

# *Journaling for the Soul*

## SMALL GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE

A Companion Guide to *Journaling for the Soul: A Handbook of Journaling Methods*

By Deborah Haddix

FIVE SESSIONS

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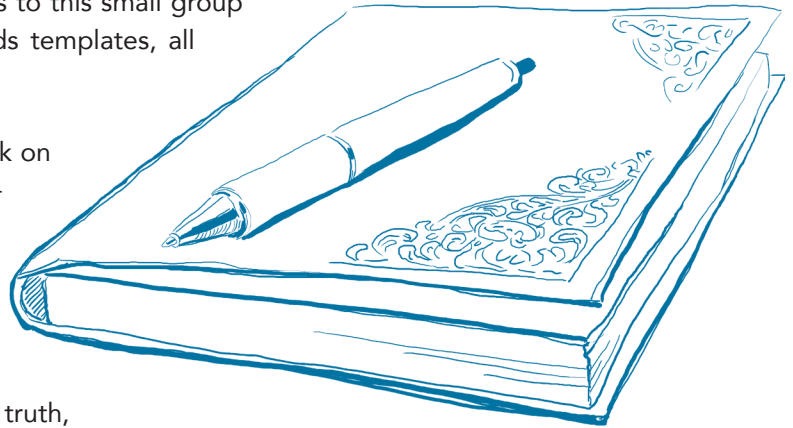
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# Welcome!

Congratulations on your purchase of *Journaling for the Soul: A Handbook of Journaling Methods*. You now have convenient access to this small group leader's guide, 10 videos, and six journaling methods templates, all online and available to you anytime.

Your small group and you are getting ready to embark on an exciting journey together as you discover, in community, the value of journaling—the process that invites us to record our experiences, observations, ideas, reflections, and more on a regular basis.

Journaling is a tool for soul care. Used as a spiritual discipline, it helps us grow in grace, experience God's truth, and discover His character.



## Purpose

The purpose of this study, quite simply, is to gather a group of women together to experience Christian fellowship, encourage one another, and share ideas about journaling that draw us closer to God.

Whether women are just curious and have never journaled before, or they've been journaling for quite some time, all are welcome, and all will benefit.

It is unnecessary to have an "artistic" ability. Everyone can write out Scriptures or quotes, and everyone can doodle. All that's needed is an open heart and willingness to learn.

## How to Host a Journaling Group

Hosting a group is simple. Just invite others to gather at your home, at a local coffee shop, or in a room at your church, at a convenient time. Gather a few materials that can be shared and encourage seasoned journalers to bring some materials and ideas as well.

Let the videos and this guide do the rest. Before you know it, your group will be doing more than journaling; you also will be connecting your souls together and building one another up in the faith!



## Before You Meet...

- Decide when and where you will be meeting.
- Send out invitations through postal service, email, or social media. Invite women of all ages, from teens and moms to young moms and older women. In the invitation, tell guests to bring a journal, a Bible, and if they have one, a Bible journal. They also can bring a regular notebook. If they are just testing the waters, they can just show up.
- Download and print off the free journaling templates offered along with this guide. Print off enough for each person to have one or two of each.
- Choose a variety of Bible verses from pages 110–121 in the *Journaling for the Soul* book. Type out these verses for women to review and practice journaling.
- If your church's women's ministry group is willing, have them purchase extra materials that include:
  - › markers, pens, pencils, crayons, colored pencils, gel pens
  - › stickers, stamps, and rub-on transfers for added color
  - › extra practice paper or transfer paper
- If your church doesn't have the funds, ask attendees to gather supplies they already have at home. Include this information in your invitation.



## When You Meet...

- Have a specific beginning and ending time.
- Have the online video ready to go.
- Set materials out in the middle of the table.
- Be welcoming and encouraging. Remind your group this is a judge-free zone.
- Encourage women to purchase the book, *Journaling for the Soul: A Handbook of Journaling Methods*, by Deborah Haddix. It includes 60 different journaling methods that suit a variety of personalities or life seasons. The book can be found online at: [nourishthesoul.warnerpress.org](http://nourishthesoul.warnerpress.org). Owning the book is not necessary for the small group experience.





## Above All Else...

Pray together. Laugh, encourage, invite transparency, and be creative. Build up one another and be thankful!

## Each Week

Each gathering consists of:

- A conversation starter
- Two videos: A five-minute topical lesson; and a five-minute demonstration on a specific journaling method
- Time to journal and share

# Week 1

## The Soul's Need to Breathe

1. Lay out your materials and prepare the video. Photocopy the downloadable template that goes with the lesson: Soul Check-up template.
2. Greet everyone as they arrive.
3. Open with prayer. Ask Jesus to help us use this time to exhale and let go, focusing only on Him as we explore this idea of journaling for our souls' wellbeing.
4. Conversation starter: Ask the group: **Brainstorm with me: what do you think the physical act of breathing has to do with the act of journaling?**
5. (After some brief discussion): **We have two five-minute videos:**

In this week's teaching video, author and Christian life coach Deborah Haddix shares the importance of nourishing the soul through breathing. She defines the critical line as a place for "letting go."

The method video demonstrates how to use the Journaling Check-up for Your Soul journaling method, found on page 95 of the book, *Journaling for the Soul: A Handbook of Journaling Methods*.

