

## HELPful Reflections on Releasing Stress

### Section A

Reflect on a recent stressful situation and briefly write down the details associated with it.

What was your physical response at that time (raised voice, rapid heartbeat, fast breathing, headache, crying, shaking.....)?

What were the feelings you experienced (anger, resentment, frustration...)?

How did this stressful situation resolve itself?

What lessons can you learn in reflecting back on this experience?

*"Those who think they have not time for bodily exercise will sooner or later have to find time for illness." - **Edward Stanley, 15th earl of Derby***

# HELPful Reflections on Physical Exercise

## Section A

Do you have an awareness of your level of physical activity?

Have you set weekly goals that are priorities?

Can long periods of time slip by without your attending to exercise?

Has this been the case for many years?

If you were conscious of exercising regularly at one stage in your life, what seems to be the factors associated with the decline in that routine?

List what currently takes precedence over developing a sound approach to physical activity:

If your lack of exercise contributes to the development of a disease can you find any items on the above list that still take precedence over looking after yourself?

*"Our bodies are gardens, to which our wills are gardeners."* - **William Shakespeare**

# HELPful Reflections on Easeful Body

## Section A

Take a moment to reflect upon your weekly activities.

Is your body becoming more flexible and supple as a result of these activities?

Do your daily activities enhance co-ordination, range of movement and strength of body?

On average how many hours a day do you spend sitting while working, in a car, at meals or sitting and relaxing?

How many hours do you spend sleeping on average?

How much time do you spend slowly stretching the body for greater flexibility and through what types of activities?

Is there an imbalance in your attention to the flexibility of your body given your weekly routine?

*"The frog does not drink up the pond in which he lives."* - **Buddhist proverb**

# HELPful Reflections on Quality Environment

## Section A

Where do you spend the bulk of your time on a typical day?

*Do these environments:*

Make you and others who enter them feel welcome?

Give you a sense of balance?

Promote well-being and comfort?

Give you a sense of connection with nature and the world around you?

Compromise your physical health in any way?

Promote positive and meaningful interactions?

Encourage relaxation and renewal?

Remind you of the things that are most important to you?

Promote a degree of stimulation and creativity?

Allow for change and flexibility?

After reflecting on this if you could incorporate anything at all into your environment what would it look like?

*"You put a baby in a crib with an apple and a rabbit. If it eats the rabbit and plays with the apple, I'll buy you a new car." - **Harvey Diamond***

# HELPful Reflections on Food Awareness

## Section A

### Balance:

Are you aware of balancing foods that you eat over the course of a day, a week, a month?

Can you sometimes not remember the last time you had fresh fruit or a salad?

Do you actively plan your meals so you are getting a good variety of foods regularly?

Is your food balancing significantly influenced by your environment, or do you try your best to find balance wherever you are?

Are you aware of what a balanced diet looks like?

### Style of Eating:

Do you take your time when you eat to chew your food as much as possible?

Are you aware of the subtle tastes?

Do you take time to relax and let go of whatever is on your mind before eating?

Are you aware of eating out of need rather than greed?

Do you feel appreciative and thankful for the food that is available?

Are you anticipating the food to come, or more of it, while still eating?

## **Types of Food:**

Are you aware of what is in the food you are eating?

Are you aware of the fat content of the food?

Do you know anything about where the food has come from or how it has been prepared?

Are you aware if the food you are eating is fresh, processed, or frozen?

Are you aware of food combining?

Do you consider how certain types of food have affected you in the past?

“Laughter is inner jogging.” - **Norman Cousins**

# HELPful Reflections on the Mind/Body Connection

## Section A

**When was the last time you had a good laugh at yourself and the situations you find yourself in?**

Are you holding any grudges, animosities and wounds? If so, what are they?

Do you take time out to reflect positively on difficult times in your life?

Were there any positive repercussions of these adversities?

Can you see adversity as an impetus for growth in your life?

List the items that you are ultimately responsible for that no one else has a role in?

