

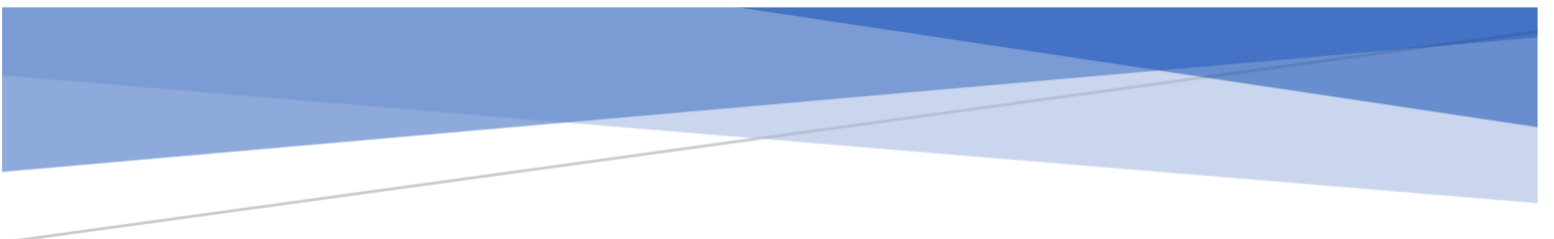
Untamed Chaos

**A Parent's Guide to Improving Communication, Resolving
Conflict, and Restoring Peace in Your Home**

Working Journal

Dr. Teri Rouse

Educator, Early & Behavior Interventionist, Autism & Reading Specialist





Let's get Started

Working Journal Activity 1: From Untamed Chaos to Peace and Tranquility

To start your journey from untamed chaos to peace and tranquility, complete Activity 1 in your Working Journal with your family.

This activity allows each person, even the littles, to have a voice and to share their personal thoughts with the whole family. Try not to invalidate or get defensive as you work through this. You need about fifteen to twenty minutes; colored pencils, markers, or crayons; and colored sticky pads, like Post-its. Be as open, honest, and vulnerable as you can be.

Step 1

Take a look at the boxes, and circle three to four words that describe each one of you as individuals. Then, circle three to four words that describe your family. Little ones can play along using the feeling faces icons, which can help them express their thoughts, feelings, and emotions in an independent, self-determining way. Everybody has a voice!

State of Untamed Chaos

Socially	Isolated	Lonely	Left Out	Bullied	Embarrassed	Stereotyped
	Tantrums	Helpless	Targeted	Ignored	Avoided	Disliked
	Frustrated	Confused	Hopeless			
Emotionally	Tired	Depressed	Angry	Helpless	Ashamed	Embarrassed
	Frustrated	Tantrums	Hopeless	Confused	Lonely	
Academically	Dislikes school	Embarrassed	Pressured	Anxious	Isolated	Lonely
	Bullied	Stereotyped	Tantrums	Helpless	Stupid	Alone
	Targeted	Ignored	Avoided	Left Out	Disliked	Frustrated

Joy

Happy

Meh

sad

angry



Now I want you to put that paper aside. Those feelings are real! And they won't necessarily go away today or even tomorrow, but they don't have to be permanent. And they don't have to keep having a negative effect on you or your family. What you're going to do next is help change the negative soundtrack playing over and over in your head. The words you use have power, so think carefully about the vocabulary in this next part of the activity. The goal is to become aware of your thoughts so that you can change them and, in doing so, navigate your way out of the chaos.

Step 2

Now that the negative thoughts are out in the open, it's time to dream big ... really big! It's time to think about what you want your life to look like.

How do you see yourself and your children in the future? Where do you want to go?

Who do you want to share your life with?

How do you want to feel?

Using this second list of words, circle three to four that describe the dream emotions for you and your family. Again, this should be done as a family and as individuals. For the little ones, use the feeling faces icons, pictures from magazines, and/or have them draw what they are thinking and feeling. It is very important that everyone has a voice and shares.

