MINNESOTA CLINIC FOR HEALTH & WELLNESS

REFLECTION GUIDE

BY MINNESOTA CLINIC FOR HEALTH & WELLNESS



JOURNAL PROMPTS FOR GREATER AWARENESS, BALANCE & WELL-BEING

MAKING SPACE FOR REFLECTION

Life moves quickly, and it can be easy to move from one day to the next without much time to pause and notice what is happening within us.

This guide brings together three journal reflections from Minnesota Clinic for Health & Wellness designed to create space to **explore the "clutter" we carry, notice moments of light and goodness, and reflect on the role of rest in our lives.**

There is no right order and no right way to use these prompts. You might work through the guide from beginning to end, choose the reflection that feels most relevant today, or return to different sections over time.

Give yourself permission to **slow down, get curious, and notice what comes up.** You do not need to have the "right" answers. Sometimes the simple act of paying attention can help us understand ourselves a little more clearly. And this understanding can point us on the path toward healing and living aligned with our goals and values.





REFLECTION 1: CLEARING MENTAL CLUTTER

Sometimes, even when the “things of life” happening around us are generally okay, it can be surprisingly hard to appreciate the goodness in our lives. When our mental space feels crowded with worries and preoccupation with problems outside our control, our perspective on everything tends to skew negative.

Just like cleaning and organizing our physical living environment, **taking the time to "declutter" our minds** can help us live more presently in each moment, align our daily choices with our values and goals, and have a clearer perspective on what really matters.

This reflection exercise will help you identify the emotional traps, unhealthy behaviors, toxic patterns in relationships, and problematic habits that keeps you from healing and growing into the person you hope to be – essentially, doing a little “inner decluttering.”

JOURNAL PROMPTS

1. Find a safe, quiet spot where you can have 5–10 minutes to reflect. Take 3–5 deep, full breaths, allowing your muscles to relax and soften with each exhale. Bring your attention to the here and now moment, exactly as it is.
2. Check in with your deepest center. See if you can identify one or two things you deeply value. Maybe it's generosity. Or compassion. Or honesty. Or simplicity. Or courage. Or justice. Or health. Or peace.
3. Once you have named this value — or values — do a brief "inventory" of your life right now. Are there ways that clutter in your life — too much busyness, scrolling, zoning out, mindless online purchases, unhealthy habits, etc. — keeps you from living into those values in the here and now?



JOURNAL PROMPTS

4. Identify one or two areas of “clutter” that you’d like to address. What is one small and doable change you could put into action to make more room for you to live fully into the values you hold?
5. How can you be gentle yet persistent with yourself through the process, remembering that change is not linear and that we often have to “re-align” many times along the way?
6. How might this bring a little lightness, healing, and hope to parts of me that may be feeling stuck, weary, or discouraged?





REFLECTION 2: LOOKING TOWARDS THE LIGHT

As we navigate our day-to-day, the things we encounter can often oversaturate us with discouraging news — leaving us feeling unsettled, uncertain, or even hopeless.

While it is wise to allow space to acknowledge the difficult realities — and how we might make efforts to tend to the wounds in our society and hearts — we also need to **remember how to orient toward the light.**

We can remind ourselves not to forget to turn toward the hints of light and goodness that can be easy to overlook when things feel dark. Cognitive science teaches us that what we focus on takes deeper root in our minds due, in part, to neuroplasticity in the brain.



And when we practice **healthy cognitive and behavioral habits** — of not ignoring injustice or danger, but of saying "yes, and" — we can mobilize in the direction of our values rather than remaining stuck in the fear, outrage, and the muck of our social media feeds and inboxes.

Maybe light is more abundant than we notice because we're too engulfed by the darkness to celebrate — and amplify — the many small "goodnesses" and glimmers around us.

When we consciously turn our attention toward the little details of daily living that may otherwise go unnoticed, they start to shift the **balance** and a new reality of "yes, and" opens up to us.

