



# Optimal

*a journal of growth*

# CONTENTS

Introduction

## OPTIMAL JOURNAL

Organise to Optimise

Life Rotas

Tiny Tips

## HOME STUDY PLAN

Environment

Trips/Experiences

Holidays/Breaks

Illness

Lesson Plan

Intentions

Define/Specialise

Educational Approach

Content of Study

Overview

Inclusion

Subject Topics

Reports

## ALTERNATIVE PLAN

What to Do

Education/Work

Lockdown/Stay Home

Inventory

Further Notes

Thanks

## INTRODUCTION

This journal is for people that need some calm and intend to carve more space into the time each day gives them. To simplify systems or create new ones and inspire small changes that will support your present and nourish the intentions and projects that matter, for your future.

I created Optimal, because as a practice, journaling or brainstorming ideas and thoughts, has helped me tremendously. I began journaling aged 11, to deal with grief and anxiety, to express thoughts and explore dreams (and all else that fascinated me). It became a study in my own behaviour that has proved useful in working through challenges.

I am now in my 40s and a regular practice of journaling over the years, has raised questions, inspired action and nurtured ongoing learning that has helped me across all areas of life. Much of the contents of this journal started out that way.

The journal features 3 key areas - a streamline/organise section as a starting point, to inspire further ideas. Part 2 is a study plan that I wrote when I switched to home educating and part 3 is something I created, when a mix of house repairs, bad weather and health issues, disrupted multiple areas of life.

This journal can help you:

- Explore aspects of self and consider your options
- Define and possibly rewrite the structure of your daily life
- Nurture dreams, intentions and projects that matter
- Inspire actions and changes and link them together
- Redesign or create new systems to support you

It features examples throughout the journal, designed to elaborate upon the point (so insert your own examples, applicable to your own set of circumstances, interests, needs and commitments). There is space in the journal to fill in, if you wish to print and complete it, or you can read it through and make notes in a separate notebook – whatever suits you!

# OPTIMAL JOURNAL

## ORGANISE TO OPTIMISE

This section asks a collection of questions designed to help you focus on small areas of your life and environment at a time. Pick one at random, highlight those that resonate with you now. Or take the list one at a time and action 1 a week or 3 a month. It is up to you...

Use space on the calendar or at the back of it, for seasonal declutter reminders. In a trug or bucket, along with cleaning supplies, tie 2 smaller bin bags to the handle and gather small items as you clean, to add to a box for donation and any rubbish.

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Set reminder on calendar or in diary seasonally (or more often if needed, such as monthly), to reduce digital files, downloads, documents, photos, and emails.

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Think of 1 hobby, 1 type of item and 1 event on the calendar to reduce spending and equipment and to increase space and time. Choose a new action going forward for these, such as donating or selling equipment, committing to attending only 4-6 social events a month and instead fitting in some classes or blocks of time to support your wellbeing.

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To embrace the phase of life you are currently in, pick 2 things you can lean into more and 2 you can lean back from. For example, lean into a weekend run and lean back on working through lunch every day, so you have a genuine break. Select 2 projects to do on the home, rather than many at a time. You can rotate these at the start of each season and lean into 2 for 3 months, then switch.

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Which parts of the day are the most hectic? How can these be optimised? Streamline the number of tasks for that time, so make lunch the night before if you have early mornings. Make storage items where needed, such as a shelf for bags by the door. Delegate simple tasks to others in the household to foster independence, such as a phone station in the house where all devices are charged overnight.

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What activities do you enjoy alone and with family and friends? Each season or month contact people or put a 2-3 hour slot on the calendar, to ensure these are included in the months ahead. Take a diary to socials so you can arrange the next one. You can fill these blocks of time with a magazine, hot shower and early evening, or a walk in the woods with a flask of hot chocolate or meeting at an art gallery. Meet up in person or online for a karaoke session or watch a movie together. Call a month or so ahead so there's time to find a free slot on the calendar. Find something (singing, drawing, running) that you enjoy doing and include it in 3-4 days of your week.

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What would you like to steer your life towards in the next 2 years? Reduced hours, a change of role, teaching skills to children that increases their self-reliance, downsizing possessions? Start with words or specifics and explore. Wandering in woodlands or a weekend in Yorkshire. Learning about permaculture and planting herbs, as examples.

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Next, zero in on ways to begin moving towards them, that increases with time. Sell some items and set up a change jar for herbs or the weekend away. Collaborate with a colleague to share the workload on a project and enable leaving on time more often. Rent books on topics of interest and note ideas. Involve members of the household in learning some new recipes or taking on the chores to spread the load and free time more evenly.

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What do you need help with? Write down as many as you can think of. Next to each item, write down 1-2 names of people that can assist. Prioritise each item by numbering them. Contact 1 person a week and request a little help, organizing a day to deal with the item. Provide refreshments and offer to do the same for them in return. This is one of the ways we deepen relationships and foster community.

What 3-5 things in life are the most important to you? With family/friends as 1, name another 3-4. With each one, write some ways you can include them more in daily living. Write down a few things to remove or release, to reduce the obstacles to your fulfilment.

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How can you optimise? Think of 2 things to change and 2 to remove (or relocate) to other times of day. Leave 1 bag by door with essentials in and check social media only at lunchtime. Put a fruit bowl and water bottle together on a surface, as reminder.

