

# Gratitude

journal

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journal

Property of:

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# Why Gratitude?

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Life can be challenging. On days when nothing seems to be going your way, it can be particularly difficult to recognize aspects of your life that you appreciate. It is during these difficult times when practicing gratitude can be the most helpful.

Practicing gratitude isn't just about feeling appreciative when things are going well. It's about acknowledging what you have, instead of focusing on what's missing. It's about the glass half full rather than half empty. You may be struggling with school or a relationship, but chances are there is some area in your life in which things are going well...or, perhaps, not as badly.

When you start looking for something to appreciate, the odds are higher that you'll find it. Doing this can have powerful effects on your mood and the way you see your life.

Research shows that practicing gratitude deepens relationships, increases happiness, and improves physical and mental health. People who practice gratitude are less focused on competing with others, which allows them to focus on their own contentment.

While society seems to promise that a prestigious internship or a new gadget will bring happiness, gratitude is an invitation to be happy with what you already have. Gratitude helps you savor the good things in life—big and small—so that you don't miss them in pursuit of the elusive next big thing.

# Using This BOOK

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Studies have found that grateful writing, which you can practice in this journal, can improve your well-being in meaningful ways.

We've designed this book to prompt you to reflect on things that make you feel grateful. Use this journal in whatever way feels helpful to you. While some benefit from practicing gratitude daily, others may prefer to do so a couple of times a week or even weekly. Fill it out when you want and how you want. Don't worry about spelling, sentence structure, or grammar—the important thing is to write about the things in your life for which you're thankful.

We want to acknowledge that it's not always easy identifying things for which you feel grateful, especially in times of stress. That's okay. Start small and try to identify a few things that are going right in your life, even if you don't feel grateful for them at the moment. It may feel like a stretch at first, especially if you're not used to doing this. Don't worry: the more you practice and write in this gratitude journal, the more genuine and natural it will become.

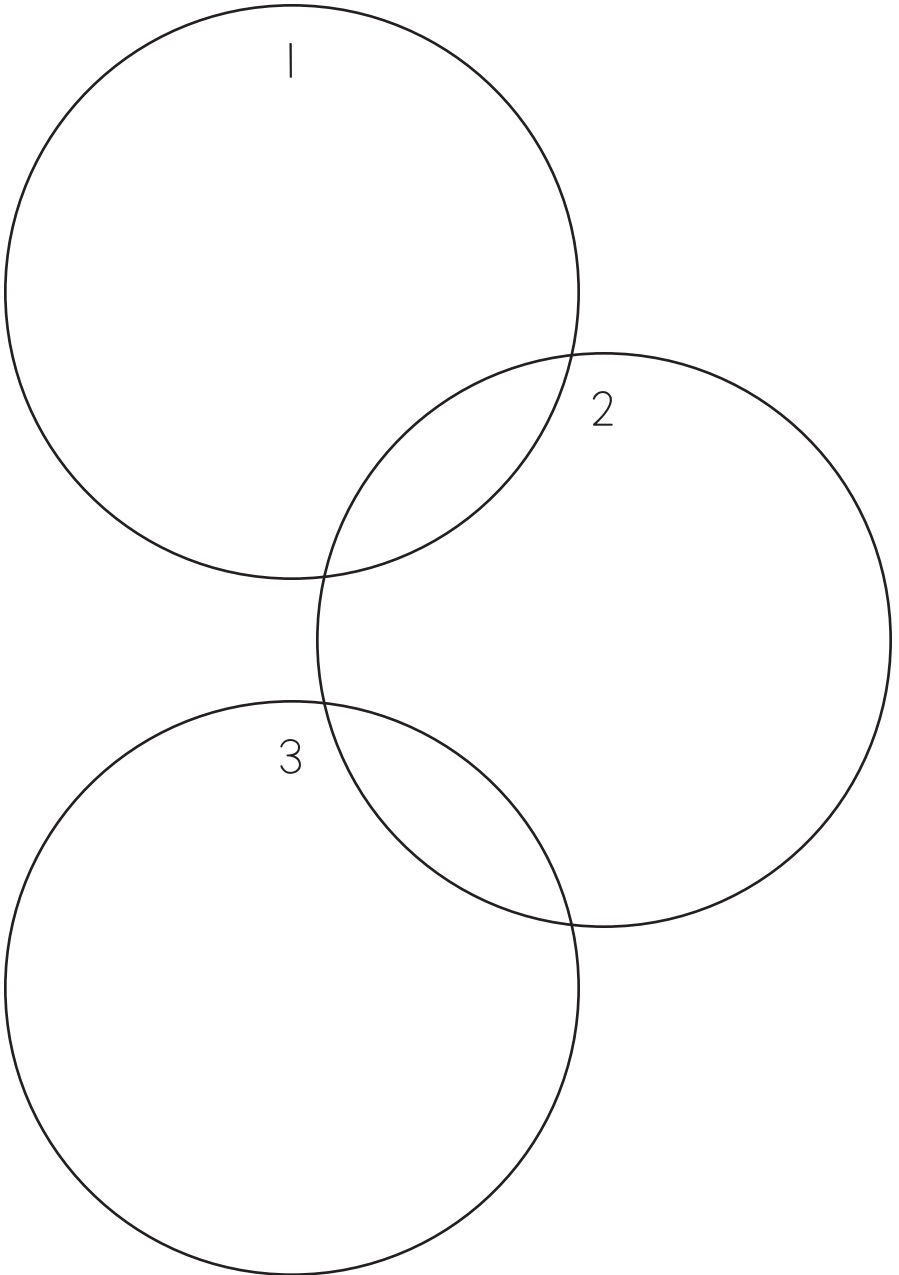


The University of Texas at Austin  
**Counseling and Mental  
Health Center**  
*Division of Student Affairs*

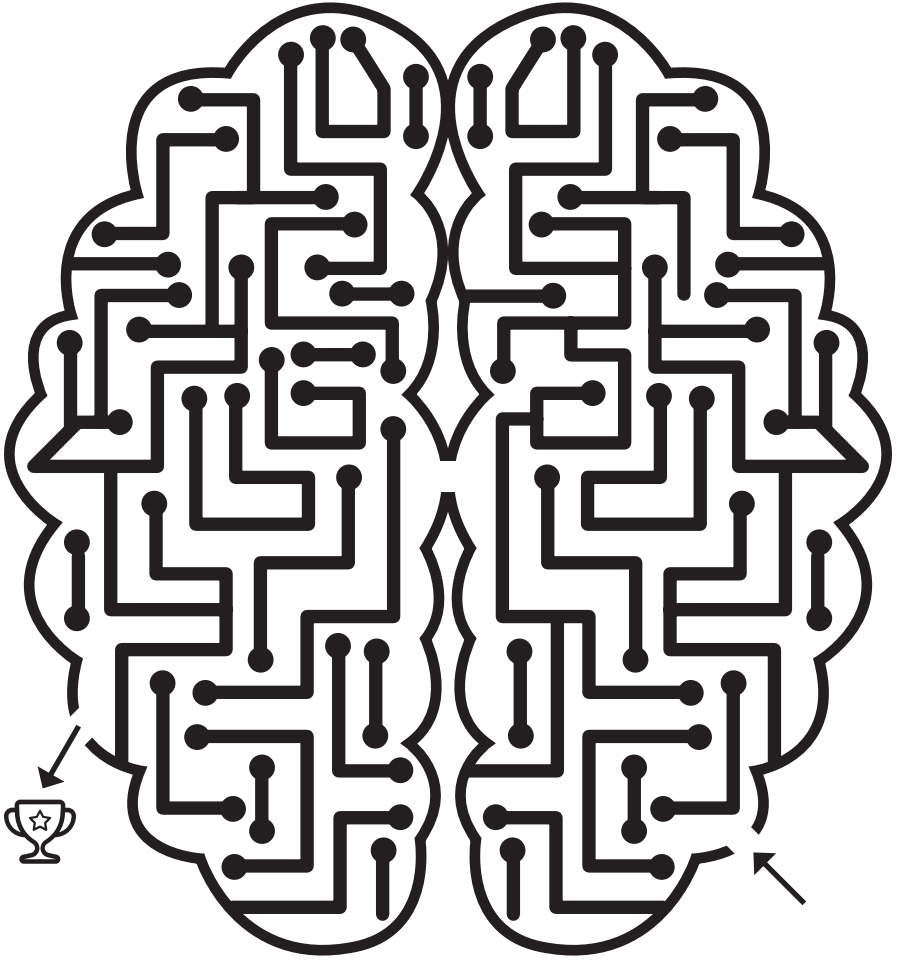
“This is a  
wonderful  
day. I’ve  
never seen  
this one  
before.”

