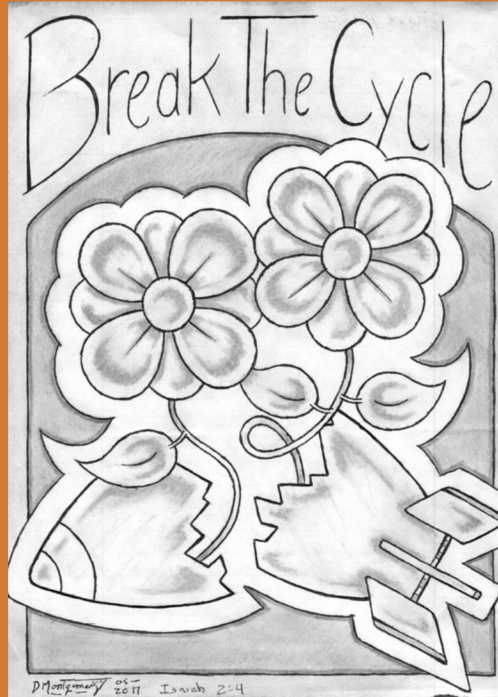


**“Each person can find **enlightenment within himself** - but like the fortune cookie, you can't get the message until you are willing to **break the shell.**”**

JM, 1981

### Reflection

Picture yourself planting a small seed in a harsh environment, such as a desert or a crack in the sidewalk. Think about the inner strength this seed must draw upon for it to bloom into a beautiful flower, plant, or tree. As you continue to grow this week, remember the same potential that lies within each seed lies within you.



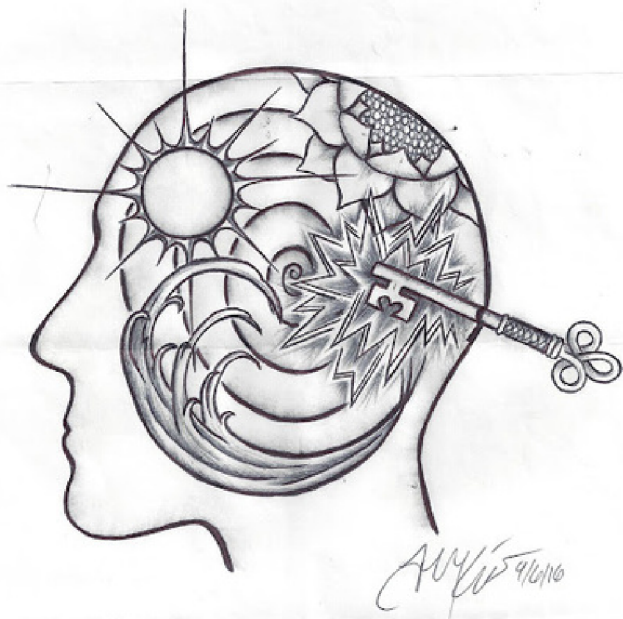
Art by Shane P.

### Questions

How have you grown despite harsh conditions?

What wisdom have you gained from difficult experiences?

How can you share that wisdom with others? How have you already?



## Questions

What is a skill you could teach others? What is a skill you would like to develop more? Why?

What is an inner truth you know about yourself?

Reflect on a time you didn't think you could solve a problem and you did. What did you learn about yourself?

## Reflection

Imagine you are looking at a crystal clear pool. Look at your reflection. What do you see at first glance? Look a little more, a little deeper. Start to slow and deepen your breaths as you look deeper into yourself. Your depth has no end. There's always more to discover. Offer love and gratitude to the light within you.

“I have been looking in books, other people's advice and comments, extensive outside sources for what was **inside of me all the time.**”

CGR, 1982



# “Before you can benefit others, you must first have your own **peace of mind**.”

Evan, 2016

## Reflection

Sit in a comfortable position and  
imagine a clear bubble around you.

Stretch your arms up and out;  
feel it surrounding and protecting you.

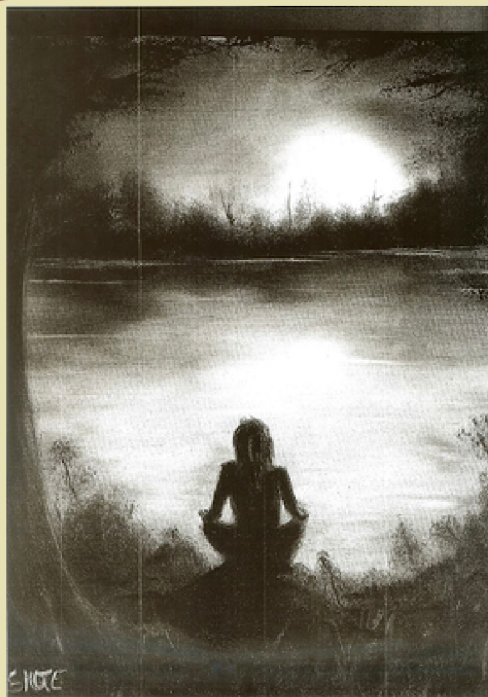
All that is good can enter;  
all that is bad cannot.

Here, you can surround yourself with  
light and love and

keep out the shadow and the noise.

This is your safe place.

It is always there for you.



Art by Shute

## Questions

What does it mean to have  
healthy boundaries?

What makes it difficult to create  
healthy boundaries? What  
makes it easy?

When was the last time you felt  
really peaceful? What could you  
do to feel that peace again?

**“I have learned that my feelings are not instructions. I do not need to act on what I am feeling.”**

Tall Tom, 2012

### Practice

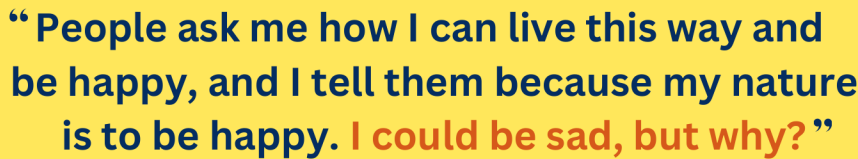
How do you feel right now? Bored? Happy? Sad? Silly?  
Ask yourself how you are feeling throughout the day.  
You might feel ten different feelings all in ten minutes (or seconds!) Feelings come and go; the consequences of actions can last forever. Throughout the day, pay attention to how you feel.  
Don't act on these feelings, just name them.  
And then watch them float away.

### Questions

When have you done something you regretted because you acted too quickly? What did you learn?

Take one minute to write down all the feelings that come up. Then do the same an hour later. What changed? What stayed the same?





## Reflection

## Questions

When is it hard to be happy? When is it easy?

Write a story about one of the happiest moments of your life.

# What can you do to bring more happiness to the world?



“As my **understanding of the self** grows, my **love for others**,  
as well as **myself** has also blossomed.” E, 2018

### Reflection

Take a moment to look at yourself in the mirror. Remember no one is born with deep self-love—it must be nurtured. Say “I love you” as if you were saying it to the person you love most. Now say it again, addressing it to you, and only you. Know that nourishing your relationship with yourself also strengthens your bonds with others. You deserve to love yourself and to share that love with others.



Art by Howard A.

### Questions

What is a strength of yours that you were surprised to discover?

What is something you've learned about yourself that you want to share with others? Why?

Reflect on a time when you showed yourself love. How did you feel?

**“The lunatic  
committee (those  
internal voices  
of criticism of  
myself and others)  
is alive and well,  
yet it doesn't  
need to get a vote  
in my choices.”**

Tall Tom, 2019



## Reflection

Close your eyes and imagine you are walking down a spiral staircase. At the bottom, you find a box filled with negative labels about yourself. Look through these labels and discard them one by one. Then, turn around and walk up the stairs. Look around. You are now surrounded by positive labels about yourself.

