



Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence

*Taking Care of Me:
My Journey to Wellness*



Welcome!

Dear Hearts,

We want to welcome you to the "Taking Care of Me" workbook. We are so happy that you are taking time out of your day to focus on you.

We created this knowing that it can be hard to find time to do something nice for yourself and to really take care of your mind, body and soul. Our hope is that no matter where you are in your journey, this workbook inspires and supports you to make your self-care a priority and create your happiest, most nurtured and fulfilled life.

This workbook was created by the Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence to support survivors and anyone working on their own journey to wellness. Included in this workbook are some of our favorite wellness activities and resources to support overall health. Each is a short and simple way to focus on you. Between each resource you will find a coloring page with a message to consider for the day. We hope this will give you a space to be yourself and focus on you because you deserve it!

We hope you enjoy this workbook and share it with anyone that you feel might benefit from it. As you are on this wellness journey remember to give yourself some grace and know that you are STRONG, BEAUTIFUL, and WORTHY of all you desire!

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What you'll find inside...

My Wellness Plan.....	1
Vision Boarding.....	3
Mindful Walking & Eating.....	4
Reflection Points.....	5 & 12
Journaling.....	6
Grounding Techniques.....	8
Help Now! Skills.....	9
Health Tips.....	11
Resources - Apps, Books & Podcasts.....	13



My Wellness Plan

My name is _____

The advocate I am working with is _____

When I am feeling well, this is what I'm like: _____

Situations that are hard for me or make me upset are: _____

This is what my body feels like when I'm starting to get upset: _____


Sometimes I can calm myself down by: _____

I may need help calming down if this starts to happen: _____

Staff can help me by: _____

I could also call _____ to help me. It is ok for you to call them.

After I am calm again, I usually like to _____



*I am
loved!*

Self-Care Activity: Vision Boarding

Describe the self-care practices you envision below:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Step 1: Materials needed: Poster board or large construction paper, magazines, markers, scissors, glue, stickers, glitter, and anything you feel you need to bring your vision to life.

Step 2: Set the mood with music, audiobook, grab a snack, something to drink, and make it a celebration!

Step 3: Use the material to create your vision! Have fun!

Self-Care Activity: Mindful Walking & Mindful Eating

Mindful walking simply means walking while being aware of each step and of our breath. It can be practiced anywhere, whether you are alone in nature or with others. Benefits include:

- Connects you more deeply with the environment
- Gets you out of your head
- Strengthens concentration
- Helps you get to know your body
- Helps you connect to the present moment

To practice mindful walking, you'll want to:

- Feel your feet connecting with the ground. What do you feel?
- Listen closely to the sounds around you. What do you hear?
- Breathe deeply through your nose. What do you smell?
- Look around your environment. What do you notice?

Mindful eating is another key wellness journey for many people. Steps for mindful eating include:

- 1. Set the stage:** Before you begin eating, eliminate distractions such as the television and cell phone. Serve out your portions and sit down at the table.
- 2. Reflect for a moment:** How are you feeling in this moment? Are you in a hurry? Are you stressed? Are you excited? Just notice where you are in this present moment.
- 3.** As you begin to eat try to chew your food at least 30 times. Notice the smell, the taste, and the texture before swallowing. Put down your utensil in between bites.
- 4.** When you are full (not when the plate is clean), stop eating. Sit for a moment in silence if possible. What are you grateful for?
- 5.** What was this experience like?



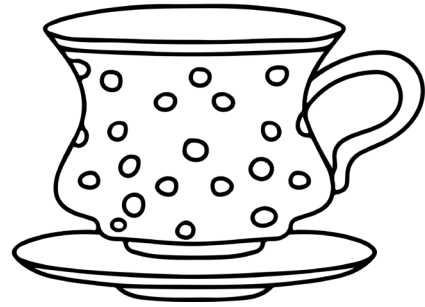
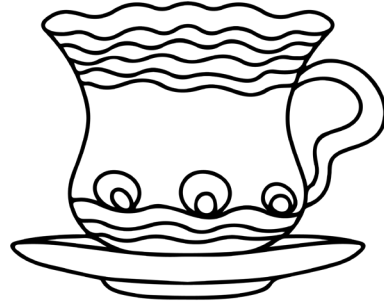
Reflection Points

3 Things that fill my cup...

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



3 Things that I need to let go...

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



Self-Care Activity: Journaling

Journaling is a powerful wellness tool that allows for self-expression and reflection. Pouring words from your mind onto paper can be healing and it can also be fun. So grab a journal and use these helpful prompts to begin your reflection!

