



**The 2004 winter theme:
explore and reflect — a creative sojourn**

This season sister i circles will engage in discussions and activities that highlight the importance of fostering healthy, supportive relationships for living your creativity. The first meeting begins by defining the creative goals and stepping stones you would like to focus on throughout the season. Following meetings will include deep processing and sharing in the creative inventory discussion and reflective conversation, a workshop creating postcards and a revisiting exercise where one or more circle sisters share a creative pursuit. The season closes with a celebration to honor your circle's commitment and achievements.

Your jewel boxes™:

opening winter — get ready

creative inventory — reflections

workshop — winter twinklers

revisiting exercise — sharing creative pursuits

reflective conversation — life stories of female creatives

closing winter — celebrate!

start a sister i or mother i circle in your community!

1. Gather like-minded women.
2. Find places and times to meet. Designate lead sisters/moms for season.
3. Meet—use the sister i format and seasons guide to direct your meeting.

circle format — each meeting looks like this!

opening: read mission statement ([LINK](#))

silent time word: use word provided to help center quietly

intro sentence: take turns finishing the sentence exercise

stepping stones/synchronicities: share creative journeys and guiding influences

business: schedules, materials and matters to be discussed

jewel box: the project, activity or discussion for the meeting!

closing: state goals until next meeting — end with brief silent time

*Refer to the circle elements and starter guides for further information on facilitating a sister i/mother i circle in your community — freely available at www.sisteri.com.



sister i circle calendar — your six meeting itinerary for fall

Schedule your meetings two weeks apart, preferably on the same day and time of each week. Schedule places according to the needs of that meeting's jewel box.

lead sister(s):

first meeting: opening winter — get ready

date:

second meeting: creative inventory — reflections

date:

third meeting: workshop — winter twinklers

date:

fourth meeting: revisiting exercise — sharing creative pursuits

date:

fifth meeting: reflective conversation — life stories of female creatives

date:

sixth meeting: closing winter — celebrate!

date:

opening winter — get ready

*sister i/mother i circle's community gathering day and date:

*Post your community gathering on the sister i website!



opening — get ready

opening: mission statement

introductions

silent time word: i

intro sentence: I am...

stepping stones/synchronicities: share past creative journeys and guiding influences and state your short-term goals for the next meeting.

business notes: discuss the season schedule and materials needed for the jewel boxes!

jewel box: opening! — creative goals for the season

closing: brief silent time

Welcome to the opening of the fall 2003 sister i season. This is the time to introduce ourselves and state our intentions for coming together. During the jewel box we will begin by stating our creative visions for the season. Let this be a time of encouragement — allowing us to share our visions with freedom of mind and spirit. We'll use the questions and statements below to help define our creative goals for the season and refer to them at each meeting during the stepping stones section of the meeting. Take some time on your own before your group gathers and answer the following questions. Share with the group during the jewel box.

My long-term vision for living my creativity is:

My current creative outlets and goals for the season are:

Here is a list of the areas in my life that are essential to my creative well-being and the goals I hope to achieve throughout the season. Set seasonal goals and action steps under the headings for "mind, body and spirit". Define your goals and choose some action steps to get you started. (Take the creative well-being quiz found on the sister i website to help you define your goals.)

stepping stones for my creative journey through the seasons include:

example: journal writing, light yoga, write a daily/weekly affirmation, draw in sketchbook

Goals for the season	affect on creative well-being (mind, body, spirit)	stepping stones
Example: spend 2 hours painting each week	time alone to express myself on the deepest level	Get baby sitter, clear out space for studio

creative inventory — reflections

opening: mission statement

silent time word: ancient

intro sentence: Winters past were...

stepping stones/synchronicities: share past creative journeys and guiding influences and state your short-term goals for the next meeting.

goals for next meeting:

business notes: Who will present for revisiting exercise?

jewel box: creative inventory — reflections

closing: brief silent time

The creative inventory meeting is a time for digging deep and finding answers that will help us understand our creative development through a selection of questions and topics related to the theme of the season. The circle selects questions and then engages in discussions from the list.

