



Curiosity

Greenville UU Fellowship – Greenville, South Carolina

Covenant Group Session Plan

Revised by Denise Frick, November, 2021, based on *What Does It Mean to Be a People of Curiosity?* By the Unitarian Society of Germantown. *

Welcome, Chalice Lighting: Here we are, together in this space. By our love and by our covenant, we make this a holy place. We light the chalice of Unitarian Universalism in honor of the light that lives in each of us, the light that shines among us, and the light we bring into the world.

Personal Check In: Share something from your life since we last met and how you are feeling now.

Opening Words

Once we believe in ourselves, we can risk curiosity, wonder, spontaneous delight, or any experience that reveals the human spirit. ~ e. e. cummings

Questions to Prompt and Guide Discussion- Pick YOUR question.

These questions are set up a bit differently. Look over the list of questions below, reflect briefly on each one, and then pick the one question that speaks to you most. The goal is to figure out which question is “yours.” Which question captures the call of your inner voice and what is it trying to get you to notice? Which one contains “your work”?

1. What or who has kept you curious?
2. What’s something you know now about being a person of curiosity that you didn’t know when you were 18 years old?
3. How has being curious come at a cost for you?
4. As you get older, how are you more or less curious?
5. How are you curious about what your body is trying to tell you? How do you respond?
6. What is that person who drives you crazy trying to teach you?
7. How have you experienced the adage that every moment is a teachable moment?
8. Have you forgiven yourself for that time you willfully refused to question what you knew was untrue? Please share about that.
9. When it comes to you worrying about the future or being curious about it, which one wins?
10. Do you think you are worth someone being curious about? In what ways?
11. Which were you taught was more important: the “expert mind” or the “beginner’s mind”? Which one resonates with you now?
12. Have you ever opened Pandora’s box? What did you find?
13. What is the greatest adventure that your curiosity took you on?
14. What’s your question? Your question may not be listed above. As always, if the above questions don’t include what life is asking from you, spend the month listening to your days to hear it. Or maybe the question or call you need to hear is waiting in one of the quotes listed below. Consider looking there!

Readings – see below

Sitting in Silence

Sharing: This is a time to speak without interruption and for deep listening. Deep listening means no interrupting, no fixing, no saving, advising or setting each other straight. Please share your response to what appears to be “your” question. Why this question for you? What is it trying to get you to notice?

(This is usually a good time to take a break)

Open Discussion: This is a time to respond to something another person said or to relate additional thoughts that may have occurred as others shared. Continue to practice deep listening.

Closing Reading: (this reading or one specific to the session)

May the light around us guide our footsteps, and hold us fast to the best and most righteous that we seek.

May the darkness around us nurture our dreams, and give us rest so that we may give ourselves to the work of our world. Let us seek to remember the wholeness of our lives, the weaving of light and shadow in this great and astonishing dance in which we move.

~Kathleen McTigue, UU Minister, Dir of the UU College of Social Justice, UU Service Committee

Announcements/Plans

Personal Check Out:

As we close out meeting today, how are you feeling now?

Extinguish the Chalice

We extinguish this flame but not the light of truth, the warmth of community, or the fire of commitment. These we carry in our hearts until we are together again.

Readings

The important thing is not to stop questioning. Curiosity has its own reason for existing. One cannot help but be in awe when he contemplates the mysteries of eternity, of life, of the marvelous structure of reality. It is enough if one tries merely to comprehend a little of this mystery every day. Never lose a holy curiosity.

~ Albert Einstein

We seek elusive answers to the questions of this life.

We seek to put an end to all the waste of human strife.

We search for truth, equality, and blessed peace of mind.

And then, we come together here, to make sense of what we find.

And we believe in life, and in the strength of love; and we have found a joy being together.

And in our search for peace, maybe we'll finally see: even to question, truly is an answer.

~ Shelley Jackson Denham, "We Laugh, We Cry" verse 4, hymn #354, *Singing the Living Tradition*

I think, at a child's birth, if a mother could ask a fairy godmother to endow it with the most useful gift, that gift should be curiosity. ~ Eleanor Roosevelt

The cure for boredom is curiosity. There is no cure for curiosity. ~ Dorothy Parker

We never stop investigating. We are never satisfied that we know enough to get by. Every question we answer leads on to another question. This has become the greatest survival trick of our species.

~ Desmond Morris

It wasn't curiosity itself that killed the proverbial cat. What really got him in trouble was his inability to deal with the new situation he was in. And when it comes to learning about new environments, curiosity is key.

~Kate Berardo

Curiosity endows the people who have it with a generosity in argument and serenity in their own mode of life which springs from their cheerful willingness to let life take the form it will.

~ Alistair Cooke

To see, simply to look and to see, is an ethical act, an intentional choice; to see, with open eyes, is a spiritual practice and thus a risk, for it can open you to ways of knowing the world and loving it that will lead to inevitable consequences. The awakened eye is a conscious eye, a willful eye, and brave, because to see things as they are, each in its own truth, will make you very vulnerable.

~ Rev. Victoria Safford, UU Minister

Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart,
and try to love the questions themselves,
like locked rooms,
and like books in a very foreign tongue.
Do not now seek the answers,
which cannot be given you because you would not be able to live them,
and the point is, to live everything.

Live the questions now.

Perhaps you will then, gradually, without even noticing,
live along some distant day into the answer.

~ Rainer Maria Rilke

In the mind of the beginner there are many possibilities, in the mind of the expert there are few.

~Shunryu Suzuki, Zen monk and teacher

We can lean into worry's opposite – curiosity. As Rabbi Marcia Prager teaches, where worry says, “oh no, what is going to happen?” curiosity says “oh wow! I wonder what will happen!”

~Rev. Kimberley Debus

Further Reading and Resources

*What Does It Mean To Be A People of Curiosity?, <https://usguu.org/what-does-it-mean-to-be-a-people-of-curiosity/>