

artisan church

# Justice

values exploration

# INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this kit is to help you to explore what Artisan's values mean to you, how you are living them out in your day-to-day life, and to foster collective re-engagement of the Artisan community to develop ways we can more fully embody our values.

This kit can be completed by individuals, friends, families, or small groups -whatever is right for you. You should complete the activities at your own pace, but we would suggest to try to work through one activity from each section (Define, Reflect, Immerse, Challenge, and Act) at a time.

## GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

Journaling activities can be done on an individual basis or in community. You can choose to write down your answers in a notebook, or share with others.

When practicing meditation, particularly if you are new to the practice, it is important that you forgive yourself for being distracted. We suggest meditating for 5-10 minutes, but an even shorter period will work, just find what works for you. Find a quiet place and set a timer to countdown so you are not distracted by the time. Sit in a posture that is comfortable, but still feels like you are alert. Take a few deep breaths to begin and consciously relax your shoulders and other tense areas. The meditations suggested will give you a focus, or you can focus on your breath. Every time you notice yourself distracted, gently guide your attention back to your focus, without judgement. Try to increase the amount of time you meditate as you go along.



# Define

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## Activity 1: Journaling

How do you define justice?

**Describe a time you recently experienced the value of justice.**

**Ask two people what they think of when they hear the word justice.**

Justice is defined by the Merriam Webster dictionary as:

**Justice** noun

- 1: just behavior or treatment.
- 2: a judge or magistrate, in particular a judge of the Supreme Court of a country or state.

**How does this definition compare to or change how you define justice?**

## Activity 2: Word Association Exercise

Write down the words that pop into your head as you consider the word justice. Alternatively, if you have access to the internet, visit [Visuwords.com](http://Visuwords.com) and type in the word justice. By double-clicking on the connected words, you can expand the word network.

**Did these connections make you consider justice in a new light? In what ways?**

## Activity 3: Bible Study - Lectio Divina

Artisan Church's value of Justice reads:  
We are captivated by the heart of God for hurting people and a suffering creation, seeking to bring compassion to those needs and a just end to their underlying causes.

*Amos 5:24; Proverbs 21:3; Micah 6:8; Isaiah 1:16-17; Isaiah 58:6-9a; Hosea 4:1-3; Matthew 25:31-46; Romans 8:18-24; James 1:27*

Choose one of these verses to study using the [spiritual practice of lectio divina](#).

Step One: **Read** the passage, listening with the "ear of your heart." What phrase, sentence or even one word stands out to you?

Step Two: Read the passage again and **Reflect** on the word of God. Be aware of what touches you, a thought or reflection that is meaningful. Allow a minute or two of silence.

Step Three: Read the passage again and **Respond** spontaneously to the word of God. Be aware of any prayer that rises up within that expresses the experience. Allow a minute or two of silence.

Step Four: Read the passage a final time and **Rest** in the word, reflect or pray and allow God to speak in the silence. Allow three or four minutes of silence.

**What stood out to you in the verse you studied? How does that change the way you see the value of justice?**

# Define

## Activity 4: Bible Study - Lexicon/Blue Letter Bible

Let's look some more at how justice is talked about in the bible. If you have access to the internet, go to [BlueLetterBible.org](http://BlueLetterBible.org) or download the Blue Letter Bible app on your phone or tablet.

Using their search engine, search for verses in which the word justice is used. Note that the number of uses may vary between translations, so check out a few different ones.

Read the verses. If you have time, go to each verse and look at the context for each use of the word.

**What do these verses have in common?**

**How do these verses expand your idea of justice?**

# Reflect

## Activity 1: Journaling

**Why did you choose to explore this value?**

**What images, objects, or ideas capture your imagination when you think of justice?**

## Activity 2: Journaling

**How have you experienced the value of justice?**

**At what time in your life did you feel most connected to this value?**

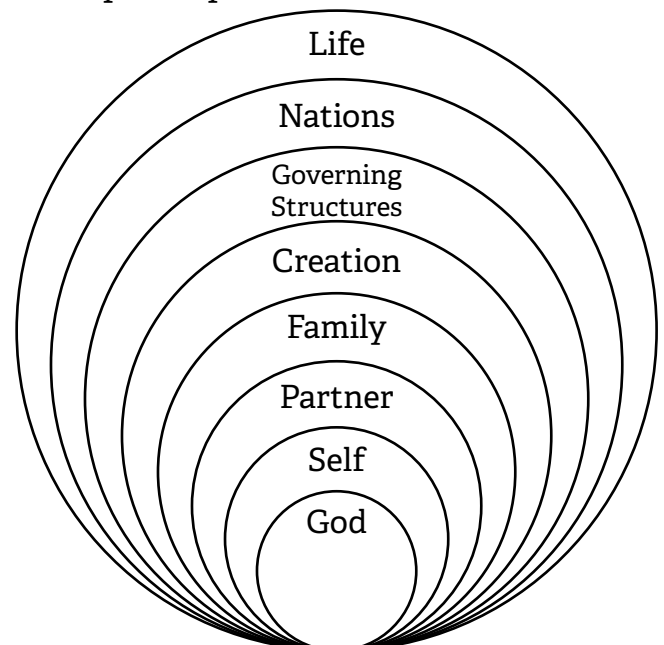
**What feelings are stirred when you consider this value?**

