

Motivation

Identifying strengths,
interests, abilities,
hopes and
dreams

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**Interactive Ideas and Reproducible Activities
for Facilitators Working with Adults and Teens**

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Our Dedications and Deepest Gratitude

I dedicate this book to . . .

Tambria. Daddy's faith in you was well-placed; he is smiling.

Myriah, the miracle

Amber, always amazing, and Zephyr

My deepest gratitude to . . .

Co-author Ester Leutenberg, wisdom personified

Amy Brodsky, illustrator extraordinaire

Eileen Regen, grammatical genius

Whole Person Associates, publisher

Joy Morgan Dey, patient and creative art director

Rick who relinquished precious time

The clients who inspired the ideas

My Higher Power who made the book possible

Carol Butler

I dedicate this book to . . .

Mitchell A. Leutenberg. On November 22, 1986, our son, at age thirty, died by suicide. For eight years, from the time of his first suicide attempt, we kept the promise Mitchell asked of us, not to tell anyone he had a mental illness. He felt it was a shame, an embarrassment - people wouldn't value him for who he was, they would see only the mental illness. The moment Mitch died, we told anyone and everyone. We were not ashamed or embarrassed. He had a disease, a mental illness. Although Mitchell did not discuss it, we hope other people will, as the stigma of mental illness slowly lifts. Mitchell is my motivating force to write books for facilitators' use with their clients.

My deepest gratitude to . . .

Carol Butler who finally said yes to writing another book!

Jay, my husband, who is everything good in the world.

Ester R. A. Leutenberg

Purpose of the Book

Motivation — incentive, inspiration, enthusiasm — is the driving force of behaviors.

Self-actualization — reaching one's full potential — is growth-motivated versus deficiency-motivated.

MOTIVATION ~ identifying strengths, interests, abilities, hopes and dreams provides participants a forward-focus after set-backs; spurs them on to find their abilities; encourages exploration of creative, altruistic, and productive endeavors; teaches how to tap into inner strengths and external resources.

The book has a total of 32 sections and is divided into two parts

Part I has 22 sections, for all adult and teen participants, who would benefit from motivation exercises.

Part II has 10 sections, specifically for clients with mental illness and addiction issues, who would benefit from all of the 32 motivation exercises.

Part I is for ALL teens and adults. They will learn . . .

- They were born with interests, abilities, talents, creativity and intelligence
- They must define and develop their unique talents
- They have the power within to overcome obstacles
- Positive thoughts beget bravery regarding healthy risks
- Courage combats fear and stagnation
- Good stress brings out their best
- The only failure is not trying

Part II is specifically for clients with mental illness and/or addiction.

Their illnesses are a large part of their identity. When medical treatment and coping skills minimize their symptoms, a void in their identity exists. Will they fill it with illness, or will their well self emerge?

Unless participants are motivated to be all they can be, they revert to the comfort of discomfort. Their symptoms bring secondary gains: sympathy, attention, disability payments. Sickness becomes a security blanket: less is expected of them regarding household responsibilities and family obligations. People may walk on eggshells around them. Often, they have been advised, and wrongly so, to avoid the stress of work, school or volunteering because these may be set-ups for failure.

Teens and adults with mental or physical health diagnoses will learn . . .

- Their illness is not their identity
- They were born with gifts and abilities
- They can work to achieve their aspirations
- Stress exists for everyone who faces challenges
- They can nurture their hopes and dreams
- They will survive positive stress and thrive
- Recovery doesn't occur in a vacuum
- Rehabilitation means re-entering the real world
- Benefits of wellness outweigh the false security of illness

What Makes This Book Vital?

MOTIVATION ~ identifying strengths, interests, abilities, hopes and dreams inspires clients to discover their inborn assets and aspirations, to develop new skills, achieve self-actualization and their goals.

Clients from middle school to middle age and beyond need motivation to reach their maximum potentials. Leaders need to conduct dynamic groups with minimal planning and preparation time.

Facilitator-led sessions provide blueprints or maps to help leaders ...

- Conduct question and answer sessions, brainstorming, games and other activities.
- Engage clients' attention, heighten their interest, and promote creative thinking.
- Motivate participants to reach their highest potential.
- Encourage group members to listen and learn from each other.

