

## 270: The Power of Writing It Down (with Allison Fallon)



### Full Episode Transcript

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**Jen Riday**

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## **270: The Power of Writing It Down (with Allison Fallon)**

You're listening to the Vibrant Happy Women podcast, episode number 270. We're talking about why journaling is important especially as a therapeutic tool to help you grow and change. Stay tuned.

Hi, I'm Jen Riday. This podcast is for women who want to feel more vibrant, happy, aligned, and alive. You'll gain the emotional, physical, and spiritual tools you need to get your sparkle back and ensure that depression, anxiety, and struggle don't rule your life. Welcome to the Vibrant Happy Women Podcast.

Hey, my friends, we are talking about journaling today. Journaling is so fun because you can take what's in your brain and see it on paper and observe it like a scientist. You can write down your stream of consciousness whatever is in there. And you can write down the things you dream about in the future which I call vision journaling. You can write what happened during your day. I do that as well.

I don't know about you but I have so many journals. I have one that's leather with a tree. I have one that's turquoise with a bird. And each journal I use for a different purpose. My leather journal is kind of my dream journal. I write about the things I want in the future as if they're already here. And I feel the energy of them. In my basic brown journal, I write about what happened each day and that's the one I plan to leave for my kids and my posterity one day.

I have a journal where I just write all my thoughts and anything goes onto that page, that's one I do not plan to leave for my kids because sometimes it has some craziness on the page. I call that my brain download journal. Well, suffice it to say, journaling is an important therapeutic tool for seeing what's in our minds, for looking to the future, for having kind of a roadmap for our lives. And it can be really helpful to go back and read what you've written.

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Well, my guest today, Ally Fallon is going to talk about journaling and she is an expert. She knows the data about journaling, how it helps with mood and so many other things. So whether you're already a journaler, or a not, this episode is definitely for you. And who couldn't use an excuse to go buy another little pretty journal? Well, without further ado, let's dive in.

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Jen: Hey everyone. I'm here with Allison Fallon and we're talking about journaling today. Allison is the author of the book, *The Power of Writing it Down*. And we're going to learn why journaling is cool. Now, if you know me at all you know I love journaling. And Allison, I'm guessing you do too. What does your favorite journal look like? We'll start it right there.

Allison: Well, I keep so many different journals. I always have a journal in front of me. But I usually use moleskins; the flexible moleskins with the soft cover are my favorite. So I usually have one of those that's smaller, that's shoved in my purse that I have access to when I'm out and about in the world, which is rare these days. And then I have one bigger one that's on my desk where I take notes and do my morning pages and all that kind of stuff. So moleskin is my jam.

Jen: Yeah. I just like any old journal to tell you the truth. I like all sizes. I'm pretty partial to embossed leather which sounds ritzy but it's actually not that much more expensive than anything else.

Allison: Yeah. It's nice to have a journal that you feel excited about having on your desk or in your space because then you're more likely to have it with you when you actually need it.

Jen: Totally. Well, so why should we be journaling? I'm sure our listeners are saying, "Not another thing." But why should we be journaling?

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Allison: Well, journaling is a habit that makes all your other habits easier. So yeah, I'm obviously biased, this is the work that I do. But because of the data that I've read I would say if you're going to implement one habit in your life make it journaling because it's the habit that can help you shape all the other habits that are actually going to create a difference in your life. Writing things down is one of the most powerful tools that we have at our disposal to generate positive change in our life. There's a ton of data and research that backs that up that I can go into.

But it's really about carving the neural pathways in our brain that drive our daily behavior. So writing is one of the most powerful ways we have not only to access the neural pathways that are currently in place but also to reshape those neural pathways if they're not getting us the result that we'd like.

Jen: Okay, so let's say – what's a goal you're working on personally, Ally?

Allison: Great question. So what's interesting is I don't tend to traditional goal setting although I do have revenue goals for my company. And we have quarterly goals that we're always trying to meet. But I tend to do more of a theme or intention for the year. And my theme or intention for this year is around boundaries sort of. The way that I've been saying it is more of what is good for me in my life and less of what is not good for me which are sort of boundaries.

Jen: I like that, more of what's good for me, less of what's not good for me.

