

Women's Search for Meaning



VALUES WORKSHOP
AMY BACKOS, PHD. ATR-BC

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This book and class are offered as an educational tool to inspire you to reflect on values. The class is not therapy and participating does not constitute a therapeutic relationship. The assignments are offered as inspiration to increase authenticity in your relationship with yourself, and achieve your value-based goals.

Enjoy the process!

Want more? Email me!
Have any questions/concerns? Email me!
Love the class? Tell a friend!!

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WELCOME

I am delighted you joined this community of women who are excited about living a meaningful life and focusing on values! Since values guide your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, they influence your career, hobbies, home, friendships, and relationships. Values also influence how you show up for your community.

More importantly, values impact your most significant relationship - the one you have with yourself. Getting in touch with your values and choosing to live each day according to what is most important to you can transform your life, your family and your community.

This workshop will help guide you to get in touch (or get back in touch) with what is most important to you. It will help you deepen your relationships with yourself and prioritize actions beyond your to-do list to create a meaningful days and relationships. This book will give you the tools you need to create a life you love with time for what you value most. Enjoy the process of self-discovery with curiosity and joy!



Amy Backos, PhD, ATR-BC
Licensed Psychologist & Board Certified Art Therapist

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Before class starts

1

Plan your mode of writing

I recommend you print this workbook and find a lovely binder to keep it all together, or have it bound at an office store. If you prefer to skip printing, get a blank journal for the writing and art exercises.

2

Schedule the Class

Use your calendar or the planner at the end of this book to mark the time of live classes, or the time you will watch the recordings later in the day.

3

Schedule Committed Actions

Schedule time for inspired action! Use your calendar to invest 20 minutes each day on your values for the next month. For maximum impact, schedule 6-7 days a week.

4

Find an Accountability Partner

Tell someone about your commitment to the class who can help you be accountable to your daily 20 minute commitment.

5

Get ready to create!

Gather some tools for drawing - crayons, colored pencils, markers, or pens, etc. It is unnecessary for you to have anything fancy - just pick ones you like!



BEGINNING

A woman of value will never tolerate
that which does not add value in her
life.

-Gift Gugu Mona

Weekly Outline

1

Class Topics

Orientation and introduction to values

Inspired action (complete before class 2)

- Review pages 7-19.
- Complete week 1 writing & art.

2

Class Topics

Barriers to value based living including chatter, impostor syndrome and thought fusion

Inspired action (complete before class 3)

- Complete week 2 writing & art.

3

Class Topics

Values and meaning, creativity and action

Inspired action (complete before class 4)

- Complete week 3 writing and art.


4

Class Topics

Living your values and committed actions

Inspired action (complete after class 4)

- Complete week 4 writing and art.
- Create your 30 day plan for action.



In the infinity of life where
I am, all is perfect,
whole and complete.
My unique creative talents &
abilities flow through me &
are expressed in
deeply satisfying ways.

Louise Hayes

How to Keep a Commitment

If you have had difficulty with consistency in the past, don't worry! This time you will succeed using the best psychology strategies! You will learn and use all of these tricks for success this month.

- **Write it down!** Research has demonstrated that when you write down your goal, you are 70% likely to succeed! That's right, simply writing down your goals gives you 70% of what you need for success. Using this workbook and sharing with others will surely push you into the realm of success!
- **Slow and Steady!** Making small daily progress is more likely to lead to big success! Research shows people making small incremental movement towards goals ultimately surpass people attempting to tackle multiple goals at once or trying to do too much.
- **Changing Habits!** Research shows pairing a new habit with an old one is a recipe for success. Pair your 20 minute a day for this class with another well established habit. For example, brushing your teeth in the morning, eating your breakfast or lunch, washing your face at night. Schedule 20 minutes before or after one of these times or pick another regular habit and schedule 20 minutes around that.
- **Pleasure!** There is decades of research demonstrating you can increase a new behavior with a reward! All you have to do is pair a new behavior with something pleasurable. Add something you enjoy to your 20 minutes and you are significantly more likely to succeed! For example, you can fix a cup of hot chocolate or tea to drink while you write and make art (I encourage you to choose a non-alcoholic beverage). You will benefit when you indulge in your favorite chocolate for this class!

More about Commitments

- **Location! Location! Location!** Research demonstrates if you practice in the same location, your mind will be ready for learn just by going to that location! Pick a comfortable spot and work there each day.
- **1% more!** All you need for this workshop is 20 minutes a day. This is about 1% of your day! You have already made an important commitment to complete this workshop...all it requires for success is 1% of your day for the next month.
- **Be decisive!** Have trouble deciding which value domain to start with? Don't worry, you can't make a mistake! The trick is once you choose your value domain, resist temptation to change. Practicing indecision reenforces that habit, prevents us from making progress, and increases stress.
- **A word of caution!** Reading and knowing these strategies is not enough for success - you must actually implement them! Don't let your mind fool you into thinking you can skip these steps. The next page is where you make your commitment and write down your goal. If you are tempted to skip this step, go back and reread the research above about ensuring success. You have probably been thinking about your values for a long time - now is the time for action and a serious commitment to making values a priority in your life.

Your Personal Commitment

I _____

(Your name)

commit to 20 minutes each day for my values this month

&

I will focus on the values I choose for the entire month.

I will complete my 20 minutes a day at this time:

I will complete my 20 minutes a day in this location:

I will complete my 20 minutes a day with this additional pleasure:

Your signature

date

Committed Actions

Now that you have identified to the time and place, the additional pleasure, and made your commitment, it is time to get started!

You have just made a life changing commitment to yourself to prioritize 1% of your day for reflecting on your values.

Once you complete the worksheets in this book, you can use any remaining 20 minutes as you wish - writing and making art about your values, reading about values, silent contemplation, and written reflection about how to put your values into action.

I suggest this schedule each day and you can use your timer:

1 minute breath and relax, get comfortable, smile

9 minutes write

9 minutes make art

1 minute breath and relax, stretch, smile

It is most impotent that you stick to your 20 minute schedule each day! Whatever you do to work on your values will be great!

Instructions for each week

Now it is time for you to reflect on your values and what is most important to you! Each week includes a few worksheets and you will work on your values in two ways:

- **Write:** Each week you will select one value and write your personal description of what is important to YOU. Reflect on what you think is important - zero people will see this so be honest.

In each value area, write what is important to YOU. This is what you aspire to in your life, so think big! This is NOT about other people. For example: in relationships, you might write about what you want to bring to a friendship such as trust, caring, support, laughter, shared interest, etc. Avoid writing about what you want OTHER people to bring to a relationship (even though it might be the same as what you want to bring). Remember, this class is about identifying and following YOUR inner compass. Following your values has nothing to do with how other people act or respond to you. Brainstorming is where you start to generate practical steps you can take to demonstrate your values.

- **Art:** Each week you will have an art response about your values using lines, shapes and colors to express your value.

This art process helps you solidify the FEELINGS for each value and allows your brain to deeply explore the value. The creative process incorporates more parts of your brain than the writing can do alone. You can spend as much or as little time on this as you wish - it is important to have a creative expression to go with each value. Avoid thinking too long about what to create - be spontaneous and have fun! When you are done with each drawing, take a moment to reflect (without judgement) on the PROCESS of creating. It's important to suspend judgement about what your art looks like. Whatever you create will be great for your values! If you are tempted to skip this step, please reconsider so you get the most value from this class!

Remember to aside 20 minutes each day to complete these inspired action. You are committed to one month of values - give yourself the gift of completing the work each day to get the most value from this class!



VALUES

Where ever she goes, a
woman of value always adds
value

-Gift Gugu Mona

STEPS TO VALUES

Values are your inner compass leading you towards, YOUR standards & priorities.

How you spend your time, think, & behave moves you closer to or farther from your values. When aligned with values, your actions reflect what is most important to you. Actions which demonstrate your commitment to the value, bring you closer to your value. Inaction in a value domain suggests it is less of a priority in your life - only YOU get to determine what is the priority.

Values are freely chosen, personal beliefs and standards of what is important to YOU. We inherit the values of family & society & it takes time to explore & define values for yourself. You may find some of your values align with family and society, while others differ greatly. You are the only person who can create your unique set of values.

Values are separate from goals - they INFORM your goals by letting you know what is important. If you value personal creativity, you might set a goal of 20 minutes of art or writing each day to ensure you are acting on this value each day.

Values naturally evolve and their importance changes as you grow and age. For example, what you value in relationships changes over time and as you meet new people. Ongoing evaluation creates a life consistent with your values.

Values are about what YOU care about and how you want to BE as a person in any moment or situation. Your values reflect YOU & how YOU want to show up. For example, defining your value of friendship refers to what YOU find important & how YOU want to behave.



A woman of value does not rely
on others
to recognize her own value.
She adds value,
no matter what.

