

# Kathleen Allison Takes Helm of the CDCR

By Ángel Castillo, Staff Translator  
and Adrian Torres, Feature Reporter

**T**HE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT of Corrections and Rehabilitation has a new leader. Appointed by Gov. Newsom, Kathleen Allison from Sacramento is now the acting secretary of the department, replacing Ralph Diaz who retired after three decades of collaboration with the CDCR.

Diaz began with the department working as a correctional officer in 1991. His dedication and commitment earned him appointment as the highest official of the department in September of 2018 and Senate confirmation in March of 2019.

Allison is also a veteran of the CDCR, beginning in 1987 as a medical technician assistant. She ascended to warden of the Substance

Abuse Treatment Facility (SATF) in Corcoran, then to director of adult institutions and moving up to undersecretary of operations before her recent appointment. She is the third woman to direct the department, but the first one with the designation of "secretary" instead of "director." The other two women who held the leadership role were Ruth Rushen from 1980-1982 and Jeanne Woodford from 2004-2005, both heading what was then known as the Department of Corrections.

Allison's appointment also means an opportunity for the new undersecretary of operations, Jeff Macomber of Sacramento. Macomber started working with the department as a correctional officer in 1992, and served as warden of the California State Prison-Sacramento.

Diaz has done an outstanding job as secretary of the CDCR, according to a statement made by Newsom. "I am grateful for Ralph's dedication and commitment to public service, safety, and rehabilitation in our state's prisons," said the governor. He also acknowledged that Diaz "has overseen incredible transformation as well as unparalleled challenges at CDCR during his time there and has truly met the moment with leadership and humility." It is a change, but the governor commented that he is confident that Allison will continue to focus on "rehabilitative opportunities for individuals both inside and outside of prison and continuing the path for restorative justice."

Allison is licensed as a registered nurse, a background that some legislators welcome in the position during the pandemic. Assemblyman Marc Levine (D-Marin County) called the outbreak in the state's prisons "preventable," and called for new leadership. Levine expressed his hope that Allison's health care experience "will help her prioritize the public health needs of CDCR staff and incarcerated persons across California."

In addition to serving as deputy director of facility support in the Division of Adult Institutions, Macomber was director of corrections services with the California Correctional Health Care Services.

The *Post* welcomes Madam Secretary Allison and Mr. Macomber to their new positions, and looks forward to what the future may bring.

(Sources: *Sacramento Bee*, August 28, 2020; The Associated Press, August 28, 2020)



Secretary of the CDCR  
Kathleen Allison

CDCR.ca.gov

Start-CHANGE-Stop are the component parts of Control i.e. PREDICTABLE CHANGE.

I've been watching the paradigm-shift of the Prison Culture for decades - and now it appears to be coming to fruition with these health care professionals at the helm.

California seems to be the trend-setter for other states, so I hope that the penal colony architects have the correct strategy for actual "rehab" this time. I've watched the expansion of Mental Health housing units taking space with preferential privileges, and drug addicts receive preferential "treatment", both while the remaining population fend for their own rehab opportunities via Correspondence Courses though

(2)

I'm attaching 30 pages I'd found in the trash the other day during my 'recycling' yard-crew job duties. These 30 pages cover the missing element for the dope fiend 'Suboxone Patients' who line-up in ever expanding med-lines for their free narcotics.

I'm posting this material here ~~between the bars~~ for family and friends to 1- better understand this "treatment" available to prisoners and 2- to print out portions to send in the mail to their loved ones, as a co-operative effort toward recovery, thus making them more accountable for doing the self-work, which somehow is not required work ~~during~~ qualifying consumption of Suboxone!!!

Several decades ago, Finland created an Integrated Addiction - Treatment Program, based on neuro and behavioral science data. They have high success rates and are considered the Addiction Treatment Model globally. Their "treatment" entails Pharmacologicals (to decrease cravings), cognitive behavioral treatment (CBT), and group/lifestyle maintenance assessments. ALL THREE ARE REQUIRED to optimize success in addiction treatment - and reduce recidivism.

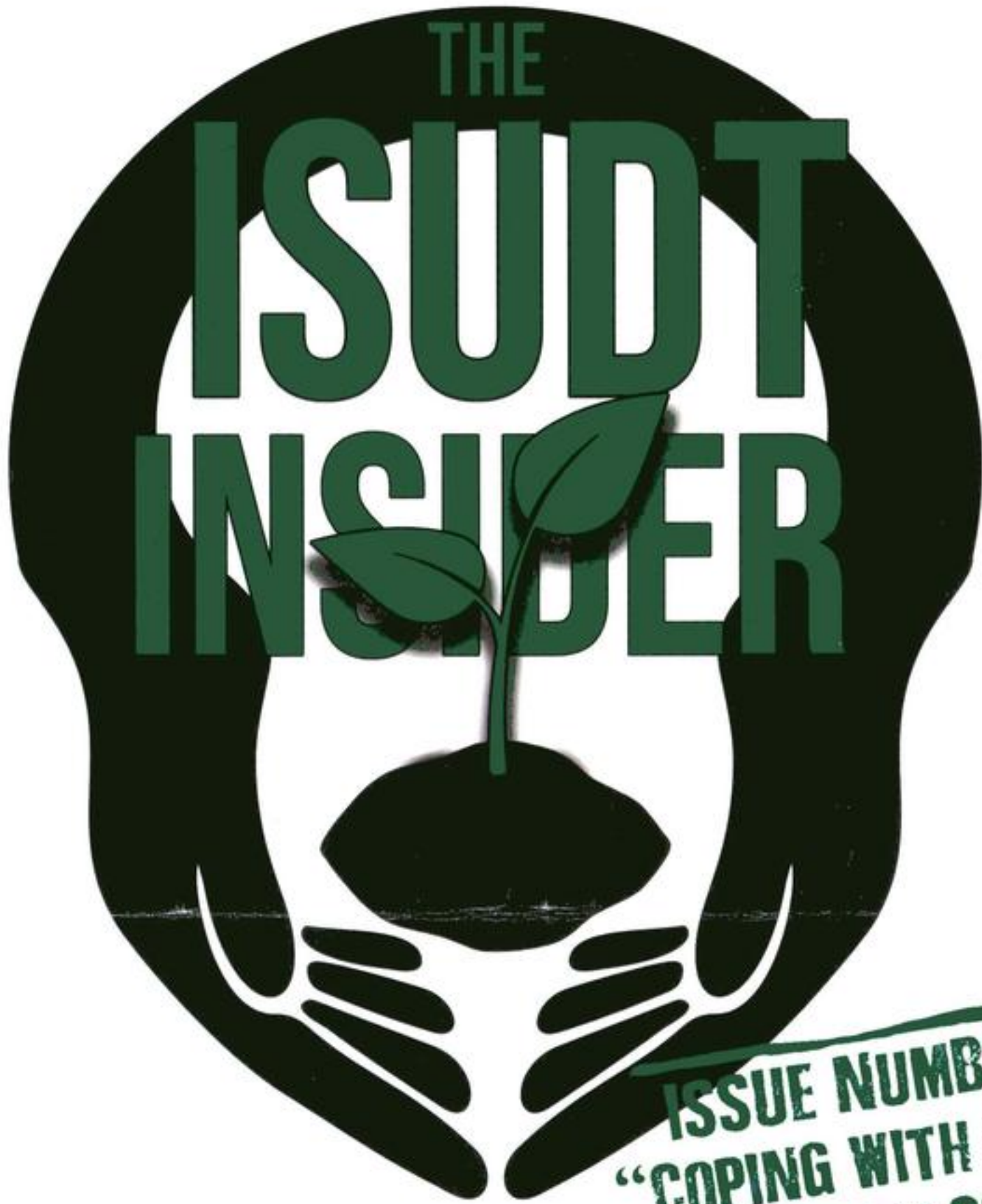
Yet all three are not presently provided to California Prisoners - hence the following 30 pages found in the trash. With over 70% of Felony crimes having drugs/alcohol linked to the offenses, you would think the California Dept of CORRECTIONS and REHABILITATION would treat the essential problem with more than free narcotics, wouldn't you?

I'm reminded of Germany, after WWI, when the Psych. Industry wanted to help the conquered nation accept their fate. I'm also reminded of why all the State Psychiatric "Hospitals" were closed down fifty years or so ago in this country.

There is no doubt the era of Convict (convicted Felons) codes have strategically been usurped by the new era of Patient Rights, which stupid criminals will manipulate into their own entrapment. And in a dysgenic society there is job security for Mental Health/ "Health Care" professionals, so the future may be awful grim for victims of this particular "help".

Job security will continue to trump actual rehabilitation where "Professionals" have vested interests. Survival of the fittest is phenomenal!

