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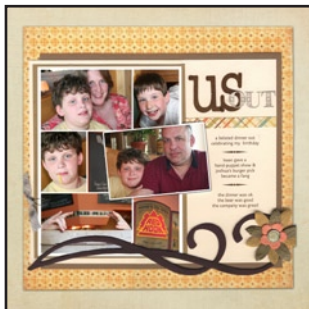
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LESSON #1: Scrapbooking Everyday Life

- Capturing everyday life for the scrapbook page
- Putting everyday life onto the scrapbook page
- Organizing everyday life photos
- Sketch bundle for everyday life pages

CAPTURING EVERYDAY LIFE FOR THE SCRAPBOOK PAGE

The photos that go onto everyday life scrapbook pages have a great variety. Figuring out how you want to scrap them and organize them in your albums requires a different approach from that you might use to scrapbook photos from defined events like parties and holidays.

The challenge in everyday life scrapbooking is to decide how to present photos that can seem almost random in a way that reveals the fabric of your home and



life. Flipping through the stack of photos you wonder: Does that photo really merit its own page? Why does that one matter? How can I showcase this? Can I put those photos together? Do I need to write much for this one or is it obvious? How much context should I keep in the photo? As an everyday scrapbooker, you are photo diarist, historian, sociologist, and memoir writer all in one seeking to document and make sense of your personal world.

There are great benefits to be had from scrapbooking everyday life photos. When you view these pages later—as a part of a continuum—you can see patterns and meanings that you weren't aware of at the time the photos were taken—or even at the time you were getting them onto the scrapbook page.

In this lesson we take a look at the whole, big picture of scrapbooking everyday life, and in future lessons we zoom in and concentrate on distinct aspects of it.

what is the material of everyday life?

You may be scrapping just yourself or you may have children and loved ones for whom you're also scrapbooking. For any of your subjects, singly or together, consider these elements of everyday life—elements that correspond to the major elements in any good story.

- **character**

Who are the people in your "neighborhood?" Everyday life pages will include stories about your roommates,



your family, your coworkers, your neighbors, those you work with, those who provide you services, your friends, extended family, pets, acquaintances and any other "characters" who are a part of your daily life. "You've Been My Sunshine" is a page about "characters" in my life -- the group of 4th graders I tutored in math for the year my son was in 4th grade. This was a weekly outing for me that had an important place in my life. I pushed myself to take a camera in at the end of our year together, when everyone was comfortable with one another and had firmly established routines.

- **setting**

Where are your everyday life stories happening? And what is the "stuff" of your everyday life? Photos and stories about home (inside and outside), workplace, and play spots are materials for everyday life pages. Think always about the macro of a setting (i.e., home, work, hometown) and the micro within each macro spot (i.e., kitchen, closet, garden). When you're taking everyday life photos, be aware of the tools, toys, talismans, decorations, and other items that are relevant, and get them in the photos--perhaps even focusing on them.



“Little Messes Everywhere” shows the setting of my daily life -- my home, in all of its messy glory.

● **plot**

What are the routine activities of your daily life and what are the special stories—big and small—that you’d like to remember? What is the work that you and those close to you do? What are your hobbies? How do you play? In addition to daily routines, consider your traditions (i.e., routines that repeat seasonally or annually). Which routines are done out of necessity



[click here for journaling](#)

and which are a result of personality or even unquestioned habit? “Did You Say Allen Wrench?” is a layout that records an out-of-the-ordinary and fun story from a “day-in-the-life” of my family. “Hobos in March” is another simple story of imaginative play on a snowy day.



[click here for journaling](#)

how do you gather photos of everyday life?

While you may already have stacks of everyday photos waiting to be scrapped, everyday life isn't stopping until you get caught up. Here's a method for ongoing photography and documentation of everyday life.

- **take it as it comes**

Be open mentally to what's going on around you on a daily basis; take photos, and make notes. Keep your batteries charged, a little notebook in easy reach and your camera handy so that you're ready to shoot and record when you want to.

- **plan for it**

Make a regular date with yourself to photograph and write about everyday life at regular intervals. Depending on your life, this might be daily, weekly, or even monthly. Use the "materials" list above, as

well as the prompts in upcoming classes to get ideas for subjects to scrapbook.

- **keep it in order**

Check out the recommendations in the next section of this class, for approaches on organizing your everyday life photos. Also see how to flag those photos so that you can easily see what you've got and scrap them up as you'd like.



PUTTING EVERYDAY LIFE ONTO THE SCRAPBOOK PAGE

The ways to scrapbook everyday life photos and pages are as wide-ranging as the subjects themselves. It helps to think about what your purpose or scope is with a page as you start. What I mean is: Is it simple record? Is it a look at a facet of everyday life over time? Do you want to find a deeper meaning in the everyday? Understanding your intention will help you decide how many photos and which photos to use, how much journaling to include, a page title, and the tone you want to set with your color, motif, and embellishment choices.

1. *leave a record*

Looking at the “materials of everyday life” above, you can see how many facets of your everyday life there are to scrapbook. “You’ve Been My Sunshine” on page 1 is an example of how you can leave a record of the people/characters in your everyday life. “Little Messes Everywhere,” (on page 2) is a record of a setting (i.e., my home!). “Today” is a day-in-the-life page and a record of activity.



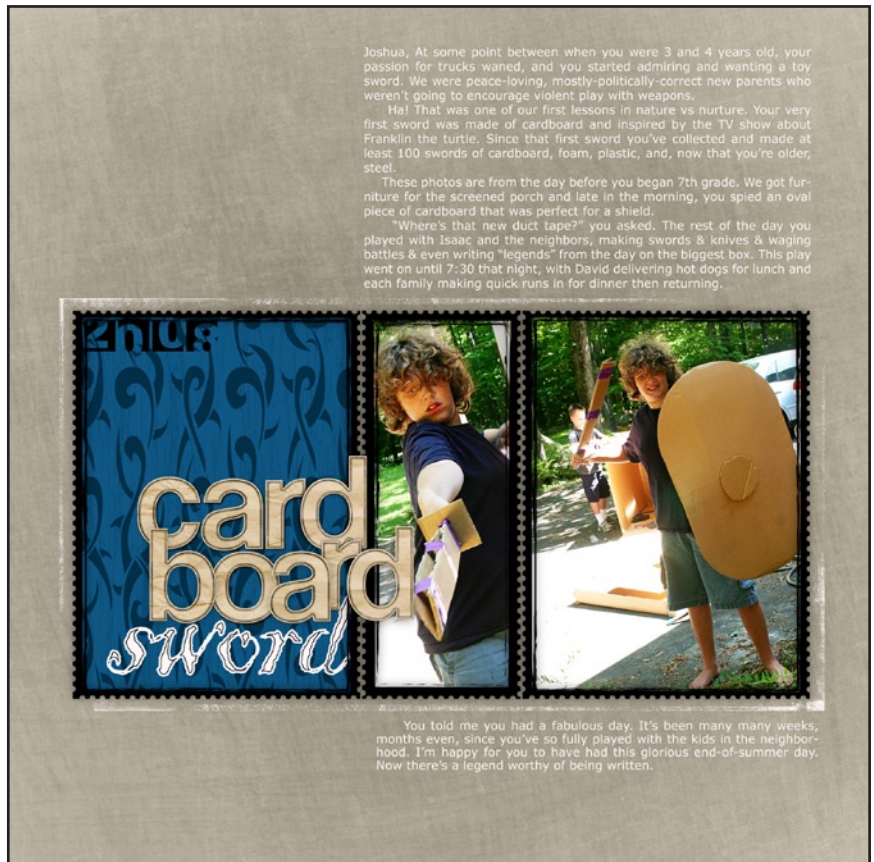
2. *chronicle an activity*

This kind of page uses photos and journaling to show something you did. “Seize the Day’s Puddles” records a day during April break when the children in our neighborhood played in the rain. Scrapbooking this kind of page is covered in more

depth in lesson #5 of this class: "The Incident Report."

3. *make connections to greater meaning*

On this kind of everyday life page, the journaling takes everyday photos beyond a simple record to a page with greater meaning. "Cardboard Sword" is this kind of page-beginning as a record of a day when my sons made cardboard swords with the neighbors and evolving into a celebration of our 12-year-old's undying love for swordplay.



4. *tell a story*

Some of the things you do will have memorable stories within. "Allen Wrench" and "Hobos in March" (both on page 4) are both layout that tell a stories. The stories of your everyday life don't always have photos, and you don't always realize their impact until later. They are, however, well worth recording. In lesson 5, I will cover the forms stories may take in more detail

[click here for journaling](#)

5. *gather onesies and scrap "collections"*

Look for ways to group photos taken at different times. In "World of Possibilities," (below) I found a home for several photos that were "onesies" (i.e., I had no other photos from that activity) and that I really didn't want to put on their own page. The photos here are connected around the theme of playing with cousins at Grandma and Grandpa's house and together they give a rich picture of this subject.

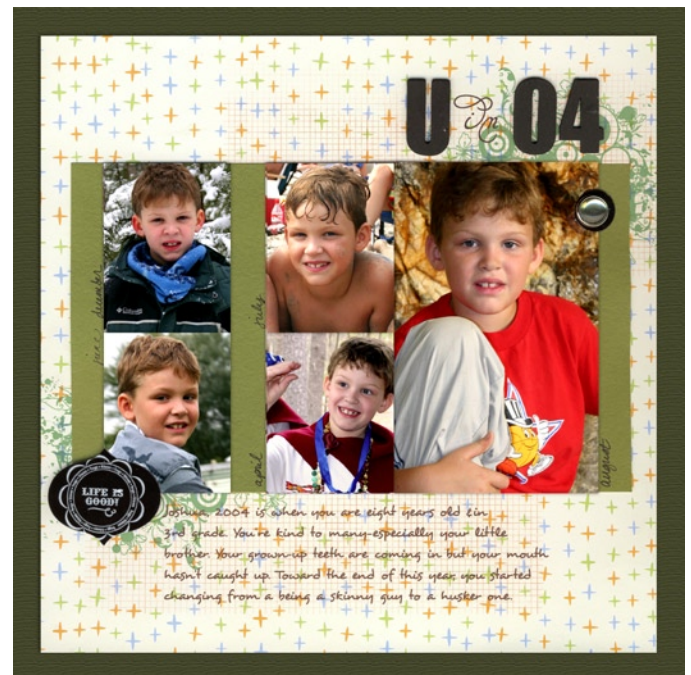
SCRAPBOOKING EVERYDAY LIFE

Lesson #1: Scrapbooking Everyday Life page 9

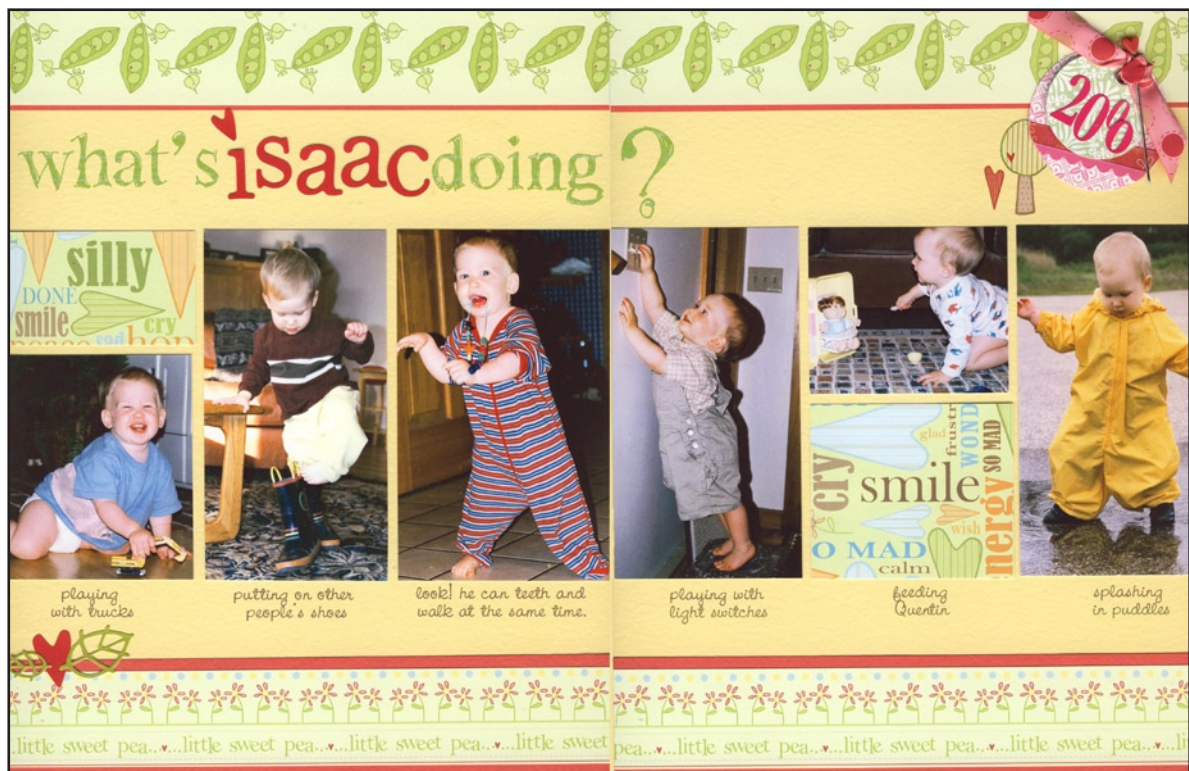
Shooting everyday-life photos can yield a lot of “onesies” – one or two photos from a shoot that don’t really merit their own page but that you want in your album. Grouping them with related photos is a great way to get them onto the page efficiently and, what’s more, within a greater context. Often times these photos have more power collected than when they’re alone. One photo of my Dad fishing is great, but when seven photos of him fishing in seven different spots span a two-page layout, the extent of his passion cannot be mistaken.



[click here for journaling](#)



The photo groups that you scrap are unique to your own life, and many of your best collection pages aren't going to be realized ahead of time, but, rather, months or years down the road since a trend isn't a trend until it's been happening for a while



ideas for collections

- a month- or year-in-review: gather the highlights from a specific time period, record progress and/or changes, perhaps on a house project, a garden's development, or even a baby's growth. "What's Isaac Doing" (above) and "August '07" (on page 10) are both examples of this kind of a page.
- everyday activities: hanging out, playing board games, sitting on the porch, watering the garden; think about what goes on in your home regularly, and you probably have some "onesies" to gather.

SCRAPBOOKING EVERYDAY LIFE

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- local outings that recur: your favorite hiking spot, an apple orchard you go to in the fall, an antique shop you stop by whenever you're in the area.
- themed pairings/groupings: your child with his best friend at different times, you and your pet, a child with grandparents. "Joshua, 1999" and "U in 04" are both collections of photos of my oldest son from one particular year.



ORGANIZING EVERYDAY LIFE PHOTOS

While photos from events (parties, holidays, vacations) can be labeled as a group and filed for obvious retrieval and scrapbooking, everyday-life photos trickle in and can't always be given discrete labels. The following is : 1) a suggested method for keeping all of your photos organized; and then 2) suggestions specific to everyday-life photos.

organizing photos in general

Storing your photos in a chronological and hierarchical order will go a long way toward helping you know what you have and finding the photos you want when you want them. As you take photos, cull close duplicates, photos of low quality, and photos that just don't make sense. Store the rest of your photos with clear labels.

- **digital**

Create a system of file folders that lets you easily browse and find photos. I use a hierarchical and chronological method that starts with a folder for each year. Within each year folder, I create 12 month folders. Within the month folders, are subject folders.

Note that the year and month follow all the way down to the subject folder names. Note also that the year is first and the month is given in a two-digit number (i.e., August is "08"). This way, an alphabetical sort of folders will also result in a chronological sort.

- **prints**

Store prints in acid-free photo boxes and use tabbed index cards to identify groupings. Sort the photos by year, and within year by month, and within month by subject. Use a tabbed index card for each subject and on each tab identify all three of: year, month, and subject. For example:

- * Aug 2007 Beach
- * Aug 2007 Home Repairs

organizing everyday-life photos

- **storing**

When you're dealing with a few shots here and there, rather than dedicate a folder or index tab to every shoot (i.e., afternoon in the yard, funny wrestling shots) keep a folder just for everyday life photos. Depending on your life, you might keep one everyday-life folder for each month, each season, or each year. Long ago, I started keeping monthly folders called "YYYY MM At Home" (YYYY=year and MM=month) and that's where I drop mine. It works for me and I know where to find things. Your preference may be different.

- **scrapping**

Periodically go through your Everyday Life folders (or tabbed groupings of prints) to figure out what you'll scrap and how.

Find the everyday stories or incidents you want to scrap. For example: supper with the Johnsons, sick day, planting the garden. If you have prints, put the photos together in an envelope or behind a tab, labeled and ready to scrap. If you have digital photos, use photo organization software to "flag" photos or put them into digital "albums" labeled and ready to scrap.

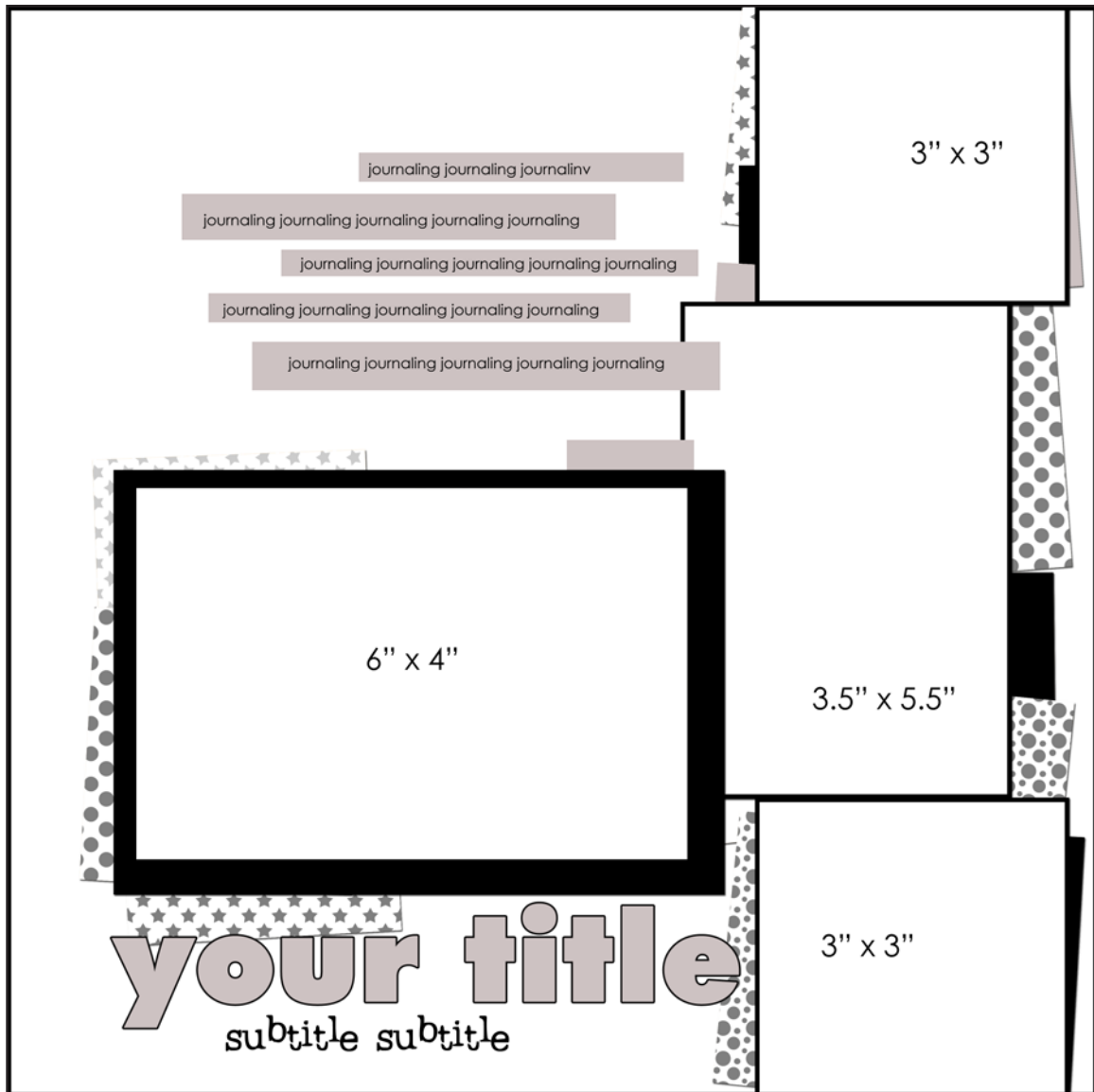
Identify photos that you'll group with others for "collection" pages, and file them by their category in the box of prints or with your photo organization software. Examples of categories are: the boys together, playing with neighbors, the cat outside.

- **an ongoing approach**

Available technology offers many opportunities to be an everyday-photo diarist. While I've never really kept a journal, I have come to think of keeping my blog up to date as an important part of my scrapbooking. Two and a half years ago, I began taking a photo almost everyday. What's more, I uploaded them to a blog calendar and added comments. A few months down the road, my children were looking at the blog and reading my comments and loving what I'd written and the memories these photos

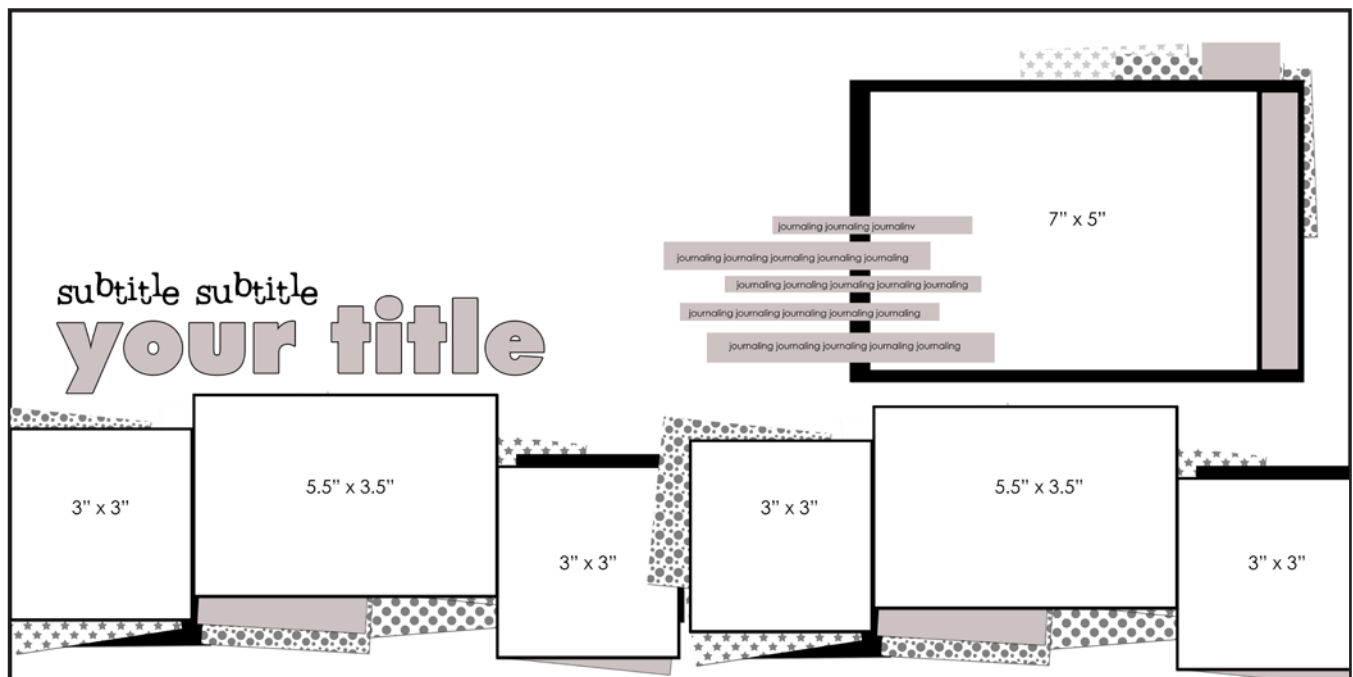
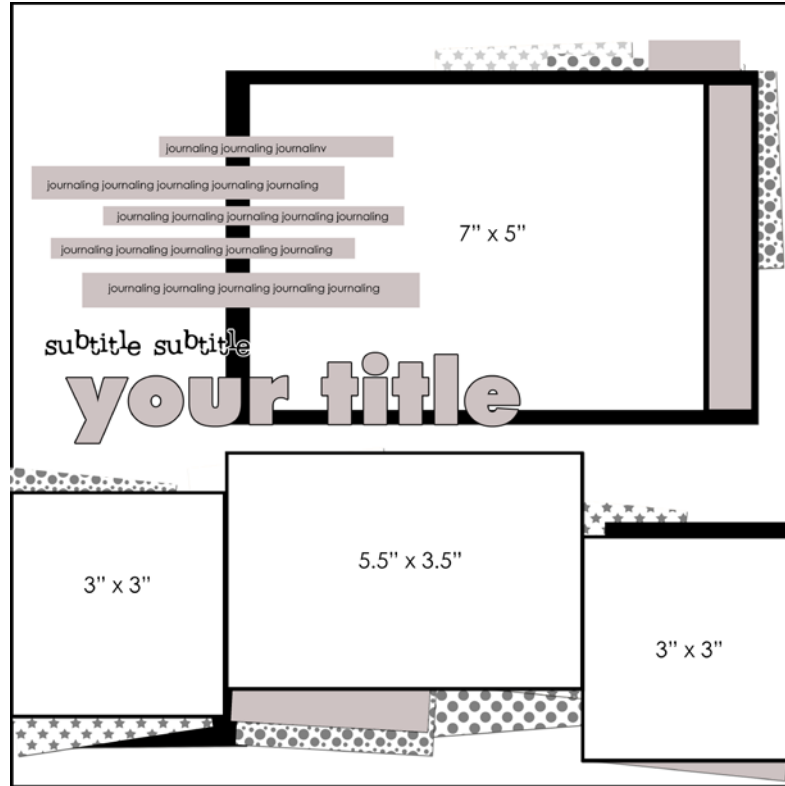
triggered of just everyday stuff. Many of the details I capture if I journal soon after photos are taken, I would not remember a couple of months later. Many days now, when I want to scrapbook, I look through my blog, and see a photo that reminds me of something I want to scrap. Since the blog is dated, I know just where to find the rest of the photos (with my "YYYY MM At Home" system), AND, I often have ready-made journaling for the page. My photo blog. My blog. This same approach could be taken with a print-a-day inserted in a notebook and handwritten notes.

