



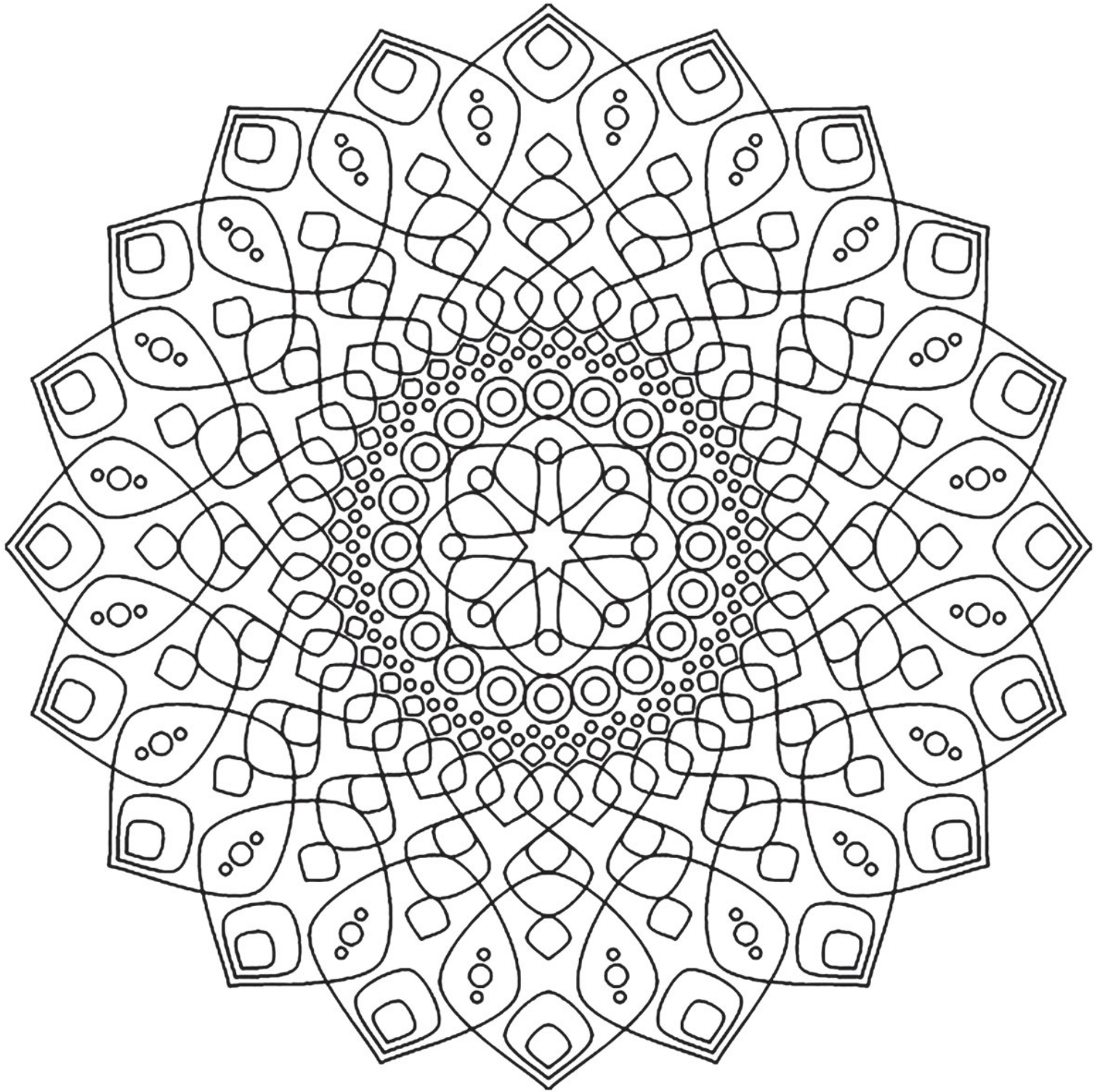
# HAPPINESS WORKBOOK

*Develop skills to actively live a  
happier life*



Wellness Center

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO  
COLORADO SPRINGS



Content and research for this workbook primarily come from the book, The How of Happiness: A New Approach to Getting the Life You Want (2007) by Sonja Lyumbomirsky, PhD. Additional research from Bill Hettler, Robert Emmons, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, and more.

This workbook was compiled and facilitated by Dr. Nikki Blakesley, PsyD; Katie Gordon, M.A.Ed; and Morgan Lavender, M.S. Questions, comments, and feedback can be directed to Katie Gordon at [kgordon4@uccs.edu](mailto:kgordon4@uccs.edu)



# "RESEARCH

SHOWS WE DON'T FIND HAPPINESS, WE CREATE IT."

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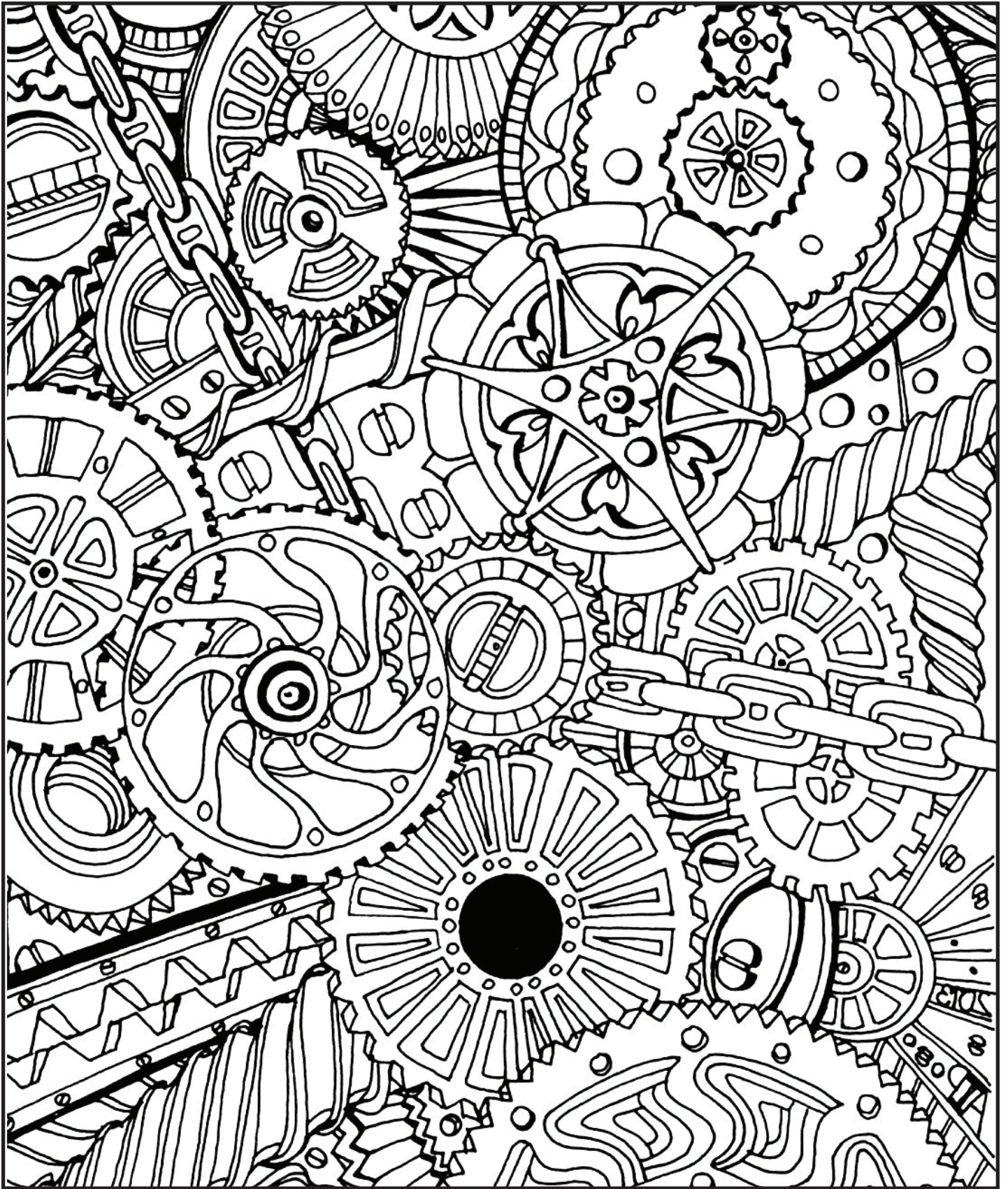
RESOURCES ..... 28

**INSTRUCTIONS:** This workbook contains definitions and activities based on leading research and recommendations to increase happiness. You will notice that there are QR codes throughout the workbook. The QR code on each of the five Section Introduction pages will bring you to corresponding online resources. QR codes on each individual page will link to a guided facilitation and explanation of the page, unless otherwise noted. If you are not using a smartphone, see the website listed on the resource page in the back of the book.



