







**Discover  
Your Power  
Journal**

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# A letter to the reader

## Hey there, girl!

Welcome to She's the First. We work with girls\*, organizations, and community leaders to fight for a world where every girl is educated, respected, and heard. And when it comes to girls' rights, our philosophy is clear: Every girl deserves to exercise her full rights. She has a right to a quality education, a right to healthcare, a right to equality, a right to be safe. It's important to know your rights so that you know without a doubt what you deserve and what should never be taken away from you.

But the reason our organization exists—and the reason we created this journal—is because all too often, girls are held back. Poverty impacts girls' ability to exercise some rights, like a quality education or the right to documentation. Patriarchy impacts others, like our right to sexual and reproductive health information or our right to pursue subjects that interest us. And sometimes, people impact our rights, by making us feel unsafe. The reality is that many times, girls just don't get to exercise all of their rights.

One thing we've learned is that before we can begin to advocate for our rights, there's some ground work we need to do. That's where this journal comes in: **together, we'll explore what it means for you to be safe and supported so that you can determine your own future and tap into your power.**

*Together, we'll explore what it means for you to be safe and supported so that you can determine your own future and tap into your power.*

In this journal, you'll learn strategies on how to cultivate safe spaces, build your community, and assert your power through speaking up and advocating for what's right to you. We wish we could give you a roadmap that would tell you exactly how to ensure you receive your full rights no matter what, but unfortunately it's not that easy. Instead, we'll give you a set of tools that you can use along the way. We know that not all of these tools will work all of the time. We hope that some of them will work some of the time, so that you will be safer, more supported, and more powerful in your community.



A few things to keep in mind as you go through this journal:

- ▶ It's best to use this journal in order because each exercise builds on the last.
- ▶ You'll be doing a lot of self-reflecting, so we recommend pacing yourself.
- ▶ Since you'll be writing a lot about safety, keep in mind that **you never have to write someone's real name**. You can use code names if you'd like, so no one knows who you're talking about.
- ▶ Keep the journal somewhere safe, and only practice the activities with friends and mentors you trust.

*One thing's for sure:  
We're with you every  
step of the way.*

*– Team STF*

*\*When we say "girls" we mean anyone who identifies as a girl and is under 22*



# Acknowledgment

The Discover Your Power Journal launched on the International Day of the Girl on October 11, 2020. A year later, She's the First held two focus groups with 34 girls representing 9 countries to assess the effectiveness of the workbook in fostering confidence, self-empowerment, and self-advocacy in girls. In this space, girls shared the parts of the workbook they loved, the parts that didn't resonate with them, and gave us invaluable ideas and suggestions on how to strengthen and improve the journal to support more girls. This feedback directly from these girls as well as STF Girls Advisory Council Members forms the basis of this revised journal. We most sincerely thank each of them for their contribution, time, dedication and commitment.

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# Who am I?

Poet and activist Cleo Wade said, “Just remember, when it comes to your life, you are not just the artist but the masterpiece as well.” What makes you you is a combination of many factors, including your values, beliefs, and where you’re from. Age, ethnicity, culture, language, ability, birth order, religion, and sexual orientation also can contribute to making us who we are. These internal characteristics, alongside your experiences, personality, and environment, make up your **identity**.

It’s important to know that you are the only person who can define your identity and what you believe in. You get to decide which characteristics and elements make you who you are.

Before you can advocate for the issues you care about, you need to learn how to advocate for yourself. Understanding your identity and values is key to unlocking your inner voice. It allows you to authentically live your truths, or fight for a world where you can do so. Only you understand what it’s like to be a girl with your unique background, and there’s tremendous power in that.

As an example, let’s hear from Pooja on how she defines her own identity:

*I’m a 13 year old girl from a rural part of Georgia. I’m the youngest of all my siblings. My family moved from India before I was born, and I like to claim both American and Indian culture as mine. I’m also Sikh, but this isn’t as important to my identity. I love to tell stories and would love to be a filmmaker one day on issues I care about, like climate change and the importance of mental health for teens like me.*

## WORDS TO KNOW

**Identity:** Who you are based on how you view yourself, and is influenced by characteristics and experiences that define you. Your identity can shape how others view you.



# PARTS OF MY IDENTITY ACTIVITY

Fill out the prompts below.

▶ What are the traits other people can see that define you?

*Examples: age, gender identity, color of your skin*

▶ What are the traits others can't see but still define you?

*Examples: birth order, religion, who you love, how much money your family has*

▶ Which personality traits define who you are?

*Examples: resilience, funny, curious, shy*

▶ Which values are important to you?

*Examples: equality, fairness, honesty, justice*

▶ How does your environment affect who you are?

*Examples: family living arrangements, co-ed schools, city, countryside*

▶ Which experiences play a part in who you are today?

*Examples: discrimination, bullying, abuse, overcoming an obstacle, family legacy, health condition or ability*



# MY FULLEST IDENTITY JOURNALING ACTIVITY

What makes me *me*?

For this exercise, grab some paper and find a comfortable space where you can reflect and write. We encourage you to use this space to respond to the prompt in the way that best suits you. That includes jotting down your answers, writing a short story about yourself, and/or drawing a self-portrait.



# Safety



# Sex and gender:

## WORDS TO KNOW

**Sex:** Humans and animals are separated into male and female based on their reproductive systems when they are born. This is also called “sex assigned at birth.”

**Gender Identity:** How someone identifies as a woman, man or other ways (both or neither) based on characteristics set by culture. They are given norms, roles, and relationships to live by. It varies from society to society and can be changed.

**Gender expression:** How someone outwardly expresses their gender identity through physical and behavioral characteristics. Like gender identity, there are societal expectations that vary from culture to culture.

**Cisgender:** Someone who is the same gender as their assigned sex at birth.

**Transgender:** Someone who is a different gender than their assigned sex at birth.

**Non-binary:** Someone who does not identify as a male or female, or as *only* one of those categories.

**Intersex:** Someone born with a reproductive system that is different from the male and female reproductive systems.



# What's sex and gender got to do with it?

Perhaps the biggest factor that originally shaped your identity is the biological sex you were assigned at birth. Families, relatives, and communities all around the world set expectations on children based on their sex at birth. Children are described as strong if they are born male and pretty if they are born female.

As they get older, kids are given toys and chores that are deemed appropriate for their gender. Boys are scolded if they express fear or cry, instead of being assertive and tough. Girls are rewarded if they are obedient, accommodating, and gentle. Through this process, children learn how they are expected to behave at home, in school, and in their community according to their gender.

Our society strongly reinforces the idea that men should act masculine and women should act feminine, but we're all individual people and we should be free to act how we'd like. You should feel supported to express your emotions and dress how you like without anyone shaming you because they expect girls to act differently.

Some people don't feel like they fit into those labels and ideas about gender at all, and when that happens, they might identify as **transgender**, **non-binary**, or **intersex**. All people should be able to choose their own gender and express it how they wish. However you identify, everyone deserves to express themselves and to dress how they want without gender stereotypes holding them back.

Expectations placed on you based on your sex when you were born can be harmful to your self-development and limit you from being your fullest self. Sarah and Miriam can tell you more about what it's been like for them:



## PERSPECTIVES

### Sarah:

*At my school, I was elected head girl and I was so excited! I worked hard to be confident and to practice my speeches. But recently my school held a community event and they automatically selected the head boy to speak, not me. I asked the head teacher why they chose him and she told me he was a good leader and very good at speeches. The other girls felt sorry for me and told me I was also a good leader, but I wish I had a chance to be on the stage, too.*

### Miriam:

*Since I was very little, I always loved playing netball. Whenever I had a chance, I would play with my friends, even before we knew the rules or could reach the basket. And now, I'm really good—probably the best player in my school. But the older I get, the more my mum says I need to stay home after school. She's worried about my safety and she says I have too many responsibilities at home to waste time playing sports. It's frustrating because it really makes me happy, but I don't want to upset my mum.*

**In the examples above, what are some of the stereotypes Sarah and Miriam faced?**

**SARAH**

**MIRIAM**



# STEREOTYPES IN MY COMMUNITY ACTIVITY

Much of the world still divides people into male and female categories. These labels can dictate how much power and input we have into the decisions that affect us. That's why in the activity below, we're focusing on understanding how girls and boys are treated differently based on their sex. Take a few minutes to jot down how girls and boys are socialized and expected to conduct themselves in your culture:

## GIRLS

**At birth:**

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**At home:**

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**In school:**

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**In your community:**

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**As adults:**

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## BOYS

**At birth:**

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**At home:**

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**In school:**

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**In your community:**

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**As adults:**

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# INTERSECTIONALITY

As you have listed in the Parts of My Identity Activity, there are many traits and values that make up your unique identity.