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How can you optimise the evening? Go to bed earlier alternate days a week. Keep a trug in a room to dump things you do not need from your daily bag (if you do not need certain items the following day), to lighten it. Hang an outfit or two on the back of the bedroom door, to save time in the morning. Designate and deal with post/paperwork/letters directly after dinner once or twice a week, while everyone is still at the table. In ten minutes, much can be sorted, disposed of and decisions made on when and who will act on what remains.

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In the coming season (Summer or Winter), what would you like to do more (or less) of and what 1 thing would make that easier? More weekend walks by preparing a bag of essentials including sunblock and snacks. More games nights, by setting up the table after dinner.

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What would you be excited to experience with friends or family this year and next? Think of a small thing and a big thing, such as Sunday lunches and a weekend away.

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What skills are you eager (or need to) go into greater depth or begin learning about? Books about budgeting, a first aid course and learning how to repair a garden fence, for example.

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What alternatives could you eat for snacks, some of the time, to improve health a little? Rosemary crackers and apples (instead of crisps), wholemeal instead of white bread, water, or herbal tea in place of caffeinated drinks.

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Where in life are you right now? Where do you want to be? If there is a dream, goal, or issue that you wish to address, what 2 things can you do immediately (or this week) to progress it or move towards resolution? What long-term habit can you begin, to manage it going forward? For example, want to create an allotment? Draw a plan and gather sticks/twine to plot out raised beds this weekend. Arrange with someone to collect scrap wood this month. Make a seed list and put sowing dates on calendar, as reminder.

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Tension or argument between colleagues, siblings, or household? Find a spot in the week's schedule, provide refreshments or a meal and bring people together. Have a notepad handy and brainstorm ways to meet people's needs, reduce friction and encourage everyone to take the opportunity to speak, in turn. Behind conflict often lay unmet needs.

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What still gives you overwhelm? Where does the pressure originate from (you, someone else etc.)? Name 1-2 things and reflect upon their source. How can you reduce something right now? Note down an action you can take to relieve the issue somewhat. Make a list of steps to deal with it long-term, so that you can reduce it over time.

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When at home, what annoys or worries you? Name as many as you can, without judging or censoring yourself. Suggest a few ways these concerns can be addressed. Manage or rearrange your schedule, possessions and tasks, to alleviate tension somewhat.

What do you want to do or express more of, in your current decade/phase of life? Think of things that give you joy and support your wellbeing.

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What area of your life would you love to evolve or deepen? Note a few ways you can lean into this and a few things you can reduce or stop, to make space and time to evolve/deepen in the area your heart longs to.

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Think of a place you enjoy being... your garden, a café, a friend's kitchen, a holiday home you have stayed in. If it helps, linger on a few. What common themes are there? What is it about these places that you love? Plants, a bold art piece, the way the space makes you feel, textures or lighting? Note how you can include some of that into your home with small changes (move things you already own, declutter, organise an area, paint or fabric cover some features, to make manageable changes).

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What activities in your space do you want to enjoy more with a partner, kids, family, friends or alone? Name a few and for each, write 2 things you can do to make this easier. Set aside half an hour sometime to contact people and arrange a few of these activities. Movie night with the kids, a long bath with a book to yourself, a walk with a friend.

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Are there changes to your space in the next 5 years, that are likely? Kids leaving home, a wedding, baby, new job or house move? Make a list of what needs to be done, that will affect your living space. Delegate the list with those you live with if the event is imminent (within the next 6 months). If it is further off or less likely, list a few tasks to action. Making some smaller changes regardless, can make life a little easier.

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What projects, commitments, habits, or hobbies are no longer serving the causes, relationships, passions, and wellbeing that you need them to? Free form on some paper or digital notepad until you are clear which of these things needs to be stopped or quit. Write a list of what needs to be done (emails, clearing paperwork, selling equipment, donating items, removing self from memberships/subscriptions or updating profiles and portfolios).

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Choose 2 hobbies to lean into more, to expand your joy. Pick hobbies that fulfill you in some way. Then make the necessary tools accessible and in plain sight (if safe to do so), as a reminder to include them in your day.

What places do you long to explore? Write 1 or 2 ways you can move towards that, such as making food, displaying photos or listening to music that evokes that place in your space.

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Ways to celebrate differently or more simply. Note some ideas - use some decorations for all celebrations, such as bunting, candlesticks and greenery from the garden. Adapt festivities to suit you. Have key areas for display and leave some clear for daily purposes.

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What ways do you wish to adapt outdoor space? Put it to work in ways that support wildlife, enable more socialising, cultivate flowers or allow room for growing herbs (suggestions all, do what matters to you!). Are there items you have that can be tailored for outdoors?

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If you have many lists/actions, use these questions to help you discern the most important.

- Is this relevant now and will it be in a month, a year, 3 years?
- Is it still worth the time, energy and resources that it will take?
- If doing this means not doing something else, is it worth the sacrifice?

If yes to those, schedule in 1-2 of the things a week to complete. Slow is still progress.

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Can some of the wall/surface décor be used as part of birthday, festive or other celebrant traditions/events, because it holds flowers or is a certain colour or material? Posy vases for Spring/Easter flowers, Red tassels for Chinese New Year, extra tealight holders for Diwali, artificial greenery for Yule, or corn knots/dollies for Harvest. Fancy tableware for birthdays, a collection of crockery and décor when family/friends come over for a meal or tea and cake. This way it can be stored to simplify the overall scheme though still used/enjoyed.

