

TRANSITIONS AND VULNERABILITY AS WE AGE

OPENING WORDS AND CHALICE LIGHTING:

For every time we make a mistake and we decide to start again: We light this chalice.

For every time we are lonely and we let someone be our friend: We light this chalice.

For every time we are vulnerable and we choose to hope: We light this chalice.

~ adapted from Maureen Killoran

PURPOSE: We come together to build connections and to talk about what deeply matters.

CHECK IN: Going around the circle, I invite you to tell us your name, and what you are leaving behind to be fully present here today.

READING OF GROUP COVENANT:

TOPIC FOCUS: There are many changes and transitions as we go through life. How we deal with those changes, how vulnerable we feel and the kinds of support we want and need can be important concerns.

QUOTATIONS FOR REFLECTION

Transitions are the cusp of change, a time of grasping and letting go, a time of sadness and of hope. ~Rev. Glenn H. Turner

Feeling vulnerable, imperfect, and afraid is human. It's when we lose our capacity to hold space for these struggles that we become dangerous.

Vulnerability sounds like truth and feels like courage. Truth and courage aren't always comfortable, but they're never weakness. What we know is that connection, the ability to feel connected, is—neurobiologically that's how we're wired—it's why we're here.

~Brené Brown, TED talk 2010

When you are aware of what you are doing, placing your trust in someone or something takes a lot of courage. It's an act of bravery. It acknowledges that you are not alone in the world and that there is a connection between you and all things.

~Angel Kyodo Williams

(Let) us focus on the difficult problem of continuing to live life as our physical and mental abilities lessen and we need more help. Most of us have cared for aging parents or loved ones, and for sure, all of us are going to be in the position of being cared for in the future.

~Jan Thomsen

Take courage friends. The way is often hard, the path is never clear, and the stakes are very high. Take courage. For deep down, there is another truth: You are not alone.

~Wayne B. Arnason

QUESTIONS: Please respond to whichever question or questions you feel moved to answer.

1. Describe a change or transition that you have experienced or may need to make in the future (eg. living situation, dealing with aging/health issues, etc.)
2. What are your usual emotional and/or practical ways of dealing with major life changes?
3. What kinds of support do you envision as you experience the changes of later life? (family, friends, congregation, assisted living.....?)
4. What are your feelings about receiving help and caring from others ?

CHECK OUT: Going around the group, please share in three or four words how you feel the session was for you today.

CONFIDENTIALITY CHECK: Is there anything you shared here today that you would like held confidential? Otherwise, a reminder to treat all sharing with kindness and respect.

CLOSING WORDS AND EXTINGUISHING THE CHALICE:

“As our time together comes to a close, we give thanks for one another, for the chance to share our lives, and to renew our spirits in the company of friends. May we go forth enriched by our gathering, committed to living life fully, to loving life with more passion, and to supporting one another.”

~ Tony Bushman and Bill Hamilton-Holway. Gatherings