All of those different parts are important to consider when confronting discrimination and oppression at school, home, or in other places. For example, some girls are discriminated against not only because of their gender but can also be targeted due to their race, religion, or ability. That is why Kimberlé Crenshaw created the term intersectionality, which examines how our overlapping identities can impact what levels of privileges or oppression we experience.

It's important to consider **intersectionality** when advocating for your own rights and the rights of others because not everyone is treated the same, even if they share a common identity. There are parts of our identity that may protect us from certain things and others that might be used to deny us certain rights and privileges. For example, in the United States, as with many other countries the world over, women are discriminated against in the workplace. As a group, women are paid less than men. However, within that group, non-white women are paid even less than white woman. In this context, intersectionality shows how even though all women face gender inequality, certain groups face more disadvantages.

## PERSPECTIVES

Here's how Daniela and Adriana, two 17 year olds from New Jersey in the United States, have been navigating their identities.

*Daniela and Adriana have been best friends since they were ten years old. Recently, they learned about intersectionality at school and wanted to discuss how their identities impact them. Before their discussion, they believed that they shared similar experiences but as they continued their talk, it became clear just how much their unique identities shaped them. Adriana has many identities that she's proud of but she knows that others may view them differently.*

*Adriana identifies as an Afro-Latina. She is proud of her culture and her race, but sometimes she is teased at school because of her darker skin tone. Daniela is also Latina but she identifies racially as white. During their discussion, they both expressed how their ethnicities have made it challenging to excel in their majority-white school. They were able to relate to each other as they shared stories about*



*how when they were younger, their classmates would tease them for learning to speak English or for bringing in homemade meals for lunch from their culture. Adriana shared with Daniela for the first time that she feels that her classmates judge and exclude her specifically because of her complexion. She shared that she often feels discriminated against amongst her peers because people rarely come up to her at school or invite her to places outside of school because they believe they can relate to her less. Daniela never noticed this because she always assumed Adriana was too shy to talk or spend time with her classmates. This conversation strengthened their relationship because Daniela learned that Adriana felt marginalized for both her ethnicity and race. She decided to speak up for Adriana, and let her classmates know how she felt. Now Adriana feels closer to Daniela and was empowered to continue her discussion on intersectionality with her other classmates.*

**Take a moment to reflect on how Adriana and Daniela’s identities shaped their experiences at school. Below, can you identify what those experiences and identities**



# Can I be my fullest self?

No matter where you live or the circumstances you're in, everyone is entitled to basic human rights. In 1989, the United Nations ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC), a treaty which lists the rights of children. The rights outlined in the CRC are the golden standard to ensure that all young people thrive in their environment. When governments signed the CRC, they committed youth would have access to documentation, information, education, and that they are free from violence, sexual abuse, exploitation, and abuses of human rights. Only three countries have not ratified the CRC: Somalia, South Sudan, and the United States.

In this toolkit, we're focusing on the following statements from the CRC:

- ▶ Children must be protected from all forms of discrimination or punishment based on their identity.
- ▶ Children are capable of forming their own opinions and entitled to their thoughts being taken seriously by adults.
- ▶ They can freely express their views and provide input on matters affecting them.
- ▶ They have freedom to choose their own beliefs.

These statements affirm the right for youth to be able to express their fullest self. Earlier in this workbook, you reflected on your identity, which includes your style, your values, personality traits, environment, and experiences. **Your fullest self** builds on your identity and includes your opinions and beliefs. Expressing your fullest self might look like:

- ▶ The manner in which you speak
- ▶ How you dress
- ▶ Pride in your identity/beliefs
- ▶ Your hobbies and interests
- ▶ Your education/extracurricular activity decisions

To express yourself authentically, you need to feel secure that you won't experience any backlash for being yourself. You might be familiar with the term safety as protection from harm, or having a roof over your head, or being able to walk to school without being sexually harassed. **Safety** is all these things and more: it's a state in which girls express their fullest self without fear of retaliation or judgement. **You are entitled to feeling safe to be yourself.**



# **MY FULLEST SELF ACTIVITY**

In the following worksheets, you'll reflect on what it means to be your fullest self and assess your safety in doing so.

**Describe or illustrate your fullest self: Who are you? What issues do you stand for? What parts of your identity and experiences do you take with you everywhere?**



# EXPERIENCING SAFETY ACTIVITY

List the different environments you encounter through your day and describe how safe you feel being your fullest self. We've listed some places to get you started.

In my room/in the space I sleep:

In my family home:

At school:

At my relative's house:

At \_\_\_\_\_ :

At \_\_\_\_\_ :

At \_\_\_\_\_ :

At \_\_\_\_\_ :



List the people you encounter most often and describe how safe you feel being your fullest self around them. Some people you can include are your mother, father, another guardian, grandparent, older sibling, younger sibling, cousins, friends, teachers, neighbors, and other peers/adults you encounter on a consistent basis.



**Write down the people and places which make you feel safest. Why do you feel safest there? What do these people and places have in common?**

**Write down the people and places where you feel less safe being your full, authentic self. Why don't you feel safest there? What do these people and places have in common?** (Use code names if you want to keep this secret.)



# Finding my safest places and people

All girls deserve to feel safe at home, at school, and in their community, but the truth is that many girls do not feel that way.

Some girls face sexual abuse, inappropriate touching, emotional abuse, or other forms of violence, even in the places they are supposed to be safe, like at home or at school. It's never okay for someone to touch you in a way that makes you uncomfortable, or for someone to make you feel ashamed for being yourself.

We know that there are other subtle, hurtful ways that girls are prevented from feeling fully safe. You may have witnessed the following or experienced it firsthand:

- ▶ Bullying or harassment
- ▶ Being made fun of or mocked
- ▶ Being ignored or given the silent treatment (not being spoken to)
- ▶ Excluded from gatherings or events
- ▶ Given harsh or unfair punishment
- ▶ Extra chores or responsibilities
- ▶ Denied food, clothing, or shelter

These uncalled-for situations discourage girls from expressing themselves, whether that's sharing their opinion or dressing how they want to. It might feel like there's nothing you can do about it. But trust us, you can always take actions to speak up for yourself and secure your safety.

**A note from the STF Team:** If you feel that you are in danger or at risk of physical harm, please reach out to a trusted adult or family member immediately. It can be scary, but the most important thing is to keep yourself safe.

You've already listed people and places that make you feel safe and unsafe. Identifying this lets you set a game plan on how you can avoid negative situations and pursue positive ones.



Mary Ann, a 15-year-old from California, in the United States, is also learning how to assess her safety and mitigate her risks. Here's her story:

*Mary Ann's uncle Tom bullies her about how she looks. He continuously puts her down and comments on how dark her skin is, even though she knows it's beautiful. Tom thinks he can get away with it because he's close in age to Mary Ann. Since she only sees him during family gatherings, she made a plan to have a buddy with her who would intimidate her uncle for making fun of her.*

*At her next family gathering, Mary Ann asked her older cousin Nancy to spend the day with her because she's older than her uncle and always speaks her mind. Mary Ann and her cousin Nancy were in the living room when her uncle stopped by and started making fun of Mary Ann. Nancy immediately said, "Tom, Mary Ann does not like it when you say that, and neither do I because it's wrong. There is nothing to joke about here." Tom sulked and walked away. He avoided Mary Ann the rest of the night because he would see Nancy standing near her. This made Mary Ann feel relieved because her strategy worked.*

*Mary Ann also decided that she's going to make an effort to spend more time with Nancy outside of family gatherings because she wants to learn how to be more fearless!*



# **ENSURING MY SAFETY ACTIVITY**

In the space below, list people and places that make you feel unsafe in the first column. Next, write out how you can limit the time you spend with those people and in those places. You can use code words that only you know for unsafe people and places. In Mary Ann's story, she shared how she limited her exposure to her Uncle Tom by sticking near Nancy. What are similar strategies you can use?

