

The Parable of the Mustard Seed (Text from Godly Play® storytelling; story from the Gospels)

There was once someone who said such wonderful things and did such amazing things that people followed him. As they followed him, they heard him speaking about a kingdom, but it was not like a kingdom that they had ever lived in. It was not like any kingdom they had ever visited. It was not even like any kingdom anyone had ever heard of.

They couldn't help it. They had to ask him. What is the kingdom of heaven like. One time when they asked him that he said, *"The kingdom of heaven is like when a person took the tiniest of all the seeds, a grain of mustard seed, a seed so small that if I had one in my finger you would not be able to see it. The person put the tiny seed in the ground, and it began to grow. The shrub grew up so big it was like a little tree, and the birds of the air came, and they made their nests there."*

REFLECTION: Reflect on the wondering questions below with a friend or colleague by taking turns in answering each question. Make sure to do active listening with each other (echo back what you heard).

- Which part of the story did you find most important? What resonated with you?
- Which part of the story is about you? Where are you in the story?

Remember, keep on sharing your stories. Keep on listening to each other's stories.

My Growth Cycle

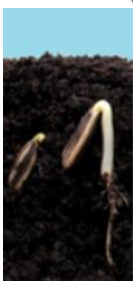


RELEASE

Notice heavy burdens of your heart and mind that you need to let go.

SERVE

Reflect on who you would like to help, serve, or guide.

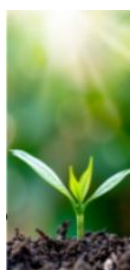


WAIT

To weather through your darkness, what tools might you use? Or what actions might you do? (*See Actions & 12 Tools)

RECEIVE

What light do you need to receive to grow, heal, thrive & flourish? (*See Needs / Light to receive)



Circle “Actions,” “Tools,” and “Needs/Light” that will help you in your growth.

ACTIONS (Which of these enable to “Release,” “Wait,” “Receive”, & “Serve”?) *do not limit yourself with this list - add as needed.

- **LITERATURE:** Read inspirational literature (novels, spiritual books, bible, self-help)
- **PRACTICE FORGIVENESS** of yourself and others
- **MUSIC** - Listen to or make music
- **PRAYER**
- **DAILY GRATITUDE**
- **MEDITATION / CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICES**
- **JOIN GROUPS OF TRUST, COOPERATION, INTERESTS** (example, sports, hobby, interests)
- **DAY OF REST:** Observe day of designated for sacred rest – stop doing and enjoy being
- **DANCE:** Engage in dance and other types of physical expression
- **ACTS OF KINDNESS:** Involve yourself in acts of kindness to others
- **NATURE:** Spend time in nature (camping, hikes)
- **ARTS:** Appreciate the arts
- **CREATIVITY:** painting, knitting, cooking, gardening, fixing things...
- **SPIRITUAL SUPPORT GROUPS:** Share your spiritual journey with others
- **JOURNALING:** Keep a journal to record learning experiences & insights (towards self-awareness)
- **SERVING FOOD:** Nourish others by serving food
- **CARING FOR ANIMALS & NATURE**
- **GARDENING:** Growing and caring for plants
- **SOCIAL CAUSES:** Joining a social movement for the common good (social, environmental justice)
- **FAITH COMMUNITY:** Belong to and participate in a faith community
- **LIFE-GIVING RITUALS:** Take part in meaningful & symbolic (celebrations & loss)
- **PHYSICAL EXERCISE / ATHLETIC PRACTICE:** biking, swimming, running, gym
- **MINDFUL EATING** (healthy, nourishing food)
- **SUPPORT GROUPS** – Recovery (Alcoholics Anonymous, Narcotics Anonymous), Grief Groups or Divorce Support Group
- **VOLUNTEER FOR SOCIAL SERVICE** – soup kitchens, education, church, hospitals, Habitat for Humanity
- **MENTORING** others who need help & guidance
- **SPENDING QUALITY TIME LOVED ONES**
- **SEE A THERAPIST / COUNSELOR/ PSYCHIATRIST**
- **AGENCY THAT WILL GUIDE ME IN MEETING BASIC NEEDS** – example, find housing, job, support in my recovery



THE TOOLBOX PROJECT

The 12 Tools

Tools for Learning • Tools for Life



Breathing Tool

I calm myself and check-in.



Quiet/Safe Place Tool

I remember my quiet/safe place.



Listening Tool

I listen with my ears, eyes, and heart.



Empathy Tool

I care for others. I care for myself.



Personal Space Tool

I have a right to my space and so do you.



Using Our Words Tool

I ask for what I want and need.



Garbage Can Tool

I let the little things go.



Taking Time Tool

I use time wisely.



Please & Thank You Tool

I treat others with kindness and appreciation.



Apology & Forgiveness Tool

I admit my mistakes and work to forgive yours.



Patience Tool

I am strong enough to wait.

Courage Tool

I have the courage to do the “right” thing.



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NEEDS / LIGHT TO RECEIVE

Purpose / Goal / Direction	Honesty	Inclusion
Vision	Creativity	Learning & Growth
Mentor / Community Support / Guidance	Transparency	Self-Respect
Friendship / Companionship	Commitment	Healing
Patience	Rest and Sleep	Vision / Dreams
Gratitude / Grace / Thankfulness	Solitude	To Grieve
Hope	Peace	Love
Recognition	Resilience / Perseverance	Consideration
Good communication	Mutuality	Empathy
Cooperation	Laughter / Joy / Fun	Community
Kindness	Play	Understanding
Belonging	Presence	Trust
Appreciation	Freedom	Support
Acceptance	Inspiration	Stability
Connection	Choice / Autonomy	Safety
Respect	Space	Exercise
Nurture	Meaning	Financial Security:
Authenticity	Awareness	Shelter, Food, Etcetera
	Tenderness	