

SMALL GROUP SESSION  
**BEING WITH OTHERS**

Glenn Turner, First Unitarian Universalist Church, Auburn, ME

OPENING WORDS & CHALICE LIGHTING:

The way is full of genuine sacrifice.

The thickets blocking the path are anything  
that keeps you from that, any fear  
that you may be broken to bits like a glass bottle.  
This road demands courage and stamina,  
yet it's full of footprints! Who are  
these companions? They are rungs  
in your ladder. Use them!  
With company you quicken your ascent.

You may be happy enough going along,  
but with others you'll get farther, and faster.

Someone who goes cheerfully by himself  
to the customs house to pay his traveler's tax  
will go even more lightheartedly  
when friends are with him.

Every prophet sought out companions.  
A wall standing alone is useless,  
but put three or four walls together,  
and they'll support a roof and keep  
the grain dry and safe.

When ink joins with a pen, then the blank paper  
can say something. Rushes and reeds must be woven  
to be useful as a mat. If they weren't interlaced,  
the wind would blow them away.  
Like that, God paired up  
creatures, and gave them friendship.

“On Being Woven” by Rumi - from *The Essential Rumi*

CHECK IN: (40 - 50 minutes)

What you share may be about your physical or spiritual health, cares or concerns for loved ones, issues you are facing.

Each person in the group speaks uninterrupted, if time remaining, general response and conversation is welcome. Confidentiality.

FOCUS: Being With Others

Some of us are extraverts, it is not so much our alone time that energizes us, but being out in the world, interacting with people, relating, being active, doing things. Sometimes it seems that the party can't go on long enough, that perhaps there is someplace else to go when it's over. Being with others can bring out the best in us.

Discussion:

For you to be happy, useful, fulfilled and growing in the world -

What kind of time or interaction do you need with others?

Does your sociability crave sports, parties, conversations?

What kind of company brings playfulness, soul-searching, or joy to your heart and mind?

What rejuvenates you in your work and play?

LIKES AND WISHES

How did this session go for you? Is there anything you'd like to call particular attention to?

CLOSING WORDS:

"Happiness" by Carl Sandburg

I ASKED the professors who teach the meaning of life to tell me what is happiness.

And I went to famous executives who boss the work of thousands of men.

They all shook their heads and gave me a smile as though I was trying to fool with them.

And then one Sunday afternoon I wandered out along the Desplaines river

And I saw a crowd of Hungarians under the trees with their women and children and a keg of beer and an accordion.