

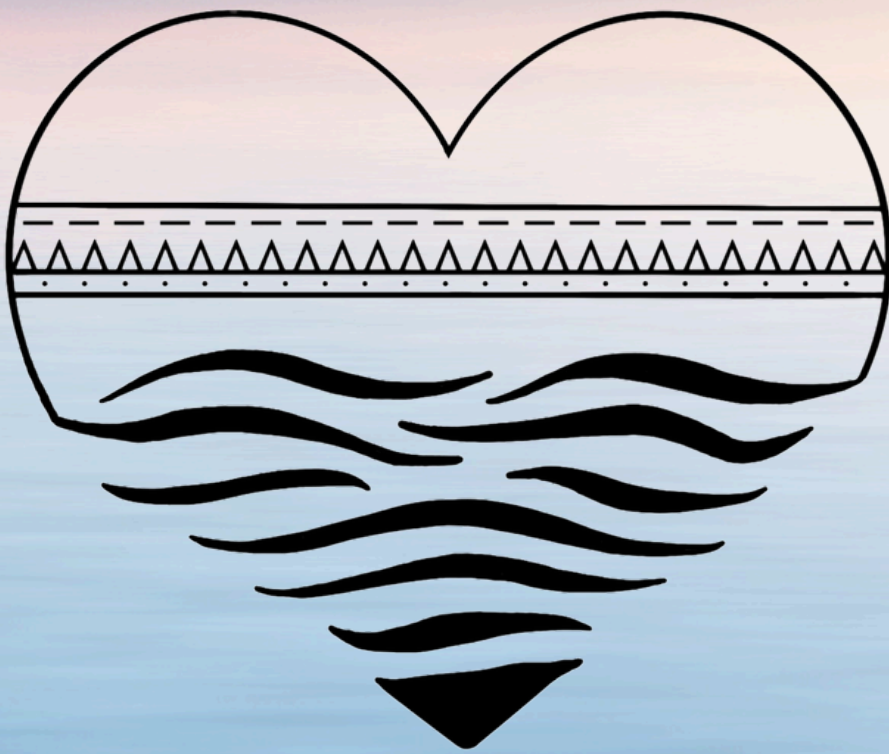
Section 1:

