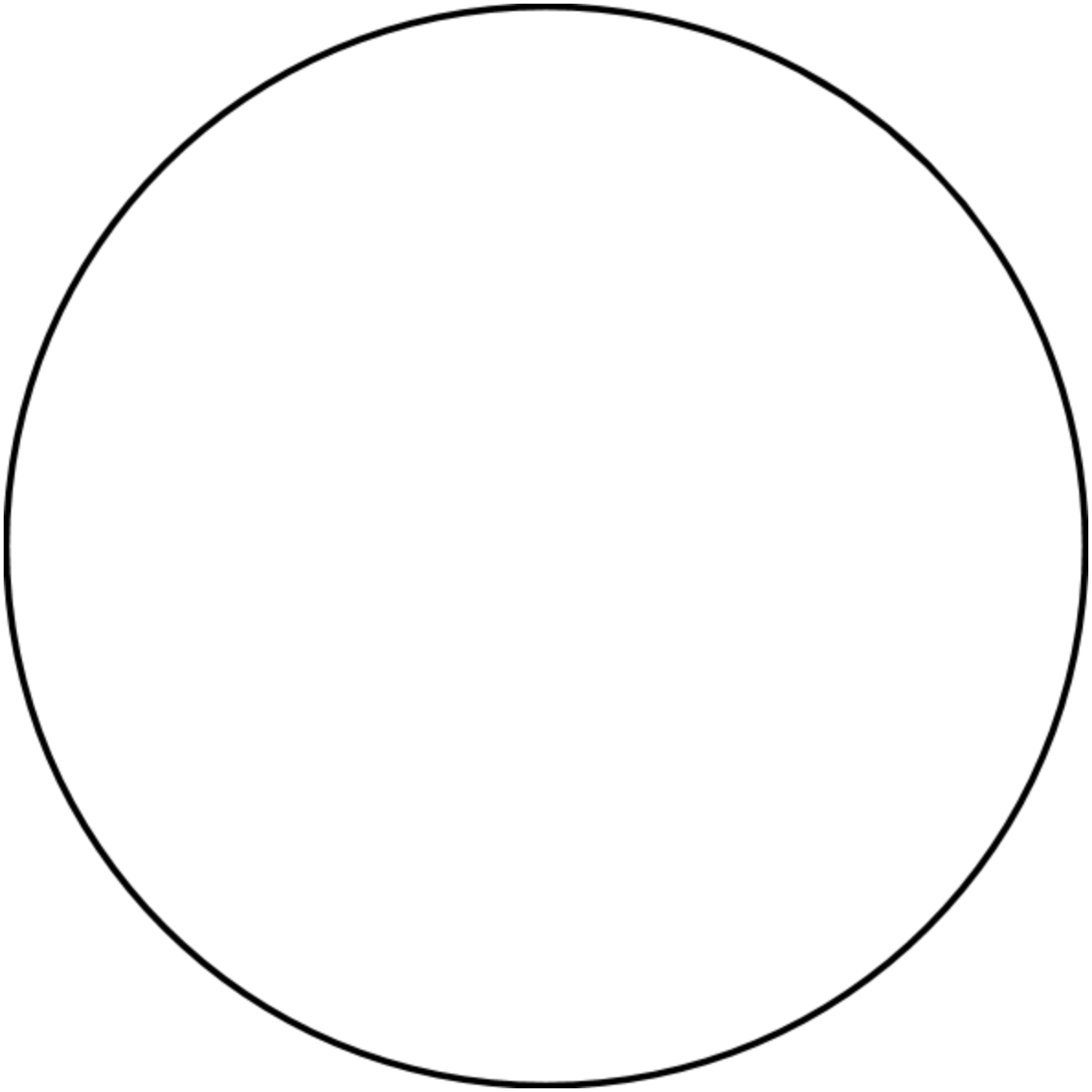
WRITING FOR SELF-DISCOVERY JOURNAL

Mini Exercise: Find the Time to Write

This mini exercise will help you find 10-15 minutes in your day that you can devote to writing. You'll outline your typical day and figure out where and how you're already spending your time. Use the circle below to create a pie chart of how you spend your time.