INTRODUCTION





# PART 1 – FOUNDATIONS



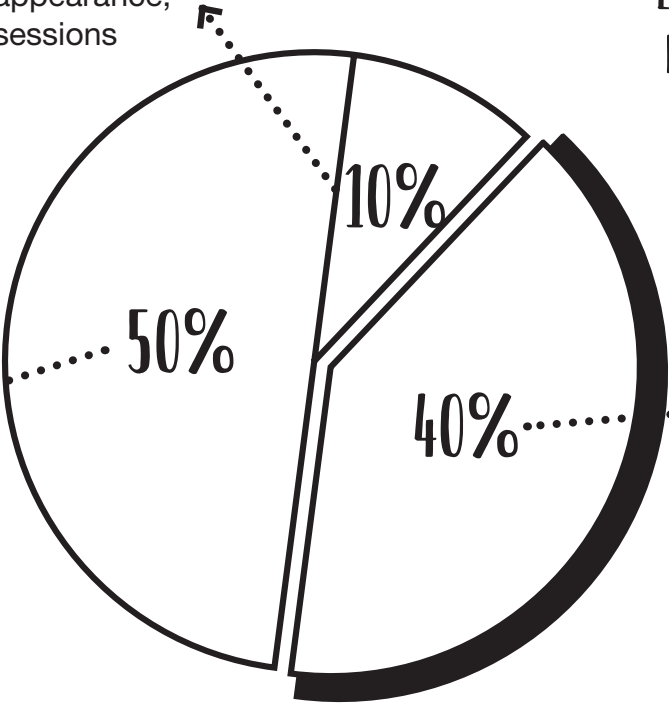
# Studies show you have control of over 40% of your total happiness

Circumstances (what you face):  
the factors that impact your life like your  
job, where you live, your appearance,  
and your income possessions

LEARN  
MORE



Genetic Set Point  
(who you are):  
a genetically  
determined baseline or  
potential for happiness  
to which we are all  
bound to return after  
major triumphs and  
set-backs



INTENTIONAL  
ACTIVITY

(what you do and  
think): this workbook  
will give you practical  
skills to change your  
behaviors and thought  
patterns to become a  
happier person.



HAPPINESS  
ASSESSMENT

Preliminary Happiness Score:

\_\_\_\_\_

Preliminary Psychological  
Wellbeing Score:

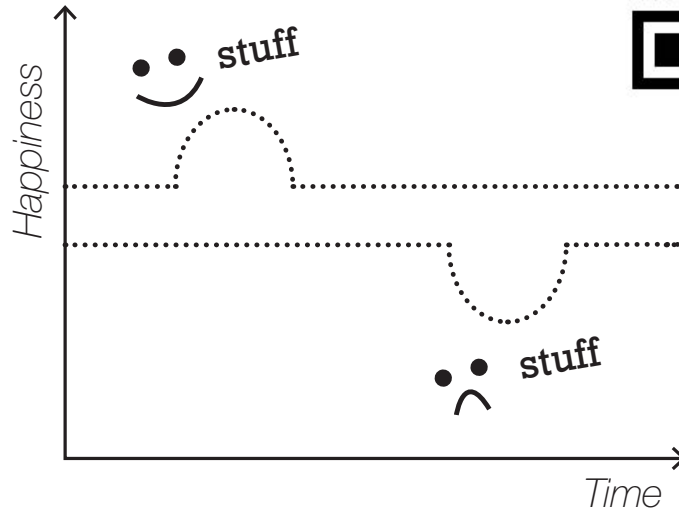
\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



# The New Normal

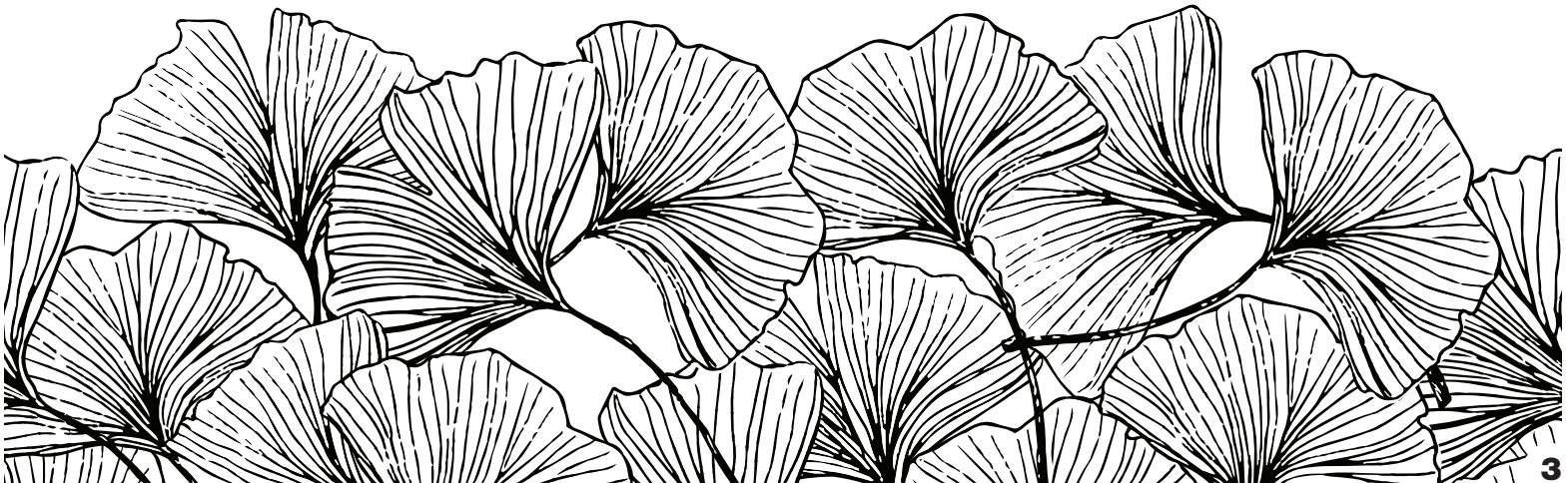
You may be surprised to learn that circumstances have very limited impact on your happiness. This is because people naturally become accustomed to changes in their lifestyle. An exciting purchase, summer break, and getting a pay increase at work may make you happier in the short term but eventually become your New Normal.



LEARN MORE

**Describe a time when you experienced something becoming your New Normal:**

*The behaviors and activities in this workbook are designed to counteract the effects of the “New Normal” phenomenon and grow your capacity for happiness over time.*





# Utilizing Your Strengths

Before learning new skills in this workbook, let's first identify the strengths and skills you already have! It can be helpful to recognize what you are already doing that contributes to your happiness and then build upon that foundation.

*Journal about a time you were resilient. Underline actions you took to work through that challenge.*



LEARN MORE



FREE GRIT  
TRAINING



LEARN YOUR  
STRENGTHS

*Try the quiz in the QR Code. How can you use these strengths to work through challenges?*

My Top 5 Strengths:

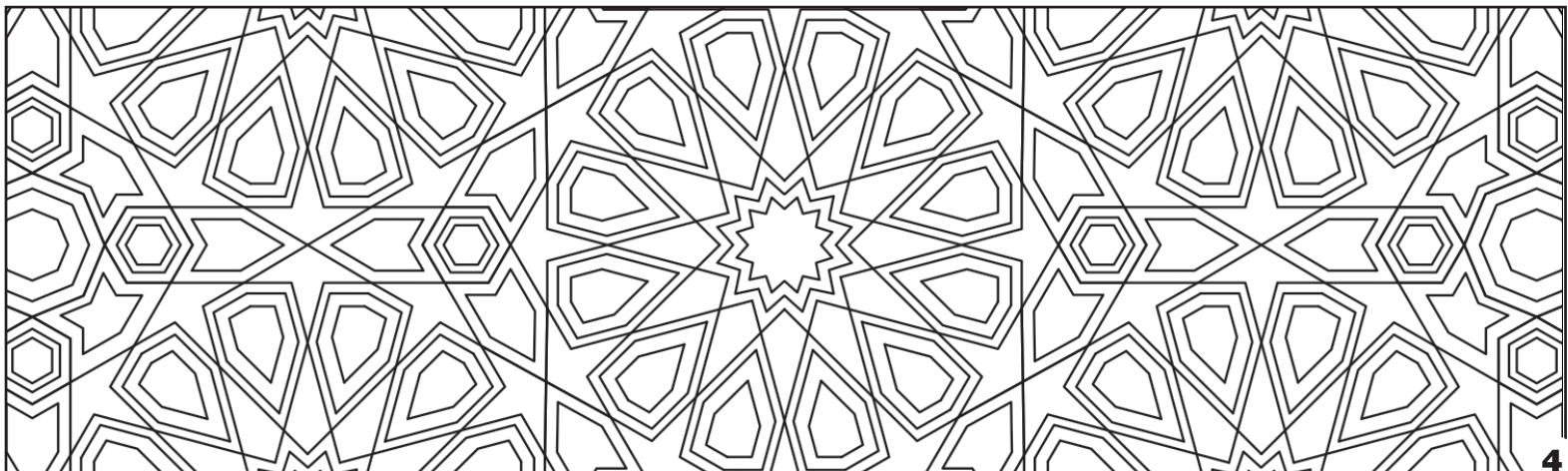
1. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