Creating Our Peace and Tranquility

Socially	Included Hopeful Energized Sporting Teams Community Events
	Invitations Organized Strong Friends Helpful Connected
Emotionally	Excited Included Hopeful Energized Strong Focused Supported
	Organized Helpful Friends Calm
Academically	Successful Hopeful Focused Organized Energized Included
	Helpful Calm Supported Smart

Joy

Happy

Meh

sad

angry



You're going to need those Post-it notes now. Make sure to choose colors that you like and that catch your attention. Write those dream emotions (or draw the applicable positive feeling face

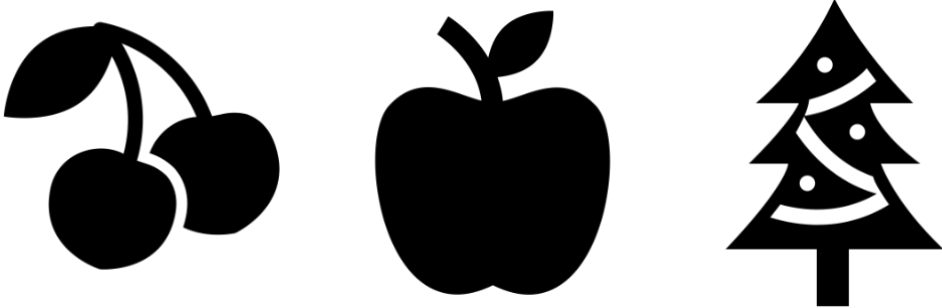
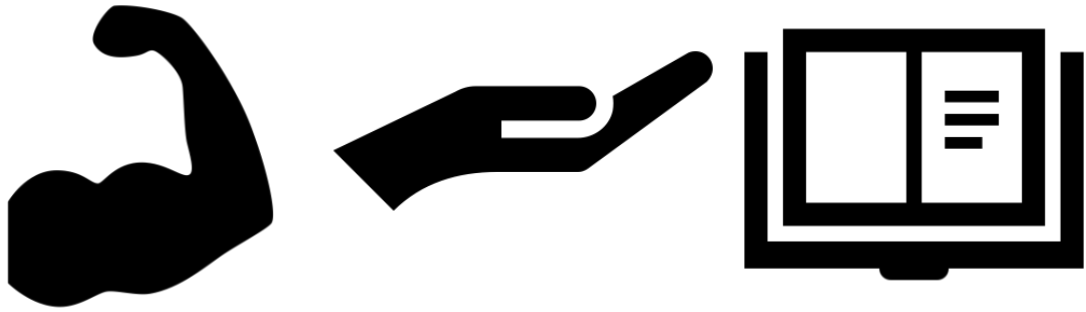
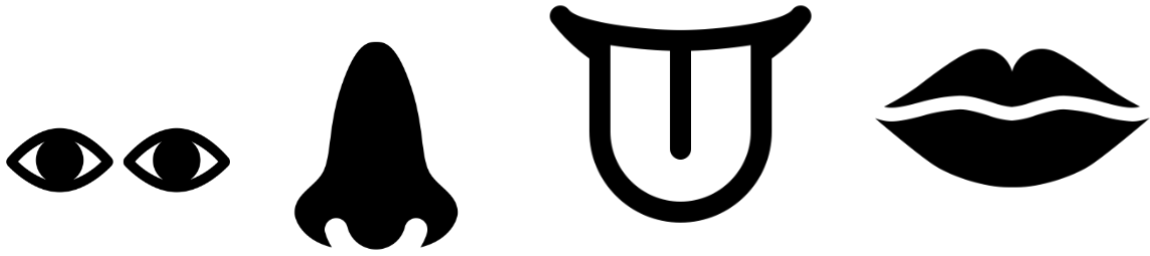
icon) on the Post-it notes. And put them around your home so that you can see them clearly multiple times a day! A study entitled

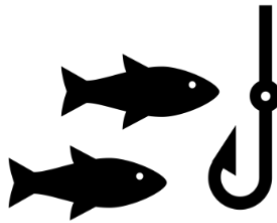
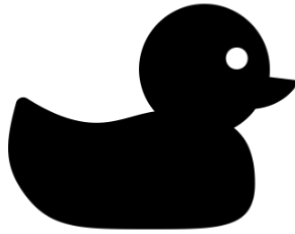
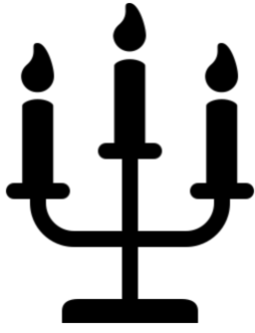
“Paper Notebooks vs. Mobile Devices: Brain Activation Differences During Memory Retrieval” has shown that when you write something down, you are more likely to actually do it. Now is your time! Time to begin the journey of long-lasting change for yourself and your children.