Do the items on the list above differ from the things that you take upon yourself that you have little control over?

Have you learned to accept those things over which you have little or no control?

Do you tackle challenges with a spirit of curiosity and wonder?

*"There's only one corner of the universe you can be certain of improving and that's your own self." - **Aldous Huxley***

# HELPful Reflections on Breath of Life

## Section A

Take a moment to close your eyes and become aware of how you are breathing right now. Just observe your breathing for two minutes and then open your eyes and record your reflections below.

What did you observe with respect to the rhythm of your breath?

Were you aware of the depth of your breath?

If so, what was it like?

Did you observe the sound of your breath?

What body movements are associated with your breathing?

During the course of the day are you aware at any time of any of the above aspects of your breathing?

*"Flow with whatever may happen and let your mind be free. Stay centered by accepting whatever you are doing. This is the ultimate." - **Chuang Tsu***

# ***HELPful Reflections on a Peaceful Mind***

## **Section A**

Take three minutes to just close your eyes and observe any thoughts or images that pass through your mind. Then open your eyes and write down what happened.

Now repeat the above exercise but this time focus on a single object with the mind, perhaps focusing on an image of a rose in all its detail. After 3 minutes or so, open your eyes and answer the following questions.

Could you maintain the image of the rose?

Did other thoughts or images come into the mind?

Were you able to return your concentration to the rose?

Were you aware of external sounds, body sensations, your environment?

What difference did you notice between focusing on the rose and the first exercise of having no specific object of concentration?

*"Imagination is more important than knowledge" - **Albert Einstein***

# HELPful Reflections on Creative Expression and Learning

## Section A

Do you currently have any pursuits that you feel allow you to express your creativity?

If so, what are they?

Do you see life as a learning experience in which your sense of play is far more relevant than being right or wrong

When asked by a friend who you have not seen for a few weeks what you have been up to, do you respond with any anecdotes that have elements of creativity, or with the same old thing?

In reviewing your current responsibilities, are you approaching them from the perspective of creative expression and learning with a flowing dynamic, or are you stuck in a set routine and a pattern of problem -solving responses to life?

“It is one of the most beautiful compensations of this life that no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself...” - **Ralph Waldo Emerson**

# HELPful Reflections on Group Support & Communication

## Section A

Take a moment to reflect on the meaning of sharing and support to you. Now write down the words that you associate with feeling supported and sharing.

Which of the above are you NOT currently experiencing in your life?

Now honestly ask yourself how much time and energy have you put into cultivating these things recently, and if not why not?

*"Small service is true service. The daisy, by the shadow that it cast, protects the dewdrop from the sun."* - **William Wordsworth**

# HELPful Reflections on the Art of Serving

## Section A

When you think of your daily routine, needs, expectations, desires and disappointments, to what extent are these things based on either serving or being served?

Do you feel that when we receive things from other people, we are providing a service in that we are giving them an *opportunity* to serve?

When you reflect on the roles you cherish in life, that make your life challenging, meaningful, rewarding and worth tackling, is there one that does not involve giving or receiving service?

Have you ever experienced a time in your life where it was not possible to provide any service at all including receiving service? Did you feel a sense of emptiness or void?

When reflecting on *quality service*, how can you serve in a way that will promote your peace of mind and ease of body, while still being useful to those around you, and experience the joy of giving?

*"Whatever you can do or dream you can do, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic to it."* - **Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe**

# HELPful Reflections on Planning Health Enhancement

## Section A

Take a moment to reflect on your underlying motivation for attending HELP and then write down all the reasons why you want to HELP yourself to health.

Now examine all of the above reasons and then write down one or two sentences that sum up the basic theme that is at the basis of all of them. This will be your overall motivation statement, keep it so simple that you can memorize it.

