

## USG SGM ~ Flourishing Together ~ June, 2026

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



### Introduction

One of the most powerful - and often most underrecognized - sources of mutual flourishing is storytelling. Stories are the threads that weave us together. They are how we bond. The stories passed down and shared widely are the means by which we become "a people." The stories we share with our children are the way they become, not just adults, but human. When others are brave enough to share their stories of pain, we discover that our suffering is not unique and our healing is not out of reach. When we feel empty, the stories of others fill us. When we feel weak or scared, the stories of others give us strength. One thing you can count on: Where you find flourishing, stories are sure to be close by.

**Chalice Lighting** If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other. ~ Mother Teresa

**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 Exercise** You may have heard that we get by with a little help from our friends. What's one thing you might do this month to keep your friendships flourishing?

### Quotes for Inspiration/Readings

I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live, it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. ~ George Bernard Shaw

I get by with a little help from my friends. ~ Paul McCartney and John Lennon

Douglas Steere, a Quaker teacher, says that the ancient question, "Who am I?" inevitably leads to a deeper one, "Whose am I?" – because there is no identity outside of relationship. You can't be a person by yourself. To ask, "Whose am I?" is to extend the question far beyond the little self-absorbed self, and wonder, Who needs you? Who loves you? To whom are you accountable? To whom do you answer? Whose life is altered by your choices? With whose life, whose lives, is your own all bound up, inextricably, in obvious or invisible ways?

~ Victoria Stafford

'Independence' ... middle-class blasphemy! We are all dependent on one another, every soul of us on earth. ~ George Bernard Shaw

A society grows great when the old plant trees whose shade they know they shall never sit in.

~ Greek Proverb

What do we live for if it is not to make life less difficult for each other? ~ George Eliot

If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together. ~ African Proverb

We need to recover our right to ask for help in grief,  
otherwise it will continue to recycle perpetually.  
Grief has never been private; it has always been  
communal. Subconsciously, we are awaiting the  
presence of others, before we can feel safe enough  
to drop to our knees on the holy ground of sorrow. ~ Francis Weller

### Questions

1. What circle of care and support helped you discover your unique brand of flourishing? i.e. what circle helped you know yourself in a way you couldn't have on your own?
2. Is it possible that our culture has tricked you into trying to flourish alone without you realizing it? Where in your life are you building walls of independence without realizing it?
3. You may have heard that we get by with a little help from our friends. What's one thing you might do this month to keep your friendships flourishing?
4. What if the flourishing of your friend groups and family depends, not on you being strong, but being vulnerable instead? Not just you supporting them when they are hurting or scared, but you being brave enough to say I'm hurting or I'm scared?

**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)

I Get By With a Little Help from My Friends (Acoustic) Franklyn Jay & Amba Tremain

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DthzwEAjo2A&list=PLvXOKgQQVYP7b7AouJG1OGjfl8el8rv> &index=1

Powerful piece from the film HARRIET sung by Cynthia Erivo: STAND UP

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sn19xvfoXvk&list=PLvXOKgQQVYP7b7AouJG1OGjfl8el8rv> &index=8

### Extinguishing the Chalice

And if it's true we are alone,  
we are alone together,  
the way blades of grass  
are alone, but exist as a field.

Sometimes I feel it,  
the green fuse that ignites us,  
the wild thrum that unites us...~  
Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer