KEEPING A PARANORMAL JOURNAL

One of the best things you can do to prepare for an upcoming investigation is to keep a journal over a period of four weeks or longer that logs occurrences and experiences you think might be paranormal. Should you and your household choose to share your journals with PPI, they can offer a cohort study that will assist our team in tailoring their investigation to the needs of the case. In fact, journaling has sometimes yielded enough conclusive evidence to make a full investigation superfluous. In most cases, though, a good journal is simply a research tool that helps uncover patterns such as when activity is likely to occur, increase, decrease, or coincide with other activities and circumstances.

It can also serve to chronicle your own progress and keep behaviors like confirmation bias in check. (To learn more about these, see “Spooking Yourself: Confirmation Bias & Myth-Making”).

Finally, a journal can be a personal diary for details you may be unwilling to share with other household members. For those reasons, we encourage thorough and honest logging into your journal, but we naturally understand any request to submit a redacted version of your journal, or to withhold it altogether.

Below is an overview of the content most frequently recorded in an average journal entry:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIMARY INFO</th>
<th>SECONDARY INFO</th>
<th>WITNESSES</th>
<th>DETAILS</th>
<th>ALTERNATIVE CAUSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Record the essential data.</td>
<td>Record secondary info about environmental conditions, if known.</td>
<td>- Who, besides you, also witnessed the event?</td>
<td>In your journal entries, reference and detail any of the sensory perceptions at right that are applicable, and describe what efforts you made, if any, to understand the anomalous occurrence.</td>
<td>Outline any possible alternative explanation for the event you experienced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>your name</td>
<td>Weather conditions</td>
<td>Who, besides you, also witnessed the event?</td>
<td>Auditory</td>
<td>Prescription glasses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>today’s date</td>
<td>Solar activity</td>
<td>Who was present but did not witness the event?</td>
<td>anomalous sounds (music, footsteps, running, knocking, closing doors, etc.)</td>
<td>Earphones/headphones</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the date of the occurrence (if different from today’s date)</td>
<td>HVAC on/off</td>
<td>Who was not present?</td>
<td>strange silence</td>
<td>Illness, agitation, or strong mood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>time of occurrence (as precise as you can make it), in hh:mm</td>
<td>Outside noises (street noise, dogs barking, helicopters, etc.)</td>
<td>Don’t ask anyone else what they witnessed; work alone when you journal.</td>
<td>Taste and Smell</td>
<td>Medication side effects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>room or location where the event happened</td>
<td>Inside noises (blaring tv/music, children at play, appliance noise, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Out-of-place fragrances (perfumes, floral scents, etc.)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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SAMPLE JOURNAL ENTRIES

April 23
23:22
Living Room
Reading; shadow critter moves south to north, new ceiling to my left. My cat sees it too. I watched him before I turned to try to see it. It faded before the wall.

April 24
11:22
Patio
As I cross through the doorway I felt something stab me in the chest on the right, and through my back.

03:00
Bedroom
Cat woke me wailing with a night terror.

April 30
03:16
Bedroom
I had three night terrors last night. I screamed because a ghost (female) was trying to materialize beside the bed.

May 3
07:30
I am startled awake by a woman’s voice saying [loudly; authoritatively], “Ma’am.” No one there inside or outside. Voice was very clear, not muffled. I had earplugs in. [Apparition materialized from the waist up; mutton sleeves, maybe Bohemian; younger ghost, but didn’t disclose her name]

May 6
00:00 - 01:00
Tapping on headboard.