Now revisit each section of this journal and fill out the Section B questions starting with a specific simple motivation statement for each component. Follow this by ranking from 1 to 10 how high a priority that component needs to be in your daily life given what your existing schedule is. For example if you are already exercising 3 hours a week, physical exercise would be a 10 because it is already part of your life. Remember you can have more than one component with the same number priority. For example, stress release and group support can both be listed as a top priority of 1. After setting your priorities write down a goal for each component that is specific, attainable, measurable and enjoyable. If you are already implementing that component to your level of satisfaction your goal could be to continue my current routine over the next 12 months. Conclude by writing down for the last question how this goal will fit into your already existing busy schedule by identifying how you can fit it in.

# STRESS RELEASE

## Section B

What is your motivation for why you want to develop stress release skills?

How high a priority is developing stress release in your daily life from 1 to 10?

Clearly state your goal for stress release that is specific, attainable, measurable, and enjoyable.

How will you fit this goal into your existing daily schedule?

From this page forward, regularly enter updates on releasing stress by adding your own pages. Keep track of your reflections, progress, goals and daily schedule, using a similar layout as displayed at the top of the page. Be accepting of the challenges and disruptions. Be flexible in your implementation schedule. Maintain your inspiration by working with others, reading, reflecting, and reminding yourself of your motivation statement.

# Physical Exercise

## Section B

What is your motivation for why you want to develop a physical exercise routine?

How high a priority is physical exercise in your daily life from 1 to 10?

Clearly state your goal for physical exercise that is specific, attainable, measurable, and enjoyable.

How will you fit this goal into your existing daily schedule?

From this page forward, regularly enter updates on physical exercise by adding your own pages. Keep track of your reflections, progress, goals and daily schedule, using a similar layout as displayed above. Be accepting of challenges and disruptions. Be flexible in your implementation schedule. Maintain your inspiration by working with others, reading, reflecting, and reminding yourself of your motivation statement.

# **An Easeful Body**

## **Section B**

What is your motivation for why you want to develop an easeful body?

How high a priority is easeful body in your daily life from 1 to 10?

Clearly state your goal for developing an easeful body that is specific, attainable, measurable, and enjoyable.

How will you fit this goal into your existing daily schedule?

From this page forward, regularly enter updates on an easeful body by adding your own pages. Keep track of your reflections, progress, goals and daily schedule, using a similar layout as displayed above. Be accepting of challenges and disruptions. Be flexible in your implementation schedule. Maintain your inspiration by working with others, reading, reflecting, and reminding yourself of your motivation statement.

# **A Quality Environment**

## **Section B**

What is your motivation for why you want to develop a quality environment?

How high a priority is quality environment in your daily life from 1 to 10?

Clearly state your goal for developing a quality environment that is specific, attainable, measurable, and enjoyable.

How will you fit this goal into your existing daily schedule?

From this page forward, regularly enter updates on a quality environment by adding your own pages. Keep track of your reflections, progress, goals and daily schedule, using a similar layout as displayed above. Be accepting of challenges and disruptions. Be flexible in your implementation schedule. Maintain your inspiration by working with others, reading, reflecting, and reminding yourself of your motivation statement.

# Food Awareness

## Section B

What is your motivation for why you want to develop food awareness?

How high a priority is food awareness in your daily life from 1 to 10?

Clearly state your goal for developing food awareness that is specific, attainable, measurable, and enjoyable.

How will you fit this goal into your existing daily schedule?

From this page forward, regularly enter updates on food awareness by adding your own pages. Keep track of your reflections, progress, goals and daily schedule, using a similar layout as displayed above. Be accepting of challenges and disruptions. Be flexible in your implementation schedule. Maintain your inspiration by working with others, reading, reflecting, and reminding yourself of your motivation statement.

# **The Mind/Body Connection**

## **Section B**

What is your motivation for why you want to develop mind/body harmony?

How high a priority is mind/body harmony in your daily life from 1 to 10?

Clearly state your goal for mind/body harmony that is specific, attainable, measurable, and enjoyable.

How will you fit this goal into your existing daily schedule?