Gift Gugu Mona

Value Categories

1

Values of your Mind

2

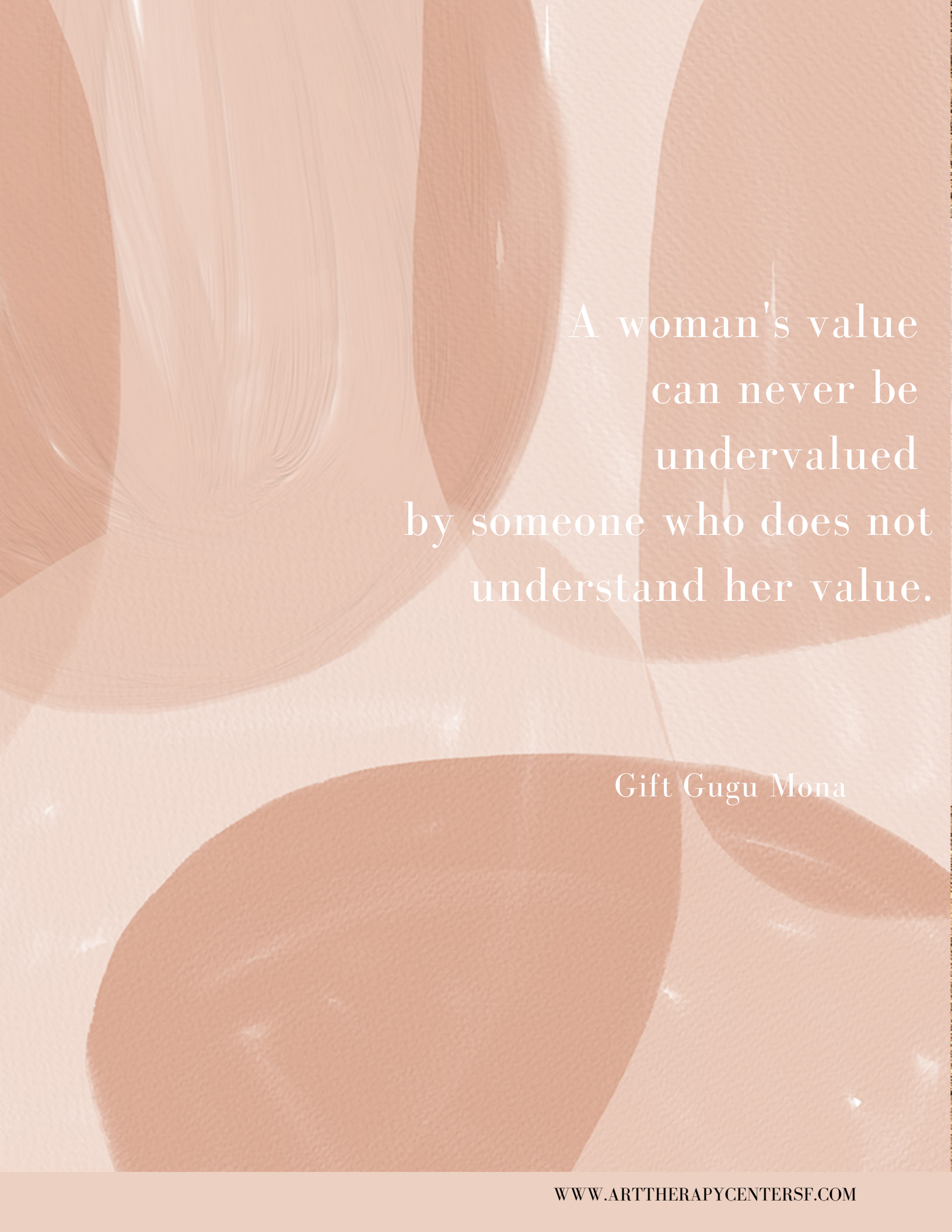
Values of your Body

3

Values of your Spirit

4

Values of your World



A woman's value
can never be
undervalued
by someone who does not
understand her value.

Gift Gugu Mona

Summary

Remember pick ONE value domain for each week. Do NOT change your mind once you pick one. You may be tempted to jump around, or work on more than one in a week. This will lead to difficulty in sustaining your practice. If you have ever made a resolution and then never finished your commitment, you know the struggle with taking on too much all at once.

Research shows, that making a small commitment and sticking to it leads to success, while taking on too much leads to burn out, frustration in lack of progress and ultimately giving up. You can succeed here by picking only ONE value each week, being consistent with just 20 minutes a day.

TO SUCCEED

- Pick only one value each week
- Work only 20 minutes a day
- Work everyday at the same time and place
- Pair your time with another habit (eg., right after your brush your teeth)
- Pair your time with a simple pleasure (hot tee, flowers, a chocolate, etc.)
- If you skip a day, get right back on track with 20 minutes a day. Do not work 40 minutes to try and "make up" for a missed day. Avoid judgement. Just move forward.

All the values are listed below - just work on one each week. You can work on the others later. You will be surprised at how working on one value improves your awareness in each area!

Remember, only one value each week and only 20 minutes a day!



Week 1 Mind

Nothing can bring down a
women comfortable in her
own skin. She knows her
worth and what she wants.

- Gift Gugu Mona

Values in Mind

circle the one you want to work on this week

1

Self Talk

Self-talk is how you counsel and advise yourself. This includes language you use in your head, how you describe, complement, or judge yourself, and how you coach yourself through challenges.

2

Mental Health

Mental health refers to thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and reactions about internal or external experiences. At your best, this is behavior and thoughts to positively support yourself and utilize your strengths.

3

Inner Boundaries

Inner boundaries refer to limits you set with yourself including, self respect, keeping self commitments, consistency, what you accept from yourself, and personal responsibility.

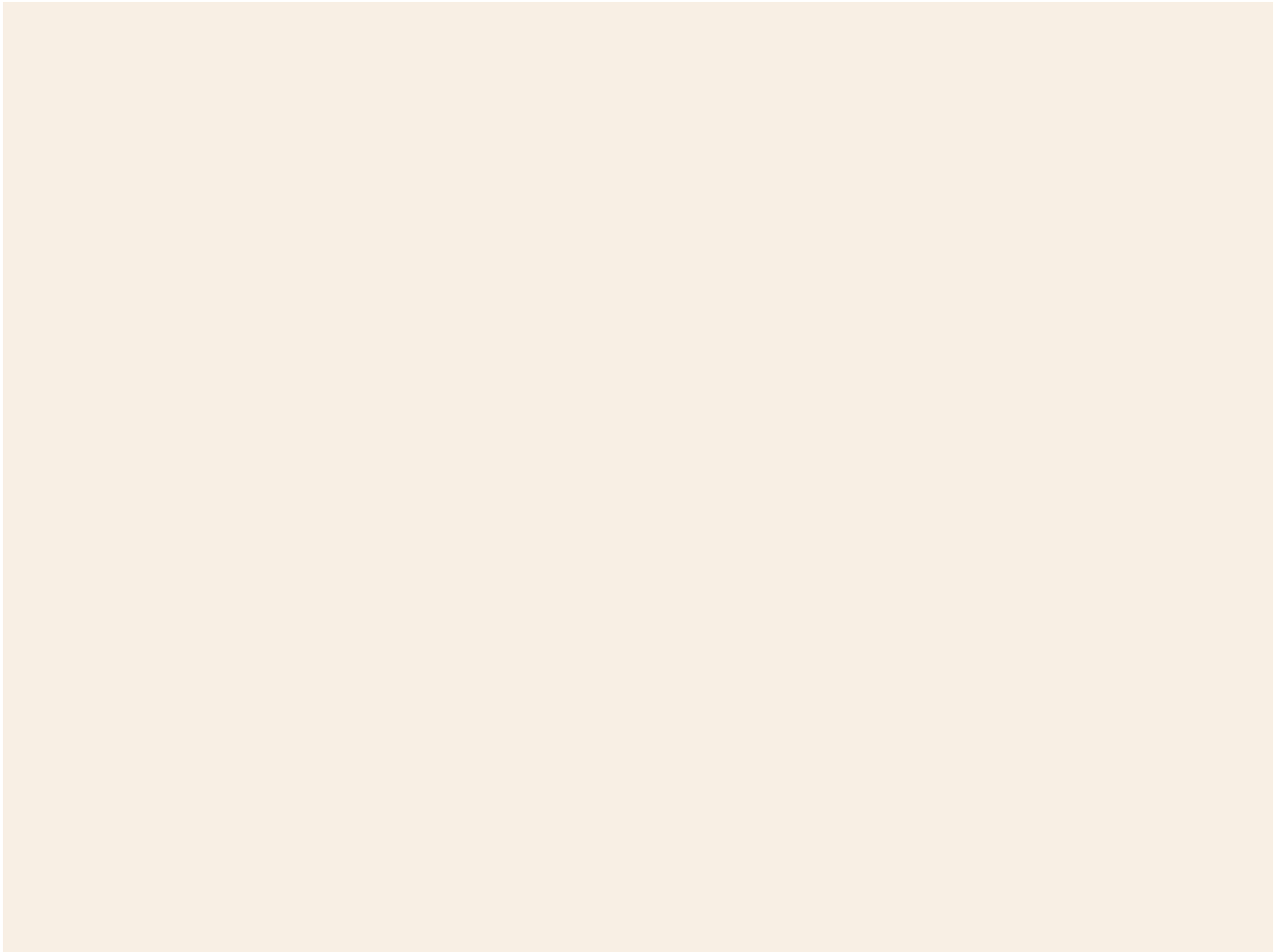
4

Outer Boundaries

Outer boundaries refers to limits you set with others. It includes knowing what you want, articulating your limits and wants with others, and asserting yourself to follow through with behaviors.

Your Values in Mind

Write about the Mind value you chose. Focus on what is most important to YOU, and how you want to feel, think and act in alignment with this value. For example, inner boundaries value might include: setting clear limits, mindfulness, communicate clearly, follow through with your personal promises, take responsibility, etc.



Reflect on what you just wrote and highlight the words which are exciting and interesting to you. Condense your writing into three main points. Below write three words or phrases describing what you most deeply value in this area.

