

# Menucha's Sunrise Daisy Survivor Path: Walk to Renewal Art Installation Reflection Questions

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## Sunrise Daisy Survivor Path Entrance Sign

Sunrise Daisy was the nonprofit that imagined and created the Survivor Path for cancer survivors and their caregivers for healing. By collaborating with Menucha Retreat Center, the mission to help others was expanded to those who do not have cancer but face challenges through trauma, grief, developmental transitions such as marriage, parenthood, empty nest, divorce, chronic pain or illness, addiction or just life stress.

Sunrise Daisy Founder, Dr. Valerie Correa used her clinical experience as a Licensed Psychologist and Licensed Marital & Family Therapist to create the art installations to highlight positive coping.

Eco-therapy believes that nature, animals, and insects are natural innate teaching guides for survival, resiliency, adaptability and healing. Dr. Valerie Correa combined these elements for each art installation and offers you these reflection questions to deepen your experience on the trail. You can answer all the questions, some of them that intrigue you or none of them. These journal questions are available to you for your own pacing and to expand your insight and personal growth.

**Sunrise Daisy Sign Reflection:** *Each day, the sun rises, and in season, the flowers (daisies) bloom. What is a daily or seasonal reminder for you to have a new beginning or a fresh start? What is a new beginning you want to invest in? What is your first step?*



**Entrance Rest Stop/Columbia Gorge Viewpoint**

This viewpoint resting spot is for the beginning of the trail and the end of the trail (the nature trail ends at another gorgeous viewpoint of the Columbia Gorge and then, you just turn around and come back to the beginning).

Time for contemplation, physical rest, waiting for a companion or just soaking in the expansive view of the Columbia Gorge is the purpose of this Welcome Structure. A fox is sleeping near the Welcome Kiosk.

**Rest Stop Reflection:** *Rest is essential. All of nature has moments of restoration through rest or sleep. It is a fundamental task we often ignore or dismiss. What stressors are depleting your energy reserves: physical, emotional, financial, relational, spiritual, career domains? What steps can you make daily, weekly, monthly to schedule more rest, sleep or time of self-nurturance? Let's honor our needs today and have a moment of rest so you can gift yourself a pause and enjoy the trail.*

*As you sit on this bench, look at the sky, the Columbia River in the Gorge, the trees, ferns, and listen to the birds, breathe in a deep breath of cleansing oxygen, feel the tension leave your mind and body. Imagine your stress just floating away from you, down river. The strength of the stone in the Gorge can absorb it. Sit here until you are ready to start the trail or if you finished the trail, soak in all that you experienced before you return to your car or resume your time at Menucha Retreat Center.*







## **Arrows Lesson**

Each of these three arrows direct you on the way of the path but also collectively make the statement, “Arrows can only soar by being pulled back first. When life drags you backwards, get ready to propel forwards, towards your dreams and goals. “

Often, when we have an unexpected event that takes us off our expected path, we assume we are regressing or going backwards in our life. A loss on top of a loss; what we got derailed from as well as dealing with the stress of the event we are enduring (developmental stage, trauma, illness, disability, grief, etc.). This installation reminds us that even though life did not happen as expected, we can still gain strength and skills during difficult times. Sometimes that gives us the ability to face future challenges better with more insight for our needs and abilities.

## **Arrows Reflection**

*When was a time you felt you were going backwards and then, after going through that difficult time, you recognized a skill you learned which helped you form a future goal or relationship you desired? Can you use that experience to give you comfort during this current challenge?*





## Mushroom Models

Mushrooms have an extensive social communication network to decide how and when to decompose to nourish the roots of trees, ferns, and soil to keep the ecosystems alive and well. Mushrooms model that you can be powerful and weak at the same time, but communication is key. Even though they start falling apart, dying and absorbed into the Earth, mushrooms are powerful healing and influential entities that promote growth through an intricate social network.

