

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
Hospitality and Friendliness

All Souls Unitarian Universalist Church of Braintree, MA, Don Swanson, November 2017

Opening Reading / Chalice Lighting

“Hospitality means primarily the creation of free space where the stranger can enter and become a friend instead of an enemy. Hospitality is not to change people, but to offer them space where change can take place. It is not to bring men and women over to our side, but to offer freedom not disturbed by dividing lines.” — Henri J.M. Nouwen, *Reaching Out: The Three Movements of the Spiritual Life*

Check In: What do you need to leave behind to be fully present here?

Centering

Time to become intentionally calm, centered and present

Topic Hospitality definition

Noun - the friendly and generous reception and entertainment of guests, visitors, or strangers.
synonyms: friendliness, hospitableness, warm reception, welcome, helpfulness, neighborliness, warmth, kindness, congeniality, geniality, cordiality, courtesy, amenability, generosity, entertainment, catering, food
"we found nothing but hospitality among the local inhabitants"

Adjective - relating to or denoting the business of housing or entertaining visitors.
"the hospitality industry"

A group of men and women were asked to judge the attractiveness of 60 expressionless photos of female faces in a study conducted by Yan Zhang and colleagues at China's Huazhong University of Science and Technology. Participants pegged the pics whose subjects the researchers described with kinder qualities (i.e., "decent," "honest,") as much prettier than shots of gals the researchers described as "hostile" or "mean."

Social connectedness is a huge factor when it comes to keeping our bodies and minds in top form. People who feel they belong to a group live longer, think clearer, and face a lower risk of heart disease than their lonelier counterparts. (They're also more optimistic, less depressed, and don't feel as anxious.)

Research suggests people who devote more time to meaningfully helping others have lower markers of inflammation coursing through their bloodstreams and stronger abilities to ward off infections.

Questions to spur thoughts

What does hospitality mean to you?
Do you have to be at home to exhibit hospitality?
Have you ever felt unwelcome?

Check out What are your likes and wishes about this session?

Closing

“There is no hospitality like understanding.”