

# RAISING FIRE

*Igniting Resilience and Becoming Whole*

## COMPANION WORKBOOK

By Lee-Ann F. O'Brien

# CHAPTER 1

## ***Journal Prompt #1***

*Think back to your earliest memories of responsibility, instinct, or protection — moments before you had the language for resilience.*

What is one childhood moment that shaped who you became — whether through responsibility, fear, instinct, or the sense that you had to hold things together? Describe what happened, how it felt in your body at the time, and what you understand about that moment now.

- Were you the "strong one," "the helper," or "the protector" in your family?
- How did those early responsibilities shape your resilience today?

*Write without judgment — just honesty. Let the memory speak. This chapter is about tracing your fire back to its first spark. Where did yours begin?*

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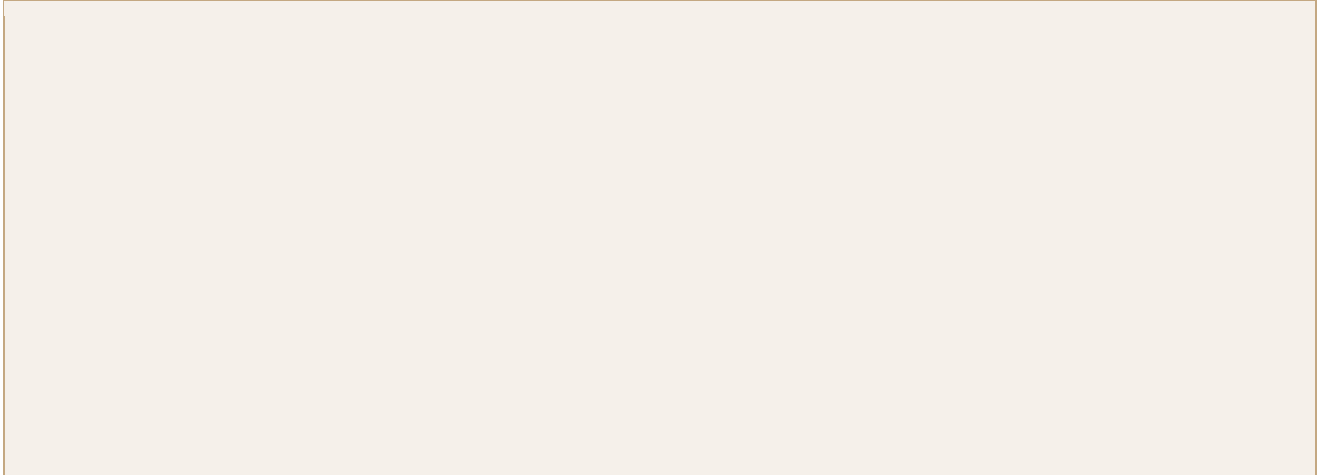
## CHAPTER 2

### *Journal Prompt #2*

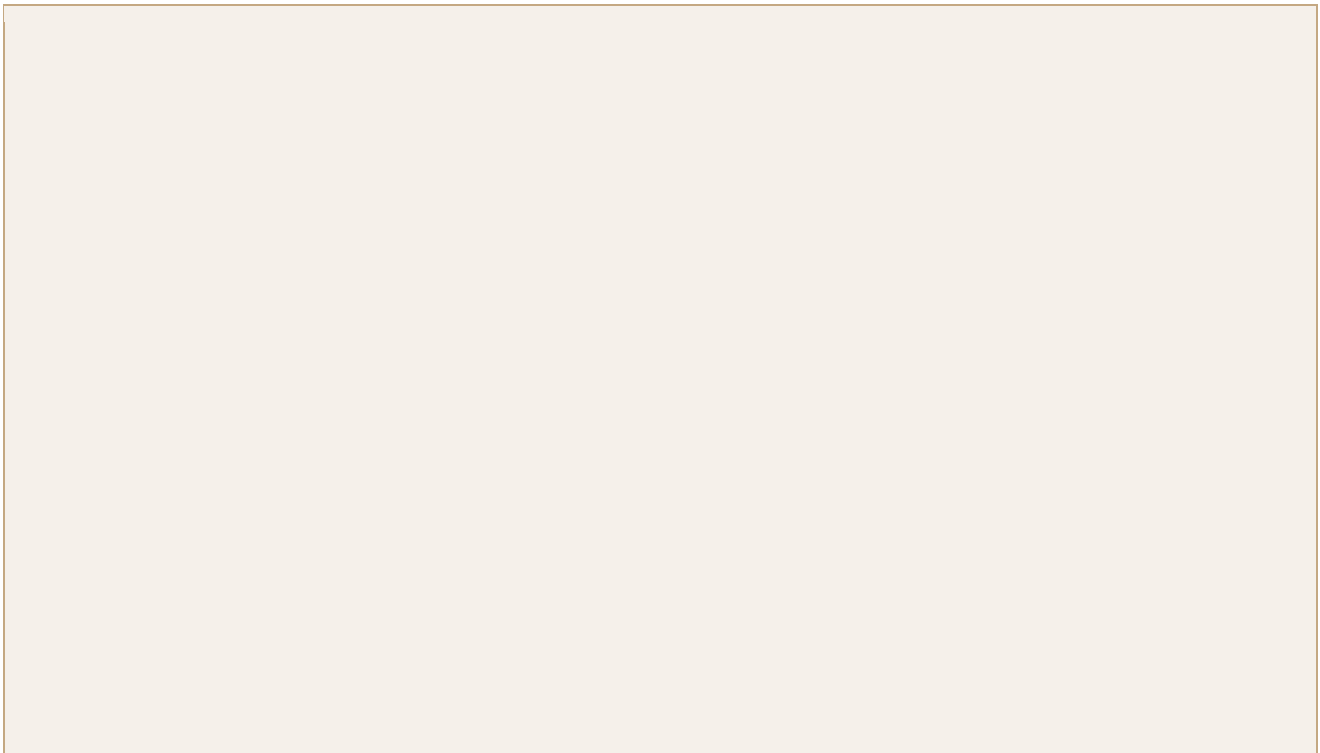
*Reflect on a moment in your life when you faced a challenge that felt overwhelming.*

Write a letter to yourself, acknowledging the hardships you have endured and honouring the resilience — Head Fire — you have ignited and built.

- How did you respond in that moment?
- What small habits, thoughts, or actions have helped your Head Fire over time? Consider even the tiniest "embers" that kept you going.



### LETTER TO YOURSELF



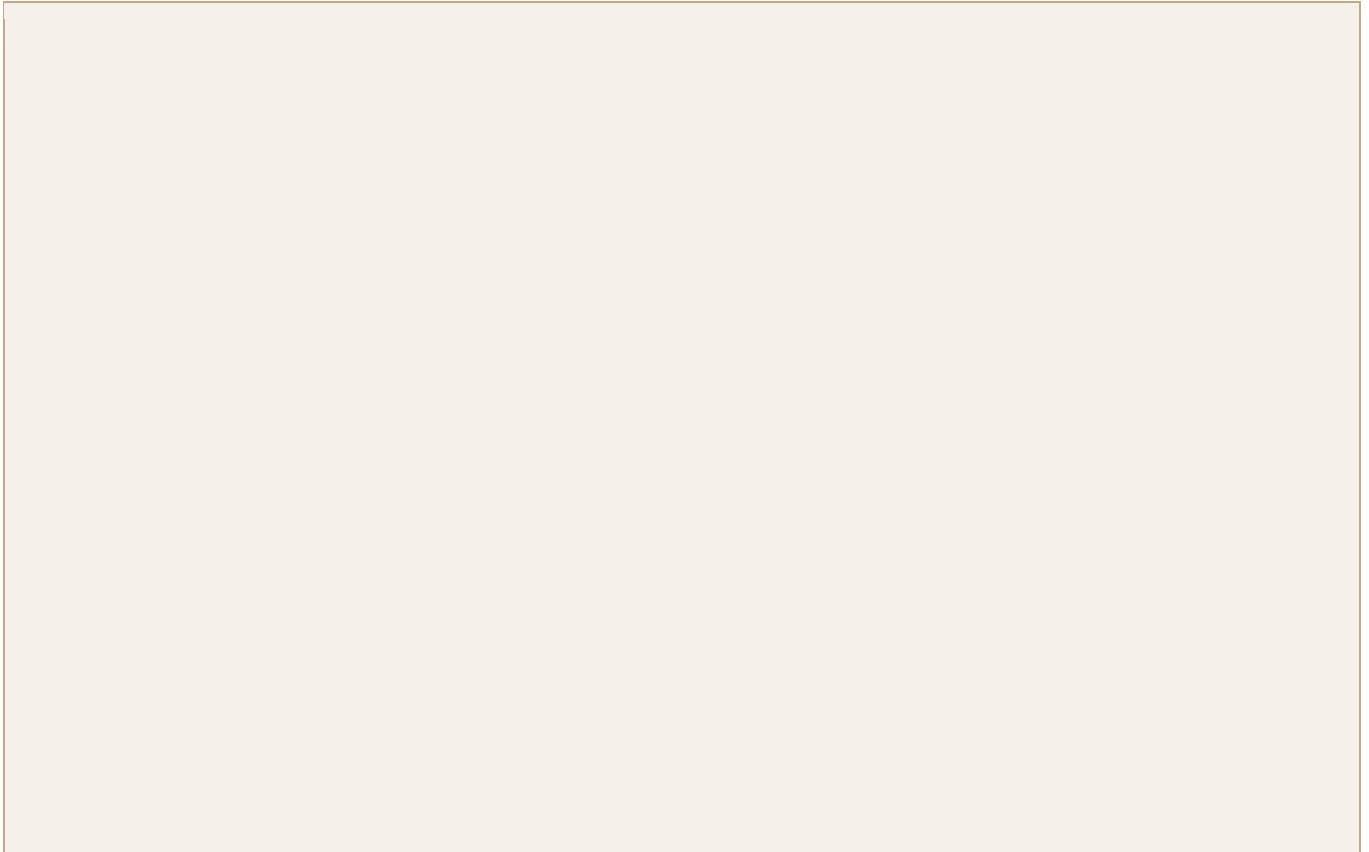
## CHAPTER 3

### *Journal Prompt #3*

*Where in your life have you been told (directly or indirectly) to "toughen up"?*

What emotions, parts of yourself or experiences have you learned to hide or silence in order to appear strong? Take a few minutes to reflect:

- What would it look like to honour your wholeness instead of just your toughness?
- Where in your life could you practice softening, even just a little?
- What might become possible — at work, in relationships, in leadership — if you let your real self breathe beneath the armour?



*Be honest. Be gentle. Be brave. The goal isn't to be unbreakable. The goal is to feel, and to heal.*

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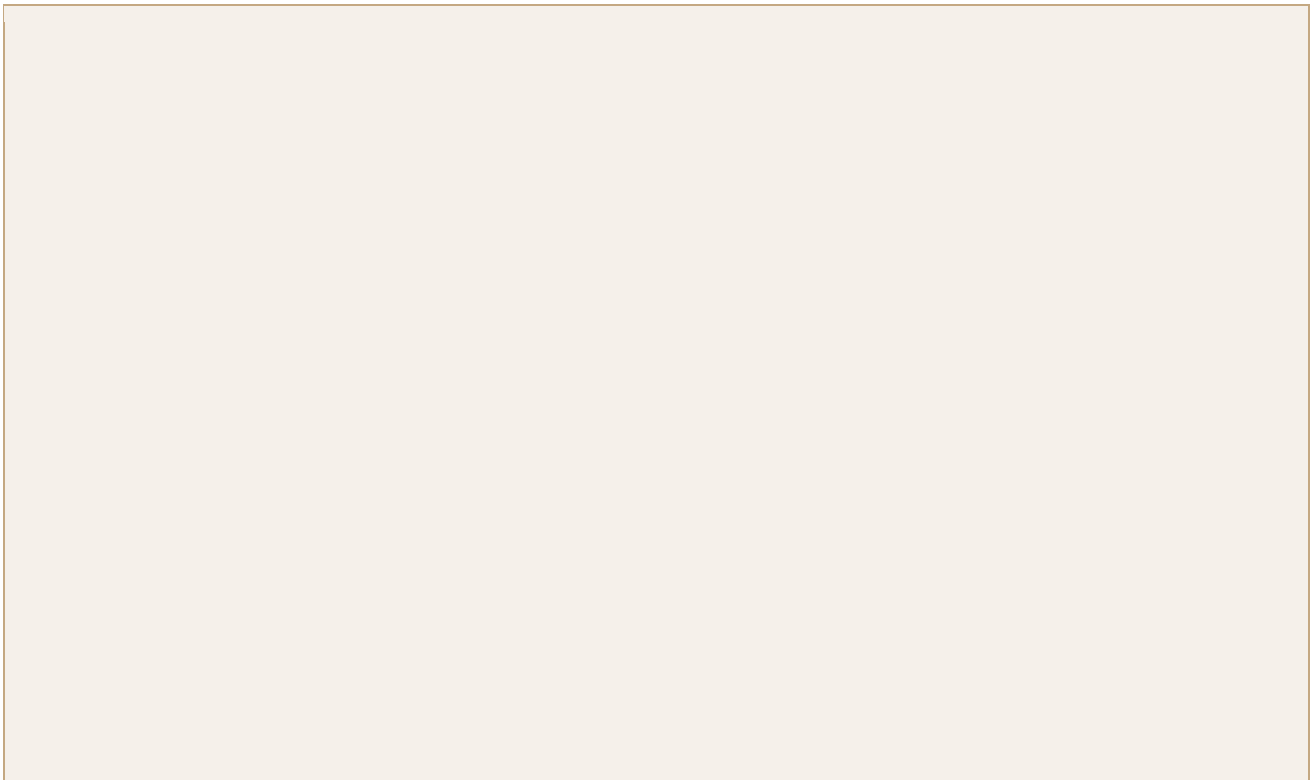
## CHAPTER 4

### *Journal Prompt #4*

#### *Design Your Morning Routine*

Take a few minutes to reflect and write. Use these questions to guide you:

- How do you want to feel when you start your day? (Calm, focused, energized, grounded?)
- What small intentional actions could help you feel that way? (Examples: drink water, stretch, walk, journal, meditate, mindful breathing.)
- How will you notice if your routine is helping you tame the blaze? (Examples: less stress, more focus, calmer mornings, more patience.)



