



Heartspeak: Writing to Reconnect with Yourself

July 25, 2024

Workshop Description

Many of the populations we work with have undergone much historical, ancestral, and personal trauma. Sometimes, processing these traumas or soul wounds can be difficult, but one way to ignite healing is through presence and mindfulness. A grounded mindset is accessed by asking powerful questions and exploring new perspectives through reflective and expressive writing. Join Indigenous author, artist, and motivational speaker Tanaya Winder for this interactive workshop where you will work through writing prompts to help you tap into parts of your journey that you want to reexamine with compassion and kindness. You will also learn mindfulness techniques that you can implement in your sessions with clients or community.

Bring your pens and something to write with as you discover how writing and the power of presence can be tools to understand the human condition regarding loving others and yourself. Explore and deepen your skill sets to plant seeds of resilience that blossom into ancestral strength and liberation.



About Me

Tanaya Winder is an author, singer/songwriter, and motivational speaker who comes from an intertribal lineage of Southern Ute, Pyramid Lake Paiute, and Duckwater Shoshone Nations, where she is an enrolled citizen. Her heritage also includes African American.

She is a 2016 National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development “40 Under 40” emerging American Indian leader.

Winder co-founded *As/Us: A Space for Women of the World*, a literary magazine publishing works by BIPOC women. She holds a BA in English from Stanford University and an MFA in creative writing from the University of New Mexico.

Winder’s performances and talks blend storytelling, singing, and spoken word to teach about different expressions of love and “heartwork.” Her poetry collections include *Words Like Love* and *Why Storms are Named After People and Bullets Remain Nameless*. Her specialties include youth & women empowerment, healing trauma through art, creative writing workshops, and mental wellness advocacy.

Tanaya Winder
Author & Motivational Speaker



Community Agreements



- Be open and curious
- Confidentiality
- Practice active listening
- Co-create and cultivate a safe space
- Judgment Free Zone
- Participation (Let's show up!)
- Be respectful
- Open-mindedness
- Words of encouragement & validation
- Lean into vulnerability
- Expect and accept non-closure
- Stay present; take care of yourself



Words as Seeds

Storytelling as Medicine





Leaning into Sweetness

“And when it happens that you are broken, or betrayed, or left, or hurt, or death brushes too near, let yourself sit by an apple tree and listen to the apples falling all around you in heaps, wasting their sweetness. Tell yourself that you tasted as many as you could.”