5. Share the videos. If you like, pause between the first and second video to briefly discuss the topic. Or, your group can discuss as you create your journaling page.
6. Invite ladies to try the journaling method demonstrated. Pass out the templates. Or, if they have another method in mind they would like to try, they can do that, too! If more seasoned journalers either have created an entry they would like to share, or if they have been working on an entry, encourage their contributions.

# Week 2

## What is the Soul?

### SLOW DOWN, REPLENISH, EXHALE

1. Lay out your materials and prepare the video. Photocopy the downloadable template that goes with the lesson: Gratitude A–Z List template.
2. Greet everyone as they arrive.
3. Open with prayer. Ask Jesus to use this time to speak to His daughters.
4. Conversation starter: Ask the group: **Christians and unbelievers both talk about the soul, but we actually know very little about it. What are your thoughts? What is the soul? Where does it live?**
5. (After some brief discussion): **We have two five-minute videos:**

**In this week's teaching video, author and Christian life coach Deborah Haddix defines the soul and shares the importance of nourishing the soul.**

**The method video demonstrates how to use the Gratitude A–Z journaling method, found on page 71 of the book, *Journaling for the Soul: A Handbook of Journaling Methods*.**

6. Share the videos. If you like, pause between the first and second video to briefly discuss the topic. Or, your group can discuss as you create your journaling page.
7. Invite ladies to try the journaling method demonstrated. Pass out the templates. Or, if they have another method in mind they would like to try, they can do that, too! If more seasoned journalers either have created an entry they would like to share, or if they have been working on an entry, encourage their contributions.

# Week 3

## Intercessory Prayer Journaling

1. Lay out your materials and prepare the video. Photocopy the downloadable template that goes with the lesson: Praying the Scriptures in Color.
2. Greet everyone as they arrive.
3. Open with prayer. Ask Jesus to bring loved ones to our minds as we explore intercessory prayer.
4. Conversation starter: Share what you believe about intercessory prayer. What is it? How does it work? What does the Bible say about it?
5. (After some brief discussion): **We have two five-minute videos:**

**In this week's teaching video, Deborah Haddix offers a Biblical perspective on intercessory prayer and how journaling is a powerful tool in this process.**

**The method video demonstrates Praying in Color Journaling, page 33, in the book, *Journaling for the Soul: A Handbook of Journaling Methods*.**

6. Share the videos. If you like, pause between the first and second video to briefly discuss the topic. Or, your group can discuss as you create your journaling page.
7. Invite ladies to try the journaling method demonstrated. Pass out the templates. Or, if they have another method in mind they would like to try, they can do that, too! If more seasoned journalers either have created an entry they would like to share, or if they have been working on an entry, encourage their contributions.



# Week 4

## Engaging with Scripture through Journaling

1. Lay out your materials and prepare the video. Photocopy the downloadable templates that go with the lesson: Character Sketch; and Biographical Study 2.
2. Greet everyone as they arrive.
3. Open with prayer. Ask God to draw us to specific Scriptures we currently need in our lives.
4. Conversation starter: **What are the benefits of knowing Scripture? How does God use the Bible to grow us in our faith?**
5. (After some brief discussion): **We have two five-minute videos:**

In this week's teaching video, Deborah Haddix reminds us of the power of Scripture to change lives and to "hear" God's voice through His Word. She also explores how the practice of Biographical journaling enhances this spiritual discipline.

The method video demonstrates Biographical Scripture Journaling on page 44 in the book, *Journaling for the Soul: A Handbook of Journaling Methods*. There are two different templates to choose from, which have been provided: Character Sketch; and Biographical Study 2. They both cover a section of Scripture about a person in the Bible, but the prompts are a little different. Use either one or both!

6. Share the videos. If you like, pause between the first and second video to briefly discuss the topic. Or, your group can discuss as you create your journaling page.
7. Invite ladies to try the journaling method demonstrated. Pass out the templates. Or, if they have another method in mind they would like to try, they can do that, too! If more seasoned journalers either have created an entry they would like to share, or if they have been working on an entry, encourage their contributions.

# Week 5

## Tips for Handling Distractions

1. Lay out your materials and prepare the video. Photocopy the downloadable templates that go with the lesson: The Sample Love Letter to God, and the blank Love Letter to God.
2. Greet everyone as they arrive.
3. Open with prayer. Ask God's Holy Spirit to reveal to us those areas we allow to distract us from spending precious time with Him.
4. Read the story from page 76 in the book, *Journaling for the Soul: A Handbook of Journaling Methods*.
5. Conversation starter: **How many of you have had a similar moment where you needed "somebody with skin on" and God brought either another person or His Holy Spirit to minister to you?**
6. (After some brief discussion): **We have two five-minute videos:**

**In this week's teaching video, Deborah Haddix helps us identify and eliminate distractions as we practice journaling for the soul.**

**The method video demonstrates Love Letter to God Journaling, pages 76–77 in the book, *Journaling for the Soul: A Handbook of Journaling Methods*.**

7. Share the videos. If you like, pause between the first and second video to briefly discuss the topic. Or, your group can discuss as you create your journaling page.
8. Invite ladies to try the journaling method demonstrated. Pass out the templates. Or, if they have another method in mind they would like to try, they can do that, too! If more seasoned journalers either have created an entry they would like to share, or if they have been working on an entry, encourage their contributions.