### **Mushroom Reflection**

*Do you have an extensive social support network to discuss moments of your own growth and decay in your life? Do you have someone to talk about joys and sorrows/ successes and failures? If not, what is one action you can take to build a relationship that allows you to share your full continuum of life?*



**Fiddle Fern Wisdom** “Turn Inward for self-reflection and self-protection. Then, trust your timing, to unfurl.”

Fiddle ferns make those cute little coiled roll ups as baby ferns contracting inward like a fetal position. Then, as they grow, they expand their frond full of segmented leaves outward. The fern shows us the power of being both inward and outward.

Inward for self-reflection and for self-protection: For positive mental health, we are healthiest when we can discern when to protect ourselves and spend time internally processing our needs. Moments of being an introvert, time with your own thoughts can be an instructive review of past circumstances, assess present situations and direct yourself to future goals.

Expansion: Or is it a time for new adventures, relationships and work pursuits? Do we have the energy and confidence to open ourselves to new endeavors, challenges and/or skills?

The fiddle fern reminds us that we often need both experiences. Time within to restore and protect and also, to expand and open ourselves for more growth in our lives.

### **Fiddle Fern Reflection**

*At this moment in time, in what aspects of your life are you finding yourself going inward? Also, what is opening you up?*



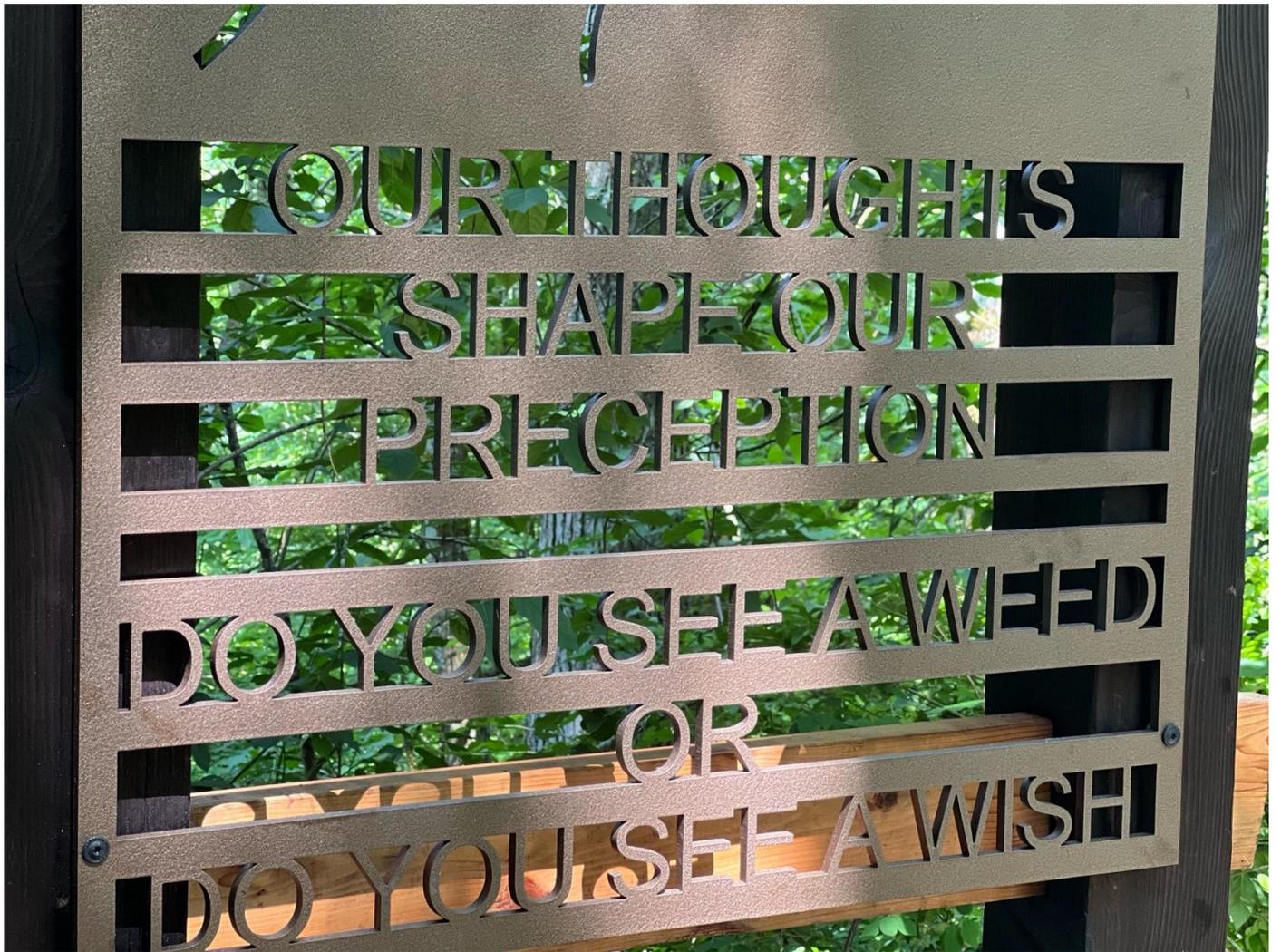
## **Dandelion Perspective**

*“Do you see a weed or a wish? Our thoughts shape our perception.”*

*The dandelion is a lesson in nature that reminds us that how we perceive our world often defines how our world becomes. We can see the positive or usefulness of objects, people or events or the negative and that becomes the lens that takes in information. In mental health, it's called cognitive behavior theory-that our thoughts shape our reality. Also, we can have multiple realities, the dandelion can be a weed, a natural healing property for wellness in teas and an experience to blow a wish. All realities can exist at the same time.*

## **Dandelion Reflection**

*Do you find you are being optimistic, realistic or pessimistic? In which situations right now do you think your thoughts give you a pathway towards health and goals or what thoughts seem to sabotage those goals and relationships? What are the steps you can take to have a “can do” verses a “cannot” thought process? What gets in the way?*