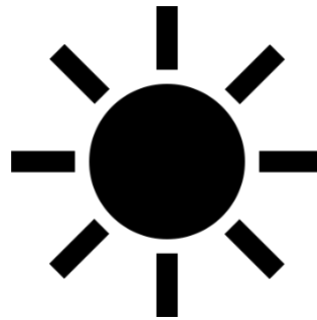
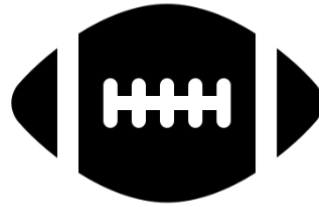
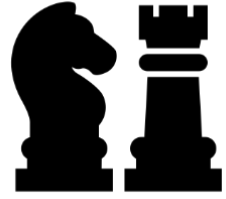
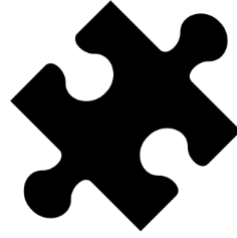
Look, see, and say these positive thoughts and feelings every day multiple times a day. Believe they are possible because they are!

Activity Icons for the little ones

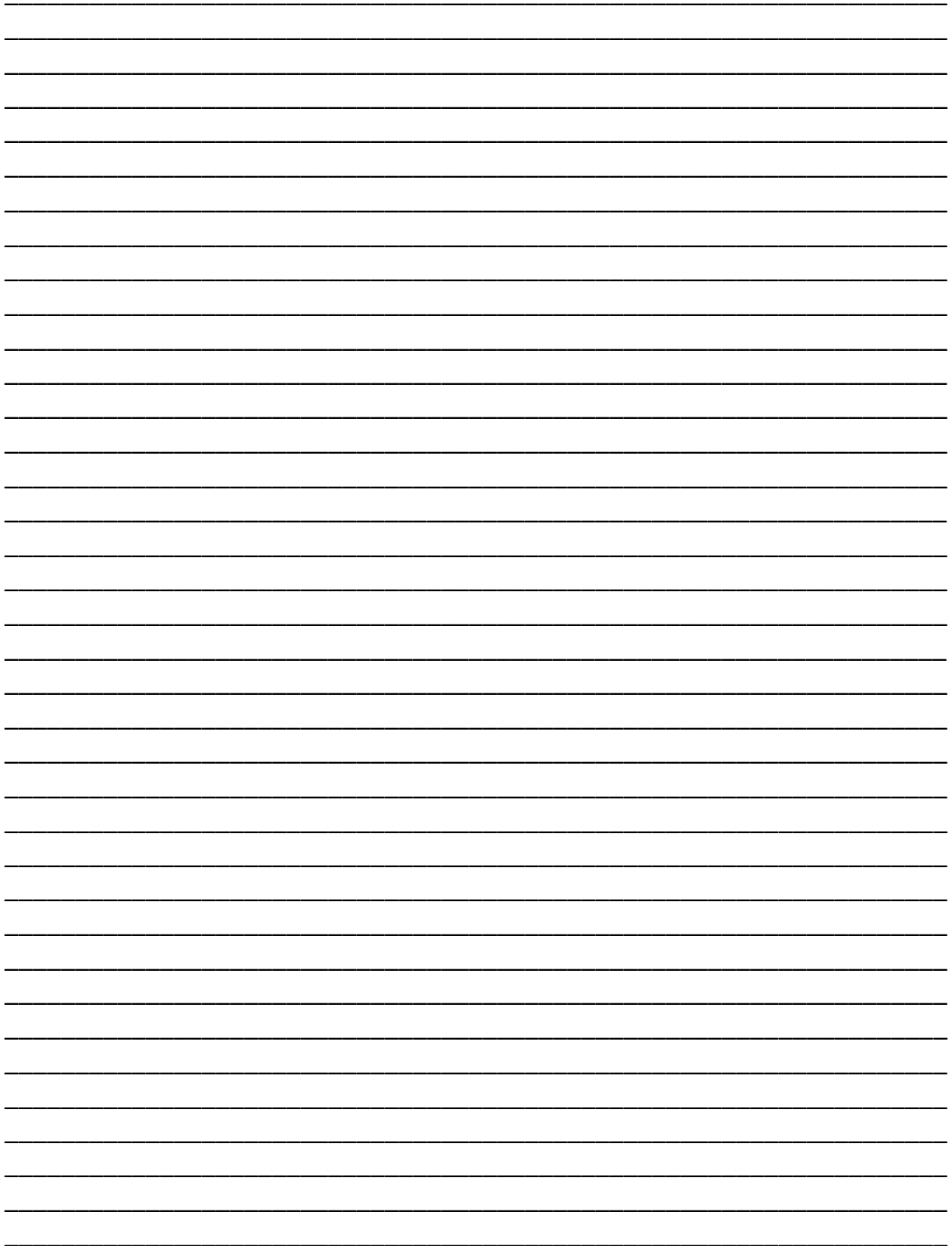


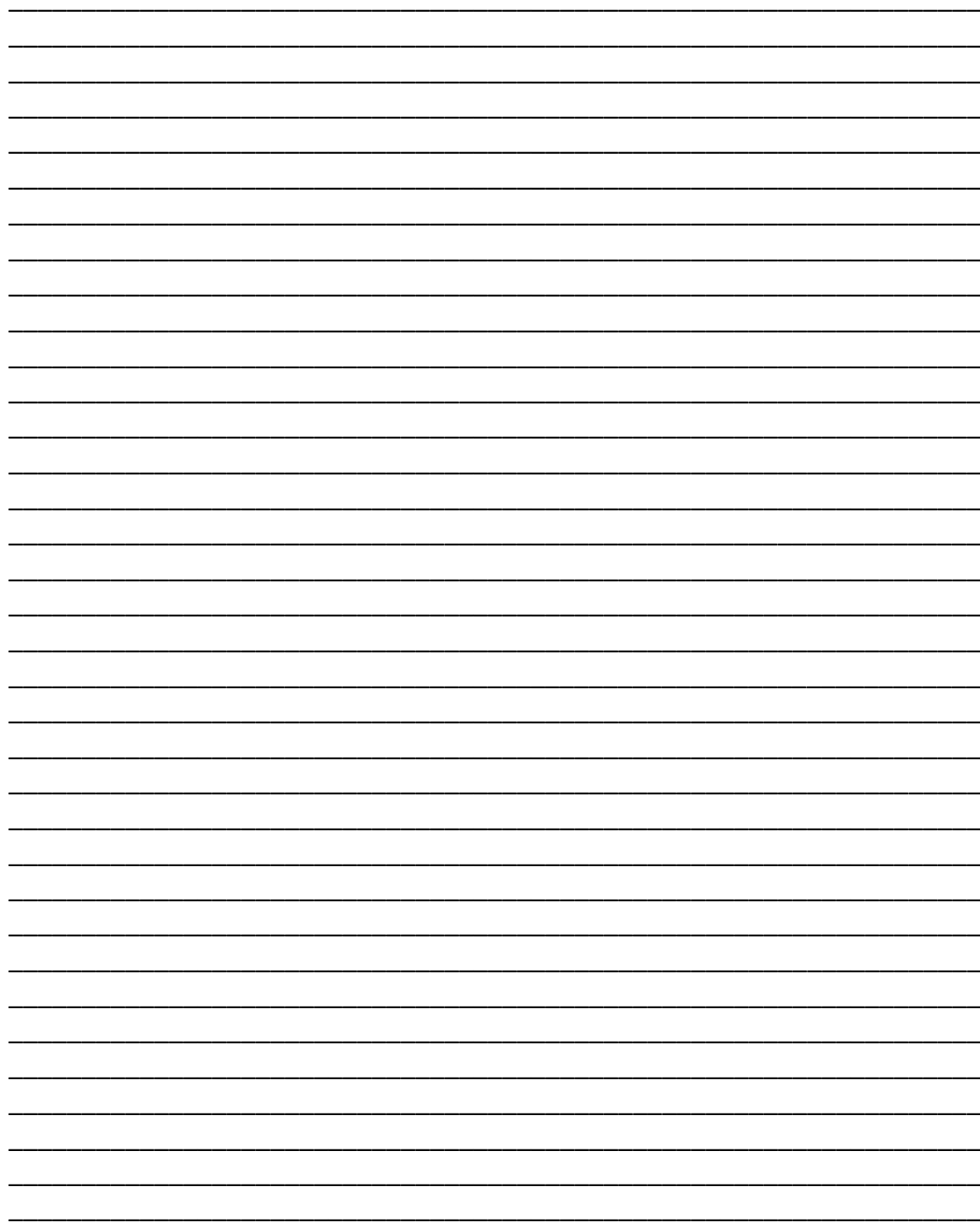


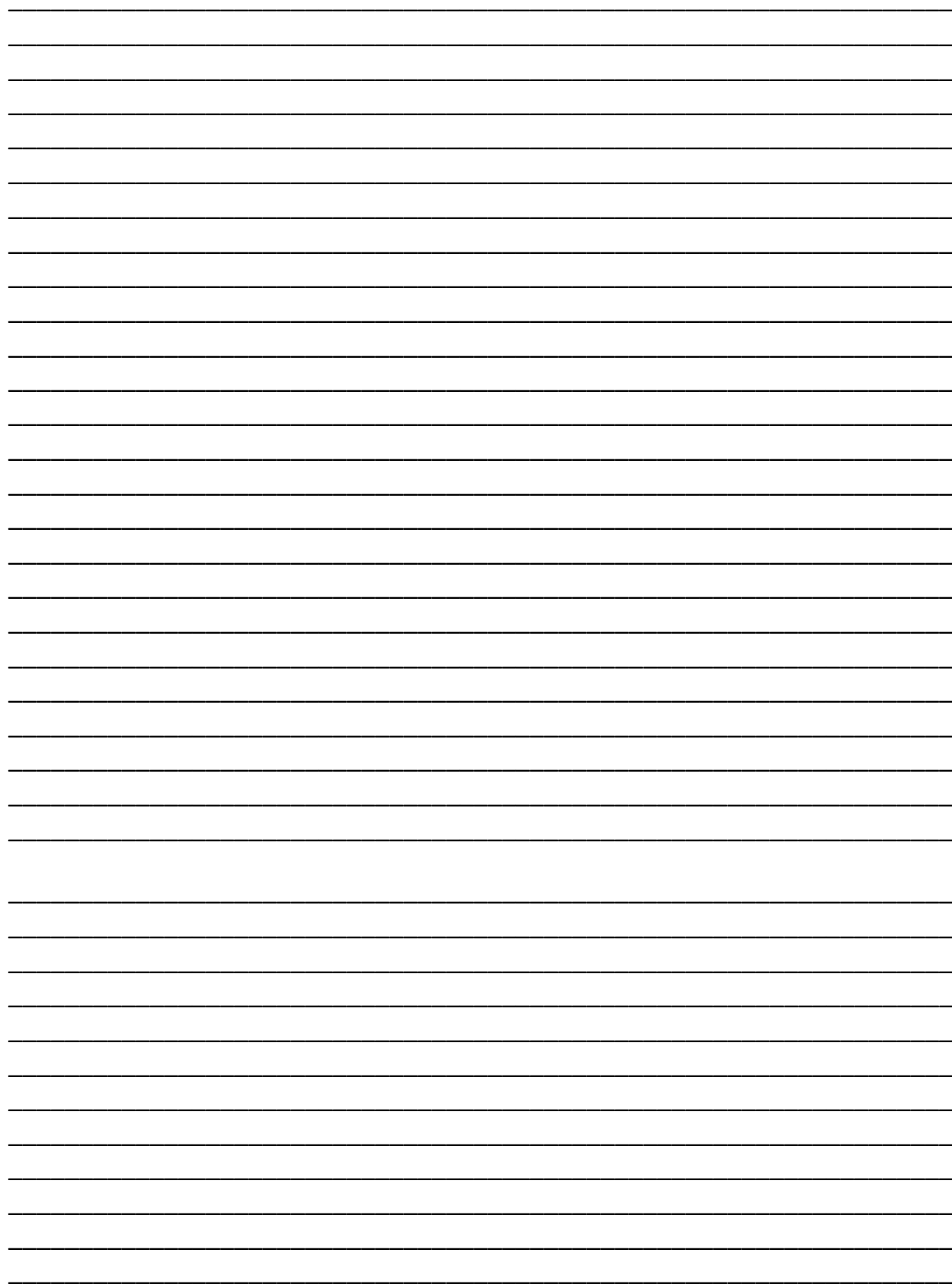














Working Journal Activity 5: React Versus Respond

Following is a list of situations and words as well as a chart. One column on the chart is “React,” and the other is “Respond.” Your assignment, if you choose to accept it, is to match each word with the action of reacting or responding. Quick review: When you react, you typically do it without thinking. When you respond, you typically take the time to think about what you are going to do and why. Keep in mind that reacting and responding can both be positive depending on the situation.

