

Spiritual Wellness Practices

This packet provides some spiritual survival tools and practices to assist you in further claiming your purpose, leading out of your gifts, and thriving in correctional work. We are going to explore practices for wholeness to help staff be exposed to and practice spiritual disciplines that promote holistic health, wellbeing, and wholeness.

Discovering Sacred Space: This first practice is entitled discovering sacred space. Consider the places you feel most at peace? For me it the ocean as there is something very soothing and healing about putting my worries and strains out to sea. I also have fond memories of the beach and enjoy returning there to find rest, relaxation, and solitude.

What is that holy place for you?

Image that location. Breathe in the surroundings, the sights, sounds, smells and how it makes you feel. You can claim the holy, sacred, hopeful feeling and revisit those holy places in your mind, heart, and spirit. Accessing these sacred places allow us to move positively forward in our lives and faith. The next time you are worn out and needing a breather, take a moment to take your sacred space to be refreshed and renewed. You can access those places as a means of hope, encouragement and peace at any moment, even now.

Emotions Weather Report: The next practice is entitled emotional weather report. This practice helps be more aware of how our emotions are contributing to our stress. The more aware we are the more we can name the feeling to move forward. Consider when you feel stressed, overwhelmed, or anxious. What is happening with people, places, and events? What triggered your reactions? Consider the emotions below:

Abandoned Angry Annoyed Anxious Ashamed Bored Burdened Calm Cheated Confused Concerned Defeated Disrespected Disturbed Edgy Empty Enthusiastic Entitled Frightened Frustrated Glad Guilt Happy Helpless Hopeful Hurt Ignored Intimidated Isolated Jealous Joyful Lonely Mad Miserable Nervous Overwhelmed Pained Pleased Proud Rejected Relieved Remorseful Restless Sad Scared Spiteful Stupid Tense Thrilled Worried

Notice your body warning signs such as *muscle tension, headache, sweating, breathing difficulties, tingling, numbness, restless, upset stomach, trouble sleeping, clenched teeth, pain, hot or cold, dry mouth*. Consider how you can stay calm, maintain your power and control going forward. By using positive communication, walking away, meditating, using breath counts, talking to others, and distracting one's self with some other positive activity, you too can move from being only in your feelings to wholeness.

Practicing Spiritual Disciplines: There are a variety of spiritual practices or disciplines across faith traditions that can aid in reducing tension, providing wider perspective, and strengthening our resiliency. Here are a few to consider embracing as a personal practice.

- **Accountability Partner-** gives honest accounts to one's choices and priorities
- **Breath Prayers-** take a deep breath in and then let go
- **Care of the Earth-** honor taking care of creation
- **Coaching-** deepening through reflection into open ended questions
- **Community-** journey with others in life and faith
- **Compassion-** become part of the healing presence to others
- **Confession-** acknowledge what you have done and left undone
- **Contemplation-** consider the Divine presence in all things
- **Conversational Prayer-** open communication lines of speaking and listening

- **Devotional Reading**- reflecting and application on spiritual readings
- **Sacred Texts**- reading and mediating on what your sacred text says
- **Self-Control**- ask God to guide your thoughts, words, and deeds
- **Fasting**- letting go of an appetite to seek greater devotion and service
- **Fixed-Hour of Prayer**- stopping work or play to pray for a specific hour
- **Gratitude**- remembering, recalling, and counting one's blessings, thanksgivings
- **Hospitality**- offering grace, shelter, and care to others
- **Humility**- to commit to the needs of the greater good
- **Intercessory Prayer**- offer the concerns of self and others in prayer
- **Journaling**- awakening self through writing and reflection
- **Justice**- to enact the good and fair treatment of others
- **Labyrinth Prayer**- to make a quiet pilgrimage to God
- **Liturgical Prayer**- openness through established traditions of prayers and readings
- **Meditation**- to quiet the mind, body, and spirit through breathing
- **Prayer Walking**- to walk, hike, or journey open to spiritual renewal
- **Rest**- to make space, room, and rhythm to pause and take a break
- **Retreat**- dedicated time a part and away to lead to deeper devotion
- **Sabbath**- set a part at least one day a week for rest and worship
- **Self-Care**- to value and nurture one's self
- **Service**- help, care, and share with others
- **Silence**- to be quiet so to be more present and listen
- **Spiritual Direction**- guiding another in careful attention to our relationship with God
- **Stewardship**- to honor that all that we have are comes from the Creator
- **Teachability**- to remain a lifelong learner
- **Unplugging**- to be fully present to our lives and values
- **Worship**- to honor and adore the sacred
- **Yoga**- to open one's mind, body, and spirit to deeper

Challenge yourself to practice one or more disciplines for the next 30 days. Research has indicated that it takes a full month to alter our behavior, thinking and/or develop a new habit. Spiritual practices ground our lives and actions day by day, practice by practice.

Spiritual Journaling: One's spiritual journey is a lifelong journey to understand and claim one's self and purpose. Part of the way we discover our purpose, discover inner peace, and move forward in our lives. Journaling is one spiritual resource utilized across various faith traditions to center our spirits. We are going to introduce you now to spiritual journaling as well. Think about starting anew, a new discovery of yourself. Open yourself up to experiencing yourself and your potential in new ways and with new eyes.

Reflect upon these questions and write your responses.

- *What can we celebrate in you and where are you challenged?*
- *If time and resources were not a concern, describe things you long to do?*
- *How are you doing with self-care on a scale of 0-10, and what would raise it one notch?*
- *What do you need to honor? What do you need to disrupt? What do you need to realign?*
- *Identify one area you would like to change and how?*
- *Where would you like to go from here?*

Closing: We hope you enjoyed this opportunity to learn more about spiritual tools for wellness. We have introduced to several spiritual exercises, disciplines, and habits that can assist you in life and work. Together we remembered and reclaimed places that bring us joy and peace. You remain in our thoughts and prayers and we look forward to other ways we can help nurture faith and wholeness in your life and work.