Rooted Together Toolkit Spiritual Reflections 🌳

12 weeks of spiritual reflections for the *Mvskoke at Home* Cultural Toolkit.

Weeks 1–6 → Understanding the Teachings

Reflection 1: Living in Balance

Balance is a central teaching across many Native American cultures, including Mvskoke culture. It is often understood as a harmony between four interconnected areas of life: physical health, mental well-being, emotional well-being, and spiritual connection. In Mvskoke families, finding balance can mean caring for the body, nurturing clear and healthy thinking, tending to relationships and feelings, and staying connected to Creator, ancestors, culture, and community. When one area is out of balance, it can affect the others, which is why restoring balance is such an important part of living well.

Reflect:
Where in your life do you feel in rhythm?
Where do you feel stretched beyond what is sustainable?
What helps you return to balance?

Consider:
Children come to understand balance by experiencing it within their home.

Reflection 2: Honoring Ancestors and Future Generations

We live within a continuum shaped by those who came before us and those who will follow. Ancestors are not only part of the past; they are carried in memory, in stories, in values, and in the ways we live each day. In the same way, future generations are shaped by what we choose to carry forward. Honoring both invites us to live with intention, recognizing that our lives are connected across time.

Reflect:
Which ancestors remain present in your memory or stories?
What strengths or teachings have been carried forward to you?
What do you hope future generations will one day say about how you lived?

Consider:
Our ancestors live on through us, as we will through the future generations.

Reflection 3: Nature As Our Relatives

In Mvskoke teachings, the natural world is not separate from us; it exists within a shared system of relationship. Plants, animals, water, and land each hold their own role and meaning, and humans are part of that same living balance. These relationships are reflected in cultural teachings and stories that emphasize respect, awareness of how we move through the world, and responsibility.

Because of this, connection to nature is not only about place, but about relationships. Even when access to land or traditional ways has been disrupted, these teachings continue through what is remembered and honored.

Reflect:
Where do you feel most connected to the natural world?
What lessons have you learned from plants, animals, water, or land?
How does your family show respect for the world around you?

Consider:
We live within a shared system, where all parts of the world hold meaning and responsibility.

Reflection 4: Language and Voice

Language carries identity, memory, and connection. They reflect how we understand ourselves and how we understand each other. For Mvskoke people, language holds cultural meaning that goes beyond words. Our voices reflect the ways stories and perspectives are expressed and shared.

Because of historical disruption, not everyone grows up with access to language or the confidence to use their voice. This can create silence and uncertainty about where one belongs. Yet both language and voice can be reclaimed over time through learning, listening, speaking, and sharing in honorable ways.

Reflect:
What does your voice represent within your family or community?
When do you feel most confident expressing who you are?
What are ways you can honor or reconnect with language and voice?

Consider:
Your voice is a continuation of those who came before you.

Reflection 5: Traditional and Modern Beliefs

Finding spiritual balance is not always easy. For many Mvskoke people and families, it can be a lifelong process of navigating identity, belief, and belonging. Mvskoke history includes the presence of both ceremonial traditions and Christianity, and this can create moments of tension or uncertainty as individuals seek a path that feels true to them.

Many families honor one path, while others respectfully carry elements of both. Rather than contradiction, this reflects adaptation and survival. In this way, balance is not something fixed or perfectly achieved, but something continually tended, shaped by experience, guided by values, and held with care across generations.

Reflect:
Which spiritual traditions shaped your upbringing?
Which teachings continue to guide you?
How do you approach spiritual differences within family or community?

Consider:
Respect allows multiple paths to exist without diminishing any.

Reflection 6: Mvskoke Ceremonial Grounds

A ceremonial ground in the Muscogee (Creek) Nation—often called a stomp ground—is a sacred, community-centered space where traditional ceremonies are carried out. These grounds are organized around a central fire where ceremonial dances, songs, and prayers take place. Each ground is connected to specific families and leadership, with responsibilities, roles, and protocols passed down through generations.

