

# CONVERSATION GUIDE & JOURNAL

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## THE LANGUAGE OF THE SOUL

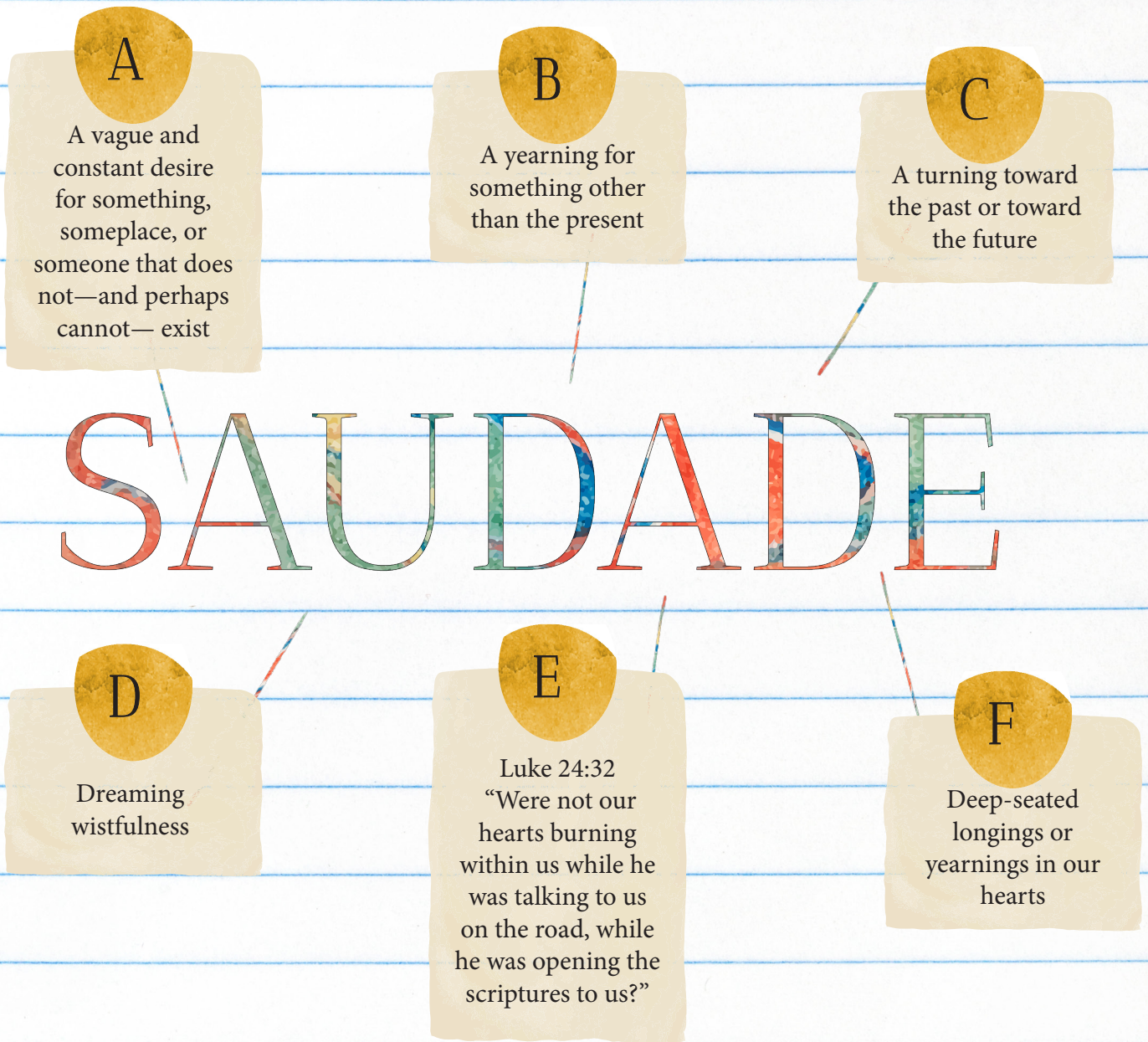
MEETING GOD IN THE LONGINGS OF OUR HEARTS

BY JEFF CROSBY

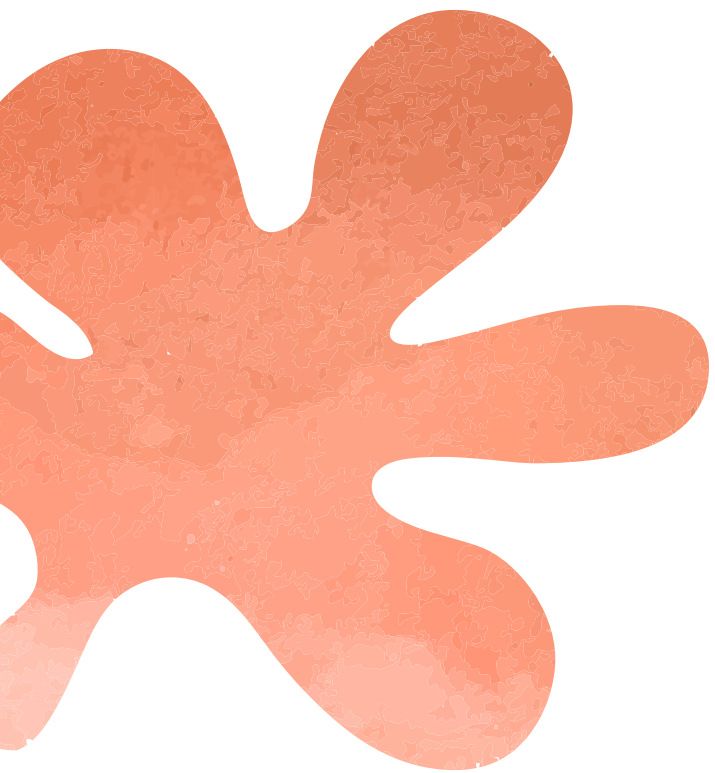


# INTRODUCTION:

Saudade – Listening to the Longings of Our Hearts



Notes:



## "WHENEVER

you find tears in your eyes,  
especially unexpected tears,  
it is well to pay the closest attention.

They are not only telling you  
something about the secret of  
who you are, but more often than not,  
God is speaking to you through them  
of the mystery of where you have  
come from and is summoning  
you to where ... you should go next."

