

# Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website

## Small Group Ministry

### **Taking Care of Ourselves**

First Parish Church of Stow and Acton, MA, September 2019

#### **Opening Words and Chalice Lighting**

“Calm your hurried pace. For this hour let the cares, the fretfulness and worry be set aside. Forgive yourself - you are so very worthy of moving on, of making new efforts, of trying again.” - *Carolyn S Owen-Towle*

**Check-in/Sharing:** This is the time to mention briefly any major issues or events on your mind that you would like to share.

#### **Topic: Taking Care of Ourselves**

Taking care of ourselves is a life-long lesson. Many of us struggle with balancing taking care of ourselves with taking care of our homes, co-workers, families or friends. Often we are brought up to do what we "should" do, or "be good", and are advised against being "selfish". So we even have to learn to ask "Would this be healthy for me?"

Once we recognize that it is healthy to take care of ourselves, we need to become aware of what that means. The self-care our mind, body, heart and soul need evolves as we grow and frankly age. Starting with basics, such as sleep, healthy food, exercise, relaxation, and awareness of our own energy and emotional rhythm, we can find ways to incorporate habits of self care into our lives. We can learn to receive as well as to give, and to ask for what we need. We can seek out careers, hobbies, people and places that fill our deeper needs as we explore what brings us joy.

“Lighten up on yourself. No one is perfect. Gently accept your humanness.”  
–Deborah Day

“We need to replace your vicious stress cycle with a vicious cycle of self care.”  
– Dr. Sara Gottfried

“Rest and self-care are so important. When you take time to replenish your spirit it allows you to serve others from the overflow. You cannot serve from an empty vessel.”– Eleanor Brown

“Doing nothing has become one of the lost luxuries in these hectic times. But doing nothing, even for five minutes, can be rejuvenating. Go for it: You – unplugged.” – Joan Marques

“Take time to do what makes your soul happy.” – Unknown

“Taking care of yourself doesn't mean me first, it means me too.”– L.R. Knost

### **Possible Questions for Discussion:**

- How do you define “taking care of yourself?”
- What connections have you found between your mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health?
- What are some specific activities you do to take care of yourself? What do you wish you did?
- What are some of your challenges to self-care? What inspires or motivates you to better self-care?
- How have you balanced care for yourself with care for others?
- Can you think of a time that deliberately practicing self-care was helpful? When ignoring it was damaging?

(Group will take a few minutes to consider topic and questions and then share).

**Wrapping Up:** How did you like this topic and session?

### **Closing Words**

“Make sure to put on your own oxygen mask before assisting others.” – Airline Safety Briefing