

EXPECTATION

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Newark, DE, Rev. Jan Carlsson-Bull, December 2015

Chalice Lighting:

Between stimulus and response, there is a space. In that space is our power to choose our response. In our response lies our growth and our freedom.

- Viktor E. Frankl

Check-In: What's going on in your life?

Readings:

If your heart is a volcano, how shall you expect flowers to bloom?

- Khalil Gibran

Expectations are resentments under construction.

- Anne Lamott

If you say a thing often enough, people come to expect it to be true, and pretty soon it becomes true. Oh, not something like "The moon is going to stop in its tracks and go backward tonight,"... But if you say things like "That girl's easy" or "That man's a thief," it doesn't much matter whether the person you're talking about believes you or not--everybody else comes to believe it, and treats them like it was true.

- Orson Scott Card

A desert is a place without expectation.

- Nadine Gordimer

Give 100% effort to the task at hand but have precisely 0% invested in the outcome. This is, of course, extremely difficult to pull off. Normally, the more effort we exert, the higher our expectations – and, often, the greater our disappointment.

- Eric Weiner

Questions:

1. What spoke to you from the readings or the theme packet (tinyurl.com/UUFNThemes)?
2. How is the spiritual practice going for you? Can you choose happiness?
3. Are you expecting too much of yourself? Are you expecting too little?
4. What would happen if you knew this month was going to be the start of a new adventure?
5. What happens to you when you don't get what you expect?
6. Are you open to "whatever comes"? Is it good to be open to "whatever comes"?

Check-Out: One sentence on "likes and wishes" from the session.

Closing:

Give us rain when we expect sun.

Give us music when we expect trouble.

Give us tears when we expect breakfast.

Give us dreams when we expect a storm.

Give us a stray dog when we expect congratulations.

Play with us, turn us sideways and around.

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Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Newark
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What impact do our expectations have on how we experience the world? I try to keep my expectations of movies low so I won't be disappointed. But I never thought about changing my expectations of how I feel. If I expect to be happy, will that make me more happy? The evidence says yes, that we indeed can change our reality based on our expectations. The spiritual practice for December is have an expectation of being happy, and see what comes of it. For further reflection on the power of expectations, see this article from Scientific American: <http://tinyurl.com/expectation2015>. From the article:

“But subtle and conditional effects can make a big difference, because expectations bend reality in so many areas of life. Our minds are constantly jumping to conclusions about the world we live in and who we are. Instead of just accepting them, we can examine some of those expectations and maybe put them to the test by trying out some alternatives.”