## **Be Kind to Your Mind: I Am...**

*Our inner voice is a guiding force for how we feel about ourselves. This art piece describes many characteristics that could identify a person. How would you describe yourself? These wooden hearts symbolize the love of Self. You can open the door and put one in the palm of your hand. Which one will you choose first and why?*

## **Be Kind to Your Mind Reflection**

*What is your inner voice saying to yourself? Do you have self-critical thoughts that impede your progress or are they helpful towards motivation? If you nurtured your sense of self with more self-compassion and valued your strengths, do you think you would have more determination to reward yourself rather than be self-punishing? If you have a mean voice, is this negative voice originate from a relative, partner, coach, teacher, or friend? Do you need to carry their voice inside of you anymore? What if you liberated yourself from their voice and created a new one that fits your goals for yourself and gives you a sense of confidence and flexibility? What is a voice that models that health for you?*



## **Alarm/ Relax Modes**

What do you need to turn on and what do you need to turn off?

*Our bodies have a rest and digest mode (parasympathetic) nervous system) that allows us to take in new information and restore ourselves We also have an alarm and alert mode (sympathetic nervous system) that detects unsafety and harm to protect our survival.*

*When we are under stress and threat, our bodies will stop digesting and other bodily functioning to make survival the priority. This is a helpful strategy when we have an actual threat. We can focus on our protection and survival and not be distracted by unnecessary functions such as thirst, hunger, reproduction, excretion. But, if we are always on high alert, our normal bodily needs get stretched too far and diminished which can create a crisis. It is called hypervigilance. It's like having all the lights on the house, it is sunlight outside, and you have a flashlight checking every little corner and object in the home. You cannot rest in those conditions.*

### **Alert/Alarm or Digest/Rest Reflection**

*What or who turned on your alert button that is on overdrive, or what shut down your alert button that you are not recognizing harm? What can you do to give your mind and body rest so it can have time to heal? What do you need to put a boundary of protection around to keep you safe from threat, what is enough for your protection to allow you to rest?*



## **Owl's 360 View/Check Intentions**

We can get inspiration from the vision of an owl. An owl can move its head all around to get a view of the surrounding area: ahead, around and behind its body. The owl has a keen perception of threat and what to prey for eating and survival. An owl lives in the present and prepares for the future.

