

Eric Maisel

90 Days of Inner Peace



Wellness Journal Series

Reality is not easy. The seas rise; tyrants appear; our rights are threatened. We get sick. We get heartbroken. Our savings dwindle—if we even had any savings. In every time and place, from the dawn of the species to the end of the species, reality will not have been easy.

And in each of these times and places, the same wisdom has emerged: that outer difficulty is best met with inner peacefulness. The individual, even if forlorn, even if beleaguered, can find ‘a way to be’ that tremendously reduces his or her sense of difficulty and his or her experience of pain. That is the way of inner peace.

There is no single definition of inner peace and no single way to achieve inner peace. Some hold it as essentially surrender, some as essentially forgiveness, some as the result of a practice like meditation, some as the result of a belief system like Stoicism or Taoism, some as essentially heightened awareness, some as another difficult, elusive word, “wisdom.”

My hope for you is that writing in this journal over the next ninety days will bring you closer to two things: to your own definition of inner peace and, much more importantly, to your own experience of inner peace. There is a bit of magic in reading a resonant quotation and then doing some writing to the accompanying prompt and I hope that you will make the time for that every day for the next ninety days. Something really valuable may happen.

Please enjoy these quotes and prompts. And when these ninety days are up ... rinse and repeat. Continue for another ninety days and another ninety days, either reacquainting yourself with these quotes and prompts or trying out another ninety-day journal in the Eric Maisel Wellness Journal series. There are many to choose from, and each is potent. I wish you a powerful writing, thinking, and feeling adventure.

For additional space, complement this wellness journal with your favorite paper and pen. Give yourself all the space you need!



Day 1.

“Peace comes from within. Do not seek it without.”

—Siddhartha Gautama

What does “inner peace” mean to you?

Day 2.

“I am content; that is a blessing greater than riches; and he to whom that is given need ask no more.” —Henry Fielding

If you could achieve inner peace, what more would you need?



Day 3.

“Have patience with everything that remains unsolved in your heart.”
—Rainer Maria Rilke

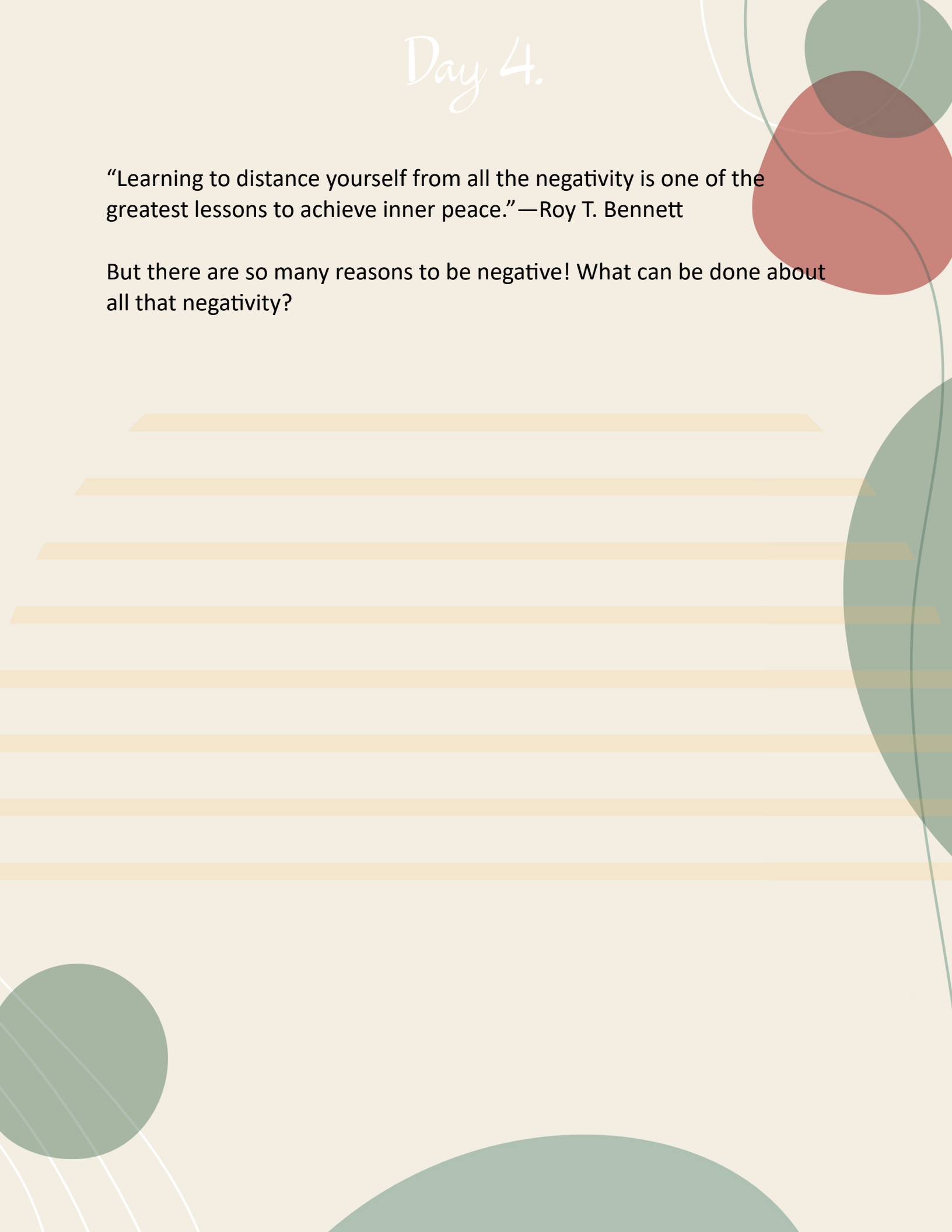
Much remains unsolved, unresolved, mysterious and opaque. Can you be peaceful nonetheless?



Day 4.

“Learning to distance yourself from all the negativity is one of the greatest lessons to achieve inner peace.” —Roy T. Bennett

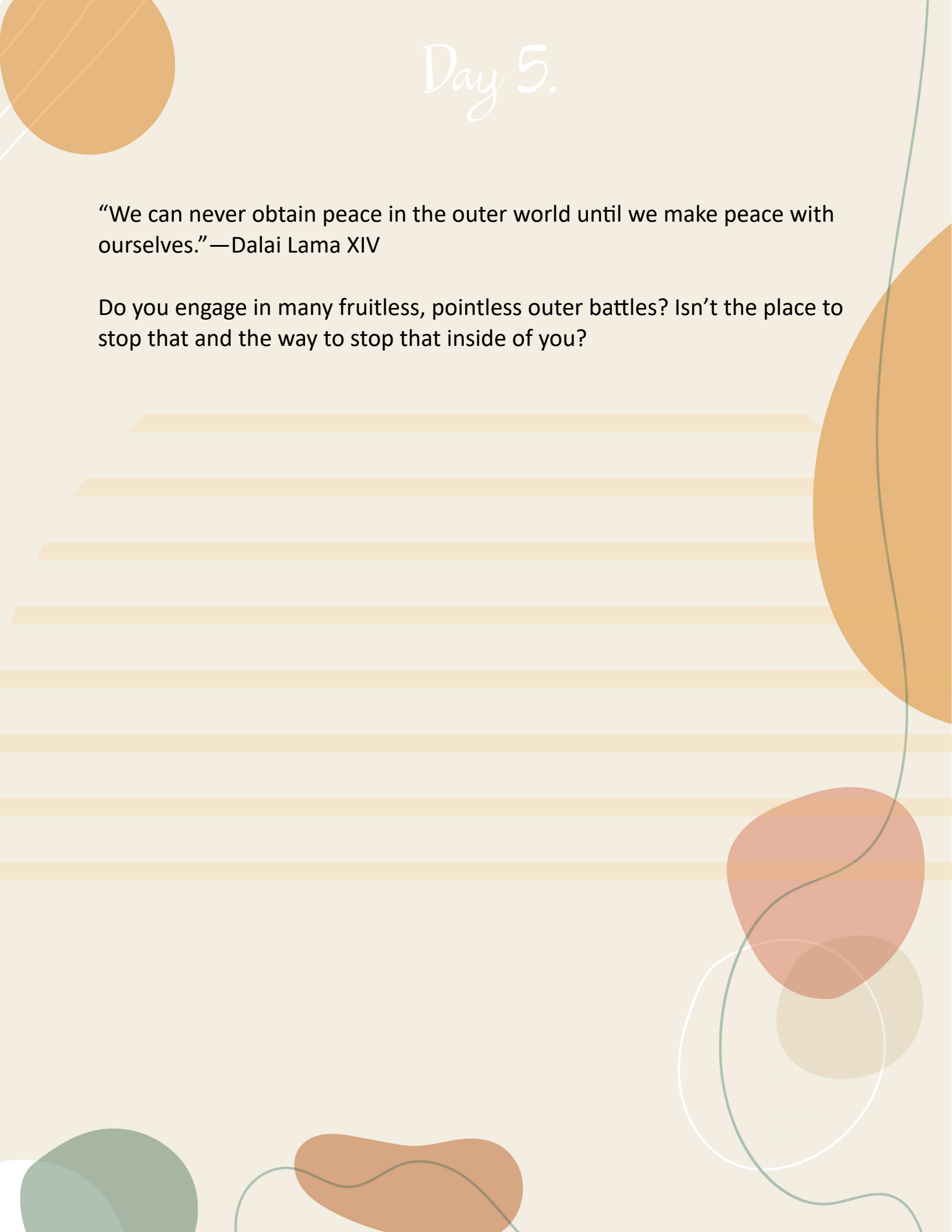
But there are so many reasons to be negative! What can be done about all that negativity?



Day 5.

“We can never obtain peace in the outer world until we make peace with ourselves.” —Dalai Lama XIV

Do you engage in many fruitless, pointless outer battles? Isn't the place to stop that and the way to stop that inside of you?



Day 6.

“Nothing external to you has any power over you.”

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

Is this true? Could this be made to be true?



Day 7.

“Each one has to find his peace from within. And peace to be real must be unaffected by outside circumstances.” —Mahatma Gandhi

Is there a way to be peaceful, active in the world, and also unaffected by circumstances? How might that look?

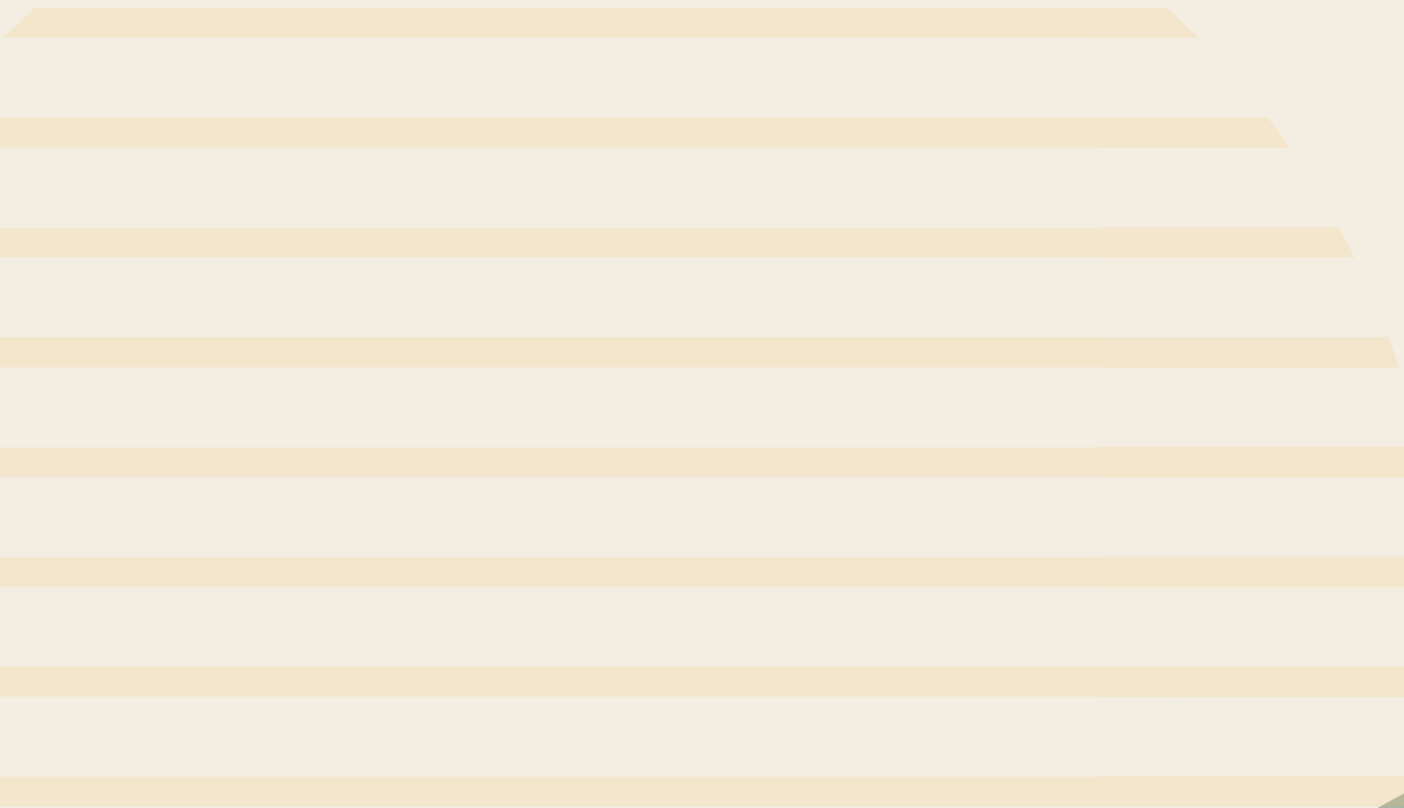
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Day 8.

“Inner peace can be reached only when we practice forgiveness. Forgiveness is letting go of the past, and is therefore the means for correcting our misperceptions.”—Gerald G. Jampolsky

Do you believe in forgiveness? Or do you believe in remaining angry?







Day 9.

“There is no such thing as inner peace. There is only nervousness and death.” —Fran Lebowitz

Maybe this is your true belief? But a belief can be changed, can't it?
Would you like to believe in the possibility of inner peace?

Day 10.

“I've made peace with myself.”

“Good for you. That's the hardest war of all to win.”

“Didn't say I won. Just stopped fighting.” —Joe Abercrombie

There may be many battles to wage out in the world. But might it be good to at least stop all that inner fighting?



Day 11.

