



CARING FOR YOURSELF WHILE CARING FOR OTHERS



A SELF-CARE & WELLNESS WORKBOOK FOR PATIENTS, CAREGIVERS, AND FAMILIES

Supporting emotional well-being, compassion, and resilience during serious illness.

Welcome

Living with serious illness or caring for someone who is can be physically, emotionally, and mentally demanding. Along the way, you may experience moments of strength, love, exhaustion, uncertainty, grief, or overwhelm. All of these responses are human, and all of them are valid.

This booklet was created to support both patients and caregivers as they navigate these experiences. Whether you are receiving care, providing care, or supporting a loved one, this resource is here to gently remind you that your well-being matters too.

What This Booklet Is For

Self-care is not about fixing or changing difficult circumstances. Instead, it is about finding small, meaningful ways to care for your body, mind, and heart especially during challenging times.

Inside this booklet, you will find:

- Simple tools to manage stress and emotional overload
- Gentle practices for grounding, reflection, and rest
- Space to notice your needs and experiences
- Encouragement to care for yourself with compassion

You do not need to complete every activity, and there is no “right” way to use this booklet. You may choose one page that feels helpful today, return to another later, or simply read through at your own pace.

A Gentle Reminder

Taking time to care for yourself does not take away from caring for others. In fact, tending to your own well-being can help you feel more present, supported, and resilient.

There may be days when self-care feels easy, and days when it feels out of reach. On both kinds of days, please remember: you are doing the best you can and that is enough.

“In the middle of difficulty lies the opportunity for kindness — toward yourself.”





Reflection

What has felt most challenging
for me lately?

What has helped, even a little?



Stress

Stress is a natural response to situations that feel demanding, uncertain, or emotionally heavy. For patients and caregivers, stress may come from changes in health, routines, roles, or responsibilities. Your body's stress response is not a sign of weakness, it is your body trying to protect you.

Long-term or overwhelming stress can affect both physical and emotional well-being. Learning gentle ways to notice and respond to stress can help create moments of relief and balance.

Signs of stress

Signs of too much stress can show up in several ways, such as physical or emotional symptoms:

- Difficulty concentrating or thinking
- Memory problems
- Lacking self confidence
- Constant worry
- Difficulty making decisions
- Irritability
- Feeling helpless
- Feeling unhappy
- Feeling agitated or unable to relax

- High blood pressure
- Fatigue
- Rapid heart rate
- Low sex drive
- Physical pain
- Social withdrawal
- Increased substance use
- Decline in productivity
- Changes in sleeping or eating habits

Reflection

What helps bring me back into a calmer or more grounded place?

Window of Tolerance

When living with illness or caregiving responsibilities, our emotional capacity can shift. The “Window of Tolerance” helps explain why some days feel manageable, while others feel overwhelming or leave us feeling numb.

The window of tolerance refers to the range in which a person is able to function most effectively. Within this window, you may feel calm, balanced, and able to cope with life’s stresses while engaging in meaningful daily activities.

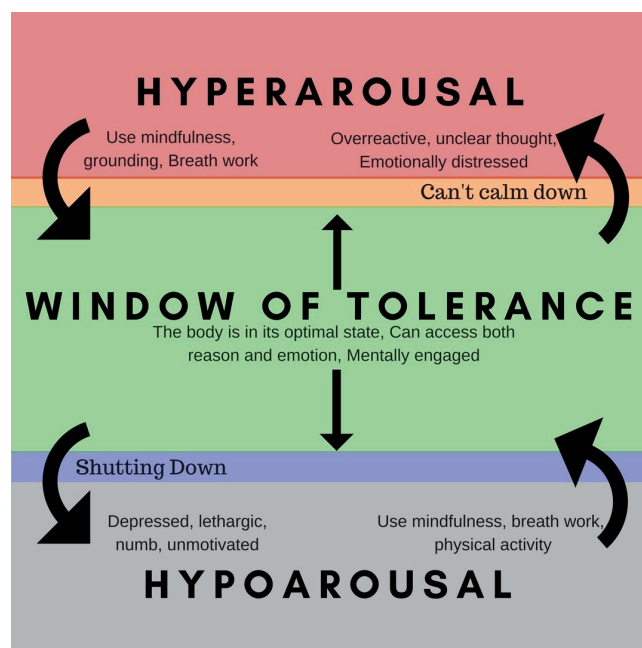
Everyone’s window of tolerance is different. It can be influenced by factors such as past experiences, current stress levels, and individual traits.

During periods of intense or prolonged stress, we may be pushed outside of this window into states of hyper-arousal or hypo-arousal.

- Hyper-arousal (fight or flight) is a state of heightened anxiety or panic. It may include racing thoughts, irritability, and feeling constantly on edge or hyper-vigilant.
- Hypo-arousal (freeze or fawn) is a state of shutdown or emotional numbness. It may include feelings of emptiness, withdrawal, low motivation, or disconnection.

When we are outside our window of tolerance, the world can feel unsafe or overwhelming. Over time, this can cause our window to become smaller and more rigid.

People who frequently operate outside their window of tolerance may experience increased emotional distress, anxiety, or low mood.



Living Within The Window of Tolerance: The Different Zones of Arousal

HYPERAROUSAL ZONE

Sympathetic "Fight or Flight Response"
(Too much arousal)



SIGNS YOU ARE HERE:

- Tension, shaking
- Emotional reactivity
- Defensiveness
- Racing thoughts
- Intrusive imagery
- Emotional overwhelm
- Feeling unsafe
- Obsessive/cyclical thoughts
- Hyper-vigilance
- Impulsivity
- Anger/Rage

OPTIMAL AROUSAL ZONE

Ventral Vagal "Window of Tolerance"



SIGNS YOU ARE HERE:

- Feel and think simultaneously
- Experience empathy
- Feelings are tolerable
- Present moment awareness - "Right here, right now"
- Feel open and curious (versus judgmental and defensive)
- Awareness of boundaries (yours & others)
- Reactions adapt to fit the situation
- Feel safe

HYPOAROUSAL ZONE

Parasympathetic "Immobilization Response"
(Too little arousal)



SIGNS YOU ARE HERE:

- Relative absence of sensation
- No energy
- Reduced physical movement
- "Not there"
- Can't defend oneself
- Disabled cognitive processing/"can't think"
- Numbing of emotions
- Disconnected
- No feelings
- Ashamed
- Flat affect
- Feeling 'dead'
- Shut down
- Passive
- Can't say no

Creating Healthy Habits

Making healthy choices can help our overall mental and physical well-being. Maybe you have already tried to eat better, get more exercise or sleep, or reduce stress, but it is not easy.

All changes take time! Be patient with yourself.

It can often help to ask others to hold you accountable for your plans. Create your plan with a friend who is also trying to make healthy changes.

We all have our regular routines and our regular habits from brushing your teeth, to having an unhealthy snack each night. Repetitive behaviors that make you feel good can affect your brain in ways that create habits that may be hard to change. These types of habits often become automatic and can be healthy or not so healthy.

Being able to recognize the habits that might not be the healthiest is the first step to stopping or creating new healthy habits.

When energy is limited, small changes matter. Healthy habits do not need to be big or perfect to be meaningful. Even gentle routines can support emotional and physical well-being.