-Maya Angelou

3 things I'm grateful for today..



date: / /



# Memories I'm grateful for:

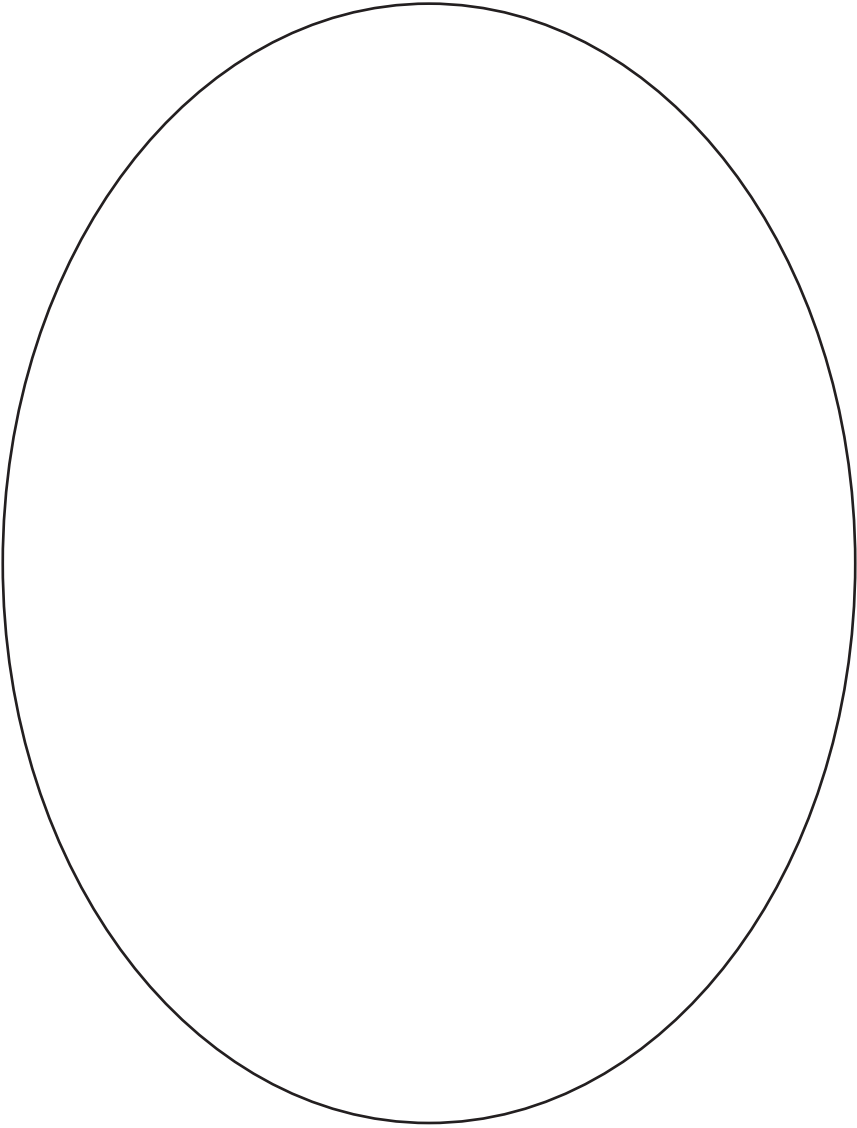
A large rectangular frame containing three smaller rectangular boxes stacked vertically. The frame is decorated with small circles along its inner border. The top box has 5 circles on each side, the middle box has 6 circles on each side, and the bottom box has 5 circles on each side.

date: / /





What made you laugh today?



date: / /

“Gratitude  
turns what  
we have into  
enough.”

-Melody Bettie

# Things I appreciate about myself are...

(circle all that apply and add your own)

sarcastic

good listener

hardworking

silly

adventurous

optimistic

loyal

adaptable

funny

practical

passionate

creative

stylish

cautious

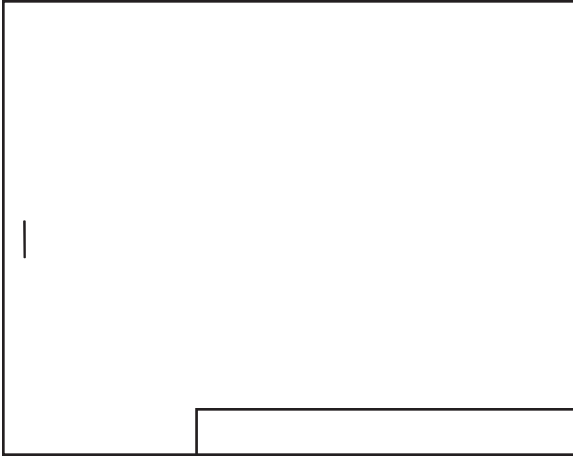
spontaneous

date: / /

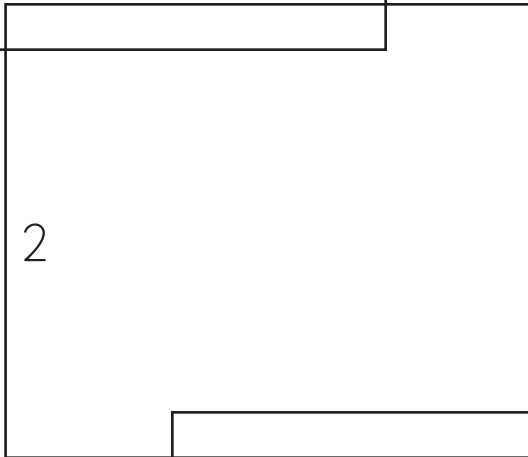


Doodle three things that added joy to your day...