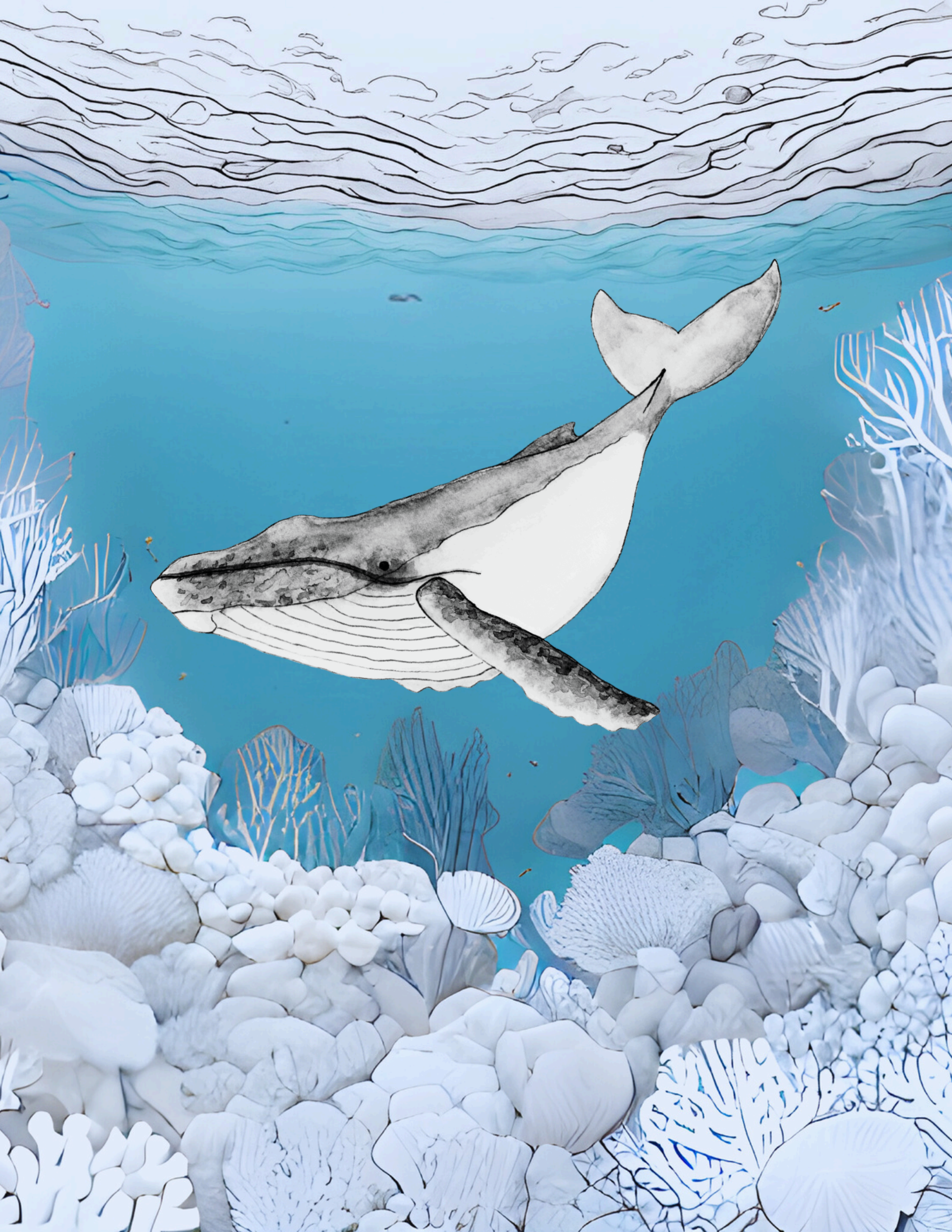
UNDERSTANDING GRIEF

Grief is a complex process.

The pain of grief can impact many areas of our life: personal identity, relationships, physical health, roles and responsibilities, social interactions, faith, work productivity, and many more. It is a constantly changing wave of feelings and emotions that can flare up when you experience certain memories, dates, people, places and things. It changes in expression, intensity, course and duration and it can have a lasting impact across our life span. It is different for each person and for each loss. Since grief is unique, the journey through it is unique to the person experiencing it. Wherever you are on your healing journey, allow this to be a new starting point. This grief journal offers a chance to acknowledge your grief and tend to your body, mind, and heart in a caring and nurturing way. Take your time as you move through the pages. You are not alone in your journey, but rather you are part of a large community whose members can relate to your feelings and can offer support.

WATER IS LIFE


$$\Delta L^{\text{rb}} \quad \Delta \dot{\rho}^{\text{rb}}$$




Remember that
you are Spirit.
Connect.
Listen.
Know.

WHEN YOU FEEL THE WEIGHT OF YOUR LOSS, WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE?

Where in your body can you sense it?

Write about it or draw it here.