Allison: Yeah. And it's taken on all kinds of – it's just fascinating to me, when I set that intention at the beginning of the year. This is why I don't love traditional goal setting because in traditional goal setting it's like the smart goals for example. Be really specific about a goal that you want to pick. The fact of the matter is you're using – and I can get into this, but the

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part of your brain that you're using is the frontal cortex to think about that, to sort of identify that goal that you want to achieve.

And so will say things like, "I want to make x revenue goal for my company", or whatever. But there's so much more going on in our souls, our hearts, our brains, that frontal part of our cortex can't access. So when I set an intention at the beginning of the year to have more of what's good for me in my life and less of what's not good for me I am shocked at the things that come up over months of time, that I realize it's time to let this go. I didn't even know that this wasn't good for me.

Or, yes, this opportunity feels really juicy, and opening, and really good for me. And it's not something that I would have thought to set as a goal. I would have missed it I had been approaching goals in that really linear way.

Jen: Yeah. So the act of writing it down gets you to reflect every day. Is this good for me or not good for me? Yeah.

Allison: A 100%, yes. One of the great things about writing is that it can help us really go deeper and explore the answer to a question that we're asking with our lives. We ask all kinds of big questions with our lives.

And with the way that we approach traditional goal setting it's more – I'm overstating this for the sake of making a point. But let me look on Instagram and see what cool things everyone else is doing. And then I'm going to set those as goals for myself rather than going internal and then unpacking and peeling back the layers and trying to determine what the answers are based on the exploration that we do.

Jen: Aside from intentions like you just mentioned, what other reasons or purposes do you have in your journaling?

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Allison: So the reason for journaling is like I mentioned, it's one of the most powerful tools we have at our disposal to generate positive change in our lives. And the data shows that writing can improve your immune system of all things. It can grow your confidence. It can improve your romantic relationships. It makes you more likely to get promoted in your job. It makes you less likely to get fired, more likely to get hired if you do get fired. So there are all kinds of really tangible positive benefits that writing can bring to our life.

But when you sit down to write your story it forces you to reflect on your life, on the daily events of your life that would otherwise seem really boring and mundane. And what actually happens is when you see those events from a new perspective you realize how interesting and exciting your life actually is. You begin to see yourself as; I call this seeing yourself as the hero of your own story which is not how we normally experience ourselves on a day-to-day basis. And so it shows you how resilient you are. It shows you how remarkable you are. It shows you how strong you are.

It shows you what you've overcome in your life. And it really gives you a different perspective on yourself as you move through the world. So a lot of the other benefits that the data shows and proves writing can bring, I think of those as sort of ancillary benefits. This helps me see myself as the hero of my own story and really feel like I'm living this meaningful life and feel engaged in my life. And the fact that it makes me more confident, that makes sense based on the fact that I'm now seeing myself as the hero of my own story.

The fact that it improves my immune system makes sense because I now feel stronger than I felt before, I feel more empowered in my life than I felt before. So I now see myself as the hero in my own story and I see all of the power and agency that I have to create the kind of life that I would like to live.

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Jen: That's really cool. I mean to see it on the page; we see it all the time when we read fiction or even non-fiction, but then to see it for yourself, do you ever go back and read old entries from years ago and learn something?

Allison: Yeah, I do, I have done tons of that. And one of the really cool things about that is you can kind of track your progress. I think this is another thing that – I don't know if other people feel like this or if this is just a personality or temperament thing for me. But I sometimes feel like I'm not even doing anything with my life. I'm just sort of like – people will say to me they feel stuck in that sentiment, the way that I experience that sentiment is kind of like I feel like I'm working hard on achieving all these things in my life. And it's just the same thing over and over again, it's groundhogs day.

And when you look back over old journal entries and read things that happened to you, the way that you experienced them, the way that you processed them you realize that actually you've grown a lot. And we don't always see that growth because it's happening slowly on a day-to-day basis.

But it would be like looking at a tree, or a plant, or a shrub or something in your yard, a photo of it 10 years ago versus today. You're going to really see how much that tree has grown versus watching it on a day-to-day basis you may not notice that it's growing because it's growing quite slow. So that's the beauty I think of looking back at those old entries is you're like, "I actually am really making progress in my life on the things that matter to me."

Jen: Yeah. So I was looking at your information earlier and you've used this find your voice method with prisoners. Can you tell us more about that?