Once you've filled out your pie chart, try to identify activities that you might be able to steal 5-10 minutes of time from and dedicate to self-care. For example, if watch TV for an hour each day, maybe you can steal 10 minutes of time from that activity to devote to writing instead.

Exercise 1: Cultivate Joy

The goal of this exercise is to define joy on your own terms. Think about the things that bring you joy and spark your happiness, and then write them down in list format using the space below.

Once you've written your list, refer back to your pie chart. Using your pie chart, identify where the items on your list might fit into your everyday life. For example, maybe the New York City skyline brings you joy and you see the skyline during your commute to and from work. Seeing the skyline might fit into a slice of your pie chart labeled "commute" or "work."

Exercise 2: Work Through Regret

Having more awareness about what makes us feel bad or what we wish we could do over helps us to learn and grow. Honoring the things you regret will help you to move forward from them. In this exercise, you'll journal about something you regret.

Use the questions below to guide you as you journal about a regret from your past.

- What is your regret?
- Why is this something you still think about?
- How might today be different if you'd gone down a different path?
- Flip the script on your regret. In what ways does your regret *not* dictate your life now?
- What is one learning or intention from this exercise that you can take with you?

Bonus Exercise: List of Desires

Write a list of any and all desires you have that are related to the regret you explored in the previous exercise. For example, Yasmine felt as though she missed out on her youth because she joined the military instead of going to college. So, she included more travel, more fun, flexibility, freedom, and the opportunity to access bliss in her list of desires.

Once you've completed your list, pull your pie chart back out. Pick one desire from your list above and see where you might be able to incorporate it into your pie chart.

Exercise 3: Define Success for Yourself

This exercise will help you to hone in on what true success looks like for you. First, you'll use the column on the left to write down what you've been led to believe success looks like. This column might include things like "money" or "attractiveness." Then, you'll use the column on the right to write down the things that *actually* make you feel successful in your everyday life.

What I've been taught success looks like:	What success looks like for me:

Once you've completed both lists, compare and contrast them. How are the two lists different? How are they the same? Did anything come up that surprised you? Go back to your lists and annotate any differences, similarities, and insights you've gleaned from them.

Exercise 4: Channeling Your Younger Self

The goal of this exercise is to access joy from your past and figure out how you can add that joy back into your life now. Use the space below to create a bubble map to identify what made you feel happy and carefree at a specific age. Start by writing that age in the center and then branch off from there to include your priorities and desires at that age.

Once you've made your bubble map, reflect on how you would feel about the items in your map today. Using a colored pen or marker, go back to your bubble map and write in how you'd feel about each item today.

• Exercise 4: Write a Letter to Your Younger Self •

Using your bubble map, write a letter to your younger self. Discuss what you enjoyed about your time at that age and reflect upon how things may or may not have changed. Talk about what habits or priorities you hope to continue to incorporate into your life based on the joy they brought you in the past.

Give yourself space to write about anything that comes up (maybe it's sadness or grief), but make sure to be kind to yourself.

Dear _____ ,

Love, _____

Exercise 5: Write From a Quote You Love

In this exercise, you'll use a quote as your prompt. To find a quote, think about the people, books, and movies you like — is there a quote from one of those sources you might be able to use? Write your quote in the box below.

Quote

Now, use the space below to journal about your quote. Start off by writing about how the quote makes you feel. If you want, you can use a bullet format like Yasmine did to get your thoughts down quickly.

Exercise 6: Brain Dump

Choose a topic or theme that you've been thinking about lately — this should be something that you can't seem to get out of your mind — and use the space below to complete a "brain dump." Start by writing the theme you've been thinking about in the middle, and then use the rest of the page to write down any words or phrases that come to mind when you think about your theme.