



# An Indigenous Language Advocate's Guide to Reflection



# Reflection is important

Thinking deeply about your experience is an important part of creating change in your life.

Creating change in your life is central to your language revitalization journey.

# Every language revitalization journey is unique

One purpose of reflection is to help you think about where you have been and where you want to go next.



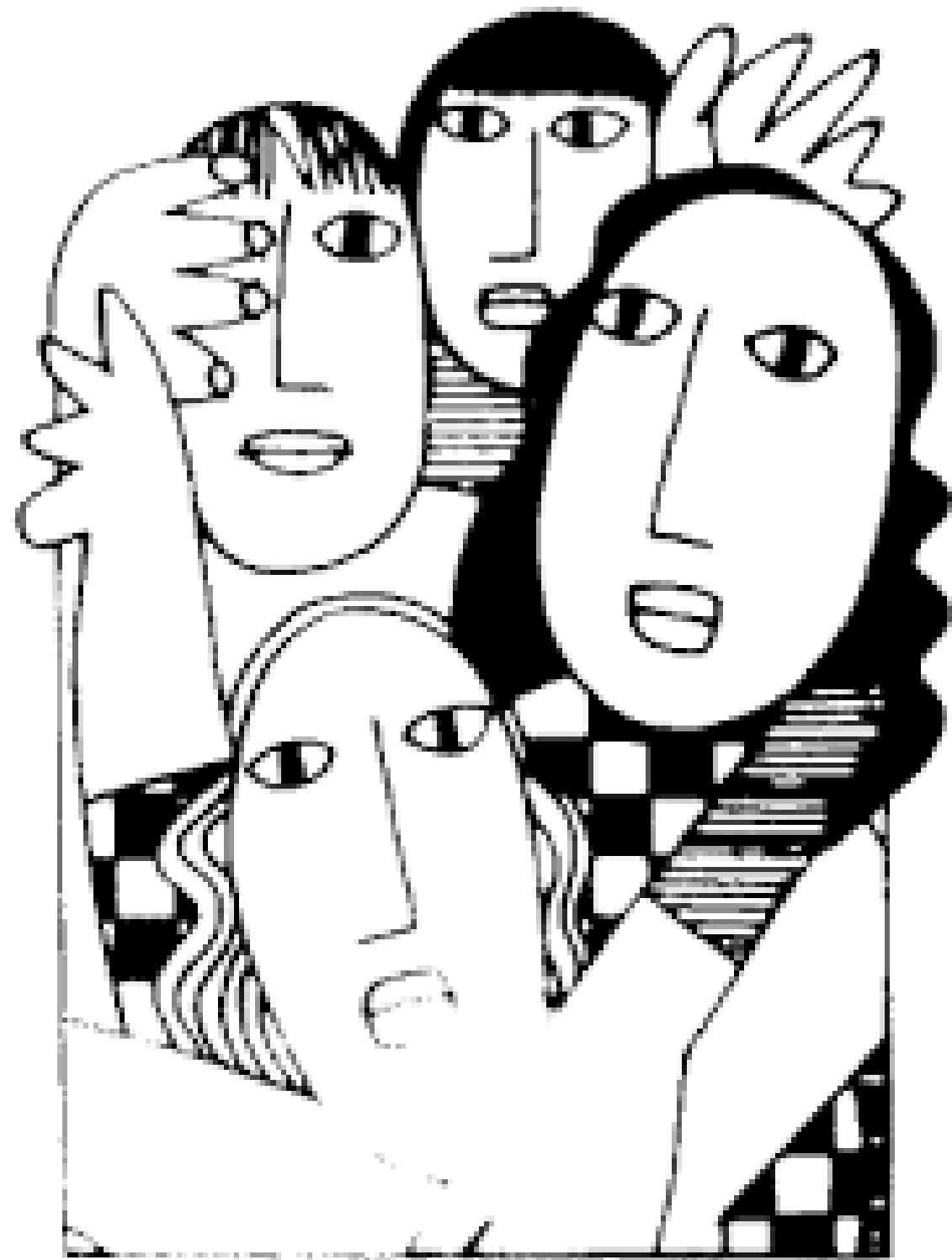
**REFLECT**



**LEARN**



**GROW**



# You can change your own life

Sometimes it feels like we don't have the power to change anything.

One path to change is reflecting on what makes you feel strong, good, and capable.

Another path to change is reflecting on how to take little actions that help you move along.

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# Little actions lead to bigger actions

What  
motivated me to  
take action?

When do I get  
excited about  
language  
revitalization?