“The unyielding optimist will pretend that the forest is not burning, either because he is too lazy or too afraid to go and put the fire out.”
—Criss Jami

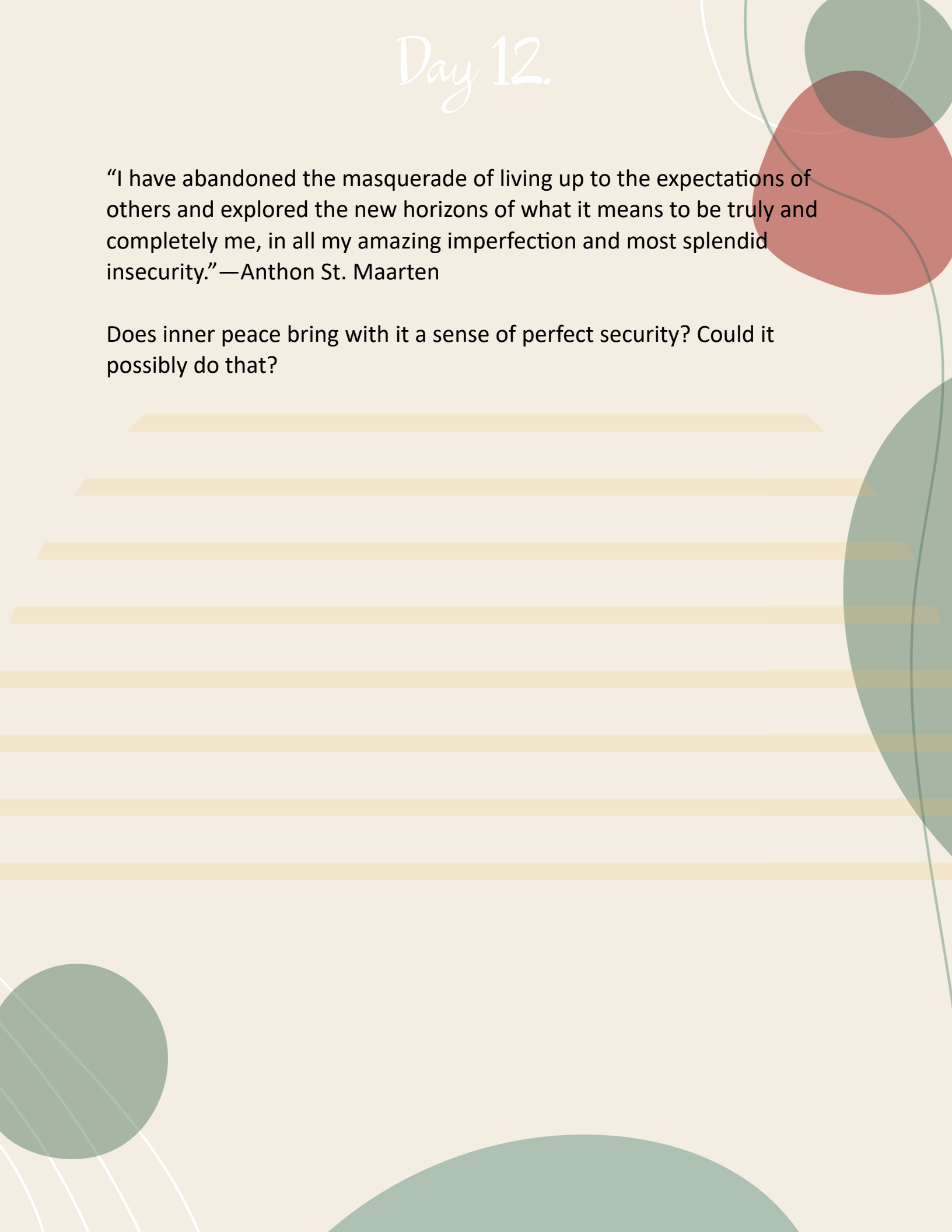
Must you become an unyielding optimist in order to find inner peace? Is that what we're talking about? Or is it rather that you will have become more 'philosophical'?



Day 12.

“I have abandoned the masquerade of living up to the expectations of others and explored the new horizons of what it means to be truly and completely me, in all my amazing imperfection and most splendid insecurity.” —Anthon St. Maarten

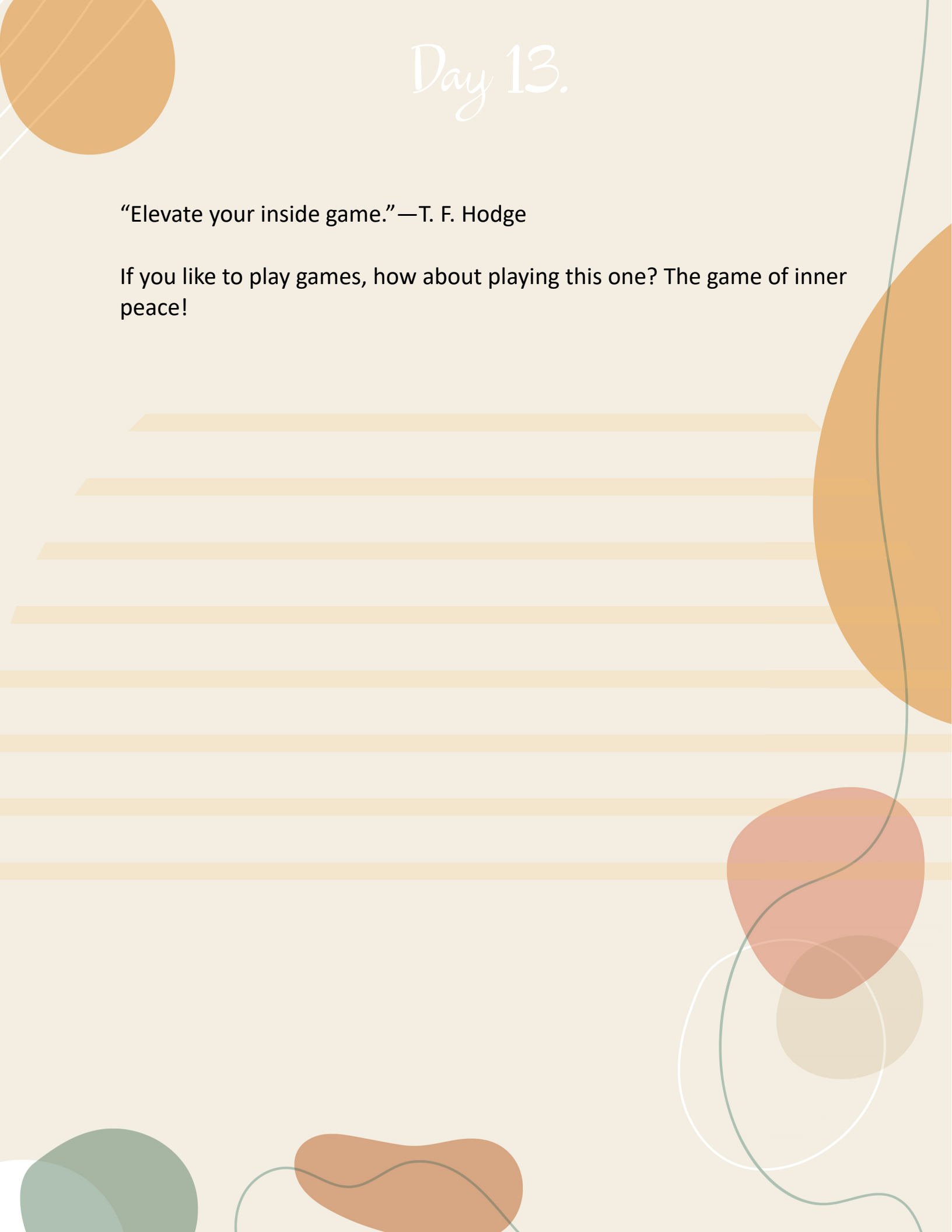
Does inner peace bring with it a sense of perfect security? Could it possibly do that?



Day 13.

“Elevate your inside game.” —T. F. Hodge

If you like to play games, how about playing this one? The game of inner peace!



Day 14.

“Having inner peace means committing to letting go of self-criticism and self-doubt.” —Sanaya Roman

Well, doubts are bound to remain. But must the criticism?



Day 15.

“The quickest way to experiencing the peace inside, is to learn to recognize when I am not at peace.”—Jim McDonald

Are you aware when you are not at peace? Or are you too agitated to notice?

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Day 16.

“A contented mind is the greatest blessing a man can enjoy in this world.”—Joseph Addison

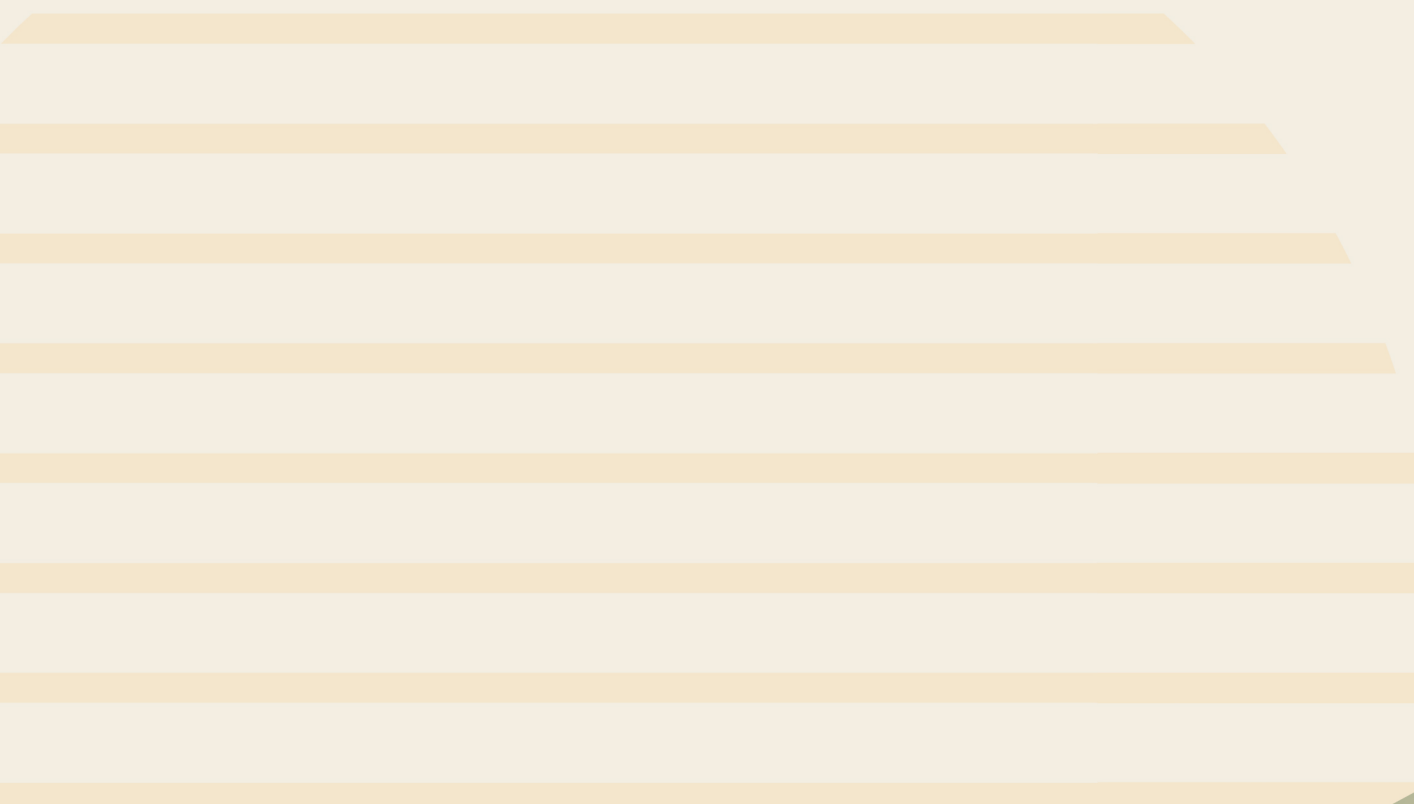
Can you be discontented about the world and also have a contented mind? How might that work?



Day 17.

“I left home and tried to live the life of a hermit, but I was still fighting myself. I went to England and worked as a chainman on the road. It was better therapy than the shrinks. Building a two-mile road gave me internal peace.”—Brian Strang

What, for you, is the equivalent of building a two-mile road?



Day 18.

“Do not look for me in a busy world. I don’t belong there.
Come sit with me in solitude. I’ve found my peace.” —Labhandar Rós

Are you always in a busy world? Or do you sometimes manage to find solitude?



Day 19.

“If you are not currently living a life of inner peace, then your thoughts must be wrong on some level.” —Bohdi Sanders

Imagine only thinking thoughts that serve you. How amazing would that be!



Day 20.

“The fights that you have with yourself are the worst.” —Garima Soni

Sometimes we are in conflict and want two opposing things. How can we achieve inner peace then?



Day 21.

“Without question, the greatest lesson I learned during my time in school was that speaking my truth contributed more to my sense of inner peace than all the wealth and fame in the world.” —Huda Al-Ghosa

For you, what is the connection between speaking your truth and inner peace?

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Day 22.

“I couldn't count on the world being silent, so my only option was to become at peace with the noise.”—Josh Waitzkin

A beautiful idea, yes, to become at peace with the noise? But can you do this?

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Day 23.

“In simple silence, you can realize the universe.” —Dido Stargaze

We are built to know things about the universe. But only in silence. What have you learned about the universe when you fell silent?

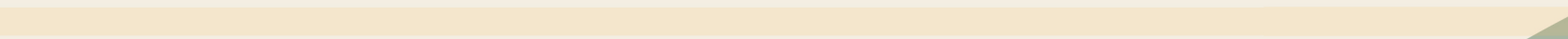
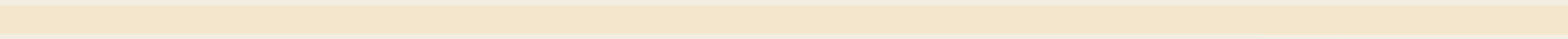
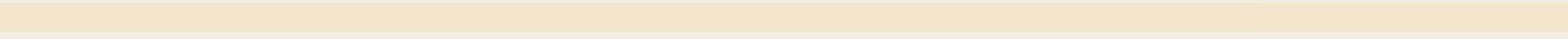
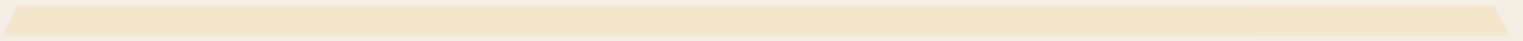
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Day 24.

“Sacrifice your ego for inner peace.” —Shunya

That does feel like a sacrifice, doesn't it, sacrificing your ego? No more feverish ambitions. No more vigilant comparisons. What a sacrifice! Or is it?





Day 25.

“Once you touch that place of inner peace within you, magic begins on the outside.” —Hiral Nagda

You can change how you operate in the world. That is in your power. And you can change how you are inside. Or both! What would changing both look like?

Day 26.

“Be selective with your fights. Sometimes peace is better than being right.”
—Abhishek Tyagi

Because we are sensitive to justice and fairness, we may want to fight every injustice and battle every windmill. Can life be led that way?



Day 27.