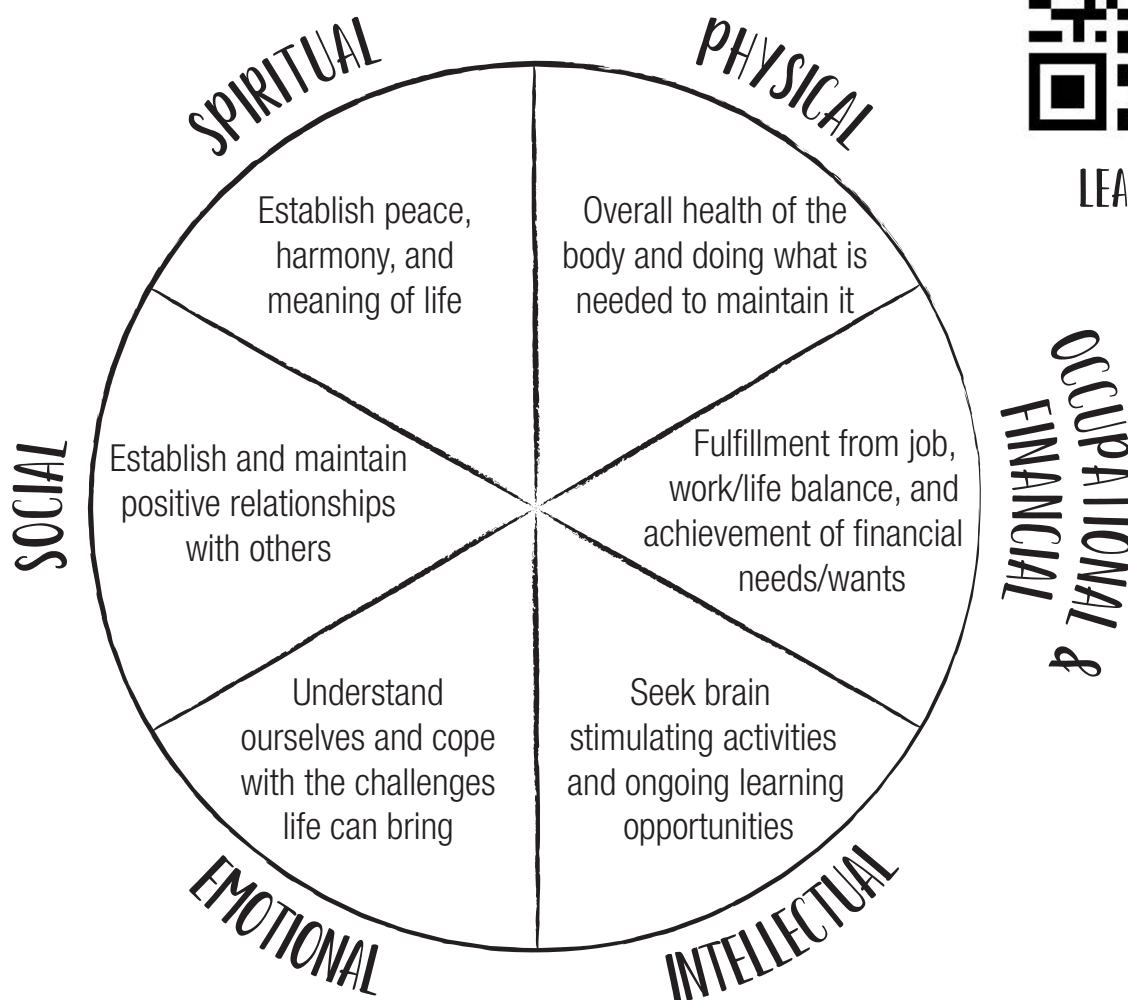
3. \_\_\_\_\_



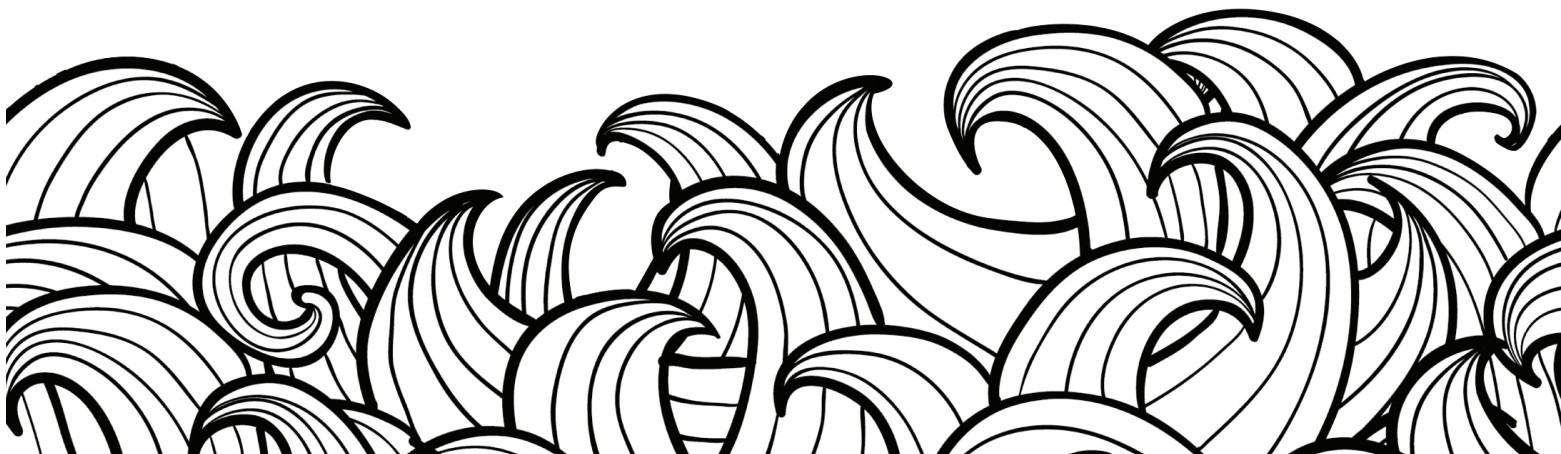
# Happiness and Wellness



LEARN MORE



*To improve your happiness it's important to reflect on your overall health, also known as wellness. Wellness represents many different areas of your health and is often visually represented as a wheel. The Wellness Wheel on this page shows six dimensions that, together, make up your overall health.*