Participants will:

- Recognize they are not alone with their fears and aspirations.
- Identify and overcome potential obstacles to success.
- Ponder, learn and grow from past experiences.
- Develop insight and define hopes and dreams.
- Reflect upon and respond to inspirational quotes and the wisdom of the ages.
- Become aware of their personal attributes.
- Initiate goal-oriented action.

For facilitators preferring written work, the reflections worksheets accomplish all of the above goals.

Additionally, clients are:

- Exposed to new ideas through illustrations, brief introductory information, factsheets and quotations.
- Encouraged to challenge stagnating old beliefs by answering evocative questions.
- Directed to define their new identities and write action plans.

Reflections worksheets enable leaders to:

- Individualize instruction by assigning different sections depending on clients' needs.
- Allow responses to be private or shared through reading aloud.
- Encourage partners or trios to record each other's ideas, then share with the whole group.
- Assign homework or provide information to people who missed a session.
- Review and assess learning after presenting a section.

Versatility of materials for various age groups, interactive and/or introspective activities, and the uniqueness of guided discovery of strengths, interests, hopes and dreams make this book vital. The special section addressing needs of clients with emotional and/or substance abuse issues expand this book's reach to include almost every population.

Using This Book – For the Facilitator

Format of the Book

Each section:

- Purpose
- Materials
- Opener
- Activity
- Follow-up
- Variation
- Worksheet Options (see the next page)

Both in Part I and Part II, each section contains a **facilitator-led format or lesson plan for group discussions, questions, answers and brainstorming sessions**. These lead the facilitator through the teaching and/or counseling group activities and provide possible answers in italics. Reinforce any responses, as they indicate participant engagement and risk-taking. Responses may be more meaningful and insightful than those in italics.

Each section features accompanying **worksheet reflection pages** wherein participants write and then share their responses. Many have **quotation pages**, to analyze and apply to their lives. These may be used as journaling activities to foster independent learning and introspection.

Reproducible Handouts

The book, *MOTIVATION identifying strengths, interests, abilities, hopes and dreams*, is spiral bound to permit easy photocopying. All of the reflections and quotations pages can be used in their original format, or facilitators can make one copy, white-out words/phrases, and make changes specific to their population. Then the needed number of copies can be reproduced.

The reproducible pages have this symbol  **after the exercise title.**

Worksheet Options

Traditional

- Present topic
- Pass out reproducible worksheets for individual completion
- Allow participants to share their answers
- Open the floor for listeners to ask questions or give feedback

Time-saver

- If you run out of time, distribute the reflections worksheets and/or quotations for homework.

Time-filler

- If you finish the activity and follow-up, with time left, distribute the reflections worksheets and/or quotations as a written review.

Partners

- Facilitator presents the topic
- Participants break into pairs, or trios
- Each records the partner's responses
- Each shares the partner's answers with the whole group
- Listeners ask questions or give feedback

Assessment of Learning

Present the material in the facilitator-led format. Use the reflections worksheet as a recap. This option can be used as evidence of learning, for example, a treatment plan objective might be to answer at least 60% of recap questions completely. This can be used in utilization reviews to prove progress to insurance companies.

Who Should Use This Book?

We suggest this book be used by people in a helping and/or teaching capacity and by professionals.

Part I: PROFESSIONALS: Teachers, youth group leaders, school counselors, vocational rehabilitation counselors, evaluators, placement specialists, job coaches, recovery-related group leaders, psychiatric nurses, therapists, addiction recovery counselors, social workers, probation or parole officers, etc.

Part II: PROFESSIONALS: Primarily mental health professionals including psychiatric nurses, therapists, social workers and addiction recovery counselors.

For either or both parts, the concepts below apply:

Why Use the Facilitator-Led Format?

- The facilitator initiates group interaction which is set up to be lively, fun and evocative.
- Openers provide suspense and humor.
- Participants learn from each other.
- Suggestions and answers from peers are generally better-received than professional advice.
- Lectures are usually perceived as boring; this book features questions, discussions, brainstorming, games and other activities to heighten interest.
- The format helps facilitators to avoid *telling* information that participants can *deduce* from appropriate questioning that is provided on the activity sheet.

Why Use the Reflections Worksheets?