While we sit, we can be with our breathing, we can let go of tensions, and we can have peace. This peace is the most precious thing there is, more precious than any pursuit.” —Thich Nhat Hanh

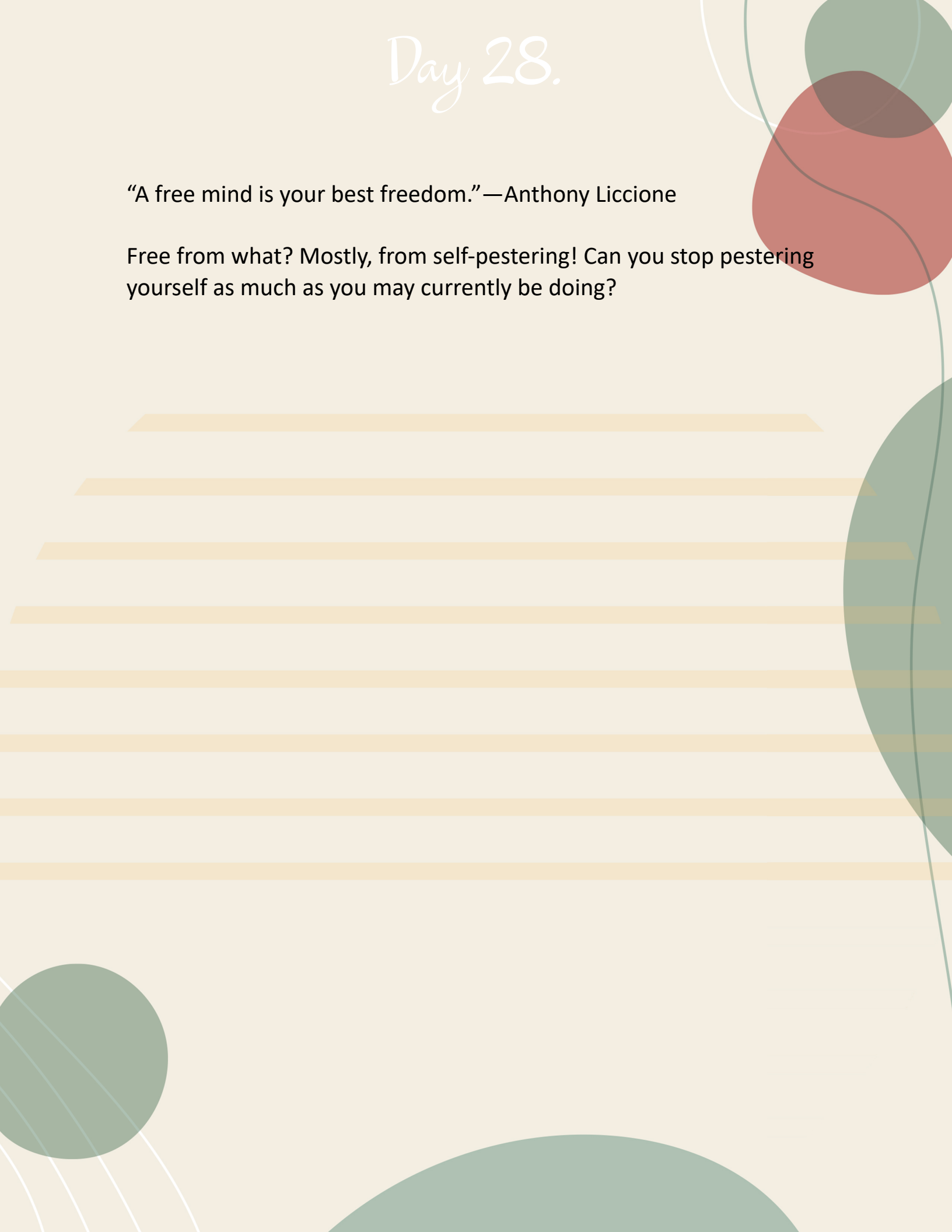
Or we can have peace while we stand. Or while we run. Or while we dance. Is there any place you can't have inner peace?



Day 28.

“A free mind is your best freedom.” —Anthony Liccione

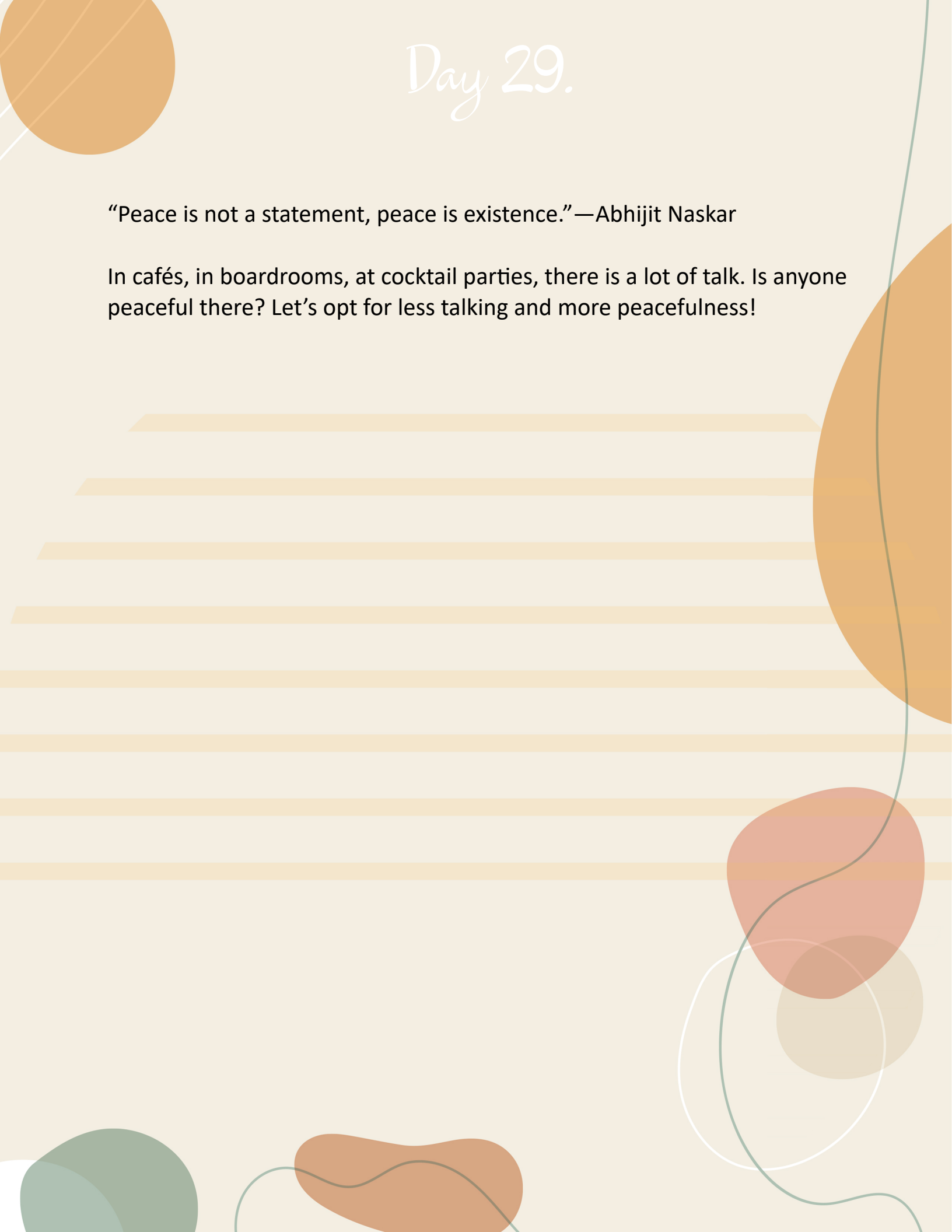
Free from what? Mostly, from self-pestering! Can you stop pestering yourself as much as you may currently be doing?



Day 29.

“Peace is not a statement, peace is existence.” —Abhijit Naskar

In cafés, in boardrooms, at cocktail parties, there is a lot of talk. Is anyone peaceful there? Let's opt for less talking and more peacefulness!



Day 30.

“Thus, rather than making life easy for living by living in accord with life, philosophy complicates it by replacing the world's tranquility with the restlessness of problems.” —Bruce Lee

Are you burdened by a philosophy that creates a ‘restlessness of problems’?
Can you perhaps shed that, just like that?

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Day 31.

“If you are depressed, you are living in the past, if you are anxious, you are living in the future, if you are at peace, you are living in the present.”

—Lao Tzu

What does “living in the present” mean to you?

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Day 32.

“Peace of mind for five minutes, that's what I crave.”

—Alanis Morissette

Wouldn't even a few minutes of peace of mind be lovely? Isn't that a starting point or starting goal?

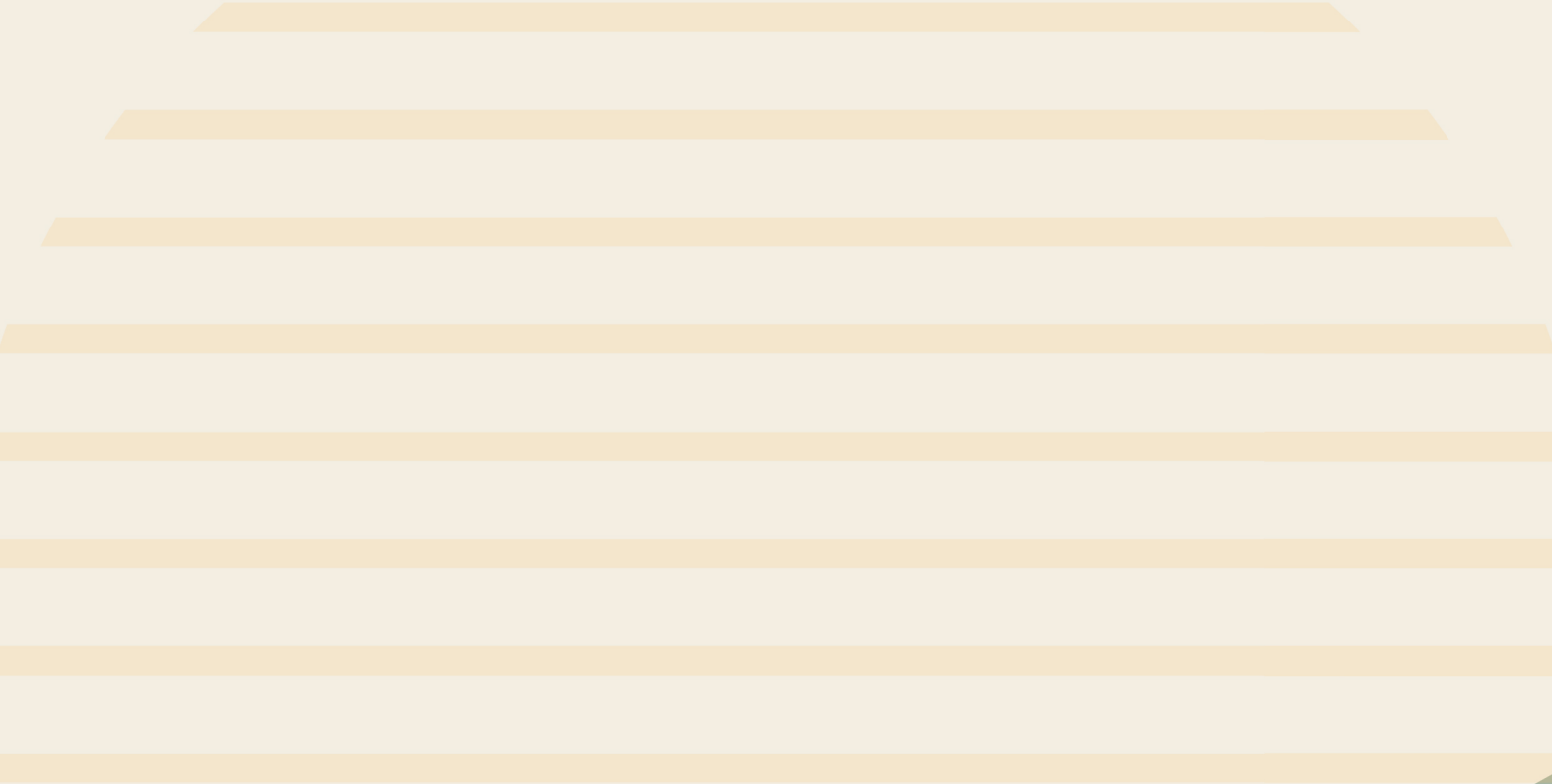


Day 33.

“Do not let the behavior of others destroy your inner peace.”

—Dalai Lama

Shouldn't upsetting behaviors upset us? If they didn't, wouldn't we lose our motivation to do the right thing? Square a need for right action with an ability to retain inner peace in the face of the upsetting behaviors of others.



Day 34.

“Never be in a hurry; do everything quietly and in a calm spirit. Do not lose your inner peace for anything whatsoever, even if your whole world seems upset.” —Saint Francis de Sales

Maybe it is easy for a saint never to be in a hurry. But if your child is sick and you are rushing her to the hospital ... picture maintaining inner peace even then. What would that look like? What would that take?



Day 35.

“Peace is liberty in tranquility.” —Marcus Tullius Cicero

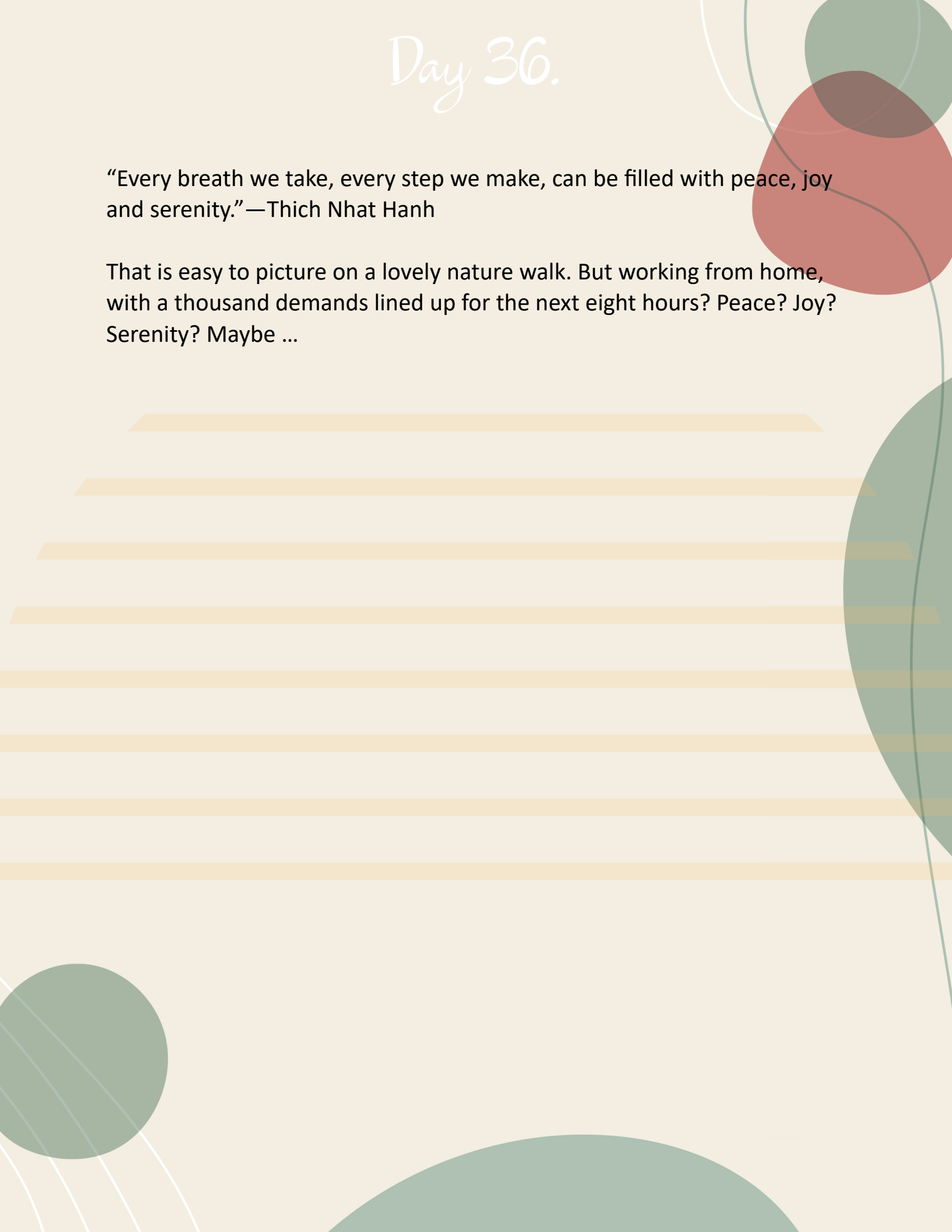
There is a beautiful relationship between inner peace and freedom. Can you sense that relationship? Can you describe it?