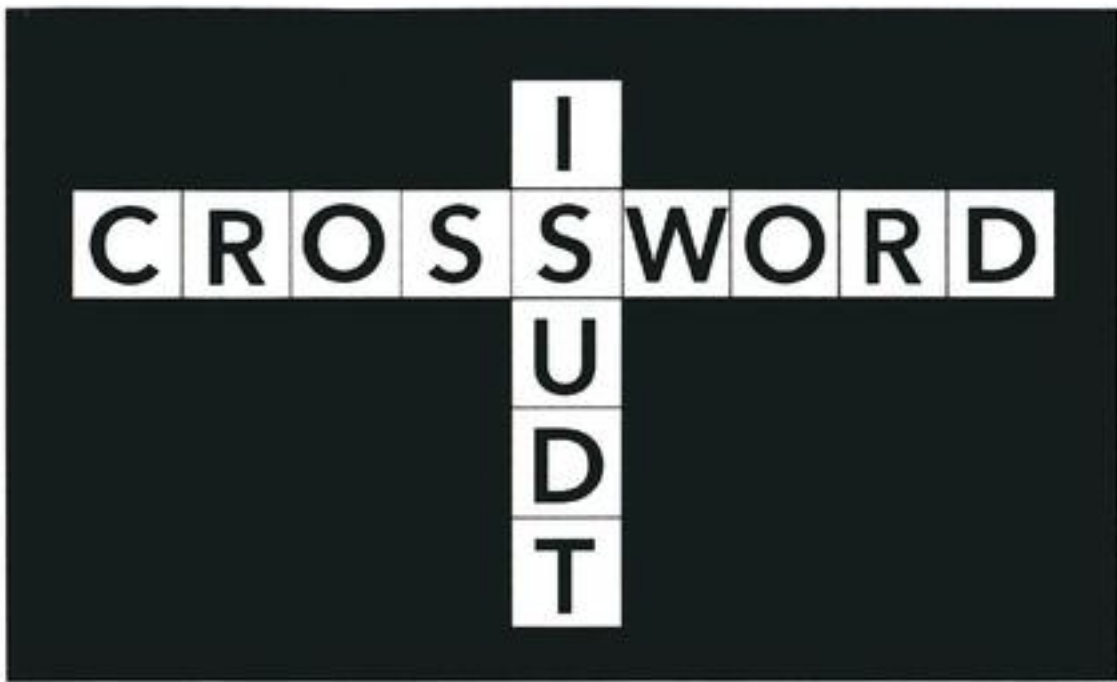
I of course will continue introducing Scientology where I can



**ISSUE NUMBER 2**  
**"COPING WITH COVID"**  
**AUGUST 2020**

- Activity Book
- Journal
- Information Guide
- Newsletter
- All of the above

"Nothing is impossible.  
The word itself says 'I'M  
POSSIBLE!'"  
~Audrey Hepburn



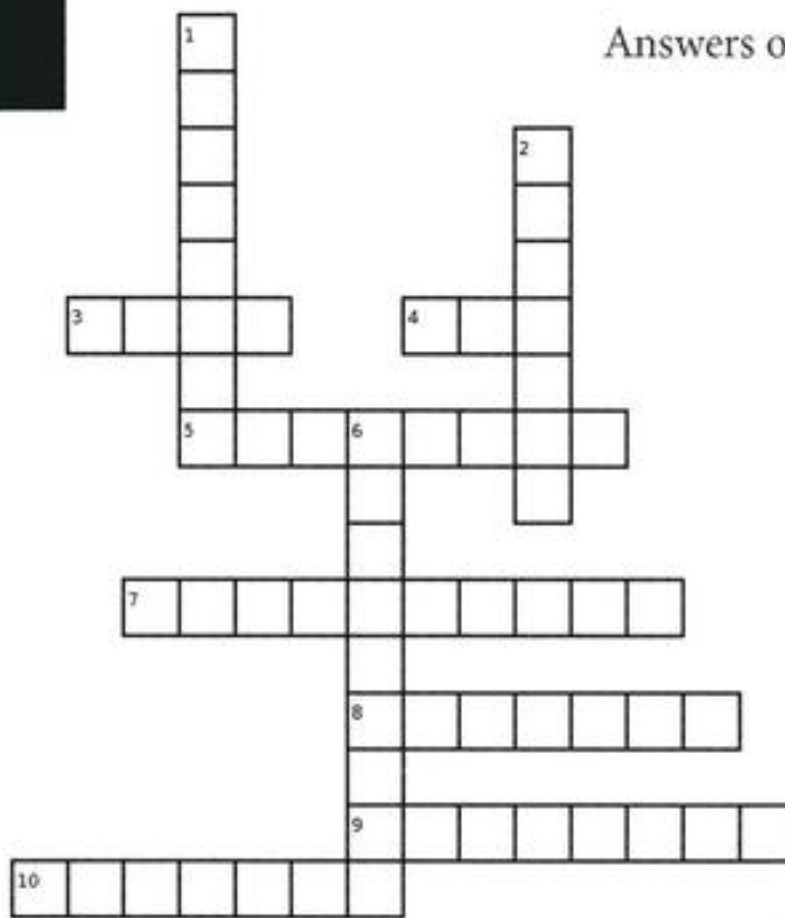
**Down:**

1. A patient's plan of care must be \_\_\_\_\_ continually and modified as needed to make sure that it meets their needs
2. \_\_\_\_\_ things down can be a very powerful way to process your feelings
6. Parts of the brain that hold a person's likes, dislikes and memories can be affected by this brain disease

**Across:**

3. As a long-term result of substance use, the body starts to produce \_\_\_\_ dopamine
4. A key part of care for many SUD patients. This works when combined with counseling and other social therapies
5. As necessary for survival as food and water
7. The Road to Recovery is \_\_\_\_\_
8. Used to change the point of view related to SUD - When mixed with medicine it can help patients recover
9. More than 67,300 Americans died from drug-involved \_\_\_\_\_ in 2018
10. Said nothing is impossible

Answers on Page 15



*Journal share!*

Entry #9 How are you coping during the COVID-19 pandemic?

I am coping at a moderate level. Only because I am lucky enough to have a room w/ supportive "roommates" I call family. We all talk and share our ups & downs. If we are concerned on a topic, we talk it out like adults, not children. Even though I am on A-yard & it's (The Covid-19) has me planted here at CCWF, I am glad to have the little family I got to tackle this virus and w/ God on our side we can accomplish anything! ~ CCWF Patient

Supportive Housing Beds are special housing with other ISUDT patients and support programs. They help prevent relapse during treatment. Each facility has a goal of making 250 beds available.

# WORD SEARCH

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I	E	E	P	H	U	M	O	E	I	G	G	E	R
R	D	J	D	E	C	R	E	U	S	N	O	R	A
E	U	E	O	E	T	H	S	A	I	A	P	A	E
D	C	I	M	U	M	H	A	E	A	T	I	C	L
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| CHANGE<br>POEM<br>JOURNAL<br>THERAPY<br>MEDICATION<br>CARE<br>LIFE<br>HAPPINESS<br>EDUCATION<br>LEARNING<br>NATURE<br>COMMUNITY<br>RECOVERY<br>AMENDS<br>UNDERSTANDING<br>KNOWLEDGE<br>PEACE<br>HEALTH<br>HOPE<br>INSPIRE | FAMILY<br>BEGINNING<br>DREAM<br>GROW<br>THRIVE<br>DOCTOR<br>COUNSELOR<br>NURSE<br>FRIEND |
|---|--|

## *Journal share!*

Entry #9 How are you coping during the COVID-19 pandemic?

It has been an interesting time so far. Basically an emotional roller coaster, constant worry about my family and friends on the outside and being locked down with no access to phone or even the outlet of being outside. I am coping by studying the Bible, yoga and exercise and trying to keep a positive attitude in these tough times. ~ CCC Patient

Even mild exercise can make you feel great as chemicals such as endorphin are released in the brain. More and more studies are showing that this process can aid in recovery from various addictions. This can be done in small spaces.

# THE ISUDT Chronicle

AUG 2020

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## CONTAINING COVID

Kelso, Diaz talk CDCR/CCHCS pandemic response

*CDCR Secretary Ralph M. Diaz and Receiver J. Clark Kelso recently delivered a message to the incarcerated population regarding the agency's COVID-19 response efforts. Below are some highlights of that message.*

**Diaz:** Communities throughout California and the rest of the country have attempted to reopen, only to be shut down again due to rising cases. These shelter-in-place orders are made for the safety of our communities, and to protect the most vulnerable.

That said, we do understand sheltering in place for someone who is incarcerated is far more difficult than someone who is at home.

**Kelso:** We'd like to thank you, sincerely, for the sacrifices you continue to make. We are making unprecedented changes to our operations, and we recognize the burden this has placed



Receiver J. Clark Kelso and CDCR Secretary Ralph M. Diaz talk to ISUDT Ambassadors about the importance of battling SUD inside prison at the state-wide ISUDT Summit in December.

on those incarcerated in our prisons. You have all experienced limited movement and the suspension of visiting and in-person programs. Schedules have changed to accommodate increased sanitation.

We have lost staff, individuals within our population, family, and members of our communities to this horrible virus. We extend our deepest condolences to all who have lost a

loved one.

**Diaz:** We know that the design of prisons, and the number of people in them, present unique challenges to fighting this virus.

We expedited the release of about 3,500 people in April, and we are in the midst of identifying even more eligible people. We'll be looking at those with 180 days and 365 days left to serve, and people

[See COVID Message on Pg 5](#)

## Cognitive Behavioral Interventions: A Sneak Peek

Cognitive Behavioral Interventions (CBI) are curricula focused on recognizing behavioral patterns and developing skills to appropriately react to negative thoughts and emotions.

The agency began CBI coursework for ISUDT patients at some prisons July 15, and is working toward statewide implementation, while balancing the safety and wellness of patients in regards to COVID-19.

