

Texas A&M International University
Department of Psychology and Communication
Master of Arts in Counseling Psychology

COMMUNITY COUNSELING CENTER



Helping the Laredo Community Help Itself

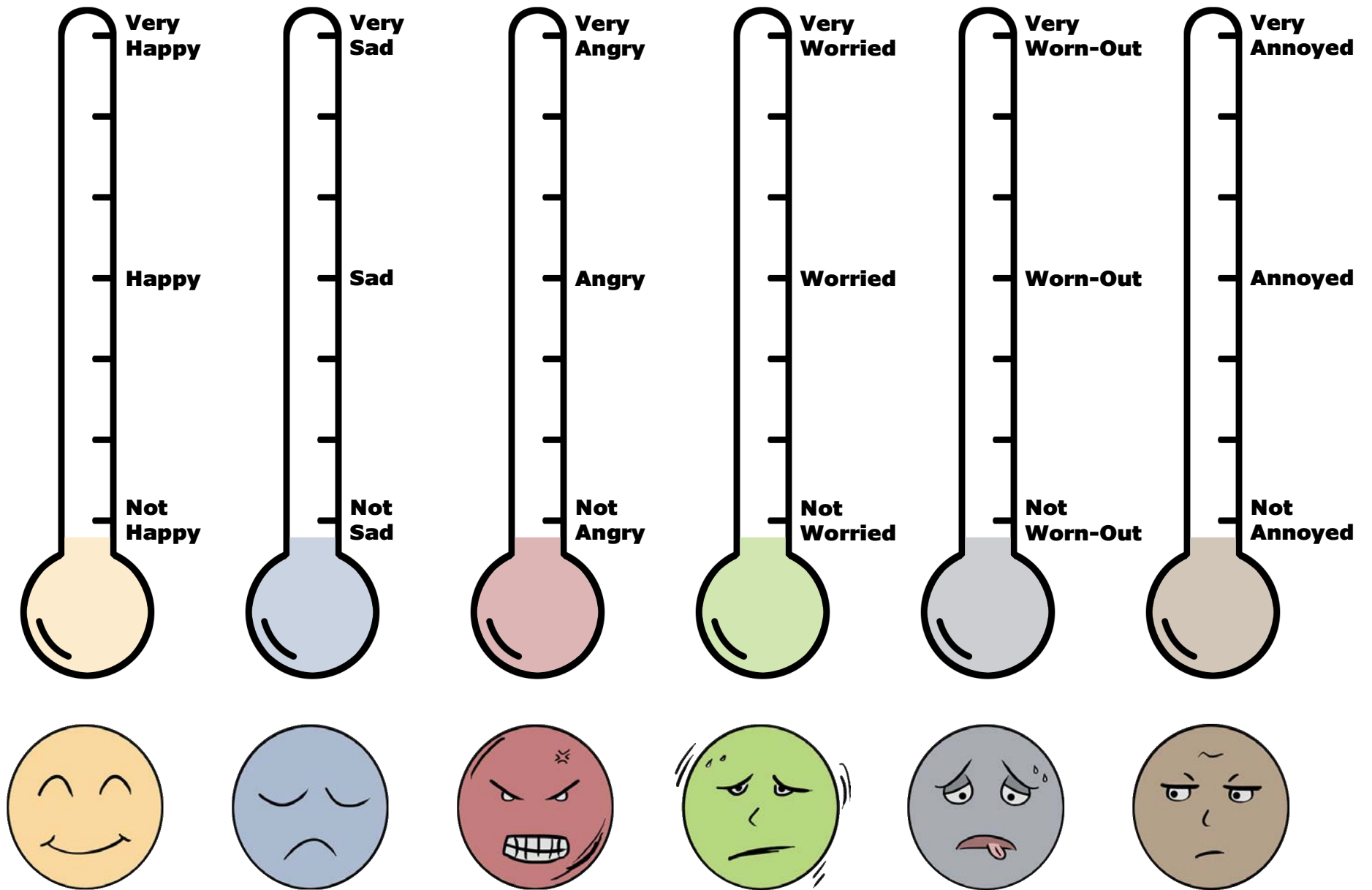
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Gratitude Jar



Introduction

Gratitude Jars are a fun, artistic, and hands-on way for children to practice gratitude. In this activity, each child will create a special jar where they save gratitude statements at the end of the day.



