

USG SGM ~ Balance ~ July 2022

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

www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com



Chalice Lighting: I arise in the morning torn between a desire to improve the world and a desire to enjoy the world. This makes it hard to plan the day. - *E.B. White*

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.*

Intro: Roots of Balance: From Latin *bi* (two) and *lanx* (plate or dish) to balance scales, both sides being equal. Add to this the idea of a still point from *stille* (at rest) and *peuk* (which includes the idea to mend).

Spiritual Exercise: Put Down Their Work & Pick Up Your Balance

Often our imbalance is our own doing. Frequently, we just take on too much. But sometimes it's not that simple. Sometimes, our imbalance is about us taking on too much *that is not really ours to do or fix*. In other words, it's often accepting responsibility for other people's weight and worry that tips us over. Or as organizational consultant, Betsy Jacobson, puts it, "Balance is not better time-management, but better boundary-management." So this exercise invites us to regain our balance by letting go of that which is not ours. The instructions are as simple as they are challenging:

Identify one way in which you are taking on something that is not really your responsibility. Then find a kind way to put up a boundary and give their "work" back to them.

Here's a great reflection to give you some motivation:

Sorry, Hon, Not My Table, Rev. Meg Barnhouse

<https://www.questformeaning.org/big-questions/sorry-hon-not-table/>

Come to your group ready to share what you "gave back," how you put up that boundary and how it gave you back a bit of balance. There will likely be some bumps in the road and some costs. Come ready to share those too, and what it taught you.

Quotes for Inspiration/Readings

Letting go helps us to live in a more peaceful state of mind and helps restore our balance. It allows others to be responsible for themselves and for us to take our hands off situations that do not belong to us. - *Melody Bettie*

To do two things at once is to do neither. - *Publilius Syrus*

All of a person's misfortune comes from one thing, which is not knowing how to sit quietly in a room. - *Blaise Pascal*

Work, love and play are the great balance wheels of our being. - *Orison Swett Marden*

The key to keeping your balance is knowing where you lost it. - *Anonymous*

There is peaceful
There is wild
I am both at the same time - *Nayyirah Waheed*

We are very good at preparing to live, but not very good at living. We know how to sacrifice ten years for a diploma, and we are willing to work very hard to get a job, a car, a house, and so on. But we have difficulty remembering that we are alive in the present moment, the only moment there is for us to be alive. - *Thích Nhất Hạnh*

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 Celebrating Blessings means for you and your daily living.*

1. What if the problem is not about being busy and all those balls you're juggling? Could the balance you seek be about connecting who you are inside with how you use your time outside? Are you sure that you are overwhelmed, or just out of alignment?
2. What "congruence" is calling to you? What "alignment" is your deepest self longing for?
3. As a kid, when did you have that feeling of everything being in perfect balance? Is that just a nice memory? Or might it be a guidepost to what you need in your life right now?
4. What happens when you sit quietly in a room? Do the voices you hear center and balance you? Or leave you off-balance and pulled off-center?
5. We struggle between our desire to save the world and savor the world. But what if it's really a matter of listening better to both of them? How is what you savor calling you to save or protect something? How are your efforts to save world asking you to get better at finding moments of personal balance and joy?
6. Psychologists say we need a balance of work, love and play. Which of these three legs needs more of your attention? Have you become a one or two-legged stool?

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.*

Songs

Both Sides Now, Joni Mitchell <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pbn6a0AFfnM>

Living In The Moment, Jason Mraz https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YUFs_1vKYIY

Extinguishing the Chalice I try to take only as much as I can give. - *Anonymous*