**People/places that make me feel unsafe** (use code names to keep them secret if you want)

**How I can minimize time interacting with them/there**



In the space below, list people and places that make you feel safe in the first column. Next, write out how you can spend more time with those people and in those places.

**People/places that make me feel safe**

**How I can maximize time interacting with them/there**



# What if I don't have a trusted adult in my life?

Many girls around the world feel like they are on their own, and have no one in their life they can really trust. We need you to know that you are not alone.

You are a part of a global movement of girls who are navigating the very same experience you are having. Our hope is through this workbook, we can work together to identify people that you can trust. This will look different for each person. For you it might be one person you can tell everything to. For others, it could be that they have multiple people they trust but with very specific things.

Here's what that looks like:

- ▶ Struggling in school ☒ Ask a teacher for additional support or a friend to help you study
- ▶ Your peers are teasing you ☒ Ask a parent, older sibling, friend, or cousin to help you navigate the next time you're in an environment where they are present.
- ▶ Health questions about your body ☒ Ask an older woman or girl, aunt, mother, doctor, or health teacher in your school.
- ▶ Liking someone romantically ☒ Chat with a friend or a sibling about what you're feeling.
- ▶ Feeling sad or upset ☒ Talk to a parent, friend, sibling, relative, mentor,
- ▶ Feeling unsafe ☒ Speak with a neighbor, a friend's parent, former or current teacher, parent, sibling or cousin, or older relative.

You can also call a helpline, which is a telephone service that can help you if you're feeling unsafe. In general, helplines are available to call at all hours of the day during every day of the week and are confidential. Child Helpline International provides helpline numbers from around the world that provide assistance to young people. The person on the other side of a helpline call is there to listen and give you support in any way that you need.

In a situation where you feel that you are in immediate danger or at risk of physical harm, it is most important to first get yourself away from harm's way. Go to a safe place and call your local emergency number for help. A safe place may be one that you listed earlier in this journal, a youth shelter, a place of worship, a hospital, a local community center, or a local police or chief's office.



# Reinforcing my safety

Sometimes, safety is about protecting your space and your own comfort levels, so you can be your full self. Remember that you always have a right to decide what you are and are not comfortable doing or talking about. There are two skills you can practice to get better at making your space a little safer for yourself: setting boundaries and negotiating.

## Setting Boundaries

The rules you create to guide others in how you want to be treated are known as “boundaries.” Some boundaries are the same for everyone. For example, most people recognize that you shouldn’t yell or scream at someone; that’s an example of crossing someone’s boundaries. You’d be treating them in a way they did not agree to be treated.

Your boundaries are likely to be made up of boundaries that are common for most people and some that are unique to you. All of your boundaries should be respected by others, especially the people who care about you.

### PERSPECTIVES

Marisol, 16, from Lima, Peru has been practicing her own boundaries.

*From the time I was little, my aunts and uncles called me SoSo. It was just normal for me for a long time, but last year, I realized I really didn't like it – I want people to use my full name! I learned about setting boundaries from my mentor and I decided that I wanted to be clear with my family on how I wanted to be called. My mentor helped me practice what I wanted to say.*

*The next time I saw my uncle, he said hello to me and called me SoSo. I said what I had practiced with my mentor. “Hello Uncle! I’m glad to see you. Please don’t call me SoSo anymore. It makes me unhappy and I would appreciate it if you called me Marisol instead.” It worked! Sometimes my family still makes a mistake and calls me SoSo but when they do, I politely remind them to please use my real name instead. It felt scary at first but now I know I can talk about my boundaries.*

Think about the steps Marisol took in deciding and enforcing her own boundaries. First, she **set her own rules** for how she wanted to be treated. Next, she **practiced with a trusted person** how she wanted to talk to her uncle. Then, **she spoke up for herself politely but clearly**.

Think about the “rules” you would create for the ways people treat you. What would they be? List them out below. We’ve written a few prompts to get you started, but you can add as many as you like.

## **My boundaries**

It is not okay for people to yell or scream at me.

It is not okay for people to hurt me physically.

It is not okay for people to bully me.

*Add your own:*

It is not okay for people to...

I feel uncomfortable talking about...







# Enforcing your boundaries

Now comes the action. Look at the examples you've listed of times people have crossed your boundaries and made you feel uncomfortable. Choose one of them to practice with. For example, you might practice telling someone you don't want to be hugged, or that you don't want to share your snack, or to talk about a certain topic. Write down the script you would use by filling these blanks:

I don't enjoy \_\_\_\_\_  
(name the action)

very much. Instead, let's \_\_\_\_\_ .  
(alternative suggestion)

You can use this template for almost any scenario. First, kindly ask them to not repeat the action you don't like. Then, suggest something else to do or say instead. This skill is called **negotiation**.

Negotiating is a skill that allows you to make a deal with someone in which you receive a benefit. Any time you make an alternate suggestion, what you're really doing is negotiating for an outcome that is acceptable to you.

*Eli was talking with her friends when one of them told her she was too skinny. Eli feels very uncomfortable talking about her body, and so she decided to set a boundary. She said to her friend, "Please don't call me skinny or talk about my body anymore. I know you don't want to make me feel bad but it does. Let's talk about our plan for this weekend instead." But her friends just laughed. They didn't think she was serious, so they kept calling her skinny. This time, Eli was very firm. "I am very serious about this. If you don't stop talking about my body, I'm going to leave." Her friends kept teasing her, so Eli followed through and she went home. The next day, her friends apologized for making her feel bad, and they stopped teasing her about her body.*

Walking away from a situation is a good way to reinforce that a boundary is meaningful to you, and people who care about you will quickly realize how their actions have impacted you negatively.



As humans, we often mirror, or copy, the way others respond to us. You might have experienced this yourself if you've felt the urge to shout at a parent, sibling, or friend who started yelling at you first. We can't promise you that the people around you will 100% embrace your first, second, and third attempts at expressing yourself and setting your boundaries. But we can promise that by modeling kind behaviors and respecting the boundaries of others, you're setting a tone for how you want to be treated.



**Remember that it's never okay for someone to hurt you or to touch you in ways that make you feel unsafe. If that happens, please tell an adult you trust.**

You deserve to be treated with respect by the people around you. But if you find yourself in a situation with someone who refuses to respect your boundaries and they make you feel unsafe, you have two options:

**1. Bring in a trusted friend, mentor, or other adult to help you navigate the situation.**

Sometimes, even when you do everything right, people still don't respect your boundaries. In this case, if you are just friends or classmates, you might want to consider spending very little time with that person. If the person violating your boundaries is a family member or someone in authority, try talking about the issue to someone you trust. They can help you stand up for yourself or reinforce your boundaries. Or, if the situation is very unsafe, they might help you find somewhere else to stay.

**2. Document abusive behavior.**

Abusive behavior includes actions by others that make you feel unsafe as well as actions that are inappropriate. This can include sexual abuse, inappropriate touching, emotional abuse, bullying or harassment, taking away necessities, or giving you too many responsibilities for your age.

When adults don't keep children safe, or they actively make them unsafe, that means the adult is showing abusive behavior. Abusive behavior is serious because it causes harm to the children who encounter it, making them feel unsafe to speak or be their fullest selves.

If someone in your life is acting abusively, you can make a list of the times and ways that person has acted wrongly toward you. Include dates and details of what was said or done, and note if you have photos, videos, or other people who can help prove that you are telling the truth. Then, go to a trusted adult and tell them what's been happening. It's their job to help you find a safe pathway forward.

