

Exploring Personal Power—BBUUC Journey Circle— May 2025

Chalice Lighting

May we know once again that we are not isolated beings, but connected,
in mystery and miracle,
to the universe, to this community and to each other.

Check-in: What is most on your mind today?

Opening Readings

"Let me fall if I must fall. The one I will become will catch me." (Baal Shem Tov)

"The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any." (Alice Walker, *Hard Times Require Furious Dancing*)

"Vulnerability sounds like truth and feels like courage. Truth and courage aren't always comfortable, but they're never weakness." (Brené Brown, *Daring Greatly*)

The Peace of Wild Things

by Wendell Barry

When despair for the world grows in me and I wake in the night at the least sound,
in fear of what my life and my children's lives may be,
I go and lie down where the wood drake rests
in his beauty on the water, and the great heron feeds.
I come into the peace of wild things
who do not tax their lives with forethought of grief.
I come into the presence of still water,
And I feel above me the day-blind stars waiting with their light.
For a time I rest in the grace of the world, and am free.

Definition and Topic Exploration:

Personal power is not about dominance or control over others. It's the deep inner strength that comes from knowing who we are, trusting ourselves, and living with authenticity and resilience.

Each of us has a reservoir of personal power — rooted not in status or titles, but in our integrity, courage, and sense of purpose. When we act from this inner power, we are more able to set boundaries, take initiative, influence others positively, and stay grounded during uncertainty.

Today, we'll reflect on different aspects of personal power — how we build it, how we sometimes give it away, and how we can reclaim it. For example, vulnerability can sometimes feel like 'giving away' power, but it can also be one of the strongest ways we connect with others and live in our truth.

Discussion: Reflection Questions:

Let's take a quiet moment to turn inward.

What does *your* personal power look like?

How does it feel when you're fully in it—grounded, clear, and strong?

Where do you feel it in your body?

What images, memories, or emotions come to mind?

1. Can you recall a time when you felt fully in your personal power? What made that possible?
2. Answering from within, is personal power a skill that can be learned or are we born with it? Can it be weakened or strengthened over time? What are steps or obstacles present in strengthening or regaining our personal power?
3. When you share parts of yourself (vulnerabilities, hopes, dreams) with others, does it feel like losing power, gaining power, or something else?
4. Have you ever noticed yourself giving away your personal power — by staying silent, seeking approval, or letting fear decide for you? How did that feel in the moment — and afterward?

Or Conversely -

Have you ever had to assert your power more forcefully than felt natural, in order to bring about positive change? How did that feel — and was it worth it?

5. Compromise is often necessary in healthy relationships — but sometimes it can feel like giving away our personal power. When does compromise feel empowering, and when does it feel like surrender?
How can we approach compromise in a way that honors both ourselves and others?
6. In what areas of your life do you feel strong in your personal power today? Where do you want to grow?

Closing reading:

From: For a New Beginning
by John O'Donohue

Though your destination is not yet clear
You can trust the promise of this opening;
Unfurl yourself into the grace of beginning
That is at one with your life's desire.

Awaken your spirit to adventure;
Hold nothing back, learn to find ease in risk;
Soon you will be home in a new rhythm,
For your soul senses the world that awaits you.

Checkout and reflections on today's session: Please express any closing thoughts on today's session.

Extinguish the Chalice

We extinguish this flame, but not the light of truth, the warmth of community, or the fire of commitment. These we carry in our hearts until we are together again.

Housekeeping