

Journaling and Creative Problem Solving

Every one of us faces perplexing problems sooner or later, and when this happens, we want quick, painless and practical solutions don't we, whether we decide to write about the problems or not? Don't you just hate it when a problem or challenge defies a solution and drags on and on?

In situations like these, finding solutions to the problem becomes a problem, and impasses pop up.

The above scenario played out in my life more times than I care to admit before I began journaling, and it presented a real challenge. Consumed with the problem, I focused on it and because I spent so much time thinking about the problem, rather *worrying* about it, the solutions were very slow in coming.

Now, because of what I have learned through journaling, when I am faced with a major challenging situation, requiring close attention and time, my approach is more creative.

For example, I clearly identify the problem and write it in my journal. Afterward, I ask myself a series of questions such as: What would be the perfect solution to this problem? I write the possibilities, and I ask: How can I best achieve the ideal solution?

At this point, I list all of the possible ways I know to attack the problem, and the problem, as well as the ideal solutions, is shared with a few close family members and friends.

From the possible solutions, the top two or three are chosen, and from these choices, with prayer and meditation, the *best* solution emerges, and I then do what I need to do to put the solution into effect.

Each time I follow this procedure, I get good practical answers for the most difficult challenges, but the process is *not* completed in a day; generally, several days are needed.

I have found that taking this approach, although it requires more time, is considerably more effective because the solutions are solid, and this means that I don't have to address the same challenge repeatedly.

The manner in which I now think (not worry) about problems has improved significantly as a result of daily journaling.

A few years back, I was the yearbook advisor for my school, and I was having an *awful* time getting the yearbook senior staff members to adhere to deadlines.

This was not true across the board, but many of the senior students never finished their assignments on time, and because they were volunteers, I had no way to hold them accountable.

I kept appealing to their school pride and how they would feel when the book was completed.

They knew that each section of the book had its own deadline and of course each section had to be finalized on or before its deadline so that the yearbook could be completed on time.