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Creating space for 'space' itself. In your mind, around the home, in your workspace, garden, garage and storage spaces. In each room, find 1 surface and reduce its contents to 3 or less, on the top or at one end, to leave an expanse of space. Can items be stacked or grouped to appear less, so that more surface is revealed? Tidy as much into storage or inside cupboards, so that floors are clearer. Secondhand baskets or trugs can be used to put unused, excess stationery or craft items into a gift basket for someone. Can extra chairs, crockery, tableware, décor, or stools be stacked/stored in a garage or under bed, for use only when needed?

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Choose a colour palette for the home and another for clothing. It can be repeated in communal areas (living room, bathroom, and kitchen), then bedrooms and office/craft spaces can be personalized. Grey or cream neutrals, wood, cotton, pottery, a mix of light, bold, jewel or muted colours for fun or to relax. Whatever you love!

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*This list was created on a sunny day in October, at a holiday cottage. I was enjoying how relaxing the space was, yet it was not so different from home. Knowing it was the questions I asked, that would help me dig deeper, I started writing things to ask myself, when home.*

*In the months leading up to the Winter festivities, I posed questions and wrote responses, acting on some each week. Many of the ideas were tiny or quick, so I was able to complete several in half an hour. Others required assistance. Much of it was optimising what was already there or relocating/removing others, so the impact and benefits were immediate, which spurred me on. I hope that it helps you do the same!*

## **LIFE ROTAS**

A rota of key tasks for each life area, can assist throughout the week:

### HOME ROTA

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### WORK ROTA

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### STUDY ROTA

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### PERSONAL ROTA

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## TINY TIPS

The opportunity for micro actions; use these as reflections in a quiet moment or when journaling. Note any thoughts that arise...

*Every word, thought, feeling, lived in the present, return often.*

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*Embrace arts, movement and practices that nourish immunity and vitality.*

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*Make time for play.*

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*Keep plans flexible, minimal, and adaptable, where possible.*

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*Co-create consciously what you wish to experience, by taking small steps towards it regularly or fulfilling aspects of it in daily living.*

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*Meet the mentors daily and collaborate, be they authors of books you enjoy reading, art you enjoy absorbing, music that inspires or people in your life that inspire you.*

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*Write some soothing words you can turn to as a balm to anger/judgements, be it a quote or phrase you heard that helped you, at a difficult time. Say it to yourself when you wake or before you settle to sleep.*

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*A person's actions say more than their words; observe yours and others.*

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*Daily, dissolve what comes up as feelings, thoughts, anxieties – let go all of it and transform yourself anew for the day to come.*

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*Free will includes announcing your consent to be assisted. Support is there, in various forms, so use it and encourage others to do so.*

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*Visual and verbal cues are powerful in creating the environment and attitude for what you are making, how you prefer to live and be treated by others. Guide by way of living.*

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*Gratitude creates a feedback loop. Apply often to all the things.*

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# HOME STUDY PLAN

This plan outlines and details the guidelines, intentions, structure, and content for children's home learning and can also be applied to adult learning, a training course, self-taught study (such as the learning of a language) or research for a project. The plan can be used in various ways and below are some examples - use what applies to you.

I created this plan Summer 2019, when I switched from the public school system to home educating Key Stage 3 (age 11-14). The simple structure informs weekdays, aligning with the UK National Curriculum partially, though diverging for greater diversity. At whatever stage, your child or you are at, this plan can serve as a template to customise.

## ENVIRONMENT

The place of study or work will be in the \_\_\_\_\_ room. It has adequate overhead, natural and focused lighting. If more is needed, list here what is required:

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The room provides adjustable heating and comfortable seating, a desk or workbench. If anything needs swapping from another room or ordering, note here:

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Necessary storage nearby has been organised and labelled, for easy access to supplementary resources such as books, stationery and equipment for necessary tasks/activities. If any items need to be borrowed, purchased, or pulled from other areas and collated, note them here:

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Computer folders, internet bookmarks and websites/channels have been bookmarked, to provide quick access to relevant information, documentaries, mixed media, and visual aids, to support learning. Add notes here regarding this:

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Where activities, experiments, research are done outside, space is available at home or in the local area, to conduct these tasks safely. Outerwear (wellington boots, coats, overalls) are accessible for frequent use. Where meetings or video conferencing is required, a sign has been created for use on the door to the room. All necessary equipment (camera, microphone etc) is accessible. If anything needs collecting in a storage space, note here:

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## *TRIPS / EXPERIENCES*

In the regular event of educational trips (2 per month, as an example), subjects can be studied for half the time to maintain consistency. The other half of the day, including travel time, can be taken for the trip.

If an entire day is required, learning can be incorporated into the travel. An example of this can be playing cards, audiobooks, thought-provoking conversations, or music. Where possible, venues and locations that relate to the topics and subjects will be utilised.

It can help to create a list of local parklands, forests, woodlands, hills that exist within a 25-mile radius of the home. Research membership to access houses/grounds that can provide artistic or educational value or support mental/physical health and wellbeing.

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## *HOLIDAYS / BREAKS*

Home education need not follow the holidays set out by the LEA (Local Education Authority, in the UK). Aligning with it sometimes, has benefits such as children being on "school holidays" at the same time as friends in the public school system. These can be moved to factor in annual trips when public school is within term, to make holiday destinations quieter or events of a health or spiritual nature. See this rota as a guide and adapt it to suit your situation:

- The second week of February (for Winter half term)
- The last week of March and first week of April (for Easter)
- The last week of May (for Spring half term)
- The month of August (for Summer Holiday)
- The last week of October (for Autumn half term)
- The last week of December (for Winter Holiday)

This allows for the government-allotted 38 weeks of education per year in the UK (allowing 5 additional days for teacher training). However, special needs or workload may require some work/study to continue, throughout these holidays; to maintain routine or support retention. A reduced schedule or some educational worksheets, so that an hour with some reading, can be done, to assist.