- Frederick Buechner,  
*Whistling in the Dark*

Read and reflect on Psalm 38

Reflections:



# CHAPTER 1

The Longing for Home

— Where do you find home? —

SIGHTS

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SOUNDS

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SMELLS

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TASTES

---

TOUCH / FEELINGS

Reflections:



# CHAPTER 1

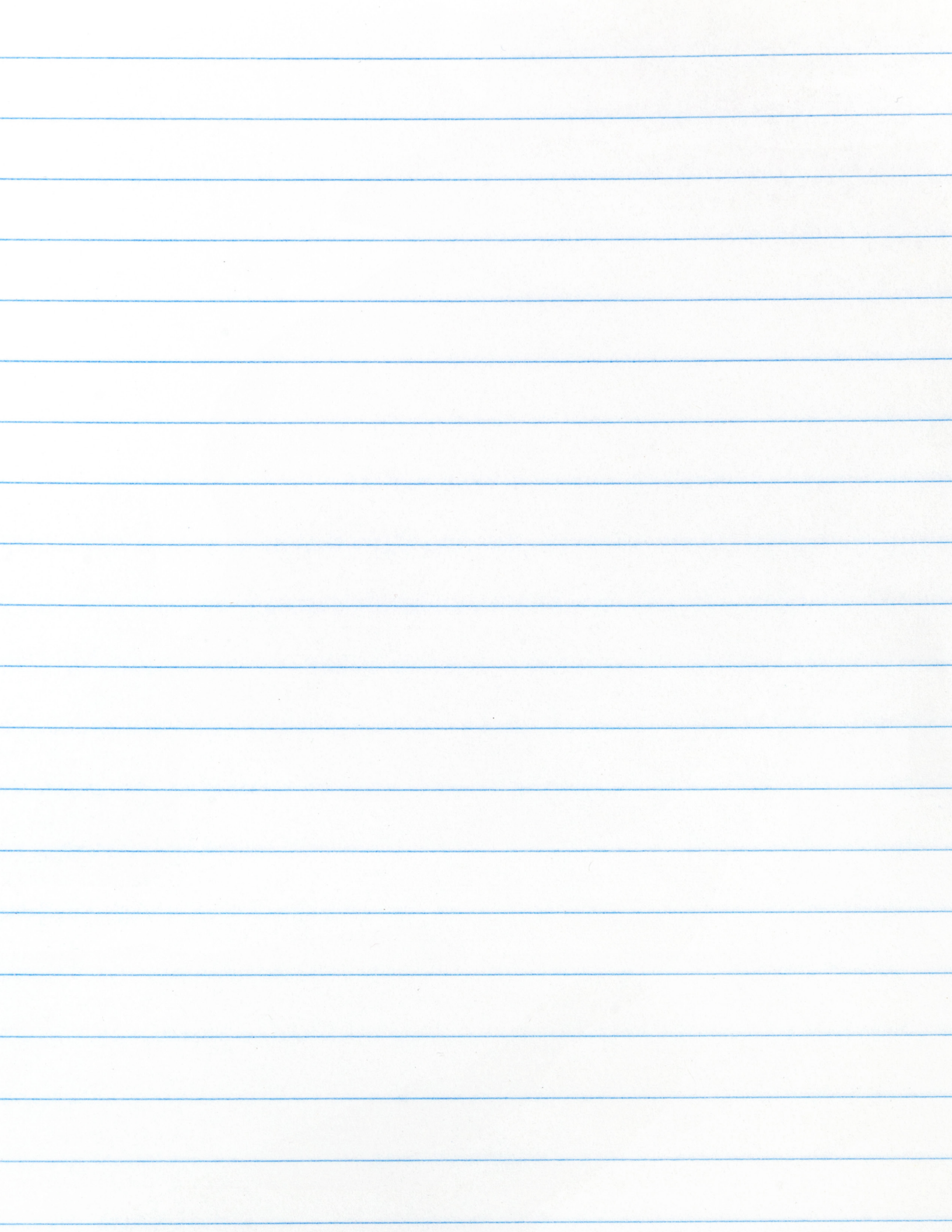
## The Longing for Home



How (if at all) is this longing for home, for you, a foreshadowing of what you've been taught about the concept of heaven?









# CHAPTER 2

The Longing for an Undivided Life

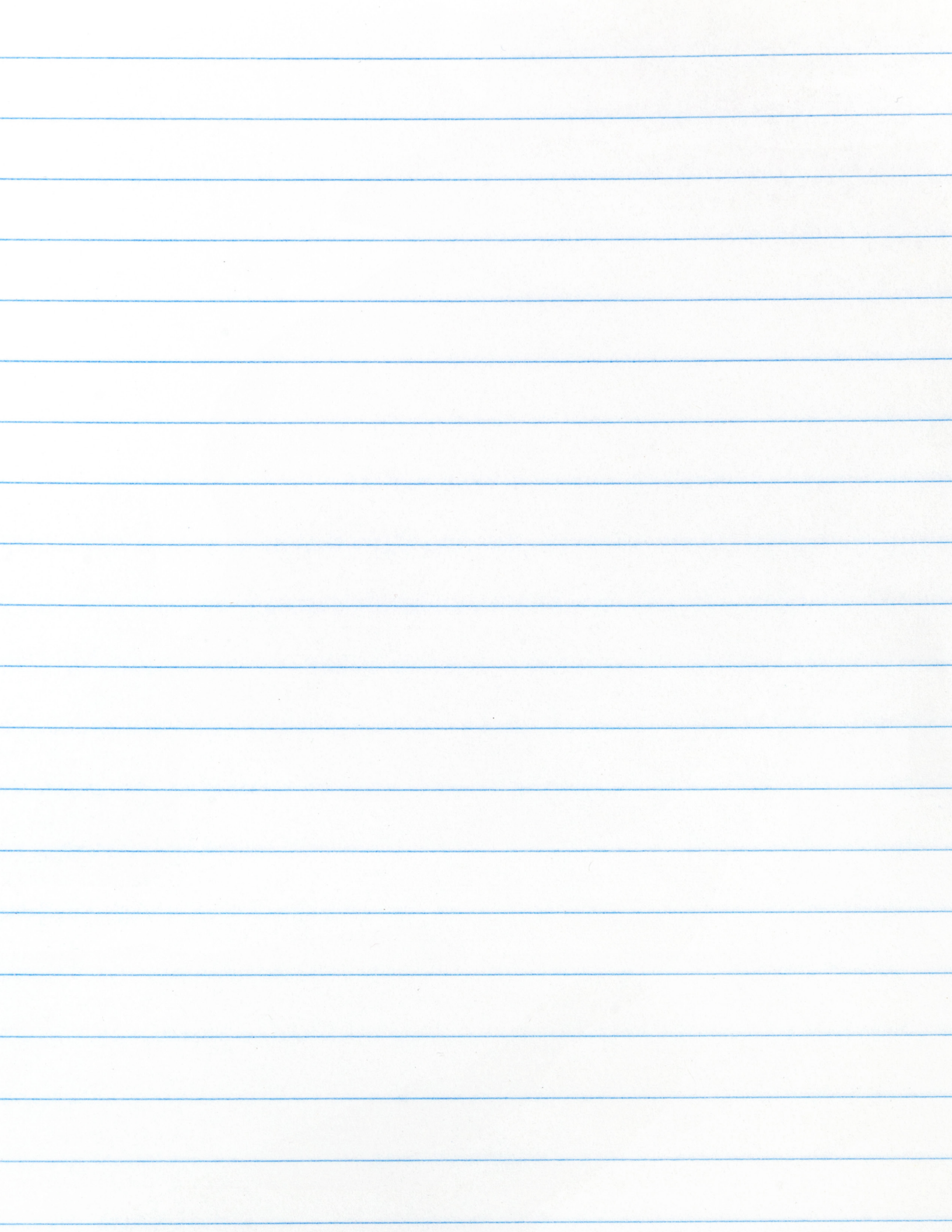
Moving from Dis-integration to Integration

"SIREN SOUNDS"  
OF DIS-INTEGRATION

HOW TO ATTEND  
TO THEM (practices)

What may God want me to be attentive to?







