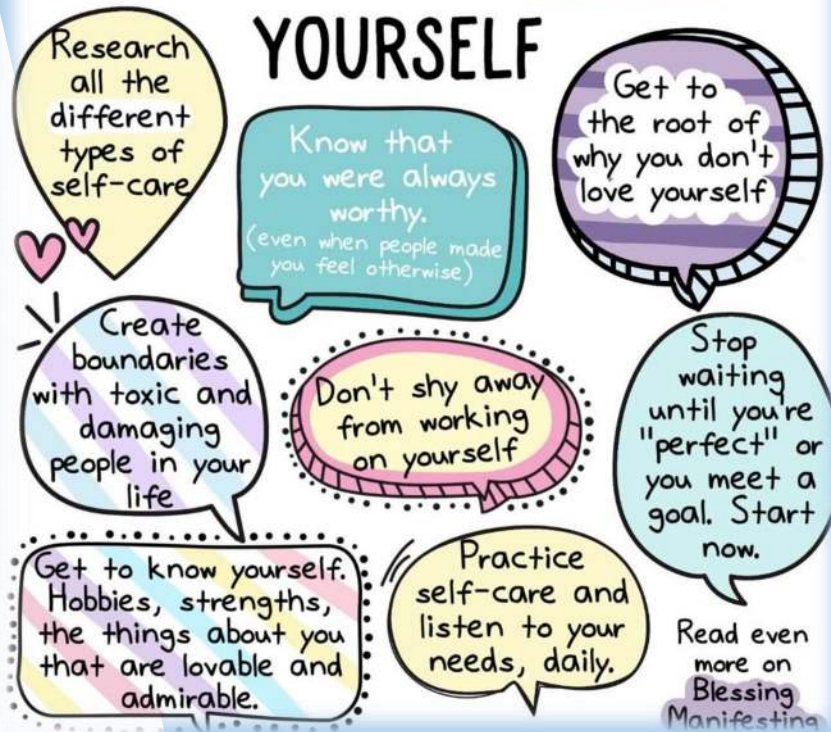


# Session 3...

## HOW TO START LOVING YOURSELF



# For My Self

Compassion helps us love ourselves. It means showing gentleness and kindness to ourselves in heart, soul, mind, and strength. When we pay attention to and honor our own selves, we experience how God sees and loves us. Through Jesus' teaching of an ancient Hebrew commandment, we can experience self-love as an essential form of compassion. Together, let's practice affirming ourselves through word and body, seeing how doing so connects us to God's Spirit within.