Below is a sneak peek at two helpful exercises/lessons from the CBI course *Helping Women Recover, 3rd Edition* and *Helping Men Recover*.

From *Helping Women Recover, 3rd Edition*:

### Five Steps to Emotional Wellness

- Become aware of when you are having a feeling and how you are feeling. Tune in to yourself.

- Name the feeling. Label it.

[See CBI on Pg 5](#)

PAGE 4

## CBI: Ask each other - Do you have any unresolved grief issues?

Continued from Pg 4

- Try to locate the feeling in your body. Where are you experiencing the sensations?

- Express the feeling in an appropriate way.

- Learn to contain the feeling.

From *Helping Men Recover*

**Ask each other in a small**

**group about loss and grief:**

- On a scale of one to ten, with one representing no significant losses, what number would you assign to reflect the losses you have experienced in your life? Briefly explain.

- How did you deal with the most recent loss you experienced?

- What are some of the fears you have about dealing with grief and loss?

- Do you have any unresolved grief issues? How important do these seem to you now?

- What would you need to feel safe enough to fully express your feelings of grief?

## COVID: You are playing an important role in keeping people safe

Continued from Pg 4

identified to be at high risk for complications should they contract COVID-19.

All of this is happening at a time when you are worried for your own health, the health of those around you, and the well-being of your loved ones. To recognize your sacrifice, we have announced the Positive Programming Credit, or PPC, which will award 12 weeks of credit to those who remained disciplinary free from March 1 through July 5.

By following the rules and remaining peaceful, you have allowed staff to maintain security and vital operations during increased staffing shortages, and most importantly, allowed our health care staff to focus on providing care to those who are ill.

**Kelso:** We appreciate all of your cooperation and understanding during these somewhat chaotic times. We have implemented coordinated response efforts at all of our prisons statewide and we will continue to work with public health officials to implement additional precautionary measures. One of these measures is mandatory testing of all staff, and significantly increasing the amount of testing our

population. Increased testing is key to quickly identify positive cases, partnered with quarantine and isolation procedures, is the key to controlling the spread of COVID-19.

**Diaz:** I assure you that every step we take is made with your safety, and that of our staff, in mind. That said, we have certainly had to alter course along the way as we learn more about the complexities of this virus. We opened up limited intake from the counties, but shut it down because people were coming to us positive. We transferred individuals to other facilities to open up space, but some tested positive upon arrival. We've adjusted our quarantine, testing and transfer protocols accordingly, but I do want to acknowledge the impact those decisions had on the receiving institutions.

**Kelso:** Several institutions have experienced significant outbreaks and now have zero cases or are well on their way to zero. We've spoken to those institutions, which include LAC, Avenal, Chino, and CIW, to share their best practices and lessons learned with other institutional leadership. The Wardens and CEOs all agree the key was not only unified leadership

and prevention planning, but also frequent communication with you, the individuals of our population.

This virus has been humbling since it first arrived at our gates. I want to acknowledge the many people working around the clock in our institutions to keep you safe, whether that's our doctors or nurses, our officers, food service, plant ops, our administrative teams – I am deeply grateful for their work.

At the same time, I want to acknowledge your hard work. By staying positive and focused, committing to good hygiene and handwashing, wearing your mask, and encouraging others around you to do the same, you are playing such an important role in keeping people safe and healthy.

**Diaz:** Thank you so much for what you are doing, and know that we are doing everything we can to keep you healthy and safe. We will continue to keep you informed as new developments arise, and have reiterated to institution leadership the importance of communication with all who live and work in state prison. Your role is significant and appreciated, and I look forward to the day I'm allowed to shake your hand again to say thank you.

Take care, and God bless. **PAGE 5**

# SUDOKU

Solved on Page 15

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## Journal share!

Entry #9 How are you coping during the COVID-19 pandemic?

Always helping others by being intuitive and creative, making others smile (with a mask). You can see it in the eyes, with a kind gesture and returning smile or wave. Also taking part in extra duty cleaning to make sure things are sanitized, encouraging people to get outside and experience the Vitamin D you need to block this disease and social distancing. Also making time for myself and of course listening to others and respecting their values and principles. ~ CCWF Patient

Vitamin D is called "the sunshine vitamin," because when your skin is exposed to sunlight, it makes vitamin D from cholesterol. Research has shown that Vitamin D is important for fighting some diseases, reducing depression and even boosting weight loss.

One way to "smile with a mask"



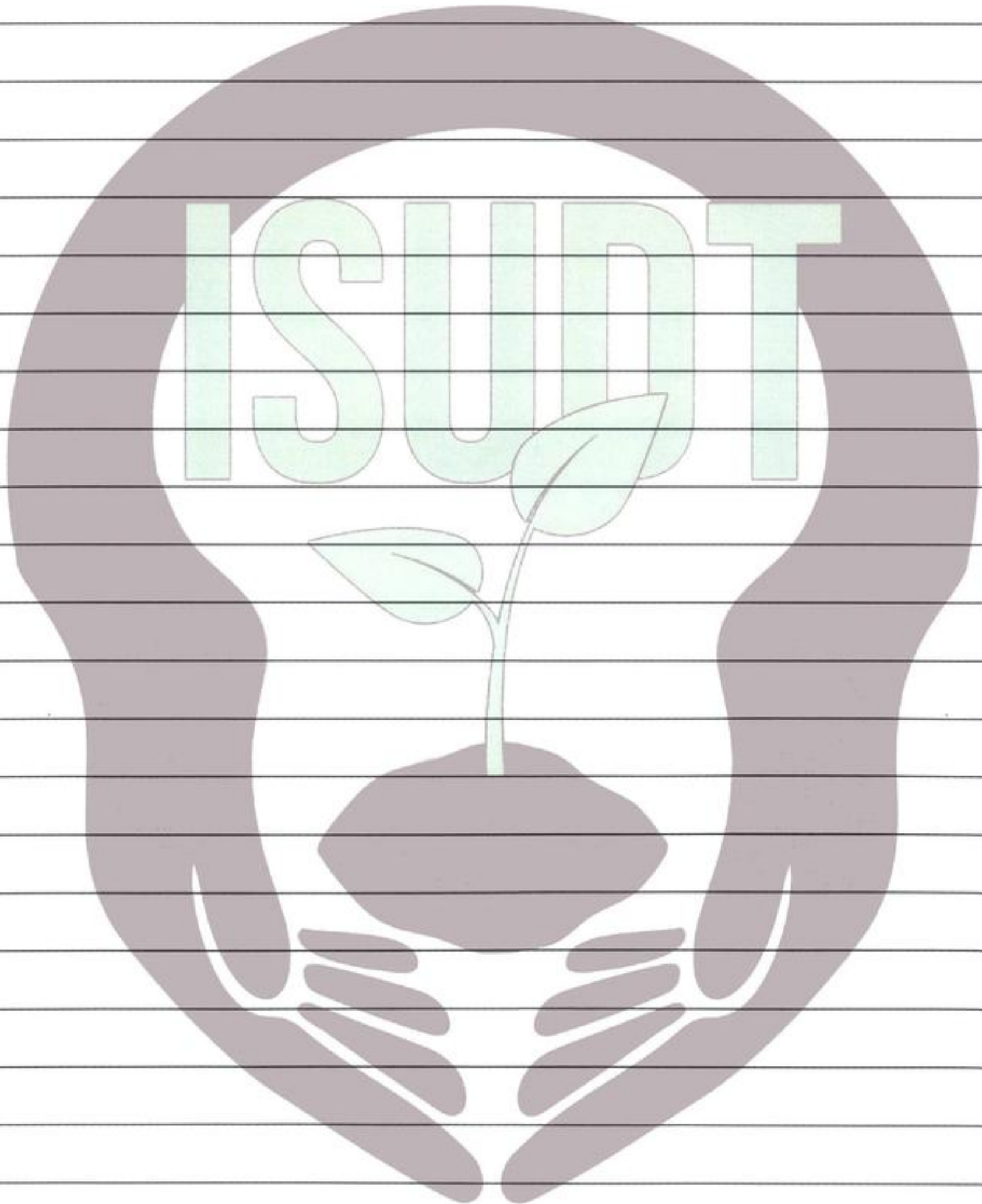


# Journal

Entry #1

What are some personal strengths you can use in your recovery?