— Louise Erdrich, *The Painted Drum*

Planting Seeds

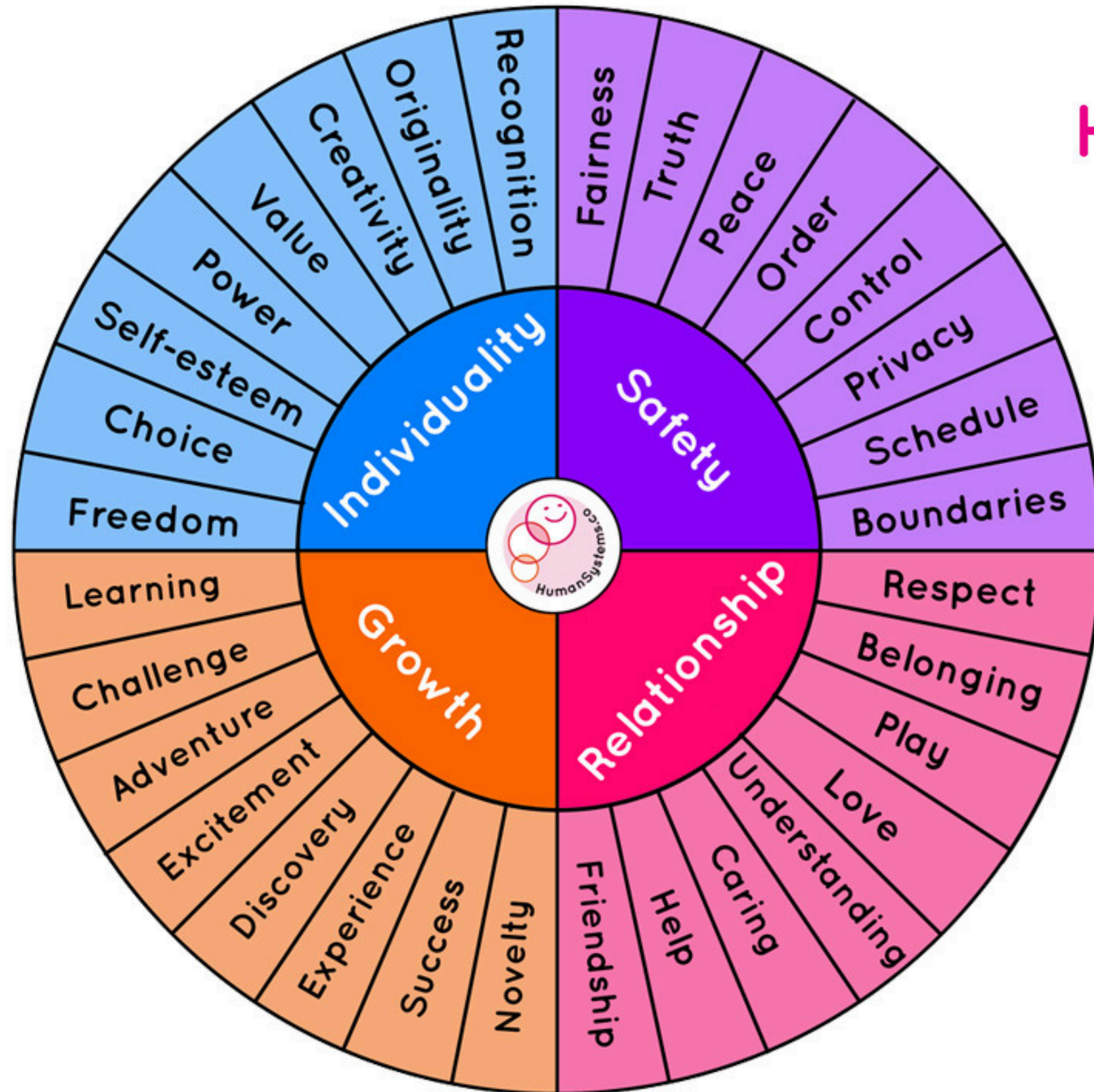
Let's set some intentions for our brief but powerful time together today. What are some seeds you'd like to plant in your life in this hour? This day? This week? Beyond?

Below are some options to help you brainstorm as you journal:

- Write down 3 intentions you have for self-care, writing, or presence in your life.
- What would make your life delicious right now?
- What would make it sweeter?
- How can you bring more "sweetness" into your life?



HS Needs Wheel I





Getting Grounded Through PAUSE



inhale
exhale



Honoring Your Needs

Reflect and journal to the following questions:

- What was the need you named in the grounding exercise? Was this need a surprise to you?
- How will you address or honor the need you identified?
- Who or what can support you in meeting your need(s)?

Sharing & Holding Space





Getting Grounded Through PAUSE

“as you are.” says the universe. ‘after...’ you answer. ‘as you are.’ says the universe. ‘before...’ you answer. ‘as you are.’ says the universe. ‘when...’ you answer. ‘as you are.’ says the universe. ‘how...’ you answer. ‘as you are.’ says the universe. ‘why...’ you answer. ‘because you are happening now. right now. right at this moment and your happening is beautiful. the thing that both keeps me alive and brings me to my knees. you don’t even know how breathtaking you are. as you are.’ says the universe through tears. — as you are | you are the prayer”

