

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website

Small Group Ministry

This Body

First Parish Church of Stow and Acton, MA, May 2021

Opening Words and Chalice Lighting

“This is your body, your greatest gift, [filled with the possibility of] wisdom you do not hear, grief you thought was forgotten, and joy you have never known.” -- *Marion Woodman*

Check-in/Sharing:

Please share anything you are carrying into this gathering that may crowd your mind and your ability to be present here and now.

Topic: This Body

Our bodies are the gateway through which the world enters our minds and the tool through which we in turn affect the world. The body provides our basic feelings and senses, such as hunger, the desire for contact, sexuality, taste, touch, smell, sight, and hearing.

Through our body, we experience pleasure, and also pain.

Our bodies evolve as we literally renew ourselves moment by moment. Sometimes, we experience change as a result of illness, injury, or just plain age.

Our body, integrated with the mind and spirit, forms a basis of our self. And, with what we know about the mind-body connection, it's clear that how we think about our body affects our world view, and our happiness.

Let's explore what it means to be in a relationship with this body we inhabit ... for better or for worse.

Quotes to consider

“I wish we could treat our bodies as the place we live from, rather than regard it as a place to be worked on, as though it were a disagreeable old kitchen in need of renovation and update.” -- Susie Orbach

“I have had a love-hate relationship with my body.” -- Demi Moore

“I'm not a genetically superior person. I built my body.” -- Sylvester Stallone

“My body - it's become, as I get older... not my friend.” -- Tiffany Darwish

“It’s ok if it’s not easy to love your body. Loving your body when your body is causing you pain is complicated.” – hejyork

“Since I don’t look like every other girl, it takes a while to be okay with that. To be different. But different is good.” — Serena Williams

Possible Questions for Discussion:

- How has the particular nature of your body affected you throughout your life? Has that changed?
- To what degree do others’ perceptions and opinions about your body feed back into your thoughts about yourself? How much is your self-image defined by that?
- Our bodies change both gradually (growing up and aging) and suddenly (by accident, illness or conscious change). What have such changes meant to you, and your own sense of self?
- What’s been helpful to you in working through your own relationship with your physical form?
- What do you need from your body to do what is important to you? How have you managed physically and emotionally at times when you could not rely on your body?
- What ways have you found to take care of your body? In what ways, if any, has this care also affected your mind and spirit?
- What do you appreciate most about living in your body?

(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:

“And I said to my body softly, ‘I want to be your friend.’ It took a long breath and replied, ‘I have been waiting my whole life for this.’” — Nayyirah Waheed