

SESSION 3

Scripture: Mark 12:28-31

The Most Important Commandment

²⁸ One of the religion scholars came up. Hearing the lively exchanges of question and answer and seeing how sharp Jesus was in his answers, he put in his question: "Which is most important of all the commandments?"

²⁹⁻³¹ Jesus said, "The first in importance is, 'Listen, Israel: The Lord your God is one; so love the Lord God with all your passion and prayer and intelligence and energy.' And here is the second: 'Love others as well as you love yourself.' There is no other commandment that ranks with these."

-Prayer of the Day-

Gentle One, Thank you for your Spirit within us who guides, encourages, and strengthens us. Help us see ourselves through your eyes - with love, kindness, and deep joy. May we love our bodies, treasure our hearts, and celebrate our spirits. Amen.



How does having love for ourselves
help us to love others better? How
does it help us love God better?
What are ways that we could love
ourselves better and how might do-
ing so effect those around us?

Reflect

Why does God want us to have love
for ourselves? Why is it important?

Take time to list all the things you love
about yourself (This is not easy! Be kind to
yourself.) Let yourself acknowledge the unique-
ness of YOU and be open to what makes you
amazing.

Make yourself list off at least 10 things.
Once you finish, try ten more.

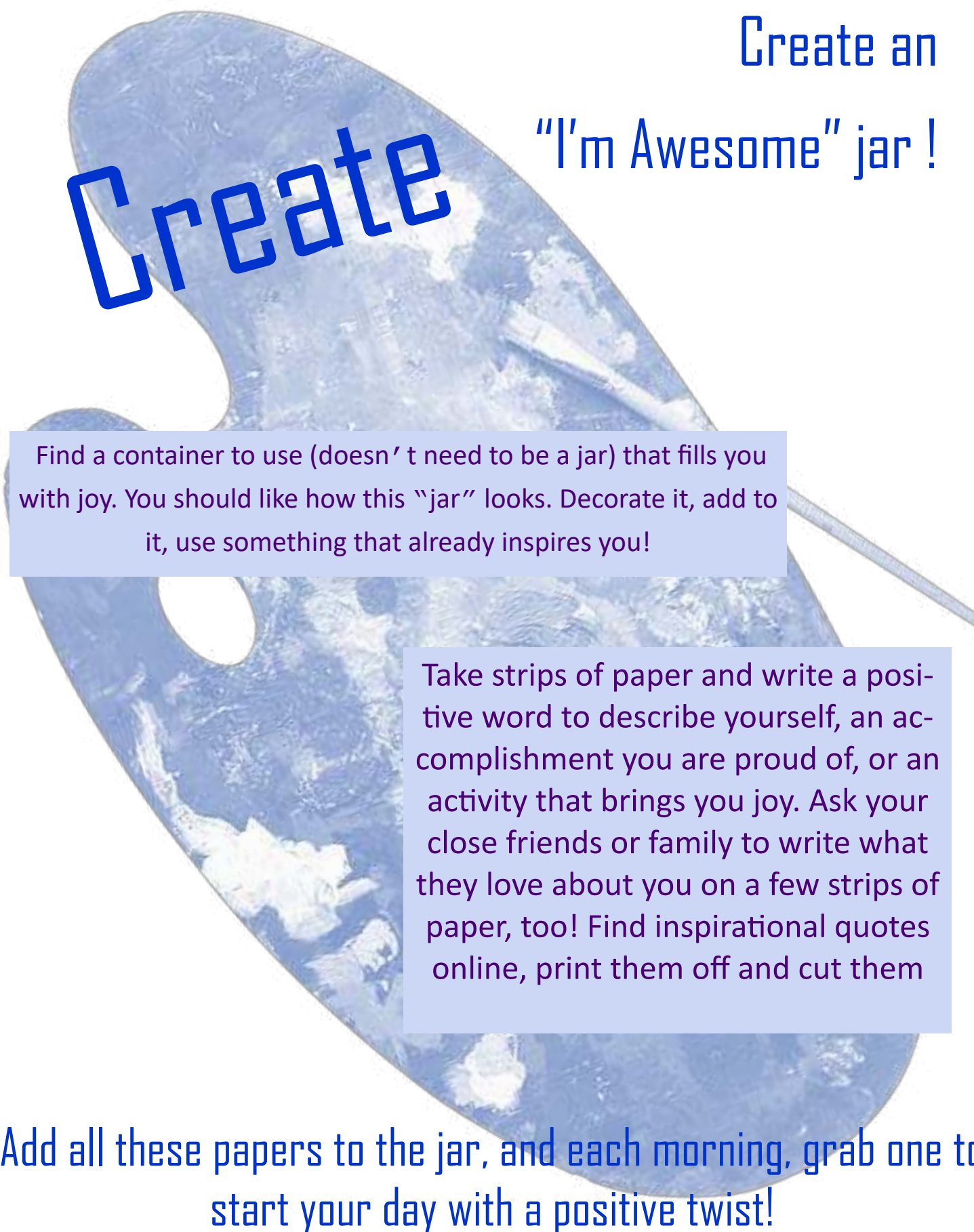
Reflect on who you were four years
ago; How have you changed?

What about you is still the same?
How did you feel about yourself then
vs. now?

List off ten of your
favorite things to do.

Circle three that help re-
lieve stress or lift your
spirits.

