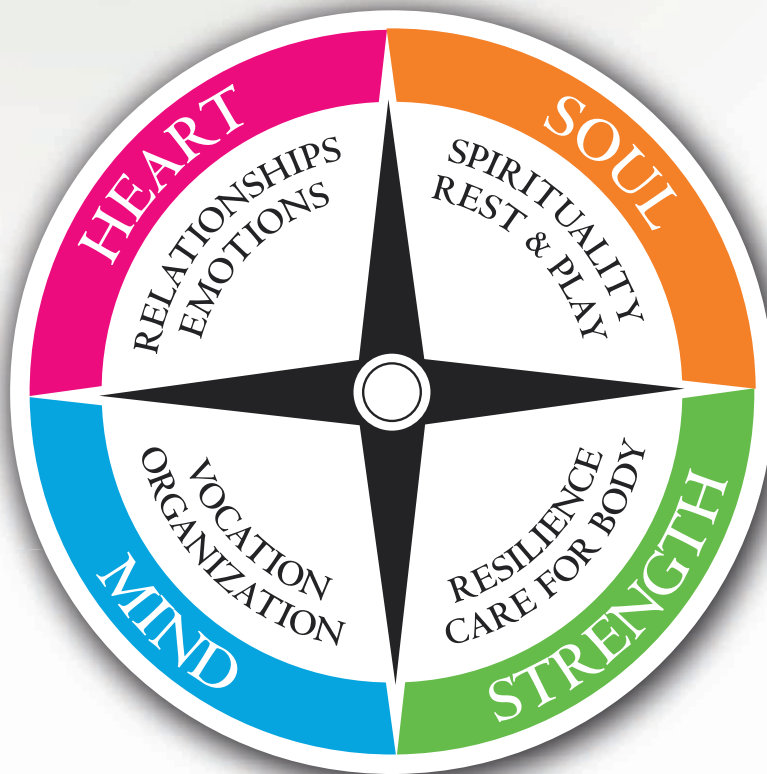


Adult Wellness COMPASS



Adult Wellness Circle *Program Workbook*



D. Scott Stoner, LMFT & Holly Hughes Stoner, LMFT



This Workbook belongs to:

Wellness Circle Date:

*Thank you for honoring my privacy by not reading what
I have written. It is intended for my reflection alone.*

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The Samaritan Family Wellness Foundation—a foundation committed to supporting and enriching the well-being of youth, parents, families, and adults—was created with a generous gift from Ab and Nancy Nicholas. While Ab passed away in 2016, their generous support continues to inspire us and to make this resource possible.



An Invitation to the Adult Wellness Circle Program

Honest self-reflection and meaningful conversations have the power to change lives and build community. Adult Wellness Circles provide opportunities for adults to experience both.

For more than thirty years, we have had the honor of walking with people of all ages on their journeys toward wellness and wholeness. We have walked with people in our professional lives as family therapists, and in our work in schools, YMCAs, community centers, and in faith communities. Yet no matter the context, we have listened to people express a desire for more places where they can have open, authentic conversations about the important things that are going on in their lives. Wellness Circles are meant to fill that gap. They have been designed to offer participants a safe place in the midst of a changing and often-challenging world, and a greater sense of meaningful, connected community.

The Adult Wellness Circle program is based on the belief that we all know what we need to do in order to become more whole. It is also based on the belief that we cannot be whole by ourselves; this journey requires the care and support of others. The program provides both a structure and a process for the individual and communal dimensions of this journey. It will help you name what you already know (although you may not be aware that you know it!), and with the support of others, help you to risk taking action steps to make the changes you truly desire.

This program addresses eight dimensions of wellness: Healthy Relationships, Handling Emotions, Spirituality, Rest and Play, Stress Resilience, Care for the Body, Vocation, and Organization. You will learn about each of these dimensions of wellness and how they are interconnected. You will learn how to be more intentional about how you live your life, and the choices you make. And hopefully, you will connect with others and have fun along the way.

It is an honor to walk with you on your journey toward greater wellness. Welcome to your Adult Wellness Circle.

Holly Hughes Stoner, LMFT and D. Scott Stoner, LMFT
Co-Directors, The Samaritan Family Wellness Foundation

What is Whole-Person Wellness?

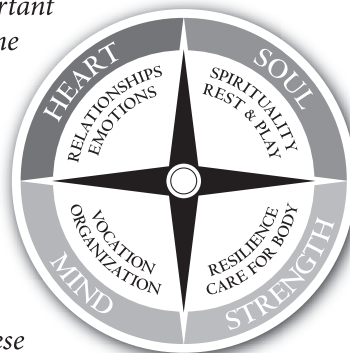
The words *whole* and *health* come from the same root, *hal*, and the word *whole* means “undivided, complete, or entire.” When applied to whole-person wellness this means we are addressing all the dimensions of a person’s being: physical, spiritual, emotional, relational, intellectual, and vocational. This approach to wellness differs from the predominant practice in our culture of treating each aspect as if it is separate from the others.

Until very recently wellness focused primarily on the physical dimension of our being. However, it is now common knowledge that when we spend time proactively working on our physical wellness, we experience a much lower rate of disease. Whole-person wellness simply extends this idea to all of the dimensions of our lives. The Adult Wellness Compass provides a way for us to proactively work on each of these dimensions, resulting in a much lower rate of disease, and “dis-ease.”

The greatest wisdom we have learned from the field of whole-person wellness is that each of the dimensions of our being are interconnected, meaning that each affects the other. Difficulty sleeping may be connected to any, or all, of the following: stress at work, stress at home, a sense that life has lost its meaning, a change in diet, or the recent loss of a loved one. The whole is truly greater than the sum of the parts, and it is time we integrate and support all of the dimensions of our being as we seek to be whole and well.

Life is a journey, and like any journey, it is important at times to make sure you are intentional about the direction in which you are heading. The Adult Wellness Circle program offers an opportunity for you to pause and check your bearings. First, you will check the direction in which you are heading in different aspects of your life. Then you will ask yourself, “Am I heading in the direction that I desire for myself?”

Your wellness circle will help you explore these questions and, if necessary, make adjustments to the direction in which your life is heading.



The Core Principles of Adult Wellness Circles

1. Resilience and wellness are rooted in **community**.
2. Resilience and wellness are rooted in identifying and acting in alignment with one's **core values and beliefs, or spirituality**.
3. Grow resilience by remembering:
 - “Change is inevitable. Growth is optional.” —John C. Maxwell, leadership expert, speaker, and author
 - “Whatever we pay attention to is what will grow.” —Deepak Chopra, author
 - “We have to do different to get different.” —Anonymous

Adult Wellness Circles ...

- focus on possibilities, not problems.
- will never ask or require you to share if you are not comfortable.
- help you take concrete steps toward reaching your goals.
- are helpful when you are going through a transition in your life.
- help you achieve greater balance.
- help you reduce and better manage stress.
- help you remember what you already know.
- help you improve your relationships.
- help you actualize the positive changes you've wanted to make.
- help you stop unhealthy habits and replace them with healthy habits.
- are not a substitute for professional help; a wellness circle is not group therapy or a 12-step group.
- might just be one of the best decisions you can make for your life right now.

Expectations for Participants in a Wellness Circle

- Arrive 5-10 minutes early so that your wellness circle can start and end on time.
- Make a sincere effort to attend all six meetings. Four is the minimum commitment.
- Honor confidentiality of what is shared in the circle.
- Respect everyone's journey and never judge.
- Avoid giving advice to others and instead focus on listening deeply to them.
- "Resource" the people in the circle any time you want feedback or ideas from others.
- Do not monopolize "air time" in the group. Everyone needs equal time to speak. It is the responsibility of both the facilitator and the group to make sure everyone has equal time to share.
- Establish clear goals and NEXT Steps for yourself and commit to working on them between group meetings. Engage with the process and the materials and come to each meeting prepared to share your progress, as well as any challenges.



