

Week1:

Since last semester, I've been struggling with insomnia, which has really affected my daily life. At the same time, I stopped playing basketball—something I used to do two or three times a week to relax and stay active.

These changes made me feel like I was losing touch with who I used to be. So this semester, I'm setting small goals: keeping a regular sleep schedule and bringing basketball back into my routine, even just once a week to start.

I know my situation is much worse than it sounds, but be honest, I don't even know what is really going on with me.

I hope this journal is not only a weekly track on how I follow the plans but also a discovery of what is wrong with me.

Week 2:

This week felt overall calm for me. I started making my own breakfast and went to the gym occasionally. Although I went fewer times than I had planned, I still feel that I'm taking care of myself. My sleep issue continues to trouble me: I get sleepy too early at night (around 8pm) and wake up too early (like 4am) in the morning. Yet this has unexpectedly given me a space for morning reading—a cup of tea and a few cigarettes, with words and the rising sun keeping me company, bringing back a serenity I hadn't felt in a long time.

As Eckhart once said, *"Only in silence can the soul find itself."*

Looking from another angle, my life is gradually finding a rhythm, and I am indeed practicing self-care. The irregular sleep has also brought me unexpected stillness and new habits. Beneath my sense of stability, there is still a small impulse for adjustment.

Next week, I want to learn how to make a bowl of hot soup with black pepper to support the transition between night and morning. Before my morning reading, I will try to spend two minutes on deep breathing or light stretching. I will continue recording my rhythm of dusk and dawn, letting it become a path toward deeper self-understanding.

Week 3:

This week felt pretty calm overall. Things weren't too fast or too slow. I kept up with making my own breakfast—though I skipped a few days—and went to the gym a couple of times. Not as much as I originally planned, but it still feels good to be moving and doing something for myself. Slowly is still progress.

One thing I'm especially happy about: I finally went to H Mart and bought radish and beef bones to make soup. I kept it simple—just added some ginger and black pepper and let it simmer for over two hours. When it was done, the smell filled the whole kitchen, and the warmth of that first bowl was honestly so comforting. It felt like I was really caring for myself.

My sleep is still weird. I get sleepy around 8 p.m. and wake up super early, usually around 4 or 5. But I'm not fighting it anymore. Early mornings have become kind of a private space—tea, a

cigarette, some quiet reading. Lately, I've been adding a couple minutes of stretching or deep breathing before I sit down with my book. It's not much, but it helps me feel more grounded and clear-headed. I'm starting to enjoy this rhythm, even if it's a little unconventional.

Week 4:

This week stayed pretty even—nothing too intense, but I did notice I felt a little lighter than last week. Maybe it's the weather. The rain somehow made things feel slower in a good way, like the world was giving me permission to just breathe and take it easy.

I had planned to wash my car, but then it rained, and honestly, that felt like a small win. It saved me the trouble and kind of made me laugh—like the universe took something off my plate without me asking.

One nice surprise: my roommate and I found a great little Japanese spot by accident. We'd just finished playing basketball at a nearby court and spotted this place with a quirky name—**Oishii Boston**. It didn't disappoint. The food was exactly what we needed after playing. I love when moments like that just unfold on their own.

I've also been thinking more about what self-care actually means for me. It's not always about doing something big or following a routine perfectly. Sometimes, it's just about noticing when I feel at ease or letting things be simple. Even skipping the car wash and letting the rain take care of it felt like a small kind of care. So did choosing to stay in when I felt like resting, or waking up early and just having a quiet moment with tea and a book.

I'm realizing self-care isn't always active—it can be about not forcing things too. Letting myself move at my own pace and being okay with whatever that looks like.

Week 5:

It's been a tough week. My insomnia came back, and each night I somehow ended up awake until 4 a.m.—again and again. By then, I already knew how painful the next morning would be. Still, I had to push through. I forced my brain to send orders to my body: stand up, walk to the bathroom, brush my teeth, wash my face, get dressed, go downstairs, drive, park, and then sit in class learning about how *culture shapes the way we learn*.

Even with all that, I made it through the week. And honestly, I feel proud—proud of this body for showing up, and proud of the brain that kept guiding it, even when everything felt heavy. Self-care looks like this during the hard weeks. Sometimes, it's not soothing candles or early mornings with tea. Sometimes, it's just doing the hard thing anyway—dragging yourself through the fog and showing up as best you can. It's choosing to move, even when everything inside you wants to disappear.

Maybe next week I'll try learning how to cook a dish or two again—just something simple to reconnect with myself. Or maybe I won't do anything at all. Maybe all I really want is to sleep.

Week 6:

This week felt like a full-blown drama—plot twists, delayed flights, a bad haircut, and just enough quiet moments to hold it all together.

