

# MY Mood TRACKER

A JOURNAL TO HELP YOU  
MAP YOUR MOOD THROUGH  
ALL ITS UPS AND DOWNS

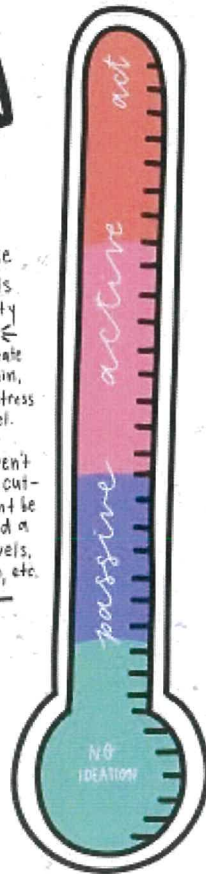
★ Great   ★ Good   ★ Average   ★ Poor   ★ Terrible

# THERE ARE DIFFERENT TYPES OF SUICIDAL IDEATION

## NOTE

ALL of these types + levels of suicidality are **VALID** & doesn't dictate the level of pain, intensity, & distress you may feel.

These also aren't always clear cut - someone might be moving around a few "skip" levels, fall in between, etc.



## SUICIDE ATTEMPT

attempts to kill self, either initiating made plan or impulsively

## SUICIDAL with PLAN & INTENT

has a specific plan (how, when, where) and intends to carry it out → Ex. "I am going to overdose tomorrow at home."

## SUICIDAL INTENT (no plan)

intends to kill self but doesn't have a specific plan → Ex. "I think I'm going to kill myself, but not sure when."

## SUICIDAL THOUGHTS (method, no plan, or intent)

has an idea of how they would do it, but no specific plan or intent → Ex. "I've thought about overdosing, but I'm not going to."

## SUICIDAL THOUGHTS (no intent/plan)

thinking about killing self, but no details & no intention to act → Ex. "I should just kill myself." "I wish I could just kill myself."

## THOUGHTS OF MORBIDITY

thinking about own death & dying, but not specifically by self → Ex. "I wish I wouldn't wake up" "I wish I were dead."

## RANDOM INTRUSIVE THOUGHT\*

passing thought, curiosity → Ex. "What if I just jumped?" when waiting for train \*different if person has chronic suicidality

## NO THOUGHTS

SOURCED FROM: David Lewinsohn & Columbia - suicide severity rating scale

@ALYSERURIANI

# Check Your Battery

How are you currently feeling?

**Feeling great!**

Keep meeting your needs and practicing self-care.

**Feeling okay.**

How can you make your day a tiny bit better?

**Struggling.**

Practice triage. What area of your life is suffering the most right now? Focus on that one area today.

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**Feeling good!**

How can you maintain the levels you're currently at?

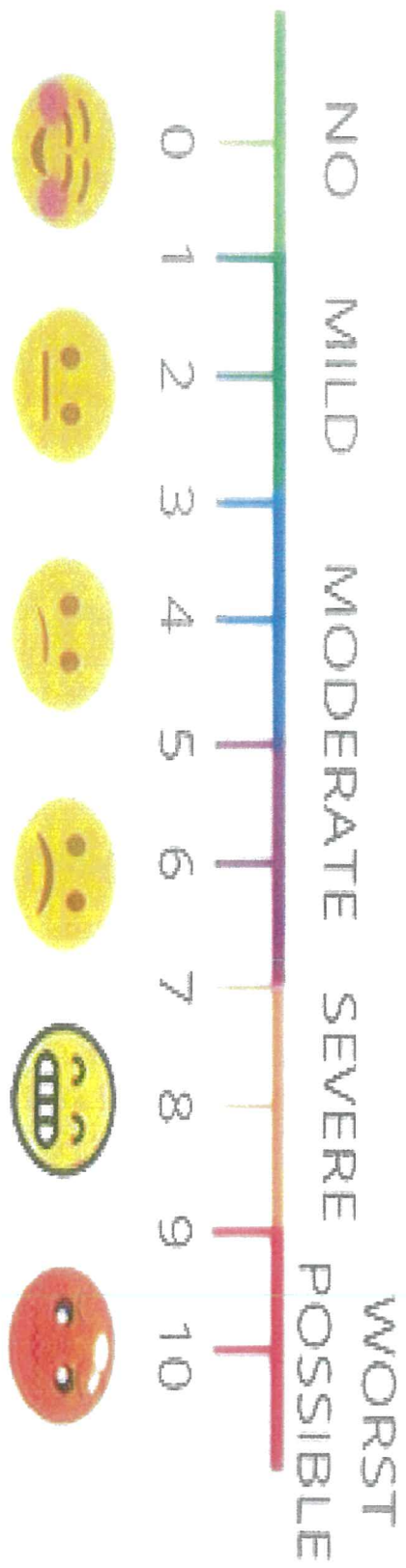
**Meh.**

How can you love on your self today? Be extra kind to yourself.

**I'm empty.**



Pinpoint what's draining you and try to create a boundary & then do one thing that fills you up.

# SUDS Scale



# Year in PIXELS

	J	F	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	
1													1
2													2
3													3
4													4
5													5
6													6
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30													30
31													31

- 
 ALIVE, ACTIVE, HAPPY  
 ENERGETIC, MOTIVATED,  
 PRODUCTIVE
- 
 AVERAGE,  
 UNEVENTFUL,  
 NORMAL
- 
 SICK, TIRED,  
 UNMOTIVATED,  
 DULL, LAZY
- 
 SAD, LONELY, DOWN,  
 INSECURE, DEPRESSED,  
 UNPRODUCTIVE
- 
 ANGRY, FRUSTRATED,  
 IRRITABLE,  
 ANNOYED, GRUMPY

# SAFETY KIT

## EMOTIONAL THERMOMETER

Below is an example of how we can identify how safe we are feeling and how that looks on a scale of 0–100°. We can then figure out in advance some ideas of what we can do to cope. You can print out your own blank emotional thermometer to fill in and personalise at [www.pods-online.org.uk/thermometer](http://www.pods-online.org.uk/thermometer).

### My unsafe feelings/behaviours

*Suicidal ideation*

*Self-harming actions*

*Fugue*

*Urge to self-harm*

*Feeling out-of-control or unaware of self*

*'Screaming' feelings*

*Panicky and hyperaroused*

*Racing thoughts*

*Getting a bit stressed and anxious*

*Withdrawing*

*Restless and can't relax*

100°

90°

80°

70°

60°

50°

40°

30°

20°

10°

0°

### What I can do to cope

*999/A&E*

*Crisis team*

*Go to a safe place, e.g. a friend*

*Crisis team*

*Contact therapist*

*Contact a helpline*

*Relaxation activities*

*Journal*

*Change the environment, e.g. go for a walk, or a coffee*

*Seek social support or be around people*

*Physical exercise*

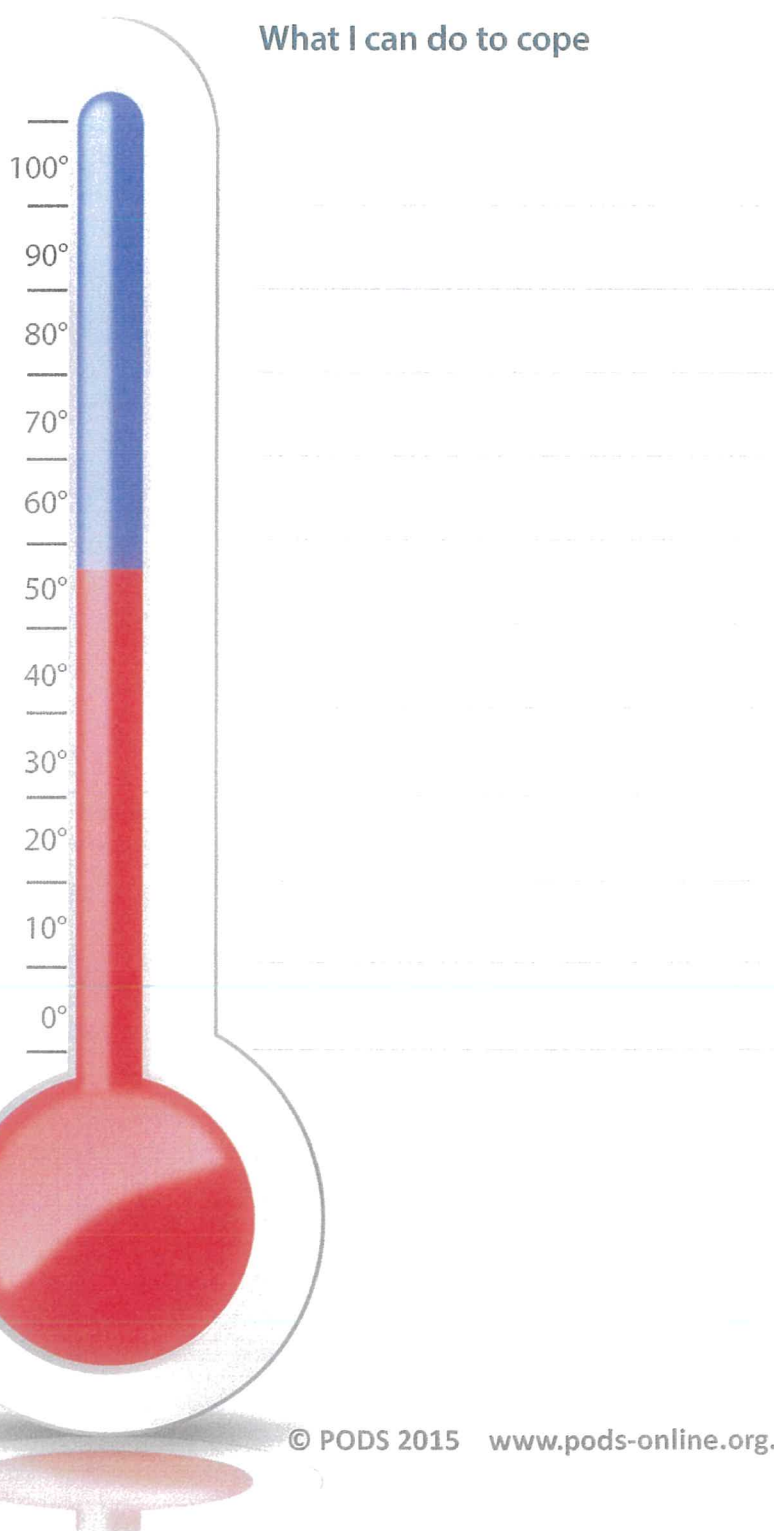
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**My unsafe feelings/behaviours**

