

HUDUMA ROHO

A GUIDED JOURNAL FOR
INTERNATIONAL CAREGIVERS



Caregiving often calls us
to lean into love we didn't
know possible.

~ Tia Walker



Be Still
AND KNOW
THAT *I am*
GOD.

To Our International Caregivers:

We love that you are giving of yourselves in sacrificial ways to meet the needs of vulnerable people. Thank you for opening your hearts to the world and the evil that exists. Working around the world in areas that have been highly affected by war, trauma, and rape will intensely impact our souls. As we walk with people who are wounded physically and emotionally, we inevitably carry their pain in our own hearts. In many cases, you have been drawn to care for others out of your own pain or history. God loves that we are willing to show compassion to others out of the compassion He has shown us (2 Corinthians 1:3-4).

He asks us to come to Him with our burdens and give our souls rest (Matthew 11:28-30). It can be confusing in a world that has so many needs to know how to care for ourselves physically, emotionally, and spiritually. We hope that you are able to use this journal to care for your soul before, during, and after your international trip.

This journal is divided into three sections: Prepare, Engage, and Recover. It also has ample space for you to jot notes, journal, color, and draw. No matter how you use this journal, recognize that there is great wisdom in identifying and expressing our emotions in a variety of ways to keep our souls healthy.

Thank you for your commitment to be the hands and feet of Jesus to a hurting world.

Love,



HOW TO USE THIS JOURNAL

This is your journal. We have included lots of different options meant to enhance individualized learning styles. Are you a writer? Write as much as you like —we made sure you have lots of space to do so! Are you a doodler? Doodle everywhere and anywhere—there is white space on every page. Is coloring your thing? Bring colored pencils or crayons. We have included many images for you to color. Are you a sponge, taking in everything around you? Write down what you see, hear, smell at that moment. Feel free to paste images or pictures to personalize your journal. No matter the skin you're in, use this journal without filter and judgement. Feel it and note it.

Writing

Writing keeps you alert, engages your mind, emphasizes and organizes information, and creates a narrative of your experience.

Doodling

Doodling helps people stay focused, grasp new concepts, and retain information.

Coloring

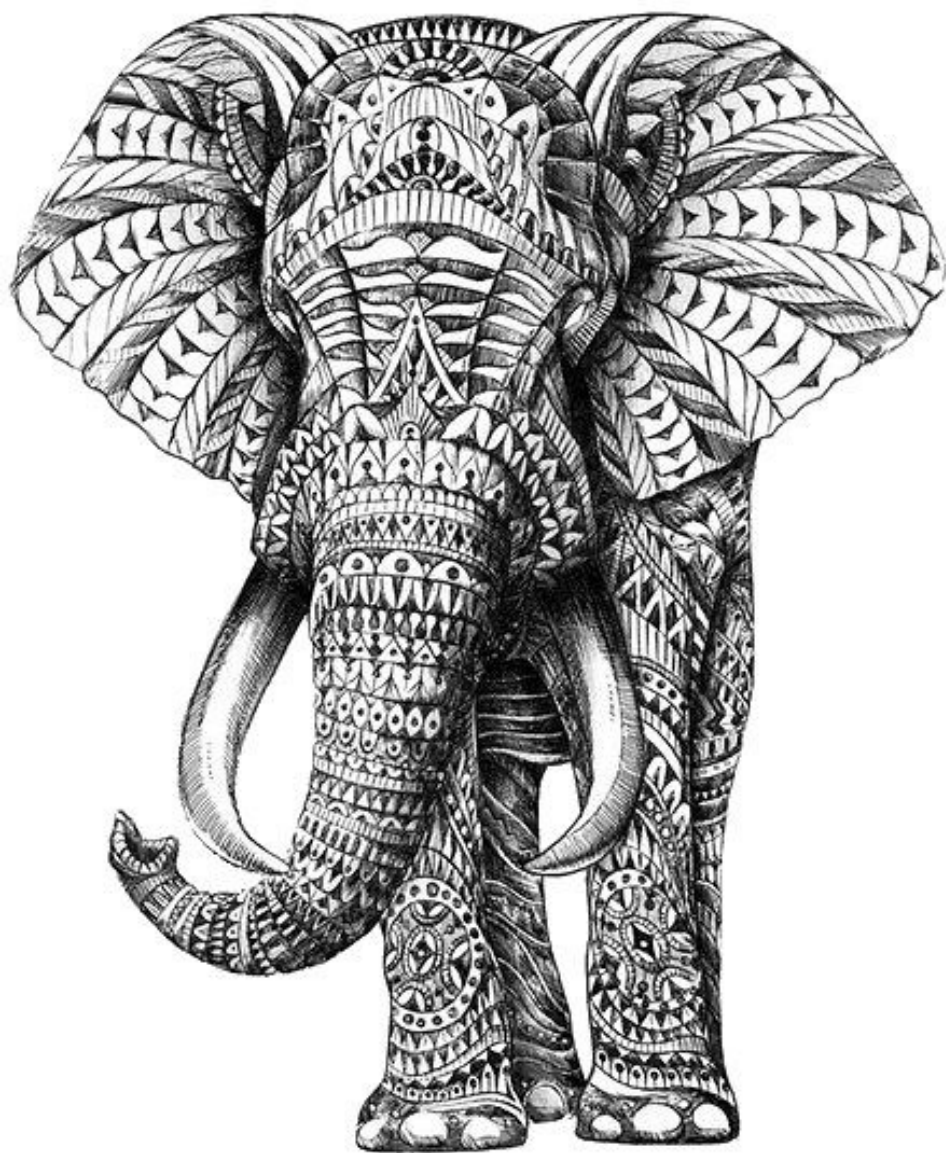
Coloring allows us to switch off our brains from other thoughts and focus on the moment. It also serves as an outlet for emotion.

