

Success and Failure

Chalice Lighting

Sharing of Joys and Concerns

Silence, holding ourselves and each other in silent support.

Shared Readings

Deep Sharing/Deep Listening

Discussion, if time

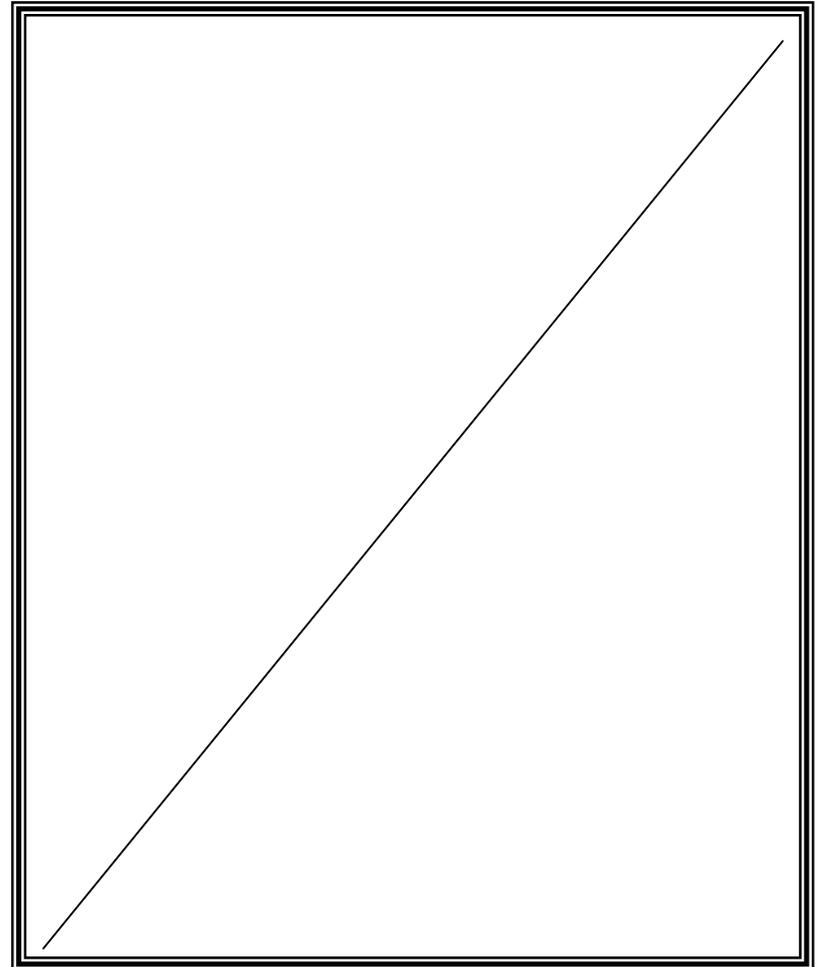
Group Business

Closing Words and Song "Go Now in Peace"

Covenant Groups **Success and Failure**

The Covenant

- I commit myself:
- to come to meetings when I possibly can, knowing that my presence is important to the group.
- to honor the group by letting the leader know if I will be absent and to come to the group one last time and say goodbye if I 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 not gossip about what is shared in the group, and not tell other people's stories.
- to listen to what others share with an open heart, and to share deeply in my turn.



Success and Failure: Leader's Notes

Preparation: Bring some pencils, crayons, colored markers, or pens. Read through the closing reading carefully; it's tricky.

Light the chalice and open in the usual way. Joys and concerns, some silence.

As a shared reading, Tell your group that their bulletin cover has two spaces for them to draw a picture or a symbol of the interplay of success and failure in their lives. Tell them that this is not a test of artistic merit, only a chance to use another part of their brain to process this interesting topic. Hand out the pencils or crayons you have brought and then ask your participants to each read one of the questions from the homework sheet, leaving some silent space between each. When people are ready, they can do their drawing. Expect some resistance to this activity and don't let it throw you. Most grownups think that they can't draw. It's ok. When most people have finished their drawing, do your usual rounds of discussion.

Do your usual rounds of deep listening

Close with the following reading. If you have a mixed gender group, read it twice, once for each gender. Otherwise, read just the first rendition.

"It is not the critic who counts, not the one who points out how the strong person stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the one who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes short again and again, who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends herself in a worthy cause, who at best knows achievement and who at the worst if she fails at least fails while daring greatly so her place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat." Theodore Roosevelt (adapted)

"It is not the critic who counts, not the man who points out how the strong man stumbled, or where the doer of deeds could have done better. The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena, whose face is marred by dust and sweat and blood, who strives valiantly, who errs and comes short again and again, who knows the great enthusiasms, the great devotions, and spends himself in a worthy cause, who at best knows achievement and who at the worst if he fails at least fails while daring greatly so his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat." Theodore Roosevelt

Homework for the session on success and failure

“Learning starts with failure; the first failure is the beginning of education. –John Hersey

”Failure or success seems to have been allotted to (individuals) by the stars. But they retain the power of wriggling, of fighting with their star or against it, and in the whole universe the only interesting movement is this wriggle.” -E.M. Forester

“If you don’t accept failure as a possibility, you don’t set high goals, you don’t branch out, you don’t try—you don’t take the risk.” -Rosalynn Carter

What messages did you get about success and failure as you grew up? From parents and family? From school and other adults? From peers?

What was the most humiliating failure/exhilarating success you experienced as a kid?

What are some failures/successes you have had as an adult?

How has failure/success contributed to your self understanding? Your growth?

Have you ever experienced a success that turned out to be hazardous? A failure that had its blessings?