**What I can do to cope**



# MY PERSONAL CRISIS PLAN

I know I'm triggered when I notice:

---

---

---

---

---

---

Some good ways to distract myself are:

Some safe people I can reach out to are:

- 1 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_

Things that help me when I feel this way are:

Ways to keep myself and my space safe:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Other resources I can use to get myself care:

1

2

3

CRISIS TEXT LINE:  
text HOME to 741741



# If you're **struggling** today

## Your mission for today

Focus on the next **24 hours**

Make a **to-do** list for today

Add in **self-care**

Don't be too hard on yourself



A reminder that it gets **better** and everything will be okay.

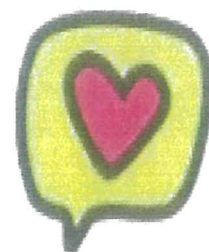


(hearts & love for you)

This unicorn **believes** **you** **can** **do** **the** **thing** even if it's hard, scary, or uncomfortable.



You are so **loved**, even when it feels like you aren't.



# REMINDERS FOR HARD DAYS



1. A bad day does not equal a bad life.

You are not this struggle

2. Not all thoughts are true. *Phew*

3. Feelings are not facts.

But all your feelings are valid, real, and allowed.

4. The only way out is through. *DARN IT*

→ 5. Your worth is not contingent on circumstance

↘ You are LOVABLE and ENOUGH always. ↙

6. Nothing stays the same. *Life guarantees this*

7. You can't be everything to everyone. *But you can be true to yourself*

8. Be gentle with yourself. And trust your inner voice, strength, and resilience.

9. You're not alone. It's okay to ask for help. *And be vulnerable* ^

10. Focus on the things you can control.

Let go of the rest. *This is easier said than done*

Take a break

Write or journal

Drink your water

Move your body

Go easy on yourself

Get creative

Rest and relax

Forgive yourself

Let yourself cry

Focus on your needs

Contact a friend

Breathe

Get cozy

Let it go

What's  
your  
Self-Care  
today?

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# Self-Care

## To-Do List

- Check in with your needs
- Meet one of those needs
- Be productive
- Manage your time
- Focus on stress relief
- Take a deep breath

# SELF-CARE TODAY

I feel...

I need to...

Overwhelm

Take a step back

Stressed

Focus on relaxing

Anxious

Practice a coping skill

Sad

Be loving to myself

Angry

Find a positive outlet

Drained

Rest and recharge

Broken

Practice self-compassion

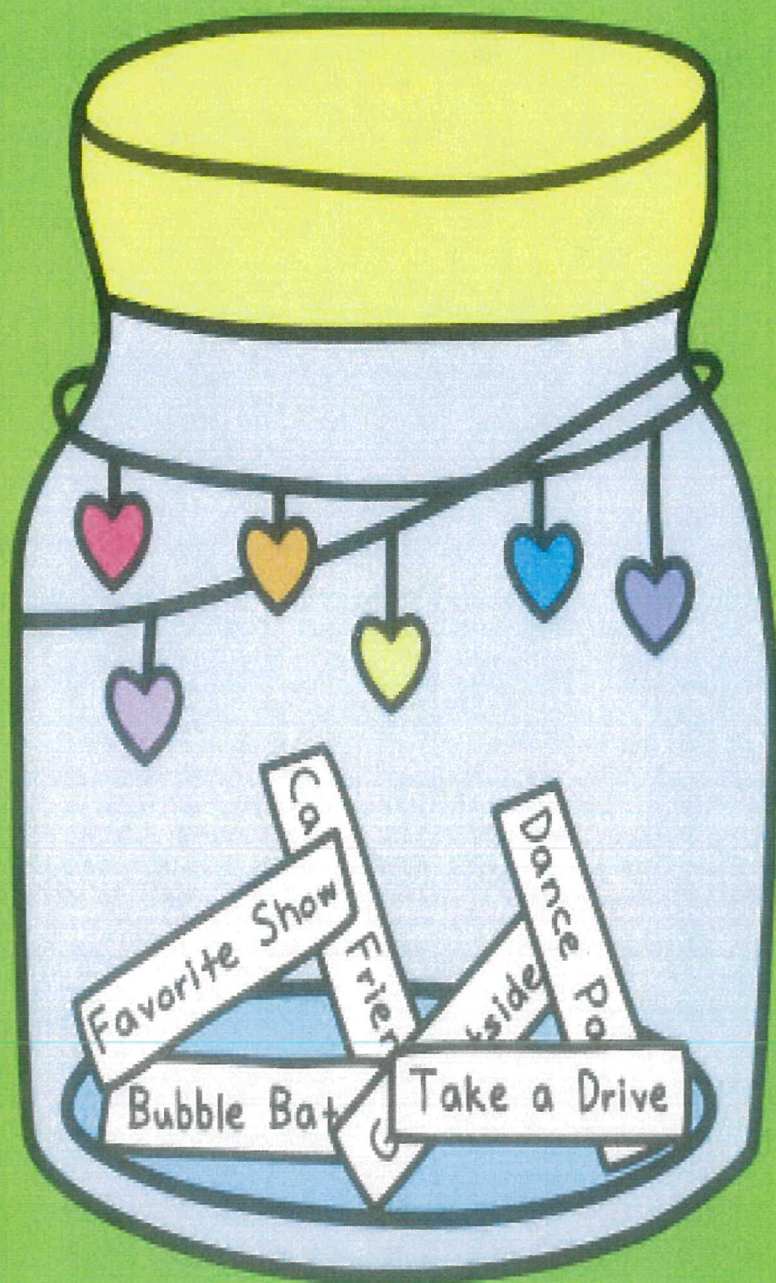
Upset

Take time for myself

Alone

Reach out for support

# ★ Self-Care Jar



1. Get an **empty** jar
2. Write down your **favorite** self-care ideas on strips of paper
3. Fill the jar with all of your **ideas**
4. When you're feeling down or **drained**, pull one out and do the activity

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# MENTAL HEALTH

*Weekly Check list*

## Monday - Motivation

SET YOUR GOALS FOR THE WEEK. WRITE THEM DOWN AND CREATE STEPS TO GET THERE.

## Tuesday - Self Care

GET A MASSAGE. TAKE A BATH. MEDITATE.

## Wednesday - Digital Detox

TAKE A NIGHT OFF FROM SCREEN TIME.

## Thursday - Organize

TACKLE THE JUNK DRAWER OR OLD CLOTHES.

## Friday - Energize

GO FOR A WALK. CALL A FRIEND.

## Saturday - Health

MEAL PLAN/PREP. DO A WORKOUT.

## Sunday - Gratitude

JOURNAL THE HIGHS/POSITIVES FROM THE WEEK!

# YOUR EMOTIONAL PIGGY BANK

Set boundaries and stick to them.

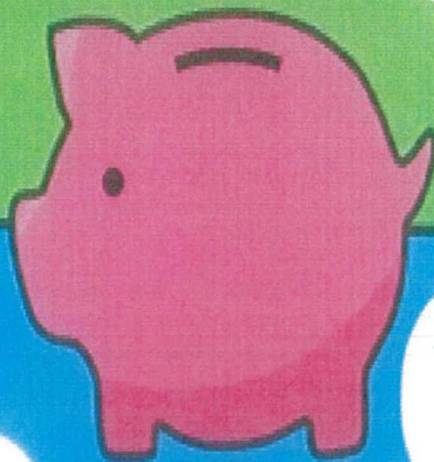
Understand your value is not gauged by sacrifice.

