

March 2023



Reframing Ritual – The Awe and Beauty of the Moment

Presented by Stop Breathe Believe® & Dianne Morris Jones

Your Rituals

By Roger C. Jones

It comes down
to this—
practice your
rituals & rich you'll
be!





Day 1

Making coffee in the morning - Grinding the coffee beans, smelling the aroma, placing a filter, measuring the coffee, pushing the button, and waiting for that first sip of “amazingness”...or what is it for you? Maybe you prefer tea. Maybe you work out first. Maybe you select just the right cup for the day. What does our morning ritual invite us to?

Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.

Day 2

Journaling - “Journaling is an old reflective practice, and an excellent tool for noticing what is arising in the moment. You may find it helpful to journal or make notes on the insights that come up for you in your reflections.” - Angeles Arrien

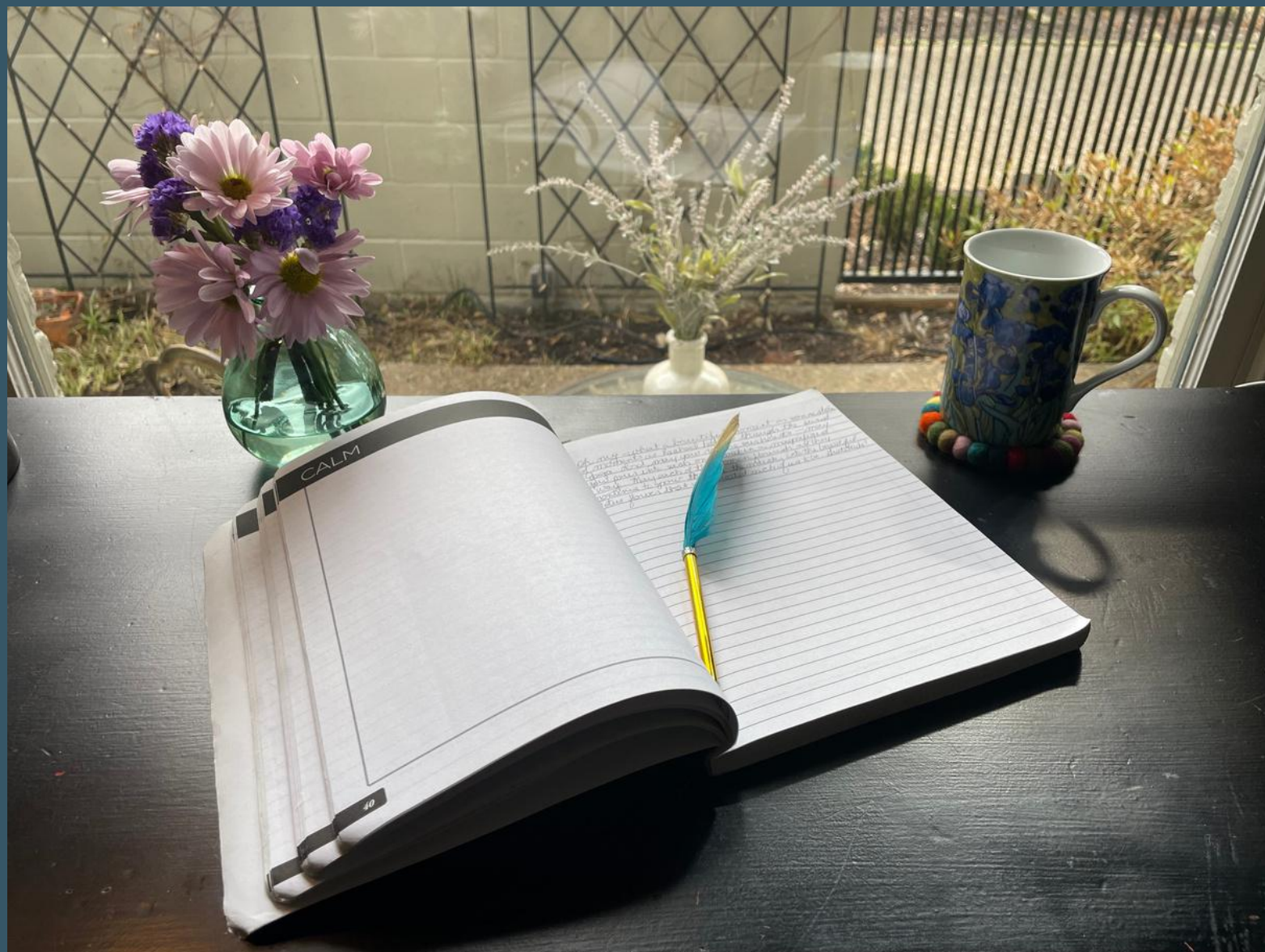


Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.

