

Gathering for Wisdom

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.

My theme for a commencement speech would be ...

Opening

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

May this flame go up and remind us that our faith is good: every one of us can bring love to the world.

May this chalice burn with clear flame as a symbol of our path: every one of us can have joy, peace and harmony in our hearts.

May through this flame the wisdom of ages speak to us and stay in us: every one of us can be a blessing to the world.

Rev. Jill McAllister, UU minister

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?”*

Do not seek to follow in the footsteps of the wise; seek what they sought. *Bashō*

You can tell whether one is clever by their answers. You can tell whether one is wise by their questions. *Naguib Mahfouz*

There are many ways to seek wisdom. There is travel, there are masters, there is service. There is staring into the eyes of children and elders and lovers and strangers. There is sitting silently in one spot and there is being swept along in life’s turbulent current. Life itself will grant you wisdom in ways you may neither understand nor choose. *Kent Nerburn*

We don’t receive wisdom; we must discover it for ourselves after a journey that no one can take for us or spare us. *Marcel Proust*

Great is the number of those who might attain true wisdom if they did not already think themselves wise. *Eliza Cook*

Look at everything as though you were seeing it either for the first or last time. *Betty Smith*

I did then what I knew how to do. Now that I know better, I do better. *Maya Angelou*

Wisdom is like a goatskin bag; every man carries his own. *Chinua Achebe*

Wisdom, after all, is not a station you arrive at, but a manner of traveling. *Sue Monk Kidd*

Wisdom is the daughter of experience.

Thoughts on Art and Life by Leonardo da Vinci, Maurice Baring

Deep Listening and Sharing

Round 1. Deep Sharing. *“Now we share reflections on Wisdom 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.”