Allison: Yeah, I mean the power of writing is so incredible. And yet when there is trauma involved you have to be careful about how you approach



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that. But I have had the opportunity on a couple of occasions because of friends I have who have done some really important work in the prison systems. And they have given me an opportunity to come in with a select group of individuals and help them learn to tell their story.

But what's amazing is I think in culture, in society we get this idea that certain people have really inspiring amazing stories and other people have these really dark tragic stories. And the fact of the matter is I think every human being that has ever walked the face of this planet is actually much more resilient than we give them credit for. And these experiences that I've had where I've gotten to work with individuals who have endured an incredible amount of trauma, they actually have really, really inspiring stories. There are dark tragic pieces to their stories for sure.

But when you are able to see and recognize what they've overcome and when they're able to see that for themselves it changes the way that they see themselves. And so the takeaway there is really there's not a single one of us who doesn't have a story to share. I'm not saying the story's going to get published and hit The New York Times list and change the world in that sort of traditional way.

But when I hear a prisoner tell me his or her story about what brought them here and how they feel about being here, I can have this really transformative human experience where my life is dramatically altered because of a new understanding or a new perspective that I gained. And those ripple effects can't be measured but they also can't be denied.

Jen: That's really beautiful. So in your journal, Ally, what is the craziest thing you have ever found that you wrote, when you read it and you say, "Wow, I was having a bad day," or, "That's embarrassing?"

Allison: Yeah. No, I mean I think this answers your question. It's not exactly that's embarrassing or whatever. But one of the most profound ways that



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writing has transformed my personal life is for years I was doing this work with other people, watching writing have an impact on other people. And about five years ago I went through a dramatic transition in my own life where I uncovered some information that basically ended my marriage all in one fell swoop. It was a couple of days I went from thinking that my life was one thing to realizing that it was something very different.

And my marriage ended really abruptly, and I went through this kind of dark nine of the soul, letting go of my marriage and really being confused about this person who I had trusted and all kinds of things. It was a really challenging time for me. And I did what I had taught so many of my clients to do over that period of time and I wrote the story. And as I wrote the story it really changed the way that I saw myself inside of it, it helped me to see myself as the hero of the story, to really see how remarkable it was that I was overcoming this incredible trail and all kinds of other things.

But later fast forward after I had done a ton of healing work I was reading through old journals. And I stumbled across this page in my journal where I had written, and I didn't journal often when I was married to this person because I think I was worried about him finding the journals. But I had written in the journal, 'I never knew love could feel so much like hate'.

Jen: That is crazy.

Allison: Right. And I remember having this feeling like oh my gosh, I knew. All along I knew. And I sort of pitched the story after everything happened like this was a big shock. This was such a big surprise. I didn't see this coming. But the fact of the matter is somewhere deep inside of me there was an intuition that did see it coming and I did really know.

Jen: So you talk about that knowing with a capital K, I've heard of people journaling in a way where they'll just write whatever's coming to their mind, kind of like a letter from God to themselves. And I've tried that a couple of

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times. That's fascinating, when I look at the page, this did not come from my brain, what is this?

Allison: Yeah. Well, it was interesting is it did come from your brain. It just came from a different part of your brain than you're used to accessing. And this is the beauty of writing is that it helps us access that other part of our brain. It can give us a sort of transcendental kind of spiritual experience. So people will explain to me that they are doing the writing prompts, they're going through this process that I'm teaching or they're – I call it getting limbic because you're moving into your limbic system.

But they'll do these writing prompts and then they'll back away from the experience. And they'll look on the page and say, "I don't know who wrote that because that wasn't me." And I'll say, "It was you. It just is a different part of you than you're used to accessing." I don't know if this is exactly accurate but I kind of think of it like this deeper truer part of you, this other part of you that you for the most part go about your day and don't really consider. So what's actually happening is you're moving out of your frontal cortex into your limbic system.

And if you've ever read the book, *The Body Keeps the Score*. If you've ever heard people talk about the body doesn't lie. Your body holds onto information that your brain can't wrap itself around. That is really true and that's kind of what this experience is getting at is that you're dropping into your limbic system by picking up the pen and putting the pen to the paper, it helps you move to that other part of your brain. And you'll see yourself admit truths, or know things, or have a depth of wisdom that you wouldn't necessarily have just on a daily basis.

