



Redefining the *Norm*

*Project:
Inspiration
Journal*

*DAVID: RISING ABOVE
EXPECTATIONS TO
TAKE HOME GOLD*

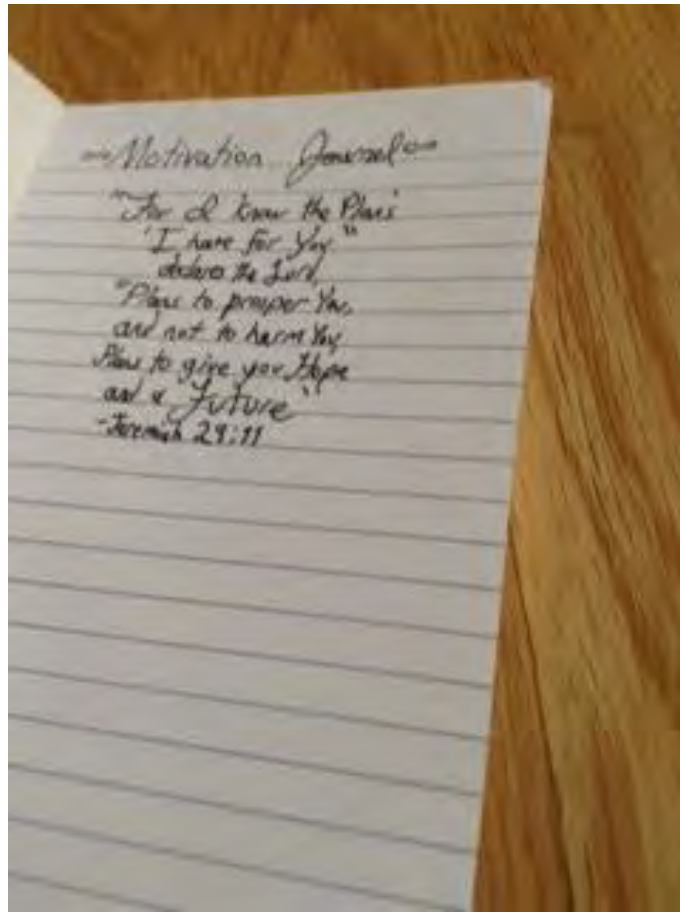
A white bicycle with a brown seat and handlebars is parked on a grassy lawn. The bicycle is leaning against a large, thick tree trunk. In the background, there are more trees and a blue sky with some clouds. A yellow car is partially visible in the distance. The overall scene is bright and sunny.

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Project: Motivation Journal

Have you ever felt fight to live for God? We unusual. But, it's never want to feel. Something feeling discouraged could who have walked here scripture that encourages beautiful photograph, greatness and care, can deep pit of despair. So things all in one place, to time we feel down? Here way to brighten your day. journal!



discouraged in your all have, and it's not fun, or something you that helps when we be words of others before. Or a great you. Or even a reminding us of God's help lift us out of the why not have these encourage us the next is a simple, yet fun Make a motivation

Step one. Pick a journal

or notebook you like.

It could be decorated nicely already, or you could add embellishments such as faux gemstones, paint, or a sketch on the cover.

Step two. Find quotes, scripture verses, or poetry to copy in your journal, or print photographs and phrases that make you smile and lighten your heart. Write in your favorite font, and feel free to add doodles, border designs on the pages, or bold colors to really make it yours.

Step three. Keep adding to it! Now that you've added some quotes to your journal, don't stop there! Whenever you see a scripture verse you like, or you hear lyrics of a song that just make you smile, go ahead and add them! But don't forget, even something that doesn't really apply for you today, could mean volumes for you in a year or so. And most importantly, enjoy! This is meant to be a blessing, not a burden. You don't have to write down every little thing, just in case it might be useful later. But hey, if you love to write, and have some free time, why not?

WALT DISNEY PICTURES AND WALDEN MEDIA
PRESENT

MOVIE REVIEW

THE CHRONICLES OF
NARNIA

THE LION, THE WITCH AND THE WARDROBE



I traveled to another world a few nights ago, and it was amazing. A world of magic, battles of epic proportions, and a traitor pardoned by the blood of a king. Yes, dear reader, C. S. Lewis' masterful first book of his famous series, *The Chronicles of Narnia, The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe* Movie.

