

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
Relational Ground Rules for *Be the Change* Workshop
Rev. Stephen Shick to accompany *Be the Change*, November 2014

**Our goal is to create an open and caring environment
conducive to learning and growth.**

Assume good intentions.

Come with an open mind.

Respect the right to pass. (That is, you can opt not to speak or participate in any part of the workshop)

Listen deeply and respectfully. Respect that each person here has a unique call to serve.

Allow for silence.

Do not interrupt except for process comments (i.e., “I can’t hear you.” or “Please explain that term.”)

Start and end on time.

Seek to move beyond tolerance to understanding of those with different opinions.

Respect and do not attack people with different views. Ask questions to enhance understanding.

Share the privilege and responsibility of helping the group to function well.

Share the time fairly. Each person will have the chance to speak uninterrupted for the time allotted minutes.

Respect confidentiality about personal stories. What’s said in the workshop stays in the workshop.

Speak from your own experience. (Use “I” statements)

Do not give advice. We’re not here to “fix.” (If you want advice you can ask for it)

No eye-rolling! Use non-verbal communication that is respectful.

Be the Change, Stephen Schick, Skinner House Books, 2009

Session by Stephen Shick, Nov. 2014. Quotations from his book *Be the Change*.

The session may be used in a workshop setting related to the book, or as a separate session. *If used as part of a larger workshop, you may be asked to select a recorder who will report back to the larger group when it reconvenes.*

Contact: TheAwakenedWord.com or stephenmshick@comcast.net

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
Be the Change: Being a Force of History
Rev. Stephen Shick to accompany *Be the Change*, November 2014

Choose one person to be facilitator. You have about an hour.

Welcome and Purpose of the Group: An opportunity to get to know each other, to create a safe place to explore how becoming aware that you are part of human history can strengthen and sustain your work for peace and justice. *Facilitator, please welcome and remind folks of the Ground Rules (at the end).*

Chalice Lighting: *Nothing true or beautiful or good makes complete sense in any immediate context of history; therefore we are saved by faith. Reinhold Niebuhr*

Brief Check-In: *Facilitator asks folks to introduce themselves by saying their names and briefly how they are feeling right now about the topic to be considered in this group.*

Topic: Being a Force of History History is so vast and complex that no one can say with confidence that history is on her side. Yet, those who want to move the world in the direction of peace and harmony must think of themselves as a force of history. Maya Angelou challenges us: *History, despite its wrenching pain, cannot be unlived, and if faced with courage, need not be lived again.* Taking turns read aloud the following quotations:

This is the true joy of life. . . being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one. . . I am of the opinion that my life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. I want to be thoroughly used up when I die. For the harder I work the more I live.
George Bernard Shaw

There is no choice but to immerse oneself in the stream of history, accept one's time-location, breathe in-with shared memories and hopes- the contaminations of traditions, become defined as the man of this cause, this party, this emergency. William Ernest Hocking
No task is more important than promoting the well-being of all the people.
Asoka Edits (ca. 274-232 BCE)

I understand history as possibility. . . that could also stop being a possibility. Paulo Freire
To this day, I cannot forget those who suffered with me and died in that clandestine prison. In spite of the humiliation that demanding answers has entailed, I stand with the Guatemalan people. I demand the right to a future built on truth and justice. Dianna Ortiz
*My heart is moved by all I cannot save: So much has been destroyed
I have to cast my lot with those who, Age after age, Perversely, with no extraordinary
power, reconstitute the world.* Adrienne Rich
Nothing less than a great daring in the face of overwhelming odds can achieve the inner security in which fear cannot possibly survive. Howard Thurman

Questions for Reflection: Again taking turns read aloud the following questions:
Which, if any, of the above quotes do you like and why?
What can you do (or do you do) on a regular to be aware of your place in history?
What connection do you see between awareness of your place in history and your work for peace and justice?

Now sit silently together for a minute. Then proceed to discuss both the quotations and questions remembering to share the time fairly. Each person will have the chance to speak uninterrupted for up to 3 minutes in response to the quotations and questions. Let each person speak when they're ready (popcorn style, so don't call on folks). If a person can't speak the whole 3 minutes, that's okay. When they're done, go on to the next person who wishes to speak. When each person who wants to speak has had an opportunity, then open the floor for discussion. End the discussion leaving about 5 minutes for check out and closing. Please keep the ground rules in mind.

Brief check-out: *Facilitator asks folks what they liked in the session and what is their most important "take-away".*

Closing: *O let America be America again-The land that has never yet been yet-and yet must be.* Langston Hughes

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The session was developed in consultation with Rev. M'ellen Kennedy.

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Be the Change: Being a Force of Nature
Rev. Stephen Shick to accompany *Be the Change*, November 2014

Choose one person to be facilitator. You have about an hour.

Welcome and Purpose of the Group: An opportunity to get to know each other, to create a safe place to explore how becoming aware that you are part of nature can strengthen and sustain your work for peace and justice. *Facilitator, please welcome and remind folks of the Ground Rules (at the end).*

Chalice Lighting: *The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measures. Rabindranath Tagore*

Brief Check-In: *Facilitator asks folks to introduce themselves by saying their names and briefly how they are feeling right now about the topic to be considered in this group.*

Topic: Being a Force of Nature Nature provides ready metaphors for peace and justice. But, it takes more than mere words to join nature to action. Truly experiencing ourselves as a force of nature in all its varied circumstances is something beyond symbolism. The next breath I take is not a metaphor. It is, if I am mindful, a reminder that I am a force of nature, linked to all that exists on our living, breathing planet.