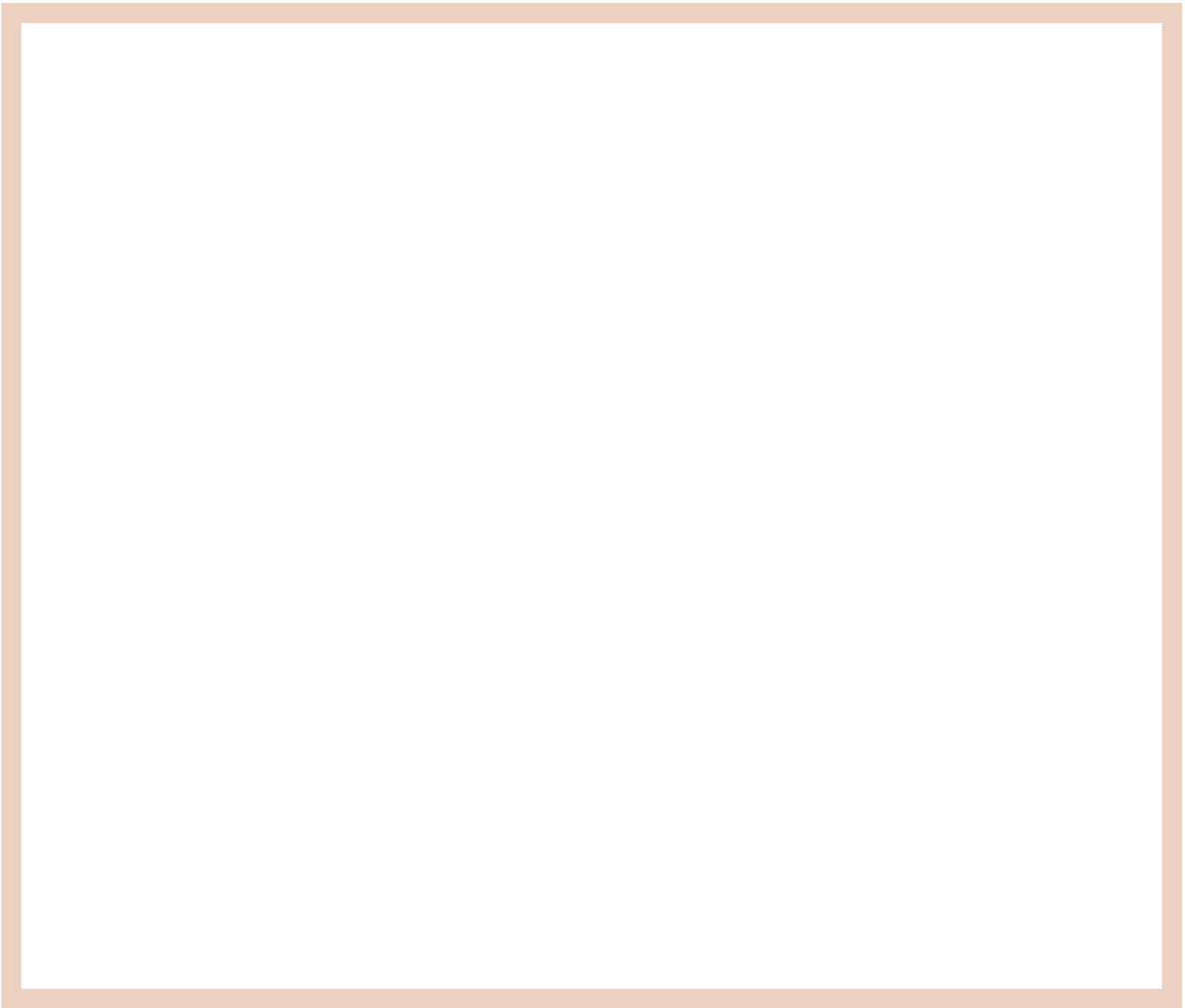
I value:

I value:

I value:

Value Brainstorm

Reflect on the ways you already act in line with the Mind value you chose to work on this week. Brainstorm ways you **currently** demonstrate this value, have in the **past**, or easily could in the **future**. Make these actions specific, short and simple. For example: smile at your neighbor, drive the kids to school, decline an invitation, make your bed, journal, take a bubble bath, schedule an appointment with a therapist, do dishes before bed, etc.



- Draw a star next to all the actions you could or would like to do this week. Be realistic! Identify small actions, and select ones that you can reasonably accomplish in a few seconds or a few minutes. You may select actions that you are already doing and you can even pick the same action and commit to do it each day. However you decide to act on your values this week is up to you, and whatever you choose will be great!
- For maximum success schedule your value-based actions for the week - write them on your calander. Writing is your commitment and a reminder to follow through.

Visual Expression

Take a few moments to show what your value looks like using lines, shapes and colors. It could range from just one line to a fully fleshed-out, abstract or representational picture. Avoid thinking too long about it and be spontaneous. This will help you connect to your value-based feelings. However you do it will be great!



Title:

Three words or phrases to describe your art.

-
-
-

How do you feel?

REFLECTION

Reflect on what you have learned about yourself this week. Be sure to appreciate your strengths, and focus on your positive actions. Notice your thoughts, feelings and actions in alignment with the value you selected this week. How did you feel paying such close attention to your value-based actions?



Week 2 Body

You must give everything to
make your life as beautiful
as the dreams that dance in
your imagination.

- Roman Payne

Your Values in Body

circle the one you want to work on this week

1

Surroundings

Your surroundings include: how you design your home; the state of your cupboards, drawers, cabinets, and closets; the inside your car; your desk, office, and files.

2

Personal Style

Personal style is your personal presentation each day: clothes, hairstyle, smile, and how you carry yourself. Research shows these significantly influence our feelings and ability to stick with and accomplish difficult tasks.

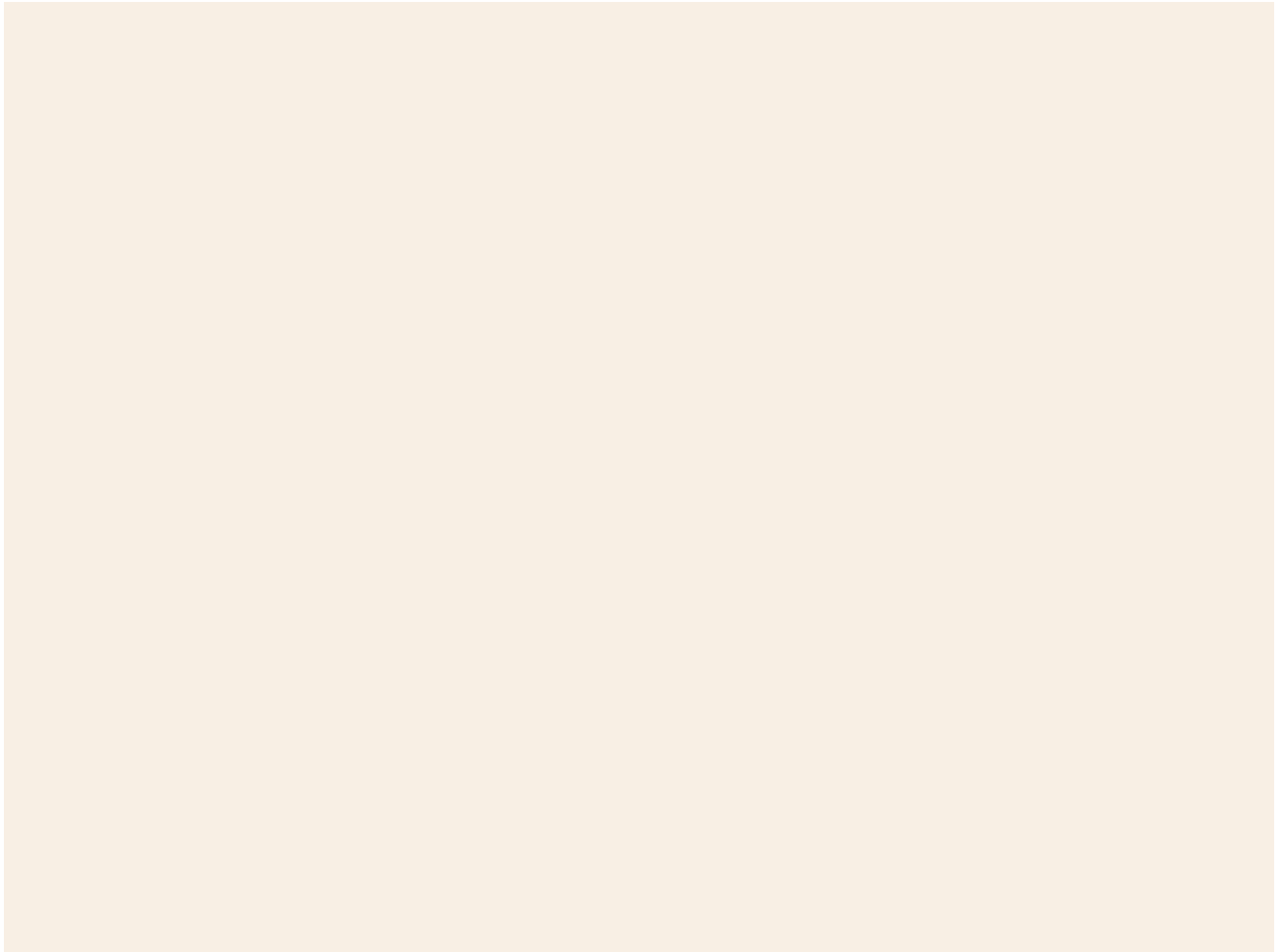
3

Physical Health

Physical Health refers to how you appreciate your body and how you care for your body. This includes your food choices, sleep, fitness, consulting experts on health care, and managing stress and anxiety.