SKETCH BUNDLE FOR EVERYDAY LIFE PAGES



SCRAPBOOKING EVERYDAY LIFE

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Journaling: Allen Wrench

On the last day of summer break, the 3 of us set up the new wicker furniture on the screened porch. The coffee table required assembly and, in the course of our work, one of us often said allen wrench. As in: “Do you have the allen wrench?” “Where’s the allen wrench?” “Give me the allen wrench.” This kept reminding us of the line in 42nd street: “ALLENtown? You’re going back to ALLENtown?” And so requests for the allen wrench were met with loud replies: “ALLEN wrench? You want the ALLEN wrench?” And it cracked us up a lot. *click here to go back to layout.*

Journaling: Cardboard Sword

Joshua, At some point between when you were 3 and 4 years old, your passion for trucks waned, and you started admiring and wanting a toy sword. We were peace-loving, mostly-politically-correct new parents who weren’t going to encourage violent play with weapons.

Ha! That was one of our first lessons in nature vs nurture. Your very first sword was made of cardboard and by the TV show about Franklin the turtle. Since that first sword you’ve collected and made at least 100 swords of cardboard, foam, plastic, and, now that you’re older, steel.

These photos are from the day before you began, 7th grade. We got furniture for the screened porch and late in the morning, you spied an oval piece of cardboard that was perfect for a shield.

“Where’s that new duct tape?” you asked. The rest of the day you played with Isaac and the neighbors, making swords & knives & waging battles & even writing “legends” from the day on the biggest box. This play went on until 7:30 that night, with David delivering hot dogs for lunch and each family making quick runs in for dinner then returning.

You told me you had a fabulous day. It’s been many many weeks, months even, since you’ve so fully played with the kids in the neighborhood. I’m happy for you to have had this glorious end-of-summer day. Now there’s a legend worthy of being written. *click here to go back to layout.*

Journaling: Hobos in March

After a very warm and melting weekend, we got snow on Monday--not enough to cancel school, but enough to get you out a half hour early. AND it was the 2nd day of the time change for daylight savings, so it was like a bonus afternoon in the snow. While your dads and other neighbors

snowblowed the driveways, you guys made a hobo home uder the pine bush at the top of the Kings's driveway. Joshua happily made his own fort in the snow by our driveway. When I came to visit you told me your hobo names. We are so fortunate you can play this way and then go home to houses with heat and food.

As for Dusty Joe: it seems every time I see him in the snow he's thinking about eating snow or he is eating snow. And that's not about being a hobo--that's about being a kid. *click here to go back to layout.*

Journaling: World of Possibilities

At Grandma & Grandpa's things are different. There are places to go and be and do and there are wondrous treasures everywhere. For a child, it presents a world of possibilities. *click here to go back to layout.*

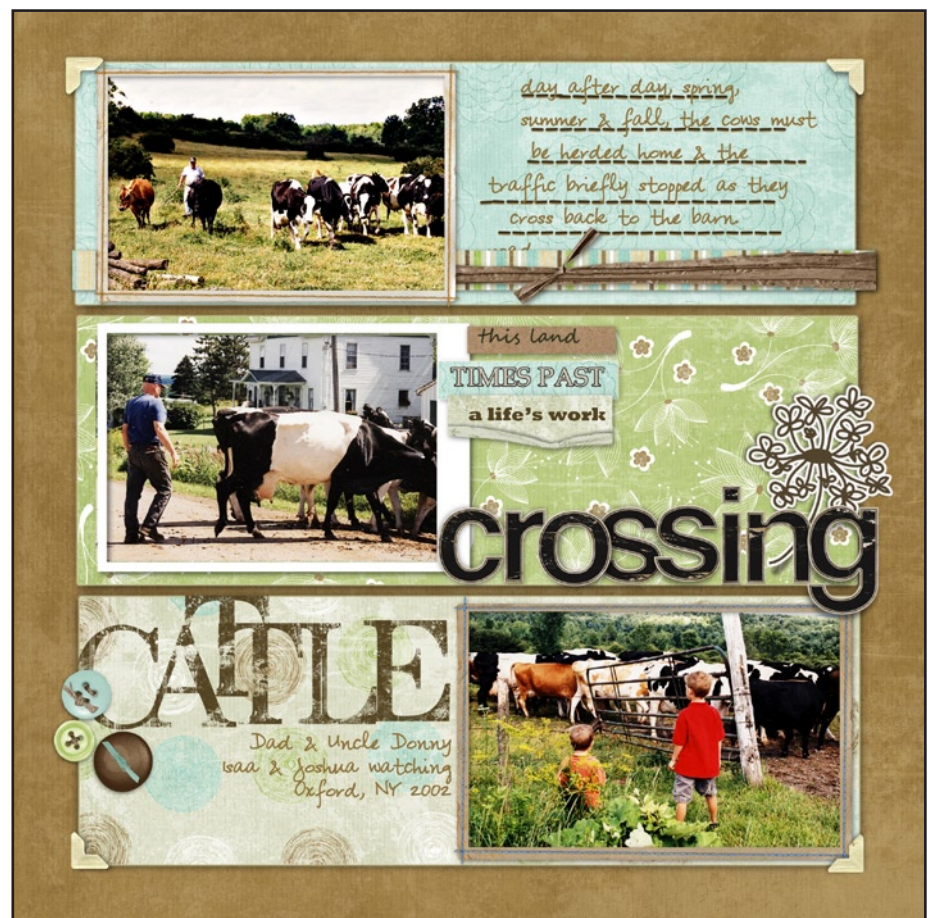
LESSON # 2: At Home

- Everyday life at home
- Taking everyday life photos
- Scrapbooking photos of people
- Sketches for scrapbooking everyday life

EVERYDAY LIFE AT HOME

Whether you live alone, with a pet, with children, and/or with other adults, your home life is unlike that of anyone else's. Your routines, your collection of cooking spices, your hobbies and routines are unique. Here are some prompts for scrapbooking what goes on in your home. Use this list to get ideas for subjects to scrapbook AND as a spur to taking photos-like, perhaps, the inside of your fridge or your bag by the door before work.

The first 19 years of my life, morning and evening cattle crossing in good weather could be counted on like death and taxes, and this layout records and celebrates this constant in my family's life.



the routines in your home

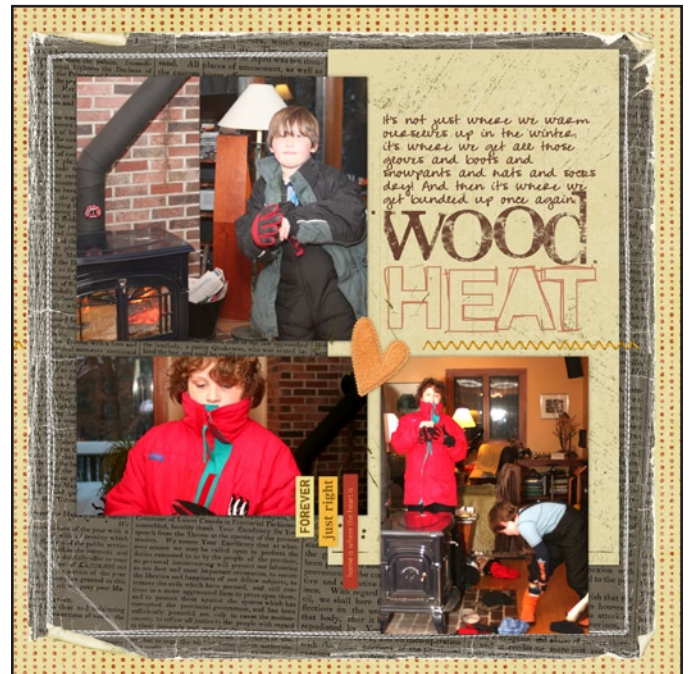
So how do you do it at your house? Do what? Do just about anything. Our routines come out of personal preferences, necessity, tradition, and sometimes just plain old happenstance. Scrapbooking your routines is a fun way to step back and appreciate your daily life as well as create a record of it.

I could list routines that I know of for you to scrapbook – but what if you have routines around activities I don't even realize? So--grab a pencil, consider these categories of scappable at-home everyday life, and start jotting answers and ideas for pages.

- what is a typical day like for you?
What is the routine of an entire day? And, then, what are the routines around the smaller parts of your day?



“Bedtime Delay Tactic #28” tells the story of what bedtimes for my children were like in January 2008. It’s a year and 1/2 later now and things have already changed. Glad I scrapbooked this!



“Wood Heat” captures the feeling of what it’s like around our house in the winter--so many clothes to bundle up in and they’re usually drying by the wood stove.

Once you've thought about that--take this exercise farther and answer the question for several kinds of typical days you might have: weekdays, workdays, weekends, holidays . . .

Example: This is how a typical non-summer weekday goes for me. At 5:30 or 6 am I get up first and spend time alone. From 6:30 - 8:15 I get the boys up, fed, packed, and on their separate buses. From 8:30 - 2, I work at my desk. From 2 - 3:30 I clean house & generally get ready for everyone to come home. Dinner's usually at 6. Then there's dishes, homework help, often laundry and more work. Boys to bed and more work.

That's the "big picture" of my typical weekday. I could then zoom in on any of these areas and find several pages I'd like to do. The morning alone time could include my chair, my diet coke, my laptop and emails, and "Morning Joe" on MSNBC.

- what are your routines around out-of-the-ordinary days?

Do you have a particular way of approaching shopping, doctor visits, long drives, whatever it is that you do less regularly but that, still, you do in your own way.



These layouts look at how we handle “special occurrences” in our home. “I am a Schlepper” scrapbooks my propensity for packing LOTS of stuff when I go to the beach. [CLICK](#) for journaling. “Power Outage” is a look at how our routines around the too-frequent power outages we experience. [CLICK](#) for journaling.



- what are your routines around particular seasons?

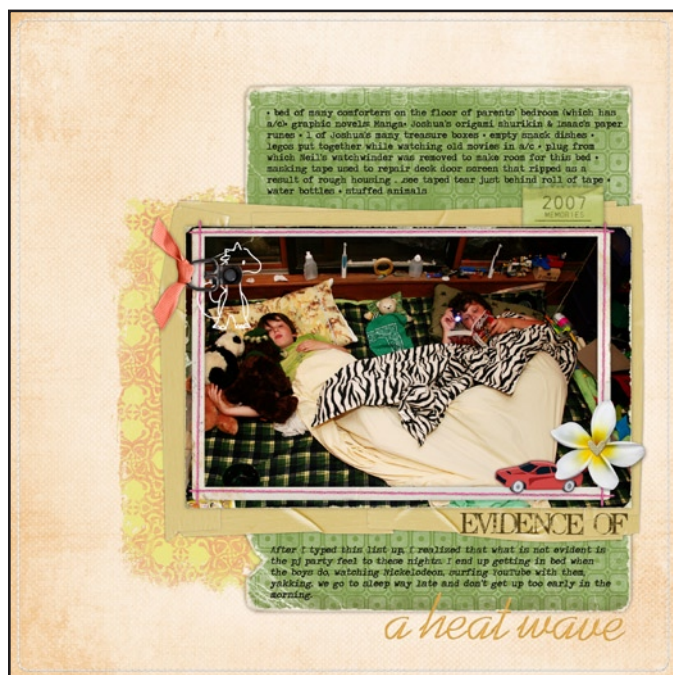
Climate and holidays are most likely to spur these kinds of routines. Once winter arrives around here, we need to get our boots and snowpants out of storage. What's more, we need to rearrange our limited storage to accommodate these extras clothes and make them accessible. When spring arrives, there's yet another clothing change over. What's more, spring where we live means a lot of raking of the sticks and additional leaves that came down over the winter.

What do your seasons demand of you? Do you plant a garden? Do you enjoy shopping for fall clothes? Is there a "battening" down of the hatches you do if cold weather is moving in? Seasonal activities for keeping your home running smoothly are fun to scrapbook so that you remember where and how you were living, what current technology demanded or offered, and how things change over the years.

- where do your routines come from? Finally, think about the origins of your routines—about whether personality, necessity, tradition or something else is driving them. Which routines come



“Don’t Be Fooled” and “Evidence of a Heat Wave” both record our routines and necessary objects for different extremes of weather.



out of a personal attitude? For example, is attending opera or theater essential to a good life in your mind and do you have routines around it? Are you a do-it-yourselfer? Do you live in an area with a lot of rain or snow or sun, and does that drive a routine?

the people & culture of your home

Your "ways" or your home's culture is a fascinating subject. This quote is about one "tribes" knowledge of their own unique home culture:

We know one another's faults, virtues, catastrophes, mortifications, triumphs, rivalries, desires, and how long we can each hang by our hands to a bar. We have been banded together under pack codes and tribal laws. -Rose Macaulay

Here are a few things to think about as you observe and scrapbook the daily life and culture of your home:

- who (if anyone) do you live with? how has this come about? how do the different members of your home (including pets) impact daily life?
- what do you call things? what do you call each other? what are frequent expressions and sayings in your home?
- what role does work play in your life or in



Here are two layouts that look at how my family does things; i.e., our culture. "Up Over Head" is about what we call a particular spot -- a phrase we don't find odd until we say it to someone new to our lives. "The Players" is an examination of the "gaming" personalities in our family -- with a fun analysis of each player. CLICK for journaling.



the lives of others in your home?
what are the attitudes around it?
how much time does it consume
and what are both its benefits and
detriments?

- what do you do for play in your home? how often and how well do you play? what are the objects used in your play (books, yarn, music) and how did you acquire them? how do others regard your play? what does it mean to you? where do you play? inside or outside? are particular play activities done in a specific spot in your home?
- what role do faith and religion play in your daily life?
- how is money a factor in your home? how is it regarded? how hard is it to come by? what are your behaviors around spending and giving and what emotions are connected to money?

For each of these, think about which you'd like to document, which you'd like to think more deeply about, and what the incidents and stories are that you could tell to really illustrate "how it is."

The layouts on this page take a look at the play habits of my husband and my oldest son. My husband loves riding his bike, and my son is always looking for craft projects that have to do with weapons -- the latest being modifying nerf guns to shoot harder and look cool. [CLICK](#) for "Riding Late" journaling.



food, shelter, & "stuff"

- food

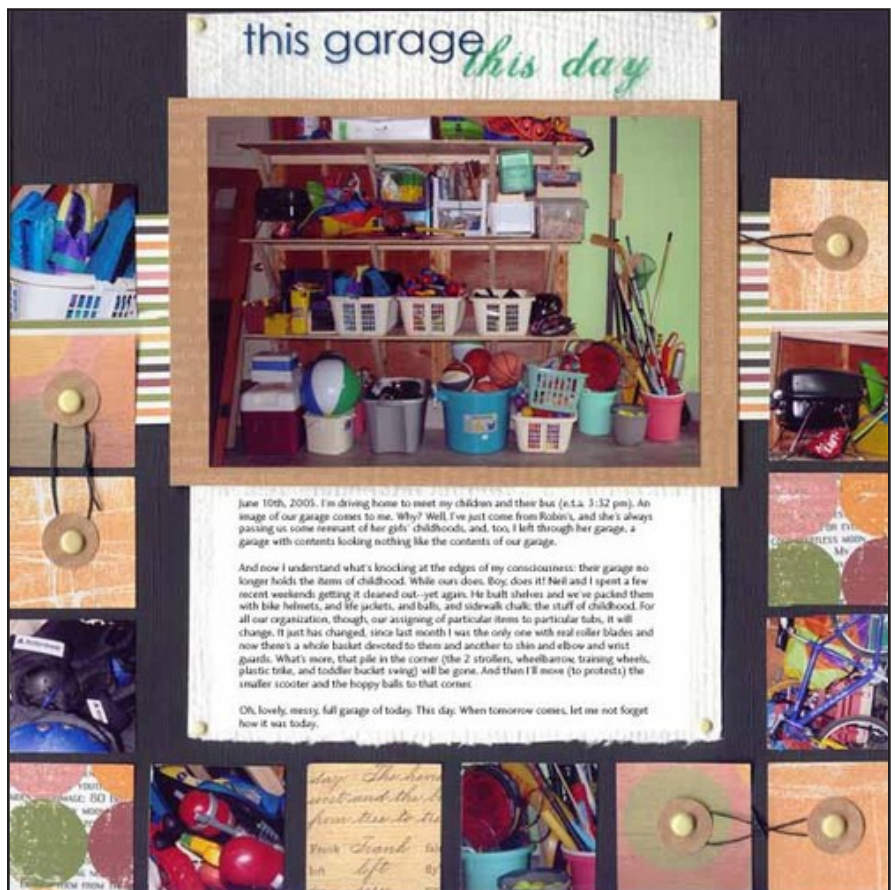
Food is one of those necessities of life. How do you approach the various aspects of it in your home? Think about the following and see what it inspires you to scrapbook:

- ◇ *ingredients*: shopping, storing, your pantry and/or fridge contents
- ◇ *preparation*: who does it and how
- ◇ *meals*: favorites, snacks, where you eat, which plates you use for everyday meals, typical seating arrangement

- things

The items that are in your home, as well as the items that you regularly procure for your home, reveal not only your taste, but the rhythms of your daily life. Stop and look around your home, and--here's the tricky part--identify which items in your home *are relevant* to the story of who you (or others in your home) are.

Example: My husband is obsessed with biking and with shoes -- and we have storage for shoes in odd places. There's a basket of biking shoes in the corner of the kitchen. There's a shelf over the door in the mudroom full of his shoes.



"This Garage, This Day" is one of my favorite layouts ever. I captures our garage and its contents at one moment in time, several years ago. The journaling considers how ever changing the things in our life are right now as our children grow. [CLICK](#) for journaling.

There are always at least 10 pair under our bed. While my sons and I each get a half shelf for our shoes in the mudroom, my husband has a full shelf and then a plastic tub that's always full of the overflow. And me? Well I have a nook off our bedroom devoted to scrapbooking. My youngest son has what we call "the wall of love" (floor-to-ceiling shelves full of stuffed animals), and my oldest son has a huge assortment of swords at the foot of his bed -- everything from the Dollar Store pirate sword from 8 years ago to a walnut Viking waster. Just reading these details I've written here, you've gotten ideas about who we are.

- shelter

Shelter is another necessity of life, and you could scrap many aspects of it, ranging from a record of the physical details to journaling about how you feel about it. The preview lesson for this class on "Scrapbooking Your Everyday Places" covers this topic in more depth.

Think about how you could scrapbook a record of how your home looks--inside and out. Include your favorite spots, quirks (i.e., noisy furnace), charm (i.e., southern sun in the living room), décor, the constants, the changes brought with different seasons, as well as transforming remodels, or simply the effect of moving some furniture.

TAKING EVERYDAY LIFE PHOTOS

Think about this next statement and let it guide your everyday photography:

The photos you take of everyday life are not necessarily pictures from memorable events, but, rather, they are representative illustrations of your life. What I mean is: you don't snap that photo of taking out the garbage because it was one very special garbage night, but rather to have a snapshot of a recurring activity in your life.

Now that I've shared my profound (;-) thoughts on everyday life photos, here are some practical tips:

Keep the batteries charged, the card empty, and the camera handy.

This way it's easy to take photos. What's more – if you're photographing people, hand the camera (ready to shoot) to them, and ask them to take a couple of pictures of you. Get your kids, spouses, and friends in the habit of including you.

Consider and include context.

That living room décor is going to change eventually, so get parts of it into the photos. The same goes for parks, restaurants, and other favorite haunts. Take some photos that are farther back to reveal the location.

Be the wall(flower).

Try to be unobtrusive so that your subjects continue what they're doing naturally. Shoot for a while without saying "look here!" Use your zoom lens to stay back and still get closer-in shots. Listen to



This photo of a friend and her new boyfriend was taken AFTER some posed shots---and THIS is the shot they both love most. Not only have I captured a bit of their relationship, I've also got the context of the crowd at the school picnic, which immediately recalls that day for them.

what's going on—and maybe use it in your journaling. When you have patience and can get your subjects relaxed and natural and engaged, you can get photos that reveal relationships--through their activities, their body language, how and when they look at each other and even how they engage with each other when you ask them to pose.

Make sure to get one good shot

It can be really hard to get good group activity shots (at the pool, on the basketball court, having a snowball fight, playing ball in the yard). It's a disappointment when your photos end up full of small subjects and lots of landscape. While

See the photo here of my father and his granddaughter. You can sense his gentleness and her interest. The detail photos of the birdfeeders give context to the photo of them which might otherwise not be immediately understandable.



you should absolutely capture that energy and context, try, also, to take the time to get one good shot. This could be a close-up of one or two subjects, a group pose at the end of the event, or a picture of something important in the environment or activity (i.e., a mittened hand holding a snowball). When you have this one good shot, it will focus your page and make clear what the activity is.

The action photos from a neighborhood snowball fight are given focus when the group shot is added.

When you're not going to be at the main event take a photo before or after with some indication of what's coming and use that with journaling— the concert tickets, the sleepover bag packed, the golf clubs in the trunk. The photos here show my youngest son just before he left for his first sleepover--an event I didn't get to witness but sure want to remember.



Connect the people in your photos to their activity

Any time your scrapbook page has photos of people “on stage”—playing a game, preparing a meal, packing their briefcase—the viewer can more quickly understand your subject. If there are items nearby that are a part of the activity—a shovel, a book, a fishing pole—get them into your subjects’ hands.



SCRAPBOOKING PHOTOS OF PEOPLE

Photos of people are naturally engaging. The following are tips for cropping and placing photos of people onto the page for best results.

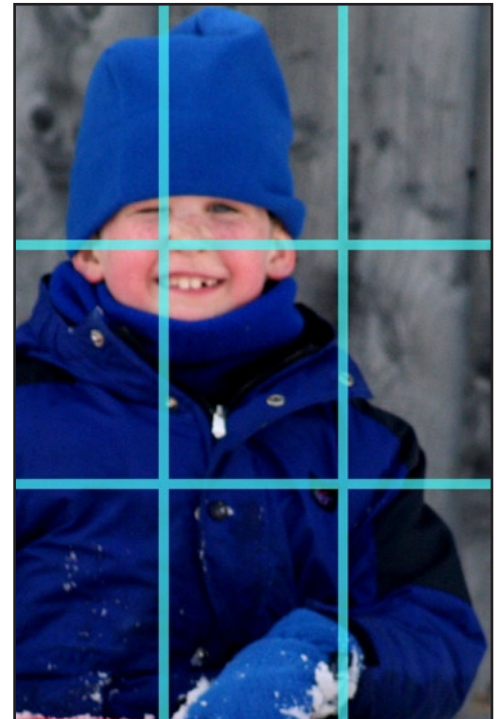
mix up your crops

Avoid having every person positioned in the middle of the photo. Some approaches for this include:

- thinking about the sweet spot. Mentally divide your photo into three equal columns and three equal rows and try to crop so that your subject's face sits at an intersection of dividing lines.
- cropping at a variety of distances. Crop some photos close in on the subject's face and shoulders and others with relevant context farther back.
- rotating your crop for a bit for energy. This is most easily done with photo-editing software. In Photoshop, you can drag out your cropping area, then position your cursor at a corner of the crop area, click and drag to rotate.

see where they're looking

The direction in which your subject is facing or looking is the direction in which the viewer's eye will move. Consciously crop and place photos of people to guide



the viewer's eye into your page. If you have multiple subjects, you may even use these photos to guide the eye through the layout and then back around again.