*This is your time. Even tiny steps stoke your Head Fire.*

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# CHAPTER 5

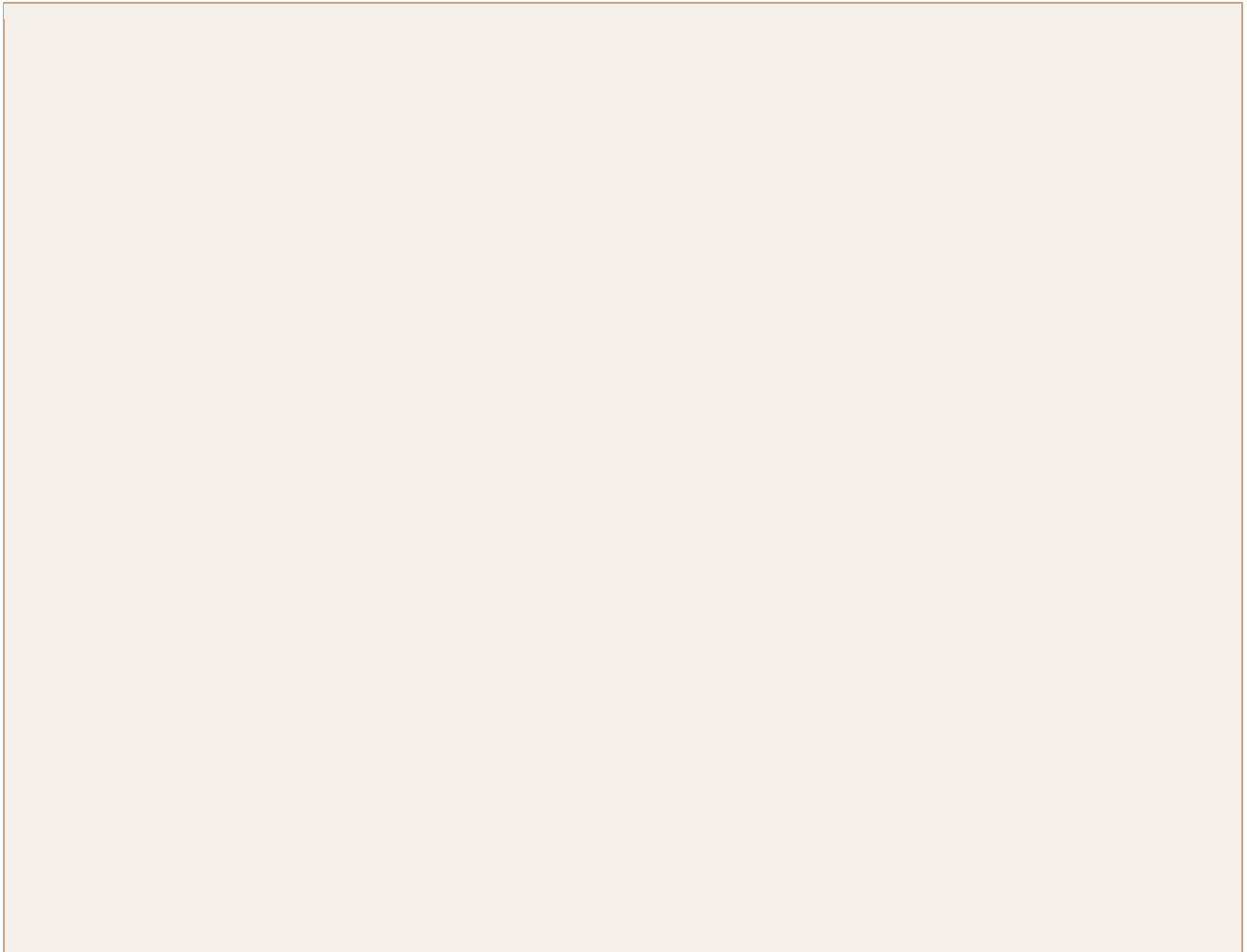
## *Journal Prompt #5*

*Take a breath before you begin. This is not about judgment — it is about awareness.*

### **PART 1 — NOTICE THE SIGNS**

Answer honestly:

- Where am I feeling exhaustion right now — physically, emotionally, mentally?
- Have I become more cynical, detached, or irritable lately?
- Do I still feel effective in my work — or am I just going through the motions?
- What used to energize me that now feels heavy or draining?



**PART 2:** *Lately, I have been showing up, but I haven't been \_\_\_\_\_.*

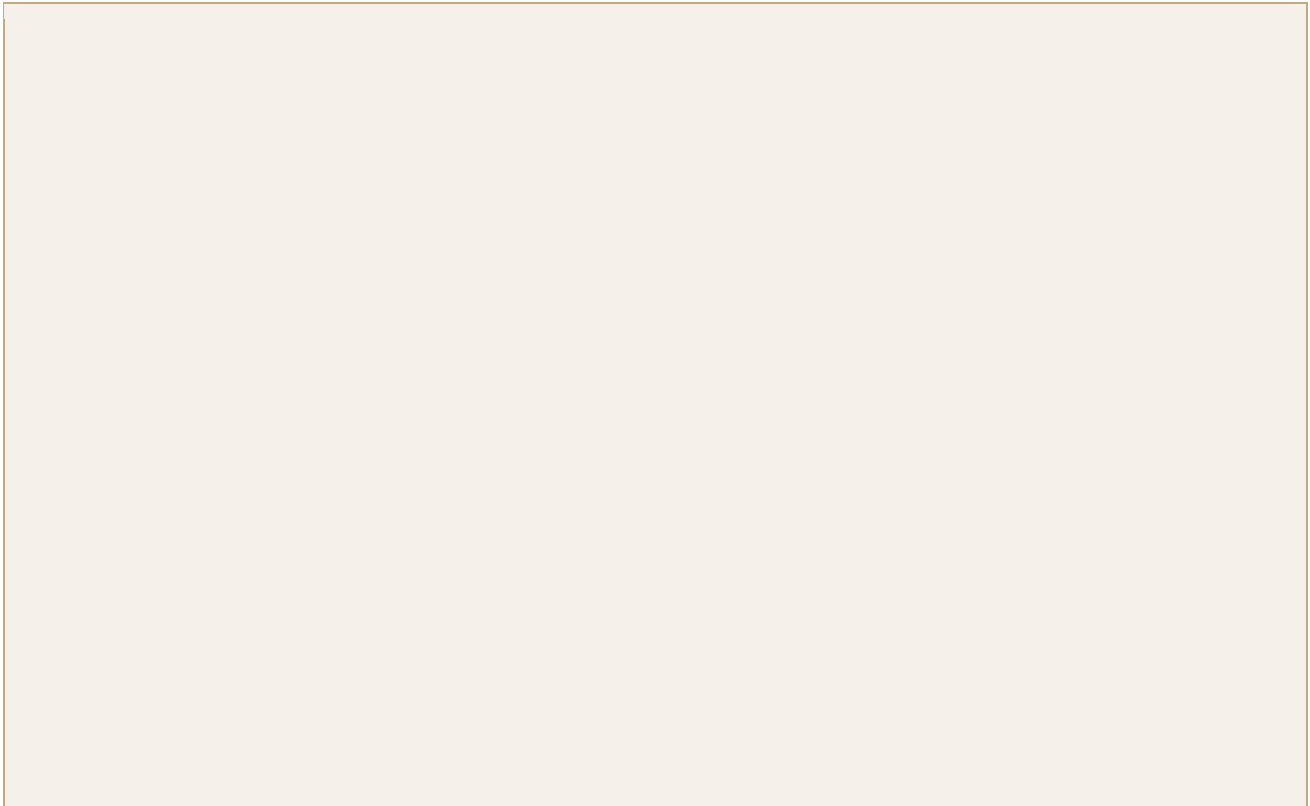
## CHAPTER 6

### *Journal Prompt #6*

*Reflect on a time when you faced a challenge and had to rely on your inner strength to get through it.*

I encourage you to pick one practice and try incorporating it into your life. Just one. After eight weeks, try another.

- What habits, practices, or support systems helped you persevere?
- How might incorporating one or more of the intentional acts mentioned in this chapter help strengthen your own Head Fire?



*Remember: you have survived everything life has thrown at you so far. You are still standing. Healing is not about bouncing back to who you were before — it is about Raising Fire and becoming whole.*

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## CHAPTER 7

### *Journal Prompt #7*

*Justice, validation or time passing doesn't automatically heal wounds.*

- What part of your story still needs your compassion?
- What lies has your pain told you about yourself? (for example: that you deserved it, that it was an “accident”).
- What truth do you want to replace those lies with?
- What does “reclaiming yourself” mean now?



*Write a letter to the younger version of you, the one who survived. Thank them. Honour them.*

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## CHAPTER 8

### *Journal Prompt #8*

*What parts of your pain have you learned to hide in order to survive?*

- Reflect on the coping strategies you've used to keep moving forward: staying busy, perfectionism, avoidance, overworking, always being "the strong one." How did those strategies protect you at one point in your life? And how might they also be keeping you emotionally stuck now?
- Think about the places, people, or moments that once made you feel safe, calm, or free — even briefly. What did those moments give you that you may have been missing elsewhere?
- Finally, ask yourself gently: What would it look like to stop just surviving... and begin healing?

*Write freely. You don't need to have all the answers, just notice what comes up when you ask yourself these questions.*

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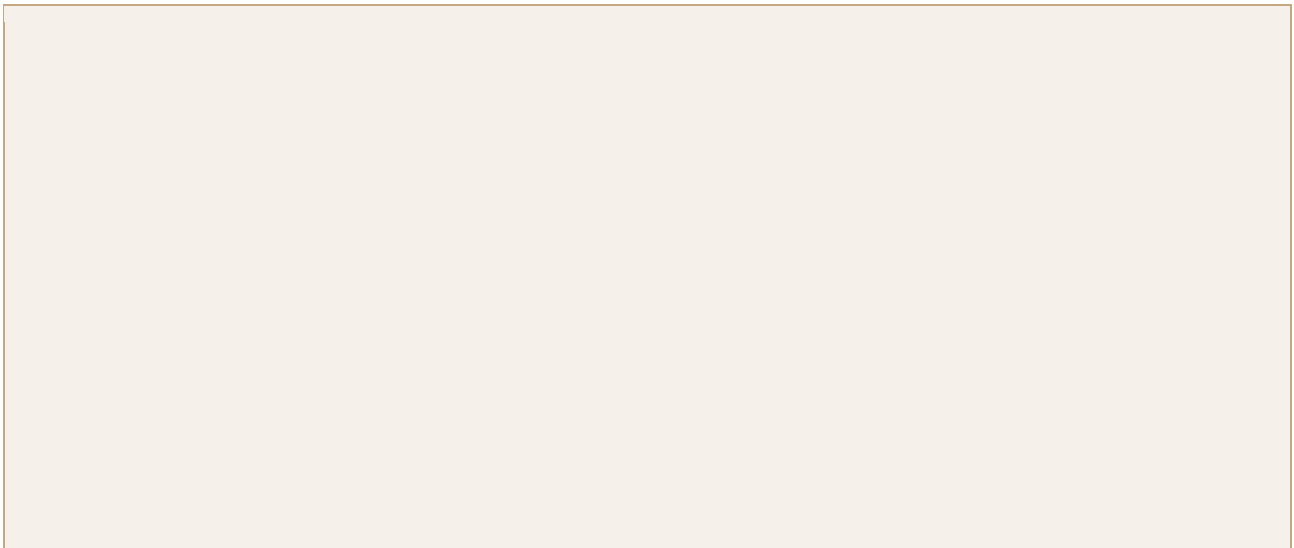
## CHAPTER 9

### *Journal Prompt #9*

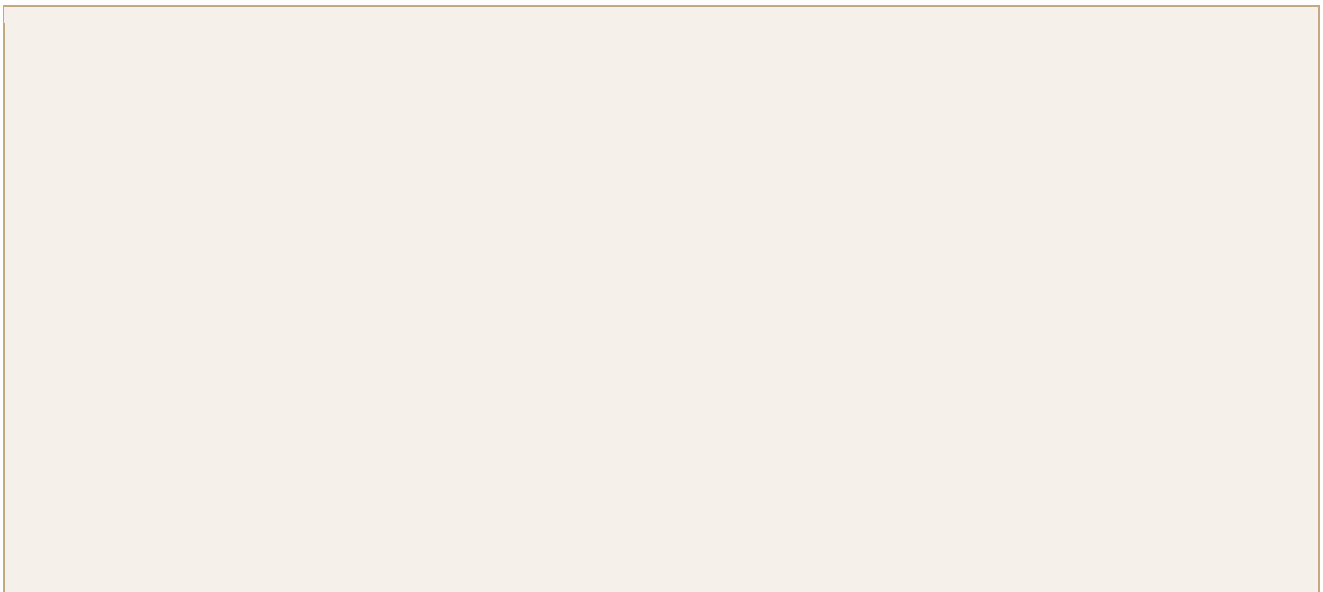
*Think back to the moment you first became a parent — or to a turning point in your life that changed how you saw yourself.*

Finish by writing a letter to the version of yourself on that day, the day everything changed. What would you want them to know now? What would you thank them for? What would you forgive them for? And what would you tell them about the journey ahead?

- What shifted in you?
- What promises did you make to your child... and to yourself?
- In what ways have you grown since then?
- Where are you still learning, still healing, still figuring it out?