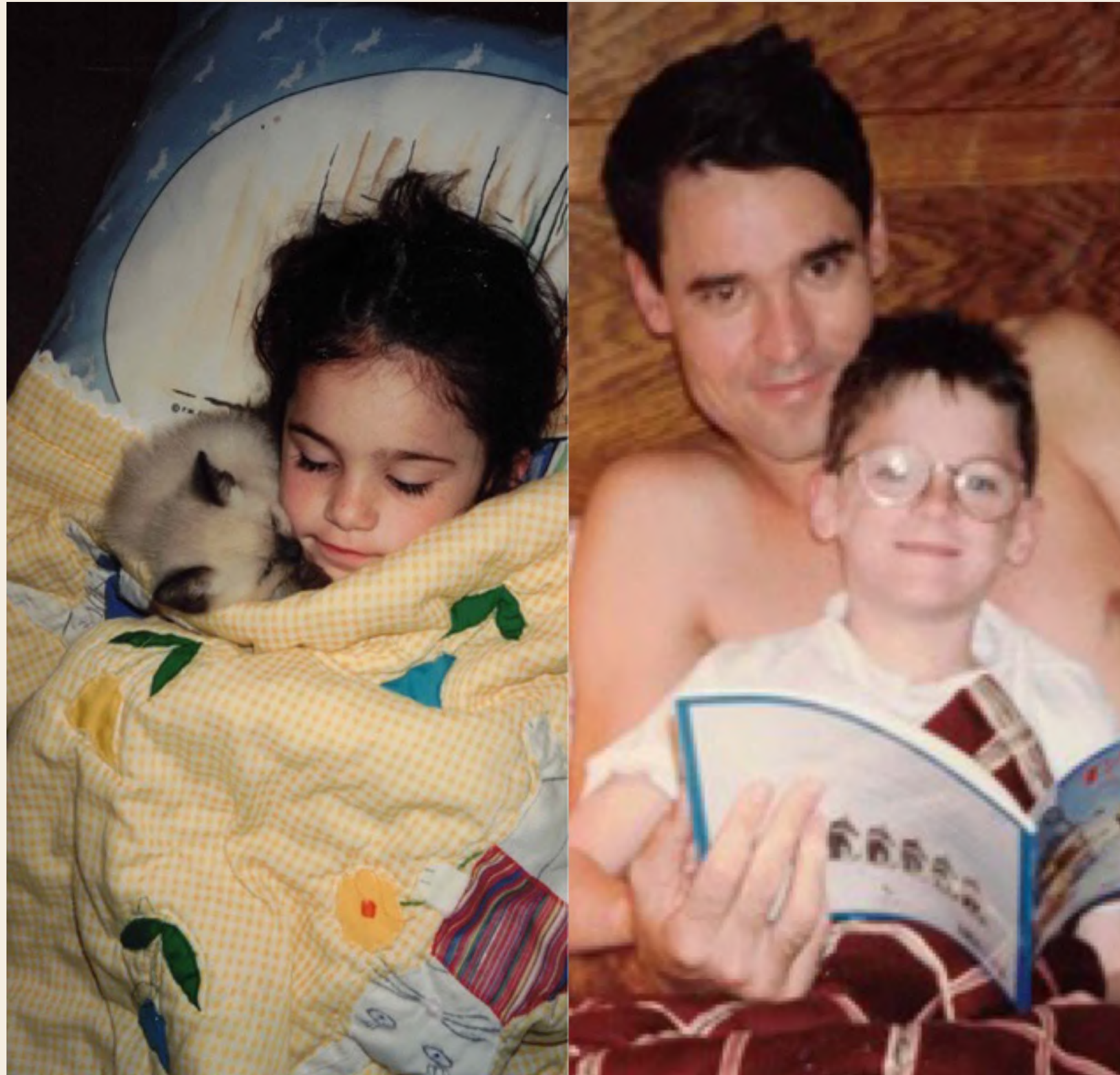
I have found journaling to be a life-giving ritual. Research shows that even 5-10 minutes of writing is a healthy way to clear your mind and center in on your heart. One hurdle that seems to get in the way for those trying to journal is when the practice becomes rigid, a chore. For others, the best way to stay in a journaling process is to be highly disciplined. So, whatever works for you is the right journaling ritual. Opportunities abound for beautiful bound journals, or you might even prefer a napkin on the plane or your computer. Of course, one of my favorite journals is the one I created, *I'm Fine: A Real Feelings Journal*.