Love is...

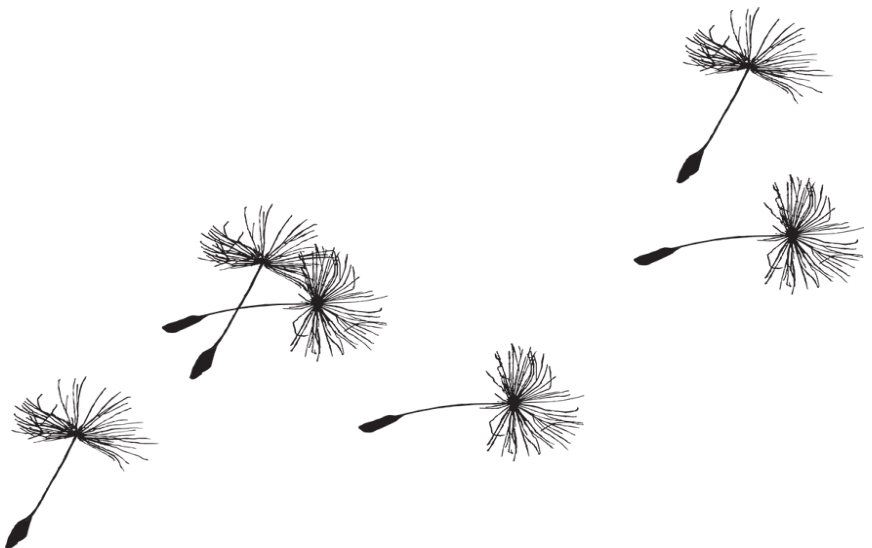
*"Return to your rest, O my soul.
For the Lord has dealt bountifully with you.*

*For you have delivered my soul from death
My eyes from tears and my feet from falling.
I will walk before the Lord in the land of the living!"*

—Psalm 116



I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO...



Just because you lead people and help people doesn't mean you are always going to be healthy on the inside. If anything, the pressure of public influence increases the unhealthy tendencies of our souls. If we aren't careful, it can make us look defensive and isolated. Instead of looking for help when we need it, we pretend to have it all together.

~ Judah Smith

GUIDED JOURNAL CHAPTERS

CHAPTER 1: PREPARE

The month before your international trip is an essential time to prepare your heart and mind. This section includes teaching and allows you to fully develop your own self-care plan.

CHAPTER 2: ENGAGE

During the trip, it is important for you to set aside time to identify and express your thoughts and emotions as well as to pray and reflect on God's work in your heart and on the trip.

CHAPTER 3: RECOVER

After the trip, you can successfully integrate your experiences as you reflect on your discoveries about yourself, others, and God.

WE HAVE

THIS *hope* AS
AN

ANCHOR

FIRM & *secure*



HEBREWS 6:19

CHAPTER 1

PREPARE

GOALS:

Build Team Relationships, increase awareness of compassion fatigue, build personal care plans.