We invite you to take some time to notice and **SAVOR moments of light in your days.**

JOURNAL PROMPTS

1. Find a safe, quiet spot where you can have 5–10 minutes to reflect. Take 3–5 deep, full breaths, allowing your muscles to relax and soften with each exhale. Bring your attention to the here and now moment, exactly as it is.
2. What is something that made me laugh recently or moved me in a meaningful way? Was I alone or with other people? Take a moment to savor this memory by evoking the details.
3. Can I attune myself for the next 24 hours to notice moments of love in action around me? Coworkers genuinely enjoying each other? A neighbor passing along a thoughtful hand-me-down? A parent wiping their child's face tenderly after eating? A gorgeous song that gives you chills — thinking of the time, heart, and talent poured into its creation? A perfect flower that catches you off guard with its beauty? The luxury of air conditioning?



JOURNAL PROMPTS

4. At the end of the day, what do I find myself reflecting the most on? The hard challenges that came up — or are persisting — or do I also think back to the bright spots or subtle glimmers? If I don't spend much time doing this, is it something I can experiment with?
5. What sorts of conversations do I find myself engaging in? Am I usually decompressing and stressing over things beyond my control, or do I also create space to touch on what is good? Is there a good way to honor both of these important aspects of my conversations if I tend to habitually skew negative?





REFLECTION 3: KNOWING WHEN TO CHOOSE REST

Surely we all know the feeling — or some version of it: a hectic week at work, schlepping the kids to all their activities, trying to figure out what to make for dinner AGAIN, the bills are piling up, and so is the laundry.

Or maybe in your phase of life it's balancing work, homework, chores, and trying to keep on top of it all. The weekend FLIES by before you can take three deep breaths, and suddenly it's Monday again and you haven't regained your bearings from the whirlwind of the week before.

We often need the reminder that we humans are not made to go, go, and go some more. **We need rest... physically, mentally, and spiritually.** And it takes a toll when we don't allow ourselves to downshift.



Practicing rest can take many different forms, and some cultures even bake this into the daily or weekly rhythms of life. Siesta and Sabbath are two well-known rest practices. Some Indigenous traditions have passed the wisdom of stopping on long journeys to “let the soul catch up with the body.”

On an individual level, preferences for what feels restorative can vary. For some people, recharging looks like doing something out and about, while others prefer to unwind by mellowing out on the couch with a favorite book or TV show.

No matter how you choose to do it, **rest is vital to how well we function** — and our nervous systems need this reset for our bodies and minds to restore.

Since our culture tends to glorify productivity at the expense of healthy rhythms of rest and effort, we invite you to do a little inner exploration and reflect on the different ways you can **intentionally cultivate practices of rest** — despite the external pressures to hustle endlessly.

JOURNAL PROMPTS

1. Find a safe, quiet spot where you can have 5–10 minutes to reflect. Take 3–5 deep, full breaths, allowing your muscles to relax and soften with each exhale. Bring your attention to the here and now moment, exactly as it is.
2. What messages have I internalized, either from my family of origin or the culture I'm immersed in, that relate to work and productivity? Do any of these get in the way of me allowing sufficient rest, recovery, or play in my life?
3. What are the events and interactions in my week that feel the most draining? Do I find myself dreading these moments and/or exhausted by them? Is there something I might be able to do beforehand or afterward to build in some balance and healthy stress relief?
4. How do I spend my weekends and evenings? Are they usually filled with tasks that I didn't have enough time to accomplish during the day or week? If I don't tend to offer myself any time to relax and unwind, what might shift for me — and those around me — if I set a little goal for myself to block out some time to set down the "to do's," even if the list is not complete? What makes this hard to do? Which of my values could I live into more fully by letting go of the "to-do's" now and then?
5. What are the things that bring me the most comfort and feel most restorative? Is it having a meal or coffee with my favorite people or playing a game together? Or is it finding a favorite corner at home and enjoying some quality "me time?" Make a list of the things that feel like true rest and recharging for you. Can I write into my calendar 3 or 4 days in the next month that I can have for myself?

