

## Obstacles to Wholeness Journal

(50 points / Homework and Class work)

This journal will be the basis of reflection in class over the next several weeks. If you complete the journal conscientiously you will earn full homework and class work credit. It will be checked for effort and thoughtfulness, not the correctness of content or grammar.

Wholeness is a virtue that is essential to human happiness and is defined in Growing in Christian Morality as “the balancing of all the parts of the self to create a dynamic and harmonious order” (Ahlers, 156). To be “whole” is to feel well in every dimension of the self – physical, emotional, intellectual, social, and spiritual. When any one or more of these dimensions is neglected, conflicted, or over-emphasized, we become distorted and out of balance, less than the whole human being God calls us to be (156). Throughout his life, Jesus modeled and called people to wholeness through his teaching. And in a special way through his healing ministry, he restored people to wholeness. With God’s help, we too can discover the obstacles to wholeness in our lives and the path to restore balance and order.

The goal of this journal is to have you reflect on an obstacle to wholeness in your life. It is important for the meaningfulness of this journal and for your own spiritual growth that you choose an obstacle that you genuinely struggle with and sincerely want to work to find balance. It will not do you much good to fabricate (make up) an obstacle for this journal. The teacher will not share this information with anyone unless the issue involves you hurting yourself or hurting others.

### Sample Obstacles

- Academic pressure
- Parental expectations
- Being an overachiever
- Perfectionism
- Living for recognition
- Living with an unhealthy relationship
- Obsession with popularity
- Gossiping
- Being critical or sarcastic
- Manipulating others
- Peer pressure/Social acceptance
- Being inauthentic/fake
- Living with a chronic sense of inadequacy
- Living in fear
- Living with divorce
- Anger
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Sex
- Drugs Abuse
- Alcohol Abuse
- Pornography
- Cheating
- Coveting material items
- Financial stress
- Bullying
- Risk Taking/Recklessness
- Stealing
- Gambling
- Overeating or extreme dieting
- Racism
- Homophobia
- Sexism

### Entry #1

Write a paragraph about your obstacle. The paragraph explaining what the obstacle is, how does it affect your ability to find wholeness, why it is a struggle for you to overcome it, and why you want to overcome it.

My obstacle is being overly critical or sarcastic in life. It does not really affect me in my path to wholeness, but it is the only obstacle that I can really relate to on this sheet. It is hard for me to overcome the feeling of sarcasm because it is so integral to my personality and who I am. By nature, I am somewhat of a

cynical person. I am not the sort of happy and cheery person that many are, but rather the cynical one that lies within all of us - I just express it on the outside. I want to overcome this obstacle because perhaps it will make my life better; I have no way of knowing whether it is what I need in life or not. Hopefully, I can gain something from trying to eliminate this obstacle from my life, and become more whole.

## Entry #2

Watch [Billy Corgan's Interview](#) on his struggle with wholeness. Take some time to reflect on any of the insights he makes about struggling with wholeness. Do any of the feelings or thoughts he brings up connect to how you have felt?

I cannot really connect with the things that he says because I do not really suffer from most of the problems that he suffers from. I am more or less a singular entity - I can deal with most of my problems myself, instead of needing to resort to external methods of coping.

### Entry #3

Take some time to pray, meditate, or reflect on your chosen obstacle to wholeness for at least ten minutes. It's encouraged for you to go for a walk, find a quiet place, or journal. Use the space below to give a few sentences on anything from your current struggles, some hopes/ fears for this obstacle, or an update on how it's currently affecting your life in the last few days- anything that would be helpful to process.

My personal obstacle is that of being too sarcastic all the time. A lot of the time, I cannot help but to make biting remarks to other people - often harmless, yet caustic all the same. It does not really negatively affect my life, since nothing really ever happens that makes it a problem, but it is a bit improper, and it is a bit annoying sometimes.