#### LETTER TO YOURSELF



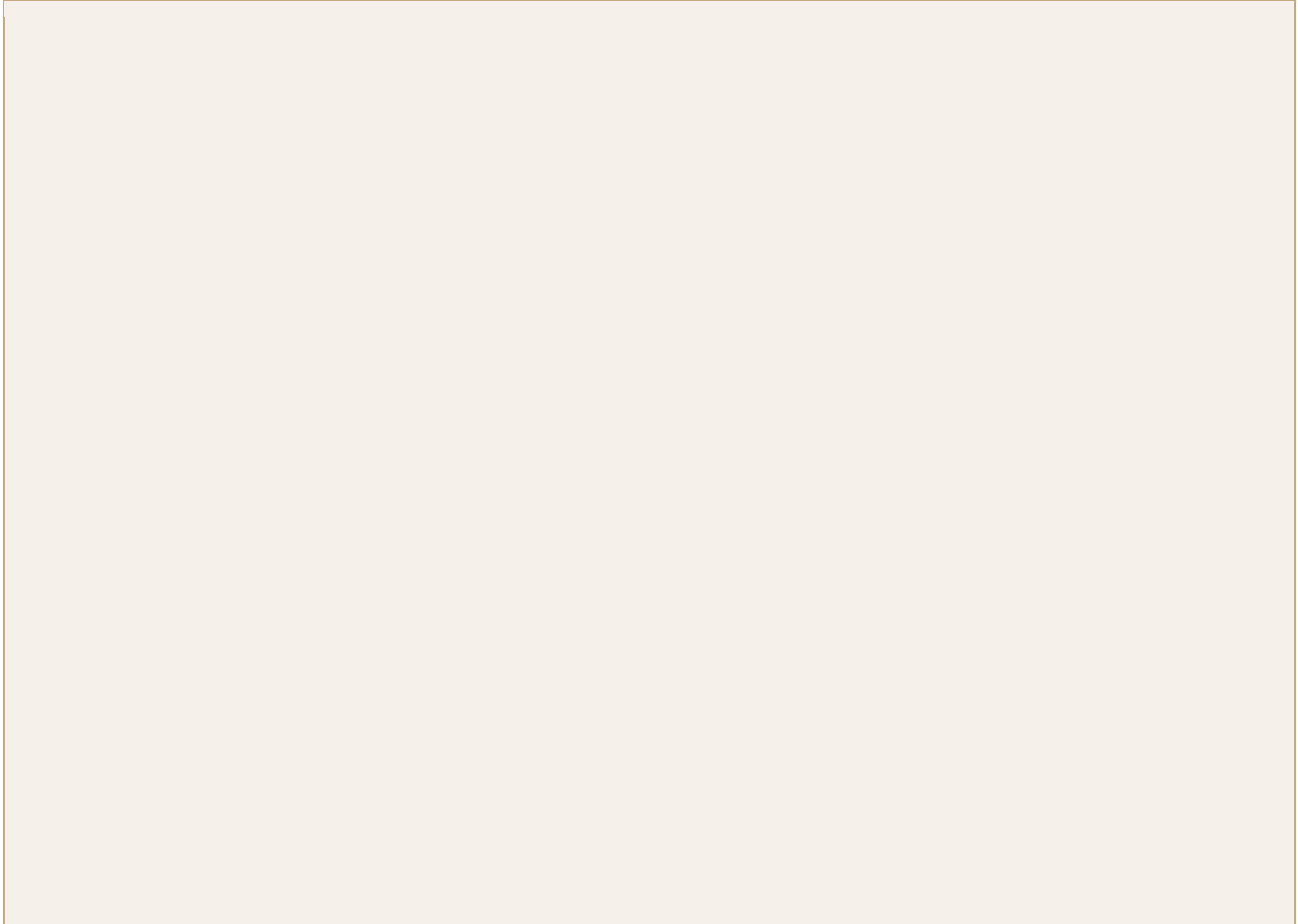
## CHAPTER 10

### *Journal Prompt #10*

#### *Listening to Your Body*

Take a few moments after the breathing exercise and ask yourself:

- Where in my body do I notice tension, tightness, or alertness right now?
- What is my body trying to tell me at this moment?
- If I could whisper a message of safety to this part of me, what would it be?



*Write freely — there are no right or wrong answers. Let your body's memory guide your words and notice what comes up without judgment.*

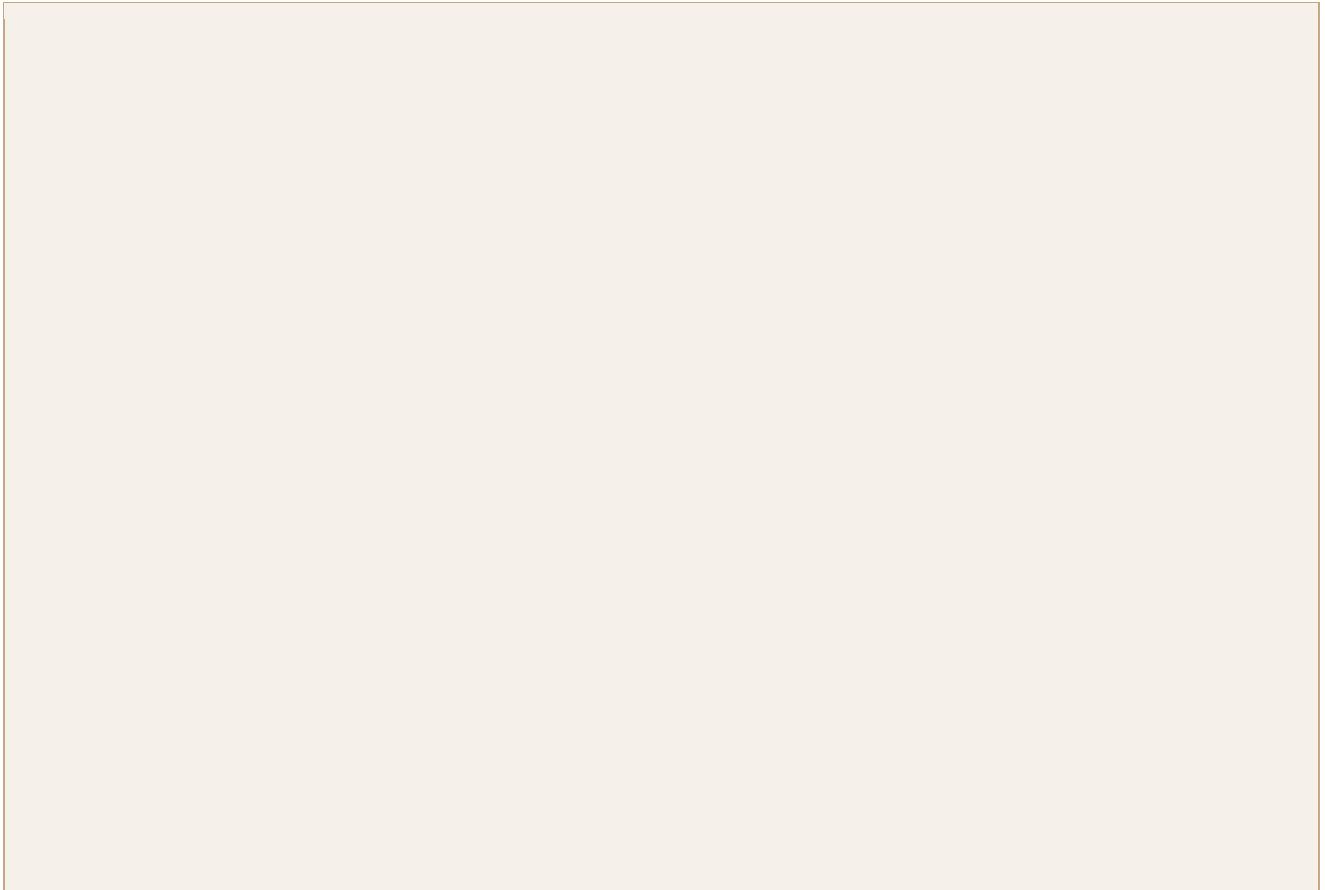
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## CHAPTER 11

### *Journal Prompt #11*

*Look back at your life and notice the moments where you practised resilience without even realizing it.*

- What small acts or habits have quietly shaped your strength and perseverance?
- How can you use what you've learned to nurture resilience, courage, and self-belief in the next generation?
- What legacy of fire, softness and strength combined do you want to leave behind?



*Long rides, quiet sunsets, a deep breath in a hard moment — it was all preparation. Pass it forward.*

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## CHAPTER 12

### *Journal Prompt #12*

*Reflect on the ways you have inherited patterns, stories, or pain from your family, your community, or your past.*

#### **1 — AWARENESS**

- What emotions, thoughts, or behaviors do you notice rising from old patterns? Where in your body do you feel them?

#### **2 — REFLECTION**

- What "because of" lies behind these reactions? Which memories, beliefs, or experiences are still influencing you?

#### **3 — REWRITING THE STORY**

- How could you respond differently if you were choosing connection, compassion, or healing instead of repeating old pain?

#### **4 — ACTIVE REACH**

- What small, intentional action could you take today to reinforce this new way of thinking or being — for yourself, and for those you love?

*Take your time. Write freely. Let the fire of your resilience guide you. Remember: "You've gotta name it to tame it." — Dr. Jody Carrington*

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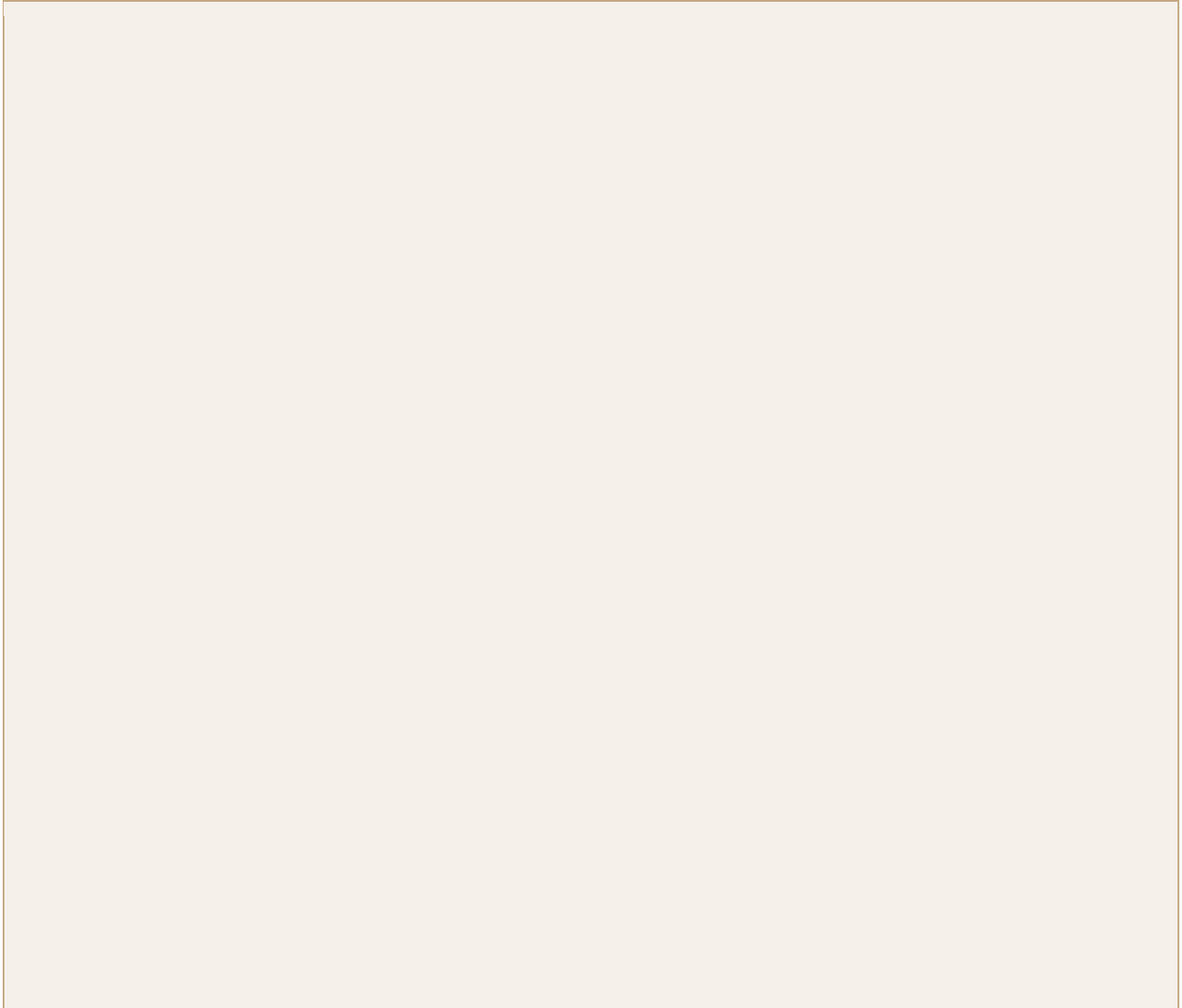
## CHAPTER 13

### *Journal Prompt #13*

*Think back to what you needed most as a child: comfort, safety, consistency, affection, someone who truly saw you.*

Now reflect on how you are or could be — offering those things to yourself or to others in your life today.

- What does "gentle parenting" mean to you — not just in relation to children, but to yourself?
- Are there moments when you feel like you're not "cut out" for a role you've taken on?
- What helps you keep going?