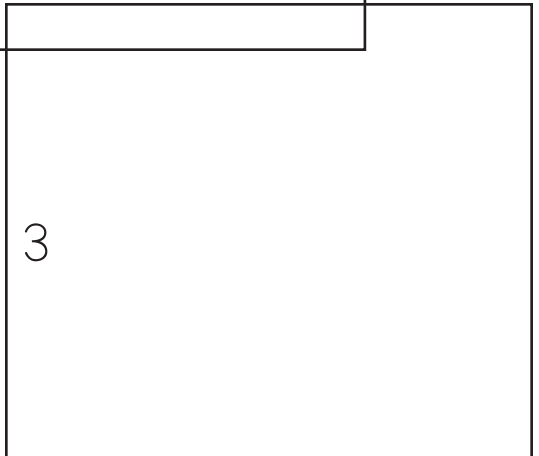
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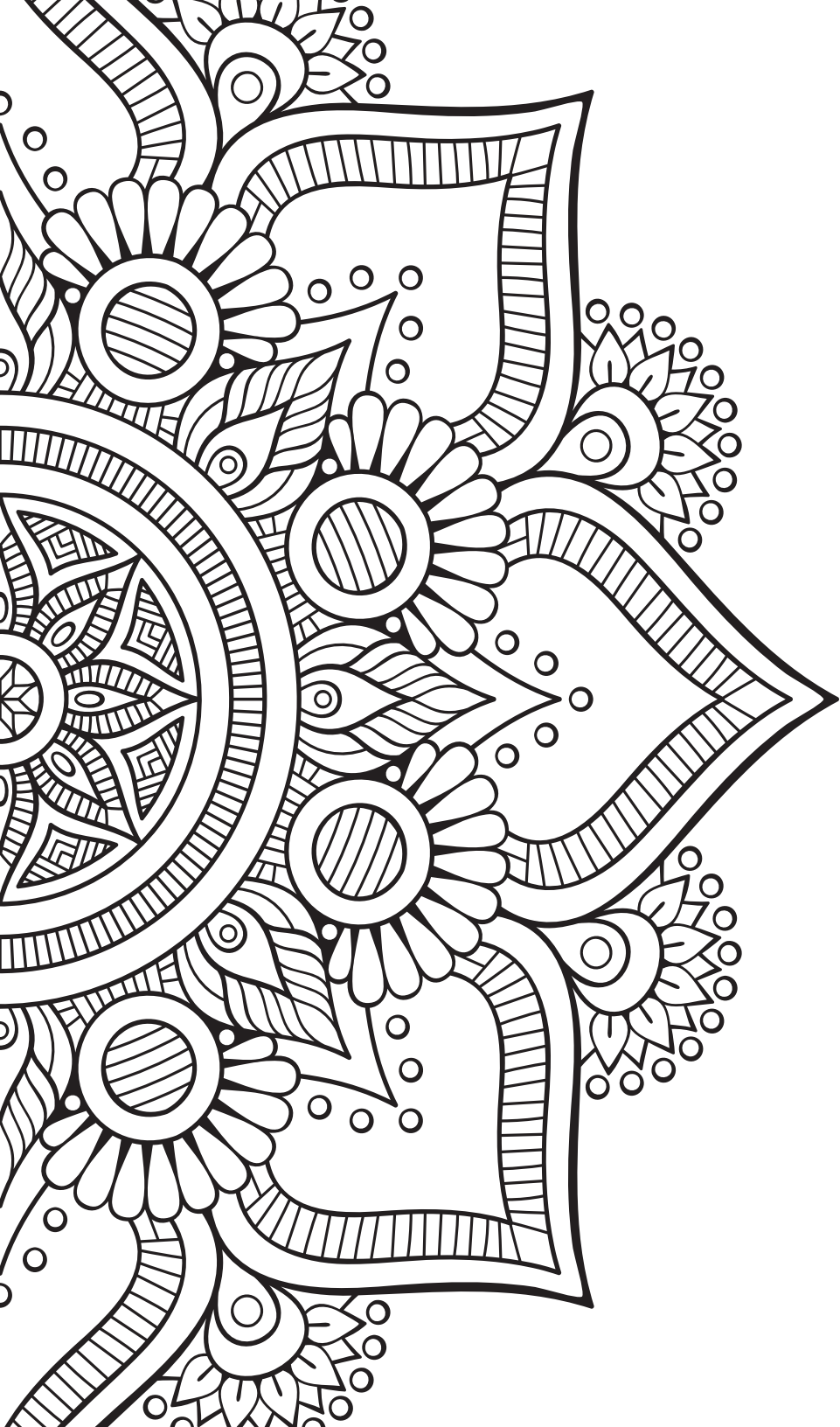
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3



date: / /



My life would be a lot less sweet  
without (fill in the blanks)

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---

and

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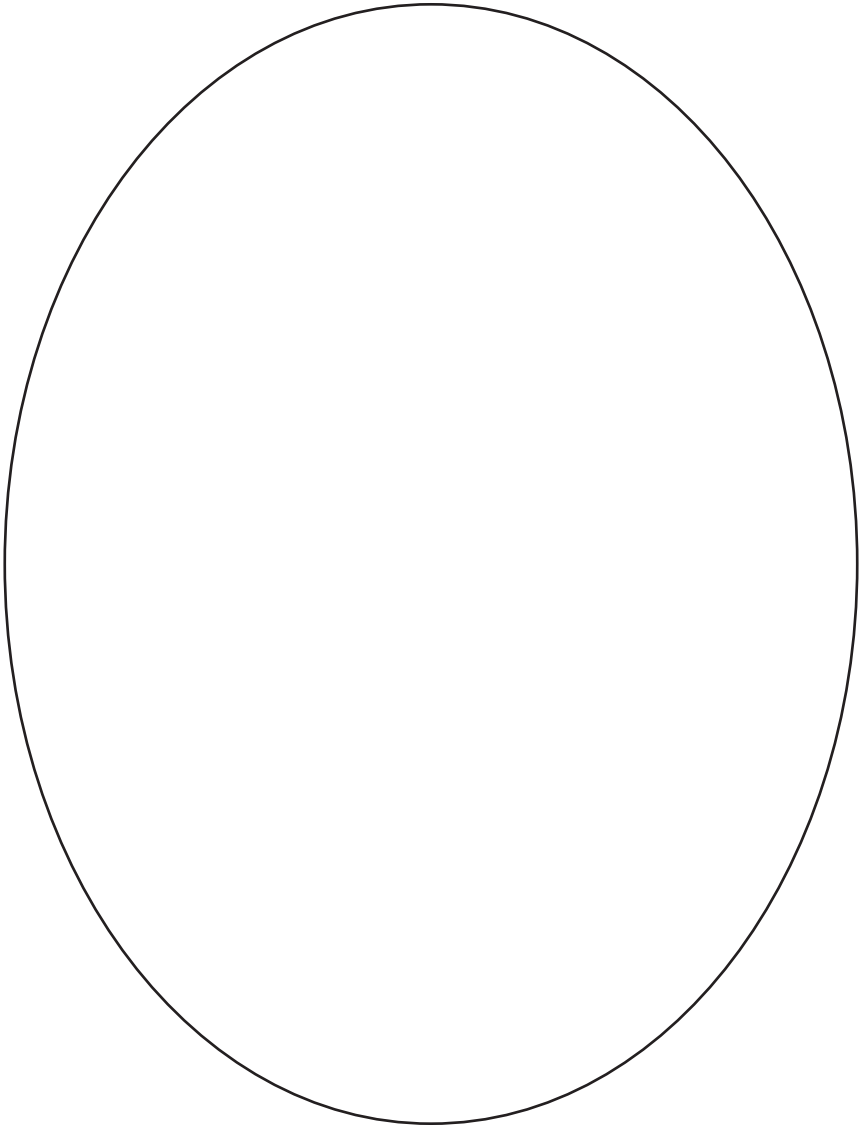
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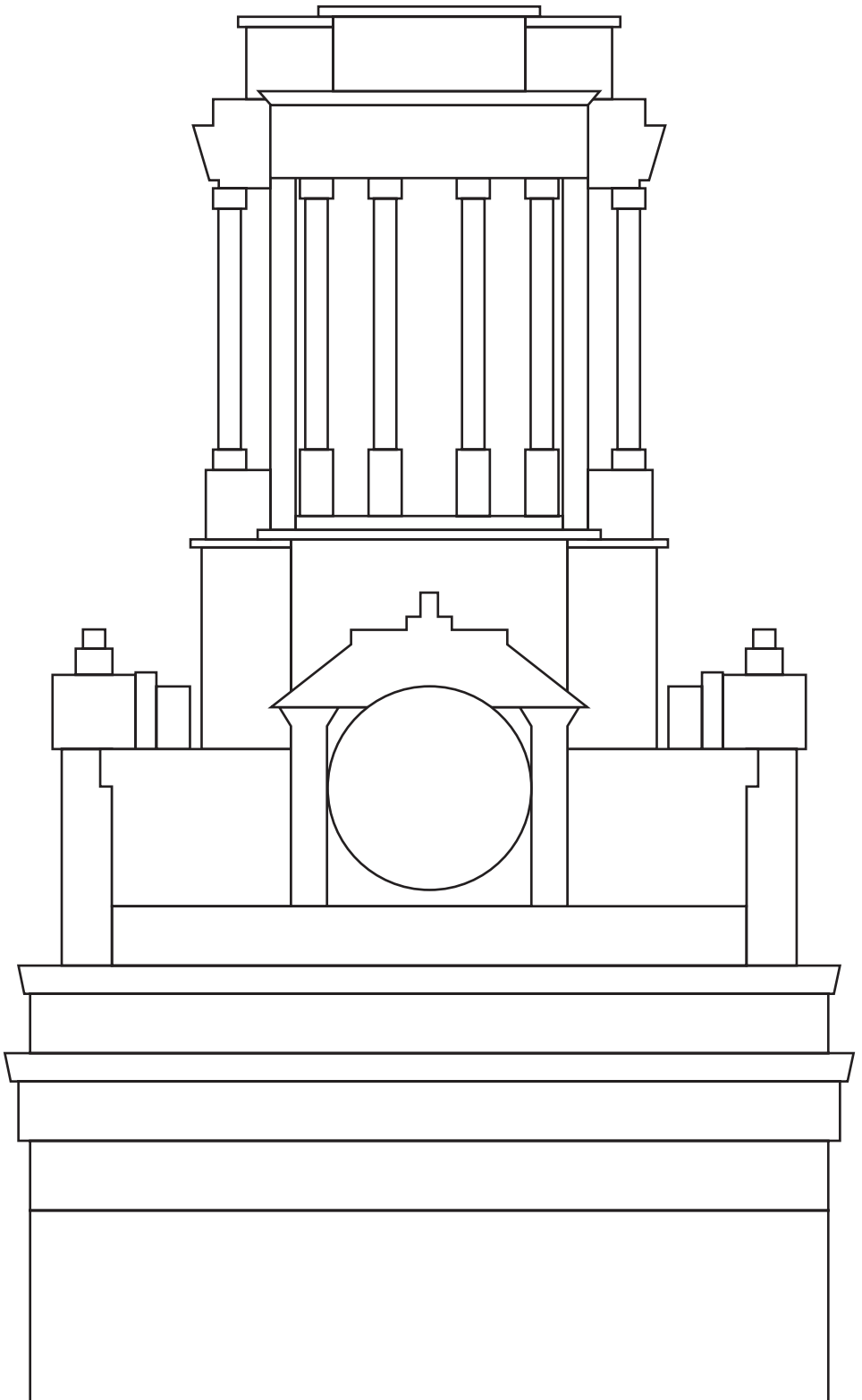
“Give thanks  
for a little  
and you will  
find a lot.”

