

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website  
SMALL GROUP SESSION  
**ON BEING AWAKE**

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OPENING WORDS & CHALICE LIGHTING

**Flowing With The Way of Things (2012) Alice Gardner**

What we have here (this whole beautiful mess of a situation) is just what it is. No thoughts about how perfect or how awful it is can compete with the flat fact of its arrival each time we look again. This is just the way of things: These big and small moments that come to us as we awaken each morning lurch out of bed and proceed to whatever is next.

SILENT MEDITATION (5 minutes)

CHECK IN (40 – 50 minutes)

Share briefly what is on your mind and in your heart.

FOCUS: “WHAT IS IT TO BE AWAKE?”

Karen Armstrong Reading from **The Spiral Staircase** for April 6 from *Almanac from the Soul*

“In the course of my religious quest, I have discovered that the religious quest is not about discovering “the truth” of the “meaning of life” but about living as intensely as possible here and now. The idea is not to latch on to some superhuman personality or to “get to heaven” but to discover how to be fully human--hence the imagery of the perfect or enlightened man, or the deified human being. A passing Brahmin priest once asked the Buddha whether he was a god, a spirit, or an angel. None of these, the Buddha replied: “I am awake!” By activating a capacity that lay dormant in undeveloped men and women he seemed to belong to a new species. In the past, my own practice of religion had diminished me, whereas true faith, I now believe, should make you more human than before.

Questions:

1. What does “I am awake” suggest/mean to you?
2. When are you most “awake?”
3. What supports/hinders your being “awake?” Situations, practices. . .
4. What are the outward signals to you that you are are “awake?”

LIKES AND WISHES

How did this session go for you? Is there anything you’d like to call particular attention to?

CLOSING WORDS:

We are held, carried by a force mind cannot encompass. All we can do is fall in with the flow of what is, willingly or not, and find our way within the twists and turns to our own un-imagined possibilities.

- Alice Gardner