

## Creativity

### Chalice Lighting

In this house of gathering  
we say yes to the call to be fully and gloriously human  
as we honor the divine spark within each of us.

In this house  
we say yes to the call we have heard  
that binds us together into a community of care, concern and  
celebration;  
we say yes to the call that knits us together as whole people;  
we say yes to the call that reminds us of our ties  
to the interconnected web of all existence.

We do not enter our houses of gathering empty-handed.  
We bring our longings and our memories,  
and we call on the spirit of love, freedom and compassion  
to abide with us.

Michael Seider

### Sharing of Joys and Sorrows

**Silence, holding ourselves and each other in silent support.**

### Shared Readings:

Every blade of grass has its angel that bends over it and  
whispers “grow, grow.”

The Talmud

We need to be willing to let our intuition guide us, and then  
be willing to follow that guidance directly and fearlessly.

Shakti Gawain

Life is trying things to see if they work.

Ray Bradbury

Trust in yourself. Your perceptions are often far more  
accurate than you are willing to believe.

Claudia Black

Creativity requires the courage to let go of certainties.

Erich Fromm

To live a creative life, we must lose our fear of being wrong.

Joseph Chilton Pearce

Acts of creation and works of art may serve needs important  
for individuals to survive and prosper. For example, by  
creating and experiencing art, one may gain access to  
otherwise inaccessible aspects of consciousness. In  
addition, the act of creating art is an important exercise in  
the intercommunication of different levels of consciousness  
and their integration with motor skill. Further, art can  
catalyze change, and art can heal.

Neil Greenberg

### Deep Sharing/Deep Listening

**Round I** Describe one or two of your Otomi Indian  
“personal planting festival” ideas for your own creative  
action.

**Round II** Discuss creativity more deeply, drawing upon  
the homework questions concerning intuition and creativity;  
the impact of a lack of creativity; how your life may have  
been blessed by creativity (yours or others); and how being  
creative has affected your sense of connection. You may  
also explore the potential for creativity in everyday life.

**Round III** In this session, what did you discover about  
your capacity to be creative? What has been most  
meaningful to you?

### Closing Words and Song “Go Now in Peace”

If we do not expect the unexpected, we will never find it.

Heraclitus

### Group Business

Pass out homework for the next session.

## Covenant Groups

### Creativity

#### 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.
- to avoid cross talk, giving feedback or trying to fix anyone
- 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.



## **Leader's Notes for Creativity**

This session focuses on creativity and attempts to spark discussion about how creativity is not reserved for the particularly gifted artist, writer, poet, musician, but can be expressed, experienced, and enjoyed everywhere in our lives.

### **Chalice Lighting: (2 min)**

Ask someone to read the chalice lighting reading found in the bulletin

### **Sharing of Joys and Concerns: (10 min)**

Ask group members to tell in one or two sentences...How you are today? Share information about absent members.

### **Silence: (3 min)**

Give your group the gift of three minutes of silence. Time it!

### **Shared Readings: (5 min)**

Go around your group, letting each person in turn read from Shared Readings found in the bulletin until all readings are finished.

### **Deep Sharing/Deep Listening:**

Do 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 (10 min)**

Describe one or two of your Otomi Indian "personal planting festival" ideas for your own creative action. (Spend a minute explaining what the Otomi Indians do for the planting festival for those who may have skipped over this. Ask them what they would like to do, but don't feel they have time for now. Go first to model the sharing.)

### **Round II (40 min)**

Discuss creativity more deeply, drawing upon the homework questions concerning intuition and creativity; the impact of a lack of creativity; how your life may have been blessed by creativity (yours or others); and how being creative has affected your sense of connection. You may also explore the potential for creativity in everyday life. Go first to model the sharing.

### **Round III (15 min)**

In this session, what did you discover about your capacity to be creative? What has been most meaningful to you?

