

Writing everything down

Tom Rochette <tom.rochette@coreteks.org>

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1 Question

Is there value in writing everything down?

2 Answer

I had this question when I started my research journey towards AGI. At one point I realized I wouldn't be able to hold everything in my brain and that I needed to write down what I was thinking about so that I would be able to come back later, re-read what I wrote and continue making progress on what I was working on, whether it had been a day, a few weeks, or many months.

There is definite value in writing everything down. It frees your mind, letting you delegate the task of remembering to the computer. A thought I might have had more than five years ago can still be accessible to me if I wrote it down, but it's unlikely I'll remember exactly what I was thinking five years ago by "thinking really hard". Nowadays I have trouble even remembering what I was working on a few hours prior due to the high volume of interruption I face in my work. Writing things down allows me to keep a record of what I'm doing.

One of the main concerns of writing everything down is that it can be seen as a waste of time. We often write and never read what we wrote again. As I write more and more, it becomes less and less likely that I will read what I've written in the past because the volume of content increases requiring more time to read. For the same amount of time spent reading, I cover the same constant amount of content, but the amount of uncovered content keeps growing, assuming I review prior content more than once.

I don't view writing that is not read again to be wasteful. Sometimes writing down our thoughts allows us to figure out an issue that is blocking us. Sometimes expressing what we feel makes us realize that the feelings themselves are very hard to explain. Sometimes we just need a buffer where we can jot things down and get rid of it once we're done.

Writing (and sharing) has the benefit that your thoughts can be reused by others. They can also be reused by your future self if you end up facing the same situation again.

3 References

- [How often should I review my personal notes?](#)
- [Research methodology and organization](#)