This season's creative inventory is in two sections. In the first section you'll make a creative journey map of your creative history, exploring the experiences and transitional phases within specific time periods of your life. The second section brings the circle together for sharing and discussion. Use the discovery questions below to help you explore and reflect and then use them for your discussion. As a circle, decide whether or not you would like to complete the mapping section before you gather — this would leave you more time for the discussion part of the meeting.

creative journey map

Using the guidelines below, create a timeline that depicts the stepping stones and life experiences that have been pivotal to your life's creative journey.

- Using a circle diagram or outline, take a sheet of paper and create a seasonal timeline for your creative journey.
- Think of the four seasons as metaphors for the transitional periods of your life. For example spring could be a metaphor for adolescence or a time in your life when you focused on a fresh beginning.
- Use these descriptors to help you define the phases within your transitional phases — budding, blooming, gathering and dormant.
- Use examples within each season that detail specific stepping stones or life experiences that changed the direction of your life.

Discovery questions to help you explore and reflect:

In which life stage, transition or seasons have you:

experienced your vibrant individuality?
discovered your internal freedom?
molded safe relational boundaries?
attained a sense of contentment?

How has your creative expression been expressed in each season, each phase?

How have others responded to your creative expression at this stage?

What educational experiences have enriched your life as a creative woman?

Describe the places you've traveled to, near and far, and share how the experiences have been interwoven into your daily life.

How have the hormonal changes within your body been connected to your creative expression?

What "outside" factors have shifted your road map? Example: death in the family, politics, divorce, lottery, environment, pregnancy, 9/11.

Write your notes and ideas for the creative inventory discussion here:



workshop — winter twinklers

opening: mission statement

silent time word: yellow

intro sentence: My window...

stepping stones/synchronicities: share past creative journeys and guiding influences and state your short-term goals for the next meeting.

goals for next meeting:

business notes: remind one another to read creative inventory questions before next meeting

jewel box: workshop — winter twinklers

closing: brief silent time

The sister i workshop is designed to initiate problem solving through fun and innovative projects that will inspire your creative journey. Basic instructions encourage members to share ideas and explore a variety of materials with one another.

Invite the winter sun to reflect the creative energy of the universe with these simple to make sun catchers. You will need a crystal, special stone or glittering bead for this workshop, so make sure to take some time before you gather to find one that reflects your creative expression. Bring your junk boxes full of materials that should include super glue and some sort of attachment to dangle your winter twinkler.

There are lots of suggestions below.

Directions:

This workshop is designed for exploring, so the directions are quite simple. Attach a stone or bead to wire, ribbon or thread and suspend it in near a sunny window to gather inspiration from the winter sun. Some of you will create elaborate winter twinklers with multiple materials, others will choose a simple reflective piece for meditation — it's up to you!

junk box suggestion!, super glue, glue gun, beads, broken costume jewelry, metallic markers, fabric, sticks, hair, fur, fake snow in a can

***camera** — Send photos in and we will post them in the gallery. When you revel in your inventiveness, you inspire not only yourself, but help other sisters to blossom as well!

revisiting exercise — sharing creative pursuits

opening: mission statement

silent time word: India

intro sentence: I'd like to learn about...

stepping stones/synchronicities: share past creative journeys and guiding influences and state your short-term goals for the next meeting.

goals for next meeting:

business notes: make plans for the last meeting — celebrate!

jewel box: revisiting exercise — sharing creative pursuits

closing: brief silent time

The revisiting exercise invites the circle to share their individual creative pursuits through a question and answer discussion forum. Each season a few members volunteer to show and describe examples of their creativity and ask the circle for support and encouragement. This can also be offered as a workshop that engages the whole circle. This is designed to 1. help the circle better understand one another's creative pursuit and 2. receive positive support, encouragement and inspiration from the circle. Whether you are fully engaged in or exploring a new creative pursuit, this is a powerful exercise in opening ourselves up to the genuine support of the group. It teaches us to step back and take the information that others are willing to share and then consciously pocket what is of value and discard what is not. Breaking ourselves from the fears associated with showing our work will bring exciting revelations and insights that will breathe new fire and life into the creative process — be brave!

