

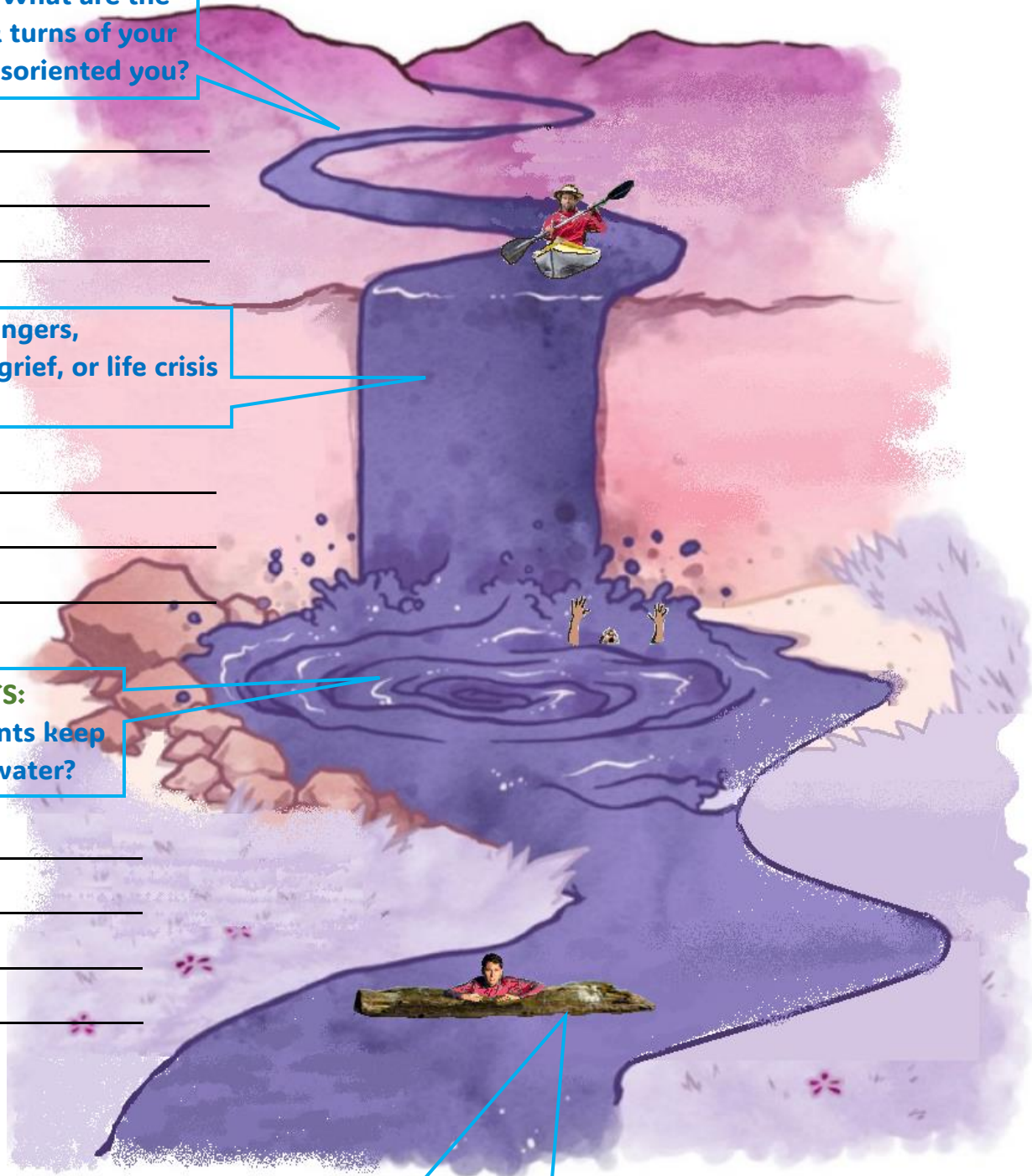
Which part of the story is about you?

TWISTS & TURNS: What are the surprising twists & turns of your life journey that disoriented you?

FALLING: What dangers, struggles, losses /grief, or life crisis did you fall into?

STRONG CURRENTS: What strong currents keep pulling you underwater?

YOUR FLOATY: What helps you stay afloat when life's currents are strong?



BREATHE

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

THE RIVER OF LIFE

(by Donnel Miller-Mutia)

Once there was someone, a traveler, who took a boat trip on a river, and was so excited to be on this adventure. This person got on a canoe and gently paddled on the river. She noticed the peaceful and gentle flow of the river, the trees on the riverbanks dancing in the cool breeze, and the beautiful singing of the birds.

Then slowly she heard a thundering roar up ahead down river, and at first didn't think much of it, but very quickly she realized that the boat was fast approaching the edge of a waterfall. She tried to paddle out of the currents of the rapids, but it was too late. With the force of the currents pulling the boat, no amount of rowing would help now.

At first, a surge of feelings came upon the person: panic and fear, but as the boat fell into the abyss of the bottom of the waterfall, she was shocked at how everything had come to this.

As the adventurer and the canoe hit the water below, the strong rapids, the undercurrent, kept pulling her down. She would try to swim up, occasionally finding success to take a deep breath of air, then another strong current would pull her down under the water once more. This happened multiple times, and she felt so tired. It felt like any effort to stay afloat her head above water took forever, and because of the exhaustion, she was about to give up.



But finally, the traveler was able to grab on to a piece of floating log to help her float. This log gave her time to rest and regain strength by not expending unnecessary energy.

Exhausted and holding tightly to the log, the traveler floated down the river. She took a deep breath, and while floating downriver she once again noticed the trees, the cool breeze, and the singing birds.

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).

WONDERING QUESTIONS:

- Which part of the story did you find most important? What resonated with you?
- What could the river really be?
- What could the strong currents and the twists and turns really be?
- Which part of the story is about you?
- Notice moments when you were caught by strong currents and almost drowned.

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