Adult Wellness COMPASS

The Adult Wellness Circle program is designed to assist YOU in making the changes you decide are right for you. Typically meeting for six weeks or six sessions, this program is a combination of education and life coaching that maximizes success with making positive changes. The chances of change happening are small when we simply hear a “good idea.” However, when we generate the idea for a change ourselves, make a plan for the change, speak the change out loud to others, and receive the accountability and support of others who are working on their own positive changes, there is a much greater chance that the change will occur.

SESSION 1: Whole-Person Wellness: How Everything is Connected. In this session participants assess their whole-person wellness using the Adult Wellness Compass Self-Assessment, and then are introduced to “Mapping Your Journey of Growth and Change.” Participants also learn about the importance of committing to a mindfulness/centering practice and choosing a wisdom quote for support on their journey of growth and change.

SESSION 2: Whatever You Pay Attention to is What Will Grow. Research shows that 50%-70% of all visits to the doctor are rooted in non-medical causes. Learn about the wellness continuum and how to pay attention to what you need to pay attention to. In this session participants create a map for their journey of growth and change using NEXT Steps as a tool, and then share their map with the group.

SESSION 3: Change is Inevitable. Growth is Optional. Learn how to turn change into growth. In this session participants share how their journey is going and receive support from both facilitators and the group.

SESSION 4: The “J” Curve Phenomenon. Growth is rarely linear. Learn how to overcome the most common reason people are not successful in their attempts at growth and change. Receive continued support from the group.

SESSION 5: Systemic Dynamics and Change. In this session participants learn how their growth impacts the other systems in their lives by exploring the concepts of “Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing.” They receive continued support from the group.

SESSION 6: Where to From Here? In this final session participants celebrate their gains and share plans for maintaining their growth and staying the course they have chosen for themselves.

An Overview of a Six-Week Adult Wellness Circle

1. Choose one of the eight areas of wellness on which to focus based on your results from the **Adult Wellness Compass Self-Assessment**.
2. Describe where you are, and where you want to be, in this area of your life. This is the “You are Here” and “Wish You Were Here” part of the **Mapping Your Journey of Growth and Change**.
3. Select an inspiring quote to guide you.
4. Choose a centering/mindfulness practice that you will commit to doing during this program.
5. Invite others to support you on your journey.
6. Harness hope from previous positive experiences of growth as you consider any challenges you anticipate on this journey.
7. Set a specific goal for the change and growth you seek.
8. Determine a **NEXT Step** you will take each week toward your goal.
9. Continue to draw support and accountability from your **Wellness Circle** as you make progress with your goal and NEXT Steps.



SESSION 1: Whole-Person Wellness: How Everything is Connected

*You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourself in any direction you choose. You're on your own.
And you know what you know.
You are the one who'll decide where to go.*
—Dr. Seuss, *Oh, The Places You'll Go!*

Welcome to the Adult Wellness Circle program. We are glad you are here. The fact that you are here says that you are committed to having a greater sense of wholeness and balance in your life. This program will help you get started on this journey and, along the way, will help you get to know the fellow travelers from your group who will be walking this journey with you. There are very few places in our culture where people have the opportunity to gather to have honest conversations about life, wholeness, balance, and well-being. Your wellness circle provides a unique opportunity in a trusted setting for you to have authentic conversations with others about your true self as you seek to steer your life in the direction you choose.

Do you remember when you were young and adults taught you how to cross a busy street? They broke it down into four simple steps: **stop, look, listen, and proceed**. Those same four steps also describe the process you will follow in this program, except this time the goal is not crossing a busy street, but rather to better discern a path to greater balance and wholeness. You have already started the first step, which is to **stop**. You have paused in the midst of your busy life to make the time commitment to participate in this program. Over the course of the next six weeks or sessions, in addition to the group meetings, we will ask you to make time each day to stop and reflect on your goals and action steps as you seek to achieve a greater sense of balance in your life.

The next step in the process is to **look** closely at your life as it is right now. A little later on in this session, you will begin to complete the Adult Wellness Compass Self-Assessment. The assessment results are like a mirror that will reflect back your current state of wholeness and balance. The results are a present-moment snapshot of how you are experiencing your life now. Next, you will be invited to **listen** to your deepest self in order to discern the changes you both desire and are being asked to make. Finally, with the help of your wellness circle, you will **proceed** with specific action steps that will lead to a greater sense of wholeness and well-being.

Adult Wellness Compass: A Brief Overview

The Four Compass Points

The “Compass” points toward the four dimensions of our being: *heart, soul, strength,* and *mind*. These dimensions are interconnected and our lives are intricately woven



together. Much like an ecosystem, each area is affected by the other areas of the compass; therefore, whatever impacts one dimension of our lives (positively or negatively) impacts the other dimensions. A change in one area of our lives impacts the other areas. The four points of the Adult Wellness Compass provide a set of maps for understanding eight areas of whole-person wellness.

Eight Areas of Wellness

We are not compartmentalized people. The Adult Wellness Compass is based on the premise that wellness is a multidimensional phenomenon that requires us to take care of and nurture ourselves in all eight areas identified on the compass. Here are the eight areas of wellness you will work with in your Wellness Circle:

1. **Relationships.** The ability to create and maintain healthy, life-giving connections with others.
2. **Handling Emotions.** The ability to process, express, and receive emotions in a healthy way.
3. **Spirituality.** The development and practice of a strong personal value system and a meaningful purpose in life.
4. **Rest and Play.** The ability to balance work and play and to renew oneself.
5. **Stress Resilience.** The ability to deal positively with the adversities of life.
6. **Care for the Body.** The ability to build healthy habits and practices regarding our physical well-being, as well as the ability to end unhealthy ones.
7. **Organization.** The ability to keep track of and make good use of possessions, money, and time.
8. **Vocation.** The ability to get the most out of employment, educational, and volunteer opportunities.

Adult Wellness Compass Self-Assessment

During the first session of your Wellness Circle you will complete the Adult Wellness Compass Self-Assessment. Your results will provide you with a present-moment snapshot of your life, showing you the areas you have been paying attention to, and the areas where you might want to invest more of your attention. Think of the eight areas of wellness in your shaded-in compass as a garden; some areas are well-watered, and some are perhaps a bit wilted and in need of care.

As you assess each dimension of your whole-person wellness, be sure to read about each area, beginning on page 30. Following a brief introduction, you will find ten assessment statements related to each dimension that are meant to guide you in your self-assessment. Use your responses to the statements to arrive at numbers you'll use to shade in each dimension on your own compass on page 29. It is helpful to keep in mind that the self-assessment reflects aspects of your life at this very moment. It might be different if you had filled this out a month ago, or a month from now. After you've added up your responses and have a total number (from 0–100) for an area, either from your assessment results or your “gut” feeling, shade in that area with your total. Think of “0” as the center, “50” as halfway out, and “100” meaning you shade in the whole wedge.

Whatever We Pay Attention to is What Will Grow

One of the core principles of an Adult Wellness Circle is, “whatever we pay attention to is what will grow.” At any given time, we have areas of our lives with which we are satisfied, and other areas where we are less so. Chances are pretty good that the areas where we experience satisfaction are the areas where we have been focusing our attention. The opposite of this is also true. If we are less satisfied with some area of our lives, it may well be because we have not been giving it enough of our attention.