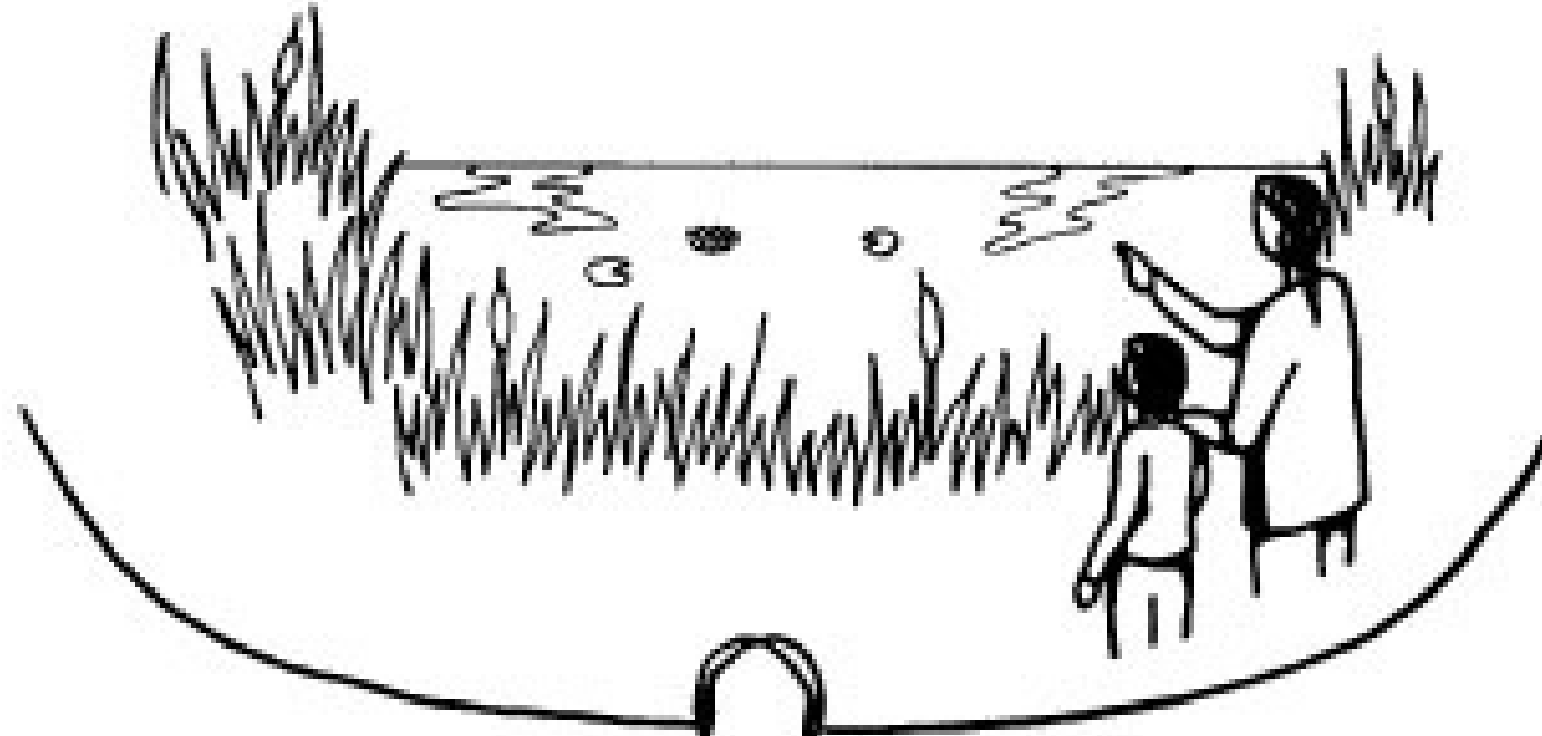
Who helps me  
be excited and  
take action?

# Know yourself

Knowing yourself makes it easier to get along with others.

If we understand our own emotions, motivations, and reactions we work better in groups.