# CHAPTER 3

The Longing for Freedom from Fear and Anxiety



Where have you felt met – or how have you experienced being met – in seasons of fear and anxiety?



Who or what are your companions for calming fear and anxiety?

“WE ARE HELD,  
witnessed, accompanied, and loved.”

- Marilyn McEntyre



## "THE QUESTIONS OF THE EXAMEN

open our attention to how God's internal movement is present in our external comings and goings. They lead us to listen deeply to the data of our lives ... The examen helps us recognize the things that bring us death and life. Once these things are known, they become part of our ongoing interaction with God in prayer."

- Adele Calhoun

### ST. IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA'S (1491-1556) DAILY EXAMEN:

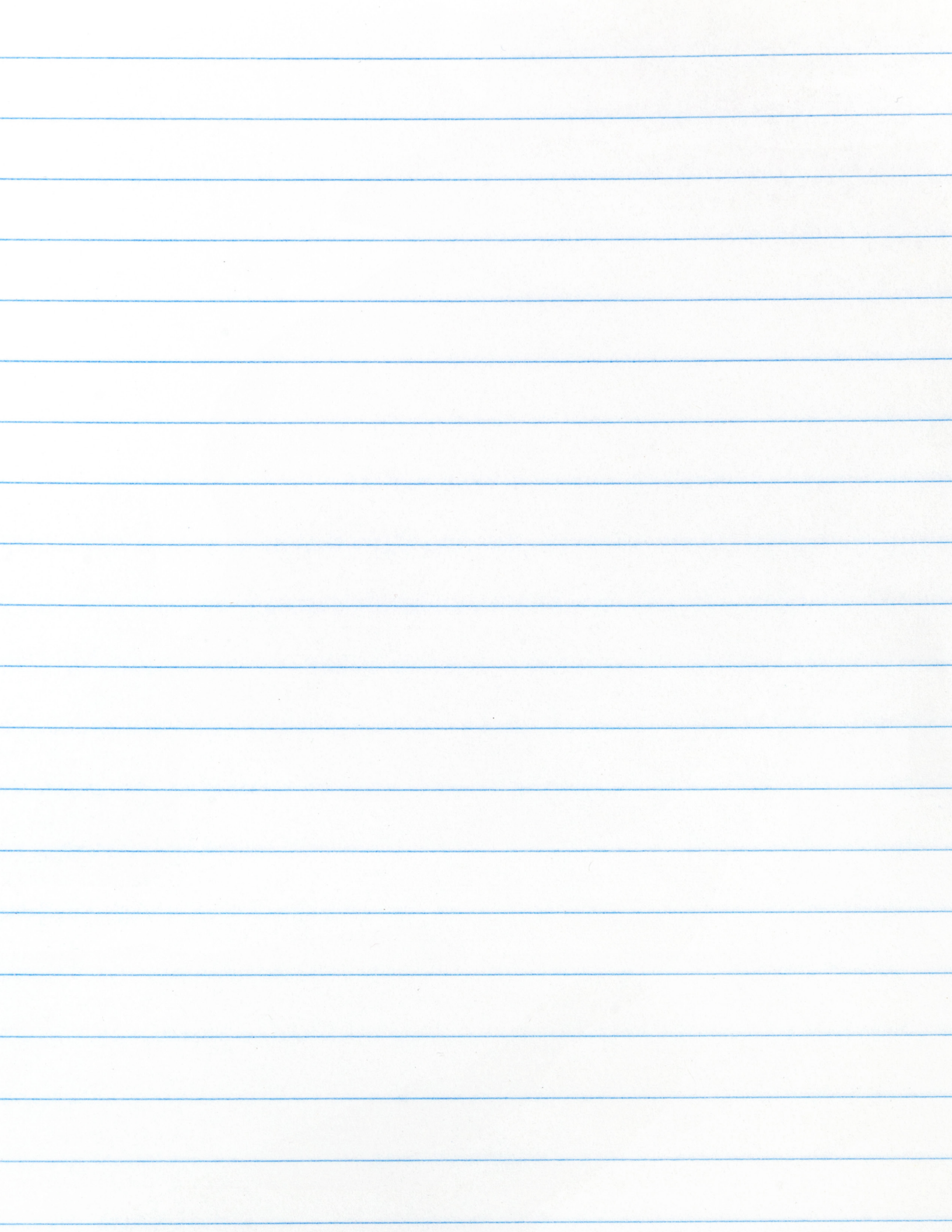
- ✿ 1. Where have you felt a deep connection to God?
- ✿ 2. Where have you felt God's absence?
- ✿ 3. What in your day has been life-giving?
- ✿ 4. What has been life-thwarting or depleting?
- ✿ 5. What is this telling you?

### MARILYN MCENTYRE'S

#### "EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE":

- BECOME AWARE OF GOD'S PRESENCE.
- REVIEW THE DAY WITH GRATITUDE.
- PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR EMOTIONS.
- CHOOSE ONE FEATURE OF THE DAY AND PRAY FROM IT.
- LOOK TOWARD TOMORROW.











# CHAPTER 4

## The Longing for Forgiveness

### *THE BOOK OF FORGIVING: THE FOURFOLD PATH FOR HEALING OURSELVES AND OUR WORLD*

-  1. Telling the story of what happened
-  2. Naming the hurt that we feel
-  3. Granting forgiveness as we recognize our shared humanity
-  4. Renewing or releasing the relationship



FORGIVENESS AND RELEASE COME THROUGH...

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For by **grace** you have been  
**saved** through **faith**.

And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,  
not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.

Ephesians 2:8-10 (NRSV)



**NINE ESSENTIAL INGREDIENTS  
OF A TRUE APOLOGY**

1. Does not include the word “but”
2. Keeps the focus on your actions and not on the other person’s response
3. Includes an offer of reparation or restitution that fits the situation
4. Does not over do
5. Doesn’t get caught up in who’s more to blame or who started it
6. Requires that you do your best to avoid a repeat performance
7. Should not serve to silence
8. Shouldn't be offered to make you feel better if it risks making the hurt party feel worse
9. Does not ask the hurt party to do anything, not even to forgive

