

USG SGM ~ Mystery ~ December 2023

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



Chalice Lighting

You bring yourself before the sacred, before the holy, before what is ultimate and bigger than your lone life... You stand at the edge of mystery, at the edge of the deep... Meanwhile, the armful of worries you brought to the edge of mystery have fluttered to your feet... -Rev. Angela Herrera

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

1) Return to Ordinary Moments of Luminosity

We've all experienced it: the mystery of an ordinary moment that suddenly lit up and reminded you of the marvel and preciousness of being alive. It moved you from a feeling of "the same old, same old" to a feeling of dancing with the sacred. Or maybe you heard a voice in your head saying, "This matters most!" and "Don't forget this!" It added meaning to our lives and defined meaning at the same time. With this in mind, spend some time this month reclaiming a handful of those mysteriously luminous moments. Here's a video to help you on your way: The Moment: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jNVPaINZD_I

As you watch it, allow it to take you back to similar ordinary but radiant moments from your life. After watching it, you can keep it simple and just list some of those impactful memories that came to mind. Or you can take this exercise to the next level by identifying one luminous moment for each decade or life-stage of your life. Some may even find themselves wanting to write prose or poetry about one of those moments.

2) Draw Your Dreams

There are few things as mysterious as our dreams. Many consider them doorways into our unconscious, revealing our anxieties before we are even aware we have them. Creative types also find their dreams can help them get unstuck in a way their conscious mind couldn't. Some even say their dreams gave them entire visions for what to create. So, this month, play with this mystery a bit by drawing, painting or collaging one or two of your dreams!

We encourage you to do some dream journaling before you sit down to create. Here are a few links about dream journaling to help you out:

<https://thecreativeindependent.com/guides/how-to-start-and-keep-a-dream-journal>

<https://medium.com/dream-codes/how-to-journal-your-dreams-the-right-way-to-unlock-their-meaning-f278f6f87f85>

Quotes for Inspiration/Readings

Let mystery have its place in you... leave a little fallow corner in your heart ready for any seed the winds may bring, and reserve a nook of shadow for the passing bird; keep a place in your heart for the unexpected guests, an altar for an unknown God. -Henri-Frederic Ariele

Those who dwell among the beauties and mysteries of the earth are never alone or weary of life. -Rachel Carson

Let me keep my distance, always, from those
who think they have the answers.
Let me keep company always with those who say
“Look!” and laugh in astonishment,
and bow their heads. -Mary Oliver

Beneath the masks, beneath the names...
is a thrumming, ecstatic atomic swirl, unseen and omnipresent, inescapable and holy...
How is it I sometimes see only woman, man, cottonwood, spider, self, other...
-Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer

I believe God is everything ... My first step from the old white man was trees. Then air. Then birds. Then other people. But one day when I was sitting quiet and feeling like a motherless child, which I was, it come to me: that feeling of being part of everything not separate at all. I knew that if I cut a tree, my arm would bleed.
-Alice Walker

In a true encounter with another human being, we come face to face with the mystery of life. In some way, every other person, no matter how well we know them, will remain as mysterious to us as a country across the ocean we only read about in books... In every interaction, whether it is with a stranger or our longtime partner, we can be surprised by what we have not yet seen or even imagined. -David Rynick

To be able to marvel at the face of our neighbor with the same awe we have for the mountain top, the sunlight refracting. This manner of vision is what will keep us from destroying each other. -Cole Arthur Riley

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 Mystery means for you and your daily living.

- 1) What was the first mystery to capture your imagination? How does that still shape you today?
- 2) What has been your most successful means of encountering or staying open to mystery?
- 3) Has mysterious “meaningful coincidence” (synchronicity) ever pointed you in the direction you needed to go, right when you were not sure of your way?
- 4) Do you spend more time treating life like a problem to be solved, a game to be won, a struggle to be survived or a mystery to be lived?
- 5) If there was one mystery you could have answered/solved before you die, what would it be?

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) [Closer to Fine - Indigo Girls](#)

Extinguishing the Chalice Life is not a problem to be solved, but an experience to be had. -Alan Watts