



THE MENOPAUSE JOURNAL

A Wellness Tool

Welcome and congratulations on taking steps to foster your health and wellness surrounding menopause! Your unique menopause experience deserves a personalized approach. This is why the Menopause Journal has been created.

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Table of Contents

Section 1: Gratitude	Page 4
Section 2: Definitions	Page 7
Section 3: Menopause and You	Page 11
Section 4: Logging Values	Page 15
Section 5: Your Body, Your Knowledge	Page 18
Section 6: Priorities and Care	Page 23
Section 7: Wellness and Self-Care	Page 28
Section 8: Final Thoughts	Page 36
Final Take Aways	Page 39

This journal is intended for informational and self-reflection purposes only accurate as of the date of publication. It is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always consult with a healthcare provider for any concerns regarding menopause or other medical concerns/symptoms. This journal is not comprehensive of all medical care required by every individual. This is not a medical chart. By filling it in, you are responsible for the content, its use, and any transmission of the information.

If you have a medical emergency, call 911. For non-emergent support, please call 811 for assistance from nurses, dietitians, and pharmacists.

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Empowering women with knowledge, tools and self-care



This journal is a way for you to document, in one place, what you are feeling and experiencing! It is a way for you to not only log changes but also to be able to share these with whomever you wish. You may want to share your experience with your healthcare provider, your friends, your family or other support people. This may support your medical appointments, your personal wellness journey or this may just be a way to document what is happening in your life right now for your own recording.

It is suggested that you fill and save your journal. Alongside the Menopause Journal, you can keep a paper journal to also record your daily thoughts and feelings.

Section One

Gratitude

Let's start! All journeys are best started with things we know are true today.
Let's begin by focusing on the positive truths today:

What are you grateful for today?

What brings you joy at this time?

What have you done to overcome challenges in the past that have made you feel proud of/good about yourself?

As a perimenopausal or menopausal woman, what are your goals and dreams for the future?

What makes you feel good about YOU?



Remember

Keep this in a safe place. If you are entering information on a device or in a separate journal, this information is your personal experience and warrants safe keeping. Your experience is of great value. A locked drawer or cupboard may be the most appropriate storage space if you're keeping a physical copy.

Gratitude
Thoughts and Reflections

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Section Two

Defining Menopause and Menopause Transition

Let's start with some definitions:

MENOPAUSE:

Menopause is the time that is defined by you not having a period for one full year (12 consecutive months). The last period is called the Final Menstrual Period (FMP). This represents the permanent cessation of menses secondary to the loss of ovarian function, usually due to ageing. In Canada, the average age of menopause is 51. Menopause usually occurs between 45 - 55 years old. Knowing each person will have their unique experience, if your periods stop outside of this age window, please see your healthcare provider. It is expected that in Canada, 43% of women will be in menopause by 2038 based on current trends. Know that you are not alone! ([The Menopause Society](#)).

It is important to know that women will spend up to 40% of their lives in post menopause, and women are living longer than ever.

1

PERIMENOPAUSE

The transition period leading up to menopause where hormone levels fluctuate, causing various symptoms.

2

MENOPAUSE

The time when periods have stopped for 1 full year.

3

POSTMENOPAUSE

The years following menopause.

How old are you?

Have you started to experience changes related to menopause?

*We will expand on this further in future pages.

PERIMENOPAUSE:

Perimenopause is the time leading up to the final menstrual period (FMP). This time is also called the menopause transition. This is usually marked by the change in your period pattern. During this time, which can last years, your period cycles can be shorter or longer than your norm. The transition often occurs in stages that you may or may not notice. The stages are referred to as early and late transition. If you have concerns about your period, please see a healthcare provider.

EARLY TRANSITION:

The transition starts in an early phase, which varies in length in each person, but can start as early as 35 years of age in some women. Usually this marks a time where periods are closer together. This does not include bleeding between periods or bleeding after intercourse. If you are having these symptoms, you should talk to your provider. Any non-cyclic bleeding should be reported to your healthcare provider.

LATE TRANSITION:

The 1-3 years prior to the final menstrual period is referred to as late transition. This is usually defined by periods being farther apart or missed periods.

POSTMENOPAUSE:

The time from one year after final menstrual period.

Are you having periods? If not, when was your last period (approx)?

If so, are they regular?

Have they changed?

Did you stop having them and they restarted?

