



Chalice Lighting: The universe buries strange jewels deep within us all, and then stands back to see if we can find them. The hunt to uncover those jewels—that’s creative living. The courage to go on that hunt in the first place—that’s what separates a mundane existence from a more enchanted one. [*Elizabeth Gilbert*](#)

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: “Prior to the mid-19th century and the Darwinian revolution, the words “creative” and “creativity” were not used at all, and “creation” was associated with the divine. [But then] Darwin showed that nature could be creative, without appealing to a divine creator.” – [Unknown source](#)

Spiritual Exercises

Option A: *This Week’s Portfolio*

You don’t have to know how to use a paintbrush or put words into poetry to be an artist. Creativity is something we do with our very living. We are all composing pieces of art with our relationships, activism, parenting and jobs. And yet we don’t often think of our daily living that way. So, this month, let’s think that way! And let’s do it by assembling a “life art portfolio.” Here are your instructions:

Set aside some time on a Saturday or Sunday to reflect on your past week *of regular events* and then make a list of the everyday “art pieces” or “creative projects” you have built, composed, planted or recreated *in your daily living*. Here are some examples of items that might make it onto your list (i.e. into your “regular life art portfolio”):

I created joy inside my child.

I repainted my mood after a crappy day at work.

I built a new proposal at work.

I planted a seed of hope in my friend.

I balanced my checkbook with the ease and grace of a ballet dancer. You get the idea.

Come to the group ready to share what surprised you most about doing the exercise.

Option B: *Share the Piece That Means the Most*

Many of us have a special piece of art which is meaningful to us beyond its beauty. Maybe it was a piece passed down from our parents or made for us by a child. Or it could be a piece you bought for yourself during a difficult time in your life or while on a life-changing trip.

This exercise invites you to share that piece of art with your group members. But here’s the important part: sharing *the story* of the piece is as important as showing the piece itself. In other words, what this exercise is really about is helping you reconnect with the story of why that art piece means so much. Too often the story and meaning of such art pieces fade. We walk by the art

and it blends into the wall or the counter on which it sits. It no longer “grabs us.” So, in the end, this exercise is about reconnecting with the story of the piece so *that* its meaning can come alive for you again.

Wise Words

All the arts we practice are apprenticeship. The big art is our life. [M.C. Richards](#)

Normality is a paved road: It's comfortable to walk, but no flowers grow on it. [Vincent Van Gogh](#)

The most regretful people on earth are those who felt the call to creative work, who felt their own creative power restive and uprising, and gave to it neither power nor time. [Mary Oliver](#)

Every act of creation is first of all an act of destruction. [Pablo Picasso](#)

We are ourselves creations. We are meant to continue creativity by being creative ourselves. This is the God-force extending itself through us. Creativity is God's gift to us. Using creativity is our gift back to God. [Julia Cameron](#)

We design our world, while our world acts back on us and designs us. [Anne-Marie Willis](#)

We live at a time when humans believe themselves fabulously capable of creation, but they do not know what to create. [Jose Ortega Y Gasset](#)

Questions *Pick the one question that speaks to you most and let it lead you where you need to go.*

- Has creativity ever gotten you in trouble?
- Has creativity ever healed or saved you?
- Were you a child that colored in the lines or outside of them? Does that childhood self still have a leading role in your life?
- Ralph Waldo Emerson said that two things prevent most of us from creative living: fear of public opinion and undue reverence for one's own consistency. Might either of those be true of you?
- Could that restless or sour feeling in your gut be [your unused creativity](#)?

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.*

Extinguishing the Chalice *A bird doesn't sing because it has an answer, it sings because it has a song. Maya Angelou*