Taking turns read aloud the following quotations:

*(We have) only begun to envision how it might be to live as siblings with beast & flower,
not as oppressors. Denise Levertov*

*As long as the sky exists, and as long as there are sentient beings,
may I remain to help relieve them of all their pain.
The Dalai Lama*

*Whatever peace I know rests in the natural world, in feeling myself part of it. May Sarton
I will be the gladdest thing--Under the Sun--I will touch a hundred flowers--And not pick one.
Edna St. Vincent Millay*

*A borderland is a vague and undetermined place created by the emotional residue of an unnatural
boundary. Gloria Anzaldua*

*This is the true joy of life. . .being used for a purpose recognized by yourself as a mighty one... being a
force of Nature instead of a feverish little clod of ailments and grievances.
George Bernard Shaw*

*Reverence for life comprises the whole ethic of love in its deepest and highest sense. It is the sources of
constant renewal for the individual and for mankind (sic).
Albert Schweitzer*

Questions for Reflection: Again taking turns read aloud the following questions:

Which, if any, of the above quotes do you like and why?

What can you do (or do you do) on a regular basis that will help you consider yourself a force of nature?

What connection do you see between awareness of your place in nature and your work for peace and justice?

Now sit silently together for a minute. Then proceed to discuss both the quotations and questions remembering to share the time fairly. Each person will have the chance to speak uninterrupted for up to 3 minutes in response to the quotations and questions. Let each person speak when they're ready (popcorn

style, so don't call on folks). If a person can't speak the whole 3 minutes, that's okay. When they're done, go on to the next person who wishes to speak. When each person who wants to speak has had an opportunity, then open the floor for discussion. End the discussion leaving about 5 minutes for check out and closing. Please keep the ground rules in mind.

Brief check-out: *Facilitator asks folks what they liked in the session and what is their most important "take-away".*

Closing: *The great doors remain closed. But spring fragrance comes inside anyway, and no one sees what takes place there. Kabir*

Notes:

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Be the Change: The Inward Journey
Rev. Stephen Shick to accompany *Be the Change, November 2014*

Choose one person to be facilitator. You have about an hour.

Welcome and Purpose of the Group: An opportunity to get to know each other, to create a safe place to explore how an “inward journey” can strengthen and sustain your work for peace and justice. *Facilitator, please welcome and remind folks of the Ground Rules (at the end).*

Chalice Lighting: *When you do something from your soul you can feel a river move in you, when you do something from another part of you the feeling disappears.* Rumi

Brief Check-In: Facilitator asks folks to introduce themselves by saying their names and briefly how they are feeling right now about the topic to be considered in this group.

Topic: The Inward Journey Many of the world’s greatest social change agents relied on spiritual practices to keep centered inwardly and be effective publicly. Desmond Tutu famously said that on an extra demanding day he abandoned his one hour of prayer and prayed for two. Gandhi knew that the change the world needed began with how we lived our lives and asked his followers to *be the change*. Taking turns reading aloud the following quotations:

Love takes off the mask we fear we cannot live without and know we cannot live within.
James Baldwin

And he whose soul is flat---the sky --Will cave in on him by and by. Edna St. Vincent Millay
To insist that I must be only what I am now is a restriction which human nature must abhor. Rabbi Abraham Heschel

For there our captors asked us for song, and our tormentors asked for mirth, saying, “Sing us one of the songs of Zion! How could we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land?” Psalm 137
There is no way to peace, peace is the way.
Rev. A.J. Mustie

I can lay no claim to goodness until I can prove that mean people have not made me mean.
Barbara Kingsolver

Today they tell me I’m going to Chiapas, to lead the people on a march. When we get to the roadblock, there will be armed paramilitaries...My fear disappears when I begin to speak in these situations, without raising my voice.
Patria Jimenez

If you spend yourself in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness, and your night will become like the noonday. Isaiah 58:10
When society is made up of men (sic) who know no interior solitude it can no longer be held together by love and consequently it is held together by a violent and abusive authority.
Thomas Merton

Questions for Reflection: Again taking turns read aloud the following questions:

Which, if any, of the above quotes do you like and why? What can you do (or do you do) on a regular basis that brings you to the calm center of your being? What connection do you see between your “inward journey” and your work for peace and justice?

Now sit silently together for a minute. Then proceed to discuss both the quotations and questions remembering to share the time fairly. Each person will have the chance to speak uninterrupted for up to 3 minutes in response to the quotations and questions. Let each person speak when they’re ready (popcorn style, so don’t call on folks). If a person can’t speak the whole 3 minutes, that’s okay. When they’re done go on to the next person who wishes to speak. When each person who wants to speak has had an opportunity, then

open the floor for discussion. End the discussion leaving about 5 minutes for check out and closing. Please keep the ground rules in mind.

Brief check-out: *Facilitator asks folks what they liked in the session and what is their most important “take-away”.*

Closing: *Polish your heart for a day or two, make that mirror your book of contemplation.* Rumi

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