Due to assimilation, not every Mvskoke person belongs to a ceremonial ground. For families, this can bring up questions about connection, identity, and what it means to belong. But remember, culture is not held in one place alone; it lives in what is remembered, practiced, and shared across generations.

Reflect:
What connections do you have to Mvskoke culture?
What teachings, stories, or practices have been passed down in your family?
What are ways your family honors culture, outside of a ceremonial ground?

Consider:
Culture continues wherever it is practiced with intention.

Weeks 7–12 → Carrying the Teachings Forward

Reflection 7: Teaching Balance to Children *(paired with Reflection 1)*

Children learn balance by what they experience, not just what they are told. The way a home holds routines, rest, communication, and care shapes how a child understands what balance feels like. When adults work toward balance in their own lives, it creates a sense of steadiness that children can feel and learn from.

Even when life is busy or uncertain, small moments of presence and intention can help children feel grounded.

Reflect:
What does balance look like in your home right now?
Where might children in your care be feeling stress or imbalance?
What are small ways you can create steadiness for them?

Consider:
Children come to understand balance through what they experience each day.

Reflection 8: Helping Children Know Where They Come From *(paired with Reflection 2)*

Children in care may not always have full access to their family histories, but they still carry connection to those who came before them. Helping children understand that they belong to a larger story can support identity, strength, and a sense of place.

This can be done through sharing what is known, honoring what is unknown, and creating space for children to ask questions and explore their identity over time.

Reflect:
What parts of a child's story are known, and how can they be shared?
How can you help a child feel connected to their people and history?
How do you speak about ancestors and family in ways that build strength?

Consider:
Every child belongs to a story that deserves to be honored.

Reflection 9: Teaching Respect for the World Around Them *(paired with Reflection 3)*

Children learn how to relate to the world by watching how adults treat it. When they are taught that land, water, plants, and animals deserve respect, they begin to understand connection and care in a deeper way.

Connection to nature can be built through everyday experiences: being outside, noticing changes, understanding natural systems and learning to care for what is around them.

Reflect:
How do children in your care experience the natural world?
What opportunities do they have to learn respect for land, water, or living things?
What teachings can you share through everyday interactions with nature?

Consider:
Children learn relationships by how we show them to care for the world around them.

Reflection 10: Encouraging Voice and Identity *(paired with Reflection 4)*

Children need to know they are heard and understood. For Mvskoke children in your care, this can be especially important as they navigate feelings of disconnection and other challenges. Creating space for them to express themselves and be heard helps build confidence.

Voice can be supported through listening, encouragement, and honoring how each child communicates.

Reflect:
How do you create space for children to express themselves?
When do children seem most confident using their voice?
How can you support identity through listening and affirmation?

Consider:
A child's voice grows stronger when it is heard and respected.

Reflection 11: Navigating Beliefs with Children *(paired with Reflection 5)*

Children may be exposed to different belief systems through family and community. Supporting them means creating space for understanding without pressure or conflict. Respectful guidance helps children explore identity while feeling safe and supported.

Adults can model respect by acknowledging differences of belief without judgment and allowing children to ask questions and form their own understanding over time.

Reflect:
What beliefs are present in a child's life?
How do you respond to differences in belief with care and respect?
How can you support a child in exploring their own understanding?

Consider:
Children learn respect for differences by how we model it.

Reflection 12: Creating Connection Beyond Place *(paired with Reflection 6)*

Not every child will have direct access to ceremonial grounds or traditional settings. This does not mean they are disconnected from culture. Connection can be built through relationships, stories, practices, and intentional care within the home and elsewhere in the community.

At the same time, it is important to be honest that not everything is meant for everyone, and that much of what we carry is shaped by what we are born into. This can feel difficult or even unfair, but it reflects how roles and teachings are held with care and passed on in different ways.

What matters most is helping children understand that they belong, and that culture can be lived and honored wherever they are.

Reflect:
How can you help children feel connected to culture in everyday life?
What practices or teachings can be shared within your home?
How do you create a sense of belonging for children in your care?

Consider:
Belonging is created through relationship, care, and what is passed on.