# Important tips when asserting your right to safety

Sometimes, the way we speak and the way we present ourselves impacts how likely others are to listen to us. While your voice should be respected no matter what, following the tips below may make it easier for others to understand what you need in the moment.

A note from She's the First: We know you're the expert in understanding what would make you feel most safe. Adjust the below to serve you!

- ▶ **Stand empowered:** How you carry yourself can be a dead giveaway for what you're feeling inside. Make sure you are standing with your shoulders back, chin up, and both feet on the ground. This signals to people around you that you mean business!
- ▶ **Come prepared:** Bring a sheet of paper with you that outlines the main points you want to bring up in your conversation. If you begin to feel overwhelmed, you can look at your list of talking points to keep you on track. Also include a section for key phrases on your paper that you can refer back to if you get flustered. For example, this may include a phrase such as, "my intention for this conversation is...." which you can use if the conversation gets off topic.
- ▶ **Speak on your conditions:** Feel your most comfortable and confident while expressing yourself. This may be achieved by choosing to speak at a familiar or public place, choosing to speak at a specific time of day that best suits you, or even by wearing an outfit that makes you feel your most powerful!
- ▶ **Bring a trusted person:** When having a nerve-wracking conversation, it can be helpful to bring a trusted friend, mentor, or other adult with you. They do not have to be included in the conversation itself, but by being close by, they can offer both emotional and physical support. You may choose to have a "safeword" with your trusted person, which is a word that only both of you know, and when said signals to end an activity or for their reinforcement or support. When you say the safeword, your trusted person knows that you would like them to step in to help end the conversation.
- ▶ **Sound confident:** Expressing yourself for the first time or in a new environment can be both exciting and nerve-wracking. When people feel this way, they might be quiet or speak in a high-pitched voice. That can take away from your message. When you speak, use an even-toned, assertive voice to signal that



you're serious. Take a deep breath to help you feel more calm and in control too. Practicing in the mirror or visualizing yourself beforehand can help you prepare your voice.

- ▶ **Read the room:** Be mindful of the people around you. Is anyone giving visible signs of negative feelings (anger, disappointment, disregard)? Continue to monitor your safety in the space. You might want to create distance between you and the people around you if you feel your safety is in danger. You can move in the direction of an exit. Walking away when your environment no longer benefits you is a brave and courageous thing to do.
- ▶ **Stay cool:** When we experience hurtful behavior like yelling, our knee-jerk reaction is to respond the same way. Take a minute to think before you respond. (Try counting to ten.) Responding calmly and respectfully can diffuse the situation and make the person you're speaking to realize they may have overreacted.
- ▶ **Let go of the need to "win":** In situations where you feel unsafe, recognize that someone's reaction to you being your fullest self is a reflection of them, not of you. Your goal in these scenarios is to keep yourself as physically and emotionally safe as possible. Resist the temptation to justify your actions with an explanation or to be the "winner" of the argument. If the other person is not in the mindset where they want to learn, it's unlikely that you will convince them they are wrong. Instead, focus on ways to get out of the situation safely. Speak neutrally and redirect the conversation or physically leave the room to protect yourself.
- ▶ **Negotiate:** If someone asks you to do something that makes you uncomfortable, but they have power over you, try to negotiate for something else. If someone tells you to give them answers to the homework and you want to say no, but you're worried about their reaction, you can offer something you

#### **Key phrases to redirect conversations:**

- ▶ "My intention for this conversation is..., not..."
- ▶ "I understand where you are coming from, however, ..."
- ▶ "I feel sad/angry/uncomfortable because..."
- ▶ "I think this is an important issue that we need to talk through together."
- ▶ "From your perspective, this is about..., for me, it's about..."
- ▶ How can I help you better understand where I'm coming from?



are willing to do instead. In this case, you could offer to do homework together. If your parents want you to clean up after dinner each night, you can negotiate with them to be able to do the dishes in the morning instead, so you have time for homework. Your goal is to arrive at an outcome that makes you feel safe and comfortable.

- ▶ **Debrief:** Reflect on the conversation that occurred. Write down your thoughts in your journal or discuss them with a trusted person. How did it feel to express yourself? What parts of the conversation went well? What things about the conversation would you hope to go differently in the future? Every time you stand up for yourself is a learning and growing experience, and helps you to become even better prepared to express yourself moving forward!

### **Let's hear from Lila, a 15-year-old from Lebanon, on how she incorporated these tips in a conversation with her parents:**

*Lila noticed that at home, she is given many more chores than her brother. She is expected to help clean the house, cook meals for her family, and care for her baby sister. This makes Lila upset because these extra chores prevent her from completing her school work, spending time with her friends, and doing her favorite activities like dancing and reading. Lila struggles to complete all of her responsibilities during the day, while her brother has large amounts of free time to play games and relax. Lila decided that she wanted to express her concerns to her parents. To prepare, Lila practiced speaking confidently in the mirror and wrote down a list of main talking points that she could reference during the conversation, including how it is unfair that she is treated differently than her brother and other reasons why her number of chores upsets her. Lila knew that she would feel most comfortable bringing up the topic while in nature during the day, so when she and her parents were taking an afternoon walk in the park she said, "I'd like to talk about my chores. I think we may have different perceptions of how they affect me." When her parents began to get defensive, Lila took a deep breath, reviewed her sheet to keep her focused, and responded calmly. Lila negotiated with them for her brother to help her care for her sister and learn to prepare some food. When Lila returned home, she wrote in her journal that the conversation went well because she was able to reduce the number of her chores, but that she would revisit the conversation with her parents again at another time if she still felt overburdened.*



# Support



# Embracing my superpowers

Girls go through so much on a daily basis. Juggling the needs and pressures of family, friends, and school can be a lot. That's why girls everywhere should have a support system they can rely on to help them navigate everyday life. It's essential to have a network to support, affirm, and defend you as you begin to speak your mind.

In this section, we'll focus on support as a system you create to ensure you can safely be yourself. This support comes in many forms. You can have a friend text when you need advice or form a group to back you up when you need reinforcement. Create a system that makes sense to you. The only requirement is that your system makes you feel safe, valued, and loved so you can be your fullest self.

You can also be your own support system by practicing self-love, which is when you appreciate and value your qualities, strengths, and happiness. Many girls have been taught that their success depends on their sacrifices and doing acts of service for others. Without realizing it, we can adopt the idea that what we want and need comes last.

Practicing self-love is essential to our development and growth as humans. As part of this exercise, you will create a love letter for yourself to read when you're down. It might feel strange to write about yourself in this way, but remember that girls are often taught that they only have value when they meet other people's expectations. With practice, we're confident that you'll cultivate a strong self-love practice where you embrace all the wonderful things that make you the amazing person you are.

Case in point: We know there's something special about you! The French call this a "je ne sais quoi," or a quality that can't be described easily. We call these qualities your "superpowers." In this section, you're going to identify and embrace the elements of you that make you powerful before you write your love letter.

Having an awareness of your strengths will help you be your fullest self and negotiate your safety. As you do this, you might come across people who try to bring you down. In moments like those, you can always remind yourself of your superpowers to give you a boost of confidence.



## JOURNAL PROMPT

**Find a comfortable space to practice self-love through the guided journal prompt below. By doing this, you are ensuring the well-being of your fullest self. You can write, draw, or use another medium to express your superpowers.**

What comes naturally to you?

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What makes you unique?

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What do people seek advice from you on?

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What are your favorite qualities about yourself?

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What obstacles have you overcome?

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What are your biggest accomplishments?