—  
**DR. HARRIET LERNER**

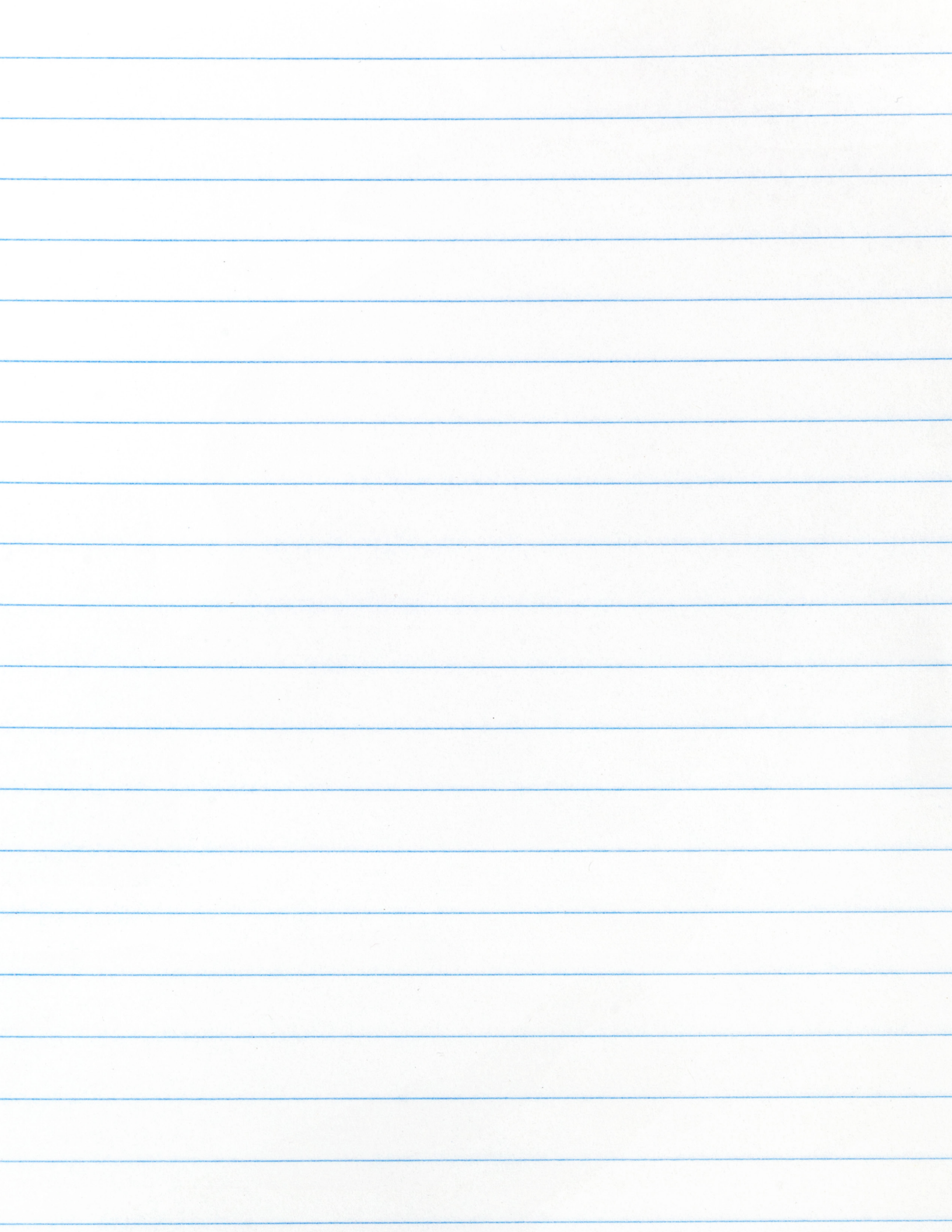
AUTHOR OF *WHY WON'T YOU APOLOGIZE?*



**Unlocking Us** PODCAST WITH **BRENÉ BROWN** | EPISODE #11

Reflections:







# CHAPTER 5

## The Longing for Spiritual Transformation

"LIKE THE JACK PINE FOREST,  
there are things "deep within the human  
spirit that are firmly embedded,  
dormant, latent and inactive," remaining that  
way until our lives are touched by fire."

- Howard Thurman



What practices, disciplines and/or pathways have led to your spiritual transformation in the past?

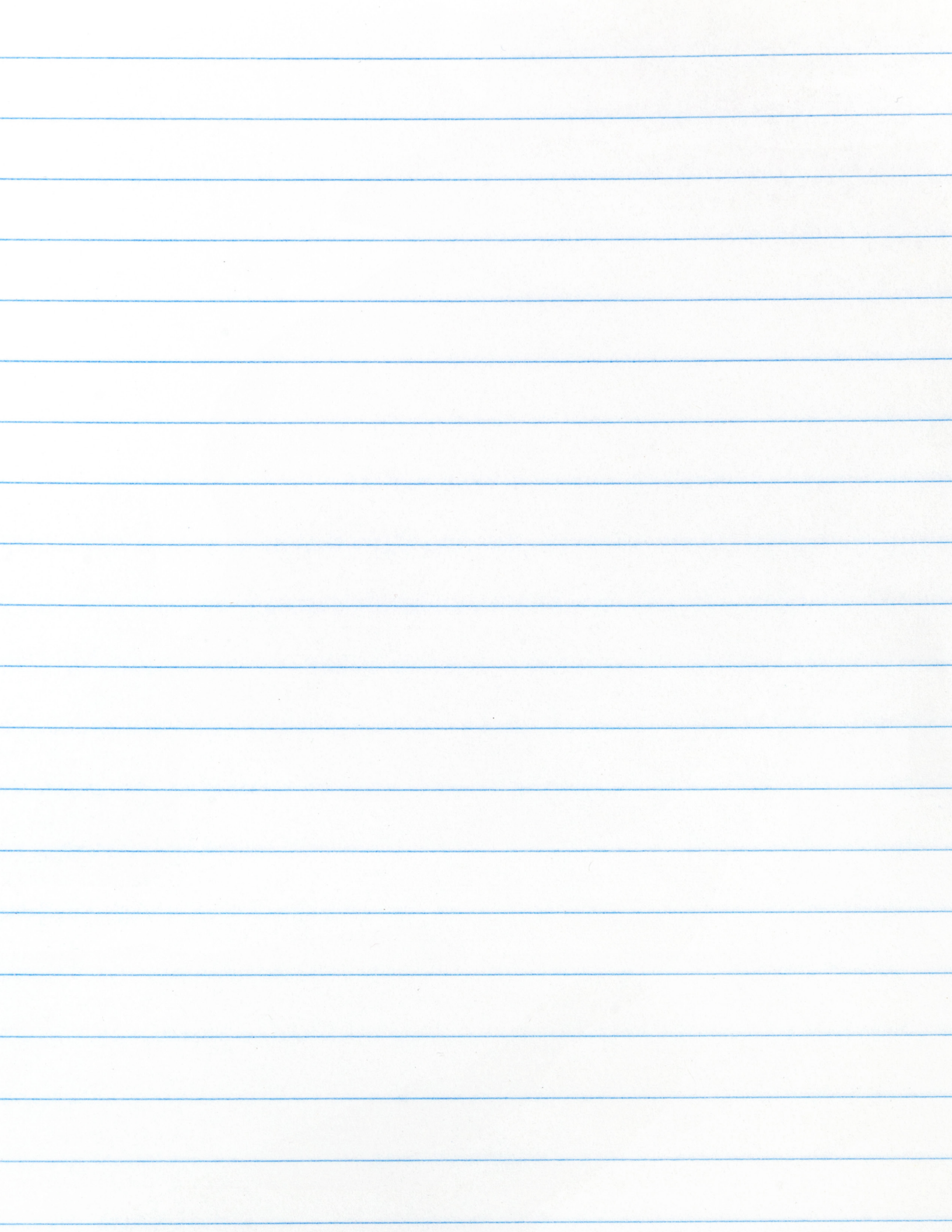


I am interested in exploring the following practices as incremental movements toward greater faith, hope, and love in my life:



I am committing to \_\_\_\_\_  
in service to my ongoing desire to grow and  
evolve in my faith.