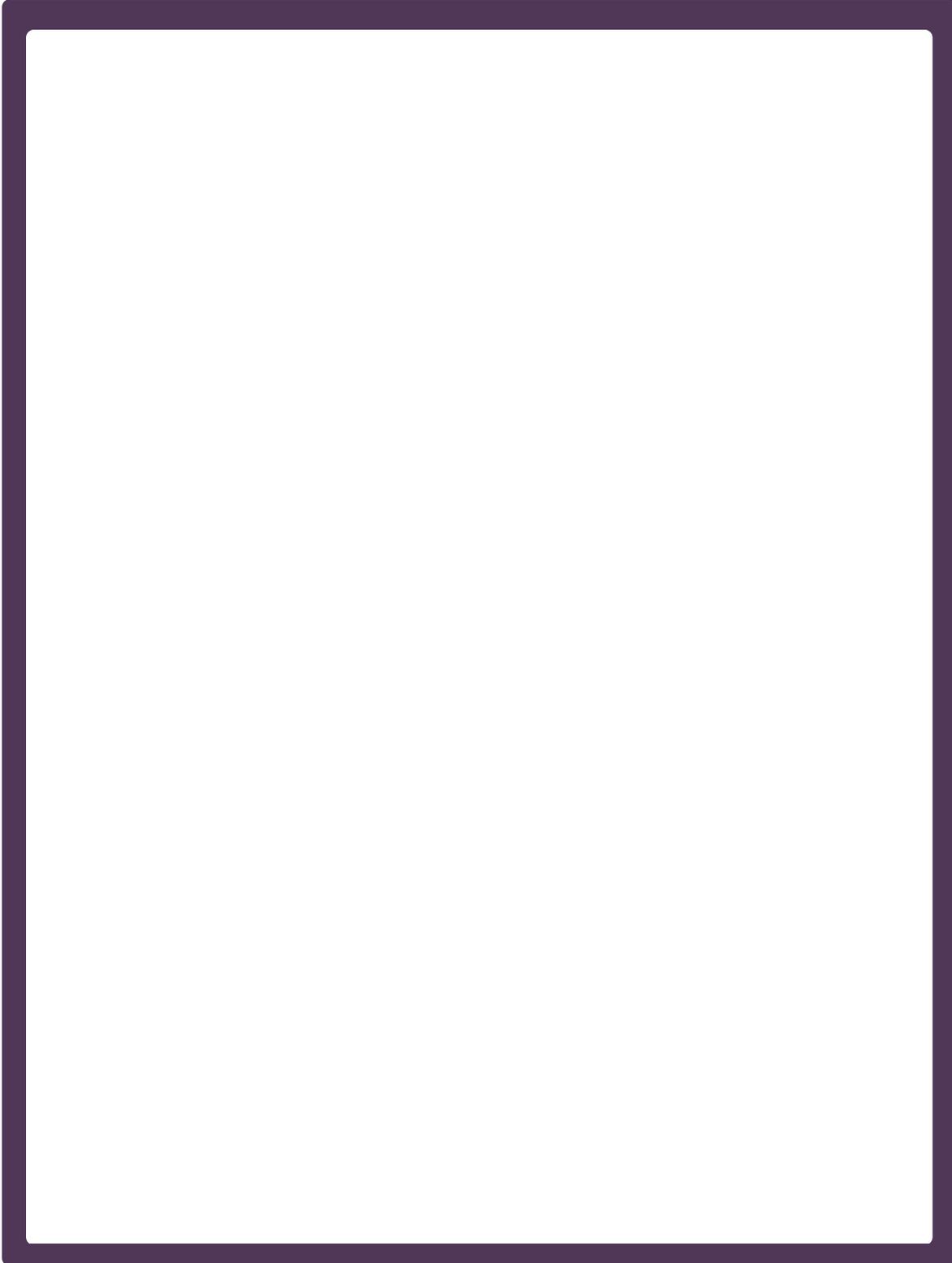
Revisit and fill this section in each month to keep track of changes.

REMEMBER: If you go one year with no periods and they restart, please see your healthcare provider.



Definitions

Thoughts and Reflections



Section Three

Menopause and You

Have you experienced changes related to:

Hot flashes or night sweats?

Brain health (fogginess, concentration, memory, other)?

Mood (anxiety, depression, mood swings, irritability, other)?

Sleep or fatigue?

Joint pain?

Breast concerns?

Bone health (a change in your height or concerns related to a family member with osteoporosis)?

Periods?

Hair or skin?

Vaginal (dryness, discomfort, pain with sex, low libido, other)?

Urinary (loss of continence, frequency, other)?

Weight changes?

Other?

Reflections

How have these changes made you feel?

How have these changes impacted your family life? Work life? Social life?

Have you talked to anyone about these changes?

Share about each symptom:

What is the symptom that is impacting you the most? And for how long?



Has this changed (improved, worsened)?

