

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
Covenant Groups
Legacy
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Vero Beach, FL., September 2015

Chalice Lighting

May we know once again that we are not isolated beings,
but connected, in mystery and miracle,
to the universe, to this community and to each other.

Check-in: How is your spirit right now?

Opening Reading

Although thinking about our legacy may remind us of death, it is about life and living. It is about putting our life into perspective-- making conscious choices about the kind of life we want to live. Our legacy is the part of ourselves that will be left in the hearts and minds of others we will leave behind.

As we learn from our past, go through life in the present and foster our potential future, these experiences create our unique legacy. Our morals, values, the examples we set, the paths we choose, the decisions we make, and the way we conduct our life, create our unique signature in this world. Every human on this earth will leave behind a unique legacy. The question is what legacy will you leave? Do you hope to be remembered in a positive way? Most of us do. So then we must ask ourselves: Are we living our lives to reflect the legacy we want to leave behind?

(www.sharynsslant.hubpages.com)

Topic Exploration

Legacy, by most definitions, refers to that which we leave behind when we die; money, possessions, offspring, stories, values traditions. Religions and cultures have defined and valued legacy differently through the ages. How one defines legacy may be influenced strongly by whether or not one believes in an afterlife. Let's explore this topic together by attempting to define what a personal legacy might be beyond our tangible assets.

Questions / Sharing

1. How Will You Be Remembered?

Come up with five things that people would remember about you if you were gone today. The following questions may help in creating that list. Share with the group as you feel comfortable doing so.

- a. What do my family members think of me and what will they remember most about me?
- b. Have I learned from past mistakes and changed my life accordingly?
- c. Do I need to make amends to anyone?
- d. Have I made a positive impact on my children and grandchildren?
- e. What is unique about me that will be remembered in a positive light?
- f. What are my morals, values and beliefs? By the way I have lived, could others identify and remember them?
- g. Was I a good friend? How will my friends remember me?
- h. Did I live a respectable life that others would use as an example to follow?
- i. Is it time to revise certain parts of my life to create the legacy I hope to leave?

2. Which of the following would you pursue to start work on your legacy right now?
 - a. Plan a celebration of life event for yourself.
 - b. Create a life portrait through personalized artwork, collages, murals, or photos.
 - c. Determine in what manner you want to leave information about your life...for example, by writing, recording, or filming, and start that process right now.
 - d. Address painful subjects and memories, deal with family difficulties in an atmosphere of love and honesty.(adapted from Connie Matthiessen, "Lasting Legacy: Why it's Important to Create a Lasting Legacy," www.caring.com)
3. Do you have cherished possessions that are significant to you that you want to pass on, and why?
4. What role, if any, does Unitarian Universalism play in helping you think about legacy?

Closing Reading

Our legacy is a "side-effect" of every single thing we do in our life. Don't let life pass you by without considering the legacy you will leave behind. Every human life is a work of art, a unique self portrait. After we take our final curtsy, our story will live on. Will you leave behind a meaningful legacy? (www.sharynsslant.hubpages.com)

Extinguish the Chalice

We extinguish this flame but not the light of truth,
the warmth of community, or the fire of commitment.
These we carry in our hearts until we are together again.

Housekeeping