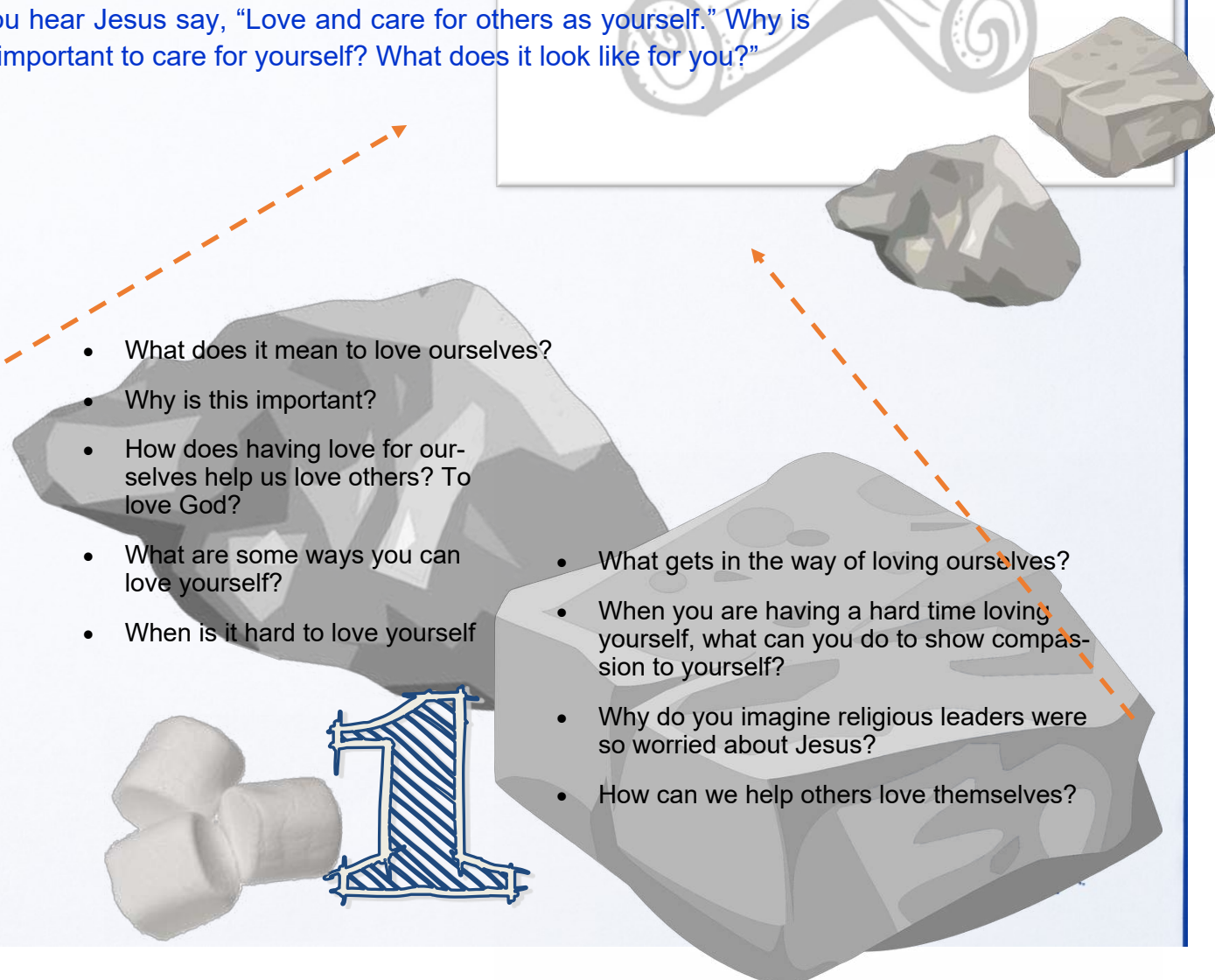


# The Campfire

## Mark 12:28-31

Look it up in your own Bible or use the reading from The Message included in this packet on the next page.

We are wondering what it means to care for ourselves. Sometimes we are given the message that caring for ourselves is selfish. Or we worry that others might think we don't care enough for them. But it's so important to have love and compassion for ourselves that God even included it as one of the greatest rules to live by. Today's story highlights something simple, yet often forgotten: a commandment to love God, love our neighbors, and yes, love ourselves. As we listen to the story, think about what you feel when you hear Jesus say, "Love and care for others as yourself." Why is it important to care for yourself? What does it look like for you?"

- 
- The illustration depicts a campfire scene. In the background, a large, stylized flame rises from a pile of logs. In the foreground, several logs are scattered on the ground. To the left, three marshmallows are shown, with a large, stylized number '1' next to them. Two dashed orange arrows point from the lists of questions towards the campfire illustration.
- What does it mean to love ourselves?
  - Why is this important?
  - How does having love for ourselves help us love others? To love God?
  - What are some ways you can love yourself?
  - When is it hard to love yourself?
  - What gets in the way of loving ourselves?
  - When you are having a hard time loving yourself, what can you do to show compassion to yourself?
  - Why do you imagine religious leaders were so worried about Jesus?
  - How can we help others love themselves?



# The Greatest Commandment

## Mark 12:28-31

## The NRSV

<sup>28</sup> One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well, he asked him, “Which commandment is the first of all?” <sup>29</sup> Jesus answered, “The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one;’ <sup>30</sup> you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ <sup>31</sup> The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.” <sup>32</sup> Then the scribe said to him, “You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that ‘he is one, and besides him there is no other’; <sup>33</sup> and ‘to love him with all the heart, and with all the understanding, and with all the strength,’ and ‘to love one’s neighbor as oneself,’—this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices.” <sup>34</sup> When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, “You are not far from the kingdom of God.” After that no one dared to ask him any questions! Highlight, doodle or talk about what “sparkles”...


LOVE THE LORD  
WITH ALL OF  
YOUR GOD  
your HEART and ALL OF YOUR  
SOUL and WITH all OF YOUR  
Mind and With all OF  
YOUR STRENGTH  
MARK 12:30



# 2

# affirmations!

Isaiah 43:1-4



<sup>1-4</sup> But now, God's Message,  
the God who made you in the first place, Jacob,  
the One who got you started, Israel:  
"Don't be afraid, I've redeemed you.  
I've called your name. You're mine.  
When you're in over your head, I'll be there with you.  
When you're in rough waters, you will not go down.  
When you're between a rock and a hard place,  
it won't be a dead end—  
Because I am GOD, your personal God,  
The Holy of Israel, your Savior.  
I paid a huge price for you:  
all of Egypt, with rich Cush and Seba thrown in!  
*That's* how much you mean to me!  
*That's* how much I love you!  
I'd sell off the whole world to get you back,  
trade the creation just for you.

What do you like about you?

What do you love about you?

**think inside, think outside...**

**DON'T BE SHY - IT'S  
JUST YOU & GOD!**

Think about your style, your sparkle, your brain, your thoughts, your creativity, your gift for art or music or sports or fun! Think about how you make people feel - are you kind, brave, joyful, quiet, reserved...

**Write it on the mirror & all  
over this page...give everyone around  
your campfire a mirror (on the next page) Practice  
compassion on yourself!**