Day 3

Going to the same vacation home/location/cabin for a particular holiday can be a special ritual. Or, maybe it is a different location, but the same date each year. Or, maybe it is the adventure of a different Airbnb each year at a time that works out for friends and family. The beauty of such a ritual is the connection.

Photo taken at Lake Kemp, Seymour, Texas.



Day 4

When the kids were younger, we would lie together at night, read a story, and let them talk until they fell asleep. A ritual of attentive listening. What are the bedtime rituals we recall from our childhood? What bedtime rituals do we practice with our own children/grandchildren? A bath? A bedtime banana? Brushing teeth? Read a story? A lullaby, soft music?

Photos taken in Amarillo, Texas.



Photo taken in Lubbock, Texas.

Day 5

A ritual to celebrate you, all year long - A ritual to celebrate you, all year long - So, let's say your birthday is on the 18th. Mark your calendar for the 18th of each month to be intentional about celebrating yourself. Plan an event to do something you love - go to a movie, watch a movie on TV with popcorn in hand, schedule a coffee date with a good friend, make a trip through the drive through at Starbucks for a cake pop or cozy up in your favorite chair with a good book. Something that celebrates YOU!



Day 6

Cup of tea - Choosing a beautiful kettle to boil the water, choosing the flavor of tea for the moment, relishing the simple and sacred process of preparing a delicious cup of tea. How might a cup of tea be a restorative ritual for us?

Photo taken in West Des Moines, Iowa.

Day 7

Read a book - Maybe this is an easy ritual and already an integrated part of your daily life. Or, maybe to sit and read a book is a huge stretch, and you don't even know where to start with finding the time. What if you read a few pages a day? What if you read on a particular morning or evening of the week? How might reading be a ritual that feeds our soul?



Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.

Day 8

Lavender oil - One of my favorite pieces of jewelry is a bracelet with a wooden bead designed to absorb an infusion of essential oil. My oil of choice is often lavender. The aroma invites me back home to my own heart throughout the day. I often put on the bracelet prior to going to yoga. What a lovely aromatic addition to the yoga practice! Consider the idea of exploring various essential oils and how you might incorporate an oil into a ritual.



Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.



Photo taken in California.

Day 9

“Wake up, hug dog, have a good day.”
What a lovely ritual....whether it is the ritual of wearing a comfy sweat shirt that reads: “wake up.hug dog.have a good day”, giving hugs, having a positive attitude for the day, hugging your dog or pet, taking a moment to soak in the beauty of the day...it is our call as to how we choose our rituals that reflect our values.



Photo taken in Ojai, California.

Day 10

Many cultures incorporate the clink of a glass together as we toast one another – a ritual called upon for many ceremonies, celebrations, and even daily meals. Today, “cheers” is simply a symbolic and succinct way of toasting with the wish of good cheer and good health to those around us – a ritual of friendship and of camaraderie.



Day 11

Studying and learning can be rituals for growth. A masterclass, a workshop, a book on a hobby or craft, a new course at the local college... there are many opportunities for being intentional and deliberate toward growth and expanding our knowledge.

Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.



Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.

Day 12

What might daily inspirational reading look like for us? How might our reading have some special features that would invite us to a deepened spiritual experience and broadened level of understanding?

Day 13

Surfing is such a beautiful example of the steps of care prior to standing up on the board and riding the wave. Each step matters for a ritual...care of the board, care of the wet suit, reading the water, pushing the board out into the water, swimming out to look for “just the right wave”, feeling the vastness of the ocean, looking at the light on the water, taking it all in. Possibly we have other hobbies, outdoor endeavors that give us joy that are full of meaning and symbolism. And, if you ARE able to surf....soak it in and enjoy the beauty!



Photo taken in California.



Day 14

Setting the table – How can we establish a ritual of some of our daily events – such as how we set the table for a meal? Gathering with friends or family is a significant moment. Even the routine morning breakfast or daily supper with the kids can be an opportunity for fun, beauty, and creativity.

Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.



Day 15

Pet rituals – What are some rituals that you enjoy with your pet? Maybe it is going for a walk in the neighborhood, maybe it is cuddling with your cat on the couch, maybe it is throwing them the ball and watching the joy of their retrieval. Consider the benefit that pet love has for your heart.

Photo taken in West Des Moines, Iowa.



Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.