# CHAPTER 6

The Longing for Peace

Google "Desiderata" by Max Ehrmann and read or listen to it being read by Les Crane

Reflections:

## SANCTUARY

SOUNDS LIKE...



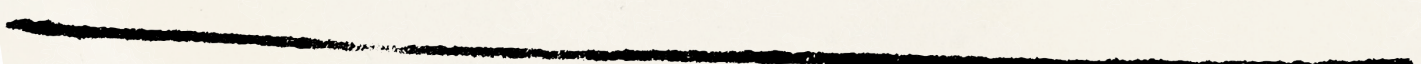
LOOKS LIKE...



FEELS LIKE...



SMELLS LIKE...



TASTES LIKE...



## CHAPTER 6: The Longing for Peace



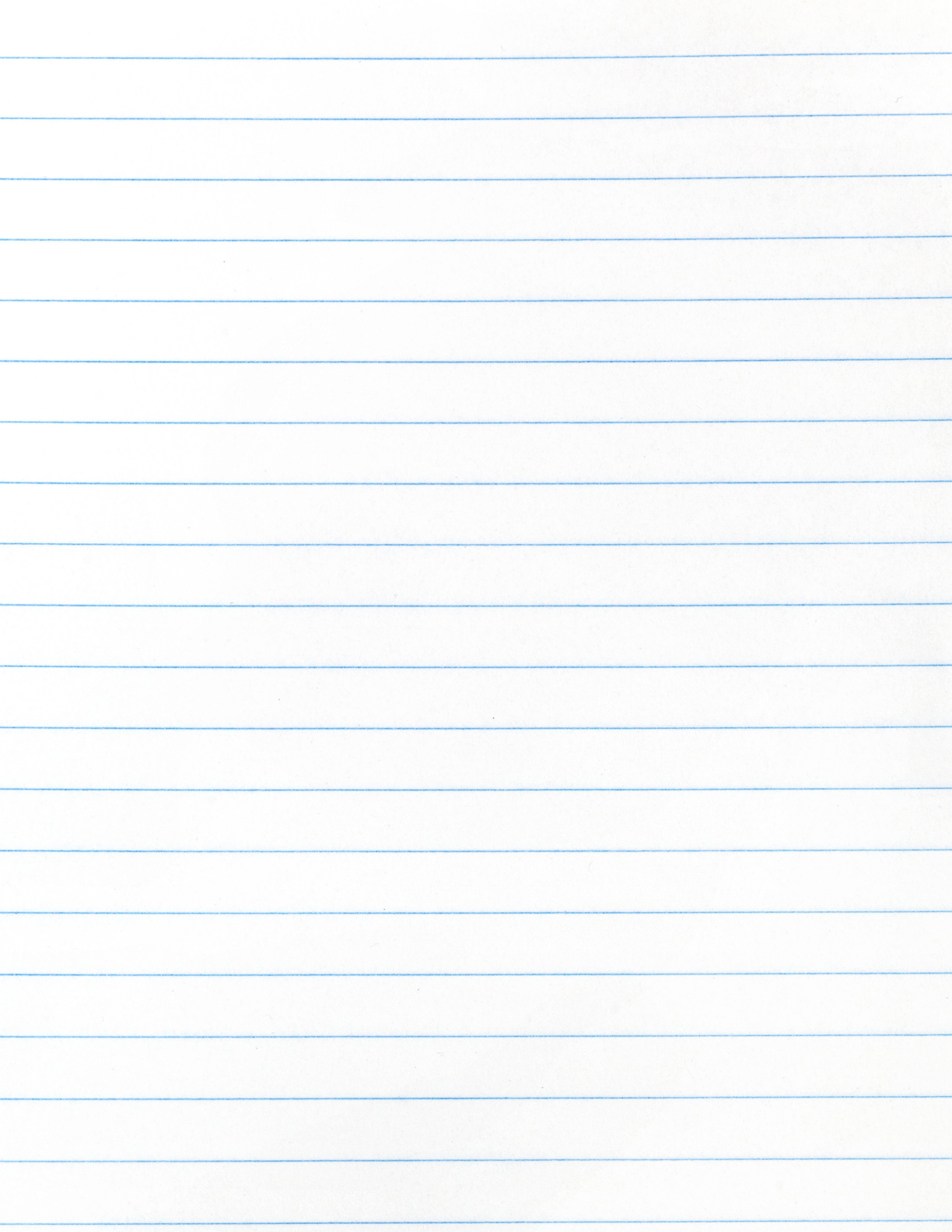
The most surprising places I have found sanctuary have been ...



I can always find sanctuary ...



I am filled with a sense of peace ...





# CHAPTER 7

The Longing for Community

## LITANY OF GIFTS PC (USA)

As in one body we have many parts  
and each part has its own function,  
so all of us together with Christ are one body;  
and we all belong to each other.

**We have different gifts  
according to the grace God has given us.**

If your gift is to hear God's Word,  
**receive it and share it in faith.**

If your gift is the heart of a teacher,  
**teach what is true.**

Let preachers preach with truth and conviction,  
and givers give with love;

**let officers work diligently for the people,  
proclaiming God's grace and peace to all.**

Let us not lack for enthusiasm,  
but be ardent in spirit,

**serving the Lord,  
rejoicing in hope,**

Being patient in suffering,  
constant in prayer,

**supporting one another,  
and welcoming all.**

Reflections:

"THERE'S A STORY IN THE  
NEW TESTAMENT WHERE  
THERE'S A WHOLE CROWD  
AND JESUS IS IN A HOUSE,  
AND THESE FRIENDS  
BROUGHT THEIR FRIEND  
WHO'S SICK AND NEEDED  
HEALING (MK 2:1-5). SO  
THEY OPENED UP A HOLE IN  
THE ROOF AND THEY LOW-  
ERED THEIR FRIEND DOWN TO  
JESUS TO BE HEALED. I'M  
ALWAYS LIKE, SOMETIMES  
WE'RE THE ONES LOWERING  
OUR FRIENDS DOWN, AND  
SOMETIMES WE'RE THE ONES  
BEING LOWERED. BUT IT'S A  
TEAM SPORT. SO WE DO, WE  
NEED EACH OTHER."

— NADIA BOLZ-WEBER



## CHAPTER 7: The Longing for Community

Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906-1945) was a German Lutheran pastor, theologian and anti-Nazi dissident who spoke out against genocidal persecution of the Jews and was later publicly executed at age 39 for conspiring against Hitler.

