MINNESOTA CLINIC FOR HEALTH & WELLNESS

REFLECTION GUIDE

BY MINNESOTA CLINIC FOR HEALTH & WELLNESS



JOURNAL PROMPTS FOR
PEACE, KINDNESS & GRATITUDE

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 reflections from Minnesota Clinic for Health & Wellness focused on **cultivating peace, practicing kindness, and noticing gratitude in our everyday 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: CULTIVATING PEACE

Minnesota Clinic for Health & Wellness is recognized as an International Peace Site because we strive to practice and uphold **five "Peace Actions":**

- Seeking peace within yourself and with others
- Reaching out in service
- Protecting the environment
- Respecting diversity
- Being a responsible citizen of the world

It is an honor to work together at MCHW — so imperfectly, of course — to live into these values with each other, with our clients, and in our wider community.

We want to bring some "counterbalance" to what seems to be the common **baseline of peace-less-ness** — in our own spirits and minds, in our relationships, online, and in our communities. For us to seek to be agents of peace in our world, we must go against the grain and intentionally live into this value in small, regular ways.

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 does “peace” mean to me? What layers can I unpack with this concept and what the word evokes? What memories arise for me connected to “peace?” How might I be part of creating the conditions — in ways big or small — for peace, for my own self and also for others?
3. Where is one place I can be without interruption for 10 minutes? Maybe somewhere at home? Outside? When I visit this space, what helps me become really present in the moment and in my senses? What is hard about “arriving” in the here and now? What helps me give myself permission to “just be” with whatever “is” for a few moments — without fighting what “is” in that moment?



JOURNAL PROMPTS

CONTINUED →

4. How many times a day do I make the commitment to set my phone away? Maybe in a different room, or if that's not possible, just silencing it, turning on “do not disturb,” or powering it off completely for just a few minutes? Can I go an hour? A day?!

When I wake up in the morning, how quickly do I check social media, the news, email, or missed texts? How might this set the tone for my day? What might be a more peace-inducing alternative?

5. Are there communities I am a part of that really make me feel at peace with who I am? Maybe it's a volunteer group, or neighborhood, or family, or a faith community, or a workplace, or a group with people who have shared hobbies and interests? If none, where might I take a small, courageous step to get plugged in somewhere with others to begin to cultivate a sense of authentic belonging?

6. When something stressful comes up in my day, do I respond in a way that exacerbates the stress, or are there any tools that help me “calm the storm” and cultivate a more peaceful inner state — even if things aren’t perfect? What helps me remember to use these resources (music, podcasts, going for a walk, taking a shower, talking to someone I trust, breathing, being in nature, doing something kind for someone else, finding a new “lens” to view the stressor to make it more navigable, etc.)? How might this intentional cultivation of peace ripple to benefit those around me?





REFLECTION 2: CHOOSING KINDNESS

Living in complex and divisive times can be taxing on our energy and compassion for one another. Still, it is **important to flood our interactions with kindness where we can** — perhaps those we disagree with may be better able to see our perspective if we show up with respect and curiosity rather than judgment.

Understandably, it is easy to be kind with those whom we find commonality with, but when we find ourselves with others who hold different worldviews or perspectives, offering warmth, empathy, or generous assumptions is a lot harder.

When faced with these interactions, what if we challenge ourselves to see the common humanity there? To choose curiosity over contempt? What if we practice treating others with the respect that we wish they might offer us or others?

JOURNAL PROMPTS

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2. Think of a person with whom you have had some kind of conflict or judgmental thoughts about recently. Is there anything that you can identify that you respect or appreciate about them? Is there anything about what they've been through in their life that might impact how they show up?
3. What might it look like to engage in conversation choosing curiosity about their experience rather than jumping to conclusions — or putting them in a "box" based on assumptions? Asking more genuine questions than would be your impulse with this person?
4. You might also experiment with the DBT skill called "opposite to emotion" actions. Basically, this is acting in a way that is — yup, you guessed it — opposite to how your emotion would urge, but in line with what your values would dictate. So, if your emotion is disgust or contempt, but you value forgiveness, compassion, and holding generous assumptions — consider small actions aligned with these values that are opposite to the impulse arising from the unpleasant emotion. Bringing that coworker a coffee — or tea — or writing a brief note of thanks not only is a gift to them, but it also shifts something in your heart when you put your actions where your values are instead of where your emotions are.