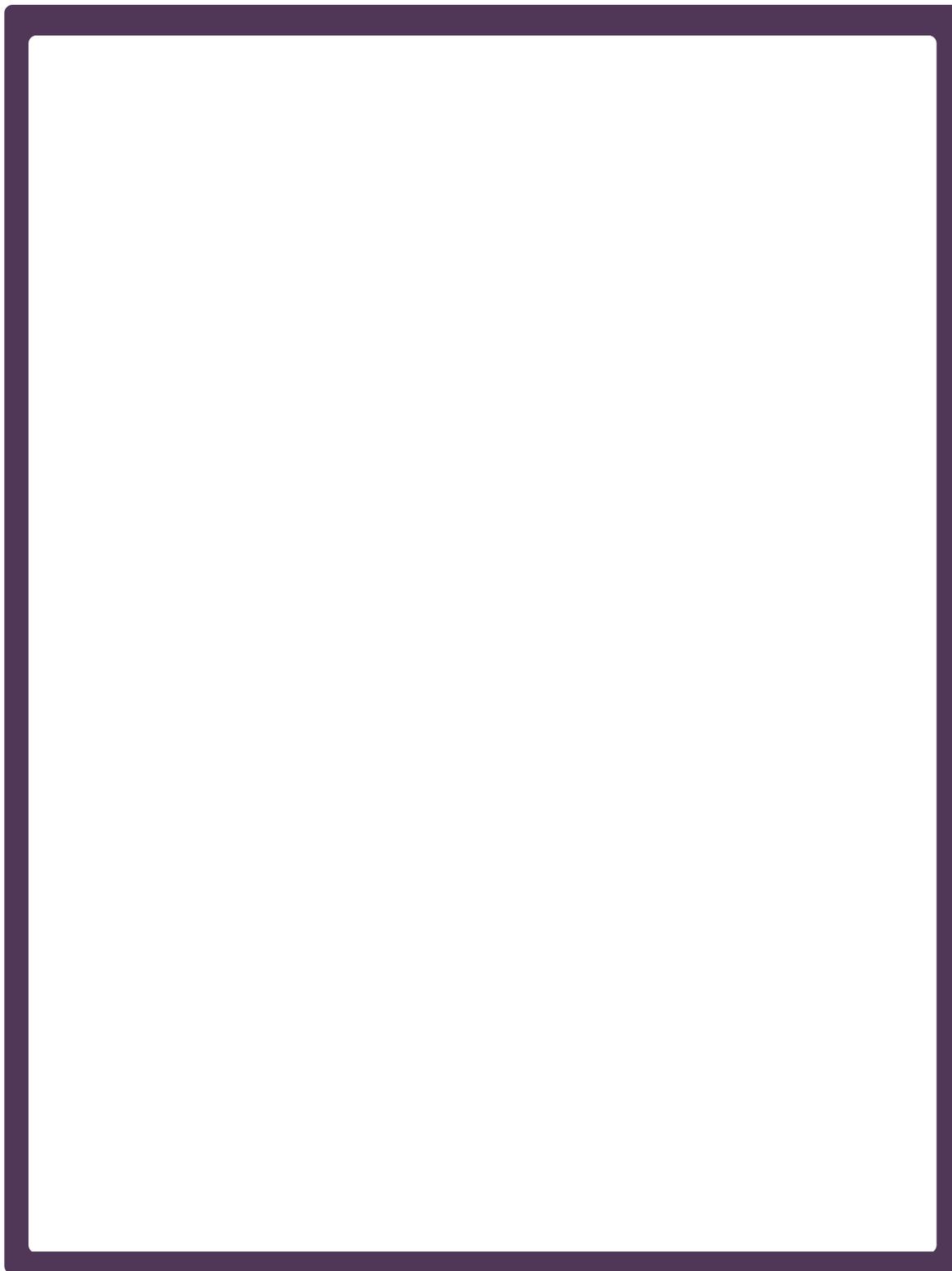


Have you used or done anything that has positively impacted these symptoms?



Menopause and You

Thoughts and Reflections



Section Four

Logging Values

The diagnosis of menopause and menopause transition is usually done based on the pattern of someone's periods, their overall symptoms and age. Sometimes people wonder if they are going through menopause and request lab work to confirm this. In most cases, blood tests are not needed to diagnose menopause, but keeping your Menopause Journal up to date can help a lot!

How you are feeling is a critical marker: Are you tired? Having trouble sleeping? Having hot flashes? Are you over 40? These are some of the things that will lead to determining if you are in menopause along with age and period patterns.

NOTE: There are times when hormonal blood work is needed and this is something to discuss with your healthcare provider as it can be related to other body systems, preventative health, and treatment plans.

When talking about when labs can be needed, sometimes there are crucial to your overall care. There are lab values that can rule out causes of symptoms other than menopause as well as guide management in certain cases. There are also risk assessments that are needed for your overall health including your cardiovascular, thyroid, nutrition, breast, bone and vaginal health. Please speak to your healthcare provider about any questions and an overall review of your overall health picture.

Keeping track of the tests

Do you feel you need lab work done? If so, what are you hoping to learn/target?

Have you spoken to your health care provider about your concerns and about overall risk assessment?

Please record any lab work or investigations you have had done here – it can be beneficial to have a recording of your care in one place.

How you are feeling, what you are experiencing, and often your age are critical to the diagnosis. There are times when hormonal blood work and other blood work and testing is needed. The use of these tests is something to discuss with your healthcare provider as it can be related multiple body systems, preventative health, and treatment plans.