-Jimmy, 2023

## Questions

What makes it easy to be kind to yourself?  
What makes it hard to be kind to yourself?  
Reflect on a time when you were brave enough to choose kindness despite being hurt or afraid.



**“You always have a choice. Even when it doesn’t seem like there is a choice.”**

Sunny, 2020

### Reflection

Take a moment to check in with your body. Try to locate your seat of power - the part of you where goodness, light, and dignity are stored. Place your hand on top of it.

Remember, your seat of power belongs to you and only you. It will always be yours, and no one can ever take it away. It’s up to you to use it.



Art by Carl M.

### Questions

What is a choice you made that you are proud of?

What can make it difficult to make the right choice? Why?

Reflect on your seat of power. Where does it come from and how can you use it to help yourself and others?

### Practice

Imagine your body as a strong oak tree. Your feet are its roots, your torso is its trunk, and your thoughts are branches touching the sky. Think of the strength and stability a tree must have to weather even the worst storms. Remember that you, like a mighty oak, are powerful. As a tree's power comes from its roots, your power comes from within.



Art by Banegas S.

**“They claim that they have taken your power, but it’s not true. No one can take that power away unless you give it away.”**

Sunny, 2022

### Questions

Have you ever been surprised by your inner power? Why?

How have you used your power for good?

Reflect on the meaning of inner power. How is it different from other forms of power?







### Practice

Close your eyes and notice what it's like to be in the dark.

Rest there for several breaths, paying attention to the feelings that come up in the darkness.

Now, as you breathe in and out, imagine a small flicker of light in your heart. Each breath adds fuel to fire that is getting stronger and stronger.

Let the light in your heart lead your way.



Art by Leary J.

**“There’s a light.  
A way. My way  
was lost, but I’m  
finding it again.”**

Stephanie, 2013

### Questions

When was a time you felt lost? Who or what helped you find your way?

What did being lost teach you about yourself? What did you learn about yourself when you found your way?

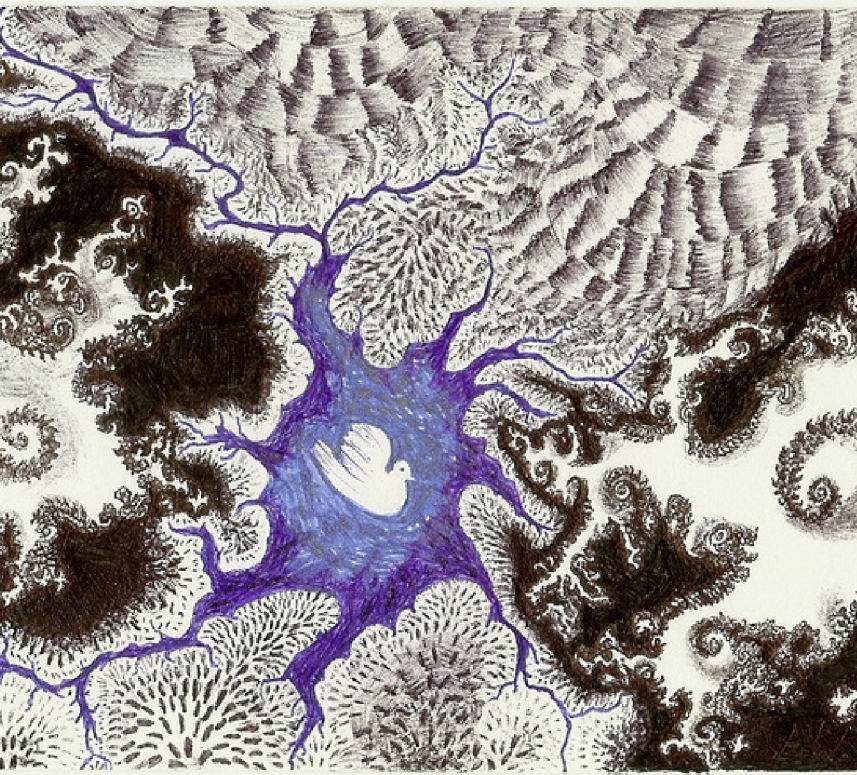
Reflect on a time you helped someone find their way when they were lost.



“Our deep dark past will become our  
**greatest** asset.”

John, 2014

Art by Stephen S.



## Reflection

“Someone I loved once gave me a box full of darkness. It took me years to understand that this too, was a gift,” writes poet Mary Oliver. Pain doesn’t simply turn into wisdom. It takes time and effort to burn off the poison of pain. Give your pain the time, care, love and attention it needs. Wounds heal. Scars remain. They trace the lines of our strength.

## Questions

What is the story behind a scar or a tattoo that is important to you?

When did a plan not go as you expected? What did you learn?

What was a hard time you thought you couldn’t recover from? How did it shape who you are today?



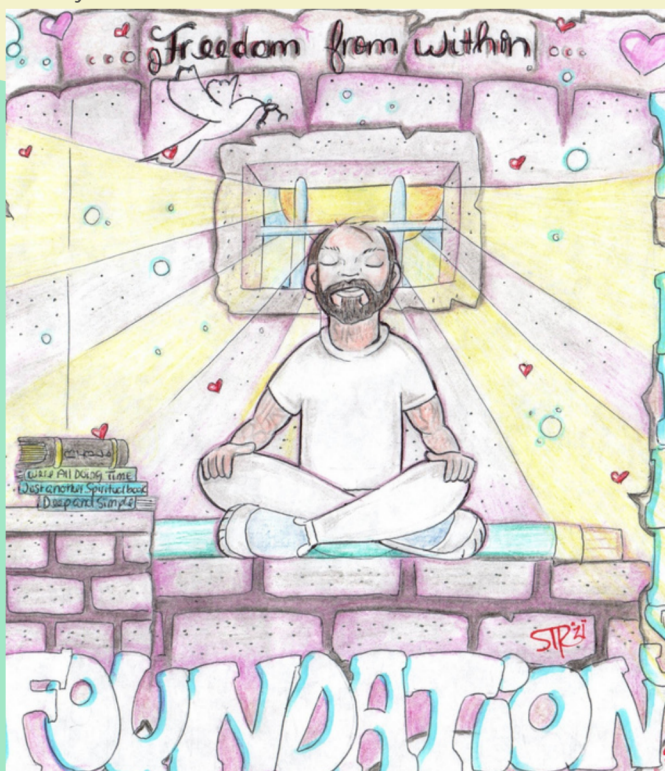
“My pain is no longer something I try to escape from; now **it’s a light or a beacon** that plays an important part in guiding me.”

Alvin, 2017

Art by Michael S.

## Reflection

Look around and find a shadow. Pay attention to its shape. If it moves, follow its journey. Shadows have their own stories to tell, their own lessons to teach, their own way to guide our path. Now look for the light that makes the shadow. Where there is shadow, there is always light. We can choose at any moment which way to turn our head.



## Questions

When have you connected with others over shared pain?

Who or what has guided you most throughout your life?

When have you guided someone through a hard time?

**“I allow myself to just feel  
the all of it and not push it  
down. It’s a powerful  
connection with the past  
and one I want to keep. It  
grounds me.”**

**Rick, 2010**



Art by Jason B

## Reflection

Plant your feet firmly on the ground. Feel the connection of your feet to the earth. No matter the weight your body or your heart holds, the earth can support it. This earth holds the bones of your ancestors; it can hold your tears and your fears today. This safety and strength is always there for you. It can hold what you carry.

## Questions

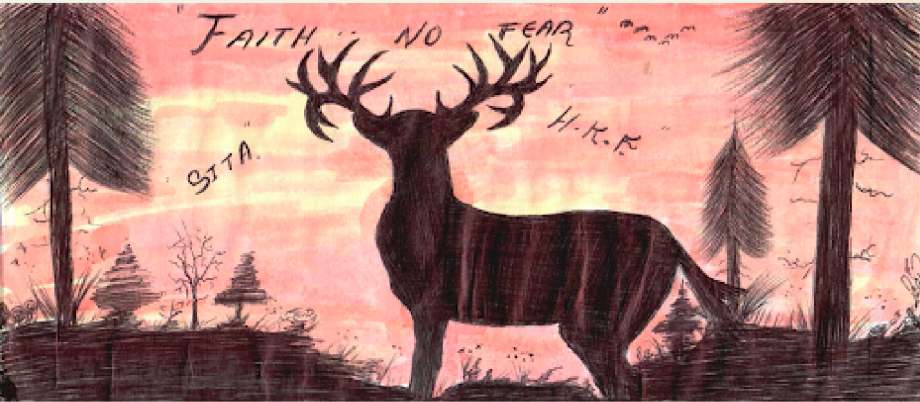
How do you cope when you are in a lot of pain?

Reflect on a time you numbed your feelings. How did this affect you?

Reflect on a time you felt grounded, peaceful and strong. What could you do to feel that way more often?

**“I started **paying attention**,  
and though I was not  
optimistic and joyous every  
day, I got better at it, and the  
**world began to seem better.**”**

**D, 2013**



Art by Javier H

## **Reflection**

Close your eyes and listen to the world around you. What do you hear? Try to identify as many individual sounds as you can. Now relax and listen to the music the sounds of your world make together. This is the hum of your world, right here. Of your life, right now. You will never hear this particular song again. Give thanks to the music of this precious present moment.

## **Questions**

Who is the best listener you know?  
How do you feel when you're around them?  
What have you learned from them?

What could you do to be a better listener?

When do you feel most loving and present?  
What could you do  
to feel that way more often?





Art by PIK

**“Just when you need it most, something you had all along makes itself known and reinstates that flicker of hope.”**

**Z, 2019**

### Reflection

Imagine yourself walking in a cave. You begin to worry because it is dark and you cannot see. You stand still because you are scared, but something within you pushes you forward. As you walk in the dark, you see a flicker of light. Aha! Feeling a mix of fear and hope, you keep walking. As you walk out of the cave, you see a waterfall. You notice different colors reflecting on the waterfall. Suddenly, you are calm. You are not afraid anymore.

### Questions

What role has fear played in your life?

What fears do you hope to overcome?

Reflect on a time when listening to yourself helped you overcome a fear or challenge.

**“I am no longer holding  
on by a thread,  
I've gotten the whole  
spool back.  
I'm beyond square one.”**

**R, 1990**



Art by Ave L.

## Reflection

Look at a piece of clothing you are wearing. Find a single thread and follow where it goes. A single thread holds a seam together, turning fragments into a whole. Praise to the single thread—sometimes it's all we've got. A thread can be our lifeline, a starting point for putting the pieces together into something stronger and more beautiful than before.

## Questions

What helps you feel better when you're having a hard time?

When did you last help someone who was struggling?

Reflect on a time you felt like you were barely holding on. Who helped you? How did you make it through?



### Practice

Look all around you.

Don't stop until you find  
something beautiful.

Take all the time you need.

This beauty might not be  
something you see; it might be  
a sound, a smell or a feeling.  
Open yourself up to beauty as  
a way of being, a way of believing.

Beauty always surrounds us.

It is up to us to see it, to be it,  
to believe it.



Art by Michael T.

**“If I do what I can  
today, I think that  
tomorrow will take  
care of itself.  
If I’m focused on  
tomorrow, I’m gonna  
miss something  
today.”**

Melvin, 2009

### Questions

When did you experience  
beauty today?

Get a pencil and paper, close your  
eyes, and let your hand freely  
move the pencil. Draw  
something that feels beautiful.

Open your eyes.

What do you see?



“I wake up and fall asleep saying thank you. All through the day I can't tell you how many times **I just say thank you.**”

James, 2005

Art by Jason B.

## Reflection

When you wake up in the morning, before you get out of bed, breathe in thanks and breathe out you. As you breathe in, let the different people and things you are grateful for float through your mind and settle in your heart. As you breathe out, imagine you are sharing this gratitude with every living being. Continue this practice throughout the day and make it the last thing you do at night.



## Questions

What are you most grateful for in your life?  
What are ten things you are grateful for right now?  
Throughout the day, write down everything you are grateful for when you think of it. What stands out? What surprises you?



Art by Jason B.

“The only thing I can’t change is the past. Everything else is a matter of my perspective. **I lay the groundwork in the present for a good future and then let go.**”

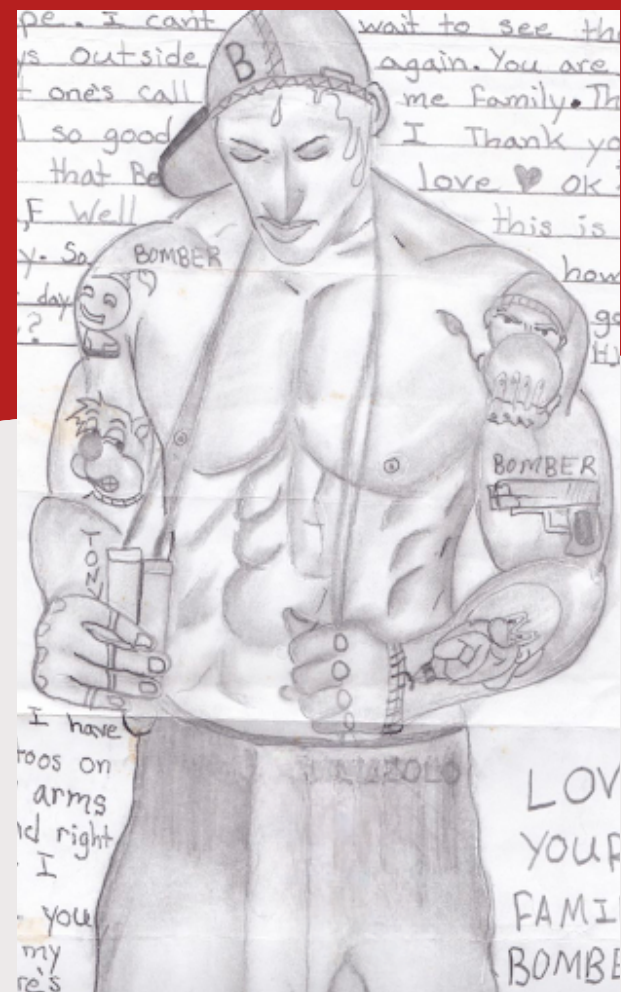
D, 2023

### Reflection

Look at the ground in front of you. Now imagine a path on the ground and start to build it. Maybe you’re marking a path with your hands or feet, maybe you’re using a stick to draw a path in the dirt. Maybe you’re finding rocks or objects to build it. Focus on the work of building, not the end point. There are many ways to make a path. Make yours well.