- A beginner facilitator may be more comfortable presenting the opener, then distributing worksheets for completion. Having participants answer individually or pair up and record partner responses, takes the heat off the facilitator. After completion, participants share their responses. Everybody participates, learns and speaks, and the facilitators need not stand in front of the group feeling nervous.
- Another use is to complete a section if you run out of time. Worksheets may be passed out as homework, to be further discussed at the next session. Or use them to fill time if you finish the planned work too early.
- Worksheets may help focus and calm down a rowdy crowd, at times when facilitator-led format would be too stimulating.
- The variety of topics allows individualization of your education/counseling because you can assign different worksheets depending on each participant's needs.
- Worksheets foster self-understanding, skill development, and positive, self-directed changes in thoughts, feelings and actions

Why Mix and Match? Ideally, you will combine interactive group activities with independent introspective assignments to meet your participants' needs.

Precautions for All Facilitators: Be aware that many participants need concurrent medication and therapy, or referrals for these. Any inference to suicide, homicide, potential child and/or adult abuse must be immediately believed, and directed to the proper professional or agency.

Be aware of mandated reporting requirements.

For All Facilitators

How to Prepare and Facilitate These Sections

- Look through this book and see which activities you plan to do, or topics you plan to cover in the next days or week.
- If tangible props suggested are unavailable, photocopy the artwork, and if possible, find Internet photos or pictures from magazines, calendars, catalogues, etc.
- Photocopy the reflections worksheets for each participant, even if you plan to do the facilitator-led format; you may run out of time and need the worksheets for homework.
- Although most sections will take 50 minutes or more, and you may plan to present them in two or three sessions, the reflections worksheets can be handed out as a review activity, if you complete the facilitator-led session early.
- Read the format in advance to know what concepts you hope to teach and what responses you hope to elicit.
- Plan to take the format pages into the group session with you and refer to them as needed.
- A helpful approach is to prepare your board or chart paper in advance with some of the questions you plan to ask, or an outline of key terms.
- You can write headings for brainstorming sessions in advance.
- If your group room lacks boards, invest in large chart paper with sticky backing, or use a flip chart with lots of paper.
- Set group guidelines for confidentiality. See page xiii for suggestions.
- If a few participants are talking amongst themselves, stop and wait until they stop, then resume.
- Present the opener in a suspenseful or playful way. For example, you might have them close their eyes while you place a toy rat in the middle of the room, for *The Good Rat* or *The Revenge of the Rat*. Warn them that what they are about to see is not real. Tell them to open their eyes, and guess why they are looking at this animal at this time and place. Then present the section.
- Remind them before question and answer or brainstorming sessions that there are no right or wrong answers; they are to respond in ways personally meaningful.
- Ask for volunteers to list the brainstorming ideas, or to help with the opener when possible; participants will pay more attention to each other and this will solidify the *volunteers'* learning.
- Always *ask* rather than tell; participants learn by reasoning and by discovering knowledge.
- The less you talk, the more participants talk and the more engaged they are.
- If someone does not want to answer, do not coerce; merely say, "We'll see if you have a comment later," or "Can we come back to you after everyone else has answered?" Never insist that a person talk and never tease or embarrass anyone.
- Do not de-rail the momentum by letting one person get off topic; tell that person and the group that you will help them individually after group, or that the issue is a great idea for another session.
- Conversely, if several participants bring up an important issue, you can always *go with the flow* and save your agenda for another time.
- You have or will discover your own style. Feel free to adapt the format and present the concepts in ways that work for you and your people.
- See *Introduction for the Participant*, pages xi and xii and *Group Guidelines*, page xiii before you begin the sections. Ask for volunteers to read the bulleted items aloud.

Suggestions for Special Needs for Part II Facilitators

- If a person breaks down, cries, or needs extra attention, provide empathy and refer the client to another staff member for one-on-one counseling, if someone is available. If no one is available, make plans to meet with that person afterwards.
- You can also acknowledge his/her distress, encourage the individual to take a brief break, (if this is safe), and tell the person and the group you will help individually, after session.
- If something looks wrong, or feels uncomfortable for you and your population, *go with your instinct*, and don't use it.
- Depending on your rapport with participants and their stability, delicate topics may be gently interjected.
- Some of the concepts, especially regarding secondary gains from illness, may *hit a raw nerve* with some clients.
- Be clear that people receiving disability payments are not expected to give up their income.
- They are *not* being advised to seek gainful employment (unless they choose to do so).
- They are encouraged to develop their interests and abilities via classes, volunteering, and/or using their creative talents to benefit themselves and others.
- See *Introduction for the Participant Part II*, page xii and *Group Guidelines*, page xiii. Distribute the Group Guidelines before you begin the sections. Ask for volunteers to read the bulleted items aloud.

