

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
Session Plan

Aging

First Parish Church of Stow and Acton, MA November 2016

Opening Words and Chalice Lighting: “At times our light goes out and is rekindled by a spark from another person. Each of us has cause to think with deep gratitude of those who have lighted the flame for us.” - *Albert Schweitzer*

Check In and Sharing: This is a time to mention briefly any major issue or events on your mind, that you would like to share.

Topic: Aging

“All children, except one, grow up. They soon know that they will grow up, and the way Wendy knew was this. One day when she was two years old she was playing in a garden, and she plucked another flower and ran with it to her mother. I suppose she must have looked rather delightful, for Mrs. Darling put her hand to her heart and cried, ‘Oh, why can’t you remain like this for ever?’ This was all that passed between them on the subject, but henceforth Wendy knew that she must grow up. You always knew after you were two. Two is the beginning of the end.”
J. M. Barrie, Peter Pan

“Spring passes and one remembers one’s innocence
Summer passes and one remembers one’s exuberance.
Autumn passes and one remembers one’s reverence.
Winter passes and one remembers one’s perseverance. - *Yoko Ono*

“Aging” is often used to refer to “old age”. The reality is we start to age the day we are born. Each stage in our lives has its own challenges, rewards and disappointments. We have little or no choice about the challenges we face in our earliest years - the developmental tasks of “growing up”, the families and communities we live in. Adulthood brings more choices - building our career(s), creating our own families, choosing our communities, our own life styles. We may make radical changes during our adulthood - in careers, families, environments or values - or we may lead a relatively stable life. As old age and retirement approach, we have a whole new set of choices to make. Today, we are looking at some of these decisions and choices , and how they have affected our own “aging” and “old age”.

QUESTIONS:

1. What stage of “aging” has been most frustrating for you and how?
 2. Describe a major change that has occurred during your life and how it affected you and your aging process.
 3. Has a particular stage of aging been especially rewarding? Please describe.
 4. Has there ever been an age that you looked forward to with anticipation? Or worry?
 5. Can you share any times when you have actually felt “grown up”?
- Group will think silently about topic for a few minutes, before sharing thoughts.

WRAPPING UP: What did you think of today’s topic? Do you have any new insights or awareness from our discussion.

CLOSING WORDS: “Most people don’t grow up. Most people age. They find parking spaces, honor their credit cards, get married, have children, and call that maturity. What that is, is aging.” *Maya Angelou*