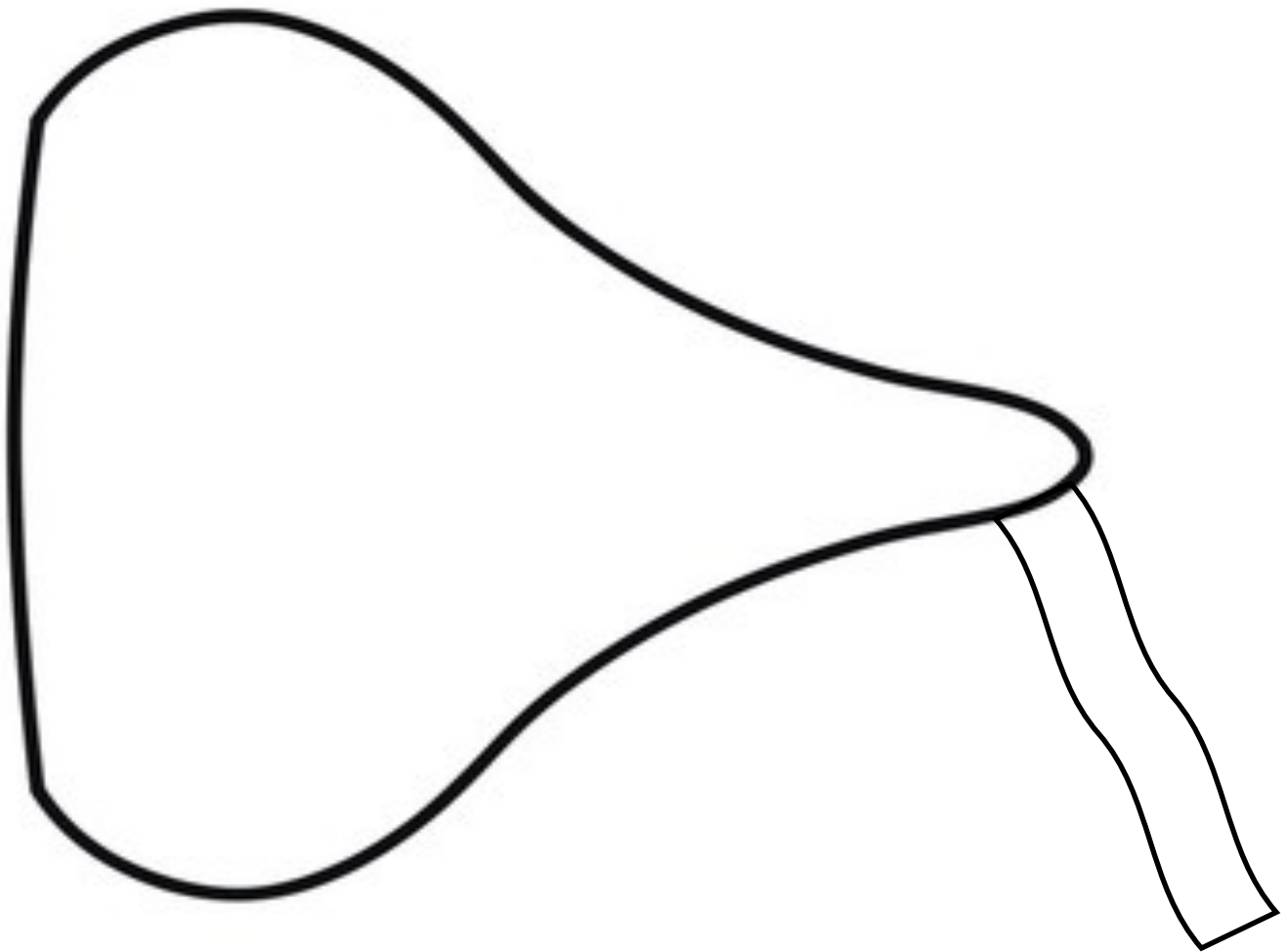
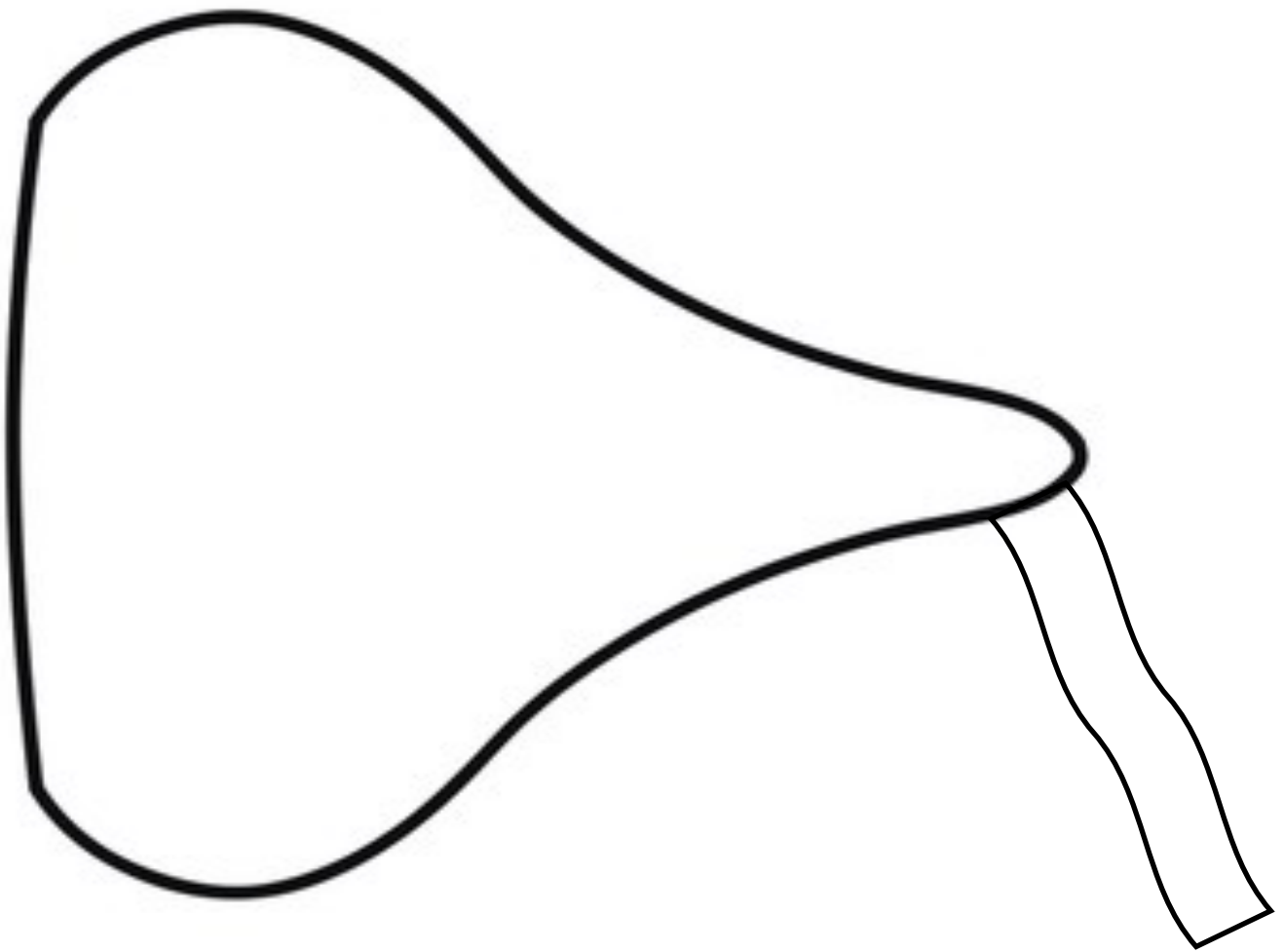
# Campfire Kisses...