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# My network

Your life is multifaceted. You're balancing your family, friends, and school, all while dealing with gender stereotypes and cultural expectations. On top of that, you're trying to make sure your needs are met, all while deciding who you want to become! This is where your support system comes in: it's a toolbox of resources to help you navigate your life. Here are areas of your life where a support system is helpful:

- ▶ Understanding and processing your feelings
- ▶ Working towards your personal goals
- ▶ Help around homework, tasks, or other responsibilities you have
- ▶ Navigating relationships with family, friends, romantic partners

Your system can be made up of family members, friends, siblings, mentors, teachers, yourself, and more. You can even find others who believe in the same causes as you do by looking to school clubs or organizations.

Members of your support system should:

- ▶ Advocate for you
- ▶ Be there during difficult times
- ▶ Provide you with information
- ▶ Listen to you

Your goal is to have a variety of people in your support network who can do at least one of the above. This might sound overwhelming at first, but don't worry. Building your community will take time. We've outlined steps below to get you started:



- 1. Identify aspects of your life where you need support.** This can be within a relationship (like a parent or a peer) or in a specific environment (like at school or social media) or with an action (starting your own club).
- 2. Determine the types of support you would like.** Are you looking for advice or information? Do you need someone to lean on or to laugh with? You might want all of the things listed above plus more, and that's okay.
- 3. Make a list of people who fit your needs.** If you don't know anyone or want to expand your list, research school clubs or local organizations where you might find someone with similar interests and hobbies.
- 4. Reach out to the people, clubs, and organizations on your list.** You can do this through social media, email, or in-person or you can have a trusted person connect you. For some members of your community, you might want to explain the type of support you need.

For example, you might want to negotiate your curfew with your parents. An older sibling or aunt might be sympathetic to your cause. Their support and endorsement can also influence your parents to listen to your case. In this situation, you should be clear in what you're looking for and ask them to help you advocate for yourself.

- 5. Sustain your relationships with the members of your support system by staying in touch!** This builds a stronger bond. Keep them posted about what's happening in your life, and reach out to them when you need help. Sometimes, we might fall into the tendency of not asking for help because we don't want to seem weak or bother others, but your support system will never look at it in this way!



We've gathered two stories about girls building their own network.

Alexandra, from Russia, was able to find support from her aunt who helped her navigate a difficult relationship.

*Alexandra started dating a boy three months ago. She likes him a lot but is starting to feel like she can't trust him. Whenever he gets a notification on his phone, he immediately hides it from Alexandra's view. He even leaves the room when he gets calls. At first, Alexandra didn't think anything of it because she respects his privacy. But this behavior has continued for a month, and a few times, she saw the name of the same girl appear before he hid his phone.*

*Alexandra wants advice from someone she can trust who won't spread rumors with this information. After thinking about the people in her life who have had romantic relationships, she thinks about her parents. She quickly disqualifies them because she doesn't feel comfortable to share her story with them. At this moment, Alexandra's aunt walks in and Alexandra realizes that her aunt has always been a good listener and has given her sound advice.*

*Alexandra wants a private place to speak so she asks her aunt to go for a walk outside. Alexandra shares updates about her life and begins to talk about her situation. Her aunt listens diligently, and confirms that Alexandra has finished speaking before giving her advice.*

*Her aunt reminds her that everything she is feeling is valid and any person would feel concerned in her situation. Her aunt advises her to speak with her boyfriend first about her suspicions. She says that his reaction will reveal a lot about what he's doing. If he responds with anger, he's most likely not the right person for Alexandra. If he responds with understanding but continues the same behavior, Alexandra will know that it's time for her to leave the relationship.*

*After the walk, Alexandra meets up with her boyfriend to calmly share how his actions have been affecting her. He completely denies that he's been hiding his phone in her presence and gets angry when Alexandra says that she's hurt by his hiding things from her. Alexandra makes the decision to end the relationship. Alexandra is sad, but she knows that her boyfriend was being dishonest with her. She knows she deserves better.*

*Now Alexandra feels closer to her aunt because she helped her leave an unhealthy relationship and supported her healing process from the break up. Alexandra spends her extra time trying to stay busy by pursuing her passions and hanging out with her friends.*



Mei, from the United States, eventually found her “people” at school.

*Mei used to like talking to the girls in her class about everything from their favorite movie stars to the latest fashions. But lately, they’ve been making fun of the person Mei has a crush on, and she isn’t sure what to do. She usually just ignores it or smiles and tries to change the subject, because she doesn’t want to admit she has a crush on the same person they all make fun of.*

*As she was walking on campus one morning, she saw a poster for a new science club. She thought about how her current friends kept saying things she didn’t agree with, and she decided that joining a new club might be a good way to meet new people. When she showed up, she realized her crush belonged to the club too! Everyone was really kind and they connected over ideas for an upcoming science competition. Now, Mei spends most of her free time with her new friends from the club instead of the girls in her class.*

Both Alexandra and Mei realized they needed support, and they were able to figure out new places to find it. When they did, it made both of their lives better.



# ***BUILDING MY SUPPORT SYSTEM ACTIVITY***

**Take the first step in building your support system by filling out the prompts:**

Where in my life do I want or need support?

What does that support look like to me?

List people who would make a good fit for your support system. Remember, if no one comes to mind, you can list school clubs, organizations, or other places where you can find like-minded people.

Make a plan for reaching out to the potential members of your support system.



# Support & the self

Understanding how you can show up for yourself is an essential part of your support system. This is **self-care**, or the practice of taking an active role in protecting one's own well-being and happiness, with the aim of improving one's health particularly during periods of stress. In a world where girls are taught to prioritize other people's needs, self-care is especially important to being your fullest self because it allows you to put your needs **first**. (You did it when you wrote a love letter to yourself!)

This might seem selfish, but hear us out: Imagine your energy as a glass of water. As you navigate your day, you'll sip more and more of your energy. The water in your glass will go down. You'll have less to give to the people and causes you care about, because you're running low on water. But what if you take some time to yourself to pour water into your glass mid-day? You've restored your energy! Taking this time to yourself actually helped you, so that you can help the people you care about.

It's essential to build a self-care routine that makes you feel happy and refreshed. Everyone's routine looks different. You can get inspiration from your friends or introduce them to your favorite self-care habits. We've listed some of our favorite ways to self-care below.

- ▶ Learning a new skill
- ▶ Exercising or stretching
- ▶ Meeting or talking with friends or loved ones
- ▶ Journaling or writing stories
- ▶ Making art
- ▶ Going for a walk
- ▶ Reading
- ▶ Taking a shower
- ▶ Doing nothing
- ▶ Dancing or singing
- ▶ Taking a nap
- ▶ Watching television
- ▶ Breathing deeply
- ▶ Eating something delicious or nutritious
- ▶ Reading your love letter to yourself
- ▶ Drink a cup of tea or a glass of water
- ▶ Listen to music, the radio, or a podcast
- ▶ Light a candle
- ▶ Meditation
- ▶ Dress up in something that makes you feel amazing
- ▶ Listening to your favourite song
- ▶ Writing in your gratitude jar
- ▶ Listening to a podcast



# ACTIVITY: BREATHING MEDITATION

One way you can build a self-care routine is by practicing self-soothing techniques. You can do this through the power of mindful breathing. This exercise will provide you with the basics on how to ground yourself. Mindful breathing can help you relax and focus. With this five finger breathing exercise, you'll have the tools to practice wherever and whenever you want.

**Step 1:** Find a comfortable space where you can close your eyes. Take a moment to center yourself.

**Step 2:** Follow the upward and downward movements illustrated below and trace your left hand with your fingers.

**Step 3:** Inhale slowly as you trace your fingers upwards and exhale slowly as you move downward.

**Step 4:** You can repeat this exercise three or more times. You can also switch hands if you would like.



We recommend you combine these to build your routine. Here's how Seo-Young, a 17-year-old from South Korea, and Rebecca, a 13-year-old from Poland, approach their routines:

**Seo-Young:** *It took me a few years to perfect my self-care routine, but I'm glad that I took the time to find what works for me! After a hard week of studying for my final exams, I know I need to take some time to myself to recuperate. I do yoga because it helps me unwind and stretch out my muscles. After some yoga, I take a shower and relax into bed with a book. My entire routine is focused on not thinking (because I did so much of that while I studied). This gives my brain a chance to rest and makes me feel better the next day.*

**Rebecca:** *In order for me to feel energized and be my best self, I like to practice a little bit of self-care every day. My life can be hard sometimes, especially now that I'm finding that I disagree with my parents more often. Whenever I find ten minutes to myself during the day, I squeeze in a self-care activity. If I'm feeling misunderstood or sad, I'll write out how I'm feeling in my journal. This helps me exit these feelings from my body. If I feel low on energy, I play my favorite song and dance around! Both of these activities always make me feel better.*







Now it is time to think of concrete ways that you will commit to take care of yourself. In the activity below, write down how you'll practice self-care. You can take ideas from the list above or add your own! There's no right or wrong way to take care of yourself, as long as it leaves you feeling happy and well-rested!