### Questions

What is something you do every day that helps you to be a better person? What is something you do every day that helps others? What is something you built that you are proud of? Reflect on the work you put into making this happen.



**“The best thing is to show them and prove it, instead of trying to tell them, and that takes time... maybe years. You do that by how you live your life from here.”**

Gabe, 2017

### Reflection

It's easy to float through life simply reacting instead of acting with purpose. When we act with purpose, the quality of our actions and their results improve. What purpose do you want your actions to serve? Pay attention to your actions today and work to let them reflect the best version of yourself. Practice acting with positive purpose. You won't always succeed. That's ok. Everything worth doing takes practice.

### Questions

What did you have to practice a lot to do well? What were the results? What story would you like your actions to tell about who you are? Reflect on a goal you have for yourself. What actions do you need to take to achieve it?



“I know I've got **many miles on this road** yet to travel but I believe I'm **off to a great start** so far” LT, 2005



## Practice

Stand up and plant your feet firmly on the ground. Pay attention to how your feet feel on the ground and the strength of the earth below. Put one foot in front of the other. Notice what changes in your body, in your balance, and in your view as you put one foot slowly in front of the other. What stays the same? Every step can be the start of something new and beautiful.

## Questions

- What is one small positive change you've made in your life recently? How does it feel?
- What is something positive you regularly do for yourself? How does this help you?
- What is something positive you would like to do for yourself? How would this help you?
- What would happen if you started today?

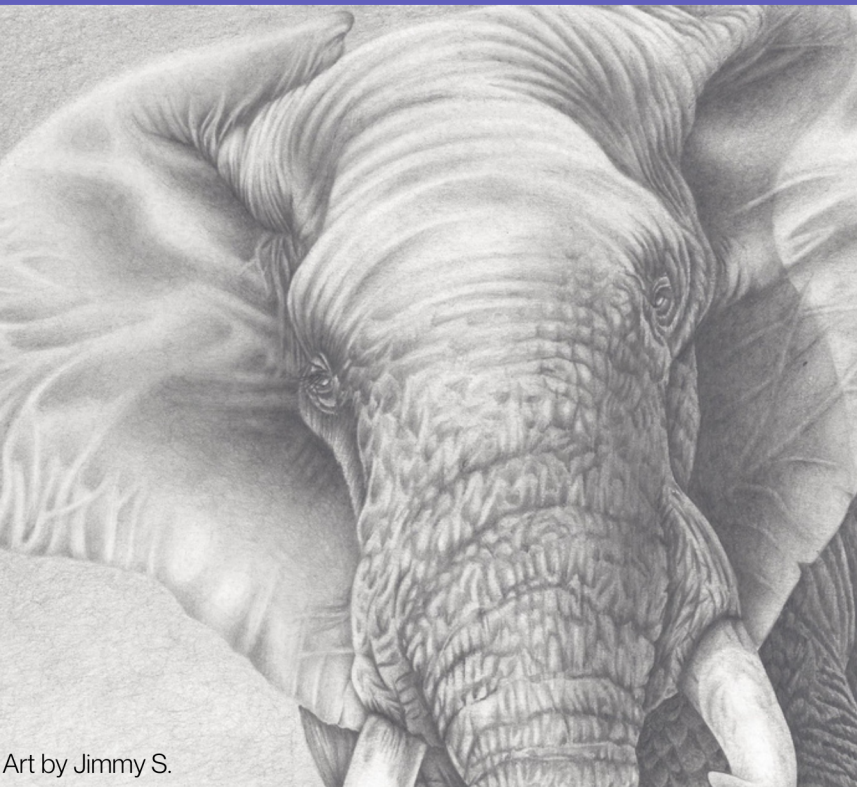


Art by Jonason K.



“All beings are created **to be enough**  
for the roads they travel.”

P, 2021



Art by Jimmy S.

## Reflection

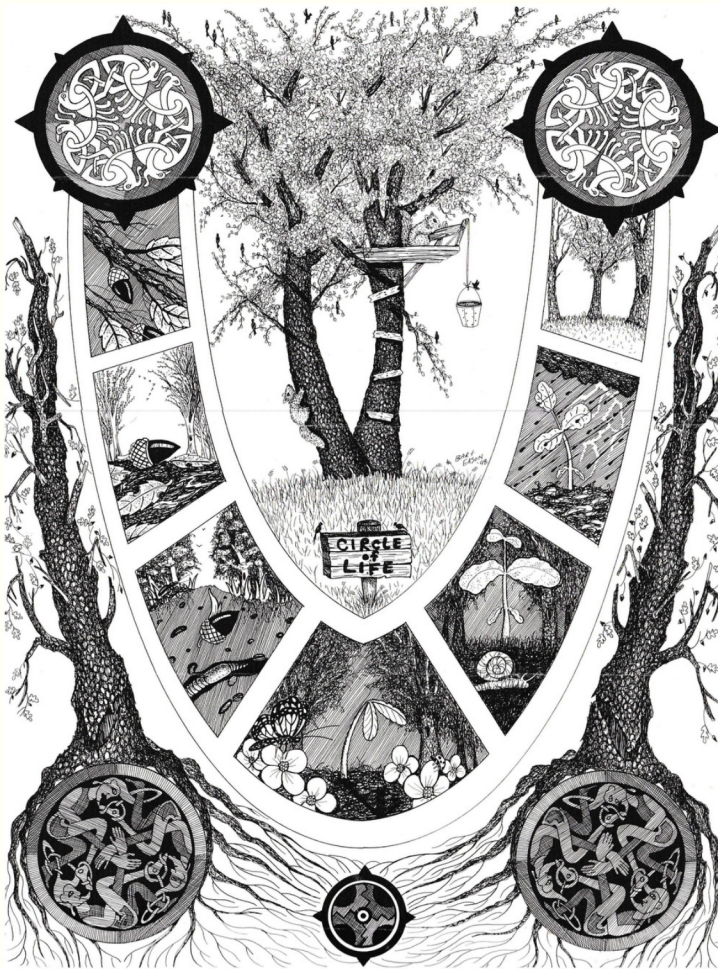
Imagine you are on a path in the middle of a journey. You are carrying everything you need with you. You are also carrying your fear, pain, and doubts. They can make it hard to find your strengths and skills. Look in your backpack and take out the stuff you don't need. Leave it on the path. Continue on your journey—lighter, stronger and more sure of the fact that you are everything you need to be. And more.

## Questions

What have you been carrying around for too long?

When have you believed you weren't enough?

What do you need to hear to remind you that you are enough? Write yourself a pep talk and keep it with you when you need it.



**“What I once saw as the end,  
now seems like it’s only the beginning.”**

**J.S., 2008**

### Reflection

Stand up and slowly stretch your arms up and then out to your sides. Focus on a single point before you. Pay attention to its details. Now slowly start to turn around. Notice what the world looks like as you turn. What stands out? When you find your way back to the place where you started, look at the same point. Does it look the same? What changed—the point or you?

### Questions

What is something that felt like an ending that was really the beginning of something good?