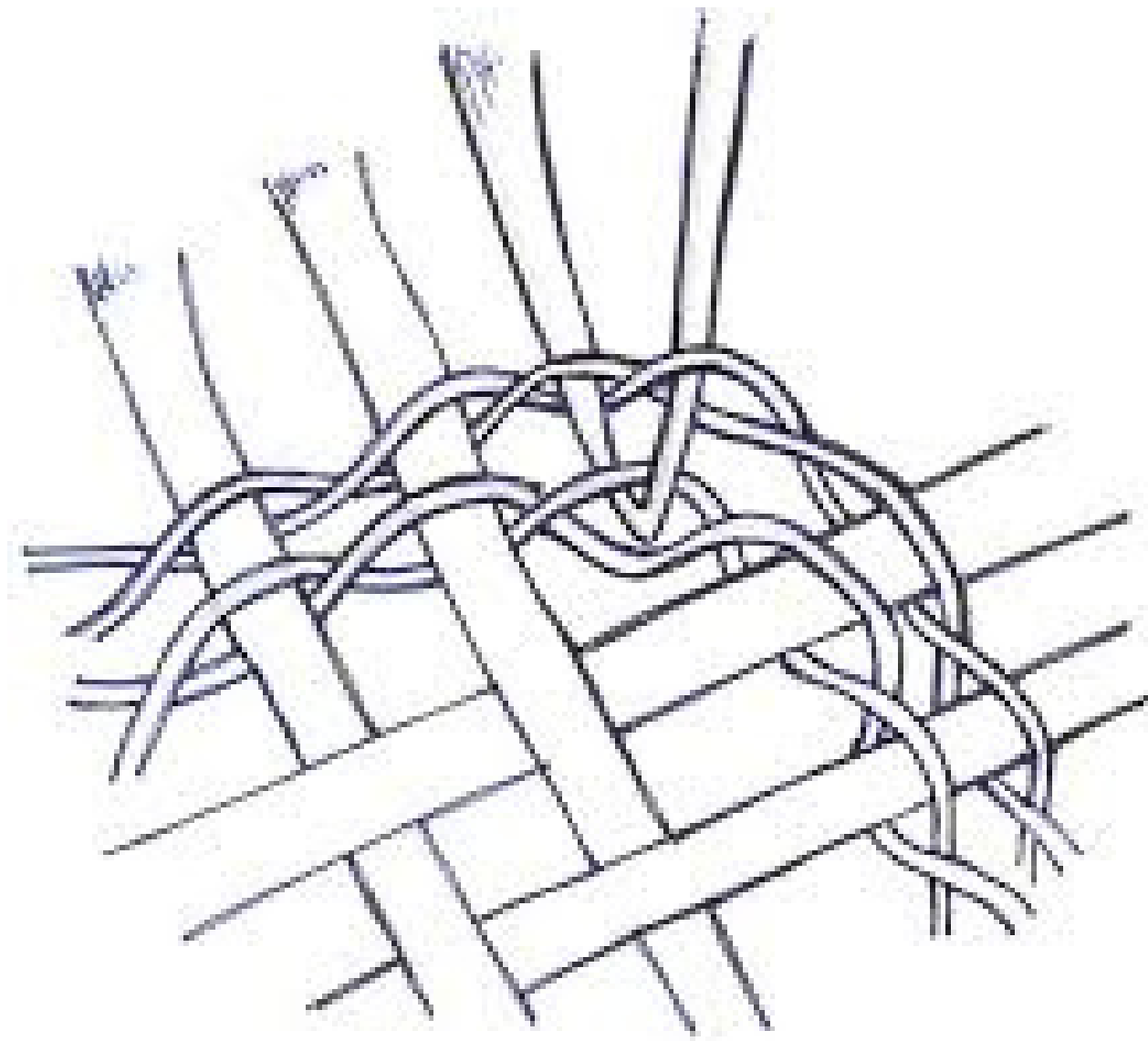


# Work together

While you can do language revitalization by yourself, usually you will be working together with other people.

Reflection is an important skill for understanding your relationships with other people.