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# Self-Determination



# The Global Girls' Bill of Rights

As mentioned earlier, The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) protects the rights of anyone under the age of 18. But we know that girls have their own unique experiences and challenges, and they need more than the CRC to protect them.

In 2019, more than 1,000 girls from 30+ countries came together to declare their rights. A panel of girl activists representing different identities, regions, and needs reviewed their contributions. They formed the Global Girls' Bill of Rights, a declaration of the rights all girls are entitled to, written by girls, for girls. This bill is the golden standard to ensure girls' basic rights are being met, in our social circles, schools, at home, and in our communities.

## The Global Girls' Bill of Rights

All girls have the right to:

**1. free, quality education which prepares them for the modern world**

*We deserve equal opportunity to attend school all the way to graduation, and we deserve freedom and safe transportation to get there. A girl's right to school should not be impacted by her cultural background, her pregnancy status, or the money her family may lack.*

**2. equality**

*We should be free from discrimination and stereotypes because of being a girl, whether at home, at school, or in our communities. We should have access to equal opportunities and we should never be harassed nor oppressed due to what we wear, what we do, or how we express ourselves.*

**3. involvement in decision-making and pursuit of leadership positions without fear of discrimination, harassment, or persecution**

*Girls must be allowed to decide what our future holds and be able to lead just as much as boys in school, at home, or in the community. Any decision that affects us should include us in a position of authority. We have the right for our voices to be listened to and respected.*



#### **4. documentation**

*Every girl has the right to access or acquire all legal and academic documents that will allow her to access opportunities and lead a full life recognized by relevant authorities.*

#### **5. comprehensive sexual education and access to free, quality reproductive healthcare**

*This includes an education that informs us about our rights, consent, contraception, and healthy relationships. We should also have access to abortion and to proper healthcare, without criticism or shame.*

#### **6. protection from harmful traditions and enjoyment of positive cultural practices**

*We must be kept safe from non-consensual practices, and be given the opportunity to express the positive elements of our cultures.*

#### **7. safety from all forms of violence**

*All girls deserve healthy and safe relationships, including with romantic partners, parents, and family members. We should be safe from violence in all locations. All girls deserve shelter, clothing, and food.*

#### **8. decision-making about their body and sexuality**

*Girls have the right to choose whom they love, regardless of gender, and to express their sexuality without censure. We have a right to say “no” and to choose who, when, and if we will marry.*

#### **9. protection under the law without fear or unequal treatment**

*Every girl has the right to seek legal protection in any situation where she feels insecure or undergoes an experience that needs legal attention, without being judged or her claim disregarded. No girl should ever be in a position where she has to choose to be silent due to fear of lack of legal protection.*

#### **10. freedom from exploitation**

*All girls deserve a happy childhood. We should never be forced to work, and we should be kept safe from child trafficking and early marriage.*



Let's hear from Mariama and Fatou, two 14 year old girls in The Gambia, about how they experience their rights after school:

### **Mariama:**

*When I get home from school, I'm immediately greeted by my grandmother. Both my parents aren't home because my dad's at the river and my mother is selling some fish in the market. My grandmother tells me that she's made some snacks for me to eat before I start my homework. I eat them and get straight to work. It takes me two hours to finish my homework and study my notes from today's classes. I have 1 hour before dinner time so I ask my grandmother if I can go to my cousin's house next door. She says yes but reminds me of my daily chore to set up the dinner table and doing the dinner dishes. My cousin and I start talking about what we want to be when we grow up. I want to be a photographer and my cousin wants to be a lawyer. I realize the hour is almost over and I go home and go to the kitchen to help my grandmother. In my family, we all eat together. Afterwards, my dad asks me what I learned in school and I share with him and the rest of the family. They're excited to hear that I like math because this means I can help with our small business. At this point, I'm feeling tired so I excuse myself to go to sleep.*

### **Fatou:**

*When I finish class, I go to a compound in my community where the younger students like to play around so I can fetch my little brother and sister. When I get home, my mother asks me to feed and bathe my younger siblings before the three of us can study. Sometimes I get tired by this point because they refuse to listen to me, but I remind them I'll tell mom if they don't listen. If they're really not listening, I do tell my mom, but I try to avoid it because she can be scary when she's angry. It's taken two hours to feed and bathe my siblings, and now it's time to study together. I can't entirely focus because I need to make sure they're doing their homework too. After only an hour, my mom calls me to help her serve dinner, because she needs to leave to work again. By the time we've eaten and cleaned up, it's 9:00 and I need to put my little siblings to bed. I try to do more of my homework, but it's too dark and I'm so tired that I go to sleep instead. Hopefully I can finish more of it before school.*

**Mariama and Fatou are two girls from the same community, but they have different realities after they finish their school day. Compare and contrast how they experience their rights:**

**Mariama:**

**Fatou:**



# ACTIVITY: EXPERIENCING OUR RIGHTS CHART

All girls deserve to experience their rights, regardless of their background or life circumstances. But as we can see from Mariama and Fatou, there are factors that can prevent girls from experiencing their rights the way they want to. In the chart below, reflect on how you and other girls in your community experience your rights.

<p>How do I experience my rights right now?</p>	<p>How would I like to experience my rights?</p>
<p>How do other girls experience their rights in my community?</p>	<p>How would I like girls to experience their rights in my community? What about girls who are different from me?</p>







# Paving my own path

As you grow older, you've probably begun to dream about your future. You imagine everything from your careers to your romantic partners to where you want to live and what you want to believe in. In an ideal world, when girls experience their rights, they're able to explore their dreams. This is **self-determination**, or the ability for girls to make decisions and determine the path of their life independently.

In reality, we know that many girls are so far from experiencing their rights. Over 130 million girls are out of school. Girls spend more hours than boys doing household chores everyday. More than 1 billion girls and women lack access to legal protection against sexual harassment in school and in public places. You might fall into one of these categories, or experience other forms of gender discrimination that discourages you from taking actions to be your fullest self.

**Each of us has power within us to create a better community for ourselves and girls like us.** By using this workbook to strengthen your self-advocacy skills, you're a step closer in determining your own future and fighting for girls' rights. By being your fullest self, you are making a difference by deciding the course of your life. This makes it easier for girls like you, girls you don't know, and girls younger than you to be their fullest selves, too.

