



A GOOD NAME

Hákonarætt Study in Wisdom,
Responsibility & Renewal

**AN OLD NORSE RELIGIOUS
FORMATION WORKBOOK**

HÁKONARÆTT FELLOWSHIP
PRISON MINISTRY

ONE HOUSEHOLD • MANY HEARTHS • SHARED TROTH

2026 EDITION

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Developed by Hákonarætt Fellowship Prison Ministry.

This workbook is a religious formation resource of Hákonarætt Fellowship. It is designed for individual, correspondence, and facilitated use, including use within correctional settings.

The workbook draws upon public-domain English translations of works from the Old Norse literary tradition together with original explanatory material, reflections, exercises, and religious formation content developed for A Good Name.

A Good Name is not an academic course of the Hákonarætt Institute of Eddic Studies (HIES) and does not award academic credit.

HÁKONARÆTT FELLOWSHIP PRISON MINISTRY

2026 EDITION

ONE HOUSEHOLD • MANY HEARTHS • SHARED TROTH

Cattle die, and kinsmen die,
And so one dies one's self;
But a noble name will never die,
If good renown one gets.

HÁVAMÁL 77

Henry Adams Bellows, trans., 1923

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WELCOME TO A GOOD NAME

A Good Name is an Old Norse religious formation workbook developed by Hákonarætt Fellowship Prison Ministry. It is intended to help participants study wisdom from the Old Norse literary tradition and practice responsibility, right relationship, worthy work, and renewal in the life they actually have.

This workbook does not ask you to wait for release, a different facility, a different sentence, or a different set of circumstances before beginning the work of formation. Do not wait for a different life before you begin tending the life you have.

The sources in these pages are treated as religious and historical texts, not as decorations for a generic self-help program. The gods are treated as gods, not as archetypes or metaphors. At the same time, the surviving literature comes from different periods and genres and must be handled carefully.

WHAT THIS WORKBOOK ASKS OF YOU

You will be asked to read, think, write, practice, return, and reconsider. There are no academic tests and no percentage score. The purpose is not to produce the right answer on paper but to develop habits of judgment and conduct.

You will never be required to disclose the offense that led to your incarceration. You may work with ordinary conflicts, relationships, habits, responsibilities, and choices. Personal reflection should be truthful, but truthfulness does not require writing down information that is unsafe, private, legally sensitive, or prohibited to share.

Responsibility is not the same as self-condemnation. Changed conduct does not create a right to forgiveness, reconciliation, access, or contact with people who were harmed. Boundaries remain real even when change is real.

A RELIGIOUS ROAD

Hákonarætt understands formation as a lived religious discipline. Wisdom is received from tradition, weighed with judgment, and carried into conduct before the gods and within human relationships.

Heroic courage in this workbook is not the promise that the gods will guarantee victory, release, safety, or the outcome you want. Heroic courage does not depend upon the promise of victory. It concerns how a person meets what stands before him when the outcome is not fully his to choose.

You do not have to be a member of Hákonarætt Fellowship to use this workbook, and no ancestry is required. Completion does not make you a Gothi, create Fellowship membership, recognize a Hús, dedicate a Hearth, charter a Kindred, or grant any religious office or status.

THE ROAD THROUGH THE FIVE PARTS

The workbook moves through five Parts: relationship, character, responsibility, purpose, and renewal. Part I begins with frith. Part II asks what makes a person worthy of trust. Part III turns toward harm, responsibility, learning, and changed conduct. Part IV considers work, learning, stewardship, and contribution. Part V asks how justice, judgment, belonging, and renewal can be carried forward.

The movement is simple to describe and demanding to live: Relationship Character Responsibility Purpose Renewal.

The work is done the same way a good name is built: one deed at a time.

A GOOD NAME IS NEVER BUILT ALONE.

HOW TO USE THIS WORKBOOK

Work through the studies in order. Each one follows the same movement: SOURCE UNDERSTANDING REFLECTION APPLICATION. Begin with the historical source before moving to the workbook's explanation or application.

From the Tradition presents a public-domain English translation or a brief historical excerpt. In Today's Words is an explanatory paraphrase, not an independent scholarly translation. Wisdom for Life then identifies the Hákonarætt formation principle being drawn from the passage. These layers are deliberately kept distinct.

Take time. A page completed quickly is not necessarily a study completed well.

WRITE HONESTLY. PRACTICE CONCRETELY.

Write only what is useful and safe to record. You may leave a question blank, answer generally, or return later. The workbook does not require confession of crimes, disclosure of victims, or descriptions that violate facility rules, court orders, or another person's privacy.

The exercises repeatedly ask for small, concrete practices. Formation happens through repeated deeds. One well-chosen act practiced many times can matter more than a page of impressive intentions.

If a study creates discomfort, do not assume that rushing through it is the same as overcoming it. Slow down, distinguish responsibility from shame, and return when you can think clearly.

INDIVIDUAL, CORRESPONDENCE, OR GROUP USE

A Good Name can be used individually, through correspondence, or in a facilitated group. The written exercises belong to the participant unless a program has clearly stated otherwise. Group discussion should not pressure anyone to disclose private history.

The five Parts can be remembered through five questions: How am I living with others? Am I becoming worthy of trust? What is mine to carry? What worthy work is before me? How will I continue toward renewed frith?

A GOOD NAME IS BUILT THE SAME WAY THIS WORKBOOK IS COMPLETED: ONE DEED AT A TIME.

A NOTE ON REFLECTION, PRIVACY & RESPONSIBILITY

This workbook asks for honest reflection, but it does not require you to disclose the offense that led to your incarceration. You decide what to write. You may use general descriptions, work with a different life situation, or leave a prompt unanswered.

Privacy is not avoidance. A person can take responsibility internally without placing sensitive details on paper or forcing them into a group discussion.

CARRY WHAT IS YOURS

Carry what is yours. Do not place it on another—and do not carry what properly belongs to another.

Responsibility is not self-condemnation. An explanation is not necessarily an excuse, but an explanation should not be used to erase agency. Other people remain responsible for their own choices. You may also have been harmed by others; acknowledging that truth does not remove your responsibility for what is actually yours.

No one owes forgiveness, reconciliation, access, or renewed contact. Do not use workbook completion or personal change as a reason to violate boundaries, court orders, institutional rules, or another person's decision not to engage.

WHEN A QUESTION IS DIFFICULT

If a question becomes overwhelming, narrow it. Work with a smaller example. Describe a pattern instead of an event. Write about the next responsible choice rather than the whole history. A facilitator can help you understand an exercise but should not demand private disclosure.

A Good Name is religious formation. It is not legal advice, medical care, mental-health treatment, or a substitute for qualified professional assistance where those are needed.

See clearly. Carry what is yours. Let the next deed show what you have learned.

PARTICIPANT COMMITMENT

This is not an oath, a vow, or a promise of perfection. It is a statement of how you intend to approach the work.

I will approach the tradition with respect. I will distinguish the historical source from the workbook's modern application. I will reflect honestly without using shame as a substitute for responsibility. I will respect my own privacy and the privacy of others.

I will carry what is mine without placing it on another, and I will not carry what properly belongs to someone else. I will respect boundaries, including boundaries set by people I may have harmed. I will practice what I learn in small, repeated deeds. Formation happens through repeated deeds.

MY INTENTION

What do I hope to learn about the person I am becoming?

What kind of conduct do I want this workbook to strengthen?

What will help me continue when a study is difficult or uncomfortable?

Participant Name: _____

Date Begun: _____

BEGIN WHERE YOU ARE. THE ROAD BEGINS WITH FRITH.



PART 1

FRITH: LIVING IN RIGHT RELATIONSHIP

Belonging · Hospitality · Friendship · Conflict

1. No One Stands Alone
2. The Open Door
3. Friendship Must Be Tended
4. Keeping Frith

STUDY 1

NO ONE STANDS ALONE

What kind of presence am I in the lives of others?

