

***Brokenness***

*First Jefferson Unitarian Universalist Church, Fort Worth, TX, By Laurie Mikitka*

*March 31, 2013*

**Opening Words and Chalice Lighting:**

Universal mystery,  
Guide us away from the desire to  
Shine light in all the corners.  
Teach us to embrace the night,  
For without the darkness,  
We never see the stars.

*Embrace the Night*

*By Jennifer Leota Gray*

<http://www.uua.org/worship/words/chalice/184714.shtml>

**Check-in**

What is most on your mind today?

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

**Focus/Topic:**

*Brokenness*

Our ability to break and heal keeps us alive and makes us stronger.

By [David Pyle](#)

*The world breaks every one and afterward many are stronger at the broken places.*

*—Ernest Hemingway (1899–1961)*

No one survives this world without wounds and pains, without loss and grief. No one walks this earth without failure, without falling, without being less than they might have been.

And yet, our ability to break keeps us alive. Our capacity to admit when we are hurt, when we are afraid, when we have lost something precious, and when we have lost hope gives us the opportunity to become stronger. Unlike our bones when we are physically hurt, our souls and spirits grow stronger than they were before the injury. Painful places become powerful. Empty places become full.

We achieve this healing not through a miracle but by sharing our pain, anguish, and hurt with one another. We tell each other our stories, just as warriors have after battle for thousands of years. We tell of how we miss those who are gone, of how we regret the place where we failed, of how we were afraid. We remember lost comrades. We remember lost hopes. We remember dreams that seem far away.

Through that sharing, we learn that we are not alone. Our failures and wounds bind us together in ways no success ever can. A failure shared is no longer lonely. A loss shared is something precious found again. A pain shared is a pain eased. In sharing with one another, we become strong in the broken places.

*God of our hearts, when we feel heartache, when the pain is too great, when we fail, when hope fades, when we are broken, battered, and bloody, may we find strength in sharing and knowing that we are not alone. —Matthew and Gail Tittle*

<http://www.uuworld.org/spirit/articles/170774.shtml>

**Questions:**

1. Is everyone broken?
2. Are you or have you been broken? How did you heal from or how do you live with that brokenness?
3. Friedrich Nietzsche said, “What does not destroy me makes me stronger.” Do you believe this is true?
4. Parker Palmer said, “Wholeness does not mean perfection; it means embracing brokenness as an integral part of life.” Do you agree or do you think brokenness needs to be fixed?

**Closing Words:**

So let us give thanks for the broken places in our hearts,  
and in our lives.

For it is only through such brokenness that we may truly touch one another  
and only through touching one another that the world may be healed.

Let us give then thanks for the brokenness that we share.

*From “Meditation on Broken Hearts” by Thomas Rhodes*

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditations/143231.shtml>