### **Owl/Check Intentions Reflection**

*The owl reminds us to check the intentions of ourselves and others for self-protection and survival. Who in your life has positive intentions to help support you? Who in your life do you question their intentions? Should they be in your visual vicinity of your life or do you need them to be farther removed in the periphery? Do you share your positive intentions with others so others can feel your support? If not, how can you communicate those intentions of safety, growth or connection to others more openly with more clarity to be felt?*



## **Breathe In What You Want**

## **Breathe Out What to Let Go**

Even though we need to breathe to survive, we can easily dismiss the power of breath. One way our brain notifies our alert system is if we are holding our breath or having quick or shallow breathing. A quick way to shift from alert/alarm to digest/rest system is to do controlled breathing exercises. There are multiple examples of intentional breathing exercises (belly breathing, alternate nostril breathing, box breathing, 1 2 3 4 breathing, progressive muscle relaxation, etc.). With mindful breathing attention, you can slow down your heart rate and your blood pressure and let your body relax. Shifting our breathing is an activity we can do with little notice from others and can lower stress and ground our awareness.

### **Breathing Reflection**

*Review different breathing strategies and choose which one feels right for you. Notice if you are breathing from your chest or your belly button (a full diaphragmatic breath or a constricted breath). Imagery such as the camping by the river under moonlight in this sign is an example that imaging our happy place can calm down our breathing. What image would relax your breathing?*



## **Self-Protection/Skunk Skills**

The skunk distinguishes what is a threat and when to use its protective resources and when to avoid using them. This animal is a great example of how we only have so much physical and emotional energy to release, and we need to conserve those resources for our survival and growth. This discernment gives us awareness to avoid others or situations who drain our energetic well or who have parasitic or predatory goals that can harm us, and we need to avoid them.

### **Skunk Skills & Self-Protection Reflection**

*What is a situation or relationship you feel you need to use defensive strategies for safety?*

*What is creating that self-protective response? Is it warranted for your emotional or physical protection or is it based in past trauma and circumstances? How can you set boundaries so you would not have to expel so much from yourself? Does this person need to be in your life or in your orbit? What are ways you can protect yourself without depleting yourself? What is one step to make your self-protection a priority?*





## **Dragonfly/ Persistence and Adaptability**

The dragonfly has survived since the dinosaurs. Even though it is small, its resilience is mighty. The dragonfly is a great teacher of adaptability, determination and persistence.

### **Dragonfly Reflection**

*Change is hard and we often do not welcome it. When we face challenges, it is often hard to shift and change to our new circumstances. What adaptations can we stretch ourselves a bit and what is asking of too much of ourselves? What is worth persisting towards? What do you need to let go of to move forward so you won't be carrying too much with you? What do you feel about change? Do you feel you are adaptable? Resilient? If so, think of some examples to reignite your confidence.*