Your Values in Body

Write about the Body value you chose. Focus on what is most important to YOU, and how you want to feel, think and act in alignment with this value. For example, personal style might include: identifying 3 words to describe your personal style, dressing for the woman you want to be, dressing for you, keeping a clean closet, keeping only what fits right now, etc.



Reflect on what you just wrote and highlight the words which are exciting and interesting to you. Condense your writing into three main points. Below write three words or phrases describing what you most deeply value in this area.

 *I value:*

 *I value:*

 *I value:*

Value Brainstorm

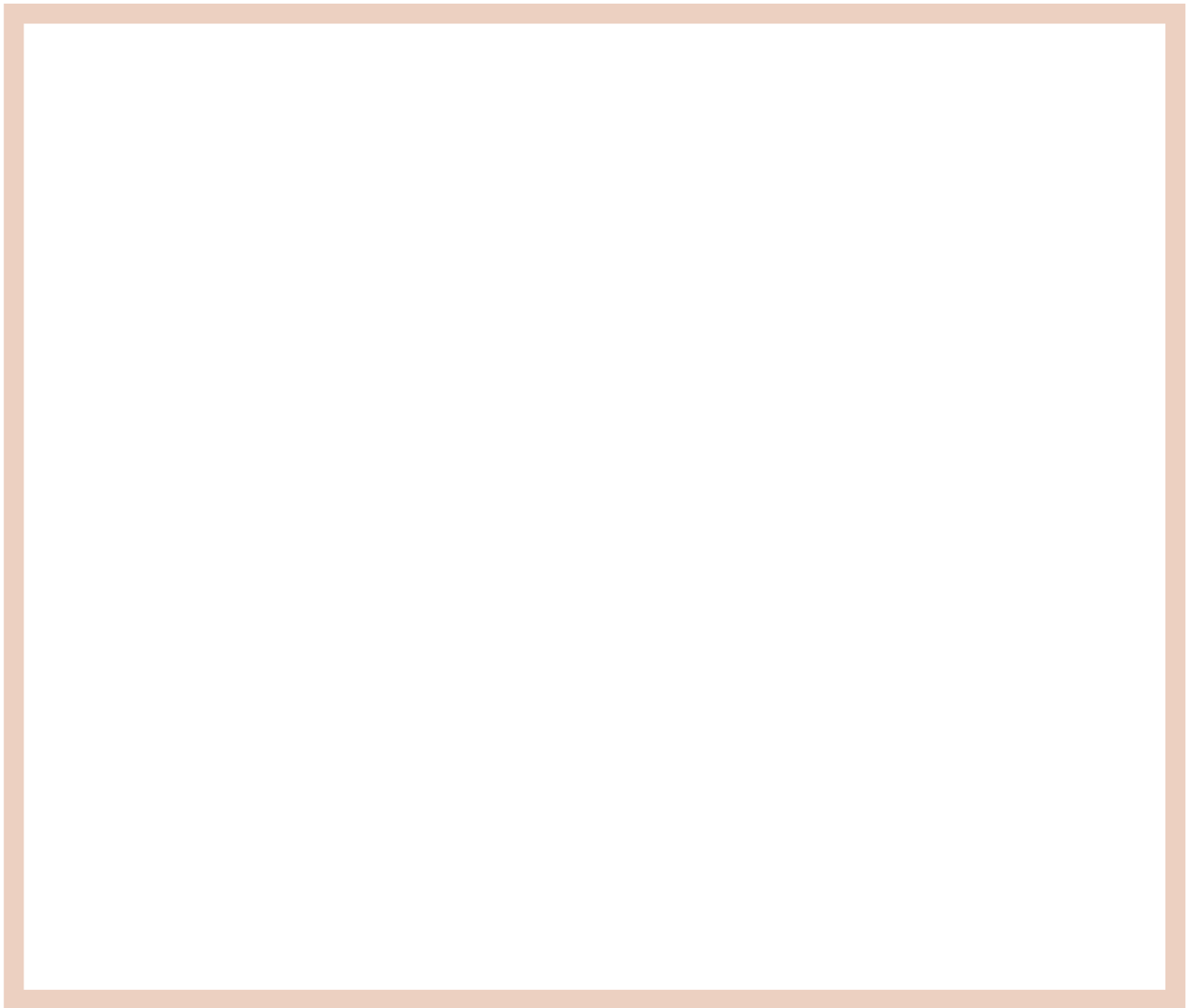
Reflect on the ways you already act in line with the Body value you chose to work on this week. Brainstorm ways you **currently** demonstrate this value, have in the **past**, or easily could in the **future**. Make these actions specific, short and simple. For example: getting dressed each day (even if you will be alone for the day), taking time to look your best, dressing intentionally for leisure and sleep, scheduling a haircut, cleaning your closet, donating ill-fitting clothes, etc.



- Draw a star next to all the actions you could or would like to do this week. Be realistic! Identify small actions, and select ones that you can reasonably accomplish in a few seconds or a few minutes. You may select actions that you are already doing and you can even pick the same action and commit to do it each day. However you decide to act on your values this week is up to you, and whatever you choose will be great!
- For maximum success schedule your value-based actions for the week - write them on your calander. Writing is your commitment and a reminder to follow through.

Visual Expression

Take a few moments to show what this value looks like in lines, shapes and colors. It could range from just one line to a fully fleshed-out, abstract or representational picture. Avoid thinking too long about it and be spontaneous. However you do it will be great!



Title:

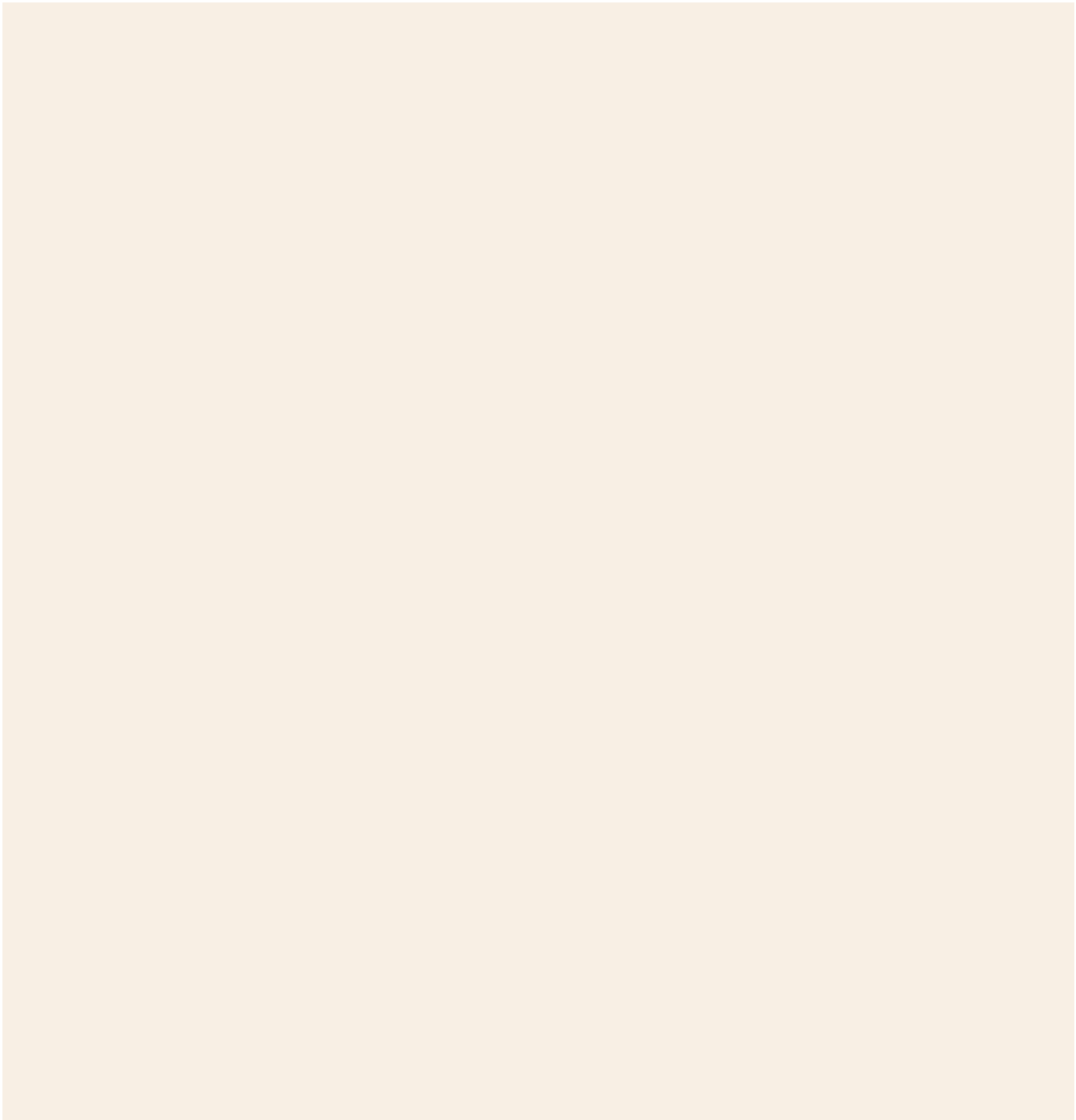
Three words or phrases to describe your art.

