

**SAMPLE SELECTION OF TEACHER RENEWAL PROGRAM**  
**AGENDAS**

**URBAN IMAGINATION NETWORK**  
**TEACHER RENEWAL PROGRAM**

**The Seeds of Regeneration : NOVEMBER 20-21, 1998**

AGENDA

**Friday night, November 20**

6-7 PM Dinner (at hotel, conference room A)

7:15-9 PM Check-in circle.  
Lighting of Sabbath candles  
**Session I: The Seeds of Regeneration:  
Reflections on Sabbath and  
Thanksgiving**

9 PM Free time; rest

**Saturday morning, Nov. 21**

7:30-8:30AM Breakfast in hotel (use vouchers)

8:50 AM Meet at Chicago Botanic Garden (Linnaeus room)

9:00 AM-12:00 PM **Session II: Our Bowls, Our Selves**

Part A: A choice of stories: An individual reflection  
*Choose one of the four meditations about bowls.  
Use it to reflect on your life as a teacher or your  
personal life. (30 minutes)*

Part B: Small group sharing Share your reflection with several other teachers who chose that same story (30 minutes)

Part C: Large Group Reflection (15 minutes)

10:15 AM-10:30 AM Break with coffee

10:30-12:30 PM Part D: Creating a Bowl for Life (90 Minutes)  
*This is your chance to create a bowl that will help hold your learning as a teacher. Think back to the metaphor you chose if the first retreat that represents your life as a teacher. Think of images that emerged during your morning reflection as well as during our last retreat and the intervening months. How can you design your bowl so it helps keep you open to life and its possibilities?*

12:30 PM Lunch

### **Saturday afternoon**

1:00-3:00 PM **Free Time**  
Conversation with your tree

3:15-4:45 PM **Session III: Building Open Spaces**  
*Fire*

4:45 -5:00 PM Break

5:00 -6:00 PM **Letter to Self**  
**Closing Circle**

## **Materials list:**

- **Ceramics materials**
- **Paints and paintbrushes**
- **Fountain**
- **Seed planter bowl**
- **Hand-outs (bowls, agendas)**
- **Books for table and for lending library**
- **Sabbath candles**
- **Table decorations? (different bowls)**
- **Music machine plus tapes**
- **Hair dryers for drying ceramics**

# URBAN IMAGINATION NETWORK TEACHER RENEWAL PROGRAM

May 14-15, 1999 Spring Blooms: Gratitude and Grace



## Friday night, May 14, 1999

6-7 PM Dinner (at hotel, conference room A)

### 7:15-9 PM **Session I: Spring Greening**

Introduction to themes: Looking for life, cultivating praise

Group check-in: *Share a "green shoot" in your classroom:  
What are the signs of growth? Of hidden wholeness?*

Small Group Discussion:

*Imagine your current classroom as a garden. Working in small groups:  
1) Describe to each other your classroom as a garden. What colors do you see? What do you smell? Think about its dimensions. Is it wild? Cultivated? What is flowering there? What is still dormant? Is there mulch from another season? What is already in full bloom? What is still in bud?*

*2) How would you describe your own gardening style?*

*Poem: "The peace of wild things"*

9 PM Free time; rest

*Note: If you didn't have time to do an interview with someone in your work setting whom you admire, you may want to interview one of your colleagues this evening. Questions include: how do they understand the vocation of teaching? How do they look at students and colleagues? How do they maintain an inner life? We will be sharing these interviews in the morning.*

## Saturday morning, May 15, 1999

8-8:45 AM Breakfast in hotel (use vouchers); check-out

8:50 AM Meet at Chicago Botanic Garden

9:00 AM **Session II: Clear Singing** (*Classroom Annex trailer*)

Sounds of spring

- *Appalachian Spring*
- *Prairie Song*

Spring Poems (by e.e.cummings)

- *Now(more near ourselves than we)*
- *Spring!may--*

9:20 AM Group Singing

9:30 AM -10:15 AM Inspiring Teaching

*"I'd rather teach one bird to sing than teach 10,000 stars how not to dance."*

In small groups: Reread your mentor interview and spend 5 minutes making notes on the following in your journal: What paradoxes, polarities do you find in life and work of this person? How does she or he stay renewed? What did hearing their story inspire or refresh or make clearer in you? Bring your insights to your small group and discuss each of your interviews in turn.

10:15-10:30 AM Break

10:30-noon **A Teacher's Song** "I will sing you as no one ever has"

- Poem: *I believe in all that has never been spoken,*  
*Rilke*

*A magnificat is a song of praise and petition that celebrates our connections to Life which holds us, turns us inside out, and calls us to remember and renew the hope within us.*

**Examples:**

- **A Magnificat of Teaching;**
- **Angel Falls**

*Sitting outside, listen to the songs of spring.*

- *"The First of May"*

*Compose a magnificent for your own life right now.*

*Sing it. Dance it.*

12:00 PM          Box lunch

12:15 PM-2:15 PM **Free Time: Rest and Renewal/Spring Singing**

- Conversation with your tree
- Case study preparation (if needed)
- Group song writing??

