

PLANTING SEEDS OF JOY 15 DAY JOURNAL



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INTRODUCTION

WELCOME

My prayer is that this little journal will provide you with new tools for the journey of your soul. It is designed to pull you back into closer communion with God.

Perhaps you find yourself feeling far away from God as the result of a loss of some kind. I found myself in such a place several years ago. I found it impossible to pray or read Scripture; there was an empty hole in my soul, and the struggle to fill it was a long journey.

I used the metaphor of growing seeds in this journal. The soil of your heart may be hard and dry; it needs to be warmed and cultivated just like the soil of a garden. The seeds are ready, but the environment is not.

This journal guides you to plant seeds of **trust, love, and gratitude** by warming the soil or your soul. We have to **trust** in God's love as we prepare the soil of our hearts to return to Him. Finding our **love** for God again takes time, Scripture, and much prayer. Recognizing the gifts and blessings our Father has given us leads us into a practice of **gratitude**. These seeds are just the baby steps in your journey. Recovery from great loss takes time; be patient with yourself, feel God's love, and let the Holy Spirit encourage you.

Each lesson is designed to take you through five practices with one Scripture. Fifteen days of practice (five days for each seed) will establish a daily time of searching, asking, and reflecting on God's Word. Please read the next page carefully to understand the daily format.

God bless you in this journey.

WEEK 1	SEEDS OF TRUST
WEEK 2	SEEDS OF LOVE
WEEK 3	SEEDS OF GRATITUDE

Record the date you begin:

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THE PROCESS OF GROWING

These steps are a roadmap for this journal.
Each lesson contains these elements.

1. QUIET THE SOUL

- Begin your time by quieting your devices and quieting the body.
- Take deep breaths (deep inhale, slow exhale).
- Roll the tension from your neck and shoulders.
- Close your eyes and surrender to a quiet space.

2. SOW THE SEED

- God's Word is your seed. Listen to the daily Scripture or read it to yourself.
- Read it aloud, slowly, thinking of what it means.
- Underline any words you think are important.
- Use your own Bible to read and mark the verses.

3. REST IN THE SOIL

- God's words can provide rest for your soul – the soil that needs to be warmed and prepared.
- Choose a phrase to repeat to yourself. Whisper it, think it, or say it. You prepare the soil in your heart to hold on to those thoughts.

*Rich soil is transformed soil.
It's packed with grace.*

Lara Casey, *Cultivate*

4. PREPARE FOR STRENGTH

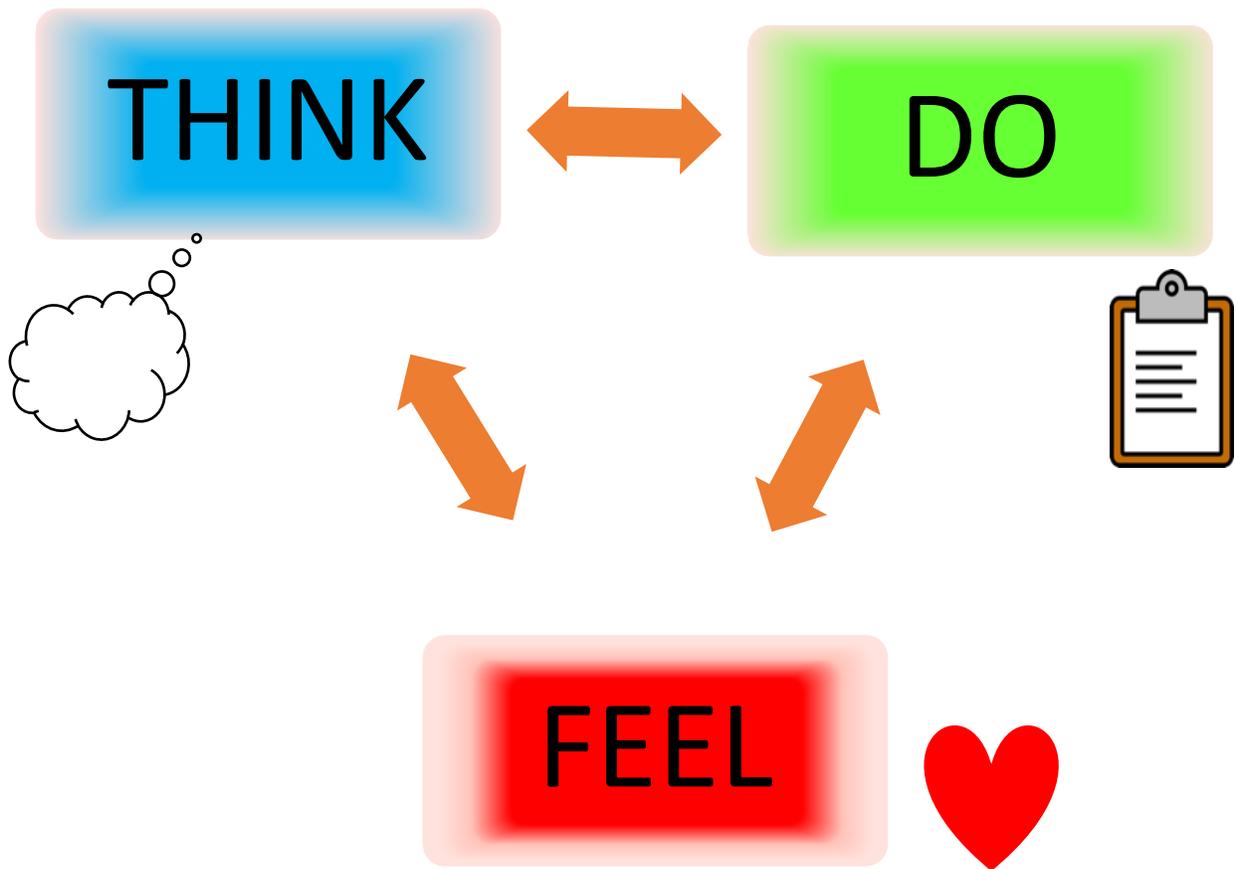
Use the prayer provided in each lesson to guide you into your own words as you speak to our *Abba* (Father).