Materials

- Clear Jar (glass or plastic)
- Art Supplies (ribbons, stickers, magazine cutouts, etc.)
- Gratitude Slips (blank strips of paper, or slips with gratitude prompts)



Instructions

Begin by helping each child personalize their jar with decorations. Use ribbons, stickers, magazine cut-outs, items found in nature, or anything else you can imagine.

After decorating the jars, it's time to add the first three gratitude statements. A gratitude statement acknowledges something that a person appreciates or is thankful for. Participants can use the prompts on the slips provided, or they can write their own gratitudes on blank slips. Here are some examples:

"I am grateful for my cat because she makes me laugh."

"I am thankful for the dinner I had tonight. It was my favorite: pizza!"

"I appreciate my grandma because she visited me when I was sick."

Once the participants have written down three gratitude statements—one per slip of paper—spend a moment discussing each one. Finally, fold the gratitude statements, and add them to the jar.

Plan for children to write three gratitude statements, and add them to their jars, each day. Encourage parents to make the gratitude jar part of their daily routine, including a brief discussion about each of their child's gratitudes. This activity works great as part of a bedtime routine.

Gratitude Jar

Today was special because...

I appreciate (person), because...

Something I accomplished today...

Something I'm looking forward to...

Something I am thankful for...

Something I like about my family...

Three people who make me happy are...

I felt happy today when...

Something little that makes me smile...

Today I had fun when...

Gratitude Jar

Something about today that I'll always want to remember...

I am proud of (person), because...

Something I appreciate about my past...

My friend (name) is important to me because...

Something good that happened today...

I was proud of myself today because...

Something interesting that I recently saw...

Something special about my family...

Something funny that happened today...

Something I like about myself...

Gratitude Jar

My favorite family tradition...

My favorite part of today...

Something I am grateful for...

Three friends who I appreciate...

A special memory I have of my family...

Something I look forward to every day...

Today, I felt happy when...

This week has been good because...

Something I like about myself...

Something that made me smile today...

Best Possible Self

Visualization Exercise

What would your life look like in a perfect future? How would you spend your time? Who would be by your side? In this exercise, you will imagine your best possible self in a future where things have gone as well as possible, and you have accomplished all your goals.



Instructions

1 Write. On the following pages, you will imagine and describe your best possible self in three domains: personal, professional, and social. Once completed, continue to step 2.

2 Visualize. For the next week, spend 5 minutes visualizing your best possible self each day. Focus on one domain per day, cycling through each of the domains throughout the week. Record your practice in the chart below.

To perform visualization, picture your best possible self in as much detail as possible. Think of a scene that your best possible self might find themselves in, and imagine the sights, sounds, and feelings you would experience.

Tip: It's common to feel distracted during visualization. If you notice your mind wandering, that's okay. Simply return your thoughts to the exercise once you become aware.




Visualization Log


	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thur.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
Personal							
Professional							
Social							

Best Possible Self

Professional Domain

Professional Domain: job, sense of purpose, education, skills, retirement, income, etc.


 Imagine your best possible self in the **professional** domain for 1 minute.


 Write about your best possible self in the **professional** domain for 5 minutes.
Continue writing for the entire time, using as much detail as possible.

