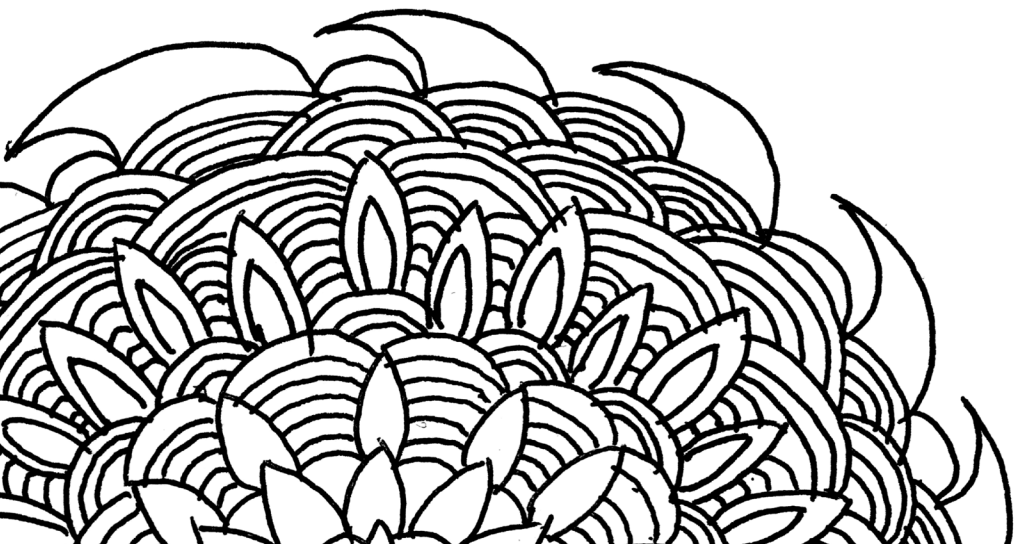




**the sanctuaries** presents

# SACRED PRACTICES

for resilience and resistance





In times of struggle, we turn to the sacred for sustenance and direction. We draw on the wisdom of our ancestors. And we build our spirits for the long, hard road ahead.

The sacred practices collected here are rooted in specific traditions and shared by specific people, yet they remain open to all. May you discover their sacred power.

**The Sanctuaries** is a diverse community that harnesses the sacred power of the arts for personal growth and social change. | [thesanctuaries.org](https://thesanctuaries.org)

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# /lis(ə)n/ listen

This practice is called ‘Words that Shine’ and is based on the belief that the sacred speaks to us when we listen.

## **1. Set your intentions.**

Ask yourself: What do I need? What am I experiencing?

## **2. Listen silently for divine direction.**

As you listen, ask yourself: What phrases are arising?

You’re invited to write these words and phrases on small sheets of paper (index cards, back of receipts) and stick them in a notebook.

### *Words from the contributor:*

When I engage in this practice, I listen for words that shimmer when spoken or read (think Moses and the burning bush).

# /rīt/ write

This practice is adapted from Julia Cameron's *The Artist's Way* and seeks to summon the sacred through words.

## **Wake up and write three pages.**

No more, no less. They are to be stream of consciousness, so they should remain unedited and free-flowing.

In the morning pages, we declare to ourselves and to the world what we wish, hope, regret, fear, imagine.

### *Words from the contributor:*

I usually pray a scripture (Romans 12:1-2) first, and then go to my rocking chair and write.

# /prā/ pray

This practice is found in so many forms across so many traditions. Experiment with different methods of intimately connecting with the sacred.

## **Pray daily in the evening as the sun sets.**

Set an altar. Center yourself. Sit silently and receptively, or offer words of gratitude, petition, lament, etc.

## **Pray as if talking to the sacred.**

Imagine yourself “talking to a higher power,” recognizing that there is something larger than you that is not you.

### *Words from the contributor:*

I light palo santo, two white candles, and put my gem infused water in the white lion paw prints on my altar.

# /moov/ move

This practice is a body prayer taken from the Christian tradition that can be modified in word and posture to reflect your understanding of the sacred. It has 4 motions:

## **Praying hands.**

Join your hands at heart center and say: *Lord, Jesus Christ.*

## **Lifted arms.**

Put your arms up, as if making a Y, and say: *Son of God.*

## **Praying hands.**

Join your hands at heart center and say: *Have mercy on me.*

## **Bent body.**

Bend over at the waist while throwing your arms down, as if making an upside down V, and say: *A sinner.*

Do this body prayer over and over while you get quieter and quieter each time. By the end, you should only be doing the motions and have the words playing as a silent soundtrack in your head.

# /dans/ dance

This practice can take so many forms across so many traditions. Experiment with different methods of moving your body and feeling the joy of the sacred.

**Dance: furiously.**

Move your body soulfully. Let yourself go. Allow yourself to be fully and freely yourself.

*Words from the contributor:*

Dancing allows me to be, and in being, I commune with ancestors.



## /sē/ see

This practice helps you to develop sacred *insight*.

### **Look at your relationships.**

Consider how you're "seeing" the person or people that you're relating to in any given moment. Are you seeing the best or the worst in them?

You can tell if you're in a less healthy place if you mainly see their faults, and if you're in a healthier place if you can mainly see their strengths.

