## **Exploring Expectations**

We don't always know what we expect until we don't get it! "Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but a desire fulfilled is a tree of life." Prov 13:12

The gift of inner reflection is a skill we are losing in our culture. We must PRACTICE IT. We are typically overly-focused on productivity and our lives are overcrowded with noise and busyness. When something "bubbles up", the work of maturity is to explore our inner world and look for clues for what has been happening.

| For starters, what are some of the things/routines that look differently right now due to COVID-19?  |
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| Look at the top of page 2. Read through the downward spiral of expectations. Name and describe a time recently when you were on the downward spiral of expectations.   |
| What is your "go to" pattern when you get frustrated with things not going as planned or as you expected.  |
| What are some of the emotions you feel as you are adjusting your expectations?   |
| Read through the upward spiral of growth on the second half of page 2. Name some specific expectations that need to be adjusted. (Ex: For me, I am more tired than normal for unexplained reasons! I am choosing to lower my expectations of what I can accomplish on a daily basis. I have purposely lowered my client load to adjust for my energy shift.) |
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## **Downward spiral of unreasonable expectations**

**Unnamed, unreasonable expectations**, which might have been reasonable before social isolation

No awareness of unreasonable expectations Pressure builds to live up to unreasonable expectations Shame and blame directed at self and others when unrealistic exceptions are unmet **Shame and blame** drive more unreasonable expectations (spiral

## **Upward growth to reorient expectations**

**5. Reorienting:** Make a list of what is more reasonable during ★ this time. Communicate to others in your life about your more reasonable expectations of yourself and others.

continues)

- **4. Emoting Stage:** Name and give yourself permission to feel the sadness, disappointment, and grief of the loss of these expectations.
- **3. Naming Stage:** Name the specific unrealistic expectations you have of yourself and others. Spend time evaluating what is more realistic during this time.
- **2. Discovery Stage:** Explore what was reasonable "before" COVID-19 that needs to shift in this new environment.

## 1. Unnamed unrealistic expectations