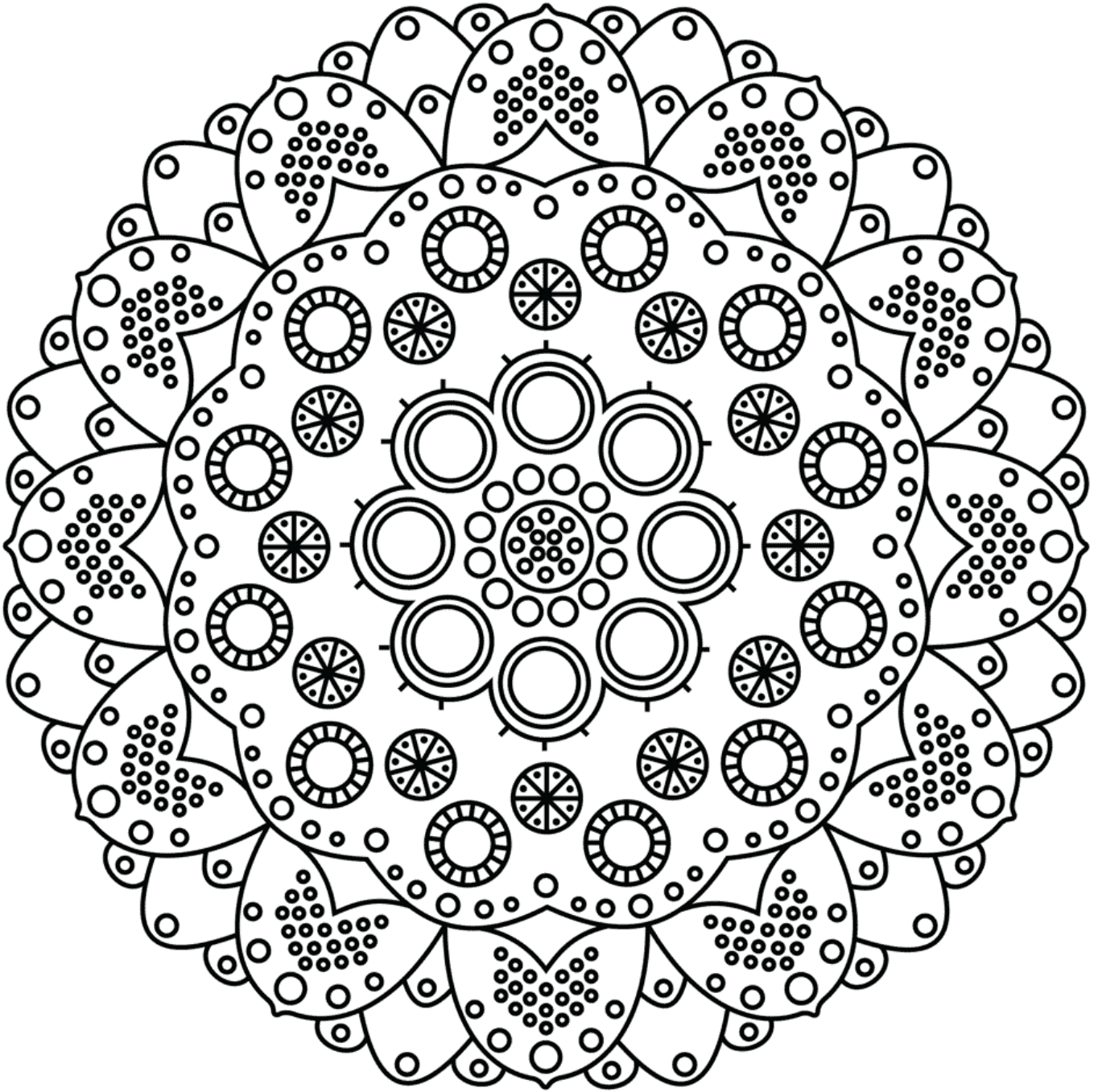
Best Possible Self

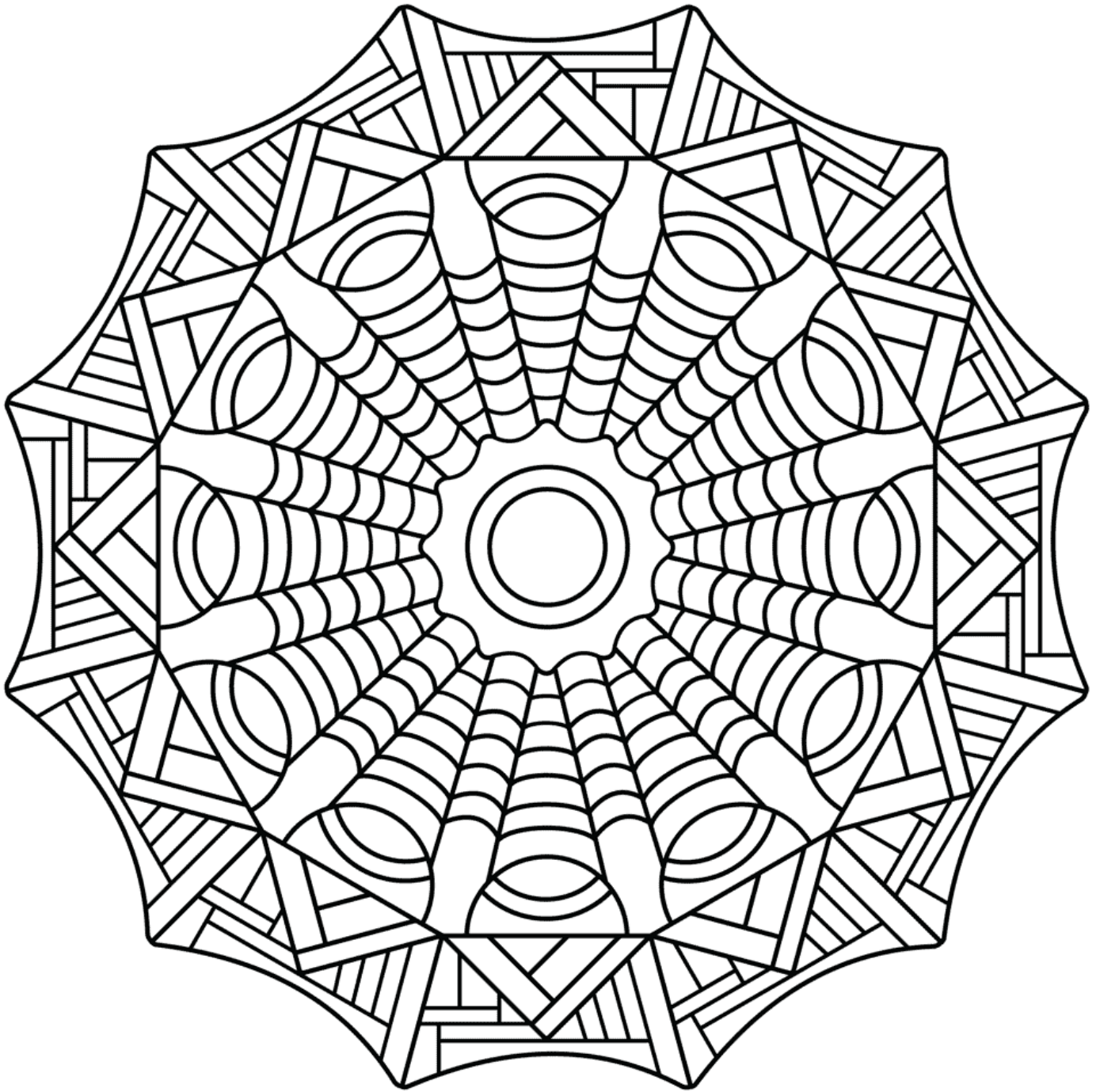
Social Domain