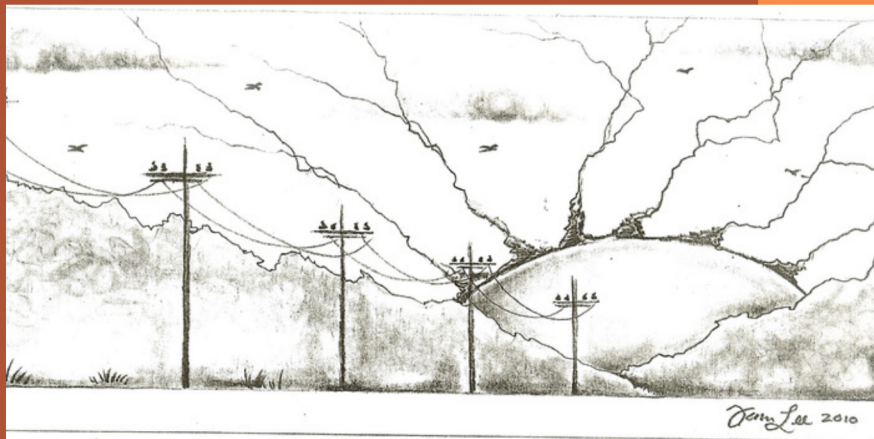
What is one thing you would like to start? Why?

Reflect on a time you learned  
to see something in a different way.

What caused this change?

**“What exactly is anger? It’s a source of energy. It’s also a use of energy. Anger must be respected and it must be given an outlet. If not, it will turn against you.”**

Sunny, 2022



Art by Jason O

## Reflection

Where do you feel anger in your body? What kinds of signals do you get when you're about to get angry? Scan your body from head to toe and back again and notice where you feel any tightness or pain when you think about something that angers you. Imagine these points as coils of energy. As you breathe, imagine them slowly unwinding and spreading energy, power and warmth throughout your body.

## Questions

What does anger look like to you? What does it feel like inside of you?

If you had a little monster that came out when you were angry, what would it look like? Draw a picture of your anger monster and give it a name.

What does your anger monster need to feel heard and understood? What does your anger monster want to say?



“I am using [my anger] as my energy, my motivation. instead of letting it destroy me. I think **anger and love are the two most powerful emotions**. Both have motivated people to do great things, to make major changes, to become stronger, better.”

R, 2000

### Reflection

Give yourself two seconds to consider everything you know before acting. [You are always] just two seconds away from determining the outcome of your life. Two seconds can bring peace or situations we regret for the rest of our lives. Allow those two seconds to keep yourself true to your heart; the heart can give all of our lives a chance. -Jarvis, 2012



### Questions

When was a time anger gave you the energy you needed to do something good for yourself or others?

When you get angry today, take a deep breath, count to two, and send love to the world. At the end of the day, reflect on how this made you feel.





Art by Tad P.

**“I need to let go of my anger. I need to unlearn the things I learned as a kid...I’m wasting more energy harboring anger than I am overcoming it.”**

Michael, 2023

### Reflection

Think of something that makes you angry that you would like to let go. Imagine holding it in your hand. Then clench your fist tightly and hold that tension for 5 seconds. Now, let go of that tension and slowly open your hand one finger at a time. Let this anger fly away. Breathe in a sense of space. Breathe out peace.

### Questions

What did you learn about anger as a child? How did this shape you?

What have you taught your loved ones about anger?

What would you like to teach them in the future?

What is the most important lesson you’ve learned about anger you want to share with others?

**“I realized that the power  
my anger has is only what  
I fuel it with. I have  
learned to forgive the  
ones who have harmed  
me and forgive myself for  
the harm I caused.”**

**Waylon, 2012**

## **Reflection**

When you feel sad, scared, hurt or ashamed, these feelings can easily turn into anger. What if you used the fuel from these feelings to turn into a protective force to help you and others? As you breathe deeply in and out, imagine the energy within you as a source of protection. Set an intention to lovingly protect yourself and others today.

## **Questions**

When was a time you protected someone from harm? When was a time someone protected you?

If you had a guardian angel, who would it be? What would they look like? What is their name?

Write a story about your guardian angel.



Art by Lindsay R



Art by Datra J.

## Reflection

It's a mystery. Tell yourself this as you breathe in and out. Start to connect your breath with the words. So much that is beautiful has no answers, like the mystery of love. Rest in the mystery. Breathe in its beauty and freedom. Let go of the need to know. Let the peace of mystery surround you.

## Questions

What are some things you cannot control? How does this make you feel?

When was the last time you felt filled with awe and wonder?

What are some good questions that have no answers?

**“It’s OK to live without all the answers.”**

L, 2013





Art by Jasionowski

“When we identify the negative stories that we have created about ourselves and **rewrite it to include our positive attributes** and disconnect from our limiting beliefs and emotions, **we will find that self-forgiveness is possible.**”

Jimmy, 2023

### Practice

Find a string and tie a knot in it. Pull it tighter. Examine the knot. Ask yourself: what keeps me bound? What prevents me from being the freest and fullest version of myself? As you work to untie the knot, imagine you are working shame out of your mind, body and heart. Shame is a story you tell about yourself; it is not you. What new stories could you tell when you free yourself from this burden?

### Questions

Is it harder to forgive yourself or forgive others? Why?

What is something you have forgiven yourself for?

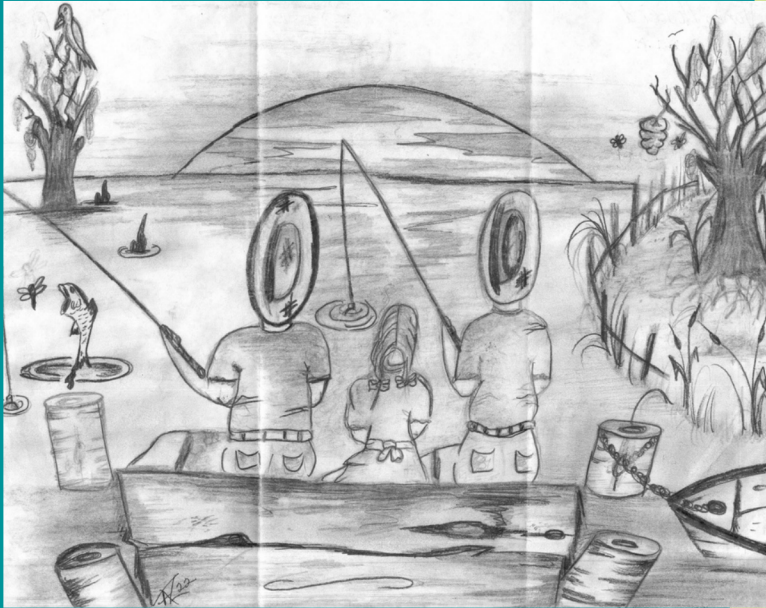
What changed when you did?

What is something you need to forgive yourself for?

What would change if you did?

**Forgiveness is not a one  
and done thing.  
It requires maintenance.  
Sometimes  
you have to keep forgiving  
people.**

*Anonymous, 2023*



Art by Tonya H.

## **Reflection**

Anything we do can be an opportunity to practice mindfulness. Today, as you brush your teeth, imagine letting go of some of the power a past pain holds in your present, even just a bit. Ask yourself to not let past pain control your thoughts and actions today. Be kind to yourself if you don't fully succeed. Tomorrow, when you brush your teeth, do it again.

Repeat as needed.

## **Questions**

What does forgiveness mean to you?

Do you think forgiveness is always possible or necessary? Why or why not? Can you forgive without forgetting?

Why or why not?

What changes in you when you forgive someone? When you forgive yourself?



Art designed by Tall Tom

“The more I let go, the less that binds  
me and **I am free to witness life.**”

Lawrence, 2017

### Reflection

Imagine a single leaf falling to the ground. Watch it turn in the wind as it falls and slowly comes to rest beside the tree. What do you need to let go? As you breathe in and out deeply, imagine you are blowing this weight and worry out of you. It lands on the leaf. Watch as the leaf drifts away in the wind, taking this weight with it. What will you do with this newfound space?