Day 16

Fresh flowers – What if, instead of waiting for a special occasion, we create a routine of purchasing some fresh flowers “just for ourselves”? Could we “stop to smell the roses” by keeping a favorite vase by our sink or coffee table or desk with a touch of fresh flowers for our hearts – to slow down, absorb the delicate nature, the aroma, the magnificence of a single flower or the beauty of a bouquet?



Day 17

Walking – A ritual of a walk can be many-faceted...it can be a vigorous work-out walk, or a gentle walk around the neighborhood, or a nature walk paying attention to the ground underneath our feet, or a brisk walk listening to a podcast or music.

Photo taken in Yosemite National Park, California.



Day 18

Music is such a beautiful source of ritual. Our choice of how we integrate music into a ritual is open – creating a playlist for the work commute, playing a piano or guitar song each morning, humming a tune as we do daily chores. Music can always be a calming source of energy for our full and active days.

Photo taken in Terlingua, Texas.



Day 19

What are the rituals that revolve around our hobbies and sports? How might we anticipate and plan for a trip? How might we consider who we could travel with? How do we choose which fly goes on the line? How do we appreciate the nature around us as we fish or golf?

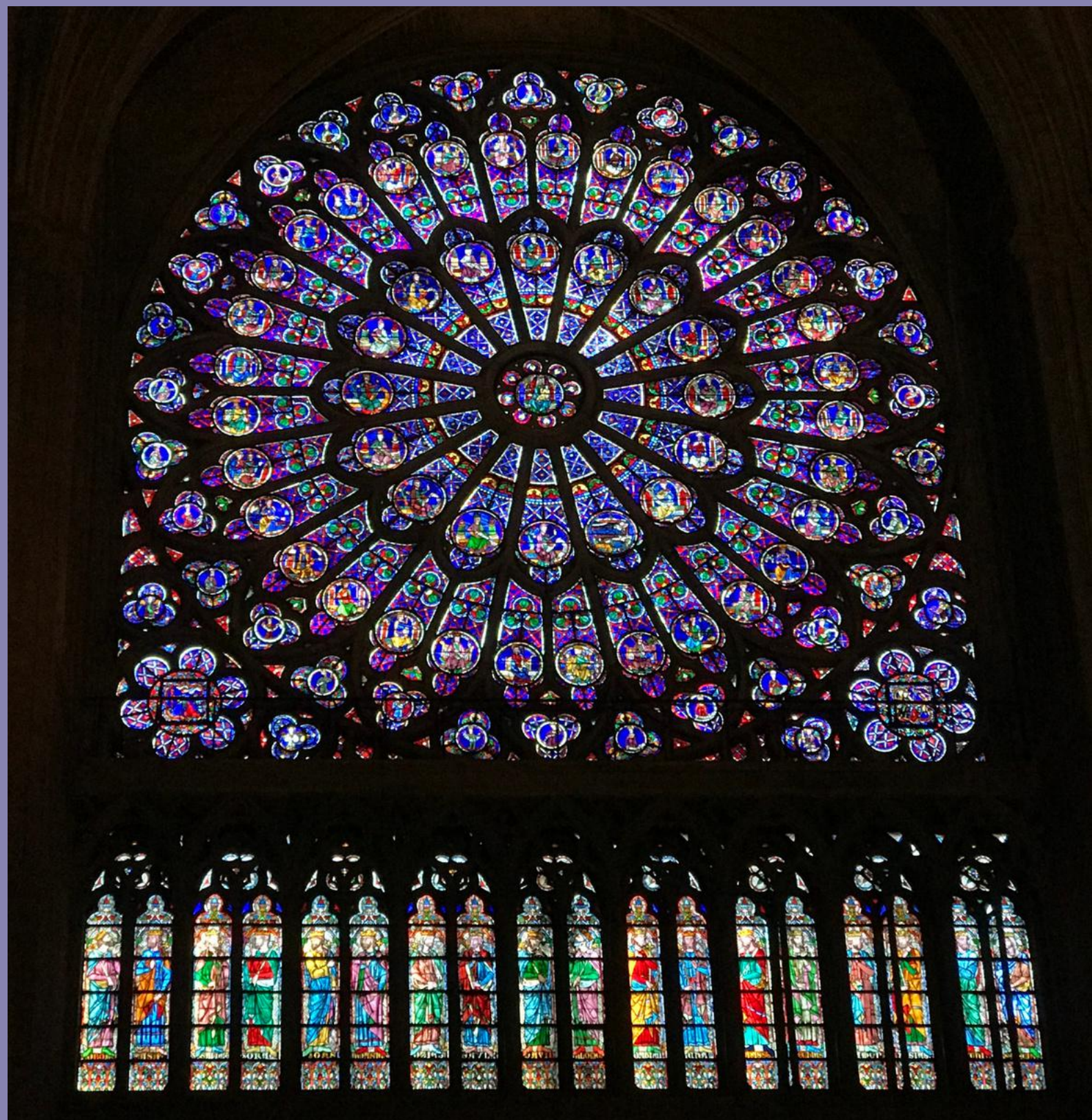
Photo taken at Beaver Creek Reservoir, Colorado.