1. What do you love about yourself?
2. What are 3 goals you want to achieve?
3. What would you like your life to look like in 5 years? 15 years?
4. What are 2 things that you're good at?
5. Write a letter to your 13-year-old self.
6. If you could be granted 3 wishes, what would they be?
7. List 5 things for which you are grateful.
8. Name 2 things that make you happy.
9. If you could visit any place in the world, where would you go?
10. Who are the people in your life that you admire? Why do you admire them?
11. What is your favorite quote and why?
12. What would you like to make more time for and why?
13. What makes you feel powerful?
14. How do you recharge?
15. What makes you feel calm?
16. Name something you would like to try and why?
17. Name 3 things you are really looking forward to.
18. What does your perfect morning look like? Evening?
19. What would you like to let go of?
20. If you could only eat one thing for the rest of your life, what would it be and why?
21. What color describes you and why?
22. List 10 songs that bring you joy.
23. What does happiness mean to you?
24. If you won a trip to your favorite place, who would you bring and why?
25. Describe yourself with 5 words.
26. What are you most proud of?
27. What is your happiest memory?





*I am
beautiful!*

Grounding Techniques

Grounding is a coping strategy that helps to “ground” you when you are overwhelmed or dealing with a lot of stress. It regulates your nervous system and helps to connect your mind and body with the present moment.

Breathe

Try what’s called “Boxed Breathing,” in which you’ll breathe in for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds, breathe out for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds, and so on until you feel grounded. You can also tighten your muscles and release them while breathing, focusing on the breath and practicing mindfulness all the way through.

Stretch

You can perform light stretches while you focus on your breath as well, paying close attention to the physical sensations that arise from the activity.

Exercise

With an emphasis on the physicality of your exertions, exercise is an effective way to get back into your body. Whether simple jumping jacks or a long run on a trail, feeling the sensations of exercise on your body can bring you back from a place of panic.

Mindfulness

Whether you engage your senses through a “5, 4, 3, 2, 1” exercise, — where you identify 5 objects, 4 different sounds, 3 textures, 2 smells, and 1 taste — or by simply focusing your awareness on the present moment and bodily sensation, it’s important to draw your attention to the present.

Senses

Focus on a particular sensation like holding an ice cube and noticing what it feels like or smelling an essential oil.



Self-Care Activity: Help Now! Skills

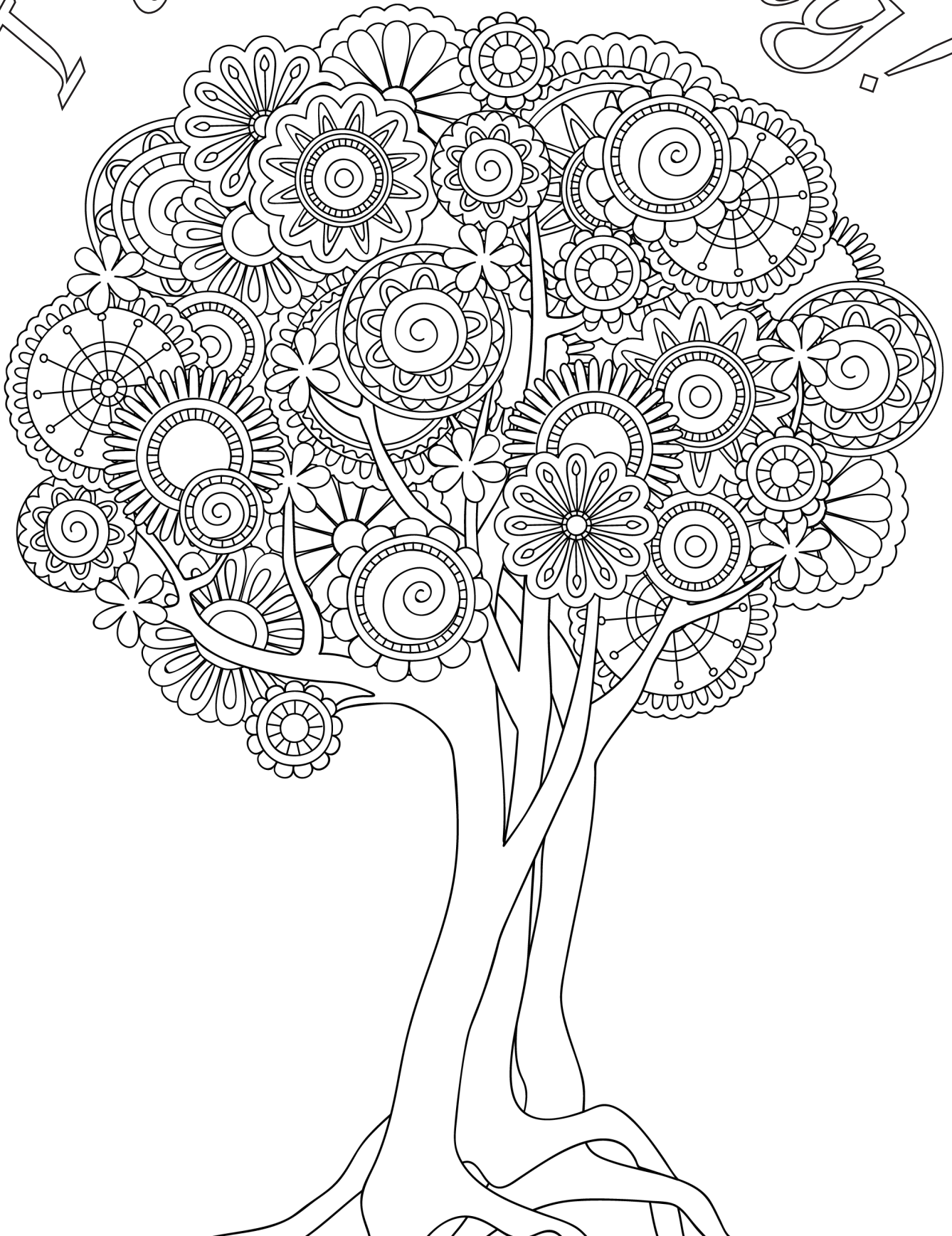
Community Resilience Model (CRM)[®] Help Now! skills help to regulate the nervous system, focus on something besides being overwhelmed, and bring you back to balance. If you get bumped out of your resilience zone, these skills can restore balance to your body, mind, and spirit.