FROM THE TRADITION

In stanza 47 of Hávamál, the poetic voice of the High One recalls a time when he wandered alone:

HÁVAMÁL 47

*Young was I once, and wandered alone,
And nought of the road I knew;
Rich did I feel when a comrade I found,
For man is man's delight.*

IN TODAY'S WORDS

When I was young, I traveled alone and lost my way. When I found another person, I felt rich, because people find joy in the company of others.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

The stanza does not erase solitude or pretend that every relationship is safe. It names something more basic: human beings are shaped by the people around them. Companionship can steady a person, challenge a person, and make a difficult road more bearable.

Frith begins with recognizing that our conduct enters other people's lives. We can bring steadiness or confusion, honesty or manipulation, respect or contempt. Even where circumstances limit our freedom, we still exercise influence through speech, attention, restraint, and daily conduct.

A person may feel alone even in a crowded place. The work of frith therefore begins not with popularity but with becoming the kind of presence that makes right relationship more possible.

The point is not to force an ancient passage into a modern program. The historical text is heard first. The application that follows is Hákonarætt's present religious formation: an attempt to live wisely, responsibly, and honorably under circumstances the old poets did not directly address.

LOOK INWARD

1. Who has made a difficult road easier for you? What did that person actually do?

2. When others spend time around you, what do you hope they experience?

3. Where have you confused being independent with refusing help?

4. What is one relationship in which you can become more steady, truthful, or respectful?

WORK THE WISDOM

Draw three circles. In the first, write people whose presence strengthens you. In the second, write people for whom you carry responsibility. In the third, write relationships that require wiser boundaries. Choose one name from each circle and write one concrete deed appropriate to that relationship. Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

A household, a hearth, or a kindred is not made strong merely because people stand near one another. It is made strong when people learn to stand rightly with one another.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

For the next seven days, practice one form of dependable presence: listen without interrupting, keep one small promise, offer practical help, or refrain from speech that would needlessly worsen a relationship.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

WHAT WILL YOU CARRY FORWARD?

Write one sentence beginning: 'The kind of presence I intend to become is...' Then name the next deed that would make that sentence more true.

WORDS TO REMEMBER

A GOOD NAME IS NEVER BUILT ALONE.

STUDY 2

THE OPEN DOOR

How do I make room for others while maintaining wise boundaries?

FROM THE TRADITION

Hávamál places hospitality beside judgment. The guest is received, but both host and guest remain responsible for how they enter relationship.

HÁVAMÁL 2-4

*Fire he needs who with frozen knees
Has come from the cold without;
Food and clothes must the farer have,
The man from the mountains come.
Water and towels and welcoming speech
Should he find who comes to the feast;
If renown he would get, and again be greeted,
Wisely and well must he act.*

IN TODAY'S WORDS

A guest has arrived. Where will the guest sit? Someone coming in from the cold needs warmth, food, and clothing. A guest arriving for a meal should find water, a welcome, good treatment, conversation, and also the freedom for silence.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

Hospitality is more than being pleasant. It is the discipline of making appropriate room for another person's dignity and need. In the old northern world, shelter, food, warmth, and welcome could be matters of survival. The moral weight of hospitality grew from real dependence among travelers, households, and communities. Hospitality does not require the abandonment of judgment. An open door is not a door without hinges, walls, or a threshold. Wise welcome includes boundaries that protect the household, the guest, and the frith between them.

Modern Hákonarætt practice therefore treats hospitality as generous presence joined to responsible limits. One can be kind without becoming careless, and one can maintain a boundary without becoming cruel.

The point is not to force an ancient passage into a modern program. The historical text is heard first. The application that follows is Hákonarætt's present religious formation: an attempt to live wisely, responsibly, and honorably under circumstances the old poets did not directly address.

LOOK INWARD

1. What makes you feel genuinely welcomed?

2. When has generosity become unhealthy because a boundary was missing?

3. Which boundaries help you treat others better rather than merely keep them away?

4. What can you offer another person even when you have little material wealth?

WORK THE WISDOM

Make two columns: WELCOME and BOUNDARY. Under WELCOME, list five ways you can make room for others. Under BOUNDARY, list five limits that protect right relationship. Circle one pair that belongs together in your life now. Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

Hospitality is not surrender. The hearth gives warmth because it is tended, contained, and kept with care.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Offer one deliberate act of hospitality this week that costs you attention rather than money. Pair it with one wise boundary stated calmly and without contempt.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

WHAT WILL YOU CARRY FORWARD?

Complete: 'I can make room for others without giving up...' Then write how that balance protects frith.

WORDS TO REMEMBER

WELCOME WITH GENEROSITY. KEEP BOUNDARIES WITH WISDOM.

STUDY 3

FRIENDSHIP MUST BE TENDED

Am I becoming the kind of friend I would want to have?

FROM THE TRADITION

Several stanzas of Hávamál describe friendship as something maintained through generosity, trust, shared thought, and the effort of returning to one another.

HÁVAMÁL 41-44

*Friends shall gladden each other with arms and garments,
As each for himself can see;
Gift-givers' friendships are longest found,
If fair their fates may be.
If a friend thou hast whom thou fully wilt trust,
And good from him wouldst get,
Thy thoughts with his mingle, and gifts shalt thou make,
And fare to find him oft.*

IN TODAY'S WORDS

Friends strengthen their friendship through generosity and giving to one another. Be a true friend to those who are your friends. When you have a friend you genuinely trust and want the friendship to remain good, share your thoughts, exchange gifts, and make the effort to spend time together.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

Friendship does not remain strong by accident. Trust is built through patterns: showing up, speaking truthfully, sharing burdens, honoring confidences, and repairing small breaches before they become large ones. Reciprocity does not mean keeping a ledger. It means that a healthy friendship has movement in both directions. One person may give more at one time and receive more at another, but neither is treated merely as a tool.

Loyalty does not require dishonesty or surrendering moral judgment. A friend who asks you to help hide what is harmful is asking for complicity, not loyalty. True friendship can include correction, refusal, and distance when those are necessary.

The point is not to force an ancient passage into a modern program. The historical text is heard first. The application that follows is Hákonarætt's present religious formation: an attempt to live wisely, responsibly, and honorably under circumstances the old poets did not directly address.

LOOK INWARD

1. What actions make a person trustworthy to you?

2. Where have you expected friendship without tending it?

3. How do you respond when a friend tells you something you do not want to hear?

4. What would healthy reciprocity look like in one friendship you value?

WORK THE WISDOM

Choose one friendship. Write four headings: Presence, Truth, Generosity, Boundary. Under each, write one thing you already do well and one thing that needs attention. Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

A trusted friend is not a possession. Friendship is a relationship renewed through conduct.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Make one appropriate effort toward a friendship: write, listen, encourage, apologize, share, or simply show up as promised. Do not demand an immediate return.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

What one quality do you most want to be known for as a friend? Write one deed that would demonstrate it.

FRIENDSHIP IS TENDED, NOT CLAIMED.

STUDY 4

KEEPING FRITH

When conflict comes, what is mine to control?

FROM THE TRADITION

Hávamál repeatedly warns that careless speech, mockery, and quarrelling can turn companionship into hostility.

HÁVAMÁL 29-32

*Often he speaks who never is still
With words that win no faith;
The babbling tongue, if a bridle it find not,
Oft for itself sings ill.
In mockery no one a man shall hold,
Although he fare to the feast;
Wise seems one oft, if nought he is asked,
And safely he sits dry-skinned.
Wise a guest holds it to take to his heels,
When mock of another he makes;
But little he knows who laughs at the feast,
Though he mocks in the midst of his foes.
Friendly of mind are many men,
Till feasting they mock at their friends;
To mankind a bane must it ever be
When guests together strive.*

IN TODAY'S WORDS

A person who never stops talking may say things that bring trouble upon himself. Do not make another person the object of your mockery. Someone who mocks others may not recognize the trouble he is creating. People may begin together in friendship, yet mockery and argument can turn companions against one another.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

Conflict is not always avoidable, and frith does not mean pretending disagreement does not exist. Frith concerns the way relationship is maintained, repaired, limited, or ended without unnecessary disorder. One of the few things a person can reliably govern in conflict is his or her own conduct. You cannot force another person to listen, apologize, forgive, or become reasonable. You can decide whether to add contempt, threat, ridicule, or dishonesty.

Sometimes keeping frith requires reconciliation. Sometimes it requires distance.

