



## USG SGM ~ Courage ~ October 2022

drawn from Soul Matters materials, see the full packet for more of all of these elements  
[www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com](http://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com)

**Chalice Lighting** We need the courage to question the powers that be, the courage to be impatient with evil and patient with people.... In many instances we will be stepping out on nothing, and just hoping to land on something. But that's the struggle. To live is to wrestle with despair, yet never allow despair to have the last word. - Cornel West

**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** Courage is a heart word. The root of the word courage is cor - the Latin word for heart. In one of its earliest forms, the word courage meant "To speak one's mind by telling all one's heart." Over time, this definition has changed, and today, we typically associate courage with heroic and brave deeds. But in my opinion, this definition fails to recognize the inner strength and level of commitment required for us to actually speak honestly and openly about who we are and about our experiences -- good and bad. - Brené Brown

### **Spiritual Exercises Strengthen Your Courage to Apologize & Forgive**

Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, is known as the holiest day of the Jewish year. Working up the courage to make amends or forgive is never easy. It's scary. So often we run from it. Often at the expense of a wounded heart, ours or another's. This exercise invites you to stop running, to carve out the time and focus to understand - just a bit better - what makes it so hard for us.

Below are two podcasts about forgiving and apologizing. Engage them this month in the spirit of discernment and spiritual practice. In other words, don't just try to learn from them, but also allow them to take you back to that place in your life where the work of forgiveness or apology remains unresolved. Find in them a skill or invitation to make at least one step toward the work of repair.

The Power of Mercy: <https://hiddenbrain.org/podcast/the-power-of-mercy/>

The Power of Apologies: <https://hiddenbrain.org/podcast/the-power-of-apologies/>

A few extras:

- It may help to know you are not alone this month. In early October, our Jewish friends will be honoring Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement, known as the holiest day of the Jewish year. If you want to explore stories of forgiveness from the perspective of this tradition, you can find them [here](https://jweekly.com/1996/09/20/forgiveness-at-yom-kippur-readers-share-their-stories-of-reconciliation/). <https://jweekly.com/1996/09/20/forgiveness-at-yom-kippur-readers-share-their-stories-of-reconciliation/>
- The Buddhist teacher Jack Kornfield has a beautiful forgiveness meditation. It might also be helpful in your journey this month. You can find it [here](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PbHKCy4f6Dk). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PbHKCy4f6Dk>

### **Quotes for Inspiration/Readings**

Here is the world. Beautiful and terrible things will happen. Do not be afraid.  
- Frederick Buechner

White supremacy culture's number one strategy is to make us afraid. When we are afraid, we lose touch with our power and are more easily manipulated by any promise of safety, even as we come to slowly learn that safety dependent on violence is not safe at all. - Tema Okun

It takes courage ... to endure the sharp pains of self-discovery rather than choose to take the dull pain of unconsciousness that would last the rest of our lives. - Marianne Williamson

I believe that courage follows love... When I love something, I can be very strong in defense of it, or very brave in pursuit of it. And I think my own courage has come from being loved well enough so that I could love myself and others. - A Soul Matters Member

Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment that something else is more important than fear. - Ambrose Redmoon

**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 Courage means for you and your daily living.*

1. What fears did your family of origin pass on to you?
2. What is the greatest act of courage that you directly witnessed? And how did it change you?
3. Has bravely not running away ever produced surprising results?
4. Are you being called to bravely not run away today?
5. What do you know now about courage that you didn't know when you were younger?
6. How would your life be enriched by bravely forgiving someone? Maybe even yourself?
7. What if Adrienne Maree Brown is right that joy and self-love are among today's most courageous acts of resistance?
8. In resistance to white supremacy culture, what are you courageous enough to stop normalizing? (inspired by sonyareneetaylor)

**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.*

**Singing (or watching a video of someone else singing)**

Click [here](#) for the YouTube playlist on Courage.

[https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLvXOKgOQVYP5ipRhSnyjS-kY78BX\\_hnr\\_](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLvXOKgOQVYP5ipRhSnyjS-kY78BX_hnr_)

Click [here](#) for video on Courage To Live Undivided, Parker Palmer

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&time\\_continue=2&v=o5ZLt4yyYrw&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&time_continue=2&v=o5ZLt4yyYrw&feature=emb_logo)

**Extinguishing the Chalice** You can choose courage or you can choose comfort, but you cannot have both. - Brené Brown