



44 Moore Avenue • Worcester • MA 01602 • USA  
phone: 1•508•234•6540  
web: [www.fcs-bilotta.com](http://www.fcs-bilotta.com)  
email: [formation@fcs-bilotta.com](mailto:formation@fcs-bilotta.com)

## *Reflecting on Daily Life via Journaling*

In reference to time and energy expended and invested, journaling is one of the most helpful and profitable processes for a person in initial formation. We highly recommend that journaling be a central part of formation beginning in the vocational discernment stage. Journaling's discipline supports and sustains the movement toward a reflective life and toward evolving into an authentic reflective human being.

Two of initial formation's primary goals are growth in self-awareness and maturity. Journaling regularly assists persons-in-formation with waking up, noticing, and becoming conscious of how people, events, and things impact them throughout the day in helpful and unhelpful ways. In addition, they uncover how they impact other people in helpful and in unhelpful ways. This is a significant part of being self-aware and growth in maturity—noticing and acknowledging how others impact us and how we impact others in both helpful/openhearted ways and in unhelpful/closed-hearted ways.

It has been our experience that the biggest obstacle to the discipline of journaling throughout initial formation years is the formator. It is highly unlikely that somewhere along the initial period of formation that the subject of journaling does not arise in some manner. Few people would protest that journaling is fundamentally a waste of time and energy. Yet few people in vocational discernment, philosophy, postulancy, novitiate, and seminary actually journal on a regular basis. Why?

In order for journaling to be a source of growth for self-awareness and maturity, the formator needs to undertake the following. First, the formator needs to teach the person-in-formation how to go about journaling. This takes preparation, time, energy, and follow-up. There are many ways to journal. *FCS* encourages journaling methodologies that enhance self-awareness. In chapter one of *FCS's Structured Autobiography*, we address journaling. We offer a focused and crafted outline and process for journaling. (If you would like a copy of this chapter, just email *FCS* with your request.)

Second, the formator needs to have regular and consistent conversations with the person-in-formation. These conversations elaborate on how the process of journaling is progressing, what he/she is learning about him/herself. When a formator does not make journaling a priority by following up and following through, the unspoken implication is clear: journaling is not a

priority. It is not important and worth a person's time and energy. When a person-in-formation resists journaling, again ongoing conversations will explore the resistance and the obstacles.

Journaling is an essential component of human formation that leads to self-awareness and increased maturity. Journaling involves little monetary cost, but does require prioritization, discipline, and follow-up and follow-through. The rewards of ongoing journaling will be hundredfold.