This can quickly become an ongoing cycle because we tend to prefer focusing our attention on the areas of our lives that are going well, while ignoring or avoiding the areas with which we are less satisfied. If we haven't exercised in years, we may find it hard initially to pay more attention to that area of our life. If we neglect keeping a budget and making good financial decisions, we may resist paying attention to that area of our life, as well, because it can be unpleasant. We are all capable of minimizing and denying those areas of our lives that are not going so well because it pushes us out of our comfort zone and can be overwhelming. Let's take a quick look at the Adult Wellness Compass Self-Assessment, which will be your trusted compass and guide for the next six weeks in your Wellness Circle, and beyond.

Adult Wellness Compass Self-Assessment: Sample Responses

► Organization Self-Assessment

Respond to the following 10 statements with a number between 0–10, based on the following scale. If a statement does not apply to you then simply give yourself a “10” for that statement.

Never	Sometimes			Half of the Time		Most of the Time			Always	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

I have a way of keeping track of my calendar, helping me keep my commitments organized, that works well for me. 7

I have a budget and a savings and/or retirement plan and have a method for helping me stick with it. 6

I am always on time for work, appointments, meetings, and social events. 6

I regularly take time to clean and organize my personal places, such as my home, car, office, etc. 7

I prioritize my responsibilities to ensure that I can take care of all of the different aspects of my life. 4

I feel like I completed most everything I set out to do. 5

I don't get mad for things so that I rarely have to get ready. 6

My life would be described by mine would describe me. 6

Because I do the following: maintain a budget, save money, balance my checkbook, pay bills, and file my taxes on time. 6

I declutter my possessions and get rid of/donate things I don't need. 7

TOTAL 60

When you are finished, total your score and then take that number and shade in the Organization Self-Assessment Results on page 29.

Find 45

► Handling Emotions Self-Assessment

Respond to the following 10 statements with a number between 0–10, based on the following scale. If a statement does not apply to you then simply give yourself a “10” for that statement.

Never	Sometimes			Half of the Time		Most of the Time			Always	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

People who know me would say that I handle my emotions in a healthy way. 10

I avoid using alcohol, other drugs, and other unhealthy habits to deal with my emotions. 8

I am able to share the full range of emotions (including sadness, fear, joy, laughter, and worry) with people I trust. 10

When someone I care about is upset, I am comfortable listening, rather than telling them what to do. 8

I have a solid and healthy sense of confidence in myself. 7

I feel good about the way I handle my emotions and how they affect my relationships. 10

I am able to communicate my emotions in a positive way without being irritable, critical, or angry. 10

I know the early warning signs of depression and anxiety, and seek help if I recognize these signs in myself. 8

When I'm feeling emotionally overwhelmed I turn to others for support and help. 9

The way I express my emotions demonstrates respect toward myself and others. 10

TOTAL 90

When you are finished, total your score and then take that number and shade in the Handling Emotions “wedge” of your Self-Assessment Results on page 29.

Area of Whole-Person Wellness: **Heart**

33

Adult Wellness Compass Self-Assessment: Sample Results



Once you have arrived at your total score from each self-assessment, shade in that section of the compass on p. 29 (“0” is at the center, “50” is halfway out, and “100” is at the outer edge). Your scores are not “good” or “bad,” nor are they “strong” or “weak.” This self-assessment is simply a “snapshot” of your life at this very moment. It might be helpful to think of it as a garden. Your results show areas of the garden you have been watering, and which areas may be in need of some additional watering.

What is a NEXT Step?

A NEXT Step is just that, the next step you feel ready to take based on a goal you set, inspired by what you learned by taking the Adult Wellness Compass Self-Assessment. After taking the assessment, you may or may not feel the need to create a NEXT Step. You know better than anyone what you need. We are simply offering an invitation to make a change if you feel the desire to do so.

A NEXT Step is based on an acronym that stands for ***Needed, EXcited, and Time-specific***.

Needed means that you have a felt need to take this step. It relates to something you have wanted to do, something you know would be good for you. ***EXcited*** means that you are positively motivated to take this step—you want to take this step, as opposed to being motivated by a feeling that you “should” or “have to” take this step. ***Time-specific*** means that you will take your step right away or within the next several days. It’s the difference between saying, “Someday I’m going to get my morning routine more organized,” and “Starting tomorrow, I’m going to get up fifteen minutes earlier than usual and prepare a simple breakfast so I’ll be better prepared for the day.”



N Needed . . .

. . . means the step addresses a felt need that you have.

For example: “For several months now I have been feeling the need to set a screen curfew so I can relax and unwind before bed, a time each work night when all screens are turned off.”

EX EXcited . . .

. . . means the motivation for doing the step is positive—I “want” to do this rather than I “should” or “have to.”

For example: “I am looking forward to having more time to truly relax, and also getting to bed earlier.”

T Time-specific . . .

. . . means I will do my NEXT Step at this time, or within a specific time frame.

For example: “I want to turn off the lights at 10p, so I will begin a screen curfew next Monday night at 9p.”

Sharing your NEXT Step with others in your Wellness Circle is one important NEXT Step you can take. You will inspire and learn from each other as you do this, plus you will become a built-in support system for each other as you put your NEXT Steps into practice.

Mapping Your Journey of Growth and Change

To be completed between Sessions 1 and 2

List 2-3 areas of high satisfaction from your Adult Wellness Compass Self-Assessment.

List 2-3 areas of low satisfaction from your Adult Wellness Compass Self-Assessment.

Give some intentional thought to the following questions and then pick the dimension of whole-person wellness that you would like to address in this program.

- If you think of your shaded Compass as a garden, what area do you think is in need of some additional watering right now?
- What area do you feel most motivated to work on?
- What dimension do you feel a strong sense of urgency about?

Area of whole-person wellness you want to address in this program.

“You Are Here” | Describe where you are right now in your life in this area of wellness.

“Wish You Were Here!” | Describe what it will be like when you are where you want to be in this area of wellness.

Inspiring Quote | Choose an inspiring quote that will motivate you as you navigate the NEXT Steps in your journey of growth and change. This quote could be from a song, a poem, a famous author, a spiritual text, or other source.

Mindfulness/Centering Practice | (see page 46 for help with this) Write down a centering practice you will commit to on a regular basis during this program.

Support from Others | Are there others outside your Wellness Circle whose support you will want or need?

Previous Successes | What previous successes do you have in making positive changes in your life that can serve as hope and inspiration for you?

Challenges | What resistance within yourself or others might arise as you seek to make changes in yourself?

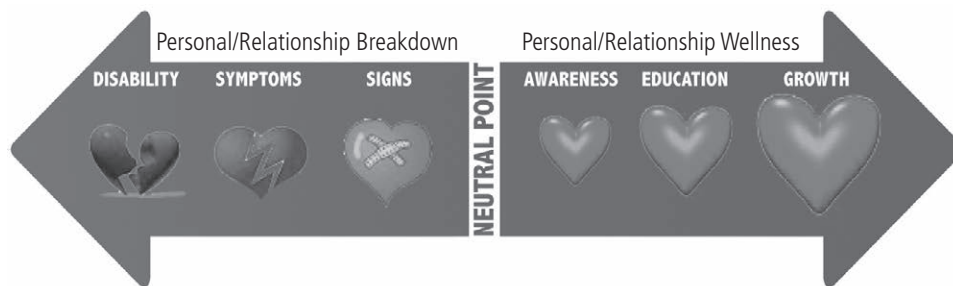
Goals | List one or two goals that you have for yourself. A goal can be a long- or short-term goal.