The presenter first shows her work and explains her creative pursuit to the circle. Examples may come in the form of color swatches of a home decorating project, journal entries, drawings, finished manuscripts, photos, a business plan — anything you would like support on. Then, the circle members offer supportive and encouraging comments and questions. Remember, this is a time of goodwill, positive regard and inspiration! Please refrain from critiquing no matter how well intentioned or constructive.

explore and support questions

How does it feel to do this work?

Has the season influenced your creative pursuit?

When are you most productive?

Where do you want to go next with this?

What dreams do you envision for your passion?

What would support you most to take the next step?

How can the group support you best?

Describe how your creativity has evolved to this level.

How has working on this filled your creative spirit?

How have you explored your creativity through the process?

Describe the choices you've made.

What is the "meaning" of this piece?

What kind of challenges have you faced?

Where do you see this leading?

What kinds of "truths" are you learning about yourself through the process?



reflective conversation — asking for support

opening: mission statement

silent time word: Athena

intro sentence: I am a lot like...

stepping stones/synchronicities: share past creative journeys and guiding influences and state your short-term goals for the next meeting.

goals for next meeting:

business notes: discuss materials for next meeting — closing fall

jewel box: reflective conversation — asking for support

closing: brief silent time

The reflective conversation engages the group in thoughtful discussions that awaken our senses to the creative world around us. Use the topics and questions suggested by the theme of the season to initiate your discussion.

During the reflective conversation each circle member will explore and reflect on the creative life of a woman they admire as someone who has lived or is living to their creative potential. Focus on one woman's life or share and compare several. Research your subject of admiration before you gather — some circles may choose to work in pairs or small groups. Below is a short list of women that are known for their contributions to society, but the list is endless — choose anyone who has an inspiring story and share what you and others have gained from her experiences. Each circle member or group will take five to 15 minutes to share and reflect, allotting enough time for questions and feedback. Have fun!

- | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Mother Teresa | Georgia O'Keefe | Virginia Wolf |
| Cultural goddesses | Simone de Bouvier | Paula Modersohn-Becker |
| Alice Walker | Helen Keller | Amelia Earhart |
| Madame Curie | Gilda Radner | Gloria Vanderbilt |
| Eleanor Anna Roosevelt | Eva Hesse | Hillary Clinton |
| Gertrude Stein | Anais Nin | Gloria Steinem |
| Billie Holiday | Pina Bausch | |
| Annie Liebovitz | Madonna (both of them) | |
| | Biblical women | |

Write your thoughts for your discussion here:



closing — celebrate!

opening: mission statement

silent time word: sisterhood

intro sentence: I say good-bye to winter...

stepping stones/synchronicities: review seasonal goals from opening season

business notes: discuss details for next season — see below

jewel box: closing fall — celebrate!

closing: no goals for next meeting (a time to pause) — end with brief silent time

The closing season meeting celebrates the creative journey of the circle by sharing accomplishments and bringing closure to the season. An outing is often suggested that follows the theme of the season. This is also the time to make arrangements for next season.

To celebrate this winter's theme — creative sojourn — gather together for a learning experience — tour a museum, participate in a political rally, listen to an author talk about her book or any experience you can imagine that would inspire your creative journeys!

closing season to do list:

Discuss each member's creative accomplishments (include everything from baking/cooking to starting a new business!). Write them in the circle journal.

Choose the next season's circle lead sister.

Get a group photo.

Make sure every member has written in the circle journal.

Thank one another for the circle!

Please write the sister i website and share your experience of being a member of a sister i circle! kei@sisteri.com