-
-
-

Now look back at your writing and see if there is anything you want to add.

REFLECTION

Reflect on what you have learned about yourself this week. Be sure to appreciate your strengths, and focus on your positive actions.

A large, empty rectangular box with a light beige background, intended for reflection.



Week 3 Spirit

Doubt is a killer. You just
have to know who you are
and what you stand for.

- Jennifer Lopez

Your Values in Spirit

circle the one you want to work on this week

1

Spirituality

Spirituality is your connection to the greater whole of the planet, to humanity, and to the God of your understanding. This aspect of the self can directly inform meaning and purpose.

2

Nature

Nature refers to how much time you spend out of doors, how you bring nature into your home and daily rituals. It also relates to your connection to spirituality and what you eat.

3

Making Special

Making Special refers to how much care and attention you put into personal, family, and home rituals each day or year. The practice of making special is thought to be vital to advancing societies.

Your Values in Spirit

Write about the Spirit value you chose. Focus on what is most important to YOU, and how you want to feel, think and act in alignment with this value. For example, making special might include: valuing yourself and your space, intentional celebration of yourself and others, making each day a little different from the last, being in the moment, cultivating joy, etc.

Reflect on what you just wrote and highlight the words which are exciting and interesting to you. Condense your writing into three main points. Below write three words or phrases describing what you most deeply value in this area.

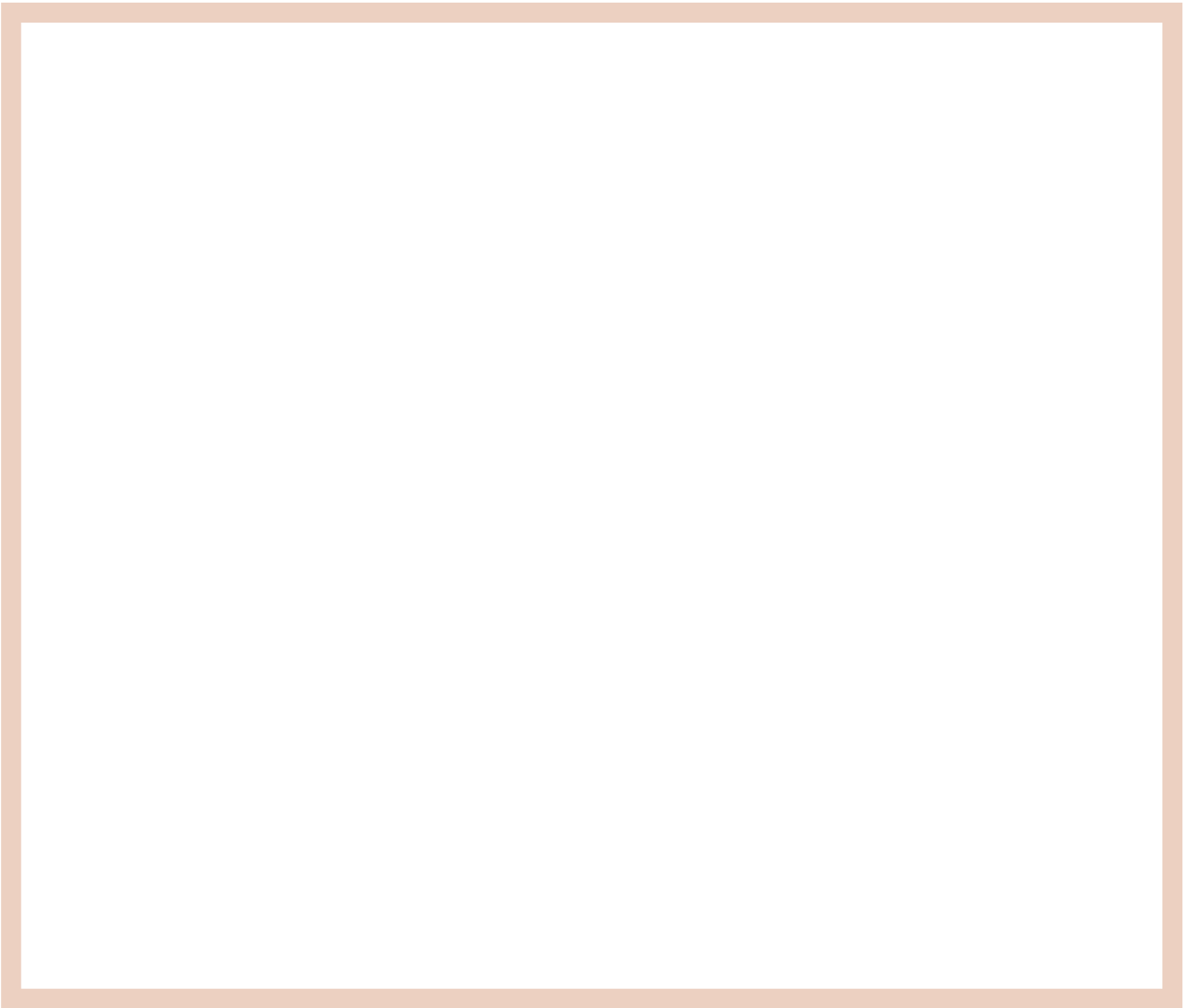
I value:

I value:

I value:

Value Brainstorm

Reflect on the ways you already act in line with the Spirit value you chose to work on this week. Brainstorm ways you **currently** demonstrate this value, have in the **past**, or easily could in the **future**. Make these actions specific, short and simple. For example: making special might include using the "good" dishes, buying flowers, cleaning your desk, celebrating life, dancing in the living room, smile at your neighbor, take a bubble bath, etc.



- Draw a star next to all the actions you could or would like to do this week. Be realistic! Identify small actions, and select ones that you can reasonably accomplish in a few seconds or a few minutes. You may select actions that you are already doing and you can even pick the same action and commit to do it each day. However you decide to act on your values this week is up to you, and whatever you choose will be great!
- For maximum success schedule your value-based actions for the week - write them on your calander. Writing is your commitment and a reminder to follow through.

Visual Expression

Take a few moments to show what your value looks like in lines, shapes and colors. It could range from just one line to a fully fleshed-out, abstract or representational picture. Avoid thinking too long about it and be spontaneous. However you do it will be great!



Title:

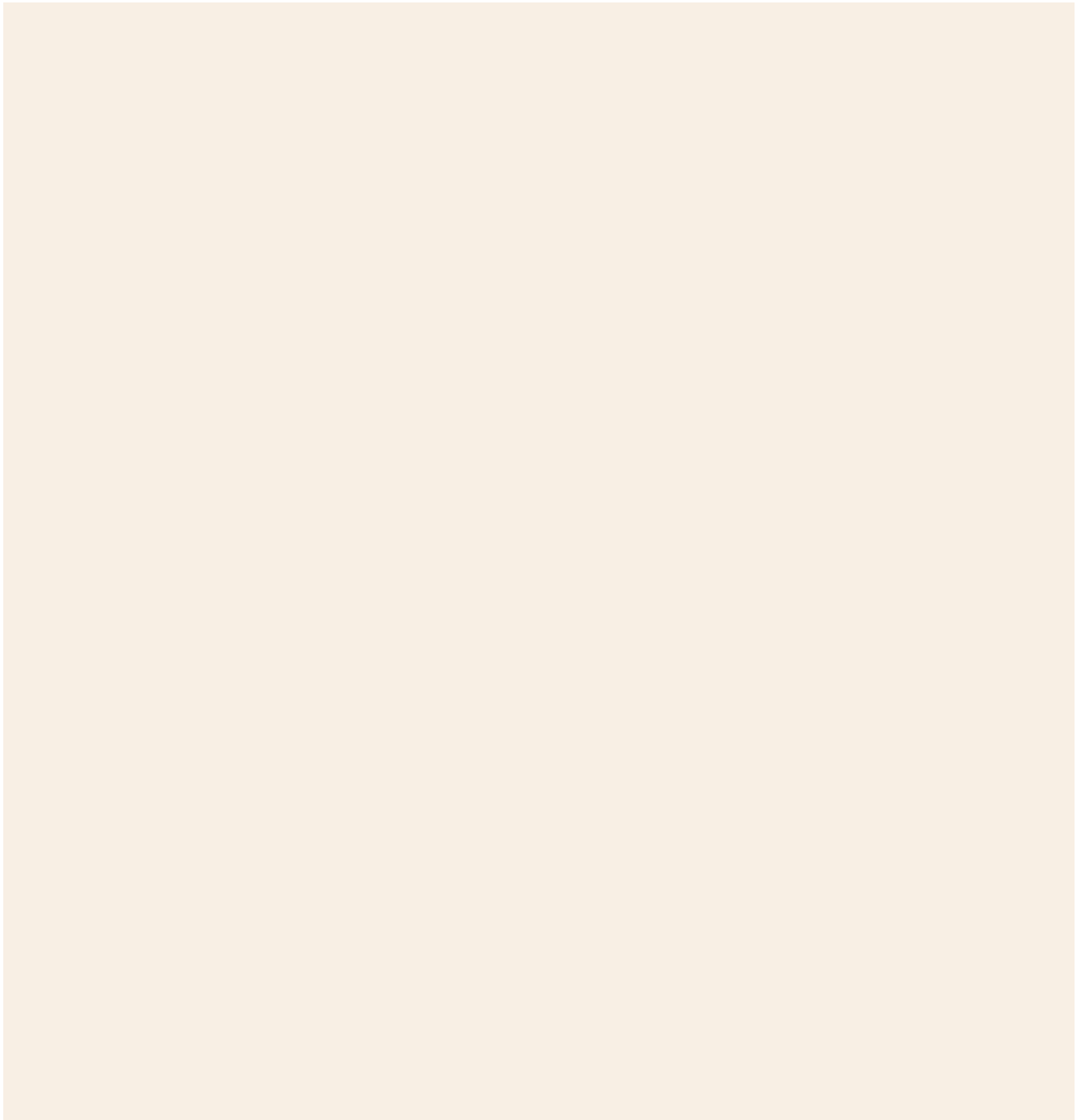
Three words or phrases to describe your art.