Alternatively, include skills and activities that provide a learning environment though are still fun, to occupy the brain (team and sports games, card and board games, jigsaws, and puzzle books such as wordsearches, sudoku, crosswords, crafts etc).

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## ILLNESS

It helps to have a system in place and members of nearby family to be informed - if applicable – for stepping in to assist if needed. In the event of mild illness of a child (a cold, infection that reduces though allows for some study), core subjects (English, Geography, Maths, Science) and more creative/subjective topics can be studied for a reduced amount, with a “some is better than none” approach. Audio and visual aids such as puzzles and documentaries are helpful in this instance.

In the event of serious illness (vomiting, chronic head pain or other issue), absolute rest from studies (and a medical appointment if necessary) can be issued. When recovered, a “catch-up” session can lead back into the full allotted time for studies. Saturday “booster” sessions of 2 hours can also assist, temporarily, when needed.

In the event of the adult student/tutor (you) being unwell, the child can complete reading, spellings, independent aspects of study such as worksheets and a documentary or audiobook relating to topics. The tutor can supervise after lunch to complete certain aspects of work that need support or oversee more creative work.

If serious illness occurs, childcare needs to be arranged for the study to be supervised, or a reduced schedule that another adult can oversee for an hour after the evening meal, with a

booster session on Saturday morning, until such time as the usual routine can resume. If you are the student, allocate some reading and visual aid research/study, if possible, until recovered, email to negotiate deadlines and clear calendar for catch-up sessions on weekends, foregoing social or fitness events that you will not have energy for, to slowly move the project/training/study along in smaller increments, until you are recovered.

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## LESSON PLAN

The lesson plan will depend on the studies being undertaken by a child or older student. Where special needs are a consideration, book-ending study with sessions that allow easing into and out of study, can assist. Certain subjects may take longer or require practical/outdoor elements.

Key Stage 4 (ages 14-16) will incorporate revision. Key Stage 3 (ages 11-14) will cover foundation and core subjects in greater depth. For children aged 8-10 (Key Stage 2), beyond Maths and English, study can be topic-based. For children aged 5-7 (Foundation/Key Stage 1), learning through play/creativity will dominate.

Because home educating is 1 to 1, it can often be completed in less time (no class disruption). An approximate guide can be 1-2 hours of academic study per day for KS1, 2-3 hours for KS2, 3-4 hours for KS3 and 4-5 hours for KS4/KS5. This refers to focused study using textbooks, online, discussion, worksheets, and Q&A.

Any practical skill-building (cooking, gardening, model building), creative pursuits (hobbies including music, arts, crafts), social events, documentaries/films, sports, experiments, puzzles etc will go beyond this time baseline. Breaks and lunchtimes can be more flexible. In place of assemblies, the evening meal, travel on daytrips or socialising with family can be an informal way to engage in thought-provoking conversation.

News from around the world can be found online or in print as newspapers/magazines. Some good examples are Positive News, Resurgence & Ecologist, New Scientist and The Happiness Journal. Useful online resources include BBC Bitesize, Twinkl and Britannica.

An example for Key Stage 3:

Mondays	Reading, Maths, English, Geography, History, Exercise
Tuesdays	Reading, Maths, English, Science, IT/Computers, Art
Wednesdays	Reading, Maths, English, Geography, PSHRE*, Exercise

Thursdays            Reading, Maths, English, Science, Music, Language  
Fridays                Reading, Geography, Science, Art or Music, Exercise  
\*Physical/Social/Health/Religious Education

An example for 6<sup>th</sup> form (Key Stage 5):

Mondays              Reading, English, Economics, Music, Exercise  
Tuesdays            Reading, English, Economics, Music, Exercise  
Wednesdays        English, Economics, Music, Revision Session  
Thursdays           Reading, English, Economics, Music, Exercise  
Fridays                Reading, English, Economics, Music, Exercise

An example for college/university:

Mondays              Reading, English, Environmental Studies, Exercise  
Tuesdays            Reading, English, Environmental Studies, Exercise  
Wednesdays        English, Environmental Studies, Field Research  
Thursdays           Reading, English, Environmental Studies, Exercise  
Fridays                Reading, English, Environmental Studies, Exercise

What will your week look like?

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# INTENTIONS

Here are some aims / needs and intentions for how they will be met across the academic year. You can make a list of your own below:

- Balanced across the week and month to month.
  - o Use of lesson plan, content of study list, text and workbooks, articles, and magazines, include a range of cultures, eras, genres, and events to offer a globally themed education that embraces and celebrates diversity.
- Nurture physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and cultural development.
  - o Daily log which feeds into monthly report and visits that relate to topics.
- Nourish self-awareness in experiences, opportunities, and responsibilities through events, learning and relationships.
  - o Discussions in PSHE relevant to age, include writing about dreams, goals, concerns to plan experiences, skills, and responsibilities (chores around home/garden). Discuss experiences and encourage trying new things.
- Include collective socialising, solitary/downtime, and exercise.
  - o Walking and being in nature regularly, visits to various places including sacred sites and special areas of interest, include daily moments of quiet and invite conversation at evening meal to express interests or concerns.
- Gain knowledge by applying it to direct experience.
  - o Access to poetry, literary works, and music. Explore classical philosophy quotes and read latest developments in science. Discuss news articles from magazines and explore the birthplace of artists, architects, inventors\*

\*Trips postponed to 2022, due to pandemic:

- Stratford-Upon-Avon (birthplace of Shakespeare)
- Science and Art museums of Birmingham
- A Norman castle

Trips you will take in future:

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Your aims / needs and intentions are:

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## *DEFINE / SPECIALISE*

Here you can list attainment targets you have. Tracking these can include weekly goals, pages covered in textbooks, daily log, a monthly report with areas to follow-up on.

