"Now class, I'd like to explain the journal. It'll be an important part of this composition course, but more importantly, it will help you understand yourself better. Have any of you ever used a journal before?"

About ten hands up. Sour looking faces. Doesn't look like they enjoyed the experience. Pity. The concern of the educator is to help the student understand the complexities of . . . Plod onward. Smile. Right leg still stiff. Co-operation. Invite a fellow to answer. Break the ice. Cliché. There's a football type. Hero. Might have a positive attitude.

"Sorry I don't know all your names as yet, but would you, the fellow with the number twelve on his shirt, share your views with us?"

"Yes Ma'am. It was a drag. I had to do a diary in high school and it was a drag. Everyday I had to write something in it and it was a drag.

He should do well when we study repetition. Foiled on the hero bit. To require him to suppress one part of his nature for the benefit of some other part is to create in him an endless conflict . . . Faces. Isn't anyone else going to volunteer anything? Smile. Walk a bit. We are so busy with the occupations of the mind that we have little time for the promptings of the heart. Encourage by looking pleasant. Mutual respect.

"We had to do a journal in high school too, but the teacher never read them. What a waste of time."

"We handed ours in and never got them back."

"I wrote something in mine, and the teacher read it aloud in class. I almost died and I've hated journals ever since."

"We have to encourage the spirit of inquiry and discontent which is already in him, thereby helping him to discover for himself what is true and what is false."

"Yes?"

"What exactly is a journal? We didn't use them in our high school so I don't know what they are."

"You're on. Define. Key words. "Is"ness or "do"ness. The meaning is in them. Things go better with journals.

"Journals are places to create, experiment, write, jot, make mistakes and revise. They'll help you bring what is inside and outside of you together in a way that makes sense."

"Poor pedagogy to explain what should just happen . . . the educator must understand himself . . . Watch how your mind works. Learn. Watch it like you watch a movie. Understand then."

"Your entries may be personal recollections, or pen and pencil probes into your world. Sometimes it even..."

He nodded. The right kind of education means the awakening of intelligence...I hope he understands. The creative impulse makes its own technique—and that is the greatest art. He's still nodding.

"I used to show incoming classes journals from previous students who wanted to share them (I never show these private journals to anyone without the owner's permission), but I'm not doing that anymore. I noticed that the new students would adopt those as models, and I want your journals to be an extension of you."

Smile came easy there. I believe in journals but how do you put growth, discovery, and creativity into words? Verbal symbols. English teacher trying to communicate. Discovery is the beginning of creativeness. They need space. Space to discover self, to create, to grow. Harmony with one-

DO

make specific journal entry assignments but encourage extra entries as well.

DO

enclose things in the students' journals. You may run across a cartoon or picture that fits a student's writing. Enclose it. A student may write three pages on a rock festival and you just finished reading an article on Mick Jagger. Enclose it. (Sometimes they do the same.)

DO

remember "The teacher helps the child to live into art and knowledge as into a single realm." (Centering, M. C. Richards)

DON'T

neglect language power. Heighen constructive thinking and writing by reading and interacting to the substance of journal entries. Find a phrase or sentence that rings, underline it, comment on it, reinforce it.

DON'T

forget "It works not by method but by virtue of the measure of trust between you and the student, who is the likely someone who has learned in school to avoid trust and must learn through you to accept it, as you have to learn it through him." (How To Survive in Your Native Land, James Herndon)

DON'T

bypass the mechanics of writing, but avoid producing anxiety over grammar, usage, spelling, punctuation and capitalization. Try to comment on these elements in terms of communication skill.

DON'T

act as the sole evaluator. While personal, each student should be encouraged to share bits and parts of the journal in intra-class group work. Decide upon days for this small group interaction and don't fret if everyone doesn't "get a turn to read his."

DON'T

ever reveal a journal entry to anyone without the author's permission.

DON'T

limit journal entries to specific genre. Students' imaginations should be the only limit.

DON'T

fail to individualize your written remarks. Conjure up the student. Visualize his strengths and weaknesses. Concretize his likes and dislikes—that way each of your journal statements will be very different.

DON'T

be negative, didactic or moralistic in your journal commentary. Remember, students read and re-read what you have written, so write with patience, understanding and love.

DON'T

overlook the linguistic possibilities of the journal. Inspire entries which include nonsense words (Lewis Carroll's "Jabberwocky"), or new words (Anthony Burgess' A Clockwork Orange), or the flow of language (William Faulkner's The Sound and the Fury), or variations on meanings (Ambrose Bierce's The Devil's Dictionary). Ditto examples and see what students do with such models.

DON'T

grade the journal except in terms of completeness, effort, growth and creativity. In other words, they did it and tried or they didn't. How else can you "mark" an extension of someone's self?

DON'T

attempt the journal unless you intend to spend a great deal of time reading and re-reading. Nothing is more discouraging than having a journal returned with merely a one word response.

DON'T

inhibit emotional growth. The journal, because of its permanence, enables the student to trace his own progress. Undergird, don't undermine this process. Make student self-actualization your goal. Tuck that aim away in your brain and remember it when commenting.

(All italicized sections are quoted material from J. Krishnamurti.)

it is alive and thriving with the journal keepers of the world

NOVEMBER 1972 / 63