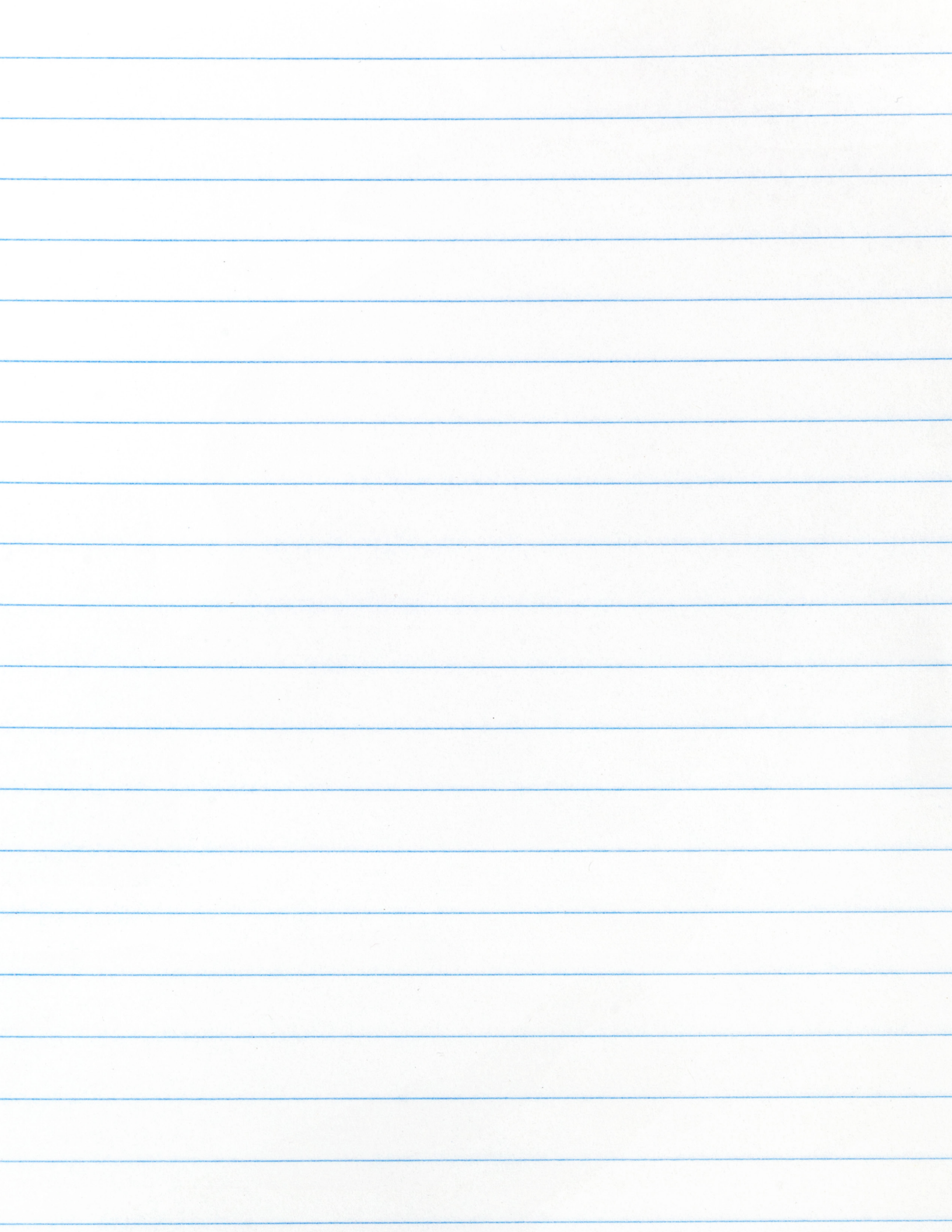
Central to Bonhoeffer's ecclesiology is that church is

**“Christ existing within community,”** and

**“The church is church only when it is there for others.”**

Notes:







# CHAPTER 8

## The Longing for Friendship

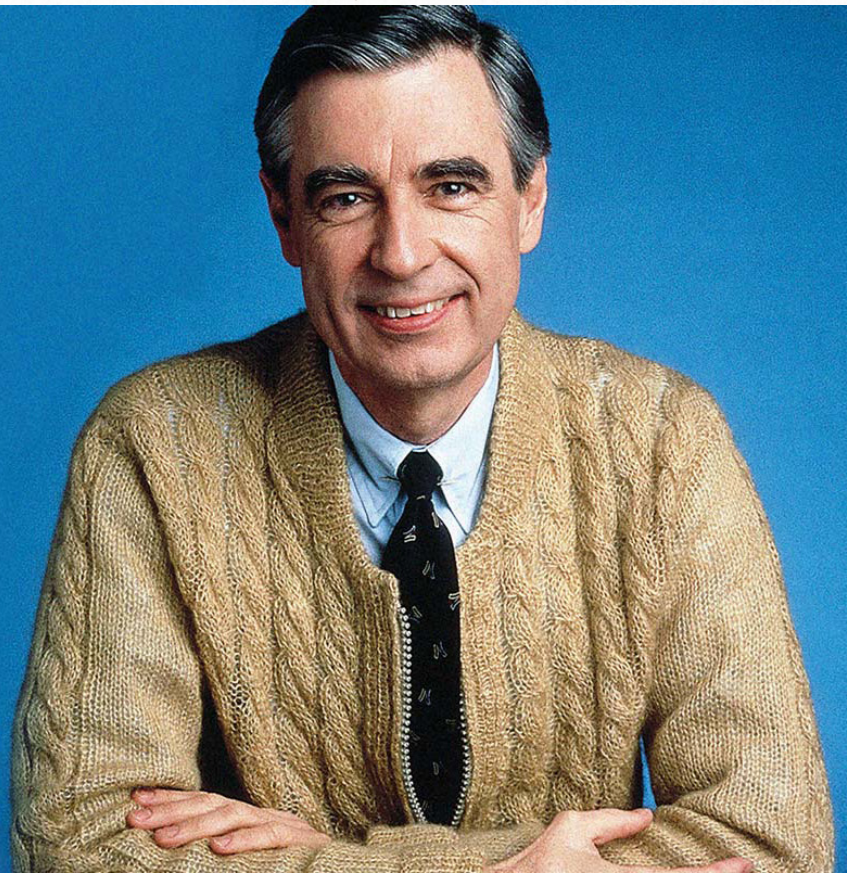
"IN EVERYONE'S LIFE,  
there is a great need for an  
*anam cara*, a soul friend. In this  
love, you are understood, as you are,  
without mask or pretension."

— John O'Donohue



"ALL OF US HAVE SPECIAL ONES  
WHO HAVE LOVED US INTO BEING.  
WOULD YOU JUST TAKE, ALONG  
WITH ME, TEN SECONDS TO THINK OF  
THE PEOPLE WHO HAVE HELPED YOU  
BECOME WHO YOU ARE ...  
TEN SECONDS OF SILENCE."