Immediate danger

Time sensitive

Someone violates your boundaries

Safety

Emotional triggers

Non-emergency

Time sensitive

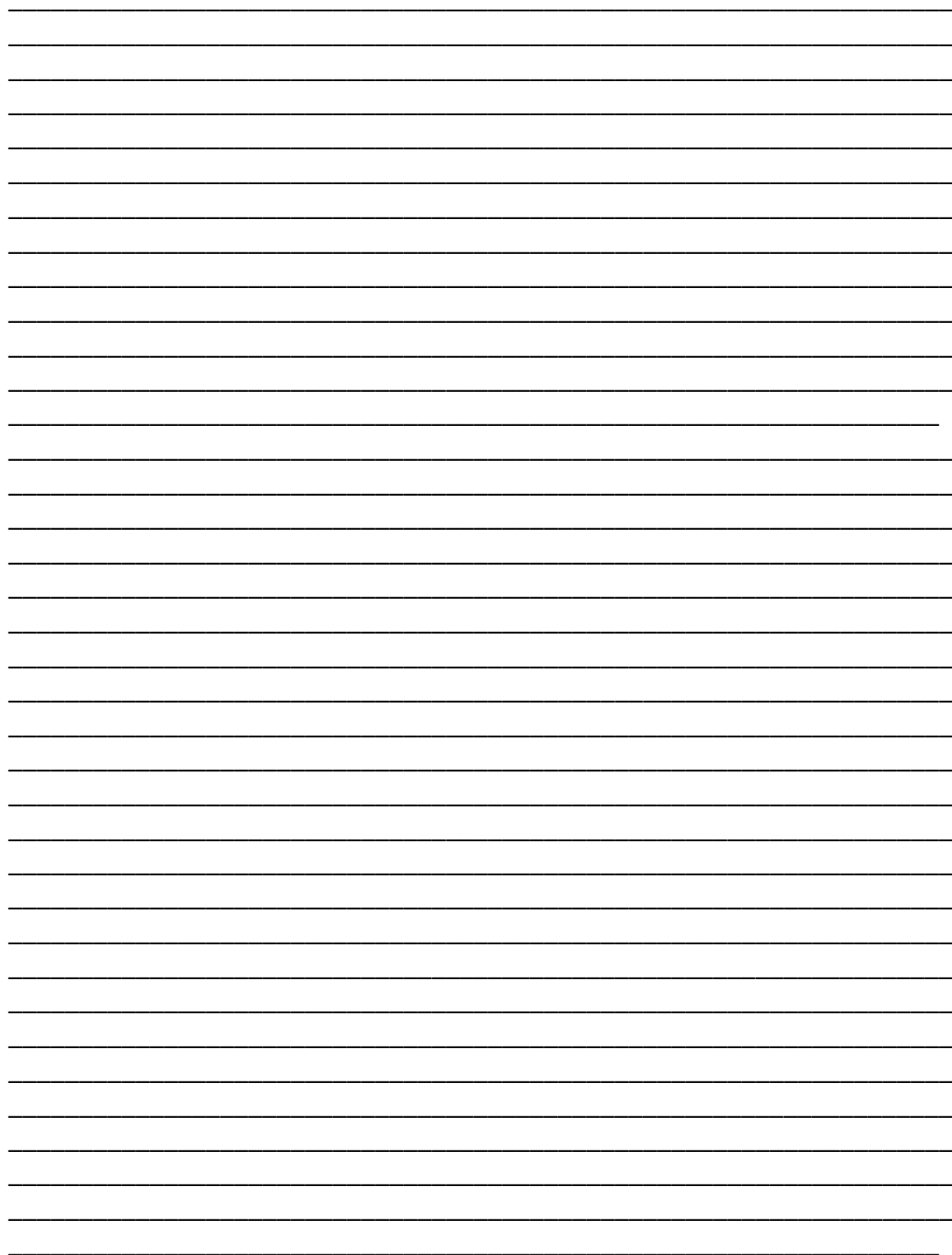
Safety

Non-emergency

Need for diplomacy Physical harm Defending someone else

REACT	RESPOND

On the lines below jot down some of your own experiences when you reacted and responded.





Working Journal Activity 6: *Must-Do* and *Want-to-Do* Lists

It's time for you to create your *must-dos* and your *want-to-dos*!

List 1 is the *must-do* list. These are tasks that you have to get done during the day. For example, I have to feed and let out my dog, GusGus. I have to do my "Power Hour" of work time. I have to go to the meeting that is scheduled. I have to go to my doctor's appointment.

List 2 is the *want-to-do* list. These are nonessential activities but ones I would like to do during the day, such as working on a puzzle, reading a novel, or playing in the garden.

Your children's day also should be interspersed with *must-dos* and *want-to-dos*. How? Give them ... wait for it ... control of their *want-to-do* activity once they have completed their *must-do* activities, or withhold their *want-to-do* activity if they didn't finish their *must-dos*. Let's break it down.

When I was teaching, I used the statement, "If you do _____, then you can do _____." This was my way of getting the *must-dos* done and giving the children control all at the same time. Here's the catch: The children cannot pick their *want-to-do* activities willy-nilly. That is a recipe for disaster, so help them to create their *want-to-do* list carefully.

Let me give you an example.

MUST DO	WANT TO DO
Feed dog	Play Video games
Brush teeth	Play ball
Get dressed	Read my book
Eat breakfast	Watch TV
Pack lunch	Color/Paint/other craft
Go to school	Play outside
Do homework	Go for a run

--	--

Use the Must Do Want to Do chart below to fill in your ideas

MUST DO	WANT TO DO

Another great option is a choice board. See the example below for ideas on how to create your own choice board

Choice Board

Video games 20 min	Watch TV 30 min	Puzzles 15-20 min	Play outside 30-45 min	Paint/color 30 min
Read a book 30 min	Play with the dog 20-30 min	Meditate 15-30 min	Go for a jog 20-30 min	Phone a friend 10-20 min
Arts and Crafts 30 min	Sit in my room 20-30 min	Have a snack 10-20 min	Write a story or a letter	Spend quiet time with you unlimited