*Ready is not a feeling — it is a decision. You can figure this out.*

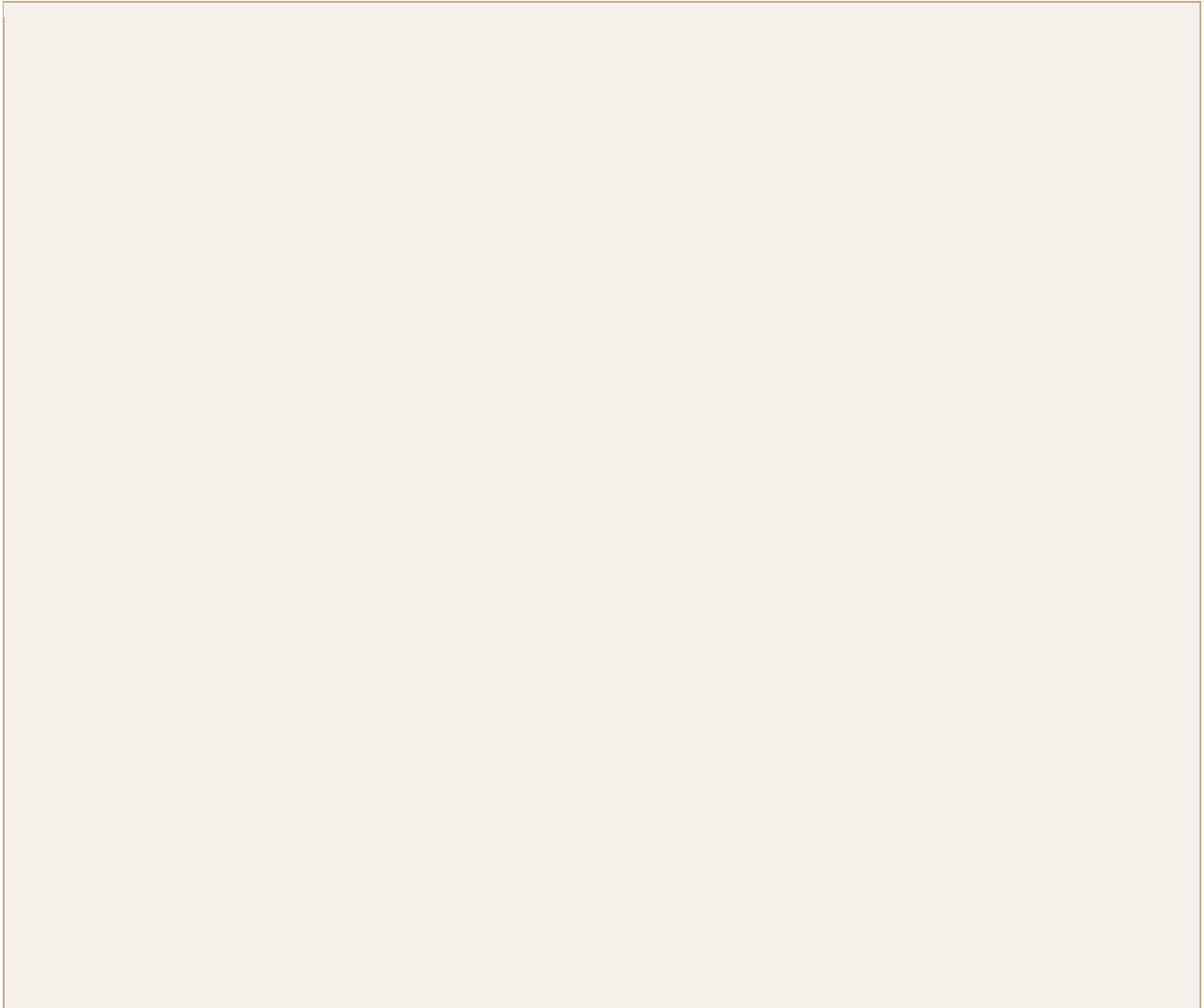
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## CHAPTER 14

### *Journal Prompt #14*

*Consider the demands of caregiving and what they cost you.*

- When do I feel most exhausted as a parent, a spouse, or a caregiver, not just physically, but emotionally?
- What signals tell me I'm abandoning myself to keep everything else running?
- Who was the "lighthouse" in my childhood? What did they give me?
- What is one small act of intention I can practice this week?
- If my child is my teacher, what might they be trying to show me right now?



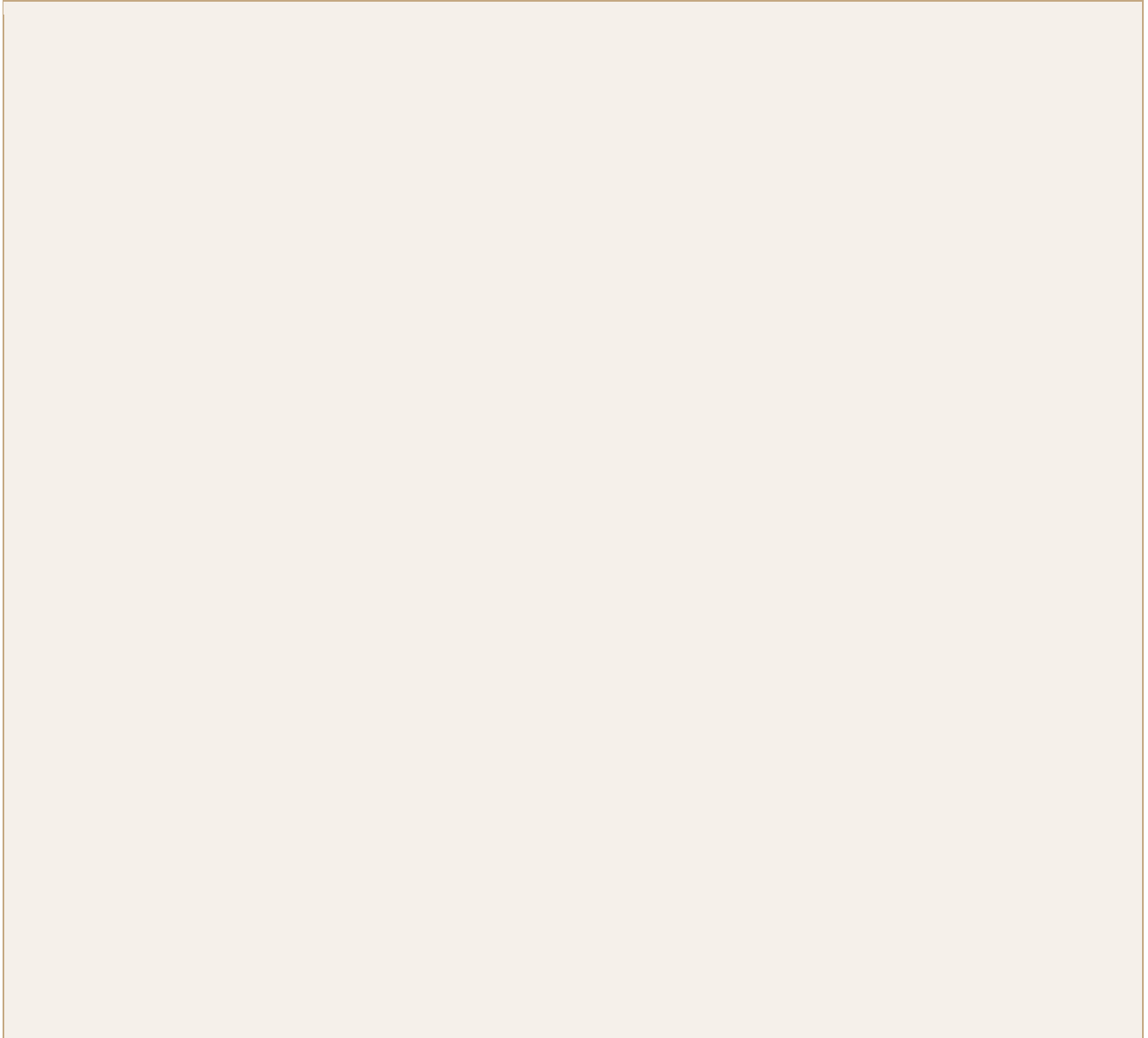
*You are not behind. You are still becoming.*

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## CHAPTER 15

### *Journal Prompt #15*

- Describe a recent moment when your child's emotions triggered your own. What did you feel in your body?
- What did you need in that moment that you didn't receive as a child?
- Write the words you wish someone had said to you at their age.
- What part of your family's pain are you choosing not to pass forward?



*Now, give yourself a pat on the back. You're doing the work. Keep going!*

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## CHAPTER 16

### *Journal Prompt #16*

*Think back to the age when you first felt unsafe, unseen, or unheard.*

Now, write a letter to your younger self. Let it be tender. Let it be truthful.

- What do you remember about that version of you?
- What did they need that they didn't receive?
- If you could sit beside them now, what would you say?

#### LETTER TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF

*Let it remind them: You were never to blame. You were always worthy of love, safety, and protection.*

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## CHAPTER 17

### *Journal Prompt #17*

*Think about a recent moment when your child faced a challenge, disappointment, or emotional struggle.*

- What was the situation?
- How did they respond?
- How did you respond?
- Did you try to shield them from the discomfort, or did you allow them to sit with it?
- How might you support their Head Fire next time — without smothering it?

### **BONUS REFLECTION**

What do you hope they carry forward into adulthood?

*Resilience isn't built by shielding them from the fire. It's built by helping them learn how to walk through it.*

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## CHAPTER 18

### *Journal Prompt #18*

*What does "home" mean to you — beyond a physical place?*

- Where in your life do you feel most emotionally safe, seen, and supported?
- What boundaries or practices help you protect that feeling of home within yourself?



*"Safety is not the absence of threat — it's the presence of connection." — Gabor Maté*

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## CHAPTER 19

### *Journal Prompt #19*

*Think of a moment when fear showed up in your life, not in a dramatic, life-threatening way, but in a quiet, unexpected one.*

Maybe it was during a conversation, a decision, a presentation, or even a moment of stillness.

- What did fear feel like in your body?
- What story was fear trying to tell you?
- Was it protecting you — or keeping you small?
- If you could speak directly to that fear, what would you say?

### LETTER TO YOUR FEARFUL SELF

*Let it remind you: You're safe now.*

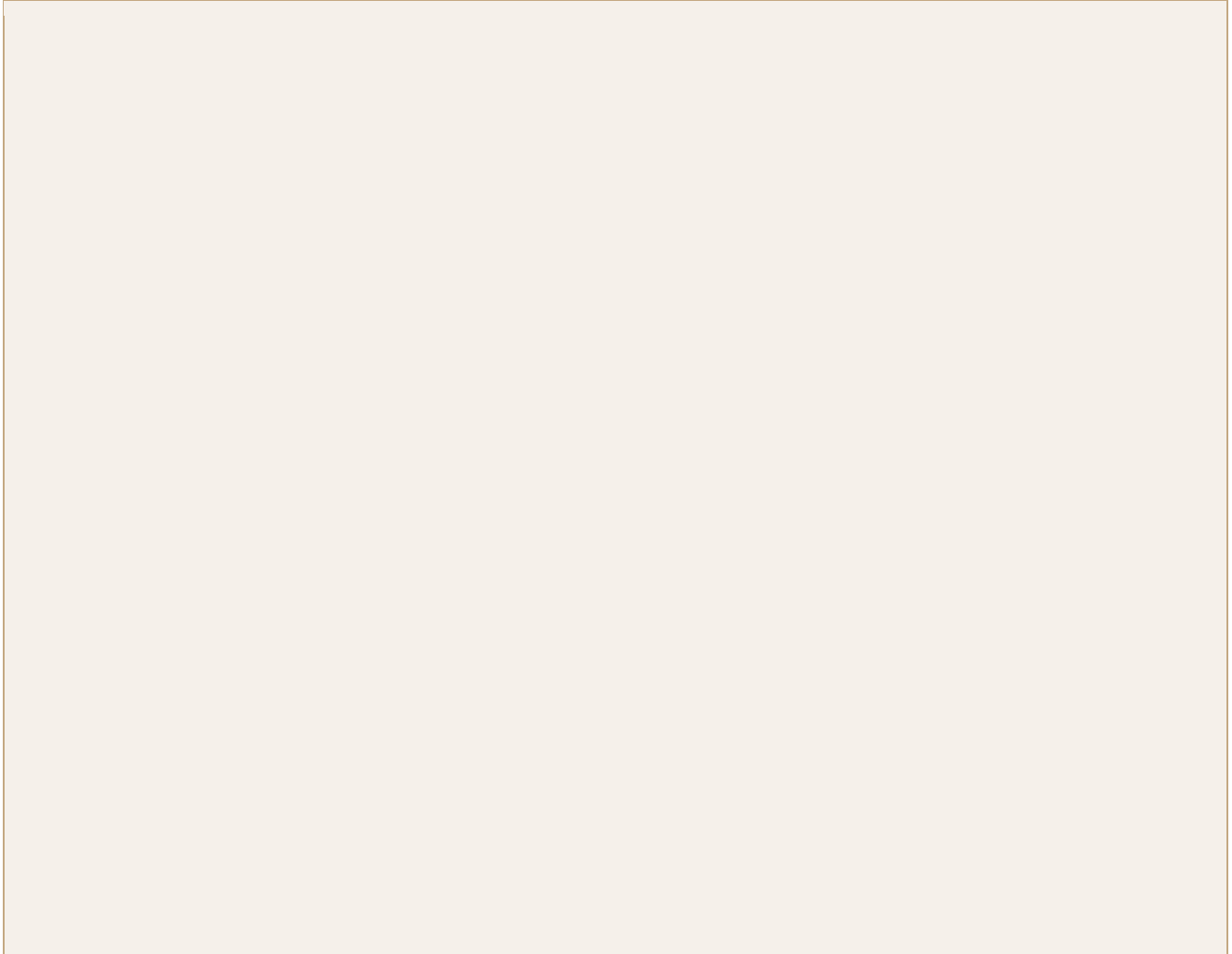
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## CHAPTER 20

### ***Journal Prompt #20***

*Consider the "rules" you may have internalized growing up — messages about what you could or couldn't say, feel, or trust.*

- Which of these rules feel most familiar to you?
- How have they shaped the way you relate to yourself and others?
- When have these rules protected you, and when have they held you back?
- What is one small way you could begin to unlearn one of these rules today?



*Write freely, without judgment. Focus on awareness, not perfection. Notice what comes up as you explore the habits, armour, or beliefs you've carried and imagine what life could feel like if you let one of them go.*

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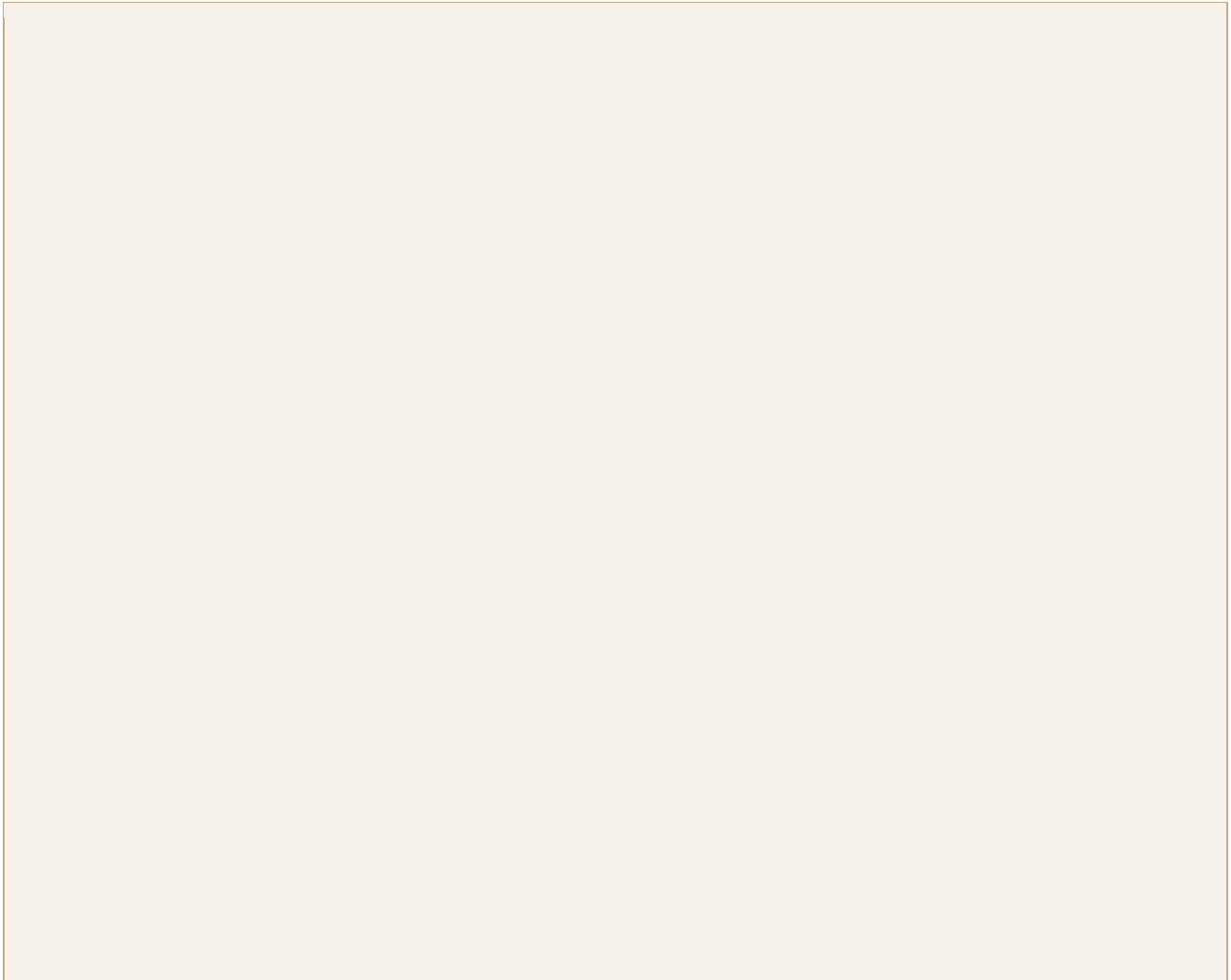
## CHAPTER 21

### ***Journal Prompt #21***

*Reflect on the "Don't Talk. Don't Feel. Don't Trust." rules you grew up with and how they might show up in your life today.*

Then consider your role as a guide, parent, or mentor.

