BREATHE

A spiritual care resource created by Kaseman's Spiritual Care Department

The Stream & the Desert

(A Sufi story)

There was once a stream that started flowing from a faraway mountain. This stream passed through a lot of countryside until it finally reached the sands of a vast dry desert. Since it had crossed every other barrier, it was confident that it could cross the desert. However, no matter how hard it tried, the stream always disappeared in the sand. It was convinced that its destiny was to cross this desert but could not find a way.

The stream became upset and frightened, but then it heard a whisper from the desert sand: "The wind crosses the desert, and so can the stream."

The stream was amazed by the desert sand's whisper, and it started to talk to the desert: "I have been trying as hard as I can to go through this desert, but I'm not the wind. The wind can fly. I cannot fly."

"Of course, moving forward in your normal way is not possible," the desert replied. "If you keep doing what you're accustomed to, you will either disappear or become a marsh. You must allow the wind to carry you over to your destination."

"Allow the wind to carry me over? - How can this even be possible?" the stream asked.

"It's easy," the desert answered. "Allow yourself to be absorbed in the wind."

Upon hearing this, the stream felt fear - the stream did not like this idea of being absorbed by a different element. It was frightened of losing its identity. The stream thought to itself: "If I lose my identity, can I get it back again? Or will I be left formless wandering with the wind forever?"

Sensing the stream's fears, the desert sand said: "My friend, absorbing the stream is one of the wind's jobs. It takes up water as vapor and carries it over the desert, and then lets water fall again, falling as rain, and the water again becomes a stream."
"But that would mean that I have to change," the stream cried out in protest. "That would mean I would not be the same stream as I am today."

The whisper said, "That is true. You will change, but your true self will be carried away and form a stream again."

Upon hearing this, the stream began to catch dim memories when it was vapor in the past held by the wind. So with a leap of faith the stream let go and began to rise as vapor into the welcoming arms of the wind. The stream, now water vapor, was lifted upwards and over the desert falling softly as rain on the roof of a mountain, and once again became a flowing stream.

REFLECTION: WONDERING QUESTIONS with a conversation partner:

- What did you find to be the most important part of the story? What resonated with you?
- What experiences have you had that is close to this story?
- Which part of the story is about you?
- What moments have you had when there was a sense of flow in your life?
- What obstacles have you faced? Who is/are your guides (the whisper)?

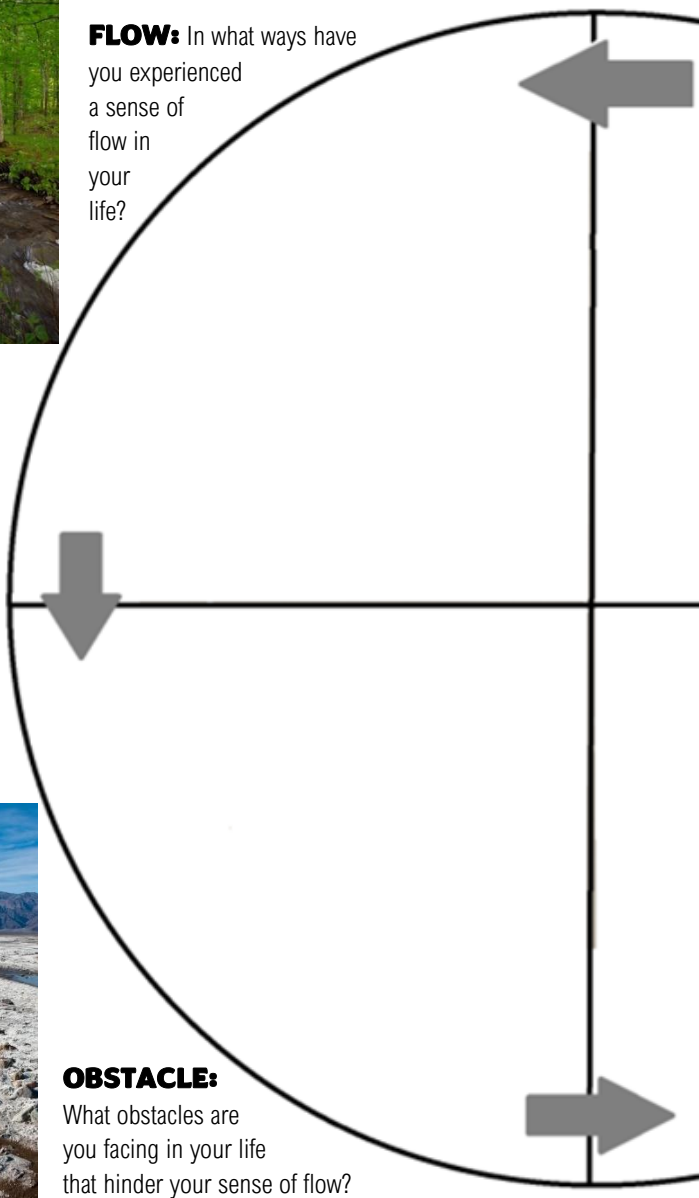
Remember, keep on sharing your stories. Keep on listening to each other's stories. And keep on listening to the silence

My Transformation

In the four spaces below, creatively write and/or draw how you have experienced or embodied these themes in the story: FLOW, OBSTACLE, WISDOM, RISE.

FLOW: In what ways have you experienced a sense of flow in your life?

RISE: What helps you rise above your obstacles?



OBSTACLE: What obstacles are you facing in your life that hinder your sense of flow?

WISDOM: Desert Whisper: Who gives you good wisdom when you feel stuck in an obstacle?