- Position the photo of a subject looking to the right, more toward the left side of your page (and vice versa). Be aware, also, of subjects and their activities implying downward or upward movement and place accordingly. A photo of a subject looking down would be better placed toward the top of the layout rather than at the bottom where it would guide the eye off the page.
- When a subject is looking straight ahead, use cropping to direct the eye. If you crop so that your subject sits more on the left side of the photo, the viewer's eye will move to the right (and vice versa).

Compare the two rows of photos here. The first is randomly arranged. The second uses more careful placement and cropping to move the eye across the row and back.

On the next page, see how I used even more photos from this shoot -- all portraits on a layout.





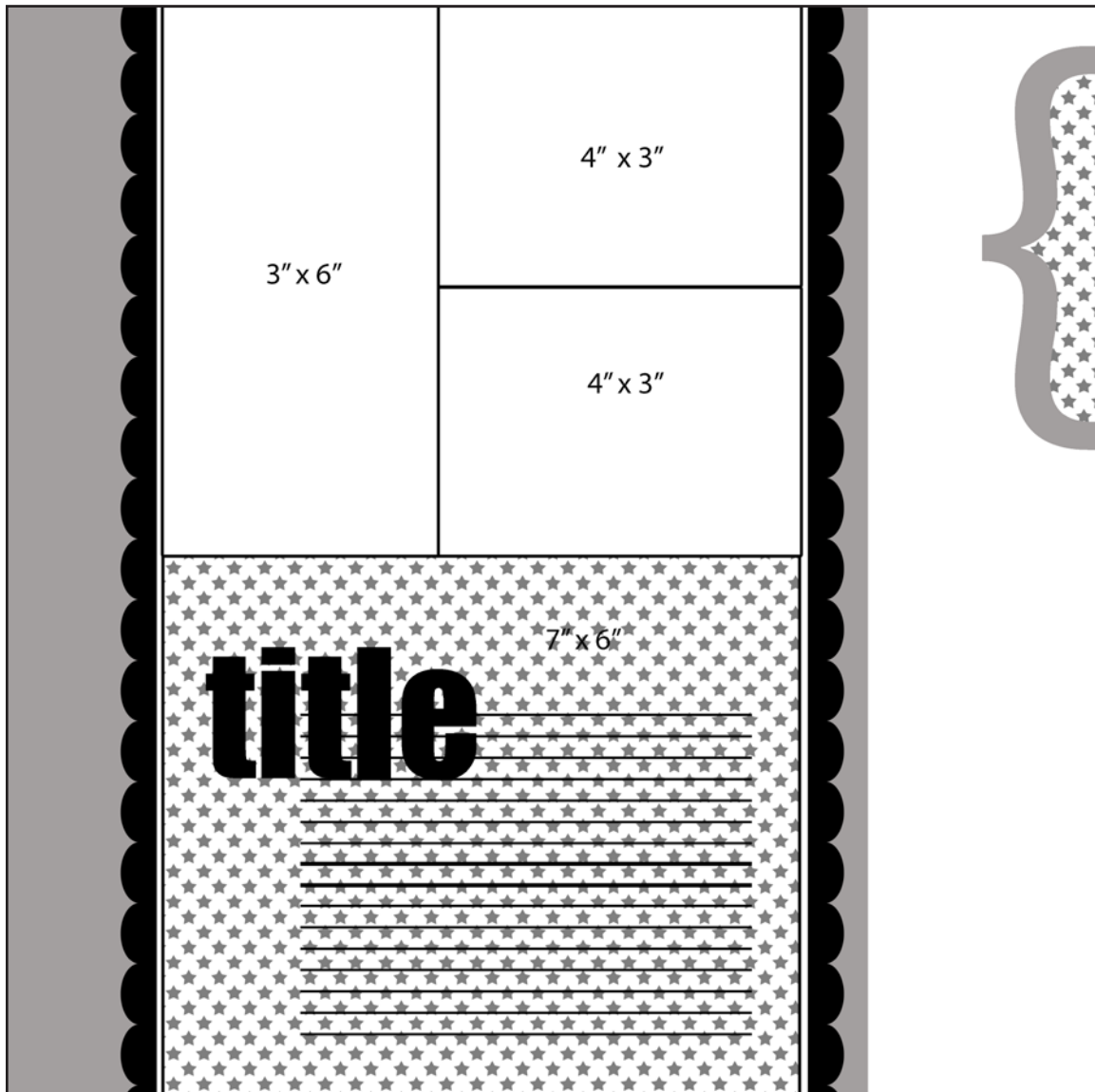
The cropping and placement of these photos keeps your eye moving through the layout rather than off the page.

GET IT SCRAPPED!

Now it's time for you to use these prompts and suggestions to scrapbook your everyday life. You should already have some lists going from the prompts in the first section, and hopefully they've spurred ideas for pages you'd like to scrap. If not, here are some activities to get you going:

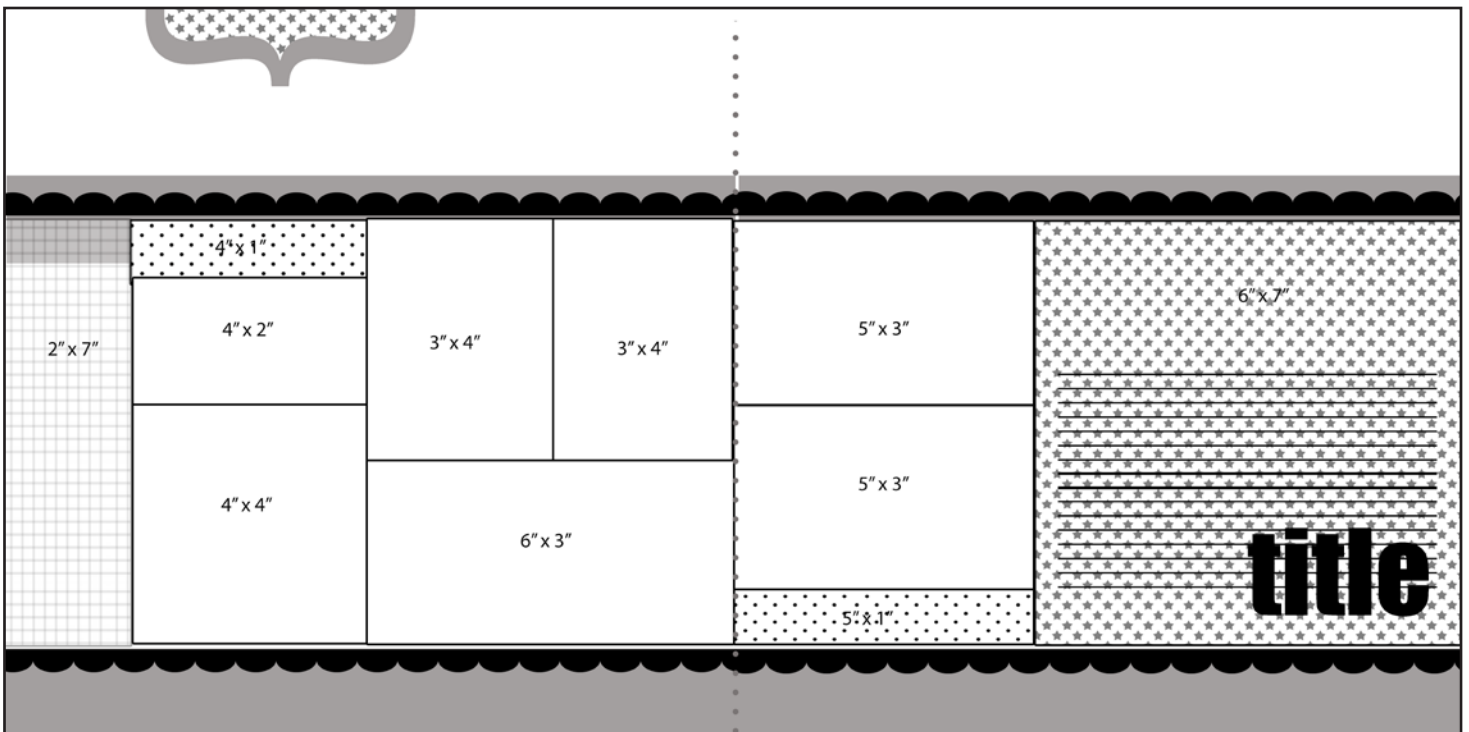
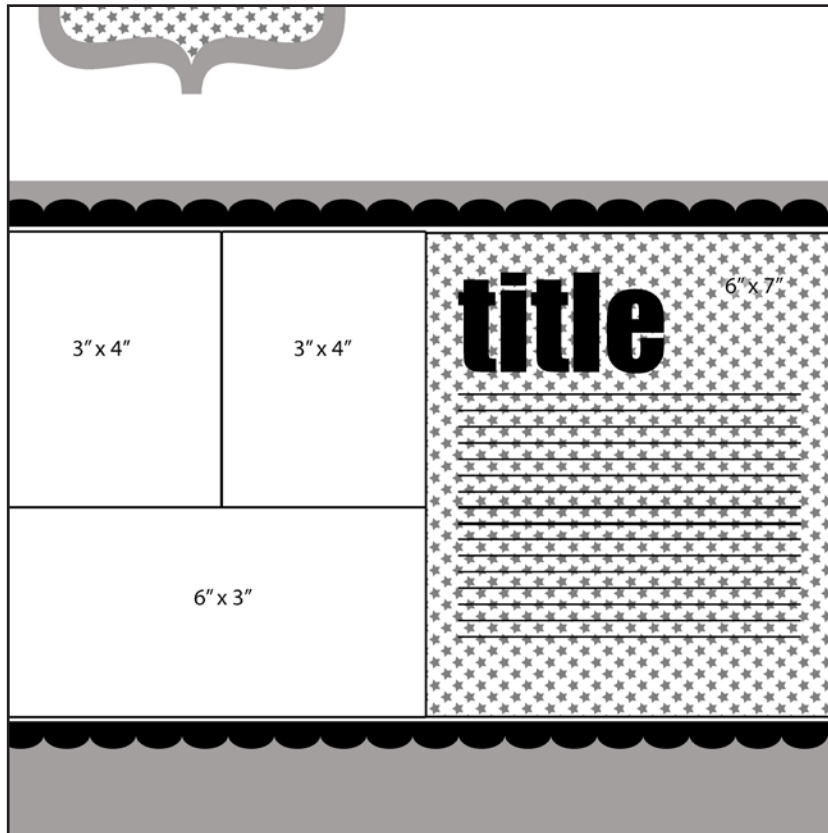
- Outline a typical day for you. Select one bit of that day and scrapbook it.
- Make a list of your "seasonal" routines. What do you do when a new season arrives? Select one of these and scrapbook it.
- Make of list of your hobbies and playtime activities at home. Scrapbook one of them.

SKETCHES



SCRAPBOOKING EVERYDAY LIFE

Lesson #2: Everyday Life at Home
page 34



JOURNALING: "Schlepper"

I take a lot of stuff to the beach--shovels, buckets, chair, pop-up tent, food, drink, extra clothes, sand-sculpting tools. This behavior extends to other outings. I think it has to do with wanting to be prepared--but, even more, it may be that I think if I'm prepared, I have control & then all is right with the world. In my defense, I'd like to point out that at least I'm a self-aware schlepper. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: "Power Outage"

Isaac said, "You (speaking of people in general) get excited when you think you're getting a power outage and then you get it and it's not as good as you thought." Smile On this Saturday night in February, our power went out at about 5:30 pm. I had just finished making dinner, the weather wasn't bitterly cold, and it wasn't a huge inconvenience--but there sure was way more complaining than (I think) folk in NH ought to make (And we are NOT getting a generator!) After we ate, I walked to the end of the road and found that a pickup truck had careened into the pole feeding our neighborhood's underground utilities. No one was hurt, and I got the boys and we hung out at the site yakking with neighbors & firemen and watching the progress of taking the old pole down and retipping the pick-up truck, and then we went and got Neil to join us for a while. When we got back we hung out in our bedroom with candles. Isaac got into bed next to Neil and fell asleep immediately, and Joshua spent time doing some coordinate graphing problems he'd downloaded earlier. We went to bed with extra blankets and the power came on about 1 a.m. And that's a true story. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: "This Garage, This Day"

June 10th, 2005. I'm driving home to meet my children and their bus (e.t.a. 3:32 pm). An image of our garage comes to me. Why? Well, I've just come from Robin's, and she's always passing us some remnant of her girls' childhoods, and, too, I left through her garage, a garage with contents looking nothing like the contents of our garage. And now I understand what's knocking at the edges of my consciousness: their garage no longer holds the items of childhood. While ours does. Boy, does it! Neil and I spent a few recent weekends getting it cleaned out--yet again. He built shelves and we've packed them with bike helmets, and life jackets, and balls, and sidewalk chalk: the stuff of childhood. For all our organization, though, our assigning of particular items to particular tubs, it will change. It just has changed, since last month I was the only one with real roller blades and now there's a whole basket devoted to them and another to shin and elbow and wrist guards. What's more, that pile in the corner (the 2 strollers, wheelbarrow, training wheels, plastic trike, and toddler bucket swing) will be gone. And then I'll move (to protests) the smaller scooter and the hoppy balls to that corner. Oh, lovely, messy, full garage of today. This day. When tomorrow comes, let me not forget how it was today. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: "Up Over Head"

Since I can remember--probably since Dad moved here at ten years old--we've called the barn's top floor and the area outside and around it "up over head." The sliding barn door and the plank bridge over to it are so familiar to me. And now, even though Dad has very few cows and doesn't put in much hay, Joshua and Isaac like to go "up over head," whenever we're visiting. To get a wagon backed into the third floor, Dad unhooks it from the tractor and holds the tongue for steering and runs the wagon back into the mow. I love going here, to the narrow band of floor looking down to the mows below, the pigeons cooing, the hay elevators, the bales, the chaff on the floor, and the dust in the air when a shaft of sun comes in the small peak window. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: "Players"

Joshua

strength: strategy

weakness: wiggles, yaks, and reveals cards

Monopoly piece of choice: cannon or horseman

player color preference: it depends on his mood

games of choice: Battleship, Risk, Heroscape, All the King's Men, Lionheart

defining attribute(s): honesty and fun spirit

Debbie

strength: experience

weakness: sympathy for losing player

Monopoly piece of choice: shoe; player color preference: yellow

games of choice: Any kind of Rummy, Chinese Checkers;

defining attribute: optimism (this from Joshua)

Isaac

strength: logic and fantastic rule recall

weakness: fear of losing

Monopoly piece of choice: dog

player color preference: blue or red

games of choice: Checkers, Mastermind, Rat-a-tat-cat

defining attribute: competitive nature

Neil

strength: anticipation of opponents' strategy

weakness: lets guard down when confident

Monopoly piece of choice: car

player color preference: yellow or orange

games of choice: Gin Rummy, Backgammon

defining attribute: ruthlessness

[CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: "Riding Late"

November 7, 2008. A wet, misty day, but you were riding -- out at 8am to one meeting, back home and then out again at 1pm for another meeting. I'd thought you'd be home earlier--esp since we've changed our clocks. You called at 4:15 and 20 mins later I was out waiting for you. as it got quickly dark. You cherish every extra ride you can squeeze out of a NH year. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

LESSON #3: Friends & Extended Family

- Everyday life with friends and extended family
- Revealing character on the scrapbook page
- Sketch bundle for scrapbooking everyday life

EVERYDAY LIFE WITH FRIENDS AND EXTENDED FAMILY

Taking photos of times spent with friends and extended family and getting them into your albums gives you pages that spur not only memories of the specific times you're recording, but, also, of the nature of your relationships. Over time, some friendships fade while new ones grow strong. Familial relationships and customs change too: teen cousins hanging out with each other look a lot different from toddler cousins playing with toys. A look at your album pages over time is a great revealer of these trends.

Pull out your notebook and go through the following points, making lists and jotting down ideas that occur to you. This is where you figure out

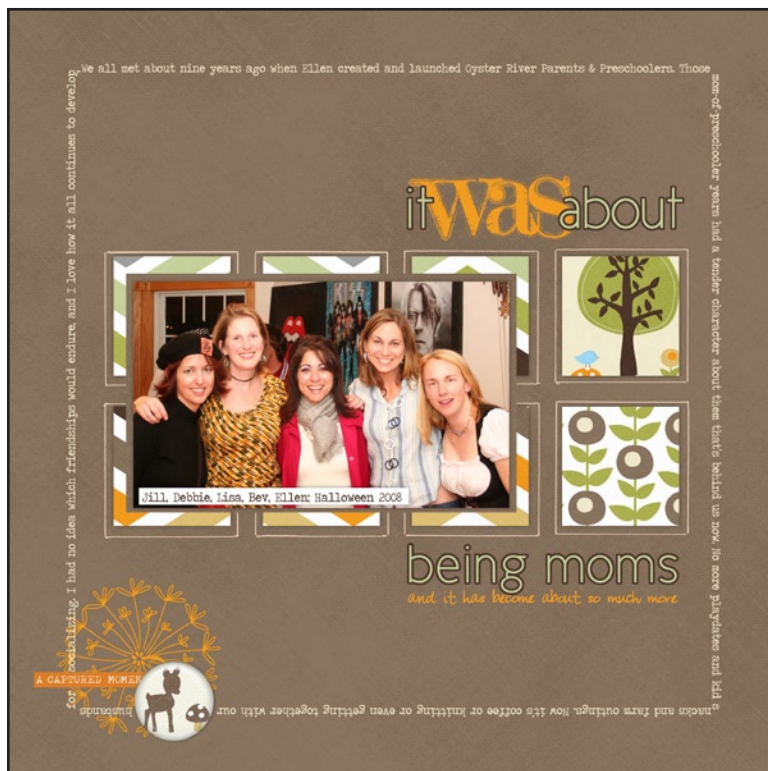


"Coffee Mates" is a layout about MY friends -- the women I have coffee with when the kids are in school. [CLICK here](#) for journaling.

who the people in your “daily”hood are and how they figure into your regular activities.

who are the friends and extended family you spend time with?

- Who are your own friends?
When do you spend time with them, and is it usually just your gang or are the others in your household incorporated?
- Who are the friends of your fellow householders?
What is the nature of the

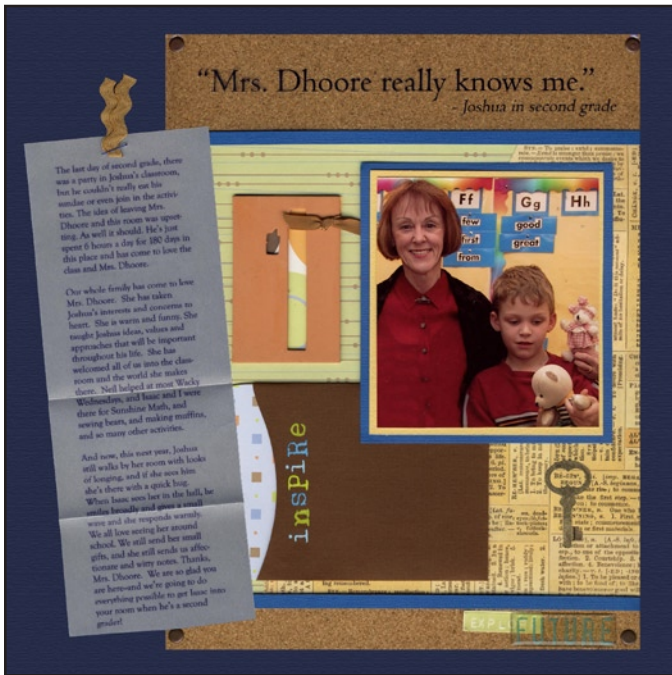


The stories of your family members and their interactions with friends are a great record of personality and just . . . how you live. In “With Hope In Your Hearts” I told the story of a summer afternoon that my youngest son spent with a friend creating a “Huck Finn” experience. [CLICK here for journaling.](#)

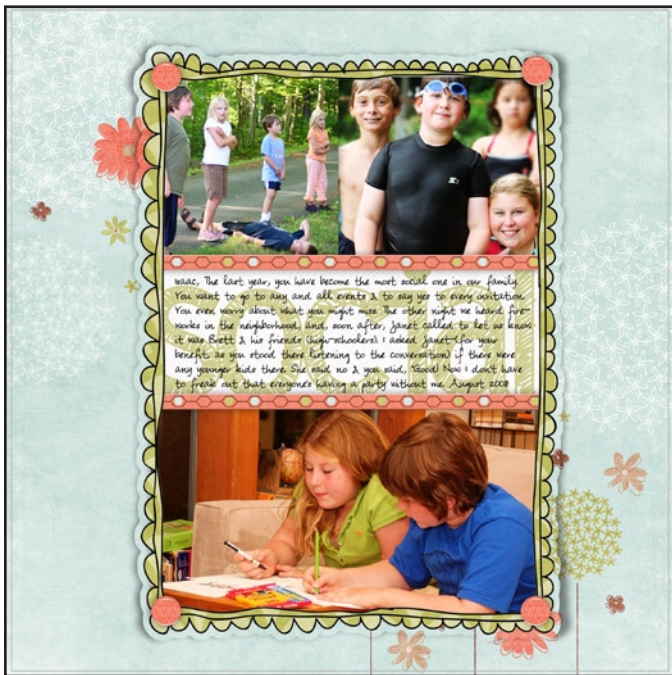
It’s not always easy to find friends that everyone in your house enjoys, but when you can, it’s awesome. “It Was About Being Moms” is a layout that celebrates the evolution of friendships. [CLICK here for journaling.](#)

relationships that your children, roommates, partners, and/or spouses have?

Lesson #3: Friends & Extended Family page 42



"Mrs. Dhoore Really Knows Me" is a page honoring my oldest son's relationship with his 2nd grade teacher. [CLICK](#) for journaling.



"Social" not only shows my youngest son with several of his friends and considers his personality in light of his friendships. [CLICK](#) for journaling.



On "Its Measure" I used photos of our favorite summer outing to scrapbook how a recent summer measured up with others. [CLICK](#) for journaling.



"Country Collection" shows my sons with their closest relatives in front of Grandma's barn -- the hub of her business (which we are all interested in and proud of).

CAPTURING & REVEALING CHARACTER ON THE PAGE

When you're scrapbooking photos of people, you've got an opportunity to document and show so much more than is immediately obvious. The things they're doing and how they're doing them, what they say and how they say it, and even the items they're holding or using or wearing may all point to more about their personality.

The examination of what people do and what it means has been going on as long ago as 475 B.C., when the Greek philosopher Heraclitus proposed that "A man's character is his fate." Heraclitus placed the fates right inside a person and maintained that we are all in control of our own destiny. Later, Aristotle saw the connection between action and character differently. He believed that individuals do not act in isolation. He spoke of how actions happen within a complex web of relationships and events that affect many more than just one person. Let's take a look at what you can do on your scrapbook pages to reveal character and leave a meaningful record of the people in your life. The following are four ways to take your pages beyond simple records of activity and convey more about the players' personalities.

reveal character by studying the artifacts

Look to the items in your photos--clothes, toys, tools, trinkets--and think about what they reveal about your subject that may not be obvious from the photo alone. As in the allegorical paintings I studied in art history, these artifacts often function as a metaphor or symbol for something more, perhaps a preoccupation, a style, or a need. "Much to Admire" is a study of my son's continued love of knightly toys even as he gets older.



CLICK for journaling.

reveal character by conveying abstract ideas with concrete evidence

Whenever you can SHOW something, as opposed to (or in addition to) TELLING, the viewer of your page gets to come to their own conclusion about your subject. Why should you care if the viewer figures it out on their own? To begin with, this draws them more deeply into your page and the events you're scrapbooking. It connects them to your story in an active way, it's satisfying to observe evidence and connect the dots on one's own, and it's all more believable.

The way to show--as opposed to tell--is to accumulate evidence, to build up the concrete details we talked about in lesson #2. Your job is to include the details that reveal your subjects' opinions, sorrows, aspirations, prejudices, phobias, interests, regrets, joys and much more.

An abstract is a concept or idea not associated with any specific instance. Examples are "good," "proud," and "kind," which I used to title my layout here. What was I thinking in so obviously using this abstract? I was thinking I sure better provide some evidence that my son is kind--and I did in my photos and my journaling.

The two photos in "Kind" (on the previous page) are from an instance of kindness related in the journaling. These photos were, in fact, what spurred me to create the page. These everyday photos of a scraped knee took me to an exploration of one aspect of my oldest son's personality.