5. CULTIVATE THE SOUL

When you **think** differently and **believe** differently you begin to **act** differently and **feel** differently. Each day you are prompted activate these sections of your brain: **THINKING, DOING, AND FEELING.**



*Our emotions flow
out of what we really
believe is true.
Nancy Guthrie*



Most of us instinctively respond with one of these areas first. Look at the explanation of each aspect of our personality.

Thinking gathering, sorting, analyzing, and making plans.

Feeling: acknowledges their own feelings and others and is aware of the needs and agendas of others. This person is good at relationships and emotions.

Doing: accomplishing tasks, jumps into a task before thinking, action-oriented, and determined.

We usually lead with one response and support it with a second. The third is often forgotten. To be a balanced person who can use all parts of ourselves, we need to develop the one that we often neglect.

For example, I am a Doer first. My instinct is to do something and then think about it. I typically ignore my feelings or stuff them. Ignoring feelings is not healthy for emotional balance.

Each day's exercise prompts you to use all three – even when one is harder than the others. Pay attention to how you respond to ordinary situations as well as in times of crisis. This will help you identify which is your strongest area.



LESSONS FROM THE SUNFLOWER

When sunflowers are young, they follow the sun. They gain energy and strength to grow and reach their full potential, blossoming from the light and warmth the sun provides. As they mature, they learn which direction to face so they can receive the most light possible.

Then they stand FIRM, permanently facing the direction that offers the greatest opportunity for growth. In their permanent direction they receive the most strength and light. They mature and share the blessings of growth they have received from the sun with everyone they come into contact with, seeds of **hope, joy, and love**.

Learn from the sunflower:



Follow the light the Savior provides.



Gain strength from Him



Stand firm in your convictions.



Share seeds of hope, joy, and love.



WEEK 1

SEEDS OF TRUST

May the God of hope fill you with
all joy and peace as you trust in him
so that you may overflow with hope
by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13

DAY 1 THE SEED OF SURRENDER



1. SOW THE SEED

PROVERBS 3:5,6 NLT

Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do, and he will show you which path to take.

Copy the verse here.

Can you see that depending on your own understanding is removing God from your life? He wants your whole heart. How do you give it to him? By seeking his will in all you do. What is stopping you from giving God your whole heart?

When we surrender to God, we actually give up our illusion of control and let go. After all, as God asked Job in chapter 38,

*“Where were you when I laid the earth’s foundation? . . .
Have you ever given orders to the morning or shown the dawn its place . . .
Can you shout to the clouds and make it rain?”*

REST AND PRAY 

2. REST IN THE SOIL

Read the verse above aloud. Pick a phrase that is meaningful to you. Underline it and repeat it.

Meditate for 1 minute on this thought.

3. PRAY

Father, you know my heart, and You know I try to surrender, but then I take back my illusions of control. Walk with me today and show me the path You want me to take. Remind me that my understanding is frail and weak compared to Yours.

Add your own thoughts. Use the back of the sheet if you run out of room

CULTIVATE THE SOUL



4a. THINKING

If you believe that God is in control, what would you need to change in your life today that demonstrates this belief?

