



## GENEROSITY

Greenville UU Fellowship, Greenville, South Carolina

Covenant Group Session Plan

Revised by David Frick, November 2022

**Welcome, Chalice Lighting:** *In this place together, we light this candle for our Unitarian Universalist, and to celebrate the light within each of us, the light among us, and the light we bring into the world.*

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

### Opening Reading:

Each morning we hold up our chalice of being to be filled

With the graces of life which abound—

Air to breathe, food to eat, companions to love,

Beauty to behold, art to cherish, causes to serve.

They come in ritual procession—these gifts of life.

Whether we deserve them we cannot know or say.

They are poured out.

Ours is the task of holding the chalice of being.

~Richard S. Gilbert, UU Minister

### Questions to prompt and guide discussion:

1. Think of a time when you were truly generous. How did it feel to you? Did it have some scary aspects? What were the good feelings? How did those two feelings balance?
2. How does it feel to be the recipient of generosity? Were there positive and negative feelings then?
3. What fears or barriers block you from being generous? What joys come from being generous?
4. Are you sometimes so generous that you over commit or feel depleted? Have you needed to say “no” sometimes so that your generosity is sustainable in the long term? Share your experience.

### Readings – see below

**Sharing** - This is a time to speak without interruption and for deep listening. Deep listening means no interrupting, no fixing, no saving, no advising, and no setting each other straight. Please share one or more responses to the session questions.

(After each person has shared once, this is usually a good time to take a brief break)

**Open Discussion** -This is a time to respond to something another person said about the topic or to relate additional thoughts that may have occurred as others shared their thoughts on this topic. Continue to practice deep listening.

### Closing reading:

For we must share, if we would keep, that blessing from above;

Ceasing to give, we cease to have; such is the law of love.

~Richard C. Trench, Anglican archbishop and poet

### Announcements / Plans

**Personal Check Out:** As we close 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 meet again.*

## Readings

That's what I consider true generosity. You give your all, and yet you always feel as if it costs you nothing.  
~Simone De Beauvoir

We make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give. ~Winston Churchill

True generosity is an offering; given freely out of pure love. No strings attached. No expectations.  
~Susie Orman

Every time you smile at someone, it is an action of love, a gift to that person, a beautiful thing. Let us always meet each other with smile, for the smile is the beginning of love.  
~Mother Teresa

Giving frees us from the familiar territory of our own needs by opening our mind to the unexplained worlds occupied by the needs of others.  
~Barbara Bush

One isn't necessarily born with courage, but one is born with potential. Without courage, we cannot practice any other virtue with consistency. We can't be kind, true, merciful, generous, or honest. ~Maya Angelou

There is a wonderful mythical law of nature that the three things we crave most in life -- happiness, freedom, and peace of mind -- are always attained by giving them to someone else. ~Peyton Conway March

So I would hope people would develop some kind of habit that involves understanding that their life is so full they can afford to give in all kinds of ways to other people. I consider that to be baseline spirituality.  
~Susan Sarandon

Money is like manure; it's not worth a thing unless it's spread around encouraging young things to grow.  
~Thornton Wilder

Do all the good you can, By all the means you can, In all the ways you can, In all the places you can, At all the times you can, To all the people you can, As long as ever you can. ~ John Wesley

Joy can be real only if people look upon their life as a service, and have a definite object in life outside themselves and their personal happiness. ~Leo Tolstoy

In the end though, maybe we must all give up trying to pay back the people in this world who sustain our lives. In the end, maybe it's wiser to surrender before the miraculous scope of human generosity and to just keep saying thank you, forever and sincerely, for as long as we have our voices.  
~Elizabeth Gilbert

Being generous often consists of simply extending a hand. That is hard to do if you are grasping tightly to your righteousness, your belief system, your superiority, your assumptions about others, your definition of normal.  
~Patti Digh

No simple act of generosity remains in isolation, the ripples are many. ~Sarah Winman