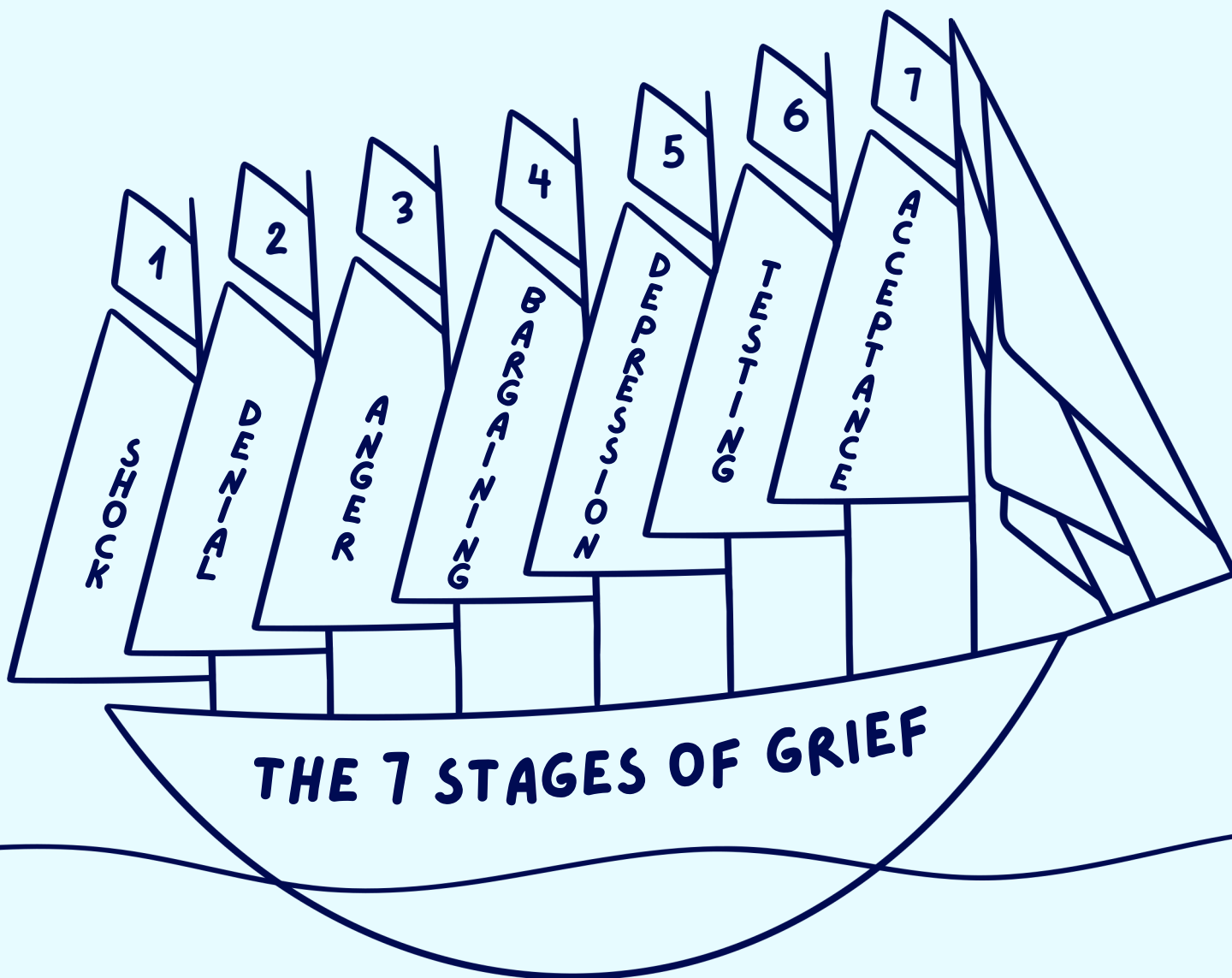


"When someone we treasure
is removed from us, it is
healthy to grieve our loss."

- Bessie Sitatak, Kugluktuk

WRITE...

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



Color or doodle and add how you feel.

**TAKE A FEW MOMENTS TO REFLECT ON THE 7 STAGES OF GRIEF
AND HOW THEY HAVE AFFECTED YOU.**

You can use an experience from your own life that you have dealt with in the past. Do you recall experiencing these phases? What did it feel like for you? Write about it below.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

SHOCK

A sudden upsetting or surprising event or experience

HEALTHY COPING VS UNHEALTHY COPING

- Attend a funeral or memorial service
 - Share feelings with those we love and trust. Talk about it!
 - Pray, meditate, or attend religious services
 - Use creative outlets; journal writing, music, painting, etc.
 - Exercise
 - Engaging with activities that let you get in touch with yourself and self-reflect
- Excessive alcohol consumption and drug use
 - Excessive eating in an effort to dull emotional pain
 - Denial; denying the tragedy and its personal impact

THE GIFT OF GRIEF

Healing through grief doesn't guarantee you will never feel pain or sadness about the tragedy. We want to always remember important people and things we have lost. What healing through grief does provide is a heightened appreciation for life, those we love and the values we cherish. It can awaken us to new possibilities for living with commitment to that which we consider truly important. It can also deepen and enliven our inner lives, because it has forced us to reflect and search our souls. Finally, grieving together with coworkers and friends strengthens and deepens the bonds we share. When we have gone through difficult experiences together, we can experience a revitalizing intimacy.

WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE LIKE WITH SHOCK?

How did you cope with this experience?

Write about it below.

[illegible]

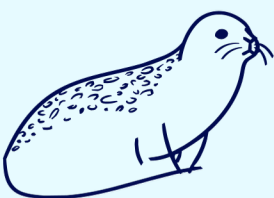
DENIAL

The action of declaring something to be untrue

HEALTHY COPING VS UNHEALTHY COPING

- Think about why you are afraid to face the problem
 - Consider the consequences of not dealing with the problem
 - Try talking to a close friend or loved one who may be able to offer some honest, more objective perspective
 - Work on identifying the distorted thoughts that might be contributing to your anxiety
- You refuse to talk about the problem
 - You find ways to justify your behaviour
 - You blame other people or outside forces for causing the problem
 - You persist in a behaviour despite negative consequences
 - You promise to address the problem in the future
 - You avoid thinking about the problem

Denial is a defense mechanism to help cope with a difficult loss. It gives you time to understand what happened and slowly adjust to your new life, as you are essentially having to redefine how you perceive yourself. Denial is one of the most challenging stages as people may isolate themselves during this phase.



WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE LIKE WITH DENIAL?

How did you cope with this experience?

Write about it below.

[illegible]