Jen: It sounds the way you describe it, it sounds like powerful therapy and we should all be doing more of it.

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Allison: It is. I mean I make the joke all the time; it's the cheapest form of therapy that you can possibly find. And I say that, I try not to say it flippantly because if you need to hire a therapist or you have mental health issues, I try not to be too flippant about that. But just for general processing of your life, I'm like there's no reason why every person in the world shouldn't be sitting down and using writing as a tool to process their own stories.

Jen: Wow. That's amazing. So you mentioned you have to be careful when journaling for trauma. Can you just speak a little bit more about that? If someone did want to kind of journal for trauma for themselves, would that be okay? Any ground rules that people should follow?

Allison: Yeah, I mean the typical ground rules that I give people, it is okay, you get to put your hand on the dial. And that's sort of the analogy that I give to help people see you've got your hand on the volume button. And you can turn it up as high as you want or turn it down as low as you want. So if you wanted to start out really simple and write about the guy who cut you off in traffic today then you can absolutely do that.

If you want to start with the volume at 10 and you want to write about losing your dad at 13 and the kind of impact that that had on your life and you've never processed that with anyone before, you can absolutely start there. I would just say pay attention to your own body's cues about what feels okay for you and what doesn't feel okay for you.

And if you begin to feel flooded, is a therapeutic term but if you begin to feel I'm experiencing too much emotion for me to really keep my feet on the ground, and stay grounded and present in the moment. Then that would be a time when it would be a really good moment to bring another kind of support system into that process with you and that person could easily be a therapist. It could also be a trusted friend or a confidante. But I'm a huge fan; I've been in therapy for my entire adult life. Therapy saved me through my divorce.

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And as I tried to reshape my world view after that happened in my life, and I'm a huge advocate of therapy, I think we all have something to benefit from in therapy. But I'll say that writing is this incredible ancillary tool to bring with you into therapy.

You could go into your therapist's office for example and because of writing you could say, "Listen, I want to meet with you for 12 weeks. I really want to process the loss of my father at 13 or 14 years old", whatever it was. "I've been writing about it for a long time. There are a few things that keep coming up again, and again, and again that I know I need to process through because it's coming out in my writing. Could we start with one and work thought that?" You're going to come into that therapeutic situation and the therapist is going to be like, "Wow, you're ahead of the game."

And most people in therapy it takes them weeks, and weeks, and weeks to even figure out what they're there to talk about. And then not only that but you meet with your therapist once a week on a Tuesday afternoon or whatever and you meet with them on a Tuesday afternoon. And then the therapist says, "Well, this week I'd love for you to think about x, y and z." And you go home and write about it for a week and come back the next week and go, "I've had four epiphanies. Here's what I realized about myself."

So you're speeding up the therapeutic process not in a way – I don't mean to be sacrilegious about this, I do think it's kind of a spiritual process that can't be sped up all the way. But also you're not mulling or chewing on one topic for four years when it's really something like loose ends you could have tied up in four sessions if you would have been a little more intentional about it. And I think that's what writing can help us to do.

Jen: So one of the journaling techniques I teach a lot in the Vibrant Happy Women world is called brain downloading. It's just writing whatever comes into your head. So I've done all kinds of brain downloads. If I haven't done

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it in a while and things have happened sometimes there have been times when my entire brain download for half a page is just swear word, swear word, swear word. What are the benefits of that style of journaling versus prompt led journaling for example?

Allison: Well, one of the benefits is you'll realize how much just random stuff is happening in your brain at any given time. And Julia Cameron talks about this, the congestion in our brain because we just simply don't metabolize our lives. So a bunch of stuff is happening to us and we don't ever really sit down and go, "That happened. That guy cut me off in traffic and it really freaked me out. And this is the story that I made up about it."

And so there's all this stuff just sort of bouncing around in our brains at any given moment, including our grocery list and our to do list and yeah, I've got 17 emails that I'm supposed to respond to. And I've got four text messages, a person texted me 10 days and I never responded to them about that party I'm supposed to go to. And so you just realize when you sit down and do a brain dump like that, you realize how much stuff is actually going on in your brain at any given time that's causing a lot of congestion.