## **Wind Phone**

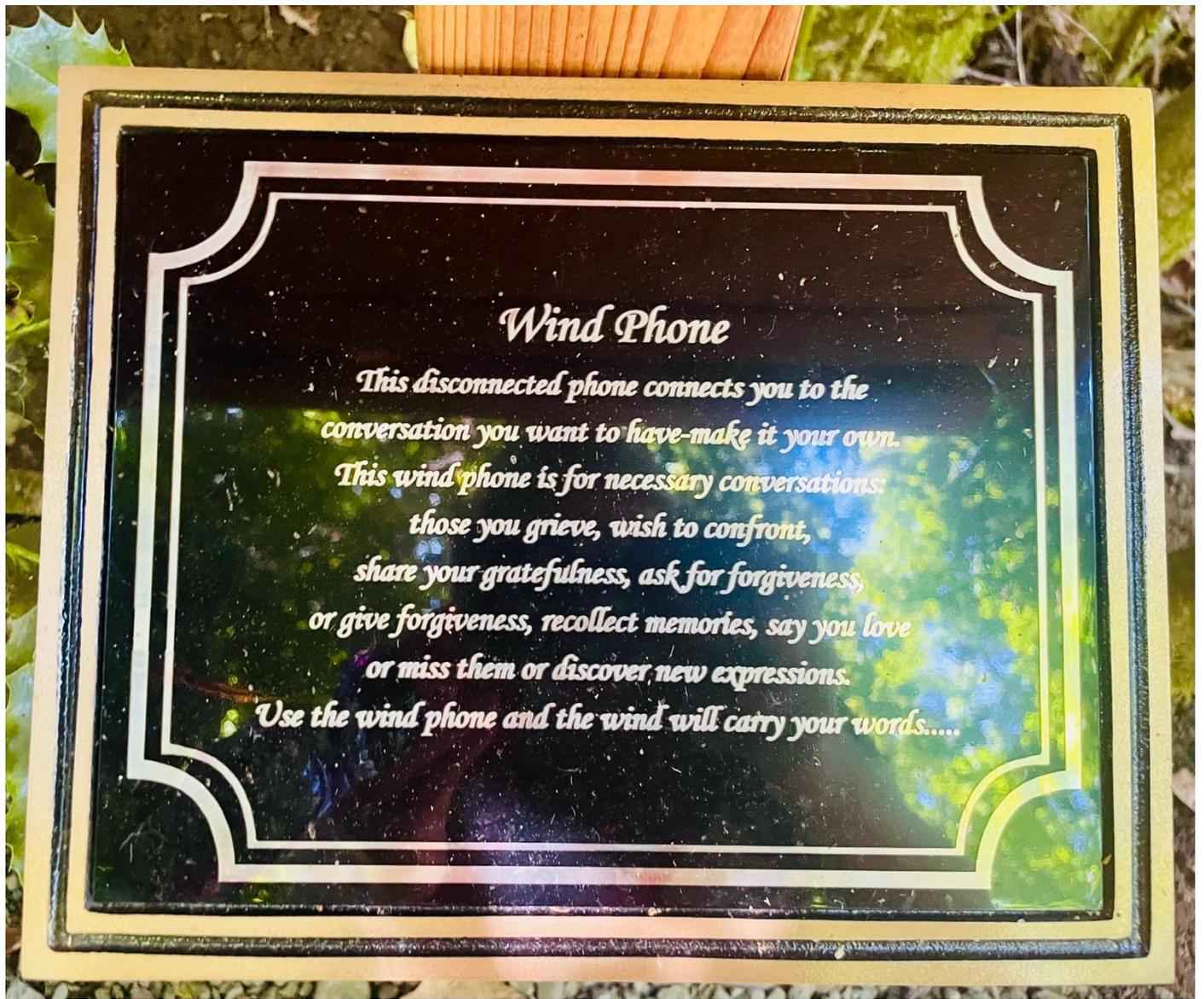
*The Wind Phone was created in Japan by Itaru Sasaki in his garden after his cousin died of cancer. He wanted to have conversations with him after his death. It was called the telephone of the wind imagining that the words would get to his cousin by traveling from the phone through the wind. Then, a tsunami hit the village and other villagers wanted to express their grief of their lost loved ones at his wind phone and creating a healing phenomenon. Globally, this grief intervention took hold and has a website to find different locations with wind phones through their galleries section ([www.mywindphone.com](http://www.mywindphone.com)).*

*It felt natural to create a wind phone on Menucha's Sunrise Daisy Survivor Path. Dr. Valerie Correa extended the concept of the wind phone to not just conversations with the deceased but those who you wish you could have the necessary conversations but not safe or available to have those conversations with. Gestalt therapy and role playing is a common intervention in therapy where people act out as if they could talk to someone that is not safe to talk to-this wind phone additionally allows people to have a healing experience of expressing those conflicted feelings.*

## **Necessary Conversations Reflection**

*Who is a person you wished you could connect with and miss? If you spoke into the wind phone to connect with them, what would you share? Or who is a person alive or deceased you feel a necessary conversation is not available to you, but you would*

gain healing from expressing your feelings you cannot share with them? What would you say? What is a situation you did not stand up for yourself? If you could have a do-over, how would you assert yourself? Speak it into the wind phone.





