

USG Racial Healing SGM ~ Widening the Circle ~ February, 2021

drawn from Soul Matters materials, see the full packet for more of all of these elements

www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com



Session Plan

Chalice Lighting

Differences are not intended to separate, to alienate. We are different precisely in order to realize our need of one another. ~ Desmond Tutu

Check-in *Share how you are doing and about any racial healing that has occurred recently.*

Quotes for Inspiration/Readings

American history is longer, larger, more various, more beautiful, and more terrible than anything anyone has ever said about it. James Baldwin

You have to love your country the way you love your friends, the way your spouse loves you, right? The people who love you don't blow smoke up your backside. They tell you hard truths. They love you... my wife, if something's going wrong, she's going to tell me... That's the nature of the relationship... The question really is... can we get to a place where citizens are encouraged to see themselves critically, encouraged to see their history critically? Ta-Nehisi Coates

Dear Black America — We are many things, aren't we? We are hair. God yes, we are hair. And song. And memory. We are a language so deep it has no need for words. And we are words that feint, dart, and wheel like birds. Like James Brown, we feel good. Like Fannie Lou Hamer, we are sick and tired. We are fearsome. We are fire. Like God, we are that we are. Tracy K. Smith

We must learn to live together as [siblings] or perish together as fools. Martin Luther King, Jr

Diversity is being invited to the party; inclusion is being asked to dance. Vernā Myers

The thing that's really slick about whiteness, if you will, is that most of the benefits can be obtained without ever doing anything personally... There are a whole set of assumptions that flow from being white, just like there are a whole set of benefits that flow from being male—you know, being a man doesn't mean that you have antipathy toward women, but if society is patriarchal, which a lot of people say it is, it means that the way resources are distributed in society benefits men. In that sense, men are not innocent, even though they may not personally have antipathy toward women. In the same way, in that sense, whites are not innocent. They're given the spoils of a racist system, even if they're not personally racist. John A. Powell

Open your hands if you want to be held. Rumi

If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together. Lilla Watson

To be free, you must embrace
the breadth of your own existence
without apology...
But to actually be free, you must

know and you must fight for the entire
Universes inside of everyone else.
Theresa I. Soto

We all get shit wrong. So the question is: Have you built the capacity to care more about others than you care about your own ego? Will you choose to protect someone else over your own ego?

Austin Channing Brown

You are not a drop in the ocean, you are the ocean in a drop. Rumi

Questions

1. When were you “saved” by someone who widened a circle to let you in?
2. Are you a circle maker, a circle joiner or a circle avoider?
3. Who needs you to widen the circle for them?
4. Has an experience of being excluded permanently left a mark on you?
5. Has an experience of failing to confront racism permanently left a mark on you?
6. How has your definition of racism widened or shifted since you were younger?
7. How has your answer to “Are you racist?” changed over the years?
8. What beloved aspect of “UU worship” might you have to let go of to make UU worship more inclusive?
9. How has your definition of patriotism changed and widened over the years?
10. Has taking a trip ever widened your circle of concern?
11. Is your circle of friends keeping you small?
12. Could shrinking your circle of aspirations set you free?
13. Has your sense of self ever widened so much that you’ve felt “one with the universe”?
14. What has life taught you about widening circles to include your “enemies”?
15. Covid shrank our circles of connection. Is there any way in which that was a blessing to you?

Three Deep Breaths

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 reflect briefly on 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 Brown Girl, Aaradhna <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xnAFtNksXDE>

Extinguishing the Chalice

It’s the community’s job to figure out how we can stretch into the so-called margins to broaden our understanding and the ability to be inclusive. Inclusivity is not “how do we make you a part of what we are?” but “how do we become more of what you are?” angel Kyodo williams Sensei