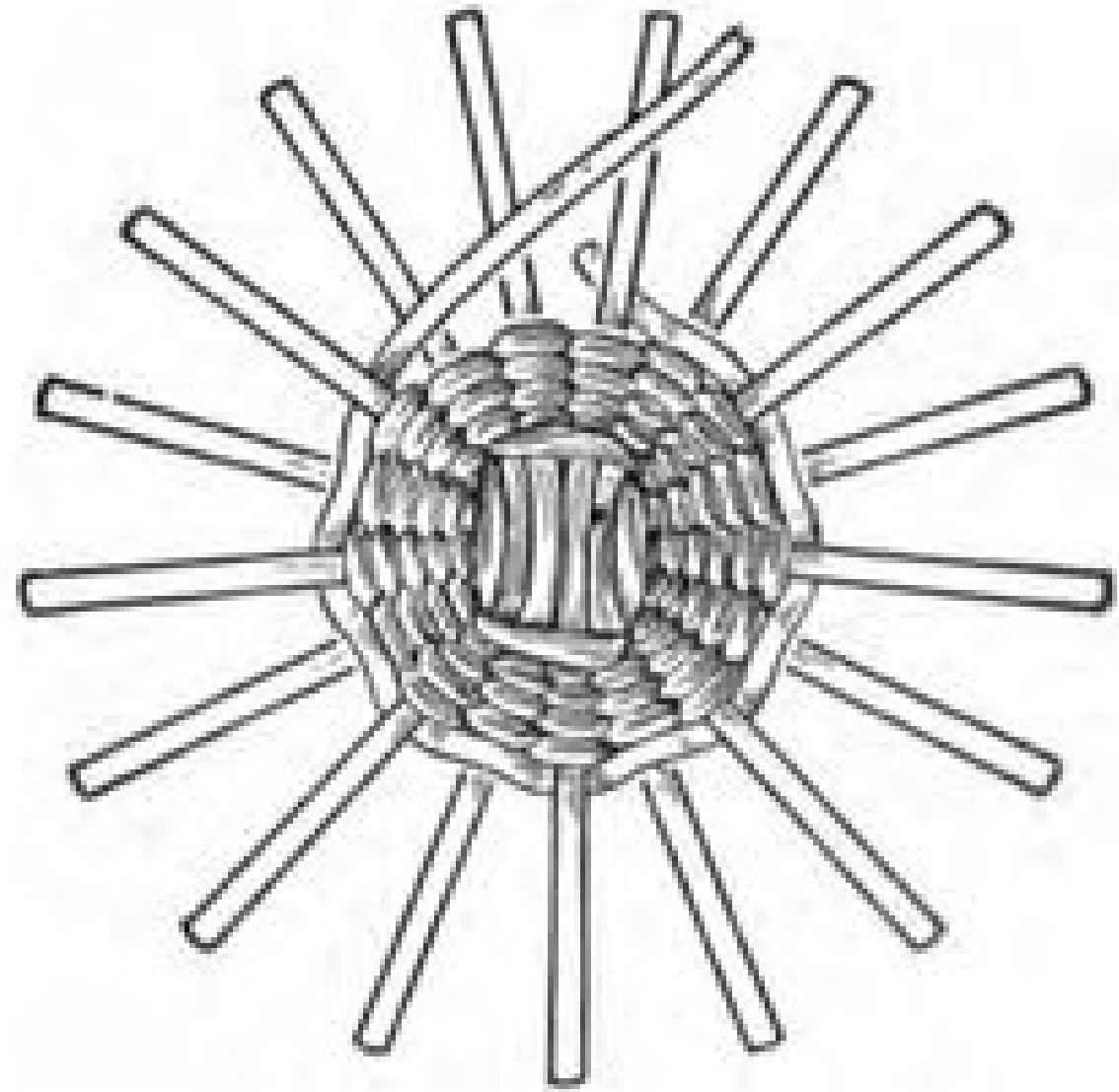




# Reflection is a skill

Certain people are not born more thoughtful than others. Like basket weaving, or language learning, reflection improves with **practice**.





# Write it down

Our circumstances are constantly changing. By keeping a journal you can track the patterns in your life.

Reflecting on those patterns can help you better understand your language revitalization journey.

# Journaling as a reflective practice

**TRY TO JOURNAL DAILY!**

Journaling is a simple way to  
start a reflective practice.



Like language learning, reflection  
improves with consistent practice.

# Find a place to journal

- 1 Find a place where you can sit comfortably and focus. If possible, go outside.
- 2 Try to make it a peaceful place, ideally away from screens, noise, or other distractions.
- 3 Turn off your phone and other devices. Take a few deep breaths.



# Set up your journal

- 1 Personalize the journal by drawing designs on it, put stickers on it, etc. You are more likely to consistently write in it if the journal is meaningful to you.
- 2 Number the pages in the right hand corner. This will help you keep track of when you wrote about specific topics.
- 3 Write your full name(s), date of birth, address, tribe(s), and language(s) you are learning on the first page of your journal.
- 4 Write the current date and an initial journal entry. Journal about anything that matters to you as an Indigenous language advocate.



# First journaling activity

1

Write a language revitalization autobiography. This activity helps orient you and also potential future readers (if you decide to share) to the context of your life as an Indigenous language advocate.

