

Creating and Destroying

Small Group Ministry Session, Unitarian Universalist Church in Eugene, Oregon, May 2010

CHALICE OR CANDLE LIGHTING OR SOUND A CHIME (2 to 3 minutes for this and silence and opening words)

MOMENT OF SILENCE

OPENING WORDS

We arrive together here, travelers on life's journey, seekers of meaning, of love, of healing, of justice, of truth. The journey is long, and joy and woe accompany us at every step. None is born that does not die. None feels pleasure that does not also feel pain. The tear has not yet dried on the cheek but the lips curve sweetly in a smile.

Numerous are our origins, our paths, and our destinations. And yet, happily, our ways have joined together here today. May our joining be a blessing. May it bring comfort to those who are in pain. May it bring hope to those who despair. May it bring peace to those who tremble in fear. May it bring wisdom and guidance for our journeys. And though this joining may be for just a moment in time, the moment is all we can ever be certain of. May we embrace this, and every instant of our lives.

(Adapted from Andrew Pakula)

CHECK-IN (Up to 20 to 30 minutes, 2 to 3 minutes per person)

TOPIC AND SHARING (Up to 75 minutes for reading, questions and sharing with optional 5 minute break about midway in the session)

READINGS

Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself.

(By George Bernard Shaw)

Our way out involves both resistance and renewal: saying no to what is, so that we can reshape and recreate the world. Our challenge is communal, but to face it we must be empowered as individuals and create structures of support and celebration that can teach us freedom. Creation is the ultimate resistance, the ultimate refusal to accept things as they are. For it is in creation that we encounter Mystery...

(By Starhawk)

Without this playing with fantasy no creative work has ever yet come to birth. The debt we owe to the play of imagination is incalculable.

(By Carl Jung)

The spirit of the universe is at once creative and destructive.. it creates while it destroys and destroys while it creates, and therefore it remains to us a riddle. And we must inevitably resign ourselves to this.

(By Albert Schweitzer)

Destroying is a necessary function in life. Everything has its season, and all things eventually lose their effectiveness and die.

(By Margaret J. Wheatley)

I have seen the science I worshiped, and the aircraft I loved, destroying the civilization I expected them to serve.

(By Charles Lindberg)

QUESTIONS (Please respond to whichever question or questions you feel moved to answer. It is not necessary to respond to all of the questions.)

1. Describe a time when you created something, and how you feel about that experience.
2. Describe a time when you destroyed something, and how you feel about that experience.
3. Tell about a time of personal or social transformation that was significant for you.

SHARING (Up to 6 to 8 minutes each, depending on the time available, with time at the end for comment and discussion if the group wishes. Consider the option of having a time of silence, perhaps up to 30 seconds or so, after each person has shared to allow for reflection, and to allow people to make notes about comments or questions they may want to bring up during the open discussion after all have shared.)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS (Up to 5 to 10 minutes)

-Next meeting date, time, location, and topic.

-Consider discussing service project.

-Hand out (or send by e-mail) the SGM evaluation forms, which are to be completed prior to or during the final session.

LIKES (celebrations, gratitudes, appreciations for needs met) and **WISHES** (mournings, requests, acknowledgements of needs not met)/check-out (a few words or phrases from each who wants to share, up to 5 minutes total)

CLOSING WORDS (2 minutes for words, and closing)

May you know fully and deeply the blessings of each of your heart's seasons^{{L}{SEP}}

The inward turning of Winter^{{L}{SEP}}

Springtime's lush renewal^{{L}{SEP}}

The effortless, steady growth of summer^{{L}{SEP}}

And autumn's rich harvest^{{L}{SEP}}

May your passage from season to season be blessed—^{{L}{SEP}}

Eased by hands to hold, and by the light of love to guide you on

(By Andrew Pakula)

EXTINGUISH THE CHALICE OR CANDLE OR SOUND A CHIME (and additional optional closing ritual if agreed to)

(Preparation for the facilitator. Please bring the SGM Facilitator Training Manual, paper and writing implements, the lesson plan, and your date book.)

(Lesson plan prepared by the Small Group Ministry Steering Committee curriculum subcommittee [Rev. Stephen A. Ames, Dick Loescher, Leora White] 4/9/10)