After being evacuated from war torn England, the Pevensie children are taken in by an elderly professor to stay at his country mansion. A rainy day, a fateful game of hide and seek, and a magical wardrobe, send the four siblings on an adventure they'll never forget. With an evil witch, monsters, talking animals, and an ancient prophecy (about them!), this new world is unlike anything they've ever seen.

After being betrayed by their brother, the remaining three siblings must find a way to rescue him from the trouble he causes, while evading capture themselves. After realizing the only one who could help them was the long-awaited King of Narnia, Aslan, the children embark on a cross country trek to where He and his newly formed army wait. Facing danger at every turn, the only thing that keeps them together is their love and loyalty to each other, and to their brother.

After arriving at the camp, they find that they are the expected and long awaited kings and queens prophesied of old, appointed by Aslan to lead Narnia into war against the evil White Witch. But their main concern is their brother. And the deep magic demands innocent blood in exchange for his life. Is there any hope for him, and the rest of Narnia?

The digital effects of this movie are spectacular, from the explosions of bombs tearing apart London homes, to the fierce battle between good and evil. The music throughout is also very stirring. And shining through it all, were beautiful parallels to the gospel story of redemption, forgiveness, and love found in the bible. Overall, this movie is an unforgettable combination of moving music, dramatic scenes, and the power of love to overcome evil.

Haikus



Backyard

*Beneath the lonely tree
swing, Colourful leaves scatter
Dancing on the breeze*

Snowfall

*Icy crystals
fall slowly, coating dry grass
and the last bright leaves*



Sandcastles

I've learned a lot about trusting God lately. A few months ago, the government shut down the homeschool board my family is with, on the grounds of allegedly mispending government funds.

Now, a few months later, the board has been allowed to continue operating, and the charges have been dealt with, but that's not the point of this article.

The point of this article is people.

Because of the closure, suddenly some 3,500 students across the province were without a school board, so not legally enrolled in school. What's more, we were told we needed to find a new school in 2 weeks. In all the other homeschool boards across the province, there was simply not enough room for all the students. Even public schools did not have the capacity to suddenly take that many students on.

Thankfully, the judge allowed the board to resume operating, so no drastic actions were needed. Still, for the families affected, those few weeks were filled with many questions about the future. What would we do? What would happen?

I found that even a small disruption of life like this caused fear to rise in my heart. If a well-respected school board could suddenly be shut down, couldn't other things be taken away as well? Church? Health? Freedom? Is anything safe?

These questions nagged at the back of my mind, as I'm sure they do for others going through similar and harder things. Your father loses his job, and your family has to move. A younger sibling becomes sick. You fail an important test. Normal is replaced by uncertainty.

In times of peace, when life goes on as usual, we can forget how much we need God. We begin to look to other things for our security. We find security in our big house and nice car. We feel safe with the great friends we have at church. We find identity in our own skills and talents.

These things are not bad on their own, but if we lean solely on them for security, what will we do if they topple? We, instead of taking risks and growing in our faith, become complacent, focusing all our energies on not losing what we have. These things become the sandcastles we hide in, in which we place our trust. But when the storms of life come, and waves crash against us, how quickly these fall.

You're rejected by the friends you thought you had. Crash. Your mom is laid off her high-paying job, and there goes the big house. Crash. The securities we surround ourselves with, which we wanted to think were impenetrable, we now see are but dust. If we lose the security we thought we had, where does that leave us? Too often, in the pits of despair and hopelessness. We feel broken, confused. Sadly, it is often only when our sandcastles fall, that we see what they truly were.

Our eyes are opened, and we see that the only One that can truly save us is God. He alone is the Solid Rock, the Shelter from the storms that assail us. We see that he is the source of our talents, skills, and every good gift. When we find our identity in Him, we realize that He is all we ever needed. And when the storms of life come, and they will, we will stand if indeed we stand in Him.

Ask Katie <3



Dear Katie,

I recently started putting into practice what you talk about in this magazine. I am really trying to do what I know is right, even when it goes against the crowd. But I am also finding how hard it is, especially when I'm the only one. Why is it so hard? And are there some things I can do to make it easier? Sometimes I just feel like giving up, it's so hard, and some suggestions on what to do when this happens would be great.

