

REFLECTION JOURNAL

Why us? America 250 and President Lincoln's Cottage

At President Lincoln's Cottage, we believe in an America that reflects our common humanity, cultivates belonging, and honors the complexity in our nation's history. We are committed to telling more complete stories that capture the full breadth of the American experience and leading our peers and community in doing the same. We're building a 250th commemoration that meets audiences where they are and makes room for both grief and joy at once. Use this resource to reflect on your own history and that of the United States as you, like Lincoln, work to form a more perfect union.

How to use the reflection journal

- Print the journal pages on regular 8.5x11 paper - or, you can open them on your tablet or other device and add your answers digitally
- Respond to the writing prompts on each page. It's okay to skip pages and return to them later.
- Treat yourself - use your favorite pen or some colorful markers or pencils to write in the journal.
- We recommend completing 3-5 prompts in one sitting, but please use this resource as best works for you.

About

These reflection prompts are intended for journalers ages 15 and up. Prompts and questions were developed by President Lincoln's Cottage in partnership with the team at the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience. Many thanks also to the participants in our Vision for America at 250 Summit. President Lincoln's Cottage is a 501(c)3 historic site and museum located in Washington DC.



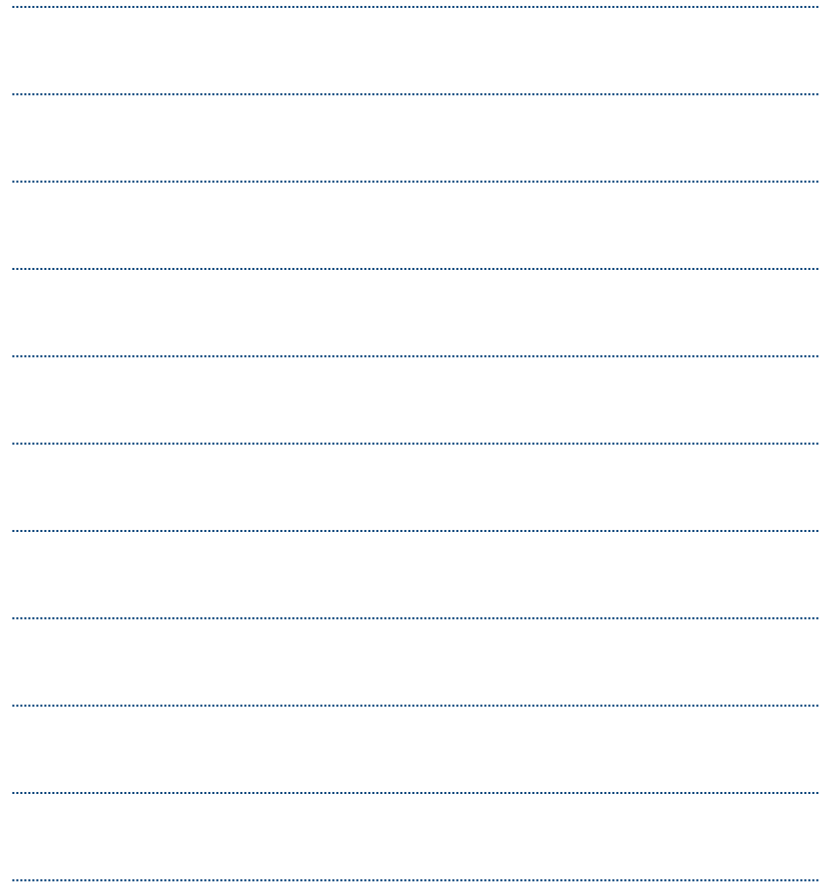
International Coalition of
SITES of CONSCIENCE

When have you asked for help?

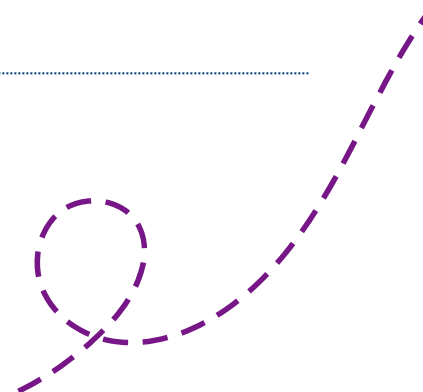


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What barriers do you face in forming new connections, or in deepening those you already have?



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What about you has stayed the same over the course of your life? What has changed?

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Would other people, if asked about you, have the same answer?

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How do you decide when to share your whole self?

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List three people in your community you'd like to make a deeper connection with.



I will reach out to them by...

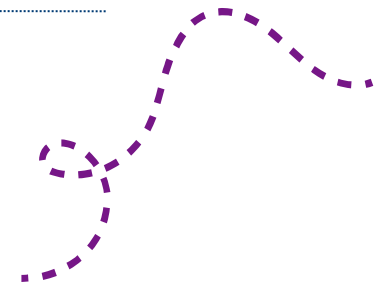


I will reach out to them by...