## 3 affirmations part 2

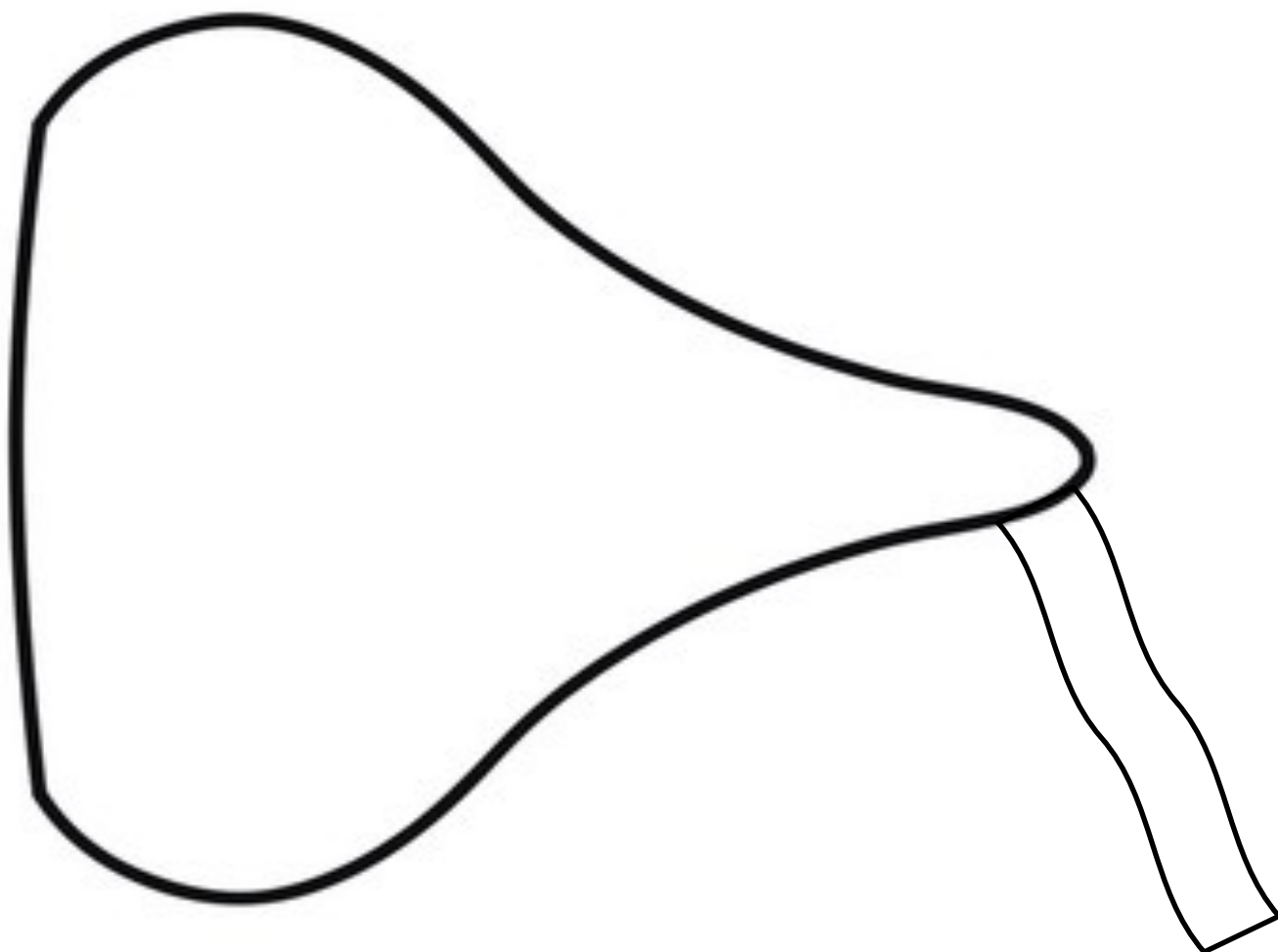
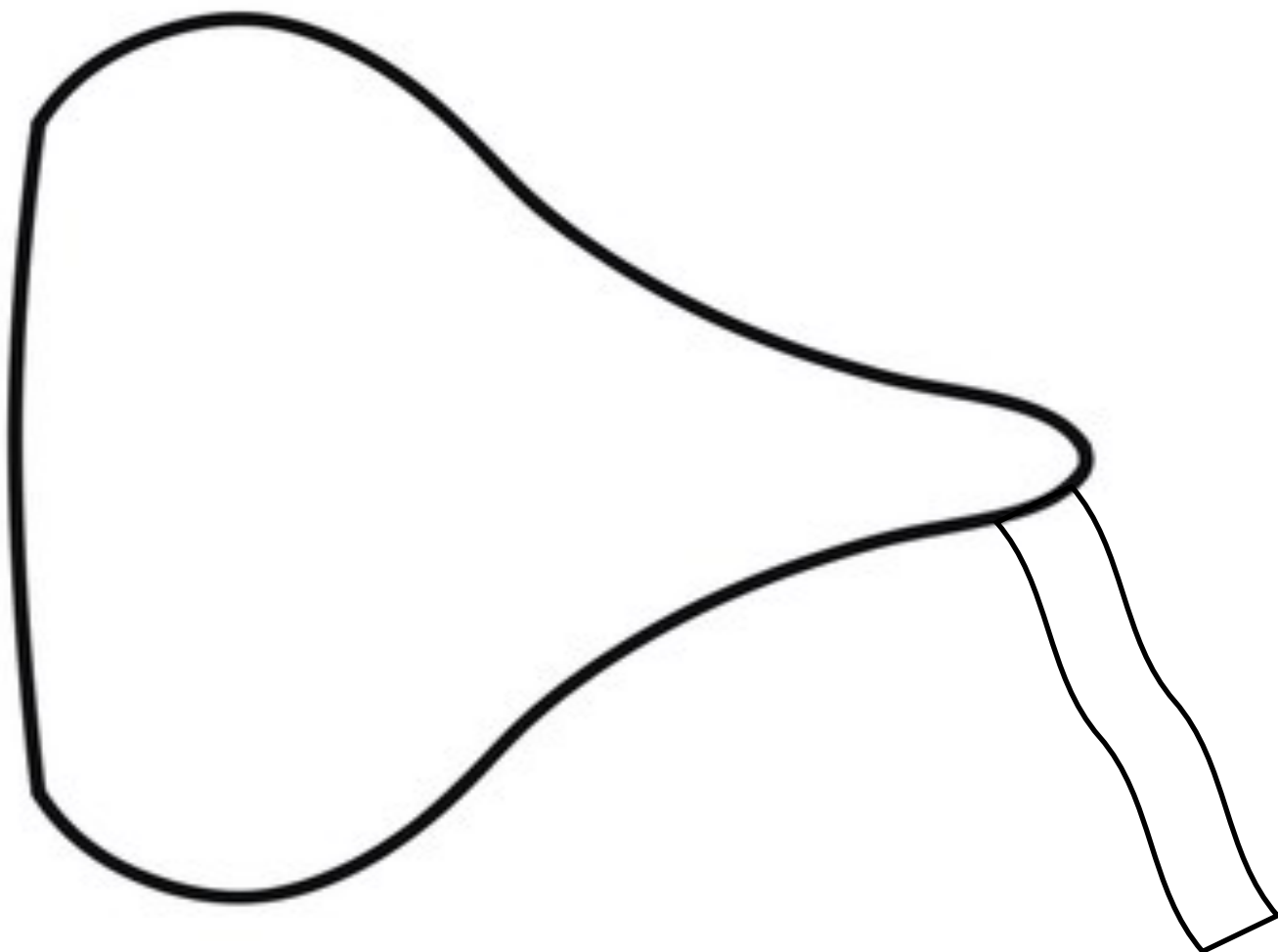
Compliments are so fun - when we get them and when we give them! So let's give them! You can do this activity with your family or with a group of friends. You are going to need some scissors, markers, aluminum foil & paper!