*Wind Phone*

*This disconnected phone connects you to the  
communication you want to have only if your own.  
This wind phone is for necessary conversations:  
those you give, wish to confess,  
share your gratitude, ask for forgiveness,  
or give forgiveness, reflect on what's, say you love  
or miss them or discover new aspirations.  
Use the wind phone and the wind will carry your words...*

## Self-Care Garden

*There are garden markers in the Self-Care Garden you can write on to take home with you or keep in the garden to remind you of a step to take care of yourself. It is easy to get busy with life and others and forget to nurture ourselves. There are many aspects of our lives we invest in and others we neglect.*

*The wellness wheel identifies different aspects of ourselves. We can make small steps towards well-being (<https://www.calm.com/blog/wellness-wheel>).*

*Here is each dimension:*

1. **Physical:** Taking care of your body through exercise, nutrition, and rest
2. **Social:** Building healthy relationships and a sense of connection with others
3. **Emotional:** Understanding and managing your emotions
4. **Intellectual:** Keeping your mind active and engaged through learning and creativity
5. **Spiritual:** Exploring your beliefs, values, and sense of purpose
6. **Occupational:** Finding fulfillment in your work or daily activities
7. **Environmental:** Being aware of the impact your surroundings have on your health
8. **Financial wellness:** Managing your money to support your life goals and reduce stress

## Self-Care Reflection

*Reviewing the different dimensions of the wellness wheel, which two dimensions do you easily protect and engage in self-care activities and which two do you neglect the most? What is one small thing you could do in each category? What would it feel like to give time and energy to yourself? What are the obstacles to make it a priority? Imagine yourself as a garden; what do you need to tend to and let grow?*







## Snail

*This metal snail reminds us of the power of slow. Our culture often rewards the fast, quick and easy. Time to reflect, time to get grounded, time for readiness, time for acceptance are not quick experiences.*

### **The Power of Slow Reflection**

*When is a time in your life, when you felt everything was moving too fast and you wished time could slow down? What things do you put aside because you do not feel you have enough time? Was there a time everything went in slow motion because your brain could not absorb it so fast? Do you have time now to attend to that event and all that you were experiencing?*



## **Caterpillar & Butterfly Chair**

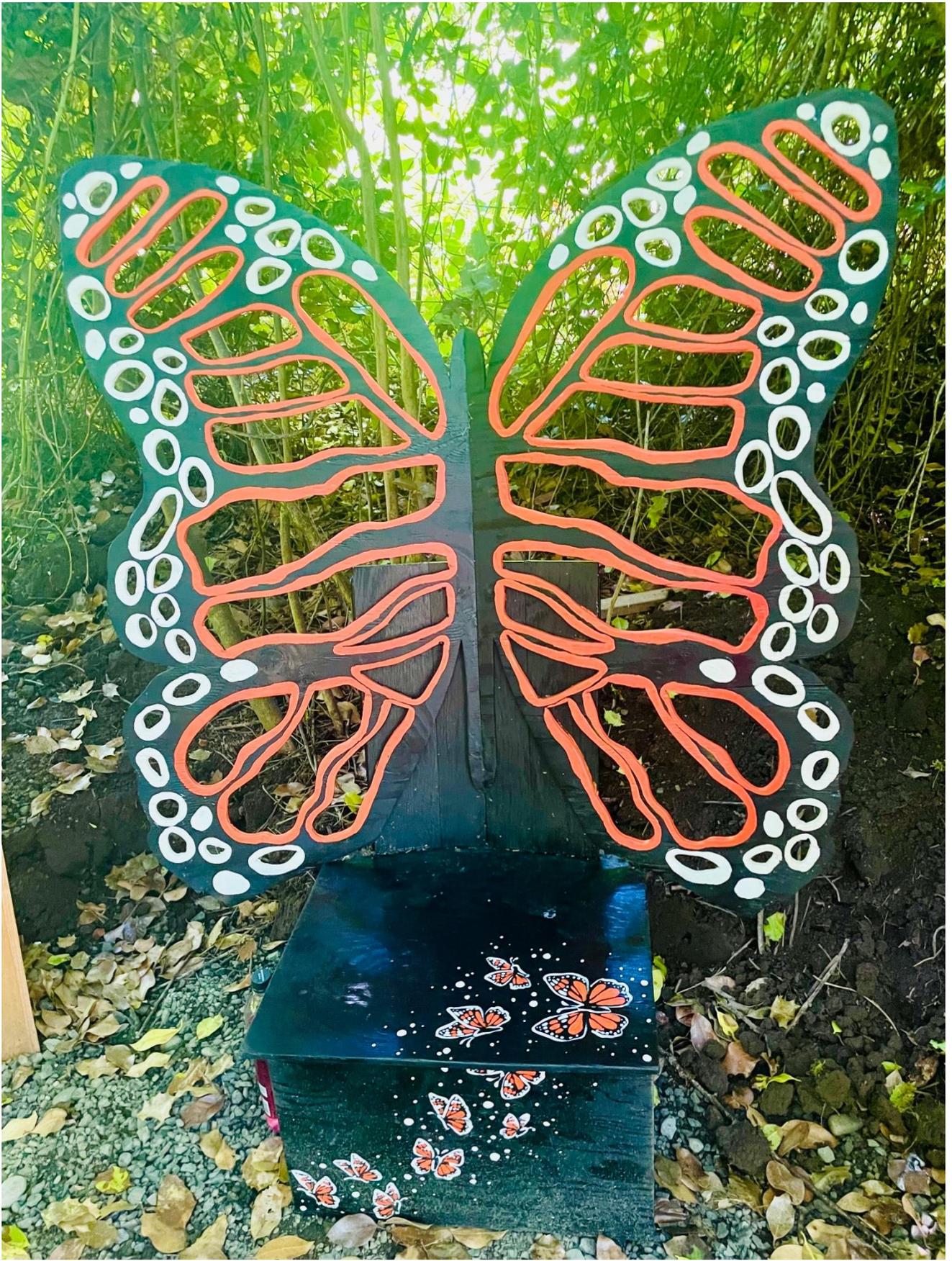
*On the trail, there is a metal caterpillar, a metal structure with butterflies and a butterfly chair to sit in for the wind phone or the self-care garden. Butterflies are informative teachers showing us that we take on many shapes and transformations during a lifetime.*

