

Bullet Journals and Obsidian

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An experiment in bridging the divide between physical and digital (part 1)

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You collect tasks digitally. You schedule events digitally. You communicate digitally. You write digitally. Your entire livelihood may be defined by what you produce

— code, designs, plans, images, music, etc —

digitally.

You should therefore review, structure, and essentially plan your life digitally.

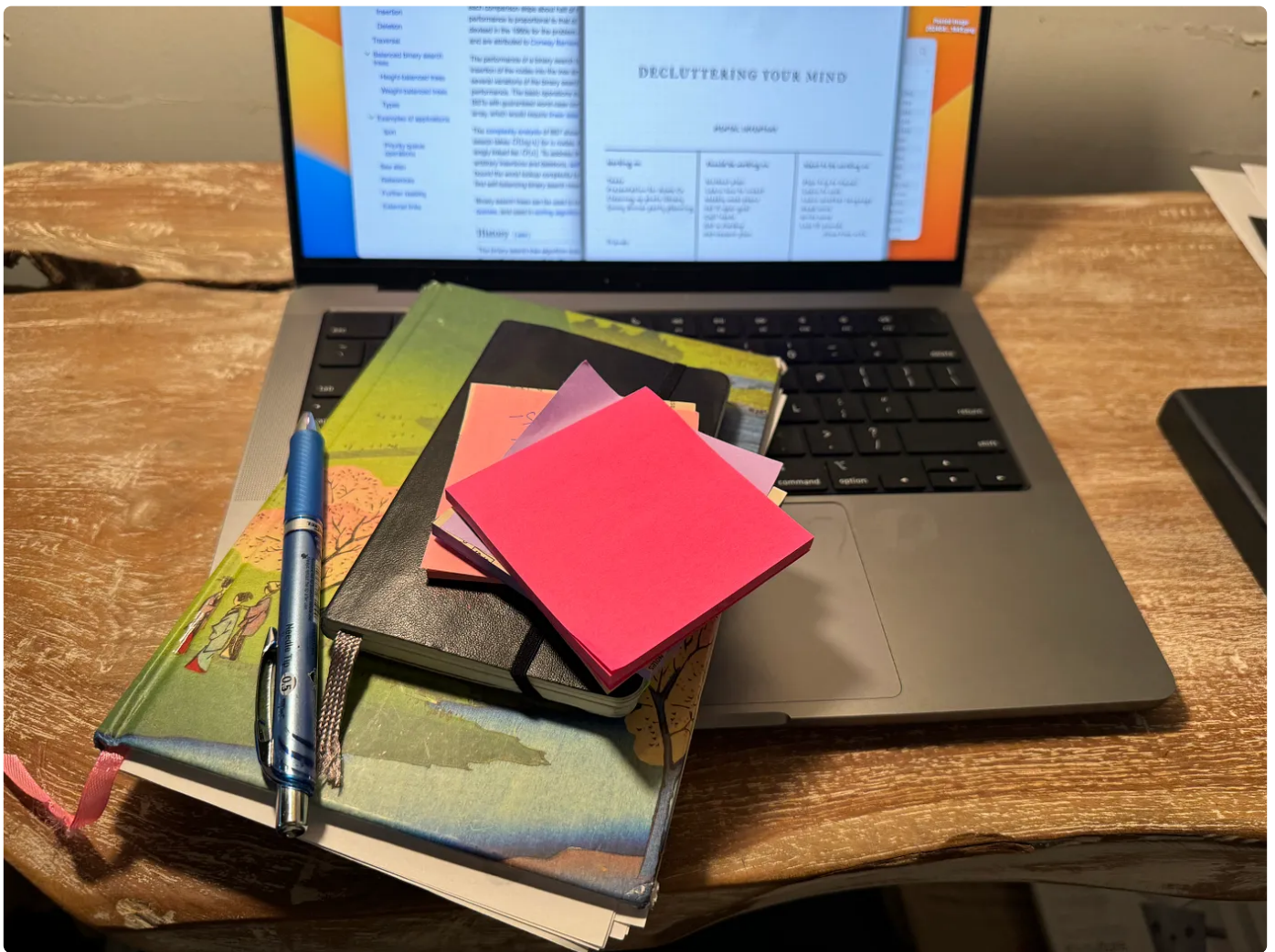
“No.” says Bullet Journal (Bujo) incarnate.

Bullet Journal® (aka Bujo) is a mindfulness practice designed as a productivity system. It will meet you wherever you are to help you process the past, organize the present, and author your future. All you need is pen and paper. — Bujo

And “No.” says my hand as it inexorably reaches for my pen to scribble down words, doodle senseless drawings, and annotate God knows what.

The idea is that there is something primal — even innate — that occurs when you put pen to paper. In the visual interactivity that ensues you will naturally do more as intended and even scratch away at the lottery ticket that reveals meaning in what you do.

That all sounds a bit like a magic trick. Nowhere in the forsaken and playful mess of my current pile of scraps have I found intent and meaning.



Geet's playful mess of scraps circa April 2024

Enter Bujo. Bujo promises to literally eat all of my scraps (see video below) and help me *structure* them in a way where my journal becomes a companion tailored for just me. A [whole book](#) written on Bujo makes a pretty compelling argument that I should believe in the magic. As I utter incantations while waving my pen, I will literally create (note)books corresponding to years that represent the volumes of my life.

