



## Introduction

Maybe our most important work is to re-imagine imagination. For instance, think of what happened when you got out of bed this morning. After a shower and a cup of coffee, you didn't just pull on fresh clothes, you also pulled out a jewelry box and slipped on your grandmother's ring. As you slid it on your finger, she slid, not just into your memory, but into your day. Now, because of imagination, you aren't just elegant; you're *accompanied*. Or how about that invisible friend of yours when you were a child? Imagination made sure you didn't travel through those early years alone. It conjured up a loyal friend. Even today, amidst the hustle and bustle of adult life, tell me you don't hear the guidance of ancestors and friends all day long. It's all one giant reminder that imagination doesn't just improve our lives, it populates it.

And *illuminates* it too. That's right. Imagination isn't just a force that drives us forward toward a more perfect future, it also pulls the sacred into our impoverished present. Imagination is what transforms trees from potential firewood into wise friends. Imagination is what moves us from lording over the natural world to seeing ourselves as part of it. It gives the world a soul. And not just the natural world, but the ordinary world too. Through the lens of imagination, we perceive the common as precious, even miraculous. The laughter of our children becomes the sound of angels. Sunshine on our face becomes a greater treasure than gold. Our "everyday" lives are understood as amazing adventures and inexplicably lucky gifts.

So friends, this month, do everything you can to soak in *the many* messages of imagination. It's not just shouting, "Improve the world!" It's also pleading, "Let the world come alive!"

## ***Spiritual Exercise: Imagine the Colors & Location of Your Happiness***

The creative folk at Soul Pancake came up with this exercise. Inspired by art therapists, they asked people to color code all the things in their lives that bring them comfort and happiness. And then with those colors in mind, the participants imaginatively located those sources of happiness on their bodies.

Here's the video to guide you on your way:

<https://www.facebook.com/soulpancake/videos/10155393464706117/?v=10155393464706117>

Unlike those in the video, you may not have access to a giant sheet of paper on which to trace your entire body. No worries. Just pull out whatever size paper you have and trace out a smaller figure of yourself on it. The important part is not the size of your creation, but the location on which you place your meaning-filled colors.

Just as the art therapist encourages in the video, be sure to pay attention to which color you start with, which color anchors your effort and you. Come to your group ready to share & what you learned and the journey of your colors.

## **Chalice Lighting**

Imagination is so powerful that it could set forth 400, 500 years of something wrong, which means that it very well could set forth 400, 500 years of something right. That's the beauty of humanity. *Jason Reynolds, Fortifying Imagination*

**Check-in** *Share your highs and lows since we last met focusing on what drains you and what lifts you up. We give each other the gift of listening without asking questions or offering advice to allow people the safety to share what's in their hearts.*

## Quotes for Inspiration/Readings

They are ill discoverers that think there is no land when they see nothing but sea. *Francis Bacon*

I like nonsense, it wakes up the brain cells. Fantasy is a necessary ingredient in living, it's a way of looking at life through the wrong end of a telescope. Which is what I do, and that enables you to laugh at life's realities.

*Theodore Geisel/Dr. Seuss*

My favorite Baldwin quote is, "The interior life is the real life... The intangible dreams of a person may have a tangible effect on the world." It's basically saying, what one can imagine, internally, what one can think about when nobody knows, when nobody's around, one's secrets, could shift human life. What an amazing thing.

*Jason Reynolds*

Imagination is one of the spoils of colonization, which in many ways is claiming who gets to imagine the future for a given geography. Losing our imagination is a symptom of trauma. Reclaiming the right to dream the future, strengthening the muscle to imagine together as Black people, is a revolutionary decolonizing activity.

*adrienne maree brown, Emergent Strategy*

Fairy Tales are more than true; not because they tell us that dragons exist, but because they tell us dragons can be beaten. *G. K. Chesterton*

**Questions** *Pick the one question that speaks to you most and let it lead you where you need to go. The goal is to figure out what being a part of a people of **Imagination** means for you and your daily living.*

1. Have you ever been "saved" by your imagination
2. Has imagination ever led you astray?
3. Is your imagination kind or cruel to you?
4. We all live with a voice that says "One day I will..." What "possible life" has been with you the longest?
5. Albert Einstein said, "Imagination is more important than knowledge." Do you buy it?
6. Is there more to see in your "enemy" than what you've been imagining?

**Sitting in Silence** *Take a few moments to sit quietly and reflect upon your thoughts.*

**Sharing/Deep Listening** *Respond with your thoughts and experiences with the topic. We create a safe space by listening deeply and not responding. When sharing, connect with what is true for you. When listening, give the speaker your full attention rather than thinking about what you will share.*

**Reflection and Gratitude** *This is a time to respond briefly to something another person said or to relate additional thoughts that may have occurred as others shared. Consider lifting up one comment or experience for which you are particularly grateful.*

**Song:** Pure Imagination by *Ant Law*

<https://music.youtube.com/watch?v=nooi8SrCASY&list=PLvXOKgOQVYP5L-CbY1QYQ4KUHLqWztTbp>

## Extinguishing the Chalice

Listen To The Mustn'ts

Listen to Mustn'ts, child, listen to the Don'ts.

Listen to the Shouldn'ts, the Impossible, the Won'ts.

Listen to the Never Haves, then listen close to me.

Anything can happen, child, Anything can be.

By *Shel Silverstein*