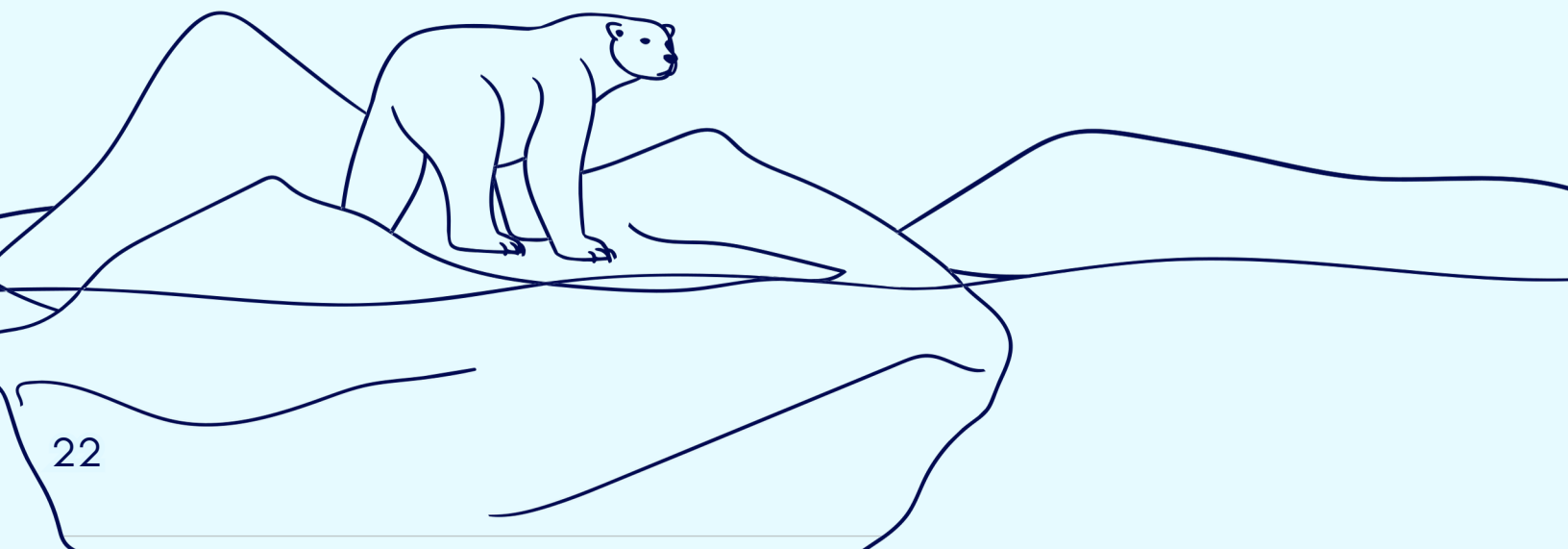
ANGER

A strong feeling of annoyance, displeasure, or hostility

HEALTHY COPING VS UNHEALTHY COPING

- Exercise
 - Turning your anger/pain into something useful (poetry, art, journaling, writing stories)
 - Practicing gratitude (what are you thankful for?)
 - Meditation
 - Talking it out with someone you trust
 - Taking deep breaths
- Being in denial
 - Avoidance (avoiding certain feelings or supportive people)
 - Displacement (redirecting negative feelings about someone or something toward something else- typically someone “safer” or someone who just happens to cross your path next such as your spouse, children, or a coworker)

Anger can be a complex emotion and is a normal reaction to grief with no specific timeline associated with this stage. People can get stuck in an angry phase of grief if they don't understand how to deal with these feelings. When anger continues or intensifies into repeated episodes of rage towards people not associated with the loss, this signals that you need additional mental health support to cope.



WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE LIKE WITH ANGER?

How did you cope with this experience?

Write about it below.

[illegible]





BARGAINING

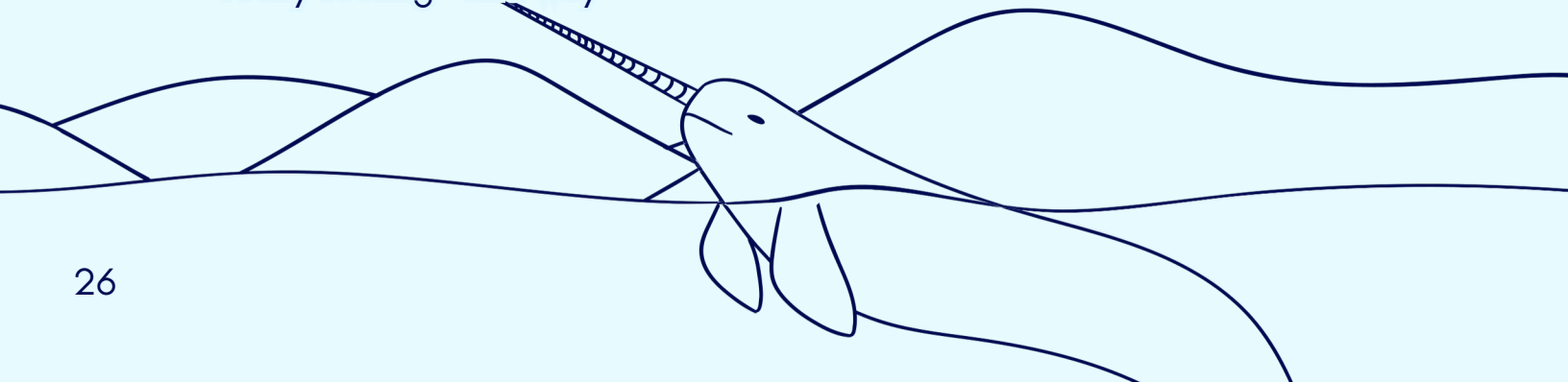
A stage in which you may try to negotiate with yourself or with a higher power to try to undo the loss

