BREATHE

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

The Parable of the Sower

(a story from the Gospels; adapted by Godly Play®)

There was once someone who did such amazing things and said such wonderful things that people followed him. As they followed him, they heard him speaking about a kingdom. The kingdom was not like the one they lived in. It was not like one that anyone had ever visited. It was not like any kingdom anyone had even heard about. So they had to ask him, "What is the kingdom of heaven like?"

One day when they asked him that, he said, "The kingdom of heaven is like when a shower, someone who scatters seeds, goes out and scatters seeds along the path."

"As the sower sowed seeds along the path, the birds of the air came and ate the seeds."

"The sower also sowed seeds among the stones. When the seeds tried to put their little roots down among the stones they could not push their way into the ground. When the sun came out it scorched the seeds and they died."

"The sower also sowed seeds among the thorns. When the seeds tried to push their little roots down among the thorns, they could push them part way in, but the thorns choked them, and they died."

"The sower also sowed seeds in the good earth. When the seeds pushed their little roots down into the good earth, they could go all the way in."

"They grew and grew. When they were all grown up, they were ripe for the harvest. Then they were cut off and gathered up. The harvest was thirty, sixty and one hundred bushels."

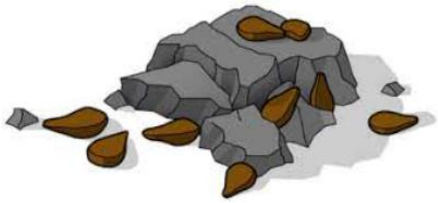
REFLECTION

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).

- Who could the sower really be?
- What could the different types of ground surface really be?
- What could the harvest really be?
- Which part of the story is about you? Where are you in this story?
- Notice moments in your life journey when the things you wanted to grow: (1) were taken away, (2) scorched, (3) choked, (4) thrived and flourished.

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

WHICH PART(s) OF THE STORY IS ABOUT YOU?

STOLEN SEEDS	ROCKY GROUND & HOT SUN	THORNS	FERTILE GROUND
In what ways in your life have your seeds been taken away from you? 	In what ways have your seeds landed on rocks, and burned up by the hot sun? 	In what ways have your seeds landed amidst thorns? 	In what ways have your seeds landed in fertile ground? 

Composting: A Pathway to Rise Above Life's Struggles

1. Funk of Life Thrown at You:

Life transition, loss, death, health struggles, mental health struggle, crisis, despair, hopelessness, meaninglessness. *Write a few below:*

_____

_____

_____

2. Composting:

This process means breaking down the funky elements of life thrown at you so it can be used for growth, learning and healing. *What/who helps you transform the funk into something that nourishes you? that helps you grow and flourish? (Complete your* ***Spiritual Care Plan*** *on "actions for composting" behind this page.)*

_____

_____

_____

_____

3 Growing:

This process is similar to a seed becoming a seedling: it means breaking out of the dark to receive light. *Instead of staying buried, what does it mean for you to rise above your struggles? To move from lifelessness to new life?*

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

*Things that help break down organic waste: **earthworms, fungi, protozoa, bacteria, termites, millipedes, moisture**

CREATE YOUR SPIRITUAL CARE PLAN

Brainstorm on spiritual practices that will help in the composting process of life's challenges.

A Toolbox of Spiritual Practices 1

Below is a partial list of practices that may help you cultivate spirituality in your life. Take a look at the list and see what speaks to you. Which of these nourish your spirit? How would you incorporate these practices into your life? What would you add to the list?