Date \_\_\_\_\_

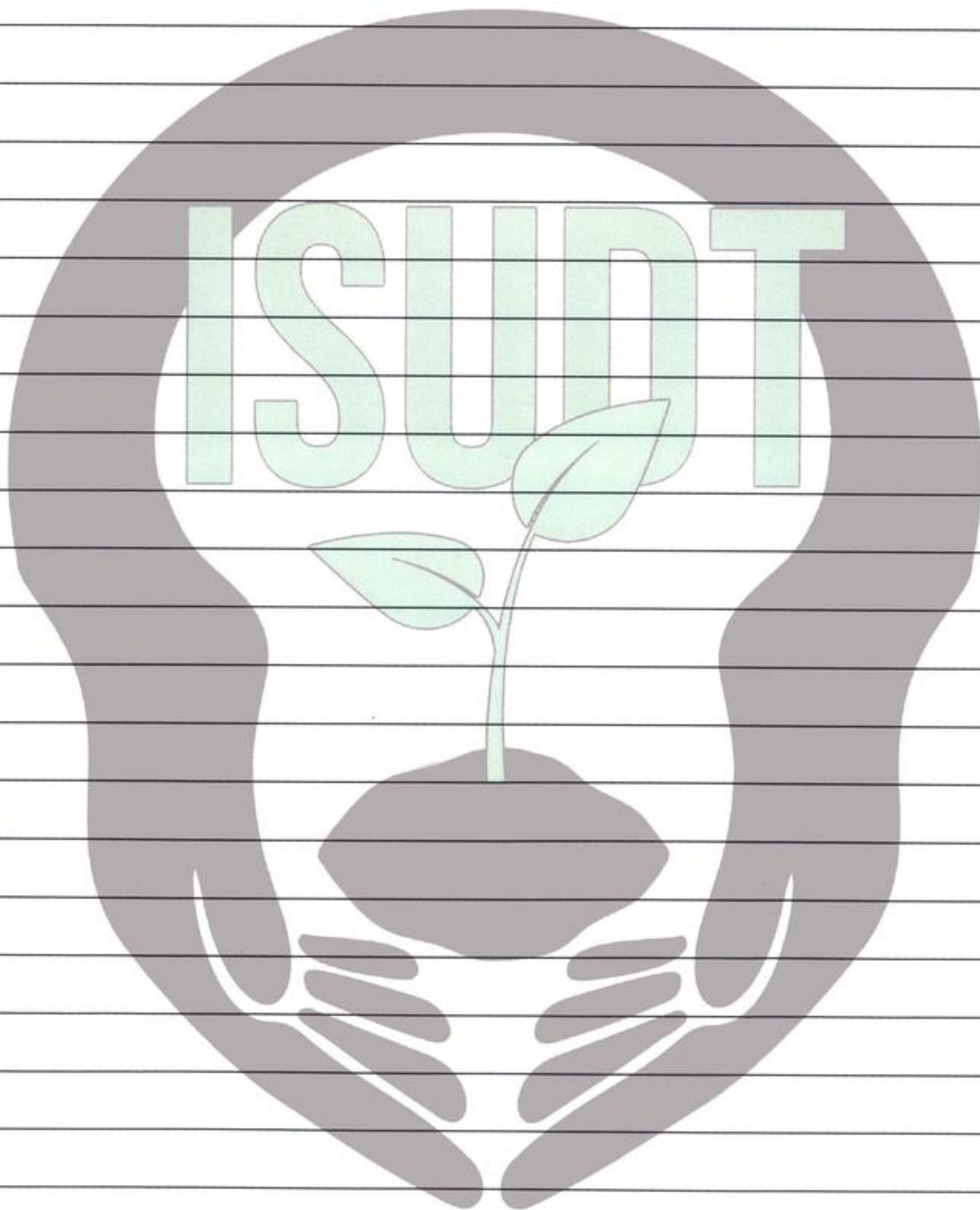


# Journal

Entry #2

What are some ways  
you find peace?

Date \_\_\_\_\_

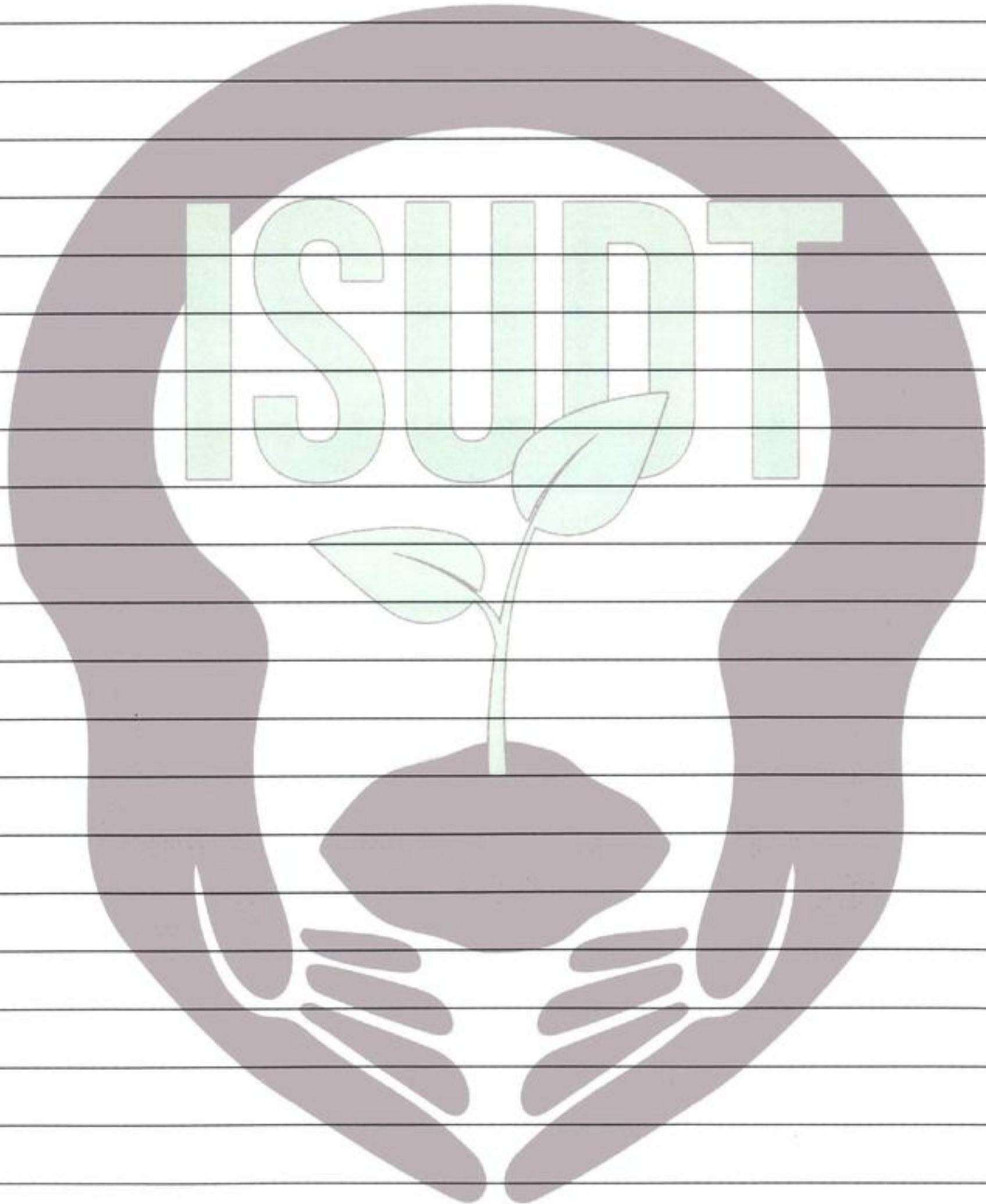


# Journal

Entry #3

Label some of your recent feelings.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