— Nayyirah Waheed, nejma

Get Curious

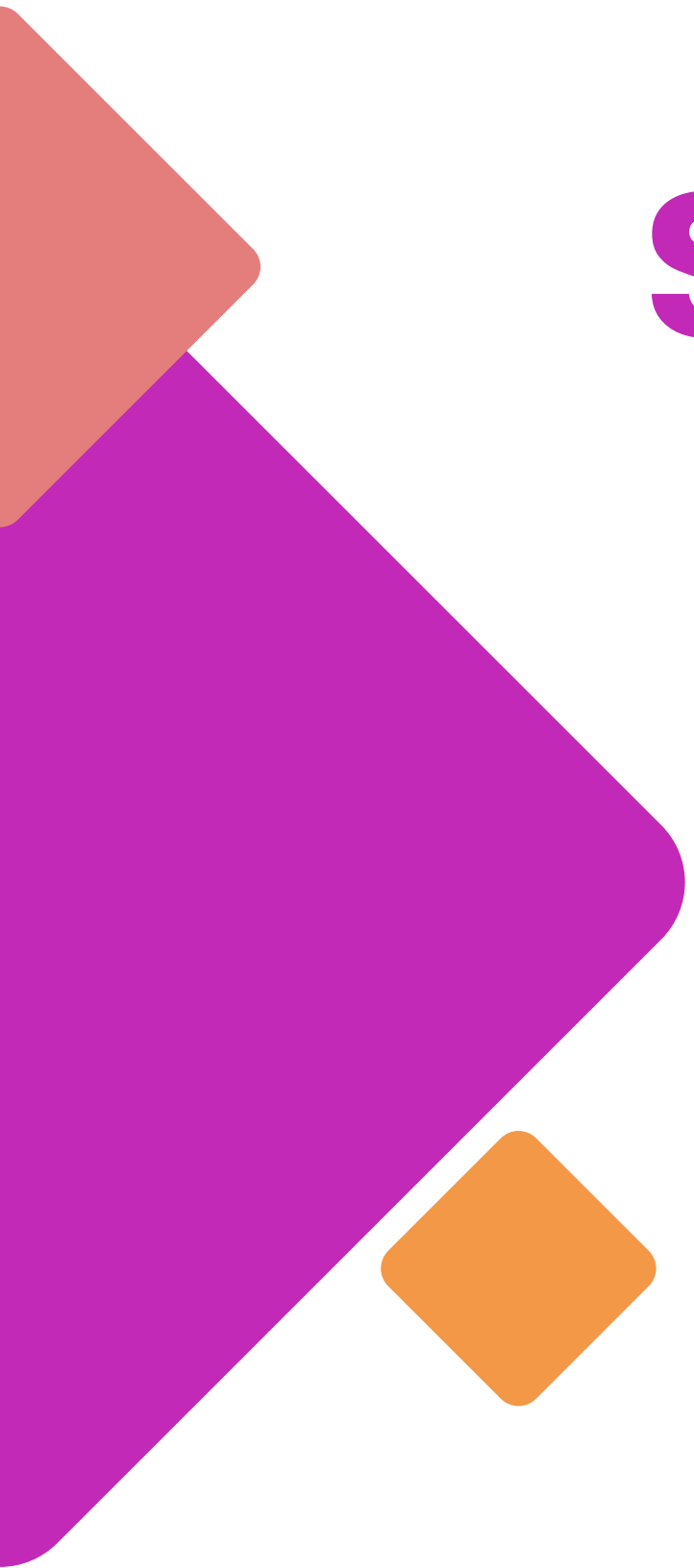
Journaling Prompt



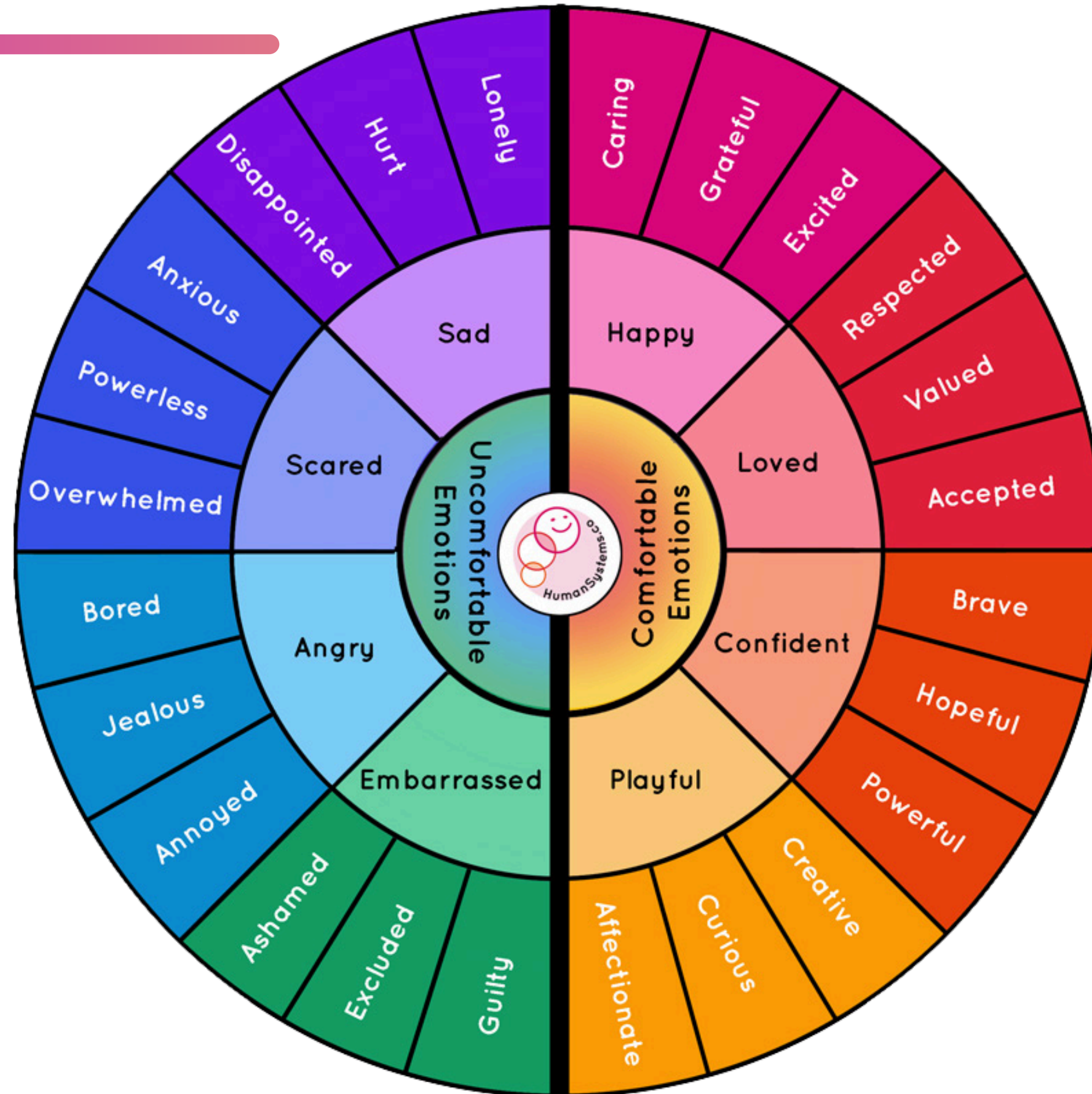
Journal to any of the following questions that resonate with you:

- What do others not see in me that I want seen?
- What old ideas of myself am I ready to release?
- Where in my body am I holding these ideas?
- How can I send love and good energy to those parts of my body?
- What parts of me do I want to bring into this space?

Sharing & Holding Space



Emotions Wheel





Identifying Bravery and Courage

- What lessons does your heart carry from the times you've had to stretch? grow? heal?
- What supports you to feel courageous?
- Where does bravery live in your body?
- Where do you feel courage?
- What do you notice about identifying them in your body?
- Can you remember where you feel those emotions and make a note of how to tap into courage and bravery in the future?

Sharing & Holding Space



Stretch Time





Breathe Deep

But breathe this deep because this is the message. We did it. We shifted the paradigm. We rewrote the meaning of life with our living. And this is how we did it. We let go. And then we got scared and held on and then we let go again. Of everything that would shackle us to sameness. Of our deeply held belief that our lives could be measured or disconnected from anything. We let go and re-taught ourselves to breathe the presence of the energy that we are that cannot be destroyed, but only transformed and transforming everything