Make time to do one of
those three things each
day. Spending time on
yourself is important to
continue having energy to
support others.




Create

Create an "I'm Awesome" jar !

Find a container to use (doesn't need to be a jar) that fills you with joy. You should like how this "jar" looks. Decorate it, add to it, use something that already inspires you!

Take strips of paper and write a positive word to describe yourself, an accomplishment you are proud of, or an activity that brings you joy. Ask your close friends or family to write what they love about you on a few strips of paper, too! Find inspirational quotes online, print them off and cut them

Add all these papers to the jar, and each morning, grab one to start your day with a positive twist!



Find a song, article, quote, movie clip,
photo, YouTube video, etc. that reso-
nates with you and reminds you of
your inner beauty.

Send this to 3 different people and tell

Spread the LOVE!

**Go for a walk or a drive and have a phone
call with someone who makes you feel valued and**

Conversation Starters:

Who were your biggest mentors/
inspirations growing up? What was your
“plan” after high school, and what did you
want to do for a career? Did you always
stay on that path, or what changed in
it? What were challenges you faced grow-
ing up? What were your biggest insecuri-
ties growing up? What did you do/how
did you get past them?

Be Still...



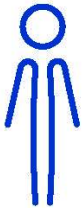
Yoga began as a spiritual practice in ancient India, centering on bringing the mind, body, and spirit into oneness with the Divine. This meaningful practice has grown globally, with people of all faiths and belief systems finding nourishment in different variations - a powerful reminder of how we learn 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:

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

With every breath you take...



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."

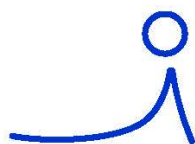


Take one more deep breath, lower your arms to your side and stand up tall in mountain pose. Repeat this sequence with chair pose one more time. This time, one person can say:

"The more we trust ourselves, the stronger we grow."

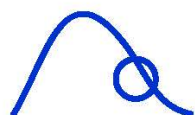


From mountain pose, jump both legs back (or step one leg, then the other) into plank pose (Phalakasana). Lower further to the ground.

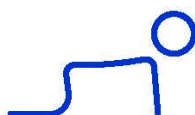


Straighten your arms and stretch your upper body, head toward the sky, into upward facing dog (Urdhva Mukha Svanasana). Hold this pose while breathing in and out a few times. One person can say:

"We face the sun and welcome what this day holds for us."

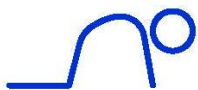


From upward facing dog, lower your upper body back to the ground, and push your hips and legs up into downward facing dog (Adho Mukha Svanasana).

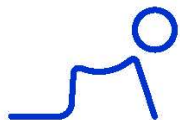


Take one big breath in, then exhale and lower your knees to table top pose (Bharmanasana).

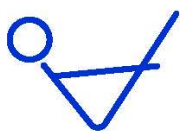
...let God inside.



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.



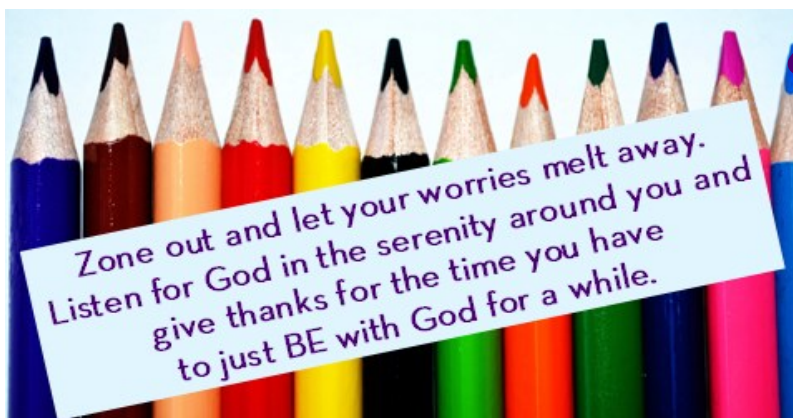
Following boat pose, roll slowly back to fully lie down. Breathe in, bringing knees into the chest and gripping each foot - right hand holding the outside of the right foot, left hand holding the outside of the left foot, in happy baby pose (Ananda Balasana). Try gentle rocking, side to side, if you'd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



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.

Coloring



GUIDES, ENCOURAGES, AND
STRENGTHENS US.

HELP US SEE
OURSELVES

THROUGH YOUR EYES -

with

Love

KINDNESS, A DEEP
JOY.

MAY WE

LOVE
OUR BODIES

TREASURE
OUR HEARTS

Celebrate
OUR SPIRITS

AMEN

Social media can be very difficult for our emotional health, especially when it comes to self-love. Choose a social media platform and find 3 self-love/positivity accounts to follow that resonate with you.

Check out: Morgan Harper Nichols, The Unedit, Beauty Redefined, I Am That Girl, MindBodyGreen, iamwellandgood

the EXAMEN

Blessings

Where have you felt the presence of God?
What brought you joy this day?
Where have you found peace?

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



Songs to Listen to:

Free to Be Me (Francesca Botticelli), Try (Colbie Caillat), Beautiful (Christina Aguilera), Born this Way (Lady Gaga), All You Need is Love (The



Bruises

Where have you felt an absence of god?
Have there been moments of unrest?