### **Closing Words and Song "Go Now in Peace (2 min)**

If we do not expect the unexpected, we will never find it. Heraclitus

### **Group Business: (5 min)**

Pass out Q and Q (homework) for next time

## Creativity

Is it your understanding that creativity is limited to gifted artists, poets, writers, scientists, and inventors? Do you believe that creativity is not a part of our ordinary, daily lives? Ned Herrmann writes, in *The Creative Brain*, that many people hold the obviously creative person in awe and find little gradation in genius. It's either the Sistine Chapel ceiling or nothing.

Creativity, however, is a natural endowment, a potential with which we are born, like taste, or sight, or hearing. It is always present. If creativity encompasses more than the artist, the poet, or the musician, and is defined as "having the power to bring into being," then we all have this power. What is it that you wish to bring into being in your daily life? A recipe? A party? A relationship? A new job? A piece of art? A song? A basic alteration in your life? In this session, let your imagination run wild as you plant the seeds of creativity.

There are a number of writers, quoted below, who strive to expand both the idea of what it means to be creative, and how creativity, as a human impulse, can be an expansion of ourselves beyond what we assume are our normal, everyday boundaries.

Emily Hanlon, writing coach and novelist, in speaking about creativity as it relates to writing, says "Creativity gives birth to our deepest longings; it is through our writing and our characters that we speak our truths often without knowing they are our truths." She describes creativity as an energy born of the human desire to lead an authentic life, to know ourselves at a deeper level than we might otherwise experience.

Osho, an Indian spiritual teacher, links creativity with concepts of the divine. He says that creativity is the quality that you bring to the activity that you are doing. "Whatsoever you do, if you do it joyfully, if you do it lovingly, if your act of doing is not purely economical, then it is creative. If you have something growing out of it within you, if it gives you growth, it is spiritual, it is creative, and it is divine. You become more divine as you become more creative. All the religions of the world have said God is the creator. I don't know whether he is the creator or not, but one thing I know: the more creative you become, the more godly you become."

Matthew Fox, former Catholic priest, says that when we consider creativity, we are considering the most elemental, innermost, and deeply spiritual aspects of our beings. To speak of creativity is to speak of profound intimacy. It is also to speak of our connecting to the Divine in us and of our bringing the Divine back to the community.

Julia Cameron, author of *The Artist's Way* and numerous other books designed to spark creativity, says to those of us who have either given up on being creative, or who avoid trying new things, that it is not too late, too egotistical, too

selfish, or too silly to work on our creativity. She points out that it is impossible to get better and look good at the same time and reminds us that we should give ourselves permission to be a beginner in whatever we wish to learn to do.

Brenda Ueland, who began teaching writing in Minnesota in 1935, firmly believed that everyone is talented, original, and has something to say. She encouraged her students to nurture inspiration by realizing that it does not come like a bolt out of the blue, nor is it kinetic, energetic striving. Inspiration comes into us slowly and quietly and all the time, though we must regularly and every day give it a little chance to start flowing, prime it with a little solitude and idleness.

### **Questions:**

1. In Mexico, the Otomi Indians plant paper seed dolls as part of a growing festival. The dolls hold paper cutouts of corn, chili, and whatever else the Otomi want to grow and flourish.

For your own personal planting festival, sit down with notepaper and write down ideas you want to pursue, but don't have the time for right now. Feel free to express your ideas in whatever way is easiest for you, for example, you may use words, pictures, or clippings from newspapers or magazines. Choose one or two of your ideas to share during the Creativity session.

2. Shatki Gawain says that we need to be willing to let our intuition guide us, and then be willing to follow that guidance directly and fearlessly. She believes that every time you don't follow your inner guidance, you feel a loss of energy, loss of power, a sense of spiritual deadness.

Think of a time when you followed your intuition, perhaps directly and fearlessly. What was the outcome?

What is the impact of a lack of creativity (yours or others) in your life?

What does intuition have to do with creativity?

3. Creativity can be seen as sacred, or as a blessing. In what way has creativity blessed your life? Describe how being creative has affected your sense of connection to others, to the earth, to your concept of the Divine, or to the universe.

4. Think about the potential for creativity in your everyday life. What parts of your life are creative? What do you do that is creative? What is the most creative job (endeavor) you've ever had? Does your current job (endeavor) enable you to be creative?