This is a meditation and journaling activity. It is a way to refocus and look for hope. If you feel safe sharing your thoughts with someone else, you might discover that you have things in common, too.

All feelings are welcome here.

You will need writing or drawing tools (one or many colors are fine).

Sometimes strong feelings come up when we are challenged or stressed. If we can name a feeling, we can manage it better. Some feeling words are:

- Uneasy
- Pleased
- Calm
- Down
- Stressed
- Joyful
- Chill
- Sad
- Worried
- Focused
- Relaxed
- Bored
- Annoyed
- Excited
- Grateful
- Lonely
- Angry
- Inspired
- Balanced
- Depressed
- Nervous
- Surprised
- Peaceful
- Hopeless
- Concerned
- Energized
- Carefree
- Discouraged

Check In

If strong feelings come up for you, ask yourself:

“What do I need?”

You might notice that you need to take a break, get a drink of water, take a deep breath or something else. Come back when you’re ready.
Step 1: Settle In

Read the steps all the way through, then give them a try.

1. Draw a large circle in the middle of the space to the right. As you do, notice how your pencil or pen moves around the paper. This will help you focus your attention.

2. What are you thinking about right now? What are you feeling? Inside the circle, write a few words that describe your thoughts and feelings. Maybe use some of the ‘feeling words’ on the cover if you’d like help getting started. This will help bring your attention to yourself.

3. Which thoughts and feelings do you find distracting? Imagine that you can move them outside of the circle. Draw arrows that ‘move’ those words out of your circle of attention. This will help you notice how your thoughts and feelings affect you.

4. When you moved those thoughts and feelings out, did any new thoughts or feelings come up? If so, write them inside your circle of attention. This will help you notice how your thoughts and feelings can change.

An example:

- Sad
- Calm
- Tired
- Curious
Step 2
Notice What's Outside

Choose one artwork from the packet that you feel connected to today. Look at it carefully. Read the following three steps all the way through, then give them a try.

A. Focus your eyes and your attention on your chosen artwork.

B. Take a few breaths.
   Breathe in and out slowly.

C. Spend at least one minute just breathing and looking at the artwork. Try not to tell stories yet. If this is tricky, try to notice the colors first. Then notice the lines and shapes. Look again for something you didn't see before.

Draw a simple outline of the artwork in the space to the right. Next, add descriptions. Write short phrases that describe what you see. Write them on the outline in the same place that they appear in the artwork.

- Use phrases, not full sentences.
  For example: "drooping laundry" or "candy-colored buildings".

- Use adjectives, nouns, and verbs.
  For example: "tired eyes searching" or "green grass reaching".

Read all of your phrases. Which one feels the most important to you right now? Circle it.
**Step 3**

**Look Inside**

1. Look at the artwork again. This time check in with your feelings. As you let your eyes wander over the artwork, which three feeling words from the cover come to mind? Add those words to your word sketch on page 3. Circle each of these new feeling words.

2. Why might you feel this way? Fill up the space below with your writing. If you have any trouble getting started, use the sentence stems:

   1. *I feel...* [Say more about the feelings that you wrote in your word sketch.]
   2. *Is it because...?* [Why do you think you feel that way?]
Hope is when you think a good thing could happen. It is possible for us to look for things to be hopeful about, even when we feel lots of feelings. Sometimes you can even help those good things become a reality.

1. Let's figure out what hope is, for you!
   - What does “hope” mean to you? Brainstorm 2-3 ideas.
   - Where do you find hope in your chosen artwork? It could be a color, a symbol, anything that connects to hope for you. Write “hope” on your word sketch on page 3 in that place. Circle this new feeling word.

   Sometimes hope can be hard to find. If you can’t find hope in this artwork, is there anything you could add to this piece to bring in hope? Is there anything this artwork needs?

2. Writing is a way to connect with yourself. Imagine the artwork can hear you. Write directly to the artwork as though you are speaking to it. Tell the artwork where you find hope in it and how that hope connects with you.

   I see hope in your... [what?] because... [why?]
   You are like me when I [do or feel what?]
Step 4
Connect and Look for Hope

Go back to your word sketch. Find something that you wrote that feels connected to you now. Imagine that you are that person or thing speaking to you about hope. From that perspective, consider: What does that person or thing wish for you? Write it in the space below.

Step 5
Reflect

Life can sometimes feel lonely. Finding hope and connection can help us manage.

Re-read all of your circled words from the word sketch.

- How did your feelings change, if at all, as you focused on the artwork?
- What did you discover about hope?
- What did you discover about yourself?
- Now that you’re in a hopeful mindset, what else makes you hopeful?

This journaling activity can be used with other artworks, music, dance, or any creative expression.
Try with another artwork!
Resilience is a person’s ability to adjust and grow when they are challenged. We can grow our resilience like we grow our muscles. When we are resilient, we know ways to find hope and navigate new challenges. As you live your life and manage difficult times, practice naming your feelings. Check in with yourself by taking deep breaths. Write as a way to reflect. Look for hope.