

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
Chalice Circle Session – **ATTENTIVENESS**
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Newark, NJ, Rev. Andrew Weber, December 2014

Chalice Lighting

The best way to capture moments is to pay attention. This is how we cultivate mindfulness. Mindfulness means being awake. It means knowing what you are doing.

- Jon Kabat-Zinn

Check-In: What's going on in your life? What have you paid close attention to this week?

Readings:

Mindfulness isn't difficult, we just need to remember to do it.

- Sharon Salzberg

For the person with attention, every day becomes the very day upon which all the world depends.

- Rabbi Rami M Shapiro

I am learning slowly to bring my crazy pinball-machine mind back to this place of friendly detachment toward myself, so I can look out at the world and see all those other things with respect. Try looking at your mind as a wayward puppy that you are trying to paper train. You don't drop-kick a puppy into the neighbor's yard every time it piddles on the floor. You just keep bringing it back to the newspaper. So I keep trying gently to bring my mind back to what is really there to be seen, maybe to be seen and noted with a kind of reverence.

- Anne Lamott

You must live in the present, launch yourself on every wave, find your eternity in each moment. Fools stand on their island of opportunities and look toward another land. There is no other land; there is no other life but this.

- Henry David Thoreau

Our minds are like crows. They pick up everything that glitters, no matter how uncomfortable our nests get with all that metal in them.

- Thomas Merton

Questions:

1. What spoke to you (or didn't speak to you) from the readings?
2. If you have done the spiritual practice, how did it go for you?
3. What does attentiveness mean to you, is it different than mindfulness?
4. How do you cultivate attentiveness in your life?
5. Do you ever struggle to live with more attentiveness? What helps?
6. What would it look like for you to be more attentive of others?

Check-Out: One sentence on "likes and wishes" from the session.

Closing:

We spend precious hours fearing the inevitable. It would be wise to use that time adoring our families, cherishing our friends and living our lives.

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Maya

Angelou

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Newark
Spiritual Practice - **ATTENTIVENESS**
December 2014

I feel that attentiveness and paying attention takes a certain amount of composure and peace. When we allow our minds and thoughts to fill with extraneous static, we can't focus very well on ourselves, others, nature or anything else. The Taoist reading by Lao-Tse comes to mind:

If there is to be peace in the world,
There must be peace in the nations.

If there is to be peace in the nations,
There must be peace in the cities.

If there is to be peace in the cities,
There must be peace between neighbors.

If there is to be peace between neighbors,
There must be peace in the home.

If there is to be peace in the home,
There must be peace in the heart.

In order for any of us to have the ability to be attentive to what is happening in the world or nature, we first need to be attentive to what is happening within ourselves. This month's spiritual practice is at once simple and transformational: eat one raisin - with deep mindfulness. Take the time to be present with yourself and attentive to the process of eating. For full engagement with this spiritual practice, follow the guidelines found here: <http://tinyurl.com/attentiveness2014>

Let us slow down and be aware of ourselves, the people around us and the natural world. With true attentiveness in our lives we are better able to live deliberately and be mindfully awake and aware of the glory of all that is life.