Meaning that if you're trying to do any other kind of creative activity where you're wanting to use your brain energy it's almost like the bandwidth is being used up by all these other things that you're thinking about. And so if you're at 80% bandwidth with just random static that's going on in your brain, sit down and try to do a writing project for something you want to publish or some other kind of creative project for work. And you're going to feel stuck. You're going to feel like you draw a blank. And that's because you're operating at 20% capacity.

Now, if you can do that kind of brain dump and especially if you can do it regularly you end up getting everything that's bouncing around in your brain, putting it on a piece of paper. You can really quickly evaluate what's necessary to hang on to and what's just getting in the way. So your grocery

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list is there. You're like, yeah, I'll have that for later, I don't need to hold that in my brain anymore, your to do list is there, have that for later.

And then you're like there's this random thought about a conversation I had with my sister last week, but that's just unimportant, I should just tear up that piece of paper and throw it away. And it clears up all this bandwidth in your brain so then you can have the flow of creative energy moving and pulsing through you again. So that's really the benefit of that type of writing.

The limitation of that type of writing is that it doesn't show you how to actually metabolize your life. So let's just say one of the, for example, you could write about an experience that you had. You could write about every experience you have every single day in that brain dump fashion. And what you might find is that over time you find yourself sort of coming to these experiences with the same type of attitude.

So I'll speak from personal experience. I could find myself, if I do this brain dump every morning I might find myself just always complaining like I'm tired again. And that's the limitation of that type of writing is it doesn't actually teach you to frame your story in any way. You're not thinking about framework, or structure, or formula, or how to see yourself as the hero in your story. And so it can take you a certain distance.

But at some point if you want to really start to metabolize the experiences that you're having and uncover how you're processing them and process them in a new and more constructive way. The brain dump activity isn't going to do that for you. It's just going to get you more of the same of what you were doing.

Jen: Yeah, that makes sense. So in your book, *The Power of Writing it Down*, are there suggestions or prompts that help with that metabolism of thought?

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Allison: Yes, one of the prompts that I teach, I teach a bunch of different prompts in the book. But the one that I teach that is probably that my favorite is called the infinity prompt. And I coined this prompt the infinity prompt because it will give you infinity things to write about. So you'll never run out of material to write about with this prompt. But the idea is essentially just identifying a circumstance or experience from your life that feels particularly charged.

So like I mentioned before, that can be something as simple as a guy cutting you off in traffic. It could be something a little deeper like losing a loved one or something more tragic or traumatic. And you take that particular experience and you start by just writing the facts of the situation. So this could feel a little bit like a brain dump where you just write what time of day was it? Who was there? What was the weather like? What were the expressions on people's faces? Who was in the room? How were they moving through the room? What was said?

You just try to remember as many details about the situation as possible, trying to remain as objective as you can. And then you move into a second part of the prompt where you start to think about the story that you made up about this thing that happened to you. So let's just say you were cut off in traffic by some guy. The story you made up about that might have been that guy was having a really bad day, bummer for him. Or the story you made up about that might have been nobody sees me or respects me. I'm just basically completely invisible, it's like I'm not here, it always happens to me.

And you can feel the different energy in those two stories. You'll see that over time you have a tendency to make up some more types of stories regardless of the experience that you're having. So you start with facts. You move to – that's called thoughts, or the story I'm making up. And then the third category of the prompt is writing your feelings about that situation. So feelings just have to do with that energetic charge.



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I always get people to start with, “Where did you feel it in your body? Was it in your chest? Was it in your toenails? Was it in your fingers? Was it in your head? And what was the sensation like? Was it a buzzing? Was it a heat that rose up? That can kind of help us to identify if it was anger that we were feeling, or was it fear, or was it rage, or was it whatever it was?”

What this prompt does is it teaches you how to begin to metabolize your life. It uncovers the framing that we’re already giving to stories in our life like I mentioned, the story that you’re telling yourself about the events of your life. You’ll probably see some repetition there.

So if the story you’re telling yourself about the guy who cut you off in traffic is nobody gives a shit about me, then you’ll probably see yourself having that story about lots of different experiences in your life. You might even think yeah, I felt that same way when that guy dumped me. Or I felt that same way when my dad left and he never calls. Or I felt that same way when my boss fired me at a moment’s notice. And that gives us a lot of leverage as we begin to think about how we’re framing our lives.