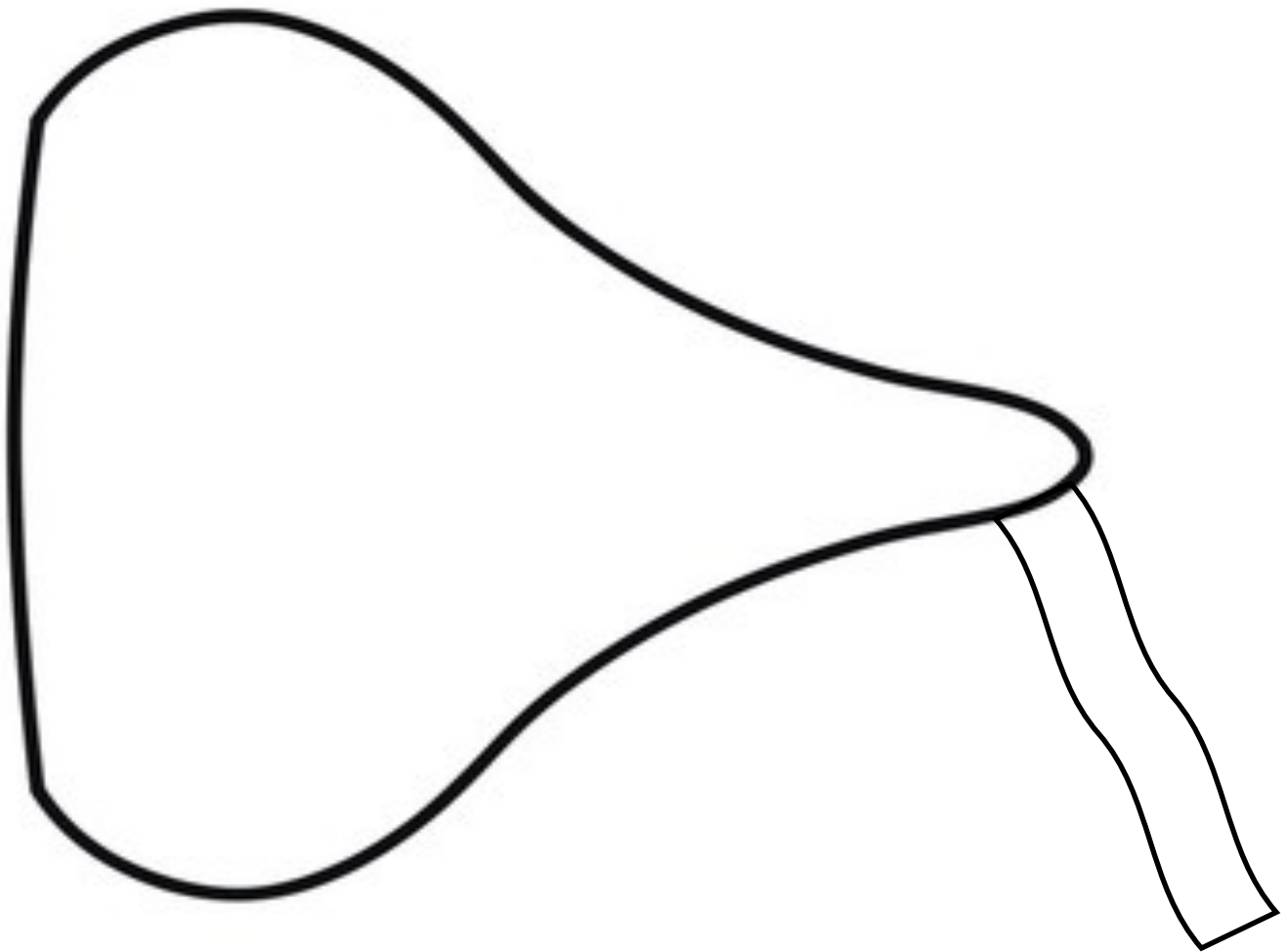
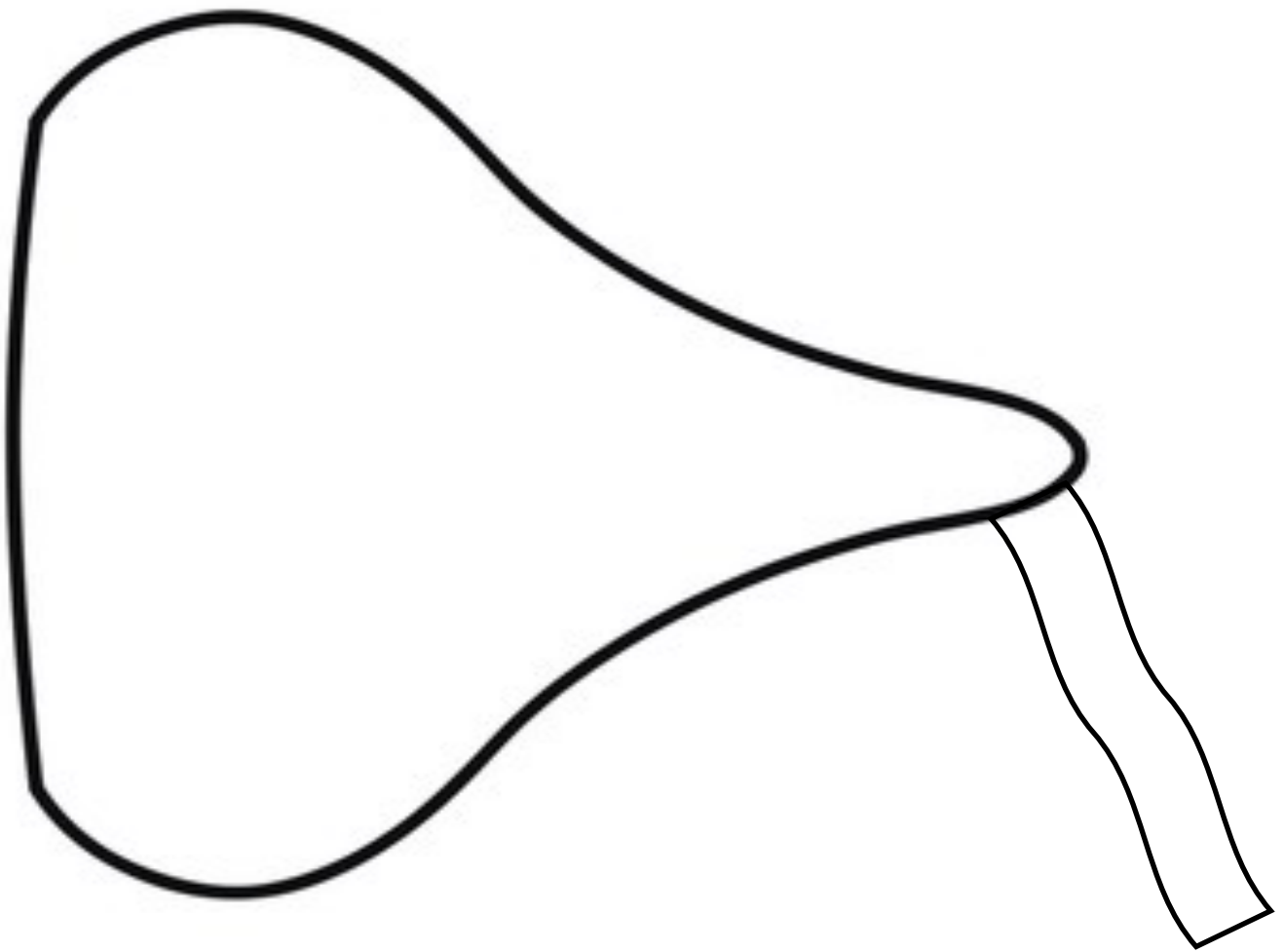
1. Each person draw a chocolate Kiss shape on paper or use the ones provided here (you will need to cut them out).
2. Everyone will draw that fun little Hershey tag on the Kiss and write their name in it.
3. Cut them out!
4. Everyone passes their Kiss to the left (or the right ☺)
5. Write what you love, appreciate or admire about that person.
6. When everyone is done writing, pass the Kiss again.
7. When the last person has written on the Kiss, they will wrap the kiss in aluminum foil and give it back to it's owner!
8. Happy readings & good feelings abound.
9. Finish the evening with a sweet treat!