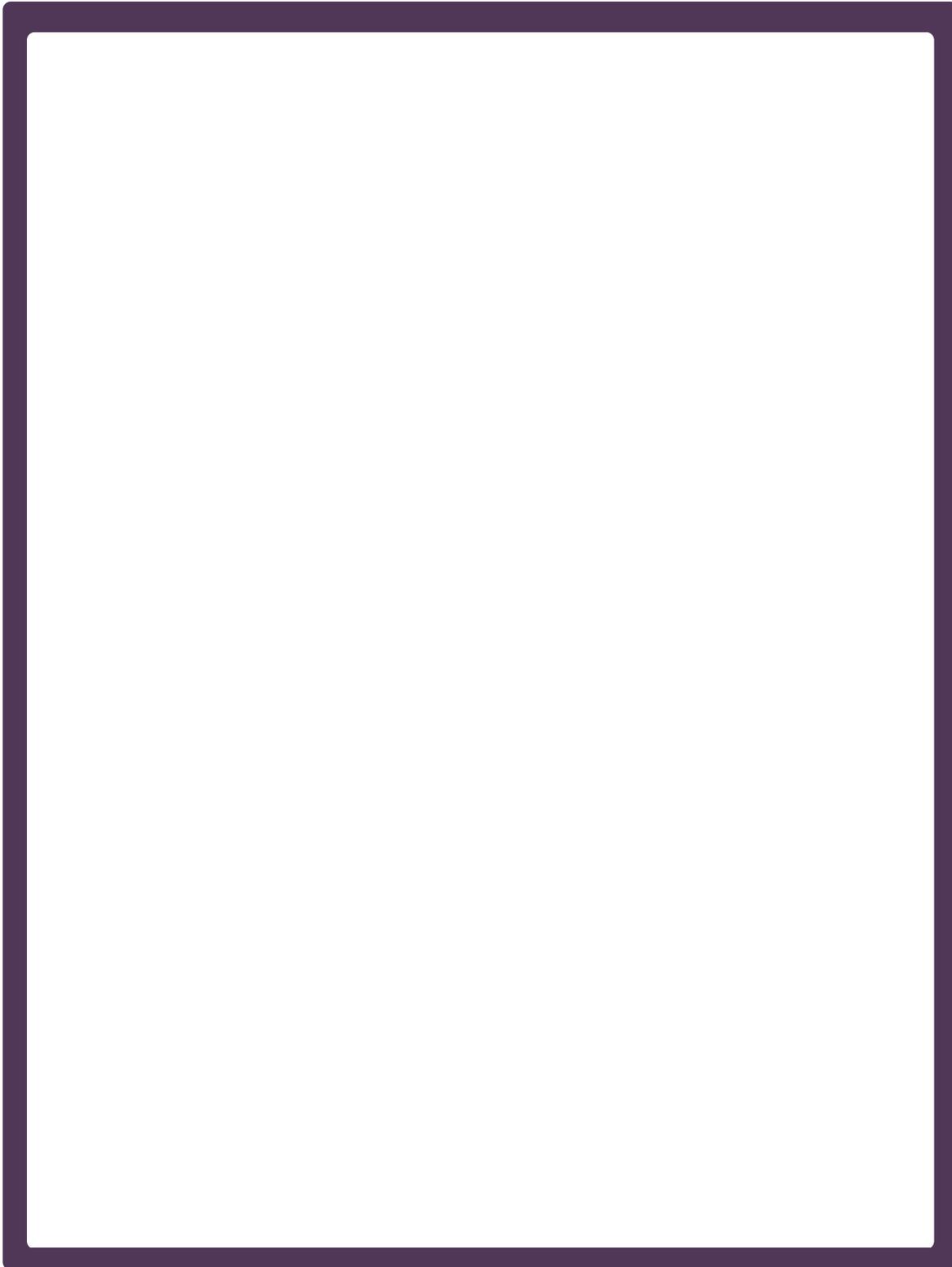
There are also risk assessments and tests that are needed for your overall health including your cardiovascular, thyroid, nutrition, breast, bone and vaginal health. Please speak to your healthcare provider about any questions and for an review of your overall health.

Test	Results	Discussion
ex. labs, blood pressure, height, weight, other		Discussion with provider about results
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

What risk assessments and screening have been completed related to your overall health including screening, (i.e. blood pressure, height/weight , bone density, pap, mammogram, other)?

Note: It is recommended for you to know your Blood pressure, height and weight. These offer insight into your overall health including cardiac health as well as bone health . It is also recommended to follow your local guidelines for cancer screening including pap smears, mammograms, and FIT testing (colon screening).

Logging Values Thoughts and Reflections



Section Five

Your Body, Your Knowledge



HOT FLASHES, NIGHT SWEATS:

This is a change in thermoregulation. These episodes can be quick (seconds) or longer (hours). They can be disruptive during daytime activities or negatively impact sleep.

- Are you having day or night flashes, flushes or sweating?
 - How is it impacting your day or your sleep?
 - Your quality of life is important. Has it been impacted by hot flashes? Night sweats?
-



PERIODS

Your cycles may change before stopping.

- Are your periods regular?
- Light or heavy?
- Are you bleeding between periods or after sex?