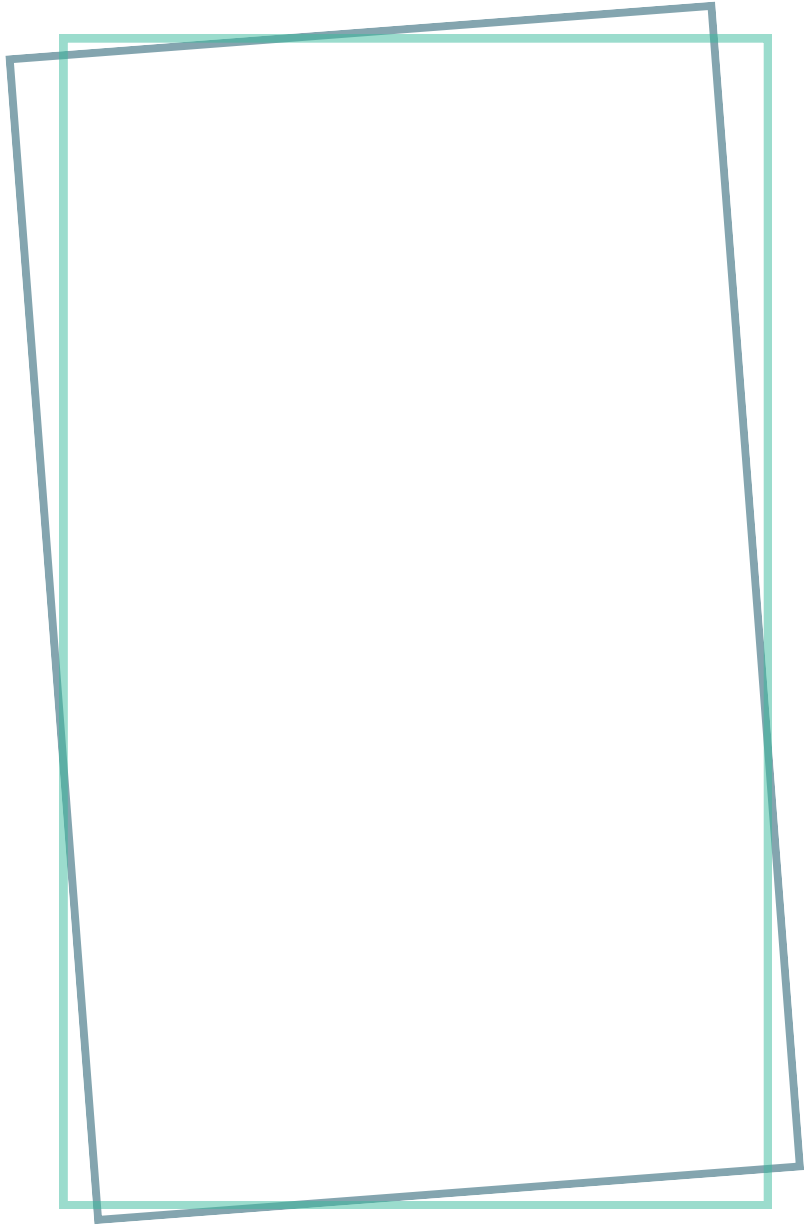


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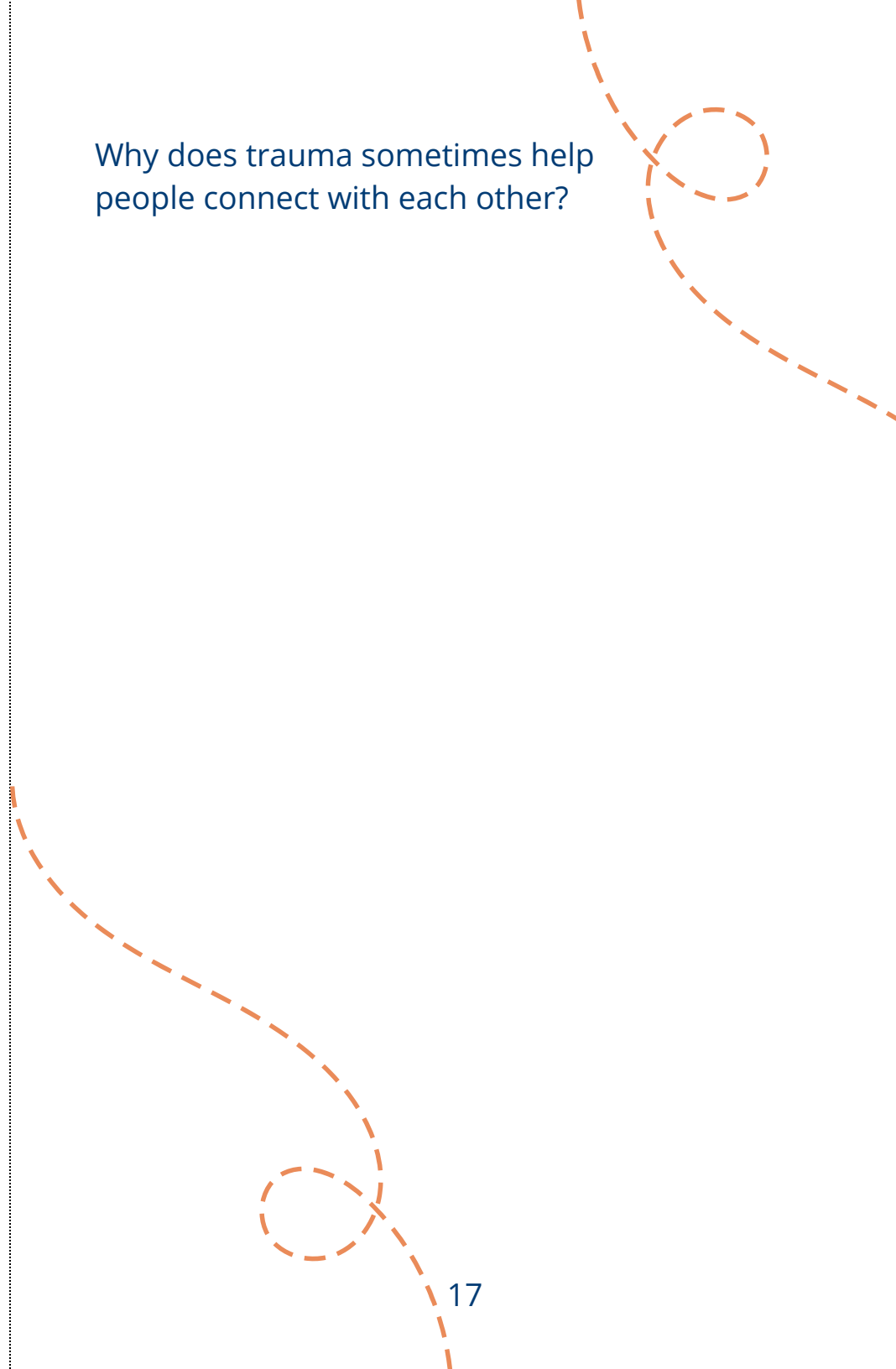
What's unique about your hometown?



Would you ask a neighbor for help? Why or why not?



Why does trauma sometimes help people connect with each other?



Write a welcome letter to people who feel like they don't fully belong in the United States.

Dear _____ ,

