

BREATHE

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

The Parable of the Sower

(a story from the Gospels)

“A sower, 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).

WONDERING QUESTIONS with a conversation partner:

- Who could the sower really be?
- What could the seeds 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

In what ways in your life have your seeds been taken away from you?



ROCKY GROUND & HOT SUN

In what ways have your seeds landed on rocks, and burned up by the hot sun?



THORNS

In what ways have your seeds landed amidst thorns?



FERTILE GROUND

In what ways have your seeds landed in fertile ground?



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?

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?

SYMBIOTIC RELATIONSHIPS (companions for positive 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?

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?

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.

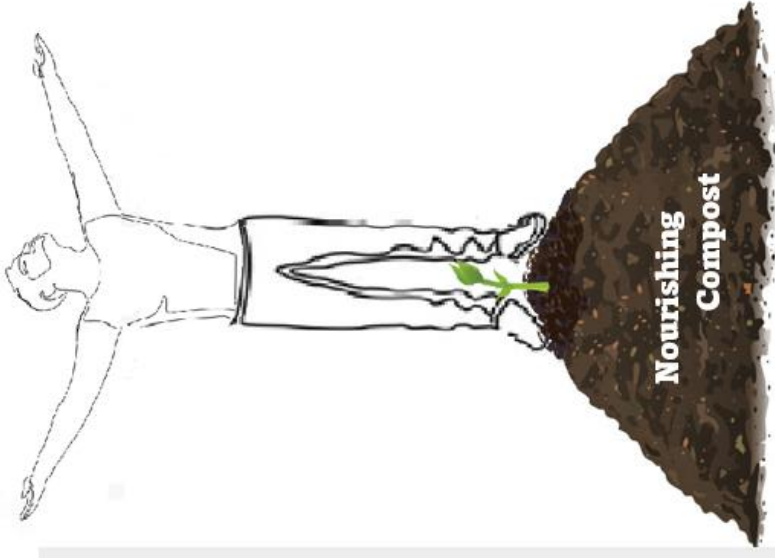
COMPOSTING:

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?*

3.

CROWING:

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



A Seed Psalm

(Adapted from Edward Hays book
Prayers for a Planetary Pilgrim)

Like buried seeds
asleep in Earthen tombs,
may we awake
and rise up with joy to break forth
the hard coffins of our shells!

May the parts of us
that are seemingly lifeless
grow towards the light,
towards hope and new life.

Source of Deep Wisdom,
guide me so that the sacred seeds
buried within me land on
nourishing good earth
so I may awaken, grow and rise
to fulfill my sacred purpose.

Inspiring Light,
enchant parts of myself that is
dormant, shy, hesitant, fearful, and anxious
and set the rhythm for my sluggish feet
in a dance of holy yearning
in a dance of trust and courage
in a dance grounded in compassion and love.