# campfire yoga

*Yoga began as a spiritual practice in ancient India, centering on bringing the mind, body, and spirit into oneness with the Divine. This meaningful practice has grown globally, with people of all faiths and belief systems finding nourishment in different variations - a powerful reminder of how we learn from one another. When we say, "Namaste," we connect with siblings across the world.*

Breathing is the heart of yoga, and breath itself is a physical way to receive and release. As we reflect on the ways compassion makes us release, accept, and welcome, we will focus on breath alongside some basic yoga poses.



**Sit on the floor, legs crossed.** Take three deep, slow breaths together, with one person saying the following during inhales and exhales:

<b>INHALE:</b>	<i>I listen to myself...</i>	<b>EXHALE:</b>	<i>...with kindness.</i>
<b>INHALE:</b>	<i>I listen to myself...</i>	<b>EXHALE:</b>	<i>...with kindness.</i>
<b>INHALE:</b>	<i>I listen to myself...</i>	<b>EXHALE:</b>	<i>...with kindness.</i>



**Slowly rise, stand in mountain pose (Tadasana),** arms straight and strong by your side, feet firmly planted on the ground. One big breath in, one big breath out. One person can say:

*"In mountain pose, we feel our strength. We are unshakeable."*



**Reach your arms up to the sky, then back down as you bend into forward fold (Uttanasana),** hands on the ground or resting on your shins (wherever is comfortable). Take a breath in and raise your hands to your knees, head looking forward. One person can say:

*"We prepare and focus our eyes forward."*

Take a breath, and put your hands back to the ground in forward fold.



**From forward fold, roll your spine up slowly, raise your hands above you, and lower your hips into chair pose (Utkatasana).** “Sit” as low as you can, taking deep breaths. One person can say:

*“We strengthen and stretch when we trust ourselves.”*

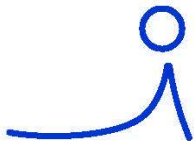


**Take one more deep breath, lower your arms to your side and stand up tall in mountain pose.** Repeat this sequence with chair pose one more time. This time, one person can say:

*“The more we trust ourselves, the stronger we grow.”*

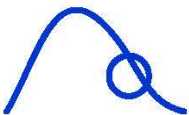


**From mountain pose, jump both legs back (or step one leg, then the other) into plank pose (Phalakasana).** Lower further to the ground.