-Hausa proverb

Write about a memory from when you were young that makes you smile.



date: / /



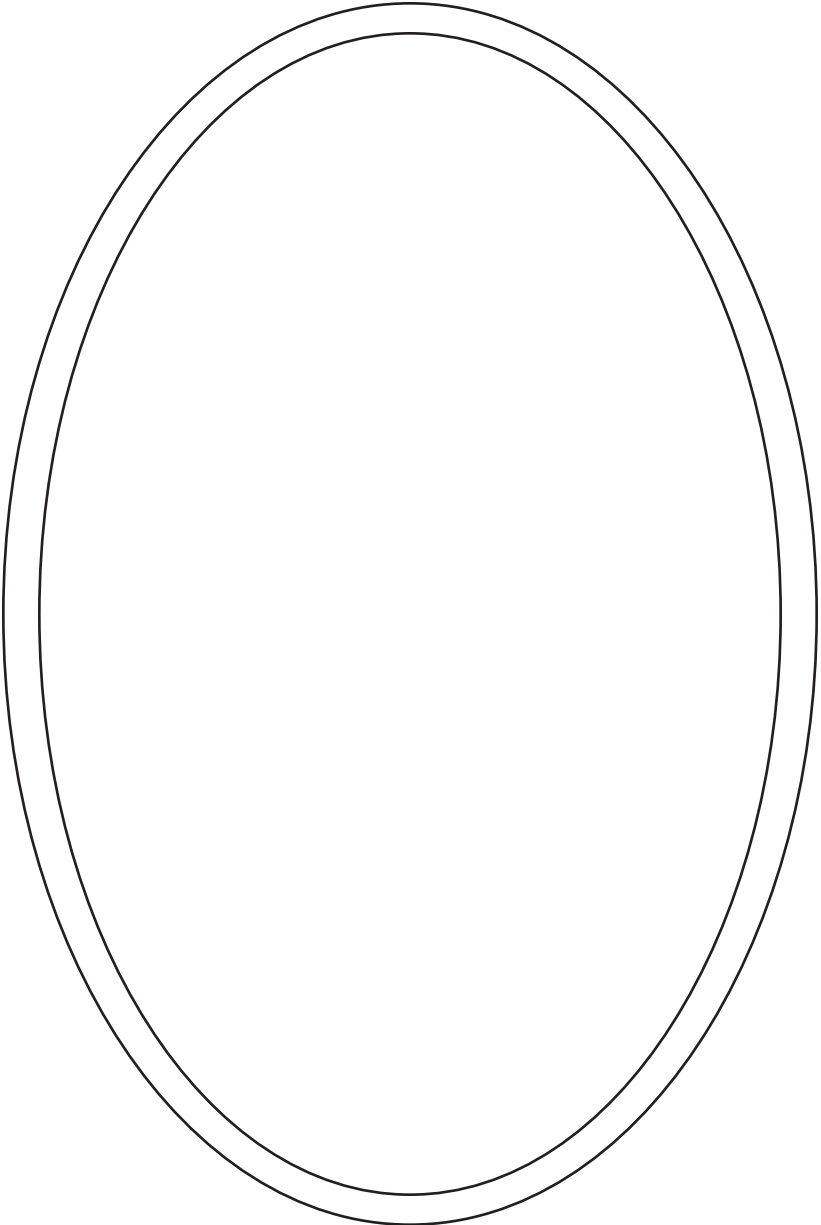
Write or draw something you're grateful for about yourself.

(e.g., your kindness, your curiosity, etc.)

date: / /



Someone who made me laugh or smile this week...



date: / /

“You only live  
once, but if  
you do it  
right, once  
is enough.”

-Mae West

Today I am grateful for...