There will also be times when you wonder if you can stick with it. It might be hard if you're not seeing the results or changes you expected, or other people aren't being mindful of your choices. But it is important to keep going if you want the habit to stick. This is where tracking your work and progress can really pay off.

But remember: it is ok if you slip once in a while! You're still human!

It is normal to feel frustrated when you experience setbacks while trying to make healthy changes or reach your goals. However, the good news is that change is possible and there are tips and strategies to help you along the way.

Be Patient

Make A Plan

Stay On Track

Be accountable

Know Your Habits

If you believe it will work out, you'll see opportunities. If you believe it won't, you will see obstacles. Some days, rest is the most important habit.

Weekly Goal and Habit Tracker

MY TOP THREE GOALS and HOW I WILL ACHIEVE THEM

[illegible]

my HABIT TRACKER

[illegible]

Achievements	
1	
2	
3	

For Next Week

What is Self-Care?

Self-care is anything you do intentionally to support your emotional, physical, mental, or spiritual well-being. During illness or caregiving, self-care may look different than it once did—and that is okay.

Self-care can be as simple as resting, asking for help, setting boundaries, or allowing yourself to feel what you feel.

Signs You May Need More Self-Care

- Changes in eating habits (not eating enough, overeating, or binging)
- Loss of interest in things that usually bring you joy
- Needing more time off than usual
- Changes in sleep (insomnia or sleeping too much)
- Withdrawing or isolating from others
- Physical changes (fatigue, aches, low energy)
- Trouble with memory or concentration
- Increased use of substances (alcohol, drugs, etc.)

Benefits of Self-Care

- Better ability to manage stress
- Increased resilience
- Reduced mental health concerns
- Greater ability to support others
- Improved overall well-being for yourself, your family, and those you care for

Taking Time for Yourself

- Allow yourself to feel your emotions
- Be gentle with yourself and your family
- Do things that bring you joy
- Forgive yourself when you make mistakes
- Give yourself permission to say “no”
- Set realistic expectations and timelines
- Remember: you are doing the best you can—and that is enough
- Eat well, get enough sleep, and stay active

Reflection

What does self-care look like for me right now?



SELF CARE Ideas

NURTURE YOUR MIND

Discover new hobbies
Read a book **Take a**
road trip **Keep a**
journal **Talk to a friend**

- Follow inspiring people
- Challenge yourself
- Be grateful
- Call an old friend
- Try something new

[illegible]

FEED YOUR SPIRIT

- Have “me-time”
- Listen to music
- Read poetry
- Write “future-self”
- Paint
- Meditate

TAKE CARE OF YOUR BODY

- Eat healthy**
- Start a workout plan**
- Get enough sleep**
- Stay hydrated**
- Yoga**
- Go for a walk**

[illegible]

Ideas

[illegible]

SELF CARE Planner

Self-care involves taking care of yourself emotionally, mentally, and physically.

Create a self-care plan by adding activities to the categories below.

MENTAL SELF-CARE

PHYSICAL SELF-CARE (GET ACTIVE)

EMOTIONAL SELF-CARE

DAILY HABITS (SLEEP, ETC)

REACH OUT (SOCIALIZE)

SUPPORT NETWORK

OTHER:

SELF CARE Focus

TOP 3 SELF-CARE ACTIVITIES

HOW THEY MAKE ME FEEL

1



2



3



OTHER SELF-CARE ACTIVITIES THAT MAKE ME HAPPY

01

02

03

FAVOURITE QUOTES/WORDS OF ENCOURAGEMENT

Relaxation Techniques

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

(Gentle Body Awareness)

Progressive Muscle Relaxation is a simple technique that helps release physical tension by gently tightening and relaxing different muscle groups. This practice can help calm the nervous system, reduce stress, and bring awareness back to the body.

You may choose to do this lying down, sitting comfortably, or stopping early if anything feels uncomfortable.

How to Practice

1. Take a slow breath in through your nose.
2. As you breathe in, gently tighten the muscles in your feet.
3. Hold for a moment — without strain.
4. As you breathe out, slowly release the tension.
5. Notice how your body feels as the muscles soften.

Continue moving slowly upward through the body if it feels right:

- Legs
- Hands and arms
- Shoulders
- Jaw and face

If any area feels painful or tiring, you may skip it. Listening to your body is part of the practice.

Gentle Reminder:

Relaxation is not about doing this “perfectly.” Even noticing one place of release is enough.

Grounding Techniques

(Finding Stability in the Present Moment)

Grounding techniques can help when thoughts feel overwhelming, emotions feel intense, or when you feel disconnected or unsettled. These exercises bring attention back to the present moment in a gentle way.

Simple Grounding Exercises

5-4-3-2-1 Senses

- Name 5 things you can see
- 4 things you can feel
- 3 things you can hear
- 2 things you can smell
- 1 thing you can taste

Feet on the Floor

- Place your feet flat on the floor
- Press them gently down
- Notice the support beneath you

Temperature Grounding

- Hold a warm mug or a cool object
- Notice the sensation in your hands

Grounding can be practiced anywhere and at any time — even for just a few seconds.

SLEEP & REST

Why Sleep Is Important

Sleep plays an important role in emotional balance, physical healing, memory, and overall well-being. During illness or caregiving, sleep may become disrupted due to stress, discomfort, worry, or changes in routine.

Difficulty sleeping does not mean you are doing something wrong. It is a common and understandable response during challenging times.

Rest .Even without sleep this still supports your body and mind.

Ways to Support Better Sleep

(Choose what feels possible)

- Keep a consistent bedtime when you can
- Create a calming routine before bed (reading, music, breathing)
- Dim lights in the evening
- Limit screen use before sleep if possible
- Use pillows or supports to increase comfort
- Rest during the day without pressure to sleep
- Gently remind yourself: "Rest is still restorative."

If sleep feels out of reach, simply lying down, breathing slowly, or listening to calming sounds can still offer benefit.

CREATIVE & CALMING ACTIVITIES

Adult Colouring

Colouring can be a soothing activity that encourages focus, relaxation, and gentle creativity. There is no right or wrong way to colour.

Use this space however you like:

- Carefully and slowly
- Freely and playfully
- For a few minutes or longer

Gentle Reminder:

This is about enjoyment, not perfection.

ACTIVITIES TO TRY

(At Home or Online)

Trying something new or returning to something familiar can offer moments of connection, curiosity, and enjoyment.

Creative & Craft Ideas

- Painting or drawing
- Knitting, crochet, or embroidery
- Simple crafts or DIY kits
- Writing letters or journaling
- Puzzle books or word games

Digital Activities

- Online or digital escape rooms
- Virtual museum tours
- Audiobooks or podcasts
- Guided relaxation or meditation videos
- Online classes or tutorials

Choose activities that match your energy and interest. Even brief moments of engagement can be meaningful.

WALKING & NATURE

Grande Prairie & Area

Spending time outdoors, even briefly, can support emotional well-being, reduce stress, and gently encourage movement. Walking can be adapted to your pace, ability, and comfort level.