From this page forward, regularly enter updates on mind/body awareness by adding your own pages. Keep track of your reflections, progress, goals and daily schedule, using a similar layout as displayed above. Be accepting of challenges and disruptions. Be flexible in your implementation schedule. Maintain your inspiration by working with others, reading, reflecting, and reminding yourself of your motivation statement.

# The Breath of Life

## Section B

What is your motivation for why you want to utilize the breathing techniques?

How high a priority are these breathing techniques in your daily life from 1 to 10?

Clearly state your goal for developing breathing techniques that is specific, attainable, measurable, and enjoyable.

How will you fit this goal into your existing daily schedule?

From this page forward, regularly enter updates on using breathing techniques by adding your own pages. Keep track of your reflections, progress, goals and daily schedule, using a similar layout as displayed above. Be accepting of challenges and disruptions. Be flexible in your implementation schedule. Maintain your inspiration by working with others, reading, reflecting, and reminding yourself of your motivation statement.

# **A Peaceful Mind**

## **Section B**

What is your motivation for why you want to develop a peaceful mind?

How high a priority is developing a peaceful mind in your daily life from 1 to 10?

Clearly state your goal for developing a peaceful mind that is specific, attainable, measurable, and enjoyable.

How will you fit this goal into your existing daily schedule?

From this page forward, regularly enter updates on meditation by adding your own pages. Keep track of your reflections, progress, goals and daily schedule, using a similar layout as displayed above. Be accepting of challenges and disruptions. Be flexible in your implementation schedule. Maintain your inspiration by working with others, reading, reflecting, and reminding yourself of your motivation statement.

# **Creative Expression and Learning**

## **Section B**

What is your motivation for developing creative expression in your life?

How high a priority is creative expression in your daily life from 1 to 10?

Clearly state your goal for developing creative expression that is specific, attainable, measurable, and enjoyable.

How will you fit this goal into your existing daily schedule?

From this page forward, regularly enter updates on creativity by adding your own pages. Keep track of your reflections, progress, goals and daily schedule, using a similar layout as displayed above. Be accepting of challenges and disruptions. Be flexible in your implementation schedule. Maintain your inspiration by working with others, reading, reflecting, and reminding yourself of your motivation statement.

# **Group Support and Communication**

## **Section B**

What is your motivation for developing communication skills and support in your life?

How high a priority is support and enhanced communication in your daily life from 1 to 10?

Clearly state your goal for developing group support and communication that is specific, attainable, measurable, and enjoyable.

How will you fit this goal into your existing daily schedule?

From this page forward, regularly enter updates on group support and communication by adding your own pages. Keep track of your reflections, progress, goals and daily schedule, using a similar layout as displayed above. Be accepting of challenges and disruptions. Be flexible in your implementation schedule. Maintain your inspiration by working with others, reading, reflecting, and reminding yourself of your motivation statement.

# **The Art of Serving**

## **Section B**

What is your motivation for developing quality service in your life?

How high a priority is service in your daily life from 1 to 10?

Clearly state your goal for quality service that is specific, attainable, measurable, and enjoyable.

How will you fit this goal into your existing daily schedule?

From this page forward, regularly enter updates on service by adding your own pages. Keep track of your reflections, progress, goals and daily schedule, using a similar layout as displayed above. Be accepting of challenges and disruptions. Be flexible in your implementation schedule. Maintain your inspiration by working with others, reading, reflecting, and reminding yourself of your motivation statement.

# Planning Health Enhancement

## Section B

What is your motivation for planning in your life?

How high a priority is planning in your daily life from 1 to 10?

Clearly state your goal for planning that is specific, attainable, measurable, and enjoyable.

How will you fit this goal into your existing daily schedule?

From this page forward, regularly enter updates on planning by adding your own pages. Keep track of your reflections, progress, goals and daily schedule, using a similar layout as displayed above. Be accepting of challenges and disruptions. Be flexible in your implementation schedule. Maintain your inspiration by working with others, reading, reflecting, and reminding yourself of your motivation statement.