- Which rule do you most want to unlearn in yourself?
- How could you model a different way for the children in your life — or for the next generation?



*Write freely and honestly. Focus on awareness and intention, this isn't about perfection; it's about creating a new path forward.*

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## CHAPTER 22

### *Journal Prompt #22*

*Think back to a moment this week — big or small — when you felt genuinely joyful, even if just for a second.*

Now, list three things you're grateful for today, no matter how ordinary they seem. (Coffee counts. Silence counts. Not losing your mind counts.)

- What was happening?
- Who were you with?
- What did it feel like in your body?

#### THREE THINGS I'M GRATEFUL FOR TODAY

*How might your days feel differently if you made space for moments like this more often?*

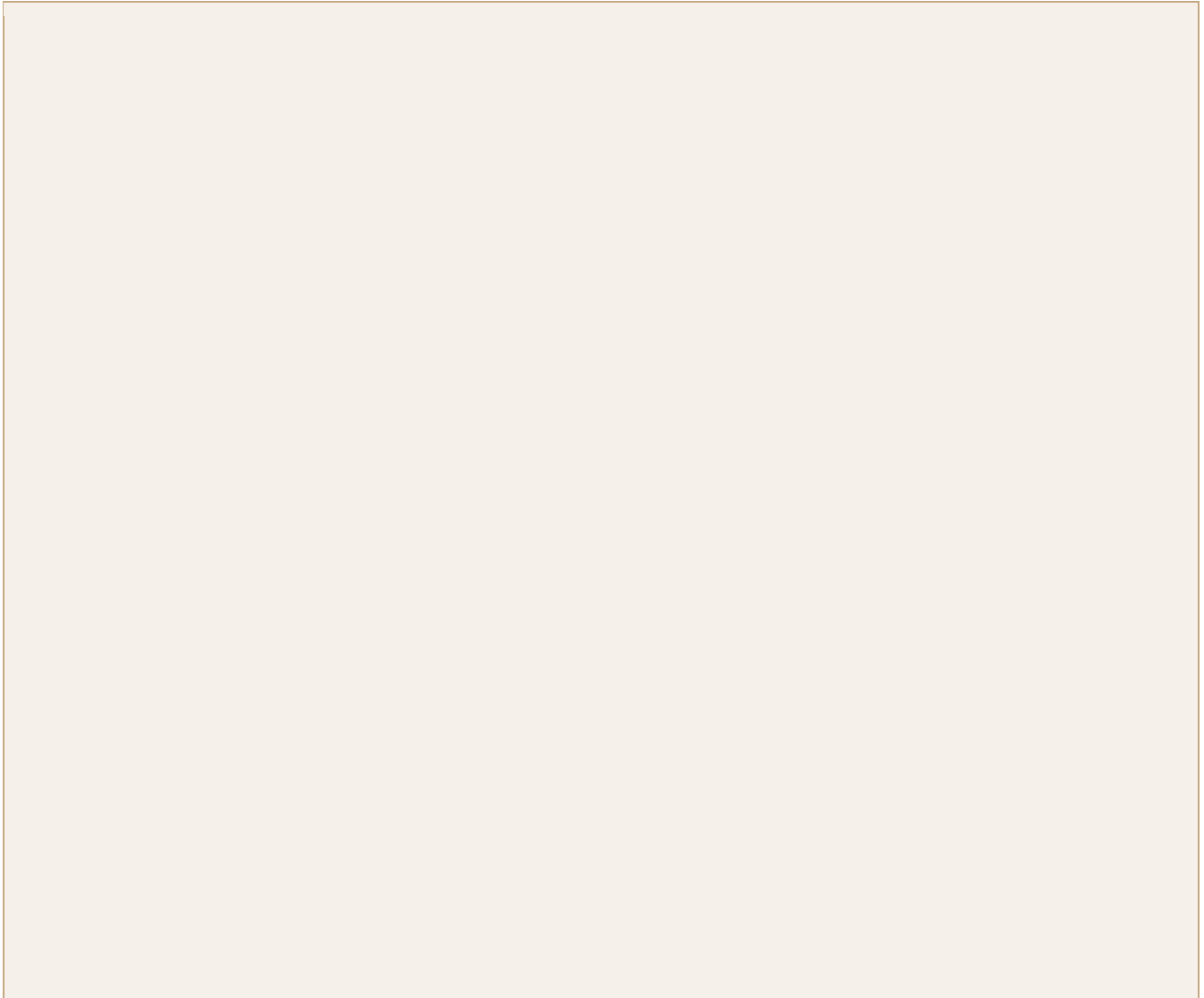
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## CHAPTER 23

### *Journal Prompt #23*

*Have you ever noticed a "cherry blossom moment" — a reaction, feeling, or behaviour that seemed older than you?*

- What did it reveal?
- When guilt or fear arises about passing on your pain, how can you shift your focus toward healing?



*Every time you choose tenderness over reaction, curiosity over judgment, and love over fear, you rewrite your lineage. Healing doesn't erase the past — it transforms it. That transformation, quiet and deliberate, is the most sacred inheritance of all.*

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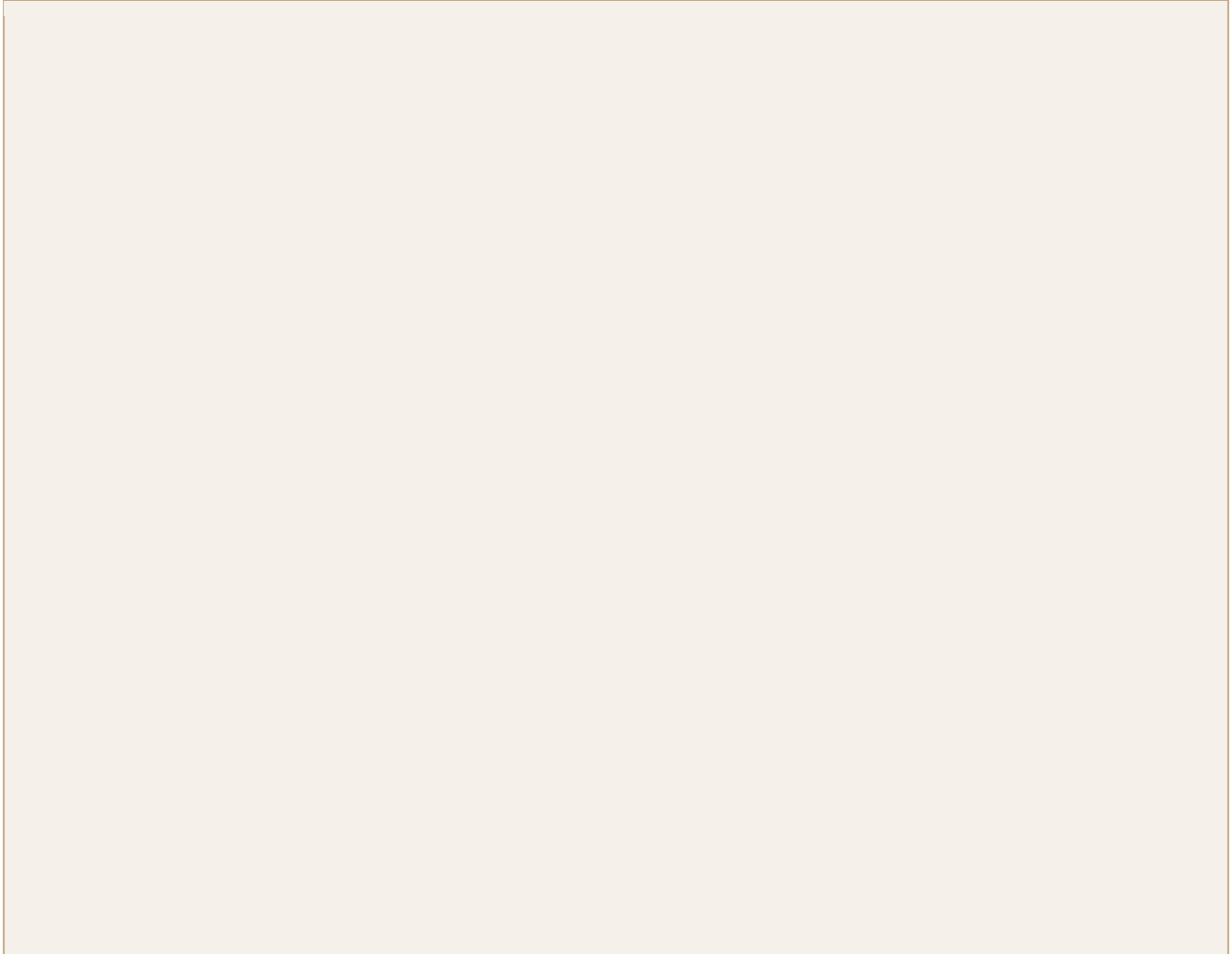
## CHAPTER 24

### ***Journal Prompt #24***

*Think back to your childhood or early life.*

Finally, try finishing this sentence:

- When was the first time you felt like you had to be "perfect" to be safe, loved, or accepted?
- Where in your life today are you still trying to earn love or approval through performance?
- What would it feel like to let go of that pressure, even just a little?



*"If I wasn't trying to be perfect, I would..." Write honestly. Let it be messy. Let it be real. And when that inner critic shows up? Let them.*

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## CHAPTER 25

### *Journal Prompt #25*

*Think about a pattern you've noticed in your relationships — romantic, platonic, or even professional — that keeps repeating itself.*

Close your eyes for a moment. Picture them. Then write them a letter — one that offers the love, validation, and safety they may not have received.

- What does this pattern feel like when you're in it?
- When do you first remember learning this way of relating to others?
- What might your younger self have been trying to protect or earn by acting this way?
- If you could speak to that younger version of you now, what would you want them to know about love, safety, or self-worth?

#### LETTER TO YOUR YOUNGER SELF

*Let it come from the version of you who is healing now.*

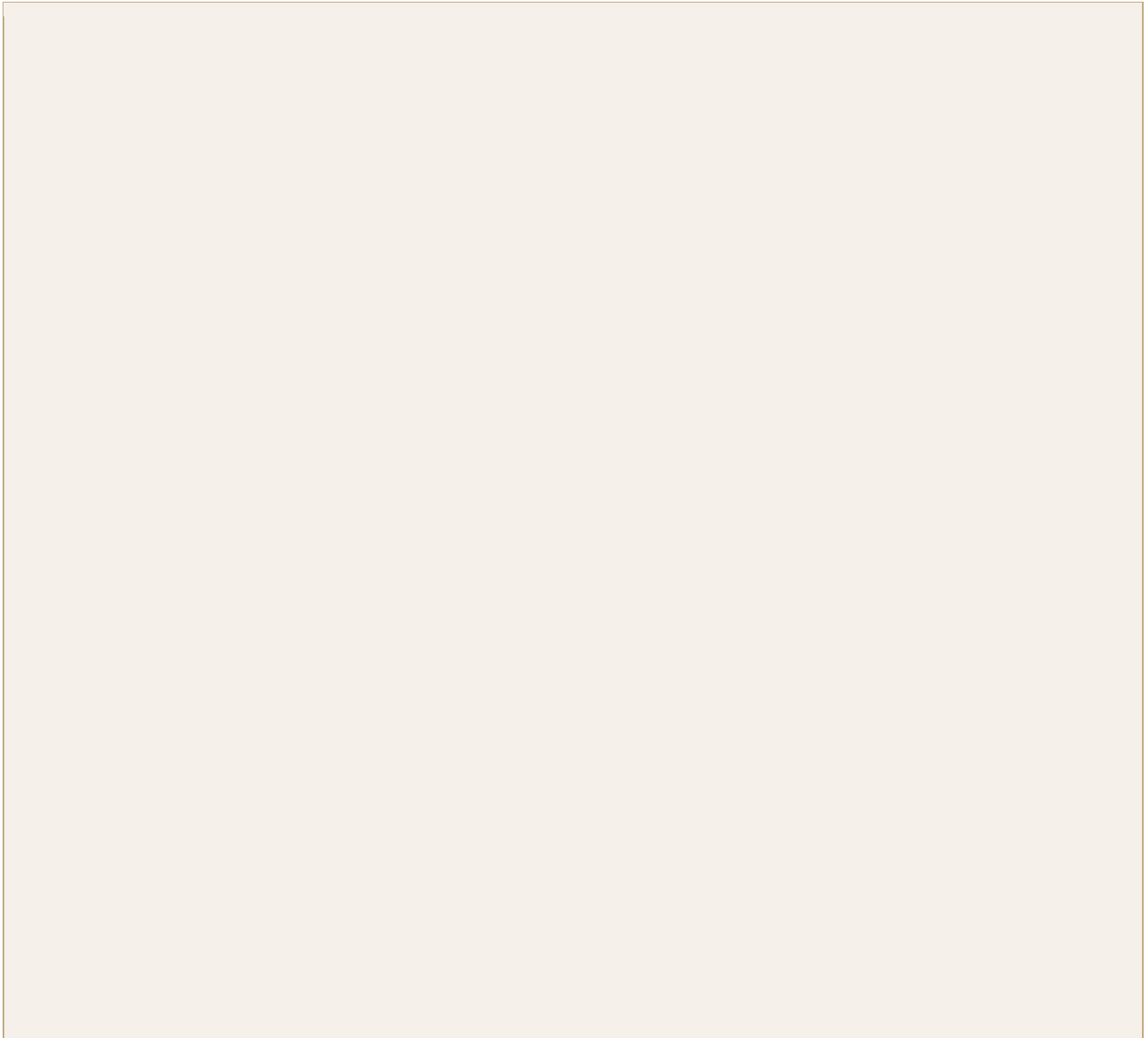
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## CHAPTER 26

### ***Journal Prompt #26***

*Write about a situation this week where you felt triggered or stressed.*

- How could you separate your identity from the outcome?
- What would responding instead of reacting look like?
- How could this practice protect your Head Fire and your energy?



