

The Sanctuary Reflective Material



Thank you for having a look at this booklet of reflective material. You'll find a range of pictures, poems, scripture and guided meditation prompts—please use as much or as little as you would find helpful. An online version is also available – just go to www.charteriscentre.com/sancturay, or scan the QR Code on the Welcome Poster in the Sanctuary.

Included with the poems and scripture are a couple of questions to help you engage with the text. These are by no means mandatory—you can simply read the text slowly and carefully, paying attention to any emotional or intellectual response the text evokes.



Grounding Exercise

Body Scan

This meditation can be performed lying down, seated, or in any comfortable position. The goal is to bring your awareness to your body and to relax any areas of tension.

Take a few moments to bring your awareness to your body.

Begin by feeling your arms at your side—try and notice any sensations, such as tightness, warmth or tingling.

Then shift your attention to your feet. How do they feel on the floor? Are there any areas of tension or discomfort?

Continue to do the same throughout your body, noticing if any areas are tense or tight. If you find any areas of tension, try to soften them.

If you are finding the body scan difficult, try and remember the following:

- Breathe slowly and deeply as you scan your body.
- Don't judge or analyse any of the sensations you experience. Simply observe them.
- If your mind wanders, gently bring it back to your body.

Scripture

אֱלֹהִים לָנוּ מְחַסֵּה וְעַז עֲזָרָה בְּצָרוֹת נִמְצָא מְאֹד:
עַל־כֵּן לֹא־יִרָא בְהִמְרֵי אָרֶץ וּבְמוֹט הָרִים בְּלֵב יָמִים:
יְהִימוּ יַחְמְרוּ מִימֵי יַרְעֵשׂוּ הַרִים בְּגִאוֹתָו סְלָה:
נִהָר פְּלִגְיוּ יִשְׁמְחוּ עִיר־אֱלֹהִים קֹדֶשׁ מִשְׁכַּנִּי עֲלִיוֹן:
אֱלֹהִים בְּקִרְבָּה בַל־תִּמּוֹט יַעֲזְרֶה אֱלֹהִים לַפְּנוֹת בְּקָר:
הִמּוּ גֹיִם מָטוּ מִמְּלָכוֹת נָתַן בְּקוֹלוֹ תִּמּוֹג אָרֶץ:
יְהוָה צְבָאוֹת עִמָּנוּ מִשְׁגַּב־לָנוּ אֱלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב סְלָה:

Tehillim (Psalms) 46: 1-7

God is our refuge and strength,
a very present help in trouble.

Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,
though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea,
though its waters roar and foam,
though the mountains tremble with its tumult.

There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God,
the holy habitation of the Most High.

God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved;

God will help it when the morning dawns.

The nations are in uproar; the kingdoms totter;
he utters his voice; the earth melts.

The LORD of hosts is with us;
the God of Jacob is our refuge.

Psalm 46:1-7

Scripture

Consider the following themes from Psalm 46 on the previous page:

- Consider what brings you *hope in the face of adversity*. For the Psalmist, it was God, for you it could be anything—God, family and friends or poetry and the arts.
- *Community* can be a powerful part of our lives. The Psalm can be a reminder that we are not alone in our struggles, and we can find strength and support in community, wherever we find it, such as the people we meet day to day.
- Consider the *beauty and power of nature*, and remember that there will always be beauty to found in the world, even when times are tough.

Take a moment to reflect on a specific aspect of your life for each of the above themes—hope in the face of adversity, community and the beauty of nature.



Grounding Exercise

Take a couple of minutes and try to find:

- 5 things you can see,
- 4 things you can touch,
- 3 things you can hear,
- 2 things you can smell,
- 1 thing you can taste.

This is a useful tool to use in everyday life when feeling stressed or overwhelmed, and can help you understand what you can and cannot control—could the TV be too loud? Would applying hand cream provide a pleasant smell to notice, and provide an added minute of respite?



As an alternative to this grounding exercise, imagine that you took the above photo and work your way through the list—what are five things that you see? Four things that you can touch?

Poem

The brain is wider than the sky,
For put them side by side,
The one the other will contain
With ease, and you beside.

The brain is deeper than the sea,
For, hold them, blue to blue,
The one the other will absorb,
As sponges, buckets do.

The brain is just the weight of God,
For, heft them, pound for pound,
And they will differ, if they do,
As syllable from sound.

**“The Brain is Wider than the Sky”
Emily Dickinson, c. 1896**

What does it mean to you that the brain is wider than the sky, and what possibilities arise from that concept?

How can you use your mind to create a more beautiful or positive world?

Scripture

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ١
الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ ٢
الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ ٣
مَلِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ ٤
إِيَّاكَ نَعْبُدُ وَإِيَّاكَ نَسْتَعِينُ ٥
أَهْدِنَا الصِّرَاطَ الْمُسْتَقِيمَ ٦
صِرَاطَ الَّذِينَ أَنْعَمْتَ عَلَيْهِمْ غَيْرِ الْمَغْضُوبِ عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا الضَّالِّينَ ٧

In the Name of Allah—the Most Compassionate, Most Merciful.

All praise is for Allah – Lord of all worlds,
The Most Compassionate, Most Merciful,
Master of the Day of Judgement.

You along we worship and You alone we ask for help.

Guide us along the Straight Path,

The Path of those You have blessed—not those You are dis-
pleased with, or those who are astray.

Surah Al-Fatihah 1-7

This Surah from the Qur'an can be used as a prayer, asking for divine guidance in any situation we are unsure of, whilst reminding us of important aspects of the Divine.

Grounding Exercise

Reflect on the Day

This meditation can be followed at any point during the day, but can be most helpful at the beginning or at the end of the day (or even both!)

If reflecting at the beginning of the day:

- What do you hope to achieve?
- Is there anything that you are particularly anxious about?
- What practical, small moments can you give yourself throughout the day to give yourself the space and energy to accomplish what you want to without being overwhelmed?

If reflecting near the end of the day:

- What happened today?
- Is there anything you learned? This can be about yourself, or something at work or at university/school.
- What lessons can you take into tomorrow?

Poem

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
like a raisin in the sun?

Or fester like a sore—

And then run?

Does it stink like rotten meat?

Or crust and sugar over—

like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags

like a heavy load.

Or does it explode?

"Harlem" by Langston Hughes



The speaker of the poem above imagines what happens to a dream that is not instantly realised. Whilst writing specifically regarding hope in the face of racism and oppression, the poem is a powerful reminder to not give up on a dream, no matter how difficult the odds may seem.

Scripture

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि

You have a right to perform your prescribed duties, but you are not entitled to the fruits of your actions. Never consider yourself to be the cause of the results of your activities, nor attached to inaction.

Bhagavad Gita 2:47

When anxious about what we do, the anxiety often comes from things not turning out according to our expectations. One aspect of this piece from the Bhagavad Gita is not that we are not the only factors that the results of our actions are dependent on. The input of others, the will of God and the specific time and place can all have an impact.

Front cover picture produced by: Megan Moir

Photos within booklet produced by: David Evans

Back cover line drawing produced by: Millie Coleman



Greyfriars Charteris Centre, 138-140 Pleasance, Edinburgh, EH8 9RR
SC047537