### **Transformation Reflection**

*What is transforming inside of you right now? What is a transformation you are the proudest of yourself? What is a transformation you wish to embody, what is one thing you can do to go in that direction?*







## Spoon, Fork. Knife Flowers

Nutritional health is represented in these metal flowers made from utensils. To be healthy, we must feed our body the nutrients we need for survival and functioning. Our physical body is made of elements and minerals and can function best with intentional eating and hydrating.

The gut-brain connection is becoming more known for overall health. Prebiotics feed the good bacteria (oats, mushrooms, onion, garlic, leeks, and asparagus) and probiotics build more good bacteria and yeast in your gut lining (sauerkraut, kefir, yogurt, miso, pickled vegetables, kombucha, tempeh, and kimchi). These aid in digestion and absorption of nutrients.

### Nourish Through Nutrition Reflection

*Eating the rainbow (varied colors of fruits and vegetables), getting enough water, fiber, protein and vegetables all nourish your brain, heart, lungs, organs and skin for vitality. What is your relationship to eating? Nutrition? Connecting to your bodily needs? How can you enjoy nourishing yourself with nutrients (learning cooking or baking, buying new dishes and cutlery or mugs, meal planning, going to different grocery stores, Saturday markets or food co-ops). Can you fuel your body in ways that make you feel most alive and vital?*







## **Human Nest**

*This human nest is to surround you with security and inspire creativity of thought or action. Rose Covert created this human nest with woven live willow branches. There are cedar benches that were milled from Menucha property by Rod Foran. Sit on one of the benches and breathe in your forest surroundings.*

### **Building a Sanctuary for Home Reflection**

*We all have a need to refuel and feel safe at home. Sometimes our place to sleep and eat is just a landing place but it can be a safe comforting sanctuary.*

*How can you create your space to give you a sense of comfort, safety, inspiration or reflect your personality (art, plants, photos of good memories and relationships, blankets and cozy spaces)?*

*What colors are you drawn to right now, can you integrate some of that color into your living space in ways to soothe or invigorate you?*