Day 20

Gardening – What are the rituals that you might consider as you plan and plant a garden? Winter times of poring over seed and plant catalogs? Preparing the soil for planting time? Gathering the tools, just the right plants, the fertilizer, and discerning when is just the right time to plant?

Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.



Day 21

For many, joining in a worship service with others is a practice that is an important and life-giving ritual. The benefit of spiritual growth and community is an integral piece of a wholehearted life.

Photo taken in Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris, France.



Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.

Day 22

Welcoming Others In – How is it that we greet another? How do we welcome others to our home, our office, our communities? Do we hug? Do we kiss? Do we linger for a moment to gaze into another's eyes? Do we have a ritual of how we say 'hello' and how we say 'good-bye'?



Photo taken in Amarillo, Texas.

Day 23

Celebration Rituals – How do we celebrate? Do we include confetti?



Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.

Day 24

Sleep Ritual – How can we create a solemn practice that prepares us for sleep, a time to honor ourselves. As we customize a routine for ourselves, make it our own, make it sacred. As we reflect on the sacredness of sleep, considering that we benefit from a restful night of sleep and it is necessary for a long and healthful life.



Day 25

Getting out in nature – A walk or activity or even a quiet, still moment in nature can be a powerful ritual to help calm our hearts and give meaning to our days. We can learn so many lessons of life from simply paying attention and being mindful of the seasons, a ritual to cherish.

Photo taken in Yosemite National Park, California.



Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.

Day 26

We have recently embraced the ritual of caring for some assorted houseplants. I am sure we have lots to learn and are excited to welcome in the natural beauty. “In some Native languages the term for plants translates to ‘those who take care of us’.” How might caring for a plant be a nurturing ritual for our soul?

- Robin Wall Kimmerer, Braiding Sweetgrass



Day 27

Reading the news – Whether your phone, iPad, computer or a newspaper – what does our daily reading of the news look like? How do we embrace what we read or hear? How do we filter news? How do we care for our hearts in a meaningful way when we become aware of bad news?

Photo taken in West Des Moines, Iowa.



Day 28

Taking a photo – What might it look like if you took a daily image with your phone or camera? What might appear to you as extraordinary in your ordinary life as you reflect back on a month’s collection of images? What catches your eye in a day to be notable to photograph? Contemplative photography can be such a beautiful time of embracing the moment. With the easy and often constant access to our cell phone cameras, we have the ability to record special moments.

Photo taken in Sofia, Bulgaria.



Day 29

Celebrating the process to get through tough moments – When life is not what you want, a ritual can be an anchor for your soul. For instance, while we were walking through the process of chemo, Roger and I would get Starbucks and do a “Starbucks toast” each time he completed another treatment. Sometimes he felt horrible, but it was a beautiful marker acknowledging that we had made it through one more treatment.

Photo taken in Dallas, Texas.

Day 30



Photo taken in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Rituals when traveling – Travel gives us the opportunity to explore, connect, expand, and open our hearts and minds. How can we use ritual to stay mindful and present during these moments of unfamiliarity? Maybe we pack a certain pillow to have in the car or plane. Maybe we search out the nearest coffee shop in each new place we visit. As we were in Nepal amidst the uncertainty of what the day’s hike would hold, what was happening with the pandemic, and trying to manage the cold temperatures, a warm cup of coffee or a latté felt like slipping into some old slippers...a “cup of comfort” for sure! Maybe you keep a travel journal and take notes of your adventures. Bon Voyage on finding a travel ritual that fits for you!



Day 31

Stop Breathe Believe moments – As a mini meditation or ritual, consider choosing to Stop and reflect on your thoughts, Breathe in and breathe out, and Believe, choosing a thought or mantra that would be encouraging for your heart, such as “I am contemplating the value of ritual in my life.” For more about my book, Stop Breathe Believe: Mindful Living One Thought at a Time, you can check out my website, or use the link above to order a copy.

Photo taken in West Des Moines, Iowa.