DATE

MOOD



DAILY JOURNAL

YOUR THOUGHTS

INTENTIONS

WHAT I CAN RELEASE

BONUS PRACTICE

A MOMENT TO PAUSE

As a bonus, we wanted to share **two guided meditations** from the Minnesota Clinic for Health & Wellness to support your reflection practice. Use these meditations whenever you need a few moments to slow down, reconnect with yourself, and return to the present moment.

MINDFUL

GUIDED MEDITATIONS

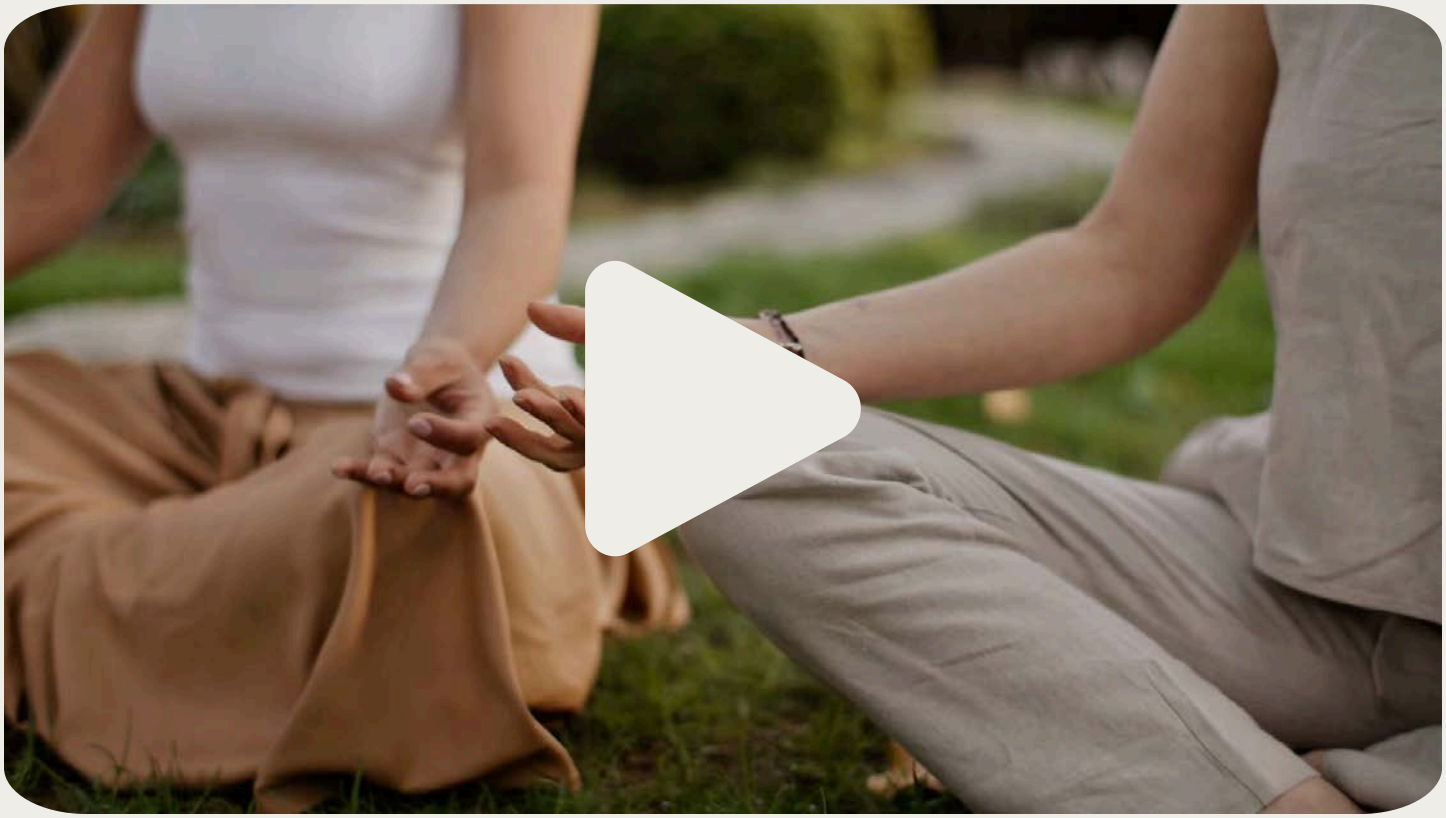
One meditation offers a gentle introduction to **breath awareness** and **grounding**, while the other focuses on **inner strength**, resilience, and setting an intention for how you want to show up.