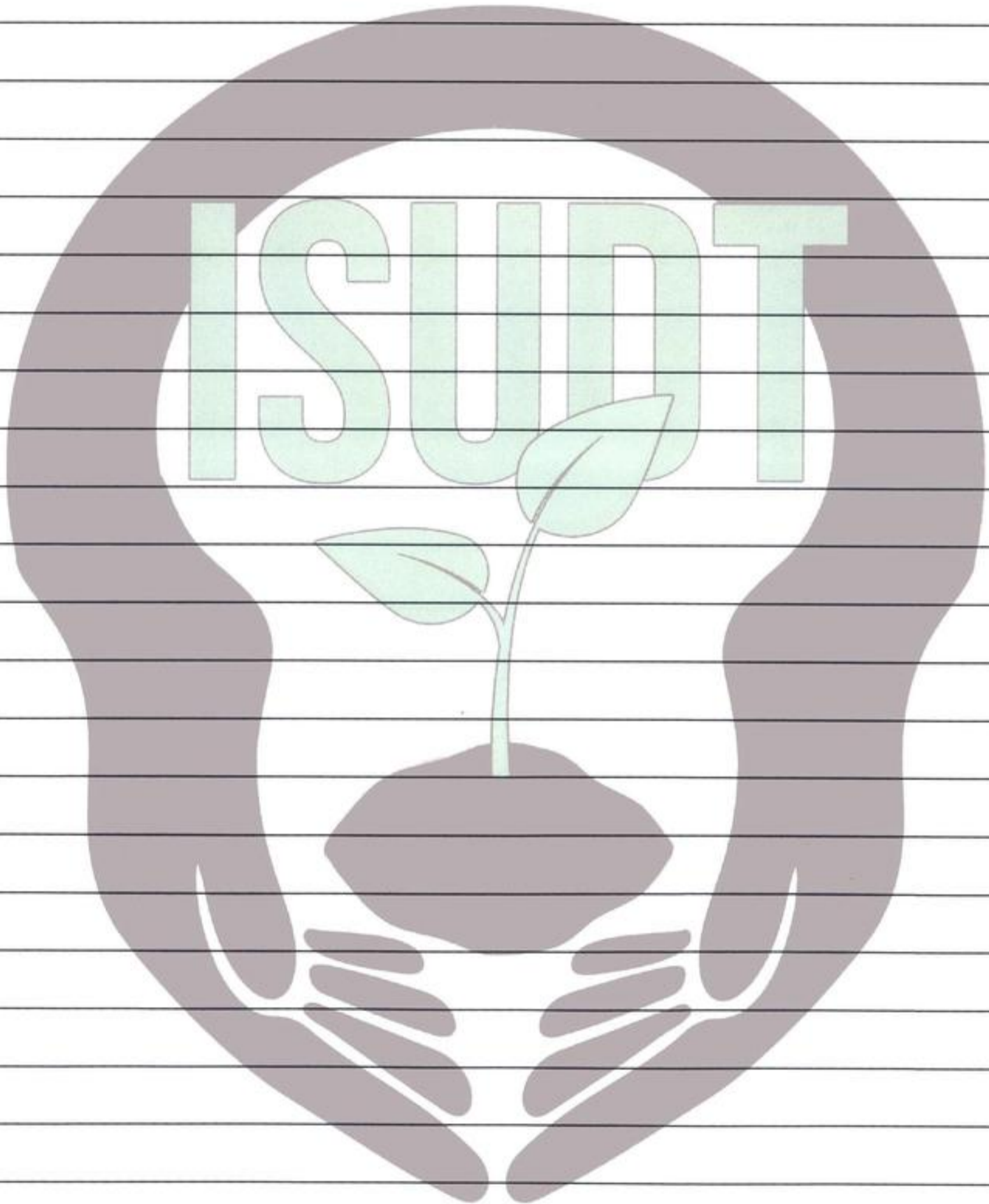


# Journal

Entry #4

What does spirituality mean to you?

Date \_\_\_\_\_

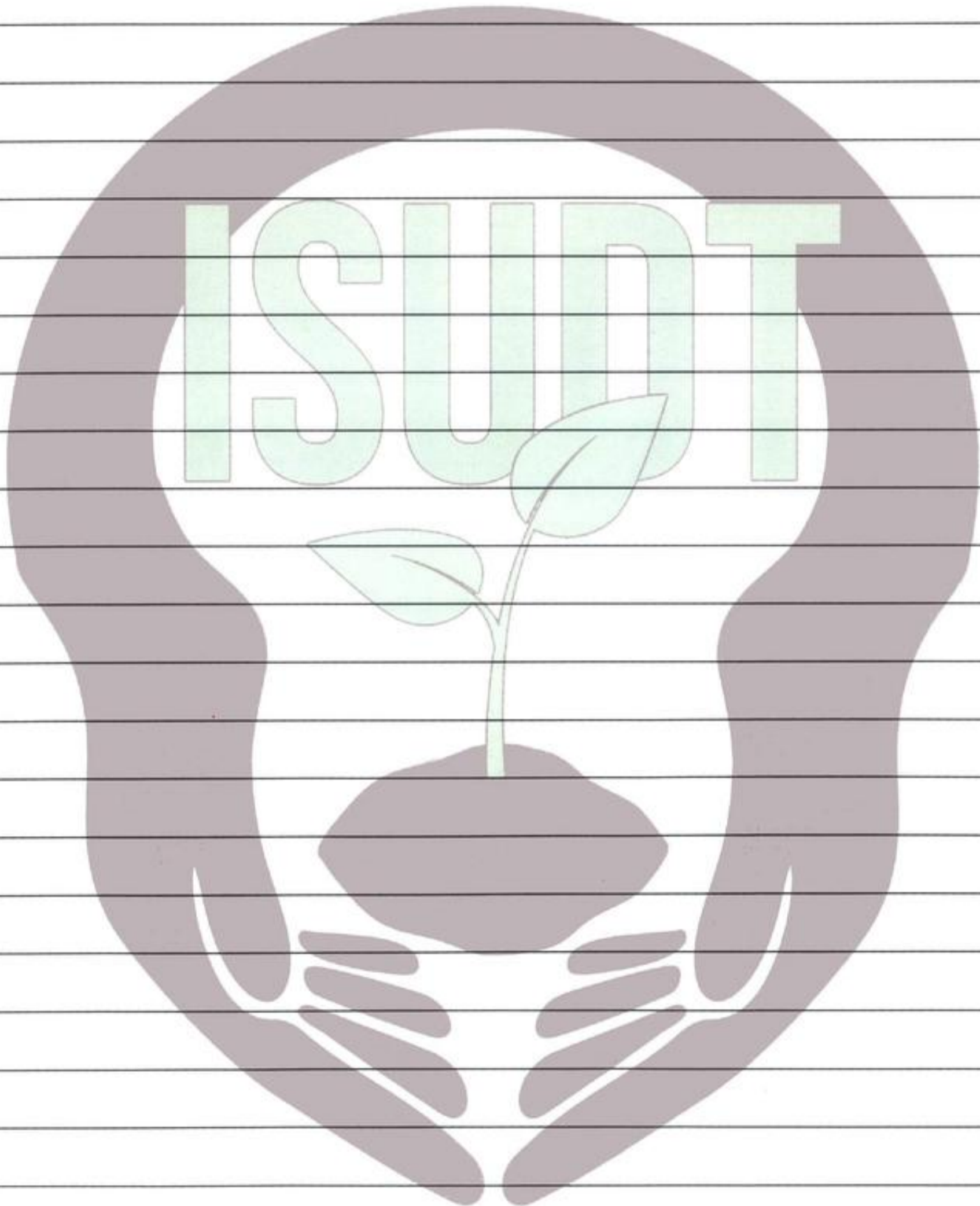


# Journal

Entry #5

How do you best relate to others?

Date \_\_\_\_\_

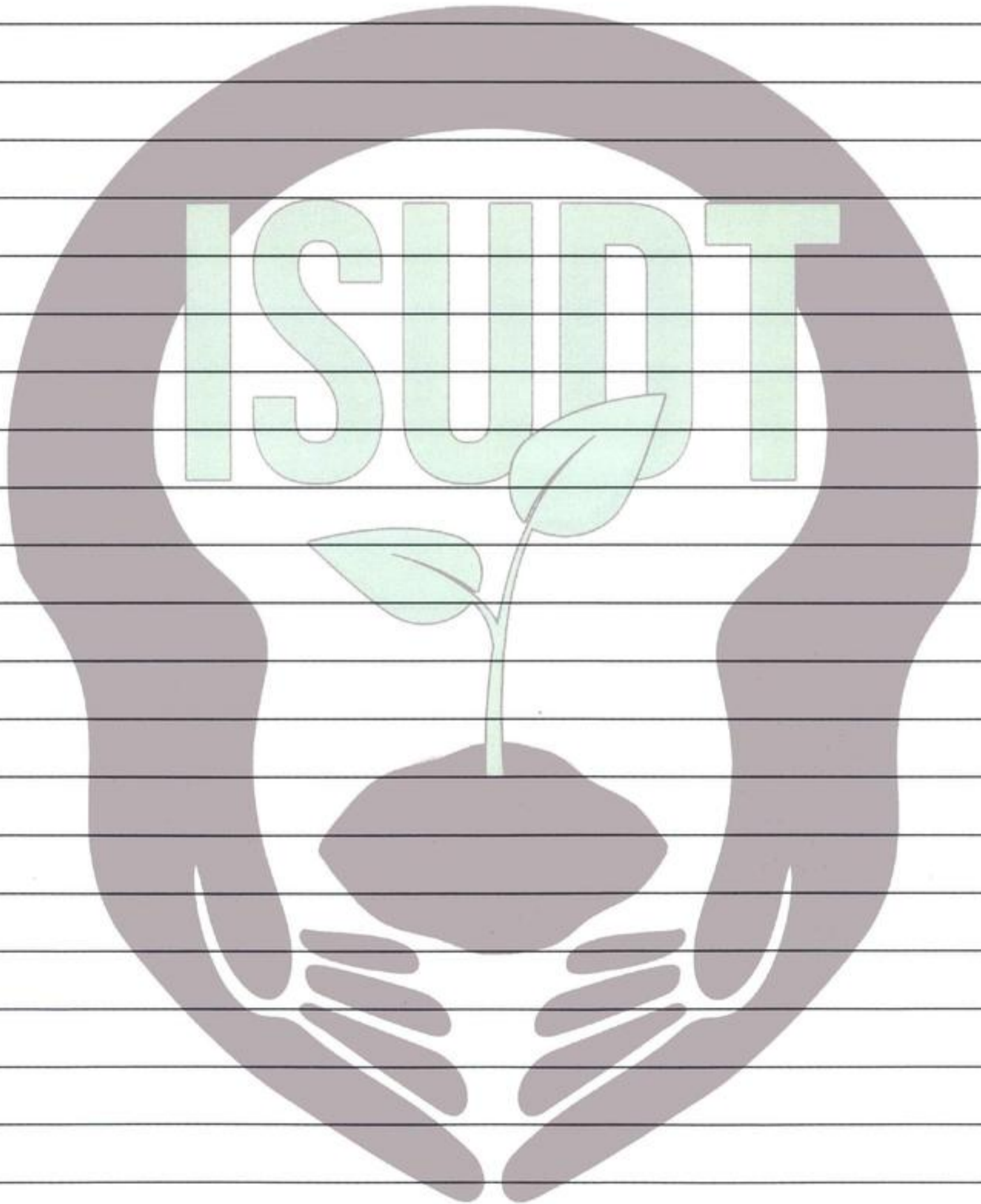


# Journal

Entry #6

Write about your hopes and dreams for the future.