I began the journaling with an introduction to the page's subject by writing about a conversation I'd recently had with my oldest son about him being "kind," I dropped in a few lines of dialogue from that moment, and it served as an introduction to the photos and the story going on in the photos, which I wrote about next. From there I added several more pieces of "evidence" (specific and particular incidents) to make sure I'd earned my abstract title.



CLICK for journaling.

reveal character when you consider what behavior implies

If Aristotle is right and “action is character,” then a look at what your subjects do and the choices they make is a great place to start to make pages that show who the people on your pages really are. When you’ve got photos from an outing, event, or everyday situation that you’d like to scrap, try this:

- Begin by asking what is/are your subject(s) doing?

In “Persistence is the Up Side of Stubborn,” my son is rolling a hoop at a local museum.

- Connect this obvious action to what it says about the character or personality of your subject(s), including what it might say about attitudes, approaches, and just a general way of being.



CLICK for journaling.

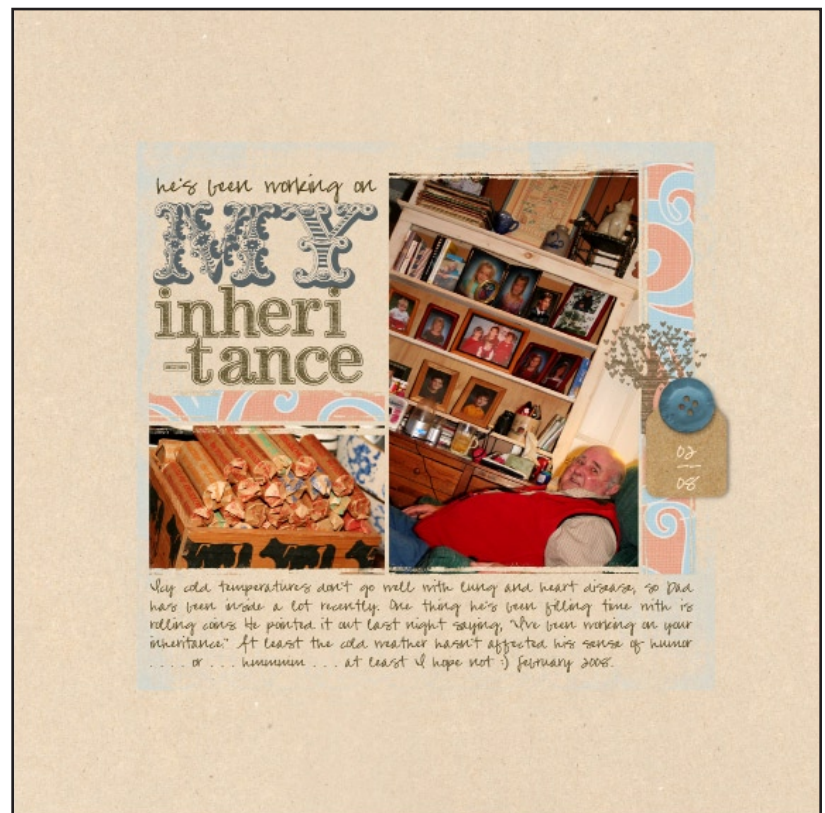
My son did not want to stop trying to get the hang of rolling a hoop. He kept doing it over and over. This is how he approaches many things in life and the journaling uses the photo as a springboard to talk about this aspect of his personality.

reveal character by including voice

“Let’s see what she says about that!” or “What did he say about it?” How often do you hear or even express this exact sentiment? There’s an anticipation and satisfaction in hearing people speak. Whenever you can convey what a person says and how they say it, you’ve got a character-revealing record.

You can convey voice by:

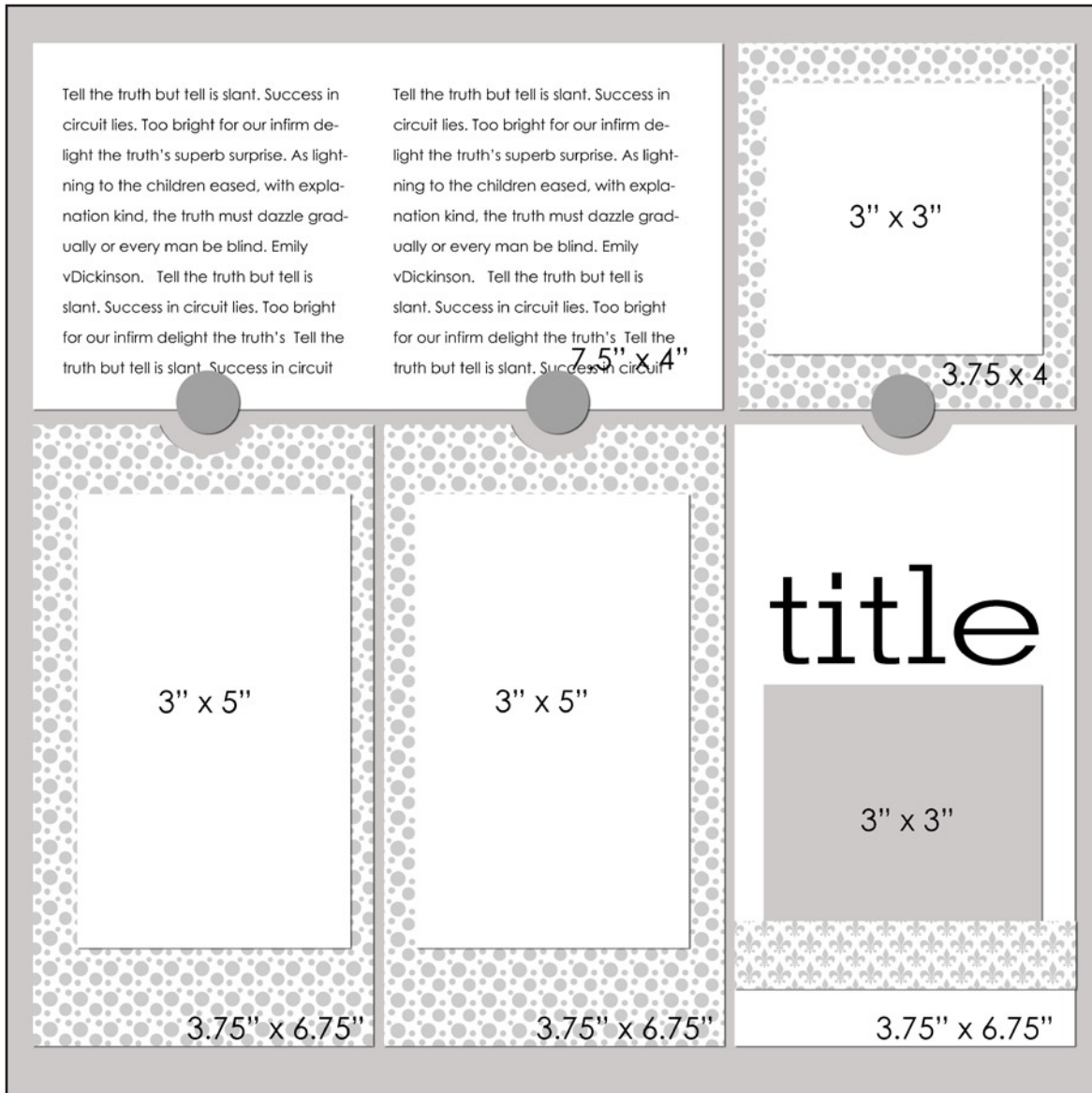
- Including direct dialogue. This would be specific things said and placed in quotation marks.
- Including indirect dialogue. This would be a recounting of a conversation but not with the specific words of the speaker.
- Writing from your own point of view in the way that you speak and think to capture your own voice.
- Writing with a 1st-person point of view, but as if you were your subject, trying to express thoughts as they would.

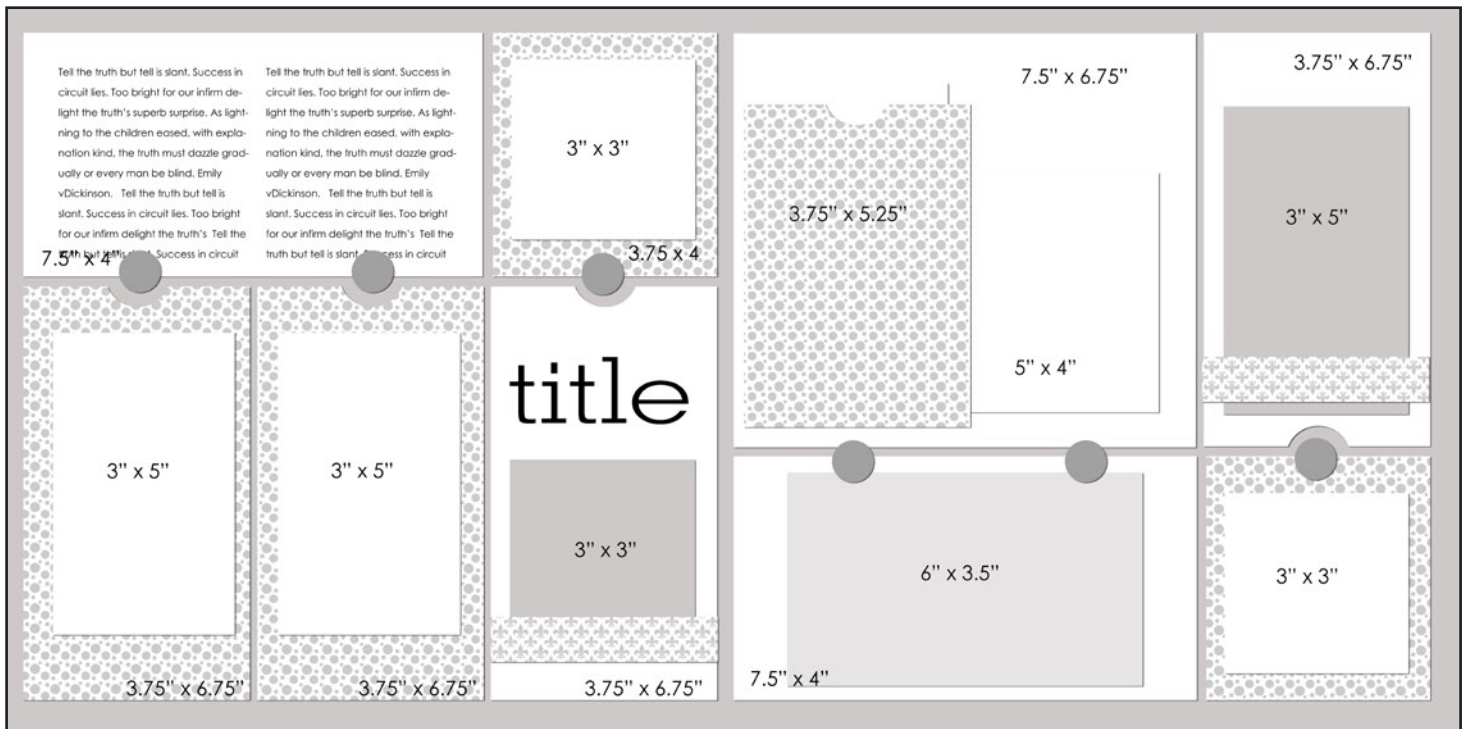
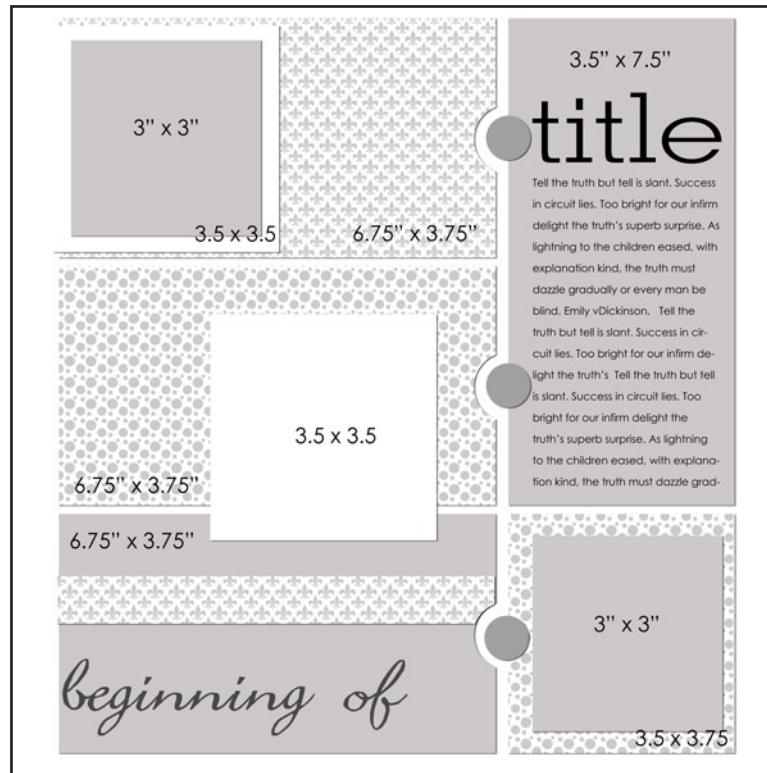


CLICK for journaling.

The journaling in “My Inheritance” is brief and to the point and includes one short line of dialogue from my Dad. With this, I don’t need to comment on how he said it because of the wry humor behind the statement. What I do include, though, is his tough health situation which is important context since it shows how he’s bearing up and keeping a sense of humor in hard times. I included a photo of my Dad smiling at me which cues the viewer to his good humor. I also included a photo of the “artifact” here -- the rolled pennies.

SKETCH BUNDLE FOR SCRAPBOOKING EVERYDAY LIFE





JOURNALING: “All This & More.”

Brought to us by . . . Barb, aka Mom, aka Grandma. You have made this meal . . for how many years? 40? at least? and while the faces around the table slowly change over time, there are always many happy ones. You not only make FABULOUS food, you make us all feel welcomed & well-loved. Thanks, Mom. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “Coffee Mates.”

Coffee on Thursdays is easier to pull off when the kids are in school. However, summer doesn't mean we need to see each other any less. Thanks, Elaine, for making calls and getting us all to the beach on this summer Thursday. I loved the whole day, and so did the kids. Jill, me, Bev, Elaine. Newcastle. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “Dadz In the Hood.”

Three very different guys with, still, much in common, including our neighborhood, young children, an appreciation of current culture, & similar hopes for your families & country. When I saw you together this last Sunday, I understood that you all get each other. You all like each other, and when you come together whether at the bus stop or a party, you enjoy each others' company and value each other's presence in our neighborhood. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “It Was About Being Moms.” We all met about nine years ago when Ellen created and launched Oyster River Parents & Preschoolers. Those mom-of-preschooler years had a tender character about them that's behind us now. No more playdates and kid snacks and farm outings. Now it's coffee or knitting or even getting together with our husbands for socializing. I had no idea which friendships would endure, and I love how it all continues to develop. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “Its Measure.” When I look back at any particular summer, I take its measure by several guides and one of them is the character of our beach outings. This summer of 2008 it was all about Jenness. When we weren't travelling and it wasn't raining, this was our preferred spot. Our company: the Mangans and the Waters -- the family of Joshua's new friend Charlie. A few others

made cameo appearances, many promised to show but didn't, and so these friends predominated. Other memories: we got a rolling cooler, the wagon started falling apart, Elaine always brought doughnuts, we began using an umbrella instead of the pop-up tent, I was often in pain or sick (tooth & ears), we usually parked in the \$10 lot across from the meters, and our meeting spot was 4 houses down on the non-lifeguard side. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “Kind.”

One day this past school year, Joshua, you talked to me about how you had several friends who were really POPULAR--and how they were your friends even though you weren't popular. “What do you mean?” I said. “People like you!” “Well, yeah, people like me because I'm kind, but these guys play sports and have their own band.” You weren't at all unhappy to consider yourself liked for your kindness and a step removed from being popular. And you ARE kind. Here, you've just brought Isaac in on the WAHHHmbulance after a fall in the yard, and I told him to sit while I got a bath running, but you wanted to soothe him and grabbed this book and started entertaining him. It's more, though, than when one of us is in immediate trouble -- you're the one who remembers if I've been sick or bothered by something the day before and you ask how I am and really wait to hear. I see you sometimes with Dad when he's tired and in pain and you spontaneously give him a huge hug. Even when you're away on a sleepover, if you & your friends are online, you check to see if Isaac's online and give him a holler, calling him “shortstuff” and sending that trademark kindness of yours hurtling through cyberspace to touch us all. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “Meeting Erin & Maisie.”

I'm not good at taking time to spend with friends --- let alone make new ones—but as I got to know Erin online and realized she didn't live all that far away from me, getting together seemed like a good idea. It turned out to be a great idea. I loved being able to talk in real life with someone about the online Designer Digitals community where we both spend so much of our time. We were immediately comfortable together. What's more, it was lovely getting to know Maisie --- to see the girl I'd read so much about-- in action. Thanks, Erin & Maisie for a lovely morning & here's to many more. October 2008. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “Mrs. Dhoore.”

The last day of second grade, there was a party in Joshua’s classroom, but he couldn’t really eat his sundae or even join in the activities. The idea of leaving Mrs. Dhoore and this room was upsetting. As well it should. He’s just spent 6 hours a day for 180 days in this place and has come to love the class and Mrs. Dhoore.

Our whole family has come to love Mrs. Dhoore. She has taken Joshua’s interests and concerns to heart. She is warm and funny. She taught Joshua ideas, values and approaches that will be important throughout his life. She has welcomed all of us into the classroom and the world she makes there. Neil helped at most Wacky Wednesdays, and Isaac and I were there for Sunshine Math, and sewing bears, and making muffins, and so many other activities.

And now, this next year, Joshua still walks by her room with looks of longing, and if she sees him she’s there with a quick hug. When Isaac sees her in the hall, he smiles broadly and gives a small wave and she responds warmly. We all love seeing her around school. We still send her small gifts, and she still sends us affectionate and witty notes. Thanks, Mrs. Dhoore. We are so glad you are here--and we’re going to do everything possible to get Isaac into your room when he’s a second grader! [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “Much to Admire.”

At about 5 years old, Joshua loved getting and playing with Papo figures of knights, horses, kings and other soldiers. By his 10th birthday he wasn’t playing with or thinking to buy them very often. I got him a knight and horse for his birthday, though, because I know he always appreciates treasures.

He opened this gift last, and his eyes started watering when he saw it. I thought maybe he was disappointed--maybe he had his hopes on something he didn’t get. I started making apologies: “Maybe this is too young--”

He said that he wasn’t upset.. “I’m happy,”

“Are you crying?”

“I’m happy, though. I’ve wanted this exact one forever.”

Here he is a growing-up 10-year-old who not only loves his knights, he understands what these toys have meant to him AND about him. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “My Inheritance.”

Icy cold temperatures don't go well with lung and heart disease, so Dad has been inside a lot recently. One thing he's been filling time with is rolling coins. He pointed it out last night saying, "I've been working on your inheritance." At least the cold weather hasn't affected his sense of humor or . . . hmmm . . . at least I hope not. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “Persistence.”

Isaac, when you saw hoops at Strawberry Banke you HAD to try rolling them. & then try one more time. & again. You started figuring it out. You love mastering new skills & are willing to stick with a task even though you're not good at it at the beginning. I love this persistence. & I will try to recall it whenever I'm up against that vein of stubbornness in your personality. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “Social.”

Isaac, The last year, you have become the most social one in our family. You want to go to any and all events & to say yes to every invitation. You even worry about what you might miss. The other night we heard fireworks in the neighborhood, and, soon after, Janet called to let us know it was Brett & his friends (high-schoolers). I asked Janet (for your benefit, as you stood there listening to the conversation) if there were any younger kids there. She said no & you said, "Good! Now I don't have to freak out that everyone's having a party without me. August 2008 [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “With Hope In Your Hearts.”

Isaac, You came home one Friday and said you needed to have Tom over because you guys were going to build a raft and go on a 2 or 3 day trip. On Sunday, Tom came, and you asked me if you could have a particular piece of plywood in the basement. As I sat on the screened porch with the mom of Josh's friend, I heard hammering. Brian had brought you some wood from a tree they'd cut down & you'd found hammers & nails. The river was high and moving faster than usual because we'd had a lot of rain. I found a rope to tie to the raft which you carried down and launched. It would not stay afloat with your weight, but you played with it just the same. The biggest joy was that you 2 had thought it up AND made it happen. 09/08. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

LESSON #4: THE EVERYDAY LIFE OF YOU

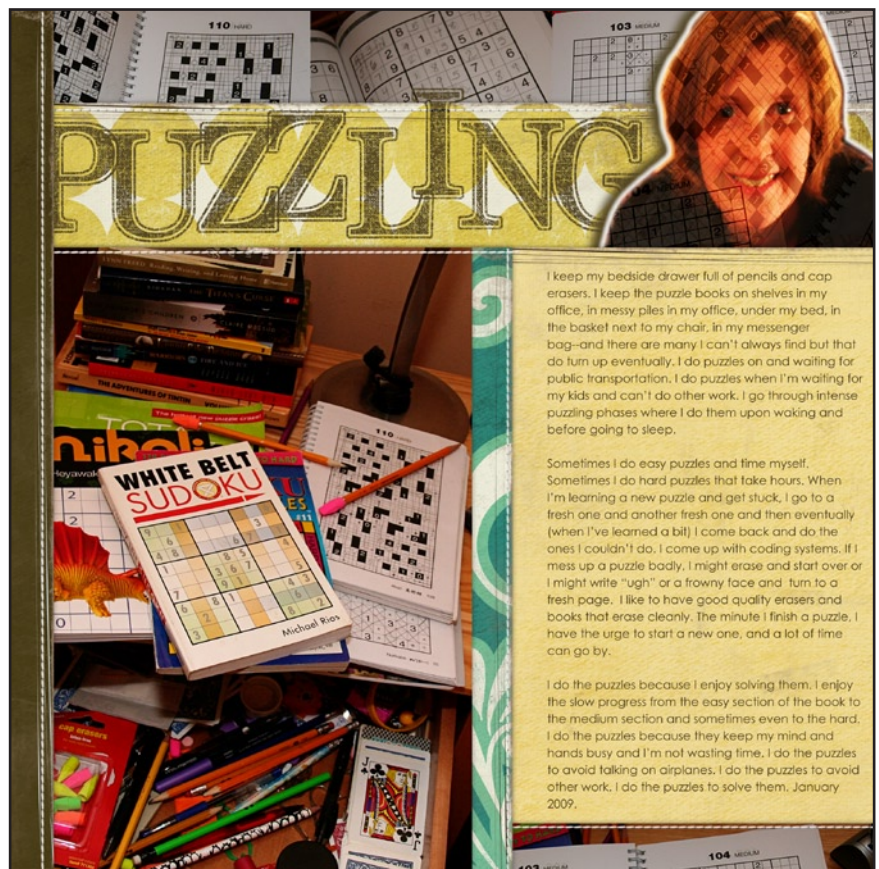
- Your everyday life
- When you don't have any, many, or good photos
- Get some perspective on your pages
- Sketch bundle for scrapbooking everyday life

EVERYDAY LIFE FOCUSED ON YOU

You are scrap-worthy, and it's time to put some of your scrapping efforts toward pages that include the basic facts of your daily life--including your feelings and even your opinions on wide-ranging topics.

Start scrapping yourself now and do it in an ongoing way, because you are always changing. How you experience things right now will be different than it was five years ago or five years in the future.

Wondering where to begin? Here's a list to jump start some ideas. As the ideas for pages start flowing, you just might want to write them down,



“Puzzling” is a page about my little hobby/habit and all that goes along with it. [CLICK](#) for journaling.

because there's probably a lot more material than you realize and it would be a shame to miss any of it. The following are ideas for pages about your everyday life.

- **consider your personality**

What do you know to be your likes, dislikes, habits, interests, weaknesses, strengths? All this makes good material for a scrapbook page. And then do another page thinking about how others see you. What are your characteristics that others find interesting? (NOTE: The third section of this lesson on Perspective has lots of helpful information for approaching this kind of page). "Puzzling" on page 1 is a page about one aspect of my personality.

- **consider the physical details of you now**

What details do you think of as defining you at this time? The nose you inherited from your grandmother? Your style of dressing? Your hairstyle? Your tendency to sunburn?

- **tell a recent story that features you.**

What is something that happened recently that you were a big part of? A story like this will have/should have a lot of



Here's a story about me that my husband told me to get down -- and I did it right away, complete with as much dialogue as I could remember. **CLICK** for journaling.

interesting context about your life right now--little details that may not come out any other way.

- **consider your beliefs**

What is your outlook on life and what do you value and how do you feel about any number of topics? Pick a topic that's important to you to scrap. Pick a topic that's in the news. Pick your reaction to a recent personal event. I made "I Believe In Consequences" to defend/justify my response to some everyday activity in our neighborhood that was getting on my nerves.