Sometimes the most responsible action is to stop speaking until speech can become useful again.

Restraint is not weakness when it prevents a bad moment from becoming a lasting wound. The point is not to force an ancient passage into a modern program. The historical text is heard first. The application that follows is Hákonarætt's present religious formation: an attempt to live wisely, responsibly, and honorably under circumstances the old poets did not directly address.

LOOK INWARD

1. What usually happens to your speech when you feel disrespected?

2. Which conflicts in your life are worsened by mockery, gossip, or repeated argument?

3. What can you control in a conflict? What can you not control?

4. When would distance protect frith better than continued confrontation?

WORK THE WISDOM

Think of a recurring conflict without naming the other person. Divide a page into MY CONTROL and NOT MY CONTROL. Place every part of the conflict into one side. Then write one action from the first column that you can practice. Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

Peace is not maintained by pretending there is no quarrel. It is maintained by refusing to become careless with one's own conduct when the quarrel comes.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

In one tense interaction, slow the pace. Lower your voice, shorten your words, avoid mockery, and stop when further speech would only feed the conflict.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

Write: 'When conflict comes, I am responsible for...' Finish the sentence with actions rather than feelings or outcomes.

WHEN CONFLICT COMES, GOVERN YOUR OWN DEEDS FIRST.



PART 2

A GOOD NAME: BECOMING WORTHY OF TRUST

Character · Speech · Word · Reputation

5. Who You Are When No One Is Watching

6. Measure Your Words

7. Your Word Has Weight

8. What Remains

STUDY 5

WHO YOU ARE WHEN NO ONE IS WATCHING

What kind of person am I becoming through ordinary choices?

FROM THE TRADITION

Hávamál names ordinary goods of life and reminds the listener that even a difficult life can still contain worthy things.

HÁVAMÁL 68-69

*Fire for men is the fairest gift,
And power to see the sun;
Health as well, if a man may have it,
And a life not stained with sin.
All wretched is no man, though never so sick;
Some from their sons have joy,
Some win it from kinsmen, and some from their wealth,
And some from worthy works.*

IN TODAY'S WORDS

Among the good things in life are warmth, sunlight, health, and living rightly. Even someone burdened by hardship may still find good in family, possessions, or worthy deeds.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

Character is often imagined as something revealed only in a crisis. More often it is formed in repeated ordinary choices: what you do with a small advantage, what you say when no one can check the story, what you do with property that is not yours, and whether you keep a promise that would be easy to escape. Living rightly is not the same as appearing respectable. Reputation is what others know or believe about you. Character is the pattern of conduct from which a deserved reputation can grow.

The work of formation is therefore quiet. A person becomes trustworthy before anyone announces that he is trustworthy. The deed comes first.

The point is not to force an ancient passage into a modern program. The historical text is heard first. The application that follows is Hákonarætt's present religious formation: an attempt to live wisely, responsibly, and honorably under circumstances the old poets did not directly address.

LOOK INWARD

1. What do you do differently when you think no one will know?

2. Which small habits are shaping the person you are becoming?

3. Where are you tempted to protect appearance rather than improve conduct?

4. What private choice would make you more worthy of trust?

WORK THE WISDOM

Write three ordinary situations in which your choices are rarely noticed. For each, write the action that would be easiest and the action that would be most worthy. Notice where they differ.

Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

A good name begins long before other people speak it. It begins in deeds that may have no audience at all.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Choose one private habit to practice with greater integrity for seven days. Keep no score for anyone else. Let the practice itself be the work.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

WHAT WILL YOU CARRY FORWARD?

Complete: 'When no one is watching, I want my conduct to show...'

WORDS TO REMEMBER

CHARACTER IS BUILT BEFORE REPUTATION IS EARNED.

STUDY 6

MEASURE YOUR WORDS

What does my speech reveal about my judgment?

FROM THE TRADITION

Hávamál treats speech as a matter of judgment. Silence, questions, answers, and restraint all have their place.

HÁVAMÁL 27-29

*A witless man, when he meets with men,
Had best in silence abide;
For no one shall find that nothing he knows,
If his mouth is not open too much.
Wise shall he seem who well can question,
And also answer well;
Nought is concealed that men may say
Among the sons of men.
Often he speaks who never is still
With words that win no faith;
The babbling tongue, if a bridle it find not,
Oft for itself sings ill.*

IN TODAY'S WORDS

A person who does not know what to say may be wiser to remain silent than to speak too much. A wise person knows how to ask questions and how to answer. What people say does not always remain hidden, and a tongue that is never restrained can bring trouble upon the person who speaks.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

Speech creates consequences. Words can clarify, encourage, warn, reconcile, insult, manipulate, threaten, expose, or bind. Once spoken, they often travel beyond the speaker's control.

Measured speech is not timid speech. It is speech governed by purpose and truth. Sometimes wisdom requires speaking plainly. Sometimes it requires asking before assuming. Sometimes it requires admitting that you do not know.

A person who wants a trustworthy name must become trustworthy in speech. That includes what is said about absent people, what is repeated without certainty, and what is promised in the heat of a moment.

The point is not to force an ancient passage into a modern program. The historical text is heard first. The application that follows is Hákonarætt's present religious formation: an attempt to live wisely, responsibly, and honorably under circumstances the old poets did not directly address.

LOOK INWARD

1. When do you talk most carelessly?

2. What kind of speech has caused you the most trouble?

3. Are you better at asking questions or giving answers?

4. What would change if you waited ten seconds before responding when angry?

WORK THE WISDOM

For one day, notice four kinds of speech: truth, exaggeration, gossip, and useful silence. At the end of the day, write what you observed about yourself without excuses or self-attack. Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

Restraint gives words weight. A person whose speech is measured does not need to make every silence disappear.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Before one important conversation, decide what must be said, what need not be said, and what question you need to ask before reaching a conclusion.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

WHAT WILL YOU CARRY FORWARD?

Write one rule for your own speech that you can actually practice.

WORDS TO REMEMBER

SPEAK SO THAT YOUR WORDS CAN BE CARRIED WITHOUT SHAME.

STUDY 7

YOUR WORD HAS WEIGHT

What makes a promise worthy of trust?

FROM THE TRADITION

In Sigrdrífumál, the listener is warned not to swear what cannot be known or kept truthfully.

SIGDRÍFUMÁL 23

*Then second I rede thee, to swear no oath
If true thou knowest it not;
Bitter the fate of the breaker of troth,
And poor is the wolf of his word.*

IN TODAY'S WORDS

Do not swear an oath unless you know that what you are swearing is true. Breaking one's pledged word carries serious consequences, and an oath-breaker becomes unworthy of trust.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

A promise places part of the future under your word. That is why promises should be fewer and stronger than wishes. To say 'I will' is different from saying 'I hope.' Keeping one's word does not mean pretending circumstances never change. Sometimes a promise truly cannot be kept. Integrity then requires early truth, responsibility for consequences, and whatever repair is reasonably possible.

Give your word carefully. Keep it faithfully. When you cannot, speak truthfully and take responsibility. Trust grows when others learn that your words are not casual tools used to control the moment.

The point is not to force an ancient passage into a modern program. The historical text is heard first. The application that follows is Hákonarætt's present religious formation: an attempt to live wisely, responsibly, and honorably under circumstances the old poets did not directly address.

LOOK INWARD

1. Do you promise too quickly? Why?

2. What kinds of promises are hardest for you to keep?

3. How do you usually respond when you realize you cannot keep your word?

4. What would make your future promises more reliable?

WORK THE WISDOM

List three current commitments. Mark each as KEPT, AT RISK, or MUST BE RENEGOTIATED. For each one not fully kept, write the next truthful action. Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

An oath should never be used to make weak intention sound strong. The weight of a word comes from the conduct that follows it.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Make no unnecessary promises this week. When you do give your word, write down exactly what you have committed to do and by when.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

WHAT WILL YOU CARRY FORWARD?

Complete: 'Before I give my word, I will ask myself...'

WORDS TO REMEMBER

GIVE YOUR WORD CAREFULLY. KEEP IT FAITHFULLY.

STUDY 8

WHAT REMAINS

What kind of memory are my deeds building?