Help Now!

1. Drink a glass of water, juice, or tea.
2. Look around the room or wherever you are, paying attention to anything that catches your attention.
3. Name six colors you see in the room (or outside).
4. Open your eyes if they tend to shut.
5. Count backwards from 20 as you walk around the room.
6. If you are inside, notice the furniture and touch the surface, noticing if it is hard, soft, rough, etc.
7. Notice the temperature of the room.
8. Notice the sounds within the room and outside.
9. Walk inside or outside and pay attention to the movement in your arms and legs and how your feet are making contact with the ground.
10. Push your hands against the wall or door slowly and notice your muscles pushing, or push your back against the wall, facing outward.

mindfulness

I am strong!



Health Tips: Rest & Hydration

Healthy Sleep

Sleep is absolutely critical for our health, safety and success. Sleep deprivation is a real problem that may cause issues with memory, attention, mood regulation, complex thought, motor responses to stimuli, and performance at work or school. Here are a few tips to help you fall asleep courtesy of the American Sleep Association:

Have a ritual – go to bed at the same time. Wake up at the same time.

Calm yourself before bedtime – Many enjoy yoga, a hot shower or bath, or listening to soothing music.

Avoid things that will keep you awake – this includes avoiding alcohol and caffeine before bedtime. Don't exercise right before bedtime.

Don't watch TV or read in bed – you only want to associate your bed and bedroom with sleep.

Don't stress out about not falling asleep. If you have a bad night, or find yourself awake for longer than expected, don't be upset at yourself.

Create a bedroom sanctuary - Create a calming bedroom with things like weighted blankets, essential oil diffusers, soft music, and dim lighting.

Healthy Hydration

Getting enough water every day is important for your health. Water helps keep your body temperature normal, lubricates and cushions joints, and helps your body get rid of waste. Here are some healthy drinking tips courtesy of the CDC:

Carry a water bottle for easy access when you are at work or running errands.

Freeze some freezer safe water bottles so that you have ice-cold water all day long.

Choose water instead of sugar-sweetened beverages. Substituting water for one 20-ounce sugar sweetened soda will save you about 240 calories.

Add a wedge of lime or lemon to your water to help improve the taste and help you drink more water than you usually do.

