Scarcity / Abundance

Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Vero Beach, FL, November 2015

Chalice Lighting

May we know once again that we are not isolated beings,
but connected, in mystery and miracle,
to the universe, to this community and to each other.

Check-in: How is your spirit right now?

Opening Reading

The terms "scarcity mentality" and "abundance mentality" were coined by Stephen Covey in his best-selling book *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*: "Most people are deeply scripted in what I call the Scarcity Mentality. They see life as having only so much, as though there were only one pie out there. And if someone were to get a big piece of the pie, it would mean less for everybody else.

"People with a Scarcity Mentality have a very difficult time sharing recognition and credit, power or profit – even with those who help in the production. They also have a very hard time being genuinely happy for the success of other people.

"The Abundance Mentality, on the other hand, flow out of a deep inner sense of personal worth and security. It is the paradigm that there is plenty out there and enough to spare for everybody. It results in sharing of prestige, of recognition, of profits, of decision making. It opens possibilities, options, alternatives, and creativity."

Topic Exploration

"A scarcity mindset narrows our time frame, causing us to make impulsive, short-term decisions that increase our difficulties in the long-term, like putting off paying credit card bills or not opening the envelopes. Dealing with extremely limited resources increases the barriers we have to deal with, resulting in mental fatigue and cognitive overload.   Feeling deprived of important resources like love, food, money, or time can lead to anxiety or anger.   Studies show that being lonely or deprived of resources results in an unhealthy obsession, hyperfocus, and overvaluing of the thing we don't have. Ironically, the nature of scarcity itself impedes our coping efforts.

Sharing / Questions

1. In your past life have you suffered from scarcity, particularly in regard to finances or relationships, and how did you cope with that?

2. Are there segments of your current life that are linked to feelings of abundance or scarcity, and how does that affect your day-to-day choices?

3.   While different people may be comfortable with different levels of scarcity versus abundance if you find yourself slipping into the scarcity mindset, seek out new environments that support positive attitudes. Volunteer organizations are a great place to meet people with an abundance mentality."
    (*Scarcity: Why Having Too Little Means So Much*, by Sendhil Mullainathan and Eldar Shafir, 2013)

a. Has affiliation with Unitarian Universalism affected your interpretation of scarcity and abundance?

b. Does the UUFVB[your] congregation have an abundance or scarcity mentality? Support your opinion.

4. How do we differentiate between wants and needs in defining our own feelings of plenty or deprivation?

5. How has your concept of "enough" changed over the years—related to money, exercise, love/sex, eating, traveling, reading, etc.?

6. Does society have a responsibility to meet all human wants and needs, or some, or none?
. Retrieved 2008-03-18

Closing Reading
"Abundance mentality has the ability to create Win/Win situations for all parties involved. Win/Win is a thought process of both the mind and the heart that continuously seeks mutual benefit in human interaction. With a Win/Win frame of mind, all parties involved feel good about the solutions, agreements, and decisions because they are mutually beneficial for everyone involved. In this way of thinking, emphasis is put upon cooperation, not competition." (http://www.northernlightspresentations.com/articles/AbundanceMentality.htm)

Extinguish the Chalice
We extinguish this flame but not the light of truth,
the warmth of community, or the fire of commitment.
These we carry in our hearts until we are together again.

Housekeeping