



SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES

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## Purposeful Frustration

In the depths of winter, I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer. - *Albert Camus*

"Not to live for the day, that would be materialistic—but to treasure the day. I realize that most of us live on the skin—on the surface—without appreciating just how wonderful it is simply to be alive at all. - *Audrey Hepburn*

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### Chalice Lighting

Deep calls unto deep, joy calls unto joy, light calls unto light. We call out to one another to be fully present. Let the kindling of this flame rekindle in us the inner light of being together. And “as one flame lights another,” let us illuminate each other in this small group gathering and in the larger communities of which we are all members. Let us be bearers of light, wherever we are.

- *Gordon B. McKeeman, UUA Worship Web*

### Opening Reading

No one has reached maturity until he has learned to face the fact of his own death and shaped his way of living accordingly. Then the true perspective emerges. The preoccupation with material things, with accumulating goods or fame or power, is exposed. Then each morning seems new and fresh, as indeed it is. Every flower, every leaf, strikes with double impact, as if I were sensing it for the first and last time. Once I have accepted the fact that I shall disappear, I also discover the larger self which relates to my family and friends, to my neighborhood and community, to nation and to humanity, and indeed, to the whole creation out of which I have sprung. I am a part of all this too, and death cannot entirely withdraw me from it. To the extent that I have poured myself into all these related groups and person, I will live on in them.

- *Victor Frankel, Man's Search for Meaning*

### Quiet Reflection

Difficult as it is to really listen to someone in affliction, it is just as difficult for them to know that compassion is listening, as it makes the pain more real and the responsibility for healing more real.

- *Simone Weil, Waiting for God*

### 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.*

### Topic

**Purposeful Frustration: “Choosing to survive and grow from the difficult.”**

### Break/Quiet Contemplation

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## 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.*

- If you agree that life cannot be easy as Victor Frankel states, why not?
- What have been some of the “winds of the world” that have challenged you and how have you faced/overcome them? What did you gain from that experience.
- What have been some of the challenges of life that still limit your ability to live life to the hilt, as Victor Frankel states “it should be lived.”
- What does it mean to live life to the hilt? Especially within the context of the quote: “I arise in the morning torn between the desire to improve the world and the desire to enjoy the world. This makes it hard to plan the day.” - *E.B. White*
- Are there those you admire who have overcome adversity and faced the difficulties of life in a way you wish you could emulate?

## 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?

## Closing Reading

### A Prayer for My Soul

*by Source*

(There are things that taste good  
That kill you slowly  
We must slowly learn to say no  
It takes a long time very often)

(Up and down like a dying roller coaster  
I am learning how to fight  
It used to be whenever the obsession called  
I rolled over  
It was because I was bored  
Or I hated myself  
Or because I didn't know how not to  
Or I couldn't stand being free  
Or because, because)

Once I couldn't stand up when the sweet  
dreams in my bones  
Was scraping off the marrow  
And there I would be:

Doing it  
And I couldn't stop it  
And I didn't want to do it anymore  
And yet there I was again doing it  
And I knew all the reasons not to  
And I couldn't stop myself  
And I would be somewhere, someplace  
Doing it again)

(A slip is not forever  
Some of us go all the way out  
And crawl home wasted  
Before we can pick up and try again)  
Yesterday I got up to recover from a fall  
Today I'm going out for the running,  
Trying to find my feet  
And seeing very clearly the doggy doo  
And that I was out on the street  
Selling myself again)

(It takes courage for me to come out  
Of the haze into a simple morning  
There is no cast of thousands  
Watching to applaud  
My limbs are stiff to unwind  
And the task at hand is hard to live  
There are other things to do  
Besides play suicide  
Other fantasies to rehearse  
Instead of my funeral march)

(Here is what I know and want you to  
learn  
Before it is too late  
Because you are my friend  
and “I love you”)

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Getting yourself straight  
Is holding on through the times  
You don't know where the hell you fit  
In this world or the next  
It is holding out for the self you don't  
believe in  
And finding out that you are true)

(The night can look very bleak  
But there are all possibilities for mercy  
In the morning  
This is a life long unwind  
It is taking your time to give birth  
And not holding on to the tradition of pain)

(Try to realized that you are going  
through the fire  
And it is hot when in passage,  
But when you come out you'll be silver,  
You'll be gold  
You will hear the sunshine in your voice)

(I've been to long wandering in  
this petrified forest  
And don't know one person in the wood  
who  
Hasn't come out crying diamonds and  
pearls.)

### **Extinguish Chalice**

*Rise and hold hands or link arms.*

Let us be with the magic of our being  
Let us feel the magic of our encountering and knowing one another  
Let our souls sing in the octave of creation  
We build the world of our soul and teach its wisdom to others, young and old.  
Let us rejoice that our lives have touched one another.  
Together we shape one another by the movement of shared breath, shared being, that  
moves into our heart and holds us together in the knowledge that we are one.  
- Source