



# This is YOUR Life, Don't Trust Your Memory

In Dallas, Texas, in 1988 a friend and fellow pursuer of the American Dream introduced me to Jim Rohn. Mr. Rohn was unlike any other speaker or teacher I had ever heard, and he remains that today.

As a student of Mr. Rohn's for more than 15 years, from aspiring sales professional to director of sales to professional speaker, some of the most powerful lessons I've learned in this life have come as a result of his fundamentals and philosophies on success, achievement and life. Too often it seems organizations want to talk only about business and work and selling and the wherefores and how-tos of whatever it is you do for your vocation. In doing so they can mortgage the real encouragement that focuses on the personal improvement of the individual. They forget that we all need to improve; to be inspired as well as instructed.

Some of the best instruction I ever received in that area was to "work harder on you than you do on your job." When you become better, you begin the process of fueling your attitude and desire and achievement and results. Don't neglect working hard on you.

When I first began listening to those tapes, Mr. Rohn said there were *fundamentals and foundations* for those who really wanted to succeed. And I did.

Three things he said we all should do if we wanted to be a top performer and high achiever.

They are...

1. Take (and keep) lots of pictures.
2. Build your own library (and use someone else's until you can).
3. Keep a journal!

There will come a time to learn more about one and two, but here I want to encourage you about number three, your personal journal. Writing in a blank book. Taking and keeping good notes on your life.

My first thought was probably much like yours, "I can't keep a diary..." But Mr. Rohn was ready for that one. "It doesn't have to be a diary," he said. He went on to explain that I didn't have to write in it everyday, but surely

something had happened in my life over the last year that I needed to write down. And he was right.

So I began keeping a journal. And soon that became two, and two became four, and so on. Because once you start, you can't keep everything in just one journal. And eventually you fill it up. When that happens you've now increased the value of the journal. How?

When you purchase the blank book it will be, well ... blank. No writing. And whatever you pay for it, five dollars or ten dollars or even 20 dollars (you can get a nice leather journal for \$20), matters little. Because when you have written just a few pages, and especially if you've filled it up, you've increased the value of that journal.

Now, when you or someone you love pulls it from the shelf of your personal library ... your spouse, child or grandchild, it will be priceless! Not for sale at any price because of your contribution to the book. And because of the memories or ideas or thoughts that you personally have captured on paper, about your life or work.

When my first book "Becoming Uncommon" was published people would ask, "Is that the first book you've ever written?" My reply? "No, I've written several but this is the first one that's been published." Because I've been filling up journals with my personal writings for years ... and you can do it, too!

You can keep journals for lots of things. Wouldn't your manager just fall over if you walked into your next meeting with a notebook or leather book that you opened and took notes of what he or she was saying? Notes about ideas you might have or things you remembered to take care of? You do take an occasional note, right?

Meetings, big days in your life, trips or travel to exotic locations, birthdays, anniversaries, be as creative as you like. I keep goals journals and golf journals (my goals journal is bigger than my golf journal). I have journals that hold all of my business meetings, what was discussed and when.

I've kept journals for my kids as gifts. Like the one I gave my son on the day he graduated from high school. I wrote in that journal for almost 30 months, filling it up

with my observations of him, the events of his life and the special days and times we shared together as father and son.

I wanted him to learn how powerful it could be to keep a written record of your life. It would have been easier just to tell him to do it and try to explain why, but it was so much more powerful as an example. To show him what I thought of this lesson, and what I thought of him, that I would commit to a project that took almost 30 months to complete. Knowing all along that the plan was to give him the finished project on graduation day.

The book only cost a few dollars. In the grand scheme of things took only a few minutes at a time to complete a work that is most certainly uncommon. Guess how many moms and dads do something like this? Guess how many could? If only they'd thought of it. If only they had heard of the idea, as you now have. And then committed to seeing it through to the successful completion of the project.

That's what personal development is: a consistent commitment to getting better and adding value to you and your life. That's why it's called continuing improvement. That's the power of reading, writing and listening. That's the power of a journal. It's actually easy to do. Problem is, it's easier not to do. And that's the option that most people will choose ... easier. "I can't," they'll say "You don't understand, where I work, I don't have the time ...".

Hey excuses are common. Coming up with the clues of success and the reasons for doing them are, you guessed it, uncommon!

Try it. Start with just one journal and see how it affects your life and the lives of those around you.

For my short list of uncommon tips on starting and keeping your journals. E-mail me at the address below.

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