

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
Small Group Ministry Program
Life Changes
Unitarian Universalist Church in Eugene, Oregon, February 2011

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 need one another when things happen in our lives over which we lack influence. We need loving reassurance of the worth of our being.

We need one another when we are spared from harm. We need to feel our gratitude with wonder and without guilt.

We need one another when we are called upon to make decisions that are contrary to another's thoughts or well-being. We need compassion for the situation and for ourselves.

We need one another when we hear of tragedies not directly related to us. We need to feel the oneness with humanity.

In all of these things, we need one another.

(By Helen Zidowecki)

CHECK-IN (up to 20 to 30 minutes total with up to 2 to 3 minutes per person)

TOPIC AND SHARING (up to 70 minutes for readings, questions, a few minutes for reflection and making notes if desired, individual sharing, optional open discussion at the end if the group agrees, with an optional 5 minute break about midway in the session)

READINGS

Every possession and every happiness is but lent by chance for an uncertain time, and may therefore be demanded back the next hour.

-Arthur Schopenhauer

Transitions are the cusp of change, a time of grasping and letting go, a time of sadness and of hope. Leaving home, leaving school, moving in with a partner, a new job, marriage, having children, moving away, a death of someone close, retirement - all times of transition in which we learn something about ourselves, about life. Our old patterns, momentarily swept away - were we cleared out for some new delight? How have we turned our transition reflections into guides from beyond?

-Rev. Glenn H. Turner

The world is round and the place which may seem like the end may also be only the beginning."

-Ivy Baker Priest

Nobody can go back and start a new beginning, but anyone can start today and make a new ending.

-Maria Robinson

If you don't like something change it; if you can't change it, change the way you think about it.

-Mary Engelbreit^[1]_[SEP]

Page 2 Life Changes

Life is change. Growth is optional. Choose wisely.

-Author unknown

QUESTIONS (Please respond to whichever question or questions you feel moved to answer. It is not necessary to respond to all of the questions. You may also respond to any of the readings that you find to be particularly meaningful.)

1. How have your transitions changed your life?
2. What unexpected lessons have come with major changes in your life?
3. Tell about a major life altering event where the change was either smooth and easy, or you had difficulty moving on.
4. Share about a current transition that is very alive for you now.

SHARING (up to 6 to 8 minutes each without interruption, depending on the time available, with optional open discussion at the end after all have shared)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS (up to 5-10 minutes)

-Confirm next meeting date, time, location, and topic.

-Consider discussing the service project.

-Other

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)

If here you have found freedom, take it with you into the world. If you have found comfort, go and share it with others. If you have dreamed dreams, help one another, that they may come true! If you have known love, give some back to a bruised and hurting world. Go in Peace.

Lauralyn Bellamy

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 calendar/date book.)

Lesson plan prepared by the Small Group Ministry steering committee (Laura Adams; Dick Loescher, chair; Sandy Moses; Leora White) and Rev. Alicia Forsey 12/6/10