



SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Object Prayer

Select an object that you will find comfort in holding and that may help prompt your prayers & meditations.

Hold the object for several minutes and come “in touch” with the meaning it brings to you.

Center yourself and form a breath meditation with words you choose:

Inhale: (with a greeting & intension . . .)

Exhale: (ask for what you need)

Continue holding the object, in trust and confidence tell your struggles.

When you have finished your breath meditation, allow for a time of silence.

Gaze at your object and hold it so that you may recognize the promised hope and gifts that come in the struggle.

At the end of this time, record your experience and answer these questions:

Consider how it felt to hold an object that is sacred to you. In what ways did holding the object enrich or diminish your prayers or the feelings you experienced? How might you incorporate this “touch” prayer in the future?



SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Memory Objects Meditation

Select an object that you will find comfort in holding and that may help prompt your prayers & meditations.

Hold the object for several minutes and come “in touch” with the meaning it brings to you.

Center yourself and find your breath as we form a breath meditation with words you choose:

Inhale: (with a greeting & intension . . .)

Exhale: (ask for what you need)

Continue holding the object, in trust and confidence tell your struggles.

When you have finished your breath meditation, allow for a time of silence.

Gaze at your object and hold it so that you may recognize the promised hope and gifts that come in the struggle.

At the end of this time, record your experience and answer these questions:

Consider how it felt to hold an object that is sacred to you. In what ways did holding the object enrich or diminish your meditation or the feelings you experienced? How might you incorporate this “touch” meditations in the future?

SPIRITUAL PRACTICES

Mindful Memory Keeping

Keeping and caring for the memories and special objects of our loved ones is part of grieving them. So many of us who grieve fear that we may forget their story or who they were to us.

What you will need for the workshop

- memories
- your loved one favorite things
- photos & treasures from the past
- a vessel to hold them
- paper or journal
- and most of all love

Memory Objects Meditation

We will explore the *Memory Objects Meditation* found on the back side of this handout. This form of meditation allows us to spend time with our loved ones' favorite items and events mindfully. Then, build a place of honor for those items and memories.

Remembering their Story

It may help to record the story of each item or photo as you build a memory-keeping place. Find a journal or create an electronic record of the story of these objects of honor. Here are some questions or information prompts to help you record the story of the object and how it is a part of the story of your loved one.

Whose was this object?

What do you know about this object?

What is this object or item?

When was it made or used? And for what purpose?

What made it special to your loved one?

Who else loved this item?

What memories do you have of this object?

What does this item mean to you? How does it comfort you?

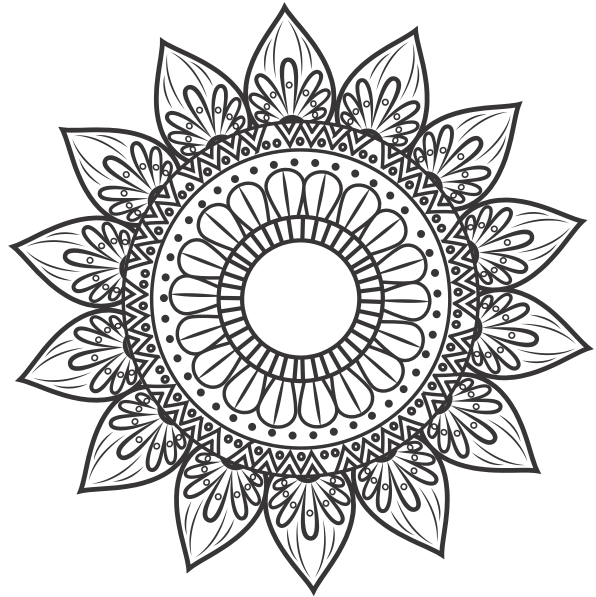


SPIRITUAL PRACTICE

Mandala

The mandala (Sanskrit for “circle” or “completion”) has a long history and is recognized for its deep spiritual meaning and representation of wholeness. The “circle with a center” pattern is the basic structure of creation that is reflected from the micro to the macro in the world as we know it. It is a pattern found in nature and is seen in biology, geology, chemistry, physics and astronomy.

Many people and cultures have vouched for the mandala’s intrinsic meaning. Buddhists, Tibetans, and Hindus have all derived meaning from the mandala and its captivating beauty. Psychoanalyst Carl Jung has called it “a representation of the unconscious self.” The mandala is widely recognized as a meaningful reflection of its creator. Praying with a mandala can be healing and a source of reflection of one’s soul.



After the death of a loved one, we are both called and challenged to stay connected, or in spiritual relationship, with that person or persons. In Dr. Ira Byock’s book, *The Four Things That Matter Most: A Book About Living*, he shares the wisdom he learned from hundreds of conversations with persons he met through his medical practice, in hospice and palliative care. These conversations taught him that the four things that matter most are to express these thoughts: **Please forgive me. I forgive you. Thank you. I love you.**

So, let’s work on a Mandala exercise to incorporate these sentiments in relationship the loved one(s) you are grieving. Turn over to see the steps to praying with the Mandala.