2:30 PM-3:15 PM **Session III: A Hidden Wholeness**

- In small groups, share the case studies from your own teaching. As you listen to each other's stories, what gifts and strengths do you see? What shadows and liabilities? What poles present? Yours? Students'? How were they held?

3:30 PM- 4:30 PM **Session IV: Planting for the Future**

For individual reflection:

- *Describe the seasons in your own life since September. What have been some of their characteristics? What have you struggled with? What have been the most important sources of renewal ?*
- *In what specific ways has the Teacher Renewal Program been helpful to you? Personally? Professionally?*
- *Where would you like the Teacher Renewal Program to go next year?*

For Group Reflection: *Where would we like the Teacher Renewal Program to go beyond July?*

5:00-6:00 PM          **Letter to Self**

**Closing Circle**

## **A Magnificat of Teaching**

My soul flowers in the light of your love, O God,  
Because you have entrusted children to me.

The tenderness of your hand rests on us as we journey together.  
You have exposed my lonely pride that I might turn to your loving  
arms.

You have freed me from my fears and opened in my heart a space  
for simplicity and peace.

I give thanks for all that you have begun in me  
and in my students and colleagues  
And I respond with all that I am becoming  
in this hour and in all times to come.

*-Adapted from *Miryam of Nazareth, Woman of Strength  
and Wisdom**

## **A Magnificat at Angel Falls**

*My soul magnifies you, O God,  
for you have filled my life with blessing  
and called me to proclaim your word.  
You have made my heart strong  
and shared the secrets of your love.*

*-Bliss W. Browne*

# URBAN IMAGINATION NETWORK TEACHER RENEWAL PROGRAM

July 22-23, 1999

**Summer: Community and Abundance**



"All are nothing but flowers in a flowering universe"

-Nakagawa Soen-Roshi

**Friday night, July 22, 1999**

6-7 PM Dinner (at hotel, conference room A)

7:15-9 PM **Session I: Summer Time**

"Summertime" (Gershwin)

- Group check-in: *sharing images of summer*
- Introduction to summer themes: Embodiment, community, abundance

Poem: "*The Summer Day*" (Mary Oliver)

9 PM Free time; rest

**Saturday morning, July 23, 1999**

8-8:45 AM Breakfast in hotel (use vouchers); check-out

8:50 AM Meet at Chicago Botanic Garden in Multipurpose Room

9-10:15 AM **Session II: Exploring Community in Education**

Introduction to community

Poetry: "*Low Road*"

Individual journaling exercise: Home is...  
(Sounds of summer)

"We" and "they"

10:15 AM

Break

10:45-noon

Small group discussion: The experience and marks of community

Share a time when you felt part of a real learning community, when you felt your "we" expand.

What does your story tell us about community?

About the marks and features of community?

- *Nature of community*
- *Fear of community*
- *Connecting to community*

*What works **toward** community? (both within us and outside)*

*What works **against** community? (both within us and outside)*

12:00 PM

Box lunch

12:30-2:15 PM

**Free Time: Rest and Renewal/Summer Sabbath**

- Conversation with your tree

2:30 PM-3:15 PM

**Session III: Scarcity and Abundance**

Images of community: A story about loaves and fishes

3:15-3:30 PM

Break

3:30 - 4:45 PM

**Session IV: What is flowering in me and how do I nurture it to fruition?**

Poem: *The Seven of Pentacles*

*In small groups, share:*

- What is your work "growing away there actively?"
- What and who is helping the work flourish?
- What real connections are you weaving?

5:00-6:00 PM

**Letter to Self**

Closing Circle

**"Grip of Grace" for those leaving us**

**Next retreat:** The first retreat of year 2 is scheduled :

Friday 11AM - Sunday 1PM on October 1-3, 1999.

Autumn theme: The Harvest that Feeds the World

Everything beckons to us to perceive it,  
Murmurs at every turn "remember me!"  
A day we passed, too busy to receive it,  
Will yet unlock us all its treasury.

Who shall compute our harvest? Who shall bar  
Us from the former years, the long-departed?  
What have we learnt from living since we started,  
Except to find in others what we are?

Except to re-ignite commonplace?  
O house, O sloping field, O setting sun!  
Your features form into a face, you run,  
You cling to us, returning our embrace!

One space spreads through all creatures equally—  
Inner-world-space. Birds quietly flying go  
Flying through us. Oh, I that want to grow,  
The tree I look outside at grows in me!

It stands in me, that house I look for still,  
In me that shelter I have not possessed.  
I, the now well-beloved: on my breast  
This fair world's image clings and weeps her fill.

-Rainer Maria Rilke



Ah, not to be cut off,  
Not by the slightest partition  
to be excluded from the stars' measure.  
What is inwardness?  
What if not sky intensified,  
flung through with birds and deep  
with winds of homecoming?

