

Gathering for Truth

This Gathering has suggestions for introducing sections. The “will you go next?” questions give the next person an opportunity to be ready. A timer and a clock are used in the Silence and the Sharing rounds.

Words of the Day

As people arrive, ask them to write the Words of the Day and put them in the basket.

A belief I have because of my culture is ...

Opening

Chalice Lighting *“We’ll begin with the chalice lighting.” Ask for a volunteer.*

They teach us to read in black and white.
Truth is this – the rest false. You are whole – or broken.
Who you love is acceptable – or not.
Life tells its truth in many hues.
We are taught to think in either/or.
Rev. Leslie Takahashi

The Basket *“Now we’ll read the Words of the Day. I’ll start, and pass it along to the right (left).”*

Being Together

Sharing of Joys and Concerns *“Now we’ll share joys and concerns. I’ll begin and we’ll go around the circle. Will you go next?”*

Silence, holding ourselves and each other in silent support *“We’ll have a few minutes of silence.” (2 or 3 minutes)*

Shared Readings

“I’ll start the first Shared Reading. Will you go next?”

It always comes to the same necessity: go deep enough and there is a bedrock of truth, however hard.
May Sarton

A lie can travel half way around the world while the truth is putting on its shoes. *Mark Twain*

We don’t get to choose what is true. We only get to choose what we do about it. *Kami Garcia*

The truth will set you free. But not until it is finished with you. *David Foster Wallace*

All things are subject to interpretation. Whichever interpretation prevails at a given time is a function of power and not truth. *Friedrich Nietzsche*

The opposite of a correct statement is a false statement. But the opposite of a profound truth may well be another profound truth. *Niels Bohr*

There’s a world of difference between truth and facts. Facts can obscure truth. *Maya Angelou*

“The truth.” Dumbledore sighed. “It is a beautiful and terrible thing, and should therefore be treated with great caution.” *J.K. Rowling*

Men occasionally stumble over the truth, but most of them pick themselves up and hurry off as if nothing ever happened. *Winston Churchill*

Believe those who are seeking the truth. Doubt those who find it. *André Gide*

Deep Sharing/Deep Listening

Round 1: Deep Sharing. “Now we will share reflections on truth and the preparation.” Then say “I’ll go first” or, if you’re not ready, “Who is ready to go first?”

Round 2: Responses and Comments. After all have shared or passed, check the time left. Say “We have about ___ minutes for a 2nd round.” Begin your response or ask “Who would like to start?”

Closing

Closing Circle “Now we’ll go around the circle and say a word or sentence about what we are taking away from the session. I’ll go first, and would you be willing to go next?”

Chalice “Now we will extinguish the chalice.” Read in unison, or ask for a volunteer.

We extinguish this flame and we remember the warmth of our community, the light of our wisdom, the generosity of our sharing. We keep these in our heart until we meet again.

Song/Chime Ask for a volunteer.

Announcements

The Covenant

I commit myself: *italicized elements are proposed changes, not yet approved*

- to come to meetings when I possibly can, knowing that my presence is important to the group
- to let the *group* know if I will be absent or need to quit
- to share with the *group* the responsibility for good process by watching how much time I take to speak, noticing what is going on for others, *and considering problems as they occur*
- 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, giving advice, or advocating a specific view
- to share as deeply as I can when it is my turn and to stay on the “I-message.”