# /māk/ make

This practice invites you to gather objects that remind and connect you with the sacred.

## **Create an altar.**

Select a space where you feel safe. Gather objects from the earth like feathers and shells, as well as objects that carry special memories like stones and photos.

## **Cleanse it.**

Burn incense and palo santo, smudge your surroundings.

## **Light candles.**

On regular days, light white candles. On important days, light colored candles. Observe the flame. Try reading or meditating afterwards.

### *Words from the contributor:*

I believe this is a cultural practice that I learned from my *abuela*. Perhaps it's a practice linked to Santería, also known as Regla de Ifá, or Lucumí. It's a syncretic religion of Caribbean origin.

# /brēTH/ breathe

This practice is a pranayama technique from the Yoga tradition that brings your brain into balance and your spirit into alignment with the sacred flow of life.

1. Sit comfortably. Place the tips of your right index finger and middle finger in between your eyebrows. Place the ring and little fingers of your right hand on your left nostril, and your thumb on your right nostril.
2. Press your thumb down on the right nostril. Breathe out, then in, through the left nostril.
3. Switch, pressing the left nostril with your ring and little fingers. Breathe out, then in, through the right nostril.

That sequence is one round of Nadi Shodhan pranayama.

## *Words from the contributor:*

Try 9 rounds of alternately breathing through both nostrils. After every exhalation, remember to breathe in from the same nostril from which you exhaled. Keep your eyes closed throughout and continue taking long, deep breaths.

# /ēṭ/ eat

This practice is drawn from the Jewish tradition as a way of honoring and paying attention to the sacred.

## **Turn off technology.**

From sundown on Friday until sundown on Saturday, don't use your cell phone, television, computer, etc.

## **Share a meal.**

Eat a communal meal with people you value, whether they be your family, friends, or other communities of which you're a part. Thank the sacred for the food and find the sacred in one another.

### *Words from the contributor:*

I observe the Jewish Shabbat and anyone can do this. We experience the divine in each other because we are able to focus on the divine in one another.

# /rēd/ read

This practice is a form of sacred reading best done in a group, but you can also try it on your own.

## **Observe.**

Open to a passage in a text that you hold sacred. Observe what's unfolding, e.g. who is doing what, when, and how. Circle/underline key words, figures, phrases, actions, etc.

## **Interpret.**

Discuss the meaning or purpose that you draw from the selected passage.

## **Apply.**

Consider what this passage might mean for your life, your community, and/or the world around you.

### *Words from the contributor:*

The choice of the text is very important, especially if your intent is to inspire resilience and resistance. The text could be a few verses or it could fill one side of a sheet of paper.

# **/kredət/ credits**

We're so grateful to the following individuals for sharing their sacred practices in this compilation:

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**Jonathan Fields**

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**Alana Landsman**

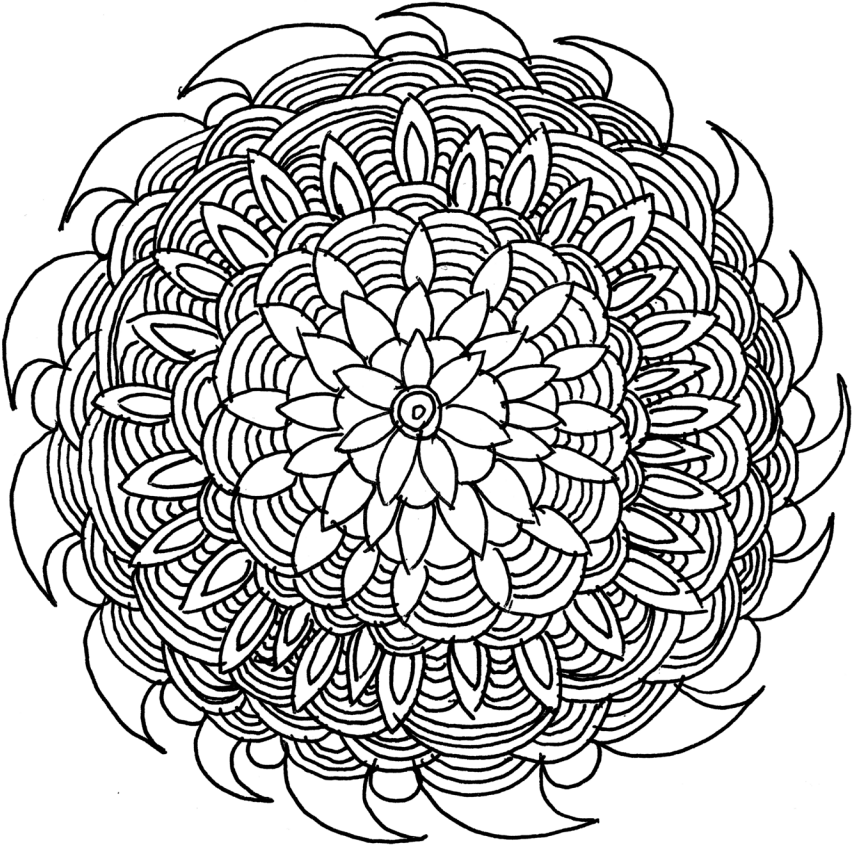
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