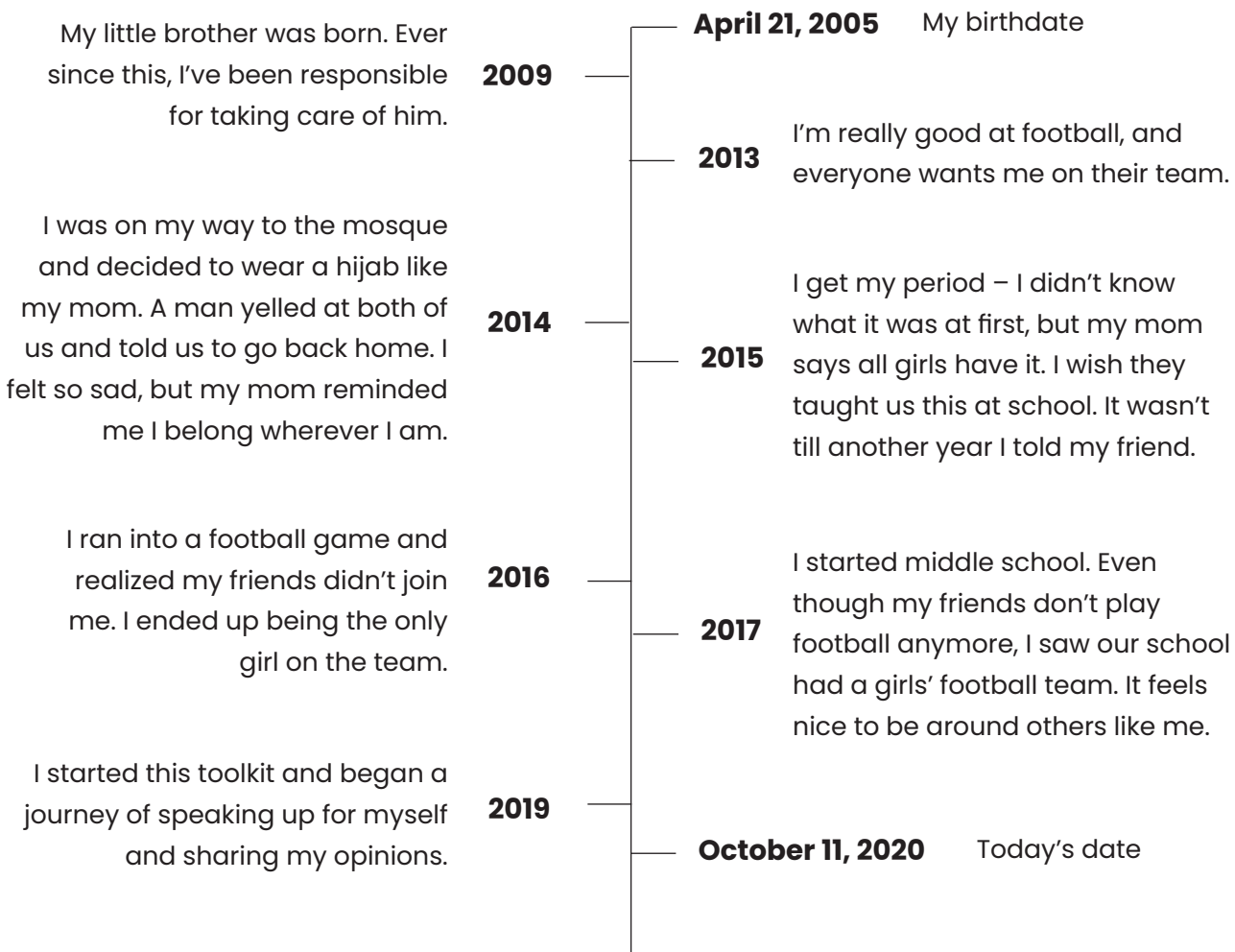


## My Journey Map

In the previous journal entry, you reflected on the rights that are part of your personal story. We'll build on your story by reflecting on the experiences that made you the person you are today through a journey map, a visual representation of your life. Use the river journey map below as a timeline of your life.

You should begin with the year you were born. Think about the events, setbacks, and milestones in your life that have contributed to your fullest identity today. You should note each moment that contributed to who you are today by marking the year and leaving a short sentence describing how it changed you. Some of these will be happy memories, and others might be sad or make you angry; they all contribute to who you've become. Your timeline should end with this very day that you are filling out your journey map.

### Here's an example from Marie:



# **ACTIVITY: CREATE YOUR OWN JOURNEY MAP**

Take ten minutes to fill out the journey below before you continue to the next activity.

Birthdate: \_\_\_\_\_

Today: \_\_\_\_\_



**Now, take the next ten minutes to reflect on how you would like your story to go forward. Begin with today, and identify experiences and milestones you would like to have five years from today. Like your previous journey map, mark the year and make a short note describing what it is for every momentous occasion.**

Today: \_\_\_\_\_



Five years from today

\_\_\_\_\_



# Be a goal-getter

You've already begun paving your own path. Understanding your story can shape where you'd like to go. Through the previous activity, you visualized your dreams and set up a target of where you want to be by the age of 30. We can use this to set up realistic, tangible goals, to help you achieve the life you want to live. Your goals can relate to your:

- ▶ Education
- ▶ Career
- ▶ Relationships with family and friends
- ▶ Finances
- ▶ Self-care
- ▶ Health & fitness
- ▶ Personal development
- ▶ Spirituality
- ▶ Activism

There are many techniques that can help you set up manageable steps to reach your goals. Our favorite is the WOOP method created by psychologist Gabriele Oettingen. It stands for wish, outcome, obstacle, and plan. We've defined them below:

<b>W</b>	WISH	Wish something you want to do that brings you closer to expressing yourself fully. This is where you set your goal.
<b>O</b>	OUTCOME	Imagine the best outcome of your wish and how good it would make you feel.
<b>O</b>	OBSTACLE	Think about any obstacles that can keep you from achieving your goal.
<b>P</b>	PLAN	Make a plan in case your obstacle occurs so you are prepared with actions you can take to achieve your goal.

When we're pursuing our goals and face a setback, we need to take some time to think about our response. In some cases, we might second-guess our goals or even be discouraged from going any further. But if you anticipate those roadblocks and how you can overcome them, then it's easier to keep your momentum going.

WOOP goals should also include how you will use:

- ▶ Your superpowers
- ▶ Techniques to secure your safety
- ▶ Your support system



We've outlined a few examples below:

<b>WOOP</b>	<b>Maria</b>	<b>Diana</b>
Wish	I would like to see my friends two times a week outside of school or family events.	I want to run for a student leadership position in my school.
Outcome	I would feel so happy to connect with my friends privately so I can confide in them without my parents or adults around.	I would feel empowered to advocate for my peers.
Obstacle	I have to ask my parents for permission. They are going to point out that I have too many chores and homework to do.	I'm second guessing myself and if I'm qualified for this position. I feel like I might not be the best person to speak up about my classmates' needs.
Plan	<p>Since I know my parents will bring this up, I will get up earlier in the morning to finish my chores for the day. I might ask my sibling, cousin, or friend to help me so I can finish my tasks quicker. Afterwards, I'll finish all my homework. This way, when my parents bring this up, I can explain that I already did these things and have free time to hang out with my friends.</p> <p>Before speaking with my parents, I'm going to power pose to increase my confidence. During the conversation, I am going to be mindful of using respectful words and body language because I know this will make it more likely for me to get to see my friends.</p>	<p>I'm going to use my superpowers list and my love letter to myself to remind me that I am smart, well-spoken, and have the skills needed to represent my peers.</p> <p>I'm also going to reach out to my support system. I'm going to start with my friends and let them know about my insecurities so they can work with me on overcoming them. My favorite teacher actually encouraged me to run for this position, so when I feel this way I also want to go to her to ask her for help.</p>

Maria and Diana used the WOOP framework to help them achieve something they wanted to do. They built plans by thinking about obstacles that could come up ahead of time. Their goals brought them closer to reaching the milestones on their journey map.





You can accomplish your goal by using the WOOP framework. Fill out the chart below using the goal you identified on the previous page:

<b>MY GOAL PLAN</b>	
<b>Wish</b>	
<b>Outcome</b>	
<b>Obstacle</b>	
<b>Plan</b>	



**How can you secure your safety as you work towards your goal?**

**How are you planning to rely on and utilize your support system?**



Come back to this page any time you want to work toward a new goal. You can start with education, and fill in the others as you'd like!

<b>MY GOAL PLAN: Education</b>	
<b>Wish</b>	
<b>Outcome</b>	
<b>Obstacle</b>	
<b>Plan</b>	

<b>MY GOAL PLAN: _____</b>	
<b>Wish</b>	
<b>Outcome</b>	
<b>Obstacle</b>	
<b>Plan</b>	



<b>MY GOAL PLAN:</b> _____	
<b>Wish</b>	
<b>Outcome</b>	
<b>Obstacle</b>	
<b>Plan</b>	

<b>MY GOAL PLAN:</b> _____	
<b>Wish</b>	
<b>Outcome</b>	
<b>Obstacle</b>	
<b>Plan</b>	



# Power







# Expressing myself: a power move

In your last journal entry, you reflected on your transformation over the course of this journal. Do you feel stronger? More confident to express yourself? Are you more likely to share your opinions and thoughts?

