

Soul and Role (February, 2010)

Introductions:

- Name, role, and how is your winter break going?

Touchstones:

- Reminder of our norms for creating a container for our time together

Today's Theme:

- Current condition of your work world; soul and role
- Poetry as the truth told at a slant, storytelling of one's selfhood
- “Winter Grace”; the gifts of winter's dormancy and death?
- The clearing quality of winter, refining the essence of our inner-teacher, leader, or worker

Reflective Dialogue:

- What word image or phrase captured your attention around the theme of winter's gift of dormancy and death?
- Journal prompts that grabbed the attention of your heart?
- Other noticings

General offerings for the group:

Closing:

- What would you like to carry from this gathering back to your work world at DU?

*Soul and Role Touchstones

- Bring 100% of self
- There is always invitation, always opportunity; never invasion
 - No fixing, no saving, and no advising
 - Openness to learning from others
 - Speak for yourself; tell your story
 - Listen to the silence
 - Confidentiality

Winter Grace

It is autumn again and our anxiety blows
With the wind, breaking the heart of the rose.
Petals and leaves fall down and everything goes.

All but the seed, all but the hard bright berry
And the bulbs we kneel on the earth to bury
And lay away with our anguish and our worry.

It is time we learned again the winter grace
To put the nerves to sleep in a dark place
And smooth the lines in the self-tortured face.

For we are at the end of our endurance nearly
And we shall have to die this winter surely,
For this is the end of more than a season clearly.

Now we shall have to be poor, to yield up all,
With the leaves wither, with the petals fall,
Now we shall have to die, once and for all.

Before the seed of faith so deep and still
Pushes up gently through the frozen will
And the joyless wake and learn to be joyful.

Before this buried love leaps up from sorrow
And doubt and violence and pity follow
To greet the radiant morning and the swallow.

May Sarton

Winter Grace: **Journal Prompts and Considerations**

-What word, image, or phrase speaks to you about the characteristics or qualities of winter in your personal/professional life?

-What are the hard bright berries, seeds and bulbs (the precious gifts of selfhood) at the center of your personal/professional winter?

-Is rest/dormancy a welcome or difficult emotion for you? Why? What do you fear or relish about winter's dormancy?

-What are/might be the gifts of winter for you? Or what gifts is winter offering for your consideration?