

**Wisdom Circle – Interdependence
May, 2015**

PREPARATION

Words of Wisdom

"Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part."

~7th Principle of Unitarian Universalism

The most remarkable feature of this historical moment on Earth is not that we are on the way to destroying the world - we've actually been on the way for quite a while. It is that we are beginning to wake up, as from a millennia-long sleep, to a whole new relationship to our world, to ourselves and each other.

~ Joanna Macy

"The whole idea of compassion is based on a keen awareness of the interdependence of all these living beings, which are all part of one another, and all involved in one another."

~ Thomas Merton

"Interdependence is and ought to be as much the ideal of man as self-sufficiency. Man is a social being."

~ Mahatma Gandhi

"We are all in the same boat, in a stormy sea, and we owe each other a terrible loyalty."

~ G.K. Chesterton

"We can either emphasize those aspects of our traditions, religious or secular, that speak of hatred, exclusion, and suspicion or work with those that stress the interdependence and equality of all human beings. The choice is yours."

~ Karen Armstrong, Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life

"None of us can ever save himself; we are the instruments of one another's salvation, and only by the hope that we give to others do we lift ourselves out of the darkness into light."

~ Dean Koontz

"Impermanence and selflessness are not negative aspect of life, but the very foundation on which life is built. Impermanence is the constant transformation of things. Without impermanence, there can be no life. Selflessness is the interdependent nature of all things. Without interdependence, nothing could exist."

~ Thich Nhat Hanh

Spiritual Exercise:

As you have a meal this month, reflect on the following:

Where did your food come from? What part of the world? What living beings labored or died to produce your food? How many different plants, animals, or other life forms are a part of your meal? What resources were likely expended to make your food ready for you to eat? How many people were required to harvest your food? To process it? To transport it? To sell it? How are their lives similar or different to your own?

If you share meals with family or friends, discuss these questions together as you eat.

Questions for Reflection:

- On whom, or on what, are you dependent? To what do you owe your life or your well-being?
- What messages did you receive growing up about self-sufficiency vs. independence? How did these shape your worldview as an adult?

Readings:

Martin Luther King Jr., "A Christmas Sermon for Peace," delivered in 1967 at the Ebenezer Baptist Church



Listen to the Audio Here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1jeyIAH3bUI>

Read the Text Here:

http://www.ecoflourish.com/Primers/education/Christmas_Sermon.html

Session Plan

This session plan is a suggested guide, not a rigid set of rules. You may adjust this plan as you feel is appropriate in your group.

Gathering & Welcome (~5 min)

Chalice Lighting (~2 min)

Optional Reading:

If there is to be peace in the world, there must be peace in the nations.
If there is to be peace in the nations, there must be peace in the cities.
If there is to be peace in the cities, there must be peace between neighbors.
If there is to be peace between neighbors, there must be peace in the home.
If there is to be peace in the home, there must be peace in the heart

~ By Lao-Tse

Check-In (20-30 minutes)

As you feel comfortable, take 2-3 minutes to share one thing that is lifting your spirits, and one thing that is weighing you down. This is a time for sharing, but not for discussion.

Business (10 minutes)

Use this time for any new business: Welcoming new members; Scheduling future meetings; Revisiting the Covenant; Answering questions about Wisdom Circle processes; Etc...

Discussion (60 minutes)

Introduce Topic. Take Turns Reading aloud the "Words of Wisdom."

- On whom, or on what, are you dependent? To what do you owe your life or your well-being?
- What messages did you receive growing up about self-sufficiency vs. independence? How did these shape your worldview as an adult?

Silent Reflection (~2 minutes)

First Responses (Share in the order you feel moved)

Cross-Conversation (Ask questions that invite deeper reflection; Speak from personal experience, and use "I statements"; Avoid explaining or judging)

Final Thoughts (Share in the order you feel moved)

Gratitude (5-10 minutes)

Share 1-2 things that have been meaningful to you from this session.

Closing

Optional Chalice Extinguishing Song:

"From You I Receive" (Sing 3-5 times. If your groups feel up to it, you can sing it in a round.)

*From you I receive,
To you I give,
Together we share,
And from this we live.*

#402 in *Singing the Living Tradition*

(youtube audio <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k7a0Lei20CA>)

402 From You I Receive

The musical score is written for a single melodic line in 3/4 time. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 120. The key signature has one flat (Bb). The melody consists of two lines of music. The first line has four measures with lyrics: 'From you I re-ceive, to you I give, to-'. The second line has four measures with lyrics: 'geth-er we share, and from this we live.' Chord symbols are placed above the notes: F, Bb, C, F in the first line; Dm, Gm, C7, F in the second line.

From you I re-ceive, to you I give, to-
geth-er we share, and from this we live.

Words & music: Joseph and Nathan Segal, © 1969 Nathan Segal

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