

# Discussion Guide

## Welcome

Greet everyone. If this is a drop-in group or if there are newer folks present, do a go round of names. Give a brief overview of our time together today, including time expectations.

Today's theme is the practice of Spiritual Grounding: How do we transform through personal spiritual experiences and shared ritual?

## Chalice Lighting

We light our chalice with words from Julianne Lepp:

### Open to Unexpected Answers

A large gray rock is cracked down the middle,  
where many small colorful stones are caught.

We seek our place in the world  
and the answers to our hearts' deep questions.

As we seek, may our hearts be open to unexpected answers.

May the light of our chalice remind us that this is a community of warmth,  
of wisdom, and welcoming of multiple truths.

## Covenant

Review the covenant as agreed upon at the last meeting. As participants become more familiar with the covenant, you can change up how you refer to it. For example, you might ask people to name the phrase that feels most meaningful or important to them today. (Don't forget to mention that it's fine to repeat phrases).

- Speak as personally and deeply as we wish--or not. It is always okay to pass.
- Speak kindly about ourselves and others.
- Speak from our own experiences.
- Hold confidentiality. Share your experience of the conversation, not other people's stories.
- Listen respectfully. Avoid giving advice or asking probing questions about others' lives.
- Be aware of power differentials. Consider our own and others' identities and how these identities shape the impact of our contributions.
- (Include any agreements added by your group)

**continued . .**

## **Check In**

Offer one of these questions or one of your own or combine the check in with the covenant exercise suggested above.

- How goes it with your spirit?
- What's on your mind and heart today?

## **Conversation**

This month we are exploring our experiences of spiritual grounding and the personal and collective spiritual practices and rituals that increase our sense of connection and belonging to ourselves, our communities, our world and beyond.

People are welcome to offer their responses to the service, the reflection questions, their experience with one of the practices, or anything from the theme packet.

You may choose to begin with a go-round or simply let the conversation flow, making sure everyone has a chance to share. If there is a lull, let the silence sit for a time, then offer up a question to continue the conversation.

## **Optional Starting Questions**

- What are you already doing that might become a spiritual practice?
- Where do you have the greatest sense of connection – to your inner voice, the larger whole, or the sacred? What expands your sense of self?
- How do you integrate your spiritual practices into your life?
- What have you gained from your spiritual practice? What do you hope to gain?

## **Sharing Silence**

Before closing the session with the check out and chalice extinguishing, offer a minute of silence to give people a moment to process all that has been said and to share a time of quiet together. Alternatively, or in addition, you could include a time of silence before starting the conversation.

## **Leaving**

From this conversation about spiritual grounding, what resonated most for you, or what are you taking with you?

## **Closing Words**

May we support one another in nurturing our sense of belonging. Blessings on us all.

## **Extinguish the chalice**