2

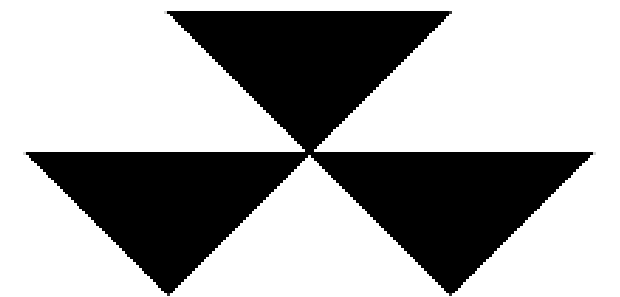
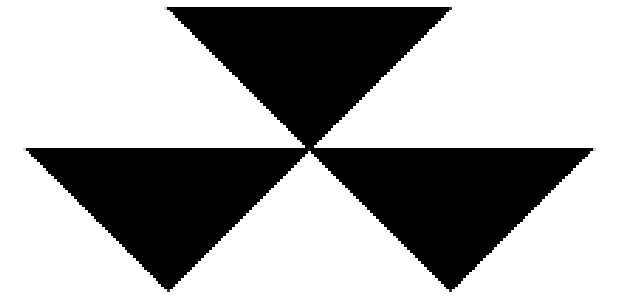
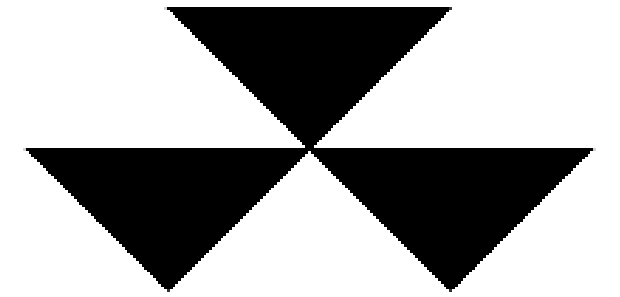
Include things like how you became interested in language revitalization, current circumstances of your language work, your hopes and dreams for the future, etc.

3

Include relevant background of the places, people, and experiences that have been important to your language revitalization journey so far.

4

Try to reflect deeply on what influences have lead you to life as an Indigenous language advocate. Don't rush. Really take some time to think about it.



# Suggestions for autobiography

1

Include information about your parents or other important relatives, what tribes they are, what languages or dialects they speak or come from, and the Indigenous language history of your family.

2

Write about where you grew up, where you have lived in your life so far, where you live now, and where you do language revitalization. Include who your language mentors are, how often you learn with them, where they come from, and where they live now.

3

Include a description of what kind of language revitalization activities you do, the people you revitalize with, and how often you are able to gather/meet (including online).

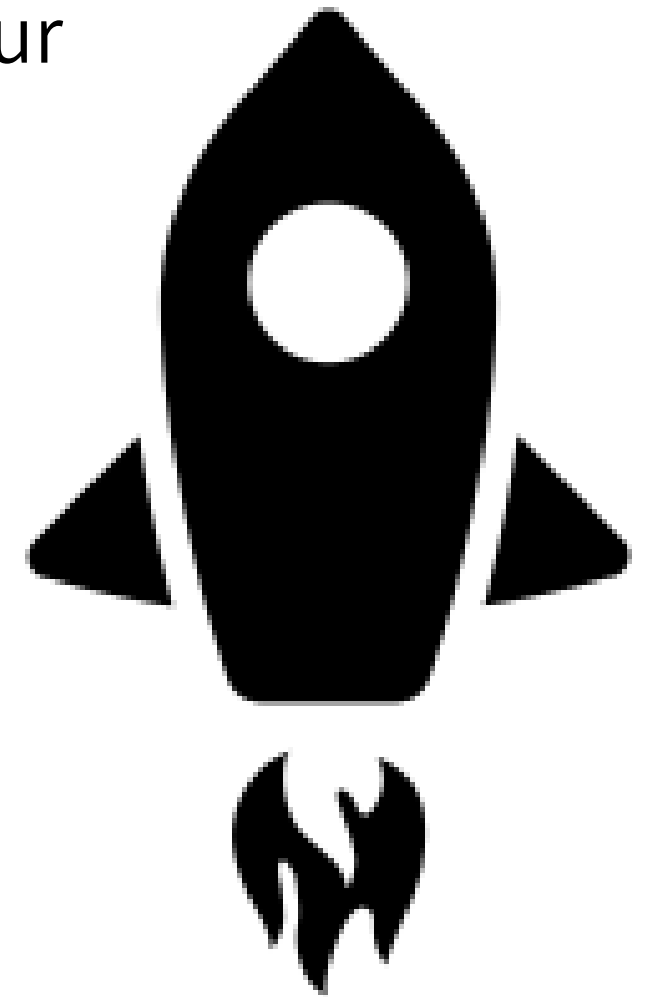
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Don't worry if you are not able to document all of these suggestions. Just do the best you can. You can always come back to it later and add more detail.



# Congratulations! Now keep going

- 1 Starting is the first step in building a reflective practice. Next, you must create consistency.
- 2 If possible journal in the same place and/or at the same time on a regular schedule to create a pattern. Consistent times, locations, and routines cue your mind to repeat the action.
- 3 Being consistent about when, where, and how you do things is also really good practice for language learning.
- 4 Below your first entry, write when and where you are going to journal on a consistent basis. Try to track your progress. Always document the time, date, and location of your journal entries.