FROM THE TRADITION

Two closely related stanzas of Hávamál turn from mortality to reputation and the remembered judgment of deeds.

HÁVAMÁL 77-78

*Cattle die, and kinsmen die,
And so one dies one's self;
But a noble name will never die,
If good renown one gets.
Cattle die, and kinsmen die,
And so one dies one's self;
One thing I know that never dies,
The fame of a dead man's deeds.*

IN TODAY'S WORDS

Cattle die. Family and kin die. Every person will also die. But a good name can live beyond a person's lifetime when that person earns honorable renown. What remains after death is the memory and judgment people carry concerning the deeds a person has done.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

Hávamál does not tell the listener that reputation can be manufactured. It points toward renown that is earned. A good name is not claimed. It is built, deed by deed. Reputation can be unfair, incomplete, or beyond your control. That is why the deeper task is not controlling what everyone thinks. It is living in such a way that truthful judgment has something worthy to remember.

Mortality gives urgency to conduct. Time is limited. A person cannot rewrite every chapter of a life, but the next deed still belongs to the living.

The point is not to force an ancient passage into a modern program. The historical text is heard first. The application that follows is Hákonarætt's present religious formation: an attempt to live wisely, responsibly, and honorably under circumstances the old poets did not directly address.

LOOK INWARD

1. What do you most want to be remembered for?

2. Which past deeds still shape how people understand you?

3. Where are you spending energy managing appearances instead of changing conduct?

4. What deed today would belong to the name you want to carry?

WORK THE WISDOM

Write two short descriptions of yourself. First: how you fear others may remember you. Second: how you hope to be remembered. Underline the differences that can still be influenced by future conduct.

Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

A good name is not a title placed upon a person. It is the judgment that gathers around a pattern of deeds.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Do one deed this week that you would be willing to have remembered accurately. Do not announce it for praise.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

WHAT WILL YOU CARRY FORWARD?

Write the five words you most want associated with your name. Beside each, write one behavior that would make the word deserved.

WORDS TO REMEMBER

A GOOD NAME IS BUILT, DEED BY DEED.



PART 3

MAKING RIGHT WHAT HAS BEEN BROKEN

Harm · Responsibility · Wisdom · Courage & Changed Conduct

9. When Frith Is Broken

10. Carry What Is Yours

11. Wisdom Is Won

12. Deeds Are the Proof

STUDY 9

WHEN FRITH IS BROKEN

Can I see harm clearly without making it smaller or larger than the truth?

FROM THE TRADITION

After a killing in Laxdæla saga, the narrative records an immediate recognition of responsibility.

LAXDÆLA SAGA, CHAPTER XLIX

Bolli rued at once his deed, and declared the manslaughter due to his hand.

IN TODAY'S WORDS

Bolli immediately regretted what he had done and acknowledged that the killing was his deed.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

The first movement of restoration is seeing. Harm becomes harder to address when it is minimized, renamed, blamed entirely on others, or hidden behind explanations that are used as excuses. Seeing harm clearly is also different from taking responsibility for everything that happened before and after it. Responsibility begins by seeing harm clearly, not by making ourselves responsible for everything that happened afterward.

A truthful account may include many causes, pressures, provocations, failures, and consequences. The work is to identify what was actually yours without shrinking it and without expanding it beyond the truth.

The point is not to force an ancient passage into a modern program. The historical text is heard first. The application that follows is Hákonarætt's present religious formation: an attempt to live wisely, responsibly, and honorably under circumstances the old poets did not directly address.

LOOK INWARD

1. When you cause harm, what explanations do you reach for first?

2. What is the difference between explaining a deed and excusing it?

3. Have you ever taken blame for things that were not yours? Why?

4. What does accurate responsibility sound like?

WORK THE WISDOM

Choose a past conflict without naming the offense that led to incarceration. Write four headings: WHAT I DID, WHAT OTHERS DID, WHAT HAPPENED BECAUSE OF IT, WHAT I CANNOT KNOW. Keep each item in the correct place. Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

Truth is not served by making your part smaller. It is also not served by making your part larger than it was.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

When you describe one mistake this week, use direct language: 'I did...' Avoid 'but' until after you have named your part completely.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

WHAT WILL YOU CARRY FORWARD?

Complete: 'The harm I can address begins with...'

WORDS TO REMEMBER

SEE THE HARM CLEARLY. CARRY WHAT IS TRULY YOURS.

STUDY 10

CARRY WHAT IS YOURS

What belongs to my responsibility, and what does not?

FROM THE TRADITION

Hávamál criticizes the person who mocks everything while failing to recognize his own faults.

HÁVAMÁL 22

A paltry man and poor of mind

At all things ever mocks;

For never he knows, what he ought to know,

That he is not free from faults.

IN TODAY'S WORDS

A small-minded person mocks everything and fails to understand what he most needs to know: that he also has faults.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

Responsibility requires enough humility to admit fault without turning fault into an identity. ‘I did wrong’ is more precise than ‘I am only wrong.’ The first can lead to repair. The second can become another way of avoiding specific responsibility. Taking responsibility does not mean taking all responsibility. Other people remain responsible for their choices. Systems, circumstances, and chance may also shape outcomes. Precision matters because restoration built on false blame is unstable.

Carry what is yours. Do not place it on another—and do not carry what properly belongs to another. This principle protects both accountability and truth.

The point is not to force an ancient passage into a modern program. The historical text is heard first. The application that follows is Hákonarætt’s present religious formation: an attempt to live wisely, responsibly, and honorably under circumstances the old poets did not directly address.

LOOK INWARD

1. Do you tend to blame outward or inward when something goes wrong?

2. Where have you carried responsibility that belonged to someone else?

3. Where have you placed your own responsibility on someone else?

4. What would a precise statement of responsibility sound like in one situation?

WORK THE WISDOM

Write one difficult event as a chain of choices. Beside each choice, mark WHOSE. Do not assign motives; identify only actions and responsibilities you can reasonably know. Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

Responsibility becomes stronger when it is exact. Vague shame cannot repair what precise accountability can begin to address.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Use one sentence this week that begins 'My part was...' and ends before you describe anyone else's part.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

WHAT WILL YOU CARRY FORWARD?

Write: 'I will carry...' and 'I will stop carrying...' Use one line for each.

WORDS TO REMEMBER

CARRY WHAT IS YOURS. DO NOT CARRY WHAT IS NOT.

STUDY 11

WISDOM IS WON

What am I learning to carry from what I have lived through?

FROM THE TRADITION

Hávamál repeatedly describes wisdom as a burden worth carrying and as something deepened by experience beyond what is familiar.

HÁVAMÁL 10 AND 18

*A better burden may no man bear
For wanderings wide than wisdom;
It is better than wealth on unknown ways,
And in grief a refuge it gives.
He alone is aware who has wandered wide,
And far abroad has fared,
How great a mind is guided by him
That wealth of wisdom has.*

IN TODAY'S WORDS

No traveler carries a better burden than wisdom. It is more useful than wealth on unfamiliar roads and can give support in grief. A person who has traveled widely may learn how much good judgment matters.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

Experience is what happened. Wisdom is what you learn to carry from it. Time alone does not transform suffering, success, failure, or loss into wisdom. Experience can become a source of wisdom when a person reflects upon it, learns from it, and carries that learning forward. Reflection asks what was true, what was misunderstood, what patterns repeated, and what should be done differently next time.

Wisdom is portable. Circumstances can change, property can be lost, plans can fail, and freedom can be restricted. What has been genuinely learned can still guide the next decision.

The point is not to force an ancient passage into a modern program. The historical text is heard first. The application that follows is Hákonarætt's present religious formation: an attempt to live wisely, responsibly, and honorably under circumstances the old poets did not directly address.

LOOK INWARD

1. What experience taught you something you did not want to learn?

2. What lesson did you miss the first time?

3. Where have you confused surviving something with understanding it?

4. What wisdom do you now possess that could help another person?

WORK THE WISDOM

Choose one difficult experience. Write: WHAT HAPPENED; WHAT I BELIEVED THEN; WHAT I UNDERSTAND NOW; WHAT I WILL DO DIFFERENTLY. Keep facts and interpretations distinct.

Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

Wisdom is not proof that the road was good. It is what you refuse to waste after the road has been hard.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Before one repeated situation this week, stop and name the lesson you already know. Then act as though you have actually learned it.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

STUDY 12

DEEDS ARE THE PROOF

What will my next deed show that my words cannot prove?

FROM THE TRADITION

As Skírnir prepares to face a dangerous journey, he speaks of courage before what must be faced. This study does not present everything Skírnir later says or does toward Gerðr as an example of honorable conduct.

SKÍRNISMÁL 13

*Boldness is better than complaints can be
For him whose feet must fare;
To a destined day has mine age been doomed,
And my life's span thereto laid.*

IN TODAY'S WORDS

For the person who must go forward, courage is better than complaint alone. Life has limits, and there are things that must still be faced.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

Wisdom shows the road. Courage walks it. Deeds reveal the person. Reflection matters, but reflection that never reaches conduct remains unfinished. Heroic courage does not depend upon the promise of victory. Old Norse religious literature repeatedly places figures before danger, loss, fate, and uncertainty. Courage is not the belief that the gods guarantee the outcome we want.

You may not choose what stands before you. How will you meet it? Even when you cannot choose the outcome, you can still choose how you meet what stands before you. The hero is not measured only by whether he wins, but by how he meets what stands before him. The point is not to force an ancient passage into a modern program. The historical text is heard first. The application that follows is Hákonarætt's present religious formation: an attempt to live wisely, responsibly, and honorably under circumstances the old poets did not directly address.

LOOK INWARD

1. Where do you already know what is right but avoid doing it?

2. What fear is standing between understanding and action?

3. What would courage look like if success were not guaranteed?

4. Which next deed would make your stated values more believable?

WORK THE WISDOM

Write one value you claim. Under it, list three observable deeds that would serve as evidence for that value. Circle the one you can perform soonest. Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

The gods are not promises that every worthy deed will succeed. Religious courage is the willingness to act rightly without demanding certainty first.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Choose one small difficult deed you have been postponing. Do it without waiting to feel completely ready.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

WHAT WILL YOU CARRY FORWARD?

Write: 'My next deed will show...' Then name the deed, not the intention.

WORDS TO REMEMBER

WISDOM SHOWS THE ROAD. COURAGE WALKS IT. DEEDS REVEAL THE PERSON.



PART 4

WORTHY WORK: BUILDING A LIFE OF PURPOSE

Work · Learn · Steward · Contribute

13. Do the Work Before You

14. Learn Without Ceasing

15. Tend What Is Yours

16. Leave Something Better

STUDY 13

DO THE WORK BEFORE YOU

What worthy work is already within my reach?

FROM THE TRADITION

Hávamál praises early effort and warns against allowing needed work to remain undone.

HÁVAMÁL 59

*He must early go forth whose workers are few,
Himself his work to seek;
Much remains undone for the morning-sleeper,
For the swift is wealth half won.*

IN TODAY'S WORDS

A person with few helpers must get moving and seek out the work himself. Much remains undone for the one who sleeps through the morning; prompt effort already wins part of the task.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

Purpose is often imagined as a single great calling. Most lives are built from smaller duties repeated: clean, study, write, repair, care, organize, prepare, teach, listen, exercise, and finish what has been started.

There is work that is yours to do. Worthy work begins by faithfully attending to it. Circumstances may limit which work is available, but limitation does not make all effort meaningless.

Do not wait for a different life before you begin tending the life you have. A person serving a long sentence still has hours, habits, relationships, skills, and responsibilities that can be used or neglected.

The point is not to force an ancient passage into a modern program. The historical text is heard first. The application that follows is Hákonarætt's present religious formation: an attempt to live wisely, responsibly, and honorably under circumstances the old poets did not directly address.

LOOK INWARD

1. What work do you regularly postpone?

2. Which daily task affects other people when you neglect it?

3. What useful work can you do under your present circumstances?

4. What is one task that would make tomorrow easier if done today?

WORK THE WISDOM

Make a list of ten tasks available to you this week. Mark each as NECESSARY, USEFUL, or OPTIONAL. Choose one necessary and one useful task to complete before adding something new.

Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

Worthy work does not need to be impressive. Its worth begins in whether it truly needs doing and whether you do it well.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

For seven days, begin one necessary task without bargaining with yourself for a better mood first.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

Complete: 'The work before me now is...'

DO NOT WAIT FOR A DIFFERENT LIFE BEFORE YOU BEGIN TENDING THE LIFE YOU HAVE.

STUDY 14

LEARN WITHOUT CEASING

Where do I still need to become teachable?

FROM THE TRADITION

Hávamál contrasts the ease of the familiar with the judgment needed when a person travels beyond what he already knows.

HÁVAMÁL 5

*Wits must he have who wanders wide,
But all is easy at home;
At the witless man the wise shall wink
When among such men he sits.*

IN TODAY'S WORDS

A person who travels beyond what is familiar needs knowledge and good judgment. At home, much may seem easy, but among people who know more, a person's lack of knowledge can quickly become apparent.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

Wisdom begins by recognizing that there is still something to learn. Familiar settings can hide weaknesses because routines carry us. New situations expose gaps in knowledge, judgment, and skill. ‘I don’t know’ is not the end of wisdom. Sometimes it is where wisdom begins. Teachability requires enough confidence to admit ignorance without turning it into humiliation.

Learning is not limited to school. A person can learn from books, skilled workers, elders, mistakes, observation, practice, and careful questions. The question is whether pride will allow correction to become instruction.

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LOOK INWARD

1. What subject do you pretend to understand better than you do?

2. Who is capable of teaching you something you need?

3. How do you react when corrected?

4. What skill would make you more useful to others?

WORK THE WISDOM

Choose one skill. Break it into four stages: KNOW NOTHING, BEGINNER, COMPETENT, ABLE TO TEACH. Mark where you are now and what practice would move you one stage forward. Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

The wise person is not the one who never lacks knowledge. It is the one who keeps learning what the road requires.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Ask one sincere question this week of someone who knows more than you. Listen to the answer without turning it into a competition.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

WHAT WILL YOU CARRY FORWARD?

Write one thing you are willing to become a beginner at.

WORDS TO REMEMBER

'I DON'T KNOW' CAN BE THE BEGINNING OF WISDOM.

STUDY 15

TEND WHAT IS YOURS

How do I care for what has been entrusted to me?

FROM THE TRADITION

Hávamál warns that resources can be lost, misdirected, or left unused when a person fails to use them with judgment.

HÁVAMÁL 39

*If wealth a man has won for himself,
Let him never suffer in need;
Oft he saves for a foe what he plans for a friend,
For much goes worse than we wish.*

IN TODAY'S WORDS

If a person has resources, he should use them wisely rather than neglecting real needs. What we save or plan does not always end up where we intended, because events do not always go as we wish.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

Stewardship means caring well for what is rightly entrusted to your hands. That can include property, time, health, tools, knowledge, responsibilities, shared spaces, and relationships. What is rightly entrusted to your care should not become careless in your hands. Stewardship rejects both waste and possessiveness. Something can be yours to tend without being yours to control absolutely.

Having little does not leave you with nothing to tend. A person with few possessions may still have a body, a schedule, a bunk or room, a book, a skill, a commitment, and the effects of his conduct on others.

The point is not to force an ancient passage into a modern program. The historical text is heard first. The application that follows is Hákonarætt's present religious formation: an attempt to live wisely, responsibly, and honorably under circumstances the old poets did not directly address.

LOOK INWARD

1. What do you currently have responsibility to care for?

2. Where are you careless because something does not feel valuable?

3. What resource do you waste most often: time, attention, money, property, or trust?

4. What would better stewardship look like this week?

WORK THE WISDOM

Make an inventory under four headings: TIME, BODY, PROPERTY, RESPONSIBILITIES. List what is actually under your care. Circle one item in each category that needs better tending. Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

Stewardship is visible in the condition in which things leave your hands.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Choose one object, space, duty, or resource and leave it in better order than you found it every day for a week.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

Complete: 'What is entrusted to me should become...'

WHAT IS RIGHTLY ENTRUSTED TO YOUR CARE SHOULD NOT BECOME CARELESS IN YOUR HANDS.

