

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website

Covenant Group Session

Inner Peace

Unitarian Universalist Community Church of Washington County, Hillsboro, OR, Kathryn Warrior,

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Chalice Lighting:

Fire consumes, and casts a bright light.

May our chalice flame consume our regrets for the past,

our fears about the future, and our worries about today.

May it light for us a path of joy and peace.-- By Debra Burrell

Check-in: *What is most on your mind today? How are you since we last met?*

TOPIC: INNER PEACE Focus Readings and Quotes

Inner peace (or **peace of mind**) refers to a deliberate state of psychological or spiritual calm despite the potential presence of stressors. Being "at peace" is considered by many to be healthy and the opposite of being stressed or anxious, a state where our mind performs at an optimal level with a positive outcome. Peace of mind is thus generally associated with bliss, happiness and contentment. Peace of mind, serenity, and calmness are descriptions of a disposition free from the effects of stress. In some cultures, inner peace is considered a state of consciousness or enlightenment that may be cultivated by various forms of training, such as prayer, meditation, tai chi or yoga, for example. Many spiritual practices refer to this peace as an experience of knowing oneself. --From Wikipedia

Tenzin Gyatso, the current and 14th Dalai Lama, emphasizes the importance of inner peace in the world: The question of real, lasting world peace concerns human beings, so basic human feelings are also at its roots. Through inner peace, genuine world peace can be achieved. In this the importance of individual responsibility is quite clear; an atmosphere of peace must first be created within ourselves, then gradually expanded to include our families, our communities, and ultimately the whole planet. --From Wikipedia

"Every spiritual journey in history has begun with a sense of dissatisfaction—with somebody saying, 'This is not enough for me.'...A spiritual journey bears no resemblance to a spa vacation. True spiritual investigation is rarely relaxing; expect your search to expose painful and challenging truths. We don't generally take on the fundamental questions because they're fun. Usually, we're brought to them on our knees. Staying with those questions, despite the discomfort, is a path for the brave... Spiritual journeys are attempts to alleviate self-suffering. Until you can alleviate your own suffering, you will continue to inflict suffering—not only on yourself, but also on those around you. Happy people are much better at caring for others than those who are in pain. (Haven't you witnessed the way misery and depression make you unable to think of anyone but yourself?) Once you've found peace, you will be able to serve humanity...If you long for a journey, embark on one—for yourself, for the people around you, for all of us. We learn from one another's paths. In fact, I guarantee you this: You will not be the only person you liberate along your private road to freedom." author Elizabeth Gilbert:

Peace, it does not mean to be in a place where there is no noise, trouble or hard work. It means to be in the midst of those things and still **be calm in your heart.**"(unknown)

“Peace is not simply the absence of violence; it is the cultivation of understanding, insight and compassion, combined with action. Peace is the practice of mindfulness, the practice of being aware of our thoughts, our actions, and the consequences of our actions.”--Thich Nhat Hanh, *Creating True Peace: Ending Violence in Yourself, Your Family, Your Community, and the World*

“You’ll never find peace of mind until you listen to your heart.” —George Michael

“Peace is the result of retraining your mind to process life as it is, rather than as you think it should be.” —Wayne W. Dyer

Peace is a daily, a weekly, a monthly process, gradually changing opinions, slowly eroding old barriers, quietly building new structures.” —John F. Kennedy

“If there’s no inner peace, people can’t give it to you. The husband can’t give it to you. Your children can’t give it to you. You have to give it to you.” —Linda Evans

“Nobody can bring you peace but yourself.” —Ralph Waldo Emerson

“Each one has to find his peace from within. And peace to be real must be unaffected by outside circumstances.” ~Mahatma Gandhi

“Never be in a hurry; do everything quietly and in a calm spirit. Do not lose your inner peace for anything whatsoever, even if your whole world seems upset.” —Saint Francis de Sales

If there is to be peace in the world, There must be peace in the nations. If there is peace in the nations, There must be peace in the cities. If there is peace in the cities, There must be peace between neighbors. If there is to be peace between neighbors, There must be peace in the home. If there is to be peace in the home, There must be peace in the heart. —Lao Tzu

Questions:

1. When have you experienced inner peace? What practices have you found that contribute to your inner peace?
2. What wisdom (if any) do you find in the reading/quotes?
3. What interferes with having inner peace?

Check Out: Likes & Wishes/ Take Aways

CLOSING WORDS:

“If we are peaceful, if we are happy,
we can blossom like a flower,
and everyone in our family,
our entire society,
will benefit from our peace.” --Thich Nhat Hanh in [Being Peace](#)

Note: "Inner Peace was created following and in response to the December 31st