# Know your reasons and purposes

There are lot of possible reasons and purposes for journaling.

What do you want to reflect on, document, and think about?

## EXAMPLES

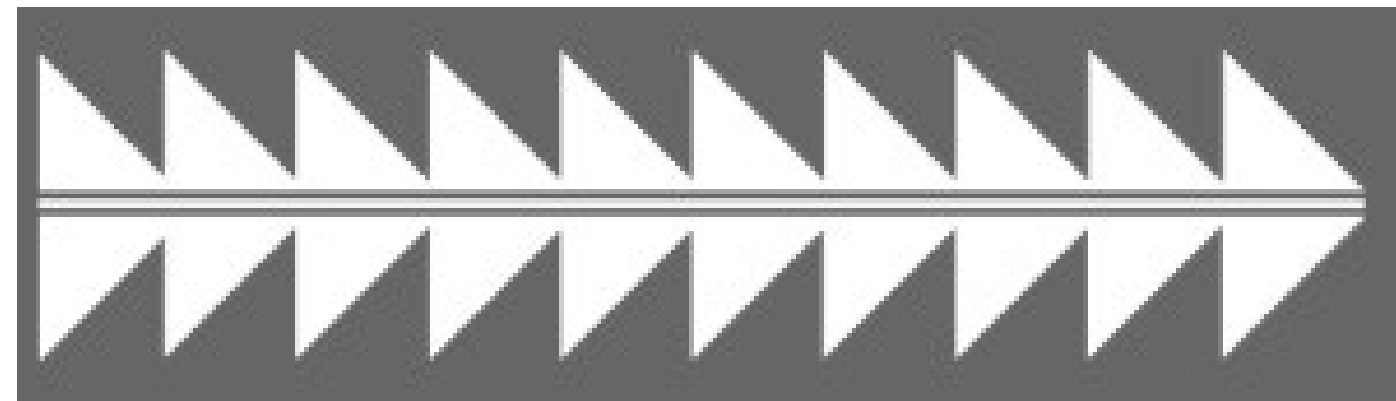
1. Journal to document language learning.
2. Journal to gain insight into relationships.
3. Journal to understand the self.
4. Journal for health and well-being.
5. Journal to help think through decisions.
6. Journal to document personal experience.
7. Journal to track patterns and progress.
8. Journal for self-expression.
9. Journal to share with others.
10. Journal to identify goals, gaps, or gains.

**Whatever you journal about, it must be meaningful to you!**



# Create a system that works for you

- 1 For some people creating a consistent journaling practice will be as simple as regularly sitting down to reflect, think, and write.
- 2 Other people will do better by following templates, journal prompts, or always writing on a specific topic.
- 3 Many people will struggle to journal on a regular basis. If you struggle, don't worry. Just keep trying.
- 4 Just like language learning, failing in your reflective practice is an important part of the process. Consistency is reached through persistent attempts.

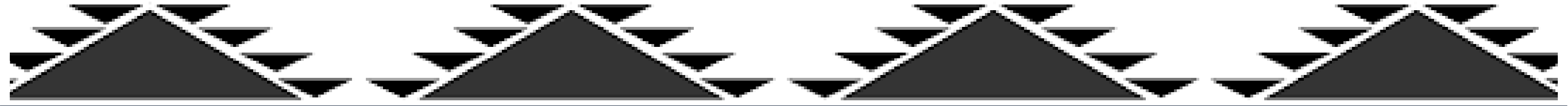


# A morning routine template



- 1 A meaningful language revitalization experience from yesterday.
- 2 Something I appreciate about my language revitalization journey.
- 3 Something I could do with greater intention to improve my language revitalization practice.
- 4 Top 4 things to do today for my language revitalization practice.

# An evening routine template

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- 1 Did I do my top 4 things for my language revitalization practice? Why or why not?
  - 2 What helps and/or challenges me in my language revitalization practice?
  - 3 What do I need to set aside this evening so I can rest well?
  - 4 What word or phrase in my language can I say to end my day? What good thought does it represent?

# Reflect on collective work

Prompts and questions for working  
with peers, mentors, friends, family,  
and community

What do you want to  
reflect on, document,  
and think about?

What was the most enjoyable  
or memorable moment of  
today's work?

What was the most  
challenging part of today's  
work?

What have I learned from  
others that I would like to try?

What am I learning from my  
challenges?

What inspires me to work with  
others on language  
revitalization?