### Questions

What is something you have held onto for too long? How could your life be different if you let it go?

Draw a leaf and write some thing you need to let go of inside it. Create a ritual to let go of your leaf and what's inside of it.

What does holiness mean to you? What do you see everyday that could be holy if you saw it differently?



**“Slowly my heart is softening into a more compassionate one.”**

**B, 2013**

### **Reflection**

You were born with the ability to love. Sometimes life causes us to harden our hearts. What feels like protection can keep us from fully loving ourselves and others. Put your hand on your heart and say “soften my heart.” Say this as many times as you need. Imagine a hard shell starting to melt away. What remains is your pure ability to love. Greet this love as an old friend.



Art by Mark H.

### **Questions**

When was a time someone showed you compassion when you really needed it? What did you learn?

When was a time it was hard to show someone compassion but you did? What did you learn?

Who would you like to show more compassion towards? Why? What would it take for your heart to soften?

**“When you truly **open your heart** up, you learn to accept that **everyone is on their own path** just doing what they know.”**

**Gabe, 2017**

## **Reflection**

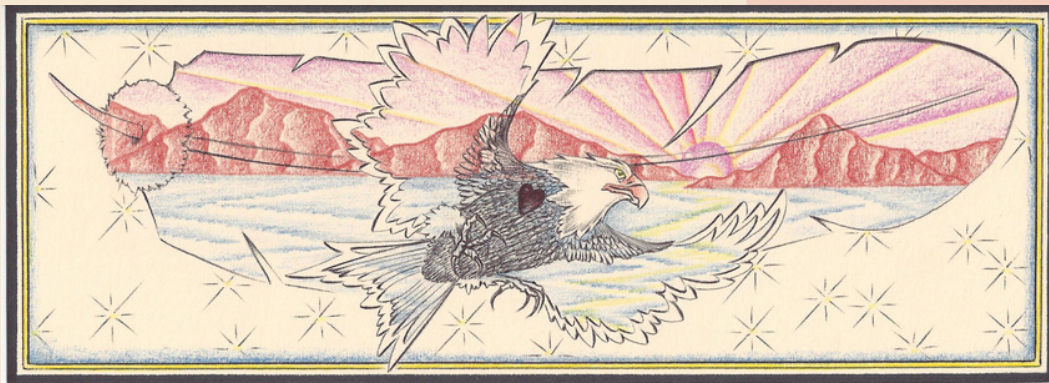
Cross your hands over each other and place them on your heart. Pay attention to everything you feel—the warmth of your chest, the beating of your heart, the movement of your breath. Quiet yourself and listen to the rhythm of your life. Gently press down on your heart. Tell yourself you are safe. Give your heart permission to gently open. Allow yourself to smile. Let this smile rest in your heart.

## **Questions**

What is one thing you want to let into your life? How could this help you open your heart to yourself and others?

Reflect on a time someone was open hearted with you. What did you learn?

What words do you need to hear to help you open your heart to yourself?



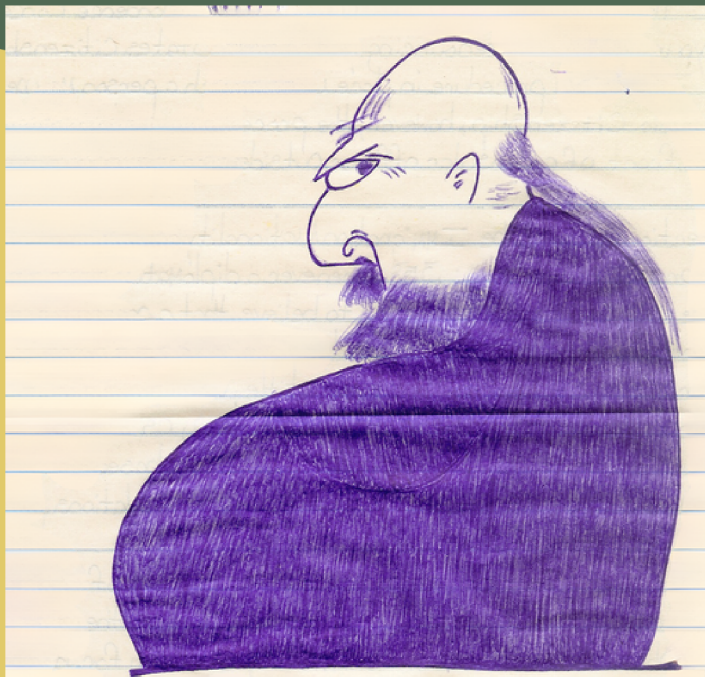
Art by Alejandro O

**“The ones that are the hardest to love are  
the ones that need it the most.”**

Robert, 2010

## Reflection

Breathe deeply and imagine you are receiving all the kindness the world has to offer. Now, it is your turn to share kindness with someone you find difficult. Pay attention to the feelings that come up; be curious and kind to yourself as you offer kindness to this person. Say to them (and yourself):  
may you be happy, may you be safe, may you be healthy and live with ease, may you be free.



Art by Tommy B.

## Questions

When did you show love to someone when it was hard?  
What did you learn?

When did you feel like you were hard to love? Who showed you love at this time in your life? What did you learn?



“ I can come to God **just as I am.**”

Melvin, 2009

### Reflection

Tell yourself today: I am enough, I am capable, I am good, I belong, I can show up, just as I am. You do not need transformation; you need revelation—to see yourself with the grace and love that God sees you. When you take off the layers of pain and protection you have mistaken for yourself, what remains is the shining brilliant beauty that is you, just as you are.



Art by Gary F.

### Questions

What kinds of masks have you worn to protect yourself? Why have you worn them? What's underneath the mask? Complete the sentence “I am” with ten positive statements about yourself.



Art by George J.

**“God's gift to us is love,  
and that we shall always  
have in abundance.”**

**Al, 1982**

## Questions

Who and what helps you  
hold steady when times  
are rough?

When have you offered  
someone shelter or  
protection when they  
needed help?

When has someone  
offered you shelter or  
protection when you  
needed help?

## Reflection

It's easy to feel overwhelmed.  
The sea is so big; our boat seems  
so small. But love is always there,  
even when we're unaware. The  
love of others and of a holy  
spirit—however you understand  
this to be—can help anchor you,  
so you can weather the storms  
that arise. Today, look at your  
surroundings with a renewed  
awareness of the love that holds  
and protects you, even in your  
darkest hour.

“After all, isn’t this the purpose of every religion known— **to love your neighbor as you want to be loved?**”

T, 2014



Art by Edwin R.

## Reflection

Everyone, everywhere, at every moment needs love, especially when it's hard, especially when they're hard. When we show love, we grow love. So be a love gardener today. Sprinkle love in unexpected places. Water the love in others that needs to be tended. Care for the love within you and then spread it madly, spread it gladly, and watch it fly away.

## Questions

Say hello to someone you don't know well today and ask them questions about themselves.

Be interested in the answers.

When have you learned a lesson from a difficult neighbor?

What can you do to try to be a better neighbor to those around you?



**“What I have found  
the easiest is  
to have compassion for  
all living things,  
big and small.”**

Albert, 2017



## Reflection

Open your arms and tell the world and everything in it you love them. Now look at everything alive around you. Take a minute and tell everything alive you see that you love it. Tell the leaves on the trees, the grass on the ground, the apple on the table, the bug flying around, the person sitting next to you (maybe say it in your heart, you make the call.) Look at your world, alive with love.

