

SEPTEMBER MONTHLY THEME:
TOGETHERNESS—*THE VALUE OF NOT GOING IT ALONE*

Since the outbreak of Covid-19, signs proclaiming “we’re in this together” have appeared on lawns and buildings. At the same time, others are insisting on individual freedoms and resisting public health mandates. Here in Massachusetts, we live in a *commonwealth*, a vision of shared goods, but also laud the “Yankee Spirit” of ingenuity and individuality. How do we navigate the tension among these cultural values? How might our core beliefs about human nature shape our understanding of the value of togetherness—especially in a culture with a legacy of segregating humanity by difference?

Which question is calling to you? Where is it leading you?

1. What gifts does being on a team or part of a community bring to your life?
2. Do you sometimes prefer to go it alone? Why?
3. In what ways does perception of difference disrupt efforts to build togetherness?

Wise Words:

If you want to fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together. *African Proverb*

A person with ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good, for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes from knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole and is diminished when others are humiliated or diminished, when others are tortured or oppressed. *Desmond Tutu*

Individuality doesn't just mean individualism-standing alone. It means developing one's unique gifts, and being able to share them for the enjoyment of oneself and others. *Frances Moore Lapp*

It is important for this country to make its people so obsessed with their own liberal individualism that they do not have time to think about a world larger than self. *bell hooks*

Music is healing...(M)usic holds things together. *Prince, The Beautiful Ones*

Coming Together Is A Beginning; Keeping Together Is Progress; Working Together Is Success. *Henry Ford*

A Dream You Dream Alone Is Only A Dream. A Dream You Dream Together Is Reality. *John Lennon/Yoko Ono*

But let there be spaces in your togetherness and let the winds of the heavens dance between you. Love one another but make not a bond of love: let it rather be a moving sea between the shores of your souls. *Kahlil Gibran*

Individually, we are one drop. Together, we are an ocean. *Ryunosuke Satoro*

If there ever comes a day when we can't be together keep me in your heart, I'll stay there forever. *Winnie the Pooh (A.A. Milne)*

You may have the greatest bunch of individual stars in the world, but if they don't play together, the club won't be worth a dime. *Babe Ruth*

Good and just society is neither the thesis of capitalism nor the antithesis of communism, but a socially conscious democracy which reconciles the truths of individualism and collectivism. *Martin Luther King, Jr.*

The need for connection and community is primal, as fundamental as the need for air, water, and food. *Dean Ornish*