

## USG SGM ~ The Path of Change ~ November, 2022

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

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### Chalice Lighting

I wonder, particularly in a time where everything seems urgent, what the role of pause and breath is, in this season, to help us gear up for whatever this transformational moment we find ourselves in is. [Rev. Jen Bailey](#)

**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.*

### Spiritual Exercises

#### Where Were You When it Happened?

*And from then on, things were just never the same. - Howard Zinn*

It doesn't always happen, but it does happen at least once to us all: Some major historical or societal event occurs, and we never quite see the world the same as before. The external event altered us internally. So what was it for you? What's your "things were never the same again" story? Spend some time this month revisiting it. And don't just think about it, externalize it. Paint, journal, write a poem, find a song connected to it. If you're not feeling overly creative, push yourself to have a deep conversation about it with someone close to you. Share your "never the same story" and invite them to share theirs.

A few questions to ask yourself along the way:

- What was happening for me personally that led to the event having such an impact?
- How was your new way of looking at the world a gift? How was it a loss?
- Who do you think you would have been if it hadn't happened?

#### Which Change Quote Calls to You?

Sometimes we read a quote and it perfectly captures what's going on for us right now. Or allows us to view our current circumstances in a new light. With this in mind, spend some time this month reading through the quotes in the Companion Pieces section below to *find the one that best illuminates your journey with the path of change.*

We encourage you to use the same discernment practice with these quotes as you with the packet's list of questions:

- Read through the list a few times, noting which ones "shimmer" (i.e. call to you or have an emotional gravitational pull for you). It often helps to circle or star these quotes that stand out.
- With each reading, narrow your focus in on those that stick out, until you finally settle on the one that pulls at you the most.
- Then make space to reflect on the gift, challenge or insight your chosen quote is offering you.

- Some of us may want to go further and capture your reflections with journaling or creative expression.

Come to your group ready to share your quote and the journey it took you on.

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

I believe in waking up in the middle of the night and packing our bags and leaving our worst selves for our better ones. *Leslie Jamison*

And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom. *Anais Nin*

The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change. *Carl Rogers*

That broken thing you keep trying to put back together is keeping your life from that beautiful thing that is waiting to be built. [Trent Shelton](#)

**Questions** *Don't treat these questions like "homework" or try to answer every one. Instead, make time to meditate on the list and then pick the one question that speaks to you most. The goal is to figure out which question is "yours." Which question captures the call of your inner voice? Which one contains "your work"? And what is that question trying to get you to notice or acknowledge? Often it helps to read the list to a friend or loved one and ask them which question they think is the question you need to wrestle with!*

1. If you could change one thing about your past, what would it be?
2. How good was your family at changing their minds and admitting they were wrong? And how has that shaped you?
3. Are you sure that it is too late to try?
4. What do you wish you would have changed your mind about earlier?
5. What part of you no longer exists? How are you *truly and radically* different than your younger self?
6. Is that broken thing you keep trying to put back together keeping your life from that beautiful thing that is waiting to be built? ([Trent Shelton](#))

**Sitting in Silence** *Take a few moments to sit quietly and reflect upon the path to courage.*

**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**

Let difficulty transform you. And it will. In my experience, we just need help learning how not to run away. *Pema Chodron*