## Questions

Reflect on a time you felt really truly alive.

Where is a place you feel deeply connected?  
Describe why you feel this connection and what it feels like to be there.

### Practice

Take a deep breath and imagine you are breathing in all the love the world has to offer. Breathe out and imagine you are sharing all the love you have to offer. Feel yourself surrounded by love in the wind and whirl, the air and earth. You are key to the love within and around you.

Open your heart to this love.



**“I met love. I’ve tasted  
it and liked it and  
daily am consumed by  
it. Through love I am  
learning to control my  
thinking, my learning,  
and my actions.”**

LS, 1980

### Questions

How can love help you control your thinking, learning and actions? When has it not? Reflect on a time you could taste love in the food. Describe the tastes, smells, sights, sounds, and feelings of this moment. How do you most like to show love to others? How do you like to receive love?





**“As long as I actively BE LOVE then  
when the wind comes to blow me away,  
I'll fly with a smile.”**

**M, 2011**

### **Reflection**

Love is in everything. Love is you and you are love. Breathe in a full awareness of this love. Breathe out and imagine your breath like the wind, blowing away all that separates you from knowing, feeling and believing in this love within and around you. This right here, right now, this air, this earth, this light, this shadow are all woven through and made of love. You are a thread of this love. You are part of everything.

### **Questions**

Who is the most loving person you know? Tell a story about how this person showed you love.

What have you learned from them?

When and where do you feel most aware of the presence of love?



“When I remember  
“Breathe--be quiet.”  
When I see the shackle turn  
into the bird.  
I am loved. I can help  
others. I am Free/Here/Now.  
I am part of the outside.”

Jeffrey 2015

## Reflection

Let your breath slow and deepen. Quiet yourself and listen to the world around you. Listen to yourself. What do you hear? Is there something holding you back? You were meant to be free; in this freedom you are the fullest version of yourself. In this freedom you can fulfill all the promise and potential that is you. That freedom lives within you. Listen to the song of your freedom.

## Questions

What would you do if you were free to do anything you wanted? Why?  
What holds you back from being the freest and fullest version of yourself?  
What do you think is the most important thing you were born to do?



Art by Kevin C.

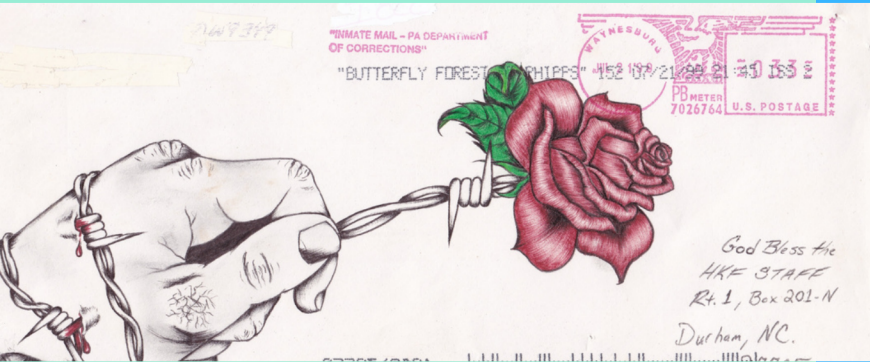
“ It’s easy to hurt people. It’s much **more meaningful** and **difficult to help people.**” Mark, 2021

## Questions

Reflect on a time someone helped you when you were in pain. What did you learn?

Reflect on a time you helped someone in pain. What did you learn?

How can hard moments in your life help you show kindness to others?



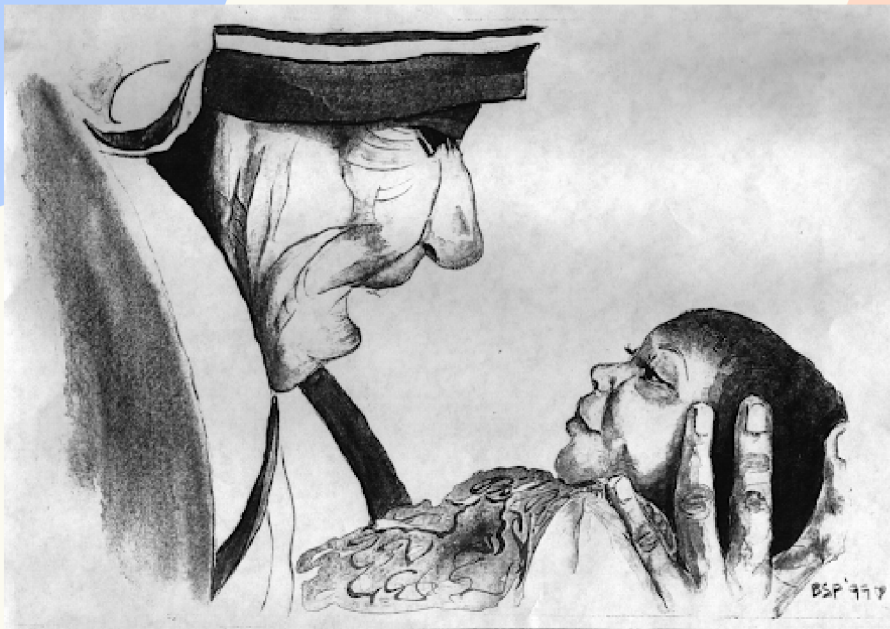
Art by John B.

## Practice

Hurt people hurt people, especially when we try to hide our pain under anger. It can be scary to feel your pain, especially when your wounds are big and many. But as you heal, your pain can become a path towards understanding other people's wounds and helping them heal as well. Imagine your pain as part of your power, allowing you to show warmth and love to yourself and others.



Art by Holman W.



**“I can’t change the whole world but I can  
make the world a better place  
for the person next to me.”**

JT, 2016

## Reflection

Next time you are sitting by someone, ask yourself what their story is. Wonder what their dreams might be. What are their fears? What’s the worst thing that’s ever happened to them? What’s the best? How could their story be like yours? How is it different and special? Offer them the grace of curiosity. Take a moment to wish them all good things.

## Questions

What is one thing you did to help someone this week?

What is one thing you would like to do to help others?

Write a thank you letter to someone who helped you when you really needed it.



“I have found that the **ONLY** antidote to grief, suffering and despair is **LOVE & SERVICE, & MORE loving service...reaching out** and genuinely **CARING** about those who others pass by.”

Jeri, 2002



Art by John S.

