

BREATHE

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

The Parable of the Well

(a rabbinical wisdom story)

There was once a great desert. And in the middle of the desert was a deep well. It was so deep that people could no longer reach the water to drink. They could not even see the water in the well. Sometimes you could feel the damp coolness rising from the well, but there was no way to get the refreshing liquid from its depths.

People cannot live in the desert without water. It is hot and it is easy to get lost. The wind changes the shape of the sand. There is nothing green to give shade or for people to eat; so *everyone hurries across the sand and dirt to get away from the danger.*



One day a person crossed the desert. When the person came to the well, the person *took time*. There was *no hurry*. The person looked at the well and the little golden strands in the desert.

The traveler picked up a rusty object, but no one could remember what it was for. It was like a bucket you could carry, but where would a person get any water?

The person looked again and kicked the golden threads. They seemed out of place. What were they? Other people thought they were silly and went on their way. But this person took time.

The traveler went back to the bucket with the handle and then to the deep well, and then began walking around picking up the golden threads and tied them together. Finally, the person tied the end of the connected threads to the bucket, and lowered the bucket into the well and drew forth the refreshing water.

The person tasted the water and was changed. When the person went on the way, the bucket and the many strands tied together were left, so the next person could also taste the water.

You can taste it too.

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:

- What could the well really be?
- What could the desert really be?
- Notice moments in your journey that come close to this.
- Which part of the story is about you?
- What deserts have you crossed?
- Notice moments when you hurried to avoid danger, and moments when you took time.
- If any, what golden threads have you found? What golden threads do you need now?
- What refreshing waters quenched your inner thirst?

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

WHICH PART OF THE STORY IS ABOUT YOU?

DESERT What moment(s) in your life felt like a lifeless desert?



THE TRAVELER IN A HURRY Notice moments in your journey when you travelled through your desert in a hurried way.



THE TRAVELER WHO TOOK TIME Notice moments in your journey when you slowed down to look and see.



THE DEEP WELL What areas in your life might the deep well be located?



THE BUCKET & GOLDEN THREADS What tools do you need to access the deep waters that will give you healing?



THE WATER THAT QUENCHES THIRST What is the water that will quench your thirst and provide healing?



CREATE YOUR SPIRITUAL CARE PLAN

Finding Your Golden Strands to Access the Waters of Life

1

A Toolbox of Spiritual Practices

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

2

Spiritual Treatment Plan

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

Vulnerability > Resilience _____

Helplessness > Agency _____

Despair > Hope _____

Emptiness > Purpose _____

Isolation > Communion _____

Resentment > Gratitude _____

Sorrow > Joy _____

3

Threefold Path: In/Out/Up

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



Connect with your Golden Strands

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

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

5

The Waters of Life -

Vocabulary of Spiritual Life

The words listed below are words related to a thriving spiritual life: they quench our thirst. **Circle words below that you will likely embody** (or receive) if you consistently follow through with your Care Plan (your golden strands) 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 Settings"

What is your deep well that quenches your thirst? What gives you meaning & purpose?

What are your golden strands (rope) that help you reach or access it?

