

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
Session Plan
Authenticity and Authentic Experience
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Raleigh, NC, Chris Abbate, October 22, 2018

Chalice Lighting & Opening Thought:

The privilege of a lifetime is to become who you truly are. ~ Carl Jung (1875-1961)

Check In: Talk about one thing you have learned or a significant feeling or thought you have had since our last meeting.

Topic for reflection:

Now I Become Myself

May Sarton

Now I become myself. It's taken
Time, many years and places;
I have been dissolved and shaken,
Worn other people's faces,
Run madly, as if Time were there,
Terribly old, crying a warning,
"Hurry, you will be dead before--"
(What? Before you reach the morning?
Or the end of the poem is clear?
Or love safe in the walled city?)
Now to stand still, to be here,
Feel my own weight and density!
The black shadow on the paper
Is my hand; the shadow of a word
As thought shapes the shaper
Falls heavy on the page, is heard.
All fuses now, falls into place
From wish to action, word to silence,
My work, my love, my time, my face
Gathered into one intense
Gesture of growing like a plant.
As slowly as the ripening fruit
Fertile, detached, and always spent,
Falls but does not exhaust the root,
So all the poem is, can give,
Grows in me to become the song,
Made so and rooted by love.
Now there is time and Time is young.
O, in this single hour I live
All of myself and do not move.
I, the pursued, who madly ran
Stand still, stand still, and stop the sun!

“Seek out that particular mental attitude which makes you feel most deeply and vitally alive, along with which comes the inner voice which says, ‘This is the real me,’ and when you have found that attitude, follow it.” *William James*

"If you keepin' it real just to keep it real you ain't keepin' it real" *Snoop-dogg*

“Authenticity is a collection of choices that we have to make every day. It’s about the choice to show up and be real. The choice to be honest. The choice to let our true selves be seen.” Brene Brown

“Less perfection. More authenticity.” Anonymous

“The individual has always had to struggle to keep from being overwhelmed by the tribe. If you try it, you will be lonely often, and sometimes frightened. But no price is too high to pay for the privilege of owning yourself.” Friedrich Nietzsche

“To become conscious and aware, we must become authentic. Authenticity is the highest form of being.” Teal Swan

“We are constantly invited to be who we are.” Henry David Thoreau

“Only the truth of who you are, if realized, will set you free.” Eckhart Tolle

“Be yourself, everyone else is taken.” Oscar Wilde

Questions for Discussion:

What does being authentic (“inner authenticity”) and living authentically (“outer authenticity”) mean to you?

What experiences, either intentional or unintentional, have developed your authenticity?

Does authenticity come naturally with age, or does it have to be consciously achieved?

How do you nurture authentic experiences in your day to day life?

Much of modern American life and of our personal experience of life is defined by mass culture and electronic media. In what ways do these outlets contribute to or take away from authentic experience?

Closing Thought:

“Our deepest calling is to grow into our authentic selfhood, whether or not it conforms to some image of who we *ought* to be. As we do, we will not only find the joy that every human being seeks; we will also find our path of authentic service in the world.” Parker Palmer