- **consider your things**

What is the stuff of your world? Getting it on the scrapbook page is a useful and (sometimes) fun angle to take as you leave a record of your everyday life. How you live and work, your values, your hobbies, and your health are just a few of the factors in your everyday life that affect what kind of "stuff" you have; thus the value in scrapbooking that stuff.



WHEN YOU DON'T HAVE ANY, MANY, OR GOOD PHOTOS

Don't despair, you can (and should) still get most any subject scrapbooked by using journaling, photo substitutes, and/or "fixed up" photos. Try these approaches:

- Use journaling only to tell your story and select colors, papers, patterns, and embellishments that support the subject.
- Look for memorabilia, maps, and other documents to include instead of photos. Do some searching on the internet and get creative. My sons showed me how I could get an aerial shot of any address from Google Earth. The top photo here is just such a shot of my parents' home and barn. To me and anyone who has spent time there, it's clear where the barn is, the three silos, the house and other buildings.
- Edit poor photos with image editing software like Photoshop and give them an artsy or moody look that complements your journaling. Since this aerial shot was of poor quality, I sharpened it up and then added a sketch effect.
- Use one photo to spur your journaling. This black and white photo of my cousin and me dressed up, immediately recalls for me my great grandmother's home and the few huge family gatherings that were held there. I don't have other photos, but this photo is all I need to journal the

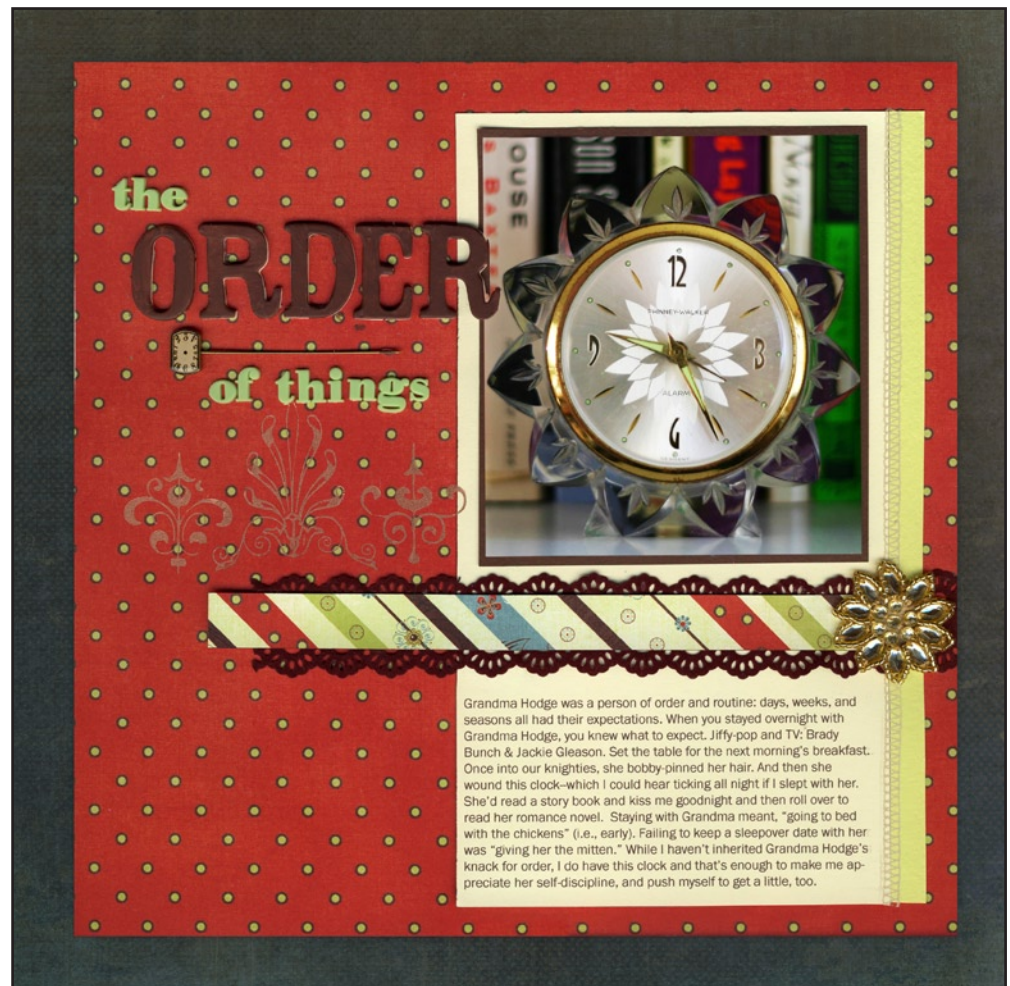


topic. Look for contextual details to trigger memories -- like the cars along the lawn here remind me of the feeling of everyone rolling in.



- Take a photo of an item that represents your subject. I actually have this alarm clock of my Grandmother's in my office now, and when I see it, I remember her saying she liked to go to bed with the chickens. I photographed it and used it as the only photo on a page about sleepovers with her.

- Use community and/or stock photos from web sites. Check out the site's licensing, copyright, or other usage guidelines. There are many sites that allow free personal use of low-resolution and charge a fee for higher-resolution photos and professional usages.



GETTING SOME PERSPECTIVE

Considering different perspectives as you scrap your own stories and photos will give you pages that tell stories with more complexity and truth. As you're remembering a story, think about having a camera on your shoulder, filming what goes on. You'd get a good idea of your own perspective. What about, though, putting the camera on someone else's shoulder, or up in a corner near the ceiling, aimed to take in the whole wide angle of the room? This is the point at which your perspective diminishes and others enter.

compare two opposing points of view

In the musical "Bye Bye Birdie" there's a scene in which the girls are marching to the town square singing "We love you, Conrad. Oh, yes, we do-oo!" while the boys are marching in from another direction singing, "We hate you, Conrad. Oh, yes, we do-oo!" Neither side is wrong -- they just have differing perspectives. It's the continued look at those perspectives throughout the story that gives it tension and makes it believable and interesting.

"Alliances & Allegations" is a layout that records a

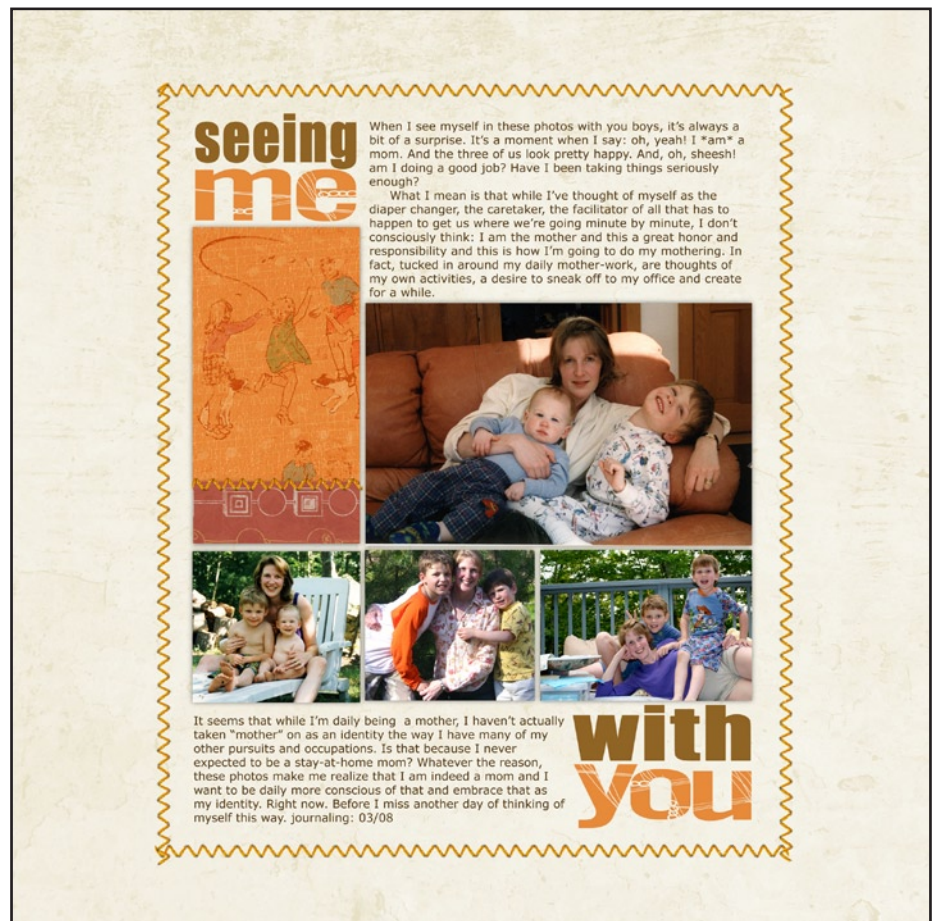


CLICK for journaling.

contentious afternoon between siblings and cousins. Both sides were so adamant in their protests that I went to bed that night thinking about them. That's when I realized I needed to let go of my own perspective, which was: 1) an adult being interrupted all day with complaints; 2) a mom to two of the players; and 3) the only defender of the group being called whiners by the other children and adults. The journaling tells of what I came to understand when I thought more about what was going on from other points of view.

figure out how you fit into someone else's life and how you might appear to others

Hard as it sometimes is for me to admit: it's NOT always all about me. I remind myself of this especially when I'm at an event that my kids are loving (and at which they have probably run off with their friends leaving me alone) and I'm making small talk, leaning against walls, and even wandering aimlessly. I think: what am I to them at this point? And my answer is: a safety net, a source of money, someone to hold their coats, someone to show cool things to, mom. And from there it becomes even easier to imagine how they are experiencing this same event.



In "Seeing Me With You" I contemplate how being more conscious of the fact that others see me 1st as a mom could enrich my life. [CLICK](#) for journaling.

look at your own behavior from someone else's perspective

Have you ever been misunderstood? There's a children's song on Sandra Boynton's Philadelphia Chickens CD that expresses just this kind of frustration:

Nobody understands me,
though memmily blitt each day.
Nobody understands me,
but I guess zooglobber that way.

Here's a chance for you to look at just how this might happen in your own life. Put that imaginary camera I talked about above on to someone else's shoulder and imagine an incident through their eyes only. You don't necessarily need to scrap the story from their perspective, but if you can understand where they're coming from it can inform how you do tell the story.

I told the story in "Your Point?" from my point of view and ended with the zinger from my oldest son, thus showing that moment when I finally realized just what the day had been like for him.

August, 2008

YOUR POINT?

rough day

Summer was almost over and we still hadn't gone to Newcastle Beach — the beach of our preschool days—small with tidepools & no waves, grassy areas, and a playground. Every summer we visit at least once, and last summer we had some of our best times here—including a final cookout with friends.

I did know I was pushing things—that maybe I should let it go, but I felt like I'd be letting us all down if I didn't make sure we got there. There were signals that I said were just obstacles that we could get over: Elaine had a new job & was working, Jill's kids were away, Joshua had hives. And then, when we arrived, there was a warning sign about bacteria levels. I persisted, though, (I'd stopped at Barnes & Noble & bought Josh a new FoxTrot collection convinced that once he was settled with it under an umbrella, he'd be happy.) Mike showed up with Lily, and so, while Joshua was uncomfortable (but engrossed) Isaac had a good time. He and Lily can yak and play in the water forever (and we made sure no one put their heads under) & I was thinking we'd be having the dinner I'd packed on the beach.

And then—while seaweed sliding—Isaac cut up his toe & ripped off a good chunk of the nail. So we packed it all in — quickly.

On the way home, I asked Joshua if he was glad we came anyway—looking for that silver lining.

He said, "I don't know."

"Well (I said this with a hopeful tone)... it's a memory... What about you, Isaac?"

Isaac was in the way back with his foot on the seat in front of him to keep the bleeding from starting again. "I don't know."

Again, I said, "Well...it's a memory."

And that's when Joshua said, "This reminds me of when Calvin (of Calvin & Hobbes) said: I'd hate to think that all my current experiences will someday become stories with no point."

CLICK for journaling.

consider how others do things

A still-current expression for acknowledging that there are different ways to approach routine activities is: "When in Rome, do as the Romans do." This comes from 387 AD when St. Ambrose explained to St. Augustine that when he was in Rome he fasted on Saturday, while, when he was in Milan, he did not.

Be alert to situations in which you get a glimpse of how others approach routines differently than you do, and consider scrapping the moment. While I could have scrapped our outing to Newburyport with posed shots and a run-down of what we did, I chose, instead, to focus on this one moment, and the resulting page is one that immediately triggers the tone of the day for me while revealing a little bit about all of us there.



CLICK for journaling.

think about when someone's thoughts surprised you

Be on the lookout for those moments when someone confides in you about how they're feeling and your response is: "YOU? No way!"

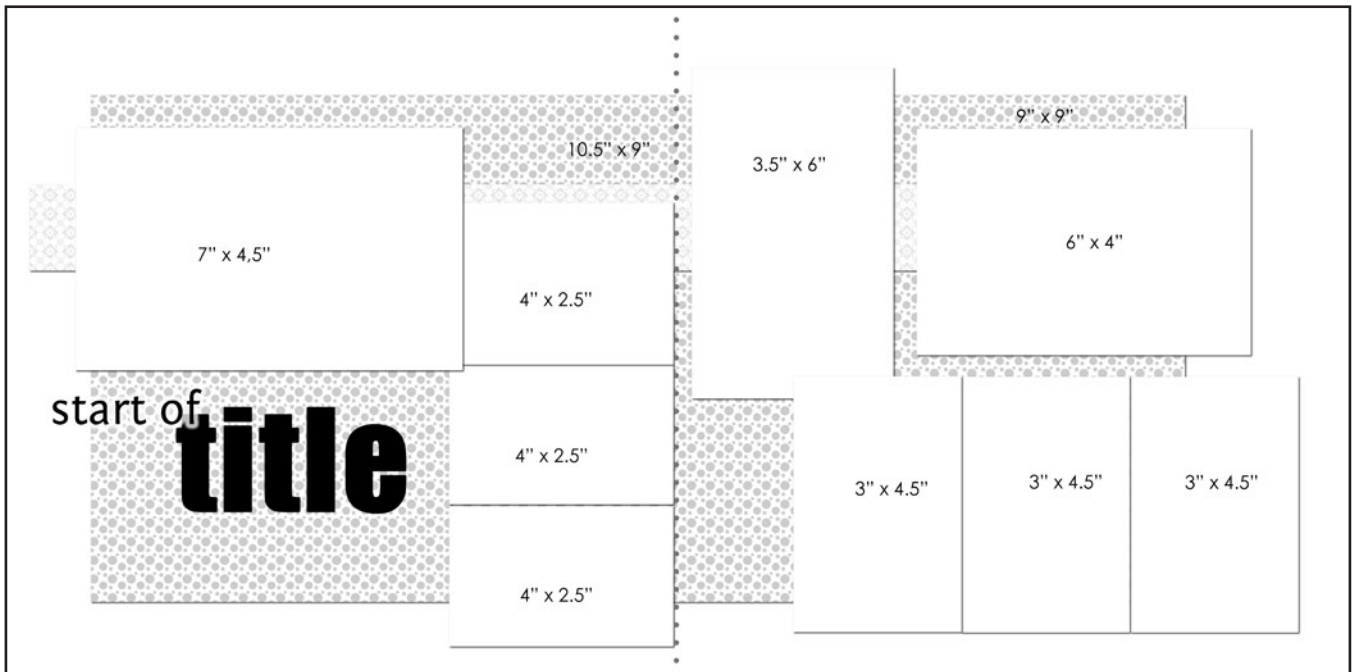
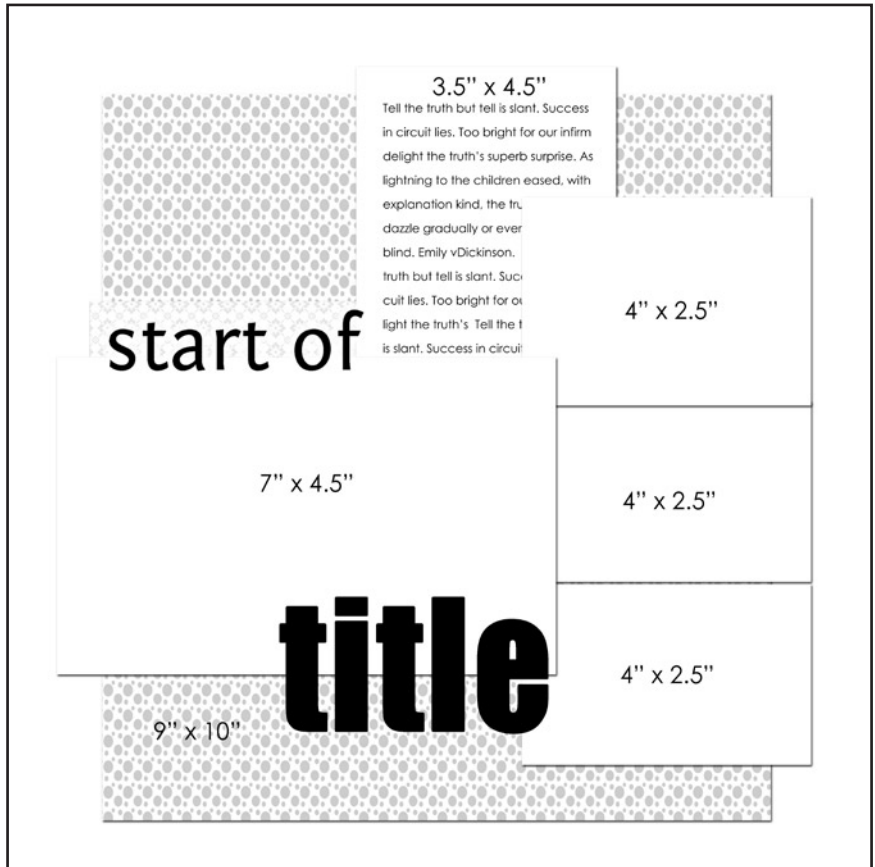
When my oldest son told me it was freaking him out to be getting as tall as me, I knew I wanted to scrapbook that moment. I pulled out the camera and asked my younger son to take these photos of us. There's one of us looking straight at each other and then just other fun ones.

The title came straight from what my son said that surprised me. The journaling is short and tells the story with one key line of dialogue -- which is repeated in the title.



CLICK for journaling.

SKETCH BUNDLE FOR SCRAPBOOKING EVERYDAY LIFE



JOURNALING: “Alliances & Allegations.” Joshua & Sara won’t let us help them build a fort!”

That’s the complaint that dragged adults to the door to ask what was going on.

“They can build their own fort.”

“Why can’t they just help you?”

“Why can’t they build their own?”

Isaac & Hannah & Emma eventually came in cold and tired and generally annoyed and got in a bed at Grandma’s to watch Frosty. Joshua and Sara came in and announced, “We’ve got a surprise for you guys. Come on!” No one really wanted to get out from under the covers and leave the movie, but they eventually did go see the surprise--a fort that had been built just for them. Their enthusiasm and thanks were luke-warm.

Several times that evening we heard, “Isaac & Hannah & Emma are ungrateful. We built them a fort and they didn’t even say thanks or play in it. They’re ungrateful.”

It was just as I fell asleep that night, finally in quiet after a busy day, that I realized they weren’t ungrateful. It’s just that they never wanted a fort. What they wanted was to play with Joshua and Sara. [Click to return to layout.](#)

JOURNALING: “Big Memory.” I have these photos because Neil said he wanted me to post them on my blog and write about my bad attitude.

On August, 30, 2008, I took Joshua to his first ever Anime convention. It was strange. We left Neil and Isaac on their own and then came home to find out it had been a strange day here, too. I say strange because my frugal husband did several uncharacteristic things. He and Isaac went to Hill-top Fun Center (a place I never thought Neil was going to venture) and they splurged and got all-day passes to ride go-carts and play laser tag and mini golf. It gets better, though.

On the way home they passed a garage sale with a huge panda bear. Isaac loves pandas. “What’s more,” said my very frugal husband, “It was only \$25!” He continued to tell me that the woman they bought it from originally paid \$400 for it and she had it dry-cleaned and she was soooo happy to see it go to someone who would love it.

I don’t know if it was a bargain or not, and it wasn’t the cost I was complaining over. “It’s HUGE and HEAVY.” I said. “Isaac’s room is so small already. Where are we going to keep it?”

“It can sit on his bottom bunk. I wanted him to have a memory of our day.”

I refrained from saying that maybe we could put the bear with the white leather ottoman that had also been a final sale purchase of Neil’s.

Neil said. “Iz, tell mom what you named your panda.”

“Kung-pao Panda!”

“You know we’re never going to be able to get rid of this bear,” I said. “We’ll be taking care of it when Isaac goes to college.”

And that’s when Neil told me to go pose with the bear so he could take photos and I could blog and scrapbook my bad attitude for all time. And I did it gladly, knowing there would be many who would hear my story and nod their heads with sympathy. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING for “Everybody Choose One Boat.” “You get one boat. Which one will it be? And what are you going to name it?”

On a fall day off from school, the Aldriches met us (on the spur of the moment) in Newburyport and we walked around the fall festival and then the docks.

At the waterfront, Alyssa announced that everyone got one boat. It was obviously something she and her boys had done before. And my boys loved entering into the fantasy of boat ownership just for a while. Sharing this small custom of theirs was an unexpected treat & just one more reason for treasuring & building friendships. [Click](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING for “It’s Freaking Me Out.”

The other day *YOU* noticed what I feel like I’ve been remarking on for a while -- that when you stand with me it seems your eyes are getting nearer to my eye level. I said that I knew this but you insisted it was more than usual. “And it’s freaking me out!” you said. Freaking *you* out? It never occurred to me that we’d have similar reactions to this. Dec 2007. [Click](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “Puzzling.” I keep my bedside drawer full of pencils and cap erasers. I keep the puzzle books on shelves in my office, in messy piles in my office, under my bed, in the basket next to my chair, in my messenger bag--and there are many I can’t always find but that do turn up eventually. I do puzzles on and waiting for public transportation. I do puzzles when I’m waiting for my kids and can’t do other work. I go through intense puzzling phases where I do them upon waking and before going to sleep.

Sometimes I do easy puzzles and time myself. Sometimes I do hard puzzles that take hours. When I’m learning a new puzzle and get stuck, I go to a fresh one and another fresh one and then eventually (when I’ve learned a bit) I come back and do the ones I couldn’t do. I come up with coding systems. If I mess up a puzzle badly, I might erase and start over or I might write “ugh” or a frowny face and turn to a fresh page. I like to have good quality erasers and books that erase cleanly. The minute I fin-

ish a puzzle, I have the urge to start a new one, and a lot of time can go by.

I do the puzzles because I enjoy solving them. I enjoy the slow progress from the easy section of the book to the medium section and sometimes even to the hard. I do the puzzles because they keep my mind and hands busy and I'm not wasting time. I do the puzzles to avoid talking on airplanes. I do the puzzles to avoid other work. I do the puzzles to solve them. January 2009. [Click to return to layout.](#)

JOURNALING: "Seeing Me With You." When I see myself in these photos with you boys, it's always a bit of a surprise. It's a moment when I say: oh, yeah! I *am* a mom. And the three of us look pretty happy. And, oh, sheesh! am I doing a good job? Have I been taking things seriously enough?

What I mean is that while I've thought of myself as the diaper changer, the caretaker, the facilitator of all that has to happen to get us where we're going minute by minute, I don't consciously think: I am the mother and this a great honor and responsibility and this is how I'm going to do my mothering. In fact, tucked in around my daily mother-work, are thoughts of my own activities, a desire to sneak off to my office and create for a while. [Click to return to layout.](#)

JOURNALING for "Your Point?" Summer was almost over and we still hadn't gone to Newcastle Beach -- the beach of our preschool days--small with tidepools & no waves, grassy areas, and a playground. Every summer we visit at least once, and last summer we had some of our best times here--including a final cookout with friends.

I did know I was pushing things--that maybe I should let it go, but I felt like I'd be letting us all down if I didn't make sure we got there. There were signals that I said were just obstacles that we could get over: Elaine had a new job & was working. Jill's kids were away. Joshua had hives. And then, when we arrived, there was a warning sign about bacteria levels. I persisted, though, (I'd stopped at Barnes & Noble & bought Josh a new Foxtrot collection convinced that once he was settled with it under an umbrella, he'd be happy.) Mike showed up with Lily, and so, while Joshua was uncomfortable (but engrossed) Isaac had a good time. He and Lily can yak and play in the water forever (and we made sure no one put their heads under) & I was thinking we'd be having the dinner I'd packed on the beach.

And then--while seaweed sliding--Isaac cut up his toe & ripped off a good chunk of the nail. So we packed it all in -- quickly,

On the way home, I asked Joshua if he was glad we came anyway--looking for that silver lining.

He said, "I don't know."