Day 36.

“Every breath we take, every step we make, can be filled with peace, joy and serenity.” —Thich Nhat Hanh

That is easy to picture on a lovely nature walk. But working from home, with a thousand demands lined up for the next eight hours? Peace? Joy? Serenity? Maybe ...



Day 37.

"Don't search for anything except peace. Try to calm the mind. Everything else will come on its own."—Baba Hari Das

Is inner peace something to search for? Or something to settle into? Your thoughts?



Day 38.

“The nearer a man comes to a calm mind, the closer he is to strength.”
—Marcus Aurelius

How does a calm mind promote strength? What do you see as the relationship there?



Day 39.

“The measure of wisdom is how calm you are when facing any given situation.” —Naval Ravikant

Picture a difficult situation. Imagine meeting it with inner calm. In what sense are you wiser by virtue of being calm?

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Day 40.

“He who is contented is rich.” —Lao Tzu

Have you experienced contentment? Did you feel rich in that moment?



Day 41.

“This is my secret. I don’t mind what happens.”—Jiddu Krishnamurti

Is this possible? Or even desirable? If it is, what would that look like?

Day 42.

“To bear trials with a calm mind robs misfortune of its strength and burden.” —Seneca

If inner peace can rob misfortune of its strength, shouldn't we cultivate it before misfortune strikes?



Day 43.

“Certainty is impossible. Once you realize it, you stop seeking it and you become calm.” —Maxime Lagacé

How can an acceptance of uncertainty bring inner peace? Isn't that a paradox? Can you be both uncertain and peaceful?



Day 44.

“Men are disturbed not by things, but by the view which they take of them.”—Epictetus

So many philosophies make this point, that we are what we think. Look at this idea with fresh eyes. What does it mean to you? What does it suggest to you?



Day 45.

“The mind freed from passions is an impenetrable fortress — a person has no more secure place of refuge for all time.” —Marcus Aurelius

Ah, but don't we need our passions? And can't we be both passionate and peaceful? Wouldn't that be ideal? Your thoughts?



Day 46.

“Anyone who enjoys inner peace is no more broken by failure than he is inflated by success.” —Matthieu Ricard

Success is dangerous—look at how many celebrities succumb to it. We cultivate inner peace in order to deal with our difficulties but also to modulate our successes. Picture how that might be.



Day 47.

“They call it ‘peace of mind’ but maybe it should be called ‘peace from mind.’”

—Naval Ravikant

Peace from mind—what an evocative phrase! Would you like that for yourself, at least for some of the time? What is the way to get there?

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Day 48.

“Enough is as good as a feast.”—English proverb

What if you were actually satisfied by something small, by a modest portion, a simple hug, a moment of pleasure? What if enough was enough? Wouldn't that be rather miraculous and heavenly?



Day 49.

“Inner peace is beyond victory or defeat.”—Bhagavad Gita

You’ve been enjoying quotes from Stoicism, Taoism, Buddhism, and other philosophies. Are you attuning to the idea threading through them?

Day 50.

“Inner peace is like a clean and spacious room, empty of unnecessary, old, or broken stuff.” —Remez Sasson

I’ve played with the metaphor of “the room that is your mind” in my book *Redesign Your Mind*. You can create inner peace by actively redesigning and redecorating that room. I can’t wait for you to try!



Day 51.

“Today I escaped from the crush of circumstances, or better put, I threw them out, for the crush wasn’t from outside me but in my own assumptions.” —Marcus Aurelius

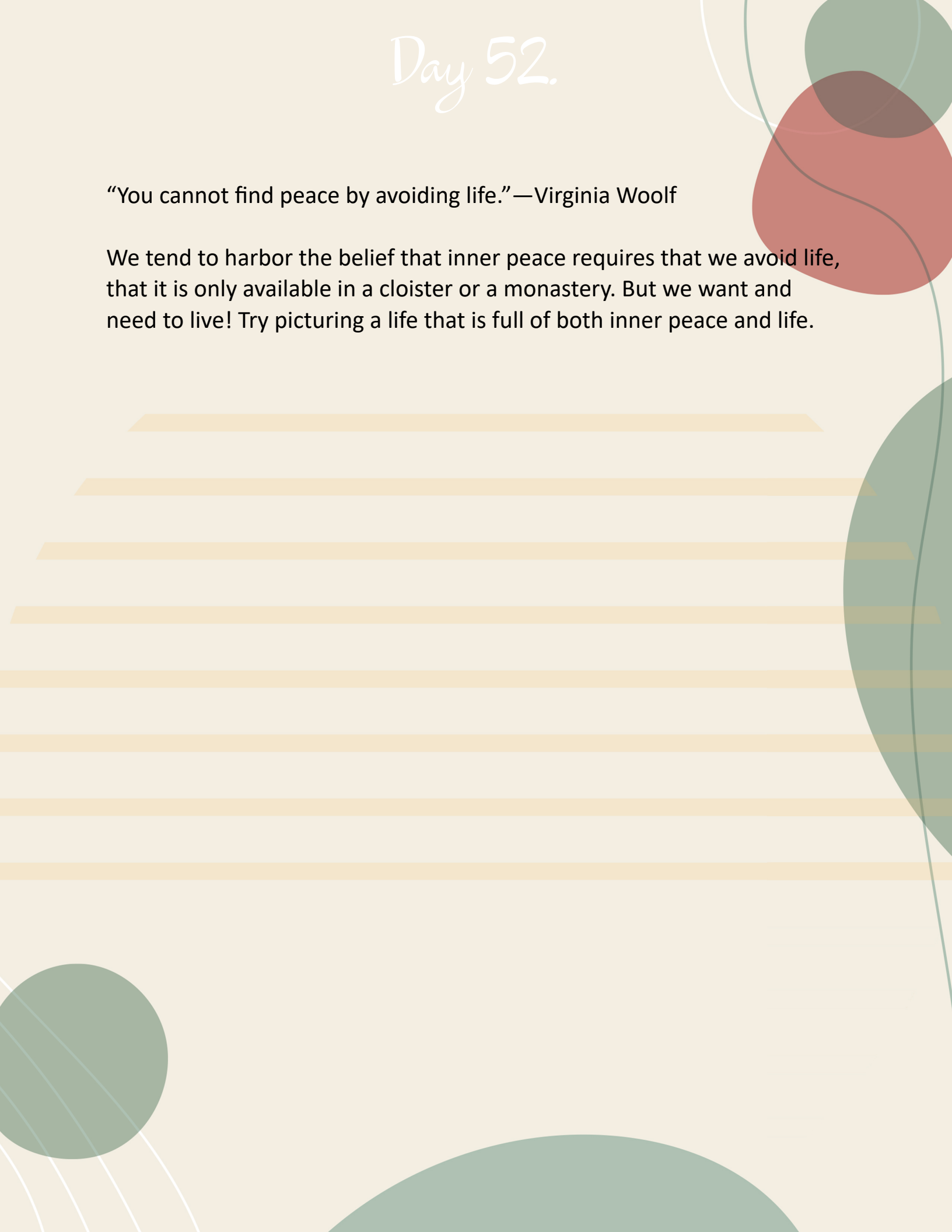
Can you identify one assumption that is crushing you? Now, can you throw it out?



Day 52.

“You cannot find peace by avoiding life.”—Virginia Woolf

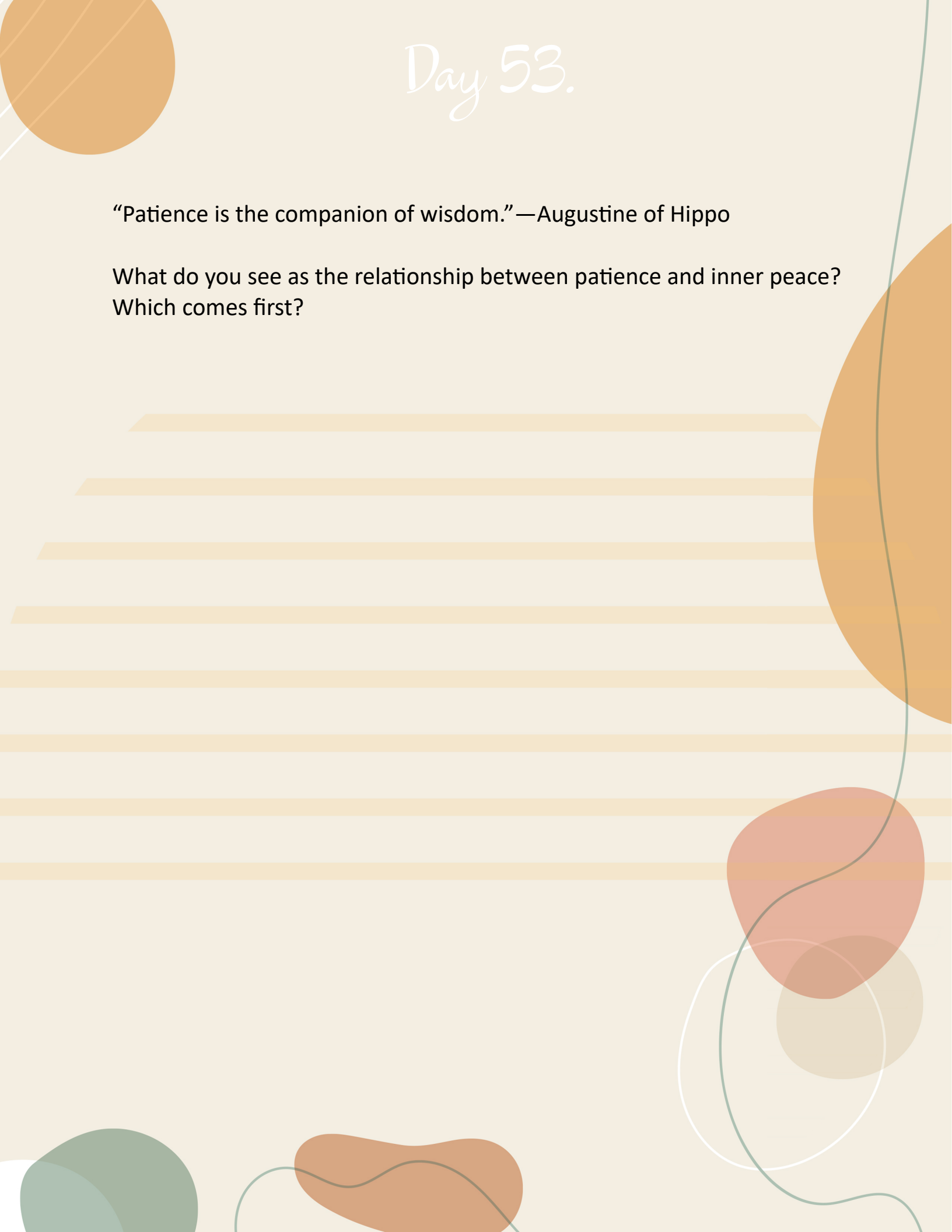
We tend to harbor the belief that inner peace requires that we avoid life, that it is only available in a cloister or a monastery. But we want and need to live! Try picturing a life that is full of both inner peace and life.



Day 53.

“Patience is the companion of wisdom.”—Augustine of Hippo

What do you see as the relationship between patience and inner peace?
Which comes first?



Day 54.

“You are the sky. Everything else – it’s just the weather.” —Pema Chödrön

Isn't that a lovely image? Picture something that is bothering you as 'just the weather.' How does that make you feel?

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Day 55.

“First say to yourself what you would be; and then do what you have to do.”

—Epictetus

You identify your life purposes, align your thoughts with those purposes, and align your actions with those purposes. Mightn't that secure you inner peace?





Day 56.

“Remember that the entrance to the sanctuary is inside you.”—Rumi

Conjure with the image of inner peace as a sanctuary. What do you see?





Day 57.

“He who laughs at himself never runs out of things to laugh at.”
—Epictetus

Inner peace is not humorless. It is full of laughter! Can you see that?

Day 58.

“The simplification of life is one of the steps to inner peace. A persistent simplification will create an inner and outer well-being that places harmony in one's life.” —Peace Pilgrim

We have billions of brain cells and they want to complicate things. Can you have a conversation with them and invite them to simplify?



Day 59.

“I get those fleeting, beautiful moments of inner peace and stillness—and then for the other 23 hours and 45 minutes I’m just a human trying to make it through the day.” —Dorothy Parker

Maybe you can’t achieve perfect inner peace. How much inner peace would be enough?



Day 60.

