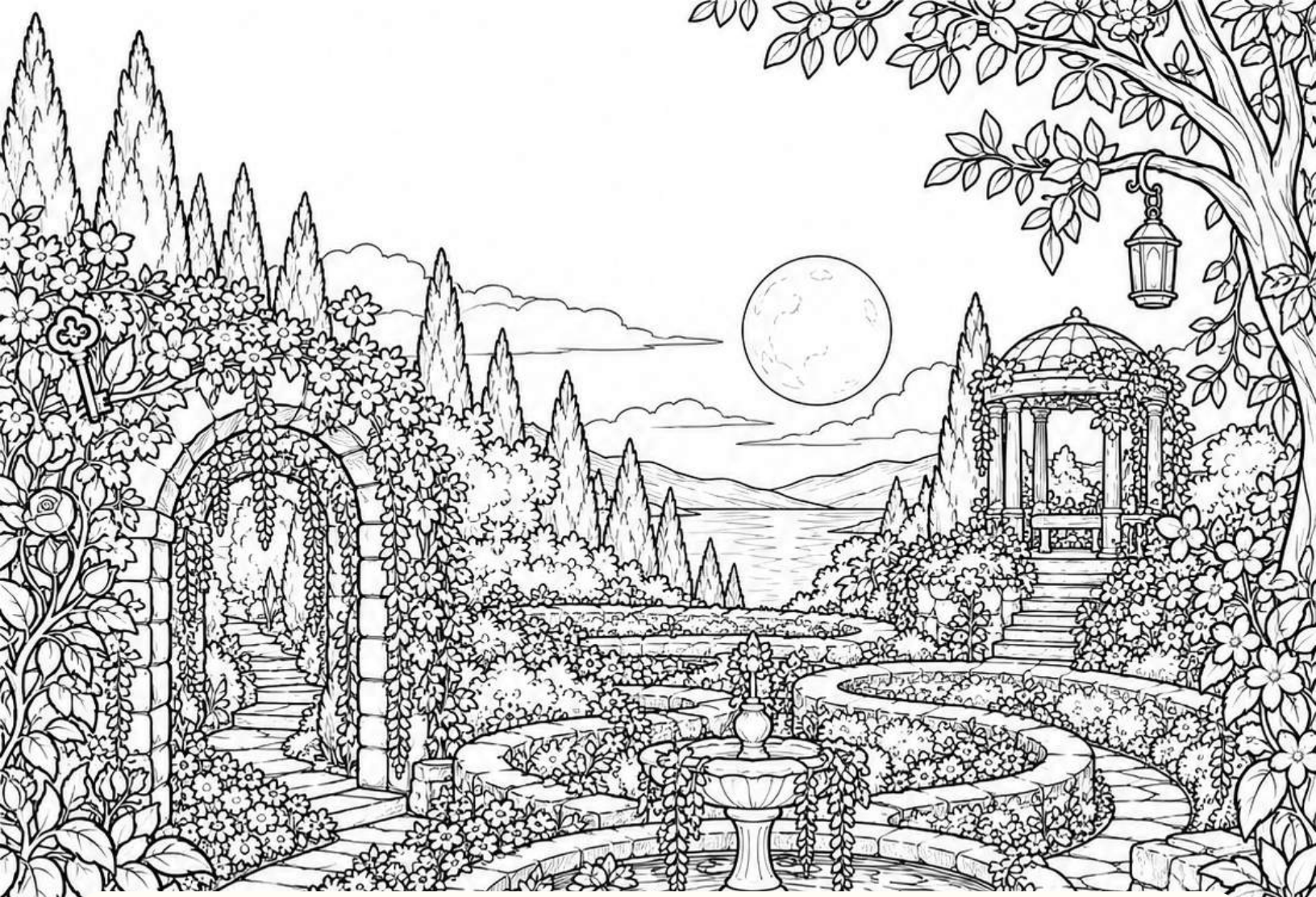


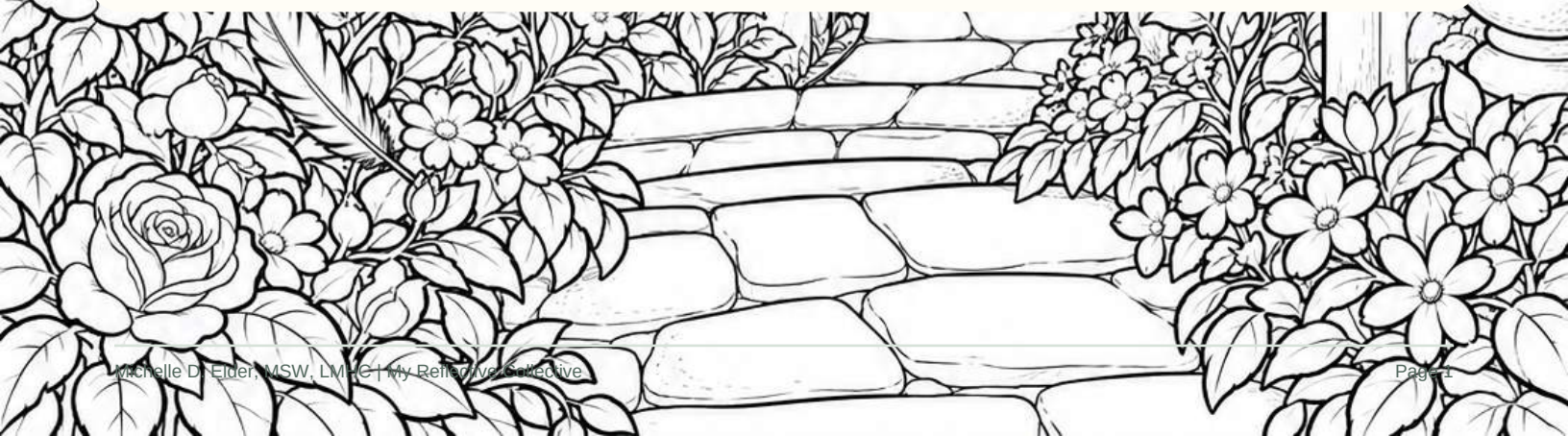
Nervous System Support Before Court

A gentle way to use this resource

Begin anywhere. Read one section at a time, choose only what fits, and skip, adapt, pause, or stop as needed. Try one practice before adding another. Reflection is an invitation, not a requirement.

Created by Michelle D. Elder, MSW, LMHC | My Reflective Collective

Educational wellness material. Not therapy, diagnosis, medical advice, crisis care, or a substitute for individualized professional support.



Before you begin

Take a moment to notice where you are starting. There is no correct answer and no requirement to complete every prompt.

What is most present?	What would feel supportive?
[ ] Tension or restlessness [ ] Heavy emotion [ ] Numbness or shutdown [ ] Racing thoughts [ ] Low energy [ ] Something else: _____	[ ] More steadiness [ ] More clarity [ ] Comfort or rest [ ] A practical next step [ ] Connection or support [ ] Something else: _____

A simple rhythm

1. Notice	Name what is happening without judging it.
2. Choose	Select one prompt or practice that fits your energy and circumstances.
3. Try	Use it gently for a clear amount of time. Smaller still counts.
4. Check	Notice whether you feel even slightly steadier, clearer, safer, or less alone.

Low-energy option

Read only the headings. Circle or note one sentence that feels useful. Then choose one action that takes five minutes or less. You can return later; stopping is allowed.

A grounding and organization worksheet for stressful systems, paperwork, waiting, and aftercare.

Use this at your own pace. Skip, adapt, pause, or stop. You are allowed to choose what fits your body, culture, privacy, energy, safety, access needs, and real-life limits today.

A printable reflection and practice resource Created by Michelle D. Elder, MSW, LMHC. This worksheet is a free educational wellness resource from My Reflective Collective.

Use what supports you. Skip, pause, adapt, or connect with a licensed therapist, healthcare provider, advocate, or trusted support if reflection brings something up.

Reflect, Restore & Grow

A choice-centered wellness and organization guide for a stressful day Court can involve waiting, uncertainty, unfamiliar rules, power differences, time pressure, and high personal stakes. This guide offers general wellness practices for noticing stress responses and supporting your ability to stay oriented. It does not tell you what to file, say, argue, sign, or request.

