

Journaling for Personal Reflection and Growth

Lasting transformation is a journey. It requires answering the invitation to walk in a new way while simultaneously nurturing newly formed relationships, both with God and with every member of God's creation. As you do this work, you are invited to spend time in personal reflection and intentional meditation. These journal prompts were created to assist you in your journey. Spend as much time as you need with each entry. In some cases, you may need a day while others might require longer. There is no time requirement for this journey. The ask is that you merely keep moving forward towards growth and development that results in healing.

Entry 1: Share your culture story.

As far as you know, what are your ancestral roots? What is "your people's" traditional heritage? Why and how did your ancestors come to the United States? Where and how did they live when they arrived here? What realities, experiences, and values shaped your people in this country? What were some significant turning points for your people during their journey? What were some early events that influenced their identity?

Entry 2: Read Psalm 106.

Reflect on the experiences or events that helped shape or change your personal identity through the years. Who was in your social group? What impact did this group have on you? How was this group's impact revealed to you? What events influenced your feelings? Who were the people on the outside of your group? How did you feel toward them? Who is in your social group now — those reference groups with whom you now identify? If your group has changed, what were some significant turning points for you?

Entry 3: Read Genesis 3 and 4.

Think about the various ways racism affects the lives of members of all people groups living in the United States. What are the ways your life has been affected by racism? What about the lives of those in your community? Reflect on Genesis 3 and 4. What meaning or insights do the stories of Genesis 3 and 4 bring to an understanding of racism and what it means to be White in America?



Entry 4: Share the narrative.

Examine the books and movies you've read or seen recently. Were any written or directed by Black, Indigenous, or People of Color authors, playwrights, or directors? Reflect upon the importance of receiving historical narrative from non-white people. How does a diverse historical perspective influence how we understand the nation building experience in the United States?

Entry 5: Read Luke 15:1-10.

Reflect on your community of faith. Who do you see as being absent from the table and what consequence does this have on the broader community? What have you lost because of racism? In the parables from Luke 15, and in life, what does it take for discovery and restoration to occur? How can you contribute to these efforts?

Entry 6: Read Genesis 1.

How has "dominion" been used over the course of time in ways that are contrary to God's vision? How are the concepts of dominion, being chosen, and patriarchy interconnected? How have these concepts shaped how the people see themselves? Take a walk to reflect, to watch, and to listen to people's interactions, noticing words or actions that reflect these concepts. What effect have those concepts had on society? What's the geopolitical legacy that has resulted from these concepts?

Entry 7: Take Inventory.

Reflect on the culture of your local congregation. How is time viewed and used? How do people communicate? How are group decisions made? How is sacred space honored? Notice the pictures on the walls and expressions of words and music. Can members of all people groups see themselves reflected here? Why or why not? How did viewing your faith space critically help you to see differently. Take note of your thoughts and feelings.

Entry 8: Consider the impacts.

Looking at all the factors of your life (social/interpersonal, vocational, physical, spiritual, financial, emotional, intellectual), consider who you are today. How has your life today been shaped by people, places, and events that came before you? How did your ancestors or other important people in your life impact your life's journey? How did you reach your level of education—who



paid for it? What resources have been available to you as you've made life impacting decisions? How were you given information or access to resources when you've needed them? How were those resources shaped or put in place by previous generations both within and outside your culture group?

Entry 9: Read 2 Kings 5:1-14.

Rewrite the healing of Naaman as a story of healing from the sin of racism. How do we know that racism is making us sick? What and who are the voices that lead us toward healing? What are the “waters”—the activities, learnings, experiences—that we need to enter in order to begin the healing of our disease of racism? What is the role of our community as we enter the river for healing? What does it mean to enter the river to find healing? What prejudices or old understandings do we have to lay aside in order to enter the healing water? How many times does it take in order to be made clean?

Entry 10: Read Isaiah 43:19.

How are you hearing and seeing community around you differently? How are you becoming aware in new ways? What visions do you have of where God is leading? Map out the new thing you perceive God has invited you into.

Entry 11: Make Connections.

Reflect on how you have approached experiences with racism in the past. What fears did you have? When and how have you challenged racism? When and how have you failed to challenge racism? What were the results of both your challenge and your failure to challenge racism? What did you learn about yourself and/or others as a result of these experiences? What fears do you have going forward?

Entry 12: Read Ephesians 2:14-17.

What could you and others do to help create a safe and welcoming conversation where everyone's voice is heard and respected and challenge and growth are encouraged? What do you personally and spiritually have to gain by creating such a space? What do you personally and spiritually have to lose?

