

USG Racial Healing SGM ~ Balance ~ July, 2022

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

www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com



Session Plan

Chalice Lighting

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

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

Reading, Dark and Light, Light and Dark by Jacqui James

We shape language and we are shaped by it. In our culture, white is esteemed. It is heavenly, sun-like, clean, pure, immaculate, innocent, and beautiful. At the same time, black is evil, wicked, gloomy, depressing, angry, sullen. Ascribing negative and positive values to black and white enhances the institutionalization of this culture's racism.

Let us acknowledge the negative connotations of whiteness. White things can be soft, vulnerable, pallid, and ashen. Light can be blinding, bleaching, enervating. Conversely, we must acknowledge that darkness has a redemptive character, that in darkness there is power and beauty. The dark nurtured and protected us before our birth...

The words black and dark don't need to be destroyed or ignored, only balanced and reclaimed in their wholeness. The words white and light don't need to be destroyed or ignored, only balanced and reclaimed in their wholeness. Imagine a world that had only light—or dark. We need both. Dark and light. Light and dark.

Questions

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?

7. Are you trying too hard to make something work? Might balance for you be a matter of accepting defeat or finally letting it go?
8. Are you off-balance because you're in a tug-of-war? You do know that you're allowed to simply let go of the rope, right?
9. What if balance isn't about doing a better job juggling what is, but instead a matter of returning to something that was?
10. Is it time to give up one of your passions so the other can fully live? Is trying to balance them all cutting you off from connecting fully with any one of them?
11. Are you out-of-balance because you've taken on too much or taken on too much *that is not really yours to do or fix*?
12. Is your life out of balance because you are taking on too much or because you want too much?
13. Do you really need better time-management? Or could better boundary-management be your true work?
14. Is time to toss balance to the side and go all in?
15. Do you ever get sick of people telling you that you need more balance in your life?
16. Are you trying to both hold on to and let go of someone at the same time?

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

Balance, Savara

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GyqP5vAYZzw>

Extinguishing the Chalice

Your joy is your sorrow unmasked. And the selfsame well from which your laughter rises was often times filled with your tears. And how else can it be? The deeper that sorrow carves into your being, the more joy you can contain. Is not the cup that holds your wine the very cup that was burned in the potter's oven? And is not the lute that soothes your spirit, the very wood that was hollowed with knives? When you are joyous, look deep into your heart and you shall find it is only that which has given you sorrow that is giving you joy. When you are sorrowful look again in your heart, and you shall see that in truth you are weeping for that which has been your delight. *Khalil Gibran*