



CARE BEFORE CRISIS™ RESOURCE HUB

WORKBOOK

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

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