Legal scope: Michelle D. Elder and My Reflective Collective are not acting as your lawyer. This resource is not legal advice, representation, case strategy, deadline calculation, form selection, or a prediction of outcome. Court rules and procedures vary.

Verify information with the court, an official source, or a licensed lawyer in the applicable jurisdiction.

Your choices come first

-] Keep your eyes open or closed - whichever supports orientation.
-] Skip breath practices if they increase discomfort.
-] Use movement, sound, water, texture, or visual anchors instead.
-] Pause this worksheet at any time.
-] Ask an appropriate support person or professional for help when needed.

What would make preparation feel more manageable?

_____
_____ immediate danger or medical emergency. Call or text 988 in the U.S. or Canada for suicide or mental health

crisis support. Copyright Michelle

ROOT | Notice your court-day signals Gather information without judging yourself Stress responses can look like racing thoughts, restlessness, irritability, numbness, fogginess, shutdown, urgency, or difficulty finding words. These experiences do not determine whether you are prepared or credible.

They are information about what support may help.

My early signs that stress is rising What helps me stay oriented

_____
_____

-] Looking at one stable object
-] Feeling both feet or another point of contact
-] Reading from organized notes
-] Taking a sip of water when permitted
-] Using a quiet sensory object when permitted

-] Asking for a question to be repeated

-] Taking one task at a time Court-specific rules to verify in advance

RISE | Build a before-court plan

Reduce preventable pressure

Preparation cannot control the outcome, but it may reduce avoidable decisions on the day. Use only the items that apply to your situation and confirm court-specific requirements.

-] Confirm the date, time, courthouse or remote link, and courtroom.

-] Check transportation, parking, accessibility, support needs, and arrival timing.

-] Organize permitted documents and copies in a simple order.

-] Write down the names or titles of documents you need to locate quickly.

-] Charge devices and bring permitted charging equipment.

-] Plan food, water, medication, clothing, and sensory needs.

-] Identify official contact information in case logistics change.

-] Choose a support person if rules permit one.

The night before: what can be made simpler?

_____

_____ My one-sentence grounding reminder

COURT DAY | Orient, pause, and proceed

A small practice for waiting Name five facts about the present moment: where you are, the date, what the next known step is, who an _____

_____ official contact is, and what item you need first. Facts can be more useful than forcing calm.

If your thoughts race

-] Place both hands on your folder or another neutral surface.

-] Read the next item on your checklist rather than the whole case.

-] Silently name three colors or shapes in the room.

-] Use a longer natural exhale only if it feels comfortable.

-] Remind yourself: I can ask for a question to be repeated.

Words I can use for basic clarity These are general communication examples, not legal instructions: 'Could you please repeat the question?' 'May I look at my notes?' 'I do not understand that term.' 'Could you tell me where to find the official instruction for that?' Whether a request is permitted depends on the setting and decision-maker.

What I want within easy reach

_____

_____

RESTORE | After court

Coming down from a high-demand day can take time You may feel relief, exhaustion, activation, numbness, disappointment, confusion, or several things at once. A delayed response is also possible. Restoration means reducing demands and returning to basic support - not forcing yourself to feel better.

My after-court care plan

-] Write down any official next steps while they are still clear.

-] Store documents somewhere secure.

-] Eat, hydrate, rest, move, or reduce stimulation as available.

-] Delay non-urgent decisions if possible.

-] Contact a qualified legal resource for legal questions.

-] Contact an appropriate health or crisis resource if additional support is needed.

support. Copyright Michelle D. Elder,

MSW, LMHC. My Reflective Collective.

More free My Reflective Collective tools

Printable links below. The worksheet wording itself is unchanged.

Scan the QR code or use the first link to open this worksheet online.

The online reader can support read-aloud tools and browser translation.

Read/listen to this worksheet online https://myreflectivecollective.com/worksheet-reader.html?file=nervous-system-support-before-court.pdf Positive affirmations and short mantras

Scan to read/listen

https://myreflectivecollective.com/affirmations.html Soundscapes and grounding audio tools https://myreflectivecollective.com/soundscapes.html

More free worksheets and PDFs

https://myreflectivecollective.com/resource-center.html Crisis and safety resources https://myreflectivecollective.com/crisis-resources.html

Website disclaimer

https://myreflectivecollective.com/disclaimer.html

Educational wellness notice

This worksheet and website offer educational wellness and self-reflection tools only.