BREATH AWARENESS & GROUNDING



INNER STRENGTH & RESILIENCE



WHEN YOU NEED SUPPORT

Sometimes reflection brings up things that feel difficult to navigate on your own. You may begin noticing patterns you want to change, relationships you want to understand more deeply, stress that has been building, or simply a desire to know yourself better.

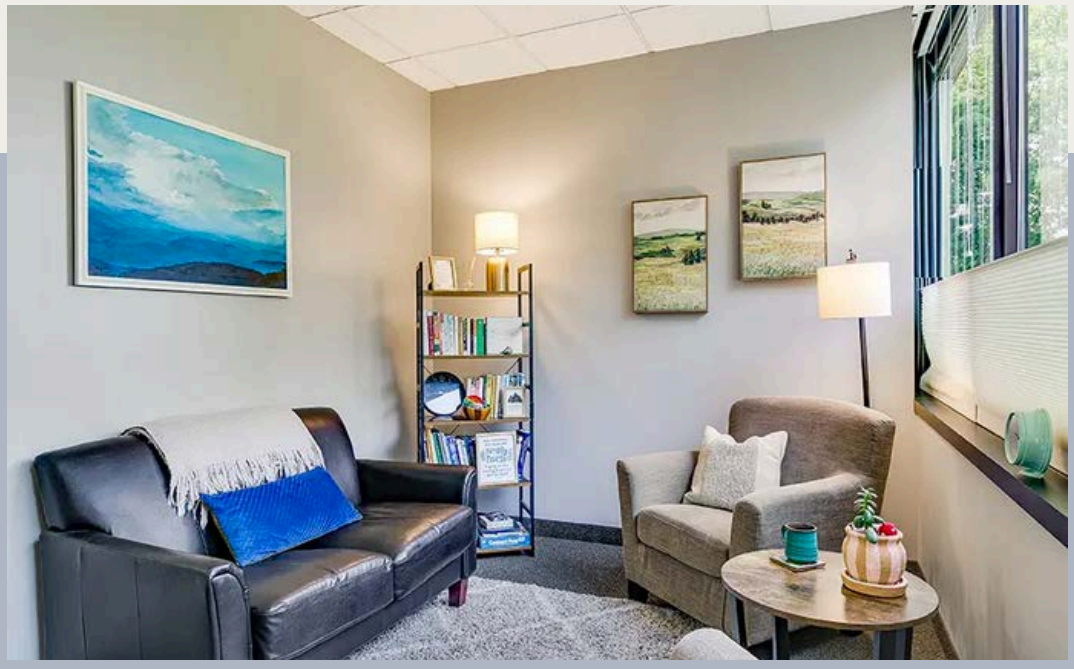
You do not have to figure everything out alone. If you would like support exploring what came up for you while working through this guide, our team would be happy to help you connect with a therapist who can walk alongside you.



LET'S CONNECT

We are a Minnesota-based clinic offering compassionate, integrative mental health care. Our team of therapists, psychologists, and holistic providers is here to support you with personalized care for your emotional, physical, and mental well-being.

If you're feeling overwhelmed, stuck, or ready to take the next step in your healing journey—we're here for you.



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