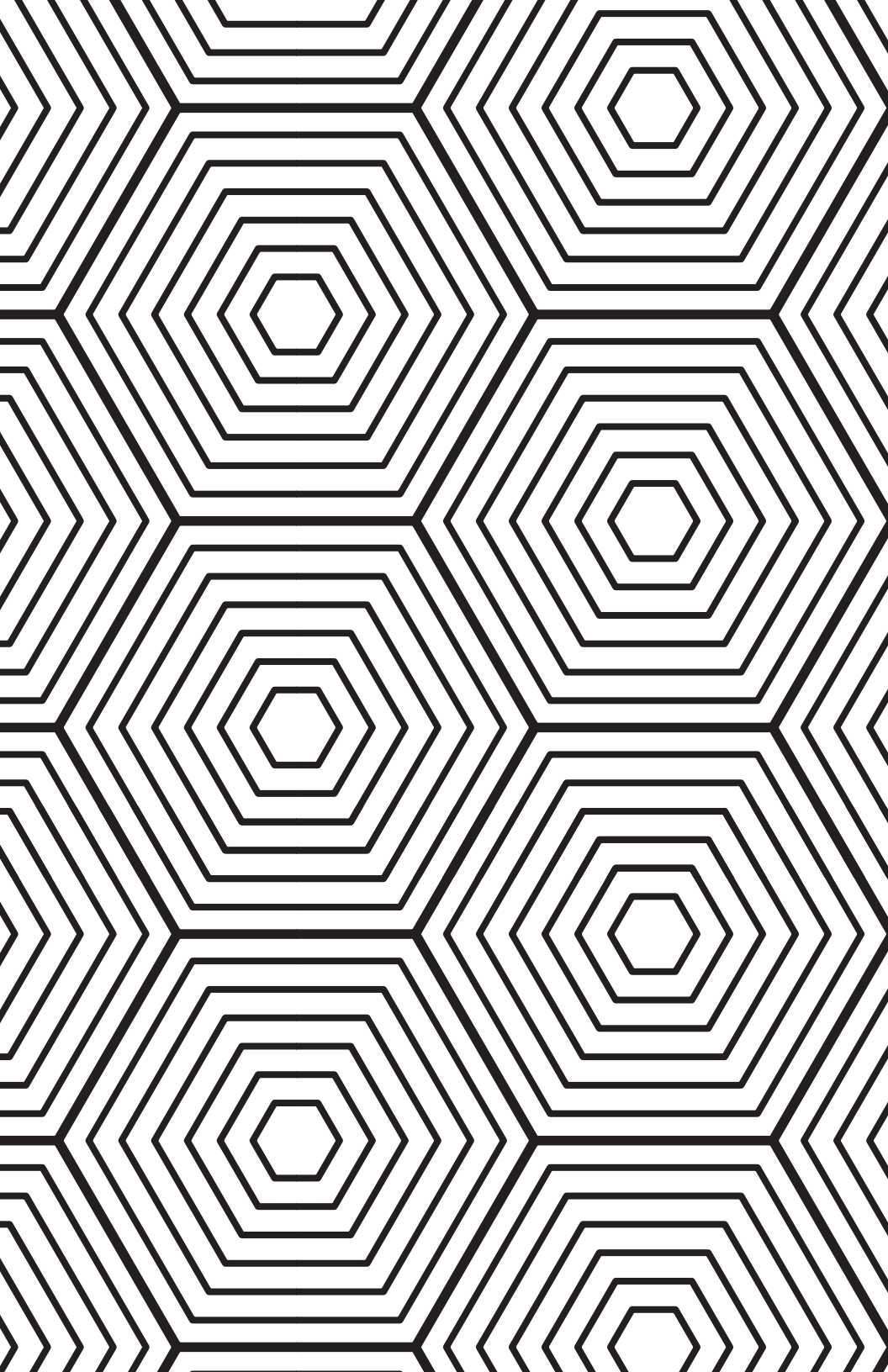
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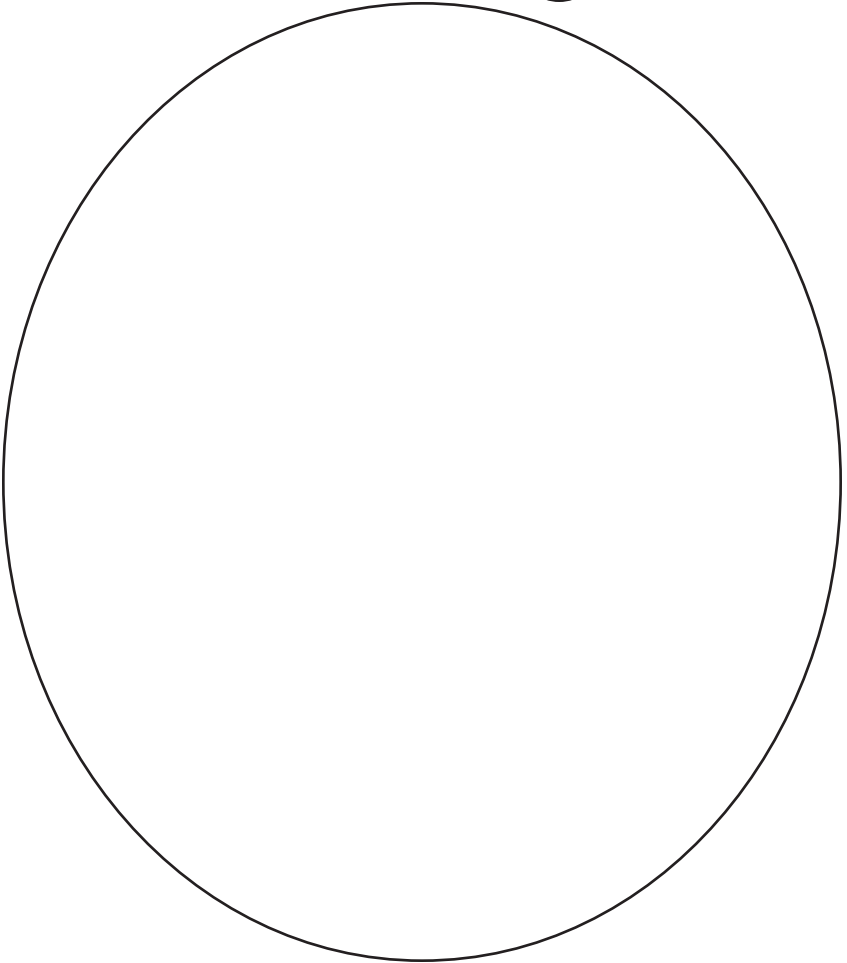
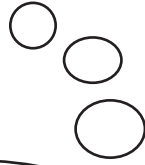
.....

date: / /





What is different today than a year ago that you are grateful for?



date: / /

J O X S R T A N Y B E Z B R M  
P Z M I A V P Z H T H B Z I I  
W Q O S F D R U E C M L E H N  
E D U T I T A R G O N E Y Y D  
P S M G F I E J K J K B K J F  
S E L F C O M P A S S I O N U  
Y N B W C S K E J D E U M A L  
B T J R L O S Y Q X R I T T N  
Z V I E E I V R I N A V C U E  
H L E N C A S U A M C I B R S  
E P F R U P T L D O F N R E S  
B R E V W M I H C T L L Z J J  
G X T V Z N M U E B E E J Q Z  
E L M Q G I Q O N X S H L J W  
M I N D S E T J C P Y H S B I

Gratitude

Self-care

Mindfulness

Self-compassion

Mindset

Community

Journaling

Sleep

Breathe

Exercise

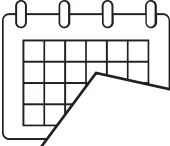
Nature

What was something that was hard to do but you are grateful you did?

date: / /



What was something that went well today?



today: \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_



Think of someone from your past that taught you something about yourself and write about it.

A large, empty rectangular box with a double-line border, intended for writing a response to the prompt above.

date: / /

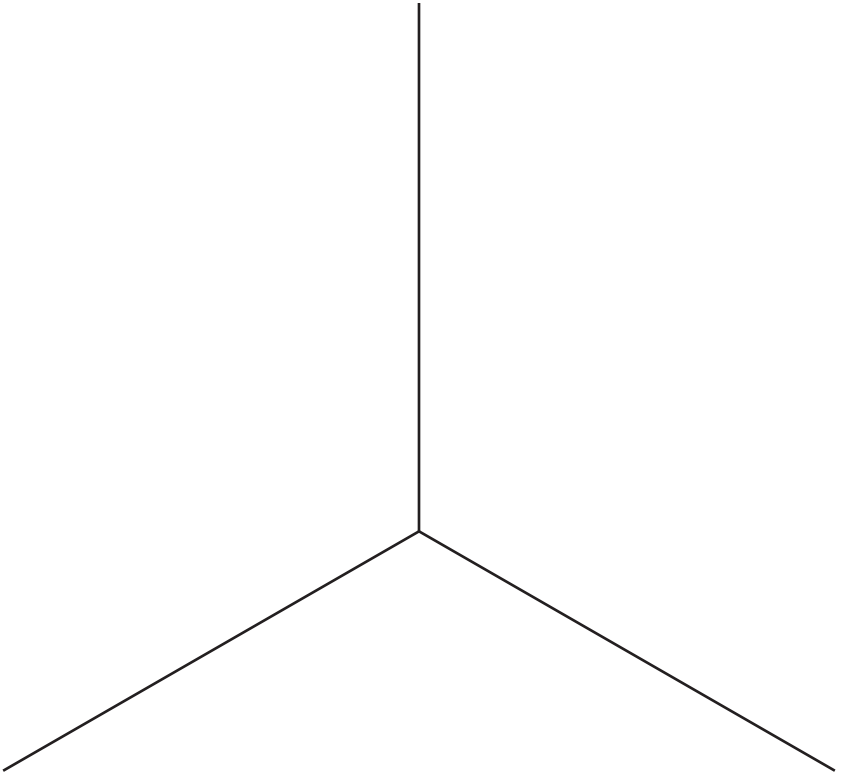


“Focus on  
the good  
in life.”