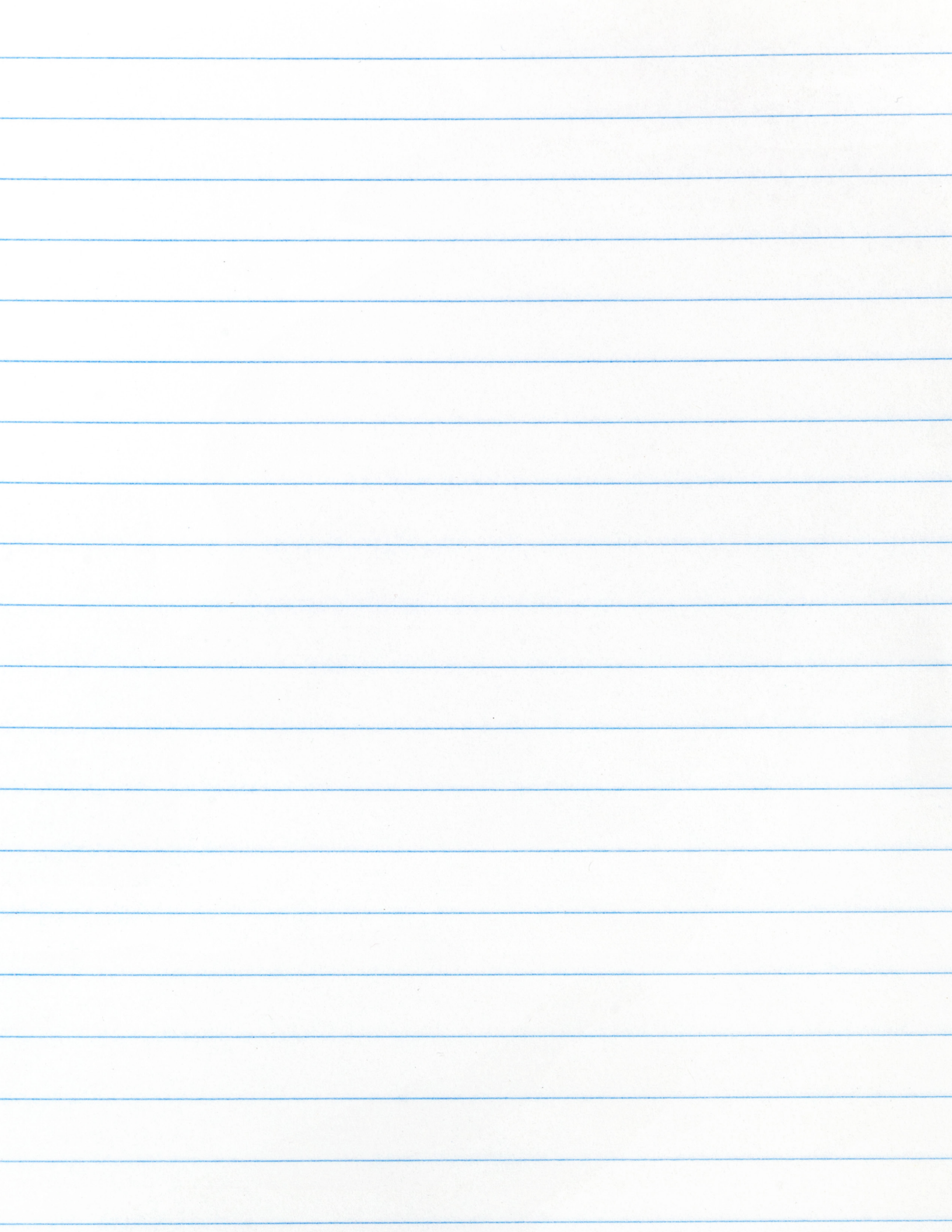
— FRED ROGERS,  
WHEN RECEIVING HIS  
EMMY LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD



### AN EXERCISE FROM FRED ROGERS:

Reflect on someone who has helped you see beyond the obvious, someone who has encouraged you to grow into a thoughtful person who cares about the essentials of life—perhaps “a person who ... longs for deep friendships and reaches out to others in response to that longing—just as our God reached out through Jesus the Christ our Lord.”







# CHAPTER 9

## The Longing for Meaningful Work

"GOD IS AS PRESENT  
in the liturgy of the world  
as in the liturgy of the sanctuary,  
but it is in worship that we tune our  
spirits to hear and see God  
amid the noise and bustle of work."

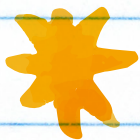
- Ben Patterson



What have you discerned about your own vocation?

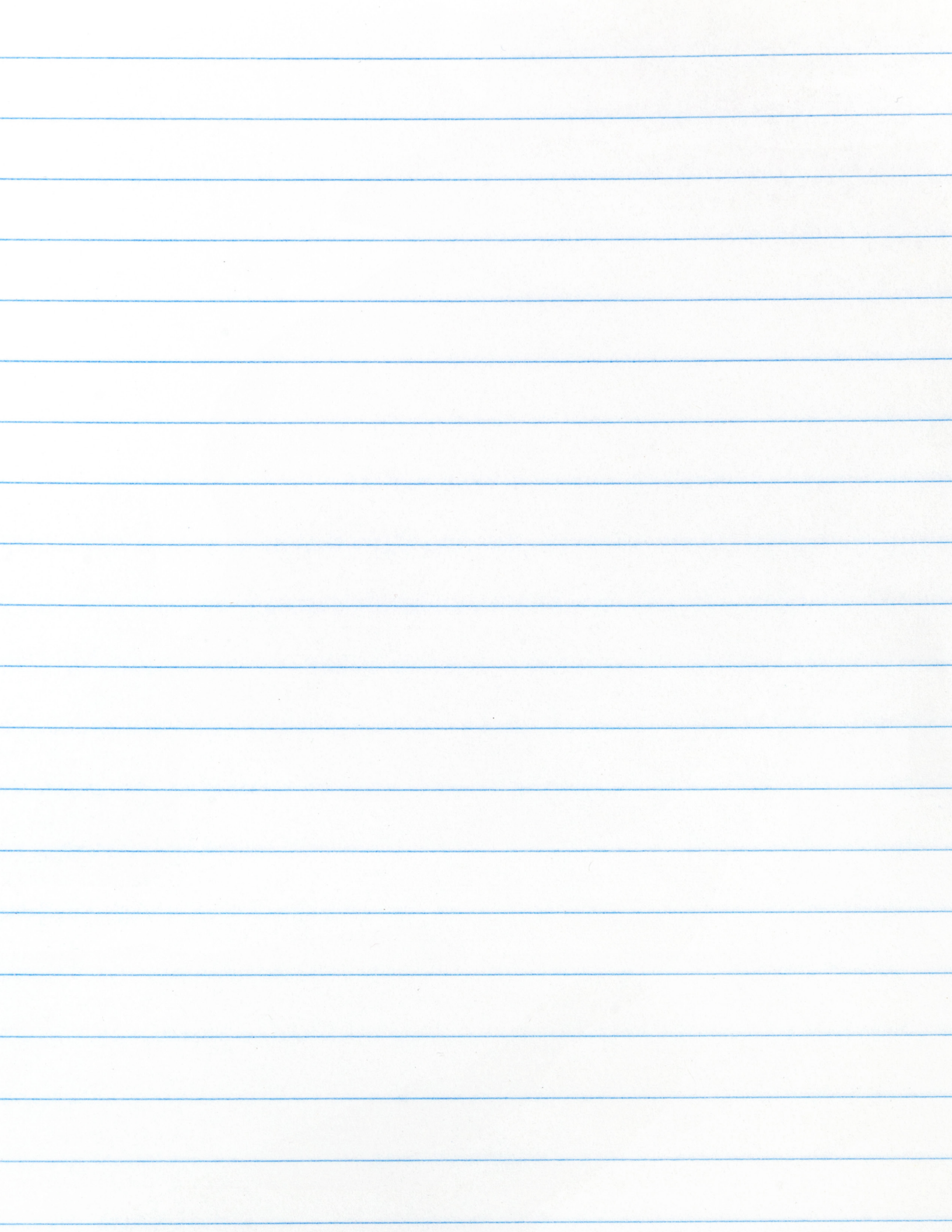


With whom are you in community to provide companionship and discernment on your journey?