“On a film set, where there is so much chaos, I find inner peace.”
—Sanya Malhotra

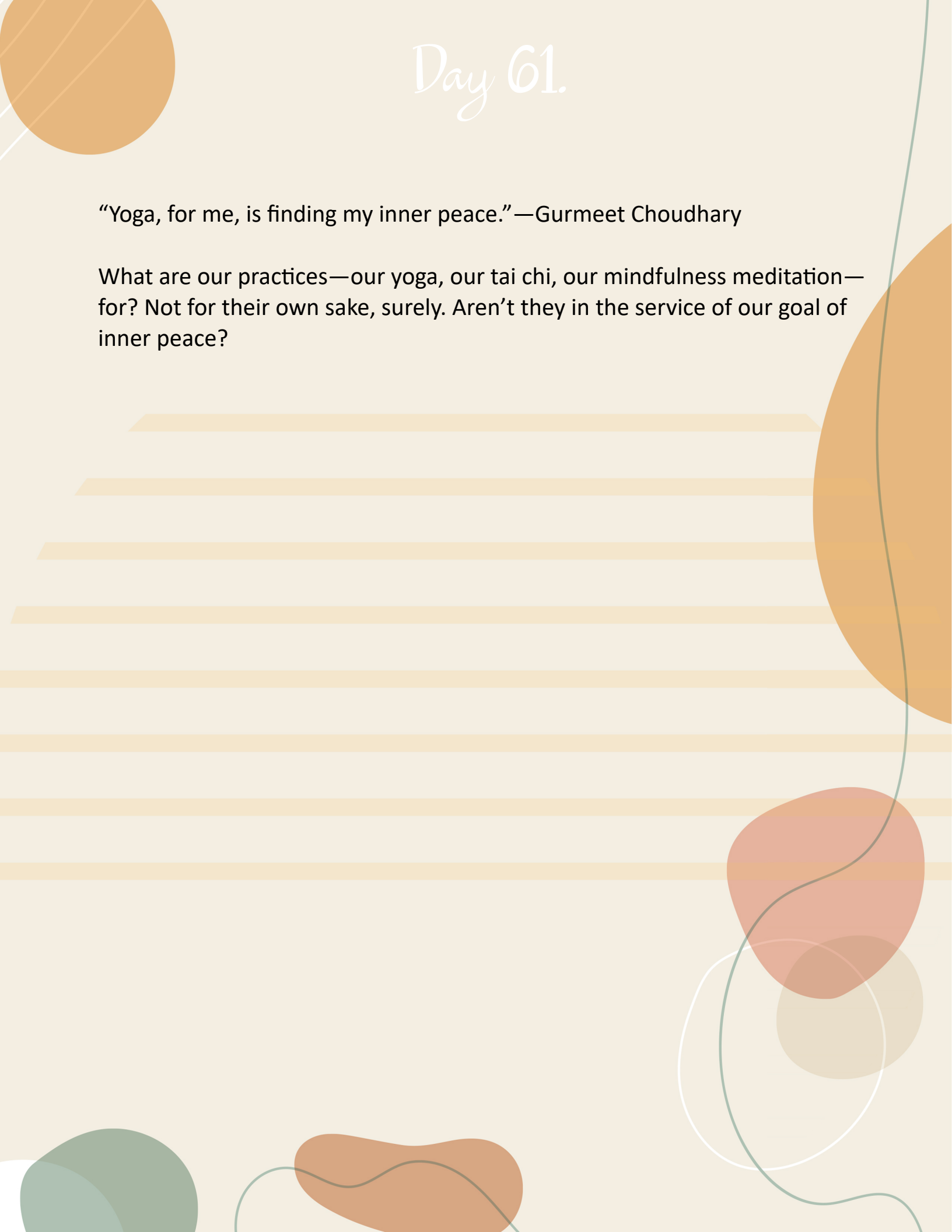
On a film set, in a factory, in an army barracks, on a stock trading floor ...
can you find peace where you actually are?



Day 61.

“Yoga, for me, is finding my inner peace.” —Gurmeet Choudhary

What are our practices—our yoga, our tai chi, our mindfulness meditation—for? Not for their own sake, surely. Aren’t they in the service of our goal of inner peace?



Day 62.

“Possession of material riches, without inner peace, is like dying of thirst while bathing in a lake.” —Paramahansa Yogananda

Maybe you can afford luxuries. But which is more important, another shiny object or inner peace?



Day 63.

“To experience peace does not mean that your life is always blissful. It means that you are capable of tapping into a blissful state of mind amidst the normal chaos of a hectic life.” —Jill Bolte Taylor

Conjure with the phrase “tapping into a blissful state of mind.” How might you go about doing that tapping?

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Day 64.

“Tension is who you think you should be. Relaxation is who you are.”
—Chinese proverb

Is relaxation “who you are”? Can you embrace that idea?

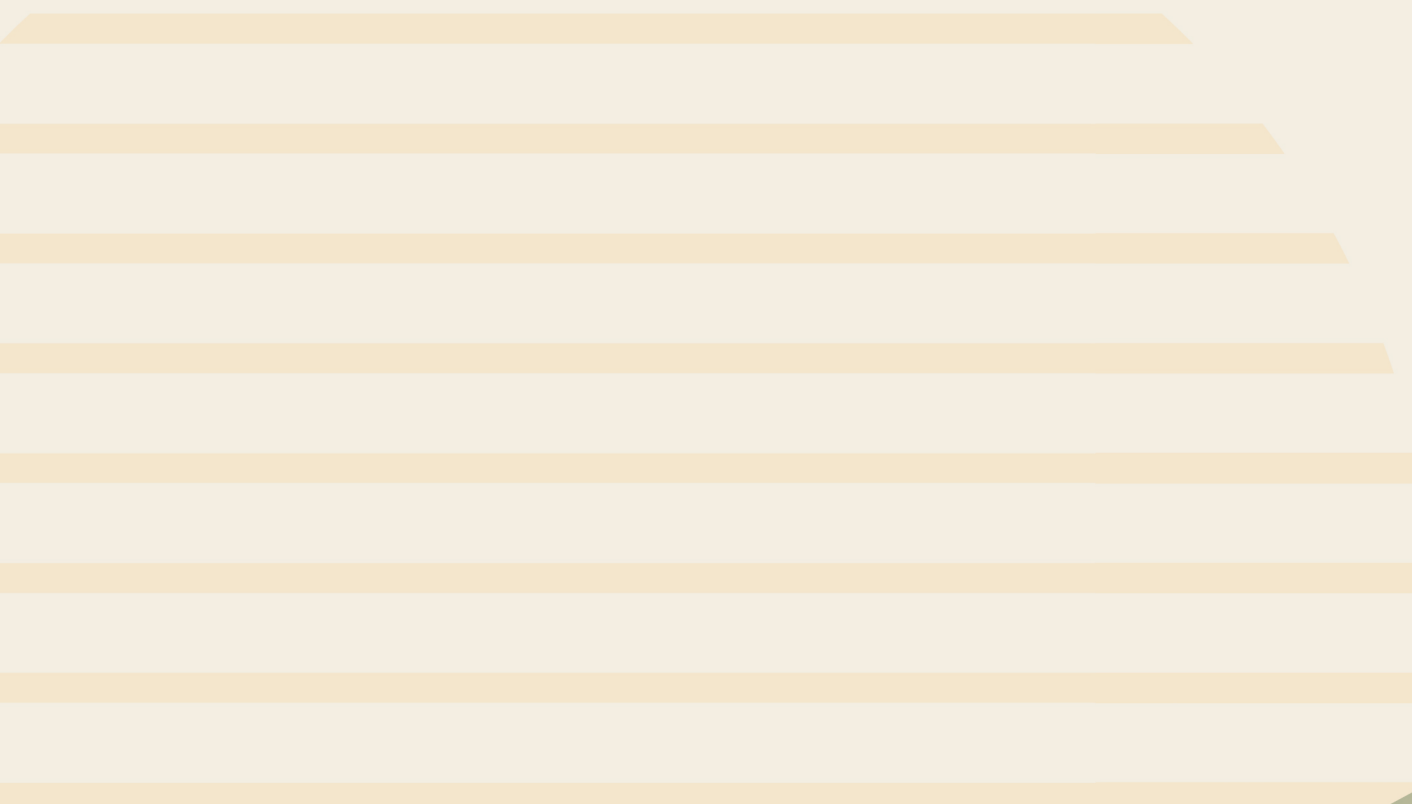


Day 65.

“Adopt the pace of nature: her secret is patience.”

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

A coiled snake and a crouching tiger are patient. You can be patient, full of inner peace, but also ready to spring into action with passion and power. Can you see that?



Day 66.

“When you recover or discover something that nourishes your soul and brings joy, care enough about yourself to make room for it in your life.”

—Jean Shinoda Bolen

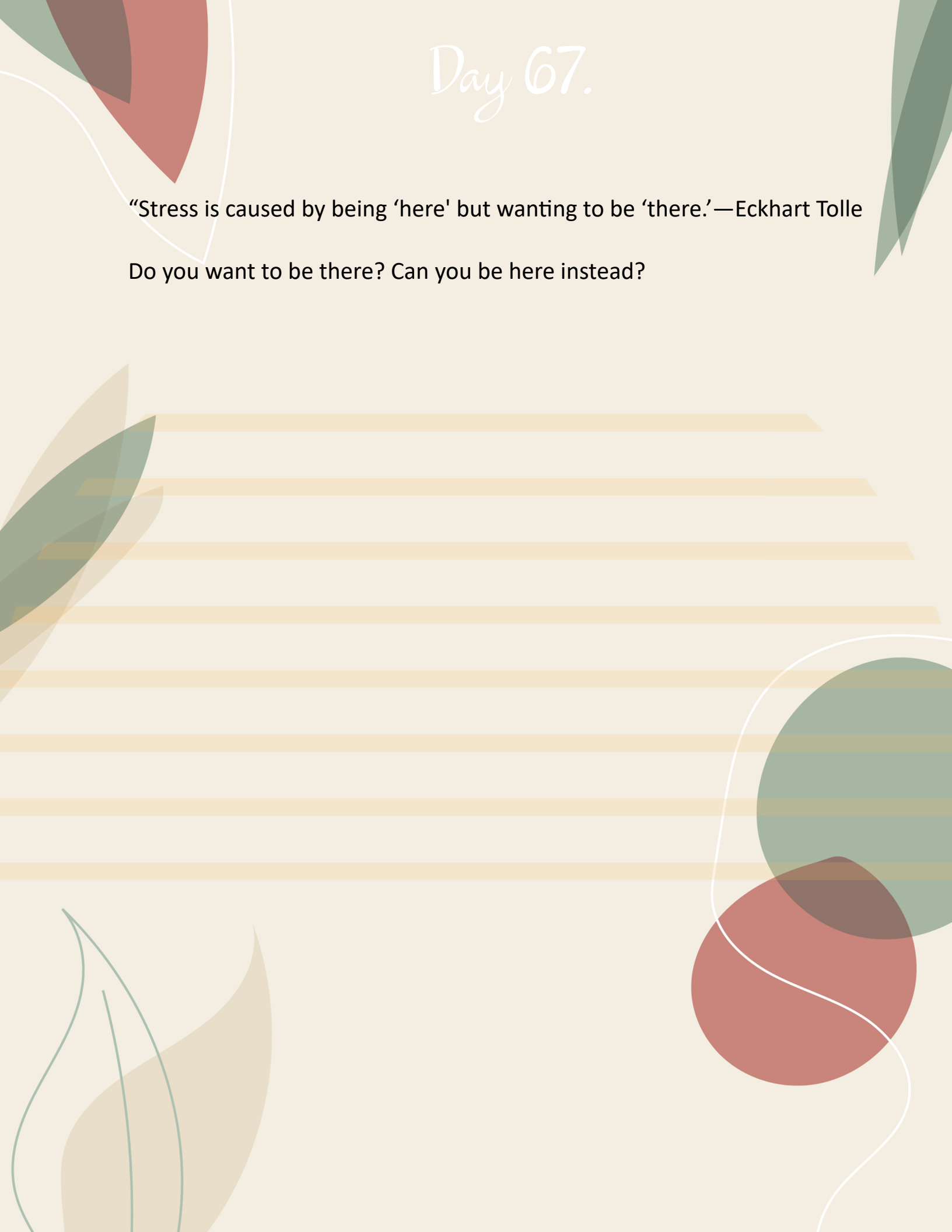
If something once brought you inner peace, why not repeat that experience?



Day 67.

“Stress is caused by being ‘here’ but wanting to be ‘there.’ —Eckhart Tolle

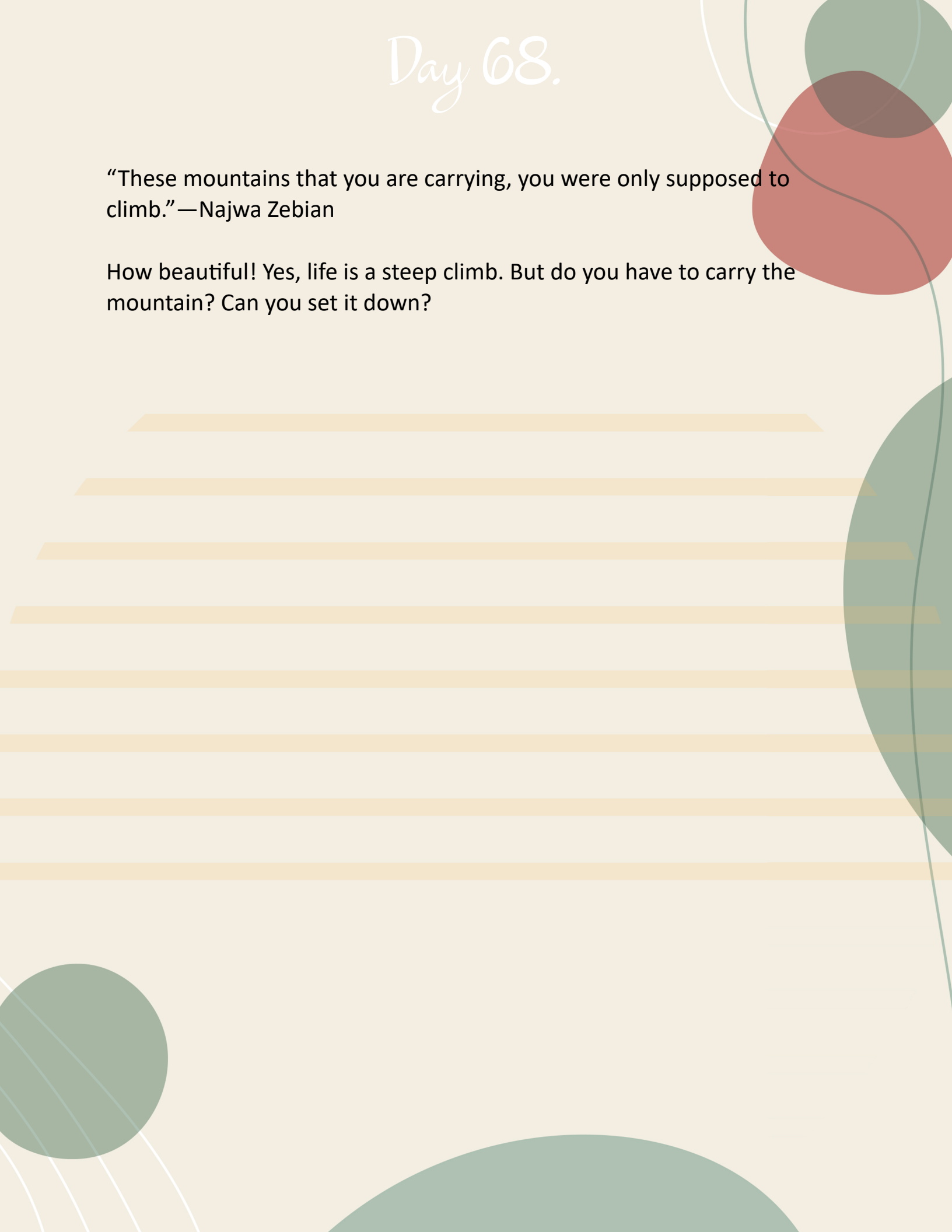
Do you want to be there? Can you be here instead?



Day 68.

“These mountains that you are carrying, you were only supposed to climb.” —Najwa Zebian

How beautiful! Yes, life is a steep climb. But do you have to carry the mountain? Can you set it down?