They are not therapy, diagnosis, medical care, legal advice, crisis care, or individualized safety planning.

Pause or stop any activity that feels wrong, unsafe, inaccessible, or too much.

For immediate danger or a medical emergency, call 911. In the U.S., call or text 988 for crisis support.

SAFETY, PRIVACY & EDUCATIONAL USE

MY REFLECTIVE COLLECTIVE - MICHELLE D. ELDER, MSW, LMHC

If there is immediate danger or a medical emergency: Call 911 in the United States or use your local emergency number. For U.S. suicide or mental-health crisis support, call or text 988. For relationship-safety support, contact the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 800-799-7233, text START to 88788, or visit TheHotline.org from a safer device when

possible. _____
_____ Privacy and safer searching

If someone may monitor your device, accounts, internet connection, location, downloads, or browser activity, consider using a safer device and a trusted network. Private browsing may reduce locally saved history but does not make activity invisible. Clearing history can also be noticed. A website Quick Exit button changes the page; it cannot erase browser, download, router, account, employer, school, carrier, or device records. Choose only steps that feel safer in your situation.

Do not store identifying or safety-sensitive answers where another person may find them.

Educational scope and professional limits This resource provides general psychoeducation, reflection, and wellness support. It is not therapy, counseling, diagnosis, assessment, treatment, medical advice, legal advice, crisis response, forensic evaluation, or an individualized safety plan.

It does not replace care from a licensed clinician, healthcare professional, attorney, trained advocate, emergency service, or other qualified professional. Laws, court procedures, services, and risks vary by location and circumstance.

Choice, pacing, and inclusion You may skip, change, discuss, dictate, draw, pause, or stop any activity. No exercise can determine what you experienced, diagnose a condition, prove a legal claim, guarantee safety, or tell you whether to stay, leave, report, reconcile, forgive, or pursue court action. Adapt language and activities for culture, identity, disability, neurotype, age, literacy, sensory needs, and personal preference. Automatic translation can make mistakes; confirm legal, medical, emergency, and safety-critical wording with a qualified person.

Copyright and sharing

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MyReflectiveCollective.com - Pause - Reflect - Learn - Practice

EDUCATIONAL RESOURCE - NOT THERAPY OR INDIVIDUALIZED CARE

Immediate danger or medical emergency: call 911 | U.S. crisis support: call or text 988 | Michelle D. Elder, MSW, LMHC

Supportive practices and reminders

Trauma-informed choice

You are in charge of pace, privacy, and participation. Keep your eyes open if that feels safer. Change the words, position, movement, or environment. Skip any prompt that increases distress. You never have to describe a traumatic experience to benefit from grounding or reflection.

A one-minute mindfulness pause

Notice one point of support beneath you. Look around and name three neutral things you see. Notice one sound and one body sensation without trying to change either. Ask, 'What would support me in the next few minutes?' Choose the smallest workable response.

Believable affirmations

Choose language your mind can accept. Try: 'I can take one step at a time.' 'My needs and boundaries matter.' 'I am allowed to pause.' 'I can ask for support.' 'This moment is difficult, and it will not always feel exactly like this.' Edit any statement until it feels honest and respectful.

Practical tips

Pair reflection with water, food, movement, rest, medication as prescribed, or contact with a safe person when needed. Save the most helpful page where it is easy to find. Revisit the resource when you are relatively steady so the choices feel familiar during harder moments.

When more support is appropriate

A worksheet cannot provide emergency care, diagnosis, or individualized treatment. Consider a qualified health or mental-health professional when distress is intense, persistent, worsening, affecting daily functioning, or connected with safety concerns. In immediate danger, contact local emergency services or a crisis service available in your country.

Integrate and choose your next step

Pause after reading. More information is not always more helpful; the goal is to leave with one choice you can actually use.

What stood out?

_____

_____

What is one kind, realistic next step?

_____

_____

What support, boundary, or adaptation would help?

_____

_____

If this did not help

You did not fail. Try making the step smaller, changing from a thinking practice to a body or sensory practice, checking basic needs, or involving a safe person. Strong, persistent, or worsening distress may need professional or crisis support beyond a worksheet.