STUDY 16

LEAVE SOMETHING BETTER

What can become better because I was here?

FROM THE TRADITION

Hávamál refuses the idea that hardship makes every life wholly empty. It names joy, relationship, resources, and worthy works among the goods still possible.

HÁVAMÁL 69

*All wretched is no man, though never so sick;
Some from their sons have joy,
Some win it from kinsmen, and some from their wealth,
And some from worthy works.*

IN TODAY'S WORDS

Even when life is difficult or limited, there can still be good in worthy things a person is able to do.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

Contribution is not reserved for people with money, status, or unrestricted freedom. A contribution is something useful, truthful, beautiful, orderly, protective, encouraging, or instructive that would not exist in the same way without your effort. You do not need unlimited freedom to make a meaningful contribution. This matters especially in confinement, where it can be easy to postpone meaning until some imagined later life.

Heroic courage does not only endure hardship. It continues to do worthy work within it.

Contribution may be as ordinary as tutoring someone, keeping a shared space clean, writing a letter of encouragement, learning a trade, or refusing to feed destructive conflict. The point is not to force an ancient passage into a modern program. The historical text is heard first. The application that follows is Hákonarætt's present religious formation: an attempt to live wisely, responsibly, and honorably under circumstances the old poets did not directly address.

LOOK INWARD

1. What can you improve where you are now?

2. Who benefits when you do your work well?

3. What knowledge or skill could you pass on?

4. What do you want to leave behind in better condition?

WORK THE WISDOM

Identify one PERSON, one PLACE, and one PRACTICE you can leave better. Write a specific contribution for each that does not depend on release or recognition. Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

Worthy work is one way a person answers the world for the fact that he has been given another day in it.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Improve one small thing that other people use or experience. Do it quietly and consistently.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

WHAT WILL YOU CARRY FORWARD?

Write: 'Because I was here, I hope this becomes better...'

WORDS TO REMEMBER

YOU DO NOT NEED UNLIMITED FREEDOM TO MAKE A MEANINGFUL CONTRIBUTION.



PART 5

FRITH RESTORED: JUSTICE, RETURN & RENEWAL

Justice · Judgment · Belonging · Renewal

17. Justice Is More Than Punishment

18. At the Thing

19. A Place at the Hearth

20. Carry a Good Name Forward

STUDY 17

JUSTICE IS MORE THAN PUNISHMENT

What must be done because harm occurred?

FROM THE TRADITION

Njáls saga repeatedly depicts wrongdoing moving into processes of compensation, settlement, and negotiated response. These processes were historically specific and should not be confused with modern restorative-justice programs.

NJÁLS SAGA, CHAPTER LXXIII (73), "OF THE ATONEMENT"

The saga's chapter on atonement describes men working toward settlement after violence rather than treating consequence as the final question.

IN TODAY'S WORDS

After harm, the community must decide not only how wrongdoing will be answered but also what actions are needed to address the damage and restore workable order where possible.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

Justice does not ask only what consequence a wrong deserves. It also asks what must now be done because the wrong occurred. Punishment may be part of a justice system, but punishment by itself does not automatically repair loss, restore trust, or change future conduct.

Restoration is not erasure. What happened remains part of the truth. Some harms cannot be repaired fully. Some relationships should not be restored. Some people who were harmed may rightly choose distance forever.

Restorative responsibility therefore begins with action that is appropriate and permitted: restitution where possible, changed conduct, truthful acknowledgment, service, boundaries, and acceptance of consequences. It never creates an entitlement to forgiveness, reconciliation, access, or contact.

The point is not to force an ancient passage into a modern program. The historical text is heard first. The application that follows is Hákonarætt's present religious formation: an attempt to live wisely, responsibly, and honorably under circumstances the old poets did not directly address.

LOOK INWARD

1. What is the difference between consequence and repair?

2. Can something be repaired without being erased?

3. Why might a harmed person refuse reconciliation even after real change?

4. What forms of repair are possible without contacting the person harmed?

WORK THE WISDOM

Choose a type of harm in general terms. Write four possible responses: CONSEQUENCE, REPAIR, PREVENTION, BOUNDARY. Notice that a complete response may require more than one category.

Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

Justice must look backward enough to name what happened and forward enough to ask what responsible conduct requires now.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Repair one small harm that can be addressed safely and appropriately: replace, clean, apologize, correct misinformation, return what is owed, or change the behavior that caused the problem.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

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STUDY 18

AT THE THING

How do fairness, patience, and right process shape judgment?

FROM THE TRADITION

In the legal conflict near the end of Njáls saga, counsel is given to proceed carefully and lawfully rather than rashly.

NJÁLS SAGA, CHAPTER CXLI (141), "NOW MEN GO TO THE COURTS"

Walk hastily in nothing, father mine, and do everything as lawfully and rightly as ye can...

IN TODAY'S WORDS

Do not rush. Handle the matter carefully, and do everything according to the law and as rightly as you can.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

The þing was an assembly in the Old Norse world where law, disputes, alliances, judgments, and public affairs could be addressed. It was not simply a modern court or a modern democracy, but it reminds us that judgment is a communal responsibility shaped by procedure. When anger is high, speed can feel like strength. Yet fair judgment often requires the opposite: hearing more than one account, distinguishing fact from rumor, applying rules consistently, and allowing time for evidence to be weighed.

Right process does not guarantee a perfect outcome. It does, however, restrain some forms of partiality and impulse. A person practicing justice in ordinary life can imitate this discipline by refusing to decide before he knows enough.

The point is not to force an ancient passage into a modern program. The historical text is heard first. The application that follows is Hákonarætt's present religious formation: an attempt to live wisely, responsibly, and honorably under circumstances the old poets did not directly address.

LOOK INWARD

1. When do you rush to judgment?

2. What happens when rumor becomes evidence in your mind?

3. Have you ever wanted a rule applied differently because of who was involved?

4. What would fair process look like in a conflict around you?

WORK THE WISDOM

Take one dispute you know about but are not directly responsible to decide. Write FACTS I KNOW, CLAIMS I HAVE HEARD, THINGS I DO NOT KNOW. Notice how much certainty remains after the categories are separated. Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

Judgment becomes more honorable when it can survive patience.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

The next time you hear an accusation or rumor, do not repeat it as fact. Ask what you actually know and what proper process belongs to the situation.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

Write one sentence beginning: 'Before I judge, I will...'

WALK HASTILY IN NOTHING. DO WHAT YOU CAN LAWFULLY AND RIGHTLY.

STUDY 19

A PLACE AT THE HEARTH

What does it mean to belong without demanding access?

FROM THE TRADITION

Hávamál pairs welcome with the conduct expected of the person who hopes to be welcomed again.

HÁVAMÁL 3–4

*Fire he needs who with frozen knees
Has come from the cold without;
Food and clothes must the farer have,
The man from the mountains come.
Water and towels and welcoming speech
Should he find who comes to the feast;
If renown he would get, and again be greeted,
Wisely and well must he act.*

IN TODAY'S WORDS

Someone arriving cold and in need should be given warmth, food, clothing, water, and a welcome. But belonging among others also calls for good conduct. The person who hopes to be welcomed again should act wisely and well.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

Belonging is one of the deepest human needs, but belonging cannot be demanded from a particular person. Communities, households, and relationships all require boundaries. To have a place at the Hearth is both to receive its hospitality and to accept responsibility for the frith around it. Belonging carries obligations: respect the space, do not prey on the vulnerable, contribute where able, and accept legitimate limits.

Belonging somewhere does not mean having access to everyone. A person can rebuild communal life while still accepting that particular individuals may not want contact, trust, or reconciliation.

The point is not to force an ancient passage into a modern program. The historical text is heard first. The application that follows is Hákonarætt's present religious formation: an attempt to live wisely, responsibly, and honorably under circumstances the old poets did not directly address.

LOOK INWARD

1. What makes a place feel like you belong?

2. What responsibilities come with belonging?

3. Where have you confused welcome with unlimited access?

4. How can you contribute to a community that has reasonable boundaries?

WORK THE WISDOM

Write two lists: WHAT I HOPE TO RECEIVE FROM COMMUNITY and WHAT I OWE TO COMMUNITY. Draw lines between items that depend on each other.

Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

The hearth receives the traveler, but the traveler is still responsible for how he behaves beside the fire.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

In one shared space, act as someone responsible for the frith of that space: clean, lower conflict, respect privacy, share fairly, or make room without forcing closeness.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

WHAT WILL YOU CARRY FORWARD?

Complete: 'Belonging asks me to...'

WORDS TO REMEMBER

BELONGING RECEIVES HOSPITALITY AND ACCEPTS RESPONSIBILITY.

STUDY 20

CARRY A GOOD NAME FORWARD

What will the next deed say about the life I am building?

FROM THE TRADITION

The workbook returns to the stanza that stands near its beginning: mortality is certain, but the judgment of deeds can outlast a life.

HÁVAMÁL 77

*Cattle die, and kinsmen die,
And so one dies one's self;
But a noble name will never die,
If good renown one gets.*

IN TODAY'S WORDS

Every life ends. What can continue is the memory and judgment attached to the deeds a person has done.

CONSIDER

Before deciding what the source should mean for your life, stay with what it actually places before you. Read the passage again. Notice what it praises, warns against, assumes, or leaves unresolved.

- What is the source plainly saying?
- What part of the passage is easiest to agree with? What part is harder?
- What would be lost if this passage were reduced to a slogan?
- Where does this reading challenge your first reaction?

WISDOM FOR LIFE

You have completed the studies. You have not completed the work. Formation is not proven by finishing pages but by the conduct that follows them. A rule of life is not an oath of perfection. It is a deliberate pattern for remembering what kind of person you intend to become: how you will tend frith, keep your word, carry responsibility, do worthy work, and continue when you fail.

A religious life is lived before gods as well as people. The question is not merely how you wish to be seen. What kind of life are you placing before the gods, your community, those who come after you, and yourself?

The point is not to force an ancient passage into a modern program. The historical text is heard first. The application that follows is Hákonarætt's present religious formation: an attempt to live wisely, responsibly, and honorably under circumstances the old poets did not directly address.

LOOK INWARD

1. Which study challenged you most?

2. Which principle are you most likely to forget under pressure?

3. What daily practice would help you remember?

4. What kind of life are you placing before the gods, your community, those who come after you, and yourself?

WORK THE WISDOM

Write a personal Rule of Life under five headings: TEND FRITH; KEEP MY WORD; CARRY WHAT IS MINE; DO WORTHY WORK; CONTINUE. Under each, write one practice that is concrete enough to do and flexible enough to revise as you grow. Use the space below. Write only what is useful and safe for you to record.

ANOTHER VOICE

A Hákonarætt reflection:

A rule of life is a road-marker, not a chain. It helps you remember the road when habit, anger, pride, fear, or weariness make the way harder to see.

Consider the reflection beside the primary reading. Where does it clarify the study? Where does it go beyond what the historical source itself says? Keeping that distinction visible is part of responsible religious formation.

PUT IT INTO PRACTICE

Choose one line from your Rule of Life and practice it for the next thirty days. If you fail, return to it at the next opportunity rather than turning failure into permission to quit.

MY PLAN

What I will do:

When or where I will do it:

What may get in the way:

How I will return if I fail:

WHAT WILL YOU CARRY FORWARD?

Write the next deed you intend to perform. Keep it specific, lawful, appropriate, and within your actual control.

WORDS TO REMEMBER

A GOOD NAME IS NEVER FINISHED. IT IS CARRIED FORWARD IN THE NEXT DEED.

COMPLETING A GOOD NAME

You have reached the end of the twenty studies. Completion means that you have worked through the material; it does not mean that every question is settled or every practice has become a habit.

There are no grades. Completion is not HIES academic credit, does not create Fellowship membership, and does not confer religious authority, office, status, or authorization. It is not proof of rehabilitation and does not guarantee any legal, correctional, institutional, parole, or release benefit.

An unfinished page does not make you a moral failure. Return where return is useful. The work remains yours.

LOOK BACK

Which study changed the way you understand responsibility?

Which study gave you language for something you already knew?

What practice have you actually begun?

Where do you still need to distinguish responsibility from shame?

Which relationship, duty, or habit most needs your attention next?

YOUR RULE OF LIFE

Return to the Rule of Life you drafted in Study 20. Revise it now if needed. It is not an oath and it is not a claim of perfection. It is a practical guide for returning to the road.

You began A Good Name by considering the relationships around you. You now leave its twenty studies with a question that cannot be answered on paper alone:

What will your deeds show?

The pages behind you record what you have studied and considered. The life before you will show what you carry forward.

Let the next deed begin.

RECORD OF COMPLETION

A GOOD NAME

Hákonarætt Study in Wisdom, Responsibility & Renewal

AN OLD NORSE RELIGIOUS FORMATION WORKBOOK

This acknowledges that the participant named below completed the twenty-study religious formation program developed by Hákonarætt Fellowship Prison Ministry.

Participant

Date Completed

Facility / Program

Facilitator

Facilitator Signature

Date Issued

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This record is not a diploma, degree, academic credential, professional credential, license, religious office, or authorization. It does not confer Fellowship membership, HIES academic credit, Gothi status or authorization, Hús recognition, Hearth dedication, or Kindred charter. It does not certify rehabilitation or moral fitness and does not guarantee any legal, correctional, institutional, parole, or release benefit.

ABOUT HÁKONARÆTT FELLOWSHIP

Hákonarætt means House of Hákon. Hákonarætt Fellowship is an Old Norse religious fellowship supporting practitioners and communities through religious resources, education, prison ministry, formation, and fellowship.

Hákonarætt understands religious tradition as something lived through devotion, observance, wisdom, responsibility, household life, hospitality, right relationship, and service. Its ordinary communal framework is Hús Hearth Kindred.

A Good Name belongs to Hákonarætt Fellowship Prison Ministry. It is distinct from the academic programs of the Hákonarætt Institute of Eddic Studies (HIES). Nonmembers may use this workbook, and ancestry is not a requirement.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Hákonarætt Fellowship gratefully acknowledges the translators and editors whose public-domain English editions make the historical sources in this workbook accessible to modern readers, especially Henry Adams Bellows, Muriel A. C. Press, and George Webbe Dasent.

The Fellowship also acknowledges the participants, facilitators, chaplains, educators, volunteers, and correctional staff who make serious religious study possible under difficult circumstances.

Hákonarætt maintains its distinct Old Norse religious identity while encouraging respectful dialogue, friendship, and cooperation with people and communities of other religious traditions.

Receive the tradition with reverence. Carry its wisdom with judgment. Let your deeds show what you have learned.

GLOSSARY

Edda

A modern name used for the principal medieval Icelandic collections through which much Old Norse mythic and poetic material survives.

Frith

Frith is a modern English form related to Old English *frip* and cognate Germanic terms associated with peace, security, and protected relationship. Within *Hákonarætt*, frith is used for the condition of right and responsibly maintained relationship among people.

Hákonarætt

“House of Hákon,” the name of the Fellowship and the wider religious household it represents.

GLOSSARY

Hávamál

“Sayings of the High One,” an Eddic poem containing wisdom, counsel, mythic material, and other sections. The High One is associated with Óðinn. The poem is composite and should not be treated as a single systematic code.

Hearth

Within Hákonarætt, a sacred place intentionally set apart by a Hús for household religious life. It is more than a metaphor and does not require a particular design, permanent fire, or building.

Hús

Old Norse for “house” or “dwelling.” Within Hákonarætt, a Hús is a household intentionally maintaining or seeking to maintain Old Norse religious tradition.

GLOSSARY

Kindred

Within Hákonarætt, a stable local religious community that has grown beyond one Hús or Hearth and may be formally chartered by the Fellowship.

Óðinn

A principal god of the Old Norse religious tradition, associated in surviving sources with wisdom, poetry, rulers, battle, the dead, magic, and the pursuit of knowledge. In this workbook Óðinn is treated as a god, not merely as an archetype.

Saga

A medieval Old Norse-Icelandic prose narrative. Sagas were written in Christian Iceland and may preserve, reshape, or interpret older memories and traditions.

GLOSSARY

Sigrdrífumál

An Eddic heroic poem in which the valkyrie Sigrdrífa gives Sigurðr counsel and rune-lore.