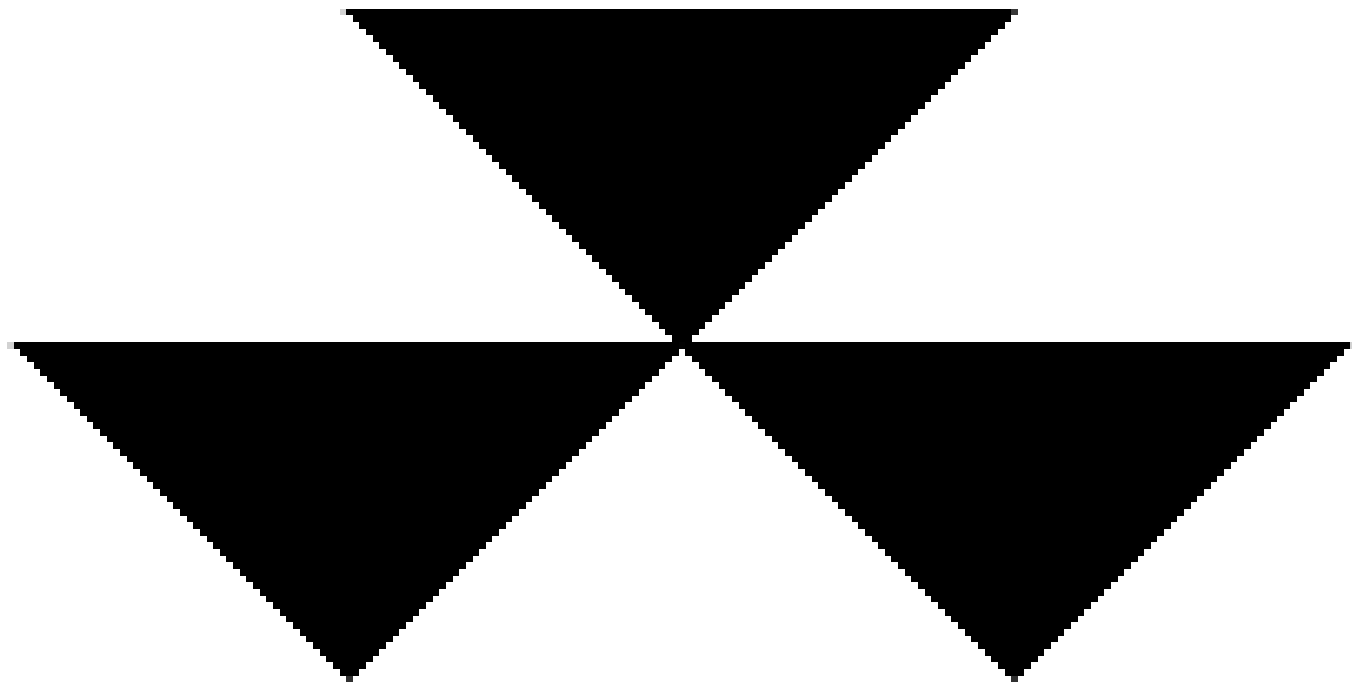
Where can I share what I  
learned?

Who supports me in my  
language revitalization  
journey?

What matters to me in  
working with others? Why are  
those things important to me?

Who challenges me in my  
language revitalization  
journey?

What can I do differently to  
work better with others?



# *A vision for your language*

Use one of your first journaling sessions to create a vision for your language.

Be sure to include yourself in your vision. Use words, pictures, symbols, or whatever inspires you to imagine a positive future for your language.

