

USG SGM ~ Nurturing Gratitude ~ November 2025

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

www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com



Chalice Lighting *We enter the world as strangers who all at once become heirs to a harvest of memory, spirit, and dream that has long preceded us and will now enfold, nourish, and sustain us. The gift of the world is our first blessing. - John Donohue*

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.*

Introduction: Gratitude has the same Latin root as kindness and grace. Its old English meaning was "a readiness to return kindness." These connections invite us to think of gratitude as a way to usher more kindness into the world. Additionally, its connection to grace calls us to recognize what we receive from the world as a gift rather than as an entitlement.

Spiritual Exercise D: Tell The Story of Your "Gift Hat"

Conceiving of something as a gift changes your relationship to it in a profound way, even though the physical makeup of the "thing" has not changed. A woolly knit hat that you purchase at the store will keep you warm regardless of its origin, but if it was hand knit by your favorite auntie, then you are in relationship to that "thing" in a very different way: you are responsible for it, and your gratitude has motive force in the world. You're likely to take much better care of the gift hat than the commodity hat, because it is knit of relationships.

- Robin Wall Kimmerer

Your "gift hat" may not be a hat, but we all have one. And we all know exactly what Kimmerer is talking about. There are things in our life that carry a different weight for us and compel a different kind of responsibility from us than the commodities in our life.

This exercise simply asks you to revisit that gift through the lens of Kimmerer's quote and then come to your group ready to tell the story of how your gift came into your life and what it has come to mean to you. (And even better, bring the gift with you if you can!)

Spiritual Exercise E: Ask Them About Gratitude

One of the best ways to explore our monthly themes is to have conversations about them with people who are close to you. It's also a great way to deepen our relationships! Below is a list of questions to guide your conversation. Be sure to let your conversation partner know in advance that this won't be a typical conversation. Telling them a bit about Soul Matters will help set the stage. Remember to also answer the questions yourself as they are meant to support a conversation, not just a time of quizzing them. Come to your group ready to share what surprised you about the conversation and what gift or insight it gave you. As always, keep a lookout for how your inner voice is trying to send you a message of comfort or challenge through these conversions with others.

Gratitude Questions:

- What's the luckiest thing that ever happened to you? And if you could talk to and thank that lucky event, what would you say?
- Which childhood experience are you most grateful for?
- Which of your senses are you most grateful for at this stage of your life?
- Has gratitude ever guided you through or rescued you from grief?

Quotes for Inspiration/Readings

If our first response to the receipt of gifts is gratitude, then our second is reciprocity: to give a gift in return... When I speak about reciprocity as a relationship, let me be clear. I don't mean a bilateral exchange in which an obligation is incurred, and can then be discharged with a reciprocal "payment." I mean keeping the gift in motion in a way that is diffuse, so that the gift does not accumulate and stagnate, but keeps moving. - Robin Wall Kimmerer , *The Serviceberry*

Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend. - Melody Beattie

With gratitude, optimism is sustainable. If you can find something to be grateful for then you can find something to look forward to, and you can carry on. - Michael J. Fox

So much has been given to me; I have no time to ponder over that which has been denied.
- Helen Keller

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 Gratitude means for you and your daily living.*

1. When was the last time you were grateful for yourself?
2. Which childhood experience are you most grateful for?
3. Is there something you used to be grateful for that you now take for granted? What would it take to view it with fresh eyes?
4. You are aware that your life is someone else's dream, right?
5. What would happen if you turned all of your "I have to's" into "I get to's"?
6. How would your life change if you paused to reflect on how many things you have now that were things you only dreamt of a decade ago?
7. How good are you at receiving thanks?

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 [Grateful Voices - Claire](#)

<https://www.tiktok.com/@moongladecommons/video/7498759145743502638>

Extinguishing the Chalice

When eating a fruit, think of the person who planted the tree. - Vietnamese Proverb