Journaling Exercise: Productively responding to moral distress

1. Take 12-15 minutes from your day.
2. Scroll through the following slides
3. Pause and spend 2 minutes writing down your answers to each (of the four) journaling questions as you encounter them

Bashir Jiwani, PhD
Enquiries and support: bashir@bjei.ca
Integrity
Walking our talk
Central to a meaningful, happy life
-for us as individuals, teams and the organization
Moral Distress

Broken apart, feeling anger, frustration, guilt, and powerlessness from not living up to one’s values

We are all somewhere on this spectrum

Integrity

Wholeness coming from alignment of values and action
Responding to Moral Distress

Examining our values and trying to recalibrate our lives to live these in a new reality

Every day we face challenges

Will we hide from these?

Or use them to clarify what we stand for?

Hiding from our values and trivializing the incoherence between our values and our actions
The process for productively responding to moral distress

1. Name what we are experiencing
2. Make sense of the situation
3. Reintegrate self into life
4. Work to rebuild trust through open, honest dialogue
5. Act with others to bring values to life
1. The telling itself is part of the work of mourning and of healing

Give sorrow words. The grief that does not speak, whispers the o’erfraught heart and bids it break.

- Shakespeare, Macbeth
How are you feeling?

What is in your heart and body?
2. Making meaning

“Suffering which finds meaning ceases somehow to be suffering.”

Viktor Frankl, after surviving Hitler’s death camps but losing his entire family

“We humans can tolerate suffering but we cannot tolerate meaninglessness.”

Archbishop Desmond Tutu
Journaling Questions 2

What is important to you that you have lost?

What is important that you still have?

What do you want more of that you can control? Why?
3. Rebalance

How do I live my values in this new reality?
Journaling Questions 3

How will you bring what really matters to you that you can control into your world?
4. Creating and maintaining trusting relationships

- Residents/ clients/ patients
- Those we lead
- Colleagues
- Those who lead us
What relationships are key to your success?

How will you nurture these?
5. Action

Moving back into the world.
Life will not be the same
Integrate the loss of who we were with
the vision of who we want to become.
Summary: Productively responding to moral distress

1. **Name what we are experiencing**
   Journaling Questions:
   - How are you feeling?
   - What is in your heart and body?

2. **Make sense of the situation**
   Journaling Questions:
   - What is important to you that you have lost?
   - What is important that you still have?
   - What do you want more of that you can control?
   - Why?

3. **Reintegrate self into life**
   Journaling Question:
   - How will you bring what really matters to you that you can control into your world?

4. **Work to rebuild trust through open, honest dialogue**
   Journaling Question:
   - What relationships are key to your success and how will you nurture these?

5. **Act with others to bring values to life** (no journaling questions)