

The Power Journal



PARENT'S INSTRUCTION MANUAL

A mentoring technique
for developing
mind, heart,
body and
soul.

THE POWER JOURNAL

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ACADEMIC DISCLAIMER

This presentation is based on the left-brain, right-brain model of differentiation of function, in which the left brain is regarded as being “linear”, logic-oriented, and the right brain is regarded as being “spatial”, creativity-oriented.

We are aware that this model of brain functioning may not be literally correct. The brain, although somewhat hemispherically specialized, also acts in a “holographic” manner. Yet since it has been introduced, the hemispherically specialized concept has taken root as a useful tool in both medicine and psychology.

Because it can be so easily grasped, the model is used by the *Power Journal*. The authors of the journal have taken the liberty to even further generalize the descriptions of “left” and “right” specialization, taking the left brain to emphasize the *acquisition* of knowledge, and the right brain to emphasize the *expression* of knowledge. We trust that those who are specialists in the academic fields will forgive our looseness of interpretation.

We also trust our experience with kids. They grab on to the left-brain/right-brain/values of the heart paradigm. It *means* something to them, and is a wonderful teaching tool. Therefore, we use it.

THE *POWER* JOURNAL BASICS

Everybody on earth needs to grow. Without growth for any length of time, everyone feels let down, as if something is missing. When we *do* use or grow in any one of these areas, we feel like something is *happening*.

THESE BASICS INCLUDE:

THE LEFT SIDE
OF THE BRAIN

Responsible for learning
and logic

THE “MIND”



THE RIGHT SIDE
OF THE BRAIN

Responsible for creativity,
for realizing solutions to
problems.

COMPASSION

Being aware of the needs
of others or of the
environment. This is the
foundation of all love.

THE “HEART”



COURAGE

Being able or willing to
overcome our own timidity
and fear. This is the
foundation of all growth

Our “vehicle” in life. We
have to keep it in good
shape in order to have the
most fun in living.

THE BODY



Exercising or playing
any sport is a good way
to do this. Eating well
also helps here.

THE SPIRIT, OUR SOUL

This is the deepest aspect of ourselves, and is our link with the Infinite, to God. Our basic mission is to find this treasure and enjoy it (or Him) in daily life. *Doing so will make it even easier to learn, to create, to conquer fear, and to happily show compassion to others.*

The purpose of the *Power Journal* is to show that by using our mind, heart, body and soul together, towards one grand purpose, we can **accomplish** a lot; we become internally **satisfied**, and gain substantial **respect** from others.

Introduction

The *Power Journal* teaches the value of using one's whole self--the mind, the heart, the body and the spirit--in actions which are beneficial towards both one's self and others.. This combining of inner personal components and outer action is not directly taught in schools, but is the secret of success in business—and in life in general.

The *Power Journal* encourages and rewards users to remember, discuss, or write instances of use of:

- **two basic functions of the mind:** the *acquisition* of knowledge (involving learning and linearity), and the *expression* of knowledge (involving creativity)--functions which are sometimes called the *left* and *right* brain;
- **two basic functions of the heart:** *compassion* and *courage*;
- **the body;** and
- **the soul** or spirit.

The *Power Journal* gives points and/or rewards for exercising these individual areas of intelligence. **More importantly, it gives even greater rewards for combining these intelligences towards the same purpose.** Examples of such combined actions would be:

Having a creative idea, and learning something new in order to manifest that idea;

Overcoming one's timidity in order to learn a new sports skill;

Having a creative idea which would help someone around you, and having to learn and overcome your timidity in order to carry that idea out; or

Rewards for *Power Journal* activities can be verbal encouragement, privileges, tokens or money. The cornerstone of the *Power Journal* is that whatever types of rewards are used, combining types of activities multiplies one's potential rewards.

Although some parents do not agree with the optional monetary rewards discussed in this manual, the pleasure resulting from challenging oneself, and the surprised and positive feedback of those who are touched by one's helpfulness and obvious personal growth, soon outstrips any

material or privilege rewards from the system itself. A teenager who used the *Power Journal* for several years found this out.