REFLECTION 3: CULTIVATING GRATITUDE

Some folks may find it pretty easy to name a number of things and people in life to feel grateful for.

Still, especially during difficult patches in our lives, some of us find these tasks challenging — especially when we've found ourselves hurt by people we care for or let down by institutions that we rely on.

One of the ways we can **cultivate gratitude** when life is challenging is by starting small with the things we are thankful for and gradually naming bigger things as we continue.

Running water? Electricity? A warm coat to wear?

Research shows that even the mental act of LOOKING for things to appreciate can shift our mood.



When things feel really tough, one of our therapists swears by noticing the effects of gravity — as strange as it may sound.

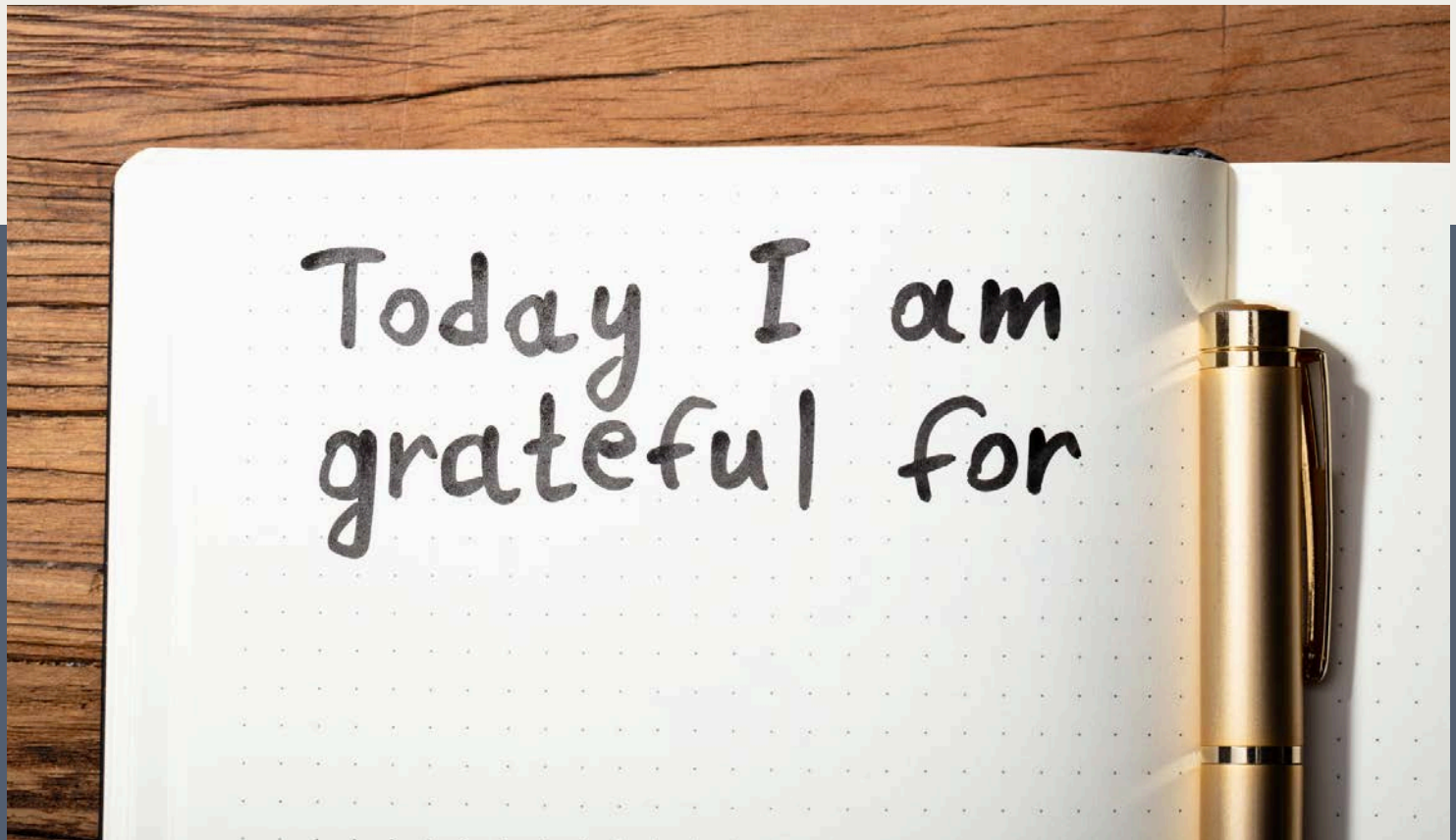
Like, when it's hard to feel thankful for ANYTHING, saying inwardly:

"I'm grateful that in this moment, I can still trust in gravity. That as I sit here right now, I can know that my body will be supported by the earth and I can rest in the stillness of being grounded."

Consider using these prompts to help you name some experiences, people, or blessings that you feel grateful for.

JOURNAL PROMPTS

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2. What was one moment that brought me joy, contentment, or peace?
3. Who is one person I enjoy spending time with?
4. Were there any new experiences that I found meaningful?
5. What is one area I think I grew in, even a little bit?
6. What is something I use every day that would make life a little more challenging if I didn't have it?
7. Who might be on my heart to express my gratitude to? What might be a meaningful way to do that?



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

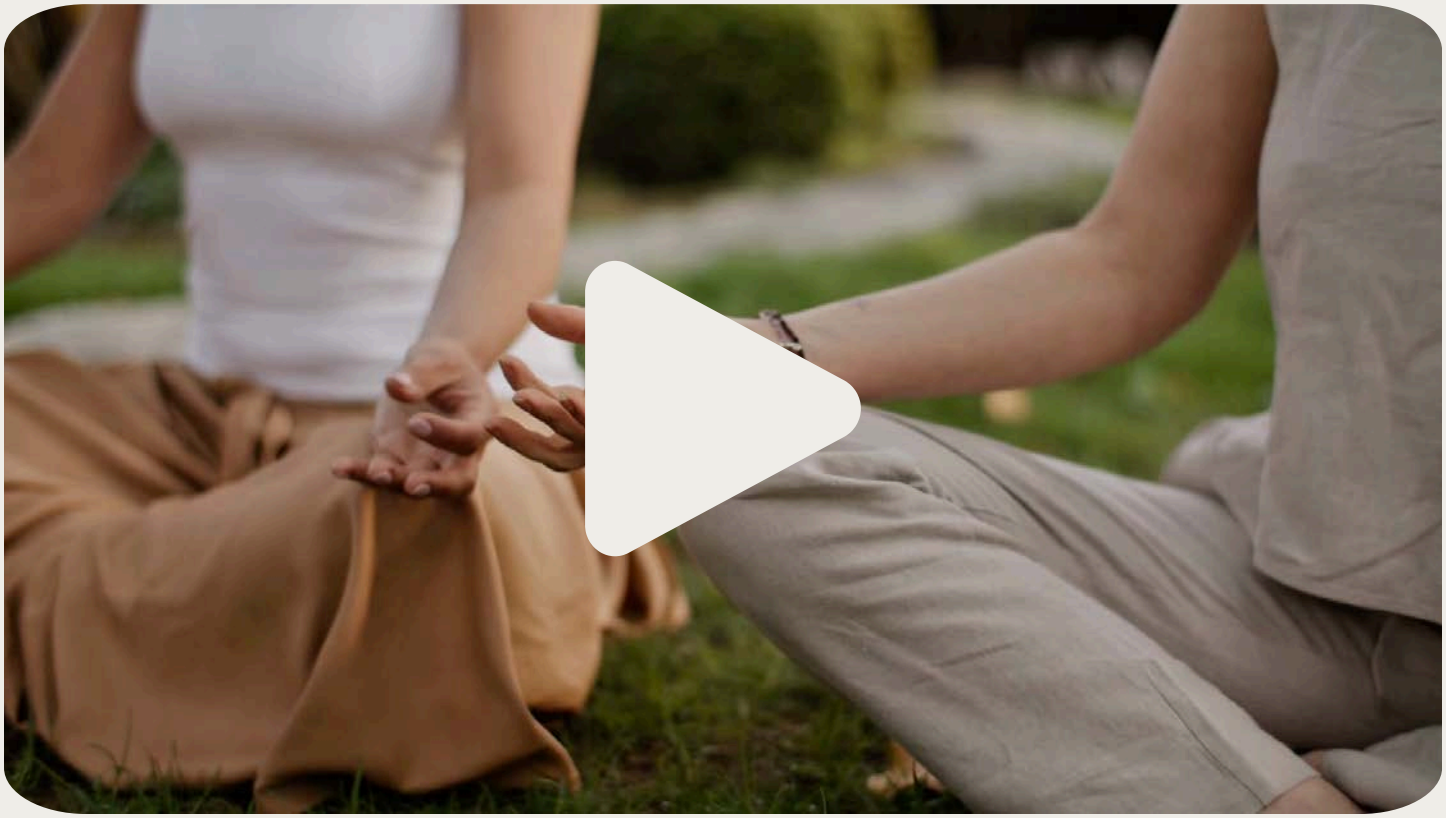
One meditation offers a gentle introduction to **breath awareness** and **grounding**, while the other focuses on **inner strength**, resilience, and setting an intention for how you want to show up.