Give but also be open to receiving.

Value the things that make you happy.

Separate your self-worth from others' opinions.

Value what you bring to your own life.



Deposits

Drains

Tying your value to what you give others.

Sacrificing yourself so that people will love you more.

Always saying yes when you want to say no.

Letting others take advantage of you.

Putting others' wants before your needs.



# Trace and Breathe

Trace along the rainbow with your finger as you breathe in and out



## 5-4-3-2-1 Mindfulness

List...

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

5 4 3 2 1

# SLOW DOWN & CALM DOWN

FIRST- TAKE 3 SLOW BELLY BREATHS!

5 List 5 things you can SEE



4 List 4 things you can FEEL



3 List 3 things you can HEAR



2 List 2 things you can SMELL



List something you like to TASTE



FINISHED? - TAKE ANOTHER 3 SLOW BELLY BREATHS

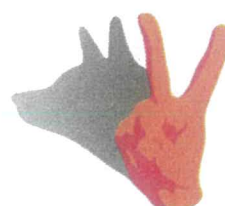
# A TO Z OF COPING SKILLS

<b>A</b> ASK for help	<b>B</b> BREATHE deeply and slowly	<b>C</b> COUNT forwards or backwards	<b>D</b> DRINK some cold water
<b>E</b> EXERCISE run, jump, skip, kick a ball or walk fast	<b>F</b> FIND a safe place	<b>G</b> GO to your happy place	<b>H</b> HUG a friend or family member
<b>I</b> IGNORE people who are annoying you	<b>J</b> JOKES to help you laugh	<b>K</b> KIND hands. Keep them to yourself	<b>L</b> LISTEN to calming music
<b>M</b> MEDITATE use yoga or mindfulness	<b>N</b> NAME the emotion you are feeling	<b>O</b> OBSERVE Use mindfulness techniques	<b>P</b> PAINT your feelings
<b>Q</b> QUESTION your thoughts	<b>R</b> RUN as fast as you can	<b>S</b> SEPARATE yourself from the situation	<b>T</b> THOUGHTS negative to positive
<b>U</b> USE your safe place	<b>V</b> VOICE your concerns	<b>W</b> WRITE down your feelings	<b>X</b> EXHALE breathe out your feelings
 ELSA support www.elsa-support.co.uk	<b>Y</b> YELL as loud as you can into a pillow	<b>Z</b> ZONE out and relax yourself	

# Quick relaxation techniques

Different relaxation techniques appeal to different people. Please try out each technique and rate it out of 10, then choose the one(s) that suit you best.

<b>Whole body tension</b>	Score out of 10										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tense everything in your whole body, stay with that tension.</li> <li>• Hold it as long as you can without feeling pain.</li> <li>• Slowly release the tension and very gradually feel it leave your body.</li> <li>• Repeat three times.</li> </ul>											
<b>Imagine air as a cloud</b>	Score out of 10										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Open your imagination and focus on your breathing.</li> <li>• As your breathing becomes calm and regular, imagine that the air comes to you as a cloud.</li> <li>• It fills you and goes out.</li> <li>• You may imagine the cloud to be a particular colour</li> </ul>											
<b>Pick a spot</b>	Score out of 10										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With your head level and body relaxed, pick a spot to focus on (eyes open point).</li> <li>• When ready, count five breaths backward. With each breath allow your eyes to close gradually.</li> <li>• Concentrate on each breath</li> <li>• When you get to one, your eyes will be closed. Focus on the feelings of relaxation.</li> </ul>											
<b>Counting ten breaths back</b>	Score out of 10										
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allow yourself to feel passive and indifferent, counting each breath slowly from 10 to one.</li> <li>• With each count, allow yourself to feel heavier and more relaxed.</li> <li>• With each exhale, allow the tension to leave your body.</li> </ul>											
<b>Transformations: pick one that works or make up your own</b>	Score out of 10										
<table border="0"> <tbody> <tr> <td>When you think of images like....</td> <td>Imagine....</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tightly twisted ropes</td> <td>The twisted ropes untwisting</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Feel of cold, harsh wind</td> <td>The cold wind becoming warm and soft</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hard, cold wax</td> <td>The wax softens and melts</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tense, red muscles</td> <td>The red muscles soften or lighten to pink</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	When you think of images like....	Imagine....	Tightly twisted ropes	The twisted ropes untwisting	Feel of cold, harsh wind	The cold wind becoming warm and soft	Hard, cold wax	The wax softens and melts	Tense, red muscles	The red muscles soften or lighten to pink	
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Let the tension flow away....	I have the power to handle this...										
I am calm and relaxed and ready for anything...	Relax the jaw, lower the shoulders....										



# 30 Ways to Get Moving in the Classroom



**1.** Dance during the transition between subjects.



**2.** 30 seconds of high knees.

**3.** Do a stand-up review at the end of science.

**4.** Play Simon Says with movement.

**5.** Get in a line; do the wave.



**6.** Practice math outside with chalk.

**7.** Take a walk 20 minutes before taking a test.

**8.** Practice spelling words while tossing a ball.

**9.** Do a wall sit while listening to instructions.

**10.** Walk outside, slide, come back in for review.

**11.** Have a Q&A review—5 jumping jacks for each right answer.

**12.** Doodle for 5 minutes.



**13.** Fist bump 10 classmates.

**14.** Do 5 arm stretches on each side.



**15.** Try a clap-pattern game.

**16.** Practice a tongue twister.

**17.** Stand during read aloud.



**18.** Do 7 lunges on each side.

**19.** Count to 100; jump at every multiple of five.



**20.** Pick a yoga pose to master.

**21.** Take 5 deep breaths at the start of a new lesson.

**22.** Jump like a frog.



**23.** Balance on one foot while counting backwards from 25.

**24.** Do arm circles for 30 seconds.



**25.** Play science charades.

**26.** Walk & review with a partner.

**27.** Set up flexible seating stations to review and move.

**28.** Stand up and share a few jokes.



**29.** Try kinesthetic charades to review literary characters.

**30.** Do the Hokey Pokey.

## A list of pleasant activities

- Go to the movies.
- Book in to see a play or production.
- Go to the ocean, a river, or a lake.
- Go for a walk, run, swim, or bicycle ride.
- Take a walk in a nearby park.
- Read a short story.
- Pick up a pencil and paper and draw something.
- Visit a fresh food or flower market.
- Try a new recipe.
- Choose a gift card for a special friend.
- Go outside and look up at the stars or the clouds.
- Wander in a book shop, antiques, or fishing & camping store.
- Take a trip on bus, train, or ferry.
- Take yourself out to lunch.
- Visit a library.
- Listen to some music, or go and see a live music event.
- Do the washing up.
- Contact a friend.
- Take a dog for a walk or play with some animals.
- Cook a favourite meal or snack.
- Re-organise your files, cupboards, living space or shed.
- Do a puzzle or brain-teaser.
- Plan a trip or short break.
- Watch your favourite TV program or movie.
- Do some exercise.
- Go bowling, golfing or fishing.
- Sit and watch the sunrise or sunset.
- Lie in the shade for a while.
- Plan a career change.
- Re-engage in an old favourite hobby.
- Start a new hobby: Stamp or coin collecting, model building, painting, woodworking.
- Recycle or donate some old items you don't use anymore.
- Plan an evening or barbeque with some old friends.
- Think about what finishing your studies will be like.
- Tick a couple of small items off your "to do list."
- Clean or work on your car or bike.
- Repair some things around the house.
- Do some gardening, or water and fertilise the plants.

- Buy or sell some stocks or shares.
- Fly a kite.
- Go camping.
- Sing.
- Book in a day specifically for doing nothing.
- Go sailing, kayaking or canoeing.
- Try doodling or sketching whatever comes to mind.
- Go for a drive (or ride) in the country.
- Look up what social clubs are nearby.
- Go bird-watching.
- Play (or learn) a musical instrument.
- Make a playlist or mix-tape that means something to you.
- Go to a barber for a hair cut and shave or a hairdresser
- Go for a bushwalk or hike.
- Do some writing – journal, think-piece, article, story, poem.
- Book into the physio or massage therapist.
- Go to the footy.
- Send someone an e-mail.
- Do some photography.
- Spend some time with the kids (either yours or those close to you).
- Go on a picnic.
- Meditate.
- Look up a suitable way to get active in your community.
- Play a game on your phone or computer.
- Look at an old photo album or journal.
- Shoot some pool.
- Find a local men's shed.
- Go to a local museum or art gallery.
- Start an aquarium, garden, worm farm or compost.
- Go to a martial arts class.
- Re-arrange the furniture in your bedroom.
- Go rock climbing, or some other activity you've always wanted to try.
- 

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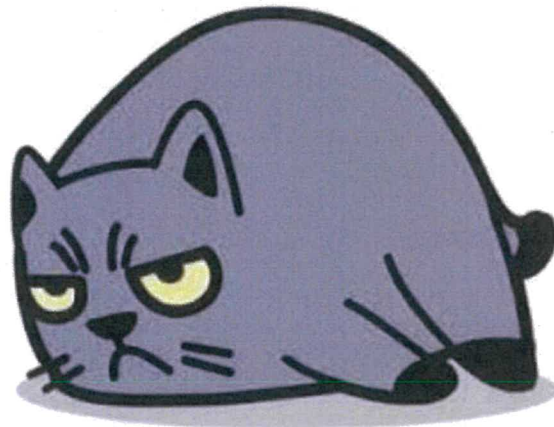
**Try to mix life up a little, book in something pleasant to do every few days.**

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# Self-Care Cats

## Emotions



Let yourself **feel** and **experience** your emotions. It's **okay** to be sad, upset, or angry. But also **realize** that you can **experience** more than one emotion at a time.

