

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
Small Group Ministry Program
Truth and Honesty
Unitarian Universalist Church in Eugene, OR, February 2015

CHALICE OR CANDLE LIGHTING OR SOUND A CHIME (2 to 3 minutes for this and silence and opening words)

MOMENT OF SILENCE

OPENING WORDS

Each of us brings a separate truth here, we bring the truth of our own life, our own story. We don't come as empty vessels...But rather we come as full people—people who have our own story and our own truth...Together we have truths. Together we have a story. Together we are a community.
-Penny Hackett-Evans

CHECK-IN (up to 20 to 30 minutes total with up to 2 to 3 minutes per person)

TOPIC AND SHARING (up to 70 minutes for readings, questions, a few minutes for reflection and making notes if desired, individual sharing, optional open discussion at the end if the group agrees, with an optional 5 minute break about midway in the session)

READINGS

All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as being self-evident.

-Arthur Schopenhauer, German philosopher

You are only responsible for being honest, not for someone else's reaction to your honesty.

-Kelli Jae Baeli

There is always a way to be honest without being brutal.

-Arthur Dobrin

Today I bent the truth to be kind, and have no regret, for I am far surer of what is kind than I am of what is true.

-Robert Brault

This is a difficult balance, telling the truth: how much to share, how much to keep, which truths will wound but not ruin, which will cut too deep to heal.

-Ally Condie, *Matched*

We tell lies when we are afraid...afraid of what we don't know, afraid of what others will think, afraid of what will be found out about us. But every time we tell a lie, the thing that we fear grows stronger.

-Tad Williams

A Nonviolent (Compassionate) Communication (NVC) model for honest self-expression includes observation, feeling, need, and request. "When I see or hear _____, I feel _____, because my need (or value) for _____ has been or has not been met." Connecting request, "Would you be willing to tell me: what you heard me say or how you feel or what you think about what I said?" Action request, "Would you be willing to _____ (stated positively, doable, oriented to present time)?"

-Based on the work of Marshall B. Rosenberg, PhD

QUESTIONS and REQUESTS (Please respond to any of the questions, requests, and readings you feel moved by. It is not necessary to respond to all of them.)

1. Tell about something that you believed to be true in the past that you do not still believe to be true now.
2. Share your experience of giving or receiving honest feedback when that was done with or without a sense of caring and love.
3. How do you decide how much and how to share something that may be hard for another person to hear?
4. What has been your experience of telling or receiving partial truths or false statements?

SHARING (up to 6 to 8 minutes each without interruption, depending on the time available, with optional open discussion at the end after all have shared)

ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS (up to 5-10 minutes). Alternatively, this agenda item can be done after the check-in, if the group decides to do that.

-Confirm next meeting date, time, location, and topic.

-Consider discussing the service project.

-Other

LIKES (celebrations, gratitudes, appreciations for needs met) and WISHES (mournings, requests, acknowledgements of needs not met)/CHECK-OUT (a few words or phrases from each who wants to share, up to 5 minutes total)

CLOSING WORDS (2 minutes for words, and closing)

We are grateful for this community, for the opportunity to listen and to learn, and for the making and deepening of friendships. May we support one another on our journeys.

EXTINGUISH THE CHALICE OR CANDLE OR SOUND A CHIME (and additional optional closing ritual if agreed to)

(Preparation for the facilitator. Please bring the SGM Facilitator Training Manual, paper and writing implements, the session plan, and your calendar/date book.)

Session plan prepared by the Small Group Ministry steering committee (Lyn Fischrup; Bonnie Koenig; Al Landy; Dick Loescher, chair).

November 17, 2014