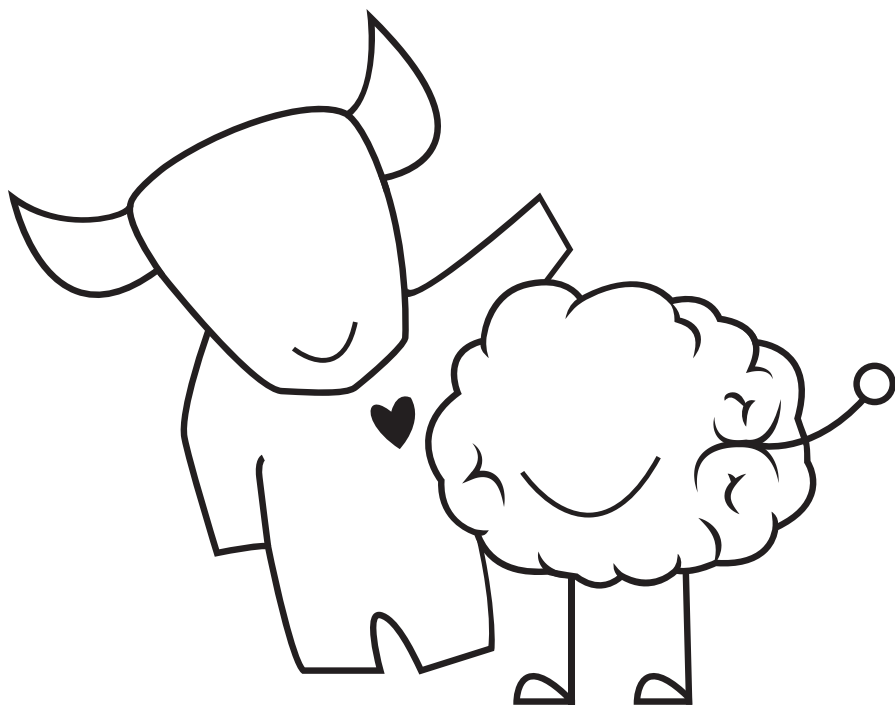
-Unknown

Write or draw three things you rely on to help get you through the day.

(e.g., coffee, music, etc.)

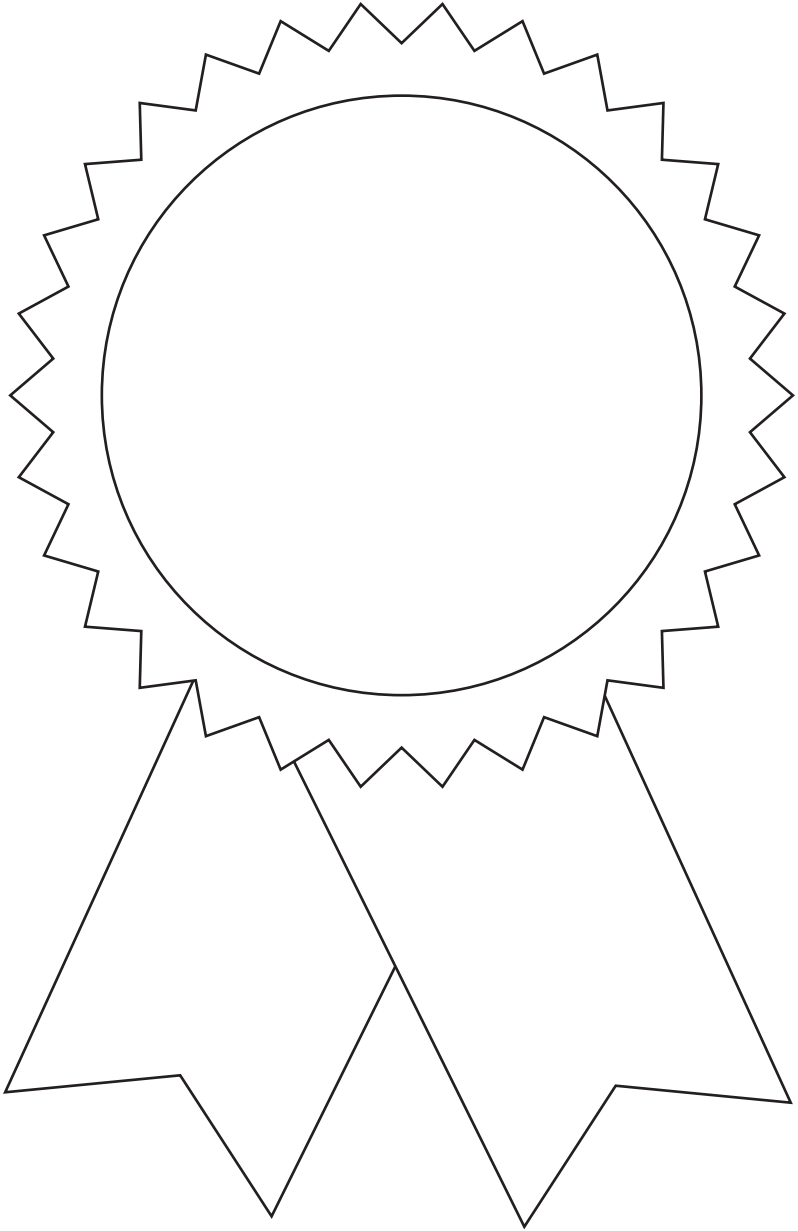


date: / /



BE **KIND** TO  
YOURSELF  
YOU'RE DOING  
THE **BEST**  
YOU CAN

What is something you are good at?



