BREATHE

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

The Four Elements

(By Chaplain Donnel)

Once there was a seeker of wisdom who sought knowledge on what specific actions one must embody to live a good life. This searcher or seeker of wisdom sat with a hermit, an old wise sage, a teacher full of spiritual wisdom.

"It's easy," the spiritual master said to the seeker. "Go to each of the four elements: earth, water, fire and air. Listen to what each element will say about what action you need to embody."

So early the next day the seeker climbed on a solid rock, sat on it, and took a deep breath, and listened to what earth had to say: "My dear one," earth said, "Trust the support of the solid earth underneath you, and allow yourself to release your burdens. Let go of your anxious thoughts and know that I am always holding and lifting you up. At the same time, stay rooted in fertile dark earth. Be in good relationship with the dirt of the soil, which provides the nutrients that you need to grow, flourish, and thrive."

After receiving the blessing from earth, the seeker sat on a sandy beach facing the largest body of water, the ocean.

Then water spoke to the spiritual seeker: "As you ride the highs and lows of waves of life's storms, breathe - stay in the present moment. Like the river, go with the flow. Learn to embody fluidity, so you can adapt to the ever-changing circumstances of your life. Hold things lightly. Do less holding on."

Then at the end of the day, the sun set. The cool evening air came, and the person felt the cool breeze. The air spoke these words: "Integrate lightness within yourself, so you can rise like air. Embody ease and freedom by being open to new wisdom. May you be open to receive, yet open to let go."

Finally, the darkness of night came. The seeker of wisdom gathered some wood and built a fire. The light of the fire said: "Do that which kindles love in you. Move towards your inner fire, your sacred purpose, your passion, your bliss. Let my light provide you with clarity and guidance in what you do. And remember that through love, fire is pleasing light."

The four elements spoke together to the seeker: "Integrate the wisdom of all four elements. 1. Stay rooted; Trust the solid ground beneath you. 2. Learn to flow like water. 3. Like air, instill in yourself lightness and freedom." 4. Kindle the fire of love within you and spread the light.

REFLECTION

Reflect on the wondering questions below with a friend or colleague by taking turns in answering each question.

WONDERING QUESTIONS:

- Which part of the story resonated with you?
- Which part of the story is about you?
- Which element are you most natural (or gifted) at?
- Which element(s) do you need to integrate for balance so that you can thrive and flourish?

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

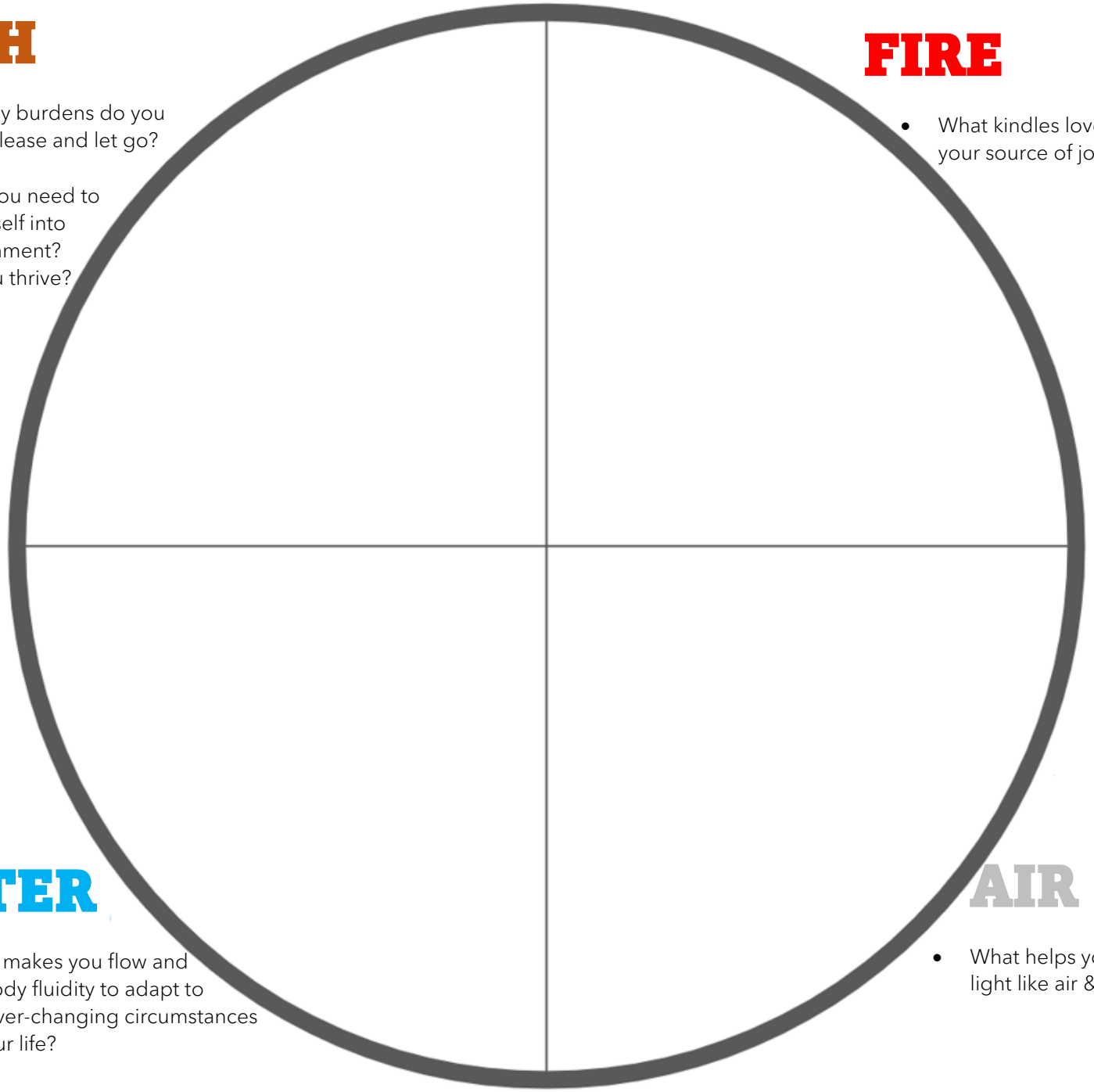
INSTRUCTION: In the space below (divided into four), draw/doodle/color/collage/write your answer to the reflection prompts under each element.