Study Courses and Attainment Targets:

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## *EDUCATIONAL APPROACH*

It can be helpful to list the ways in which you will approach learning. Here are some examples to inspire:

- Conscientious progress supported by ethical values
- An inclusive mindset that considers multiple viewpoints
- Careful use of resources including materials and money
- Direct experience to transform knowledge to wisdom
- Careful management of equipment, supplies, tools, and spaces
- Foster deepening of relationships with self, others, and nature
- Incorporate self-reliance at home and regeneration at large
- Consider the 'why' and 'how' of things (keep a curious mind)



My approach includes:

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## *CONTENT OF STUDY*

45-60 mins per day      Maths/English 4 days, Science/Geography 3 days

45-60 mins per day      History, RE, PSHE, IT and Art 1 day a week

15 mins per day      Reading current novel, 4-5 days a week

This incorporates independent and supported study, where extra time for some subjects is given, due to special needs impeding progress.

At times of stress (such as a pandemic), non-core subjects can become topics within English. They can be used for creative or persuasive writing, debate and performance, research and analyse, explore and project-based lessons.

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## *OVERVIEW*

A combination of study, reading and debating points on a topic, from workbooks and articles from a variety of magazines. Presenting reasoned opinions, arguments on a topic, occasionally taking informed action and altering personal choices or having new

experiences for personal growth. This incorporates citizenship, sexual education, physical and mental health, nutrition, and culture.

Religion incorporates the concept of faith, beliefs, ethics and traditions through clothing, food, art, celebrations, and literature. Suggestions: Hinduism, Catholicism, Buddhism, Judaism, Native American, Islam, Paganism, Christianity, and Humanism.

Exercise relates to walking, gardening, bat and ball or cardio/weight training sessions, team sports, running, yoga etc. Socialising can occur via video chats, online games and in person meet-ups/groups/clubs etc.

A monthly report tracks progress and is fed into an annual report, with focus areas for improvement. This enables tracking of progress in terms of time taken to complete work and ensure all topics are being covered.

In the case of special needs, it may be better to focus on fewer subjects per day with reading and exercise, to book-end them. To then explore some of the Arts through activities and family time (music, film, cookery, design, gardening, drawing etc). The brain can manage 4-5 hours of deep concentration daily, erring towards less or making it activity-based, ensures good quality learning and higher retention.

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## *INCLUSION*

Allow some circle/highlighting of information as well as "fill in the blank" style exercises and standard question and answer exercises. Revisit topics and review by reading and worksheets, later in year.

### **Maths inclusion of through the following:**

- Time management of daily lesson plan
- Building and design (in garden or with models)
- Cooking/DIY
- Scientific experiments
- PSHE for risk/uncertainty and estimation

- Geography and history for information/dates

**Spoken language through the following:**

- Pronunciation with spellings and reading text
- Place and names on trips, labels with gardening, names of plants
- Cooking and DIY
- Reading and performing plays and poems
- Essay questions using Query, Negotiate, Evaluate, Style and Tone
- The same for speeches and debate
- Story and lessons on art/trips/experiences to describe and explain feelings, thoughts, ideas through conversation and written work
- Outlines written for clarifying/organising their writing

**Reading/Writing via fiction, poetry, nonfiction, journalism, plays:**

- Daily reading of 6-8 pages or a short book
- Building writing at length via Geography, History, English, PSHE, RE
- Narratives, explanations, descriptions, comparisons, summary, and evaluations included across all subjects
- Reading of various magazines (current affairs, ecology, nature)

**Vocabulary Development through the following:**

- Use of dictionary/thesaurus
- Spelling and reading daily
- Explain and use mathematical and scientific language in subjects
- In conversation and on trips when reading guides, maps, signs
- When discussing/analysing writing in English or creatively writing

**Study Programmes and Attainment Targets:**

- Teach what is required across all subjects
- Include some non-statutory content, to ensure diversity
- Tailor the content to support special needs where applicable
- Friday catch-up with student to discuss progress and needs
- Monthly report detailing progression for upcoming month

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## English

An example for Key Stage 3 (ages 11-14):

Creative Writing	fiction / story
Formal & personal letters	to family, across various subjects
Review	books / films
Non-fiction Writing	online resources and textbooks
Persuasive Writing	online resources and textbooks
Shakespeare	edited stories of 4 plays
Poetry	reading various poems for analysis
Debate	notes and scripts for presentations
Analysis / Research	for fiction, debate etc
Performance	of plays and poetry

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## *SUBJECT TOPICS*

This list is an example for Key Stage 3 – topics listed in humanities are for Year 7 and 8 (ages 11-13). Fill in what is appropriate to you:

### **Maths**

### ***Algebra, coding, geometry, and all areas of ability***

Text and workbooks, focussed worksheets from online resources and other videos explaining mathematical concepts. Books for greater depth.

