

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
SMALL GROUP MINISTRY Plan for Facilitators
Perspective

Main Line Unitarian Church, Devon, PA, March 2005

Opening Words & Chalice Lighting:

I am being driven forward
Into an unknown land.
The pass grows steeper
The air colder and sharper
A wind from my unknown goal
Stirs the strings of expectation.
Still the question
Shall I ever get there?
There where life resounds
A clear pure note in the silence.

-Dag Hammarskjold

Reflection/Personal Sharing/Prayer (approximately 30 minutes)

(The facilitator should briefly remind the group of confidentiality/anonymity, that this is not the time for cross conversation, etc.) (Include the ritual sharing of meaningful objects to welcome newcomers to the group.)

Focus Reading:

A Story by MLUC member Alex Lukacs

“PERSPECTIVE”

OR

“A PERSONAL JOURNEY TO A LARGER FRAME OF REFERENCE”

This is Joe. To some, Joe is a very “special” person. To others, he’s a bit “sub-par”. But most just think of him as your “average” Joe.

Joe is a 2-dimensional being who lives in a world called Flatland.

In Flatland you can move to the left or move to the right, or even spin around in circles, but that’s just about all you can do. Nevertheless, Joe is very happy with his life in Flatland because that is just about all he has ever known.

One day, however, for whatever the reason, Joe is lifted upward from his 2-dimensional world.

Joe’s friends in Flatland note his disappearance, since they have no concept of “UP” and it appears to them that Joe has mysteriously vanished.

The residents of Flatland all mourn Joe’s passing since, from their limited perspective, they cannot conceive of anything beyond the two dimensions of Flatland.

But Joe isn't sad. He now lives in a 3-dimensional world which is far more interesting and exciting than ANYTHING he could have ever imagined when he lived in Flatland, the 2-dimensional world he left behind.

And he thinks to himself: "If only my friends could understand!"

Focus Questions:

Have you ever felt like Joe? Perhaps that you can see or understand something that others do not?

What uncharted territory have you explored? Have you been alone or with someone else in that experience?

In times of conflict or misunderstanding have you ever tried to walk in another person's shoes in order to understand better what they are experiencing? If so, what did you learn?

Is there a situation in your life right now that would benefit from being viewed or understood from a different perspective? Can members of your group help with finding that perspective?

Checkout/Likes and Wishes:

(This is the time for facilitators to ask participants what they liked about this meeting and what they might wish for future meetings. This is also the time for any discussion of logistics.)

Closing Words & Extinguishing Chalice:

We are here to abet creation and to witness to it,
To notice each other's beautiful face and complex nature
So that creation need not play to an empty house.

-Annie Dillard