Walking is beneficial because it:

- Supports circulation and mobility
- Helps regulate mood
- Encourages connection with nature
- Offers time for reflection or conversation

Local Walking & Hiking Areas

- Muskoseepi Park Trails
- Paved and gravel paths, accessible options, benches, and river views
- Bear Creek Nature Area
- Natural trails with forest and creek scenery
- Crystal Lake Trails
- Flat walking paths suitable for shorter walks
- Rotary Friendship Park
- Open green space with walking paths

You may choose to walk alone, with someone else, or simply sit and enjoy the surroundings.

Gentle Reminder:

Walking does not need to be long or strenuous to be beneficial. A few minutes is enough.

You are allowed to choose what supports you today — and to change your mind tomorrow.

City of Grande Prairie Trails

There are a variety of trails throughout the City of Grande Prairie. Look and try one that you have not tried before. <https://www.cityofgp.com/parks-recreation/parks-trails/walking-trails>

- Crystal Lake loop – 4 km Loop
- Muskoseepi Park - 3 km Loop
- Pinnacle Ridge Loop – 2.5 km Loop
- Westgate Loop – 3 km Loop
- Countryside Loop – 4 km Loop
- Arbour Hills/Royal Oaks – Short Route 4.4 km Loop
- Arbour Hills/Royal Oaks – Medium Route 5.8 km Loop
- Arbour Hills/Royal Oaks – Long Route 6.6 km Loop

The Muskoseepi trails are a great trail system that starts on the North end of Grande Prairie near Royal Oaks & Centre 2000 and continues to the South end at the Bear Creek ball diamonds. These paved trails follow the Bear Creek through the city and are great for any skill level to bike, walk, or run. These trails are 13.7 km in total. City of Grande Prairie trails do require all dogs to be always on a leash.

O'Brien Provincial Park

<https://tinyurl.com/bdf87b4> — Google map to O'Brien Provincial Park

8km loop located on the shore of the Wapiti River just off highway 40. The trail is in the best walking condition from April to October.



Lost Lake Loop

<https://tinyurl.com/8czzw4nc> — Google map to Lost Lake Loop

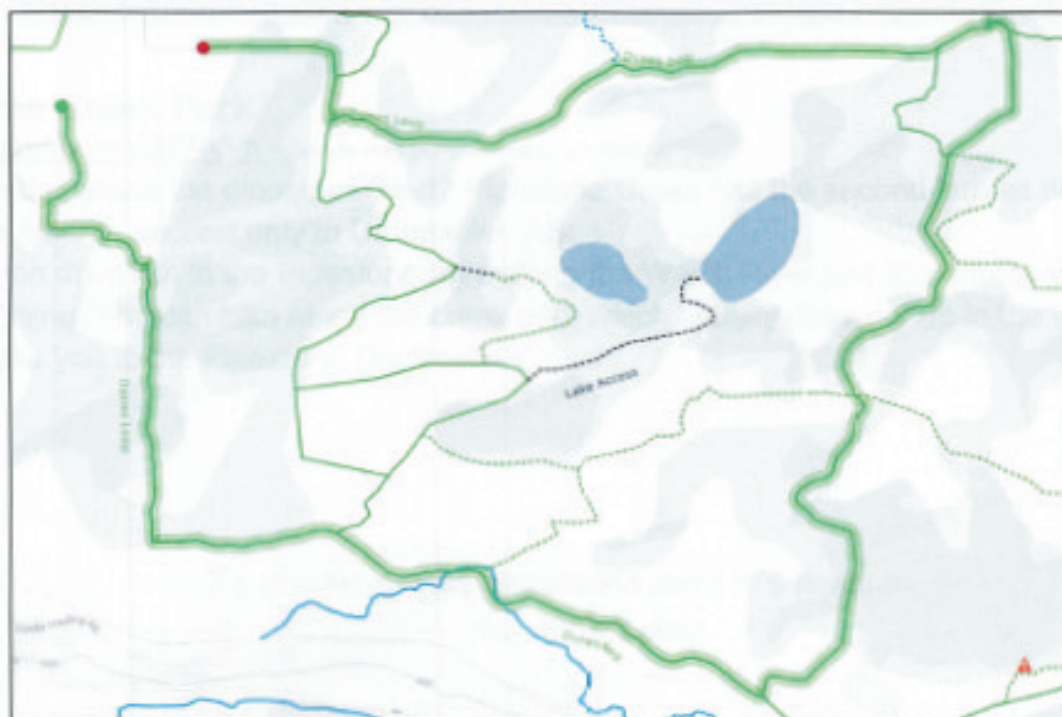
Lost Lake Loop is a 9 km loop located just past Evergreen Park. This loop is good for all skill levels and primarily used for hiking, walking and nature trips. Follow the Google map for further directions.



Dunes Loop

<https://tinyurl.com/n8cs6u4s> — Google map to the Dunes Loop

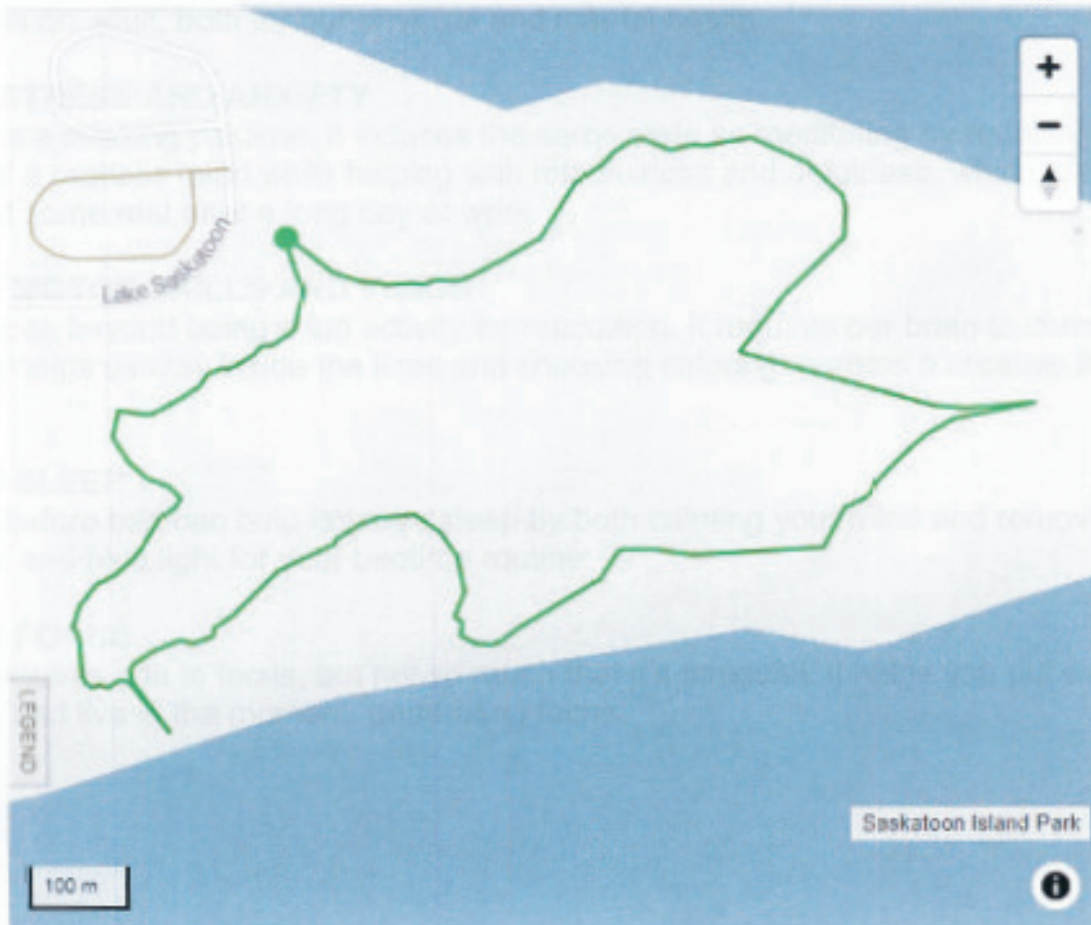
Located just off Secondary Highway 668, this paved 14 km loop is paved and a great trail for all ages.