If your periods have stopped and restarted after a year (even light spotting), please inform your healthcare provider.



BRAIN HEALTH (MEMORY, CONCENTRATION, BRAIN FOG)

There are estrogen receptors all over your body that may impact your entire body including your brain.

- Are you noticing changes in your brain health?
 - What have you seen change?
-



MENTAL HEALTH (MOOD, HAPPINESS)

Many people report not recognizing themselves and not feeling like themselves. They at times feel like their emotions are outside of their control. This can be due to the fluctuations of hormones during this time.

- Has your mood changed?
- If so, how? What are the impacts on your day to day?



CARDIAC HEALTH (IMPACTS OF HORMONAL CHANGES ON THE HEART AND VESSELS)

Cardiac disease is a vital part of care that must be prioritized during the menopause transition. Most cardiac disease in women occurs in the postmenopausal time. The change in estrogen impacts cardiac health as does age and family history along with lifestyle impacts.

Important information for you to be aware of includes:

- What is your blood pressure?
- What is your cholesterol?
- Does anyone in your family have heart disease?
- Do you smoke?
- Did you have any complications in pregnancy like high blood pressure, preeclampsia or hypertension?

Please discuss this with your healthcare provider.



METABOLIC HEALTH (WEIGHT, NUTRITION, BLOOD SUGAR)

Commonly, bodies change at this time related to age, genetics and hormones. These changes can include weight gain and difficulty losing weight.

Some support can be gained from:

- Following a [Mediterranean diet](#)
- Walking more
- Mixed workouts with strength and cardiovascular activities

Is this happening in your life? Have you tried anything like a change in diet or activity?



BREAST HEALTH (SCREENING, RISK ASSESSMENT)

Often people become more breast aware at this time. It is important to follow local screening guidelines. You can find Canadian regulations at cancer.ca, or by clicking [here](#).

- Do you have concerns about your breasts?
- What screening have you had done?
- Have you been followed by your healthcare provider for breast health?



BONE HEALTH (BONE DENSITY)

Bone health is often not given the attention it needs. It is often called the silent thief because you may be losing bone but symptoms may not appear for many years.

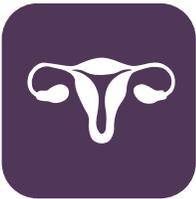
Osteoporosis is low bone mass and the deterioration of bone tissue. This can increase one's risk of fractures like hip and wrist fractures, which can be incredibly challenging to cope with if they occur. A discussion with a healthcare provider is important to assess your risk and need for screening.

- Do you know anyone with osteoporosis or had a fracture related to low bone mass?
 - Are you related to anyone with osteoporosis?
 - Have you had a chance to speak to a healthcare provider about your bone health?
-



VAGINAL HEALTH (VAGINAL DRYNESS)

If you are experiencing painful sex, bleeding after sex, incontinence, itching or discomfort, please see your healthcare provider. There can be simple strategies to make dramatic changes. The first step is finding a trusted provider to work with!



REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH

For those in perimenopause, remember you can get pregnant until you are officially in menopause!

- Do you require contraception?
- Are you using contraception?
- Do you have questions about contraception?

Reflections

Do you have thoughts about the information above?

Is this new information?

Have you been able to determine how to approach your next appointment with a healthcare provider?



All the questions in this section are important, and the changes you are going through are important. Please let your healthcare provider know what is happening.

Your Body, Your Knowledge
Thoughts and Reflections

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Section Six

Priorities and Care

It is important for you to be able to prioritize your symptoms, experiences, insights, wishes and priorities as needed. Your values towards treatment and wellbeing are vital. You are the leader of your care which can mean empowerment but it can also mean you may be keeping track of a lot of information.

In this section, please share the highest priority feelings, symptoms, concerns and more that are occurring in your life here:

Another important thing is to be able to track the care you are receiving. Keeping things in one place is very helpful. Below is a space you can use to start that process:

Healthcare Providers:

Medications you are taking:

Hormone use:

Supplement use:

Allergies:

Family history: Your family's history, especially of cancer, heart disease and osteoporosis are vital to your health. Has anyone had serious illnesses in your family?

Other: Please note down your exercise and diet plans, your smoking and alcohol habits, as well as caffeine intake:

These can all impact your symptoms, have you noticed any changes based on the above, positive or negative?

Reflections

Is there any part of your care that is not being addressed that you have concerns about?

What is going well in your healthcare experiences?

What requires more attention?

My Main Concern

It is important to try to treat the most impactful symptoms first once your general health has been reviewed and a risk assessment of your overall health is complete. Remember, feeling good is the goal which can be possible in many people once the first symptoms are addressed.

Share your main concern (this may be a change in your memory, hot flashes, sleep or other):

This may change over time, you can update anytime. It is recommended to come back to this page frequently to revisit and refresh your concerns and feelings.