Use the template to fill in you Choices for the day/ week /month

Choice Board



Working Journal Activity 7: Expectation Matrix

Following is an expectation matrix. Together, you and your family will fill in the expectation (behavior), the definition (what the behavior looks and sounds like), the consequences that happen when the expectation is met, the consequences that happen when it is not met, and special celebrations. Then everyone initials to show their agreement!

Column 1 are the expected behaviors

Column 2 is the definition of the behaviors...what it looks and sounds like

Column 3 what happens when the expectation is met

Column 4 what happens if the expectation is not met

Column 5 How will we celebrate our wins

Column 6 Initial your agreement to this expectation

Behavior	Definition	Expectations met	Expectations not met	Celebrations	People participating (initials agreement)
Kindness and respect	Use polite language and listen to others with an open mind. And avoid using name calling or hurtful comments.		Apologize, think about how to say or do something differently.	Enjoy time together	Mom dad, sister, brother 1 brother 2 Mom, Dad, Sister, Brother 1 Brother 2
Responsibility	take responsibility for belongings. help out with household chores. including cleaning up after yourself, making the bed, putting the dishes away, and completing homework and other tasks without being asked more than once.		Belongings taken away, loss of a wanted activity until chores are completed.	Ice cream party in the kitchen!	Mom, Dad, Sister, Brother 1 Brother 2
Honesty	be honest with one another and admit their mistakes	Respectful conversation. Coming up with a solution to a problem rather than lying about or ignoring it	Loss of an activity		Mom, Dad, Sister, Brother 1 Brother 2
Safety	be mindful of safety rules such as wearing a helmet when riding a bicycle, walking on the sidewalk, locking the door when everyone leaves.				Mom, Dad, Sister, Brother 1 Brother 2
Empathy	develop concern for other people. This means being sensitive to other peoples' feelings, offering help when needed, thinking about what their				Mom, Dad, Sister, Brother 1 Brother 2

	words and actions might do to someone else				
--	--	--	--	--	--

Now you try

Behavior	Definition	Expectations met	Expectations not met	Celebrations	People participating (initials agreement)