"Well (I said this with a hopeful tone). . . it's a memory., , ,What about you, Isaac?"

Isaac was in the way back with his foot on the seat in front of him to keep the bleeding from starting again. "I don't know." Again, I said, "Well ...it's a memory."

And that's when Joshua said, "This reminds me of when Calvin (of Calvin & Hobbes) said: I'd hate to think that all my current experiences will someday become stories with no point." [Click to return to layout.](#)

LESSON #5: Everyday Incidents & Epiphanies

- The incident report
- The everyday epiphany
- Sketch bundle for scrapbooking everyday life

In my mind, the INCIDENT REPORT and the EVERYDAY EPIPHANY sit on opposite ends of a scrapbook page-type spectrum. The INCIDENT REPORT documents life with photos, words, design, and products. THE EVERYDAY EPIPHANY tries to make sense of life and come to new understandings about it (also with photos, words, design, and products).

THE INCIDENT REPORT

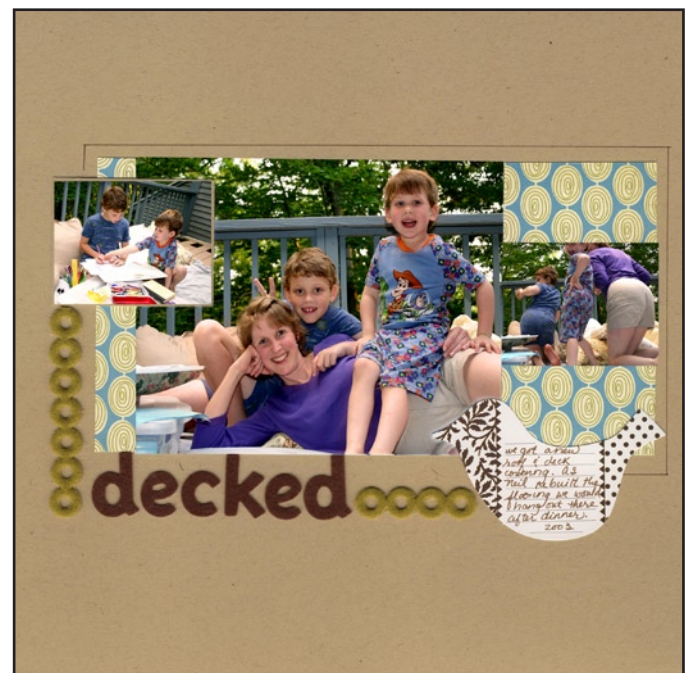
I took 100+ photos on the afternoon the photo in "How Many Shovels Does It Take?" was snapped--and I've scrapped a few multi-photo pages from that bunch of photos. This one shot, though, of my boys and their cousins crowded into a not-finished snow-fort with umpteen shovels all around, just kept nagging at me to scrap it on its own page with nothing else upstaging it. This is a just-because-I-love-it page that records a bit of snow play in Grandma and Grandpa's yard.



Documenting moments that don't appear to be remarkable in themselves, creates a snapshot of life that combines with other snapshots and accumulates to create a larger portrait of your daily life. It's a way to scrapbook those "just-because" photos: just because I had the camera nearby, just because the scene called to me, just because someone said, "You should take a picture of that." Often I find that this basic act of documenting leads to discovering meaning--and other times: it's a simple record. The following are approaches you can use on your own "incident reports."

combine compelling photos and minimal journaling

"Decked" and the untitled layout of my son with a dirty face shown here are examples of pages that capture people and place at a particular moment. These photos bring instant smiles and memories to my family. We recall the repairs on the deck and how we played games on it in the evening. We see the goofy photo of us shaking our bottoms and don't even know exactly what was going on but have a sense of how we were (and still are) together. The photos in the dirty-face layout bring out tender feelings. Isaac looks so tired and dirty. What's more--he still eats a lot of popcorn. And what's even more--that red leather sofa was the first piece of furniture we bought when we moved into this house. It's no longer here, but photos like this help us remember.



create a mood with design

“Kingdom of After My Own Heart” features a photo of my sons and me. I LOVE photos of the three of us together. I still plan to make an event page with the photos from this particular beach outing, but I wanted to show off this photo and try to create a sense of the feeling this photo evokes for me. I used a title that makes sense to me, no journaling, a realistic rendering of the photo and a colorful, dreamy sketch as background as well as motifs and design that reflect what I feel about this photo.

attempt to show rather than tell

A first impulse when writing the journaling to go with an everyday life photo that doesn't involve an interesting story or extraordinary situation is to start with sweet abstracts (i.e., You always look so sweet and thoughtful when you're swinging . . .). In “Homework Helper,” I could have written about how it “warmed my heart” to see my boys bent over a math book together. I might have written of their “brotherly bond.” Instead, I relied on the concrete details of the scene and what was going on to show these feelings rather than tell them. Oftentimes feelings are understood and believed much better when they're presented via evidence rather than abstractions about feelings.



CLICK for journaling.

use lists

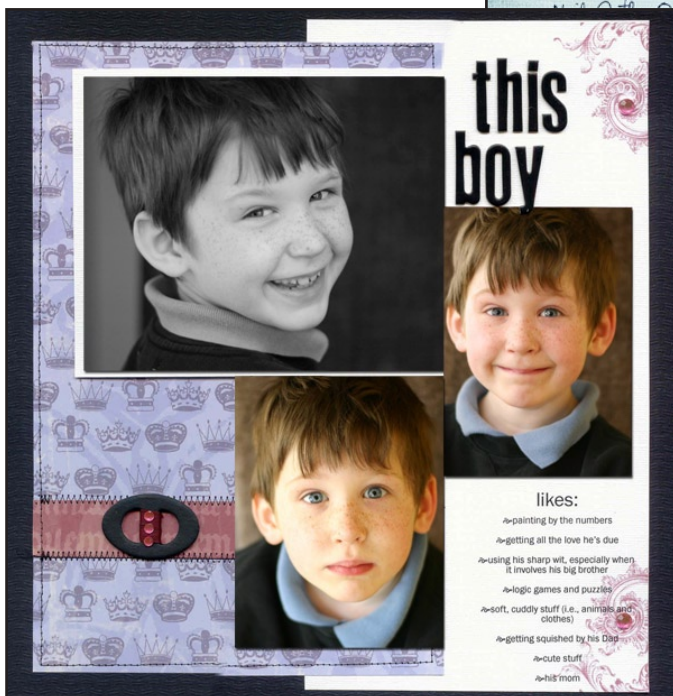
Use lists to capture “how things are” succinctly. “When Politics Are Local” used photo “onesies” from local events that really didn’t merit their own page. The journaling is a list of the kinds of things that my husband, as a local politician, experiences. The quick broad strokes of list journaling let you cover a lot of territory with limited words.



CLICK for journaling.

“This Boy” lists several things that my youngest son liked at that point in his life. Four years later, while some of the specifics have changed, the essence that underlies these preferences still describes him.

CLICK for journaling.



tell a story

When the little stories of your everyday life are preserved on a scrapbook page, they are greatly appreciated by future readers, and, what's more, they are likely to be retold in other situations. You give the story a longer life by preserving it on the page. You bought encyclopedias captures an act of mine one summer as well as details about how each of us behaved around this purchase.

include context in both your photos and your journaling

"Playing Solitaire Together" shows photos of my husband helping my son play solitaire. It wasn't a remarkable conversation they had or a remarkable game. It was just a nice moment on a busy afternoon. Given how uneventful the moment was – what was I to journal about? These photos gave me the excuse to ramble about what else was going on that day, how I felt about that white leather ottoman they're playing upon, and my son's attitude when it comes to playing games. Let those everyday incidents be a springboard for sharing more of the everyday details that cannot be photographed.



CLICK for journaling.



CLICK for journaling.

EVERYDAY EPIPHANIES

An “epiphany” is one of those “ahha” moments when you realize something you hadn’t before, when you have a flash of new understanding. You may have a quick moment of understanding that you realize is important and have to take a photo to go with the subject. Alternatively, you may have to track these understandings down. Everyday life photos (and the concrete details they trigger in your journaling) are the perfect jumping-off spot for discovering your own everyday epiphanies.

look at behavior

Look at your own behavior or that of someone in your life from many angles. Try to understand the motivation for the behavior. You might ask: Why am I always late? Why does my son avoid competitions?

My oldest son is almost always bringing up the rear of any group outing or event. It took me years to realize that no amount of cajoling was going to speed him up because he values this part of his personality. Your own drummer shows him bringing up the rear of a hike, and the journaling talks about his history of “marching to his own drummer.”



CLICK for journaling.

begin with a photo that compels you

Select a photo that compels you, one that you really love and keep coming back to, and then begin journaling about the concrete circumstances of the photo. When was it taken? What was going on? If there's something in the photo that's important – a place or thing – write about that. If you keep on journaling past the concrete details, you often find yourself getting to the real heart of meaning. I began "Tender Boy" just wanting to feature this photo, thinking I'd use a quote rather than journaling because I didn't have much to say. But I did want to put down a few of the where, when and why details. And then I found I was writing about my son's nature and the effect his love has on us. That photo that I didn't think had much of a story turned out to have a really Important story.

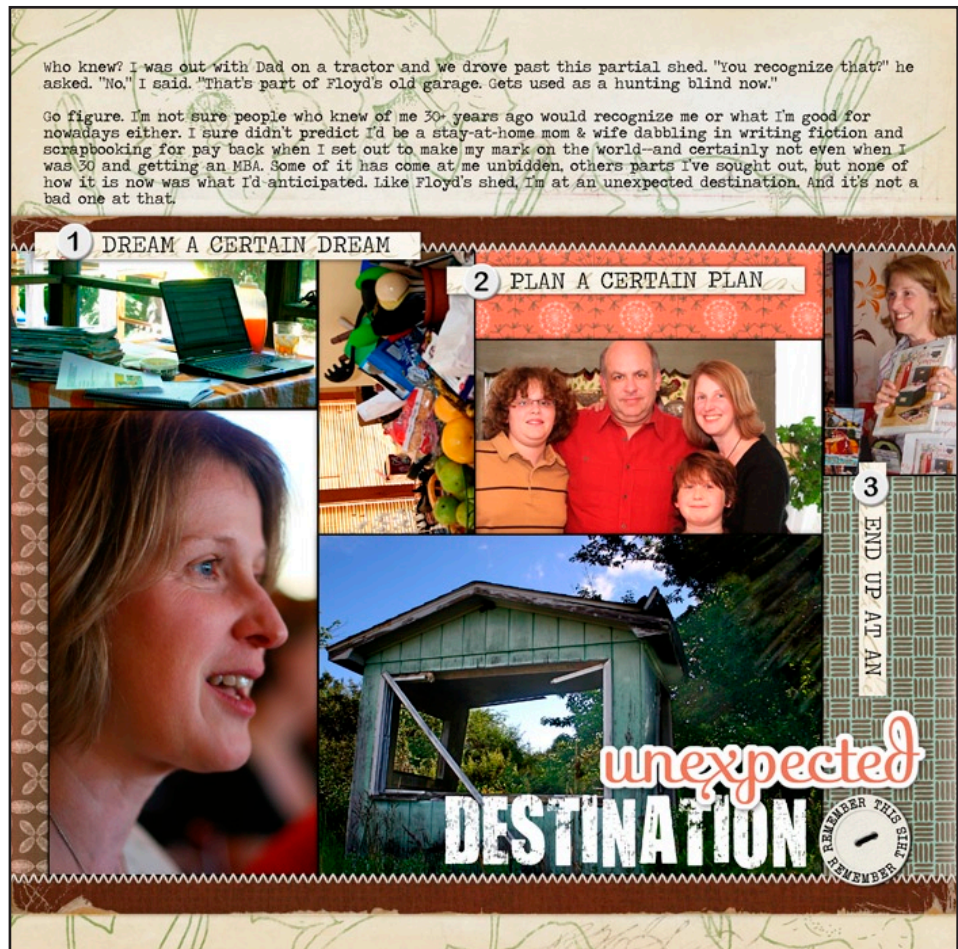


CLICK for journaling.

- Extend the commonplace to the meaningful. Grab on to things your family members say or do that you want to just dismiss and think about the why of it all. Is it Straightforward or is there something more going on?

pay attention and make notes

Some “ah-ha” moments are complex and not easy to articulate. An understanding that you just “get” in your mind and heart may not be easy to talk about. When you have one of those, though, stop your mind a minute and tell yourself to remember this. As soon as you get a chance, write about it—and again, it’s always best to start with the concrete and trust it to move you to deeper meaning. The “glimpse” that prompted me to create “Unexpected Destination” came during a tractor ride with my father. I pursued this in writing that filled a couple of pages until I finally understood what was important. With several images and greatly condensed journaling, I scrapbooked this “ah-ha” moment.



CLICK for journaling.

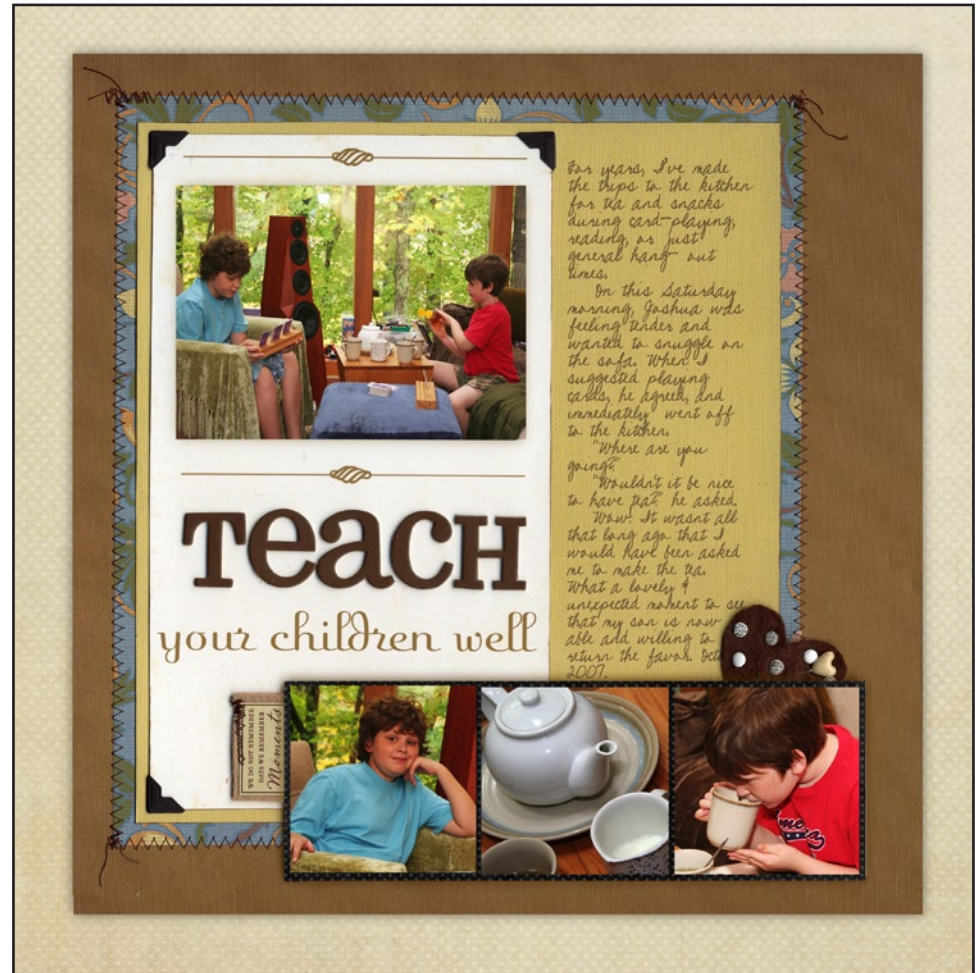
connect the specific to the general

Small exchanges and incidents in our daily lives are often indicative of important character traits, of repeating patterns, and even new trends. Making those connections explicit on your page lets your viewers in closer and gives them a deeper understanding of and appreciation for the lives you're recording. What's more, writing through these things often reveals them to you as you write.

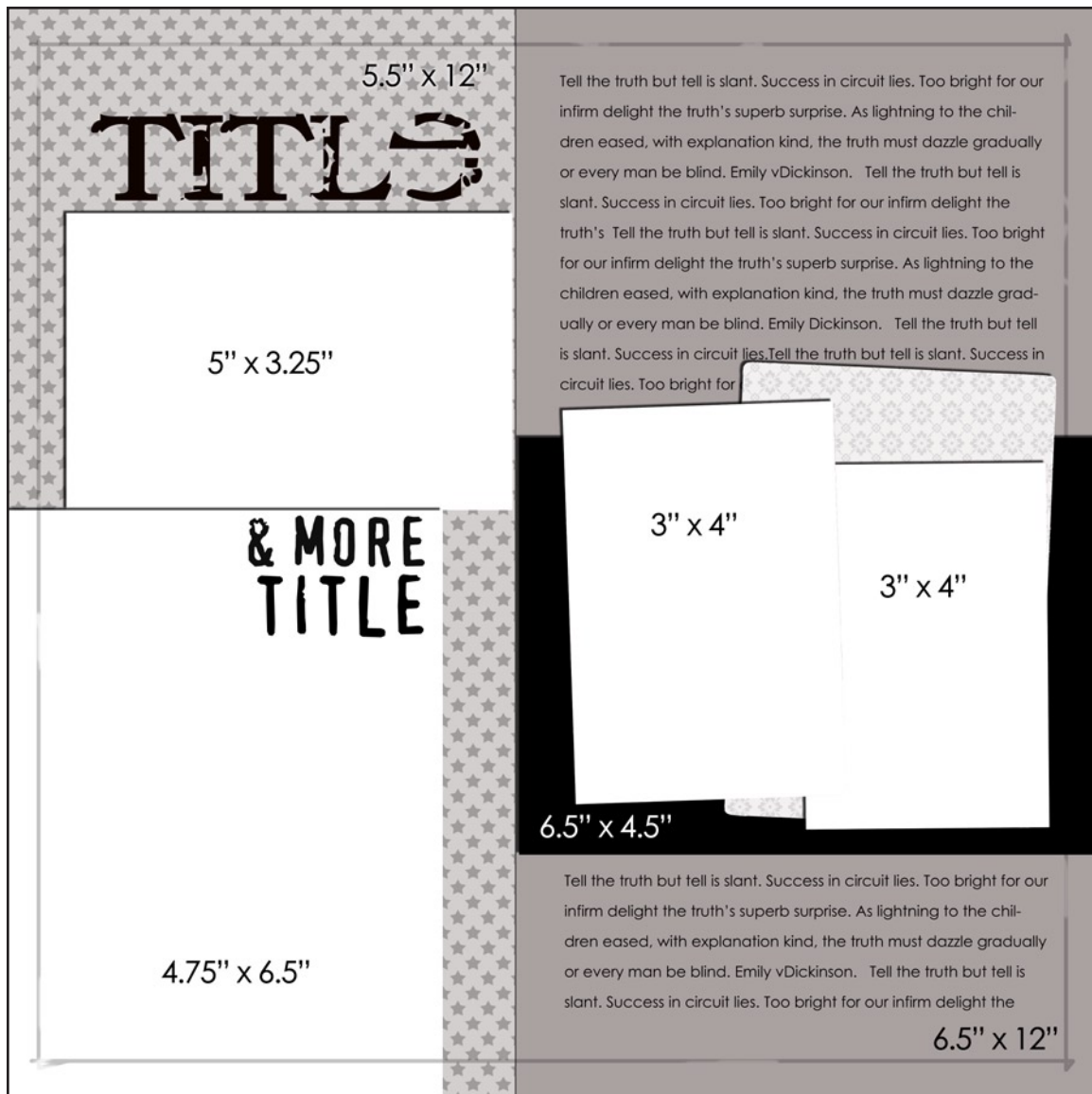
In "Teach Your Children Well," I begin with a specific morning of tea

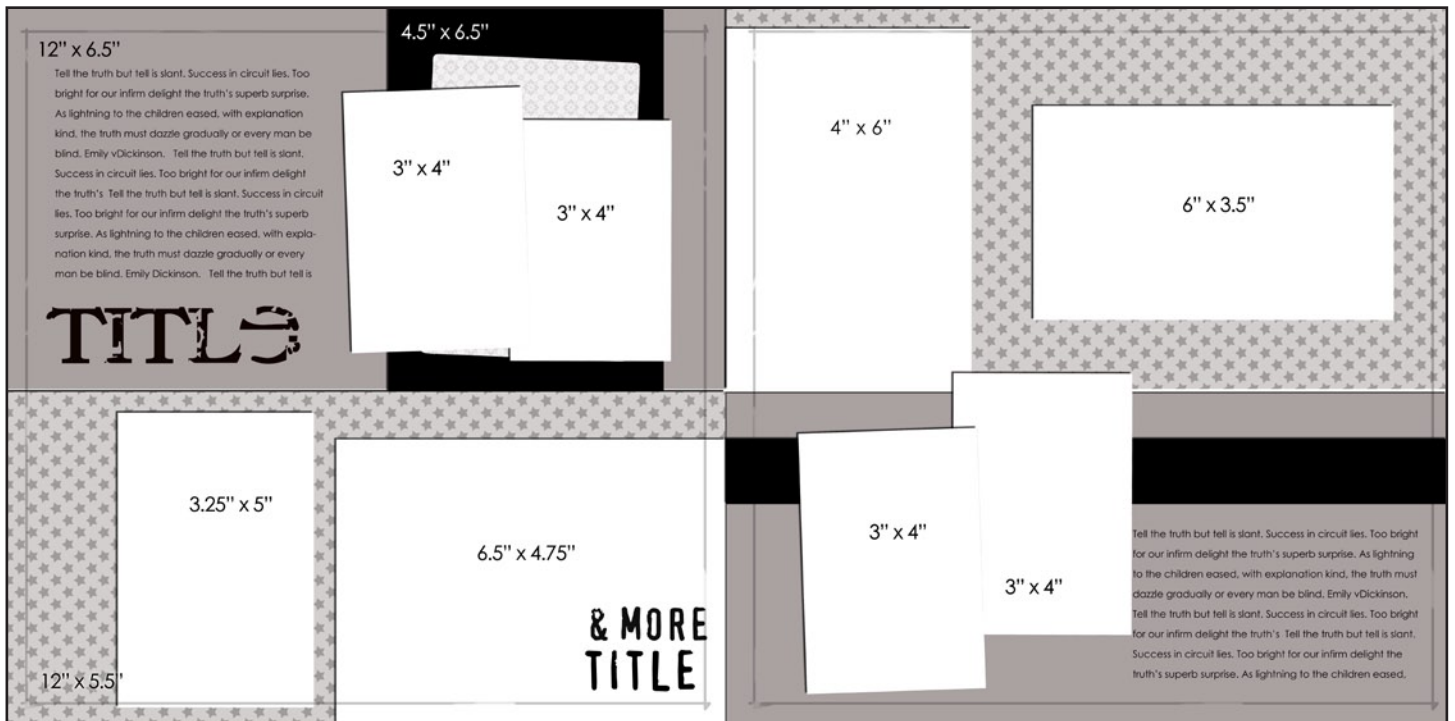
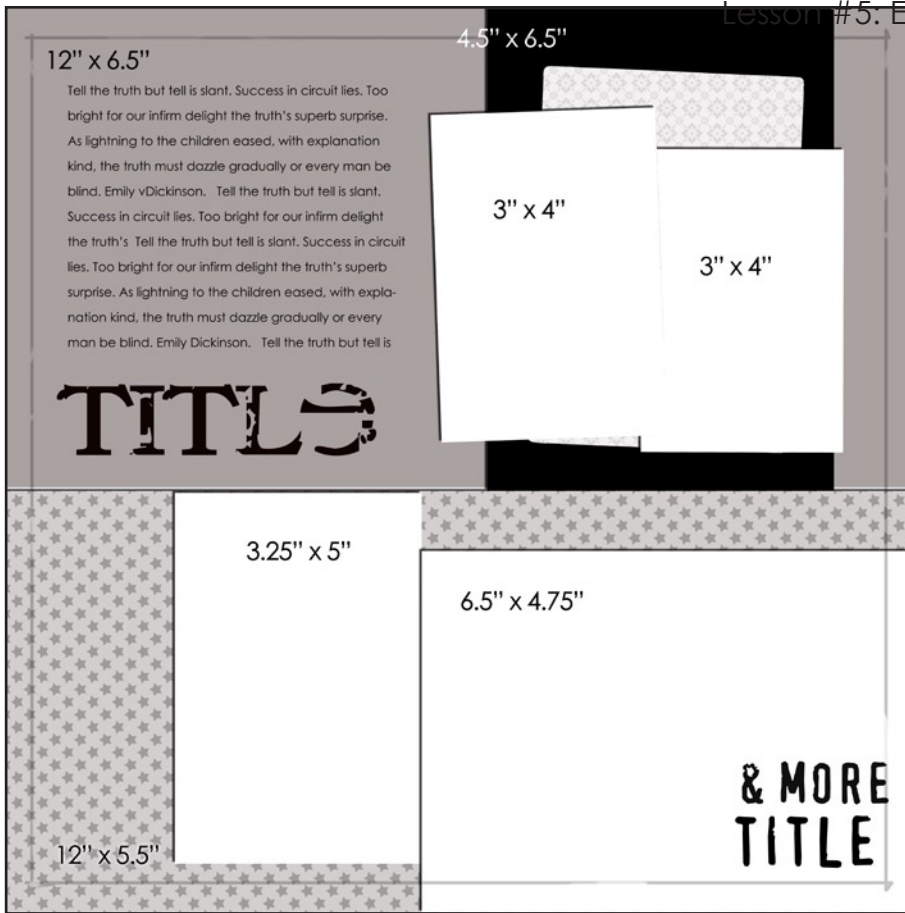
CLICK for journaling.

and card playing and used it as support for the more general idea of my children growing up to take care of the things I'd always done previously.



