Gathering for Awakening (April theme)

There are video session suggestions – speaking in turns, using Chat. Some sections use a timer / clock.

When you join the session *Facilitators – do these for yourself first and help others.*

- Check your volume and video, if you are using video. Check your "name tag."
- Make sure you have a copy of the Gathering available.
- **Words of the Day.** Complete this sentence: "For me, a moment of awakening feels …"

Chalice Lighting "We'll begin by lighting the chalice." *Ask for a volunteer to read.*

We come together in an attitude of openness – not knowing quite what will happen, yet daring to receive a new idea, a new experience, sustenance for our minds and our hearts.

We come with an attitude of humility, knowing how much we need one another, how alone we can be in the world, how vulnerable if we face life only by ourselves.

We come in the spirit of love, seeking human warmth and fellowship in the hands and faces of those around us.
Peter Lee Scott

Words of the Day "Now we'll share the Words of the Day." *If you're using Chat, people can't see chat written before they joined, so the facilitator can read. Or people can read their own.*

Sharing of Joys and Concerns "We'll share joys and concerns." *Begin, and then either call on people or ask them to "chain" to the next person. Make sure everyone has an opportunity.*

Silence, holding each other in support "Now a few minutes of silence" *(2 or 3)*

Shared Readings "I'll start the first Shared Reading." *Begin, and then either call on people or ask them to "chain" to the next person. Make sure everyone has an opportunity to read.*

You can become blind by seeing each day as a similar one. Each day is a different one, each day brings a miracle of its own. It's just a matter of paying attention to this miracle. *Paulo Coelho*

It's exhilarating to be alive in a time of awakening consciousness; it can also be confusing, disorienting, and painful. *Adrienne Rich*

I think it pisses God off if you walk by the color purple in a field somewhere and don't notice it.
Alice Walker

Nature is an infinite sphere whose center is everywhere and whose circumference is nowhere.
Blaise Pascal

If the sight of the blue skies fills you with joy, if a blade of grass springing up in the fields has power to move you, if the simple things of nature have a message that you understand, rejoice, for your soul is alive. *Eleanora Duse*

There is no wi-fi in the forest, but I promise you will find a better connection.
as seen on a bumper sticker

Those who are awake, live in a state of constant amazement. *Jack Kornfield, Buddhist teacher*

We don't have an explanation for everything that happens. We don't control almost anything. And if we are not open to that mystery, life becomes so small. *Isabel Allende*

At some point in life the world's beauty becomes enough. You don't need to photograph, paint or even remember it. It is enough. No record of it needs to be kept and you don't need someone to share it with or tell it to. When that happens – that letting go – you let go because you can. *Toni Morrison*

No matter what darkness
exists in this world
there is still beauty
and if you cannot find it
simply be it.
Marie Amara

Deep Listening and Sharing

Round 1. Deep Sharing. "Now we share reflections on awakening." *Note the time available for each person. Go first to model. Make sure everyone has an opportunity.*

Round 2. Responses and Comments. *Note how much time is available for Round 2. People can unmute for freer exchange. Go first to model for the group.*

Closing Circle "We're going to say a word or sentence about what we are taking away from the session." *Begin, and then either call on people or use "chaining."*

Chalice "We will extinguish the chalice." *Ask for a volunteer to read.*

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.

Bell or Chime

Announcements

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 facilitator know if I will be absent or need to quit
- to share responsibility for good process by watching how much time I take to speak, noticing what is going on for others, and considering problems if 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."