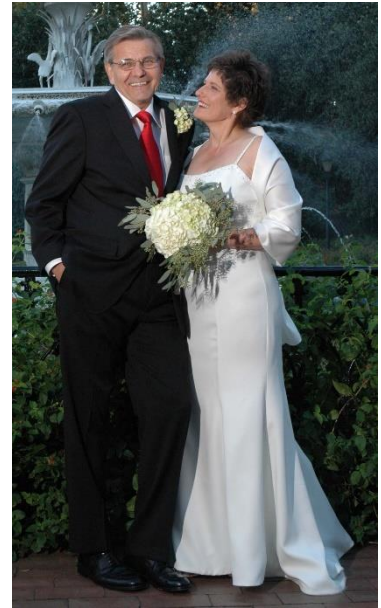


My Five-Year Journal Story

My husband Bob and I married on Thanksgiving Day in 2005, and I thought keeping a journal of our life together would be a fun thing to do. I knew it needed to be quick and easy because I had started many journals before, only to have them begin collecting dust after a few weeks. Then I came across a five-year journal.* I had never heard of such a thing.



This type of diary has a page for every day of the year and is divided into five equal parts. Each section has a box for the year and six corresponding lines to write whatever thoughts, events, moments, etc., you wish to record.

Every night, just before I go to sleep, I take my five-year journal from the nightstand and jot down whatever stood out in my day. What's so amazing to me about this is that I've done it faithfully since 2005! I do it because it takes me five minutes, and it's become part of my nightly routine.

Most of the entries in my five-year journals (I'm on my third one now) capture ordinary moments—Bob's golf scores (the good ones), outings with friends, work projects, purchases, movies we loved and hated, and so forth. Some accountings bring back

exceptional days in vivid detail—a new job, being laid off from that new job, illnesses, deaths, surgeries, trips, surprises, awards, Bob's latest holes-in-one (he's had four), hurricanes, and so on. As you can tell, golf makes regular appearances in our five-year journals.

These few minutes each evening, just before we turn

January 1

2011	Saturday - good day - the start of a brand new year. Give up pessimism - I took a little time out this morning to write down goals for 2011. Both business and personal - I have a good feeling about this year - expect a victorious year. I have a college for money and a whole year for work - Yum!
2012	Sunday - beautiful day in Pasadena to start the new year - it's warm and sunny - a perfect Florida day - I had a great morning and evening to do my thing - I want to do well in the year - I had a great dinner and we all had a very nice time for in the new year - very exciting - I feel so good about my life
YEAR	
YEAR	
YEAR	

January 2

2011	Sunday - very day - the start of a brand new year. Give up pessimism - I took a little time out this morning to write down goals for 2011. Both business and personal - I have a good feeling about this year - expect a victorious year. I have a college for money and a whole year for work - Yum!
2012	Monday - first Monday of 2012 - I'm going to have a very nice morning - I have a trip to San Jose and that's just for starters - Yikes! - one day at a time - it will all get done - I have a great morning and evening to do my thing - I want to do well in the year - I had a great dinner and we all had a very nice time for in the new year - very exciting - I feel so good about my life
YEAR	
YEAR	
YEAR	

off the light, have become a special time for Bob and me. He always asks, "What were we doing last year?" I tell him, and then he wants to hear about the year before and the year before that and the one before that. We reminisce for a few minutes, reliving the times recorded in the journal and close the book on another day of our life together. Keeping this five-year journal has been one of the most rewarding things I've ever done.

A couple of years into keeping this journal, Bob came up with the idea of writing each year in a different-colored ink, so we've used purple, blue, green, pink, turquoise, and black. I'm not yet sure of what color the next year will command, but I know it won't be red. I still have leftover ninth-grade-English-teacher trauma.

I hope keeping a five-year journal will become a special time for you, so much so that you purchase one for someone you love. Happy writing!

Patricia Charpentier

**For more information about how to purchase five-year journals in cranberry red, sapphire blue, chocolate brown, hunter green, navy blue, or glossy black, go to WritingYourLife.org/Shop/Five-Year-Journal for the details.*