Introduction for Participants (Part I)

Congratulations! You are using coping skills to handle stress and life's challenges. You are ready to find your strengths, interests, hopes and dreams and to become *self-actualized*.

What is *self-actualization*? It is mentioned in the armed forces commercial: Be all that you can be . . . Yes, **you** can believe and achieve.

Trial and error may occur, and if something doesn't work out, you did not fail! You just learned what does not work for you. As Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers sang in the 1936 movie, *Swing Time*, "Pick yourself up, dust yourself off, and start all over again."

The exercises in this book help you recognize . . .

- There is good stress.
- You can face your fears.
- Daydreams and 'pie-in-the-sky' ideas are promoted.
- You will contribute to the world through your inborn abilities.
- You will develop your interests and talents and direct them toward education, employment, volunteering, creativity, or other productive activities.

As you complete the exercises, remember:

- There are no right or wrong answers.
- Respond according to what applies to you, personally.
- Think baby steps.
- Think healthy risks.
- Applaud your efforts regardless of outcomes.

Introduction for Participants (Part II)

Congratulations! You are managing your symptoms through any/all of the following: medications prescribed by a psychiatrist, individual, marital or family therapy, support groups and/or twelve-step programs. You are using coping and problem-solving skills. You are ready to find out who you are and what you were born to be and to do. You are ready to *self-actualize*.

What is *self-actualization*? It is mentioned in the armed forces commercial: *Be all that you can be*. Yes, **you** can believe and achieve.

You may have to give up some things to gain others. Losing the shroud of sickness may leave you feeling naked and vulnerable.

You will be facing challenges you were shielded from. You will experience the positive stress of being on the brink of something big.

The exercises in this book help you realize . . .

- You are not your disease.
- Your symptoms are a small percent of the person you are and can become.
- When you shrink your sickness, you must expand your wellness.
- You can overcome fear of failure and fear of success.
- You need hopes, dreams, 'pie-in-the-sky' ideas.
- You have interests and abilities, and a variety of intelligences.
- You can use them to improve your life.
- You have much to contribute to the world.

When your symptoms ruled, your motivation was relief. You have learned that positive thinking, feeling and actions promoted well-being. But wellness must extend beyond a protected environment. Mental health and sobriety are maximized in the real world, with its unknown factors, frustrations and disappointments, along with challenges and opportunities to succeed.

As you complete the exercises, remember . . .

- There are no right or wrong answers.
- Respond according to what applies to you.
- Think baby steps.
- Think healthy risks.
- Applaud your efforts regardless of outcomes.

Group Guidelines

Welcome!

**We hope you will learn new and wonderful things about yourself.
These suggestions will insure that you and others get the most,
and give the most, to these experiences.**

- ✓ Please be on time. It disturbs others when people walk in late.
- ✓ Bottled water is fine, but please enjoy food and drinks only during breaks.
- ✓ One person at a time speaks, otherwise no one is heard.
- ✓ Confidentiality is crucial; what is said in group stays in group.
- ✓ Use fictitious names or name codes when referring to people in conversations or on reflections pages.
- ✓ Please participate within your comfort zone; you will not be forced to comment.
- ✓ If you rarely speak in group, *test the waters*; try to expand your comfort zone gradually.
- ✓ If you seem to be the only one answering questions, hold back a few minutes and give others a chance to think and speak. It is great that you are an enthusiastic participant, but if you have all the answers, others may quit trying, and you will deprive yourself of learning from others.
- ✓ The more thought and effort you put into a session, the more insight you will develop.
- ✓ Be honest.
- ✓ Feel free to ask questions.
- ✓ When questions are posed, respond as they apply to you; there are no right or wrong answers.
- ✓ Keep an open mind.
- ✓ Agree to disagree. People have different ideas: listen, and consider whether another view applies to you. If it doesn't, remember, it may be meaningful to others.
- ✓ During brainstorming sessions, *the sky is the limit*. Share whatever ideas come to mind.
- ✓ Cell phones must be on *vibrate* or *off*; calls are extremely disruptive. Excuse yourself from group if you must call someone back immediately.
- ✓ Unless you have an emergency, please use the phone and restroom during breaks.
- ✓ If a session triggers strong personal emotions, feel free to share briefly during group, and ask for one-to-one counseling after group.
- ✓ When you work on a reflections handout, respond from your heart. Do not worry about spelling or mechanics. You are the only person who will read your responses.
- ✓ If you are asked to draw or doodle, artistic talent is not required. The purpose is to show your thoughts and feelings on paper in a non-verbal way.
- ✓ Above all, be true to yourself, and ENJOY!