- Read sacred and inspirational literature
- Practice forgiveness of yourself and others
- Listen to or make music
- Spend time in deep reflection, meditation, or prayer
- Participate in groups that involve trust and cooperation (example, sports, hobby or interest groups)
- Observe day of designated for sacred rest – stop doing and enjoy being
- Engage in dance and other types of physical expression
- Involve yourself in acts of kindness to others
- Spend time in nature
- Appreciate the arts
- Be creative – painting, knitting, cooking, gardening, fixing things…
- Share your spiritual journey with others
- Keep a journal
- Nourish others by serving food
- Caring for animals
- Growing and caring for plants, garden
- Joining a social movement for the common good (social, environmental justice)
- Belong to and participate in a faith community
- Take part in rituals, or symbolic practices that are spiritual

Spiritual Treatment Plan 2

Identify your spiritual resources. List what helps you move from:

Vulnerability > Resilience _____

_____

Helplessness > Agency _____

_____

Despair > Hope _____

_____

Emptiness > Purpose _____

_____

Isolation > Communion _____

_____

Resentment > Gratitude _____

_____

Sorrow > Joy _____

_____

Threefold Path: In/Out/Up 3

Spiritual healing involves nurturing a relationship with yourself, others, and the Divine. Write the practices that support you in each of the areas below.

Reaching In (Self)

Reaching Out (Others)

Reaching Up (Higher Power / Wisdom)

4

Actions (composting) that will nourish your seeds.

Choose three activities that you will commit to trying for a month.

1)_____

2)_____

3)_____

Receiving the Light - Vocabulary of Spiritual Life 5

The words listed below are words related to a thriving spiritual life: they are the potential seeds that will grow out of the good soil (with dark compost). **Circle words (the seeds you want to see grow)** if you consistently follow through with your 3 Actions above.

- Awe/Wonder
- Meaning
- Wholeness
- Healing
- Gratitude
- Connection
- Forgiveness
- Compassion
- Peace
- Ease /Freedom
- Patience
- Hope
- Love
- Purpose
- Acceptance
- Grace
- Faith
- Joy
- Awareness
- Harmony
- Rest/Renewal
- Resilience

***This worksheet is adapted from Elisa Goldberg's "Guide to Leading Spirituality Support Groups in BH

A Gardener's Notes: My Life as a Garden

THE GOOD EARTH (fertile ground): Before planting, a gardener prepares the soil. What actions or strategies help create nourishing dirt? How can you turn funky waste into compost & mulch? In other words, how can you transform your crisis, obstacles, trauma (negativity in your life) into a learning experience that give you insights, perspective & self-awareness, which help you grow or propel forward in your life?

SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIPS (companions for mutual support): How can you set up or design your garden so that all things living in it can benefit from each other? Example, creating good shade, grow nitrogen-fixing legumes, attracting good bugs (pollinators)? In other words, who or what are your relationships of mutual support?

PRUNING: Part of being a gardener is the skill of pruning (aka "deadheading") – cutting off parts of plants that get in the way of growth and flourishing. What do you need to let go, or cut off in your life? (*Example: People & relationships, OR patterns of behavior that no longer serve you & do not lead to your health & wellness*).

STAYING SIMPLE & ORGANIC: Instead of using synthetic or inorganic chemicals/materials, part of being a gardener is learning to use nature (organic methods) to facilitate growth. How might you practice a life that is much slower? natural? simple? mindful? That is, a life attuned to gratitude of simple things in life?

THE PROTECTORS: A gardener knows basic knowledge of what protects the growing plant from unwanted weeds and bugs. Marigolds repel certain insects. Ground beetles and ladybugs destroy aphids. Who or what will protect you from "unwanted weeds/bugs" of your life, which if unnoticed, will overwhelm you & hinder your growth?

ACTIONS IN OUR SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

(Adapted from Quadratos by Alexander Shaia)

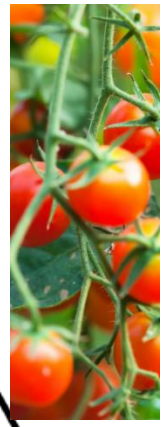
INSTRUCTION:
Draw, write or color in the space provided in each four areas of the circle: **Release, Wait, Receive, Serve**.

1. RELEASE

What do you need to let go? (Example: a heavy thought, feeling, or burden)

4. SERVE

Who are you going to serve? (Example, those who are struggling in life)



What do you need to weather through your darkness or struggle?

2. WAIT

What do you need to receive to grow & flourish?

3. RECEIVE