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**History**      *Stone Henge & Stone/Iron Age, Norman Conquest & Castles, English Campaigns to conquer Scotland/Wales, Tudor Architecture & Gardens, Enlightenment, Qing Dynasty, British Empire in India, Viking & Mayan Civilisations*

Text and workbooks, focussed worksheets from online resources, video content and documentaries, books for greater depth, guides, and leaflets from visiting places of historical relevance and interest.

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**Geography**    *Polar & hot deserts, topography of Russia & Horn of Africa, glaciation & coastlines, UK maps, Romania, and weather/climate*

CGP, Collins and other workbooks for KS3. Aged 11-12 focussed worksheets from online resources, use of BBC Bitesize & Twinkl, documentaries, and videos with content on topics above and those of geological / geographical relevance, books for greater depth and visits to sites for map reading, topography, and field studies.

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**PSHE**          *Citizenship, social and sexual development, health, wellbeing, nutrition, money management, emotions, choices, equality, justice*

Your Life books and other workbooks, use of online websites and documentaries regards culture, citizenship, and social/health development. Books for greater depth, table discussions and conversations, with writing to explore social and world issues.

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**Exercise**      ***Fitness, strength, cardio in solo, pair and team activities***

Use of home fitness equipment comprising of weights, outdoor space for paired/team activities, walking and gardening in nature; frisbee, badminton, bat n ball, walking in nature, online cardio workouts. Use of video content and websites.

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**Arts**      ***Art, design, and tech; draw, paint, garden, cook, sew, and DIY skills, Study Leonardo da Vinci and The Masters, Children's Illustration, Pop Art, Impressionism, William Morris and other classical and modern artists***

A variety of books for the practical element of developing skill in a variety of styles. Online video content for artist profiles and research, exploring various styles and genres. Sewing for repair, basic DIY skills, building and gardening, cooking healthy meals with knowledge of hygiene and safety, using books and online resources.

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**IT**      ***Everyday skills (email and software used in work) and basic coding***

Computer Science workbooks, use of online websites and resources. Books for greater depth and software to learn everyday personal and work-based skills.

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**RE**            ***Hinduism, Buddhism, Paganism, Judaism, Native Americanism,  
Christianity and Humanism***

World Religions website and use of online resources, various online content in audio and video to explore the music, celebration, food, beliefs, and values of various faiths. Reading extracts of their sacred texts, exploring the traditions and origins of the religions. Books for greater depth. Visits to places of worship or sacred sites.