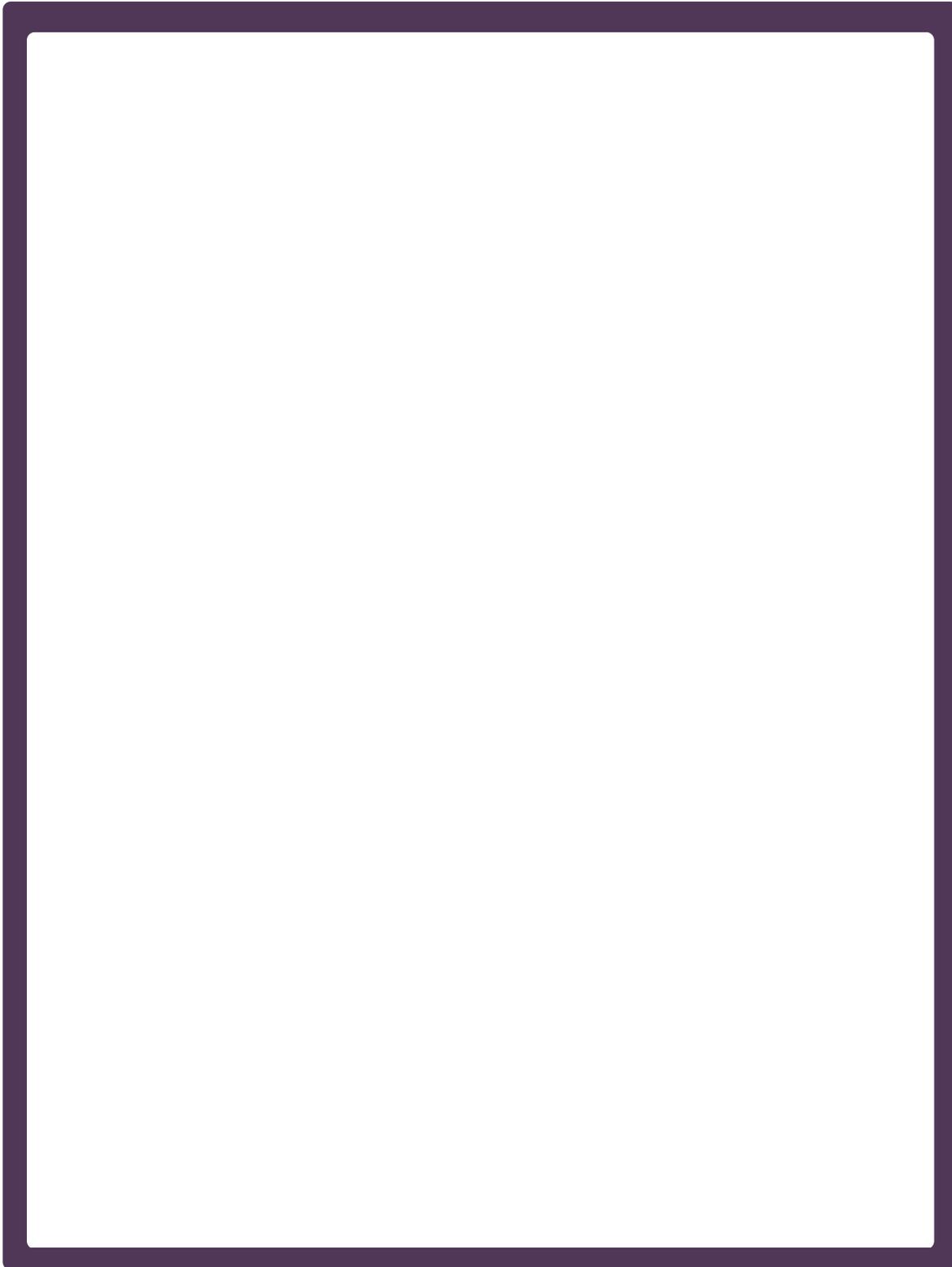
Your main concern should be the focus of your first appointment with your healthcare provider along with a review of your general medical history. Your medical history, including your family history, allows your provider to know how best to guide your care

Final Recordings

Is there anything further you feel is related to this transition that is impacting your quality of life? Sometimes writing your thoughts and feelings is important!



Priorities and Care Thoughts and Reflections



Section Seven

Wellness and Self-Care

Health and Wellness are intertwined and equally important. What is wellness? Wellness and the feeling of wellness will change over time and be influenced by many factors like changing circumstances, stress and diet. It is fluid and it is yours to define for yourself. Wellness and health are linked as each impacts the other.

When considering overall wellness, a focus on self-care is needed. What do you focus on? Consider nurturing your:

- ✓ **Spirit**
- ✓ **Physical health**
- ✓ **Mental health**
- ✓ **Wisdom**
- ✓ **Community/connections**
- ✓ **Energy**
- ✓ **Emotional health**

And more! Many things impact your wellness. What else can you think of that would be positively or negatively required to focus on to improve your wellbeing?



Remember: Your journey is unique.

What impacts your wellness? What could change to improve your wellness?