Saskatoon Mountain

<https://tinyurl.com/4hjupdh2> — Google map to Saskatoon Mountain

Just a quick 30-minute drive West of Grande Prairie, well worth it for the amazing views.



Pipestone Creek Park

<https://tinyurl.com/d977n8jb> — Google map to Pipestone Creek Park

Every wonder where the dinosaurs lived? Pipestone Creek has the second largest dinosaur deposit in Alberta, second only to Drumheller, AB.

Take a short drive out to the Pipestone area along the Wapiti River just 35 minutes West of Grande Prairie. You can hike along the creek bed, which usually does dry up in the summer that will take you to the Pipestone Dig location.

It always seems impossible until it's done.

- Nelson Mandela

Colouring Sheets

Adult colouring books are a trend right now and for good reason. There are many benefits to colouring as an adult, both for our physical and mental health.

REDUCE STRESS AND ANXIETY

Colouring is a relaxing pastime. It induces the same state as meditating by reducing the thoughts of a restless mind while helping with mindfulness and quietness, which allows your mind to get some rest after a long day at work.

IMPROVE MOTOR SKILLS AND VISION

Coloring goes beyond being a fun activity for relaxation. It requires our brain to communicate, while logic helps us stay inside the lines and choosing colors generates a creative thought process.

IMPROVE SLEEP

Colouring before bed can help improve sleep by both calming your mind and removing electronics and blue light for your bedtime routine.

IMPROVE FOCUS

Coloring requires you to focus, but not so much that it's stressful. It helps you put everything else aside and live in the moment, generating focus.

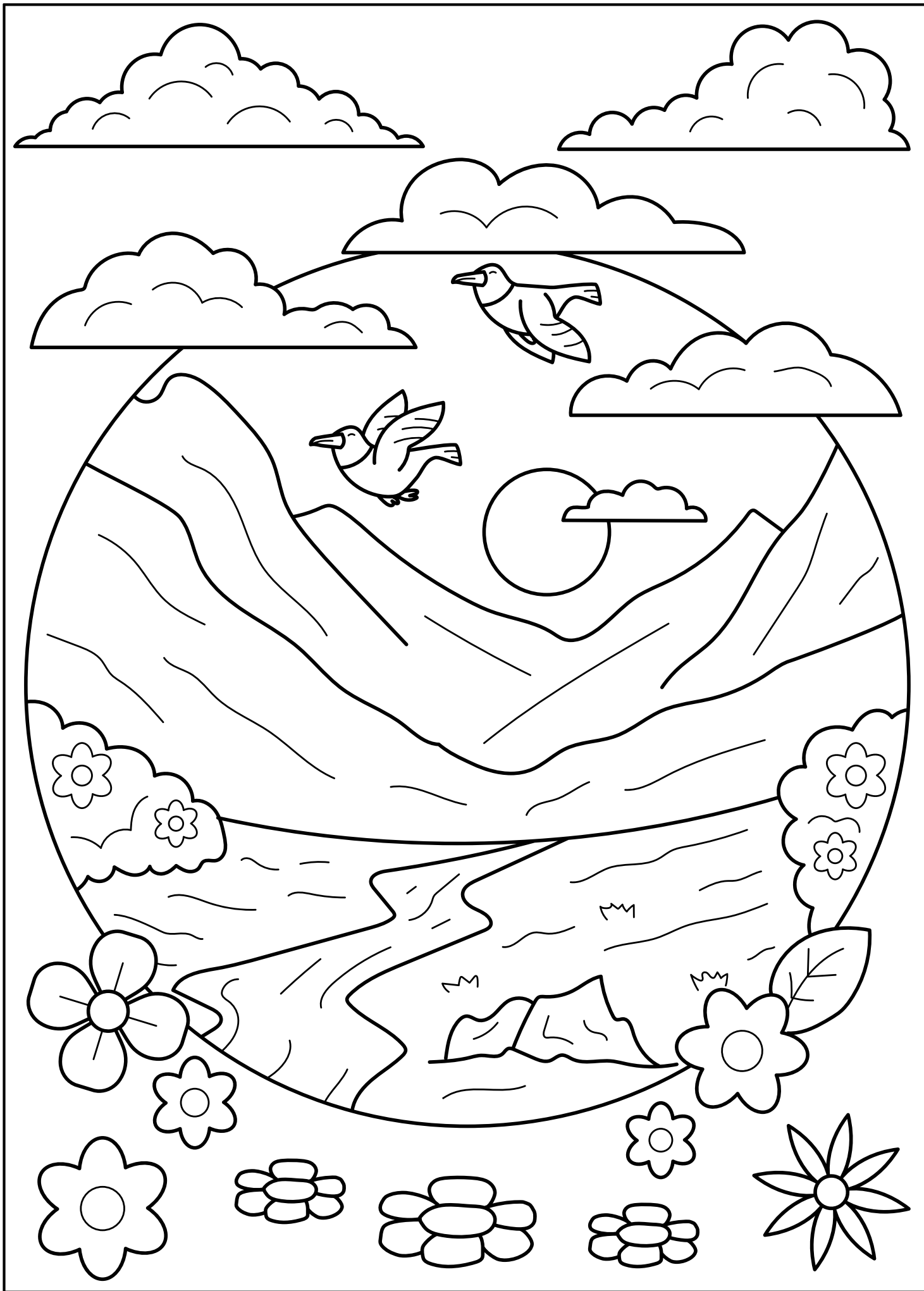
Be yourself; Everyone else is already taken.