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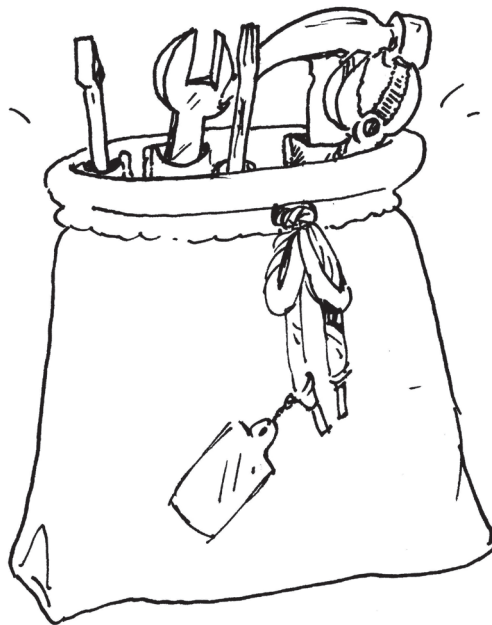
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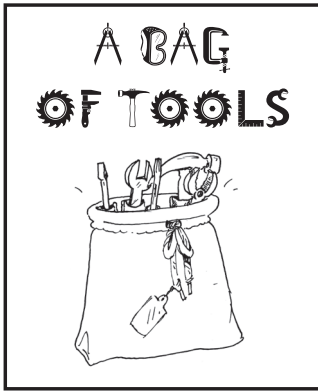
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Part I

**For all adult and teen participants,
who would benefit from
motivation exercises.**

A BAG OF TOOLS





A Bag of Tools

Purpose

To use our inborn and acquired abilities to reach our maximum potential.

Materials

Board and marker, a paper bag with a couple of tools inside, or an Internet photo of tools, copies of the poem, or write it on the board after the opener.

Opener

Pass around the closed bag of tools and ask each participant to guess its contents.

Activity

Distribute copies of the poem, *A Bag of Tools*, on page 20 or write the poem on the board.

Read the poem aloud in unison, at least two times.

Ask the participants for their impressions:

“What does the poem say to you?”

Accept any responses.

Ask the following questions and elicit the italicized or similar ideas:

What is said about all people in all walks of life?

We are builders for eternity.

What is meant by our bag of tools?

Abilities and/or gifts we are born with.

Why is it a shapeless mass?

Because we decide how we use, develop or shape our ‘tools’ or abilities, we have a hand in forming the ‘shapeless mass’ or raw materials.

What is our book of rules?

This may be different for each person; this may represent societal laws or spiritual principles, moral and/or ethical beliefs, personal goals, etc.

What is meant by ‘Ere life is flown’?

Life flies by quickly, we need to put our tools to work quickly.

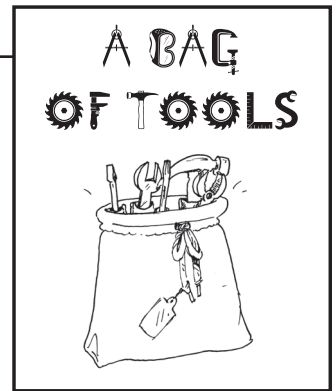
What is meant by ‘A stumbling block or a stepping stone’?

What we do with what we have is to create an obstacle or excuse for inaction, or a bridge to becoming our best.