SKETCHES FOR SCRAPBOOKING EVERYDAY LIFE





JOURNALING: “Homework helper”

Many nights when Joshua is doing his homework there's a lot of sighing and complaining. This night, tho, he asked Isaac if he wanted to learn 6th grade math. Joshua explained to Isaac how to know if something is divisible by 9 and how many zeros you need based upon the decimal point. Isaac loved the attention and helping Josh get his homework done, and Joshua kept calling out how smart Isaac is. It was just like the old days of bathtub math. Remember that? [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “Playing solitaire”

Stark winter sun shines on you and Dad. He's teaching you to play solitaire on the white leather ottoman he bought final sale (white leather final sale?! -- that's another story). Joshua is at a friend's house and I'm busting my you-know-what cooking for the fabulous-women party at Sandell's (that's yet another story). I'm guessing Dad had the stereo going, and I think you played until you won because that is how you'd do it, Mr. I-Demand-A-Rematch-Isaac. A quiet & fine Sunday afternoon. February 2007. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “Teach your children well”

For years, I've made the trips to the kitchen for tea and snacks during card-playing, reading, or just general hang-out times.

On this Saturday morning, Joshua was feeling tender and wanted to snuggle on the sofa. When I suggested playing cards, he agreed, and immediately went off to the kitchen. “Where are you going?”

“Wouldn't it be nice to have tea?” he asked.

Wow. It wasn't all that long ago that I would have been asked to make the tea. What a lovely and unexpected moment to see that my son is now able and willing to return the favor. Oct 2007. y. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “Tender boy”

I remember the moment before I took this photo. We were at Durham Day, and, Neil, you had been working the grill and other jobs, and the 4 of us were finally coming together. When Joshua saw you, he was moved naturally to hug you long and hard -- a big old boy hugging his Dad in the middle of a festival. Neil, you and I have both been struck by how generous Joshua is with his love and affection. Every time I see him do this, I wonder what it does to you, and I think the love he gives you is probably the purest you've received in your whole long life. 09*07 y. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “This boy”

likes: - painting by the numbers - getting all the love he’s due - using his sharp wit, especially when it involves his big brother - logic games and puzzles - soft, cuddly stuff (i.e., animals and clothes) - getting squished by his Dad - cute stuff - his mom. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “Unexpected Destination”

Who knew? I was out with Dad on a tractor and we drove past this partial shed. “You recognize that?” he asked. “No,” I said. “That’s part of Floyd’s old garage. Gets used as a hunting blind now.” Go figure. I’m not sure people who knew of me 30+ years ago would recognize me or what I’m good for nowadays either. I sure didn’t predict I’d be a stay-at-home mom & wife dabbling in writing fiction and scrapbooking for pay back when I set out to make my mark on the world--and certainly not even when I was 30 and getting an MBA. Some of it has come at me unbidden, others parts I’ve sought out, but none of how it is now was what I’d anticipated. Like Floyd’s shed, I’m at an unexpected destination. And it’s not a bad one at that. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “When politics are local”

* you try to do “good.” *you haul yourself out of bed early on weekends and holidays for all sorts of events: fun runs, parades, benefit breakfasts . . . * you’re invited to events even if they don’t want you to do anything official, so you sit around with the University President listening to the music. * you get misquoted. * you get hugged by firemen (this particular one was a student of yours years ago). * you know lots of people wherever you go -- or if you don’t know them, they know you and start conversations. * there’s never any free lunch. * you can’t please all of the people all of the time, but you do make some of them happy. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “You bought encyclopedias?”

There are those in this day and age who: 1) don’t buy anything from a door-to-door salesperson AND 2) don’t see a need for printed encyclopedias. And on another day that could have been me. But it happened to be this day that Celeste, a college student from Nebraska, talked to the boys and me in our pjs while Neil was out biking. Yep. They were more than we thought they should be. Yep. The boys and I talked about what we’d forego at the bookstore the next several months. Yep. We evaluated the software add-on that the boys really wanted and decided that was too much. So, why did the three of us want these books? Well, they had all the

animal hierarchies, and flags, and presidents in order, and all the geometric formulas and how to do division the old way and the new way, and maps . . . lots of maps, even maps to trace for reports. During Joshua's first two years in middle school, he and I have spent a lot of hours combing the web for info he's needed ---- and it's not always all that easy to find. Lots of info? Yep. Easy to figure out which link will yield the right info? No. And then often that info is for sale. I love the idea of a "desk reference," of thick books with thin pages full of print and pictures and all of it with indices and chapter organization. I like the idea of having the right information accessible in a book that we can hold. My parents still have two BIG sets of encyclopedias that I used for most every report I wrote from 1st grade through high school. I loved those books, and I loved writing reports, and I hope my boys come to find a little pleasure in this, too. So am I a sucker? I guess time will tell, but right now these books are on Grandma Spicer's library table in our home and they representing that feeling of anticipation and hope every new school year brings. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: "Your own drummer"

Since preschool, you've been known as the boy who will bring up the rear of any outing. You're now eleven, and I cannot remember a time when you've had a sense of urgency about what you do. On this walk, you brought up the rear from the start -- even backtracking for a while. Nothing seems to bother you; no one else's impatience seems to reach you, and you are happiest when we leave you behind. Summer 2007. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

LESSON #6: Your Everyday Places

- *prompts & approaches for:* everyday places
- *focus on journaling:* meaning without schmaltz
- *sketches* for scrapbooking everyday life

"I want to go home to the dull old town, with the shaded street, and the open square, and the hill, and the flats, and the house I love, and the paths I know -- I want to go home." -- Paul Kester

The places we come from, the places we've traveled through, and the places we long to visit all inform who we are. How many of you have had the very longing described in the opening quote here? When you experience this kind of longing for a place, the place itself takes on associations and triggers feelings.

Writers and filmmakers understand this connection between place and character, often creating a story setting with such power it becomes a character itself. Think of 1920s



[click here for journaling](#)

Long Island in *The Great Gatsby*. Its geography and society inform the characters' actions--both those who've lived there all their lives and the newcomer Gatsby.

When I want to plumb my own thoughts on the places in my life, past and present, I often turn to the poem "First Year" by Irish poet Eavan Boland that begins: *It was in our first home--/our damp, upstairs, one-year eyrie--/above a tree-lined area/nearer the city.* That first stanza can carry me immediately to a "garden" apartment in Silver Springs, MD, and from there I'm recalling the furniture, the deck, the view of the parking lot below it, and even the stories.



[click here for journaling](#)

Many of my favorite scrapbook pages are those I've created as my own nod to the places in my life. "Been There" (on page 1) and "It's Charm" are both about my childhood home--a topic I scrapbook again and again.

prompts & approaches: YOUR EVERYDAY PLACES

To figure out and decide which places of your life to scrapbook:

- Pull out a piece of paper and begin making lists that answer the following:
 1. What are the "MACRO" places in which you live your everyday life? (These would be places like: home, town, work, school, errand destinations, fun destinations, etc.)
 2. Within each of these "MACRO" spots, what are the "MICRO SPOTS?" (i.e., for the macro spot "home" the micro spots might include: kitchen, porch, desk, garage, garden, driveway, foyer . . .)
- Now go through your lists and check off the spots that compel you. To decide just how you'll approach documenting a particular place, ask yourself these questions --and make notes as you do. The answers will help you get at the place's significance in your life, the tone you want to take in your journaling, and even details to include in the journaling:
 - ◇ is this spot a part of your daily routine?
 - ◇ is it a place you like to go to? what feelings do you have about it?
 - ◇ does it have a strong influence on your character (or on that of those living with you)?
 - ◇ will you remember it in 10 years? do you want to remember it in 10 years?
 - ◇ what makes it interesting or compelling?
 - ◇ what do you usually do at this spot?
 - ◇ who else is with you at this spot?
 - ◇ what is/are the lighting, the temperature, the smells at this spot?
 - ◇ what are the most important concrete details about this spot?

With your lists and answers in front of you, pick a place and decide upon an approach for making your page. In other words, decide upon the scope and angle you'll take. Will it be thoughtful, documentary, snapshot, or contextual?

- thoughtful

Create a thoughtful (perhaps even reverent) celebration of an important place that helps the viewer understand your feelings about the place and the role it plays (or has played) in your life. "Been There" on page 1 is this kind of page for me. I firmly believe that the place I was raised has left an indelible (and good) mark on my character, and this is one of the many pages I've made in homage to it. "Trestle" on page 9 records how the train tracks and trestle near our home have fit into our life over the years.

- documentary

Make a document or record of your personal world. "Your Room" on page 5 includes several photos of my son's room last year. I wanted a record (for him and for me) of the things that he surrounded himself with and the style in which he did this.

"Sweet Dreams" on page 7 is another bedroom page. The bedroom documented here is the one my sons share when they're at their grandparents' home.

excerpt from "First Year"

Where is the soul of a marriage?

Because I am writing this
not to recall our lives,
but to imagine them,
I will say it is
in the first gifts of place:

the steep inclines
and country silences
of your boyhood,
the orange-faced narcissi
and the whole length of the
Blackwater

strengthening our embrace.

Against Love Poetry
by Eavan Boland

- snapshot

Take a (perhaps fun) peek at a very localized spot in your life captured at one moment in time. "Like a River to the Sea" is this kind of a page for me-- I took a photo of the odd items that accumulated on my dresser top recently and then journaling a list and some of the reasons these things are there.

- context

Scrap a page that's not specifically about a place, but that uses photos of place to provide context. In "See Why" on page 6, the farmland in the photos sets the context for my Dad's story and allows me to make a record of what his land looked like at this time.



[click here for journaling](#)



focus on journaling: MEANING WITHOUT SCHMALTZ

Purple prose, sentimentality, schmaltz: all of these are ways of describing writing that uses exaggerated or affected emotion. Sentimental writing relies on clichés (“heaven on earth,” “a feast for the eyes”) and abstracts (peace, despair, joy) to grab at a reader’s heartstrings rather than taking the time to render a subject with complexities and specifics. The result is writing that we don’t quite believe and definitely don’t feel.

Try these techniques for pages that have meaning without being “schmaltzy.”

- **Pay attention to concrete details.**

In both your writing and your photos, focus on conveying how you experienced something concretely (as opposed to naming your feelings) including any of the five senses for which you have relevant information. Relevant is key -- detail for detail’s sake can weigh things down and make it hard for the reader to figure out what’s important.

Photos can show lighting, colors, and specific sights. In your writing, you can include smell, sound, touch, and taste.



[click here for journaling](#)

The best way to do this writing is to allow yourself to initially free write and then revise with a checklist:

- Use no more than 20% abstract concepts and 80% concrete description. (See sidebar here.)
- Avoid “pretty prose” by eliminating streams of adjectives, adverbs, and metaphors.
- Avoid clichés, simplistic expressions, and “Hallmark”-isms.
- Be clear. Revise language that’s “fuzzy,” i.e., sweet and abstract, and replace it with concrete details.

The journaling in “See Why” on page 6 opens with a listing of the constants of a farmer’s life and a brief history of how my father got there, then moves to recount a specific outing. This outing provides few concrete details that supplement the photos and that build up to provide the basis for my new understanding of where he’s coming from. The photos work with the journaling establish the concrete details. Views of land with lots of green grass, blue sky, bits of water and trees all give a sense of the natural world in which my father has moved about his entire life.

Concrete details are those of images that can be sensed (seen, heard, touched, smelled, even tasted). Including details gives your image specificity. “Creature” is a vague word. “Animal” is more specific but still leaves a lot to the imagination. “ But tell us about your “long-haired Persian cat with a wide face” and you’re getting specific.

Significant details are those that matter to the story. You don’t need filler. A significant detail suggests an abstraction or feeling like beauty or stress or joy **without** using that abstract word. When you write the detail rather than the abstraction you’ve got a more compelling piece.

● ***Evoke an emotional response with color, image, motif, and design choices.***

On a scrapbook page, you have more than your journaling available for conveying a feeling. It's possible to use a combination of images, color, and motif to convey the joy or disappointment of a moment, place, or subject. In writing about art (specifically about Hamlet), T.S. Eliot talked about the "objective correlative," a set of objects, or a situation, or a chain of events that evoke an emotion in the audience. Rather than writing "He felt sad," in a story, the author can use weather, gestures, and even the things the character observes to the same purpose. On many of the pages you scrapbook, you will absolutely have a feeling or attitude about the subject you're scrapping. Consciously think about every choice you make to create a whole that's evocative of a mood or emotion.

Specifically, you can work with:

- color associations;
- pattern (oversized, stylized florals convey a different tone than bright dots on white background);
- photo cropping and editing;
and
- image and motif

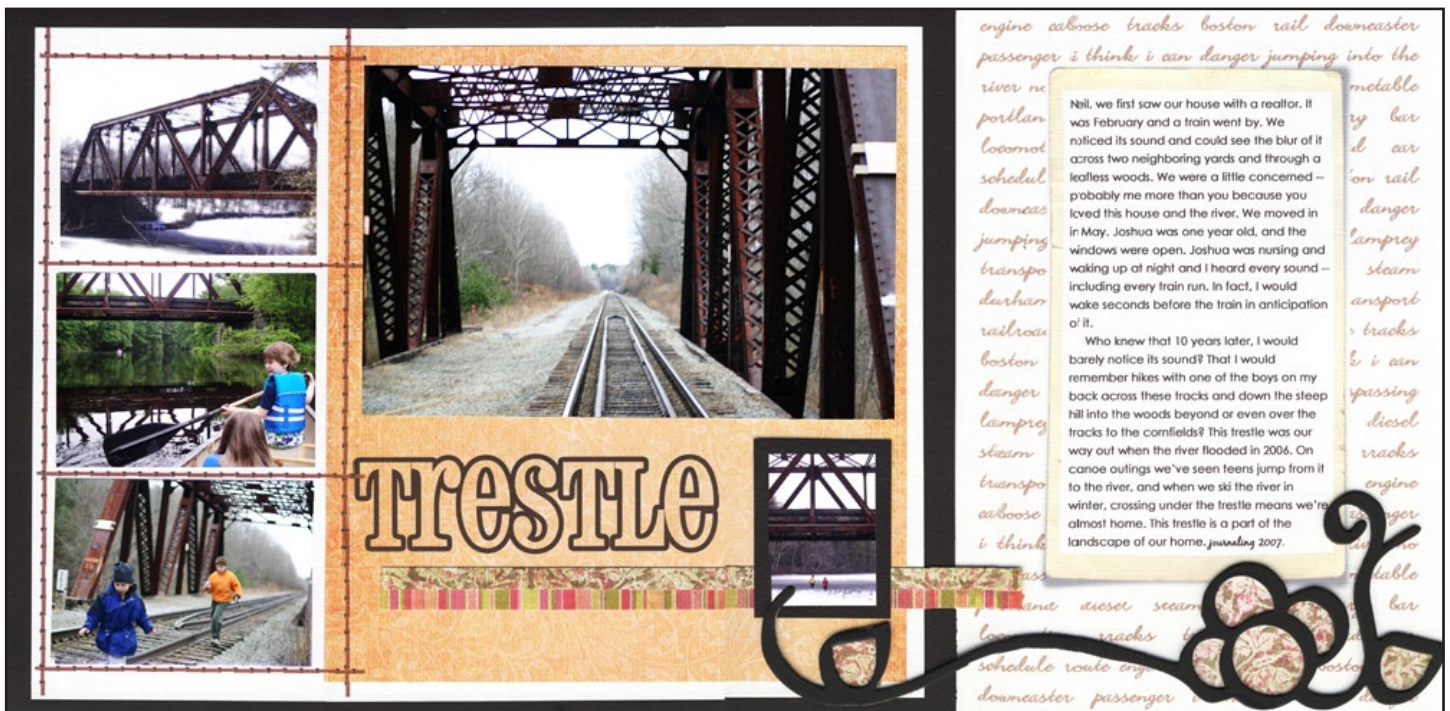
The layered papers along with curled and worn edges and warm colors in "Sweet Dreams" convey a cozy tone that goes with how I feel about this room. A bedtime motif of the cow jumping over the moon and a gingham bow complete this feeling and support the subject.



● **Show don't tell**

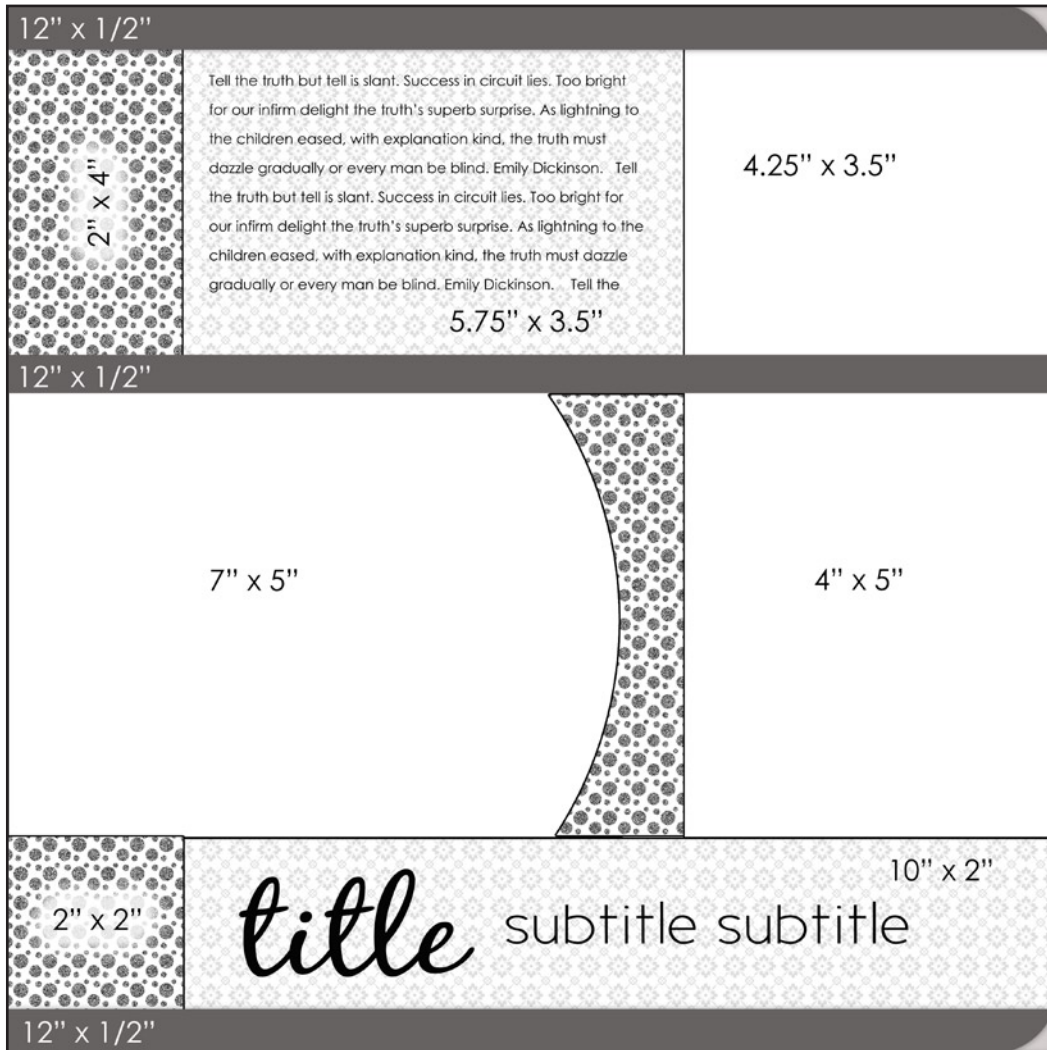
Hold back from telling the reader what they should think about your subject (or at least save it for the end). Trust that if you report an experience as truly and accurately as possible that it will speak for itself. Do not try to shape a response, but, rather, seek to present the kind of clear picture that lets readers come to their own understanding of meaning. The journaling on "Its Charm" on page 2 accumulates details that work to earn the abstract "charm" in the page's title, listing the many aspects of life at my parents' home that are both different than those at my home and that my family loves.

The journaling and photos in "Trestle" also accumulate details. The photos were taken in different seasons and from different angles. The details accumulated in the journaling are of incidents relating to this place. Together they sum to show just how this spot fits into our lives now and in the past.



[click here for journaling](#)

sketches: FOR SCRAPBOOKING EVERYDAY LIFE



JOURNALING

Journaling: “Been There”

The sight of you three takes me straight back to my days of sunning next to hayfields on this farm in upstate NY. Oh, the indulgence of sunning oneself as others labored nearby -- the bravura involved in attempting a suntan in a place that has as many overcast days a year as it does sunny. I'm quite sure my brothers (one of them your dad) and my own dad thought I was a little addled and that I certainly didn't "get" their lives. And I didn't. I planned to go to college for international business and get a job making lots of money so that I could hire someone to watch my children and do my housework. Oh--and I would be living in a city.

Yep. I'm pretty sure I had (and voiced) those plans. And I did go to college. And I did go off to Washington DC. And I had some international relationships and I worked a lot and commuted and ate at nice restaurants and traveled on business so much I was doing my laundry at hotels. And it was good for a while.

But you guys know where I ended up. In fact, the life I live now is the life you've always known me living. I live in the country in a small college town in New Hampshire and I'm a stay-at-home mom to your cousins and I do all the dishes and I don't make a lot of money.

AND . . . I love to come visit you and I love to see my boys playing with you and I love seeing all of you BE on this land as I once WAS on this land. return to “Been There”

Journaling: “Its charm”

So much at Mom and Dad's is different from our home. There's a barn—several buildings, actually—and all of them filled with treasures to explore. They use a clothesline and grow a garden and have lush flower beds around the house and numerous bird feeders. There's a wellhouse and even a trampoline! It's not just in the way they do things but it's also in the charm of the place -- all the touches outside and in. This pump and goose that Ethan's standing next to are new this year, and the front porch is always my favorite place to be—so many flowers and sweet touches. Summer 2008. Oxford, NY. return to “Its Charm

Journaling: “Like a River to the Sea”

Whenever we can't find something around here, Joshua or Isaac or will eventually say, “Look on Mom's dresser.” And I often lament, “Why's *THIS* (pvc pipe, lone sock, wrapper to string cheese, YuGiOh card deck) on my dresser?”

Today's contents: card shuffler & holders from Gin Rummy with Isaac; lone sock; spoon from under a pillow (snow day superstition); Aztec mask; “My Fair Lady” DVD; trombone slide cream that was in my suitcase when we went to Disney; puzzle book from Tami; orange & blue “camo” paint for Isaac's tank; string Donald; pencil case with game pieces for Sunshine Math; small wire cutters; baseball (?); stationary; memory card; paper chain napkin holder from the “sustainable” Commencement Dinner last month; Halo figure & Littlest Pet Shop figure; lint brush; lizard, ruler; bag of toothpicks (for crafting); pvc from Joshua's nerf gun modifications; ruler ... return to “Like a River to the Sea”

Journaling: “See Why”

Mostly, we've all said this about you rather than to you: Why? Did the work of farmer choose you or did you choose it? Why choose work that goes 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, fixing machinery in the cold garage at night, putting up hay in the heat, being always available, subject to the whims of weather and animals?