NEXT Steps | List one or two NEXT Steps you will take this week to move toward your goal. A NEXT Step is a step that you feel is: “Needed,” you are “EXcited” to take, and is “Time-specific.”

Notes

SESSION 2: Whatever You Pay Attention to is What Will Grow

We don't have a health care system in our country, we have an "illness care" system. This is not just true for physical health, but for psychological health, as well. Looking at the continuum below, we see that most people do not seek help until they are experiencing symptoms and/or disability. The goal, then, of the health care provider is to relieve disability and symptoms in order to get the person back to the neutral point. At this point a person may stop paying attention to their health until the next time they experience symptoms and/or disability, and the cycle starts all over again.



—Reference based on the work of John Travis, MD.

By being a part of a wellness circle you are making a proactive decision to pay attention to all aspects of your health and wellness. As you choose to work on a particular dimension of wellness, it is essential that you pay attention to the wellness you already have in that dimension, and how you would like to make it grow. It will not be helpful to focus only on your "problems," or "what is wrong." Self-talk is very important. Talk to yourself as you would talk to someone you really care about. To such a person you might say, "That's great that you have started working on your weight/marriage/work/spiritual life, etc." You definitely wouldn't say, "I can't believe you waited this long to work on that. I doubt you'll make much progress at this point in your life."

Pay attention to how often you focus on the negative in yourself and/or others. Gradually shift your attention to the positive and the possibilities in yourself and/or others, and that is what will grow.

Mapping Your Journey of Growth and Change

For use between Sessions 2 and 3

Area of whole-person wellness you wish to continue to focus on, or choose a new area.

“You Are Here” | Describe where you are right now and note if this is different than Session 1.

“Wish You Were Here!” | Restate or refine where you want to be.

Wisdom Quote | Keep the same or choose a new one.

Mindfulness/Centering Practice | Keep the same or choose a new one.

Support from Others | Have you asked others for support? Do you need to?

List same or new goals as appropriate.

NEXT Steps | List one or two NEXT Steps you will take this week to achieve your goal.

SESSION 3: Change is Inevitable. Growth is Optional.

—John C. Maxwell

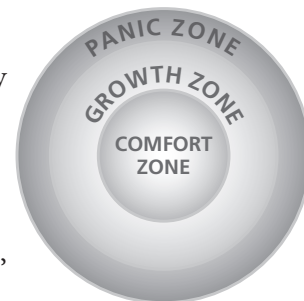
Every individual, relationship, family, and organization have a set of patterns and habits within which they normally function. Over time these patterns, which are necessary for our everyday functioning, become familiar and comfortable. In our personal lives, relationships, and organizations, this “Comfort Zone” functions like a set of unwritten rules about how things should be. For example, when a relationship (or organization) has an unwritten rule that conflict will not be talked about openly or directly, this becomes everyone’s Comfort Zone.

In the diagram below, we can see that in order to grow, we need to risk moving out of our Comfort Zone and into the “Growth Zone.” We move into the Growth Zone in one of two ways. We either move there proactively and intentionally, or we are forced to move there because of life circumstances. Either way, the important thing to note is that all growth is by definition initially uncomfortable because it requires us to move out of our Comfort Zone. When someone tries a new experience or takes on a new challenge, it is common to hear them say, “This is pushing me out of my comfort zone.”

We can also find ourselves in the “Panic Zone” in one of two ways: either because something completely unexpected happens to us, or because something we have been trying to ignore erupts in a crisis. Examples of the former are a health crisis, an accident, the loss of a loved one, an unexpected job loss, or a natural disaster. Examples of the latter are a relationship ends because of problems that were never addressed, a person loses a job because they didn’t listen to the feedback they were getting, a physical symptom that was ignored eventually creates a health crisis, or a student flunks an exam because they didn’t study or ask for help.

We cannot grow when we are stuck either in the Comfort Zone or the Panic Zone. We must seek support (like you are doing in your wellness circle) in order to intentionally move into the Growth Zone.

Individuals, families, and organizations that regularly stretch themselves into the Growth Zone not only minimize their chances of going into the Panic Zone, but also continuously expand their Comfort Zones, giving them greater flexibility and freedom to enjoy the life they have been given. As we spend more time in the Growth Zone, it becomes, over time, our new Comfort Zone.



The Adult Wellness Circle program is designed to help you place yourself in the Growth Zone as you proactively make changes that will enhance your whole-person wellness.

Mapping Your Journey of Growth and Change

For use between Sessions 3 and 4

Area of whole-person wellness you wish to continue to focus on, or choose a new area.

“You Are Here” | Describe where you are right now and note if this is different than Session 2.

“Wish You Were Here!” | Restate or refine where you want you to be.

Wisdom Quote | Keep the same or choose a new one.

Mindfulness/Centering Practice | Keep the same or choose a new one.

Support from Others | Have you asked others for support? Do you need to?

List same or new goals as appropriate.

NEXT Steps | List one or two NEXT Steps you will take this week to achieve your goal.

SESSION 4: The “J” Curve Phenomenon

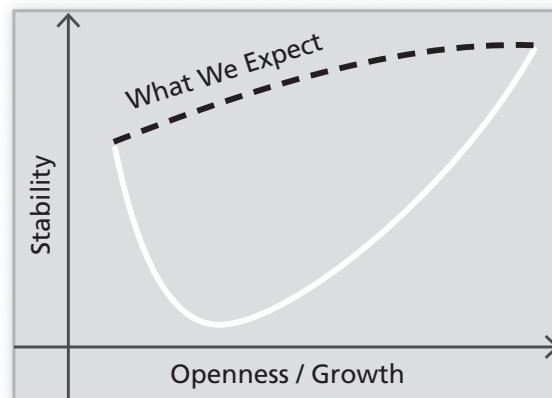
Last session we talked about how all growth and change is hard because it requires us to move out of our Comfort Zone. In this session we will focus more precisely on one way in which moving into the Growth Zone is uncomfortable. Unless we understand this, we are likely to retreat to our Comfort Zone out of fear.

The “J” Curve shows that when we risk making a change, we often will have two very different experiences. On the one hand, we feel a new openness (growth) about the future that we are working to create; and our horizons have opened to new possibilities that we could not see before. At the same time, we have never been here before and will often find ourselves feeling less stable, less sure of ourselves.

If you look closely at the diagram, you will see that stability drops faster than the corresponding gains in openness and growth. This is common when we are first making a big change, especially if the change has not been completely our own choice. Not understanding that growth often means an initial time when stability declines has caused many people and organizations to attempt retreating to their Comfort Zones. The J Curve shows that with perseverance and time, we will experience increased stability and openness and growth.

We would all like to move from “You Are Here” to “Wish You Were Here” in a nice straight, upwardly mobile path, but that often is not realistic. The bigger the change/growth we seek, the more likely we are to experience the J Curve phenomenon.

Most people understand the J Curve when the change they are going through is an experience of loss. It is easy to see that one will sink down at first when they have lost a job or a relationship. It is harder for people to understand that a similar experience happens even with positive changes that they have chosen, such as a move, a new job, taking on a new challenge, or a new relationship. Even in these experiences of change, there is often an initial period of instability and disequilibrium.



—Adapted from *The J Curve: A New Way to Understand Why Nations Rise and Fall*, by Ian Bremmer, 2006.

Mapping Your Journey of Growth and Change

For use between Sessions 4 and 5

Area of whole-person wellness you wish to continue to focus on, or choose a new area.

“You Are Here” | Describe where you are right now and note if this is different than Session 3.

“Wish You Were Here!” | Restate or refine where you want you to be.

Wisdom Quote | Keep the same or choose a new one.

Mindfulness/Centering Practice | Keep the same or choose a new one.