4b. DOING

What can you do today that will help your trust in God at a deeper level?

4c. FEELING

Do you feel differently when you surrender and let God in control?
How would you describe the feeling of surrender? The feeling of being unable to surrender?

Does it help to repeat the phrase you used when you meditated?

FEELING WORDS

inspired
peaceful
blessed
tranquil
anxious
restless
stressed
motivated
disheartened
apathetic

CONCLUSION FOR DAY 1

Hold the verse with you through the day.

Ask for the Spirit to guide and direct your efforts.

Actively implement the three steps of Cultivate: **Thinking, Doing, Feeling.**

Use the back of this page to keep track of your progress. What worked; what didn't?



DAY 2 THE SEED OF SURRENDER



1. SOW THE SEED

PSALMS 86:7 NLT

I will call to you whenever I'm in trouble, and you will answer me.

Copy the verse here.

This verse begins with David making a bold statement about God's response to our call. Use your Bible to look at the beginning of the psalm. David asks the Lord for five things in verses 1-2.

1. Bend down 2. Hear my prayer 3. Answer me 4. Protect me 5. Save me
And then David says, "for I serve you and trust you."

Psalm 86 is a lament, and a lament always contains a complaint but also includes the psalmist's belief that God will provide and that he trusts in the Father.
Can you confidently make this statement in verse 7?



2. REST IN THE SOIL

Read the verse above aloud. Pick a phrase that is meaningful to you. Underline it and repeat it.

Meditate for 1 minute on this thought.

3. PRAY

Father, I have been in trouble and sometimes I don't hear your answer. I ask you to bend down and hear my prayer. Answer me, for I need your help. Protect me and save me from deep emotions and sorrow when I feel like I am drowning.

Add your own thoughts.

CULTIVATE THE SOUL



4a. THINKING

Read all the verses of Psalm 86. Will memorizing this psalm help you think differently? Think carefully about this chapter. Write your thoughts below.

4b. DOING

Try to memorize the first four verses. Write them first. Put each verse on a 3 x 5 card. Learn one verse at a time. Keep at it for 5 days.

4c. FEELING

Have your feelings changed about trusting God more after completing the first two steps? If you are conflicted about trusting God, reflect on exactly how you feel.

Recognizing a feeling is the first step to understand our emotional state. We often are not very good at recognizing our feelings; we find it easier to ignore them or stuff them. Try telling God exactly how you feel about trusting Him.

CONCLUSION FOR DAY 2

Hold the verse with you through the day.

Ask for the Spirit to guide and direct your efforts.

Actively implement the three steps of Cultivate: **Thinking, Doing, Feeling.**

Use the back of this page to keep track of your progress. What worked; what didn't?



DAY 3 THE SEED OF BLESSING



1. SOW THE SEED

ISAIAH 54:10 NLT

For the mountains may move and the hills disappear, but even then my faithful love for you will remain. “My covenant of blessing will never be broken,” says the LORD who has mercy on you.

Copy the verse here.

What is the promise God gives here?

Put this verse in your own words.



2. REST IN THE SOIL

Which phrase in this verse do you want to remember? Write it here and then meditate on it for one minute.

3. PRAY

Holy One, your powers I cannot comprehend with my human mind. You made a promise that will never be broken – you will always remain faithful! May I feel your blessing today and tomorrow and the next day.

Add your own thoughts.

CULTIVATE THE SOUL



4a. THINKING

Has God always been faithful to you?

What does faithful mean?

Will He give you everything you want or make your road smooth and straight? Why?

4b. DOING

Write out this promise on a card and then write the date and these words: I BELIEVE!

Put it in your Bible or somewhere that you can see it regularly.

4c. FEELING

Do any of the words in the Feeling Words box describe you whenever you begin to doubt God's faithfulness?

Try to **understand** your feelings.

What makes you feel this way? Did something happen to cause your feelings or reaction?

Try repeating the first two steps again: **THINK** and **DO** to help you feel God's faithfulness.

FEELING WORDS

Anxious
Worried
Concerned
Troubled
Apprehensive
Discouraged
Disheartened
Despondent
Depressed

CONCLUSION FOR DAY 3

Hold the verse with you through the day.

Ask for the Spirit to guide and direct your efforts.

Actively implement the three steps of Cultivate: **Thinking, Doing, Feeling.**

Use the back of this page to keep track of your progress. What worked; what didn't?



DAY 4 THE SEED OF TRUST



1. SOW THE SEED

ISAIAH 26:4 NLT

Trust in the LORD always, for the LORD GOD is the eternal Rock.