EARTH

- What heavy burdens do you need to release and let go?
- What do you need to Root yourself into for nourishment? so that you thrive?

FIRE

- What kindles love in you? What is your source of joy & passion?



WATER

- What makes you flow and embody fluidity to adapt to the ever-changing circumstances of your life?

AIR

- What helps you feel light like air & free?

CREATE YOUR SPIRITUAL CARE PLAN

Actions that you need to integrate to access Sacred Wisdom

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)

CARE PLAN 4

Actions to integrate in your life.

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

1)_____

2)_____

3)_____

SACRED WISDOM 5

Vocabulary of Spiritual Life

The words listed below are words related to a thriving spiritual life. **Circle words below that you will likely embody** (or receive) if you consistently follow through with your Care Plan?

- 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

DRAW & LABEL: (1) What kindles your love and passion? (2) What makes you flow? (3) What makes you feel light and free? (4) What do you need to release & let go, AND root yourself into something that nourishes?

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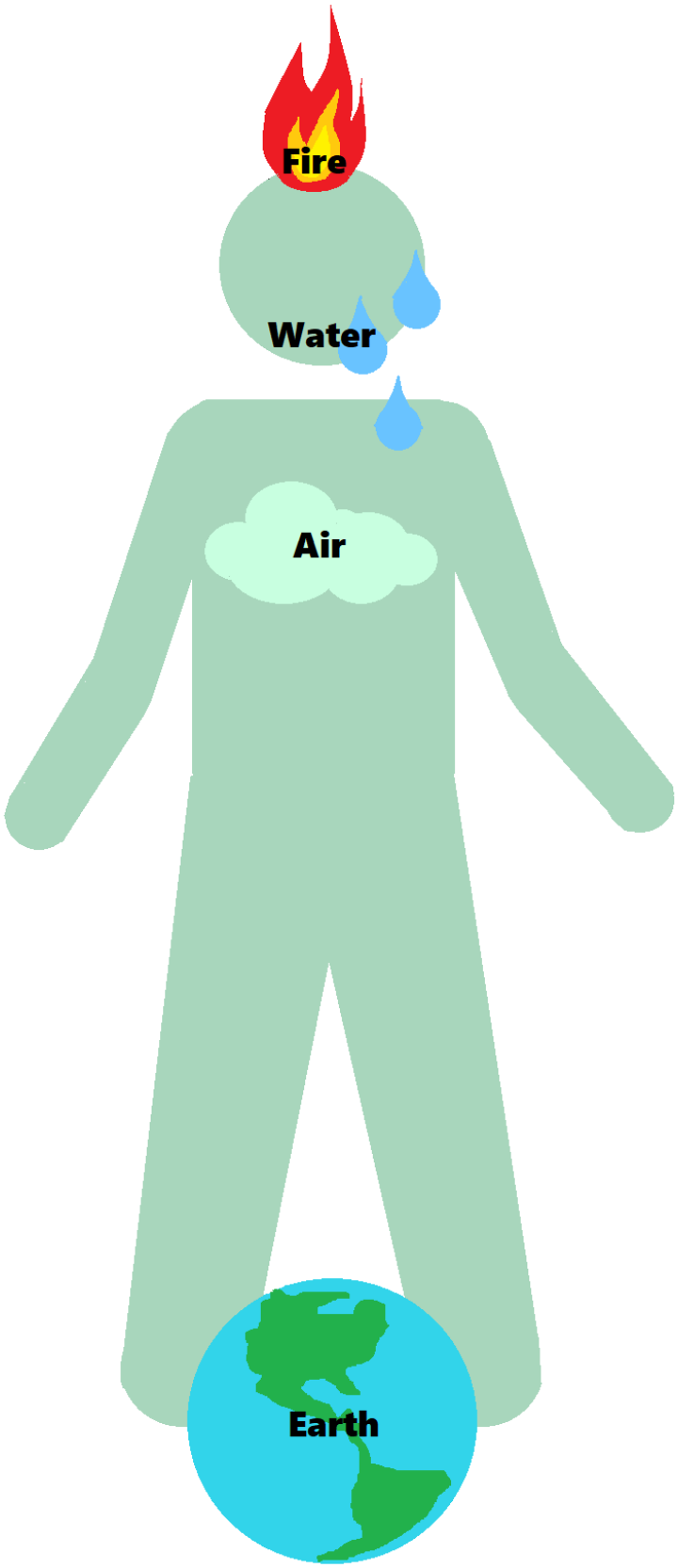

FIRE - Inspiration

Light up the path of your imagination and will power. What healing light needs to be kindled within you? (Example: Love, forgiveness, self-acceptance, hope, vision, inspiration, wisdom, clarity, kindness, gentleness, joy, fun, happiness). Who will you share your light with? Who will you serve?

WATER - Flow

Access the wisdom of flowing, receiving but never holding on to grasp & control. Always open to welcome a thought and feeling, yet open to let go. What helps you flow?

AIR - Breathing for balance & centering.

Take a deep breath and fill your lungs