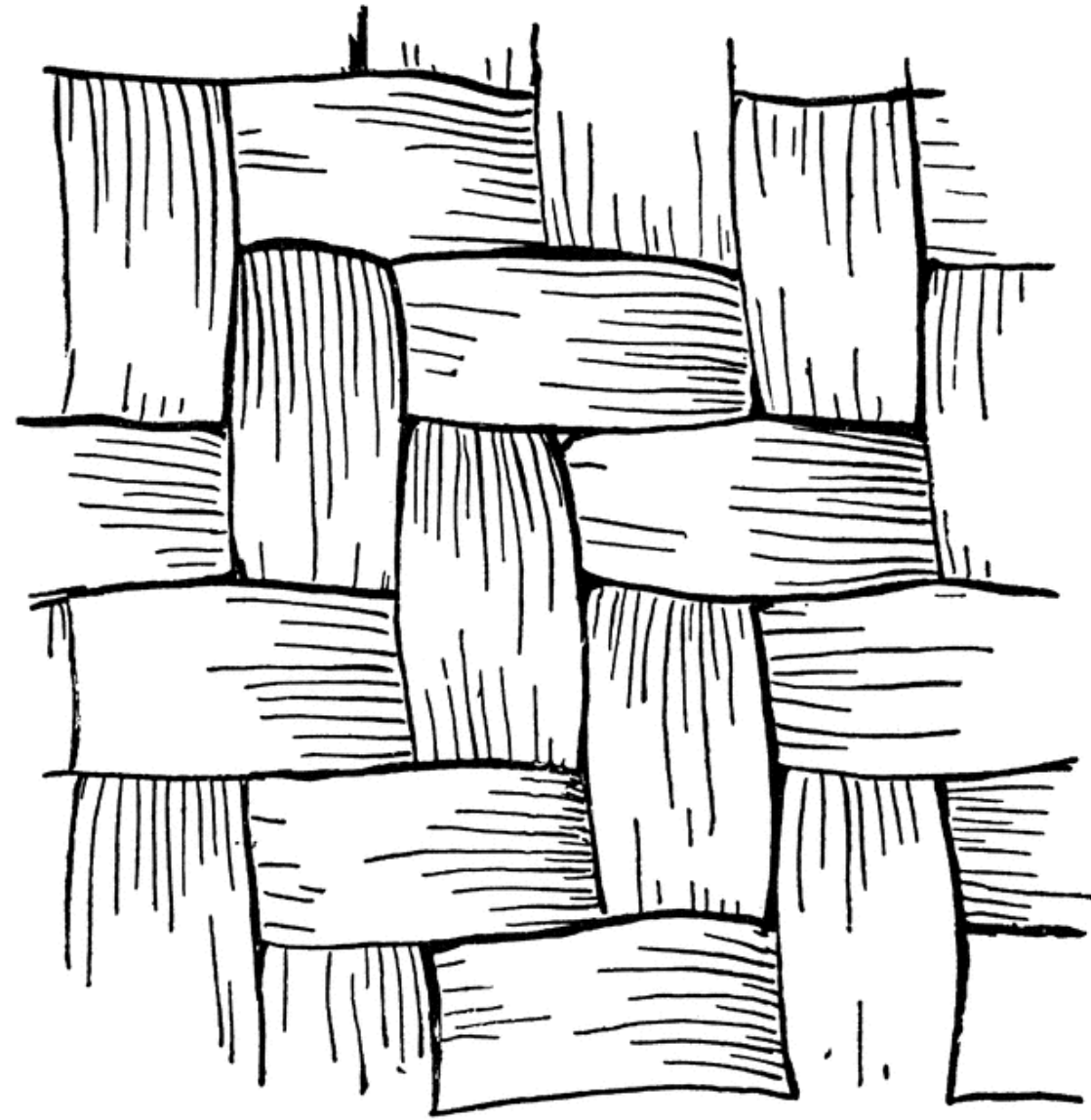
# Reclaim Domains

Reclaiming domains is about creating new habits around language use for a specific activity, location, or relationship.



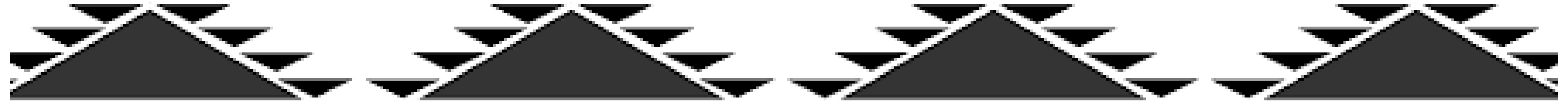
Like with journaling, it involves forming consistent patterns of behavior through reflection, concentration, and practice.

# Journaling about reclaiming domains



Where can you start to weave  
more language revitalization  
into your life?

# Suggestions for building new habits



- 1 Start small and simple. Don't set the difficulty level too high. You can expand when what you are doing starts to feel like it doesn't require much effort.
- 2 Value repetition. New habits take a long time to form. Your mind will resist following a new pattern. Don't worry. Eventually, it will get easier.
- 3 Build new habits with other people in your life. It's much easier if somebody else is also committed to creating change.
- 4 Be consistent in the time, place, and routine of your new habit. The world around us helps our spirits, bodies, and minds to support new patterns.



# Language revitalization is your life

Language revitalization does not have to exist in a separate category.

You can integrate language revitalization into anything you do.

What motivates you to bring more language revitalization into your life?

New habits, whether around journaling, language use, or anything else, can be challenging to form. Understanding what motivates you helps you integrate language revitalization into your daily life.

# Persist, Practice, Repeat, Improve

Language revitalization is not separate from your life. It is your life.

Use language revitalization to help you and the people around you  
have good lives.

Use reflection to improve your Indigenous language advocacy.



# Credits

This guide was created as part of a joint project on youth leadership between the Advocates for California Indigenous Language Survival and MICA's Next Steps Language Revitalization Project.

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