### Entry #4

Read the Gospel passage below, then watch as [Tiffany shares](#) what happens when academic stress causes her to loose control. Do you see any connections between Martha in the Gospel and Tiffany? Do you see any connections between either of Martha/Tiffany and you?

Luke 10: 38-42 Martha and Mary Now as they were traveling along, He entered a village; and a woman named Martha welcomed Him into her home. She had a sister called Mary, who was seated at the Lord's feet, listening to His word. But Martha was distracted with all her preparations; and she came up to Him and said, "Lord, do You not care that my sister has left me to do all the serving alone? Then tell her to help me." But the Lord answered and said to her, "Martha, Martha, you are worried and bothered about so many things; but only one thing is necessary, for Mary has chosen the good part, which shall not be taken away from her."

The parallel was that both of the people had been given a lot of responsibility, and were having trouble keeping it up, so they turned to the wrong thing to try and fix the problem.

### Entry #5

Find a friend, mentor, or parent and ask them to listen to you as you take about your obstacle to wholeness. Try if possible to make this a face-to-face experience rather than electronically. What insights did you gain from talking it out.

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### Entry #6

Read the Gospel Passage from Matthew. What do you think Jesus is teaching us about the role of faith and wholeness? What can you take from Jesus' words that might help you in your own temptation. Be specific.

Matthew 6: "For this reason I say to you, do not be worried about your life, as to what you will eat or what you will drink; nor for your body, as to what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air, that they do not sow, nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not worth much more than they? And who of you by being worried can add a single hour to his life? And why are you worried about clothing? Observe how the lilies of the field grow; they do not toil nor do they spin, yet I say to you that not even Solomon in all his glory clothed himself like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, will He not much more clothe you? You of little faith! Do not worry then, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear for clothing?' For the Gentiles eagerly seek all these things; for your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you. "So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."

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### Entry #7

Take some time to pray, meditate, or reflect on your chosen obstacle to wholeness for at least ten minutes. It's encouraged for you to go for a walk, find a quiet place, or journal. Use the space below to give a few sentences on anything from your current struggles, some hopes/ fears for this obstacle, or an update on how it's currently affecting your life in the last few days-anything that would be helpful to process.

My life seems to be going relatively on path. Although I did not exactly do very well last semester, most of my grades have been going back up again, so I am not worried. I am spending my time wisely and putting effort into my work.



### Entry #8

Watch Half of Us piece "[Technology](#)," and reflect on how connect with information in the video. Does technology keep you from feeling balance in your life? Does it contribute to other problems for you?

A series of horizontal lines for writing, crossed out with a large black 'X'.

**Entry #9**

Find a friend, mentor, or parent and ask them to listen to you as you take about your obstacle to wholeness. Try if possible to make this a face-to-face experience rather than electronically. What insights did you gain from talking it out.

I did not gain any insights because I realized my situation successfully by myself. I have knowledge of my own problems and I do not need help or insight from other people to be able to understand and work around my obstacle.

**Entry #10**

In the space below, reflect on how one of the miracles of Jesus addresses obstacle and weakness. Examine how the character(s) are both physically changed, but also emotionally and spiritually healed. Finally, reflect on how this miracle connects with you and your obstacle. What do you need to be "healed" of this obstacle? Are there ways in which God can provide healing for you that you can't do on your own?

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|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Calming the Storm at Sea    | Matthew 8: 23-27  |
| Healing of the Paralytic    | Mark 2: 1-12      |
| Cleansing of the Ten Lepers | Luke 17: 11-19    |
| Feeding the 5,000           | John 6:1-15       |
| Walking on Water            | Matthew 14: 22-33 |
| The Man Born Blind          | John 9:1-12       |
| Raising of Lazarus          | John 11:1-44      |

In the healing of the paralytic, the man who is paralyzed I heralded entirely by his faith in Jesus and his friends' faith in Jesus. All he had to do was believe in himself and in Jesus, and he was healed of his sins - changed forever in life. personally, I do not think that there are ways that God can heal me that I cannot do myself.