

# A Rule of Life for Wholeness in Chaos — The Companion Journal

A reflective workbook for grounding, renewal, and transformation

by Elizabeth M. Johnson, LCSW, LMFT

## Dedication

For all who seek steadiness in uncertain times.

## About This Journal

This journal is a quiet space for reflection and renewal — a companion to *A Rule of Life for Wholeness in Chaos*. It invites you to slow down, listen inwardly, and meet life's uncertainty with steadiness and grace. Each page offers room to write, wonder, and breathe. Use it daily or seasonally, alone or within a group, as a way to return — again and again — to the center of your own grounded presence.

## Introduction

This journal offers a living rhythm — a way to hold presence and purpose in chaotic times. You'll travel through seven Benedictine-inspired principles, each re-imagined for modern life. Move slowly. Write freely. Leave space for silence. There are no wrong answers, only honest noticing.

## Stability — Staying Rooted in the Ground of Being

I commit to presence rather than escape. I honor the ordinary — the body, the room I inhabit, the relationships I already have. In chaos, I return to small anchors: breath, stillness, and kindness.

### **Reflection Prompts**

- Where in your life are you called to stay present rather than run?
- What people or practices help you remain grounded?
- What does 'home' mean in your inner landscape?

### **Embodied / Creative Practice**

Stand or sit with both feet on the floor. Notice your contact with the earth; breathe into that rootedness. Sketch or write the shapes of your anchors — the simple things that hold you.

## Conversatio — The Art of Ongoing Transformation

Life unfolds through continual change. Growth is not a destination but a rhythm of unfolding. I commit to openness, curiosity, and the courage to begin again.

### **Reflection Prompts**

- What form of change are you resisting?
- What have you learned from past transitions?
- Where do you sense new growth emerging?

### **Embodied / Creative Practice**

Write one page about a current transition, describing it as a teacher rather than an adversary. Then create a simple image or symbol for what 'becoming' looks like right now.

## Obedience — Listening Deeply

Listening is the first act of love. I attend to what is real — to the quiet voice of the body, to intuition, to others, and to the wisdom found in stillness.

### **Reflection Prompts**

- When was the last time you truly listened without planning your reply?
- What helps you hear your own inner wisdom?
- Where do you sense life inviting your attention?

### **Embodied / Creative Practice**

Practice active listening with a friend or colleague. Speak for three minutes each, without interruption. Notice what happens when you truly receive another's words.

## Ora et Labora — Rhythm of Stillness and Purposeful Action

Balance contemplation and creation. Begin and end the day with stillness. Offer work — creative, clinical, or personal — as participation in healing the world. Rest is part of the work.

### **Reflection Prompts**

- How does your daily rhythm honor both stillness and movement?
- When do you feel most aligned between inner purpose and outer action?
- What boundaries support your rest?

### **Embodied / Creative Practice**

Create a small ritual to begin and close your workday — light a candle, stretch, breathe. Notice how simple rituals shape intention.

## Hospitality — Radical Welcome

I receive others and myself with compassion, especially in moments of distress. I honor difference without needing to erase it. I make my presence a space of safety and acceptance.

### **Reflection Prompts**

- What parts of yourself or others need greater welcome?
- What does 'radical kindness' mean to you?
- How can you extend warmth without losing boundaries?

### **Embodied / Creative Practice**

Write a brief welcome note to a part of yourself you usually reject. Read it aloud, gently. Notice what softens inside you.

## Silence and Solitude — The Wellspring of Clarity

Silence is not emptiness but fertile ground. It restores clarity and nourishes creativity. I protect moments of quiet as sacred.

### **Reflection Prompts**

- What is your current relationship with silence?
- When do you feel most restored by solitude?
- What fears or resistances arise in quiet?

### **Embodied / Creative Practice**

Unplug for one hour this week. Sit in stillness, walk in nature, or create without sound. Afterward, write a few sentences beginning with 'In the quiet, I noticed ...'

## Community — Shared Becoming

Healing and creativity flourish in connection. I seek mutual nourishment, honest conversation, and shared purpose. I remember that wholeness is a collective journey.

### **Reflection Prompts**

- How do you show up for others — and how do you allow others to show up for you?
- What does supportive community feel like in your body?
- Where might you need to ask for help?

### **Embodied / Creative Practice**

Gather a small circle — friends, colleagues, or clients — for shared reflection. Invite each person to name one thing they need and one thing they can offer. End with gratitude for interdependence.

## Rhythm and Renewal

A Rule of Life is not a doctrine but a dance. Return to it often. Let it evolve as you evolve. Hold it lightly, as you would a companion walking beside you through change. Begin again, and again, and again. Use this space to write your closing reflections or intentions for the coming season. What rhythm feels most life-giving now?

© 2025 Elizabeth M. Johnson. All rights reserved. For use in personal or group reflection.  
May this work be a shelter and a light in uncertain times.