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Problem: for me to really believe Bujo can deliver on its promise, it seems like it needs to eat a lot of my *digital* scraps

— links to articles, videos, images, quick-captured text, etc —

physically.

Lately, I have been using pen-and-paper to solve more problems and it occurred to me that there is a way that I can marry the approach I take to digital logging in the Obsidian app (see *Capture to Do* linked below) with Bujo.

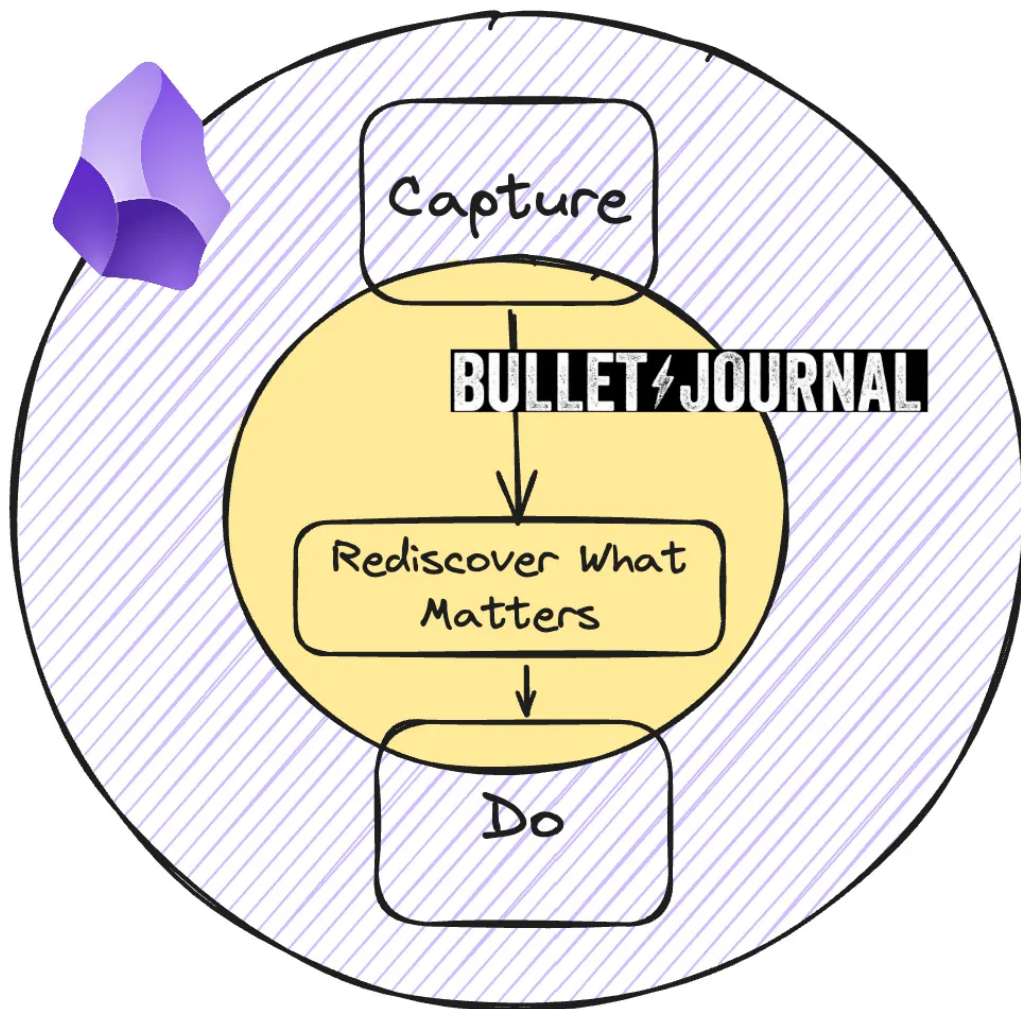
Capture to do. How I manage literally all my tasks in Obsidian

Unlock the simple, satisfying, and energizing secret to task management ‘productivity’

medium.com

I personally find that my ‘digital scraps’ are far too important and far too numerous for Bujo to be the primary source of capture. However, where I believe Bujo can really shine is the space between “capture” and “do”: the space where you re-discover what matters.

In Bujo space, there’s also a bit of “capturing” and “doing”, but I am going to make a bet that Bujo’s primary value will be in (re-)discovery of what matters.



In short, I will:

- maintain a “vanilla Bujo”. This is defined as Bujo is described in the video above (index, future log, monthly log, daily log, and other collections) and
- continue to use Obsidian via the “Capture to Do” method linked to above.

Bringing Bujo into my life forces me to think deeply about the divide between digital and physical. Previously I assumed that I can simply take pictures of my physical scraps and retain them for subsequent digital ref-

erence. But I don't remember the details of and context surrounding my scraps with the same fidelity that a dedicated physical notebook affords. I therefore want to also

- experiment with a *slight* twist to vanilla Bujo where physical scraps are refined and the divide between physical and digital scraps are more intimately bridged (think scrapbooks, tiny URLs, QR codes).

If you're interested in following my journey, 'like', 'subscribe', 'plunge', 'dive', 'swipe', or whatever we are all doing these days. Given how passionate both the the Bujo and Obsidian communities are, I would love any links and motivation from you all in the comments below as well!

Disclaimer. First, happy spring time to all of those on the northern hemisphere. I am aware that this is the start of a multi-part series and that the "Capture to Do" trilogy has yet to see its third post. That post is coming soon!