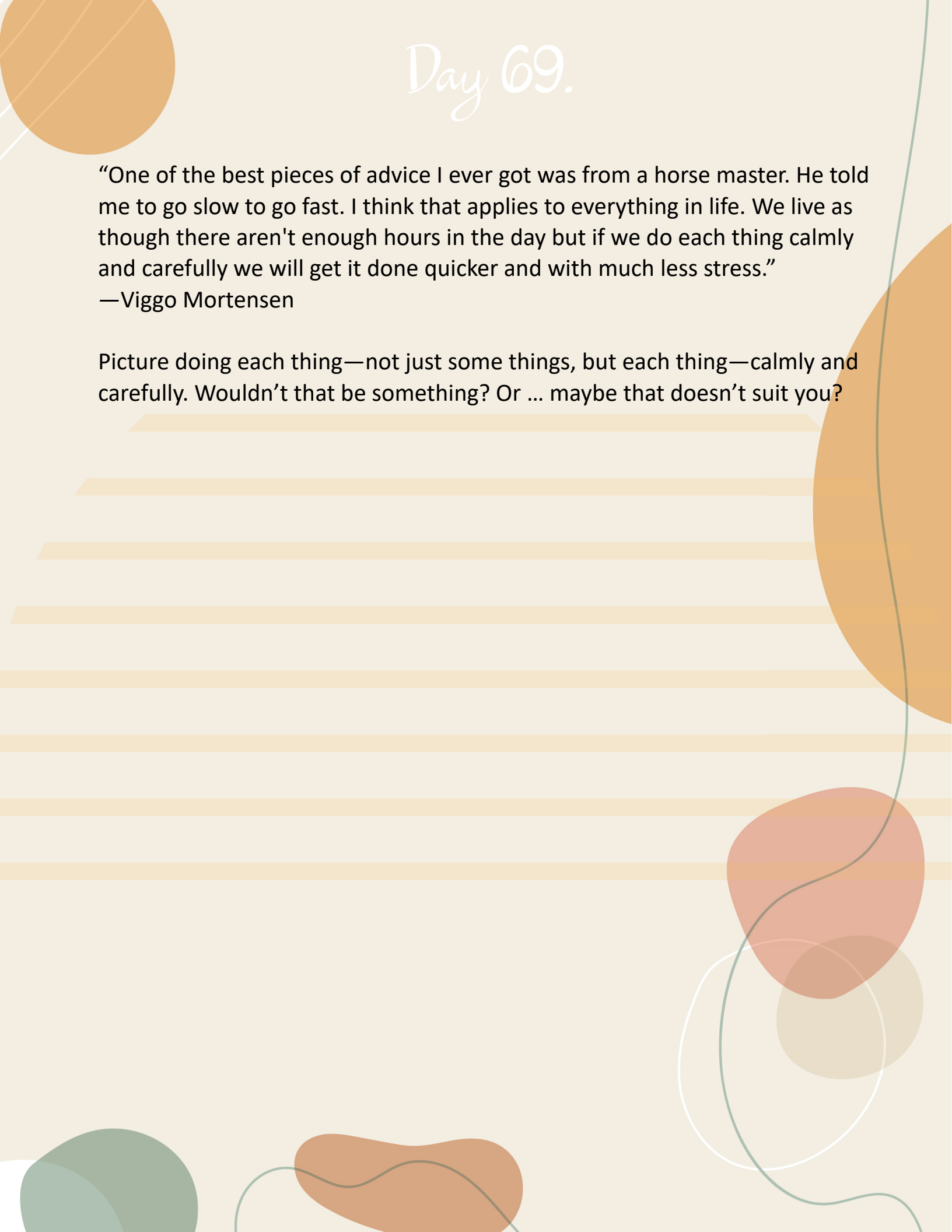


Day 69.

“One of the best pieces of advice I ever got was from a horse master. He told me to go slow to go fast. I think that applies to everything in life. We live as though there aren't enough hours in the day but if we do each thing calmly and carefully we will get it done quicker and with much less stress.”

—Viggo Mortensen

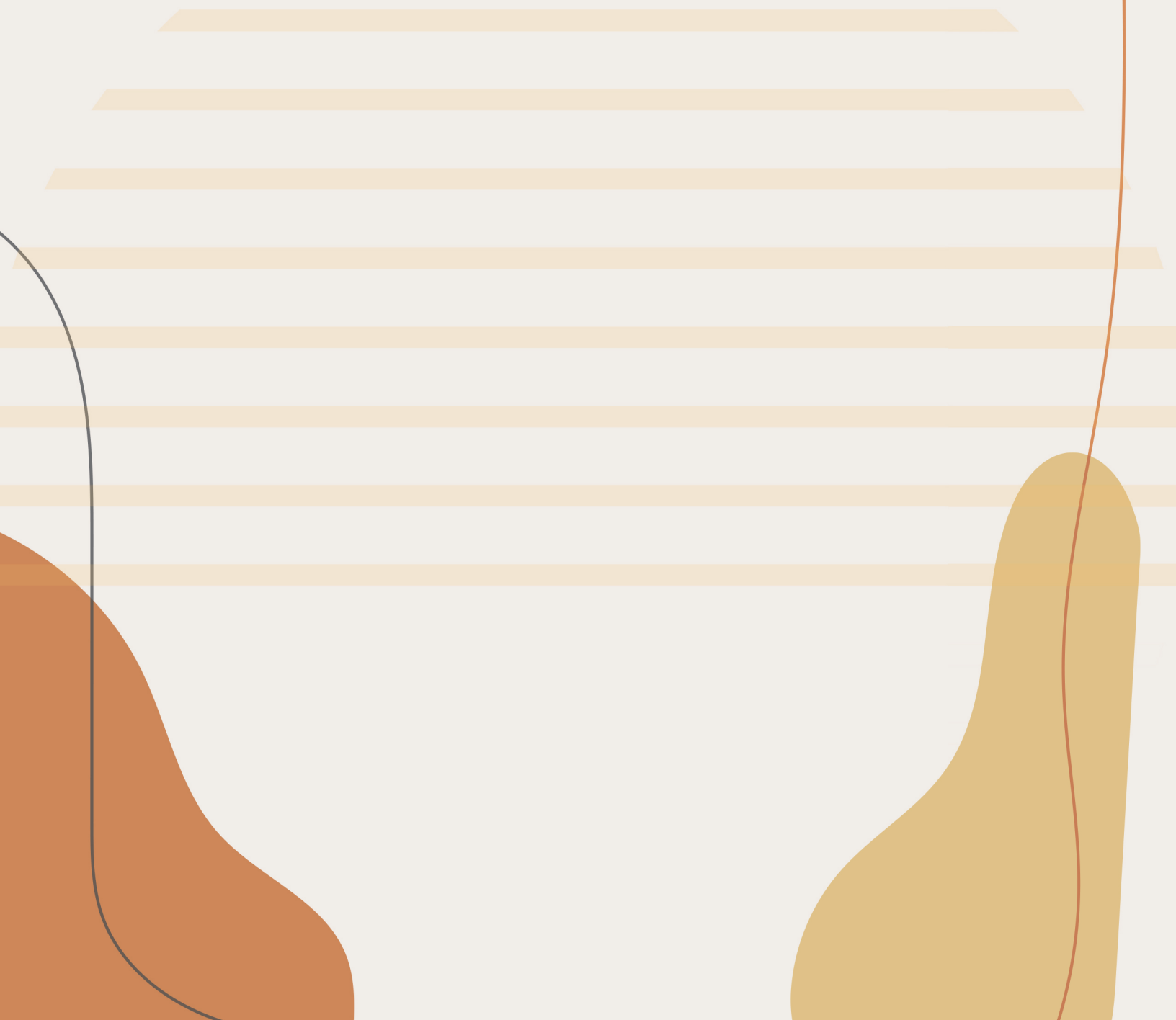
Picture doing each thing—not just some things, but each thing—calmly and carefully. Wouldn't that be something? Or ... maybe that doesn't suit you?



Day 70.

“The time to relax is when you don't have time for it.” —Sydney J. Harris

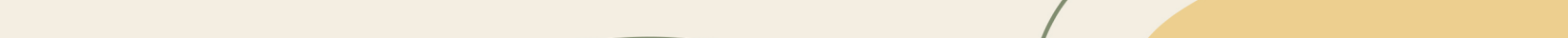
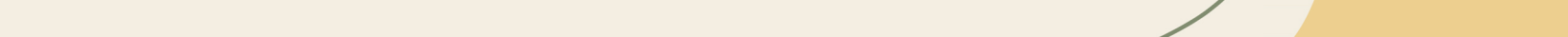
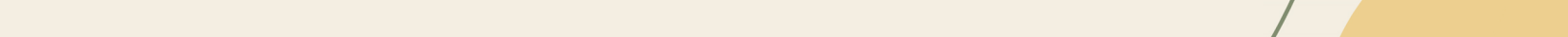
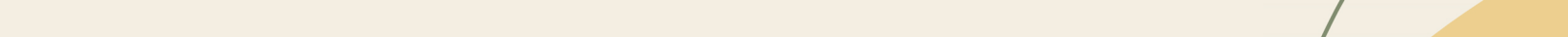
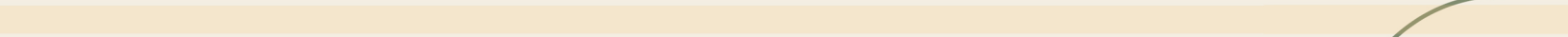
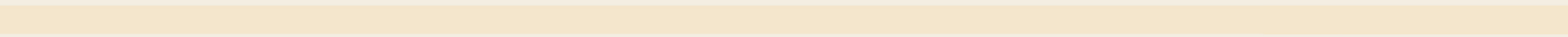
Maybe you schedule your day and pencil in time for relaxation. But what if you were “always relaxing,” even as you lived your difficult day? Wouldn't that transform your day completely?



Day 71.

"People become attached to their burdens sometimes more than the burdens are attached to them." —George Bernard Shaw

You had that argument last week. Why are you still replaying it? What do you need from the replay? A different outcome? Are you attached to your resentment and anger? You can't experience inner peace until you either take some action, let that all go, or both.

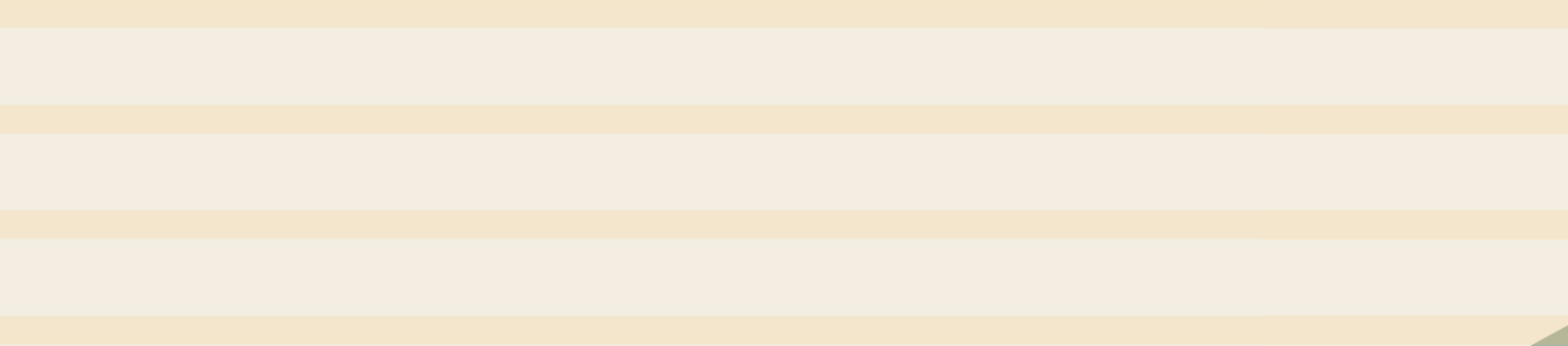
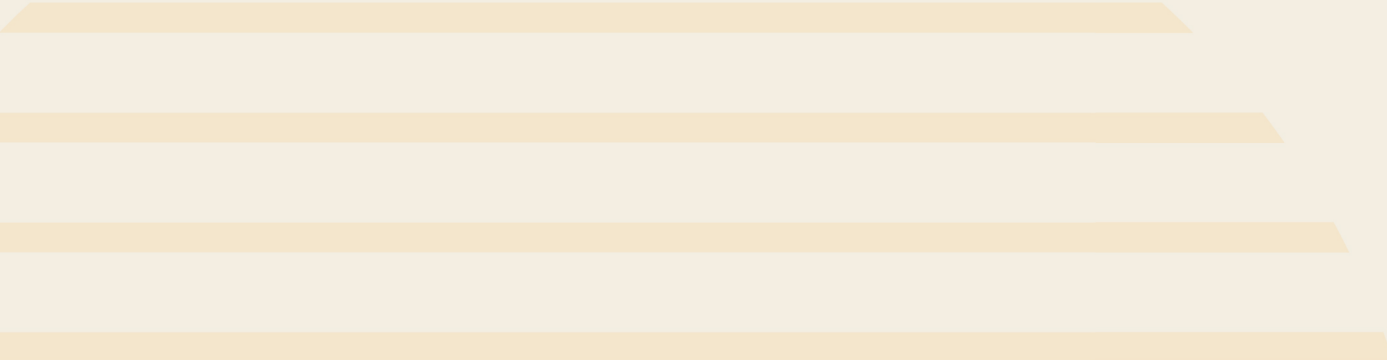




Day 72.

“That the birds of worry and care fly over your head, this you cannot change. But that they build nests in your hair, this you can prevent.”
—Chinese proverb

Have the birds of worry built a nest in your hair? What will you do?



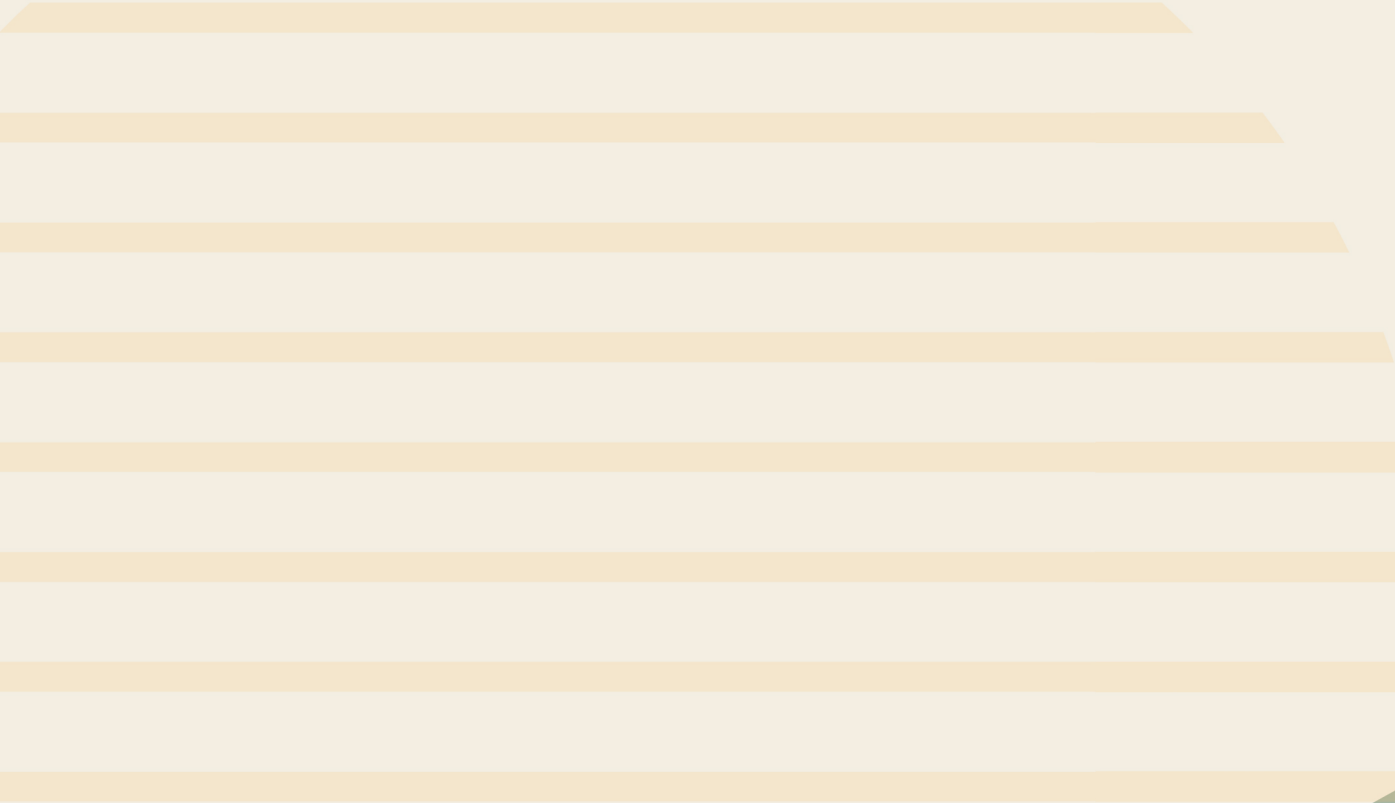


Day 73.