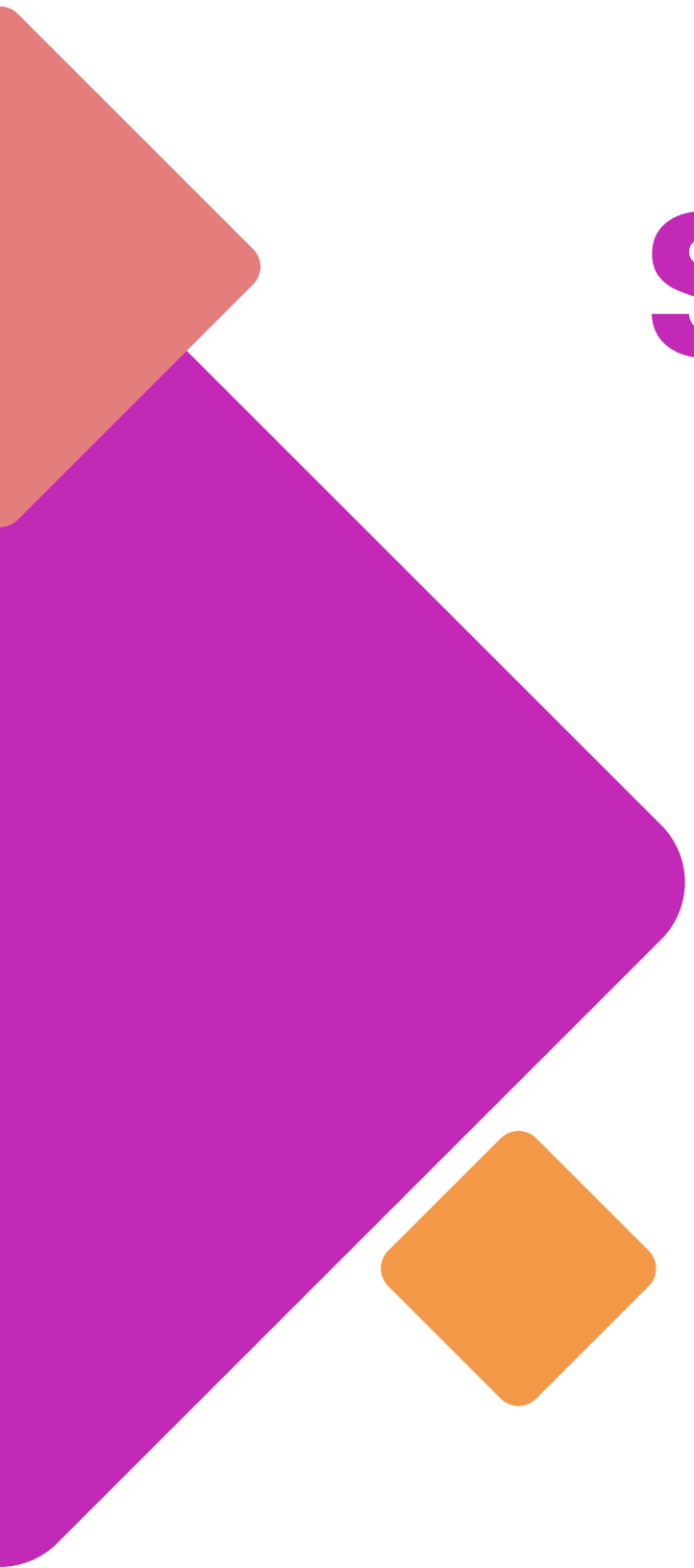
— Alexis Pauline Gumbs, excerpt from Evidence

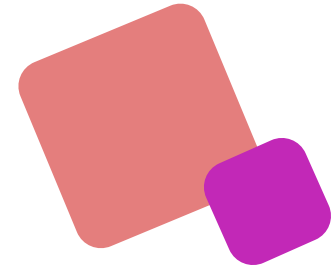
Breathe Deep: Blessings & Lessons

Journal to the following questions:

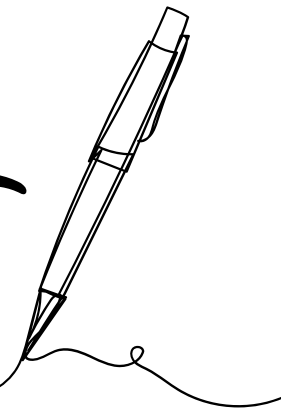
1. What meaning of life have you rewritten with your living?
2. What did you have to let go of in order to become who you are today? Or, what do you want to let go of to transform into who you want to become?
3. What have you “re-taught” yourself?
4. What message, teaching, or lesson do you want to breathe so deeply that it becomes a part of you?

Sharing & Holding Space






Writing Prompt



Imagine that your ancestors came to visit you overnight. They watched over you as you slept and left you a note / letter for when you woke up. What does the note / letter say?

- Write a letter from your ancestors to you. What advice do they give you?
Do they offer insight to a situation you're going through?
- Or, write a letter to your ancestors. What guidance do you ask them for?



“Perhaps all the dragons in our lives are princesses who are only waiting to see us act, just once, with beauty and courage. Perhaps everything that frightens us is, in its deepest essence, something helpless that wants our love.”

– Rainer Maria Rilke



*When we drop fear, we can draw
nearer to people, we can draw
nearer to the earth, we can draw
nearer to all the heavenly
creatures that surround us.*

— bell hooks

Writing Prompt

Unpacking Relationship to Fear

Reflect and journal to the following questions:

- What is possible when you drop fear?
- What is possible when you release fear?
- What is possible when you draw nearer to the earth?
- Who are you when you draw nearer to all the heavenly creatures and ancestors that surround you?

