

# Bulletin for Regret

## Business

### Chalice Lighting

After leader says the phrase: This season brings forth many feelings.

Group members respond with: We find comfort in naming these feelings; we find some peace in being together.

### Sharing of Joys and Concerns

### Silence

### Shared Readings

You'll seldom experience regret for anything that you've done. It is what you haven't done that will torment you.—*Wayne Dyer*

Many of us crucify ourselves between two thieves— regret for the past and fear of the future.  
—*Fulton Oursler*

Regret is an odd emotion because it comes only upon reflection. Regret lacks immediacy, and so its power seldom influences events when it could do some good.—*William O'Rourke*

Forget regret, or life is yours to miss.—*Jonathan Larson*

Looking back, I have this to regret, that too often when I loved, I did not say so.  
—*David Grayson*

### Deep Sharing/Deep Listening

#### Round I

Share briefly two experiences of regret in your life.

I wish I hadn't ...

I wish I had ...

#### Round II

Share experiences and thoughts about regret, responding to the questions and readings in the preparation material.

#### Round III

As time allows, share additional thoughts or reflect on what others have shared.

## **Closing Words**

If only. Those must be the two saddest words in the world.—*Mercedes Lackey*

## **Closing Activity**

### **Song**

### **The Covenant**

I commit myself:

- to come to meetings when I possibly can, knowing that my presence is important to the group.
- to let the leader know if I will be absent or need to quit.
- to share with the leader the responsibility for good group process by watching how much time I take to speak and noticing what is going on for others.
- to do the reading and thinking about the topic ahead of time.
- to not gossip about what is shared in the group, and tell only my own story to others.
- to honor the safety of the group by listening to what others share with an open heart.
- to refrain from cross-talk, judging, or giving advice.
- to share as deeply as I can when it is my turn.

## Leader's Notes for Regret

**Before the Session** Read over the Chalice Lighting to familiarize yourself with it.

### Business

#### Chalice Lighting

*Leader:* This season brings forth many feelings

*Response:* We find comfort in naming these feelings; we find some peace in being together.

*Leader:* All around us are bright lights and merry messages  
Yet in our heart not all is joyful  
There is grief with the loss of relationships,  
Those we love no longer with us because of death  
Those we have loved who are estranged from us  
Those we love yet experience a diminishment of intimacy  
There is grief with the loss and change of relationship,  
Grief, bittersweet for it is a consequence of the presence of love  
... this season brings forth many feelings

*Response:* We find comfort in naming these feelings; we find some peace in being together.

*Leader:* All around us are bright lights and merry messages  
Yet in our heart not all is joyful  
There may be anger and regret with the memories we hold,  
Anger with past experiences of hurt or abuse,  
Regret of our own actions that may have cause hurt to others,  
Anger that life has not turned out as we imagined,  
Regret for what we might have said or done,  
Anger and regret, bittersweet in presenting the possibility for healing and forgiveness,  
... this season brings forth many feelings

*Response:* We find comfort in naming these feelings; we find some peace in being together.

*Leader:* All around us are bright lights and merry messages  
Yet in our heart not all is joyful  
We know grief and pain,  
We know anger and regret,  
We know all these feeling, we name them,  
We live them for such is the human experience  
Love, connection and forgiveness can begin to heal loss, loneliness and regret  
Being alive is a courageous act in which we engage all of our emotions and  
... this season brings forth many feelings

*Response:* We find comfort in naming these feelings; we find some peace in being together  
—Rev. Debra Faulk, adapted

**Sharing of Joys and Concerns** (about 2 min. per person)

**Silence** (3 min.)

## **Shared Readings**

**Deep Sharing/Deep Listening** During your rounds of deep sharing/deep listening, pay close attention to the time allotted each person to ensure all get to share at least once.

**Round I** (about 2 min. per person)

Share briefly two experiences of regret in your life. Assure the group they will have more time to elaborate on the incident in the second round. Go around the group twice. First share “I wish I hadn’t...” On the second time around, share “I wish I had...” Go first to model.

**Round II** (about 5 min. per person)

Share experiences and thoughts about regret, responding to the questions and readings in the preparation material.

**Round III** (about 2 min. per person)

As time allows share additional thoughts or reflect on what others have shared.

## **Closing Words**

If only. Those must be the two saddest words in the world.—*Mercedes Lackey*

**Closing Activity** (about 2 min. per person)

Invite people to hold hands around the chalice and say one or two words about an insight they have had or the way they are feeling as we close

## **Song**

## Preparation for Regret

In this session we look at the topic of regret, regret for actions taken and those untaken. Regret includes remorse and sorrow we feel in the present based on actions or lack of actions in the past. Things haven't worked out the way we had hoped for, we feel guilty and disappointed with ourselves and choices we've made.

We may numb ourselves or judge others to protect against the pain of regret. Although living with regret seems to be part of living, we may benefit by reflecting on patterns of situations that cause regret and remorse. We can't undo the past, but we can choose to act differently now. Working through regret may include some of the following steps: accepting responsibility, seeking forgiveness, making restitution, grieving, learning, moving forward.

We all have something stored in our memory banks of the past that we wish we could have done differently, or something we wish we didn't do.—*Jenny Nicols*

When one door closes, another opens; but we often look so long and so regretfully upon the closed door that we do not see the one which has opened for us.—*Alexander Graham Bell*

Regret is insight that comes a day too late.—*Anonymous*

Make the most of your regrets; never smother your sorrow, but tend and cherish it till it comes to have a separate and integral interest. To regret deeply is to live afresh.—*Henry David Thoreau*

Regret for the things we did can be tempered by time; it is regret for the things we did not do that is inconsolable.—*Sydney Smith*

Be bold and courageous. When you look back on your life, you'll regret the things you didn't do more than the ones you did.—*H. Jackson Brown, Jr.*

### Questions to Ponder

1. Think about a couple of events in your life that come to your mind when the subject of regret comes up? Finish these sentences:  
    If only I had ...  
    If only I hadn't ...
2. Decide on a couple of incidents you are willing to share.
3. What are some of the ways you protect yourself from acknowledging the pain of regret?
4. What are some of the steps you have used in dealing with regret? Think of a situation you are willing to share with the group.