

Soul Circle Small Group Reflection Material for May 2020-Theme: Thresholds 1

This month, the first group meeting will focus on the Reflection Questions and Quotes. The 2nd group meeting on Photo Activity and the Rumi Poem.

Reflect on Thresholds

- What was your favorite threshold time in your life? How are you honoring the joy and gift of that time in your life right now?
- So you've made the journey over that threshold. How are you now supporting those who are still on the other side? The ones still working to make it over?
- How would someone be able to tell that you've made a journey through a spiritual threshold?
- Looking back on the last major threshold you crossed, was there something you now wish you'd brought along? Or maybe something you wish you'd left back there?

Threshold Quotes

- "And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom." -Anais Nin
- "It's a dangerous business, Frodo, going out your door. You step onto the road, and if you don't keep your feet, there's no knowing where you might be swept off to." -Bilbo Baggins
- "If you go back to the etymology of the word 'threshold,' it comes from 'threshing,' which is to separate the grain from the husk. So the threshold, in a way, is a place where you move into more critical and challenging and worthy fullness." -John O'Donohue

Threshold Activity - Looking Back at An Old Photo

One of the best ways to take ourselves back to the threshold moments of our lives is to revisit the pictures we took of them. So here are your instructions: Find a picture of yourself after having gone through an important threshold or right in the middle of it! Likely, you will stumble on a number of other pictures of the same moment. Take your time going through them all. Try to notice the subtle differences, and what those subtle differences might be trying to tell you.

Rumi on Thresholds: Our Welcomed and Unwelcomed Guests

The Guest House is a beloved poem by the Sufi poet Rumi. It's a powerful reflection on this month's theme of thresholds. Here's how it begins:

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.
A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
As an unexpected visitor.
Welcome and entertain them all!

You watch and listen to a video meditation of Rumi's poem here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_SMcuZfUqG0

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In this time of Covid-19, we are all too familiar with unexpected and unwanted guests crossing our thresholds. Depression, Uncertainty. Sickness. Fear. Job loss. New routines. Isolation. These things don't knock politely and ask permission to enter. They just come. We are hosts whether we want to be or not. But that doesn't mean we have no choice at all. We can always choose what kind of hosts we want to be. Ultimately Rumi's is a call to be active not passive ones. Ask yourself: What "unwelcomed guest" are you struggling with the most these days? What "welcomed guest" has most blessed you during these times of pandemic? What aspects of your relationship with your "unwelcomed guest" do you not have control over and what aspects do you have control over? How can you make more room for the new "welcomed guest"?

And finally, once you've identified the ways in which you have agency, figure out a way to keep that work front and center. Physical objects make great reminders. So find an object to symbolize your unwelcomed guest and another to represent your welcome guest. Then place those objects somewhere near where you cross the threshold into each new day: on your bed stand, or dresser or bathroom sink.

Let them serve as a daily reminder of how much choice you still have in these days that can feel so out of control.

Additional Resources for you are below and on our Thematic Resources webpage here:

<https://uucentralct.org/thematic-resources/>

Threshold Bookshelf

- *To Bless the Space Between Us: A Book of Blessings* by John O'Donohue
- *Thresholds: How to Thrive Through Life's Transitions to Live Fearlessly and Regret-Free* by Sherre Hirsch
- *On the Threshold of Transformation: Daily Meditations for Men* by Richard Rohr
- *Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End* by Atul Gawande

Threshold Film Festival

- "Boyhood"
- "Moonlight"
- "To Sir, With Love"
- "Jojo Rabbit"
- "What a Way to Go: Life at the End of Empire"

Family Movies

- "Toy Story 3"
- "Monsters Inc."
- "The Chronicles of Narnia"