date: / /

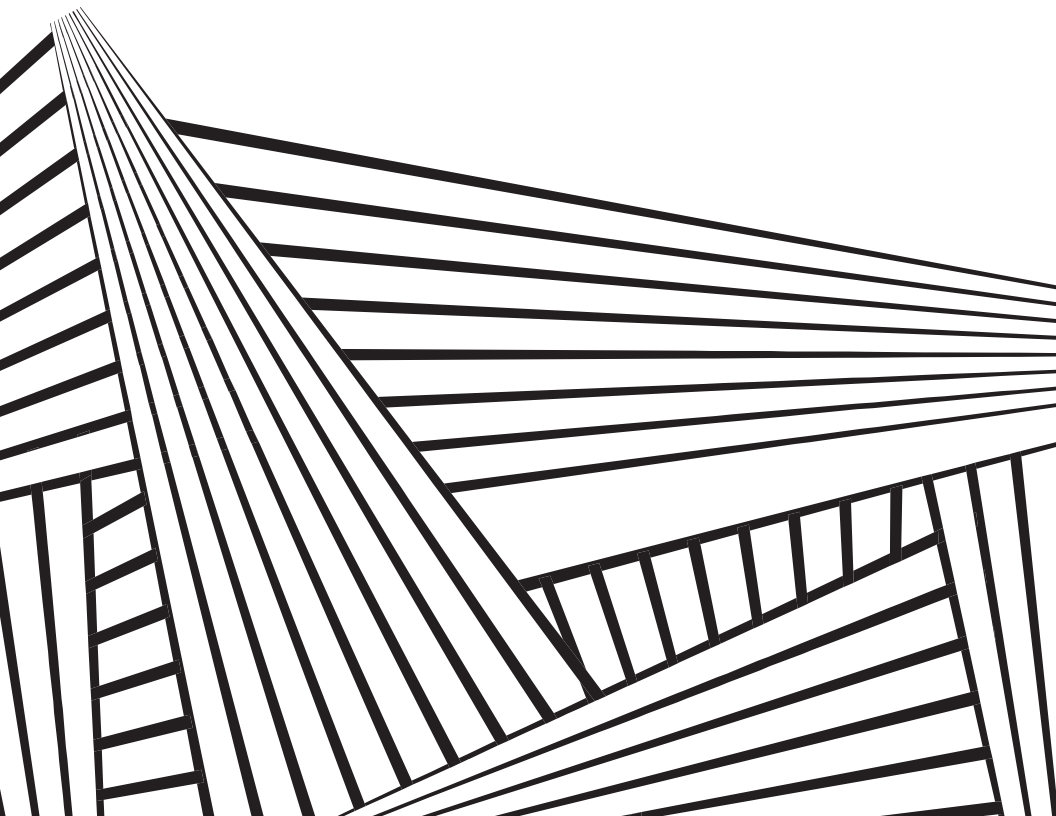
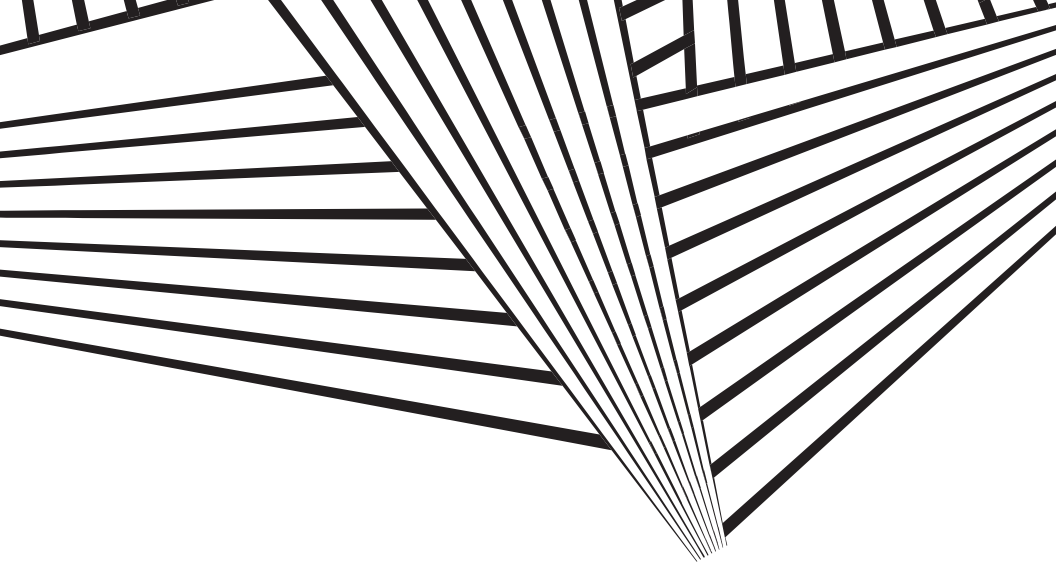
“Expect  
nothing and  
appreciate  
everything.”

-Unknown

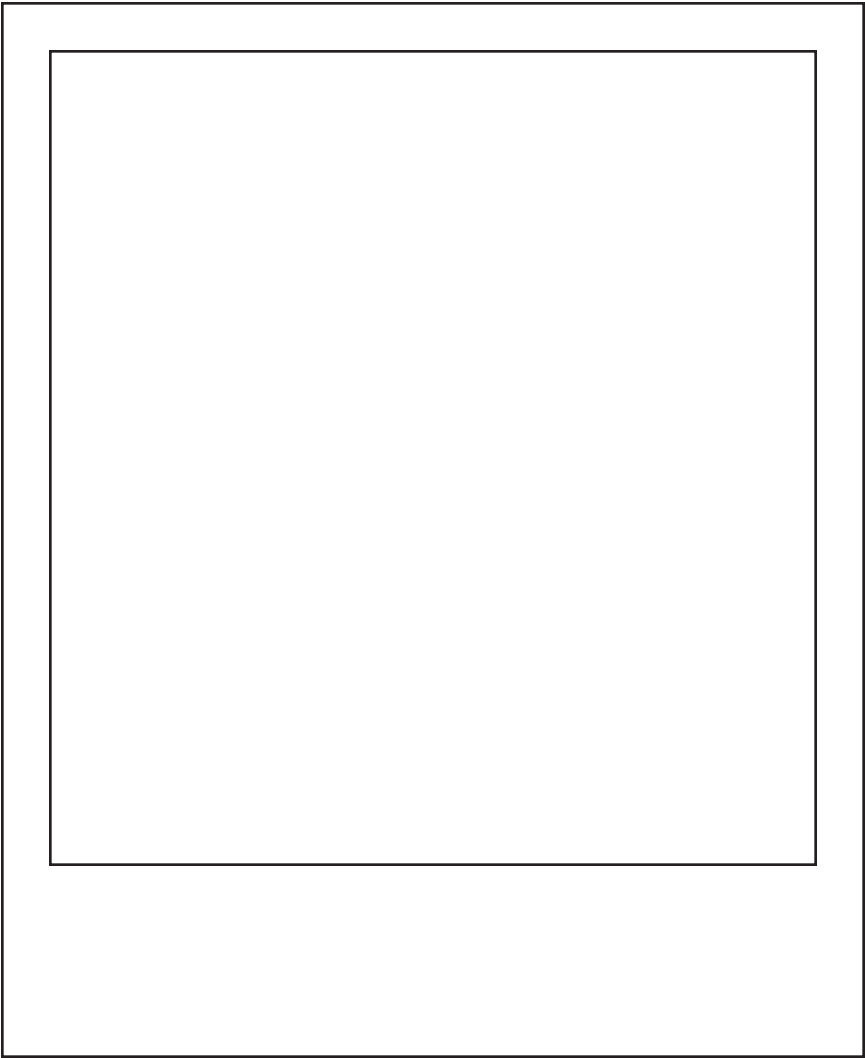
What was something beautiful you saw today?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for a drawing or a written response to the question above.

date: / /



Close your eyes, take a breath and imagine a place you're grateful you've visited. Draw or describe the place.