Skírnismál

An Eddic mythological poem recounting Skírnir's journey on behalf of Freyr to Gerðr. The poem includes material that should not all be treated as a model for modern conduct.

Þing

An assembly in Old Norse society where legal, political, social, and communal matters could be addressed. It should not be reduced simply to a modern court or parliament.

PRONUNCIATION IS NOT THE TEST

You are not expected to master reconstructed pronunciation before engaging the tradition. Care, accuracy, and willingness to learn matter more than performing expertise.

YOU ARE NOT EXPECTED TO KNOW THE WHOLE ROAD BEFORE YOU BEGIN WALKING IT.

SOURCES & BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bellows, Henry Adams, trans. *The Poetic Edda: Translated from the Icelandic with an Introduction and Notes*. New York: The American-Scandinavian Foundation, 1923. Public domain in the United States.

Press, Muriel A. C., trans. *Laxdæla Saga*. 1899. Public-domain English translation used for the passage in Study 9.

Dasent, George Webbe, trans. *The Story of Burnt Njal: From the Icelandic of the Njals Saga*. Translation originally published 1861. Public-domain English translation used for Studies 17 and 18.

HOW THE SOURCES ARE USED

The surviving Old Norse literary record was written and preserved across different periods, genres, and religious circumstances. It does not present one single systematic doctrine. Some sources preserve material that scholars understand to have roots extending into the pre-Christian tradition; others reflect medieval Iceland's Christian literary setting as well as memories of older culture.

Each study follows a deliberate sequence: historical source explanatory rendering Hákonarætt application. In Today's Words is an explanatory paraphrase intended to make older English easier to understand. It is not presented as an independent translation.

The workbook does not assume that every deed performed by a saga or Eddic figure should be imitated. Difficult or morally troubling material is not made harmless by being old.

STUDY SOURCE MAP

1 Hávamál 47 • 2 Hávamál 2–4 • 3 Hávamál 41–44 • 4 Hávamál 29–32

5 Hávamál 68–69 • 6 Hávamál 27–29 • 7 Sigrdrífumál 23 • 8 Hávamál 77–78

9 Laxdæla saga XLIX • 10 Hávamál 22 • 11 Hávamál 10, 18 • 12 Skírnismál 13

13 Hávamál 59 • 14 Hávamál 5 • 15 Hávamál 39 • 16 Hávamál 69

17 Njáls saga LXXIII (73) • 18 Njáls saga CXLI (141) • 19 Hávamál 3–4 • 20 Hávamál 77

A NOTE ON PUBLIC-DOMAIN TEXTS

The principal English translations quoted in A Good Name are public-domain works. Bellows's 1923 Poetic Edda is available through Project Gutenberg, which identifies the text as public domain in the United States. Older saga translations used here are likewise public-domain English editions.

Modern explanatory material, reflections, exercises, and Hákonarætt religious formation content in this workbook are original to A Good Name.

Listen to the tradition first. Then consider what you will carry forward.

ABOUT THIS EDITION

A Good Name: Hákonarætt Study in Wisdom, Responsibility & Renewal was developed as a religious formation resource of Hákonarætt Fellowship Prison Ministry.

This 2026 Edition was prepared for individual, correspondence, and facilitated use, including use within correctional settings. It is designed to remain fully usable as a printed workbook without requiring internet access or digital resources.

The workbook draws upon public-domain English translations of works from the Old Norse literary tradition together with original explanatory material, reflections, exercises, and religious formation content developed for A Good Name.

A Good Name is a Hákonarætt Fellowship Prison Ministry resource. It is not an academic course of the Hákonarætt Institute of Eddic Studies (HIES) and does not award academic credit.

2026 EDITION

HÁKONARÆTT FELLOWSHIP PRISON MINISTRY

ONE HOUSEHOLD • MANY HEARTHS • SHARED TROTH

APPENDIX — FACILITATOR NOTES

A Good Name is religious formation, not a correctional behavior score, psychotherapy program, academic course, or investigative interview. The facilitator's first responsibility is to preserve the purpose of the work.

Facilitators should understand the religious foundation of the workbook. Old Norse sources are not merely motivational quotations. The gods are treated as gods, the historical texts are treated with care, and modern Hákonarætt application is identified as modern application.

1. BEGIN WITH THE SOURCE

Read the historical source before discussing the modern lesson. Do not force the source to say what the group wants it to say. Where a passage is difficult, allow difficulty to remain visible.

Avoid romanticizing the Viking Age, secularizing the religion into generic values, or turning Old Norse material into a substitute form of Christianity. Similar moral themes do not erase religious and historical differences.

2. DO NOT REQUIRE OFFENSE DISCLOSURE

No participant should be required to describe the offense that led to incarceration. The workbook can be completed through ordinary examples of conflict, responsibility, speech, work, and relationship.

Do not ask for victim names, identifying details, legal strategy, or facts that could create risk. If a participant volunteers sensitive information, follow facility policy and applicable reporting requirements.

3. RESPONSIBILITY MUST BE PRECISE

Encourage direct responsibility without encouraging global shame. ‘My part was...’ is more useful than ‘Everything is my fault.’

Likewise, do not permit explanations to become automatic excuses. Other people’s wrongdoing does not erase a participant’s own choices. The aim is accurate responsibility.

4. RESTORATION DOES NOT CREATE ACCESS

Never imply that changed conduct entitles a participant to contact, forgiveness, reconciliation, parole, release, family reunification, or renewed relationship.

Respect no-contact orders, victim boundaries, facility rules, and the right of another person to refuse engagement. Restoration may consist entirely of changed conduct and lawful forms of repair that do not involve direct contact.

5. MEANING DOES NOT DEPEND ON RELEASE

Do not frame every lesson as preparation for reentry. Some participants may have very long sentences or no realistic expectation of release. The workbook must remain meaningful now.

Ask what worthy work, learning, stewardship, contribution, religious practice, and right relationship are possible under present conditions.

6. HEROIC COURAGE IS RELIGIOUS COURAGE

Do not promise that faith, courage, or the gods will produce the desired outcome. Heroic courage does not depend upon the promise of victory.

The relevant question is how a person meets what stands before him when outcomes remain uncertain or beyond his control.

7. PROTECT THE GROUP

Do not allow racial, ethnic, extremist, gang, or supremacist interpretations of Norse symbols or tradition to dominate the group. A Good Name is a religious formation resource and is not ancestry-based.

Maintain discussion rules that prohibit threats, ridicule, coercion, disclosure of another participant's private material, and pressure to adopt Hákonarætt membership.

8. FACILITATE PRACTICE, NOT PERFORMANCE

There are no grades and no reward for sounding impressive. Encourage concrete practices that can be observed and repeated. Formation happens through repeated deeds.

A participant may disagree with a reflection and still engage seriously. The facilitator should ask for careful reasoning, not forced agreement.

Completion does not confer religious authority, Gothi status or authorization, Hús recognition, Hearth dedication, Kindred charter, or Fellowship membership.

THE FACILITATOR DOES NOT STAND ABOVE THE WORK. THE FACILITATOR STANDS WITHIN IT.

GO FORWARD WITH A GOOD NAME

*A better burden may no man bear
For wanderings wide than wisdom;
It is better than wealth on unknown ways,
And in grief a refuge it gives.*

HÁVAMÁL 10 — HENRY ADAMS BELLOWES

There is no promise of an easy road. There is no promise that every wrong can be repaired, every relationship restored, every door reopened, or every worthy deed rewarded. The gods are not guarantees that the world will bend to our preferred outcome. What remains within your keeping is the way you meet the road before you.

TEND FRITH.

KEEP YOUR WORD.

CARRY WHAT IS YOURS.

DO WORTHY WORK.

CONTINUE.

When you fail, return. When you speak badly, correct your speech. When you neglect what is yours, tend it again. When you learn that you were wrong, let the new understanding change the next deed. Do not use failure as permission to abandon the road.

ONE HOUSEHOLD • MANY HEARTHS • SHARED TROTH

**A GOOD NAME IS NEVER FINISHED.
IT IS CARRIED FORWARD
IN THE NEXT DEED.**