Right now, I'm sitting in a hotel near Orlando MCO, waiting for an Uber to take me to dinner. A few days ago, on Thursday, my friends and I were tossing around the idea of spending our 4-day break at Universal. I had a gut feeling the trip would be exhausting—but I also knew I needed some air. Something new. A break from the same daily rhythm.

Before we left, I squeezed in a haircut (predictably, it turned out pretty awful) and dropped my car off for servicing (which, as of now, is still not done). The two days at Universal were tiring in every possible way—long lines, constant walking—but also genuinely fun. We laughed a lot. I even fell asleep in a movie theater on the last night. My body had officially given up.

Then came the travel chaos. This morning, just as we were heading to the airport, we found out there was a storm in Boston—our flight got canceled. Somehow, my roommate and I managed to grab two seats on a Delta flight later that evening. It's already been delayed, but we're still hopeful we'll make it home tonight.

Despite everything, I've been surprised by how steady I've felt. This week could have knocked me out of sync, but it didn't. I don't know if it's emotional maturity or just straight-up numbness—but either way, I kept going.

Now I'm sitting in a restaurant, quietly doing some breathing exercises, trying to check in with myself. Seeing how I'm really feeling under it all. Hoping everything continues to unfold smoothly.

0:24 a.m.

I'm on the plane now, finally heading back to Boston. Everything feels a little unreal. These four days flew by in a blur of roller coasters, shared meals, and inside jokes. Just before boarding, my roommate and I sat by the big floor-to-ceiling windows, watching our plane under the soft glow of the sunset. Two teenagers—one 18, one 17—living in a foreign city, sharing a little apartment for one last semester. There's something about that moment that stuck with me.

All the thrill from the rides, the adrenaline, the dopamine hits—they didn't compare to the quiet happiness I felt just sitting there, watching the sky, feeling the weight of time.

I guess this week reminded me that sometimes, the most meaningful part of an adventure isn't the highs, but the calm in between

Week 7:

This week was draining in a way I can't fully explain. Even though I only had two days of class, I skipped my trauma course. I felt tired—not just physically tired, but the kind of tired that makes me want to shut the world out. I didn't want to talk to anyone. I just wanted to stay in my room, quiet and unseen. It wasn't sadness, and it wasn't anger. It was more like a numb heaviness sitting somewhere inside me.

At some point, I caught myself thinking, “I should really see a therapist.” And I know that’s true. But I felt too exhausted to take that step. Not unwilling—just tired in a way that made even asking for help feel like too much.

One evening, something hit me out of nowhere. I was sitting on the couch, feeling neither good nor bad—just flat. Then suddenly, my mood dropped sharply, like an elevator falling. Loneliness and a sense of suffocation came all at once. My heart started pounding so fast it scared me. I could hear it in my ears, like it was echoing inside my skull. My chest tightened, and it felt impossible to breathe. I knew I’d seen instructions somewhere about what to do in moments like this, and I tried to calm myself, telling myself it would pass soon. But it didn’t—at least not fast enough.

I felt myself panic. I’m someone who’s supposed to become a therapist in the future—I know the techniques, I know the theory. Still, in that moment, I reached for a plastic bag and tried to control my breathing, but my fingers and arms were shaking. I felt like I was drowning in my own body. It was a mix of exhaustion, frustration, and helplessness all crashing at once. I wanted to scream, or cry, or collapse, but I was too tired to even break down. I don’t remember how long it lasted. At some point, without noticing when, I just... returned to normal. As suddenly as it came, it was gone.

Now, looking back, I don’t have a grand lesson from it. I just know it happened, and it was real.

Week 8:

This week, I watched two sunrises—one at Revere Beach and another by the Charles River. Both were breathtaking in their own way. At Revere, the horizon looked endless, a pale line slowly brightening into pink. The sound of waves was steady and repetitive, like breathing. I stood there with a cigarette between my fingers, the smoke curling up into the cold morning air, wondering how something so ordinary could feel almost sacred.

At the Charles River, it was quieter. The water was still, reflecting the early light like a sheet of glass. A group of people were already running along the riverside path—their breath visible, their footsteps rhythmic, their faces calm but determined. I couldn’t help but wonder what kind of force drives them to wake so early, to face the freezing air just to move their bodies forward. I felt a little envy but also admiration—that kind of discipline feels distant to me, something my lungs and my body wouldn’t allow right now.

So instead, I stayed still. I tried a few deep-breathing exercises by the river, just observing how my chest expanded and contracted. I checked in with my body—was there any discomfort, any tightness? The cold air stung my throat but also felt strangely clean.

After a while, I closed my eyes and began to imagine lying down on soft earth, surrounded by the scent of wildflowers and the faint hum of insects waking up. The ground beneath me was warm from the sun that hadn’t yet risen fully. I imagined the soil giving way slightly under my weight, as if it wanted to hold me. In that imagined space, I didn’t feel the need to move, to fix, or to think. I simply breathed—slowly, deeply—until everything inside me grew quiet again.