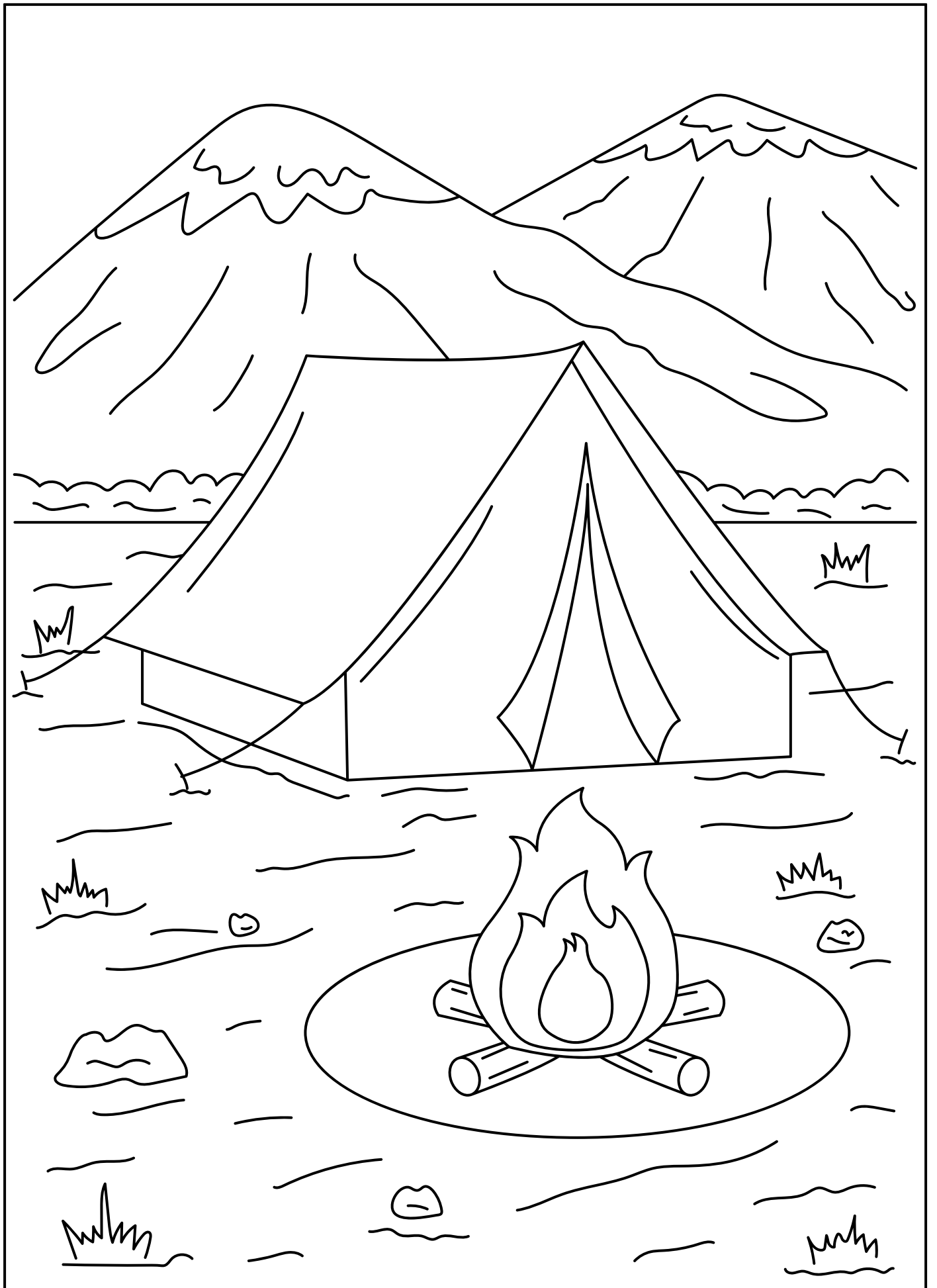
- Oscar Wilde

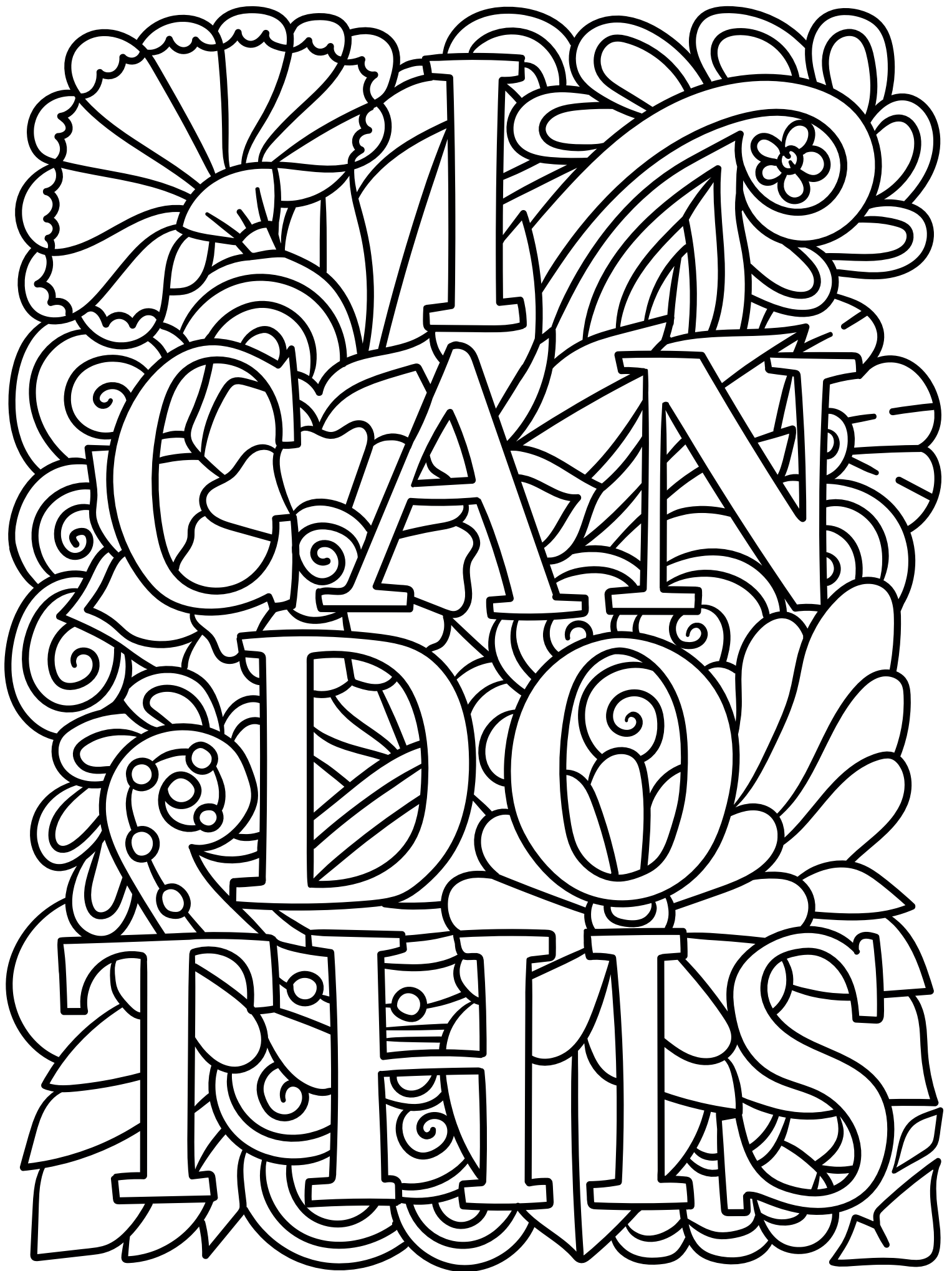


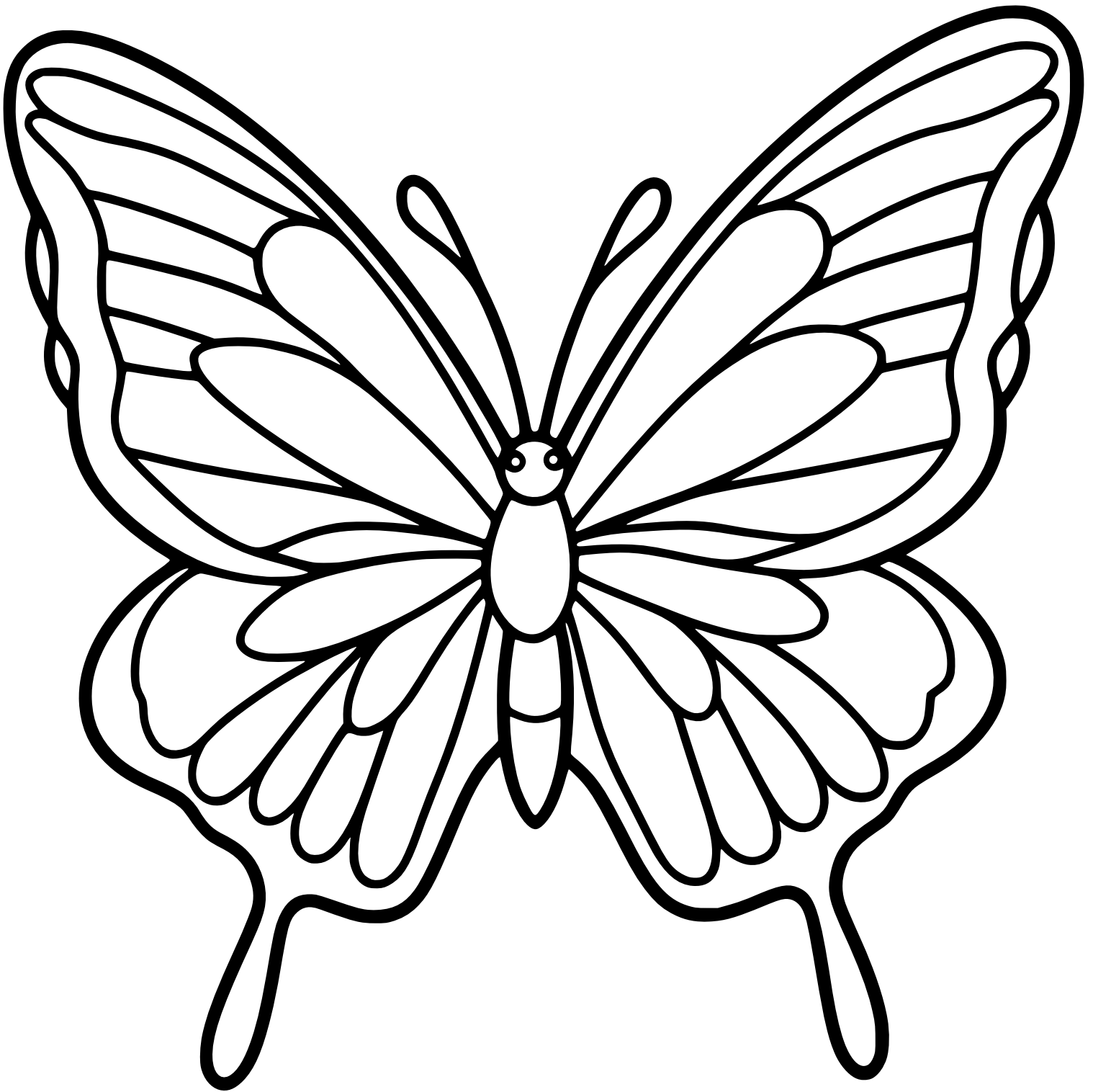
Compassion Is Contagious









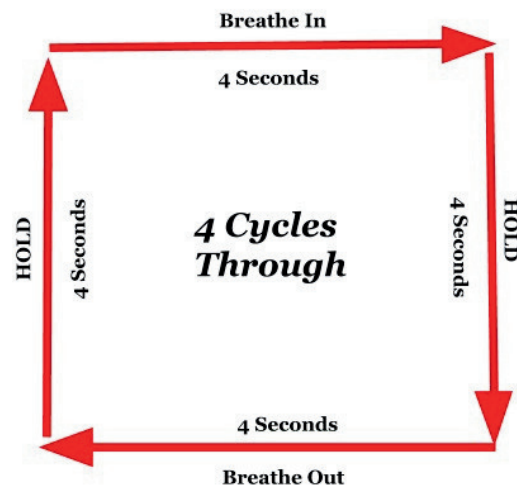


Breathing Techniques

Breathing exercises can help calm the nervous system during moments of stress, discomfort, or emotional overwhelm. If a technique does not feel comfortable, it is okay to stop.

Box Breathing Technique

1. Close your eyes. In your mind, draw a square. As you breathe, trace that square with your mind.
2. Breathe in through your nose while counting to four slowly. ...
3. Hold your breath inside while counting slowly to four. Try not to clamp your mouth or nose shut. ...
4. Begin to slowly exhale for 4 seconds.
5. Repeat steps 1 to 3 at least three times.



Hot Chocolate Breathing

1. Get a hot cup of your favourite beverage such as Hot Chocolate, Tea, or Coffee and hold it with two hands close to your nose.
2. Take a long deep breath through your nose and really enjoy the smell of your hot beverage.
3. Breathe out through your mouth slowly to the count of 5 to help cool the beverage.
4. Repeat for 2-3 minutes or until your beverage is at a comfortable drinking temperature.



Thinking Traps or Unhelpful Thinking

Thinking traps are patterns of thought, usually with a negative twist, that prevent us from seeing things as they really are and often lead to increased feelings of anxiety and depression.

These thoughts might make us jump to conclusions and make bad decisions that lead to vicious cycles and a decline in our mental health.

Making things seem smaller than they actually are. Only noticing certain types of information (good or bad). Drawing conclusions or creating patterns based on single events. Making assumptions that because we feel a certain way it must be true.

Thinking things can only be one way or the other with no middle ground. Blowing things out of proportion or making them seem bigger than they actually are.