*What things in your space no longer represent you or the feelings you want to feel in your home? Are you ready to donate it and let it go?*

*How can you create a space that takes less upkeep to clean and organize?*



## **Moon Cycles/Cycles of Change**

The Moon is a visual teacher to us that life is in constant motion and full of change. We often wish there was more continuity and predictability in our daily lives, but one thing that is a constant is change. Change does not always have to bring a challenge. You can also welcome challenges to let you grow and evolve as a person and how you interact in relationships and your environment. Sometimes, patterns in life repeat themselves, what is an ending becomes a beginning again. Nature shows us many repetitive patterns: moon cycles, sunrises and sunsets, ocean tides, and seasons.

### **Cyclical Nature of Life Reflection**

*What is the cycle in your life that does not provide you positive development? How could you create a new pattern that would detour this self-defeating path? What is a cyclic nature of something in your life that gives you reassurance? How can you protect that cycle? Is there a tradition you can create yearly that has a scheduled time for self-care or enhance relationships in your life?*



## **Find Your Balance**

Whether it is a squirrel balancing nuts, birds learning what sticks to weave in a pattern to create a safe nest, or a beaver knowing how to gnaw a tree down, so it does not land on them. Animals, insects and nature have an innate way to create balance for stability. Balancing all our demands is often overwhelming and can feel impossible. We often dismiss all that we balance in a day, so give yourself more credit than stress or critique.

### **Balancing Act Reflection**

*As we balance priorities in our lives, sometimes, we meet our goals and sometimes, we fail. What expectations do you have for yourself that are not realistic to complete in a day, week, month, or year? How can you identify each step towards your goals in more bite size realistic actions? What do you procrastinate or devalue that you need a pep talk to complete? Do you need to delegate more to others or hire help? Can you ask for help when your load is too much to manage? Can you take time off to manage these demands or change your schedule or ask for a project buddy? Can you forgive yourself for not accomplishing everything? You are just one human trying your best with the emotional, physical and financial resources of the moment. Make one adjustment today for a less stressful life.*







## **Gorge/Water Carved Stone**

The Columbia River Gorge is a natural phenomenon to see right here at the viewpoint on the Survivor Trail at Menucha Retreat Center. It is quite incredible that persistent rain drops became brooks and streams of water weaving through stones. Then, they became creeks. Then, a small river that started carving into the stone to make a wider path. Finally, a large gorge of stone rose up towards the sky and a mighty river filled the cavern beneath it. These eras of persistence created transformation of something vast and momentous that has been everlasting.

## **The Value of Putting in the Time Reflection**

*Wouldn't it be great if all our desires and goals happened immediately unexpectedly? This should bring a smile to your face, since rarely does this happen spontaneously. What do you value that is worth your time and energy to carve it into existence? How can you schedule in some time on a regular basis to make it an eventual reality?*

*What is something that gives you a sense of awe like this viewpoint? When times get tough, visualize those spaces to remind you of something magnificent and grand rather than this present moment of crisis or change. The entirety of your life is miraculous and individual, be in awe of yourself and your life and those around you.*



## **Tree of Life Wind Sculpture**

In most cultures of people, religion, and countries there is some art depicting the tree of life. The tree is grounded in a deep root system of history, it has a strong trunk to stabilize the present, branches symbolizing individual pursuits and lineage and the leaves, cones or fruit creating the vitality of life. The tree of life reminds us that we all have universal truths that guide us and protect us for generations to come.

## **Universal Themes of Reassurance Reflection**

*What is a universal truth or mantra that guides your life? Some examples: work hard, play hard; treat others the way you want to be treated; this too shall pass or take each day at a time. Would it be helpful to tell yourself or journal daily a saying that could start your day or end your day to give you perspective? Do you need to discover a new theme to guide yourself?*



## Author's Note

*Dr. Valerie Correa is a licensed psychologist and licensed marital and family therapist who created this facilitator guide for the Sunrise Daisy Survivor Path at Menucha Retreat Center. Treat this information as a starting point for discussion and reflection. Please add your own unique insights and inspiration for discussion, growth and healing. Enjoy!*