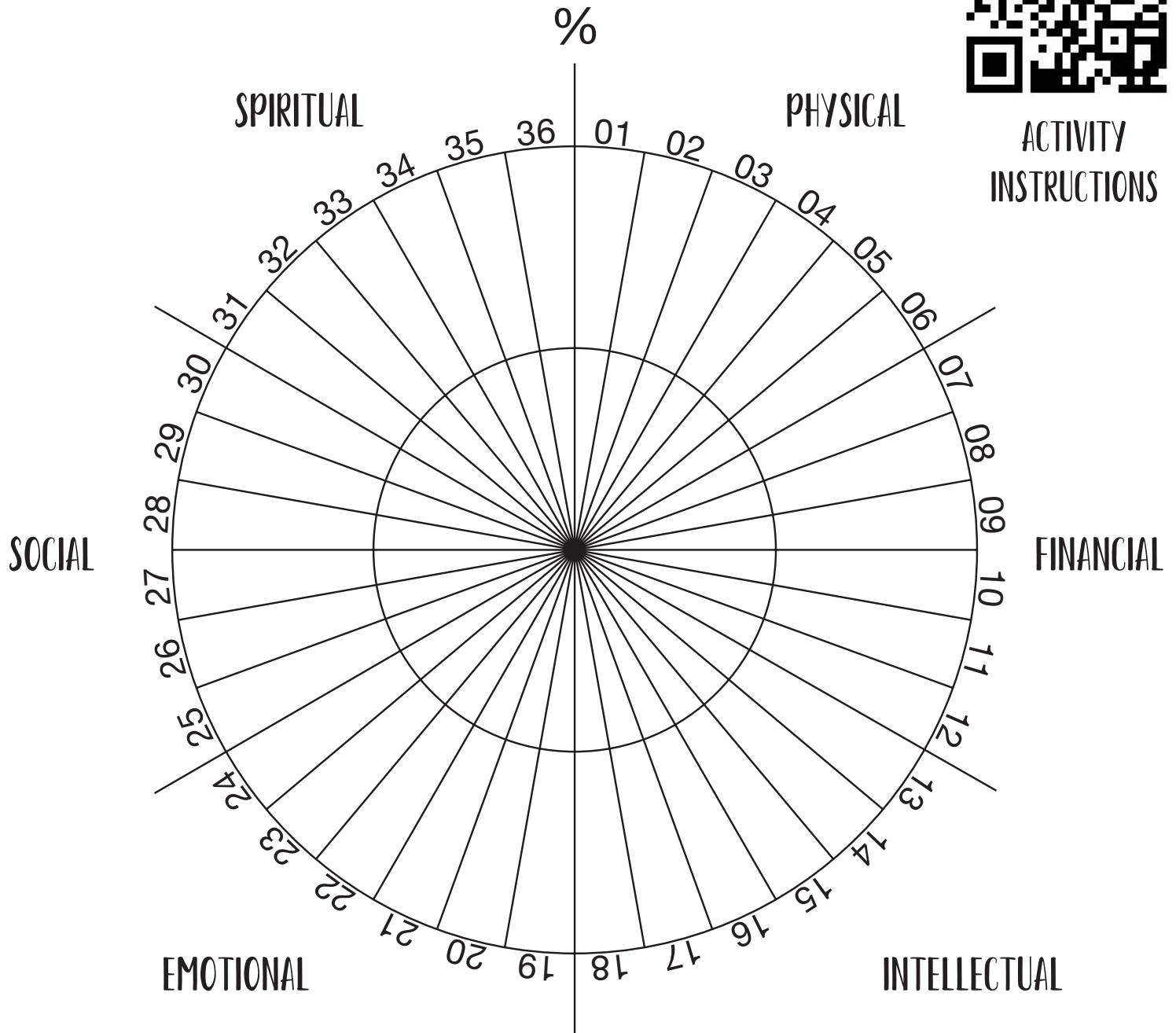




# Wellness Wheel Activity



ACTIVITY  
INSTRUCTIONS



*After completing the activity, remember that each person is unique and there is no “right” or “wrong” wheel. In addition, your wheel will continue to change throughout life depending on many factors. Things that are more difficult now may come more easily in the future, and vice versa.*

*What area of your wellbeing do you want to improve and list 2-3 things you’ll do to improve it over the semester; what are resources on campus to support you?*

# Goal Setting

Think about your Wellness Wheel from the previous page. What goals do you have around your wellness? Pick 3-5 goals based on your wellness wheel and separate them as intrinsic or extrinsic goals in the space below.



## INTRINSIC GOALS

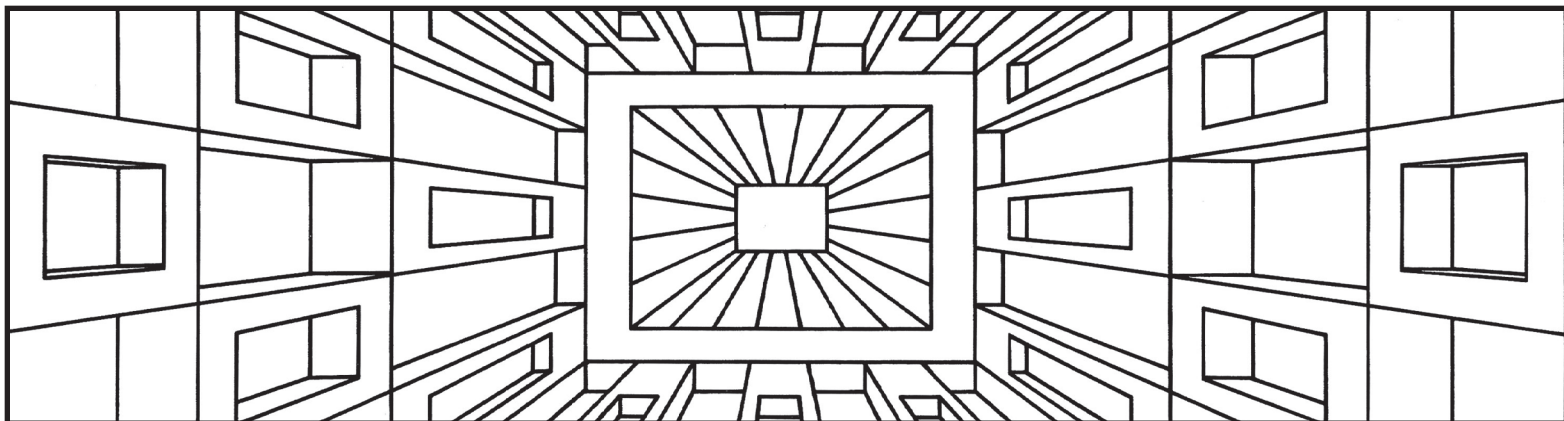
Motivation comes from within  
*ex) exercising for more energy*

## EXTRINSIC GOALS

Motivation comes from outside of you  
*ex) exercising to "look better" for others*

LEARN MORE

SETTING  
INTRINSIC GOALS  
IS MORE LIKELY  
TO INCREASE  
HAPPINESS!





People who break down goals into small, actionable steps are more likely to achieve them. Use one of your intrinsic goals from the previous page to create an action plan here.

GOAL: \_\_\_\_\_ Complete by: \_\_\_\_\_

How I'll know I achieved it: \_\_\_\_\_

### ACTION STEPS:

### THIS STEP IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE:

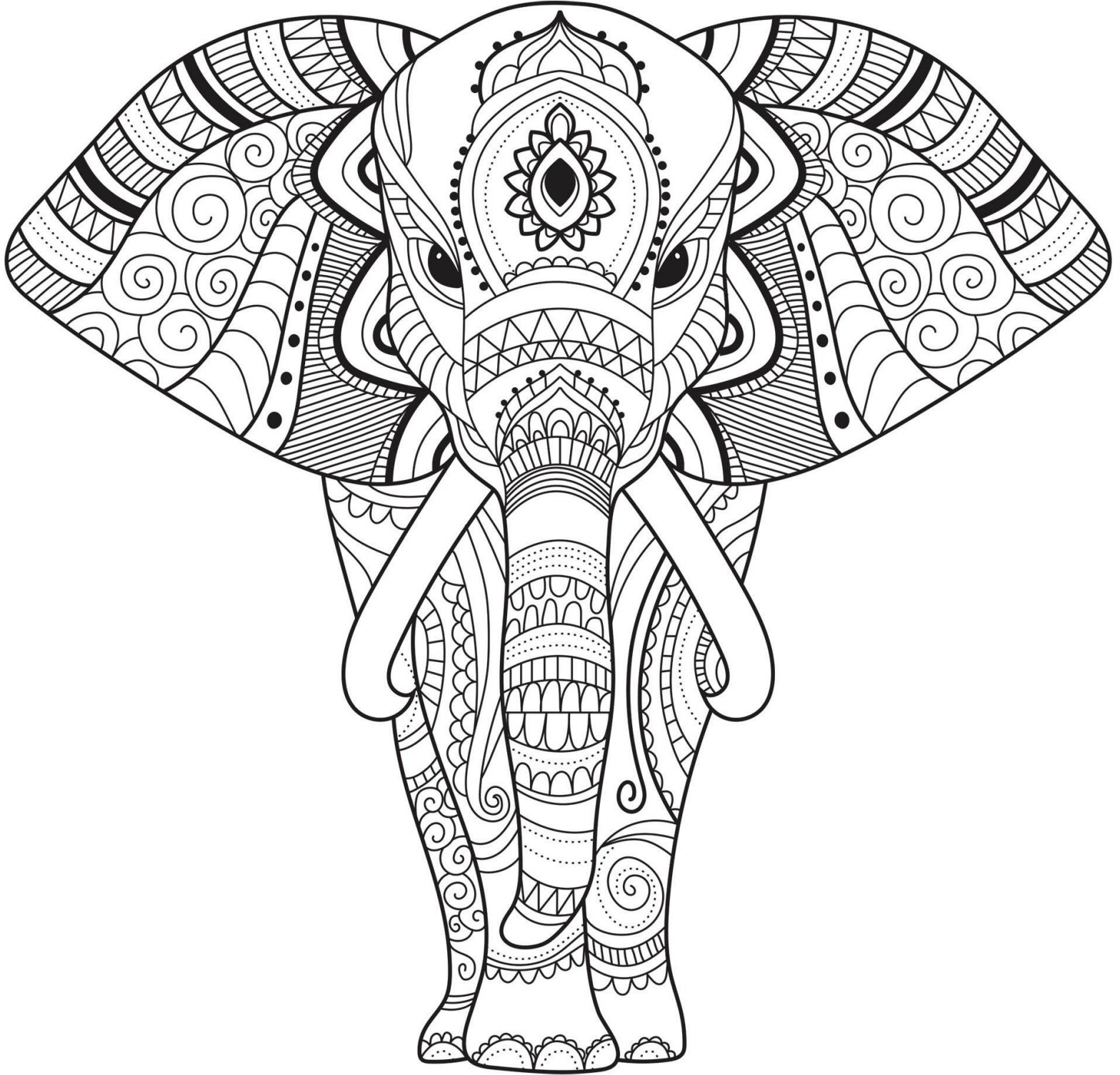
- |          |   |       |
|----------|---|-------|
| 1. _____ | → | _____ |
| 2. _____ | → | _____ |
| 3. _____ | → | _____ |
| 4. _____ | → | _____ |