Support from Others | Have you asked others for support? Do you need to?

List same or new goals as appropriate.

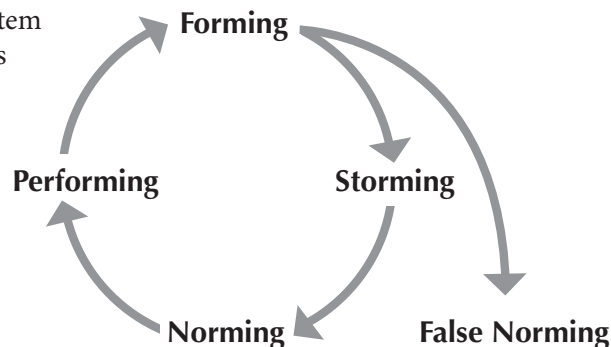
NEXT Steps | List one or two NEXT Steps you will take this week to achieve your goal.

SESSION 5: Systemic Dynamics and Change

Any group of people who interact on an ongoing basis constitutes a system. Such groups include families, friendships, work teams, and couples. Systems by definition prefer homeostasis; that is, they like to find a balance point and maintain it. When one person in a system changes it can create a “storm” in the system and it now needs to rebalance itself. This “storming” phase, if it is worked through well, will lead to a new “norm” that will then allow the system to once again “perform” well. Natural life transitions are one kind of change that can create a storm in a system. For example, let’s say the first child in a family leaves home. The family will now experience a big change in their former norm of what it means to be a family. There may be a period of storming before a new norm is achieved. “False norming” is when a system denies that upset has occurred and instead tries to pretend everything is still the same.

A few other examples might be helpful. An organization brings in a new leader who does things differently. A storm is sure to follow until new norms and new ways of performing are achieved. A person in a family gets diagnosed with a chronic illness. The old “normal” is gone and there will be a period of storming before a new normal can be reached.

One thing to keep in mind is that sometimes the systems in which we live and work might not initially support our attempts at growth and change. If they don’t, it is often not a conscious decision. Why would they do this? Because when one person in a system grows and changes, then the old “normal” of the system may be threatened, and others in the system may also have to change. This is why, for example, a person who chooses to go into drug or alcohol recovery often finds that they need to create a new group of friends.



—Adapted from “Tuckman’s Theories,” by Bruce Tuckman, 1965.

Mapping Your Journey of Growth and Change

For use between Sessions 5 and 6

Area of whole-person wellness you wish to continue to focus on, or choose a new area.

“You Are Here” | Describe where you are right now and note if this is different than Session 4.

“Wish You Were Here!” | Restate or refine where you want you to be.

Wisdom Quote | Keep the same or choose a new one.

Mindfulness/Centering Practice | Keep the same or choose a new one.

Support from Others | Have you asked others for support? Do you need to?

List same or new goals as appropriate.

NEXT Steps | List one or two NEXT Steps you will take this week to achieve your goal.

SESSION 6: Where To From Here?

*You have brains in your head. You have feet in your shoes.
You can steer yourself in any direction you choose.
You're on your own.
And you know what you know.
You are the one who'll decide where to go.
—Dr. Seuss, Oh, the Places You'll Go!*

As we gather for our last session, we begin with the quote we shared in Session 1 because we want to both reflect and celebrate the “places you’ve been” these past six weeks, as well as to look ahead to the places you still wish to go. As you check in with each other about your action steps for this past week, be sure to celebrate the gains you have made, as well as what you want to take forward from here.

If you desire more growth and progress in the area(s) of wellness you have been working on, or if you decide there are other areas you would like to work on, it will be important to continue doing what you have learned in this program: engage in honest self-reflection, set realistic goals, commit to concrete NEXT action steps, turn to others for support and encouragement, and celebrate your successes. You may want to consider signing up for another Adult Wellness Circle in the future.

As you leave this Wellness Circle, in the words of Dr. Seuss, “. . . you know what you know. You are the one who'll decide where to go.” The questions on the following page will help you clarify just what it is you know now after having been through this program. Please take ten minutes or so and write some thoughtful responses to the questions. Write down what you wish to celebrate, and also write down where you intend to go from here in terms of what area or areas of wellness you want to continue to pay attention to. Next, write down a quote that you wish to take with you; you have been exposed to many quotes in this program, so take time now to choose your favorite. Write down something you are grateful for at this point in time. Finally, write down what you know now about yourself, others, and life itself!

Please remember to pay attention to all areas of your wellness. That is one of the most important things for you to take from this program. Pay attention to the people you care for and to those who care for you. Pay attention to any signs that you are not heading where you want to be heading, or that your life is out of balance and commit to doing something about it by remembering to stop, look, listen, and then proceeding again. Pay attention to what you are being called to be and do with your life. Pay attention to what you grateful for in your life. And remember, too, to pay attention to what you pay attention to!

Closing Reflection and Celebration

For use at the end of Session 6

Celebrate! | Write down one or two things you want to celebrate that happened for you in this program.

The Area of Wellness to which you will continue to pay attention:

A quote you wish to take forward with you:

One thing you are grateful for as you complete this Wellness Circle:

A Mindfulness/Centering Practice that you are committed to continuing:

Something you know now and something you can affirm now about

Yourself: _____

Your Family/Friends: _____

Others: _____

Adult Wellness Circle

Self-Assessment: Your Results



To be filled out in Session 1

You can use your responses (on a scale from 0–10) to the Self-Assessment statements in the following section to arrive at your total number. It is helpful to keep in mind that your responses likely would be different if you had filled this out a month ago, or were to fill it out a month from now. Add up the total from your responses and then shade in that area of wellness on your compass on this page with that number (a total of “0” is at the center, “50” halfway out, and a total number of “100” means you shade in the whole “wedge”). See pages 10 and 11 for examples. If you think of this as a garden, the Assessment shows which areas of your life are well-watered and which perhaps are a bit dry and in need of watering.

HEART RELATIONSHIPS



My friends are my estate. —Emily Dickinson, poet

Don't walk in front of me, I may not follow. Don't walk behind me, I may not lead. Walk beside me and just be my friend. —Anonymous

A friend is someone who knows the song in your heart and can sing it back to you when you have forgotten the words. —Anonymous

Hold a true friend with both of your hands. —Nigerian Proverb

Be who you are and say what you feel because those who mind don't matter and those who matter don't mind. —Dr. Seuss, author

If you look deeply into the palm of your hand, you will see your parents and all generations of your ancestors. All of them are alive in this moment. Each is present in your body. You are the continuation of each of these people.
—Thich Nhat Hanh, Buddhist monk and author

Relationships are important. Relationships are how we interact with all the other people in our lives. While there are times we might feel alone, there are other people all around us all the time. When we build healthy relationships with them, those relationships can have a very strong impact on our overall well-being.

In fact, few things affect the quality of our lives more than the quality of our relationships. Think about it. A fight with a good friend can ruin a day. Relationships can give us energy or drain us of needed energy. They are very important, and we all need to be intentional about how we both build them and participate in them.

With relationships being such an important part of our lives, it is important to pause and take time to look at the relationships we have right now. Think about your relationships with your spouse, significant other, children, parents, extended family, colleagues, close friends, and others as you read over the following questions.

- How honest and transparent are you in your closest relationships?
- Are you comfortable being vulnerable with those to whom you are closest?
- Are you able to turn to others for help and support when you need it?
- Is there at least one person in your life with whom you can be fully yourself?

Please complete the Relationships Self-Assessment on the following page.

▶ Relationships Self-Assessment

Respond to the following 10 statements with a number between 0–10, based on the following scale. If a statement does not apply to you then simply give yourself a “10” for that statement.