SECTIONS:

- Safe Place & Container
- Anchors
- Helpful Definitions
- Building a Self-Care/Soul-Care Plan
- Self-Care Plan
- Resilience

PREPARE: SAFE PLACE & CONTAINER

SAFE/COMFORTABLE PLACE

Imagine a place where you feel calm, peaceful, and relaxed. Maybe it's a place where you can be in the moment with no worries or anxieties, completely comfortable in your own skin. Focus on the images that you see in your mind's eye, the temperature, the sounds, the feel on your skin, and the smells. Take a few deep breaths as you focus on this comfortable place until you can envision it and notice that your body feels as though you are there. Once you notice that you feel relaxed and can describe the place, choose one word that reminds you of this place. Jot down a few notes about this safe, comfortable place here and write down the word that reminds you of it:

CONTAINER

Imagine a container that is meant to hold distressing or disturbing material, one that you create and is uniquely yours. You may want the container to be strong enough to hold whatever you put in it. You may also want to have a way to open and close it and have some choice about how and when you do that. You may envision a lock, handle, door, or lid. In your mind's eye, picture this container. How does it look? What material is it made of? What kind of design or script does it have on the outside? What does the inside look like – is it comfortable enough for distressing things to stay inside of it until you are ready to bring them out? Once you have a complete image and feel some positive feelings about what it would be like to be able to use this container to hold distressing things, choose a word that represents this container. You can write your description of your container and the word that reminds you of it here:

Attach or draw a picture of your safe place and container

**SAFE
PLACE**

CONTAINER

PREPARE: ANCHORS

ANCHOR VERSE

Take some time to consider an anchor verse for your trip. You might have one in mind already or need some time to discover one. Once you have a verse, record it here:

ANCHOR PERSON

Take some time to visualize a safe person in your life with whom you would like to share about your experiences on this trip. What are the qualities about this person that you enjoy? Describe how you feel emotionally and physically when you feel understood and valued by this person. Take some time to record your experience here:

Using color, write your anchor verse and attach a picture of your anchor person.

PREPARE: HELPFUL DEFINITIONS

Compassion Fatigue

Compassion fatigue can be described as the breaking down process, as one's physical, emotional, and spiritual resources are depleted (Mendenhall, 2006). It is the caregiver's reduced capacity or interest in being empathic or "bearing the suffering of others" (Adams, Boscarino, & Figley, 2006).

Universal Vulnerability

Universal vulnerability means that everyone is susceptible to fatigue from caring for others. The very qualities and traits that make caregivers good at what they do (dedication, compassion, deep caring, empathy) create vulnerability. The healing that occurs when someone is deeply empathic is profound, but it can be costly to the caregiver.

Empathy

Empathy is the choice to experience what someone else is experiencing. Empathy facilitates connection and relationship with others.

Resilience (Merriam-Webster)

: The ability to become strong, healthy, or successful again after something bad happens

: The ability of something to return to its original shape after it has been pulled, stretched, pressed, or bent

Self-Care

Self/soul-care is the most effective treatment for compassion fatigue, reducing unwanted symptoms of caregiving, and increasing resilience. However, for many caregivers the idea of self-care sounds selfish. Self-care is fuel for your tank. No one would even consider going on a long journey in a car without gas.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

How do you know when you are being negatively impacted by your work or experiencing compassion fatigue? What do those signs/symptoms indicate for you?

Think of a time when you were resilient. What helped you recover?

COMPASSION FATIGUE SYMPTOMS

- Nightmares or flashes of images or stories that you have heard
- Vigilance – feeling like you are “on guard” or anticipating something bad happening
- Anxiety – muscle tension, sleeplessness, racing heart, irritability
- Depression, cynicism, hopelessness

As caregivers, we often minimize our own pain. Careful reflection and consideration of our own thoughts and feelings allows us to address and nurture the pain we may be feeling. This is the emotional and spiritual rest that our souls need to run the marathon of caregiving.

Think of time you may have had one or more of these symptoms. What sustained you during that time?





PREPARE: BUILDING A SELF-CARE/ SOUL-CARE PLAN

Emotional

- Reflection
- Identifying and expressing thoughts and feelings
- Journaling
- Processing and working through emotions

Relational

- Talking through your experiences with someone else
- Feeling supported by others
- Having safe relationships
- Creating physical comfort in relationships
- Identifying communities of support (family, church, groups, clubs)

Physical

- Nourishment – healthy eating
- Exercise – regular exercise can modulate anxiety levels, especially when “importing” traumatic stories and/or events
- Sleep
- Awareness of body

Spiritual

- Making sense of suffering and experiences
- Developing/Maintaining connection with God
- Meditation and Prayer
- Nature
- Life giving experiences (spending time with loved ones, intentionally doing things that help you feel closer to God)

COPING STRATEGY REFLECTIONS

Currently, what are the positive ways that you cope with stress?

