



SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES

Letting Go

Things falling apart is a kind of testing and also a kind of healing. We think that the point is to pass the test or to overcome the problem, but the truth is that things don't really get solved. They come together and they fall apart. Then they come together again and they fall apart again. The healing comes from letting there be room for all of this to happen: room for grief, for relief, for misery, for joy.

- Pema Chödrön, *When Things Fall Apart*

Chalice Lighting

We light this chalice as a symbol of the light that shines in the human heart.

- Unitarian Universalist Society of Spain, from *ICUU.net*

Opening Reading

After great pain, a formal feeling comes
The Nerves sit ceremonious, like Tombs
The stiff Heart questions was it He, that bore,
And Yesterday, or Centuries before?

The Feet, mechanical, go round
Of Ground, or Air, or Ought
A Wooden way
Regardless grown,
A Quartz contentment, like a stone

This is the Hour of Lead
Remembered, if outlived,
As Freezing persons recollect the Snow
First-Chill-then Stupor-then the letting go
- *Emily Dickinson*

Quiet Reflection

Remember to listen deeply and not become distracted. Let us put our agendas down during check in and whenever you are not using it during the meeting. Let us try and center ourselves. Put your feet solidly on the ground, take a deep breath, and know that, with intention, we can touch one another with deep awareness through listening and authentic speaking, helping us to achieve understanding and allowing us to be understood.

Buddhist enlightenment has revealed that if you touch one thing deeply you touch everything. And if you are touched by one thing deeply you are touched by everything. So let us intentionally listen and authentically speak and be touched by everything.

Sharing/ Check-In

Take two or three minutes to share how you are spiritually, psychologically, emotionally, and physically. You can speak or you can pass. We want to know how you are in this moment.

Reflection

Take a moment to reflect on gratitude for the space this group gives us to touch and be touched by one another's lives.

Topic Reading

We often assume that something can last forever; yet everything is always ending, always changing, endings are as natural as beginnings. Yet the hope that things can last forever is what we sometimes need to believe to have courage to begin again. But when the inevitable ending comes, we are face to face with the dark and demanding force of reality, which often goes against our human desire. We can take this lesson home and lodge it in our hearts--life is a constant interchange between human will and something beyond our control and comprehension. We need both the courage and hope to plan and create a life, and piety of the most profound kind to face the mysteries that change our intended design. Each of us is asked to be at the same time existentialist and pious, responsible and responsive, practical and immensely imaginative.

- Paraphrased, based on an excerpt from Soul Mates, by Thomas Moore

**Break/Quiet
Contemplation****Sharing/Deep
Listening**

Speak about this topic in any way that is comfortable to you. If you choose to use the questions, focus on just one or two, as this will allow you to go deeper into the topic.

- What have you successfully let go of in your life and what do you think made letting go possible for you?
- What is something you would like to let go of but have not been able to? What do you think would help you in the process of letting go? Why do you think you "should" let go? Can you think of anything that would help in the process of letting go?
- What changes do you imagine will occur in your life once you let go of what you would like to let go of?
- What needs are being served by what you are holding on to and what type of emptiness or difficulty might you face once you have let go? Do you have any thoughts or strategies on how to get the help you will need to support you with those difficulties?
- Do you think our society places too much emphasis on letting go? If so why do you think we do? Also what do you think makes it hard for people to let go?
- What in your view are the consequences to an individual, group, society, etc if he/ she or they cannot let go?
- Is there a person that serves as a role model for you in the process of letting go?

Discussion

This is a time to supportively respond to something another person said or to relate additional thoughts that may have occurred as others shared.

Likes & Wishes

What did you like about this meeting? What would you like to see change at future meetings?

Announcements

Closing Reading

Past
- Pablo Neruda

Breathing Practice

In- Breath: I honor what I need to let go of
Out-Breath: I know it is time to let go – I have the strength with the support of community to let it go
What we will say aloud together is
In breath -- Honor letting go
Out breath -- I let go

Closing Circle

Loss of love and intimacy can be a profound form of initiation. Paradoxically, initiation means beginning, and yet the most powerful initiations almost always involve some sort of death.
-from Soul Mates, Thomas Moore

Extinguishing Chalice

Rise and hold hands or link arms
Remembering that the universe is so much larger than our ability to comprehend, let us go forth from this time together with the resolve to stop trying to reduce the incomprehensible to our own petty expectations, so that wonder -- that sense of what is sacred -- can find space to open up our minds and illumine our lives.
- Marjorie Newlin Leaming (1997 UUMA Worship Materials Collection, altered; from UUA Worship Web)