

## Endings

### Chalice Lighting

### Sharing of Joys and Concerns

### Silence, holding each other in silent support.

### Shared Readings

What we call the beginning is often the end. And to make an end is to make a beginning. The end is where we start from.

T.S. Eliot

Our time together will be a chapter in the stories of our lives... The good good-bye includes: Acknowledging feelings, sharing memories, offering praise, making a promise, and giving a final blessing.

Danita Nolan

Great is the art of beginning, but greater the art is of ending.

Longfellow

I wanted a perfect ending ... Now I've learned, the hard way, that some poems don't rhyme, and some stories don't have a clear beginning, middle, and end. Life is about not knowing, having to change, taking the moment and making the best of it, without knowing what's going to happen next.

Gilda Radner

To live in this world, you must be able to do three things: To love what is mortal. To hold it against your bones knowing your own life depends on it; and when the time comes to let it go, to let it go.

Mary Oliver

Behind a good-bye there lurks much of the salutation of another beginning to me.

Walt Whitman

What is born will die,  
What has been gathered will be dispersed,

Buddha

### Deep Sharing/Deep Listening

Round I Share a story about a goodbye from your childhood.

Round II Each person will have a chance to share more deeply feelings and experiences endings in response to the homework questions.

Round III Closing Ritual

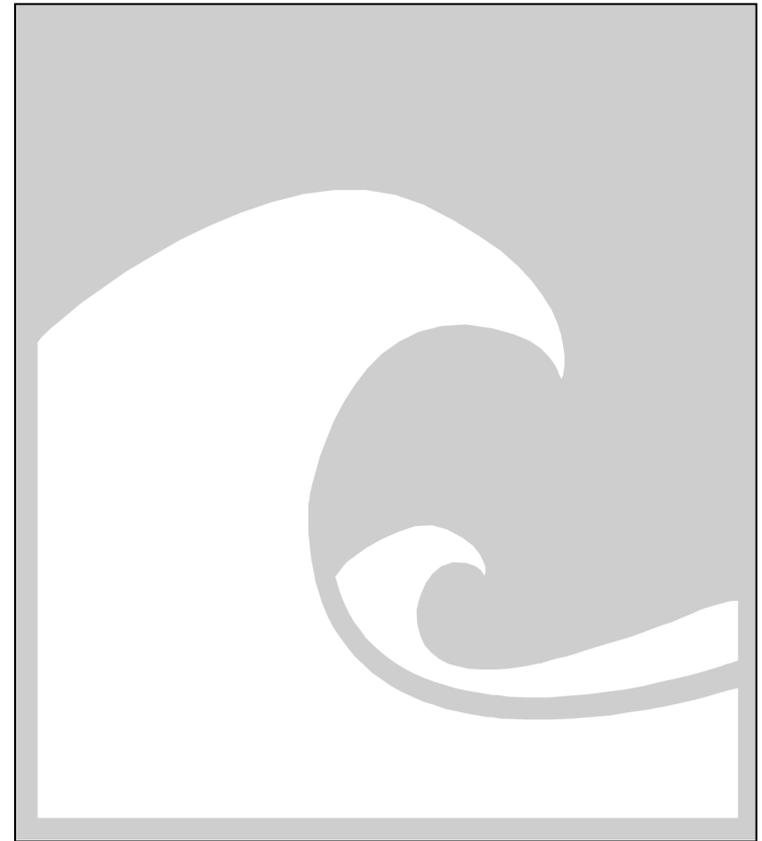
### Group Business

### Sing Go Now in Peace

## *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.



Covenant Group

Endings

## **06 Leaders guide: Endings**

\*\*\*Before the meeting crack the stones apart from the chalice so that they are just lying in the saucer. (I hope that is easy!) The closing ritual will involve each person taking away a stone and speaking about what the group has meant to them.

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

**7:00-7:20**

The things that matter most in our lives are not fantastic or grand.  
They are the moments when we touch one another,  
When we are there in the most attentive or caring way.  
This simple and profound intimacy is the love that we all long for,  
These moments of touching and being touched can become a foundation for a  
path with heart,  
And they take place in the most immediate and direct way.

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

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

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

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

Round I (about 2 min each)

**7:20-7:40**

Share one or two thoughts about a goodbye from your childhood.

Round II (about 3 min each)

**7:40-8:10**

Each person will have a chance to share more deeply stories, feelings and experiences of endings in response to the homework questions.

Round III Closing Ritual (20 min)

**8:10-8:30**

Leader: Today we are saying goodbye to our group. When our group began in October we each brought a rock and used them to create our group chalice. Today we'll each take a part of the chalice away with us to symbolize this ending time.

One at a time, take a stone from the chalice and say sentence or two on what it has meant to be part of this group. (Give them a minute to think. You may want to model this by going first by saying something like....Being connected with you all has become a rich part of my life. I carry away a part of each of you with me....)

#### **Group Business**

**8:30-8:40**

Make sure everyone is clear about the plans for the potluck, if we're having one.

#### **Sing Go Now in Peace**

## Quotes and Questions - Endings

We shall not cease from exploration  
And the end of all our exploring  
Will be to arrive at where we started  
And know the place for the first time.  
T S Eliot

Endings are a catharsis. They give meaning to what comes before, and change us from the way we were.

Steven Winn

Appreciation can give a meaning to endings.

Patrick Dawson

It is when one first sees the horizon as an end that one first begins to see...Ends are the hardest things in the world to see--precisely because they aren't things, they are the ends of things. And yet they are wonderful. What would life be without them!...if we didn't die there would be no works--not works of art certainly, the only ones that count.  
Archibald MacLeish

Beginnings and endings go together. We would like to imagine that our lives are a series of only beginnings but the fact of the matter is that nothing begins without an attendant ending, and there are no gains in our lives that do not include losses.

Christine Robinson

The end of something is better than its beginning.

Ecclesiastes 7:8

1. What do you think of the quote from Ecclesiastes? Have endings been better than beginnings in your life? Does it seem cynical, wise, depressed, hopeful, or something else?
2. Do you remember a 'goodbye' from your childhood? Who or what were you leaving/ending?
3. Recall a good and a poor 'goodbye' from your adult years. What made the good ending good? What made the poor one poor?
4. What is something you appreciate about this group as it has been?
5. What meaning do you make of endings? What follows the endings?