*What I need to achieve this goal (resources, people, time, etc):*

### OBSTACLES THAT MAY ARISE:

### RESPONSE TO THOSE OBSTACLES:

- |          |   |       |
|----------|---|-------|
| 1. _____ | → | _____ |
| 2. _____ | → | _____ |
| 3. _____ | → | _____ |



## PART 2 – SUPPORTIVE PEOPLE



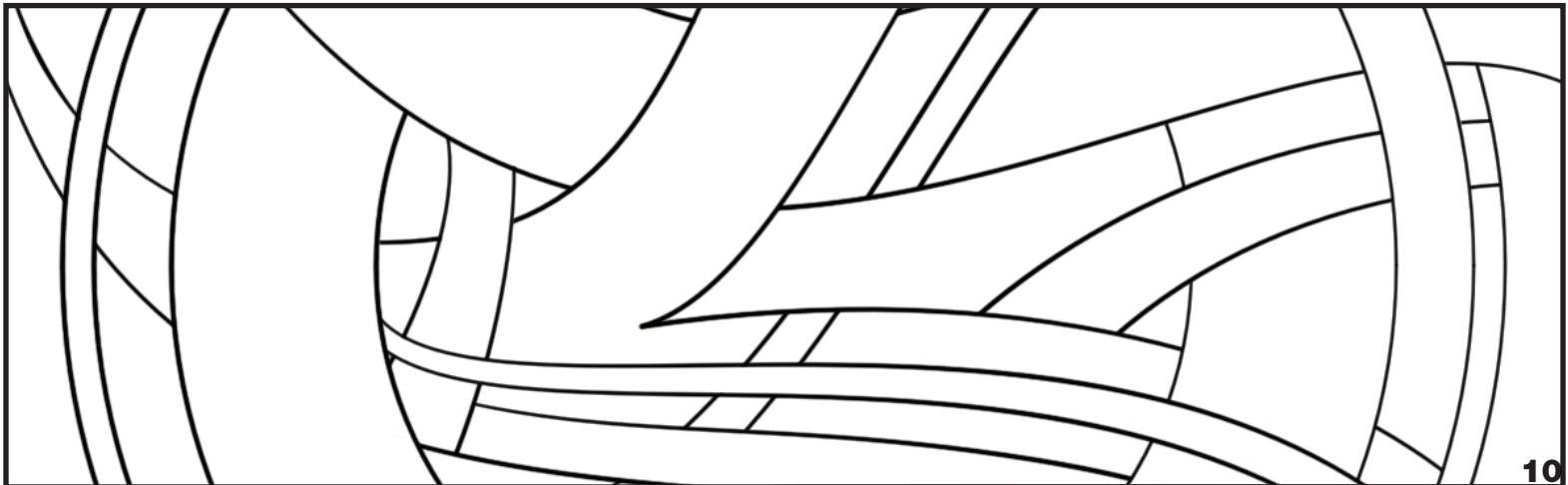
# Finding Community

It's important to build a community with others by spending time with them. Having a healthy community, whether it is with friends, family, neighbors, mentors, or romantic partners, is a vital part of life. Having people to comfort and support you, enjoy good times with, and share your inner self with can help you in your journey to creating happiness. Creating a community can enrich your life and bring you joy!



LEARN MORE

*Make a list of positive people in your life (friends, family, co-workers, etc.)*



# How do you find your community?

*First, think about the activities and interest that bring you joy!*



LEARN MORE



DISCOVER  
YOUR LOVE  
LANGUAGES



GET  
INVOLVED



GET  
HELP



# Honoring Your Values

By this point, you might be aware that your wellness is composed of many different intertwining influences. When thinking of your wellbeing, it is important to recognize how your unique personality, likes and dislikes, and values also influence your “whole self”. What you value impacts how you practice wellness and make decisions. For instance, if you prioritize family over career, you will likely be happier in a job that does not require frequent travel and overtime hours.

*Follow the QR Code to participate in an activity that will help you determine your top values.*



VALUES CARD SORT

## RANK YOUR VALUES

*Why does this matter to you?*

1. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_



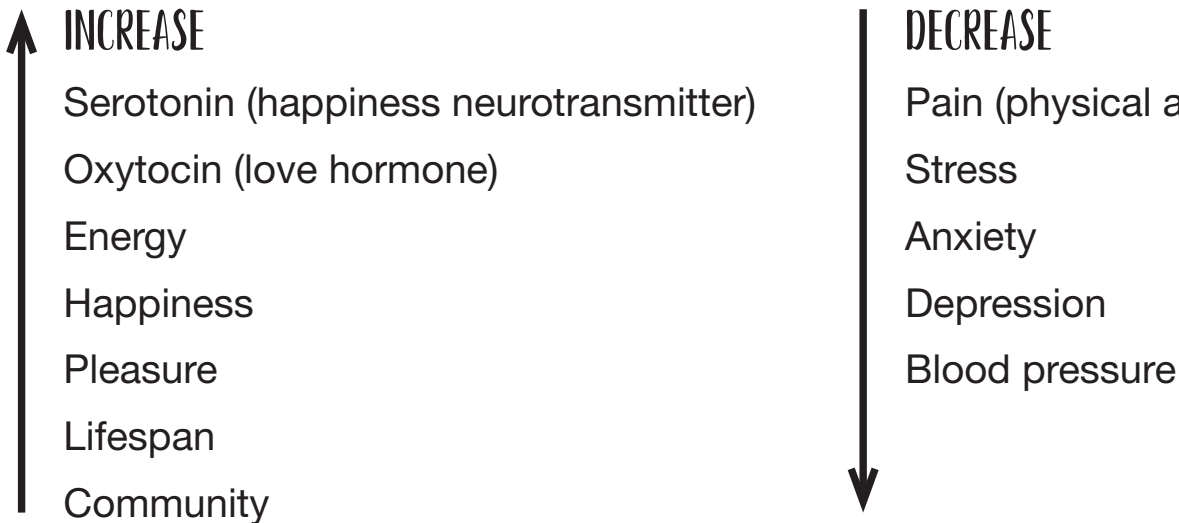
# Acts of Kindness

Either spontaneous or planned, acts of kindness are selfless acts performed for no reason other than to help or cheer someone up. Unsurprisingly, doing kind things for other people creates happiness. Acts can be as small as complimenting a stranger or as large as doing a service project in the community. Regardless of the scale, being kind to others is mutually rewarding for yourself and those around you.