Never		Sometimes		Half of the Time			Most of the Time		Always	
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

I am satisfied with the amount of time I spend with the important people in my life. _____

I am satisfied with the honest conversations I am able to have with those who are important to me. _____

My friends and family can count on me when they need to reach out to me for help. _____

I am able to forgive family and friends for past or present hurts. _____

I am happy with my friendships and other social connections. _____

In my close relationships, I am very satisfied that there is a good balance between give and take. _____

I can say “no” when I want or need to without worrying about the reactions of others. _____

I feel good about the impact my use/or non-use of alcohol and other drugs has on my relationships with family, friends, and colleagues. _____

I feel good about the amount of trust, respect, and honesty that exists in my relationships with the people in my life. _____

I am able to identify and then work to change or end unhealthy relationships when needed. _____

TOTAL _____

When you are finished, total your score and then take that number and shade in the Relationships “wedge” of your Self-Assessment Results on page 29.

HEART HANDLING EMOTIONS



The walls we build around ourselves to keep sadness out, also keep out the joy. —Jim Rohn, author

People will forget what you said. People will forget what you did. But people will never forget how you made them feel. —Bonnie Jean Wasmund, author

If wisdom's way you wisely seek, these five things observe with care: to whom you speak, of whom you speak, and how and when and where.

—C.L. Ingalls, father of Laura Ingalls Wilder

Happiness is not something ready-made. It comes from your own actions.

—Dalai Lama, spiritual leader

In reading the lives of great people, I found that the first victory they won was over themselves. Self-discipline with all of them came first. —Harry S. Truman, U.S. President

Feeling and Expressing the Full Range of Emotions. Imagine your emotions existing on a continuum, or a scale from zero to ten. Think of the emotions on the bottom end of the scale, zero to five, as the difficult or unpleasant emotions, such as fear, worry, anger, and sadness. Now think of the emotions at the top end of the scale, six to ten, as the pleasurable emotions, such as joy, laughter, love, and excitement. Right in the middle, at number five, is considered the neutral point, where we don't really feel much of anything, pleasant or unpleasant.

Here is an important insight: There is a strong connection between the degree to which we are comfortable feeling and expressing unpleasant emotions and the degree to which we feel and express pleasurable emotions. Difficulty feeling and/or appropriately expressing unpleasant feelings usually means we will have difficulty feeling and expressing positive feelings, as well. While we know that we all have the full range of emotions, it is when we either hide our feelings from view or let them explode that we get into trouble.

The following questions might be helpful as you think about emotions.

- Are you handling your emotions, or are they handling you?
- Are you comfortable feeling and expressing the full range of emotions: sadness, fear, anger, joy, etc.?
- Do your emotions “get the best of you,” causing you to say or do things you later regret?
- Are you ever concerned that you might be suffering from depression or anxiety? Who would you feel comfortable talking to about these feelings?
- Are you comfortable listening and being present to someone who is hurting, upset, or very emotional?

▶ Handling Emotions Self-Assessment

Respond to the following 10 statements with a number between 0–10, based on the following scale. If a statement does not apply to you then simply give yourself a “10” for that statement.

Never		Sometimes		Half of the Time		Most of the Time		Always		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

People who know me would say that I handle my emotions in a healthy way. _____

I avoid using alcohol, other drugs, and other unhealthy habits to deal with my emotions. _____

I am able to share the full range of emotions (including sadness, fear, joy, laughter, and worry) with people I trust. _____

When someone I care about is upset, I am comfortable listening, rather than telling them what to do. _____

I have a solid and healthy sense of confidence in myself. _____

I feel good about the way I handle my emotions and how they affect my relationships. _____

I am able to communicate my emotions in a positive way without being irritable, critical, or angry. _____

I know the early warning signs of depression and anxiety, and seek help if I recognize these signs in myself. _____

When I’m feeling emotionally overwhelmed I turn to others for support and help. _____

The way I express my emotions demonstrates respect toward myself and others. _____

TOTAL _____

When you are finished, total your score and then take that number and shade in the Handling Emotions “wedge” of your Self-Assessment Results on page 29.

SOUL SPIRITUALITY



There are two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle.

—Albert Einstein, scientist

Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that. —Martin Luther King, civil rights leader

The two best prayers I know are, “Help me, help me, help me” and, “Thank you, thank you, thank you.” —Anne Lamott, author

Something precious is lost if we rush headlong into the details of life without pausing for a moment to pay homage to the mystery of life and the gift of another day. —Kent Nerburn, author

The word *spirituality* comes from the same root as the word *breath*. We see the root of the word spirituality in words like *respiration*, which means “to breathe,” and *inspire*, which means “to breathe new life into something.” In our metaphor of a compass, our spirituality is how we define “true north” for ourselves. Our spirituality gives our life direction and purpose, inspires us, gives us the energy to live, and guides our life choices.

Spirituality then is not the same as religion, although devoting oneself to a particular religion is one way in which a person could express their spirituality. Spirituality, whatever that looks like for each of us, helps us to define our core values and beliefs, those we turn to to guide all the important decisions in our lives. If honesty, respect, and integrity, for example, are cores values for you, they will guide how you treat others, as well as provide guidance for you if an opportunity to be dishonest or disrespectful presents itself. In any number of ethical situations you face each day, your spirituality helps you decide about things such as caring for others, giving to charity, gossiping, lying, or stealing.

Another way to think about spirituality is to think of it as the root system of a tree. In order for trees to grow tall and weather storms, droughts, and other extreme conditions, they need to have strong root systems. Roots literally keep trees well-grounded.

What is true for trees is also true for people. We all need a strong root system to sustain us through the many changes and challenges we will face in life, both now and in the future. And it is our spirituality that identifies our purpose, forms our values, and gives us meaning, hope, and grounding.

Please complete the Spirituality Self-Assessment on the following page.

▶ Spirituality Self-Assessment

Respond to the following 10 statements with a number between 0–10, based on the following scale. If a statement does not apply to you then simply give yourself a “10” for that statement.

Never		Sometimes		Half of the Time		Most of the Time		Always		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

My life has meaning and purpose. _____

I am pleased with what I give back to the world. _____

I have centering/spiritual practices that are a regular part of my life. _____

I have activities that I do regularly to renew my soul, to center myself, and to gain perspective. _____

My core values and beliefs guide my thoughts, behaviors, and daily decisions in a way that makes me feel good. The way I live my life is consistent with my spirituality, and core values and beliefs. _____

I have a deep sense of gratitude for the many good things in my life. _____

I seek forgiveness from family and friends when I have hurt them. _____

I can forgive myself when I have made a mistake. _____

People who know me well would describe me as very compassionate. _____

I am a part of a community that enriches my spiritual life. _____

TOTAL _____

When you are finished, total your score and then take that number and shade in the Spirituality “wedge” of your Self-Assessment Results on page 29.

SOUL REST AND PLAY



Give me six hours to chop down a tree and I will spend the first four sharpening the axe. —Abraham Lincoln, 16th President of the United States

You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation. —Plato, philosopher

People who cannot find time for recreation are obliged sooner or later to find time for illness. —John Wanamaker, merchant

The time to relax is when you don't have time for it. —Sydney J. Harris, journalist

Tension is who you think you should be. Relaxation is who you are. —Chinese Proverb

Telling people how busy we are seems to have become a badge of honor in our culture. Many of us are involved in so many things and have so many responsibilities that we can easily lose track of how important rest and play are to our well-being.