## Reflection

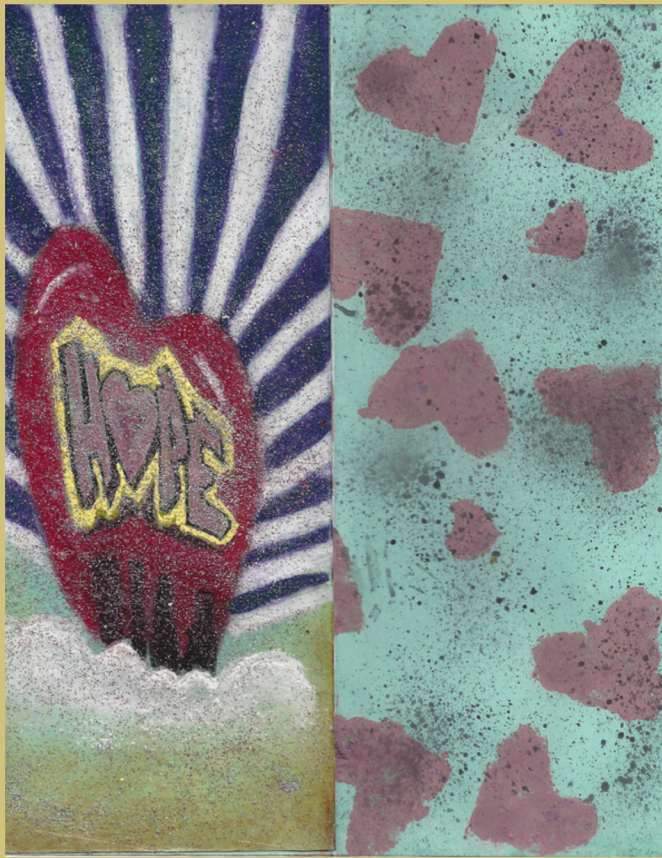
There is no other. There is only us. When you care for another you care for yourself. See your own face—and the faces of those you love—in all those you pass by today. Ask yourself—what gift might they have for me and I for them? These gifts come from our pain and our joy. What lessons might we learn and share? How are our lives bound together? Recognize and give thanks to the connections that surround us.

## Questions

What is a valuable lesson you learned from a stranger?

Reflect on a time you received a gift from a stranger.

What is the most memorable gift you ever received? Why?



Art by Raheem

### Reflection

Praise to the fools—the holy fools—who show us how to love, how to live and how to serve without reservation. Ask yourself today: How can I be a holy fool? How can I be a holy tool? Tell yourself today: let me use these hands of mine to help others. Let me use this voice of mine to speak the truth. And let me use this heart of mine to spread joy.

### Questions

Reflect on a time a stranger made your day better.

Reflect on a time you made a stranger's day better.

Tell someone you don't know today they're doing a good job. How did they react?

**“As foolish as I am, I can be hope--a light--or something better for someone.”**

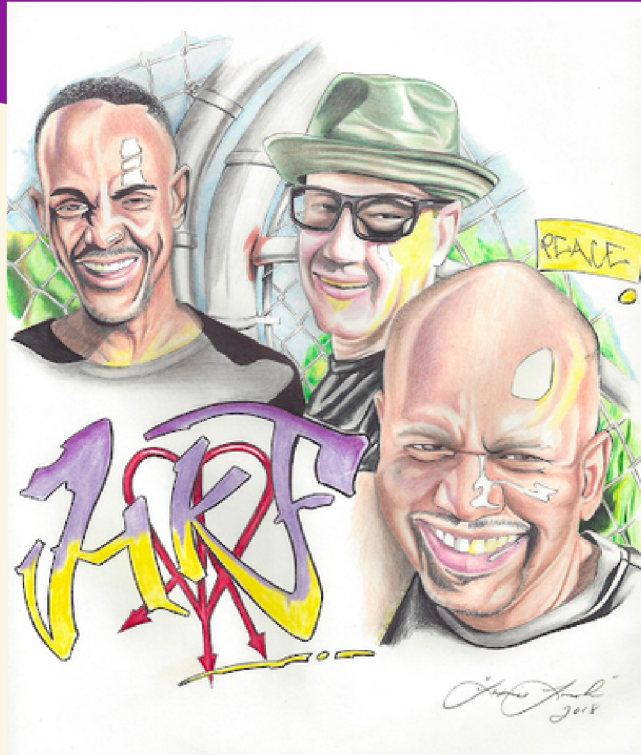
Ken, 2022

**“We are all spirits on a journey. Our imperfections help us learn, and, through the energy that makes up all things, we are all connected.”**

Sunny, 2022

### Reflection

Pour yourself a glass of water and look at what's inside. Water makes up most of your body and most of the world. As you take a sip, feel yourself in this water and feel your unity with the world around you. Offer thanks to the dance of people, objects and nature that bring this water to your body right here, right now and remember that we are never alone.



### Questions

What mistake have you learned the most from?  
What did you learn?  
When have you connected with others through shared mistakes?  
Write a story about a time you felt really connected to others. Use all your senses. What were the sights, sounds, smells, feelings and tastes of this time?





Art by Tomas

“ Others have walked  
this road before me,  
I just have to **draw on their strength.**”

D, CA, 2000

### Practice

Think of someone who is no longer with you who loves you very much. Picture their face in your mind. Let the presence of their love fill you, warming you with their love. Start to walk slowly, imagining them at your side. With each step, imagine them surrounding you with the protective presence of their love.

Let their love light your way.

### Questions

Who is the strongest person you know? What have you learned from them?

What strengths have you gained from your loved ones?

Write a story about the ancestor you admire most and why.



Art by Mark S.

“Live a life of **joy**  
and **connection.**”

Royal, 2013

## Reflection

When did you laugh the hardest in your life? Remember who you were with and how you felt in this moment.

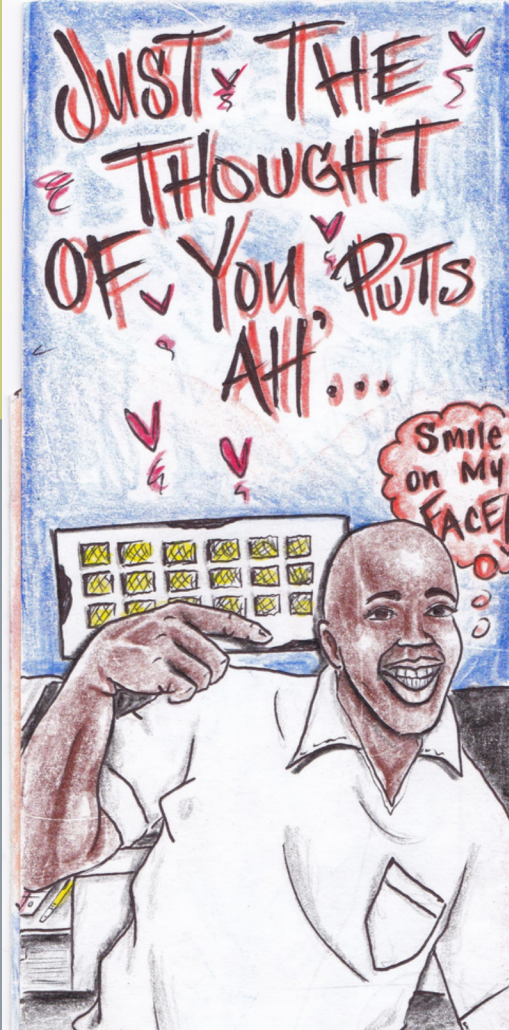
Let the feeling fill you with warmth and peace. Give thanks to your ability to laugh, love and feel joy. Breathe in a sense of connection. Breathe out a smile. Share that smile with someone who needs it today.

## Questions

Write about the time you laughed the hardest in your life.

What brings you joy?

How do you feel when you're around the happiest person you know? What have they taught you?



Art by Donald C.

“This life has never been about me...  
and it’s not about you.  
It has always been about us.”

Tony, 2010

### Reflection

Your pain is my pain; your joy is my joy. I work to end your suffering to end our suffering; I work to bring you joy to increase our joy. When we move from you and I, from us and them, and towards a “we” that means all of us, then we have created the Beloved Community. Tell yourself today: There is no you. There is no I. There is only we. We who make this world go round. We who hold and help each other. We are all we have. We are enough. We are everything.

### Questions

Who do you feel most connected to? Why? What responsibilities do you have to them?

What responsibilities do you have to those you don’t know?

What could you do to feel more connected to others?