“At the beginning, to some extent I thought, ‘if I do this, I’m gonna make some money’. But then, afterwards, I thought, ‘Oh, this is nice’!

“The helping, the learning, became worth it for their own value. And after awhile, it just became something that felt good to do.”

This boy’s father said:

“We used the *Power Journal* with our son for three years. I think that it changed his life for the better. It created habits within him that he continues today [four years after quitting use of the journal]. He gets a kick out of helping other people.”

Use of the *Power Journal* doesn’t need to take much time. It may be employed in several ways which are further described in this manual.

- 1) The *verbal version* merely involves keeping mental notes of the types of one’s daily activities;
- 2) the *refrigerator poster version* involves the checking off of types of activities which have been done (and getting points and possible rewards for them), but still doing no writing; and
- 3) the full-fledged *Power Journal* system involves the daily (or periodic) writing and personal scoring of one’s activities.

Each of these versions is used as the basis for regular discussions between parent and children. Because the *Power Journal* tends to encourage new realms of self-satisfying activity, these discussions often start real communications between parent and child. The value of these discussions is multiplied greatly if the parent(s) or mentor also uses the journal in one of its forms.

One of the beauties of the *Power Journal* is that it can be employed at a distance. It can allow divorced or separated fathers to fulfil their traditional mentoring role of challenging their children and preparing them for life in the real world. Its use can keep bonds alive which would otherwise have fallen by the wayside.

The only key to success in use of the *Power Journal* is that you have the basic areas of activity as defined by the *Power Journal*, clear in your own mind.

The following pages will expand on these areas of importance, and teach you how to use and score the *Power Journal*.

Let's go into more details about the areas we are talking about.

THE MIND:

The acquisition of knowledge --Learning about any subject of curiosity, without having been told to do so; or being aware of events and the analyzing the meaning of activity which is taking place around one,

The expression of knowledge-- Doing, making or creating *anything*. This can involve discussing new ideas or world events, or activities which involve personal or artistic *expression*. A good way to remember this is that it can be said to mean what *comes out of* the mind.

For the purposes of the *Power Journal*, we limit scoring and rewards for learning and expressing in a *positive* manner.

THE HEART:

Showing compassion--Noticing, being sensitive to and responding to other people's needs or the general need of the environment. This often means helping someone without necessarily being asked to do so;

Showing courage: --Challenging our own fear or timidity. This can mean overcoming procrastination, talking to people that we would not ordinarily talk to, doing something truly heroic, or simply having the courage to *learn, to create, or to help people*. Every individual on earth is timid of something, and sometimes afraid of doing things he or she knows would be good to do.

THE BODY: exercising or learning new physical skills.

THE SPIRIT OR SOUL: we can experience this aspect of ourselves by whatever means is best for us. This could mean religious thinking or practice, spiritual exercises, or expanded reasoning or deeper realizations of truth. It is important for you as parent to be flexible in this. Children--and all people--grow in their perceptions of truth.

THREE VERSIONS OF *THE POWER JOURNAL*

I. THE SPOKEN VERSION

It is all too common for us as parents to ask: “What did you do today?” and get the response of “nothing”.

The experience of those who use the *Power Journal* can be much different. Parents, instead of the top-down usual question, are more likely to ask:

“What did you do today that you were afraid (or timid) to do? Here is what I did that I was somewhat afraid to do...” ; or

“I read an article today and learned that _____. What did you learn today that interested you?”; or

“Did you make (or think of) something today which is new?” (for some reason, adults often feel weak in this area); or

“Did you help (or offer to help) someone--anyone today who seemed to be in difficulty, without being asked?” (kids tend to be weak in this area).

The first times of using this method of questioning may seem to produce no responses. When the adult uses examples of each of these areas in his or her own daily life, it can be surprising how communications begin to flow.