The quote from President Lincoln talks about the importance of sharpening an axe before using it to chop down a tree. Rest and play helps to strengthen our well-being so that when we do need to do hard work, we are sharp enough to perform well. If we are having trouble performing well, it may be because we have become tired and dull and in need of some down time to renew ourselves. In this we are not much different than our phones or any of the other battery-dependent devices we use—our batteries wear down and need recharging on a regular basis.

Think about the word “recreation” ... it really means “re-creation.” True recreation re-creates us! What renews our batteries will be different for each of us. Getting some rest while mindlessly watching TV may be okay in moderation, but it won't renew us in the same way a walk, a good conversation, or reading a book that feeds our soul will. Find what works for you.

Please complete the Rest and Play Self-Assessment on the following page.

▶ Rest and Play Self-Assessment

Respond to the following 10 statements with a number between 0–10, based on the following scale. If a statement does not apply to you then simply give yourself a “10” for that statement.

Never		Sometimes		Half of the Time		Most of the Time		Always		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

I get enough rest to renew myself most of the time. _____

I am satisfied with the amount of time that I set aside for healthy fun. _____

I have at least one hobby or interest that renews me, and I take intentional time for it on a regular basis. _____

I actively take advantage of opportunities to try new healthy ways to have fun. _____

I enjoy recreational activities in my community, work, places of worship, or other local organizations. _____

I am able to take my mind off work while I am away from it. _____

I take time to laugh and enjoy life. _____

I am confident that the amount of time I spend on email, online, watching TV, on my computer, on my phone, and other technology, is good for my overall well-being. _____

I frequently have fun where alcohol and other drugs are not involved. _____

I use some of my free time to renew my relationship with myself. _____

TOTAL _____

When you are finished, total your score and then take that number and shade in the Rest and Play “wedge” of your Self-Assessment Results on page 29.

STRENGTH STRESS RESILIENCE



Is everything as urgent as your stress would imply?

—Carrie Latet, poet

No one can get inner peace by pouncing on it. —Harry Emerson Fosdick, pastor

Adopt the pace of nature: her secret is patience. —Ralph Waldo Emerson, author

When it rains, I let it. —A one hundred and thirteen year-old-man when asked about his secret to growing old

Stress is the trash of modern life—we all generate it, but if you don't dispose of it properly, it will pile up and overtake your life. —Danzae Pace, author

Stress resilience has to do with how well we deal with two separate aspects of our lives. The first is how we emotionally and spiritually negotiate significant changes and transitions (planned and unplanned). The second is how well we manage stress in general in our lives. Being highly resilient, which means “to bounce back, or spring back to shape or form,” implies that we have taken the time and allowed ourselves to do the hard work of fully working through the stages of grief when we have experienced a significant change. Too often we try to avoid these feelings, which seems like a good idea in the short term, but will always limit our emotional and spiritual wellness in the long run.

As you assess your satisfaction with this dimension of your life, reflect on whether you have been through, or are currently dealing with, any of the stressful changes listed below. How fully have you addressed any transitions you have been through? How much do unresolved or frozen feelings of grief (sadness, loss, anger, fear) currently affect you? Are you being proactive in managing stress, or do you feel that it is burning you out?

- Divorce or break up
- New relationship
- Birth of a child
- New job, loss of job, or change of job
- Financial stress
- Major health issue in yourself or a loved one
- Death of a loved one
- Child leaving home
- Move to a new location
- Recent accident or injury
- Work stress, impossible boss
- Unemployment

You will also want to stop and reflect on whether you are a stress “junkie”—a person who thrives on having high levels of stress in their life most of the time. A person who seems to thrive on stress and intensity, getting a “high” from living in “fight/flight” mode. It is indeed possible to live this way for a short time, but eventually the presence of chronic stress chemicals in your body will cause a decrease or breakdown in functioning across all dimensions of your life.

Please complete the Stress Resilience Self-Assessment on the following page.

► Stress Resilience Self-Assessment

Respond to the following 10 statements with a number between 0–10, based on the following scale. If a statement does not apply to you then simply give yourself a “10” for that statement.

Never		Sometimes		Half of the Time		Most of the Time		Always		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

I adjust to changes in my life in a positive way. _____

I am dealing well with changes, planned or unplanned, that have occurred in my life. _____

I seek support from others, rather than isolating myself, when I find myself stressed or in a time of transition. _____

I set realistic goals for myself. _____

I have the tools necessary to handle a major life challenge. _____

I recognize the physical signs of stress: headaches, trouble sleeping, feelings of depression, or outbursts of anger, and try to make healthy adjustments accordingly. _____

When I encounter challenges, I am able to keep them in perspective. _____

When I have a problem, I turn to others for support rather than keeping it to myself. _____

I have healthy ways to handle the stresses in my life, such as exercise, meditation, creative outlets, or yoga. _____

I refrain from using alcohol, drugs, or food to numb or self-medicate when I am stressed. _____

TOTAL _____

When you are finished, total your score and then take that number and shade in the Stress Resilience “wedge” of your Self-Assessment Results on page 29.

STRENGTH CARE FOR THE BODY



We do not stop exercising because we grow old—we grow old because we stop exercising. —Kenneth Cooper, doctor

Don't dig your grave with your knife and fork. —English Proverb

If I knew I was going to live this long, I'd have taken better care of myself.
—Mickey Mantle, baseball player

Being our best through generous self-care is the finest way to be of service to others. —Margaret Stortz, minister

Our food is our medicine and our medicine is our food.
—Hippocrates, philosopher

Our culture puts a great deal of emphasis—some might say too much emphasis—on physical wellness and body image. The two extremes of either obsessing about our bodies, or neglecting them, are clearly something we want to avoid. It is essential for our long-term health to find a balanced approach to the care and nurturing of our physical wellness. The more intentional and proactive we are about caring for our bodies, the less time we will spend at the doctor's office. As you think about caring for your body, you might reflect on the following questions.

- Are you mindful about your nutrition and eating patterns?
- Are your eating choices primarily conscious or unconscious?
- Are you concerned that you too often eat for emotional reasons as a way to comfort yourself?
- What role does alcohol or other drugs play in your life? Are you content with that role?
- Are you consistent about going to the doctor and dentist for regular checkups and care?
- Are you comfortable with your sexuality and your sexual needs?

Please complete the Care for the Body Self-Assessment on the following page.

► Care for the Body Self-Assessment

Respond to the following 10 statements with a number between 0–10, based on the following scale. If a statement does not apply to you then simply give yourself a “10” for that statement.

Never		Sometimes		Half of the Time		Most of the Time		Always		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

I get an amount of regular physical activity that is healthy for me. _____

I treat my body with respect. _____

I am comfortable with my sexuality, knowing that my sexual decisions are healthy and safe for me, physically and emotionally. _____

The daily decisions that I make about what I eat and drink are healthy. _____

I go to the doctor and dentist for regular checkups, and seek help when a health problem arises. _____

I feel comfortable about my relationship with food. _____

I know that the decisions I make about the use of tobacco, alcohol, and/or other drugs are healthy for me. _____

My current weight is healthy for me. _____

I feel a healthy sense of self-worth and self-esteem regarding my body. _____

Most days I get at least eight hours of sleep. _____

TOTAL _____

When you are finished, total your score and then take that number and shade in the Care for the Body “wedge” of your Self-Assessment Results on page 29.

MIND VOCATION



People for the sake of getting a living, forget to live.

—Margaret Fuller, author

Three Rules of Work: Out of clutter find simplicity; from discord find harmony; in the middle of difficulty lies opportunity. —Albert Einstein, scientist

Nothing will work unless you do. —Maya Angelou, author

Far and away the best prize that life has to offer is the chance to work hard at work worth doing. —Theodore Roosevelt, U.S. President

Many people spend a majority of their waking hours each week at work.* How we experience our work/vocation can have a major impact on our wholeness and wellness.

