

Gathering for Awe

This Gathering has suggestions for introducing sections. Some sections use a timer / clock.

Words of the Day

As people arrive, ask them to write the Words of the Day and put them in the basket.

I have felt a sense of awe when ...

Opening

Chalice Lighting *“We’ll begin with the chalice lighting.” Ask for a volunteer.*

We light our chalice
Fragments of stars and sun
To light our hopes and dreams,
To make a way for peace and love.
Source Unknown

The Basket *“Now we’ll read the Words of the Day. I’ll start and pass to the right (left).”*

Being Together

Sharing of Joys and Concerns *“Now we’ll share joys and concerns. I’ll begin and we’ll go around the circle. Will you go next?”*

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

Shared Readings *“I’ll start the first Shared Reading. Will you go next?”*

If the stars should appear but one night every thousand years how man would marvel and stare.
Ralph Waldo Emerson

What is it that breathes fire into the equations and makes a universe for them to describe? Why does the universe go to all the bother of existing? *Stephen Hawking*

People are just as wonderful as sunsets if you let them be. When I look at a sunset, I don’t find myself saying, “Soften the orange a bit on the right hand corner.” I don’t try to control a sunset. I watch with awe as it unfolds. *Carl Rogers*

To science, not even the bark of a tree or a drop of pond water is dull or a handful of dirt banal. They all arouse awe and wonder. *Jane Jacobs*

I was struck by the fact that I hadn’t been awed in a while. Did that mean awesome things had disappeared from my life? No. What it did mean was that I’d gotten too caught up in distractions and mind mucking to recognize anything as awe-inspiring ... I hadn’t been paying attention to the beauty around me. *Sue Patton Thoele*

The job of the artist is always to deepen the mystery. *Francis Bacon*

Mystery creates wonder and wonder is the basis of man's desire to understand. *Neil Armstrong*

The world is full of magic things, patiently waiting for our senses to grow sharper. *W.B. Yeats*

The more clearly we can focus our attention on the wonders and realities of the universe about us, the less taste we shall have for destruction. *Rachel Carson*

Let me keep my mind on what matters,
which is my work,
which is mostly standing still and learning to be
astonished. *Mary Oliver*

Deep Listening and Sharing

Round 1. Deep Sharing. *"Now we share reflections on Awe and the preparation." Begin, or if you're not ready, ask who can go first.*

Round 2. Responses and Comments. *After all have shared or passed, check the time. Say "We have about __ minutes for a 2nd round." Begin your response or ask who can start.*

Closing

Closing Circle *"We'll go around the circle and say a word or sentence about what we are taking away from the session. I'll go first, and would you be willing to go next?"*

Chalice *"We will extinguish the chalice." Read in unison or ask for a volunteer.*

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.

Song/Chime *Ask for a volunteer.*

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."