

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
Small Group Ministry
“Relationship with our bodies”
Unitarian Universalist Church in Eugene, OR

Chalice or candle lighting or sound a chime (2 minutes for this and silence and opening words)

Moment of silence

Opening words

Let our sharing together provide a place where memories are rooted, where mysteries are pondered, where dreams are nourished, where love is freely given, where failures are owned and accepted, where sorrows are transformed, where our lives are deepened, challenged, and uplifted. Let this be such a time and place.

-Adapted from Rev. David E. Bumbaugh

Check-in (up to 20 to 30 minutes, with 2 to 3 minutes each)

Topic and sharing (up to 70 minutes for reading, questions, a few minutes for reflection and making notes if desired, individual sharing, and optional discussion at the end, with an optional 5 minute break about midway in the session)

Reading

“If your heart beats, then you can love.
If you can breathe, then you can live:

Your body is not the husk given to carry your soul around during a life sentence on a desolate rock – but is a flower of great beauty all of evolution has shaped to invite you to be an integral part of the ongoing life and beauty of this cosmos. You are not here to repeat history or walk the same paths as all the generations before you. You are not here to carry your head around – but to feel the wind and the water to feel the world on your skin and to touch the world in return. Your body is not merely a tool for use while on this planet – your body is a wondrous instrument that can bring new life into the world, create art, embrace other bodies, help the suffering and oppressed, save itself, rebuild itself, and surprise history. You are here to bring the wonder of the world forward – you are a self creating life, creating more life in everything that you do. There is power in your body to do wonders.

-From *Stones in the Path*, by Rev. Hilary Landau Krivchenia

“...These practices lead us into physical and spiritual health. When we work on one, we work on the other. When we neglect or harm one, we neglect or harm the other. Mind and body are not separate and our daily lives are our religion. To pay attention to our physical health is a spiritual practice in that we make of our bodies a temple and all that we do an act of worship, of thankfulness, of mindfulness that we are a part of the All.”

-From “Physical health as a spiritual practice”, a sermon by the Rev. Susan Manka-Seale, Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Northwest Tucson, Aug. 22, 2004

Questions

1. What experiences influenced your knowledge, thoughts, and feelings about your body? How have those experiences shaped your life?
2. What has been your relationship with food, physical activity, sleep, illness, disability, aging, and other aspects of the body?

3. How does the condition of your body affect your emotional, spiritual, and social experiences?
4. How do your emotional, spiritual, and social experiences affect your body?

Sharing (up to 6 to 8 minutes each, depending on the time available, with time at the end for comment and discussion if the group wishes)

Administrative matters (service project, future meeting dates and topics, etc.) (up to 5 to 10 minutes)

Likes (celebrations, gratitudes, thank you, appreciation for needs met) and wishes (mournings, requests, please, acknowledgement of needs not met)/check-out (up to 5 minutes total)

Closing words (2 minutes for words and closing)

May we leave grateful for our sharing, giving thanks for the relationships we are forming here.

Extinguish the chalice or candle or sound a chime (and optional closing ritual)

(Preparation for facilitator: bring the SGM facilitator training manual, paper and writing implements, the lesson plan, and your date book.)

Lesson plan prepared by the Small Group Ministry Steering Committee curriculum subcommittee (Rev. Steve Landale, Dick Loescher, Leora White) 2-11-09