The Sacred Dance for Life

*I sometimes forget that
I was created for joy
My mind is too busy
My heart is too heavy
Heavy for me to remember
that I have been
called to dance
the sacred dance for life
I was created to smile
to love*

*to be lifted up
and lift others up
O sacred one
Untangle my feet
from all that ensnares
Free my soul
That we might
Dance
and that our dancing
might be contagious.*

- a poem by Hafiz



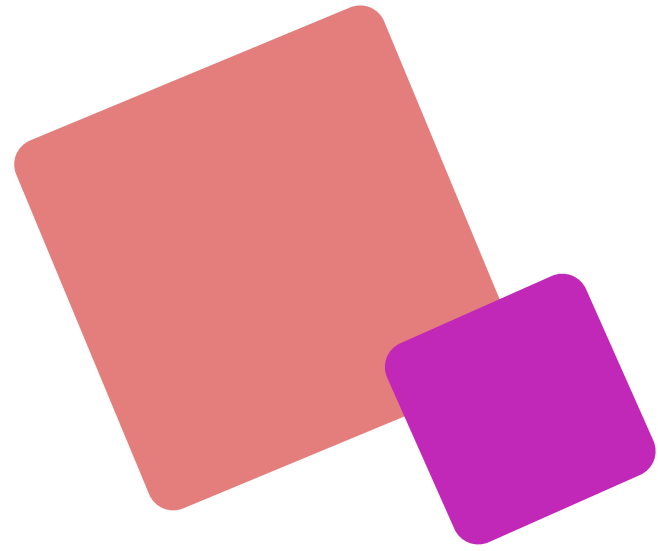
Discovering Joy: Journaling Prompt

With the poem as inspiration, write about the joy(s) in your life, the celebrations, the people and moments or that reminds you to look for joy.

What does your “sacred dance for life” look like, taste like, sound like, etc? What scents or smells are present?