For a brief moment, I felt something close to peace. Not happiness, not excitement—just a quiet balance, fragile but real.

Week 9:

This week felt uneventful—nothing particularly special. I often have so many thoughts, but I keep waiting. I'll do it this weekend, I tell myself. Maybe tomorrow. Maybe over the break. But somehow, those thoughts always seem to fade during the waiting.

In the midst of my busy days, those fleeting ideas that once filled me with excitement become nothing more than bubbles in my memory—bright, beautiful, and gone in an instant. I've tried to capture them with a pen—whether while lying in bed or sitting in class—but more often than not, they slip away before I can write them down. And by the time I finally sit down to put them into words, the feeling that once moved me is no longer there.

So I've started to wonder—maybe those ideas were only ever meant to exist in a brief moment inside my head. Nothing more, nothing less. And so the days keep passing, one by one. Some ideas get recorded. Others vanish without a trace.

Maybe next week I'll try to bring a few of the wild ones to life. But for now, I'll let this week quietly come to a close.

Week 10:

This week passed in a haze.

I clearly remember having plans for the morning, yet somehow, I only recalled them the day after.

There really wasn't much worth recording.

A few days ago, I lost some money in CS:GO.

No one blamed me—not even my parents.

In fact, they struggled to find words to comfort me.

They told me that I've gone through so much at such a young age, earlier than most people, and that it's admirable in its own way.

Then, worried I might feel upset or short on money, they transferred me some.

I know they're loving me with everything they have.

I've always felt that—

the money, the time, the freedom,

the love.

They believe these things might make me a little happier.

And I used to think so too.

But I still feel pain so often.

Not knowing how to be happy

That's probably the root of my suffering.

I hate that even though I already have so, so much,

I still feel empty.
like a Klein bottle.
I live in contradiction.
I want someone to see me—
Yet I fear being seen.
I hope others can look past my surface and see my fragility.
Yet I'm terrified someone might actually touch that fragile part.
I want people to invite me out.
but I instinctively avoid them.
I want to go to the ocean.
but I'm too lazy to leave my room.
I want someone beside me
But I don't want anyone suddenly entering my life.
I imagine you coming with me to the shore.
watching the tides rise and fall.
We sit shoulder to shoulder.
You don't ask why I came,
or why I sigh.
There's no grand resolution this week.
but maybe self-care, in times like this,
just means giving myself space to feel—
even when it's messy, contradictory, and hard to name.
Maybe it's not about fixing the pain right away.
but staying soft enough to not run away from it.
I'm trying to remember:
Feeling lost doesn't mean I'm broken.
Wanting more doesn't mean I'm ungrateful.
And even when I don't know how to be happy,
It doesn't mean I'm failing.
That's all for now.
This week felt heavy, but maybe next week will hold a little more light.

Week 11:

This week, I finally went to see a therapist.

I talked about the pressure I've been feeling lately—how easily I lose my temper while gaming, sometimes even yelling at my teammates. I said I didn't know what was wrong with me, only that I always end up regretting it.

Then the therapist asked me, "Did you get yelled at a lot when you were little?"

I froze.

It felt like someone had punched me straight in the gut. My whole body tensed up. Of course—I knew the answer. My mom has always had a temper. The kind where the smallest things could spark a storm. A less-than-perfect test score, a bowl held the wrong way—any of it could turn into a full-blown explosion. And it wasn't just scolding. It was the kind of yelling that changes the atmosphere in the room.

The kind that makes the air itself feel heavy.

As a child, I would shrink inside myself, feel myself becoming as small as an ant, easily crushed.

That voice didn't just scare me—it made home, my supposed safe haven, feel like an ocean wave collapsing on top of me.

Instantly, all my safety was gone.

Just—zeroed out.

I thought that by growing up, by leaving home, I had left all of that behind.

But today, I realized: I didn't escape it.

I became it.

I became the adult who yells.

Without even knowing it, I had copied the pattern.

And somewhere deep inside me, I believed it was "effective."

I hate that part of me.

But at least now I understand what's happening in my body.

When I explode, it's not because I'm "crazy."

It's because my amygdala—the brain's ancient alarm system—gets triggered.

It hijacks everything and flips the switch into "fight or flight."

Meanwhile, my prefrontal cortex, the part responsible for reasoning, learning, and memory, goes offline.

Ironically, every time a parent screams hoping to "teach a lesson,"

They're actually shutting down the part of the brain responsible for learning.

There's more I want to say—probably a lot more.

But this feels like enough for one week.

At the very least, I'm starting to see the map of where I've been, and maybe, just maybe, a path toward something softer.