The question we have to ask is, is there another meaning that I could give to this story?

Jen: Yeah, that’s so cool. That is almost identical to a method I use called thought tables. And I’m guessing you know about cognitive behavioral therapy, this is where it all actually comes from.

Allison: Totally. It’s built on the cognitive behavioral model, yeah.

Jen: Yeah. I love your name though, infinity prompt. So I think it’s cool that we both discovered or brought forth a similar tool. It just shows it’s meant to be and it’s powerful. Yes, that’s amazing. So let’s say someone’s listening, they’re like, “Okay, I need to journal. I want to do my work. I want to

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process. I want to metabolize my thoughts and feelings and move forward.” But they’re nervous that they won’t do it right, what advice would you have?

Allison: Yeah. Well, so much of our resistance to the writing process is mental. And it’s kind of true with everything but especially with writing, we have these ideas about writing that are passed down through generations that are untrue and unfair. But they’re our ideas about writing nonetheless.

And so these ideas are things like, well, to be a writer I need to be trained in some specific way. Or I need to have a degree from a particular university. Or I need to have a publishing contract. Or there are some people who are writers and other people just aren’t writers and I’m not one of the writers. And the fact of the matter is you write, compose and send at least three text messages, or emails, or some kind of messages every single day of your life. You absolutely are a writer. There’s no one who’s not a writer. Writing is just a fact of modern life.

You’d be hard pressed to get through a day without writing something. And so if we can use writing and leverage that to our own benefit then why wouldn’t we? Don’t avoid, the first thing I would say is I don’t avoid opting in to the group of writers simply because you think you have bad grammar or you’re not good at spelling.

Let me let you in on a little not so well known secret, that even the best writers in the world, the writers whose books you’ve read and who you hold close to your chest, you’ve reread these books, you have them on your bookshelves, they would still say to me, “I’m terrible with grammar. I’m a bad speller.” And I’ve worked with these writers and they also don’t think that they’re real writers.

So it’s not that there’s no one in the world who feels like they can raise their hand and opt into that group. But most of us feel like yeah, I’m scared to call myself a writer because I don’t feel like I can live up to that title. So to

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me that's just helpful to know that no one feels, or very few people feel particularly eager to claim that title and that so many people feel insecure about their ability as a writer.

And then the next obstacle to overcome is just logistical because like you mentioned at the beginning of this conversation. There are 1,000 habits we could implement into our day. And we touched on goals and stuff.

And I always think about the beginning of the year people are like, "Yeah, this is the year I'm going to get my finances in order. And I'm going to get to the gym. And I'm going to eat right. And I'm going to grocery shop instead of eating out all the time." All these things that you're going to do and then we get to this time of the year and everyone's like, "I don't even remember what I was going to do this year." And so for me to come along and say, "Here's another habit that you need to implement", can feel a little bit daunting and overwhelming.

What I try to do when I work with clients is help them find a way into this experience or this practice that actually feels immediately enriching for them. So something that feels really organic, in other words, you don't have to put a lot of boundaries around it. It doesn't have to be 40 minutes. There are plans and programs out there that say it has to be 40 minutes, it has to be three pages, it has to be in the morning, it has to be at night, it has to be this, it has to be that. I don't like to put a lot of restrictions around it.

I just like to say, "Whatever would feel enriching for you, do that." So if that's writing on your device, on your cell phone, then write on your cell phone. If you can, write with pen and paper. But if it's writing on your computer because that's what you have in front of you, then great. Start a note on your computer and just start adding to it every single day.

Start a Word doc on your computer and start adding to it every day. If that for you is scribbling on a piece of scrap paper or on the back of a cocktail

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napkin, then great, do that, if it's five minutes, perfect, if it's 30 seconds, great, if it's 20 minutes, even better. But just find a way into this practice that feels really enriching for you because most of us, what I've learned over the years, helping thousands of people do this is most of us have an impulse to write it's just that we're stopping ourselves.

We're stopping ourselves because we feel we aren't worthy to consider ourselves writers and because we feel like whatever we write isn't going to matter for anything and it's going to be a waste of time. But most of us, most people that I encounter, do have an impulse to write. I consider writing a very human impulse because it's an impulse to connect with ourselves, with the divine, with other human beings, to communicate, to ask questions, to explore or to be creative. And that's a very human impulse.