## Activity 3: Journaling

**How have you seen justice exhibited in people's lives, including your own?**

**Who in your life embodies this value well?  
In what ways?**

Lisa Sharon Harper uses this diagram in *The Very Good Gospel* to illustrate the different circles of relationship. There may be layers of this diagram that do not resonate for you. That's okay. Feel free to skip layers that don't connect with you or add layers beyond what's listed here.



# Reflect

Starting with your relationship to God, how could you express the value of justice in these relationships?

## Activity 4: Meditation

Meditate for 5 min, using the word justice as your mantra. When distracted, forgive yourself and return your focus to the word.

**Afterward, write down any thoughts about this value that arose during your meditation.**

# Immerse

## Activity 1: Candle Meditation

Find a space where you feel comfortable and calm. Sit in a comfortable spot. If it's safe for you, light a small candle and put it in a safe place within your eyesight. If a flame isn't safe for you or those around you, you can use a battery-operated candle or any other light source. With your eyes fixed on the candle or other light source, take a few deep breaths, breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth. Then, with your eyes still fixed on the candle or other light source, meditate on the value. Perhaps say the value out loud or silently. Give yourself a few minutes to meditate on the value and observe the light. Close by taking a few deep breaths, breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth. Reflect on how you felt during this meditation time. Make sure to blow out the candle if you're using one.

## Activity 2: Engage with a Prayer of Confession

A powerful way to engage with the value of justice is through confession of the ways that we struggle to live out justice in our lives. Below is a prayer of confession. The prayer uses collective "we" and "us" language, so as you are engaging with the prayer, think about how this is both an individual and collective confession. As you pray through this prayer, notice what words or phrases stand out to you. Pause on those words or phrases and revisit them throughout the day, noticing any invitation that might be present for you in those words or phrases.

### Prayer of Confession

(Source: <http://dojustice.crcna.org>)

*Knowing that our God walks with us in our confusion, our doubts, our failings, and our struggles, we now come humbly before God to ask for mercy.*

*For the times we fail to offer hospitality to those in our world who suffer injustice, oppression, and poverty, we pray:*

**God, have mercy on us and your people.**

*For the times we lack courage to address the causes of injustice, oppression and poverty, we pray to our God:*

**God, have mercy on us and on your people.**

*For the times we give in to despair and resignation when confronted with the injustice of our world, we pray to our God:*

**God, have mercy on us and on your people.**



# Immerse

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For the times we allow our fears to triumph over the call to solidarity, we pray to our God:

**God, have mercy on us and on your people.**

Merciful God, receive our petitions. Heal the brokenness in our hearts and in our world caused by injustice, indifference, selfishness and fear. Open our hearts to hear the cries of your beloved people. Support us as we seek to respond in solidarity and with hospitality.  
Amen.

## Activity 3: Audio

Listen to some of the following songs or read through the lyrics ([links to audio and lyrics](#) can be found in the online version of the values exploration kit)

