

## **President Gerald R. Ford's handwritten reflections, 1977 or 1978**

Scanned from the collection **Gerald R. Ford: Materials from the writing of *A Time To Heal*** at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library

While writing his autobiography, *A Time to Heal* (New York: Harper & Row, 1979), President Gerald R. Ford composed a series of personal reflections on twenty-seven topics. What makes these documents so unusual is not only their introspection but also their form. President Ford recorded these observations by hand, writing in blue ball point on his favored yellow writing tablets. He did not expend time and energy to polish and edit his writing, apparently planning to do so when incorporating them into the book. Therefore occasional spelling or grammatical errors or incomplete thoughts appear.

For each reflection the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library has scanned President Ford's handwritten document and added a Library-produced transcription below to aid in reading the reflection.

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## Learning How to Be Alone

Being <sup>alone</sup> is a wonderful feeling if one's mind, body & conscience are at ease. I enjoy being alone if I am reading, writing or constructively thinking. My mind must be occupied, my body free of pain and my conscience clear. Solitude under these conditions is a super feeling especially if the previous atmosphere is one of noisy crowds, heavy pressure on decisions or just nothing to do.

Alone is not enough. Four walls without work & a clear conscience is devastating mentally. Alone in the Oval Office with the telephone shut-off, working <sup>thinking</sup> or reading, was a stimulating, enjoyable experience.

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