A story is told of a student who asked her wise teacher, “I want to make a difference in the world. What does the world need me to do?” The teacher responded, “Do what makes you feel most alive, because the world needs more people who are fully alive.” So ... what kind of work or service makes you feel most alive?

The questions below should help you assess your satisfaction with this aspect of your life. If you are retired or not working, you might reflect on volunteer/service work that you do. You might also reflect back on the work that you have done in your life.

*Please note that when we talk about “work” we include paid employment and volunteer/service work.

- Is the work you do congruent with your values and beliefs?
- Do you have a sense of purpose in your work/service/vocation?
- Do you see how your work/service/vocation fits into the bigger purpose of your life?
- How do you relate to those with whom you work or serve?
- Are you comfortable expressing your needs and wants where you work or serve?
- Are you growing in your work/service/vocation?
- Do you intentionally seek opportunities for growth and learning?

Please complete the Vocation Self-Assessment on the following page.

► Vocation Self-Assessment

Respond to the following 10 statements with a number between 0–10, based on the following scale. If a statement does not apply to you then simply give yourself a “10” for that statement.

Never		Sometimes		Half of the Time		Most of the Time		Always		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

(*Please note “work” and “vocation” encompass paid employment and volunteer/service work.)

I make good use of my talents and passions in the work I do. _____

I am satisfied with how my work life is balanced with my personal life. _____

I have others in my life who enjoy the same kind of work I do. _____

I welcome new opportunities to learn new things that will enhance my vocation. _____

I enjoy my current vocation. _____

My vocation is compatible with my beliefs and values. _____

If I were to decide to make a change in my vocation, I would know where to begin. _____

I am satisfied with the pay and recognition I receive for my work. _____

I am proud of myself when it comes to the work I do. _____

I have a clear sense of purpose and direction in my work. _____

TOTAL _____

When you are finished, total your score and then take that number and shade in the Vocation “wedge” of your Self-Assessment Results on page 29.

MIND ORGANIZATION



Science is organized knowledge. Wisdom is organized life.
—Immanuel Kant, philosopher

The key is not to prioritize what's on your schedule, but to schedule your priorities. —Stephen R. Covey, author

Time is the coin of your life. It is the only coin you have, and only you can determine how it will be spent. Be careful lest you let other people spend it for you. —Carl Sandburg, author

A place for everything, and everything in its place. —Isabella Mary Beeton, journalist

Being disorganized can be both a symptom and a cause of stress in our lives, whether it be disorganization of time, environment, finances, or planning. Everything becomes harder and requires more time when we are not organized. A vicious cycle is easily established as we become more stressed due to not being organized, which in turn causes us to be even less organized and more stressed.

That's the bad news. The good news is that anyone can make immediate progress in becoming better organized once they set their intentions to do so and once they ask for the support and coaching of others. The patterns we have established around organizing our time, money, "stuff," etc., are simply learned habits and, like all habits, they can be changed. And while it may feel like it will take forever to make this kind of change, research has shown that on average it takes only 30 days to form a new habit. So where to begin?

In *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, Stephen Covey writes about what he calls the "tyranny of the urgent." By this he means that people often are so overwhelmed with all that they are trying to do in the now, that soon everything seems like it is urgent and they lose their ability to plan and prioritize. One of the symptoms of getting caught up in the "tyranny of the urgent" is that it feels like we are wasting time if we take time out to plan and prioritize. In the end, planning and prioritizing will save us time and make our lives much calmer, but it can be difficult to remember this when we are caught up in our constant busyness.

Take an honest look at your life and assess how well you organize all the important things in your life: time, calendar, finances, closets, drawers, meals, grocery shopping, work, errands, important papers and documents such as wills, titles, and birth certificates.

Please complete the Organization Self-Assessment on the following page.

► Organization Self-Assessment

Respond to the following 10 statements with a number between 0–10, based on the following scale. If a statement does not apply to you then simply give yourself a “10” for that statement.

Never		Sometimes		Half of the Time		Most of the Time		Always		
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

I have a way of keeping track of my calendar, and keeping my commitments organized that works well for me. _____

I have a budget and a savings and/or retirement plan and have a method for helping me stick with it. _____

I am always on time for work, appointments, meetings, and social events. _____

I regularly take time to clean and organize my personal spaces, such as my home, car, office, etc. _____

I am happy with the way I organize my priorities to ensure that I have enough time to dedicate to all of the different aspects of my life. _____

At the end of each day I usually feel like I completed most everything I had planned to get done. _____

I regularly make time to plan ahead for things so that I rarely have to rush around at the last minute to get ready. _____

Others whose lives are impacted by mine would describe me as organized. _____

My finances are well organized because I do the following: maintain a budget, keep track of expenditures, save money, balance my checkbook, pay all bills on time, organize tax information and file my taxes on time. _____

I regularly go through my possessions and get rid of/donate things I no longer need or want. _____

TOTAL _____

When you are finished, total your score and then take that number and shade in the Organization “wedge” of your Self-Assessment Results on page 29.

Choosing a Centering Practice

An important step in mapping your journey of growth and change is choosing a centering practice. Don't be intimidated by this. A centering practice is simply a commitment to do something on a regular basis that connects you with your higher self / higher power, and refreshes and energizes your soul. By definition, our souls are unique, and so what refreshes our souls will be different for each of us. While we are each unique, we share the universal need to regularly water and nurture our spirits/souls.

Following is a sampling of mindfulness/centering practices some people have used in the Adult Wellness Circle program. This is a list to simply help you get started in case you are stuck. You decide how often and how long you wish to commit to doing a centering practice. You can stay with one practice for all six weeks, or choose a different one each week.

- Keep a gratitude journal and write what you are thankful for every day.
- Learn about and/or start a mindfulness practice.
- Play a musical instrument, sing, or dance, with others or alone.
- Sit quietly in silence or while listening to your favorite music.
- Meditate on a spiritual reading or quote by repeating it slowly in time with your breath.
- Spend time in nature.
- Read a book that inspires your soul.
- Choose a mantra and speak it silently or out loud throughout the day.
- Practice yoga, tai chi, or other forms of spiritual movement.
- Paint, draw, or try some other form of artistic expression.
- Write a letter to someone you love (living or someone who has passed).
- Play with your pet.
- Create a meditation space in your home.
- Say a prayer or offer a thought of gratitude when waiting.
- Exercise.

About the Authors

Scott and Holly Stoner are the Co-Executive Directors of the Samaritan Family Wellness Foundation in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. They are both Licensed Marriage and Family Therapists (LMFTs) with a combined sixty-five+ years of experience helping parents and families. Scott—founder of the Living Compass Wellness Initiative—has served his community for more than 30 years as a psychotherapist, retreat leader, spiritual director, pastor, and author. Holly has worked with many families and children as a teacher at the grade-school, middle-school, and high-school levels, and both Holly and Scott have worked with families from all walks of life in their family therapy practices.

Married for over 40 years, they are the creators of the *Parent Wellness Compass: Outfitting for the Journey*, *The Teen Compass Wellness Notebook*, and both the Parent Wellness Circle and the Teen Wellness Circle programs.



Adult Wellness COMPASS



Life is a journey, and like any journey, it is important at times to make sure you are intentional about the direction in which you are heading. The Adult Wellness Circle program creates the opportunity for you to pause and check your bearings.

This program includes the Adult Wellness Compass Self-Assessment, a signature resource in this program. It is completed during the first session and then serves as a guide to help participants identify and create NEXT Steps on their journey toward whole-person wellness.