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# SELF-CARE CATS



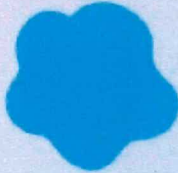
Make sure that your needs  
are being met and your  
soul is being fed.

(If you are feeling empty or deprived, it's okay  
to be **vocal** about your needs. It's scary to **speak**  
up sometimes but do it anyway.)

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# Check-in

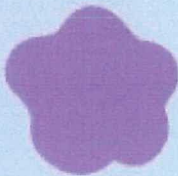
Take a moment to ground yourself



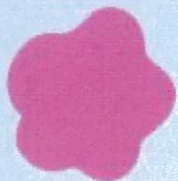
Take a deep breath  
(Inhale slow. Hold. Exhale slow.)



Notice any sensations in  
your body



Try to name what you are  
feeling in this moment



Thank yourself for this  
moment and your strength





# *Self-Care Goals*

emotional

practical

physical

mental

social

spiritual

# WATER TRACKER

INSTRUCTIONS: FILL IN A DROP FOR EACH GLASS YOU DRINK

GOAL: FINISH THE WEEK WITH ALL YOUR DROPS FILLED

**MONDAY**



**TUESDAY**



**WEDNESDAY**



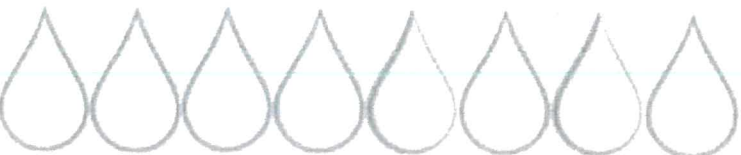
**THURSDAY**



**FRIDAY**



**SATURDAY**

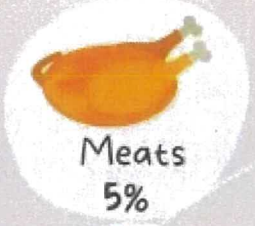


**SUNDAY**



# FOODS WITH THE STRONGEST ANTIDEPRESSANT EFFECT

Based on AFS (AntiDepressant Food Score)



# Insomnia symptoms

DIFFICULTY GETTING  
TO SLEEP

LYING AWAKE  
AT NIGHT

WAKING UP DURING  
THE NIGHT

FEELING TIRED  
& IRRITABLE  
DURING THE DAY



WAKING UP EARLY  
AND BEING UNABLE  
TO GO BACK TO SLEEP

FEELING TIRED  
AFTER WAKING UP

DIFFICULTY NAPPING  
DURING THE DAY EVEN  
THOUGH YOU'RE TIRED

DIFFICULTY  
CONCENTRATING

# Wide Awake?

WHY CAN'T I  
SLEEP? ☾

WERE MY  
THOUGHTS IN THE  
PAST/PRESENT/F  
UTURE?

EMOTIONS?  
THOUGHTS?  
BODY SENSATION? ★

REFRAME ♡

CREATIVE? ♡

Can it wait till tomorrow?  
Can I put it in a voice memo or notes?  
If I want to do it now that's totally okay!  
->  
Do the thing, if I feel tired, i'll go back to  
bed <3

WORRIED/STRESSED

Can I journal it out/voice memo?  
Can I plan the next day so it's out of my  
mind?  
Is the worrying necessary?  
No? -> reframe your thoughts  
Yes? -> allow yourself compassion and  
remember it's normal to feel worried or  
nervous in life  
Is there anything you can do to help the  
worrying - eg. watch a childhood movie?

AM I HAVING A  
FLASHBACK?

DO THESE

# 7 Proven Tips To Sleep



## Better At Night

- SLEEP 7-9 HOURS
- GO TO BED & WAKE UP THE SAME TIME EVERY DAY
- AVOID SLEEPING IN TOO LONG ON WEEKENDS
- ELIMINATE PHONE AND SCREEN USE BEFORE BED
- TRY AN EYE MASK 🌙
- DRINK CHAMOMILLE OR LAVENDER TEA
- KEEP A JOURNAL OR NOTEPAD NEXT TO YOUR BED



[www.nicolevalek.com](http://www.nicolevalek.com)





fix a consistent  
wake up time &  
stick to it



create a  
comfortable sleep  
environment



limit exposure  
to bright light  
after dark



avoid exercises  
closer to bed time

## Sleep Hygiene

### Tips

@inner.aid



limit stimulants  
late in the day



unplug an hour  
before bed

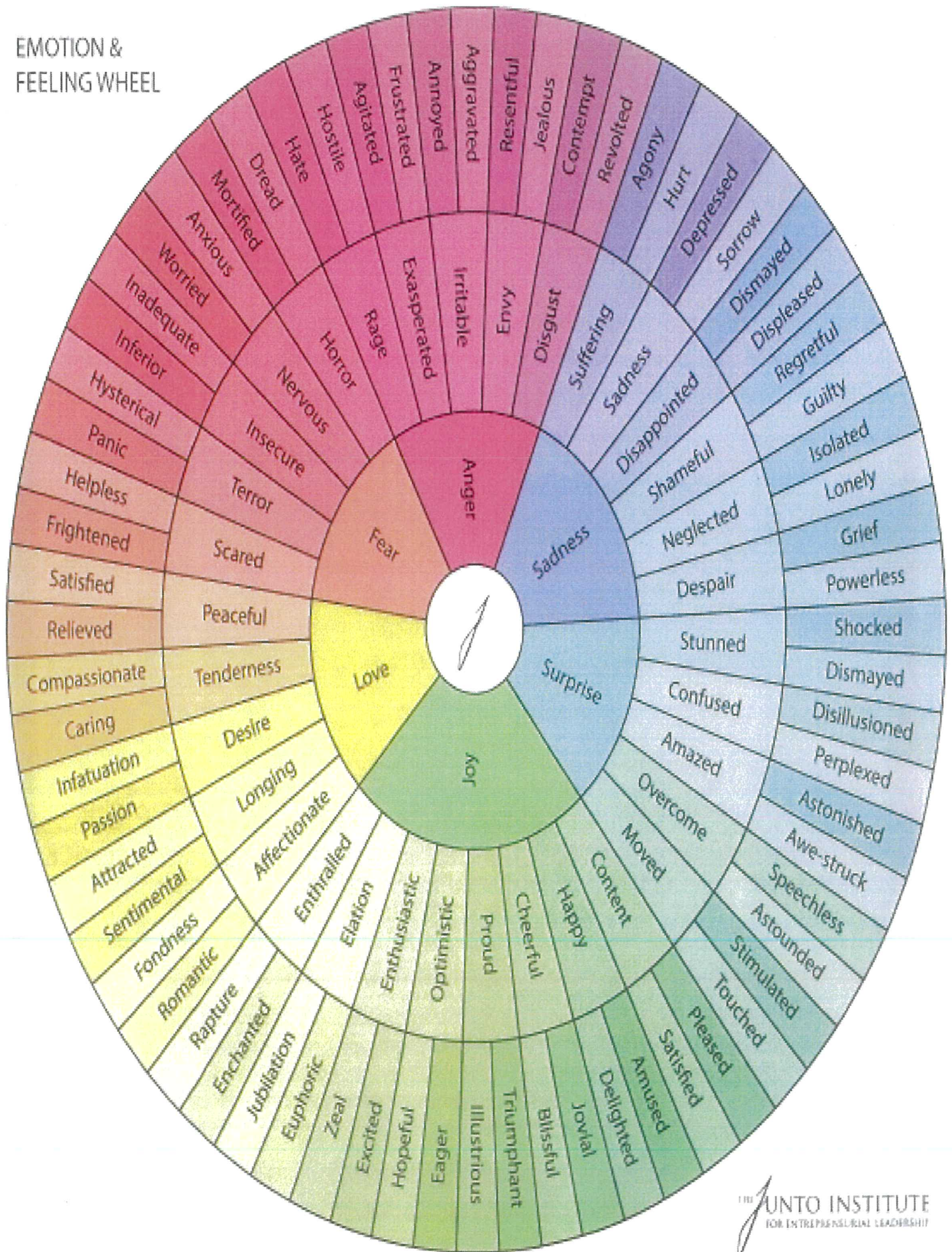


create a relaxing  
bedtime routine



maintain a  
sleep journal

# EMOTION & FEELING WHEEL



**GOOD  
HOUSEKEEPING**

# 30 DAY MENTAL HEALTH CHALLENGE

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**DAY 1**

Do a deep breathing exercise.