Copy the verse here.

Look at these other passages about God. What words are used instead of “eternal” rock?

Deuteronomy 8:15

2 Samuel 22:2

Psalms 71:3

Draw a rock and put the words you found on it to remind you of how firm God’s faithfulness is.



2. REST IN THE SOIL

Read the verse above aloud. Choose the first part or the second to repeat and whisper the phrase as you meditate.

3. PRAY

You are my rock and my Redeemer. I want to trust you always. May your Holy Spirit remind me that your faithfulness is as solid as a rock and the foundation of my faith. Without You my life is meaningless and empty. Thank you for being eternal.

Add your own thoughts.

CULTIVATE THE SOUL



4a. THINKING

Do you have doubts about God's faithfulness?

What causes you to lose your trust in Him?

Can you change your thoughts?

4b. DOING

Find a smooth rock and use a permanent white or black pen to write some of the phrases you wrote in #1 in Sow the Seed about God as our rock.

4c. FEELING

Day 2 we learned to **Recognize** a feeling. Day 3 we tried to **Understand** our feeling and where it came from. Today we want to **Label** our feeling. Use the Feeling Words to help you.

When your trust in God is strong, how do you feel?

When it is weak, how do you feel? (Look at the Feeling Words on Day3)

FEELING WORDS

Upbeat
Joyful
Energized
Hopeful
Optimistic
Fulfilled
Secure
Blessed
Calm
Balanced

CONCLUSION FOR DAY 4

Repeat today's verse throughout the day.

Ask for the Spirit to remind you to trust in the Lord.

Actively implement the three steps of Cultivate: **Thinking, Doing, Feeling.**

Use the back of this page to keep track of your progress. What worked; what didn't?



DAY 5 THE SEED OF CONFIDENCE



1. SOW THE SEED

JEREMIAH 17:7,8 NLT

But blessed are those who trust in the LORD and have made the LORD their hope and confidence. They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of producing fruit.

Copy the first sentence of this verse here.

The prophet Jeremiah uses a simile to compare people to trees: *they are like trees planted* . . . Draw a picture of these trees.



2. REST IN THE SOIL

Focus on the words “hope and confidence” in the verse. Does the LORD have your hope and confidence?

Meditate for 2 minutes on this idea.

3. PRAY

Abba Father, you know what it is like for me when my soul is in a desert. I am soul-weary, thirsty for you, and longing for rest. Your only Son went without food in a desert. I ask your Holy Spirit to fill my heart with seeds of hope and confidence.

Add your own thoughts.

CULTIVATE THE SOUL



4a. THINKING

Does your soul need filling up?

Have you used the Wellness Check and Self-Care Cards? Look on the website: www.joymsonder.com to download the cards.

Does your spiritual-self need attention? Make a list of some things you need to do for your soul.

4b. DOING

Hope will not magically appear without some work. Look through these Scriptures and write out the message on slips of paper. Put them in a Hope Box so you can read them again and again.

Romans 12:12
Romans 15:13
Hebrews 6:18,19
Hebrews 19:23
Psalm 31:24
Romans 8:24



4c. FEELING

Is it possible to feel hopeless but also joyful at the same time?

Can you be joyless but also hopeful?

Keep track of your feelings of hope or confidence in a journal or use an app for your mobile device. Some of the apps use pictures or rating scales. See the App suggestions on the website.



CONCLUSION FOR DAY 5

Remind yourself of the hope and confidence you have in the LORD.

Ask for the Spirit to fill you today with hope and confidence.

Actively implement the three steps of Cultivate: Thinking, Doing, Feeling.

Use the back of this page to keep track of your progress. What worked; what didn't?

SCRIPTURES FOR WEEK 1

Proverbs 3:5,6

Trust in the Lord with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. Seek his will in all you do. And he will show you which path to take.

Psalms 86:7

I will call to you whenever I'm in trouble and you will answer me.

Isaiah 54:10

For the mountains may move and the hills disappear, but even then my faithful love for you will remain. "My covenant of blessing will never be broken," says the LORD who has mercy on you.

Isaiah 26:4

Trust in the LORD always, for the LORD GOD is the eternal Rock.

Jeremiah 17:7,8

"But blessed are those who trust in the LORD and have made the LORD their hope and confidence. They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green and they never stop producing fruit."



But blessed are those who trust in the LORD and have made the LORD their hope and confidence. They are like trees planted along a riverbank, with roots that reach deep into the water. Such trees are not bothered by the heat or worried by long months of drought. Their leaves stay green and they never stop producing fruit.

Jeremiah 17:7, 8