Jen: That's really cool. And I love that you said, "Whatever feels good for you, do it that way." Trusting our way of doing it, I think society in general is going away from this top down approach at everything. And why not do it the way that feels good. And one thing that popped into my head was as a mom of six, I sometimes drive people and I wait for people. Why not journal in your car, why go automatically to the phone? Just grab the journal first and a couple of scenarios.

Allison: A 100%. I've worked with some clients, because I work with publishing clients who are working on outlining books, and publishing books. And then I also work with people just to write their personal story for the sake of healing and growth. And I've worked with publishing clients who are moms. I'm always so in awe of moms. I'm a brand new mom. I have an eight month old daughter. And I'm like, "How do you keep more than one human alive?" Because I can't, I just can't even wrap my brain around it to be honest.

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But no, I've worked with moms who have written whole books in the school pick-up line, on the dashboard of their car or as they're waiting to pick up their kids from...

Jen: That is so inspiring, yeah.

Allison: It's so inspiring isn't it? I mean we have this idea that you need to book a cabin and go away for weeks at a time. And that's just not the case. It's not how books are written.

Jen: Okay. And you know what's cool about – this is just my thought. I can take a paper journal anywhere. I don't have to whip out a big laptop. I don't have to thumb type on my phone. But I can bring a little journal wherever. It seems less intimidating to me.

Allison: I think it was Anne Lamott who said this. A writer who I respect a long time ago and I believe it was Anne Lamott was saying, "If you consider yourself a real writer, you better have something to write with, with you at all times because you never know when inspiration is going to strike." And I've really taken that to heart.

I almost never go anywhere without some sort of notebook or notepad in my purse. And then also something to read because it's so easy when you have five minutes, or three minutes, or 10 minutes here and there during your day to pick up your smartphone and go to Instagram and fill the time. But what if you were filling the time with something that was actually going to feed you, or enrich you, or help you process your life, or help you understand yourself in a new way? And for me, reading and writing are both really wonderful ways to do that.

Jen: I think you just inspired me to upgrade to the mom purse, so I can do that. I have avoided it. I'm 46, still no mom purse, I don't even do it.

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Allison: I have a serious mom purse. I even told my husband the other day, I'm like, "I need a bigger one. That's what I want for my birthday is a bigger one." I've got to bring all the things with me, yeah, got to be prepared.

Jen: Yeah, okay. You and I we're going to be energetically supporting the mom purse. So everyone join us, yeah. I don't know if I can do it. My mom always carried one of those and then she would dump it out. And I would almost gag at what was in the bottom of there.

Allison: I mean unwrapped food, old tampons probably, yeah.

Jen: Yes, totally. This is good. So, Ally, I love what you do, seriously you know your stuff, I can tell. Where can people find you to learn more, to get your book etc?

Allison: Yeah. Well, I would love for people to go get a copy of the book. It's called *The Power of Writing it Down: A Simple Habit to Unlock Your Brain and Reimagine Your Life* by Allison Fallon. That's me. And you can find the book wherever you buy books. So I always love to encourage people to go to their local bookstores, especially right now, our independent bookstores are hurting and need us to support them. So it should be available at your local bookstore.

If you prefer to shop on Amazon, or Target, or Wal-Mart or whatever, it's also available there. So you can grab it wherever you buy your books. But that would be – I would love to have people go and read the book. And please once you do that let me know on Instagram at Ally Fallon; let me know what you think of the book. Let me know how it's impacting your writing practice or other parts of your life. And I would just love to hear your honest feedback about how it's helping you.

Jen: Cool, will do. Thank you so much for being on the show, Alli.

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Allison: Yeah, thanks for having me, this was fun.

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So my friends, grab a journal, grab your mom purse and send me a picture because I need inspiration on the mom purse thing. But I am going to do this too. I'm going to carry a journal and a book, and I'm going to be a writer, even if it's only for myself because I have things happening just like you. I want to let the emotions move through and after listening to Ally's wisdom in this episode I'm totally going to be journaling more often, plus there's so many pretty journals out there. I can't wait.

Send me a picture of your mom purse if you decide to do that too because this is going to be fun.

Alright, my friends I will see you again next week or at least I'll let you hear me. And until then make it a vibrant and happy week. Take care.

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