Sharing & Holding Space



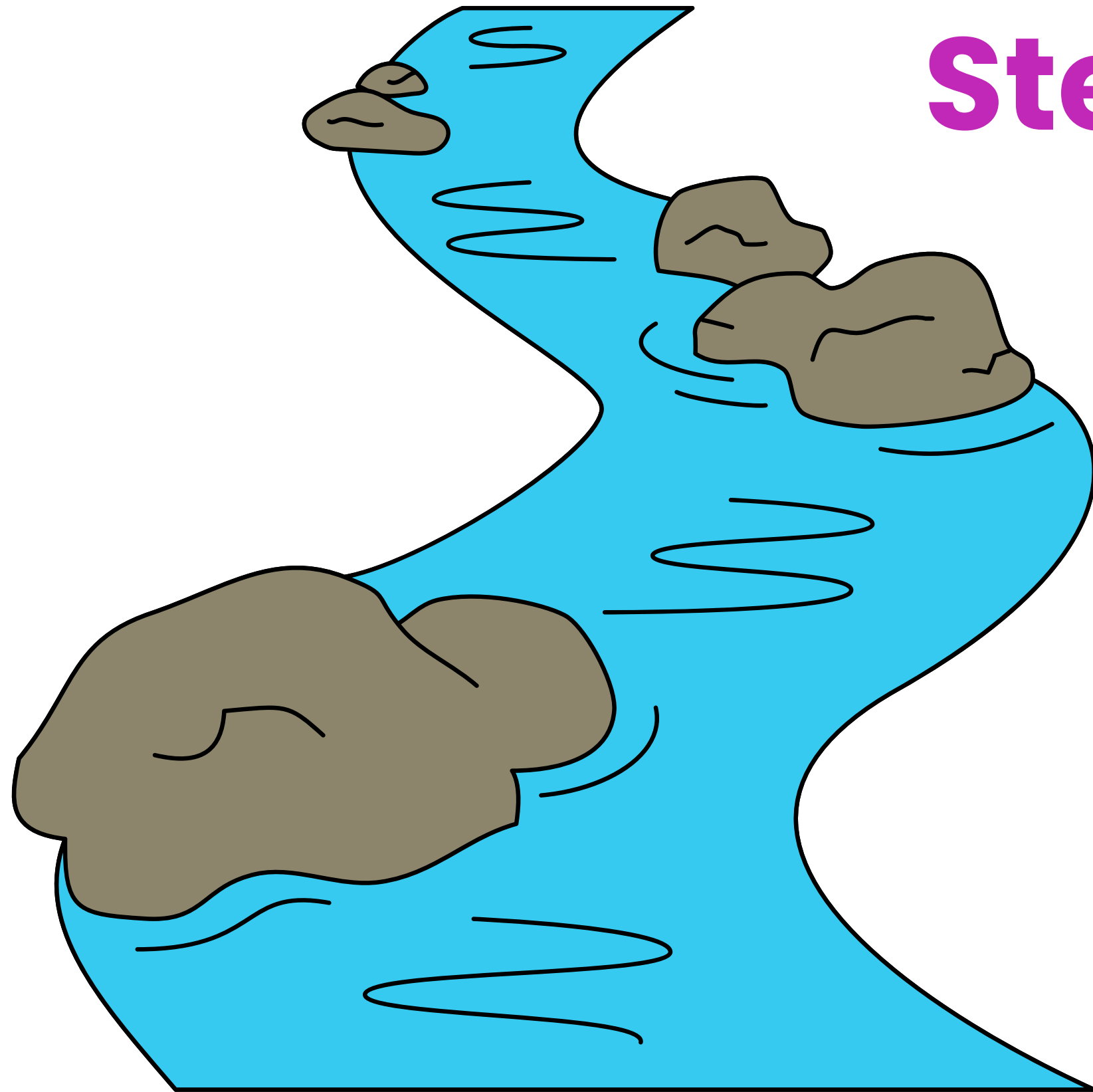


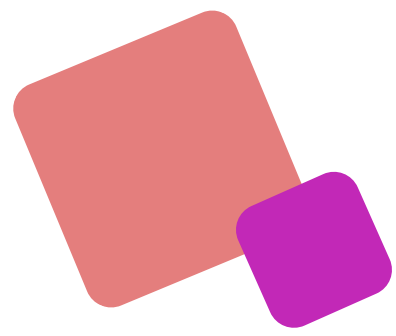
Writing Prompt

- What do you need to remember?
- What do you know about yourself by heart?
- What makes you feel whole?
- What parts of yourself are you still looking for?

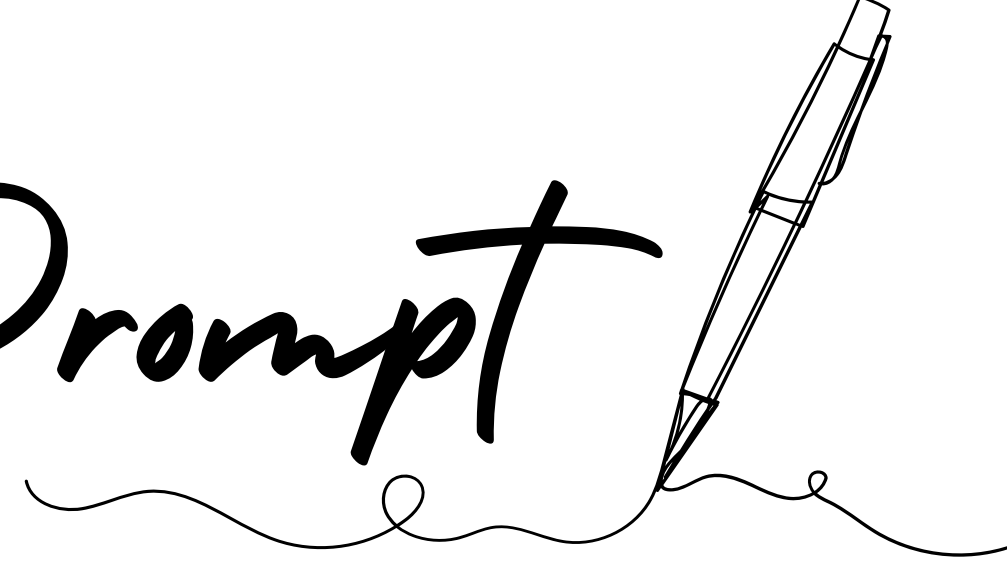


Step into the flow





Writing Prompt



What does it mean to step into the flow....Spend some time reflecting on the rivers in your life, the flow.

- What is being in flow (in connection, in tune) mean to you?
- How do you know when you're in the flow?
- How do you know when you're connected with Creator? your ancestors?
- How can you tap into the flow moving forward?
- What lessons does the river offer us?
- What lessons does the water provide us?

Sharing & Holding Space



Closing the Circle