*All Ye Refugees* - Sandra McCracken

*Tears of the Saints* - Leeland

*We'll All Be Free* - William Matthews

*Ring the Bells* - Johnnyswim

*Run, Mary Run* - The Brilliance

*Idea #21 (Not Too Late)* - Over the Rhine

*There Will Be A Light* - Ben Harper & Blind Boys of Alabama

*Keep Your Eyes on The Prize* - Traditional

*Prayer of St. Francis* - Traditional

**What images of or connections to justice do the artist's lyrics bring to mind?**

**What new connections to justice did you find in the song(s)?**

# Immerse

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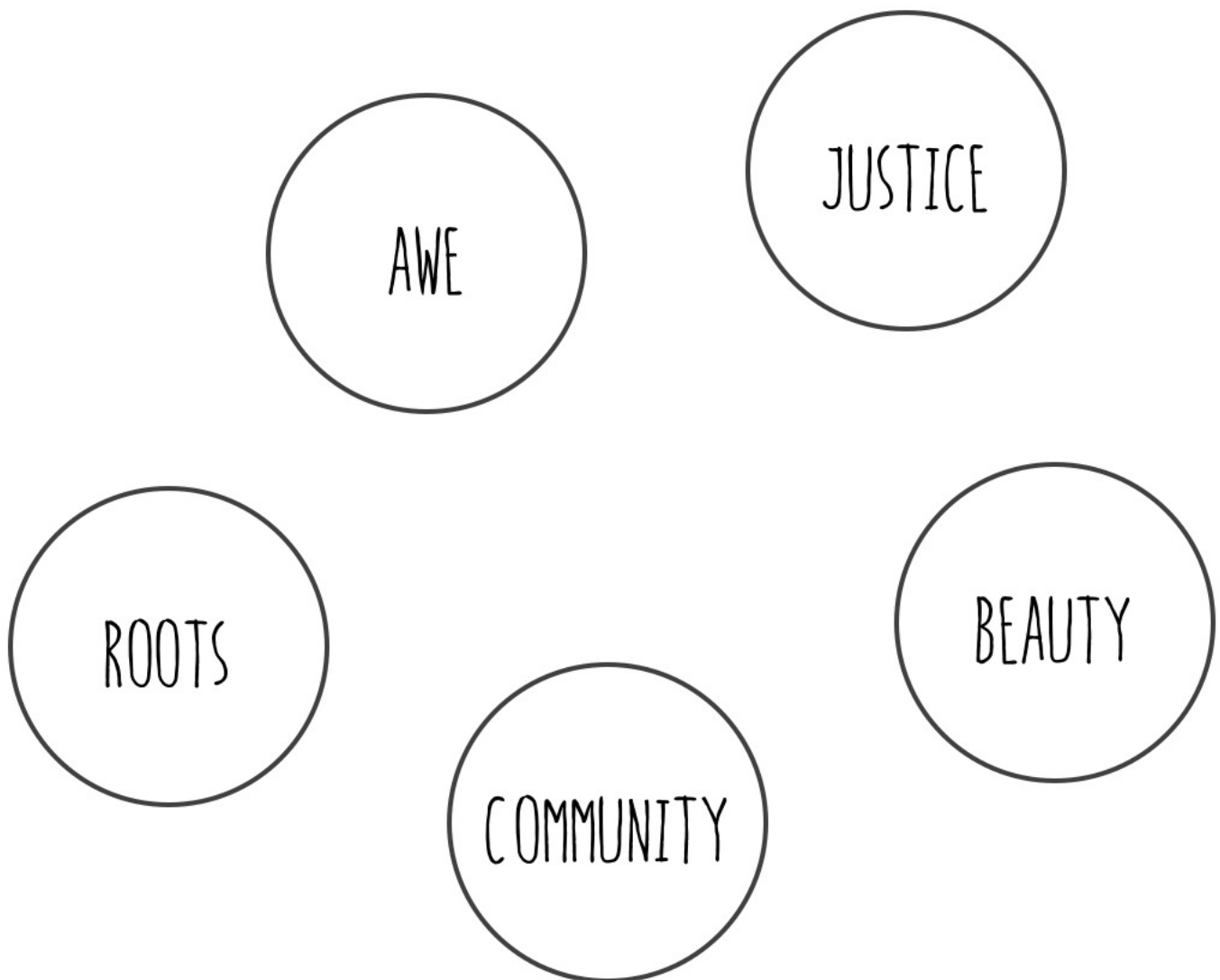
## Activity 4: Art Engagement

### Coloring, Creative Expression, and Contemplation

Choose a coloring page (included at the end of this booklet) or create your own image using the medium of your choice related to the value of justice. If you choose, add words to your coloring page/drawing that have come up in your reflections. Try to enjoy the creative process in a relaxed and meditative way while reflecting on what you have read, thought, and written about this value so far.

## Activity 5: Connection

In this activity, consider how the value of justice connects to the other four Artisan values: awe, community, roots and beauty. Use the diagram below to explore these connections by drawing or writing in the connections you come up with.



# Challenge

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## Activity 1: Journaling

**How well do you feel that you embody this value? In what ways?**

**If you don't feel that you embody this value very well, what do you think is holding you back?**

## Activity 2: Journaling

**Can you think of ways that this value or verses associated with this value have been or could be used to harm others?**

**What could we do to prevent that?**

## Activity 3: Journaling

**Not everyone connects with each value. Is there anything in the description of this value or the accompanying verses that you think is problematic?**

**What could be added to the description that would make it easier for you to connect with this value?**

**There are many gifts and virtues discussed in the Bible. What other values do you think we're missing?**

# Act

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## Activity 1: Journaling

**What does it look like to live this value everyday?**

**What act will you do to show yourself and others that you value justice?**

## Activity 2: Learn

Learn more about how to live out this value. You can learn from a book/website/social media personality, or really any source. If you can, post the resources you find on Instagram with #ArtisanValuesJustice.