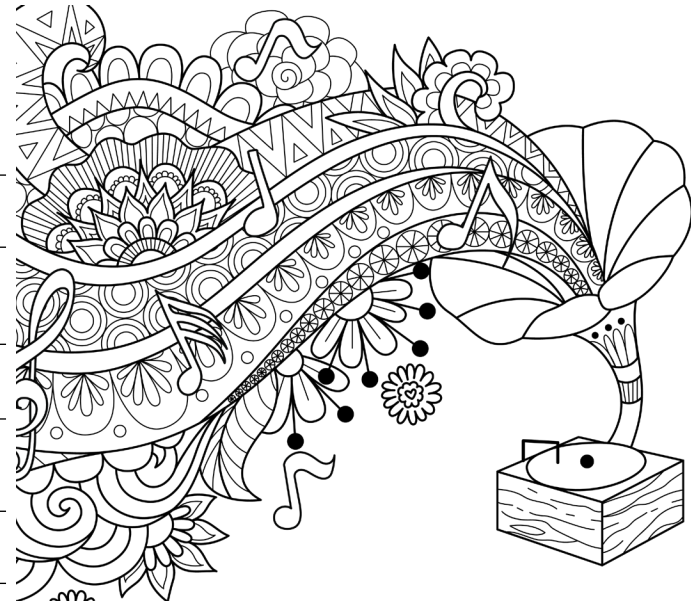
Reflection Points

3 Songs that bring me joy...

- 1. _____

- 2. _____

- 3. _____

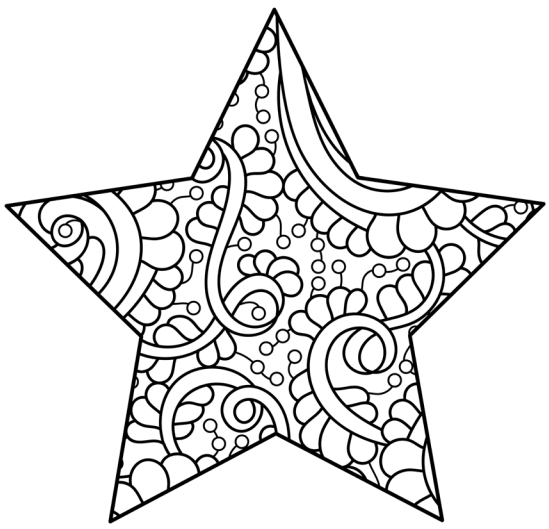


3 Things that I am most proud of...

- 1. _____

- 2. _____

- 3. _____



Resource Page: Wellness Apps

Check out these handy apps that may help you on your wellness journey. Whether it's helping you manage stress, soothing you to sleep, or supporting mindfulness, these apps can help give your mind, body and soul a boost! All are available in the iTunes Store or Google Play.

Breathe2Relax

Breathe2Relax is a portable stress management tool which provides detailed information on the effects of stress on the body and instructions and practice exercises to help users learn the stress management skill called diaphragmatic breathing.



Buddhify

Whether you're looking to reduce stress and anxiety, or get a better night's sleep buddhify has easy-to-follow guided meditations to help you live happier and healthier.

Calm

Calm is the perfect mindfulness app for beginners, but also includes hundreds of programs for intermediate and advanced users. Guided meditation sessions are available in lengths of 3, 5, 10, 15, 20 or 25 minutes to fit with your schedule.

Headspace

Headspace is your guide to mindfulness for your everyday life. Learn meditation and mindfulness skills from world-class experts and develop tools to help you focus, breathe, stay calm, and create balance in your life.

The Mindfulness App

Enjoy a more restful sleep, stress less, and reduce your anxiety together with The Mindfulness App. With over 300 guided meditations and courses from experts around the world, it has options for every mood and every time of the day.

Resource Page: Books & Podcasts

Here are some book and podcast suggestions to support your wellness journey!

Podcasts

Just Ingredients - A place to find all the best ingredients for life and talk about all things nourishing for the mind, body and soul! Just Ingredients believes that nature provides the necessary nutrition in order for people to live healthy, happy lives full of energy and inspires others to make a change in their eating habits and daily product use.

TED Talks Health - What does exercise do to your brain? Can psychedelics treat depression? From smart daily habits to new medical breakthroughs, welcome to TED Health! TED speakers answer questions you never even knew you had, and share ideas you won't hear anywhere else, all around how we can live healthier lives.

