

UU Small Group Ministry Network Website

Play Histories

First Unitarian Church of Wilmington, Delaware, by Rev. Michelle Collins, 2013

Chalice Lighting, author unknown

We light this chalice in fellowship, in love, laughter and praise,
Drawing from it inspiration and hope, joy for the days to come.

Check In

Reading: from *Play*, by Stuart Brown, M.D.

The primary purpose of the play history is to get us back in touch with the joy that we have all experienced at some point in our lives. Find that joy from the past and you are halfway to learning how to create it again in your present life. Start this exercise by thinking about what you did as a child that really got you excited, that really gave you joy. Was it reading comic books? Building a tree house? Making stuff with your parents? Did you like doing this with other people or on your own? Were the things that really fueled you more mental or physical? Try to remember the feeling you had, and recapture it. As part of this remembrance, if visual images spring to your mind's eye, amplify them, let your associations to them flow.

Some people have a hard time remembering what they did for play, and even more have difficulty remembering the activity in enough detail that they can really re-experience the feeling it gave them. It's not easy, but it's worth putting in the time to do so. Understand what your unique play temperament is, and how it has manifested itself as you have matured.

Discussion & Sharing Questions:

- What experience came to your mind? What can you remember about it?
- Search your memory for those times in your life when you have been at your best. (These are usually authentic play times and give clues as to where to go for current play experiences.) Are there any themes that emerge for you?
- What have been the impediments to play in your life? What has disappeared?
- How would you describe your "play personality"? What types of play bring you joy?
- Are there any places where you need more play in your life now?

Closing Thoughts

Extinguishing the Chalice