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.

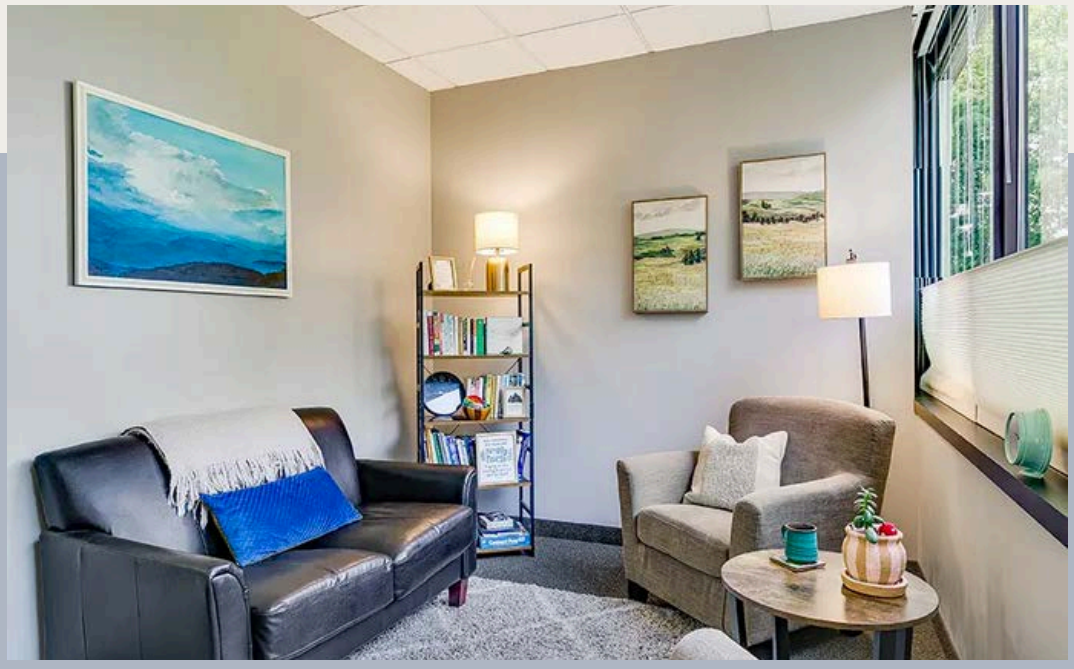
You do not have to figure everything out alone. If you would like support exploring what came up for you while working through this guide, our team would be happy to help you connect with a therapist who can walk alongside you.



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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