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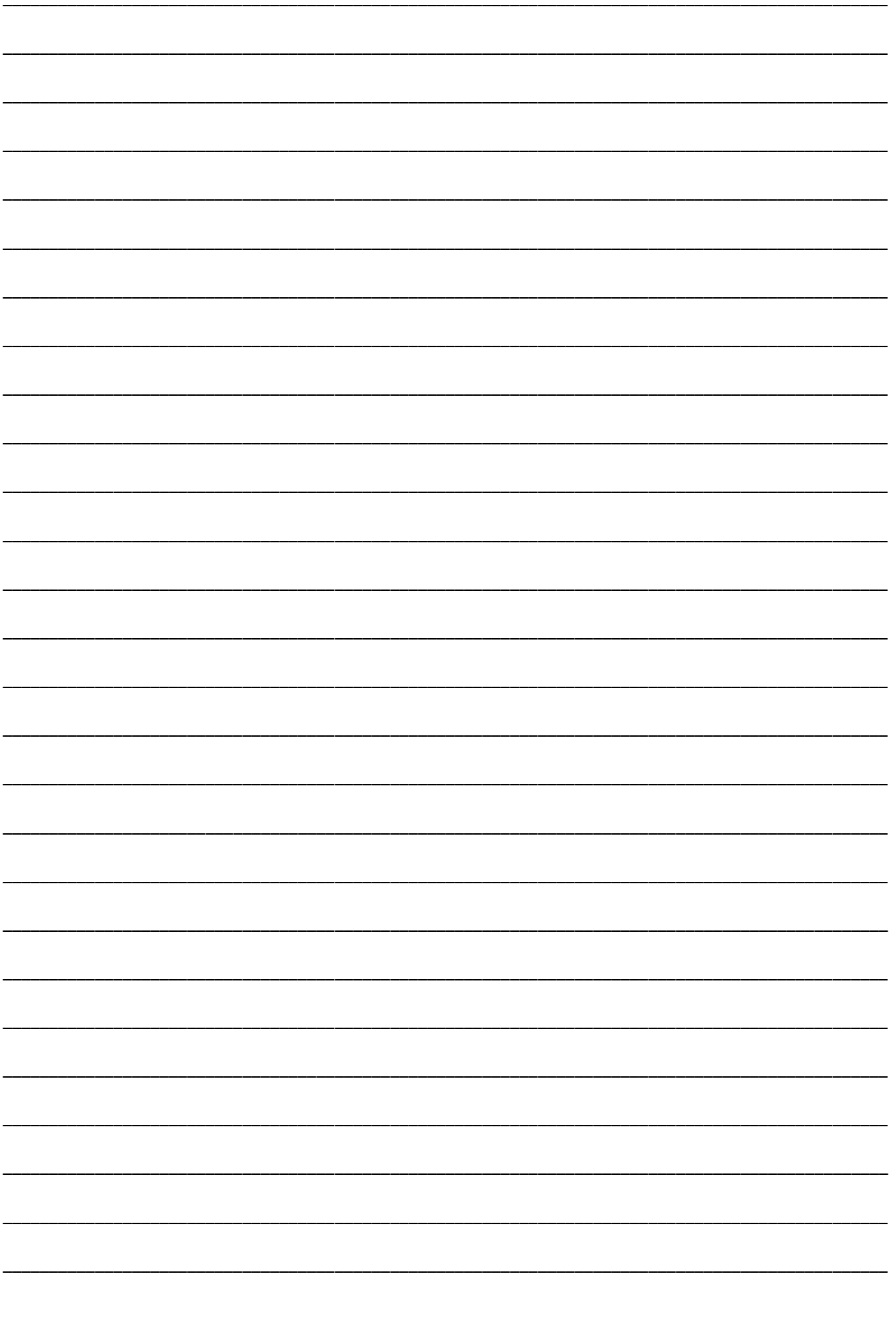
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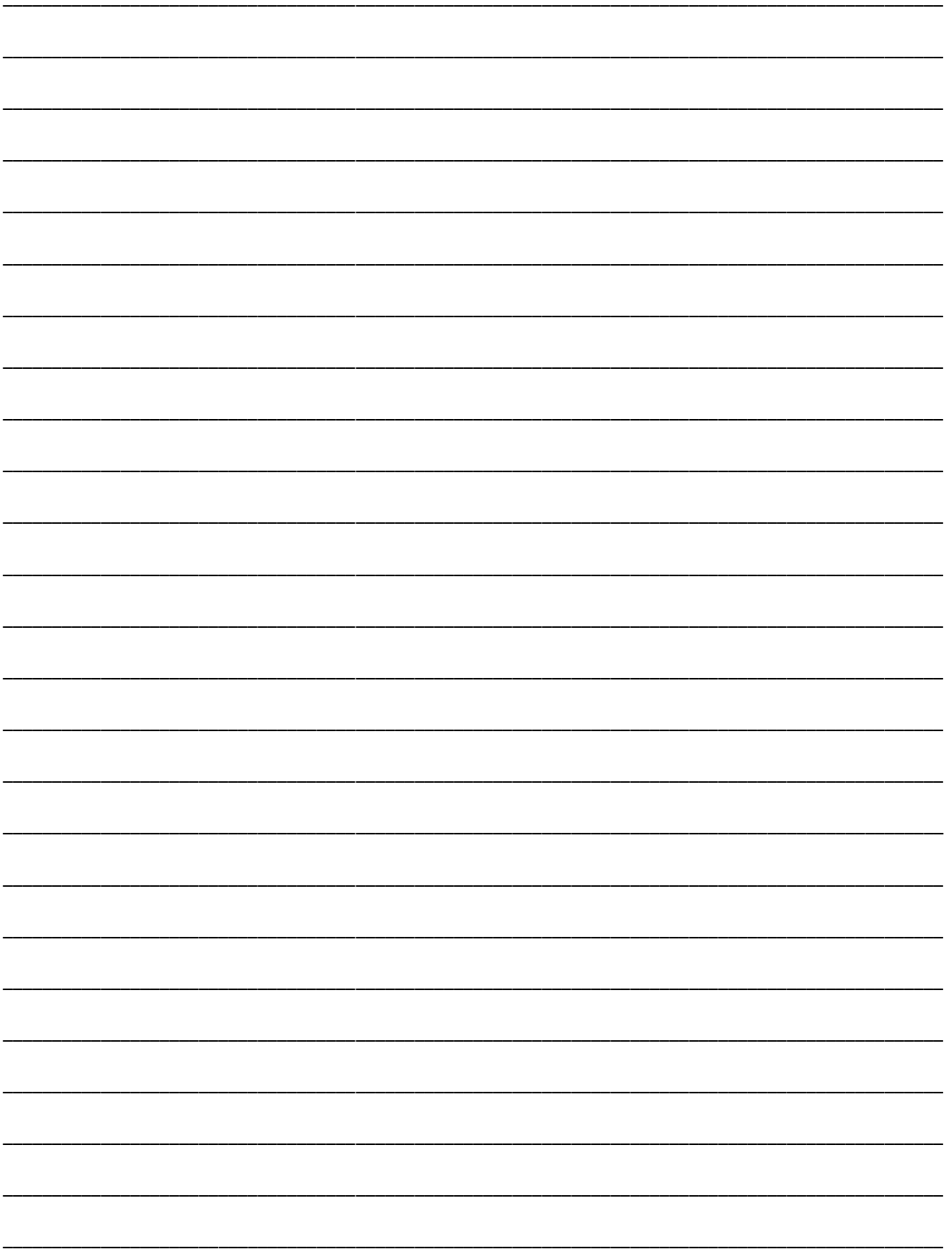
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***REPORTS (Monthly & Annual)***

2-3 pages outlining a summary of the monthly reports, for each subject. Areas of concern/difficulty, actions to address these issues in the short-term and long-term. Include resources and topics that will be used to assist in this. A talk with the child to summarise areas they feel they are struggling and doing well, to build on greater depth and retention.







# ALTERNATIVE PLAN

This section has been written to assist you in making some choices and decisions ahead of time, so that in the event of challenges that can cause distress, you can act calmly and organise what matters swiftly. In modern life, we often have a 'Plan B' in mind, for unexpected though minor occurrences. The small issues that crop up as part of living. This is more of a Plan C – for less frequent and more disruptive events.