Sincerely,

Worn out.

Dear Worn Out,

Going against the crowd is hard! Anyone who's been there will agree, it takes a lot of courage to stand alone. From a psychologist's perspective, it is difficult because of the power of conformity, and the longing in all of us for acceptance and verification. Also, it takes a lot of guts to stand up for what you believe in, some people just don't have the courage, and aren't willing to even try. From a biblical perspective, doing evil, the way of the world, is a broad path, and because we don't want to risk being unpopular, we sometimes cave in to peer pressure. We crave acceptance, and often try to meet that need in other people. But, it never fully satisfies. People will let you down. It is only when we come to God, and live in a relationship with Him, that we can find true, unconditional acceptance and love. So, my advice is, when things get tough, run to Him. When it's hard, He'll be with you, giving you strength and hope. Realize that, as a believer in Jesus, God accepts you unconditionally, and loves you completely. Also, it can help to surround yourself with people who have the same values as you, and who can encourage you.

Yours truly,

Katie <3



David ran across the grassy field to grab his water bottle, before joining the rest of the team sitting on the grass. Glaring evening sun shone in his eyes, his legs burned from the strenuous activity, and sweat beaded on his forehead. He was glad his new coach had finished the practice, as though he expected it to be hard, and though he was one of the five best players on his old team who his coach had recommended to try out for nationals; and even though he was talented enough to make the rep team, his state of exhaustion told him he had a lot of work to do.

Sitting with the other fourteen exhausted boys on the representative U12 team, one of his coaches handed each of them a notebook. "I know this is only the first practice, but if we want to win Nationals, we have a lot of work to do. You have made this team because you have talent and skill, but to win you need to improve and learn great endurance. That's what these notebooks are for. You will record every time you run two miles. When we don't have a practice, you should be running. This will build

endurance, and motivate you toward the goal, that is Nationals. You will train and you will improve.” And train they did. Nearly every day they didn’t have a practice, David ran two miles around his village. And as he did, his time improved. The team improved too. The coaches pushed them in their practices; teaching new strategies and improving them in their positions. Never was David, since starting soccer at age 7, pushed so hard to improve at the sport as now. Finally, the week of the Nationals tournament arrived. The boys arrived at the fields in Mana just like every other practice. Except this time, many other colors of team jerseys greeted them. All the teams had been training hard, and with their eyes fixed on gold, would be tough competition for them. But David’s team played hard, winning every game, except one, which they tied. The scores came back, and David’s Mana Representative Team was at the top playing Auckland in the final for gold! The morning of the big game arrived. Playing hard, they gained three points, to Auckland’s 1. But could they keep the lead? The suspense grew for the players and those watching. They played hard until tweet! the final whistle blew. The score: 3-1 for Mana! They won gold in U12 Nationals! They were the top U12 team in all New Zealand! Celebrating with treats afterwards, the team rejoiced, knowing that without their persistence, hard work and their coaches training and pushing them as they did, they wouldn’t be where they were. This lesson of hard work and endurance to succeed and achieve, stuck with David his whole life, going on to place first in his school district’s cross country running race, earning his Queen’s scouting award, completing his business management degree, and raising two crazy girls, one of whom, you, dear reader, have heard a lot from lately. That’s right, David is my father! In case you’re wondering, he didn’t pursue a professional career in soccer, though he made the team that would win U13 Provincials, and later played in Nationals again in U14. No, instead of going professional, he has taken to passing on his skills and knowledge to me and my sister, and even assistant coaching my soccer team one year. I am really grateful for the knowledge and expertise he has passed onto us, and I think his experiences show that if you work hard at something you love, and persevere to the end, you will succeed. Who know? You may even go on to win soccer Nationals in your country!

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Waves

*Racing across soft sand, hair flying
Dodging the ocean waves, splashing
Reaching for high ground, gasping
Splashed again and again, laughing
The wind whips our clothes, as, hand in hand,
We dare the sea to touch us.
We walk together, through the waves,
Standing firm,
Invincible.*