-
-
-

Now look back at your writing and see if there is anything you want to add.

REFLECTION

Reflect on what you have learned about yourself this week. Be sure to appreciate your strengths, and focus on your positive actions.





Week 4 World

No one can make you feel
inferior without your
consent.

- Eleanor Roosevelt

Your Values in the World

circle the one you want to work on this week

1

Friendships and Coworkers

Friends are the people you perceive as close, important, and valuable in your life, and how you choose to interact with them. Coworkers are the people you collaborate with to get a job done and how you interact with them.

2

Family, Friends, Partner

Family are the people you are related to by birth, adoption or choice. The value is how you interact and behave with people you choose to call family.

3

Advocacy

Advocacy refers to how you respond to improve situations you perceive as important. This includes facilitating changes in yourself, work, family, groups and society.

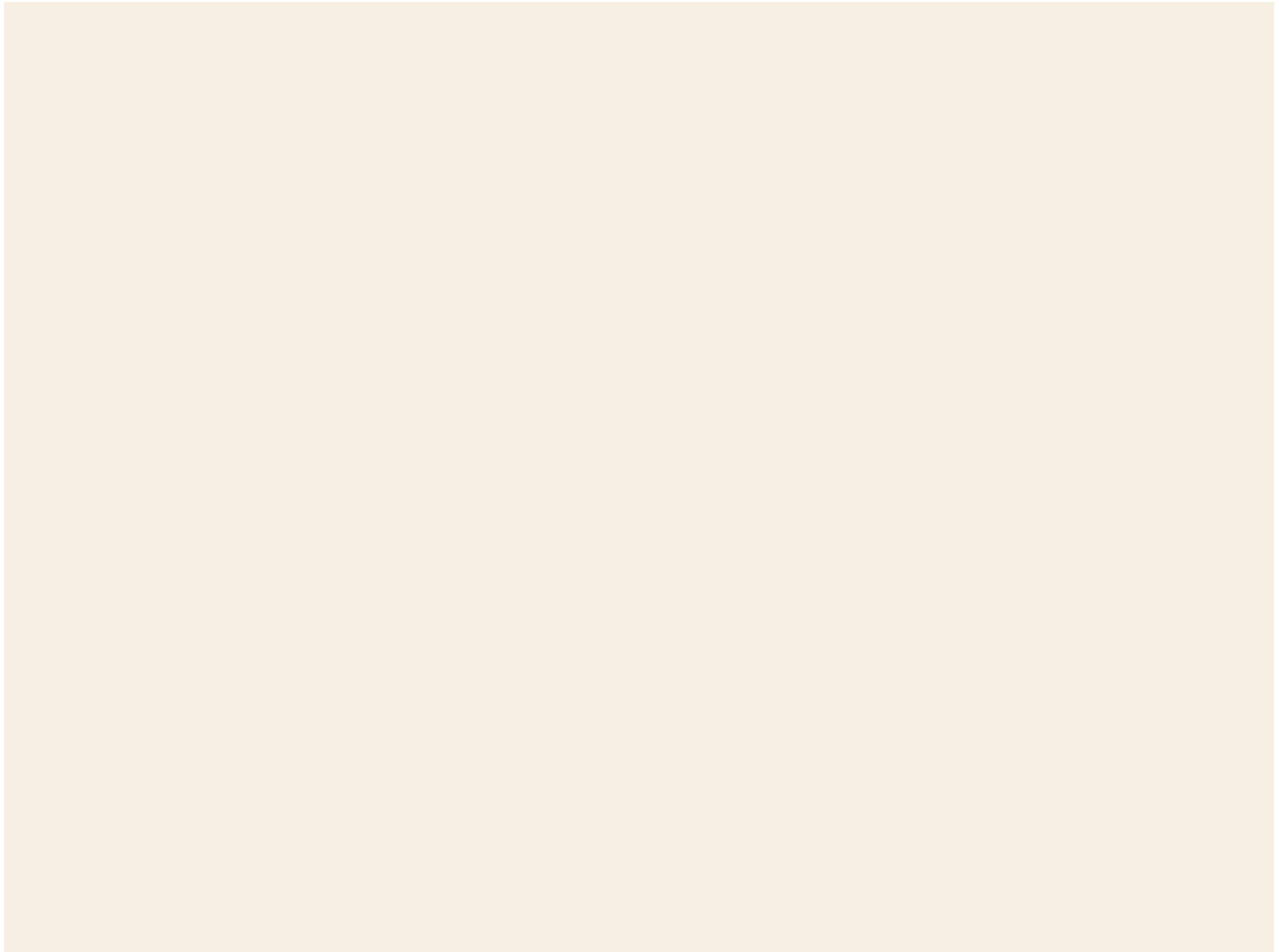
4

Community

Community is your neighborhood, the people around you in various contexts, and how you think of them as well as how you interact and engage with them.

Your Values in the World

Write about the World value you chose. Focus on what is most important to YOU, and how you want to feel, think and act in alignment with this value. For example, friendship values might include: making time to appreciate others, prioritizing kindness (even in conflict), remove pride, make amends, forgive yourself and others, etc.



Reflect on what you just wrote and highlight the words which are exciting and interesting to you. Condense your writing into three main points. Below write three words or phrases describing what you most deeply value in this area.


I value:

I value:

I value:

Value Brainstorm

Reflect on the ways you already act in line with the World value you chose to work on this week. Brainstorm ways you **currently** demonstrate this value, have in the **past**, or easily could in the **future**. Make these actions specific, short and simple. For example, in the friendship value, you might text, call or send a letter to an old friend to say hello, schedule a lunch or Zoom date and focus on listening to your friend, make a new friend online, etc.



- Draw a star next to all the actions you could or would like to do this week. Be realistic! Identify small actions, and select ones that you can reasonably accomplish in a few seconds or a few minutes. You may select actions that you are already doing and you can even pick the same action and commit to do it each day. However you decide to act on your values this week is up to you, and whatever you choose will be great!
- For maximum success schedule your value-based actions for the week - write them on your calendar. Writing is your commitment and a reminder to follow through.

Visual Expression

Take a few moments to show what your value looks like in lines, shapes and colors. It could range from just one line to a fully fleshed-out, abstract or representational picture. Avoid thinking too long about it and be spontaneous.

However you do it will be great!



Title:

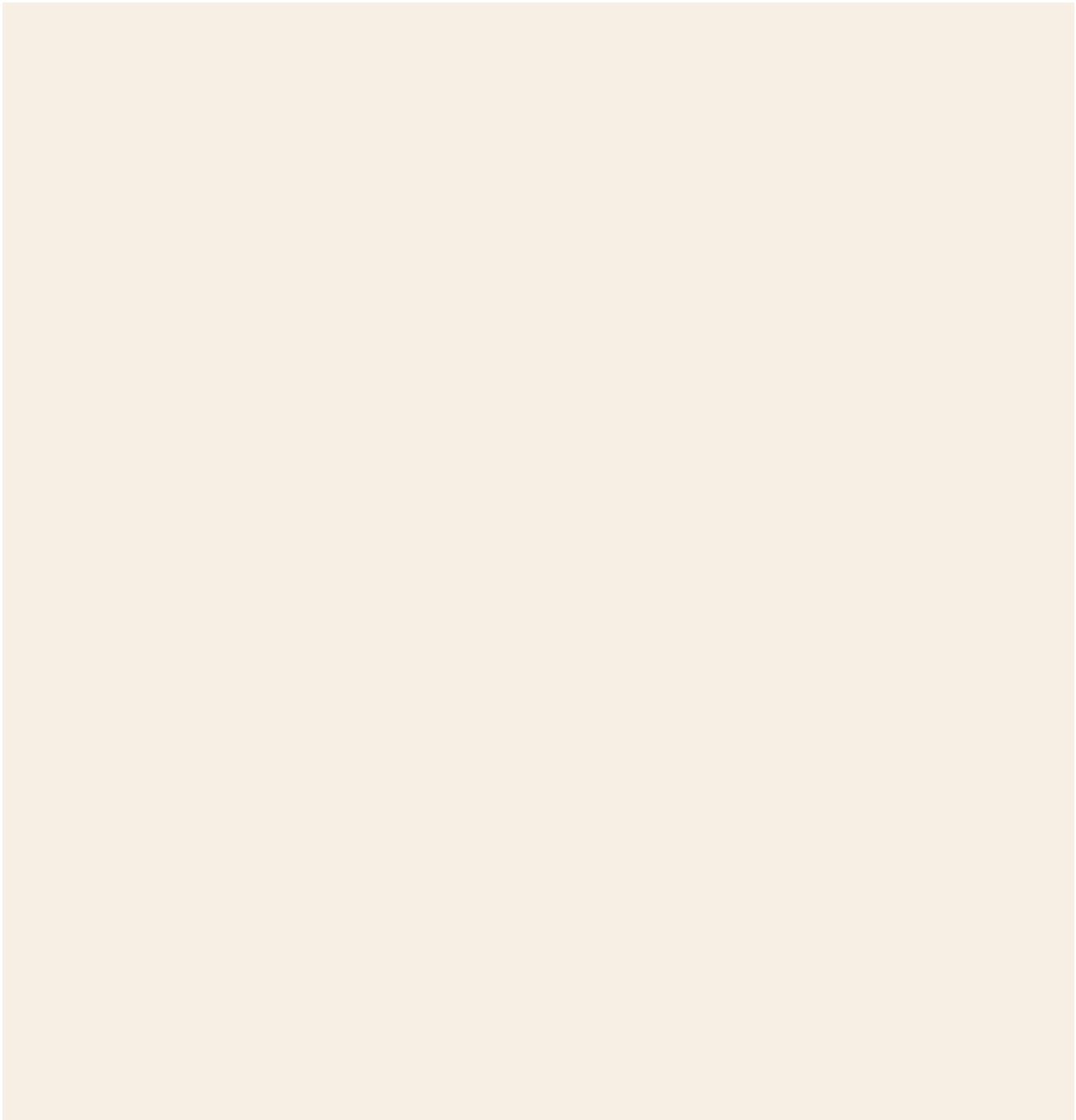
Three words or phrases to describe your art.

