

My Creative Window

Teen Edition guidance for parents and caregivers

This undated planner and creative journal is designed for young people aged 13 to 18. It offers twelve flexible weeks of planning, creative practice and personal reflection. Its purpose is to make room for expression, choice and connection. Your role is to offer support while respecting the young person's ownership of the journal.

Offer an invitation rather than an assignment

Let the young person choose whether, when and how to use it. There is no daily requirement and no need to complete the pages in order. Writing, drawing, patterns, fictional characters and spoken reflection are all welcome. Do not tie journal completion to rewards, grades or behaviour targets.

Agree on privacy

Ask before reading, photographing or sharing any page. Do not use the journal to monitor them or require explanations of their creative work. Agree together on where it will be kept and what support they would like. For those aged 18, respect their independence and ask how they want you involved.

Listen without interpreting

Try "Would you like me to listen, help you think it through or give you some space?" Accept their choice. Avoid treating a colour, symbol or fictional story as a reliable sign of a particular feeling. If they choose to explain, let them define what their work means.

Keep conversation open

You can offer a calm check in without asking to see the journal: "How has your week been?" or "Is there anything you would like support with?" A skipped prompt or an unfinished page does not need to become a discussion.

Support creative practice

Offer ordinary materials and realistic time: a pen, pencil, paper or colouring pencils may be enough. Ask before suggesting improvements. Join an activity only if invited, and create your own work rather than taking over theirs. Shared activities can also involve a trusted mentor, sibling or friend; parents do not need to be involved in every invitation.

Make planning manageable

The weekly pages are tools for noticing priorities, support and rest. Help break down a plan if asked. If the journal becomes another source of pressure, simplify the activity or leave it for another time. Reflection does not need to lead to a goal or a solution.

Approach digital life with curiosity

The digital space prompts invite reflection on attention, connection and privacy. Discuss their experiences without demanding access to accounts or turning the activity into a test. They should not record passwords or identifying details in the journal. If an online experience worries them, help them find appropriate support.

When support is needed

If a prompt brings up distress, pause and respond calmly. Do not push for a detailed account. Take disclosures of harm or concerns about safety seriously and help the young person access appropriate support. Respect privacy while explaining clearly when safety concerns mean you need to involve someone who can help. This journal is not a diagnostic tool or a replacement for professional care.

The framework behind the journal

The journal is inspired by Dr. Reem Kassem's Creative Resilience Framework, developed through doctoral research on hybrid cultural engagement in the context of crisis. Recovery, sustainability and growth guide the design, with creative expression, relational support and meaning making informing the activities. Blue represents recovery, orange sustainability and maroon growth. These are connected dimensions, not stages to complete. This teenage edition is a new adaptation; outcomes from the original research should not be assumed to apply to it.