

## USG Racial Healing SGM ~ Welcome ~ August, 2022

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

[www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com](http://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com)



### Session Plan

**Chalice Lighting** When you recover or discover something that nourishes your soul and brings joy, care enough about yourself to make room for it in your life - *Jean Shinoda Bolen*

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

### Quotes for Inspiration/Readings

I believe every inch of America is sacred, from sea to shining sea. I believe we make it holy by who we welcome and by how we relate to each other. Call it my Muslim eyes on the American project. "We made you different nations and tribes that you may come to know one another," says the Qur'an.

-*Eboo Patel*

I'm on my way to a job where I am the only black person in my office. I work with people who either don't know or don't care about Alton Sterling or Philando Castile. They are going to ask me "How are you this morning?" and the simple truth is that I can't be honest. I can't say that I'm scared and angry and that I want to take a mental health day. I can't say that I and people like me subconsciously fear for our lives on a daily basis. I can't say how I am this morning because it will make them uncomfortable and offended. The offensiveness of my pain is why we have to remind America over and over again that Black Lives Matter: because if you lack empathy for our tears it's likely that you lack respect for our lives. - *Shane Paul Neil*

The me that shows up in mostly white UU spaces isn't inauthentic, but is guarded and not my full self.

- *Rev. Marisol Caballero*

Hospitality is a form of worship. - *Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 127a*

### Brave Space by Micky ScottBey Jones

Together we will create brave space  
Because there is no such thing as a "safe space."  
We exist in the real world  
We all carry scars and we have all caused wounds.  
In this space  
We seek to turn down the volume of the outside world,  
We amplify voices that fight to be heard elsewhere,  
We call each other to more truth and love,  
We have the right to start somewhere and  
continue to grow.

We have the responsibility to examine what we think  
we know.  
We will not be perfect.  
This space will not be perfect.  
It will not always be what we wish it to be  
But  
It will be our brave space together,  
and  
We will work on it side by side.

### Guest House by Jelaluddin Rumi

This being human is a guest house.  
Every morning is a new arrival.  
A joy, a depression, a meanness,  
some momentary awareness comes

as an unexpected visitor.  
Welcome and entertain them all!  
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,  
who violently sweep your house

empty of its furniture,  
still, treat each guest honorably.  
[S]he may be clearing you out  
for some new delight.  
The dark thought, the shame, the malice,

meet them at the door laughing,  
and invite them in.  
Be grateful for whoever comes,  
because each has been sent  
as a guide from beyond.

## Questions

1. Do you spend more time welcoming in gifts or keeping out threats?
2. Can you remember the last time you truly “widened the circle”?
3. Might widening the circle mean you stepping away from the center?
4. Do you notice your ruts? Have you slipped so deeply into routine that you don’t even notice anymore? When was the last time you welcomed in something new?
5. What would it mean to give yourself permission to shut the door for a while? Have you been too welcoming and tolerant of a toxic relationship or soul-killing commitment?
6. Is your house really ready for guests? Sometimes we need to get our house in order before we welcome in the new? What kind of clutter in your life needs cleaned up?
7. Is believing “I’m the only one” or “No one can understand” separating you from belonging?
8. Do you know yourself well enough to know where you belong?
9. Do you believe that you have to earn belonging? What would your life look like if you didn’t have to prove that you’re worthy?
10. That mess or roadblock which just came your way? Are you sure that it’s not a guest in disguise trying to offer you a gift? Are you sure you need to fight or fix it? Or is welcoming it in and embracing it what you really need to do?
11. Are you ready to finally let that grief in?

## 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** [Love Reaches Out](#) Erik Martinez Resly

## Extinguishing the Chalice

Principles by Danez Smith

let us not be scared of the work because  
it’s hard  
let us move the mountain  
because the mountain must move  
let us, oh lords above us and within,  
let us be useful to our neighbors  
& tender their wounds

let us be more bandage than blade  
unless the blade is needed  
let us be a sword against what does not  
bring us closer to home  
let us be dangerous to that which fails us  
and bring us a world good to us,  
all of us all us  
amen