## Activity 3: Practice

While we encourage you to explore how to express this value in your everyday life, we don't have to do it all ourselves. Find a place/organization/person who engages with this value and give them some support. Volunteer, affirm, donate.



# Act

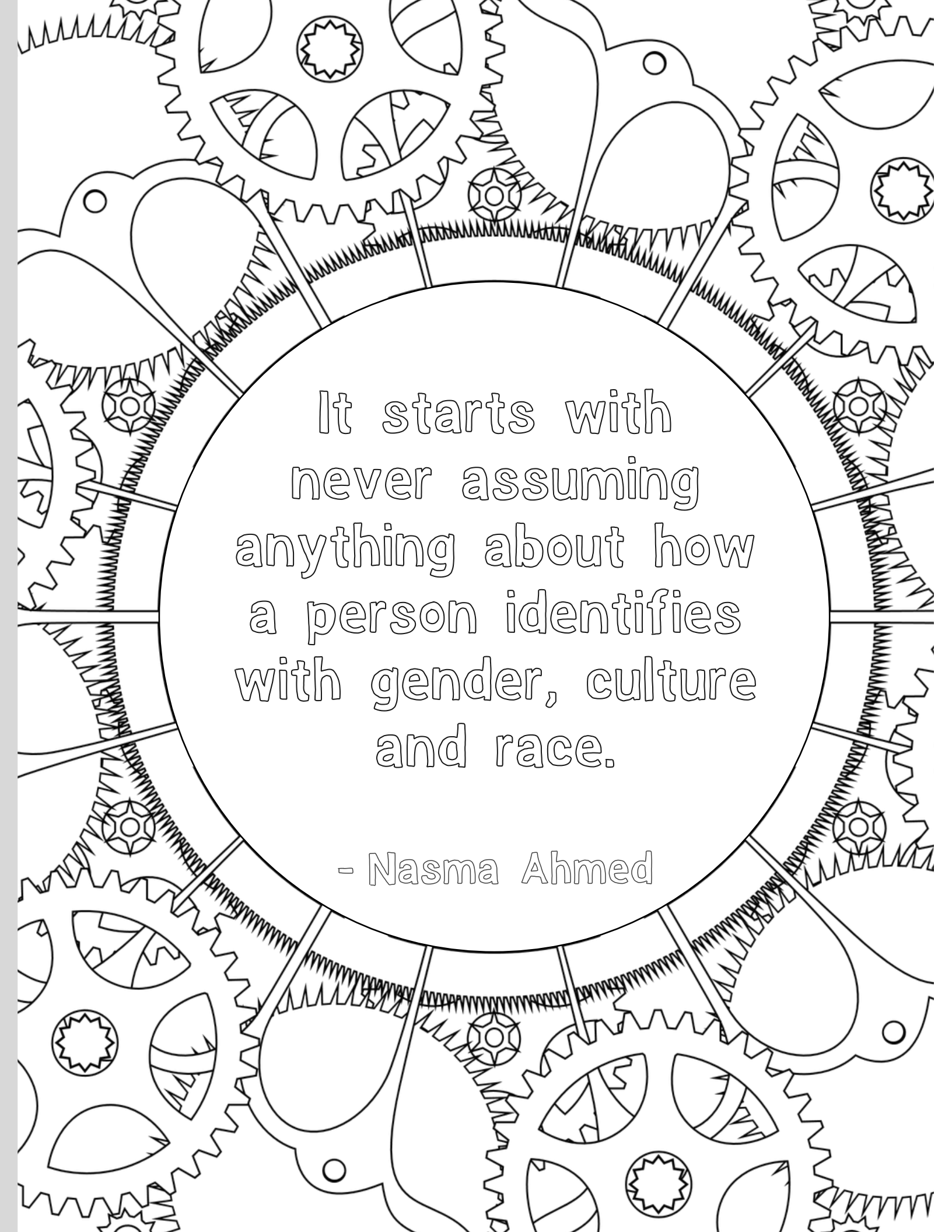
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## Activity 4: One Little Thing

Here is a list of little things you can do to embrace justice in your life. Or come up with your own!

- Choose one justice issue that you want to learn more about and spend some time researching it
- Read one book or article that shares a story of justice
- Switch one of the goods you purchase to an organization that pays living wages
- Learn about one leader on justice issues and follow them on social media to continue engaging and learning
- Read about Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s principles of nonviolence
- Sign up for a RAIHN shift
- Find and financially support a marginalized artist or creator on Patreon
- Share what you've learned about justice with other people
- Sign up to be on a mailing list for one of the Rochester area justice organizations e.g. Metro Justice, Children's Agenda, Police Accountability Board





It starts with  
never assuming  
anything about how  
a person identifies  
with gender, culture  
and race.

- Nasma Ahmed