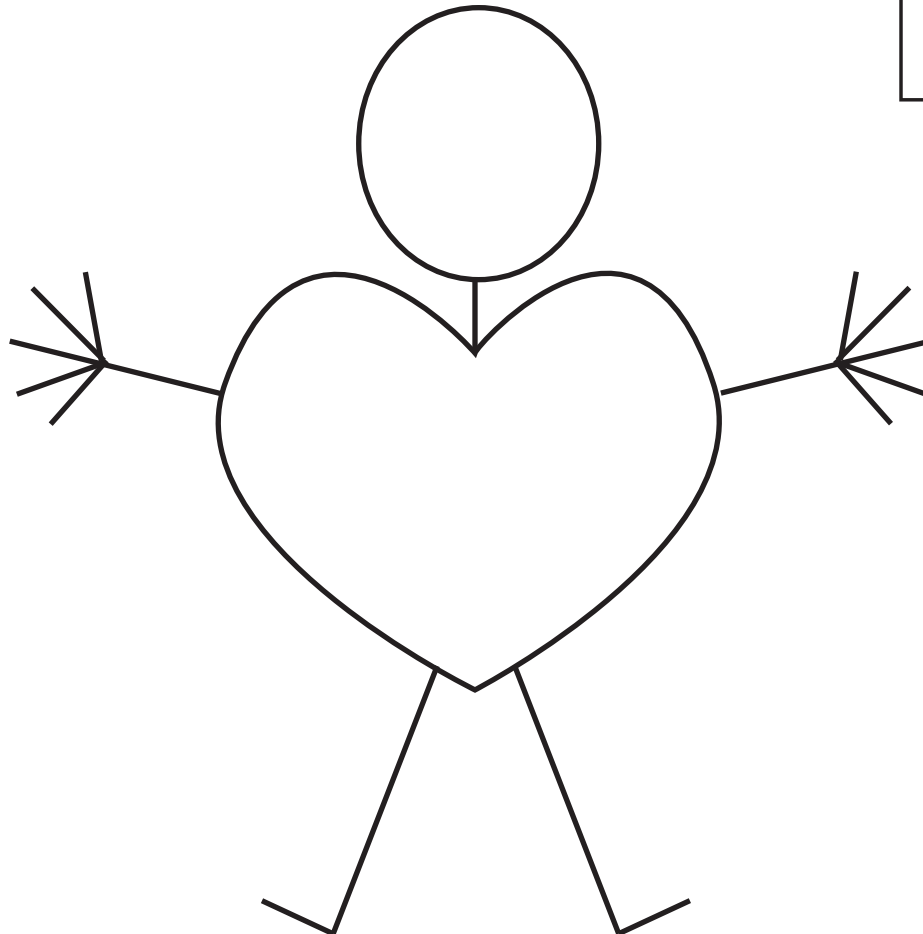
Ask for the basics we are all born with and list participants’ responses.

Responses will vary.

Head, Hands and Heart



Draw a stick figure on board with a fairly big head and hands, and draw a heart on the body.



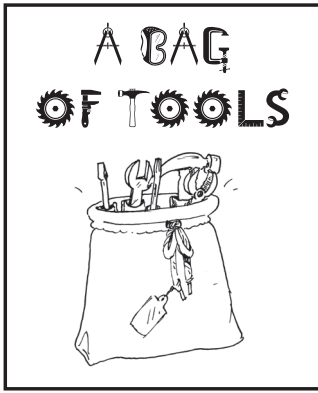
Write *Head, Hands* and *Heart* on the board in columns as shown below.

Explain that our head represents our brain and thoughts; our hands represent ability to do things; our heart represents feelings.

Remind participants that these are parts of the *shapeless mass* that we choose to form for positive or negative purposes.

Ask participants to brainstorm the shapes these tools can take; try to elicit italicized ideas.

HEAD Thoughts	HANDS Ability to do things	HEART Feelings
<i>Positive or negative</i>	<i>To be productive or idle</i>	<i>To feel love or hate</i>
<i>Problem-solving or problem-focused</i>	<i>To do for others, to be selfish, to give or to get</i>	<i>To harbor resentments or practice forgiveness</i>



A Bag of Tools

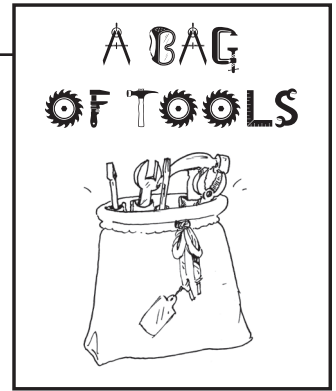
Isn't it strange
That princes and kings,
And clowns that caper in sawdust rings,

And common people
Like you and me
Are builders for eternity?

Each is given a bag of tools,
A shapeless mass,
A book of rules;
And each must make —
Ere life is flown —
A stumbling block
Or a stepping stone.

by R.L. Sharpe

Bag of Tools



Draw four columns on the board as follows and ask for examples of each.

Italicized examples are possible responses.