**DAY 2**

Catch up with a friend.

**DAY 3**

Schedule something fun.

**DAY 4**

Donate something you never use.

**DAY 5**

Do 30 minutes of yoga.

**DAY 6**

Plan a healthy meal.

**DAY 7**

Ask for help.

**DAY 8**

Listen to your favorite music.

**DAY 9**

Take 10 minutes to read.

**DAY 10**

Go for a walk.

**DAY 11**

Budget 30 minutes of spa time.

**DAY 12**

Practice a favorite hobby.

**DAY 13**

Get distracted by a movie.

**DAY 14**

Go to bed 30 minutes earlier.

**DAY 15**

Drink just water today.

**DAY 16**

Schedule a game night.

**DAY 17**

Set a mini goal.

**DAY 18**

Cross an item off your to-do list.

**DAY 19**

Compliment someone.

**DAY 20**

Plan a night in with friends.

**DAY 21**

Try a 5-minute meditation.

**DAY 22**

FaceTime with family.

**DAY 23**

Do something outside.

**DAY 24**

Book a date night.

**DAY 25**

Unfollow negative social media accounts.

**DAY 26**

Say no to something.

**DAY 27**

Have a phone-free night.

**DAY 28**

Watch a silly video.

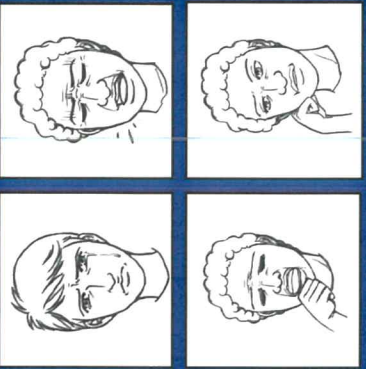

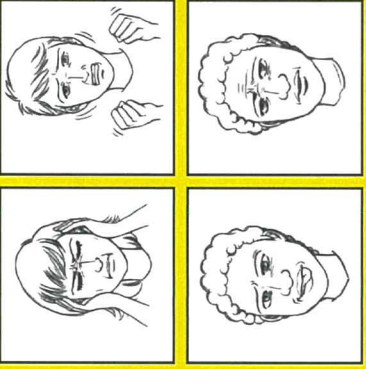
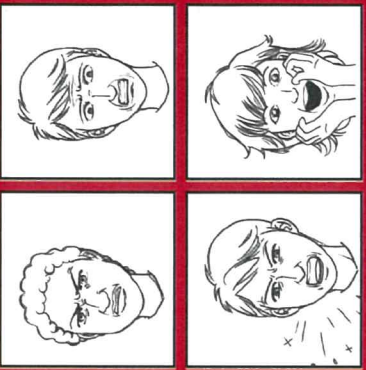
**DAY 29**

Write down something good that happened.

**DAY 30**

Adopt a new habit.

# The ZONES of Regulation™

			
<p><b>BLUE ZONE</b></p> <p>Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly</p>	<p><b>GREEN ZONE</b></p> <p>Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn</p>	<p><b>YELLOW ZONE</b></p> <p>Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control</p>	<p><b>RED ZONE</b></p> <p>Mad/Angry Terrified Yelling/Hitting Elated Out of Control</p>



# 's Toolbox

Blue Zone Tools

Blank writing area for Blue Zone Tools, containing 10 horizontal lines.

Green Zone Tools

Blank writing area for Green Zone Tools, containing 10 horizontal lines.

Yellow Zone Tools

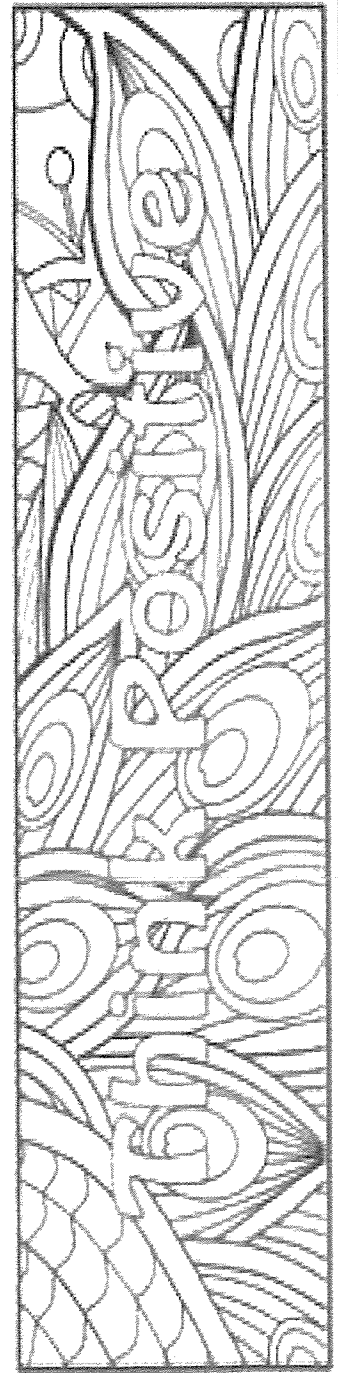
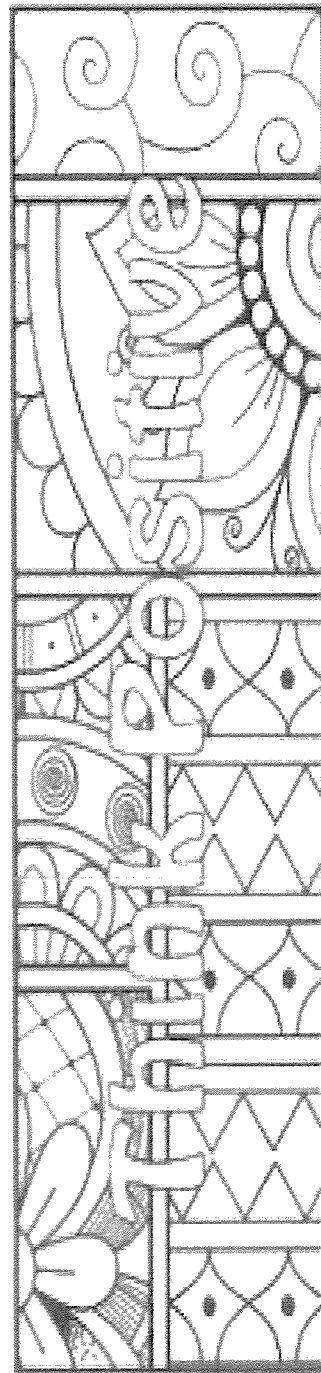
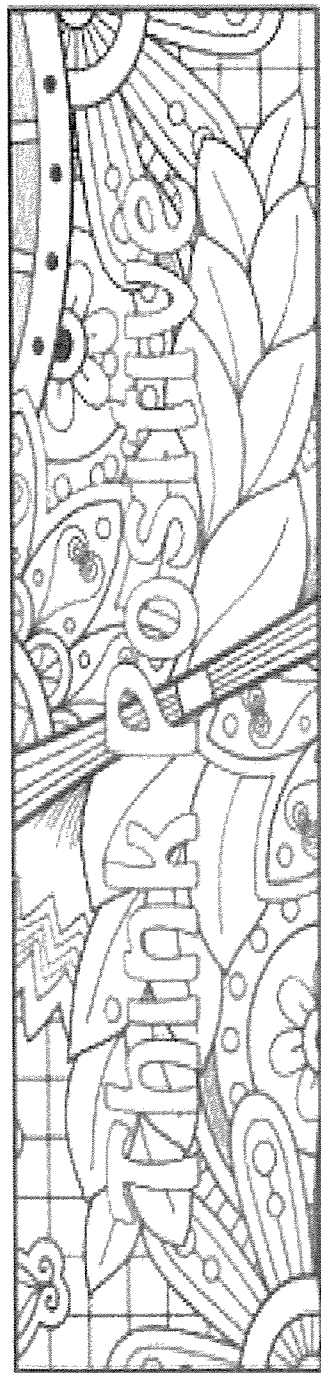
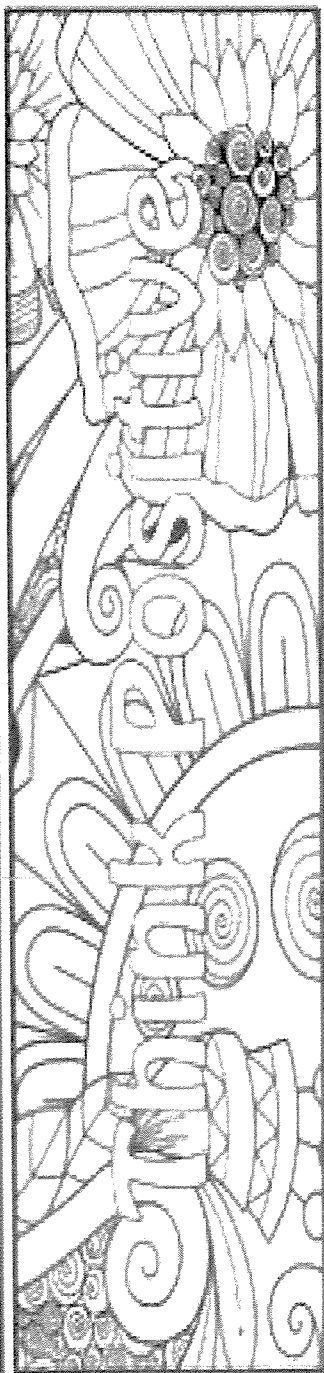
Blank writing area for Yellow Zone Tools, containing 10 horizontal lines.