HEALTHY COPING VS UNHEALTHY COPING

- Not stigmatizing the bargaining stage of grief. It's okay to feel what you're feeling. Bargaining, even though the individual will eventually realize it's futile is a way for hope to remain alive
- Being patient as you begin to heal. Overcoming the pain of grief and loss will likely take a considerable amount of time
- Journaling- start by writing down your thoughts and feelings. It can be a good idea to record what you're bargaining for. This can reveal your innermost wishes and desires related to what you've lost during the grieving process. This might help you become more aware of what you're really feeling-~and why

- Numbing the pain by using drugs and alcohol
- Blaming yourself and saying "What if I did something different"
- Punishing yourself

Bargaining involves trying to regain a false sense of control after feeling helpless and displaced. This stage provides a grieving person with time to emotionally come to terms with a loss. People on the bargaining side of this stage often don't find an acceptable resolution. Eventually, they recognize that the outcome they hope for will not occur. Trying to bargain with a higher power, another person, or a system is a means of diminishing anger and moving closer to acceptance. This phase generally does not last as long as others because it eventually becomes clear that what you hope for won't happen.



WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE LIKE WITH BARGAINING?

How did you cope with this experience?

Write about it below.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue lines, similar to notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

DEPRESSION

A mental state of low mood and aversion to activity

HEALTHY COPING vs UNHEALTHY COPING

- Tap into your 5 senses; name 5 things you can see, 4 things you can physically touch and feel, pay attention to 3 things you can hear in your environment, notice 2 things you can smell, and identify 1 thing you can taste
- Practice deep breathing
- Engage in regular exercise or go for a walk
- Practice self compassion- treat yourself with kindness and understanding
- Risky behaviours- doing things that are dangerous to feel numb
- Social isolation- being away from people who care about you the most
- Behavioural addictions- gambling, video gaming, scrolling aimlessly through social media
- Over eating

Depression stems from internalized or repressed anger in this stage. It occurs when time has passed and the outcome of the significant loss starts to become clear. This stage can manifest as reduced concentration, inability to sleep, and sleeping too much. You may have physical symptoms like headaches and body aches, or digestive issues as well. People who have limited social supports or isolate themselves during this time of grief may have a greater risk of developing major depressive disorder (mild irritability to an extremely low mood with suicidal thoughts, and can also affect sleep and appetite). If there is a predisposition to depression, there is a greater risk for depression lasting longer in this stage. This stage can be the longest of grief.



WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE LIKE WITH DEPRESSION?

How did you cope with this experience?

Write about it below.

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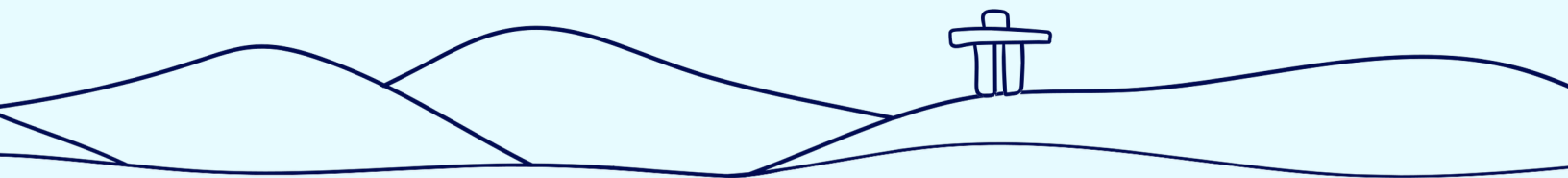
TESTING

This stage begins when you start to venture out, trying and testing ways make life return to a more stable time

HEALTHY COPING

- Be interested in learning about grief or your specific loss
- Try new strategies for coping
- Reach out to loved ones for support
- “Try on” different philosophies or spiritual traditions

In this stage of grief, you begin to adjust to life post-loss. People begin to see that they have survived the loss and that they have a future to live. Typically depressive symptoms and physical symptoms of grief start to decrease. Individuals tend to feel more hopeful about life and begin to find some measure of peace related to the loss. This stage is not as difficult as the others as it offers relief and a sense of hope that a grieving person can build a new life after a life-changing loss.



WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE LIKE WITH TESTING?

How did you cope with this experience?

