



USG Racial Healing SGM ~ The Gift of Mystery ~ December, 2023

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

www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com

Session Plan

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 recent experiences facing racism in ourselves or others.*

Quotes for Inspiration/Readings

Knowledge is a priceless gift. But the illusion of knowledge can be more dangerous than ignorance. Thinking that you know your lover or your enemy can be more treacherous than acknowledging you'll never know them. Every morning in Japan, as the sun is flooding into our little apartment, I take great pains not to consult the weather forecast, because if I do, my mind will be overclouded, distracted, even when the day is bright... In the end, perhaps, being human is much more important than being fully in the know. [Pico Iyer](#)

Questions

This list of questions is an aid for deep reflection. They are meant not so much to be answered as to take you somewhere. Read through the list 2-3 times until one question sticks out for you and captures your attention, or as some faith traditions say, until one of the questions "shimmers."

Then reflect on that question by asking yourself:

- *What is going on in my life right now that makes this question so pronounced for me?*
- *How might my inner voice be trying to speak to me through it?*
- *How might Life or your inner voice be trying to offer me a word of comfort or challenge through this question?*

Writing out your thoughts often enables you to go deeper. It also sometimes helps to read the list of questions to a friend or loved one and ask them which question they think is the question you need to wrestle with.

A note about self-care: *Often these questions take us to a vulnerable space. It is OKAY to ignore the questions that may be triggering – or lean in if that feels safe.*

1. As you've grown older, has life seemed to have more or less mystery in it?

2. What was the first mystery to capture your imagination? How does that still shape you today?
3. What has been your most successful means of encountering or staying open to mystery?
4. What's the most unprovable thing you've placed your faith in?
5. Have you ever heard silence speak?
6. Has mysterious "meaningful coincidence" ([synchronicity](#)) ever pointed you in the direction you needed to go, right when you were not sure of your way?
7. Mystics describe their [mysterious experiences](#) using phrases like, "[my soul turned into a tree](#)," "[I slipped and fell into the sky](#)" and "I became [a transparent eyeball](#)." Do any of these descriptions resonate with you? Have you had a mysterious or mystical experience that would help explain these phrases to others?
8. 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](#)?
9. What's one thing you could do this month to more deeply encounter mystery?
10. If there was one mystery you could have answered/solved before you die, what would it be?
11. [Rev. Angela Herrera](#) says that when we "stand at the edge of mystery, at the edge of the deep," the armful of ordinary worries we carry, "flutters to our feet." Has mystery ever done this for you?
12. What has allowed you and your life partner to still view each other as the wonderful and intoxicating mysteries you were when you first met?

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

Wonder, Naughty Boy (feat. Emeli Sandé) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kASjW_aPbQ
 Magic, Sia <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3s0iHnJr5rQ> (from Wrinkle in Time)

Extinguishing the Chalice

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](#)