Red Zone Tools

Blank writing area for Red Zone Tools, containing 10 horizontal lines.

# Think Positive

## Coloring Bookmarks





### I AM STRONG

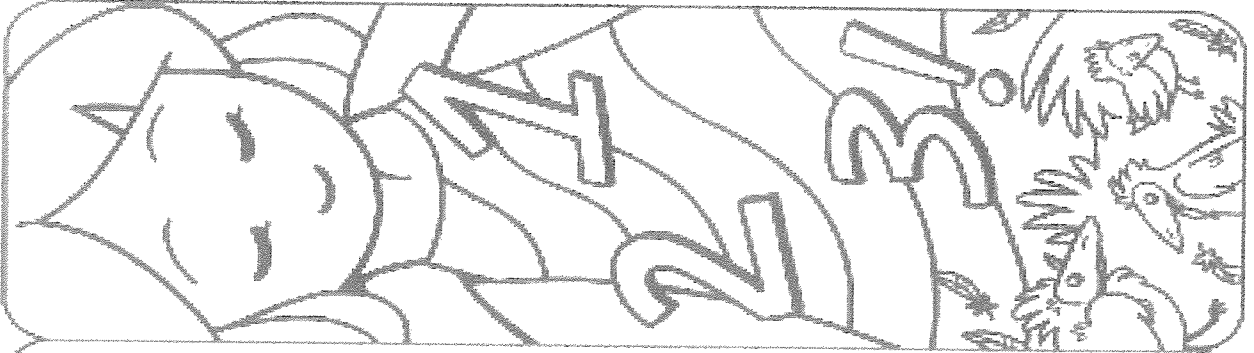
It's OK to feel worried. If something keeps worrying you, try...

- TALKING ABOUT IT
- WRITING IT DOWN
- DRAWING IT

Share your worries with someone you trust, like a parent or teacher.

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### JUST BREATHE

Feeling worried?

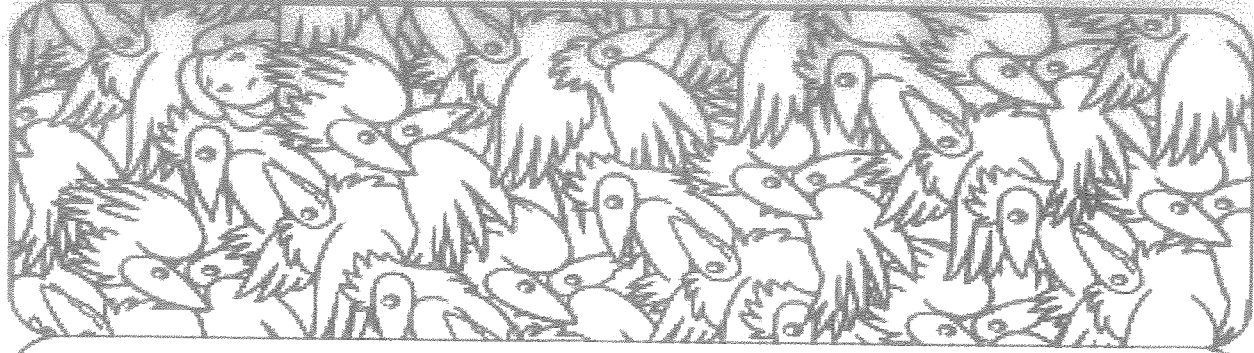
Take a slow, deep breath while counting to three in your head.

Now breathe out slowly while counting to three.

Do this a few times. You should feel a little calmer.

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### I CAN DO THIS

Feeling worried?  
Colour me in for 8 minutes...

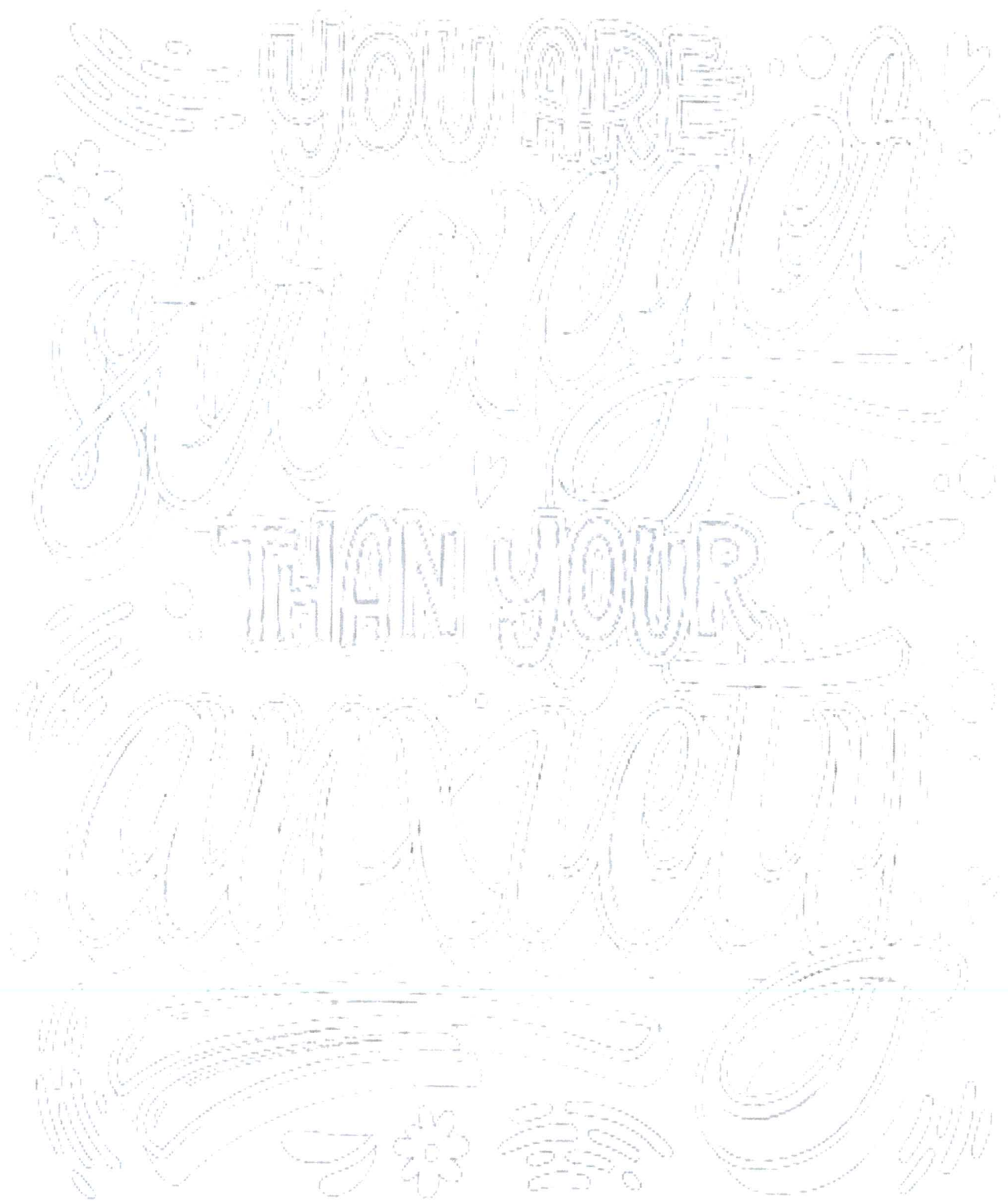
How do you feel now?

It might help to talk things through with someone.

People care about you and are here to listen.