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Yours,

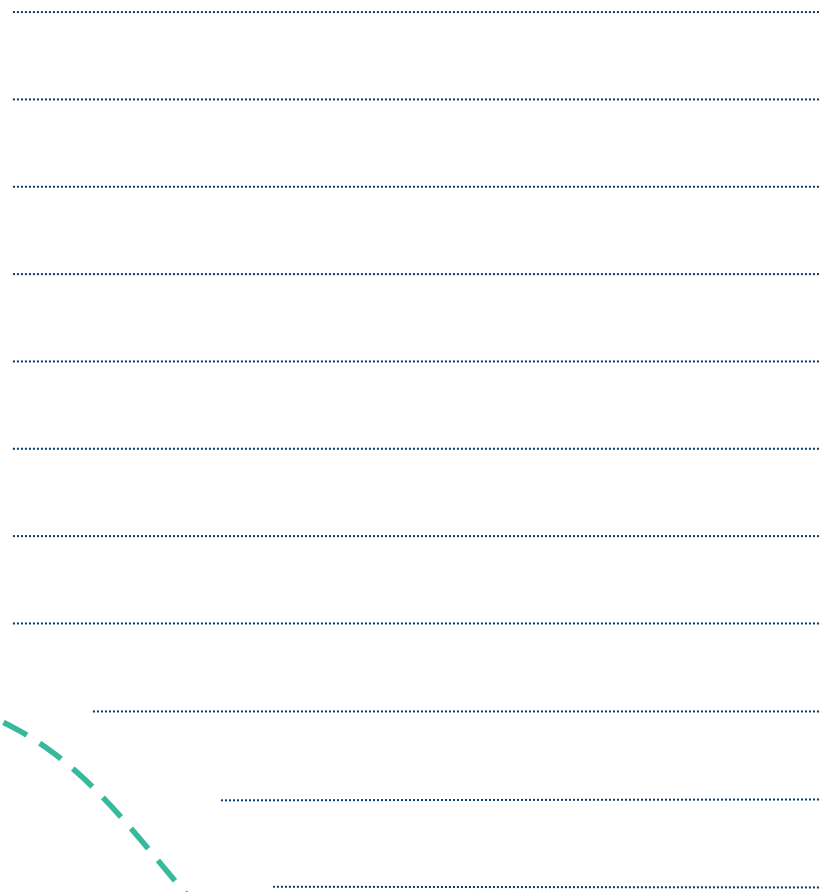
Think about a community you belong to. How did you become a member?

In what ways does this community align with your values (or not)?

What questions do you have about American history?



What's a change you've made that you're proud of?



What do you think America has yet to grieve?

What questions do you have about America's future?