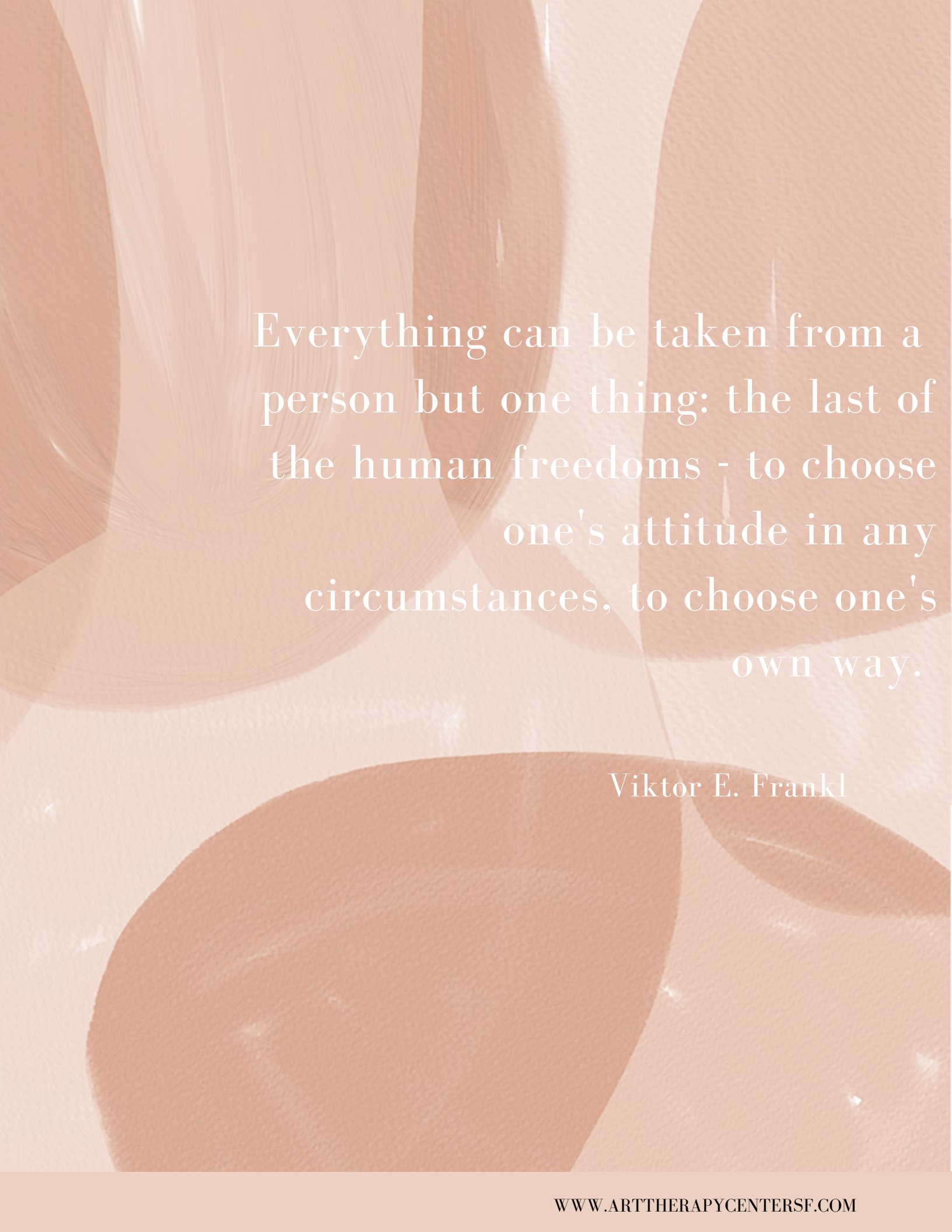
-
-
-

Now look back at your writing and see if there is anything you want to add.

REFLECTION

Reflect on what you have learned about yourself this week. Be sure to appreciate your strengths, and focus on your positive actions.

A large, empty rectangular box with a light beige background, intended for reflection.



Everything can be taken from a
person but one thing: the last of
the human freedoms - to choose
one's attitude in any
circumstances, to choose one's
own way.

Viktor E. Frankl



VALUES IN ACTION

Values Summary

On the next two pages, write a summary of the four values you worked on this month.

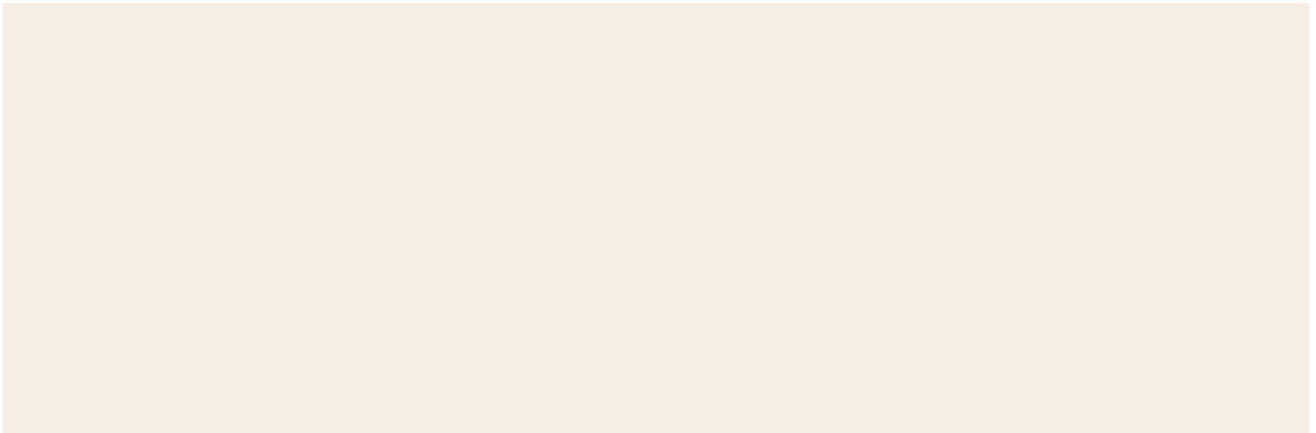
Begin your statements with "I am a woman who values..."
Describe your highest self when you are living out your values in each of the areas you worked on this week.

Here is an example of what you might write. This is a reflection from the friendship domain:

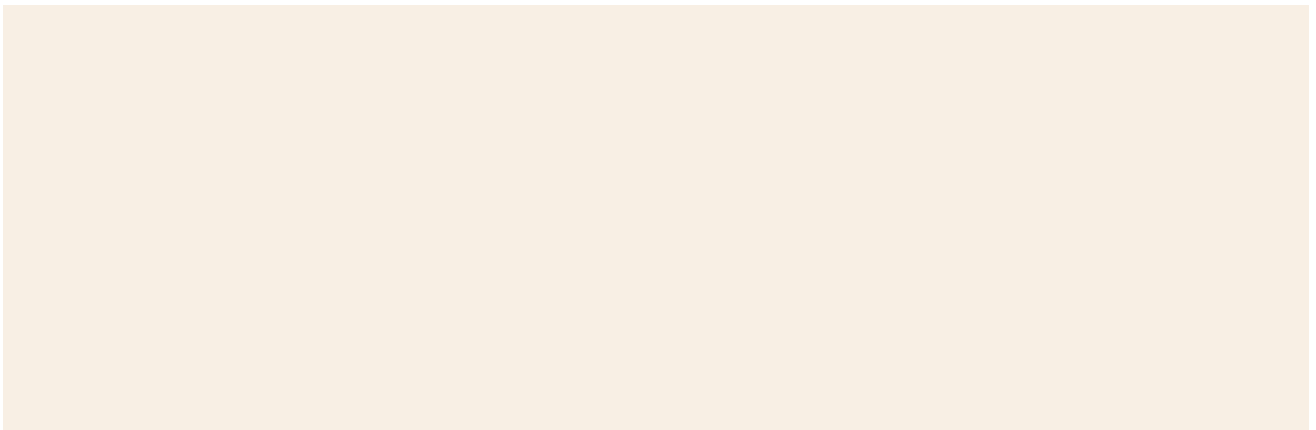
"I am a women who values honesty, fun, and support in friendships. I bring my best self to my friendships with humor, fun, integrity and commitment. I am committed to being kind, encouraging and supportive in my friendships. I create space in my life to spend time with and listen to my friends. I make time to meet new people. I choose to spend time with people who share my values."