Who around you can you routinely laugh and enjoy light-hearted moments with in the middle of the wrap and woof of the heaviness of life?







# CHAPTER 10

## The Longing for Heaven

Where do you or have you sensed or experienced a “thin place, a powerful reassurance of the Creator’s presence, love, and place of eternal life, even amid the mystery”? (pg. 161)

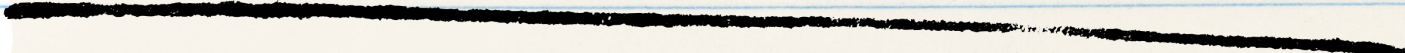
Reflections:

**☞ Making our way to our heart's true home,  
where what we want and what we have will be perfectly aligned.**

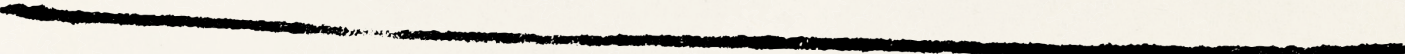


HEAVEN

SOUNDS LIKE...



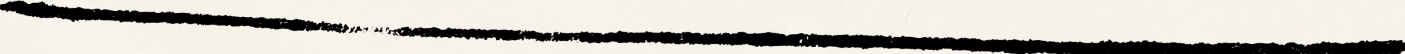
LOOKS LIKE...



FEELS LIKE...

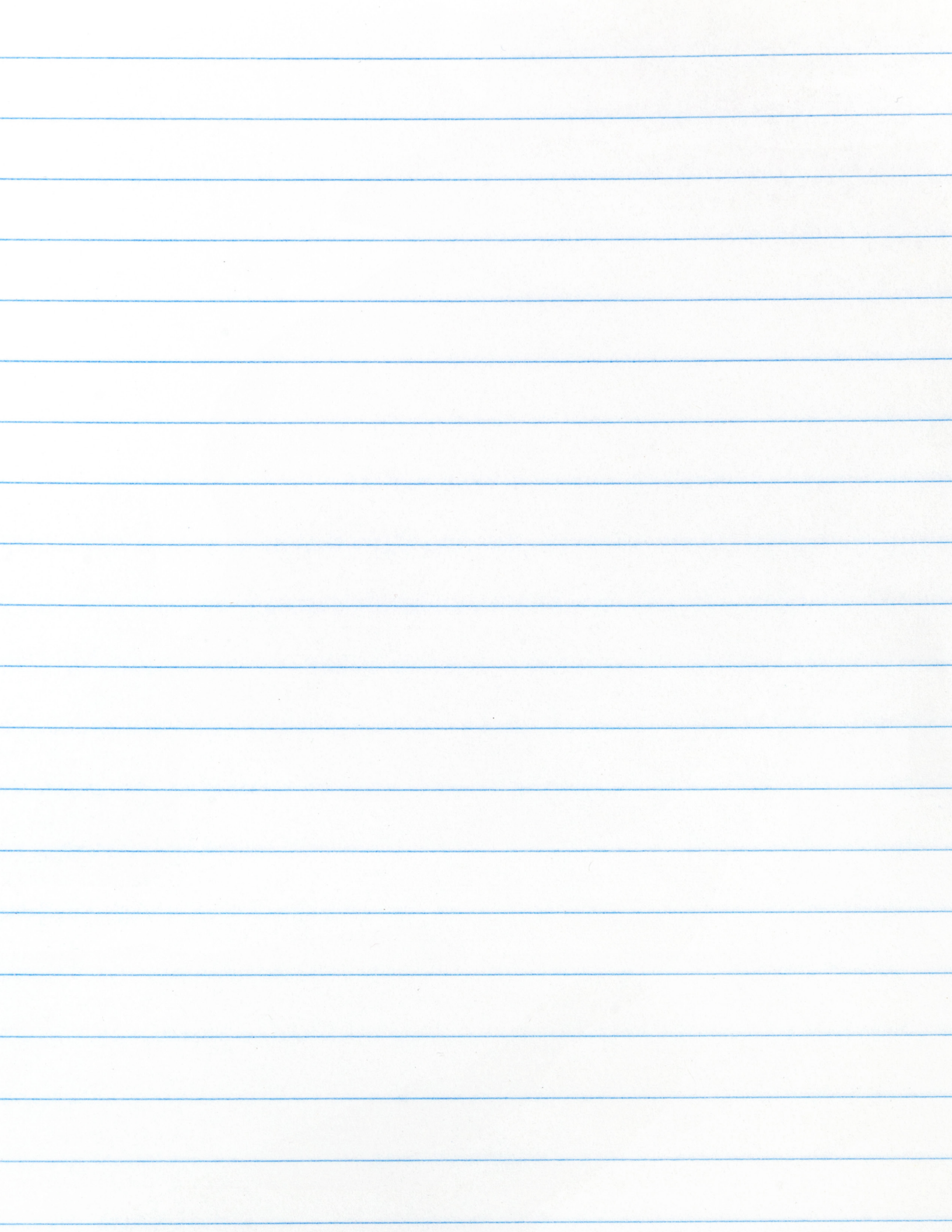


SMELLS LIKE...



TASTES LIKE...







# EPILOGUE

## FOR LONGING: A BLESSING BY JOHN O'DONOHUE

(1956 - 2008)

Blessed be the longing that brought you here  
And quickens your soul with wonder.

May you have the courage to listen to the voice of desire  
That disturbs you when you have settled for something safe.

May you have the wisdom to enter  
generously into you own unease  
To discover the new direction your longing wants you to take.

May the forms of your belonging—  
in love, creativity, and friendship  
Be equal to the grandeur and the call of your soul.

May the one you long for long for you.  
May your dreams gradually reveal the destination of your desire.

May a secret providence guide your thought  
and nurture your feeling.

May your mind inhabit your life with the sureness  
with which your body inhabits the world.

May your heart never be haunted  
by ghost-structures of old damage.

May you come to accept your longing as divine urgency.  
May you know the urgency with which God longs for you.

Notes:



## EPILOGUE

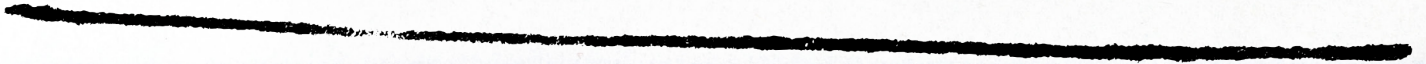
### Reflections:



What "ah-ha" moments have arisen for you on this journey?



Are there any unnamed longings of the soul you have identified which we have not explored?



GOD THE FATHER, SON,  
AND SPIRIT DOES,  
in truth, long for me, for you,  
for all of humankind ...

Our routes will be unique.  
Our roads will be long and winding.  
But we are guided along this camino  
by one who knows and loves us as  
children of great worth.  
And one day, we will be home.

(pg. 170)