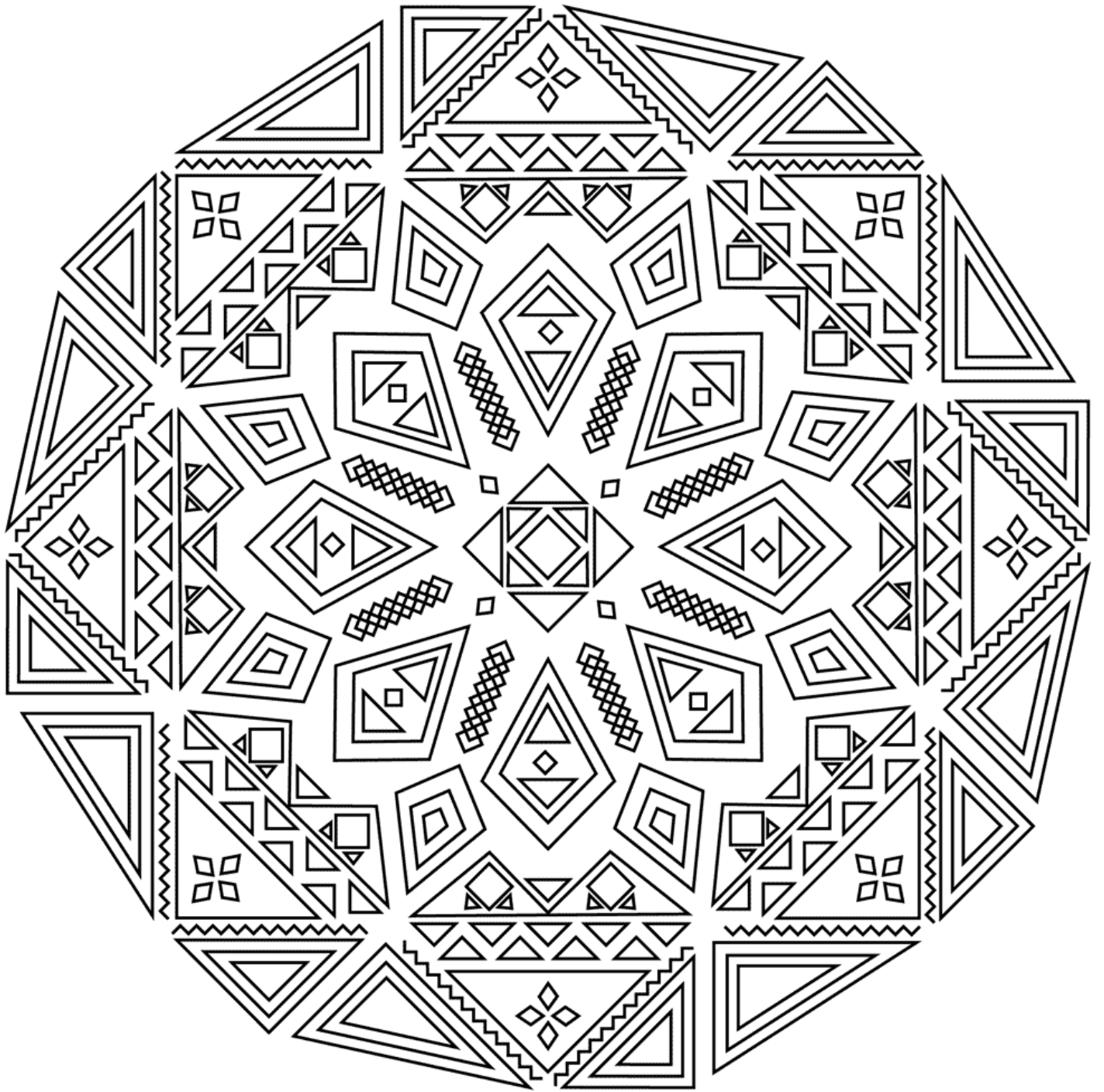
Social Domain: romantic relationship, friends, family, social activities, etc.