Whenever the young person does respond, the parents should love to hear the details. **Moreover**, when a child indicates that he or she has combined types of activities for a single purpose the feedback from the adult or mentor should be *extremely positive*.

For example, on any particular day if a child learns something, or creates something, or does something he/she was timid to do, that is **good**. But if a child has a creative idea and has to learn something new in order to bring that idea to fruition, that is **great**. Or if he/she notices a need of another person or a need of the environment, has an creative idea how to solve that need, and has to both learn and challenge his/her own timidity in order to bring that idea into reality, that is **superb!**

While within the spoken version of the *Power Journal*, only verbal encouragement, and not points or rewards is (or are) ordinarily given, the pattern of response demonstrated above is central to all versions of the *Power Journal*.

II. THE REFRIGERATOR EDITION

The second major alternative use of the *Power Journal* is as a recording and scoring poster displayed in an obvious place in the house. This version can be used by itself, or in combination with the verbal or written versions.

The purpose of the poster is for family members to become inspired by each others' progress, and to make it apparent how many points have been scored by whom. These points can later be translated into rewards or privileges, but *always* are the basis for positive verbal feedback from the parent(s), and often become the basis for interesting discussions.

This poster has columns which indicate *how many* activities have been done on a particular day, *what types* of activities they were, *whether or not these activities were combined* in their purposes, and *how many points* were deserved for each incidence..

Part of this poster is shown below. The scoring system itself will be explained on a later page.

DAY, DATE	TYPES OF ACTIONS					SIMPLE SUM	TOTAL SCORE	
	LEARNING & LOGIC	CREATIVE	COMPASSION	COURAGE	SPIRITUAL			EXERCISE
Tues, March 10	✓					✓	2	2
Thurs, March 12		✓	✓				2	4
Tues, March 17				✓			1	1
Sat, March 21		✓				✓	2	2
Sun, March 22			✓		✓		2	2
Sat, March 28	✓	✓	✓				3	9

III. THE FULL-FLEDGED WRITTEN EDITION

The written version of the *Power Journal* can be mixed or matched with either of the other two versions. It is the recommended version for two main reasons:

- 1) it is more likely to be taken seriously as a private record of personal achievement; and
- 2) it helps to document a person's activities--which is useful if rewards and privileges have been agreed upon by the parents.

How to actually make entries should be apparent from the layout of these pages. Please note that whether an entry involves the *acquisition* of knowledge or the *expression* of knowledge (or any other type of the intelligences) may be open to interpretation. This is something that will be learned from experience and communication on the part of both children and parents.

As a person makes entries, he or she circles activities which have been combined.

A written entry example

Enter examples of different types of activities. Put checkmarks in their corresponding columns.

LEARNING	CREATIVE	COMPASSION	COURAGE	SPIRITUAL	EXERCISE
	✓				
✓			✓		
	✓	✓			

Circle any checkmarks which are related to each other.

Saturday 3/26

I figured out how to change my bicycle tire. (learning). My friend's mom wouldn't let him go out until he washed their dishes, so I helped him do it (compassion). I had (maybe a crazy) idea (creativity) about a new type of computer game, and I called a guy I don't know very well (courage), to pick his brain about it (learning again).

For this day, a total of 11 points might be given--1 for each activity done by itself, and extra "power points" for the three actions done for the same idea in mind. See next page.

HOW TO SCORE THE CHECKMARKS

The illustration below shows two variations of scoring. You, of course, may make up your own system.

In all variations, single actions always score as one point, and combined actions always receive more than just the simple sum of checkmarks.

The first variation doubles the score for any set of combined activities. For instance, two combined activities would score as *four*; three would score as *six*, four would score as *eight*, etc.

The second variation multiplies the points by the number of activities which were combined. That is, two types of activities combined would double the score to *four*; three combined would triple the normal score to *nine*, four would quadruple the apparent score to *sixteen*, and so on.

The final scores themselves can be translated into positive verbal feedback and also may result in physical, privilege or monetary rewards.