Discounting, minimizing, or ignoring the good things that happen or that you've done.

Assuming or imagining what others are thinking (mind reading) or predicting the future without the full picture.

Emotional Reasoning

These thought patterns often appear during times of uncertainty, illness, or caregiving. Noticing them is not about judging yourself, it is about creating space for more compassionate and balanced thoughts.

Types of Thinking Traps

- All or Nothing Thinking (Black and White Thinking)
- Minimizing
- Mental Filter
- Catastrophizing
- Overgeneralizing
- Jumping to Conclusions
- Disqualifying the Positive

Personalization

Blaming yourself or taking responsibility for things that are not your fault or blaming others for something that is your fault.

Labeling

Assigning labels to ourselves or others such as “I’m such a failure.”

Using Critical Word

Using words such as “should”, “must”, “never” can create guilt or frustrations.

Tips for challenging thinking traps

- Keep a journal. Write down any negative thoughts you have and try to identify the type of thinking trap it might be. Use this opportunity to challenge that thought and write a more positive alternative. “I’m really nervous for this event. I will probably fail!” to alternate thought “I’m really nervous for this event. It is really important to me so I want to do my best.”
- Challenge your thoughts. Ask yourself if these thoughts are based in facts or if there is any evidence that it is true. Are there other ways to look at this situation?
- Talk about your thoughts. Talking to trusted friends or relatives can give us a different perspective on the thoughts as well as give us space to process it in a healthy way.
- Give yourself positive messages. Writing down and thinking positive messages or affirmations can help us reframe our thoughts into a more positive light.