“How beautiful it is to do nothing, and then to rest afterward.”

—Spanish proverb

Well, we have many things that we must do and many things that we want to do. We may not be able to do nothing and we may not be inclined to do nothing. But we understand the sentiment of this proverb, don't we?

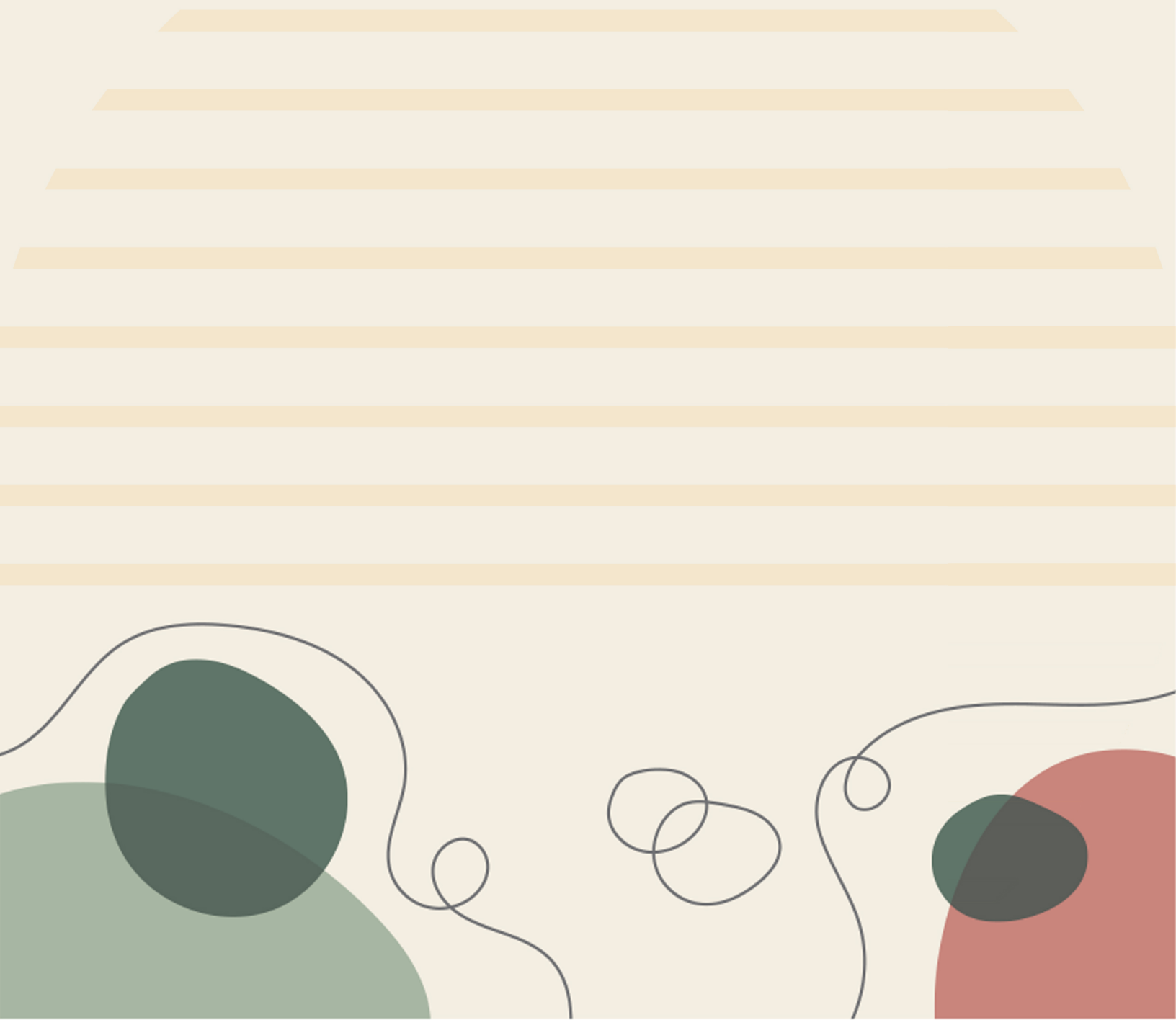


Day 74.

“A crust eaten in peace is better than a banquet partaken in anxiety.”

—Aesop

For you, what is the equivalent of “a crust eaten in peace”? Do you get to experience that often ... or often enough?



Day 75.

“If you treat every situation as a life and death matter, you’ll die a lot of times.” —Dean Smith

There are many ways to say “don’t sweat the small stuff.” What’s yours?



Day 76.

“Your outer world is a reflection of your inner world.” —T. Harv Eker

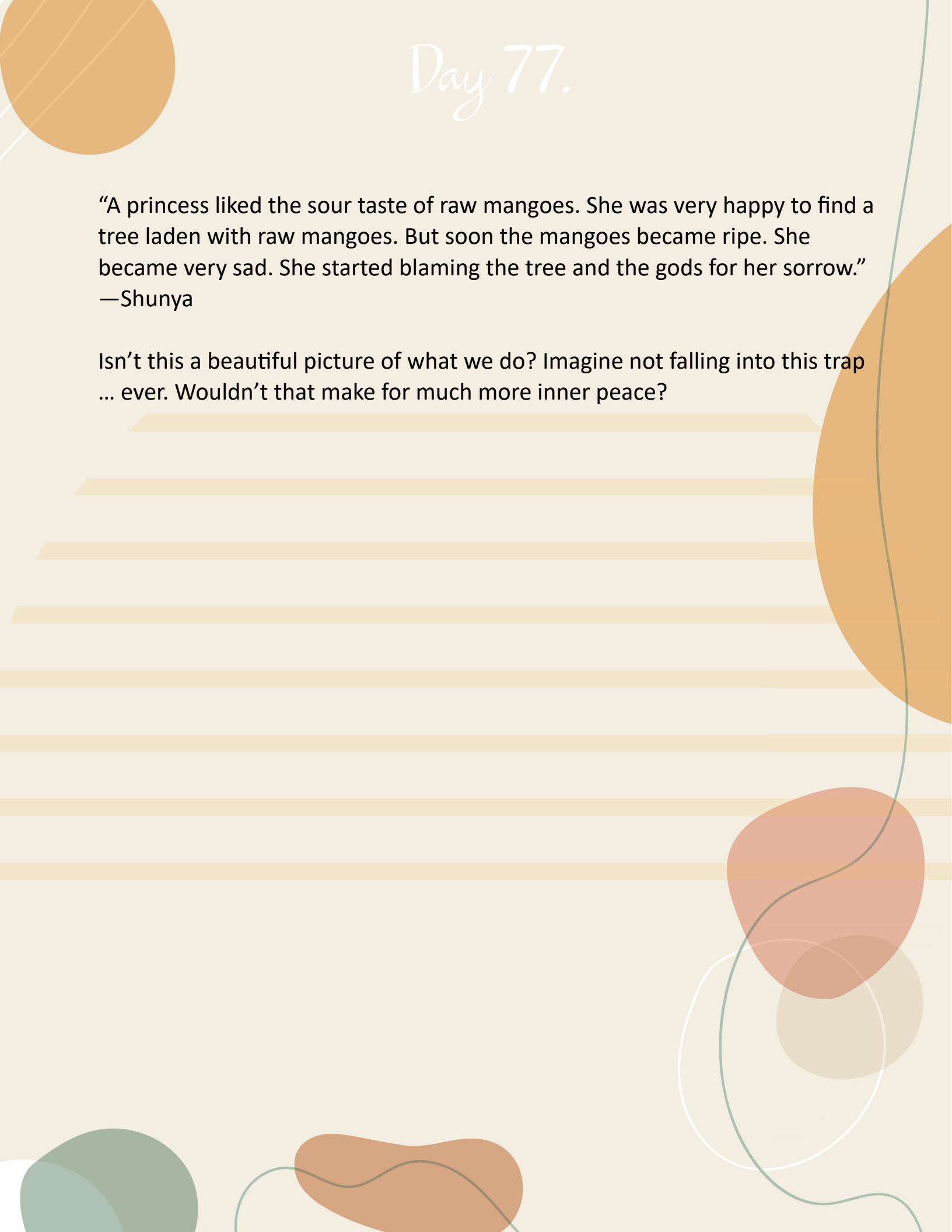
Look around you. What do you see? What does what you see say about your inner reality?



Day 77.

“A princess liked the sour taste of raw mangoes. She was very happy to find a tree laden with raw mangoes. But soon the mangoes became ripe. She became very sad. She started blaming the tree and the gods for her sorrow.”
—Shunya

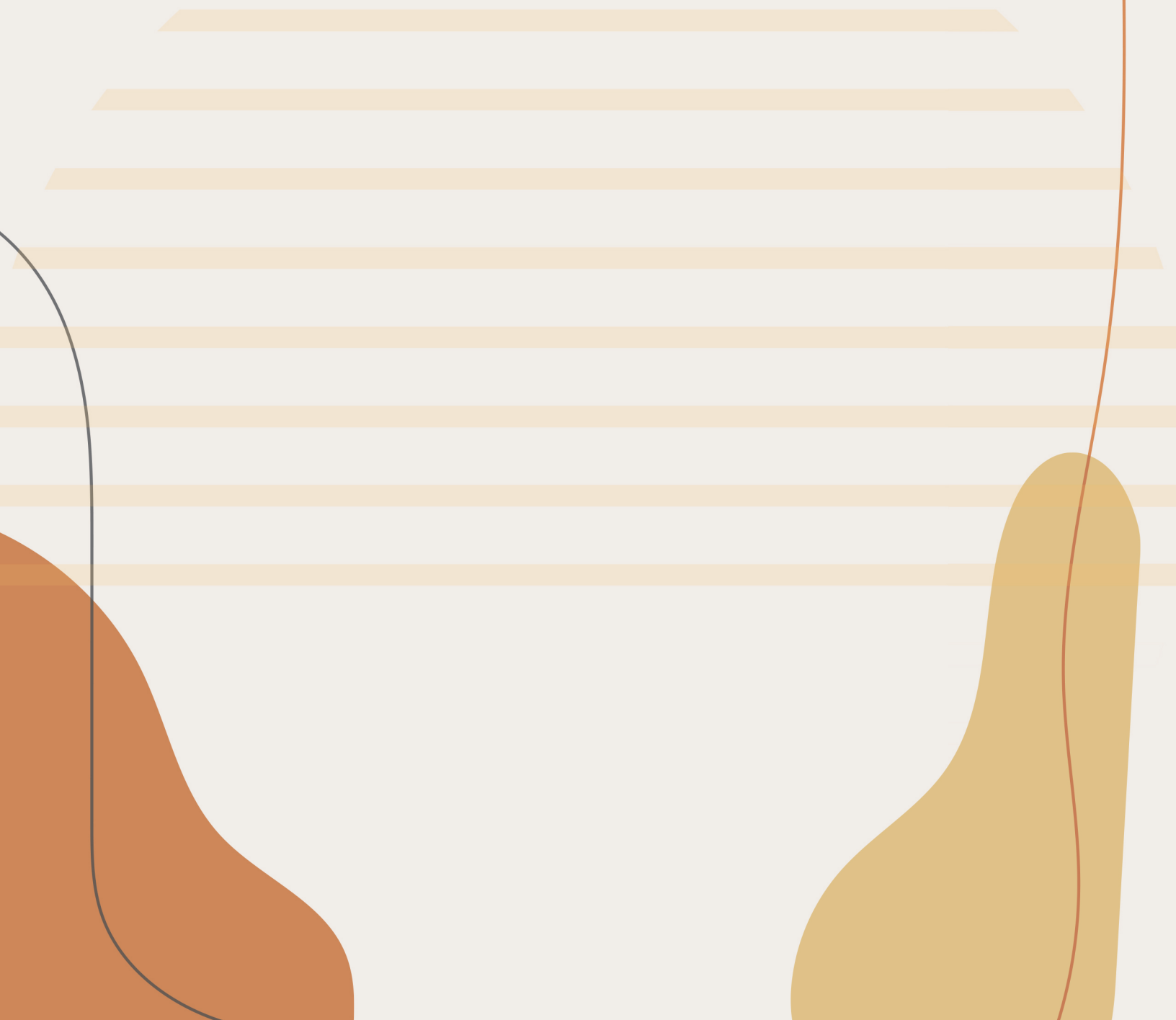
Isn't this a beautiful picture of what we do? Imagine not falling into this trap ... ever. Wouldn't that make for much more inner peace?



Day 78.

“There is always a certain peace in being what one is, in being that completely.” —Ugo Betti

Maybe you are yourself at the 50% level or the 60% level. Imagine being 100% you. Can you picture that?



Day 79.

“You have a soul too pure to be damaged, a heart too beautiful to be broken, and a mind too peaceful to be disturbed”—Samiha Totanji

This is the dream. Can you picture it? Can you feel it?