You came here at 10 years old. Your dad died when you were 19. You are 64 now, and the cows are gone and your body has been so well used, you cannot walk any great distance. This July day, I have come with you to the dump--riding in the wagon your tractor pulls--to help unload the heavy stuff. The sun is bright and warm and we bump down a rutted road, leafy branches brushing the wagon sides. When we are done, you say, “You want to go for a ride?” These photos show only a bit of where we went, through this land that is yours, that you have known for over fifty years, that you have cared for and that has cared for you back, and I'm seeing it all now as you choose to show it: both simple and grand. And now is when I think: So, this is why. Of course. This is why. return to “See Why”

Journaling: “Trestle”

Neil, we first saw our house with a realtor. It was February and a train went by. We noticed its sound and could see the blur of it across two neighboring yards and through a leafless woods. We were a little concerned -- probably me more than you because you loved this house and the river. We moved in in May. Joshua was one year old, and the windows were open. Joshua was nursing and waking up at night and I heard every sound -- including every train run. In fact, I would wake seconds before the train in anticipation of it. Who knew that 10 years later, I would barely notice its sound? That I would remember hikes with one of the boys on my back across these tracks and down the steep hill into the woods beyond or even over the tracks to the cornfields? This trestle was our way out when the river flooded in 2006. On canoe outings we've seen teens jump from it to the river, and when we ski the river in winter, crossing under the trestle means we're almost home. This trestle is a part of the landscape of our home. journaling 2007. return to “Trestle”

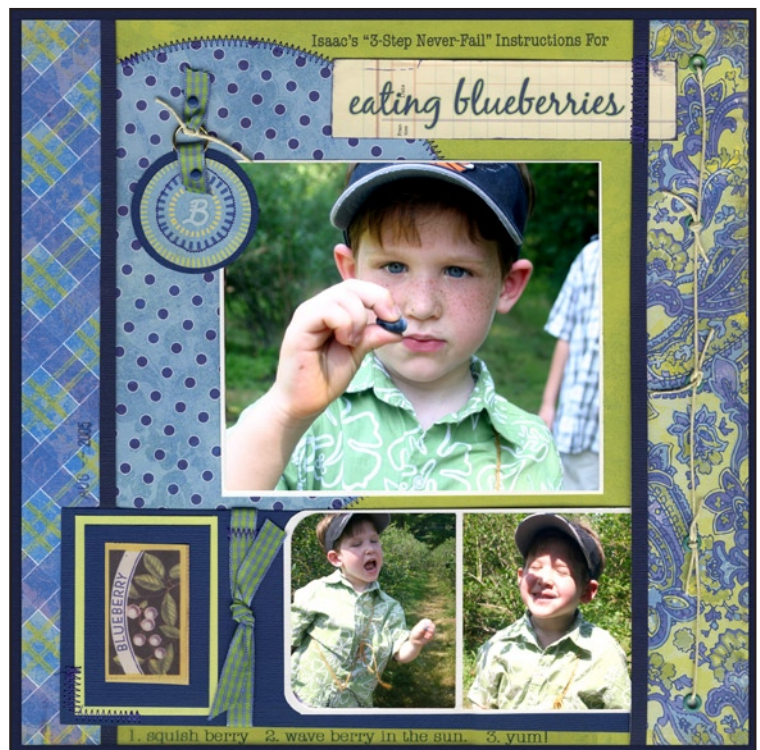
LESSON #7: Local Outings

- Focus on people
- Vary your scope
- One page or multiple pages?
- Concentrate on the place
- Feature the activities
- Sketch bundle for everyday life pages

Do you take photos and scrapbook your local outings to museums, parks, playgrounds, performances, fairs, sports events, the pool, lunch spots? Many local outings are repeat visits to favorite places, and, thus, you may not be photographing them regularly. The challenge is to scrap these places and outings over time in ways that keep a record and don't feel stale or redundant.

The photos for "Eating Blueberries," on this page," and "Blueberry Season," and "Get Your Hand Outta My Bucket," both on the next page were all taken at the same berry-picking patch--

but at different times: 2005, 2007, and 2008 respectively. Taking a camera blueberry picking is a bit of a nuisance, but I try to take it at least once each year. I love how these pages show our repetitions and our growth.



If you're not photographing everyday outings, sit down and make a list of the places you visit frequently. Make plans to take the camera along next time. A quick way to jumpstart your list is to consider destinations by season, since many local outings are tied to the season and holidays.

When you're scrapbooking your local (and repeated outings) consider taking a variety of the following angles so that you provide different and varied looks at the same outing.



CLICK for journaling.



CLICK for journaling.

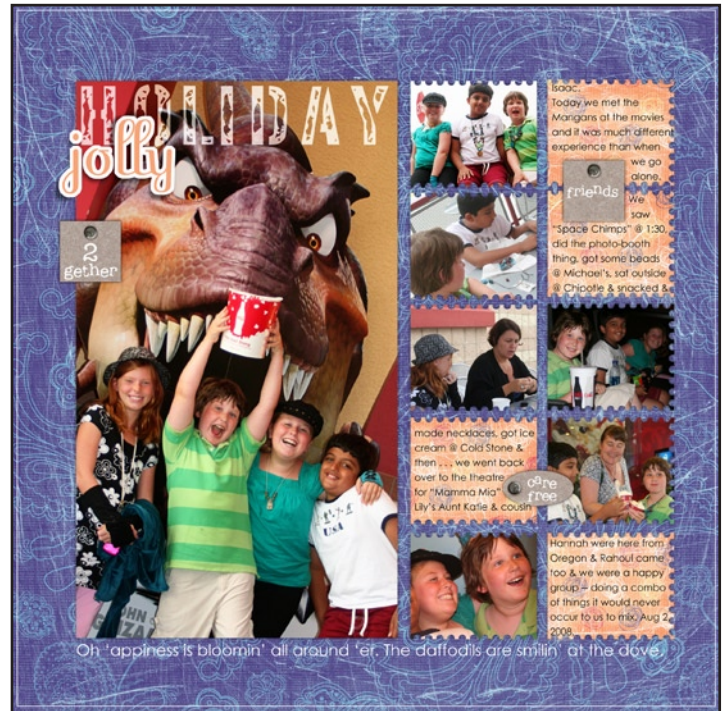
focus on the people

Local outings are often driven as much by wanting to do something with friends as by the desire to be at a particular location. You can provide this focus with photos, or journaling, or both.

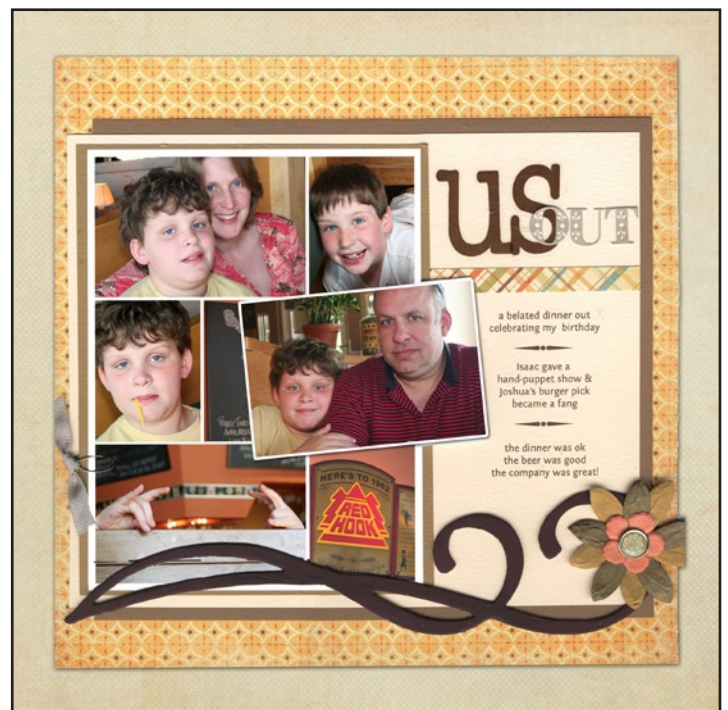
Show and tell who you went with, why you went with them, and what it was like to make this outing with them. Do you find that the way you experience a particular locale changes depending upon your company? In the journaling for "Jolly Holiday" I provide a run-down of what going to the movies with our friends the Mangans entails--it's all a much different experience than we'd have on our own.

When there's not a whole lot of activity or scenery to show, focusing on the people is the way to go. Eating dinner out isn't the most thrilling thing to scrapbook, but on the outing shown in "Us Out" we were marking my birthday. I wanted a record of being celebrated, thus brought the camera along. And while the photos are of just "us," I love seeing what the behavior in them reveals about individuals and relationships.

As you "focus on the people" think about the different ways you can focus on



CLICK for journaling.

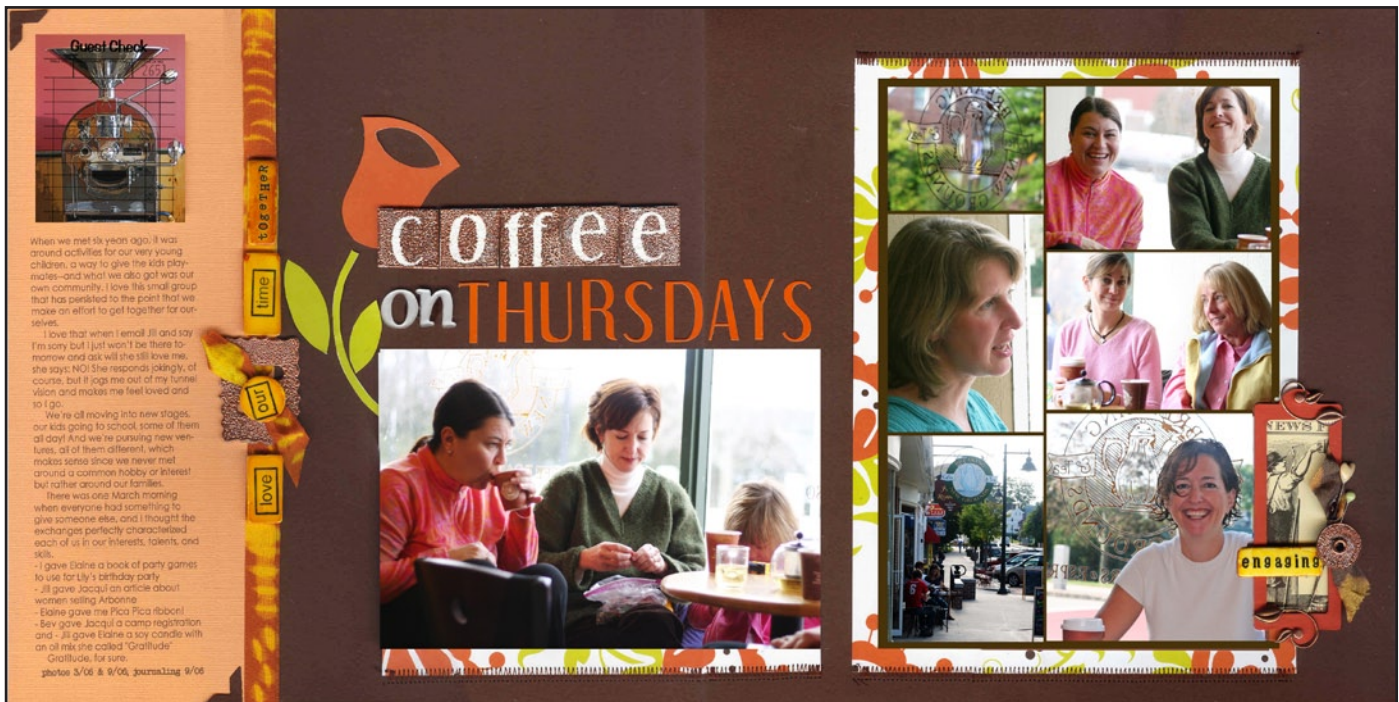


them--you can show them in photos, you can describe them and their behavior in the journaling, AND, if you're feeling like getting some feelings onto the page, you can journal about your relationships with them and how they relate to the outing you're scrapbooking.

In "Coffee on Thursdays," I write about the evolution of a friendship between several women and of how this regular outing has become key to its endurance. In "Rink Time," the photos show the outing and activity, but the journaling's focus is on how we need to make more time to spend with these friends no matter what the activity.



CLICK for journaling.



CLICK for journaling.

vary your scope

Sometimes you'll have photos and an interesting timeline from an outing, and you'll include all of it on a page. In "And We Shopped" I took photos of multiple stops and purchases, as well as the lunch to present a picture of our day.

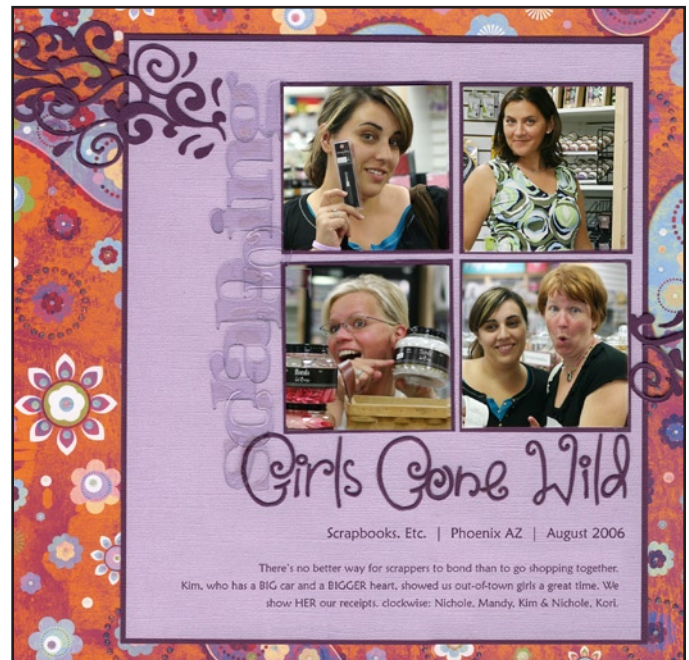


CLICK for journaling.

You don't need to scrap the entire outing, though, to convey a feel for the spirit and intent. "The Shoppers" shows my nieces ready to do a girl's shopping day with me -- their purses and lunch outfits chosen



CLICK for journaling.

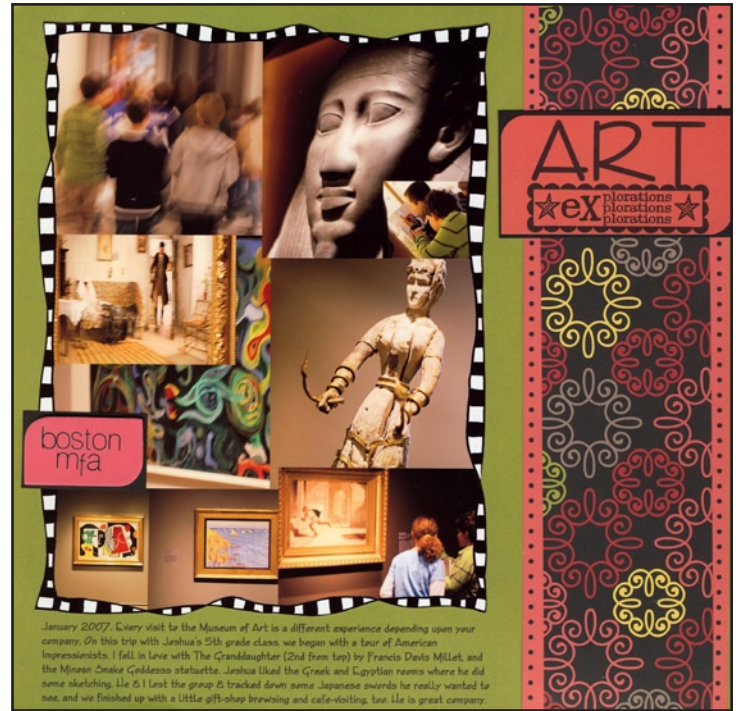


carefully. "Scrapping Girls Gone Wild" captures one stop on a day of shopping and eating with scrapbooking friends.

concentrate on the place

Focus on the details of the location, ranging from the landscape and buildings to the smaller details that you noticed or have even come to take for granted. Do this when you don't have the photos and/or story of people and activities. But, also, do this for places you visit repeatedly so that you can have this record.

Museums often seem to demand this approach from me--it's much more interesting to show the exhibit than it is to show my friends looking at the exhibit. "Art Explorations" and "Drawing at the MFA" are both the the Boston Museum of Fine arts. The two pages feature the

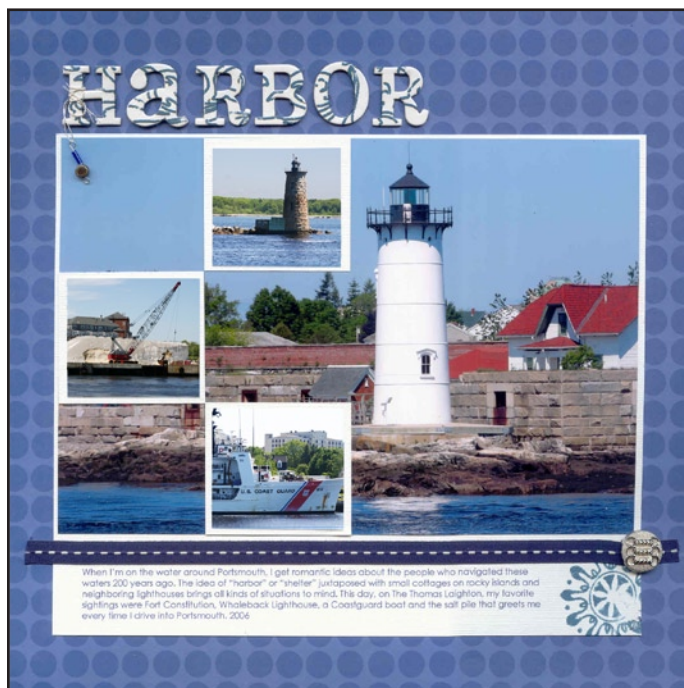


place--but with differing levels of focus. "Drawing" zooms right in on one exhibit and shows my children focused on that exhibit. "Art Explorations" shows several of the exhibits we really enjoyed on this particular outings.

"The University Dairy Bar" is a page that shows up the inside and outside of one of our favorite lunch stops. I made this page four years ago, and even included a booklet the the food menu, ice cream menu, and the history of this train station. This last year,



CLICK for journaling.



CLICK for journaling.

the station was "updated" inside to a more modern look. What's more, the menu has become healthy and organic. Oh, how we miss those hot dogs and fries and sitting at the u-shaped counter. What's more: oh, how happy I am that I made this page and included so many details.

When you do make pages that concentrate on place, consider adding memorabilia or documentation (like the menus on "Dairy Bar") or even facts that seem obvious to you right now but not to others or to you in the future. In "Harbor," I included the names of the key sights in my photos.

feature the activities

So what did you do there? And it is always the same thing or does it vary by season, with your company, or over time? Be sure to get photos of your companions in action on outings and tell about these goings-on in the journaling.

"Evening Swim" is a layout of an outing we've made many times over the years. Every year is different,



though. I find I don't scrap going to the pool more than once in any season BUT I do seem to scrap it every season, and I love seeing the repetitions and the changes. The journaling is not real "deep" on these, but the photos focused on their play provides the information

and charm that make these pages keepers.

Physical activities just seem to demand some action shots--as shown in "Big Hill" and "Doing It."



JOURNALING: “And We Shopped”

Joshua loves junk. And Isaac loves odd cute stuff. While in Oxford this summer, we spent one day in Bainbridge where there are several antique shops. Luckily they all have “stuff” (I’ll stop calling it junk) that the boys could afford. Joshua was excited. Isaac was skeptical, but he had the first find of the day: this colorful squirrel that he HAD to have. He also got a glass elephant and a very small, handmade, jointed bear. Joshua got an Native American pewter figure, a small totem pole made in Alaska, and a very small knife in sheath (about 2”). And no junkshopping day is complete without lunch at Bob’s diner. July 2007. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “Blueberry Season”

I love the things that Isaac latches onto. On Sat evening, I said they played classical music on Sunday mornings at Blueberry Bay Farm. He was fixated on getting there early enough the next day to make sure he didn’t miss the music. And when we got there that was what he was looking for first --- and we found it right in our favorite back patch. The EarliBlues were the best picking and the least tart. Joshua made a coffee cake that night. And check out his blueberry snowman. June 2007. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “Coffee on Thursdays”

When we met six years ago, it was around activities for our very young children, a way to give the kids playmates--and what we also got was our own community. I love this small group that has persisted to the point that we make an effort to get together for ourselves.

I love that when I email Jill and say I’m sorry but I just won’t be there tomorrow and ask will she still love me, she says: NO! She responds jokingly, of course, but it jogs me out of my tunnel vision and makes me feel loved and so I go.

We’re all moving into new stages, our kids going to school, some of them all day! And we’re pursuing new ventures, all of them different, which makes sense since we never met around a common hobby or interest but rather around our families.

There was one March morning when everyone had something to give someone else, and I thought the exchanges perfectly characterized each of us in our interests, talents, and skills. - I gave Elaine a book of party games to use for Lily’s birthday party - Jill gave Jacqui an article about women selling Arbonne - Elaine gave me Pica Pica ribbon! - Bev gave Jacqui a camp registration and - Jill gave Elaine a soy candle with an oil mix she called “Gratitude”

Gratitude, for sure. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “Dairy Bar”

COVER: When In Durham, New Hampshire THE UNIVERSITY DAIRY BAR is not to be missed Eat breakfast, lunch, and/or ice cream in this small Richardsonsdesque train station. Be served by the University’s Restaurant Management Students. Catch the Downeaster to Portland or Boston. Enjoy the company of friends and family.

TRAIN STATION HISTORY PAGE:

The Durham Train Station was originally built in 1896 in Lynn, MA. When a much larger station replaced it in 1911, this small Richardsonsdesque station was completely dismantled and transported to Durham. Here it was reconstructed and served the University and the town as a train station until the 1960’s. A few years after its closing, the University purchased the station from the B&M Railroad for \$1.00. Since the 1970s it has been an educational facility for Restaurant Management students. This station is one of the of the best examples of turn-of-the-century railroad architecture in New England. In December 2001, passenger rail service resumed with Amtrak’s Downeaster.

DOWNEASTER PAGE:

The first commuter train to pull into Durham, NH in 30 years, Amtrak’s Downeaster, pulled in on December 14, 2001. THE ROUTE Portland Old Orchard Beach Saco Wells Dover Durham Exeter Haverill Woburn Boston. \$14 one way Durham to Boston. Departures South: 7:29 am 9:59 am 3:10 pm 4:49 pm 7:49 pm

RESTAURANT PAGE:

Breakfast * Lunch * Ice Cream. The UNH Dairy Bar is a Thompson School Training Facility for Restaurant Management students. Grill service is offered Monday through Friday from 8a.m.-4p.m. throughout the entire year. Summer ice cream service at the window is offered weekdays 4:30p.m.-8p.m. and Saturday and Sunday Noon-8:00p.m.

ICE CREAM FLAVOURS PAGE :

Pistachio Chocolate Vanilla MooseTracks Rum Raisin Cookies and Cream Chocolate Almond Strawberry Chocolate Chip Cookie Dough Praline Pecan Coffee Rocky Road Mint Chocolate Chip Butter Pecan Neapolitan etc . . . [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: “Get Your Hand Outta My Bucket”

Sunday morning at Blueberry Bay Farm is our tradition. We never get up early enough to beat the heat. We each have our own bucket & this time I remembered rope. You guys get tired after about 30 mins and wander off while I pick some more. We gobble handfuls of them in the car on the way home. We took this shot with the gorilla tripod you guys gave me for mother’s day--love that you

understand & want me in photos with you & splurged on this PLUS are always cooperative when I want to use it. We clowned around grabbing each others' berries. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: "Harbor"

When I'm on the water around Portsmouth, I get romantic ideas about the people who navigated these waters 200 years ago. The idea of "harbor" or "shelter" juxtaposed with small cottages on rocky islands and neighboring lighthouses brings all kinds of situations to mind. This day, on The Thomas Lughton, my favorite sightings were Fort Constitution, Whaleback Lighthouse, a Coastguard boat and the salt pile that greets me every time I drive into Portsmouth. 2006. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: "Jolly Holiday"

Isaac, Today we met the Mangans at the movies and it was a much different experience than when we go alone. We saw "Space Chimps" @ 1:30, did the photo-booth thing, got some beads @ Michael's, sat outside @ Chipotle & snacked & made necklaces, got ice cream @ Cold Stone & then . . . we went back over to the theatre for "Mamma Mia." Lily's Aunt Katie & cousin Hannah were here from Oregon & Rahoul came too & we were a happy group -- doing a combo of things it would never occur to us to mix. Aug 2 2008. [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: "Rink Time"

After too many months of not seeing each other, Patty called on a Sunday to find out what time the rink in our town opened since theirs was closed. 2:00! And we'll be there to meet you. It can be that easy. It's not as easy for the kids to reconnect as it is for Patty and me--so we need to do this again . . . and soon. 01*08 [CLICK](#) to return to layout.

JOURNALING: "The Shoppers"

When you showed up at Grandma's in these cute outfits with your purses I had my 1st inkling that I might not know what shopping with little girls is like. Tho, I did immediately realize that we'd need to "do lunch" while we were out. We hit 4 dollar stores, with Hannah confidently putting items in her basket and Emma making considered choices. After that we went to the Pizza Hut lunch buffet and had a lovely time. XO Aunt Debbie [CLICK](#) to return to layout.