Susan	CREATIVE	LEARNING	COMPASSION	COURAGE	EXERCISE	SPIRIT	Variation # 1: Double the "simple sum" when any number of activities are combined.			Variation # 2: Multiply the "simple sum" by the total number of combined activities.	
	SIMPLE SUM	#1	#2	#3	Your variation?						
Sunday, March 5	✓						1	1	1	1	
Tues., March 7	✓	✓					2	2	2	2	
Wed, March 8	✓	✓					2	4	4	?	
Thurs, March 9	✓	✓	✓				3	3	3	3	
Fri, March 10	✓	✓	✓				3	6	9	?	
Mon, March 13	✓	✓	✓	✓			4	4	4	4	
Wed, March 15	✓	✓	✓	✓			10	4	8	16	

WHAT THE POINTS ARE WORTH

You as parents can decide if points count merely towards general encouragement or towards other types of rewards, including money or privileges.

Some may argue that giving monetary rewards to create behavioral effects develops a “warped” sense of expectation in kids. But developers of the *Power Journal* have seen it work extremely well in families who understand both the materialistic nature of kids and the principles and goal of the journal. What follows is a defense of this position.

Children are often quite materialistic. They certainly understand “things”, but may not have highly developed social reasoning faculties. They may not realize that, in the long run, when we help others, we *are* helping ourselves. And they may not have yet realized the how fulfilling it is to be courageous enough to face one’s fears, to educate oneself in areas of interest, or to follow creative ideas through with positive action.

Because they can buy *things* with money, kids do respond to monetary rewards. So do we as adults. After all, we learn, we create, we help people, we overcome our timidity, for the purpose of making money. In this sense, the journal is simply training for the real world.

Using the *Power Journal* becomes self-satisfying as time goes on. The pleasure resulting from challenging oneself every day, and the surprised and positive feedback of those we touch by our helpfulness and obvious personal growth, soon outstrips any material or privilege rewards which one gets from the system itself. The process tends to become addictive. To repeat a previous quotation:

“At the beginning, to some extent I thought, ‘if I do this, I’m gonna make money’. But then, afterwards, I thought, ‘Oh, this is nice’!

“The helping, the learning, became worth it for their own value. And after awhile, it just became something that felt good to do.”

Whether points count towards special privileges or monetary rewards is in a sense incidental. It is only important that:

- 1) you as a parent understand the value of these fundamental intelligences--especially when they are combined towards one purpose--and consistently communicate this value to the child; and that

- 2) no “force” or guilt-based coercion, be used to get the child to do these activities. The *Power Journal* is to be used as a carrot, not as a stick.

HOW MUCH TO GIVE?

Some parents who opt for monetary rewards, give a dime per point. Some give a quarter, and some fifty cents or even more.

A chart will show the relationship between checkmarks, points and potential financial rewards.

NUMBER OF ACTIVITY TYPES WHICH HAVE BEEN COMBINED TOWARDS ONE PURPOSE>>	1	2	3
Resulting point score	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>9</u>
\$ value at a dime per point:	.10	.40	.90
\$ value at a quarter per point:	.25	\$1.00	2.25

If your eyebrows raise at the amount of some of the rewards, it is good to get a grip on how often the larger combinations are going to happen, and what their true value in life really is.

It is fairly rare even for an adult, to use many aspects of intelligence for a single purpose, at one time. When was the last time you did it? Or more appropriately, how often have you noticed your offspring spontaneously throw him or her self into activities which were creative, required new knowledge or skill learning, which was for the benefit of the another person or the environment, and which took courage to implement?

Throwing our whole selves into beneficial activity is certainly worthy of celebration, and arguably worthy of reward. Such activity is after all, what makes the world *work*.

The *Power Journal* is no more--and no less--than a mirror of life.

A NOTE ON FAMILY POLITICS

It is important that there be agreement between both parents that the *Power Journal* is a good thing to use. It should not be resented or sabotaged by either parent. This is especially important in the case of divorce or separation, wherein one parent may have decided to employ the *Power Journal* as a means of mentoring the children from a distance .

