

Holiday Message Series: This Joy

Challenge:

Each day, intentionally bring awareness to something you do regularly that you know you enjoy. It could be anything: a morning cup of tea or coffee, a walk, a favorite snack, an interaction with someone you appreciate or love, a person or a pet, or a spacious moment in your day while you travel. Commit to being wholeheartedly present to these moments. (from mindful.org)

Spiritual practice:

Joy journal: Even in the most difficult of times, there are things that bring joy. Each evening, write down at least one thing that brought you joy that day, no matter how small. Begin every day by reading through your entries.

Discussion questions:

How do you define joy? What are some things that bring you joy? Can you be present for joys without also being present for sorrows? Can we find a balance of joys and sorrows even in difficult times? How?

Journal/reflection/art prompt:

finding joy

Family Resources from Miss Carol:

Article for parents:

[“How to Awaken Joy in Kids”](#) by James Baraz and Michele Lilyanna

Book for littles:

[Each Breath a Smile](#) (based on teachings by Thich Nhat Hanh) by Sister Susan, et. al.

Book on video for school age kids:

[I Am Peace](#) written & read by Susan Verde

Readings, etc. from the Revs:

Articles

[“Resistance Revival Chorus Protests with Song for Black Lives Matter”](#) by Stephanie Simon

[“Black Joy Isn't Frivolous - it's Necessary”](#) by Patia Braithwaite

[“Finding Joy & Power in Being a Trans Person”](#) by Thomas Page McBee

[“Everyone Can Learn from How Marginalized Communities Use Social Media”](#) by Naomi Day

[“The Difference Between Happiness and Joy”](#) by David Brooks

[“Athletes Are Shifting the Narrative Around Mental Health at Work”](#) by Alyson Meister and Maude Lavanchy

Books

[The Book of Joy](#) by Dalai Lama & Desmond Tutu

[Pleasure Activism: The Politics of Feeling Good](#) by adrienne maree brown

[The Body Is Not An Apology](#) by Sonya Renee Taylor

Video

[Karama Neal and Judge Olly Neal](#), Story Corps

Website

[Theology of Joy & the Good Life](#), Yale Center for Faith and Culture

Podcasts

["Stephen Colbert: Laughter as an Act of Love"](#) from *Mike Birbiglia's Working It Out*

["Hear the Inspirational Protest Songs of the Resistance Revival Chorus"](#) from *World Cafe on WXP*

Poetry

["Mindful"](#) by Mary Oliver

["And the Day Came..."](#) by Joanna Fontaine Crawford

["When We Get Through This"](#) by Maya Stein

"The truth about saving the world" by Ali Muldrow (see final page for poem text)

Music

[This Joy](#) by Resistance Revival Chorus

[Sing About It](#) by The Wood Brothers

[Alright](#) by Kendrick Lamar

[Joy in Resistance](#) by Resistance Revival Chorus

[Colors](#) by Black Pumas

The Web of Life by Bruce Callander (*sung to the tune of Ode to Joy*)

Sing of joy and gladness now and evermore to Nature's song,
Open up our heart's desire with love that lasts our whole life long
May the knowledge of our kinship spread throughout the universe,
Helping us to live our lives in harmony with all the Earth.
All the sky is bright and glorious; all the Earth is filled with light,
When we see the Sun before us rising to dispel the night.
All the fears that once beset us fade before the rising dawn.
Newfound joy comes now to let us join anew Creation's song!
Sing of seas and sing of mountains! Sing of forests and of plains!
All the universe before us sparkles with the falling rains!
Barren deserts, living oceans, teeming cities, countryside
Joined with us in joyful singing, Celebrate the web of life!

Questions? Suggestions? Feedback? Please feel free to contact one of the members of the Spiritual Development Ministry:

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"The truth about saving the world" by Ali Muldrow

What if I told you the revolution
doesn't need your stress
Or your overworked exhausted?
What if I invited you to let go of that rage
And resentment, to set yourself free first?
What if I asked you to spare this movement
your fear and panic at the expense all those bitter jokes?
If I told you this movement is fueled
only by your every joy
Would you believe me?
Would you show up too with a boom box
and shoes unlaced?
Would you invite your little cousin to
sing like church at the protest?
Would you kiss in public and call yourself courageous?
Would you hang out in your homies garden plot
Braiding garlic?
Would you make love more often
And embrace your every ecstasy?
Would you read quietly knowing you were changing the world with each moment of chill?
Would you find yourself giving daffodils
To strangers or topless in a swaying hammock?
Would you whisper sweet words to yourself in the mirror and cook dinner with a dear friend?
Would you suddenly have time to write poems
Or take a bike ride with your daughter?
Would you plan a vacation to some place beautiful
And savor your food for the sake of us all?
Would you pay more attention
to what makes you happy?
Would you sleep in
and drink wine while making art?
Would the way you feel come into focus?
Would loving people be the most important part?
Will you come to replace complaining
With writing thank you notes?
Will noticing beauty
Become your religion?
I want to tell you
the revolution will be Joyful
That your happiness is a necessity
and your love will be remembered"