*Start small. Even one conscious choice a day strengthens your nervous system, strengthens your Head Fire, and keeps you moving toward who you're becoming.*

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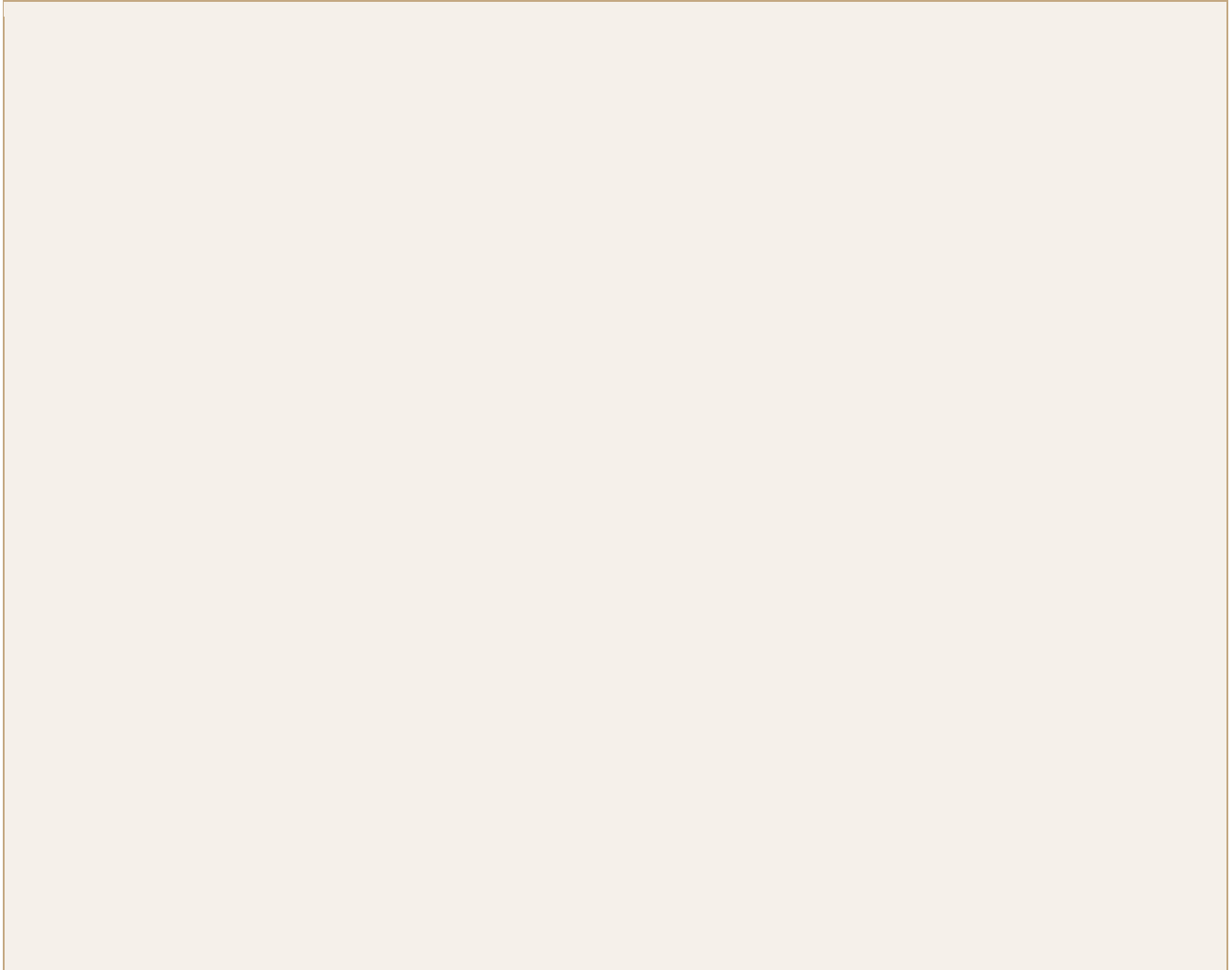
## CHAPTER 27

### *Journal Prompt #27*

*Reflect on a time when you stayed in a situation that felt unsafe, unhealthy, or misaligned with your truth.*

Now, write about what leaving — or choosing yourself — might look like today.

- What kept you there?
- What fears or beliefs made leaving feel impossible?
- What support did you have — or wish you had?
- If you could speak to yourself in that moment, what would you say now?



*Let it be honest. Let it be brave. Let it remind you: Leaving isn't a weakness. It's wisdom.*

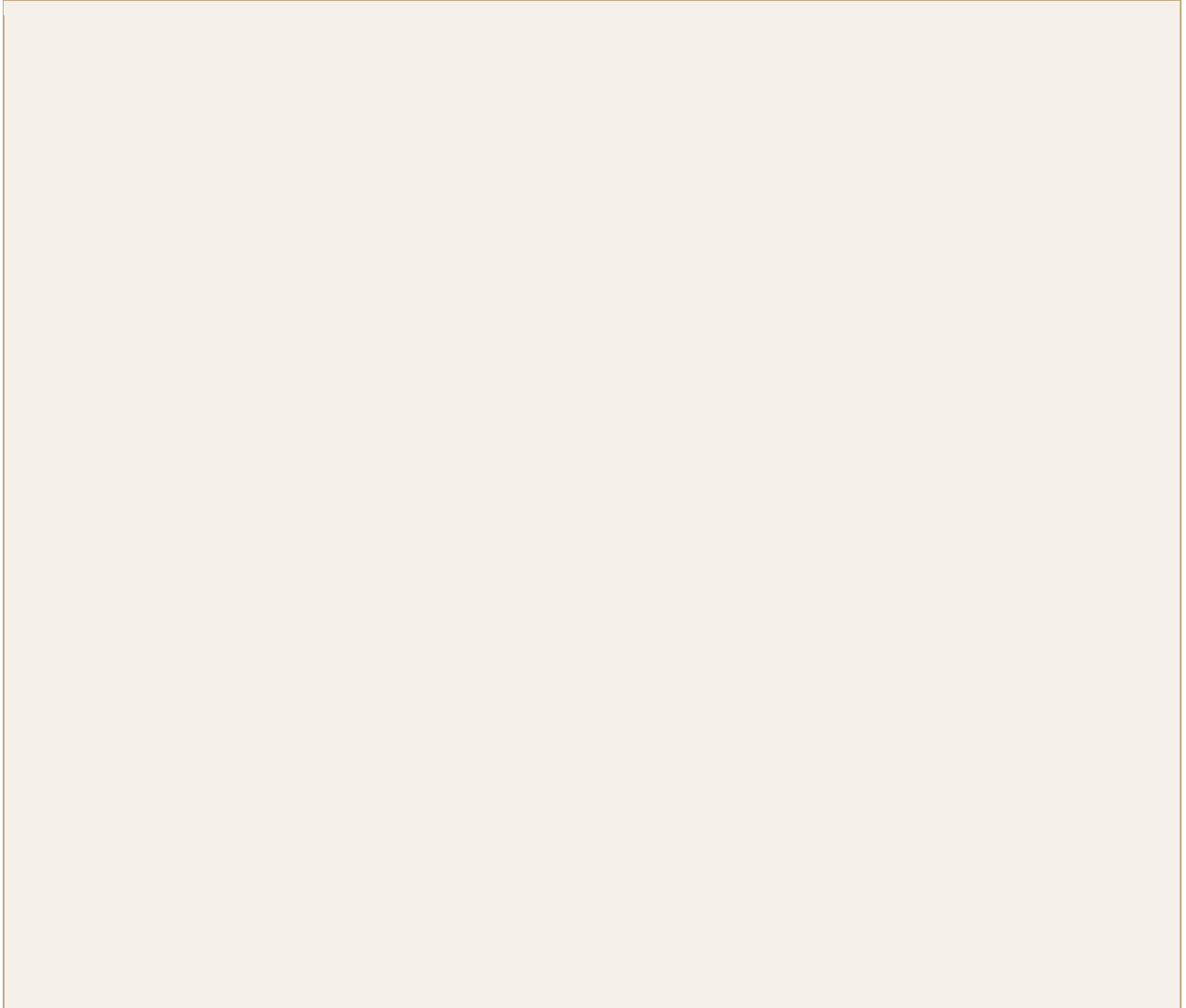
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## CHAPTER 28

### **Journal Prompt #28**

*What did "survival" look like for you in the aftermath?*

- What is one thing you've reclaimed — or want to reclaim — that once felt lost to you?



*Healing doesn't mean going back to who you were; it means becoming who you were always meant to be, without fear. You are not behind. You are rebuilding. And rebuilding is not loud. It is not fast. It is not flashy. Even the smallest steps forward count. In fact — small steps are the goal. Just steady, deliberate turtle steps. Slow enough to stay grounded. Slow enough to heal properly. Slow enough to build something that lasts. So, keep going. You are already further than you think.*

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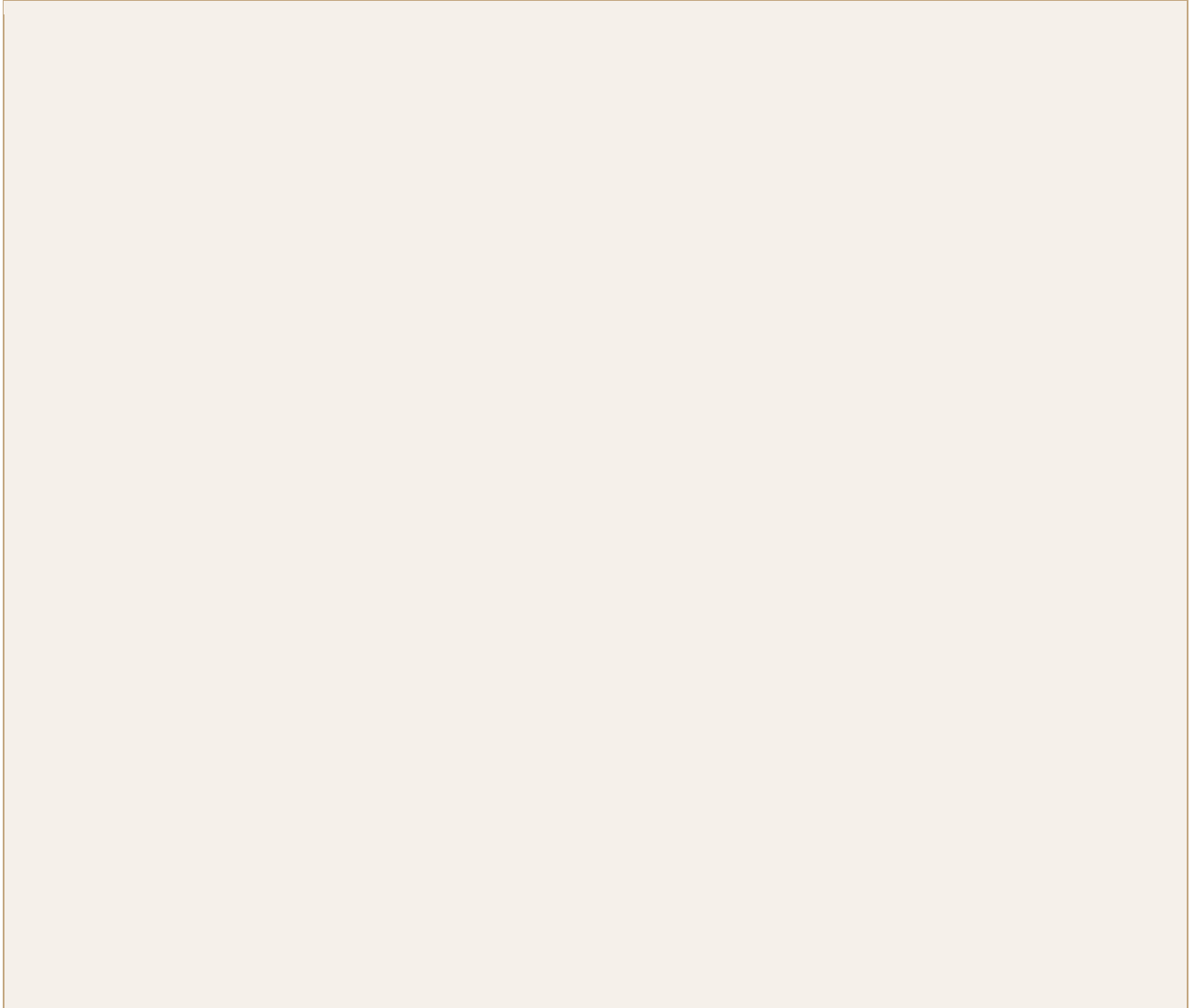
## CHAPTER 29

### *Journal Prompt #29*

*Reflect on a time when you felt like you were breaking but didn't.*

Write as if you're speaking to someone who's just beginning their healing journey.

- What helped you keep going?
- What did you learn about yourself in that moment?
- If your story could be a lighthouse for someone else, what would you want them to see?



*Let your fire guide them.*

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## CHAPTER 30

### *Journal Prompt #30*

*Think back to a moment in your life when everything you believed in — about love, family, or yourself — started to unravel.*

Now imagine that version of you — heartbroken, exhausted, but still standing. What did she need to hear that no one said out loud? Write a letter to her. Remind her what she survived. Tell her what she taught you.

- What version of you was trying to hold it all together?
- What did she believe about her worth, her role, and what it meant to be "enough"?