date: / /



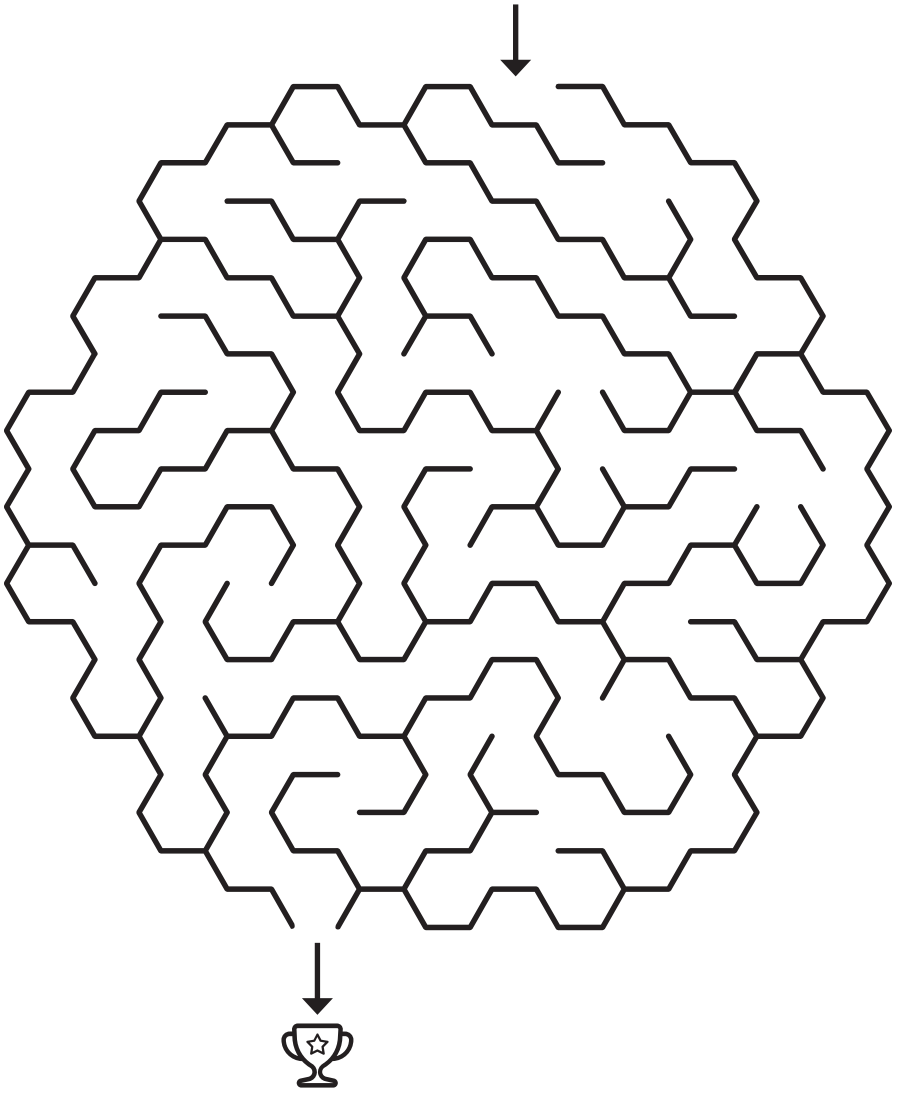
“Look up at  
the stars  
and not  
down at  
your feet.”

-Stephen Hawking

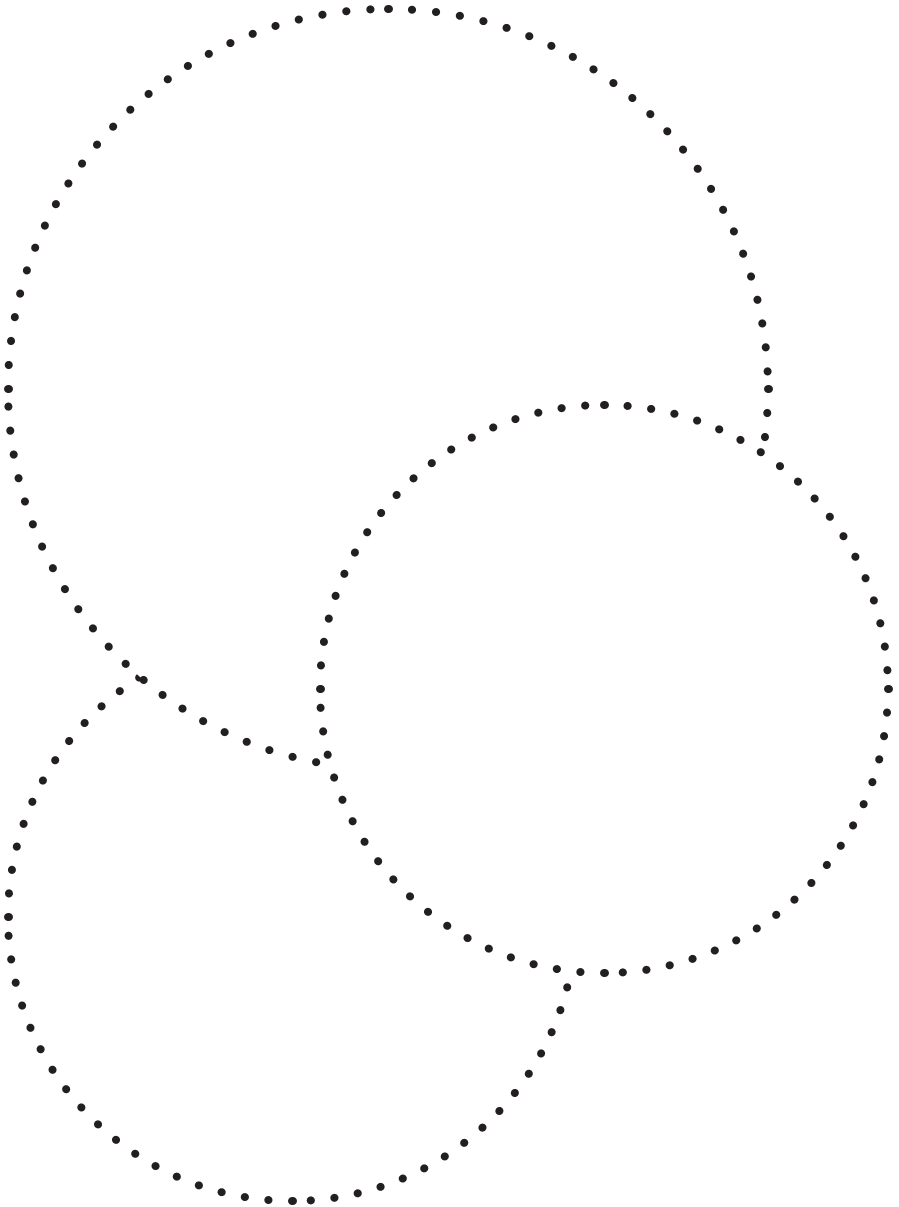
What or who made your day a bit more enjoyable?



date: / /



During challenging times I am grateful for...



date: / /

# Gratitude is self-care.

Self-care doesn't have to stop here. Self-care refers to activities and practices that can help you reduce your stress and enhance your overall well-being, like practicing gratitude. Self-care is more than an occasional treat, but a way of living each day that incorporates practices and behaviors that help you feel refreshed, re-energized, and rested. Everyone deals with stress differently, and everyone's preferences for practicing self-care are different as well.

# There are lots of ways to practice self-care.

The important thing is to make self-care a priority in your schedule. Here are some ideas for self-care:

- Keep practicing gratitude!
- Journal
- Sleep
- Exercise
- Do something you love
- Meditate
- Hang out with friends & family
- Download *Thrive at UT* smartphone app
- Schedule breaks
- Go for a walk
- Cook something
- Practice yoga
- Stretch
- Listen to music
- Have a 3 minute dance party
- Practice self-compassion; treat yourself like you would treat your best friend
- Take time for yourself
- Do something creative
- Visit the Mindbody Labs
- Unplug from technology
- Practice deep breathing
- Take a nap
- Spend time in nature

For more information on self-care, visit CMHC's website at [cmhc.utexas.edu/selfcare](http://cmhc.utexas.edu/selfcare)



# Resources at UT

Counseling & Mental Health Center (CMHC)  
[cmhc.utexas.edu](http://cmhc.utexas.edu), 512-471-3515

CMHC 24/7 Crisis Line  
512-471-2255 (CALL)

MindBody Labs  
SSB 5th floor and SAC 2.106

Thrive at UT  
A free mobile app to enhance the well-being of UT students  
[cmhc.utexas.edu/thrive](http://cmhc.utexas.edu/thrive)

Student Emergency Services  
[deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency)  
512-471-5017

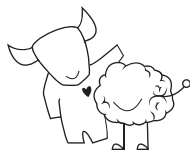
Behavior Concerns Advice Line  
[besafe.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line](http://besafe.utexas.edu/behavior-concerns-advice-line),  
512-232-5050

Student Ombuds: Conflict Management  
[ombuds.utexas.edu](http://ombuds.utexas.edu), 512-471-3825

Vick Center for Strategic Advising & Career Counseling:  
[ugs.utexas.edu/vick](http://ugs.utexas.edu/vick), 512-232-8400

To get involved at UT:  
[utexas.edu/campus-life/student-involvement](http://utexas.edu/campus-life/student-involvement)







The University of Texas at Austin  
**Counseling and Mental  
Health Center**  
*Division of Student Affairs*