 Imagine your best possible self in the **social** domain for 1 minute.

 Write about your best possible self in the **social** domain for 5 minutes. Continue writing for the entire time, using as much detail as possible.







Small Talk

Family Discussion Cards

Family 

Who is in your family?

**DIG
DEEPER**

What makes someone family?

Family 

How can you tell when someone in your family is mad?

**DIG
DEEPER**

Look in the mirror and make a mad face. What does your face do?

Family 

How can you tell when someone in your family is happy?

**DIG
DEEPER**

Do a random act of kindness for a family member.

Family 

What is unique about your family?

**DIG
DEEPER**

Share a special talent.

Family 

What makes you proud of your family?

**DIG
DEEPER**

Share something interesting about your family's past.

Family 

What holiday traditions do you like celebrating with your family?

**DIG
DEEPER**

If you could invent a new holiday, what would it be like?

Family 

Do you have close friends who feel like family? Who are they?

**DIG
DEEPER**

Write a letter to a friend or family member who lives far away.

Family 

How does your family show that they care?

**DIG
DEEPER**

Show someone that you care by saying something nice about them.

Small Talk

Feelings Discussion Cards

Feelings 

What are 3 things that make you happy?

DIG DEEPER

Share a story about a time you were very happy.

Feelings 

What helps you feel better when you are sad?

DIG DEEPER

What would you do if your friend was sad?

Feelings 

What does your body feel like when you are worried?

DIG DEEPER

Share something that is worrying you right now.

Feelings 

What does your body feel like when you are angry?

DIG DEEPER

How do you *act* when you feel angry?

Feelings 

What is something that scares you?

DIG DEEPER

Tell a scary story.

Feelings 

How do you know when someone in your family is upset?

DIG DEEPER

How would someone else know that *you* are upset?

Feelings 

When you feel sad, what does your body feel like?

DIG DEEPER

How do you *act* when you feel sad?

Feelings 

How does your body feel different when you are worn-out or tired?

DIG DEEPER

What is your bedtime routine?

My World Discussion Cards

My World 

What is your favorite time of year? Why?

DIG DEEPER

How does the world change during your favorite season?

My World 

If you could be an animal, what would you be?

DIG DEEPER

What animal are you most afraid of?

My World 

What is your favorite song?

DIG DEEPER

Can you play an instrument?

My World 

What kind of wildlife have you seen near your home?

DIG DEEPER

What animals have you touched? What did they feel like?

My World 

What is the farthest place you have travelled to?

DIG DEEPER

Where in the world would you most like to visit?

My World 

What are your favorite games to play outside?

DIG DEEPER

Have you ever invented a new game? If so, explain the rules.

My World 

If you planted a garden, what fruits and vegetables would you grow?

DIG DEEPER

Draw a picture of your dream garden.

My World 

If a magical genie granted you one wish, what would you wish for?

DIG DEEPER

What do you think your best friend would wish for?

To: _____

Thank you for being my _____

I appreciate you because...

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

I think you are special because _____

You make me laugh when _____

I have fun with you when _____

You are important to me because _____

When I think about you, I feel _____

From: _____