Working Journal Activity 8: Boundaries

Boundaries exist to keep you safe. They are necessary for you to build your self-respect. Without boundaries, you often respond to everyone else's wants and needs and neglect your own. Considering all of this, who do you and who don't you want in your life?

First, create a list of the Positive Peeps you enjoy spending time with and want to keep in your life. This can be a lot of fun.

Next, create a list of the Negative Nellies—those people who drain your energy; who aren't respectful toward you or your time; who expect you to stop what you're doing because they "need" to see or talk to you; and who won't respond kindly when you say "no" to them or put them off.

Who on that list can you kindly eliminate? Who on that list has to be in your life in some capacity?

Think about some ways that you can respond to the Negative Nellies that you must live with. For example, your sister doesn't like your boyfriend and makes no bones about telling you every blessed time she talks to you. You may respond by saying, "Thanks for the input, but we are going to have to agree to disagree." Or as soon as she starts, say something like, "I really don't want to have this discussion again. We can either end our call or move onto another topic." You do *not* have to stay engaged with the Negative Nellies. You have plenty of other positive and productive things to do in your life!

Now ... It's time to refine your boundaries. Complete the following

sentences, included here as examples, in your Working Journal (at untamedchaosbook.com/resources) to refine your boundaries.

a. I am worthy of

b. It bothers me when people

c. My physical boundaries are

d. My emotional boundaries are

e. When I feel my boundaries are crossed, I will

f. I value my time and energy by

g. I will take time for self-care by

It is almost impossible to not spend some time with people who are negative, but by creating boundaries, you can protect and value yourself, your time, and your worth.



Working Journal Activity 9: Self-Care Checklist

This is an example of a Self-Care Checklist. Self-care is a personal journey, so you will need to customize this checklist to fit your own unique needs.

Nutrition

By prioritizing nutrition as part of your self-care routine, you can enjoy more energy and vitality, support your overall health and well-being, and become more resilient in the process.

- Eat balanced meals.
 - Fruits Veggies
 - Whole grains
 - Lean proteins
 - Healthy fats
- Drink plenty of water.
- Limit sugar.
- Be mindful of what and when you eat.

Being conscious about what you eat, the quality and the quantity, ensures that you get the nutrition that your body and mind need to remain healthy and to maintain a healthy weight. In addition, you are modeling for your children how to make good choices, how to keep yourself healthy, and why nutrition is so important.

SELF-CARE IS *NOT* SELFISH Physical Health

By incorporating more physical activity into your self-care routine, you can boost your mood, increase your vitality and energy, and improve your overall well-being and health.

- Participate in regular physical activity, like walking, running, biking, and swimming.
- Stretch or practice yoga.
- Establish sleep hygiene.
- Take breaks throughout the day to move and stretch.

Taking time each day to move is important because it helps to support your physical health, maintain good posture, reduce stress and anxiety, and benefit your overall well-being.

Spiritual Wellness

When you incorporate spiritual well-being as a part of your self-care routine, you can handle stress and navigate challenges more effectively. Spirituality helps when coping with difficult emotions, and it can bring focus to a more purpose-driven life.

- Practice meditation, prayer, or journaling.
- Spend time in nature; take a walk.
- Practice gratitude, and focus on the positive things in your life.
- Do something that brings you a sense of purpose.

Emotional Health

Incorporating emotional health as part of your self-care program

cultivates a greater sense of calm and inner peace as well as develops a greater sense of self-awareness.

- Be kind to yourself, give yourself grace.
- Speak affirmations over yourself.
Connect with loved ones, and encourage supportive relationships.
- Do what brings you joy and makes you feel happy.
- Seek help (professional if necessary) if you're struggling with depression or anxiety.