We also asked you to identify obstacles you overcame. These moments are important because they are real examples of your strength and determination. Every single time you weathered the storms on your path to expressing yourself, you exerted your power. We define **power** as **the ability of girls to influence people or events by expressing their opinions, needs, and ideas freely and confidently.**

Throughout this journal, you've discovered your power. But you know as well as we do that sometimes people can discourage you from using it. Globally, girls are encouraged to be agreeable and obedient. You may be told to prioritize tasks that develop your care-taking skills, like cooking and cleaning, instead of pursuing your hobbies. To help you express your power confidently, add the techniques below to your existing arsenal of tools.



## Before expressing yourself

- ▶ **Visualize:** First, imagine what it would be like if nothing went according to your plan. Is it something you can survive? Most of the time, you will still be able to stand on your own two feet. While the outcome may not be what you wanted, you exercised your power and expressed yourself – that is something to celebrate.

Remember, you're not alone. There are girls around the world alongside you using this very same toolkit. They believe in you. We all believe in you. You are resilient and can overcome all the obstacles thrown at you.

Now, imagine what it would feel like for everything to go smoothly. How good does that feel? Channel that positive feeling as you embark on expressing yourself.

- ▶ **Power pose:** Strike a power pose before you enter the space you will express yourself! A power pose is any pose that you feel radiates power and confidence. We love to replicate superheroines like Wonder Woman, Ms. Marvel, or the Dora Milaje from Black Panther.

## In the moment

- ▶ **R-E-S-P-E-C-T:** Sometimes simply existing as your truest self can be seen as an act of rebellion. You might be asking for permission to join a sports team or an overnight school trip. In these situations, sometimes acting in line with what "respectful behavior" typically looks like can help ensure your safety. This varies widely from one family or environment to another. In some places looking into one's eyes can be a sign of respect or a sign of defiance. We believe that if you are treating everyone with kindness and thoughtfulness, that you are being respectful. Take tremendous pride in that!



## After expressing yourself

- ▶ **Heal:** Give yourself a big hug! Regardless of the outcome, we want you to celebrate that you advocated for yourself! This is a major step in YOU determining the path of your life. Take some time to do something that makes you happy and relaxed. We're going to talk more about that in the next unit.
- ▶ **Reflect:** After you've had some time to recover your energy, reflect on how it felt like to express yourself. What was this experience like? What would you do differently next time? What went really well that you'd continue the next time? We recommend journaling after every time. This is especially important if you experience negative reactions. Documenting the behavior of people around you can help you recognize patterns when you might be unsafe.







# My power, my voice

By expressing yourself and your power, you're telling the world around you how you want to be treated. This is a form of **advocacy**, or **fighting for your right to live the life you want**. At She's the First, we advocate for all girls to live the lives they always wanted. We use the Global Girls Bill of Rights to guide us in our fight to ensure every girl is educated, respected, and heard.

You have firsthand experience in advocating for girls. By speaking about your own experiences, sharing your opinions, and pursuing your interests no matter how non-traditional, you're expanding what it means to be a girl. Your power gives you the ability to shape what happens around you.

It's powerful girls like you who are well-equipped to advocate for gender equality. By fighting for girls' rights, you're an **activist, someone who pushes for political and social change**. There are so many issues that affect girls, from climate change and reproductive rights to access to education and leadership opportunities. It can be difficult to know where to start because practically everything affects girls!

Start with the Girls' Bill of Rights. It's straight from the voices of girls themselves about what they want and need. It's the foundation of understanding what a world that offers girls equal rights and opportunities looks like. If all girls experienced their rights, they would be able to express themselves and embrace their power. You can find a toolkit with project guides and resources to support you in advocating for girls' rights. To access this toolkit, go to [girlsbillofrights.org](http://girlsbillofrights.org).



# JOURNALING ACTIVITY

Earlier in this journal, you reflected on the girls in your community, the rights they have, and how you would like for them to experience their rights. In today's journaling activity, write a story where you are the superheroine who advocates for the girls in your community and wins! Make sure to note the techniques you've learned in the safety, support, and self-determination chapters in your story. Sometimes, visualizing your success can inspire you to take action. You can kick it off by illustrating your story in the boxes below using the storyboard.



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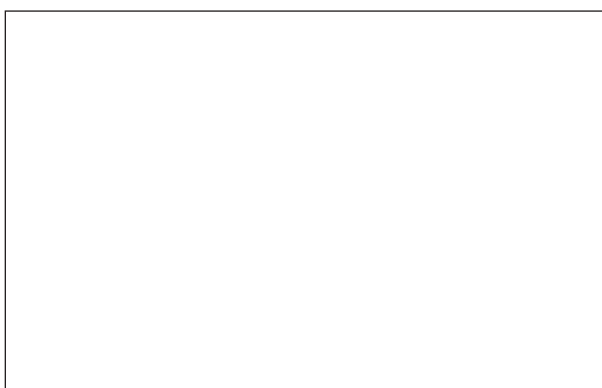
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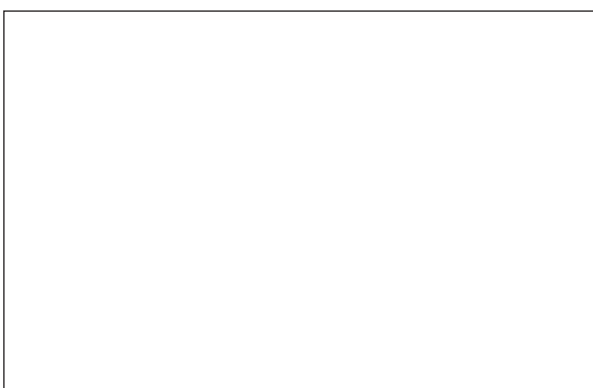
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# MY ACTION CHART ACTIVITY

In the chart below, think about how you can use your power for good by advocating for yourself and others around you. We've listed scenarios below to help you get started.

Scenario	How can I use my power for good?	What can I do afterwards to make long-term changes?
With my friends		
At school		
In my community		
At home		



<b>Scenario</b>	<b>How can I use my power for good?</b>	<b>What can I do afterwards to make long-term changes?</b>
When someone says something I disagree with		
When someone makes me uncomfortable		
When I disagree with a rule or an expectation		
When someone is being treated unfairly		



# A new chapter

Through this process, we know you've grown into a more resilient, strong, and powerful girl.

You decided to pick up this journal to discover your power. You did the hard work of taking time to understand your fullest self, find your voice, and express yourself. You learned new skills to ensure your safety and build your support network. You embraced the skills you had inside you the whole time, like all of your super powers!

We're so proud of you.

We want you to know that this is just the beginning of your new journey map where YOU decide how you want your life to be. Continue to use this journal as a resource to help guide you. We have blank pages below where you can reflect on your progress.

You're not alone in this fight. As you embark on the next chapter of your journey, you'll find us with you every step of the way. We've created a dedicated online community for girls (like you) called "Stand Up For Girls." Members can meet new people, discuss topics, host events, and more. You can join at <https://shesthefirst.mobilize.io/>.

You're a role model for girls around the world. We hope that you share this journal with other girls to help them discover their own power. As you navigate your next steps, keep us posted. Send us updates on social media @shesthefirst or email us at [info@shesthefirst.org](mailto:info@shesthefirst.org).









# **JOURNALING PAGES**



A series of 25 horizontal lines for writing.



Lined writing area consisting of 20 horizontal lines.





A series of 25 horizontal lines for writing.









Blank lined writing area consisting of 20 horizontal lines.



Lined writing area consisting of 20 horizontal lines.