Agreement is especially important as regards the type of rewards which are used. *There must be agreement here.* If there is a difference of opinion, the more conservative reward system should be used.

In all cases, it is the understanding of the *Power Journal* framework on the part of its “sponsoring parent”, which is more important than the actual rewards, or even the actual version of the journal which is used (verbal, refrigerator edition, or written).

USING THE POWER JOURNAL AT A DISTANCE

The author has used the framework of the *Power Journal* while communicating with two godchildren living at a distance. The mother was not accepting of monetary rewards, so the *Power Journal* consisted simply of a format of asking questions over the phone. The kids may not even have been aware that we were using the *Power Journal*, but the questions followed the pattern: “what did you do today that you were afraid to do (or to learn something, or to create something, or to help someone)?” These questions were discussed using as a model, the author’s own experiences that particular day of overcoming fear, learning, creating, etc. Having the pattern firmly in mind soon created natural responses and lengthy conversations, and was good for both adult and child.

Fairly consistent use of this pattern seems to have had very positive effects over time. In college, the older child wrote a paper expressing that the godfather had been a tremendous influence in his life. That same child says he has a burning desire to make a positive impact on the world--which is the long term purpose of the *Power Journal*.

ON SIBLING RIVALRY

In some cases sibling rivalry may come into play, or the sense of use of the *Power Journal* may become entirely “other directed” rather than being appreciated for its own value. In this case, private use of a written journal is probably better, with private talks and meetings being held between the parent and children to discuss the activities and rewards.

THE TRADE

Many teenagers don't respect their parents very much because their parents don't themselves seem to change or improve much over time. The qualities talked about in the *Power Journal* don't belong to any age of people, and it is unfair for parents to expect kids to challenge themselves when they don't even do it themselves.

Therefore, as we have said before, it is good that you as parents participate in your own version of the *Power Journal*. You may use any version you wish: verbal, refrigerator, or written. In any case, checkmarks and points should at least be noted on the "refrigerator" poster included with the *Power Journal* set. The results can be traded and discussed on a weekly or monthly basis. Some parents have a definitely scheduled meeting time in which to do this, which works out well for both discipline (for both parties) and for the distribution of rewards.

It is important that if children feel their writings are "secret", that fact be respected. However, they should be able to thoroughly defend the "learning", the "creative", the "helping", (etc.) bases of what they have been doing. It may be that someone keeps a private journal but enters the checkmarks on the refrigerator scoresheet.

If you as a parent also keep your own *Power Journal*, five things are going to happen.

- 1) there will always exist a natural jumping-off point for discussions;
- 2) your children will be far more likely to keep up with the journal, giving it time to influence them;
- 3) you will greatly enhance your ability to understand, apply, and bring out the principles of the *Power Journal* as a teaching and mentoring tool; and
- 4) you will speed up your own personal growth, happiness and sense of personal satisfaction;
- 5) the respect you enjoy from your offspring will be greatly improved.

The journal starts on the next page....

LEARNING					
CREATIVE					
COMPASSION					
COURAGE					
SPIRITUAL					
EXERCISE					

Please visit
<http://www.HighlyEffectiveParenting>
for full-sized, printable versions of these pages.

Table with 5 columns (LEARNING, CREATIVE, COMPASSION, COURAGE, SPIRITUAL EXERCISE) and 30 rows. The table is oriented vertically on the page, with the header labels positioned at the top.



The *Power Journal* is a mentoring system which develops in children the tendency to throw one's *whole self* into beneficial activity. It can be used with ages from 6 to the later teen years, and benefits parents as well as children.

The results of the *Power Journal* will be highly appreciated by any parent. Because it can be used at a distance, the system is especially useful for divorced or separated fathers. It can help such men fulfil the traditional role of fatherhood--which is to constantly challenge the child towards growth, towards the acceptance of responsibility, and towards becoming a contributing member of the world.

For ordering information, contact:

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