

Vacations

Chalice Lighting

For every time we make a mistake and we decide to start again:

We light this candle.

For every time we are lonely and we let someone be our friend:

We light this candle.

For every time we are disappointed and we choose to hope:

We light this candle.

Adapted, –M. Maureen Killoran

Sharing of Joys and Sorrows

Silence

Business

Prioritize topics for next year.

Shared Readings:

How beautiful it is to do nothing, and then rest afterward.

–Spanish Proverb

If your teeth are clenched and your fists are clenched, your lifespan is probably clenched.

–Adabella Radici

Sometimes the most urgent and vital thing you can possibly do is take a complete rest.

–Ashleigh Brilliant

We need the tonic of wilderness—we can never have enough of nature. . . . In wilderness is the preservation of the world.

–Henry David Thoreau

With me, a change of trouble is as good as a vacation.

–David Lloyd George

A vacation is like love – anticipated with pleasure, experienced with discomfort, and remembered with nostalgia.

–Unknown

It amazes me that most people spend more time planning next summer’s vacation than they do planning the rest of their lives.

–Patricia Fripp

Summer is the time when one sheds one’s tensions with one’s clothes, and the right kind of day is jeweled balm for the battered spirit. A few of those days and you can become drunk with the belief that all’s right with the world.

–Ada Louise Huxtable

The journey not the arrival matters.

–T. S. Eliot

Activity

Deep Sharing/Deep Listening

Round I

Share a few of the words you have circled.

Round II

Talk about your experiences with vacations; both those which have impacted your life in meaningful ways and those that left you feeling dissatisfied or agitated. Share any insights you gained from doing the homework.

Closing Ritual – Ending

Closing Words

Song “Go Now in Peace”

Vacations

Sabbatical

Relaxation

Education

Reconnecting

Family Bonding

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.



Traditions and rituals

Personal development

Child development

Reflection

Aesthetic experiences

Escape

Adventure

Leader's Notes for Vacations

Pre-meeting instructions

There is a lot in this last meeting. The sharing time has been abbreviated to allow time for the closing ritual. As written it should last about an hour and a half...but it could go over.

Activity

Read over the instructions for the Activity.

Closing Ritual

Bring a large index card (unlined) for each person in the group and an assortment of "Sharpie"/fine point markers. Cut out the "speech" found at the end of this document. Read over the closing ritual to become acquainted with it.

Meeting

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!

Business: (15 min)

1. Group members have been asked to think about which topics (used in 04) they most want for next year. Topics are listed at the end of this leader's guide. Each person can pick their top 3. Tally the group's top 3 .
2. Then ask the group to come up with 3 new topics they would like to do next year.
3. **After the meeting send the top 3 topics from 04 and the 3 new topics to Alicia at ahawkabq@comcast.net. We'll be presenting totals at the potluck.

Shared Readings: (5 Min)

Activity (5 Min)

Tell the group: On the bulletin cover are words that are elements of a vacation. Circle those which have made vacations especially meaningful for you. Feel free to add words of your own.

Deep Sharing/Deep Listening:

Round I (5 Min)

Share a few of the words you have circled.

Round II (30 Min)

Talk about your experiences with vacations; both those which have impacted your life in meaningful ways and those that left you feeling dissatisfied or agitated. Share any insights you gained from doing the homework.

Closing Ritual – Ending (15 Min)

Pass out an index card to everyone. Ask each person to write his/her name on one side. Each person will pass the card to the next person, who will read the name on the card and write a characteristic, adjective or phrase on the back of the card describing the person whose name is on the card. For instance on one card there might be phrases like loving, deep, compassionate, great hugger, etc. On another – sensitive, optimist, etc.

When everyone has added a phrase to each person's card, gather around the chalice. Mix the cards and pass out in any order (preferably one would not get his/her own card).

The leader starts by reading this "speech":

 (Name of person) , you have been a valuable presence in our group. You have shared your story with us, told us your joys and sorrows and allowed us to enter into your life. You are (read the phrases written by group members). Your gifts have enriched us.

(This "speech" is found at the bottom of this document. Pass it around as each person gives the "speech" when giving the card to its owner.)

Closing Reading (2 Min)

Read this to the group:

Spirit of Life, known to us in beginnings and endings,
In possibilities and promises
We give thanks for all that has led to this moment,
And all that is yet to come.

Kathleen Rolenz

Song – Go Now in Peace (2 Min)

Cut here

 (Name of person) , you have been a valuable presence in our group. You have shared your story with us, shared your joys and sorrows and allowed us to enter into your life. You are (read the phrases written by group members). Your gifts have enriched us.

Topics from 04

Spirituality

Response and Call

Shadow

Success and Failure

Divine

Saying Goodbye

Gratitude

Living the Questions

Loss and Grief

Guilt

Gifts and Giving

Faith

New Beginnings

Hope

Atheism

Earth

Vacation

One's destination is never a place, but a new way of seeing things.
Henry Miller

Every now and then go away and have a little relaxation. To remain constantly at work will diminish your judgment. Go some distance away, because work will be in perspective and a lack of harmony is more readily seen.

Leonardo DaVinci

A holiday is a respite, not a cure.
Evelyn Underhill

Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things that you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbor. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover.

Mark Twain

*A little too abstract
A little too wise
It's time to touch the earth
And let the leaves rain down from the skies.
That the rich life can run through the roots again.*
Robertson Jeffers

Different people have different goals and purposes for their time away from routine work. Some possibilities are:

Sabbatical—Recharging personal batteries

Adventure—Having new experiences

Relaxation—Getting away from stimulation and stress

Education—Learning new things

Reconnecting—Visiting distant family and/or friends

Family bonding—Sharing experiences and time together with family members

Traditions and rituals—Attendance at events such as holidays, weddings and family reunions

Personal development—Seeking to develop one's own skills, character, philosophy

Child development—Providing opportunities for children to learn, grow up, etc.

Reflection—Time to look at the world from a different perspective

Aesthetic experiences—Experiencing nature, art, architecture, theater and music

Escape—Getting away from routine.

Questions to ponder:

1. What is a special vacation memory for you? What made it special?
2. Think about an unpleasant vacation memory. What went wrong?
3. Vacations come in many forms. Reflect on your experiences with
 - A stay-at-home, hang-out-around-the-house vacation
 - A day trip
 - A visit to relatives
 - A trip to a new and different destination
 - An extended time off, such as a sabbatical
 - A time of reflection, such as sitting on a beach
 - A sightseeing vacation with lots to see and do

What has been good and bad about each?

4. After reflection on different types of vacations, what feeds your soul and allows you to re-enter your everyday world refreshed and renewed?

*****At our meeting you will be asked to pick your favorite topics from this list. These were used in 04 and will be refigured for next fall. Pick your top 3 from this list.

- Spirituality
- The Shadow
- The Divine
- Gratitude
- Loss and Grief
- Gifts and Giving
- New Beginnings
- Atheism
- Response and Call
- Success and Failure
- Saying Goodbye
- Living the Questions
- Guilt
- Faith
- Hope
- Earth

*****At the potluck we will also be picking some new topics. Be thinking about what other topics you think would be interesting for next year.