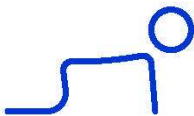


**Straighten your arms and stretch your upper body, head toward the sky, into upward facing dog (Urdhva Mukha Svanasana).** Hold this pose while breathing in and out a few times. One person can say:

*“We face the sun and welcome what this day holds for us.”*

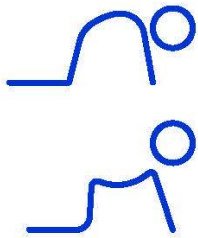


**From upward facing dog, lower your upper body back to the ground, and push your hips and legs up into downward facing dog (Adho Mukha Svanasana).**



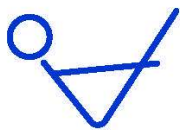
**Take one big breath in, then exhale and lower your knees to table top pose (Bharmanasana).**





**From here, move into cat/cow pose.** Breathe in, tuck your chin toward your chest, and arch your back. Breathe out, lift your head, and push your tailbone up. Repeat this three to four more times. One person can say:

*"In cat/cow pose, we need times to draw inward and times to stretch outward. Everything we feel is welcome."*



**After finishing cat/cow, sit back on your heels, then roll your legs/feet to be out in front of you. Slowly bring your knees up, then straighten your legs into boat pose (Navasana).** If you feel comfortable, take your hands off the ground and extend them in front of you, next to your legs, and hold. One person can say:

*"Practicing balance is one way to be kind to ourselves."*

You can lower your legs for a brief break, then extend back into boat pose one or two more times.



**Following boat pose, roll slowly back to fully lie down. Breathe in, bringing knees into the chest and gripping each foot - right hand holding the outside of the right foot, left hand holding the outside of the left foot, in happy baby pose (Ananda Balasana).** Try gentle rocking, side to side, if you'd like. One person can say:

*"I celebrate being God's child and love myself."*

From happy baby, stretch your legs back up, roll to your side, and move into a seated, cross-legged position.



**Reach your arms up to the sky, then draw them into prayer form, right by your heart.** End with a bow of your head and hands as you share the foundational yoga greeting - "Namaste" - a call to see one another the way God sees each of us. One interpretation of the phrase is, "The Light in me sees the Light in you."

I listen to myself with kindness

5

# Blessings & Bruises

Blessings & Bruises is taken from a practice called the Examen. The Examen is an ancient prayer practice that enables you to find God in your daily life. It is based on a technique designed by St. Ignatious Loyola (note the above “*ancient*” 😊). Blessings & Bruises can be done daily or whenever you feel the urge. They are a great “around the campfire” conversation and way of connecting! You can even journal or draw them!

&amp;

Where have you felt God?

What has brought you joy?

Who is someone who blessed you?



Where has God been absent?

What has made you sad or mad?

When have you been anxious?

Share where you feel bruised...





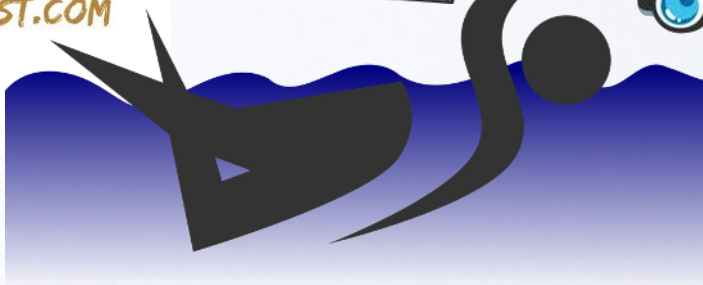
# do what brings you JOY

6

DO WHAT  
BRINGS  
YOU JOY.

EVEN IF  
NO ONE  
UNDERSTANDS  
IT BUT YOU.

-WWW.YOURJOYOLOGIST.COM



Think about what makes you happy & think about what makes you Joyful...are happy and joyful different? Happiness often feels fleeting - like something you have to work for. Joyful feels more personal; like it belongs to who we are inside! Everyone is invited to take some time this week to do something that brings YOU joy! This is a way of being compassionate with ourselves. At a later "campfire", share what you chose to do and how it made you feel!

Zone out and let your worries melt away.

Listen for God in the serenity around you and give thanks for the time you have to just BE with God for a while.

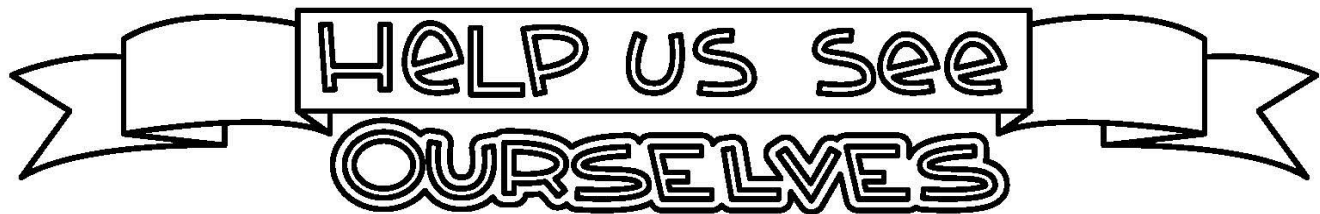
7

coloring compassionately



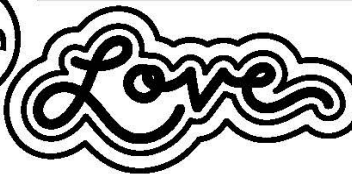


GUIDES, ENCOURAGES, AND  
STRENGTHENS US.



THROUGH YOUR EYES -

with



KINDNESS, AND

DEEP JOY.

MAY WE

LOVE  
OUR BODIES

TREASURE  
OUR HEARTS

Celebrate  
OUR SPIRITS

AMEN