



CARE BEFORE CRISIS™ RESOURCE HUB

WORKBOOK
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Family Check-In Workbook

A 20-minute monthly ritual for the whole household — so the people under one roof actually know how each other are doing.

Life moves fast, and it's easy to share a home without really checking in. This workbook turns “How's everybody doing?” into a simple, repeatable habit — twenty minutes, once a month, where every voice gets heard. It builds the kind of **everyday trust** that makes it natural to speak up when something's wrong, long *before* a hard season becomes a crisis. Print the monthly pages and make it yours.

The whole idea in one breath

This is a habit, not a one-time talk. Pick a regular time (the first Sunday, the first of the month, a monthly family dinner), keep it short and judgment-free, and do it even when things seem fine — *especially* when things seem fine.

These check-ins build connection and help families notice when someone needs more support. They are not therapy or treatment. If a check-in surfaces something serious, use the guidance and crisis resources inside.



Why a monthly check-in matters

Strong families aren't the ones without problems — they're the ones who talk about them early. A regular check-in does three quiet but powerful things:

- **It normalizes feelings.** When 'how are you, really?' is a monthly habit, no one has to work up the courage to start — the door is already open.
- **It catches change early.** You notice the kid who's gone quiet or the adult who's running on empty before it becomes a bigger problem.
- **It builds trust you can bank on.** The relationship you build on an ordinary month is the one your loved one leans on during a hard one.

Setting it up

When & where

Same time each month so it becomes automatic. Around a table or in a comfortable circle. Phones down, TV off, snacks welcome. Twenty minutes is plenty — keep it short so everyone looks forward to it.

Ground rules (read these aloud each time)

Our family check-in agreements

- ☐ Everyone gets a turn. No one is forced to share more than they want.
- ☐ No fixing, no lectures, no judging — we listen first.
- ☐ What's shared here is respected, not used against anyone later.
- ☐ Feelings are allowed — all of them. There are no wrong answers.
- ☐ We thank each other for being honest.

Make it fit your family

Adapt for your household — single-parent, blended, multi-generational, chosen family, roommates. “Family” is whoever shares your life and your roof.



The 20-minute ritual

A simple flow that gives every person a voice. Adjust the minutes to your family's size and ages.

#	Step	Time	What you do
1	Open together	2 min	Put phones away. Read the agreements aloud. One person says: "We're here to check in on each other. Everybody's voice matters."
2	Feelings round	4 min	Go around: each person names how they're doing in a word or a number (use the feelings scale on the monthly page). No explaining required — just naming.
3	Rose, thorn & bud	6 min	Each person shares one good thing (rose), one hard thing (thorn), and one thing they're looking forward to (bud). Listen without jumping in.
4	What I need this month	4 min	Each person names one thing they need — more help, more rest, more time together, a little grace. The family hears it and, where it can, supports it.
5	Gratitude & a goal	2 min	Each person shares one thing they're grateful for. Pick one small family goal or kind act for the month.
6	Close	2 min	Thank each other. Note anything that needs a follow-up (a private chat, a call to support). End on connection — a hug, a handshake, a laugh.

The five-minute version

Short on time? Do just the **Feelings round** and **Rose, thorn & bud**. Five honest minutes beats a skipped month.



TOOL

The feelings scale

A shared language for the feelings round — helpful for kids and grown-ups alike. Point, say a number, or use your own words.

#	Word	Sounds like...
5	Great	Energized, hopeful, connected
4	Good	Mostly steady, doing okay
3	Meh	So-so, a little off, tired
2	Low	Stressed, sad, or worn down
1	Hard	Really struggling, need support

Reading the scale

If anyone lands on a **1**, or sits at a **2** for a while, that's your cue to follow up privately and with care after the check-in (see 'When a check-in surfaces something bigger'). A 1 is not an emergency by itself — but it's always worth a gentle, caring conversation.



PRINT ONE PER MONTH

Monthly Family Check-In

Month / date:

Who's here:

Feelings round

Each person: your name, your number (1–5), and a word for how you're doing.

Name	#	A word for how I am

Rose, thorn & bud

Rose — one good thing this month

Thorn — one hard or heavy thing

Bud — one thing I'm looking forward to



What I need this month

One thing each of us needs from the family — more help, more rest, more time together, a little grace.

Gratitude

Something (or someone) each of us is grateful for.

Our family goal / kind act for the month

Worry box — follow-up needed

Anything heavy that came up — and who will follow up, and how. (A private chat? A call to support? Reaching out for help together?)

You don't have to handle it alone. Call or text **988** (Suicide & Crisis Lifeline), 24/7, free and confidential. If there is immediate danger to life, call **911**. To connect with ongoing support, reach **Care Connections™** at **214-506-0691** or **Dominique@amindfulresource.org**.



Conversation prompts by age

Use these to spark the rounds, especially with younger kids. Pick a couple that fit — you don't need them all.

Little ones (about 4–9)

- What was the best and worst part of your month?
- Show me how you feel with your face or your hands.
- What made you laugh? What made you sad or mad?
- Who was kind to you? Who were you kind to?
- Is anything worrying your heart right now?

Tweens & teens (about 10–17)

- What's something going on that I might not know about?
- How have things been at school / with friends, really?
- What's been stressing you out lately?
- On a scale of 1–10, how's your head and your heart this month?
- Is there anything you've wanted to tell me but weren't sure how?

Adults & caregivers

- What's been filling your cup — and what's been draining it?
- Where are you running on empty? What would help?
- What's something you're carrying that you haven't said out loud?
- How are we doing as a household — what do you need from us?
- What's one thing we could do differently this month?



When a check-in surfaces something bigger

Sometimes 'how are you, really?' uncovers more than a rough month. Here's how to respond with calm and care.

Pay closer attention if you notice

- Someone stuck at a 1 or 2, or clearly not themselves for weeks.
- Pulling away, big changes in sleep/appetite/energy, or slipping in daily life.
- Hopeless or worrying words — “what's the point,” “I'm a burden,” talk of not being here.
- A child or vulnerable family member who seems unsafe or afraid.

If there's any sign of danger

If anyone talks about suicide or self-harm, or you sense immediate danger: don't leave them alone, don't promise secrecy, and get help now — call or text **988** together, or **911** if life is in danger. Asking directly (“Are you thinking about hurting yourself?”) is safe and helps.

Taking a caring next step

1. Follow up privately and gently — “I heard you, and I've been thinking about you.”
2. Listen without fixing; take what they share seriously.
3. Encourage support — a counselor, doctor, or Care Connections™ (214-506-0691). Offer to help find someone or make the call together.
4. Keep showing up. Check in between the monthly meetings, too.



KEEP IT GOING

Make it a habit

Check off each month you gather. Aim for the streak — consistency is what builds the trust.

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

One last thing

You showing up for this — month after month — is one of the most protective things you can do for the people you love. It tells them: in this house, you matter, your feelings are welcome, and you never have to carry it alone.

If you or someone else is in crisis

You don't have to handle it alone. Call or text **988** (Suicide & Crisis Lifeline), 24/7, free and confidential. If there is immediate danger to life, call **911**. To connect with ongoing support, reach **Care Connections™** at **214-506-0691** or **Dominique@amindfulresource.org**.

Review status: Draft resource for internal clinical review (Jazmine Peacock, LPC) before publishing. The warning-signs and crisis-response guidance should be confirmed in review.