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# Mindful Coloring

**A Simple & Fun Way to Reduce the Stress in Your Life**



## Introduction by Lawrence E. Shapiro, Ph.D.

Adult coloring books have become very popular over the last few years, reminding us of the need for simple activities to help us step back from the day-to-day bombardment of media and technology. I've heard some people say that spending time coloring a design is just the kind of "mindless" activity they need at the end of the day and that adult coloring books are a good distraction from the constant commotion in their household.

But I'd like you to think about using this coloring book in a somewhat different way. Rather than coloring as a "mindless" distraction, I'd like you to be "mindful" while you are coloring. Mindful coloring can be a very powerful type of meditation which has a surprising number of short and long-term psychological benefits.

As you may know, mindfulness is a technique that Western psychology has borrowed from the Buddhist tradition of mindful meditation. Mindfulness involves bringing your attention to what is happening in the present moment, being aware of both your internal experiences as well as what you experience in the world around you. As you observe your internal and external experiences, you will try not to judge them as good or bad, and you will try not to react to them. Just be aware and present in the moment.

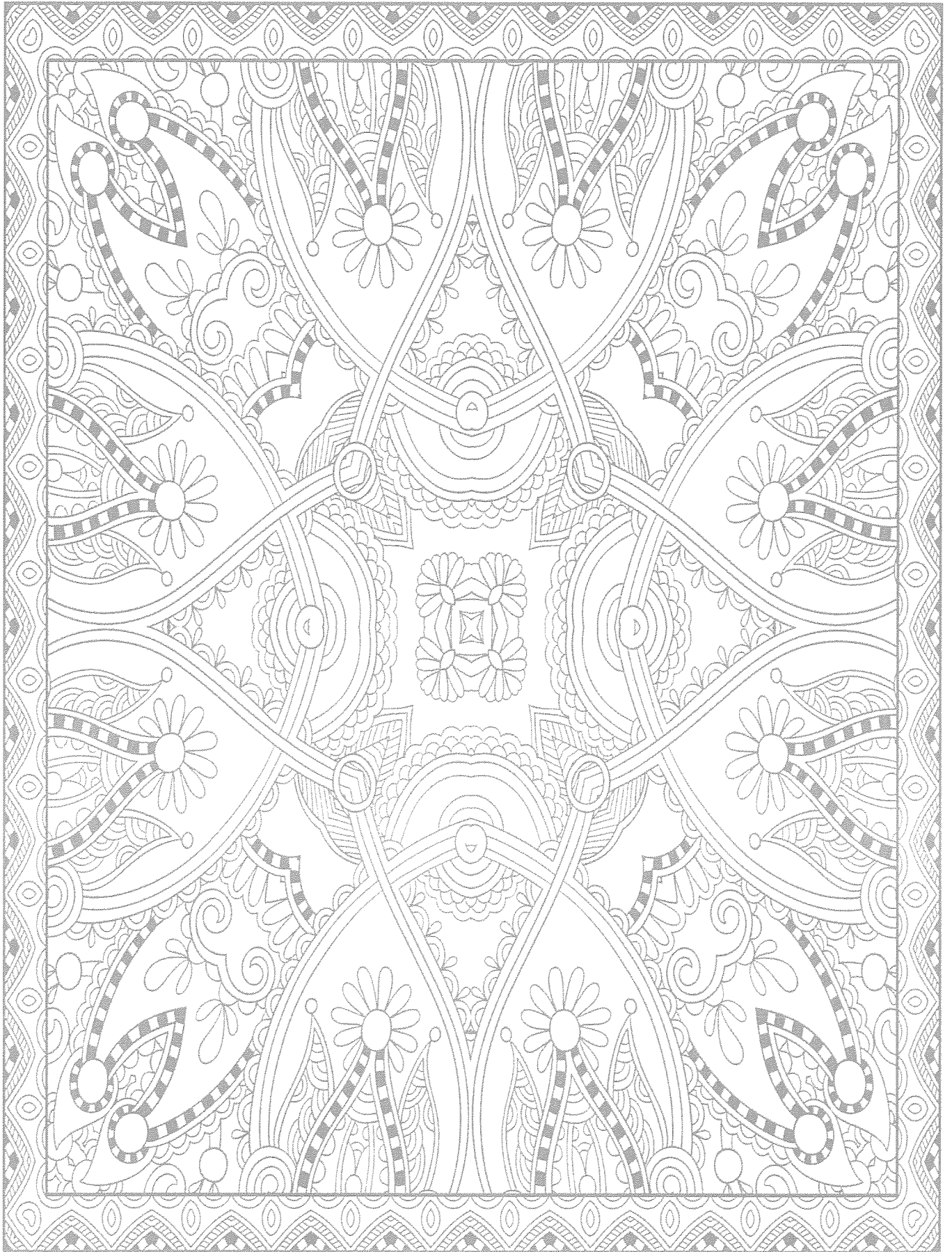
Does this sound simple? It actually might be a little harder than you think. But I assure you it is well worth the effort. Many psychological studies have shown that there are measurable health benefits when you practice mindfulness on a regular basis. These include boosting the immune system, improving memory and attention skills, fostering compassion, and overcoming disorders like anxiety and depression.

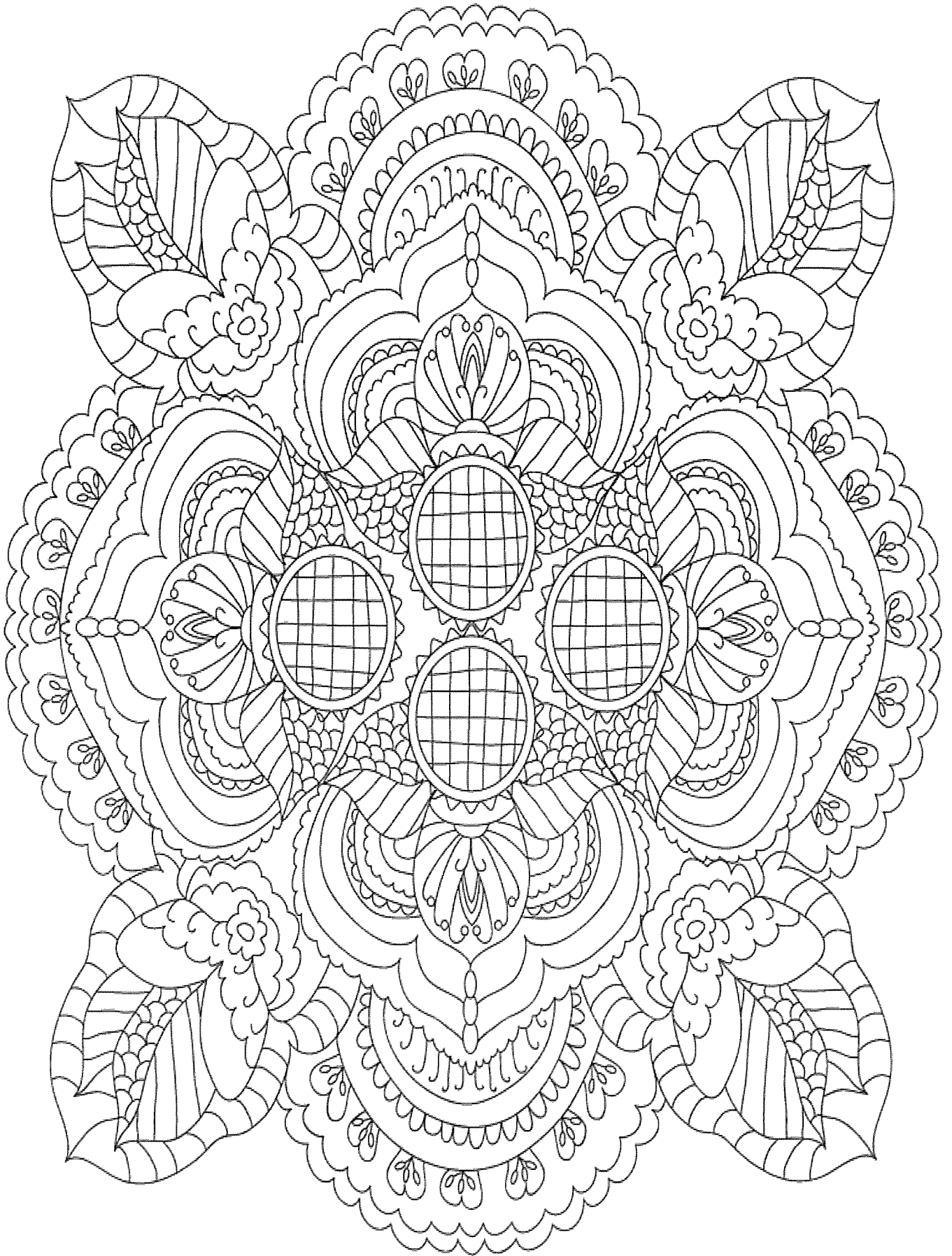
So here's what you should do:

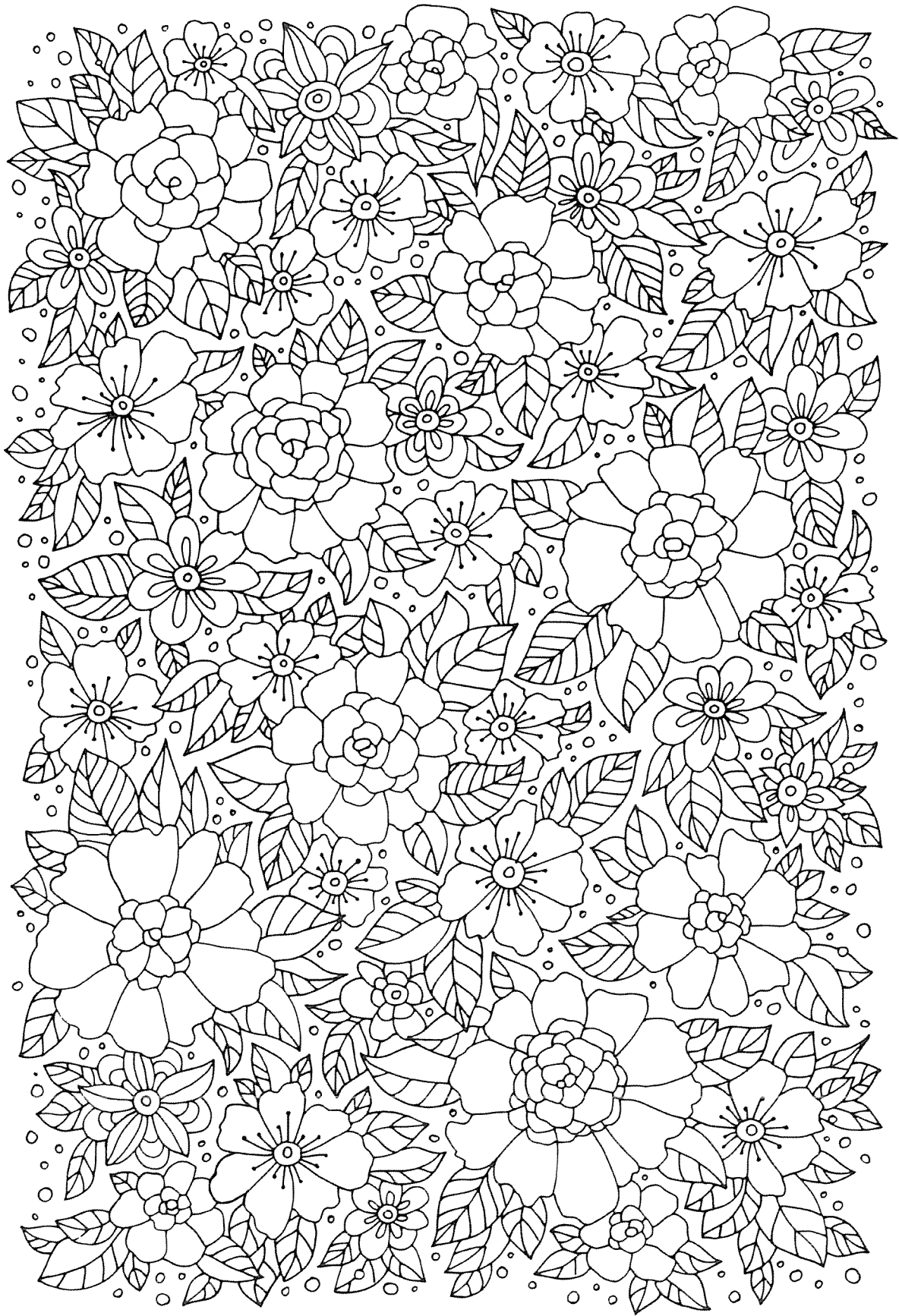
- Set aside 5 to 15 minutes to practice mindful coloring.
- Find a time and place where you will not be interrupted.
- Gather your materials to do your coloring and sit comfortably at a table. You may want to set a timer for 5 to 15 minutes. You should try and continue your mindful practice until the alarm goes off.
- Choose any design you like and begin coloring wherever you like.
- As you color, start paying attention to your breathing. You will probably find that your breathing is becoming slower and deeper, but you don't have to *try* and relax. In fact, you don't have to try and do anything. Just pay attention to the design, to your choice of colors, and to the process of coloring.

While you are coloring, be aware of your inner and outer experiences without reacting to them. For example, if you start to think about something that upset you during the day, just be "mindful" of the feeling without reacting to it. Let your feelings come and go without really thinking about them. Similarly, if you hear music or a noise, or feel a breeze, or smell something cooking, just observe these experiences without reacting to them. The essence of mindful meditation is just to be present in the moment.

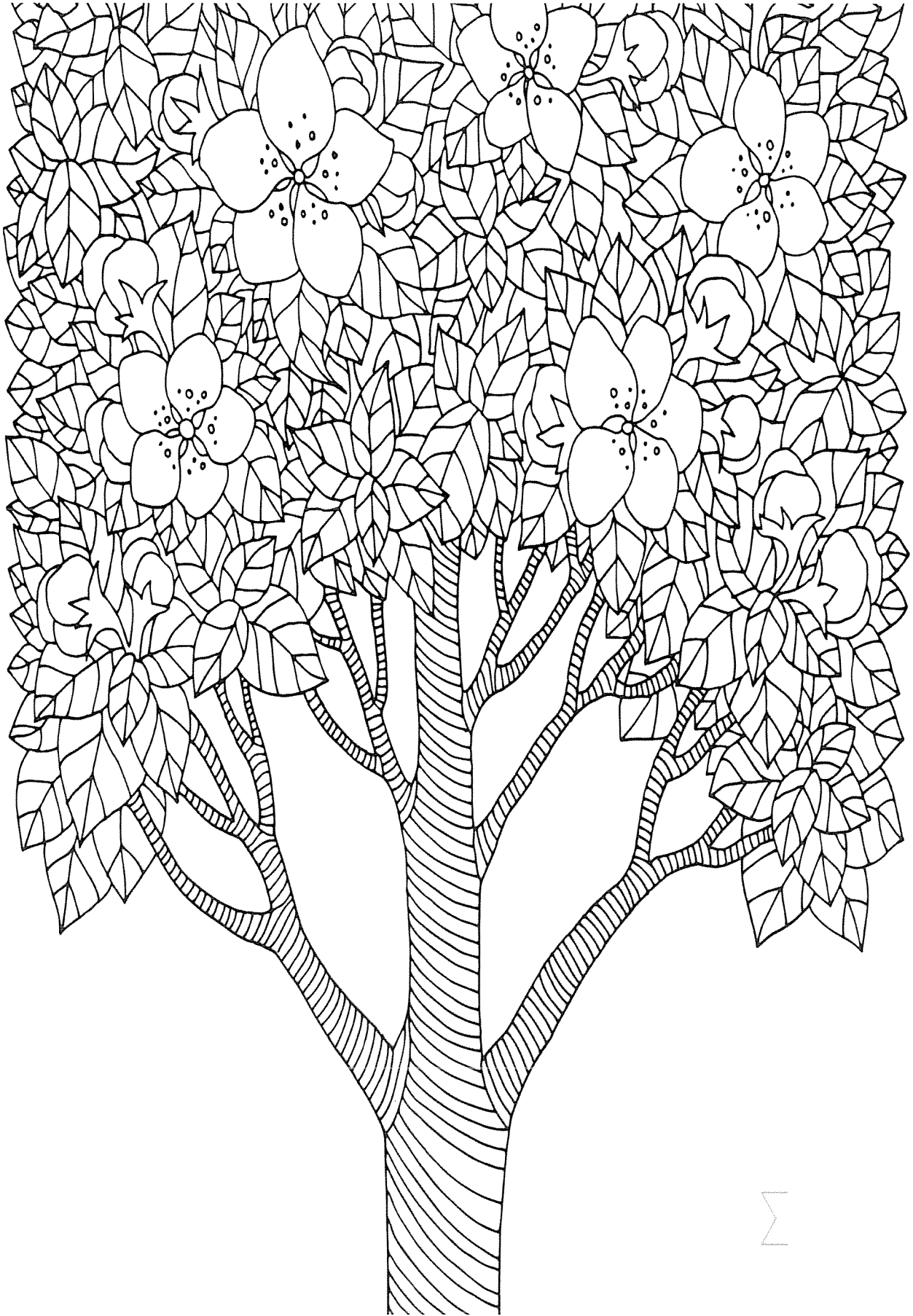
Mindful coloring is just one way to introduce you to the concept of mindfulness. Once you have learned the essence of mindful meditation you can bring this "skill" into all areas of your life. You can practice mindful eating and mindful walking or any other activity where you want to develop a greater sense of being alive by being present in the moment. If you are using mindfulness to address emotional problems, you should consider consulting a mental health professional who can help you integrate this practice into a comprehensive treatment plan.











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