Currently, what are the negative or unhealthy ways that you cope with stress?

How will the above listed coping strategies translate to your international trip?
Which ones will work internationally? Which ones will not work at all internationally?

EMOTIONAL & PSYCHOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS

What are the ways that you self-reflect? Do you have opportunities in your life to explore what you think and feel? If so, how do you express yourself?

If something is worrying you or occupying your mind just before falling asleep at night, how do you process what you are thinking about at that time?

What draws you to international or trauma work? Does it support your ego or feed your view of yourself? Is caregiving a pattern from your childhood history? (These are quite normal but essential to explore as you learn better strategies for self-care and soul-care and mitigate the impact of compassion fatigue).

RELATIONAL REFLECTIONS

How likely are you to seek out someone to talk with after experiencing something traumatic or stressful? If you have someone you typically talk with, is that person going on the trip or not? If they are not, what are some reasonable alternatives for you?

Are you comforted by physical touch? Is that a source of comfort that would be feasible for you on the team?

PHYSICAL REFLECTIONS

How will your diet be impacted by the trip? How important is food for you as a coping strategy? What can you do to prepare for this before going on your international trip?

How will your exercise be impacted by this trip? If you exercise regularly, how can you modify your regimen so that it is still a benefit to you on the trip?

How do you sleep in unfamiliar places? How can you prepare for any potential sleep difficulty on the trip?

SPIRITUAL REFLECTIONS

How do you nourish your soul in times of low stress? How do you nourish your soul in times of high stress?

How do you make sense of trauma, evil, and suffering? How has your worldview and faith been impacted by the events in Africa? As you learn of the atrocities, how do you wrestle with the information and the impact it has on your human spirit?

PREPARE: SELF-CARE/SOUL-CARE PLAN

Emotional:

How will you connect with your thoughts and feelings on the trip and what will your forms of expression be?

Relational:

Who will you connect with on the trip? Who do you connect with on the team? If your anchor person is not on the trip, how will you stay connected to that person? What are needs for physical comfort on the trip?

Physical:

What are your plans for the inevitable changes to your diet, exercise, and sleep patterns?

Spiritual:

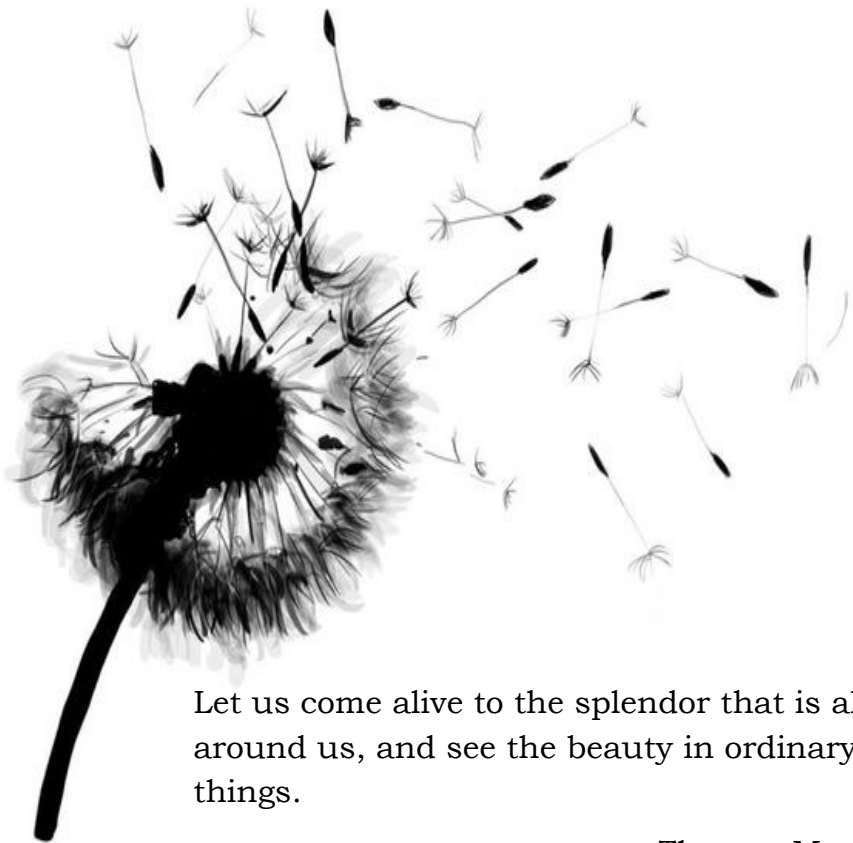
How will you nourish your soul on the trip? How will you foster connection with God? Do you have thoughts about how to wrestle with or process an event or experience that rocks your faith or worldview?