Date \_\_\_\_\_

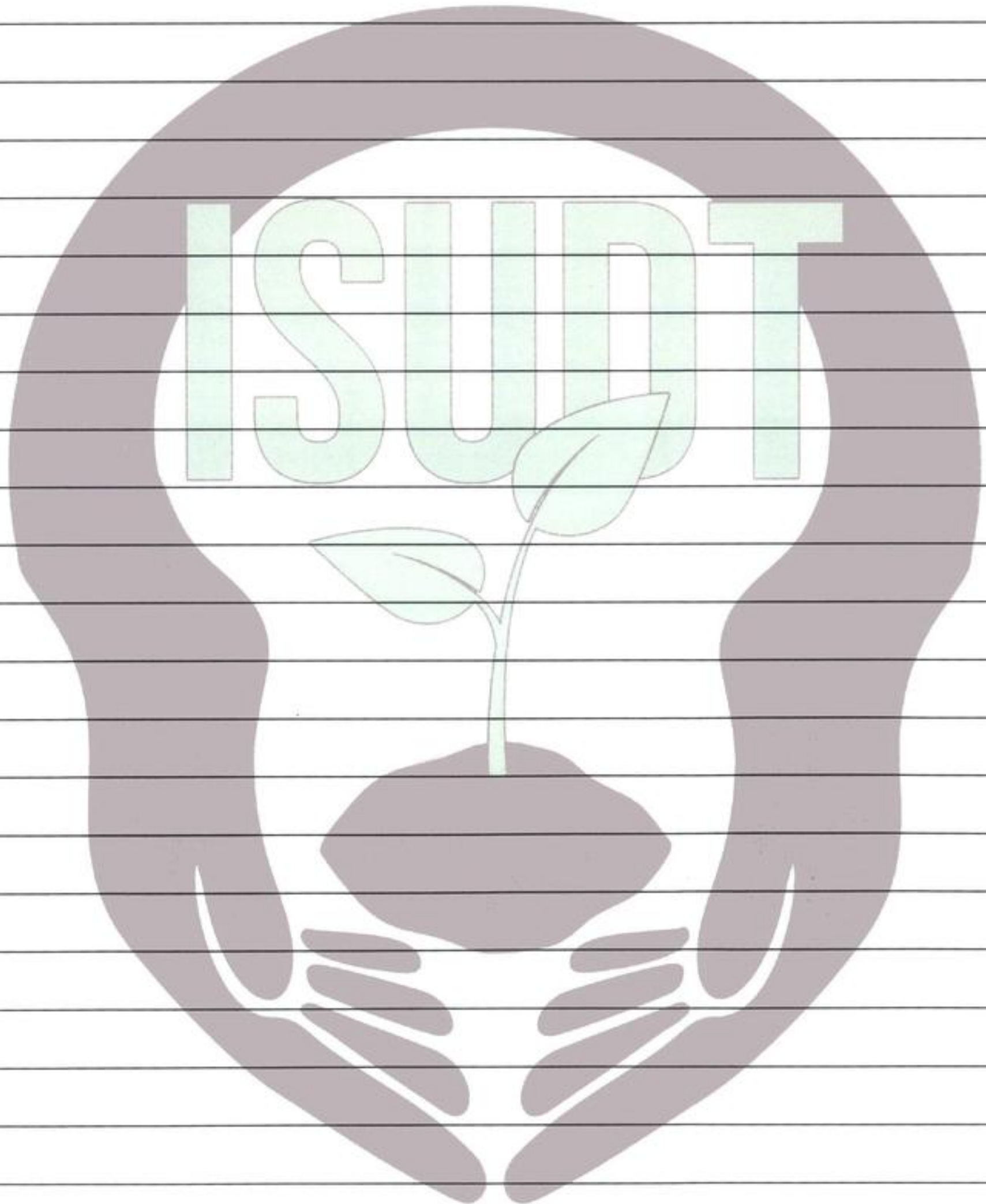


# Journal

Entry #7

What character traits do you admire in others?

Date \_\_\_\_\_

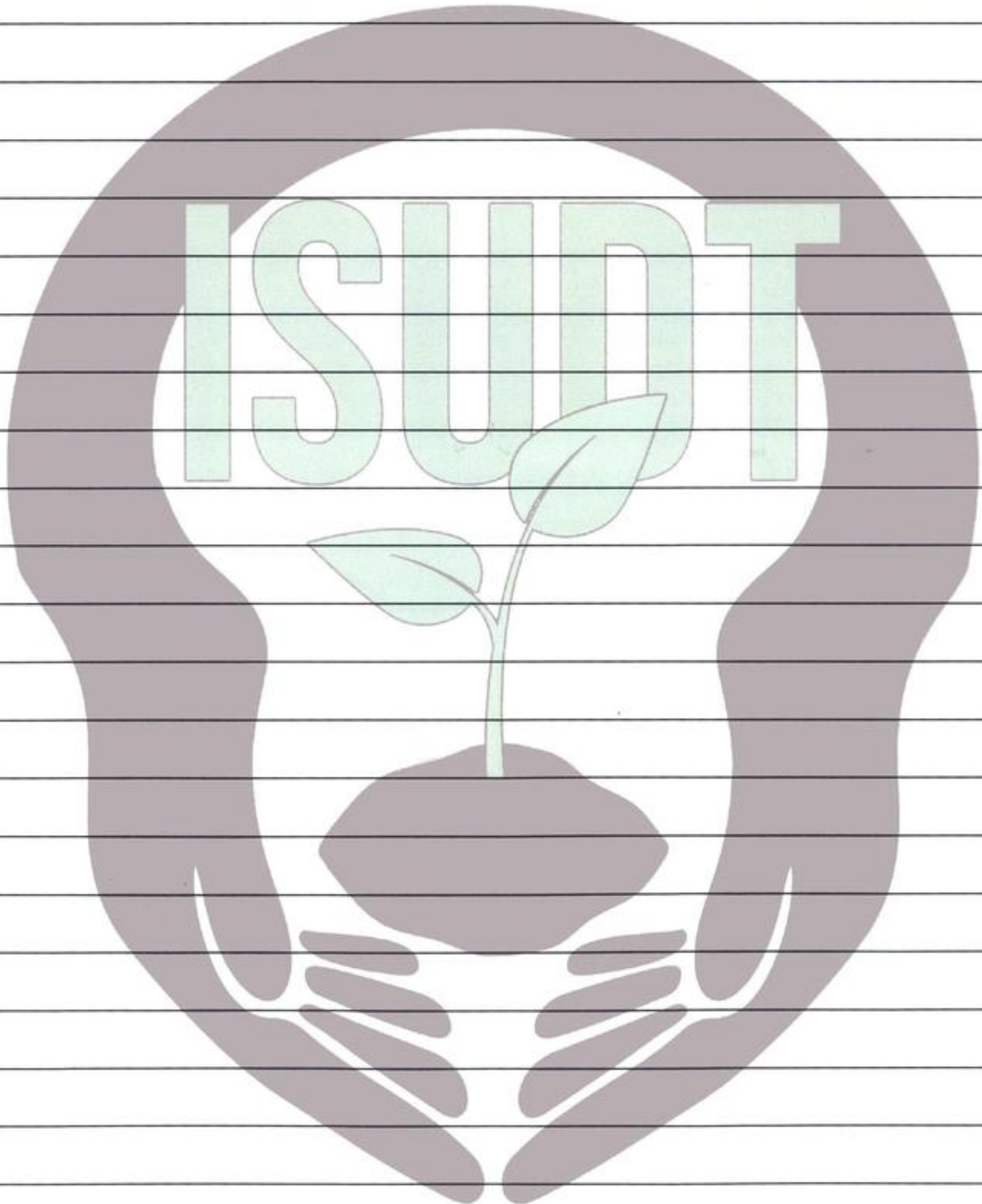


# Journal

Entry #8

Make a list of 30 things that make you smile.