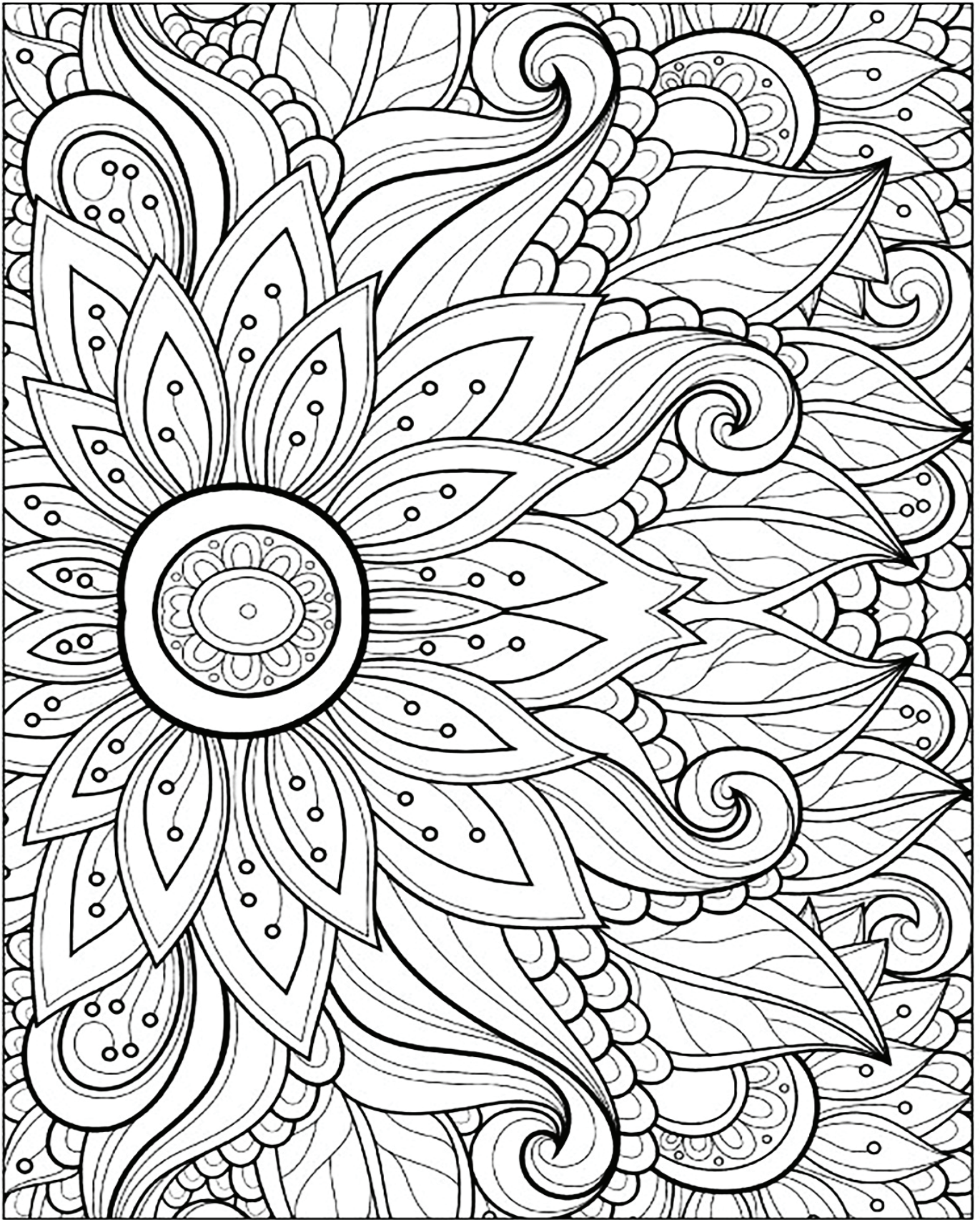
LEARN MORE

## Kindness can...



*Journal about three acts of kindness you did this week.*

Examples: complimenting someone, writing a thank you note, holding the door open, buying someone's favorite treat, etc.



## PART 3 – SHIFTING YOUR MINDSET

# Gratitude

“Gratitude is a felt sense of wonder, thankfulness, and appreciation for life.”

*-Robert Emmons, Prominent Gratitude Researcher*



## Eight Ways that Gratitude Boosts Happiness

[LEARN MORE](#)

1. Promotes the savoring of positive life experiences
2. Bolsters self-worth and self esteem
3. Gratitude helps people cope with stress and trauma
4. Expression of gratitude encourages moral behavior
5. Builds social bonds, strengthens existing relationships and nurtures new ones
6. Inhibits negative comparisons with other people
7. Incompatible with negative emotions, and may actually deter anger, bitterness, and greed
8. Gratitude helps us thwart hedonic adaptation

What is your current mood?     

*Set a timer for 3 minutes and write/draw/journal one thing you're grateful for... ready, set, GO!*

How is your mood after practicing gratitude?     

*We encourage you to try multiple ways of expressing gratitude to keep it fresh and fun for you! You can try keeping a gratitude journal, writing a letter of gratitude to someone, expressing through art, or thanking someone in person.*



# Optimism

*Highlight, circle, or underline the parts that stand out to you in the following quote:*

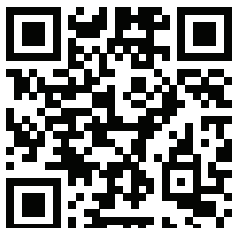
**“Cultivating optimism has a lot in common with cultivating gratitude. Both strategies involve the habit of striving to make out the positive side of your situation. Building optimism, however, is not only about celebrating the present and the past but anticipating a bright future.” -Sonja Lyubomirsky**



LEARN MORE

*Think and write about your “Best Possible Self.” Imagine yourself in the future, after everything has gone as well as it possibly could. You have worked hard and succeeded at accomplishing your life goals. Think of this as the realization of your life dreams, and of your own best potentials. This activity may take around 20 minutes for best results.*

*Where are you living, working, what do you do for fun, who are you with, etc. (Sheldon & Lyubomirsky)*



POSITIVE  
PSYCHOLOGY



MORE  
OPTIMISM  
RESOURCES

# Photo Activity: Comparison

Media creates an unrealistic standard that we constantly compare ourselves to. What if instead of comparing ourselves to the “best” version of others, we celebrate the best version of ourselves?



LEARN MORE



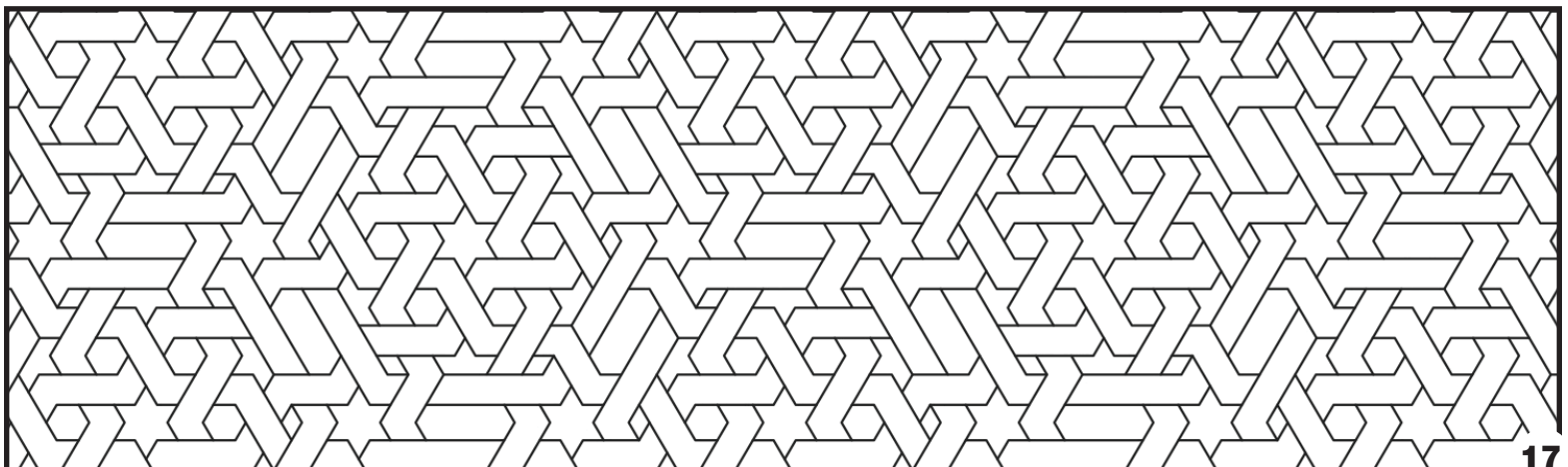
*What about this moment makes it the best version of yourself?*

## YOUR PHOTO HERE:

Select a photo you have handy (in a phone, printed, a drawing, or a written account of a memory)



*Do you find yourself being this authentic on a regular basis? If not, how can you practice finding this version of yourself again?*



# Letter to Self

*Write a letter to yourself from the perspective of the person in the picture from the previous page. What do they have to say about being true to yourself?*







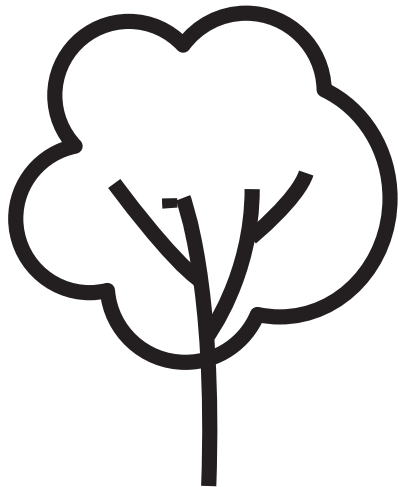
## PART 4 – MIND-BODY CONNECTION

# Mindfulness

In a world preoccupied with worrying about the future and ruminating about the past, mindfulness is a practice that grounds you in the present. Mindfulness can help you alleviate anxiety, clear your mind, and be more present. For instance, practicing mindfulness with breathing techniques before a test is a way to reduce pre-test nerves and focus more fully on the task at hand. The elements earth, wind, fire, and water can be used as ways to remember mindfulness techniques. Here, you'll find videos to help you practice grounding yourself (earth), breathing techniques (wind), boosting your imagination (fire), and ways to find your flow (water).