Creative Tools	Productive Tools	Altruistic Tools	Spiritual Tools
<i>Musical talent</i>	<i>Work ethic</i>	<i>Compassion</i>	<i>Faith in a Higher Power</i>
<i>Artistic talent</i>	<i>Perseverance</i>	<i>Generosity</i>	<i>Optimism</i>
<i>Writing poetry or prose</i>	<i>Time management and prioritizing</i>	<i>Environmental ethics</i>	<i>Believe the best about others</i>

Ask participants to share their creative, productive, altruistic and spiritual tools and how they are developing them.

If some have no idea about these tools, ask which ones they would like to have and how they might develop them. Additionally ask how they might discover their abilities by focusing on what they like to do, what attracts them:

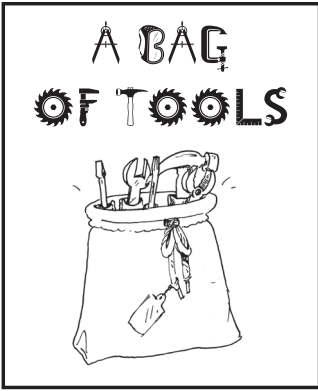
- Music
- Art
- Project completion
- Poetry
- Spirituality

Follow-up: Brainstorm resources for finding and developing tools. Some examples include:

- *Interest inventories*
- *Aptitude tests*
- *Career/counseling centers at community colleges*
- *Volunteer sites*
- *Houses of worship*
- *Inspirational literature*
- *Do-it-yourself resources*
- *Museums*
- *Concerts*
- *Art exhibits*
- *Musical opportunities*
- *Instructional and/or spiritual CDs or DVDs*
- *Literature and online information about charities*
- *Social-environmental-political action organizations*

Encourage people to look within themselves via daydreams, drawings and journaling, to further explore their bags of tools!

Variation: Worksheet options (page vii of introduction) using *A Bag of Tools Poem*, page 20, and *A Bag of Tools Reflections*, page 22.



A Bag of Tools Reflections

Consider the poem *A Bag of Tools* by R.L. Sharpe, page 20.

Then, respond to the following reflection questions related to the poem and your life.

1. What are people in all walks of life doing?

2. What is meant by your *bag of tools*?

3. What is the *shapeless mass*?

4. What is your *book of rules*?

5. What does "*Ere life is flown*" suggest to you?

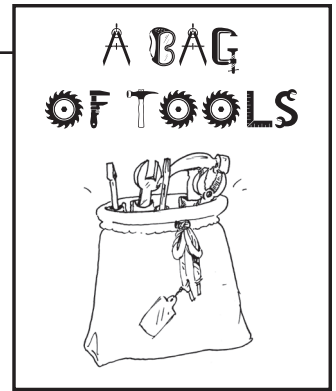
6. How is it that you can make either a *stumbling block* or a *stepping stone*?

My Tools

Tools represent basics we are born with – our head and brain (thoughts), hands (abilities to do things), and heart (feelings). These are ready to be *shaped* by us for positive or negative purposes.

Your head (thoughts) can be positive or negative. You can choose to focus on *problems* only, or *problem-solving*.

Your hands (abilities) can be productive or idle, selfish or receiving, or selfless or giving. Our feelings can harbor resentments or forgiveness, love or hate.



Describe a current situation and how you will focus on positive thoughts and problem-solving techniques.

Describe how you can be productive and selfless now or in the near future.

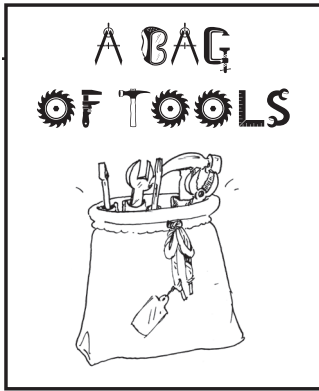
Whom do you need to love and forgive?

Tools – our inborn gifts, talents and passions – come in several categories:

- a) Creative tools such as musical talent.
- b) Productive tools such as a strong work ethic and the ability to focus on quality as well as quantity.
- c) Altruistic tools such as caring about others and interest in social justice.
- d) Spiritual tools such as strong faith in a Higher Power.

In each column, list at least two or more of your tools. If you are unsure what tools you already have, list ones you would like to have or develop. Think about your interests, what attracts you and what activities give you a natural high or a sense of accomplishment.

Creative tools	Productive tools	Altruistic tools	Spiritual tools



My Resources

List resources for finding and developing your tools (talents). They may be online, in books, in your community, on CD, or within yourself, just waiting to emerge via daydreams, drawings or journaling.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
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