Journaling the Gift of Years

Course Description
Journaling the Gift of Years is a course for reading, writing about, and discussing Joan Chittister’s book *The Gift of Years*, which explores and encourages us to embrace the opportunities that our older years offer through graces and challenges. Students in the course will keep a journal in response to the reading for the week and share selected journal entries with the class. Class discussions will focus both on Chittister’s work and on the perspectives added through class members’ experiences and writing. Required Text: *The Gift of Years*, by Joan Chittister, ISBN 978-1933346335.

Instructor: Winifred Hayek (whayek@wcupa.edu)

Course Schedule
In preparation for each session, please read the chapters to be discussed and journal about one or more of the ideas they explore.

Session 1
Introduction (The Purpose of Life), Regret, Meaning

Session 2
Fear, Ageism, Joy, Authority

Session 3
Transformation, Newness, Accomplishment, Possibility

Session 4
Adjustment, Fulfillment, Mystery, Relationships

Session 5
Tale-Telling, Letting Go, Learning, Religion

Session 6
Freedom, Success, Time, Wisdom

Session 7
Sadness, Dreams, Limitations, Solitude

Session 8
Productivity. Memories, Future, Agelessness

Session 9
Immediacy, Nostalgia, Spirituality, Loneliness
Course Overview and Guidelines
1. This is a course for sharing ideas and experiences related and in response to those Joan Chittister presents in *The Gift of Years*. As we discuss Chittister’s observations and each other’s contributions, we will avoid making judgments of one another, arguing points of view, or introducing politics into our conversation.
2. There is no required minimum or maximum length for journal entries, and there is no requirement to share a journal entry with the class every week. Time will be set aside in each session for class members to read their journal entries written in response to the chapters for the week. To allow time for several readers and for discussion, each journal entry shared with the class should not exceed five minutes unless arrangements are made ahead of time for a longer presentation.
3. Oral and written sharing during the course should be considered confidential.

A Few Zoom Tips
1. Remember to mute yourself if you have background noise, such as a phone ringing.
2. Raise your hand in the usual way or by using the raised-hand icon under the Participants tab.
3. Ask questions or make comments in the usual way or by using Chat, where messages can be directed to individuals or to the full group.
4. If your internet connection is unstable, stop your video for a minute or so and then try turning your video back on. If significant problems persist, try exiting and then rejoining the Zoom session.