



SMALL GROUP MINISTRIES

Forgiveness

Forgive transgressions always; better still, forget them.

- *Tirukkural 152, from One Heart: Universal Wisdom from the World's Scriptures*

Resentment cannot be removed by more resentment;
resentment can be removed only by forgetting.

- *Mahavagga 10, from One Heart: Universal Wisdom from the World's Scriptures*

Opening and Chalice Lighting

We light this chalice to remember that life is born again every day.

- *Sociedad Unitaria Universalista de España, from ICUU.net*

Quiet Reflection

Silence is essentially surrender to the holiness of the divine mystery. □

- *Sister Wendy*

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 Readings

The most important commandment of the post-Holocaust era should be the recognition of goodness. Because this alone can struggle against the curse that says, 'We had no friends, we have no friends, we will never have friends.' That paralyzes our leadership. It kills the future. If all you have a hammer, then the whole world is full of nails."

- *Rabbi Harold Schulweis*

When conflict is reconciled, some hatred remains;

how can this be put right?

The wise accept less than is due

And do not blame or punish;

For love seeks agreement

Where justice seeks payment.

- *Tao Te Ching 79*

To be in a state of unforgiveness is to know hell, at least in a small way.

- *Madeleine L'Engle, A Stone For A Pillow*

He who takes vengeance or bears a grudge

acts like someone who,

having cut one hand while handling a knife,

avenges himself by stabbing the other hand.

- *Jerusalem Talmud, Nedarim 9.4, from One Heart:*

Universal Wisdom from the World's Scriptures

Break/Quiet Contemplation

Sharing/Deep Listening

Individual sharing. Let's take turns in a clockwise direction, remembering to leave some moments for quiet reflection by the group before the next person begins. 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 or who do you find it hard to forgive, or impossible to forgive? Is it necessary for someone to apologize, for you to forgive them?
- How do you feel about having a situation in which you cannot forgive?
- Have you experienced forgiveness? Completely forgiven? Partly forgiven? Conditionally forgiven?
- Are there are things that you would like to be forgiven, for which forgiveness does not seem forthcoming or possible? Or there things for which you have been unable to accept forgiveness?
- How has forgiving, being forgiven, and either accepting it or not, affected you?
- What religious instructions on forgiveness do you value? Which ones have hurt you? Do you have, or believe you should have, regular forgiveness practices?
- How well do we as a congregation forgive?

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.

Checkout/ Likes & Wishes

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

Closing Reading

For remaining silent when a single voice would have made a difference,
*As we are willing and able, we forgive ourselves and each other;
we begin again in love.*

For each time that our fears have made us rigid and inaccessible,
*As we are willing and able, we forgive ourselves and each other;
we begin again in love.*

For each time that we have struck out in anger without just cause...

For each time that our greed has blinded us to the needs of others...

For the selfishness which sets us apart and alone...

For falling short of the admonitions of the spirit...

For losing sight of our unity...

For those and for so many acts both evident and subtle
which have fueled the illusion of separateness,

*As we are willing and able, we forgive ourselves and each other;
we begin again in love.*

- Robert Eller-Isaacs

**Extinguishing
the Chalice**

Though we've broken our vows a thousand times,
Come, come whoever you are
Wander, worshipper, lover of leaving
Ours is no caravan of despair
Come, yet again, come.
- Jellaladin Rumi, adapted