PREPARE: RESILIENCE

Name one thing you can do to build resilience this week:

Name one thing you can do to build resilience for the duration of your international trip:





Let us come alive to the splendor that is all
around us, and see the beauty in ordinary
things.

—Thomas Merton

CHAPTER 2

ENGAGE

GOALS:

Care for members on your team, implement self-care plans, establish structured down-time, continue to build an environment of expression and caring.

SECTIONS:

- Journal Ideas
- Self-care/Soul-care Plan
- Journal Pages

ENGAGE: JOURNAL IDEAS

Jot down your thoughts, feelings, and physical sensations of the day.

Reflection Questions:

What surprised me today?

What touched my heart?

What was I inspired by today?

What images or people come to my mind?

Describe or draw them on a journal page.

Reflect on your Anchor Scripture.

Find a scripture that is meaningful to you and copy it on a journal page.

Color with any color that is soothing to you.

Review your self-care/soul-care plan and pick one thing to do tonight or tomorrow—write it in a journal page.

ENGAGE: SELF-CARE/SOUL-CARE PLAN

Emotional:

How are you identifying and expressing your feelings in the ways that you planned?

Relational:

How are you connecting with other s on this trip?

Physical:

How are you managing diet, exercise, and sleep patterns?

Spiritual:

How are you nourishing your soul during this trip? Describe your connection with God.

DATE:

DATE:

DATE:

DATE:

DATE:

A healthy spirit conquers adversity, but what can
you do when the spirit is crushed?

Proverbs 18:14

DATE:

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DATE:

(with soul, love,
and creativity)

DATE:

DATE:

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DATE:

DATE:

Anytime we speak of the human soul, we are speaking of
God's breath.

~ Judah Smith

DATE:

Although
the world
is full
of suffering,
it is full also
of the overcoming
of it.
Helen Keller



CHAPTER 3

RECOVER

GOALS:

Utilize team relationships as a strength, evaluate extent of compassion fatigue, implement recovery plans.

SECTIONS:

- Revisiting Compassion Fatigue
- Adjusting Self-Care/Soul-Care Plan
- Integrating Experience
- Hope for the Future

RECOVER: COMPASSION FATIGUE SYMPTOMS REVISITED

- Nightmares or flashes of images or stories that you have heard
- Vigilance – feeling like you are “on guard” or anticipating something bad happening
- Anxiety – muscle tension, sleeplessness, racing heart, irritability
- Depression, cynicism, hopelessness
- Irritation with American culture

One month after my trip, I have noticed:

Six months after my trip, I have noticed:

RECOVER: SELF-CARE/SOUL-CARE PLAN

Emotional:

How are you connecting with your thoughts and feelings after the trip and what are your forms of expression?

Relational:

Who are you connecting with after the trip? Do you have intentional time set aside with your anchor person? Will you be spending time with people who understand the complexities of international work?

Physical:

How are you recovering and regaining normalcy in your diet, exercise, and sleep patterns?

Spiritual:


How are you nourishing your soul after the trip? What does your connection with God look like right now?

The impact of my trip on my current life:

To receive God's love, we have to slow down. Without slowing down, we run the risk of responding to old images of God that don't correspond to reality.

~Ted Wueste

Keeping in mind my international trip, my hope for the future is:



... in
quietness
and trust
shall be
your
strength.



TO BE OF USE

The people I love the best
jump into work head first
without dallying in the shallows
and swim off with sure strokes almost out of sight.
They seem to become natives of that element,
the black sleek heads of seals
bouncing like half-submerged balls.

I love people who harness themselves, an ox to a heavy cart,
who pull like water buffalo, with massive patience,
who strain in the mud and the muck to move things forward,
who do what has to be done, again and again.

I want to be with people who submerge
in the task, who go into the fields to harvest
and work in a row and pass the bags along,
who are not parlor generals and field deserters
but move in a common rhythm
when the food must come in or the fire be put out.

The work of the world is common as mud,
botched, it smears the hands, crumbles to dust.

But the thing worth doing well done
has a shape that satisfies, clean and evident.

Greek amphoras for wine or oil,
Hopi vases that held corn are put in museums
but you know they were made to be used.

The pitcher cries for water to carry,
and a person . . . for work that is real.

—M. Piercy