga, meditation, exercise, massage, etc. Would you like to try any of these techniques? How can you make this a part of your daily routine?
26. Notice your controlling behaviors and write a few lines about each one of them.
27. List a few potential situations where your inner control freak is likely to surface. Describe an alternate response.
28. In order to accept things that are out of our control, we need to stop pushing situations to be something they aren't. Instead, we have to surrender to what's out of our control and allow things to be as they are without forcing them to change to suit us. Describe one thing that is out of your control and you need to accept.
29. Describe an unexpected change that you encountered. Could it be positive in the long run – even if it doesn't feel that way when it first happened?
30. Think back to an unexpected change that you encountered where you could not control the situation. You could however, control your response. How did you respond. How should you have responded?
31. Copy the Serenity Prayer in your journal. "God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference." How does it make you feel to read or write it?

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Can you be demanding and critical with people? How does this affect your relationships? How could you change this?

Do you have trouble relaxing? Why? What could you do to change this?

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