#### LETTER TO THE VERSION OF YOU WHO WAS HOLDING IT TOGETHER

*Then describe the life you're building now — not the old dream, but the truer one. The one that's yours. The one where you are already galloping toward freedom.*

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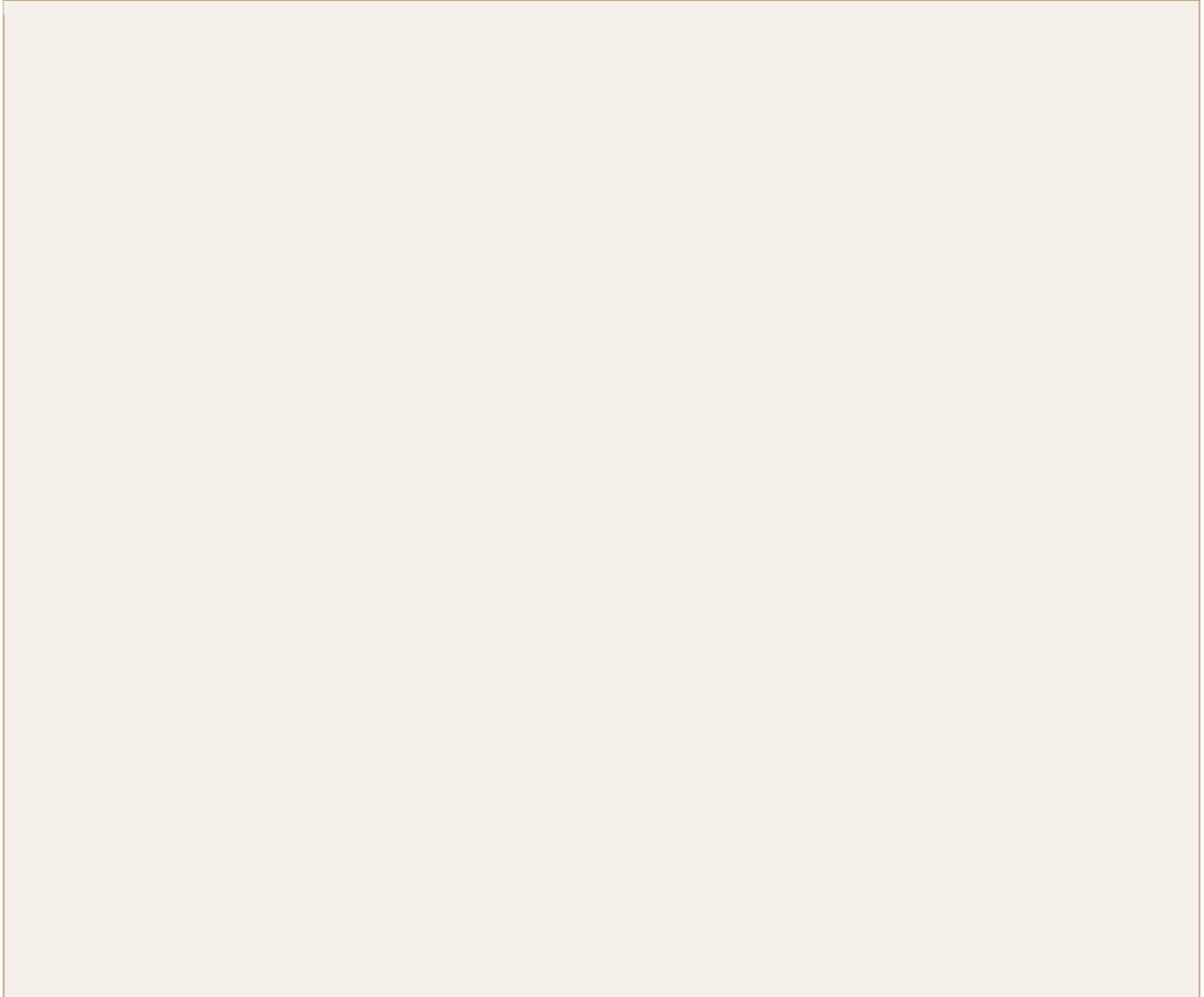
## CHAPTER 31

### *Journal Prompt #31*

*During a time of deep stillness, I met the version of myself I had been avoiding for years.*

Take a quiet moment today to ask yourself:

- Who was I before I was expected to be everything for everyone?
- What parts of me have I tucked away to survive, to keep the peace, or to feel loved?
- Where do I still feel the ache for nurturance, protection, or guidance?



*Let the answers come without judgment. Let them be messy, incomplete, or surprising. Healing doesn't happen all at once — it happens in small, brave pages like this one.*

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## CHAPTER 32

### *Journal Prompt #32*

*Create Your Vision Board — a step-by-step exercise*

#### **STEP 1 — GATHER YOUR TOOLS**

Grab a blank board, notebook, or digital app. Find markers, magazines, photos, or anything that helps you express your vision visually.

#### **STEP 2 — IMAGINE YOUR FUTURE**

Close your eyes for a few moments and picture the life you want to create. What do you see? How do you feel? Who is beside you? What surrounds you? Let yourself dream freely — no judgment.

#### **STEP 3 — PUT IT ON YOUR BOARD**

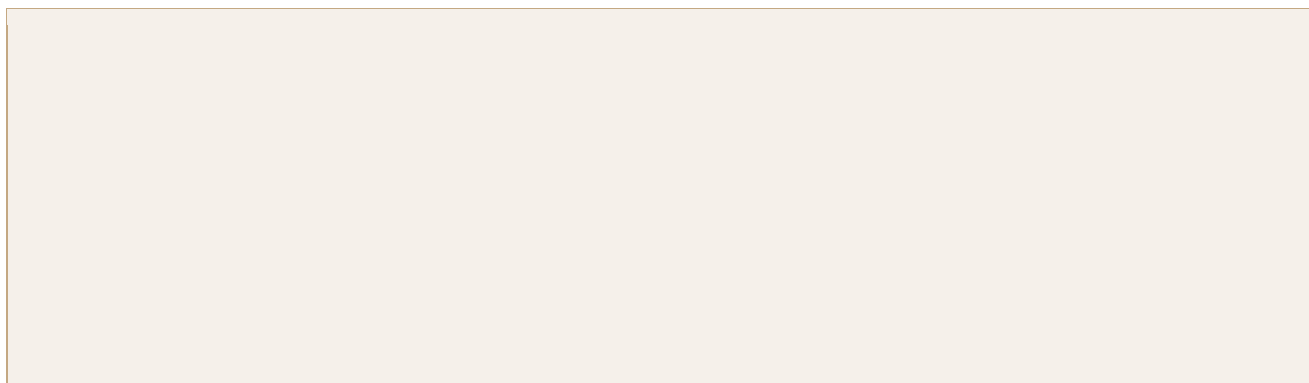
Draw, write, or collage images and words that represent your vision. Include career goals, relationships, health, personal growth, or experiences you want to have. Add words that capture the feelings you want to cultivate: love, joy, courage, freedom, strength.

#### **STEP 4 — CONNECT WITH GRATITUDE AND MINDFULNESS**

Notice what's already present in your life that supports this vision. What small things can you appreciate today? Gratitude and mindfulness help tune your energy to the frequency of what you want to manifest.

#### **STEP 5 — OBSERVE AND ACT**

Set your board somewhere you can see it. Then let it go — trust that the vision is working its way into your life. Take small, intentional steps every day. Say "no" to anything that doesn't align with your vision. Say "yes" to everything that does — even if it makes you nervous.



*Manifesting is about alignment — holding a vision for your future and taking small steps toward it. Your vision doesn't have to be grand; it just needs to be meaningful to you.*

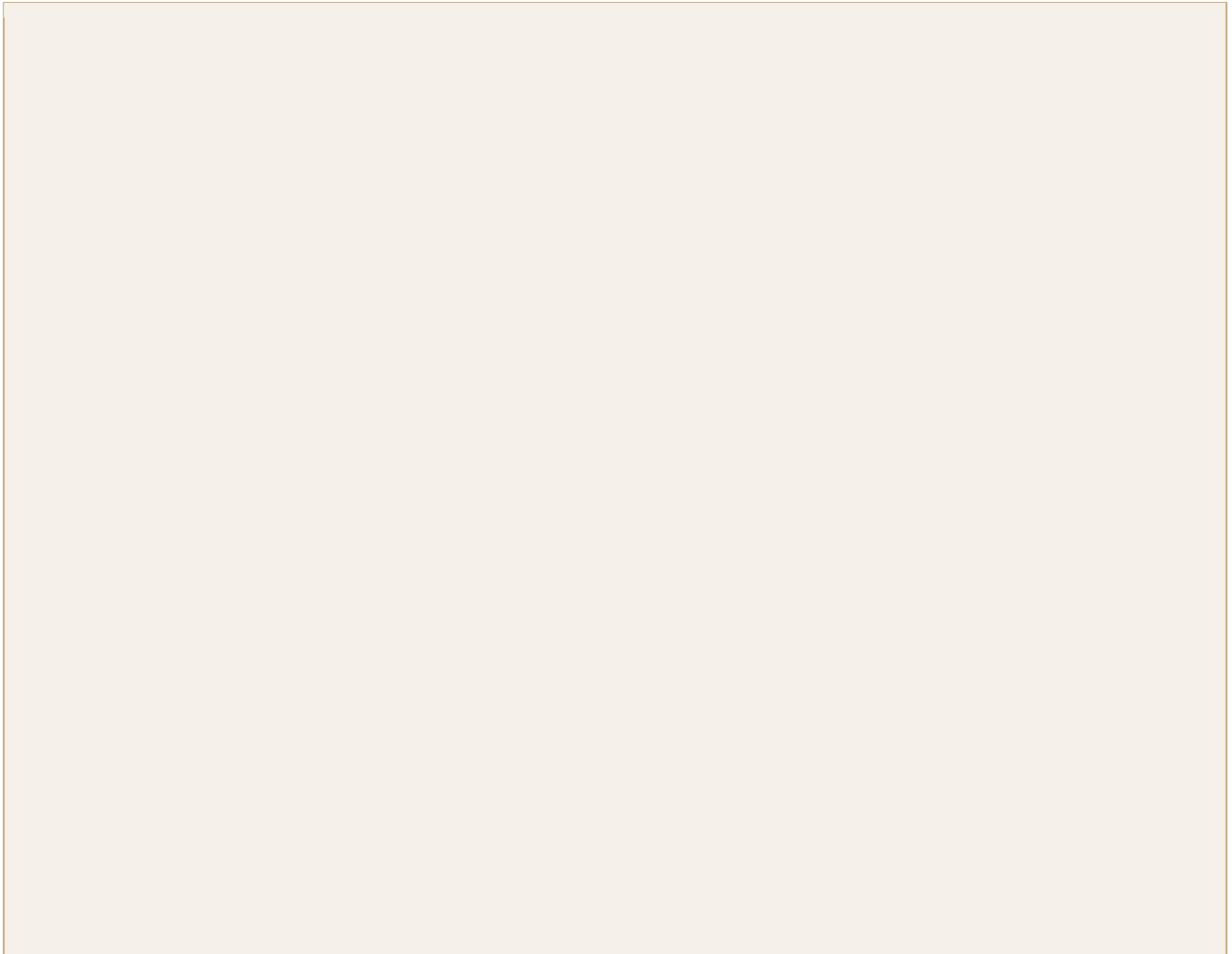
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## CHAPTER 33

### ***Journal Prompt #33***

*Reflect on generational patterns and cycle-breaking.*

- What generational patterns or beliefs were passed down in your family that no longer serve you?
- What would it look like to gently question them — or even let them go?
- How has physical or emotional distance helped — or hindered — your healing?



*Sometimes that choice makes you an outsider. Sometimes it makes you a trailblazer. Sometimes it makes you both. And that is what makes it brave.*

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## CHAPTER 34

### *Journal Prompt #34*

*Reflect on a recent moment when you felt your emotions taking over — at home, work, or elsewhere.*

If you have time, create a small routine to help practise emotional regulation daily. For example: take a 5-minute mindful breathing break, notice tension in your body, stretch or move, and jot down your feelings.

- How did your body react?
- What helped you pause, breathe, or reconnect?

#### MY DAILY EMOTIONAL REGULATION ROUTINE

*How might this small, consistent practice change the way you navigate stress and connection with others?*

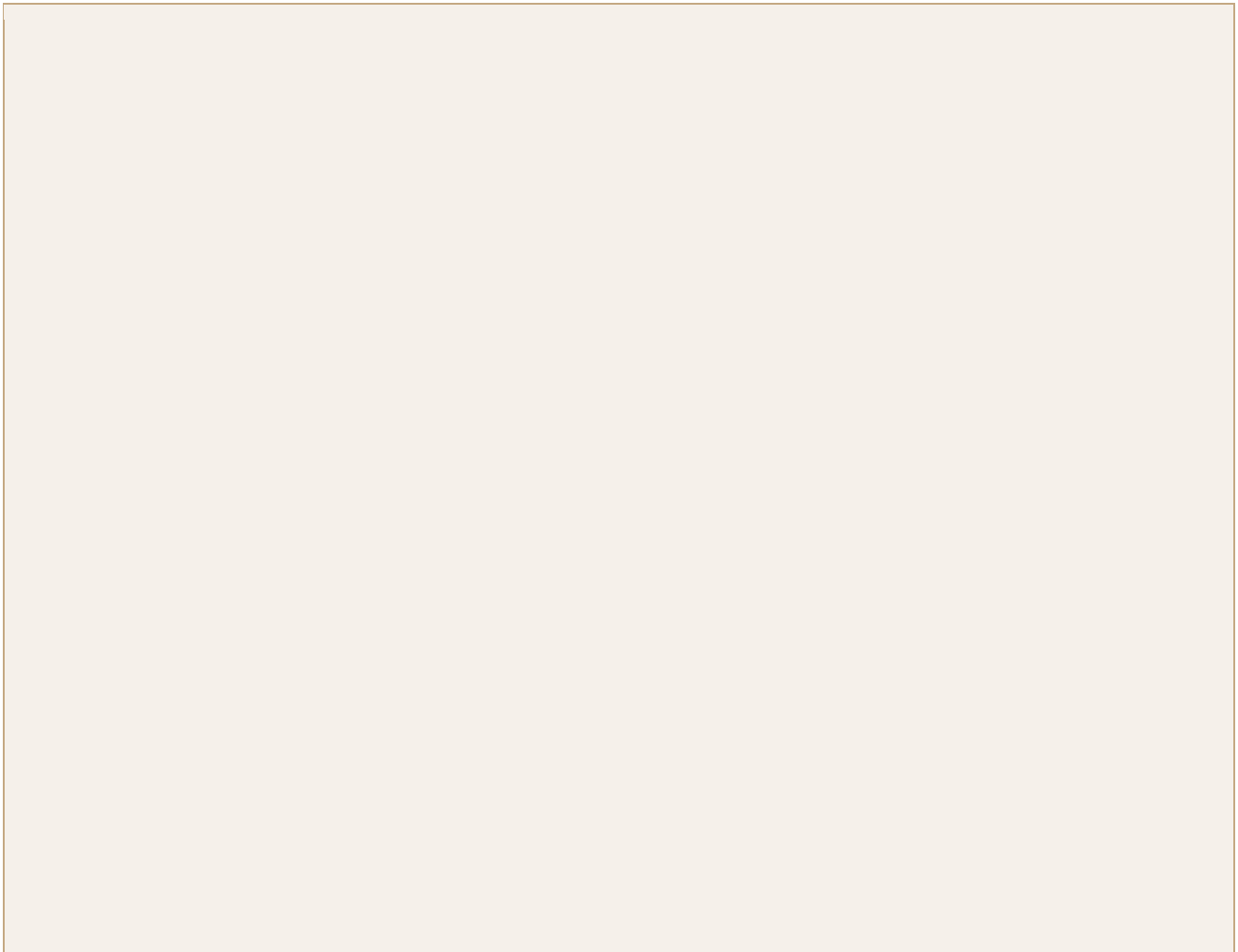
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## CHAPTER 35

### *Journal Prompt #35*

*Think of a recent situation that could have caused panic or stress. How did you respond?*

- Looking back, is there a way you could have approached it with more calm and steadiness?
- Have you ever noticed a moment when you reacted differently than the "old version" of yourself would have? What changed?
- What practices in your life help you stay grounded when things go wrong?
- Describe a moment when you trusted that things would work out, even when the situation was uncertain. What helped you hold that belief?
- Sometimes growth is quiet and subtle. What small signs of personal change have you noticed in yourself recently?