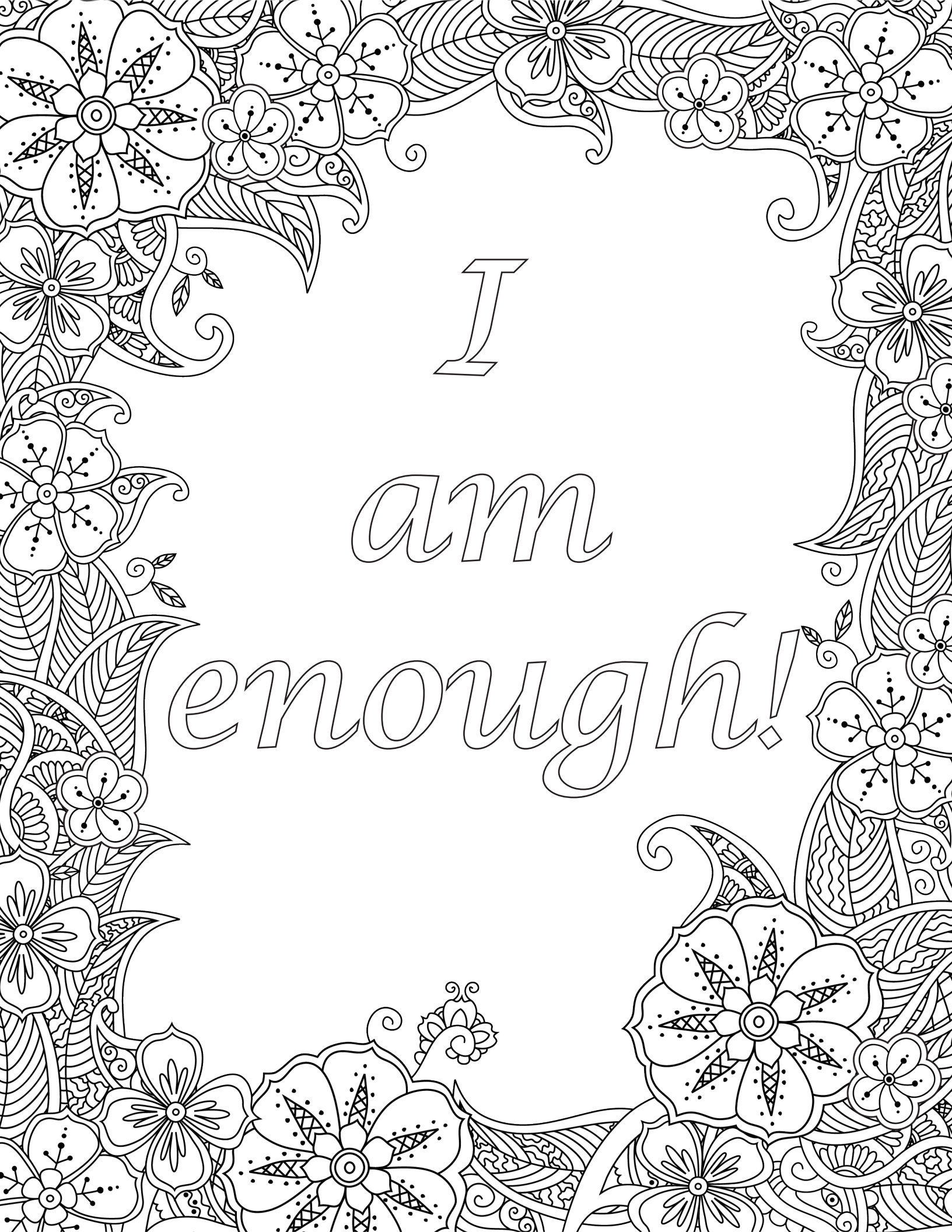
The Happiness Lab - You might think more money, a better job, or Instagram-worthy vacations would make you happy. You'd be wrong. The Happiness Lab podcast will take you through the latest scientific research and share some surprising and inspiring stories that will forever alter the way you think about happiness.

Books

The Body Keeps the Score - *Bessel Van der Kolk* uses recent scientific advances to show how trauma literally reshapes both body and brain, compromising sufferers' capacities for pleasure, engagement, self-control, and trust. He explores innovative treatments that offer new paths to recovery by activating the brain's natural neuroplasticity.

Rising Strong - *Brené Brown* has ignited a global conversation on courage, vulnerability, shame, and worthiness. *Rising Strong* explores the power of emotion and the courage to lean in to discomfort, rumbling with our stories until we get to a place of truth.

You are Your Best Thing - *Tarana Burke and Brené Brown* usher in this stark, potent collection of essays on black shame and healing. Along with the anthology contributors, they create a space to recognize and process the trauma of white supremacy, a space to be vulnerable and affirm the fullness of black love and black life.



I
am
enough!

cca | DV

Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence

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