

Unitarian Universalist Small Group Ministry Network Website
ZOOM and Small Group Ministry: Questions
Anne Bailey, Universalist Church of West Hartford 5/4/2020

I've been holding two Small Group Zoom sessions every week. The attendance varies, a few are there regularly, others now and then. Even with only 4 one time, we had a great conversation. I usually post a few prompting questions with the Zoom log-in invitation, but we may end up just having a spontaneous conversation. Most sessions last about an hour. The log-in link is posted in our Weekly eNews, but most of the attendees have come from personal email outreach I've done.

I've attached a list of questions I have compiled as we've gone along.

Some prompting questions to choose from for Zoom Small Groups

- How are you doing? What have you found helpful in coping with the uncertain and closed-down world we are now living in? Share any tips you may have.
- What are you finding to do with your stay-at-home time? Have you had any surprises in what you have found to do?
- Have you been setting any new goals - small or big - that you try to accomplish daily or over time? What are some of these?
- What small kindnesses have you experienced - either as a recipient or as one who offered them - during this time of isolation?
- Have you found any ways to be of help to others?
- What are particular challenges for you?
- Have you found any gifts or unexpected bonuses as you cope?
- Have you found some things to do that you really enjoy?
- How about things for just fun? What has made you laugh?
- Have you found some advantages to this isolation we are having to endure?
- Are there things on your life's to-do list have you found you have been able to tackle?
- What difficulties and/or losses are you having to cope with?
- Are there times when we feel lonely or helpless? What are some ways we might deal with this?
- How has Covid19 changed your view of your future?
- How has it changed what you find meaningful?

A session focus:

We'll continue to share our experiences with this abnormal time:

- good things, unexpected surprises, new activities
- what's working for us
- what are our challenges and difficulties
- are there kindnesses we have experienced or bestowed
- are there things on your life's "to-do" list have you found you have been able to tackle?

Another session focus:

- What have you found for good entertainment? (TV series, movies, books, etc.)
What are some good resources for this?
- What other positive things can you think of?

More session ideas:

We'll check in and share any tips we have, and then let's learn more about each other - some of us already know this about each other, but it never hurts to refresh our memories!

Some questions you might choose from:

- Where did you grow up.
- What was your religious background?
- How did you happen to come to our church?
- What were some pivotal moments in your life? Was there an individual who was a "springboard" for you?
- What were your favorite things to do when you were growing up?
- What did (do) you do for work? How did you come to get into that field of work? If you are still working now, how is it going?
- What are your passions and hobbies? Have you been able to pursue any of these during this time of isolation? Have you found any new ones during this time?

Another idea:

We might consider playing a game together at a future session. Nancy Upchurch has "Zoom played" "What would you choose to be if you were a _____ - and why?" Example: animal, fruit, building -- we could brainstorm a list.

Fortunately, Unfortunately

Craft a wacky, twisty-and-turny story with your companions by using "fortunately" to begin each sentence and then "unfortunately" to kick off the next person's addition. Chloe Smith, an outdoors lover who is about to marry an REI member, offered a thought-starter: "Fortunately, the bear had a nice hat to keep him warm. Unfortunately, it was the middle of summer and 110°F." Game play proceeds in a circle.