

## February Theme for Exploration: INCLUSION

*This list of questions is an aid for deep reflection. They are meant not so much to be answered as to take you somewhere. Your question may not be listed below. If the questions don't include what life is asking from you, spend the month listening to your days to find it.*

*Read through the list 2-3 times until one question sticks out for you and captures your attention. Then reflect further with questions such as:*

- *What is going on in my life right now that makes this question so pronounced for me?*
- *What might the question be inviting me to revisit? And why?*
- *How might Life be speaking through the question to offer me a word of comfort or challenge?*
- **A note about self-care:** *Often these questions take us to a vulnerable space. How might my inner voice be trying to speak to me through it? It is OKAY to ignore the questions that may be triggering – or lean in if that feels safe.*

1. When were you first “saved” by someone who widened a circle to let you in? If you could talk to them today, what would they say to them?
2. If you could go back and change a moment of being excluded or excluding someone else, what would it be?
3. Has an experience of being excluded permanently left a mark on you?
4. Have you ever invited and included something or someone in your life that unexpectedly altered the trajectory of it, something or someone that broke you out of a stifling rut, challenged you to finally face something you were avoiding, or forced you to grow in a way that you wouldn't have on your own? If so, what did the experience teach you about courage, risk, luck or grace?
5. Do you belong to a community or relationship that demands a version of you that no longer is true? Or does it require you to remove parts of yourself to belong?
6. What aspect of your personality do you need to do a better job of embracing and welcoming in? Your judgmental self? Your lazy self? Your vulnerable self? Your bitter self? Your easily frightened self? Your quick-to-anger self? Your jealous self? Your petty self? Your selfish self?
7. What aspect of your life partner, child or close friend do you need to do a better job of embracing and welcoming in?
8. What excluded and painful memory of yours wants to be welcomed back in and better understood?
9. Have you or the communities you are a part of invited diverse people into your “house” but not allowed them to “rearrange your furniture”?
10. Is it possible the community that has welcomed you with open arms has also burdened you with an unhealthy or unfair understanding of “us and them”?
11. What if Black History Month is not just a call to remember but also a form of reparations? If so, what might Black History Month be asking of you to include in your awareness and action this month?
12. How has the pain and struggle of those less fortunate than you been included in your life?