Values Summary

Mind Value: _____

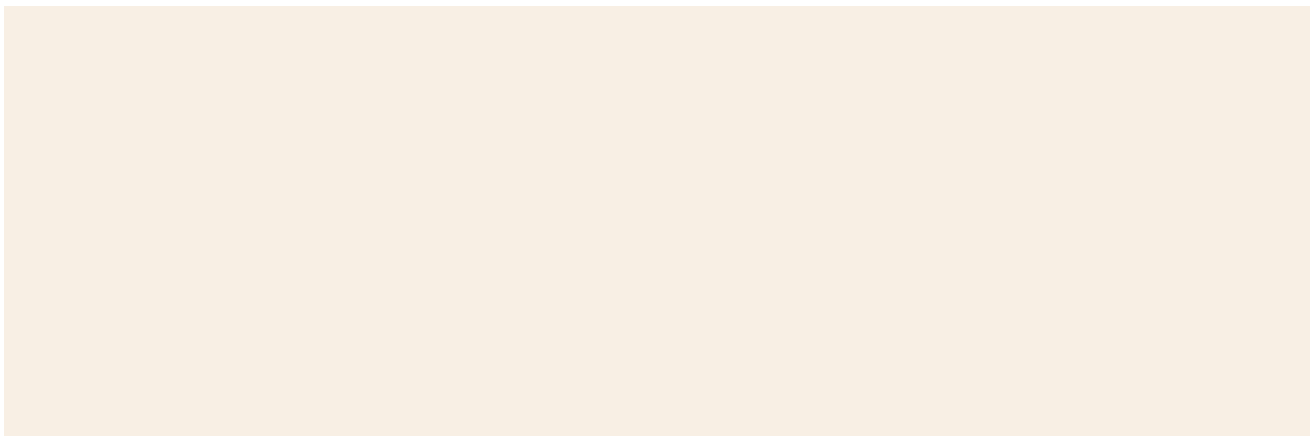


Body Value: _____

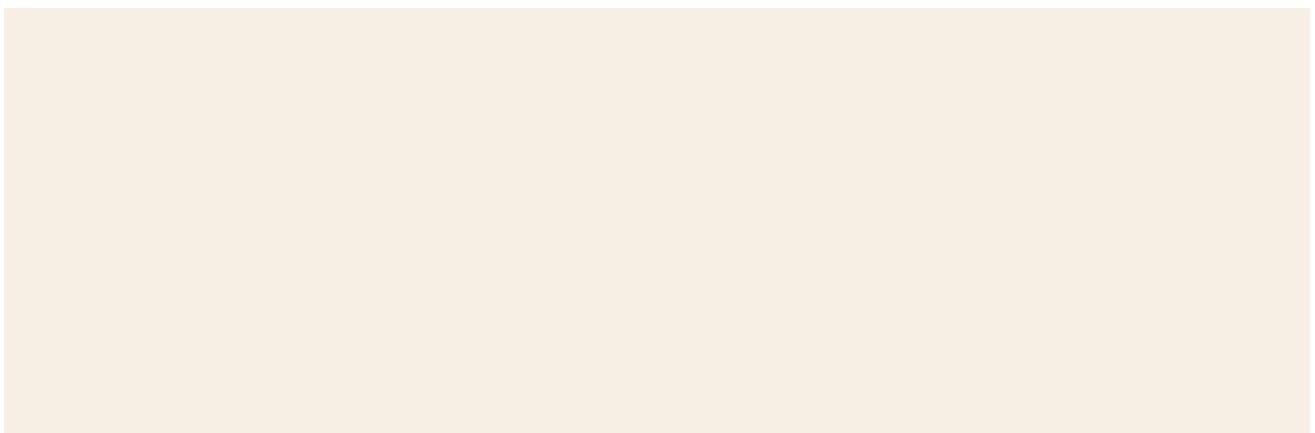


Values Summary

Spirit Value: _____

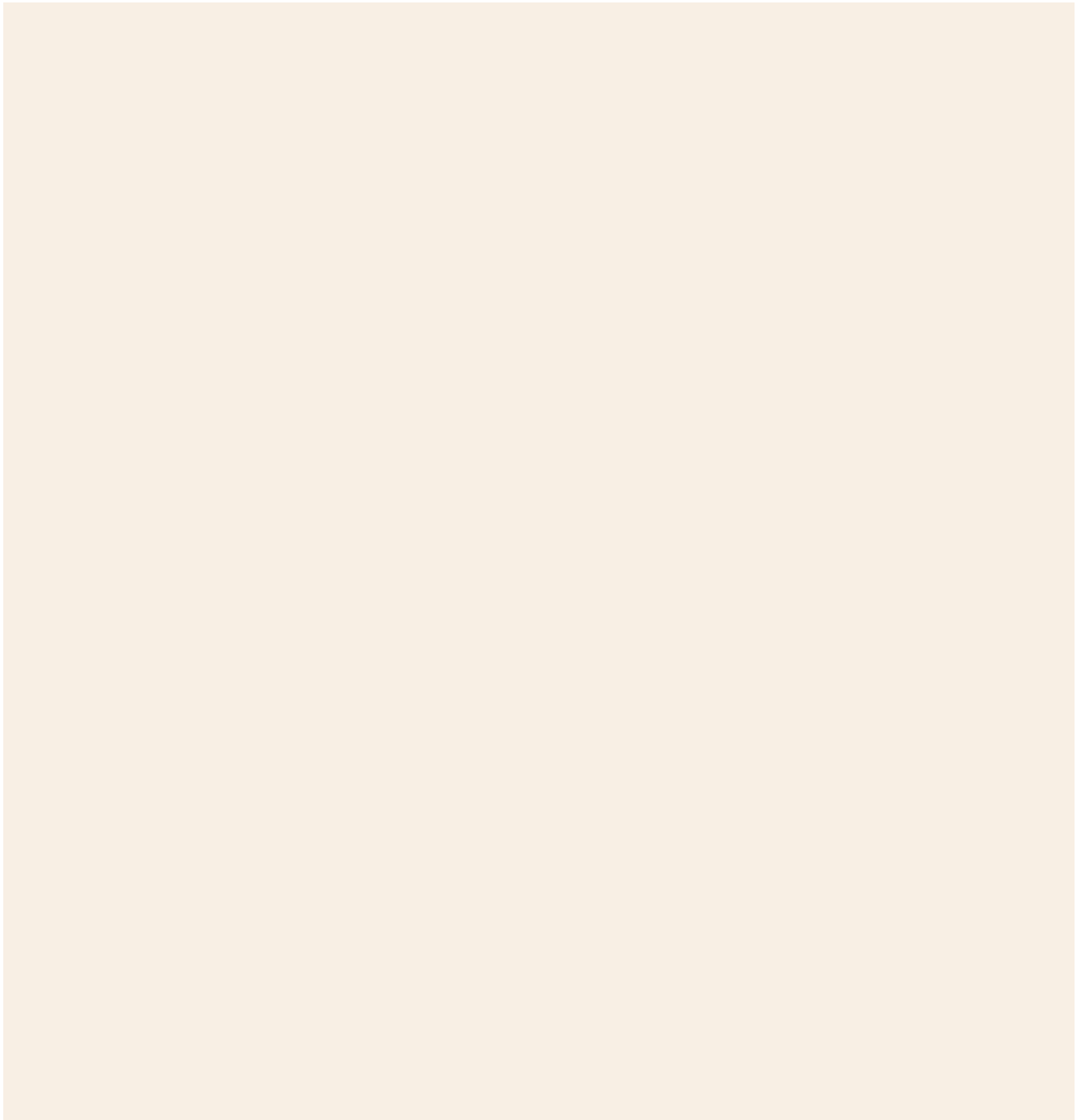


World Value: _____



REFLECTIONS

Reflect on what you have learned about your values and how you learned to keep your personal commitments. Be sure to appreciate your strengths, and focus on your positive actions and what you did accomplish.





RESOURCES

THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO
DO IT, IS TO DO IT.

-AMELIA EARHART

RESOURCES

01

Women of Virtue: Power-Filled Quotes for a Powerful Woman

Book by Gift Gugu Mona offers powerful affirmations to remind you of your value as a woman.

02

The Happiness Lab

Podcast by Yale Professor, Dr. Laurie Santos, offers compelling stories on the science of happiness.

03

Man's Search for Meaning

Book by Viktor Frankl offers stories and insight into how we make meaning in our lives and how our circumstances and those around us have nothing to do with our satisfaction.

04

Art Therapy Center of San Francisco

Center for creative expression, psychological wellness, positive psychology and value-based living with online classes, memberships, and in person & online psychotherapy.

05

authentichappiness.sas.upenn.edu

Website with resources & free assessments on happiness and positive living from the grandfather of positive psychology, Martin Seligman at the University of PA.

Values in Action

VALUE

ACTION STEPS

1.

2.

3.

VALUE

ACTION STEPS

1.

2.

3.

Values in Action

VALUE

ACTION STEPS

1.

2.

3.

VALUE

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