It can be applied to situations that include job loss, damage to the house, health issues, flooding or other natural disasters in the area in which you live, that require evacuation, moving home, downsizing, switching to working from home or home educating.

I wrote this when daily living was disrupted. Since then, there has been a pandemic with lockdowns, minor flooding, a switch to home education and health issues in the household at one time or another - all of which were assisted by having this plan to refer to. Adapt and use what is relevant to you. There is space to make notes and plan for the circumstances that could likely disrupt daily life.

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It can help to agree on some places to seek temporary sanctuary, with essential items (such as a family emergency bag and the day/hand/workbag for everyone).

## Meeting Location 1

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Landline) \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

*Somewhere near your home, stay there up to a month potentially in 1 room for sleeping, if you must evacuate your house, but immediate area is safe and secure.*

## Meeting Location 2

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Landline) \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

*Outside your immediate area, if it has been evacuated due to natural or other damage, though surrounding areas are safe and secure.*

Meeting Location 3

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Landline) \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

*Go here to regroup, if not viable go to a local supermarket café or shop \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ or garden centre \_\_\_\_\_ where  
the staff may know family members or members can all meet up.*

## WHAT TO DO

### **NOW / In 3 Minutes**

Put any pets in baskets or on leads. Turn off water and electric if necessary. Grab the emergency bag, important documents folder, necessary medicines, and devices. Collect bag and coat as you walk out on foot or by transport. Head to meeting location 1.

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### **In 30-60 Minutes**

Do the above and pack the following into a car or large suitcases; necessary devices/chargers, 2 days of drinking water/food for humans/dogs, 3 changes of clothes/underwear for each person, sleeping bags, torches, favourite personal items (highlight on packing pages), toiletries and basic cleaning supplies. Secure all windows/doors, pull curtains/blinds, leave lights on timer, thermostat on Away. If need be, turn off power. If in location 1 or 2 and safe to return, check on house every few days.

Every few days to ensure it is secure and remove further items. Fill car with fuel, obtain cash from a cashpoint and ensure everyone eats/drinks together regularly and sleeps as best they can. Keep a notebook of actions/reminders/tasks.

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## EDUCATION / WORK

- Contact existing schools to explain then contact local schools in chosen area to find places for kids within walking distance of new house.
- Use online resources and library books to home educate until a place can be found at a new school: <http://www.ahomeeducation.co.uk/home-schooling-gcses.html>
- Work from home for existing employer or seek alternative work and consider multiple streams of income.
- Rent holiday let for 2 weeks, that allows pets with garden/parking, to a budget of £\_\_\_\_\_ per week, while searching for somewhere to rent for 4 months at a £\_\_\_\_\_ per month budget, in these nearby areas \_\_\_\_\_ to maintain existing schools/amenities.
- Contact bank and apply for 6-month mortgage holiday (details: <https://www.moneyadvice.service.org.uk/en/articles/mortgage-payment-holidays>)
- Look at houses to buy if the move will be permanent (if necessary to move further away (changing school/work/amenities), look at these areas \_\_\_\_\_

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- Source local doctor/dentist and maintain same chain of optician/vets and weekly home food delivery. By calendar/chargers, put information/to do list of phone calls and letters to inform all of change of circumstances (family, friends, insurance, financial, medical).
- Pay for any installations/repairs to new house, clean and decorate new house, have new locks fitted to all doors/windows and keys cut for household members.
- Inform everyone of change of address, declutter and improve garden, explore local amenities such as parks, woodlands, cinema, gym.

- Arrange regular meet ups if not too far or holidays, if further away.
- Start making extra payments on mortgage, having moved into new property (and arrange sale/demolition of previous house).

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## *LOCKDOWN / STAY HOME*

- Shop once a week for essentials.
- Ensure daily exercise/relaxing and maintain work and education as best as possible.
- Regularly contact family and friends to ensure connection and maintain routine.
- Allow extra hours for sleep.
- Keep meals regular, smaller in portion and maintain healthy eating, allow for snacks/treats though less often.
- Enable each person to have alone time daily, at a desk space or in another room.
- Maintain cleaning routine to essentials though add extra chores required due to lockdown and ensure everyone in household pitches in.
- Have a list of minor projects, repairs, DIY, spring cleaning and do 1-2 each month.
- Allow time for talking and provide resources or space to process what is going on.
- Because of being in proximity a lot more often, particularly if weather prevents being outdoors much, have a "step back and breathe" rule where people agree to let minor irritations and annoyances go, apologise swiftly and move on.
- Have a weekly household meeting to discuss any changes or improvements that can be made, air concerns or grievances, though keep it resolution-focussed and kind.

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## *INVENTORY*

In the following pages, write down essential items from each room you will pack when evacuating temporarily, with plans to return to the property, or packing with no plans to return (due to damage). Use two colour pens or note items to pack in emergencies.

### PORCH

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### HALLWAY

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### DOWNSTAIRS/UNDERSTAIRS CUPBOARD OR TOILET

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### KITCHEN

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*For example: calendar, utensils, post trug, medicines, kettle, crockery, cookware, food!*

GARAGE, UTILITY, MUDROOM

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*For example: cleaning supplies, candles, bikes, toolbox, tower fans.*

LIVING ROOM / LOUNGE

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*For example: décor, lamps, plants, stationery, books, films.*









I hope that this journal has helped you.

To explore further, visit [www.louiseannknight.com](http://www.louiseannknight.com)

THANKS FOR READING 😊