Reflection

What would I say to someone I love in this situation?

Mindfulness

What is Mindfulness

Mindfulness does not require clearing your mind or feeling calm. It is simply about noticing what is happening right now, with kindness and without judgment.

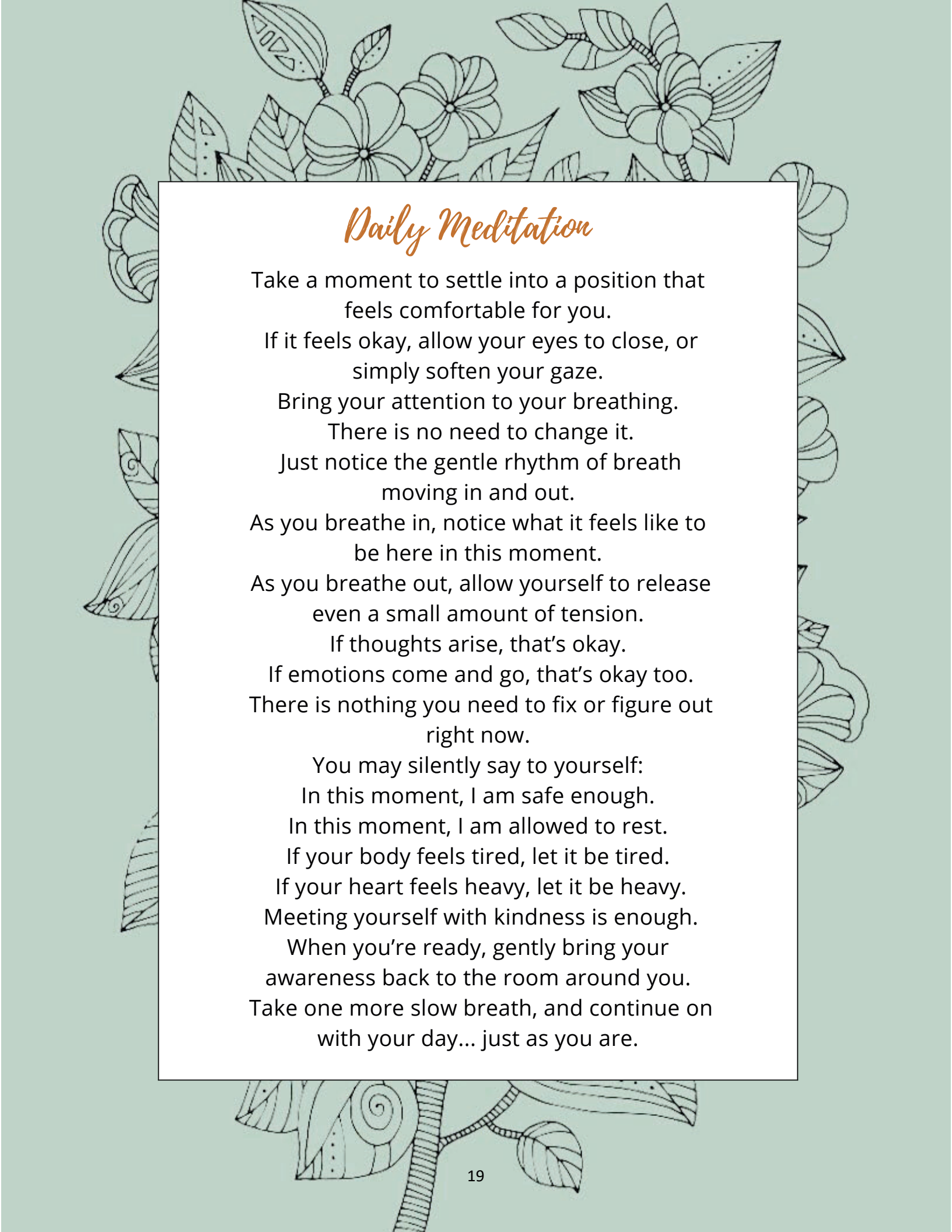
Why be Mindful

Mindfulness has many benefits including:

What are some examples of mindfulness exercises.

There are many simple ways to practice mindfulness. Some examples include:

- Reducing stress Reducing running thoughts
- Boosts working memory Higher brain functioning Increased clarity Lowered anxiety and depression
- Helps with insomnia and sleep
- Pay attention. It is hard to slow down and notice things in a busy world. Try to take the time to experience your environment with all your senses : touch, sound, sight, smell and taste. For example, when you eat a favorite food, take the time to smell, taste and truly enjoy it.
- Live in the moment. Try to intentionally bring an open, accepting and discerning attention to everything you do. Find joy in simple pleasures.
- Accept yourself. Treat yourself the way you would treat a good friend.
- Focus on your breathing. When you have negative thoughts, try to sit down, take a deep breath and close your eyes. Focus on your breath as it moves in and out of your body. Sitting and breathing for even just a minute can help.

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Daily Meditation

Take a moment to settle into a position that feels comfortable for you.

If it feels okay, allow your eyes to close, or simply soften your gaze.

Bring your attention to your breathing.

There is no need to change it.

Just notice the gentle rhythm of breath moving in and out.

As you breathe in, notice what it feels like to be here in this moment.

As you breathe out, allow yourself to release even a small amount of tension.

If thoughts arise, that's okay.

If emotions come and go, that's okay too.

There is nothing you need to fix or figure out right now.

You may silently say to yourself:

In this moment, I am safe enough.

In this moment, I am allowed to rest.

If your body feels tired, let it be tired.

If your heart feels heavy, let it be heavy.

Meeting yourself with kindness is enough.

When you're ready, gently bring your awareness back to the room around you.

Take one more slow breath, and continue on with your day... just as you are.

Positive Affirmations

What is a positive affirmation

Short, positive, powerful statements you repeat to yourself. Phrases about yourself which describe how or what you would like to be, or what you would like to attract to your life. These phrases may include:

The act or an instance of affirmations; state of being affirmed. • The assertion that something exists or is true. • Confirmation or ratification of the truth or validity of a prior judgement, decision etc. • Law. A solemn declaration accepted instead of a statement under oath.

Why say positive affirmations

They help influence the thoughts that you are having, attract positive things into your life and help deliver successful outcomes to your life. Can be used for self-improvement, boost self-confidence, reduce negativity and help set positive change in different areas of your life. As you work and develop these new skills with positive affirmations you will find your overall health and happiness should improve leaving you feeling energized and empowered.

Affirmations Do's and Don'ts

Do's

- Use present tense
- Be authentic
- Be positive Block and replace negative thoughts
- Repeat often
- Be consistent
- Take action
- Be open
- Be thankful
- Expect good things

Don'ts

- Don't expect miracles
- Don't try too many at once
- Don't be too realistic
- Don't give up too soon
- Don't stop at one thing
- Don't lose focus

Examples of positive affirmations

- I accept myself just as I am
- I am proud of myself for even daring to try
- I deserve love and compassion
- I am doing the best I can with what I have today
- I am allowed to rest

Challenging Negative Thoughts

Negative thoughts contribute to increased stress and anxiety which can take a toll on you and your body over time. It is linked to an increase in mental health problems, physical health problems, and relationship challenges. Changing negative thought patterns into more helpful and positive ways of looking at situations can decrease this risk.