*Change doesn't always look dramatic. Sometimes it looks like standing in a parking lot at 6:00 a.m. and choosing calm instead of chaos. That's how you know you're changing.*

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## CHAPTER 36

### *Journal Prompt #36*

*Reflect on a recent situation where you felt hesitant, anxious, or unsure.*

If nothing comes to mind, create the opportunity: go to lunch alone, sit at the table without reaching for your phone, attend a local event and introduce yourself. Confidence grows in quiet, intentional acts of courage repeated over time.

- What was happening, and how did you respond?
- Imagine your confident self in that same situation. What would they do differently? How would they hold themselves, speak, or act?
- Take action in small ways this week. Write down three specific moments where you can choose to show up fully, even if you don't feel completely ready.

*Celebrate every small win. At the end of the week, write down each time you acted with confidence and how it felt — even if it felt uncomfortable at first. Confidence is built through practice, not waiting.*

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## CHAPTER 37

### *Journal Prompt #37*

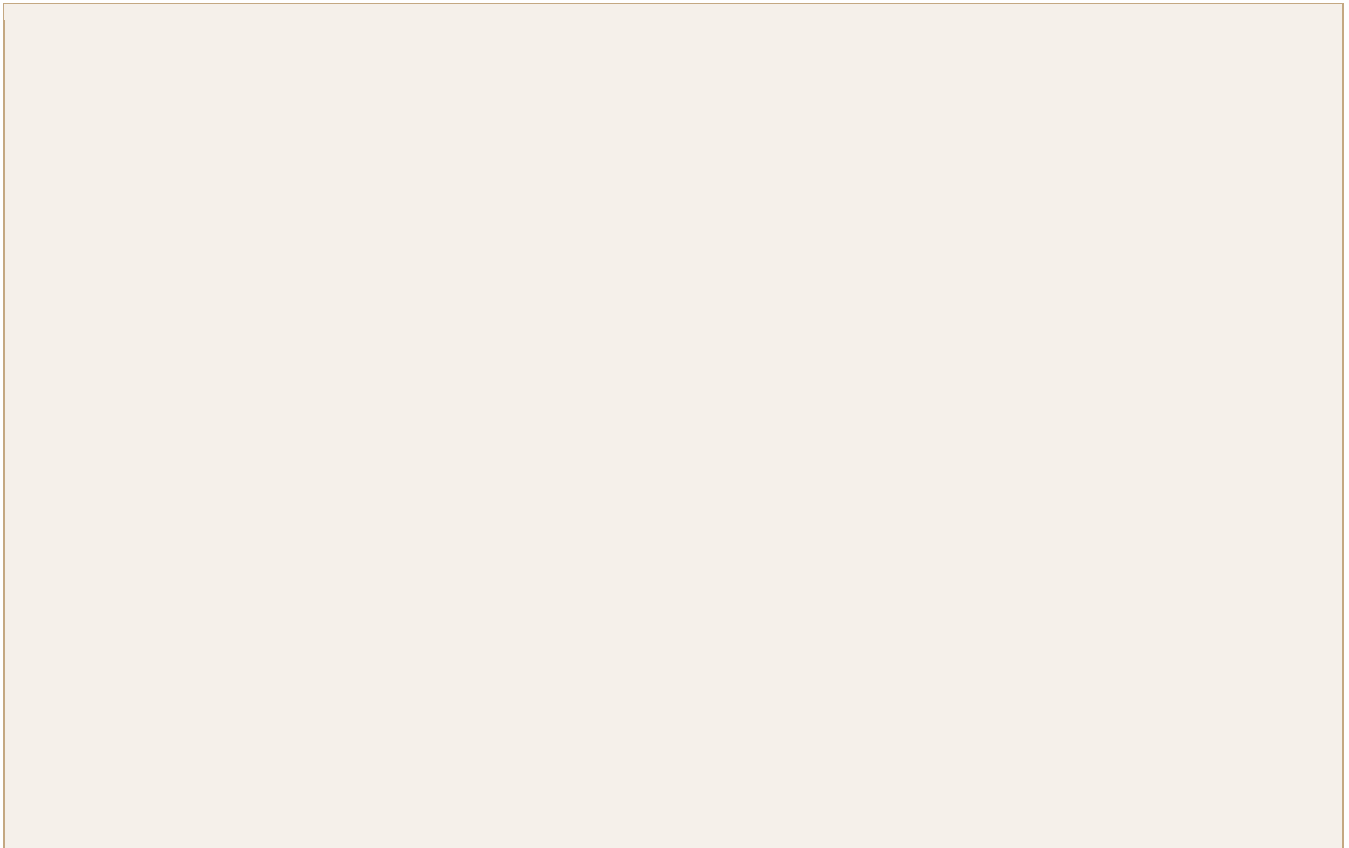
*Starting today — a little challenge.*

Open the Notes app on your phone (or grab a notebook). Each time you notice something good — even the tiniest moment — write it down. Once you start paying attention, your energy shifts. As you jot these moments down, practise the three steps:

- What is one positive thing that happened to you this week?
- What is one thing you're proud of today or this week?
- How did it feel in that moment?

#### **THE THREE STEPS**

- 1. Notice it — really let it register.
- 2. Enrich it — feel it fully in your body and mind.
- 3. Absorb it — let it become part of you.



*Trust me — if you practise this regularly, before you know it, it won't feel like practice at all. It'll just be part of your day.*

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## CHAPTER 38

### *Journal Prompt #38*

*Take a few minutes today to notice the good around you.*

Reflect: How does noticing these moments shift your energy, your mood, or your perspective?

- List three things that you are grateful for right now.
- Pause and feel them in your body — let the warmth expand in your chest, your shoulders soften, your face lift into a natural smile.

#### **THREE THINGS I'M GRATEFUL FOR RIGHT NOW**

#### **HOW NOTICING THE GOOD SHIFTS MY PERSPECTIVE**

*Practise this daily. Set a timer on your phone to help remind you. Over time, these small sparks of gratitude will fuel your Head Fire, build resilience, and help you carry the hard moments with more strength, grace, and courage.*

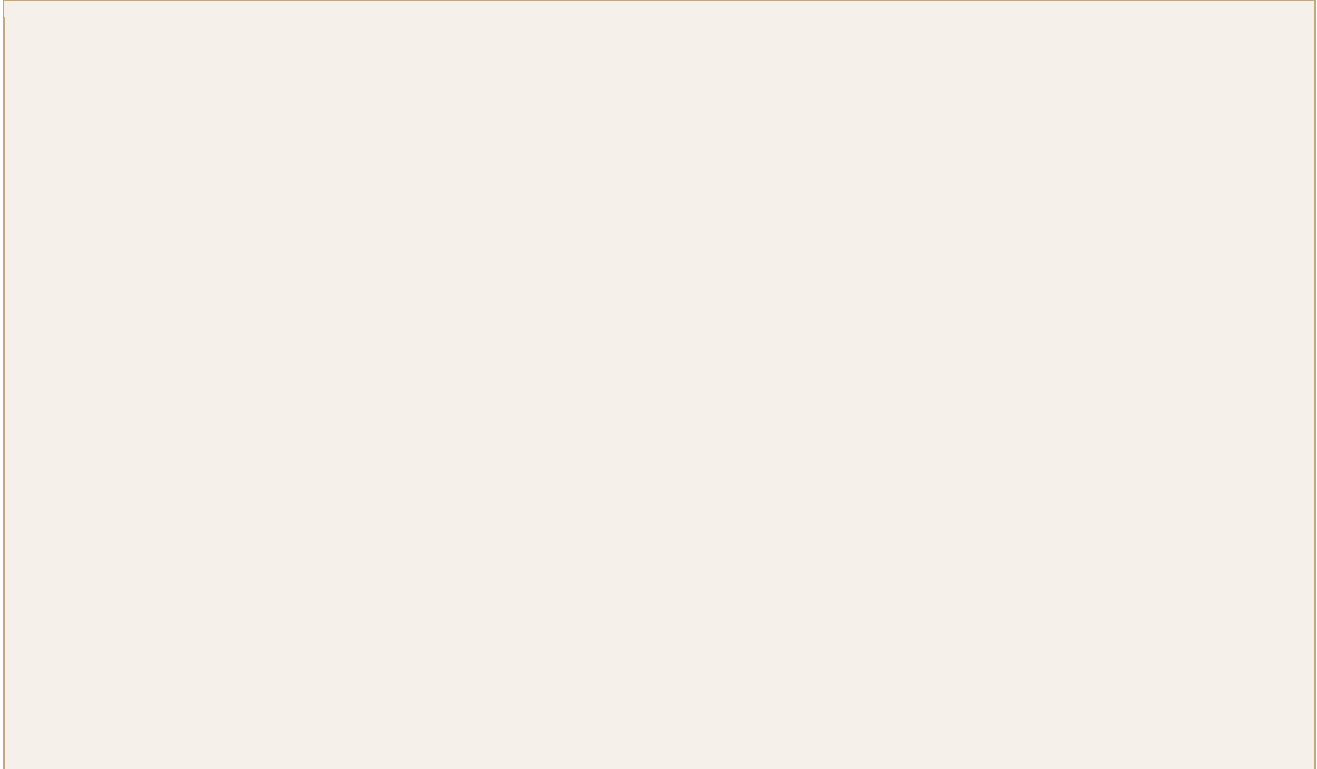
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## CHAPTER 39

### ***Journal Prompt #39***

*Real self-care is deliberate — the small, intentional choices we make to protect our energy.*

- What are three small things you can do this week that feel like care — not for anyone else, but for yourself?
- Where can you make space for joy, stillness, or just a moment to breathe?



*You can't pour from an empty cup. And more importantly, you shouldn't have to. Caring for yourself isn't selfish — it's essential. It allows your Head Fire to keep burning and warming those around you.*

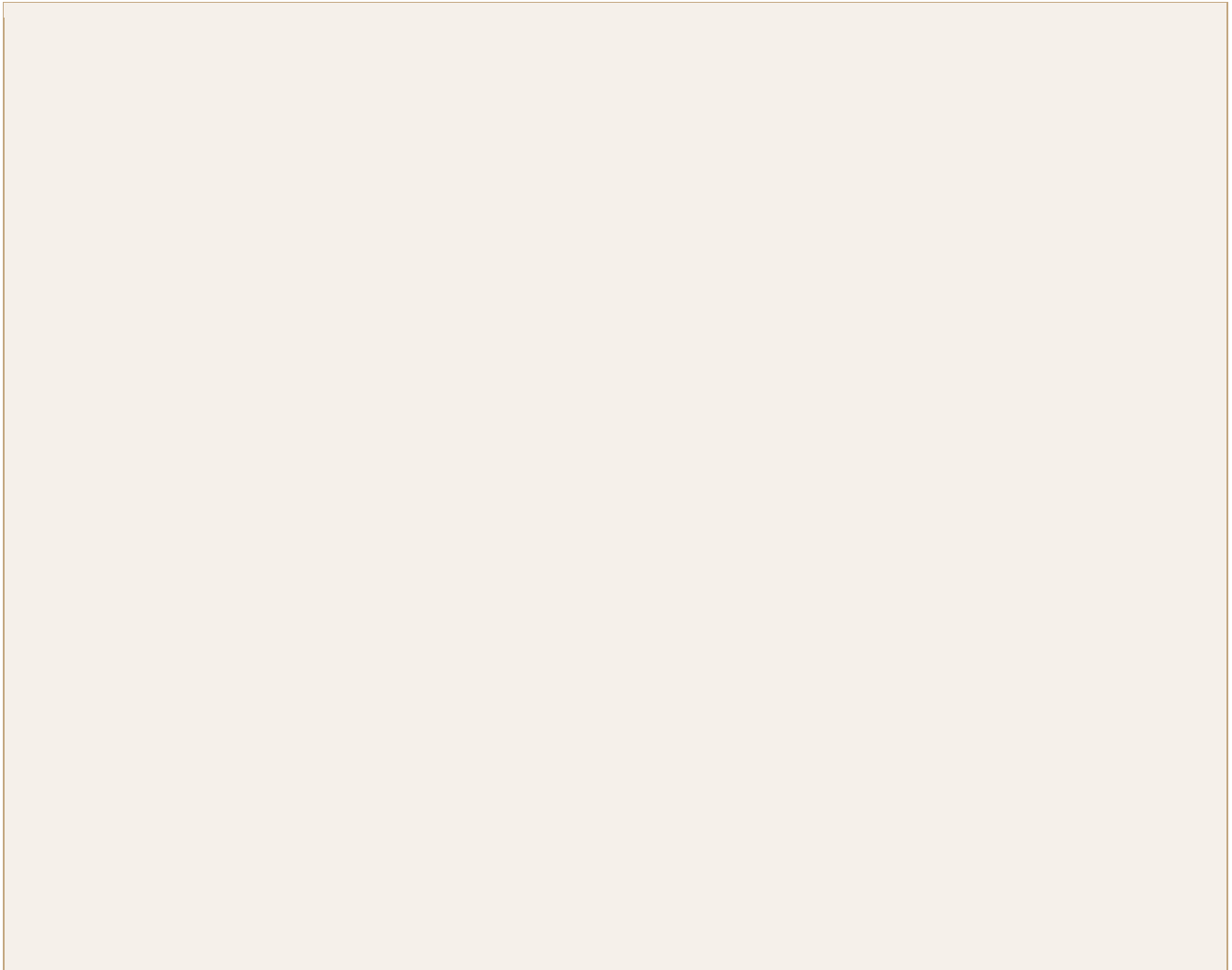
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## CHAPTER 40

### *Journal Prompt #40*

*Now that you've come to the end of this book, ask yourself:*

- What does "wholeness" mean to me right now, in this season of my life?
- Where am I still growing, and where can I finally rest?
- What parts of myself have I reclaimed or remembered through this journey?



*Honour them. They are all a part of who you are — and they are beautiful.  
"Wholeness isn't perfection — it's truth. It's the courage to be exactly who you are, even when the world wants something else." — L.O.*

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