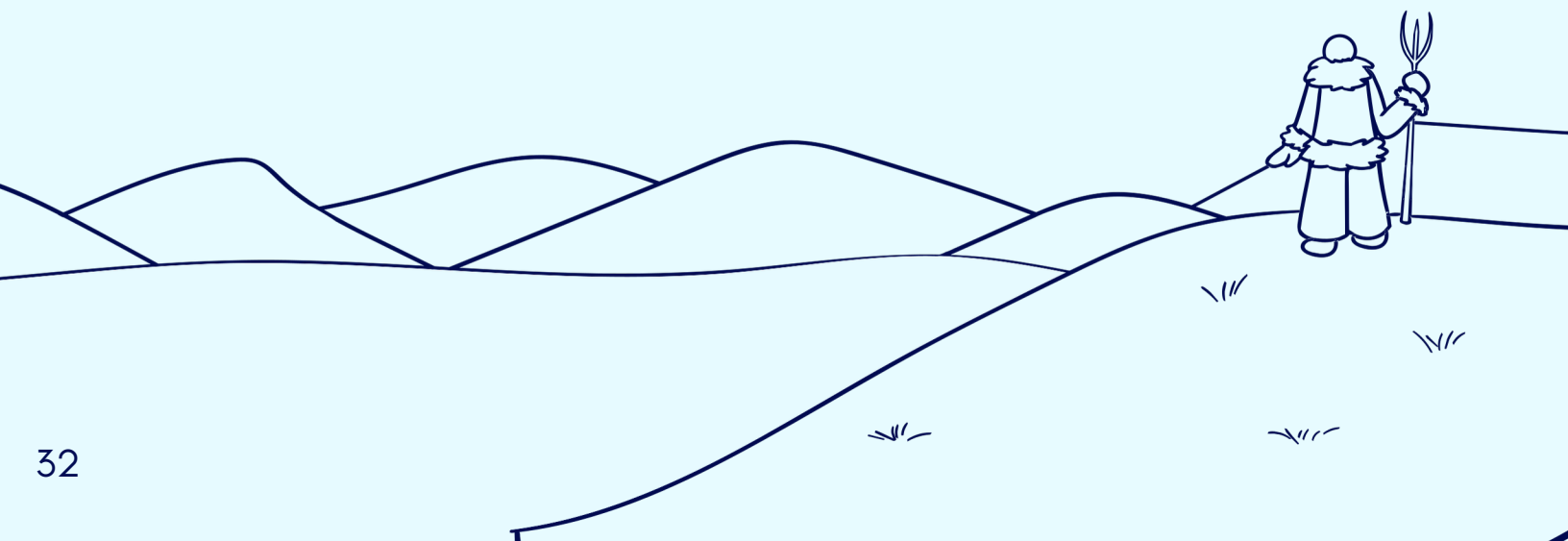
Write about it below.

[illegible]

ACCEPTANCE

The fifth and final stage of grief- accepting the reality that our loved one has left us physically and accepting this as the permanent reality

This is the last stage in the grieving process. It comes with a sense of optimism from a realistic life assessment with a deep understanding of your loss's impact. There is still pain and sadness attached to your loss. However, there is a desire to create a different life, offering yourself peace and contentment. You allow yourself to plan for a future, knowing you will not forget what has happened. You have learned ways to care for yourself, and cope, and how to set new self-expectations as you begin to move ahead. People in this phase have not fully healed from their loss. They allow themselves to reflect on past cherished memories associated with the loss. There may be feelings of sadness that arise during holidays or birthdays, however the despair is less intense.

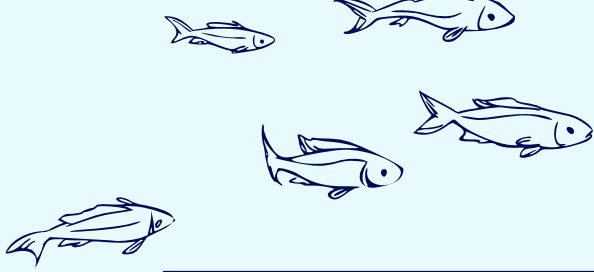


WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE LIKE WITH ACCEPTANCE?

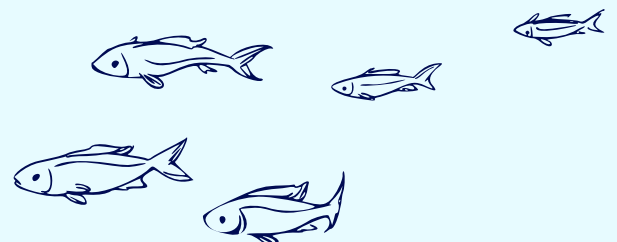
How did you cope with this experience?


Write about it below.

[illegible]



A series of 20 horizontal lines spanning the width of the page, providing a space for writing.





"Grief is like the ocean; it comes on
waves ebbing and flowing.
Sometimes the water is calm,
and sometimes it is overwhelming.
All we can do is learn to swim."

- Vicki Harrison

Section 2:

EMBRACING THE QUIET

After a loss occurs, our lives can feel empty and we can feel lost in the physical world around us. The void can feel still and silent, and it can feel challenging to fill it with hope, happiness or joy. This feeling can lead to detachment from those around us and from ourselves. During this phase true friendships and kindness can really shine through and as impenetrable as our sadness feels, it is not permanent. These dark and heavy times can bring new insights and can provide time and space to nurture our mind, body and soul. It can be a time of hope and resiliency. Try to embrace the quiet and remain open to new perspectives, and the light that comes from people, places and experiences.