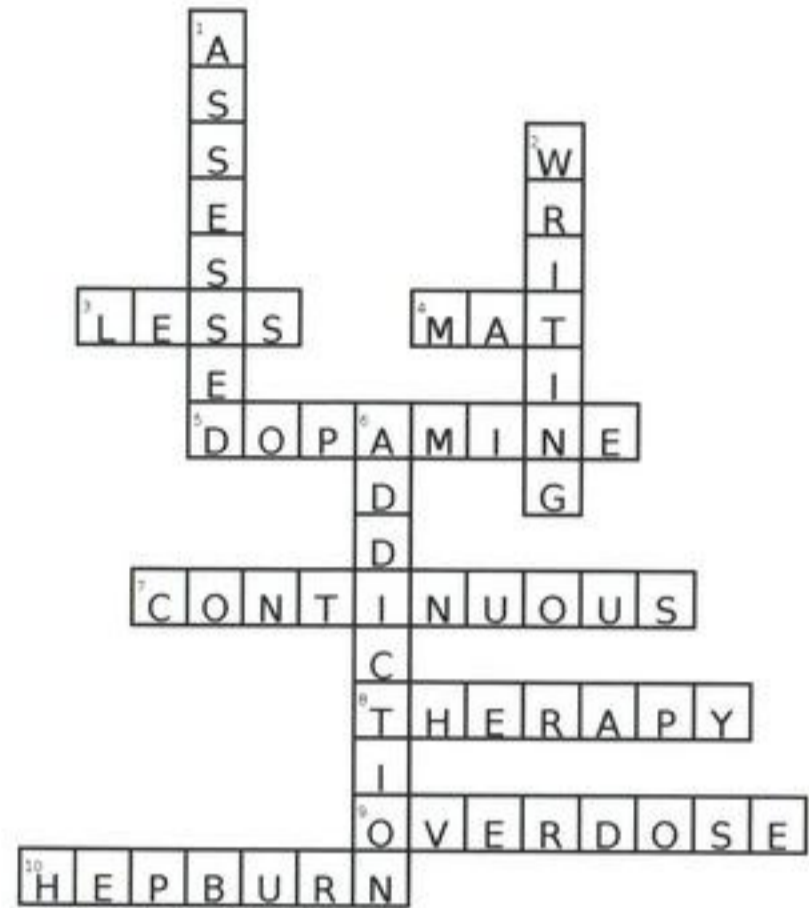
Date \_\_\_\_\_





# SUDOKU & CROSSWORD ANSWER KEY

1	2	5	6	7	8	4	9	3
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4	1	7	3	2	8	9	6	5
3	5	4	7	1	9	6	8	2
9	7	2	8	6	3	4	5	1
1	8	6	4	5	2	3	9	7



## Journal share!

Entry #9 How are you coping during the COVID-19 pandemic?

For the most part all the cell time, I actually like it. I read and watch a lot of TV I try and talk with my mom every day and dad at least a couple times a week. I also work out every day and I do a lot of thinking about Covid and the state of the world, and the future of our country. ~ LAC Patient

An incarcerated person's support system is critical to their success. Free phone calls and inbound email print services can help you connect with loved ones. These opportunities are updated on the DRP-TV Health and Wellness channel.

## Journal share!

Entry #9 How are you coping during the COVID-19 pandemic?

I constantly worry about my family out there. Are they safe? Are they being safe? Do they have everything that they need? Are they going to get sick? I was driving myself crazy with all these worries. But then I would write each of them down in my journal each day along with what I can do about it all. I cannot do anything to help them or prevent any of it. But each time I wrote about it and it lost its power to make me worry about it. ~ HDSP Patient

"Anything that organizes your life and makes you introspective and also kind of slows down the urgency of a craving for a drug or behavior (like a journal) can be very helpful."  
~ Psychology Today

2020 ISUDT POSTER RUNNER-UP  
BY DR. MICHAEL LEWIS, LAC



"SOWING THE SEEDS OF CHANGE"

MEDICATED  
ASSISTED  
TREATMENT  
(MAT)  
AVAILABLE



COGNITIVE  
BEHAVIORAL  
INTERVENTIONS

PEER SUPPORT &  
THERAPEUTIC  
COMMUNITIES



WHOLE PERSON  
CARE FROM  
INCARCERATION  
THROUGH RETURN  
TO THE COMMUNITY

CDC REHABILITATION  
**WHOLE PERSON PROJECT**  
INTEGRATED SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER TREATMENT

# POEM CONTEST: "RECOVERY"

Do you have some special words to share? Submit your written work below, a poem with the theme "recovery," and it may be featured in an upcoming issue of the ISUDT Insider! Fill and remove this page and deliver it to someone on the ISUDT team for submission to the ISUDT email. Your voice matters! (Use the back page if needed).

*Name* (or remain anonymous) \_\_\_\_\_

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## Your feedback matters

What do you like about this first edition of the ISUDT Insider? What could we do better? Let us know what you would like to see changed in upcoming issues.

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What kind of video could support your recovery? What would you like to see on the DRP-TV Health and Wellness channel?

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## **The Importance of a Relapse Prevention Plan**

Because the likelihood of relapse is so high, it is very very important to have a plan in place from the start.

Why is a Relapse Prevention Plan Important in Recovery?

Relapse is a common component of recovery. Studies estimate that more than 2/3 of individuals in recovery relapse within weeks to months of beginning addiction treatment. Addiction is a chronic disease. Some individuals may struggle with relapse for many years before they are able to maintain long-term sobriety. Individuals who relapse are not failures. In fact, relapse may be caused by a variety of factors such as:

- Money problems
- Undiagnosed mental health problems
- Stress
- Relationship problems
- Smells/Triggering Environments
- Exposure to trauma
- Withdrawal symptoms
- Poor self-care
- Isolation
- Pride/Overconfidence

## **What Makes a Good Relapse Prevention Plan**

A good relapse prevention plan will outline a specific course of actions, mechanisms, and ideas to take in the case of an issue where you become worried of a relapse. Relapse can occur when you notice that your cravings are becoming triggered and have become too intense to control.

A good plan can be changed and updated as time goes on, you may figure out new ways to cope or learn about different stress reduction techniques that you will want to be a part of your plan. And the more details you have in your plan the more likely it will be that you will be able to implement the plan and avoid relapse.

## **Relapse Prevention Strategies May Include:**

- Daily life maintenance plan
- Accountability methods.
- Specific triggers
- Tools for stress and trigger coping
- Healthy lifestyle strategies and self-improvement ideas
- Goals

## **How to Create a Relapse Prevention Plan**

Follow this step-by-step guide when writing your relapse prevention plan

### **Step 1 | Goals & Motivation**

Identify your goals in recovery and find the motivation in you that calls for positive changes. Like a relapse prevention plan, these goals need to be individualized, specific to you. When thinking about your recovery, think about what you want out of it, what you want may be different from what someone else wants – so it is important to always think personally and deeply for what motivates you.

Consider what changes you are willing to make, and what motivates you to make these changes. Things that may motivate you to make changes could be things like keeping your job, maintaining your family and friend relationships, improving your skills in your hobbies, becoming healthier and living a better lifestyle, improving your self-esteem. These are all great examples for motivational objectives you may want to strive for.

### **Step 2 | Name Your Challenges**

When creating your plan, identify cravings and triggers by identifying them and methods for overcoming them. A trigger is simply something, anything, that will potentially make you feel like you need to use. Each person has their own specific triggers so it is important that you identify yours.

An example of a trigger could be a person that you might know that you always used with – avoid this person if you are not confident in yourself to stay on your recovery path. Stress could

be another example of a trigger – this is something that may not always be easily avoidable so you need to put together coping strategies to relax yourself in the event that you do become stressed.

Think about what might be the biggest challenges for you in your daily life and consider how you can best manage those things. Utilize relaxing and stress-management techniques to stay on track.

### **Step 3 | Self-care & Lifestyle**

Find ways to improve your self-care and lifestyle habits. It can be very fulfilling to immerse yourself in health living habits like having a routine that involves exercise and healthy cooking. Creating a fitness schedule and paying attention to what and how much you eat can really help not only your health but get your mind in the right place keeping you focused on a healthy goal. Follow your routine, stay on track with your workouts and find healthy balanced meals to eat throughout the day.

Getting enough sleep is another aspect to a healthy lifestyle, everyone needs sleep and there is a minimum amount of sleep your body needs to function to its full capacity. If you find yourself having trouble falling asleep or staying asleep, try changing your habits and schedule or research ways to get to sleep faster. Being active during the day and eating a better diet may also help with your sleep.

Finding hobbies that occupy your mind and your time and are incredible. Something that you enjoy will keep you busy – when you're doing something you love and you're fully immersed in it time goes by faster than you can imagine. Creative or healthy hobbies are great outlets, things like dance, yoga, rock climbing, hiking are all great examples of hobbies. Things like this are great because you can always learn more, you can always improve at it, and you can always spend time enjoying it because these are things that don't get old if you genuinely enjoy them. Take care of yourself physically and emotionally and incorporate these practices into your daily life.

## **Step 4 | Support System & Communication**

Great people around you can be a wonderful benefit during recovery. Surround yourself with likeminded people who support you on your path to recovery, people you can count on in times of need. There are also different types of groups that can be helpful both in letting out your feelings and finding new people to associate yourself with. Peer support and 12-step groups can be really helpful during recovery. The Journal of Addictive Disorders found that actively participating in a group like this were much more likely to remain abstinent over those who did not.

Having people like this to talk to when you need it is important. Think about the ways which you can effectively communicate and ask for help when a time comes that you may need it. If you have already thought about it it will be much easier when the time comes. Keep contact information for mentors, counselors, and friends & family close so it is easy to reach out if the time comes.

## **Step 5 | Accountability**

You must keep yourself accountable because no one will do it for you, not like you can. You must devise ways to stay accountable to the plan which you have created.

Methods of staying successful in the plan: a great way to stay accountable – what does this mean?

Give yourself mini goals to reach. These goals will not only allow you to track your progress but keep you motivated to continue and not give in to a craving. If your progress is fresh in your mind with each of your mini goals you will be more aware of your progress and feel the need to stay on track in your recovery.

Create a list of things you are thankful for and the reasons for which you want to be sober. Keep this in your relapse prevention plan to remind yourself why you are doing this, and what you are working towards. This will keep you motivated in your journey.

## Relapse Prevention Plan Example / Template

Having your relapse prevention plan written down will serve as a way to keep you accountable to the plan. It also gives you something to refer back to to remind yourself of why you're doing this and how to stay on track.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) publishes that being aware and taking note of early warning signs of stress can be extremely helpful in working to prevent relapse. In addition, having a strong "action plan" in writing can be a great resource. The action plan should offer guidance and be a tool for accomplishing and holding fast to your goals in recovery.