Social Connections and Wellness

Wellness is often for some, attained through connection. It can at times be positively impacted by shared experiences. Sometimes sitting quietly with someone, sharing, taking part in a community activity together, sharing a meal, exercising together can positively impact one's wellness. Notably, loneliness, anxiety, and depression have been linked not only to menopause but also as being more severe if menopausal symptoms are more severe (HER-BC Study). Is this your experience?

You are certainly not alone. In the US, Dr. Murthy, the Surgeon General, put an advisory out: The Epidemic of Loneliness and Isolation, which you can view [here](#), or if you've printed this journal, by searching "surgeon general social connection advisory".



While this work was a product of COVID and is not specific to menopause, looking at the above HER-BC data, we know this is impactful in menopause and our mental health as women needs to be a priority surrounding menopause. Current data surrounding loneliness exists showing health consequences of loneliness including increased risks of heart disease and mental health challenges. This highlights the necessity of social connections being prioritized. It also says, we as women need to raise up our mental health, self-care, connectedness and overall wellbeing as matter of great importance.

Reflections

It has been considered that one tenant to healthy longevity is social connectedness. It has been shown that for many, social connection is beneficial for health not only for you, but it can be a way to build a personal menopause community! This has been observed in populations where ageing well past 90 is commonplace (blue zones). Specifically, menopause is often a shared experience, and this connectedness can offer knowledge exchange, empowerment, joy and even relief.

Knowing this:

Who is a part of your support system?

What would you like to talk to your friends about related to menopause?

Do you have a healthcare professional that you trust that you can speak to about your experience?

What can you do to support each other?

How do your social connections positively impact your wellbeing?

How often do you have the opportunity to visit (virtually and in person) with your team?

It is encouraged to revisit this page when social connections grow or change.

Resources for support can be found on the Canada.ca website under Mental Health Services, or by clicking [here](#).

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Self-Care

Another key when striving for healthy longevity is deliberate activities that nourish and feed our wellness. These activities make us feel good! They can be low or high impact, can be with others or alone, and can result in relaxation, accomplishment and/or enlightenment.

Examples

- A walk with music, a friend, a pet, in silence
- A walk with music, a friend, a pet, in silence
- See a friend
- Gardening
- Join a group
- Uphill: challenge yourself with an uphill walk or hike
- Donate time
- Saying no when you can and taking the time for you
- Spend time outside
- See a movie
- Deliberate breaks every day
- Rest
- Volunerring
- Laugh

If You or Someone You Know is in Crisis

- If you're in immediate danger or need urgent medical support, call 911.
- If you or someone you know is thinking about suicide, call or text 988. Support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- If you're experiencing family or gender-based violence, you can [access a crisis line](#) in your province or territory.

Reflections

What do you do to relax?

What do you do for self-care?

How do you spend your time away from daily duties?

Share about what makes you feel well:

Another part of overall wellness is stopping and taking a minute for YOU.

What do you do to take a break?

How can I fit in a break for my wellness in a day?

This can be journaling, walking, meditating, running, activities in a gym or other. The important thing is finding time to take a break, even for a few minutes, in a day.

What can you do to take a short break in the day? It can be a moment, an hour or longer! For some, the best case is to spend time with someone else, but for many, our best company is ourselves or a pet to recharge as needed every day.

Which is best for you?

Some things that you may consider for wellness around this time include:

➤ Exercise

➤ Massage

➤ Accupuncture

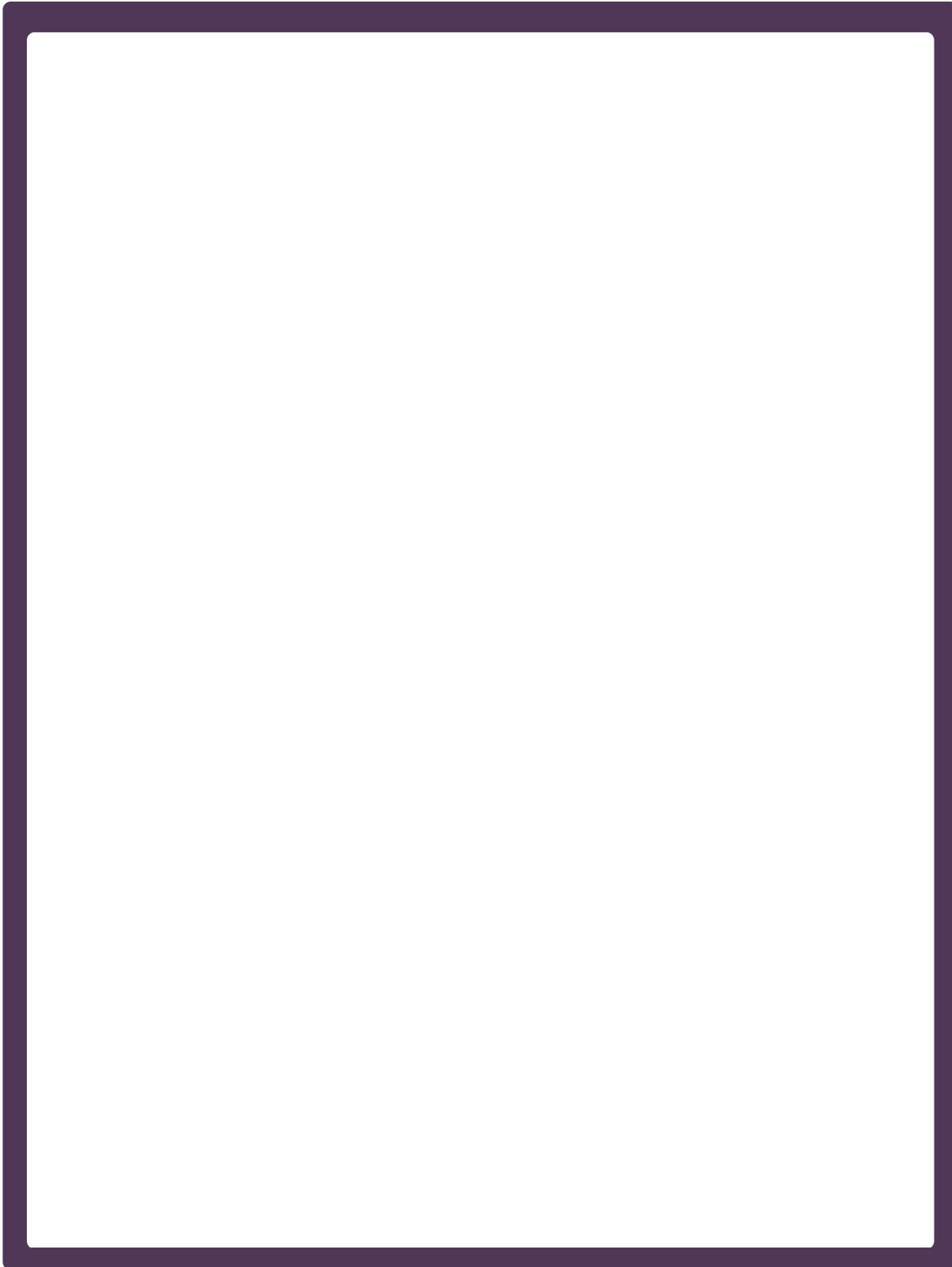
➤ Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

Speak to your healthcare provider about the above list, revisit it, change it as needed, use it as a reminder to care for YOU.

By keeping yourself informed and organized, you have the opportunity to feel empowered in your healthcare!

What else can ensure you feel like you understand more about menopause?

Wellness and Self-Care Thoughts and Reflections



Section Eight

Final Thoughts

Do you have questions or concerns? Please write them down and speak to a healthcare provider.

You can refer to these trusted sites:

- ✓ **The Menopause Society**
<https://menopause.org/>
- ✓ **The Canadian Menopause Society**
<https://sigmamenopause.com/>
- ✓ **Menopause and U**
<https://menopauseandu.ca>
- ✓ **HER -BC report on menopause, wellness and the workplace**
https://whri.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/HER_BC_Report_V1.2Hres.pdf

Remember this journal is NOT a replacement for clinical care or to replace your visits with your healthcare provider. It is important for you to be able to organize your thoughts and feelings, which this journal allows for, but it is vital for you to have a trusted, trustworthy provider leading your care alongside you.

Reflections

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Congratulations!

Final Take Aways

Now that you have completed your journal, you have documented your current transition symptoms and are able to share a summary with your provider. Please utilize the table below as a quick guide to support you in appointments with your healthcare team. Always know that you can continue to add or change what you are writing if you experience changes.

	What are you feeling?	How is this impacting your life	What have you tried so far
Brain health/brain fog? Memory changes	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Day time hot flashes	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Night sweats	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Sleep	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Joints	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Bone health/osteoporosis	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Breast health	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

	What are you feeling?	How is this impacting your life?	What have you tried so far?
Periods	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Vaginal health/ dryness/ discomfort	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Urinary health	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Hair, skin, other	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Period changes	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Mood changes	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Bring along any medications, supplements, lab work and/or imaging you have as well.

Wellness Plans

Now that you have completed your journal, you can create a wellness plan! Consider short- and long-term plans, and what can make it easier for you to achieve these plans.

Consider the following when making your wellness plan:

- Nutrition and activity
- Daily physical, mental, social and emotional activities
- Wellness activities including meditation, cognitive behaviour therapy, counselling, breathing exercises
- Your support team
- Taking a break
- Gratitude journalling

An example of a wellness plan is:

- ✓ **Daily:** incorporating walking and if possible, outdoor time, into daily activities
- ✓ **Weekly:** taking part in strength training (full-body workout with weights or resistance bands).
- ✓ **As often as you can:** visiting friends or taking some time to oneself
- ✓ **Daily to weekly:** read or journal before bed at least once a week (or more!)

Below share how you will go forward with your wellness plans, which resonate with you, and which can you take part in immediately. Come back to these plans often as time goes on and consider what is working and what could be changed.

Wellness plan:

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