"Grief, I've learned, is really just love. It's all the love you want to give, but cannot. All that unspent love gathers up in the corners of your eyes, the lump in your throat and in that hollow part of your chest. Grief is just love with no place to go."

- Jamie Anderson

WHAT IS SOMETHING THAT HAS IMPACTED POSITIVELY ON YOUR LIFE?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

A watercolor illustration of the Earth, showing continents in shades of green and yellow and oceans in various shades of blue. The style is soft and painterly.

Remember that
you are Earth.

Ground.

Give.

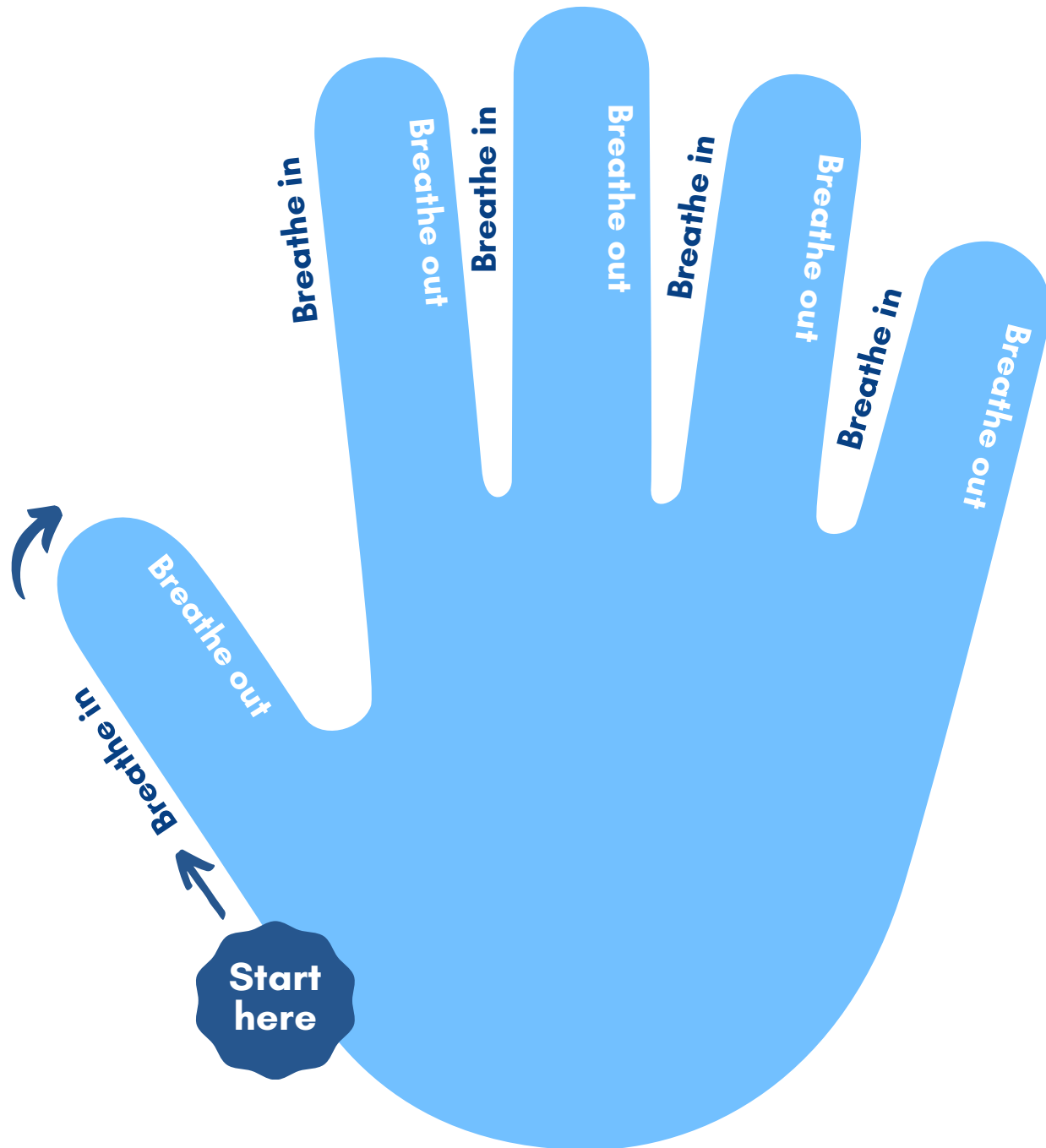
Build.

Heal.