Below you will find a sample of a relapse prevention plan example which you can use as a template for your relapse prevention plan. Use this example as guidelines for writing your own personalized plan.

Personal goals for self-improvement:

- I want to take better care of myself and improve my lifestyle. I will start on a lifestyle change in what I eat and keep up with my fitness routine.
- I wish to get my job back and excel at my position where I can become a valuable resource to the company and become financially stable.
- I will attend self-management classes to manage myself, my anger, my emotions.
- I want to fix any broken relationships that have arisen from my substance abuse.

Triggers and potential challenges:

- Going out to the bars after work or on the weekends.
- Hanging out with Freddie and day drinking on his deck.
- Money problems and being irresponsible with my financials
- Parties where drugs and alcohol are being consumed
- Fighting with my partner and struggles in home life



Methods for coping with stress and minimizing triggers:

- I will learn and use meditation and mindfulness techniques to balance myself when I am overstressed.
- I will avoid going to bars after work or on the weekends.
- I will attend my support group every week at least once per week.
- I will not attend wet events.
- I will self-reflect every day and keep a journal for my thoughts.
- Once a day I will do something fun, for myself
- If I get into trouble I will call a mentor or friend to stay accountable for my actions.

Daily life and self-care plans:

- Drinking enough water and staying on track with balanced healthy meals
- Get at least 9 hours of sleep each night.
- Join a gym, or buy home workout equipment and exercise 3 days per week.
- I will go for a 2 mile walk every day.
- I will take time in the day to emotionally check myself and make sure that I am doing okay.

My support system:

- Peer counselor/mentor
- Members in Support Group
- Family
- Sober friends
- Mental, medical, and/or substance abuse treatment providers

Consequences, gratitude, and accountability actions:

- I am thankful for my friends and sober family, and wish to be a good friend, family, and partner
- My job and my financials depend on me staying sober and in control
- I may lose my job and my house and even family if I cannot stay sober

- My physical health is directly related to me staying sober and not using drugs so I must continue to stay clean
- This plan is a promise to myself and everyone important in my life that I will stay sober and continue on my path to recovery.

# Coping Skills

## Addictions

### Social Support

Few things are as powerful as having a supportive person in your corner. Just knowing that friends, family, or even a fellow group member or sponsor are pulling for you can make all the difference.

#### Daily Social Support

There's more to social support than having someone to call during moments of crisis. People who have strong relationships are more resilient when facing life's obstacles, and more likely to beat addiction. Make a point to strengthen your relationships, attend support groups, and build new friendships.

#### Crisis Social Support

When in crisis, it's helpful to have a person you can count on for support—someone who you can call, who will help to talk you through the situation. Make a list of people who you can contact during these situations, and how you can reach them.

### Diversions

Cravings are brutal. They grow and grow, gnawing at your willpower, demanding that you relapse. In the middle of a craving, it might feel as if there's no escape but to use. But then, if you resist, the craving starts to fade. Eventually, it disappears. Most cravings end within one hour of starting.

The goal of **diversions** is to buy yourself time during a craving. If you can distract yourself for just *one hour*, you will have a much better chance of avoiding relapse. Come up with a list of activities you genuinely enjoy that will keep you at a distance from your temptation.

#### Diversion Ideas

go for a walk	read a book	play a sport	listen to music
watch a movie	practice a hobby	go for a run	clean or organize
do yard work	draw or paint	do a craft	cook or bake
play a game	go for a bicycle ride	write or journal	take a long bath
play an instrument	call a friend	lift weights	go swimming
go hiking in nature	take photographs	play with a pet	rearrange a room

# Coping Skills

## Addictions

### Building New Habits

Most addictions require a *lot* of time. Thinking about, acquiring, and indulging an addiction can fill most of a day. When you quit, one of your greatest new resources is time. However, if your newfound time isn't filled with healthy activities, it will pose a risk for falling back into old habits.

**Building new habits** is different than diversion because of the focus on long-term or permanent life changes. This isn't about riding out a craving—this is about building a better life for yourself.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Foster New Relationships</b>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Join a casual sports league.</li><li>• Attend a local meetup for one of your interests or hobbies.</li><li>• Get involved in your community by volunteering or supporting a cause you care about.</li></ul>   |
| <b>Develop New Professional Skills</b>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Return to school to pursue a subject you are interested in.</li><li>• Find a full-time job, or seek a new career that you enjoy.</li><li>• Build new skills on your own using free online resources, or practice your existing skills.</li></ul>  |
| <b>Refocus on Existing Relationships</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Build a routine around socializing with friends and family. For example, have Sunday dinners with family, and evening walks with a friend.</li><li>• Be proactive—don't wait for others to reach out to you.</li><li>• Say "yes" to every social invitation that will not put you at risk of relapse.</li></ul> |

### Prevention

#### Avoid Triggers / Risky Situations

Don't wait until you're in a bad situation to figure out how to escape it. Instead, avoid those situations altogether. Create a list of the people, places, and things that will likely lead to relapse, and come up with a plan to avoid them in the future. Sometimes this is as simple as taking a different route home from work, and other times it might mean a significant lifestyle change.

#### Healthy Lifestyle

A healthy lifestyle will make you more resilient when faced with obstacles. Many unhealthy habits, such as insufficient sleep and exercise, have been closely linked to many forms of mental illness. Focus on creating a routine that accounts for the following aspects of a healthy lifestyle:

- Sleep
- Exercise
- Medical Compliance (e.g. taking medications as prescribed and attending appointments)
- Healthy Diet

# Coping Skills

## Addictions

### Managing Emotions / Relaxation

Most addictions serve as an escape from uncomfortable emotions such as stress, anxiety, and anger. When the crutch of addiction is taken away, you may need to re-learn how to manage your emotions. If you don't learn how to relax, tension will build and build, until it leads to relapse. These techniques, when practiced regularly, will help you manage your emotions in a healthy way.

#### Deep Breathing

Deep breathing is a simple technique that's excellent for managing emotions. Sit comfortably and place one hand on your abdomen. Breathe in deeply enough that your hand begins to rise and fall. Imagine you are trying to completely fill your lungs with air. Time the inhalation (4s), pause (4s), and exhalation (6s) during every breath. Practice for 3 to 5 minutes at a time.



#### Journaling

Writing about personal experiences gives your brain the opportunity to process information and organize it into manageable chunks. Some of the many benefits of journaling include improved mental wellbeing, and the reduction of uncomfortable emotions. As you journal, be sure to describe your feelings alongside the facts of your experiences.

Feel free to journal however you like. However, if you feel stuck, try these prompts:

- **Daily Log:** Jot a few notes about each day. Whatever comes to mind is fine.
- **Letter:** Write a letter to someone with whom you would like to tell something. Remember to describe your feelings. *Do not send the letter!*
- **Gratitude:** Describe three good things from your day, no matter how minor they seem.

#### Imagery

Your brain has the power to turn thoughts into real emotions, and physical responses. Think about it: Your mouth waters at the thought of your favorite food, and a happy memory can make you laugh. With the imagery technique, you will use this power to your advantage.

Take a moment to think of a relaxing location or situation. This could be a memory, or something entirely made up. Maybe you're on a warm beach, alone at the top of a mountain, or at dinner with close friends. Next, imagine this scene through each of your senses. Don't just think about each detail for a second and move on—really imagine them. What do you see? What sounds do you hear? What do you feel? What smells are around you?

Use imagery for at least 5 minutes whenever you need a quick escape.

# Triggers



**Trigger:** A stimulus—such as a person, place, situation, or thing—that contributes to an unwanted emotional or behavioral response.

## The Problem

Describe the problem your triggers are contributing to. What's the worst-case scenario, if you are exposed to your triggers?

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## Trigger Categories

Just about *anything* can be a trigger. To begin exploring your own triggers, think about each of the categories listed below. Is there a specific emotion that acts as a trigger for you? How about a person or place? List your responses in the provided spaces.

<b>Emotional State</b>	<hr/> <hr/>
<b>People</b>	<hr/> <hr/>
<b>Places</b>	<hr/> <hr/>
<b>Things</b>	<hr/> <hr/>
<b>Thoughts</b>	<hr/> <hr/>
<b>Activities / Situations</b>	<hr/> <hr/>

## Tips for Dealing with Triggers

- Oftentimes, the best way to deal with a trigger is to avoid it. This might mean making changes to your lifestyle, relationships, or daily routine.
- Create a strategy to deal with your triggers head on, just in case. Your strategy might include coping skills, a list of trusted people you can talk to, or rehearsed phrases to help you get out of a troublesome situation.
- Don't wait until the heat of the moment to test your coping strategy. *Practice!*

# Triggers



In this section, you will develop a plan for dealing with your three biggest triggers. Review your plan regularly, and practice each of the strategies.

Describe your three biggest triggers, in detail.

Trigger	#1	
	#2	
	#3	

Describe your strategy for *avoiding or reducing exposure* to each trigger.

Trigger	#1	
	#2	
	#3	

Describe your strategy for dealing with each trigger head on, when they cannot be avoided.

Trigger	#1	
	#2	
	#3	