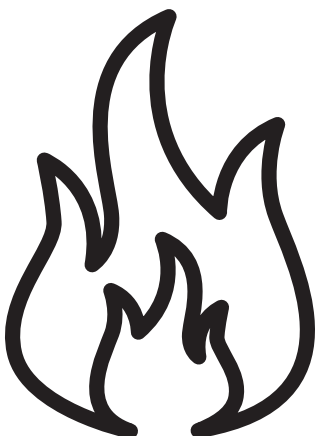
LEARN MORE



EARTH



WIND



FIRE



WATER



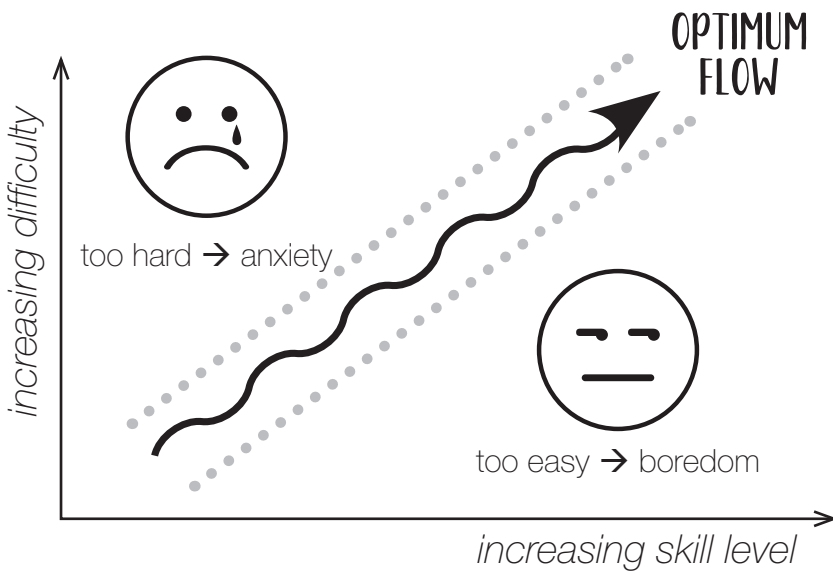
MINDFULNESS  
PRACTICE

# Flow

Flow is the positive mental state of being totally absorbed, focused, and involved in your activities; “in the zone” doing something that you enjoy and is challenging. (e.g. exercising, house cleaning, sewing/knitting, playing board games, doing homework).



LEARN MORE



List 3 of your Flow activities:

---



---



---

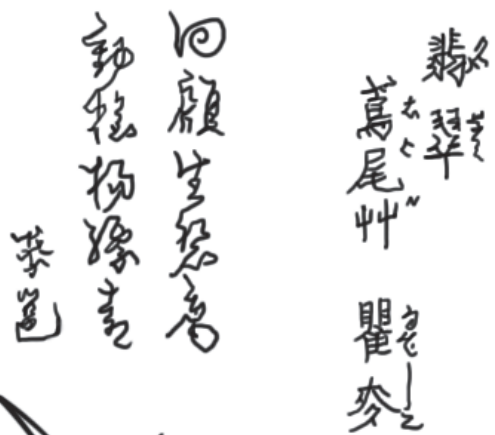
*How does your mind/body feel before and after your flow activity?*

BEFORE

AFTER







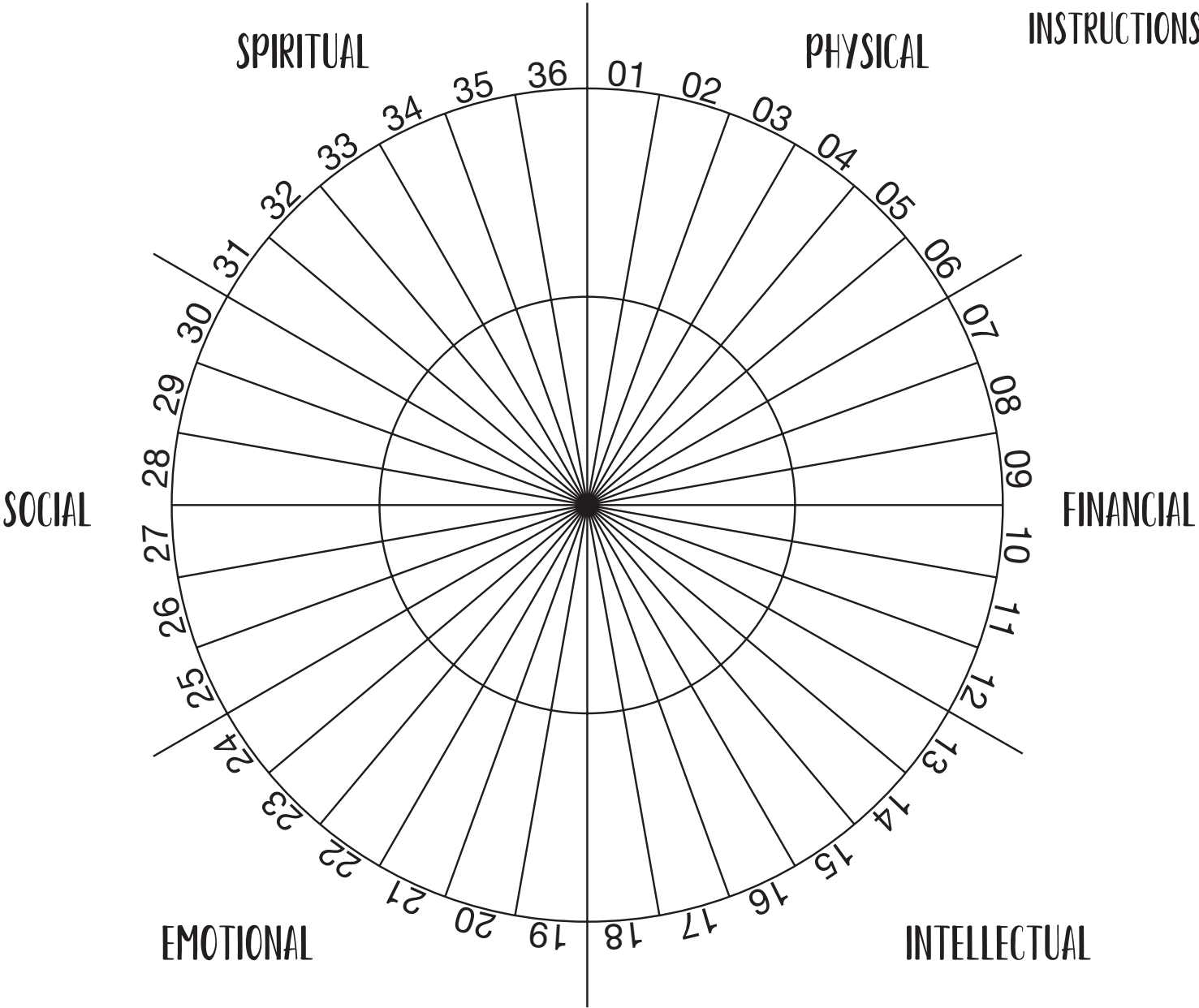
# Take Time to Reflect

Now that you're at the end of this program, let's see what progress you've made.

*Use this page to retake the Wellness Wheel Assessment and see how things have changed for you!*



ACTIVITY  
INSTRUCTIONS



HAPPINESS  
ASSESSMENT

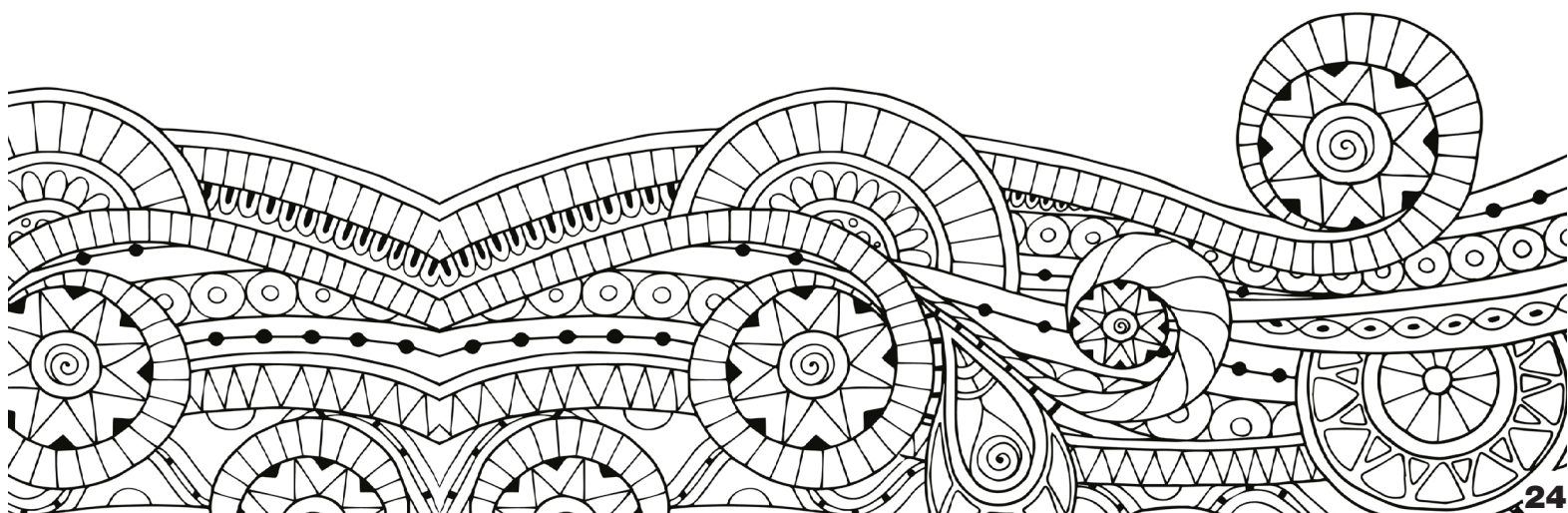
Post Happiness  
Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Post Psychological  
Wellbeing Score: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