Calm yourself with a

5 FINGER BREATHING

Brain Break

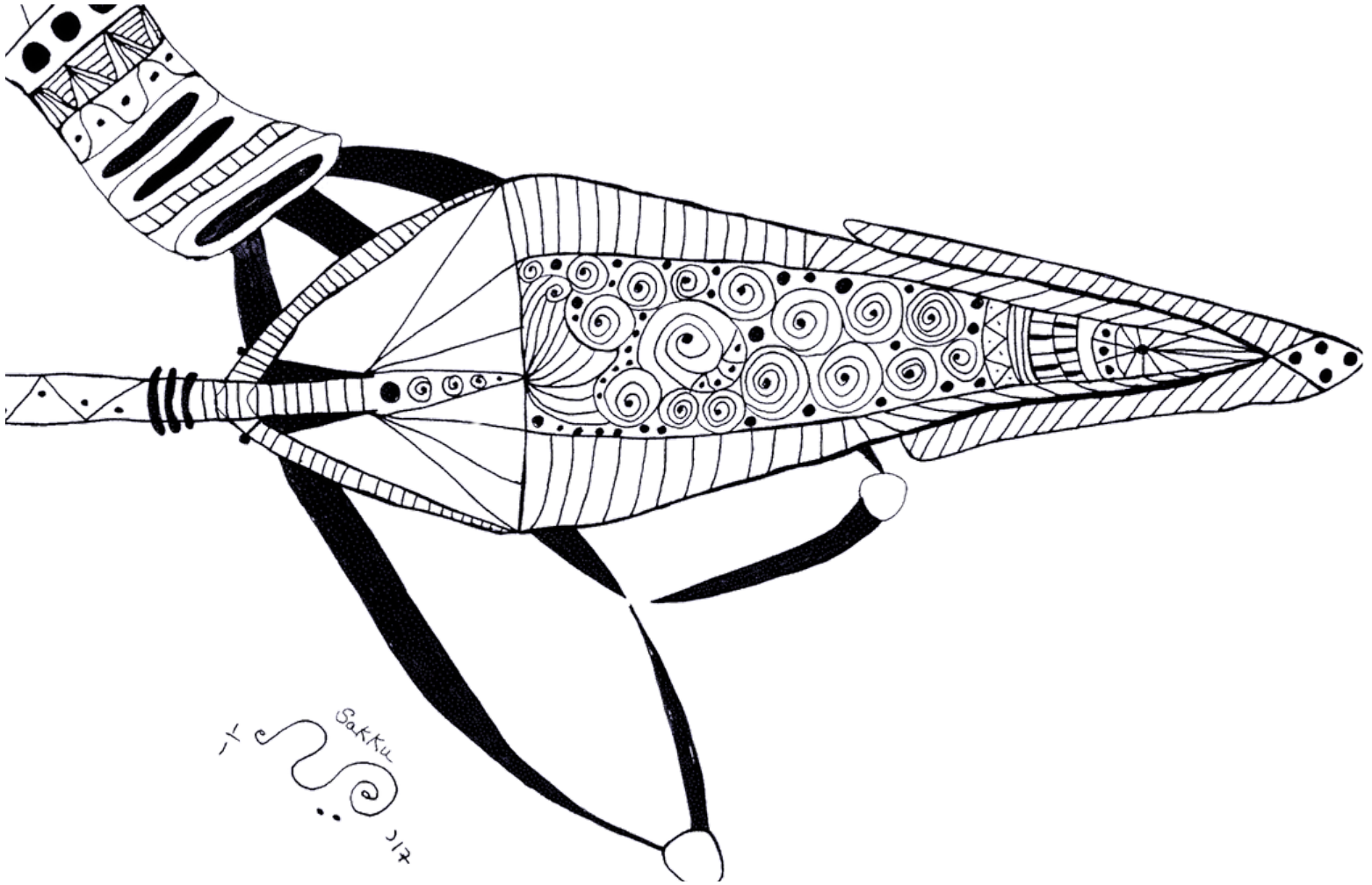


Slowly trace the outside of the hand with the index finger, breathing in when you trace up a finger and breathing out when you trace down. You can also do this breathing exercise using your own hand.

HOW CAN I PRACTICE MEANINGFUL SELF REFLECTION?

[illegible]

RELAX & COLOR



THERAPEUTIC BENEFITS OF COLORING

- Improves focus
- Eases anxiety
- Supports brain function
- Improves memory
- Reduce stress
- Increases positivity
- Encourages creativity
- Embraces inner child
- Creates a meditative state


"When you meditate, you relax your mind and go into a state of contemplation or reflection. Coloring can have a similar effect mentally."

USE THIS PAGE TO FREESTYLE WRITE

What is on your mind today?

DO YOU HAVE ANY OUTSTANDING REGRETS SINCE YOUR LOVED ONE PASSED THAT ARE STILL WEIGHING ON YOUR HEART AND MIND?

Feel free to write them here.



WRITE...

[illegible]

This image shows a full page of blank handwriting practice paper. It features a series of evenly spaced, horizontal blue lines running across the entire width of the page. The background is a solid light blue color. There are no margins, text, or other markings present.