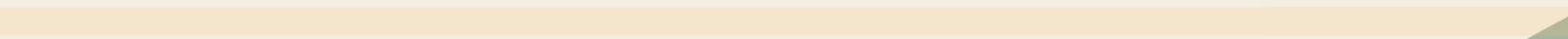
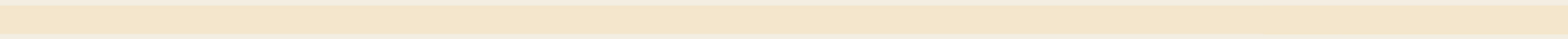
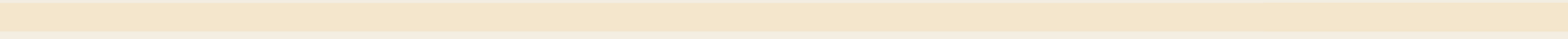
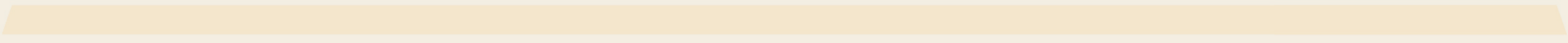
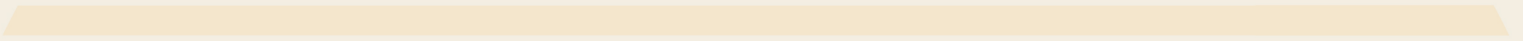


Day 80.

“To form a new relationship with yourself, you must first acknowledge that the inner world is more real than the outer world.”

—Grace Grossmann

The outer world has its reality and its way of serious impinging. It is not unreal—it is quite something. But our inner world is also quite something. Can you make your inner world more peaceful?



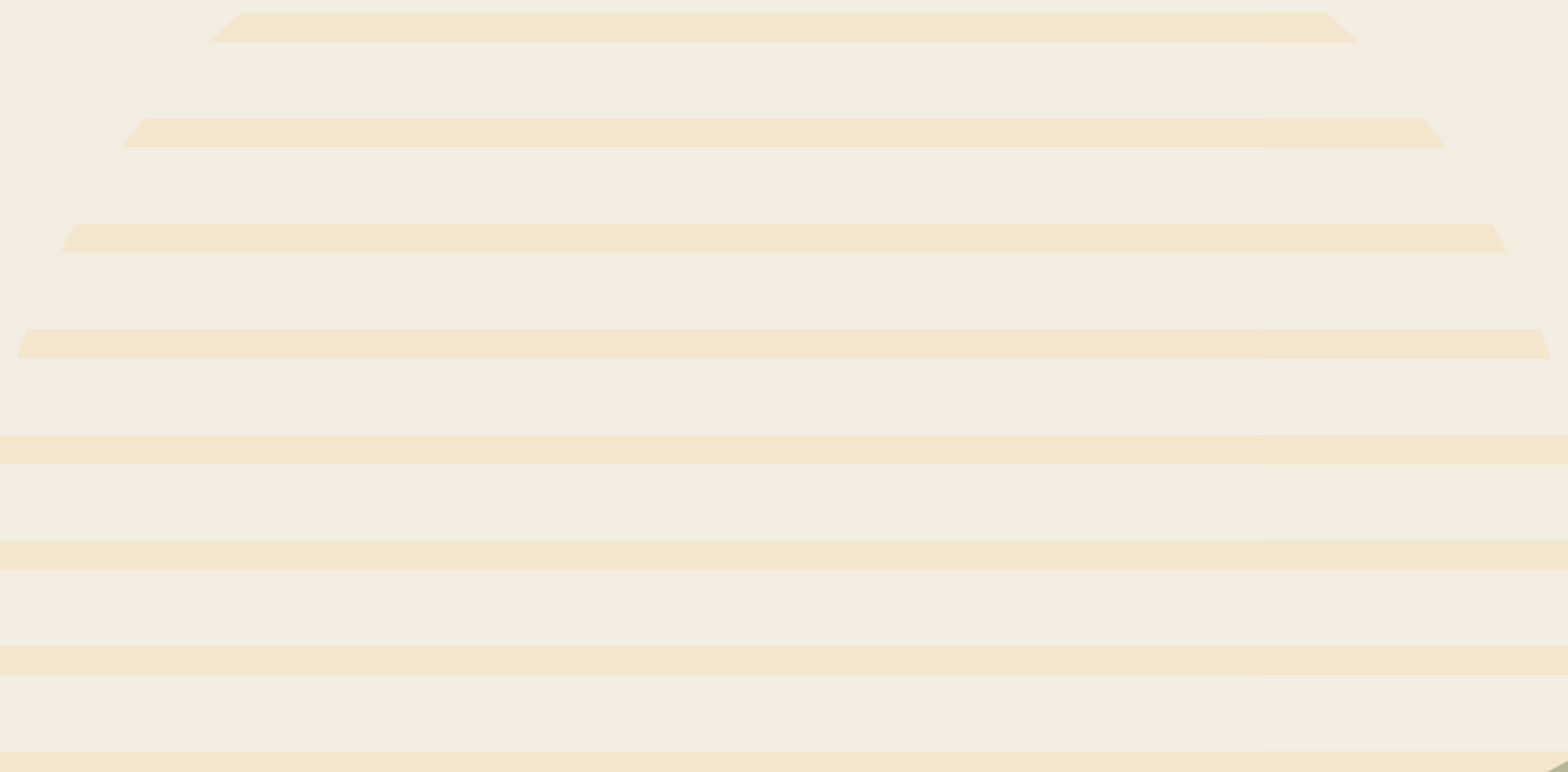


Day 81.

“I was born into chaos. I didn’t know what peace felt like.”

—Shannon A. Thompson

If you’ve always had inner peace, well, then, inner peace is easy. But what if you’ve mostly had chaos, inside and out? What then? How might you get from chaos to inner peace?



Day 82.

“A healthy mind observes and questions itself. This is the path to inner peace and happiness. Don’t believe everything you think.”

—Vironika Tugaleva

Could any advice be more valuable? Pick a thought you believe that you know you ought not to believe. How might you get rid of it?



Day 83.

“I have heard that he who knows what is enough will not let himself be entangled by thoughts of gain; that he who really understands how to find satisfaction will not be afraid of other kinds of loss; and that he who practices the cultivation of what is within him will not be ashamed because he holds no position in society.” —Zhuangzi

Inner peace is the fruit of dignity and the way to dignity. Whatever your station or place, you stand dignified and peaceful.



Day 84.

“The fact is, inner peace isn't something that comes when you finally paint the whole house a nice shade of cream and start drinking herbal tea. Inner peace is something that is shaped by the wisdom that 'this too shall pass' and is fired in the kiln of self-knowledge.” —Tania Ahsan

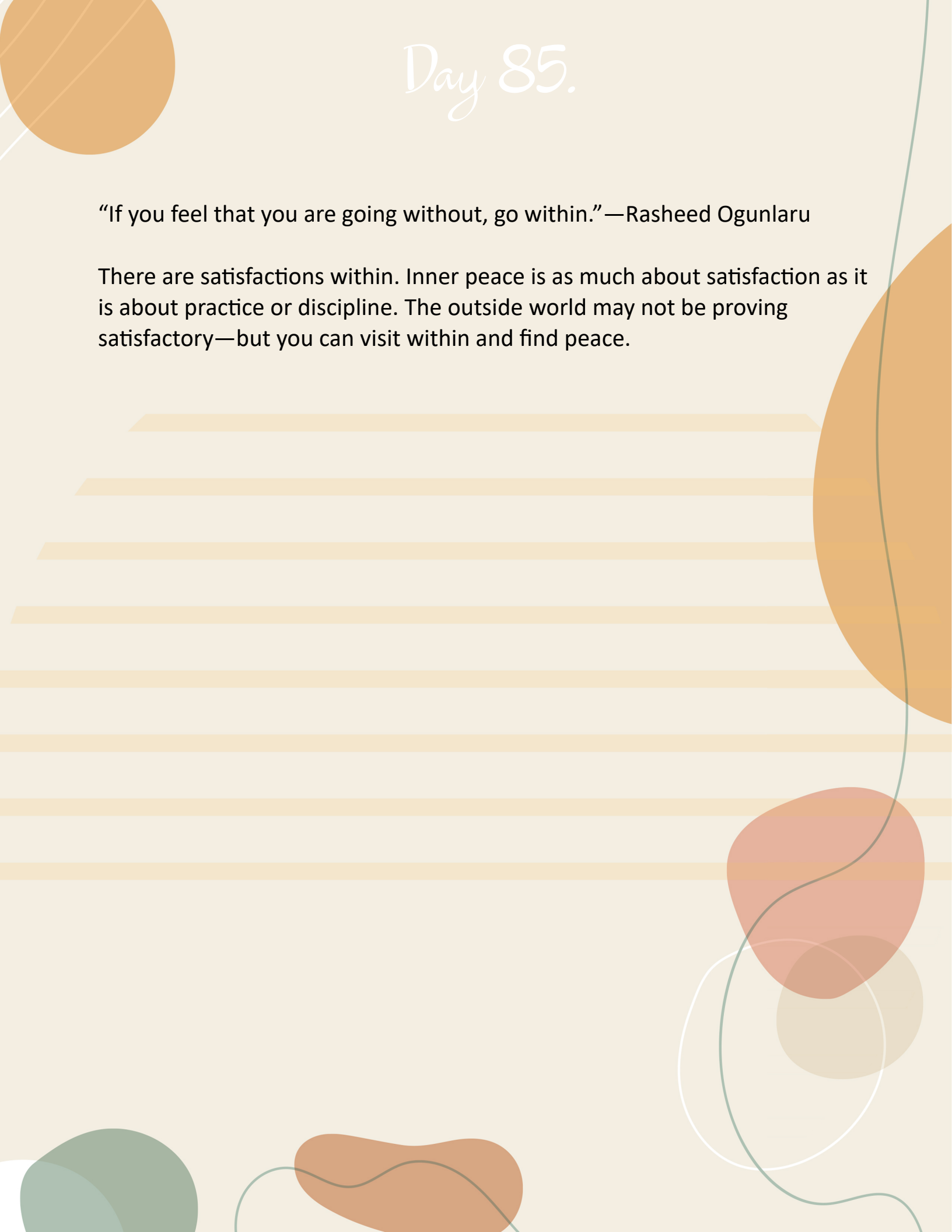
Who hasn't tried to find inner peace by painting the whole house a nice shade of cream? But that isn't the way, is it?



Day 85.

“If you feel that you are going without, go within.”—Rasheed Ogunlaru

There are satisfactions within. Inner peace is as much about satisfaction as it is about practice or discipline. The outside world may not be proving satisfactory—but you can visit within and find peace.



Day 86.

“You cannot find peace by avoiding life.”—Michael Cunningham

Inner peace serves a life well-lived. We do not just sit and sit and sit. We live!



Day 87.

“I do not want the peace which passeth understanding, I want the understanding which bringeth peace.”—Helen Keller

Self-awareness and inner peace are twin candles that, when lit, illuminate a life.



Day 88.

“You can’t separate peace from freedom because no one can be at peace unless he has his freedom.” —Malcolm X

Where do you need to be freer? How might you attain that freedom?



Day 89.

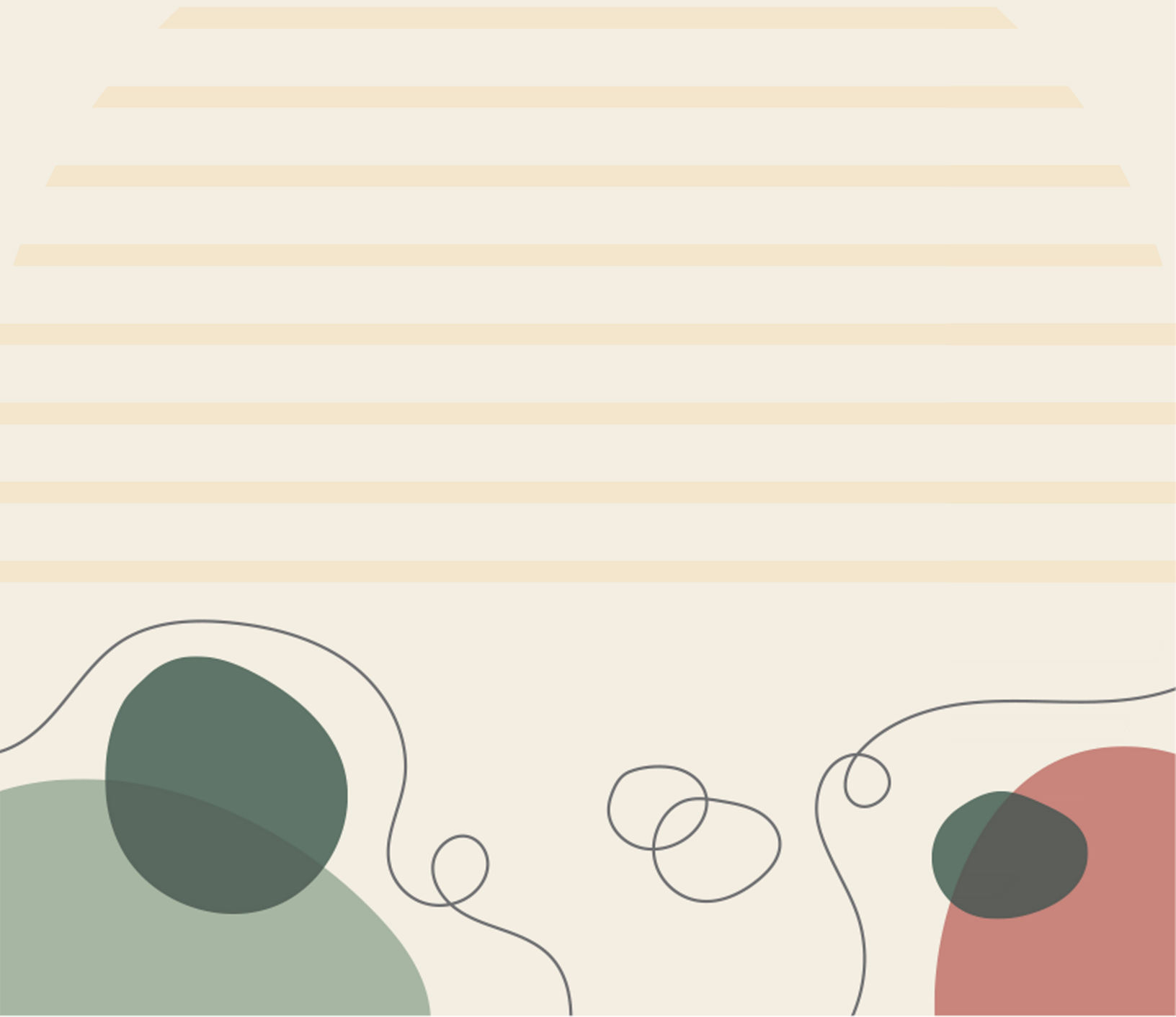
“You find peace not by rearranging the circumstances of your life, but by realizing who you are at the deepest level.” —Echhart Tolle

Ah, but you may also need to rearrange the circumstances of your life.
Are you ready for that? Are you willing?

Day 90.

“Make peace with your broken pieces.”—Unknown

Maybe you can become whole. Broken bones can heal. Can you?



About Eric Maisel

Eric Maisel is the author of 50+ books. His interests include creativity and the creative life, life purpose and meaning, mental health and emotional wellbeing, and critical psychology and critical psychiatry. His books include *Coaching the Artist Within*, *Fearless Creating*, *The Van Gogh Blues*, *Life Purpose Boot Camp*, *Mastering Creative Anxiety*, *The Future of Mental Health*, *Why Smart People Hurt*, *Why Smart Teens Hurt*, *The Power of Daily Practice*, and *Redesign Your Mind*.

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