*Describe your happiness journey while using this workbook. What does happiness mean to you now? Were there activities you really enjoyed? How do you plan to continue practicing happiness?*



# Mapping Out Your Goal

*Think back to your wellness goal on page 7 you set in the beginning of the program. You can use this page to create a visual representation of what you've done to achieve your goal. For example, you can write this goal in the center of the page and use branches to show who had helped you, how you've gotten to where you are, what steps you took, and why it matters to you. Or if you'd like, use this page as an opportunity to map out a new goal!*





# 31-Day Happiness Challenge

1

no social media

2

call (not text) a friend

3

listen to your favorite song

4

15 min of movement

5

hug someone you love

6

small act of kindness

7

watch a funny movie

8

stretch for 5 min

9

dance to happy music

10

imagine positive outcomes

11

eat your favorite treat

12

color a picture

13

wear your favorite outfit

14

read for fun

15

go for a walk

16

spend time with loved one

17

drive/walk without a destination

18

eat a nutritious meal

19

take a nap

20

write down strengths

21

declutter your room

22

meditate

23

be in nature

24

write 5 things to be grateful for

25

journal about self love

26

write a thank you card

27

practice spirituality

28

volunteer

29

be creative

30

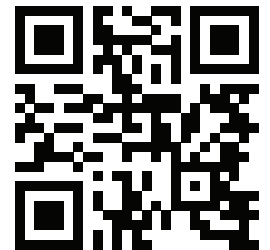
coffee with a friend

31

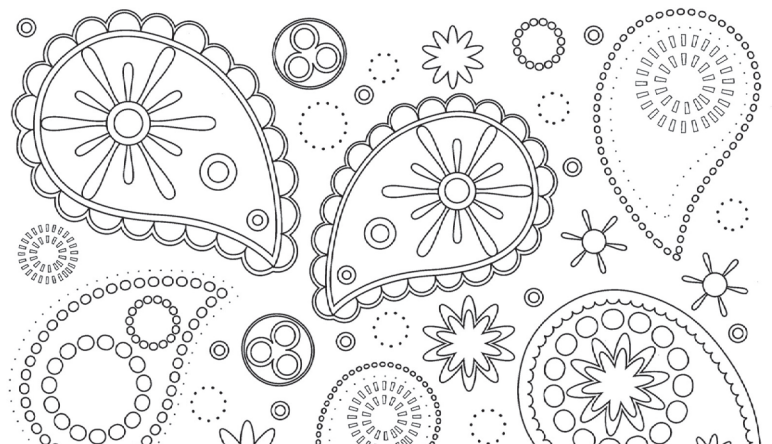
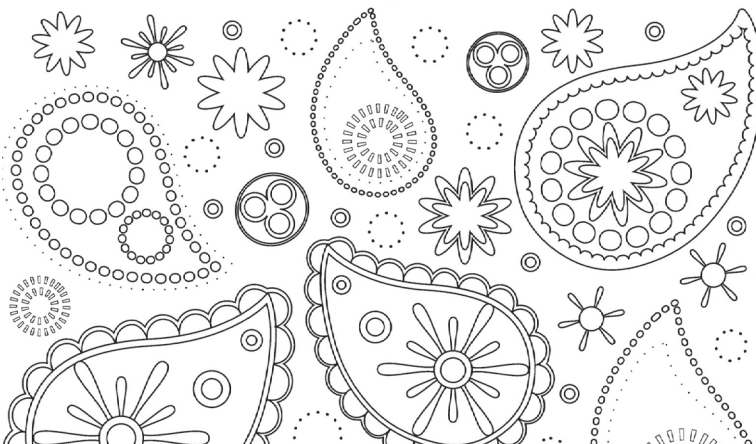
revisit a goal



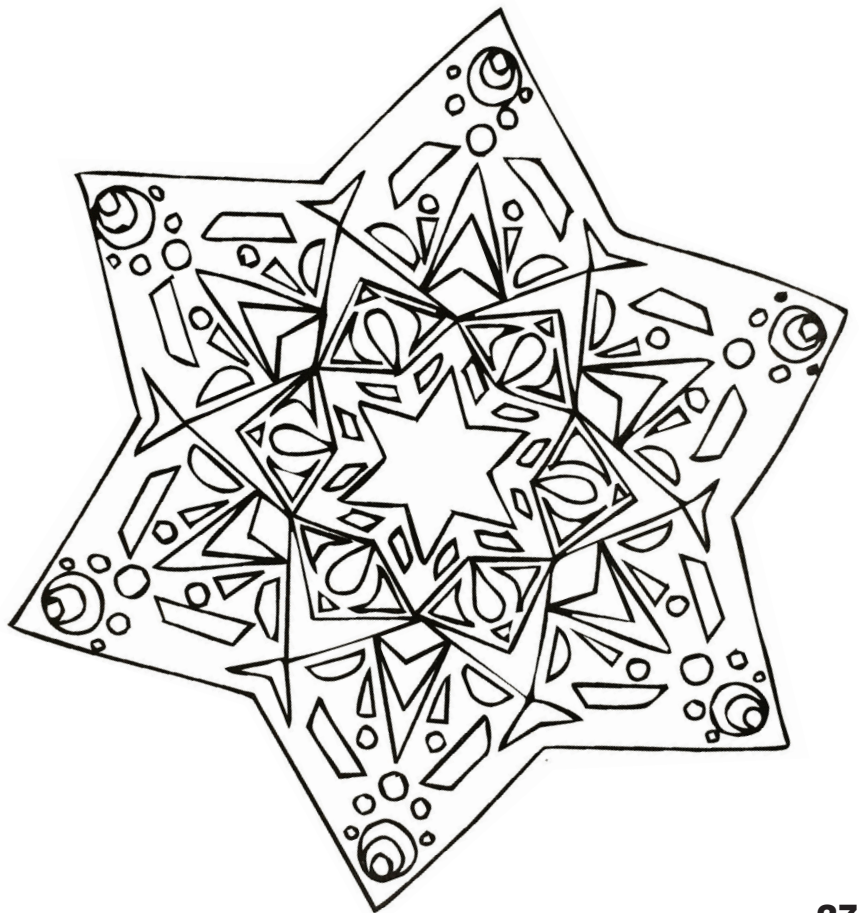
OTHER CHALLENGES



GIVE US FEEDBACK



# Notes



# RESOURCES

Can't scan QR codes?  
All linked resources can be found on:  
[uccs.edu/happiness](https://uccs.edu/happiness)

## **Additional Campus Resources:**

Gallogly Recreation and Wellness Center

Mental health services: [recwellness.uccs.edu/mental-health-services](https://recwellness.uccs.edu/mental-health-services)

Health services: [recwellness.uccs.edu/health-services](https://recwellness.uccs.edu/health-services)

Nutrition: [recwellness.uccs.edu/nutrition](https://recwellness.uccs.edu/nutrition)

Campus Recreation: [recwellness.uccs.edu/campus-rec](https://recwellness.uccs.edu/campus-rec)

Wellness Promotion: [recwellness.uccs.edu/wellness](https://recwellness.uccs.edu/wellness)

Emergency assistance and reporting crime: [police.uccs.edu](https://police.uccs.edu)

Student advocates: [dos.uccs.edu](https://dos.uccs.edu)

Resources relating to healthy relationships: [roc.uccs.edu](https://roc.uccs.edu)

Report sexual misconduct, harassment, or discrimination:  
[equity.uccs.edu](https://equity.uccs.edu)

LGBTQIA+ and Multicultural Center: [mosaic.uccs.edu](https://mosaic.uccs.edu)

Campus involvement and community service: [studentlife.uccs.edu](https://studentlife.uccs.edu)

Help navigating classes: [advising.uccs.edu](https://advising.uccs.edu)

Military and veteran assistance: [military.uccs.edu](https://military.uccs.edu)

Trauma training program: <https://resilience.uccs.edu/training-and-education/trauma-programs/certificate-programs>



Wellness Center

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO  
COLORADO SPRINGS

[wellness@uccs.edu](mailto:wellness@uccs.edu) | 719-255-4444

Mon-Fri 8am-5pm