Examples of replacing negative thoughts:

Negative Statement

- I'm stupid
- I'm unhealthy, overweight & lazy
- I don't deserve to be happy
- I don't like meeting new people
- What an awful start to another day

Positive Statement

- I can and will learn from the mistakes I make in my life
- I will make my health a priority
- I deserve happiness in my life
- I welcome meeting new people into my life. I am a strong confident person
- Today will be a great day

Replacing negative thoughts and phrases with positive ones may take some practice, it doesn't always happen overnight.



Thought Tracker

Monitoring Your Thoughts & Feelings

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

SUNDAY

Journaling

Journaling can be a helpful strategy to help manage your mental health, manage emotions, and reducing stress. Other benefits of journaling include helping to prioritize your needs and emotions while helping you gain control of how you feel, reflecting on positivity in your life, focusing on positive self-talk, and improving your memory and comprehension. Journaling can also be helpful to track your day to day, week to week, or month to month to create healthy habits. It does not have to involve writing multiple pages about how your day went, it could simply be writing down thoughts or phrases throughout the week. Consider buying yourself a nice notebook and pens to begin the process. This will allow you to feel excited about your writing.

Journaling Tips

- Try to write every day, even if it is just a few minutes or one sentence. Always have a pen and paper available. Or use your note pad on your phone if that is easier.
- Helps you set and achieve your goals you might have.
- Write down whatever you might be feeling. Your notebook is not going to judge you for spelling mistakes or grammar errors. Your journal is yours; you do not have to share it with others, use it how you want to use it.
- Look forward to your journaling time.
- Find a quiet relaxing place to take time to reflect.

Reflection

- What am I carrying today?
 - What brought even a small sense of comfort?
 - What do I wish others understood about how I'm feeling?
-

Support & Resources

Northwestern Alberta

Living with serious illness — or caring for someone who is — can feel complex and isolating, especially in rural or remote communities. Support is available for patients, caregivers, and families, no matter where you live.

Alberta Northwest Palliative Care Society

Supporting patients, caregivers, and families across Northwestern Alberta.

204-10134 97 Avenue

Grande Prairie, Alberta T8V 7X6

780-897-0066

admin@abnwpalliative.ca

Caregiver-Specific Supports

Alberta Caregivers Association

Support, education, and advocacy for caregivers across Alberta

caregiversalberta.ca

1-877-453-5088

Caregiver Support Line (Alberta)

1-877-453-5088

Information, emotional support, and referrals for caregivers

211 Alberta – Caregiver Supports

2-1-1 (24/7)

Ask specifically about:

- Respite care
- Home care supports
- Financial and benefit navigation
- Rural caregiving services

Support & Resources

Home Care

Location: Grande Prairie Virene Building

Phone

780-532-4447

Tollfree

1-855-371-4122 (Continuing Care Access)

- Care after surgery
- Long-term care
- Palliative care
- Respite services

WellSpring Alberta

General Inquiries

Calgary Phone 587.747.0260

Edmonton Phone 780.758.4433

Alberta Toll-Free 1.866.682.3135

- Cancer Supports

Health & Community Supports

Health Link Alberta

811 (24/7)

Speak with a registered nurse for health advice, symptom guidance, and care navigation.

Community Information & Referral

2-1-1 (24/7)

Free, confidential help connecting to local services such as:

- Home care and caregiving supports
- Grief and bereavement services
- Financial, housing, and food resources
- Seniors and disability supports

Support & Resources

Emotional Support

Mental Health Helpline (Alberta)

1-877-303-2642 (24/7)

Confidential support, information, and referrals for mental health concerns.

Indigenous Support

Hope for Wellness Help Line

1-855-242-3310

Available 24/7

Immediate emotional support and crisis intervention for Indigenous peoples across Canada.

Crisis Support (If Needed)

If emotional distress feels overwhelming or urgent, support is available.

Indigenous Virtual Care Clinic (Alberta)

Access to Indigenous-led health services, including mental health support

indigenousthehealthcare.ca

Local Indigenous Health Centres & Friendship Centres

Contact 211 to find Indigenous-specific services available in your community or region.

Crisis Support

There may be moments when emotional distress feels overwhelming. Support is available.

Suicide Crisis Helpline

9-8-8

Available 24/7 across Canada

Confidential support for anyone experiencing emotional distress or crisis.

If you are in immediate danger, please call 911.

Resource Centre for Suicide Prevention

#200, 10014 99 Street (Nordic Court)

Grande Prairie, AB

Phone: 780-539-6680

A Gentle Reminder

Reaching out for support does not mean you are weak — it means you are responding to a difficult situation with care. Whether you are seeking information, reassurance, or connection, help is available.

You do not have to do this alone.

What is Social Prescribing:

Social Prescribing is a non-medical, person-centred approach that connects older adults to community-based supports and activities to improve overall health and well-being. Through a referral process, individuals work with a Case Manager and Link Worker who help identify social, emotional, and other non-medical needs, and connect them to appropriate services. Rather than focusing only on clinical care, Social Prescribing recognizes that factors such as social connection, transportation, food access, physical activity, and a sense of purpose play a vital role in overall health.

Who Can Receive Services:

- Age 55+
- Residents of the City of Grande Prairie

Why Social Prescribing Matters:

- Reduces social isolation
- Supports independence and aging well
- Helps people feel connected and supported
- Complements healthcare by addressing social needs
- Strengthens connections between healthcare and community services

Services & Support Available:

- Transportation services and supports
- Social groups, clubs, and recreational/community activities
- Community centres and senior-serving organizations
- Meal programs and meal preparation support
- Physical activity, health, and wellness programs (e.g., fitness, mental health support)
- In-home supports (e.g., light housekeeping, basic assistance)
- Connection to the Council on Aging, including lawn maintenance and snow removal programs

How to Make a Referral:

- Healthcare providers and community organizations can refer individuals by contacting the Primary Care Network at 780-539-9204 or by submitting a referral form on their website: <https://grandeprairiepcn.com/social55plus/>
- Older adults can self-refer by reaching out to the Primary Care Network at 780-539-9204 or by submitting a referral form on their website: <https://grandeprairiepcn.com/social55plus/>

SOCIAL PRESCRIBING

The Grande Prairie Social Prescribing Program is a partnership between the City of Grande Prairie and the Grande Prairie Primary Care Network, connecting older adults ages 55+ to local services that support their health and well-being.

Who It's For

City of Grande Prairie residents aged 55+ who want to stay active, connected and age well in our community.

The following are examples of services clients may be connected with:

- Recreational programs.
- Support navigating financial benefits.
- In-home support services.
- Social programs.
- Referrals for accessible transit.
- Social workers, if needed.

Learn more or request an appointment today:



Online: grandeprairiepcn.com/social55plus



Phone: 780-539-9204





204-10134 97th Ave.
Grande Prairie, Alberta T8V 7X6
Tel: 780-897-0066
admin@abnwpalliative.ca

~ Compassion is Contagious ~