

**Wisdom Circle - Chaos
October 2014**

PREPARATION

Words of Wisdom

“In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters.”

- *The Book of Genesis*

“Chaos is the score upon which reality is written.”

- *Bob Dylan*

“One cannot make an omelet without breaking some eggs.”

“If a cluttered desk is a sign of a cluttered mind, of what, then is an empty desk?”

- *Albert Einstein*

“An act of art begins with an act of destruction.”

- *Pablo Picasso*

You may have heard of the term “creative chaos.” It refers to the idea that creativity, new ideas, and novel solutions to problems are often born out of seemingly disordered situations. It explains why artists and academics often have such messy workspaces. One theory for this phenomenon is that the human mind has such a strong propensity to explain the world around it – to make sense of things – that it will find patterns in situations that are actually random. One way to stimulate this pattern-finding process—to challenge the mind to work harder than usual to find connections and create meanings—is to put yourself in a chaotic environment. Ironically, those creative people who are often accused of being cluttered, disordered, and anarchic, may have the most orderly minds of all of us. They are experts at finding ways to make sense out of nonsense.

Spiritual Exercise – Reflecting on the Gifts of Chaos

Reflect on a time in your life when things felt chaotic – perhaps a time when you were in the midst of a life transition and didn't know what the future would bring. Or when you lacked a sense of direction and purpose. Or when the environment around you was being unpredictable or people were behaving unpredictably. When we are in the midst of these periods of relative disorder, we can feel unmoored and that feeling can be frightening or frustrating. However, sometimes these times of chaos give birth to unexpected, but wonderful, new directions, new goals, new revelations and new connections. Sometimes we can only see these gifts in retrospect. What, if any, were the gifts of chaos in your own life? In what new ways were you reordered after going through a time when it felt like you were coming apart?

Come to the Wisdom Circle gathering prepared to reflect on what has been created out of chaos in your own life.

EXTRA CREDIT READING:

“Chaos Theory: A Unified Theory of Muppet Types” by Dahlia Lithwick

(click the link below or copy it into your browser to read the article):

http://www.slate.com/articles/life/low_concept/2012/06/what_kind_of_muppet_are_you_chaos_or_order.html

Questions for Reflection:

- What in your life feels chaotic right now?
- What has been created out of times of chaos in your own life?
- Was there ever a time when you needed to destroy something in order for something new to be created?
- Are you a chaos muppet or an order muppet?

Wisdom Circle – Chaos 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:

We are here to abet creation and to witness to it,
To notice each other's beautiful face and complex nature
So that creation need not play to an empty house.

- Annie Dillard

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 (10-20 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."

- What in your life feels chaotic right now?
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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 Song: "We Give Thanks" by Wendy Luella Perkins (#1010 in Teal Hymnal)

Oh we give thanks
For this precious day.
For all gathered here
And those far away.
For this time we share,
With love and care.
Oh we give thanks
For this precious day.

1010 We Give Thanks

Easy flow $\text{♩} = \text{no}$

A9 sus4 D Em7

(Melody) Oh, we give thanks for this pre-cious

(Harmony) Oh, we give thanks for this pre-cious

day, For all gath-er'd here,

day, For all gath-er'd, all gath-er'd

© Words & music: Wendy Luella Perkins, 1966 - . © 2004 Wendy Luella Perkins.
© arr. Susan Peck, 1967 -

We Give Thanks - 2

F#m G D A/C#

and those far a - way; For this time we (food)

here, far a - way; For this time we (food)

share with love and care,

share with love and care,

Bm F#m/A G

We Give Thanks - 3

D#F# Em7 A9 sus4

Oh, we give thanks for this pre-cious

Oh, we give thanks for this pre-cious

day. Oh, we give

day. Oh, we give

