



GARDEN OF SELF-DISCOVERY

A

Reflective

Journey



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Disclaimer:

The activities and prompts in this document are intended to spark curiosity and reflection. They are suggestions, not medical advice, and are not meant to replace professional therapy or counseling. By engaging in these reflections, you are taking responsibility for your own actions and personal journey. If you are experiencing emotional or mental health concerns, please consult with a licensed therapist or healthcare provider.



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A Reflective Journey

Introduction:

Have you ever taken a moment to pause? To truly honour the essence of who you are, what you are passionate about, your values, and aspirations?

I welcome you into this activity as it is a resource or tool that can support you as you imagine and discover your life within the framework of a garden, with each thought, achievement, and aspiration growing into something vibrant and meaningful. This reflective exercise invites you to nurture your "Garden of Self-discovery" through mindful journaling and introspection. The original activity was from "The Bean Story," where I welcomed kids to create their "Garden of Self-discovery" using pictures, glue and markers. By all means, if you'd like to invite your inner child to create a visual garden, I encourage it with all of my heart. Bring out the markers!

Let's create a symbolic "garden" that celebrates personal growth and self-discovery.

Materials Needed:

- **A journal or notebook**
- **A pen or pencil**
- **A quiet, comfortable space**
- **Optional: Stickers or decorative items**

**"Pause in this moment with awareness,
compassion and trust."**

- Darlene Wierski-Devoe

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Cultivating Your "Garden of Self-discovery":

Preparing your space:

Find a calm space where you can focus without any distractions. Consider lighting a candle, playing soft music, or practicing a few moments of deep breathing to center and ground yourself.

Similarly, you may find comfort and focus at a cafe or local library.

Remember, whatever you choose is best for your innate unique process.

Also, think about timing. Allow enough time so you do not rush the process. Perhaps carve out 45-60 minutes. However, this is only a rough guide. Things might come to you quickly, or you may want to linger more.

Just before you begin:

Ground Yourself by taking a full breath through your nose and exhaling fully through your mouth with a gentle sigh.

Repeat once more. Let your body relax into this moment.

This activity is for you. There is no judgment, no should have, would have or could have's. There is gratitude for all that comes forward.

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Preparing the Soil (Mindful Care and Growth):

Self-Care

Like a thriving garden, your growth begins with mindful care and attention. From the very first seed you plant, your awareness and dedication shape what blossoms. Tuning in to your garden's needs strengthens everything you are cultivating.

Take a moment to reflect on how you support yourself in growing the life you desire:

- How do I practice self-care?
- What habits or routines nourish my growth?
- What affirmations can nurture my forward growth?

Take a moment to jot this down.

Affirmations

Affirmations are like a gentle rain soak, nurturing growth with kindness, appreciation, love and intention. Remember, affirmations are most potent when framed in a positive voice. For example, instead of saying, 'I will not fail,' you can say, 'I am capable and strong.' Celebrate all that you are and send some self-compassion inward.

Take a moment to jot this down.

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Core Values

Take a few moments to reflect on your core values—the beliefs and ideals that shape your choices, actions, and perspective on life. Your values are your inner compass, guiding you toward alignment and fulfillment. As you pause to connect with them, ask yourself:

- What are my deepest values?
- What truly matters to me at my core - right here and now?

Allow yourself the grace and space to explore these questions with curiosity and openness. These values are the seeds of your personal growth. By identifying them, you are setting the foundation for the life you wish to cultivate.

Take a moment to jot this down.

Planting the Seeds (Defining Your Growth)

Before a garden can flourish, you must choose the seeds you wish to plant. Your seeds represent the values, dreams, and goals that align with who you are and who you are becoming.

Take a moment to reflect on what growth is calling you.

- What areas of your life do you want to nurture?
- What intentions feel most meaningful at this time?

Write down 3-5 seeds—these areas of growth you are ready to cultivate.

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Mapping Your Garden (Prioritizing Growth)

Now that you have planted your seeds, it's time to consider how they will grow. Just as a thriving garden requires intention and care, your journey needs thoughtful planning. Take a few minutes to reflect on the following:

- Which of my seeds (values/goals) feels most ready to grow right now?
- What small steps can I take to nurture this growth?
- What resources or support do I need to help this seed flourish?
- Which seeds will take longer to grow, and how can I tend to them with patience?
- How will I celebrate my progress along the way?

By answering these questions, you are designing your garden—deciding where to focus your energy first and how to create the best conditions for success.

What seeds will you plant? Take a moment to jot this down.

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Water Your Garden (Your Strengths):

Your garden needs water to thrive. Nurture your personal growth by recognizing your strengths, achievements and resilience. Take a few moments to reflect on your journey and acknowledge the resilience that has brought you here. Ask yourself:

- What am I proud of?
- What challenges have I overcome?
- What qualities or strengths have helped me along the way?

Create a bullet list of moments—big or small—that celebrate you! This includes reflection around areas you've grown, experiences where you've persevered and shown resilience and of course all of your abilities, strength and past achievements. Every success, no matter its size, is a vital part of your flourishing garden.

Take a moment to jot this down.

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Let Your Dreams Bloom (Your Aspirations):

Can you visualize the future that you desire? Imagine that you've already achieved your goals —what does it feel like? Close your eyes and fully embrace the sensation of living your dreams.

Ask yourself:

- When my goal is completed what does it feel like in my body?
- How does my life look when I am aligned with my deepest aspirations?
- What emotions arise when I visualize my dreams sprouting, blooming and flourishing?

Allow yourself to embody these feelings and experiences, knowing that your dreams are already taking root. Write down what you see, feel, and experience as you connect with the future that is unfolding before you.

Take a moment to jot this down.

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Seeds to ponder:

Take a moment to review what you've written.

How is your garden taking shape? Can you see how many wonderful things you bring into this world through your "Garden of Self-discovery"? Your garden isn't just a snapshot—it's a living, growing and glowing reflection of you.

This reflective activity is not just a one-time exercise; it is a valuable tool you can revisit whenever you need clarity, inspiration, or a reminder of your strengths and values. Think of it as a bit of self-love or self-care.

Remember, personal growth is a gradual process that requires intention, compassion, and a willingness to trust the process. No matter how small, each step you take it brings you closer to nurturing your "Garden of Self-Discovery."

One last thought:

I invite you to celebrate all of your victories - all of you! Keep being one amazing human BEAN!

You got this!

"It never hurts to try"
- Darlene Wierski-Devoe