



Hate

Greenville UU Fellowship, Greenville, South Carolina

Covenant Group Session Plan

Written by Pam Stevenson, January 2018, revised by Jerry Salley, Kris Seitz and Denise Frick,

January 2025

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

Opening Words:

Never does hate cease by hating in return; only through love can hatred come to an end. Victory breeds hatred; the conquered dwell in sorrow and resentment. They who give up all thought of victory or defeat may be calm and live happily at peace. Let us overcome violence by gentleness; let us overcome evil by good. Let us overcome the miserly by liberality; let us overcome the liar by truth.

~Dhammapada (Reading 597 Love versus Hate, from *Singing the Living Tradition*)

Questions to prompt and guide discussion:

1. How often do you find yourself saying that you 'hate' something (i.e., a food, a color, a person, etc)? Is that really true? How does using the word "hate" shape your attitude? How else could your feelings be expressed?
2. Share your experience from having worked in an environment of negativity and/or hate. How did that make you feel? What did you do to make things better for yourself?
3. How do you feel you might be able to contribute to/foster an environment of nonviolence and/or less or no hate in your current work, social or living settings? What are some of the things you could do to help foster a more positive environment?

Readings

No one is born hating another person because of the color of his skin or his background or his religion. People must learn to hate, and if they can learn to hate, they can be taught to love, for love comes more naturally to the human heart than it's opposite. ~Nelson Mandela, 1918-2013, *Long Walk to Freedom*,

Hate has caused a lot of problems in this world, but it has not solved one yet.

~Maya Angelou, 1928-2014, American memoirist, poet, and civil rights activist

I think that hate is a feeling that can only exist where there is no understanding.

~Tennessee Williams, 1911-1983, *Sweet Bird of Youth*

I will permit no man to narrow or degrade my soul by making me hate him. ~Booker T. Washington, 1856-1915, American educator, author, and orator.

We hate some persons because we do not know them, and will not know them because we hate them.

~Charles Caleb Colton, 1777 – 1832, English cleric and writer

Hate is too great a burden to bear. It injures the hater more than it injures the hated. ~Coretta Scott King, 1927-2006, American author, activist, and civil rights leader who was the wife of Martin Luther King Jr.

I feel sorry for anybody that could let hate wrap them up. Ain't no such thing as I can hate anybody and hope to see God's face. ~Fannie Lou Hamer, 1917-1977, American civil rights leader

Hate and force cannot be in just a part of the world without having an effect on the rest of it. ~Eleanor Roosevelt, 1884-1962, American political figure, diplomat, and activist

We may not know what each day has in store for us. We could be gone tomorrow. Any minute could truly be our goodbye. But we do have this moment. This time. Today. Right now. It takes way more effort to shell out hate than it does to allow love to flow freely in our lives. After all, it's what we were born to do. ~Grace Gealey, b.1984, Caymanian American actress

This is the way of peace: Overcome evil with good, falsehood with truth, and hatred with love.
~ Peace Pilgrim, 1908-1981, Born Mildred Lisette Norman -American spiritual teacher, mystic, pacifist, and peace activist

In hatred as in love, we grow like the thing we brood upon. What we loathe, we graft into our soul.
~ Mary Renault, 1905-1983, British writer

I realize patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness towards anyone. ~ Edith Cavell, 1865-1915, British nurse celebrated for treating wounded soldiers from both sides during WWI. She spoke these words before her execution.

To me, the black woman is our essential mother, the blacker she is more us she is and to see the hatred that is turned on her is enough to make me despair, almost entirely, of our future as a people.
~ Alice Walker, b.1944 American novelist and social activist.

Hate speech is an alarm bell - the louder it rings, the greater the threat of genocide. It precedes and promotes violence. ~ Antonio Guterres, b.1949, United Nations Secretary-General since 2017
Any religion that puts hate speech in the mouth of God is no religion at all.
~By Rev. Jacqueline J. Lewis, b. 1959, Senior Minister of Middle Collegiate Church, New York, NY

Sitting in Silence (Reflect on the questions and readings)

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.

(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:

...May every living being, seen or unseen, those dwelling far off, those living nearby, those already born, those waiting to be born, may all attain inward peace. Let no one deceive another. Let no one despise another in any situation. Let no one, from antipathy or hatred, wish evil to anyone at all.....

~Buddhist (Reading 598 Without Hate, from *Singing the Living Tradition*)

Announcements/Plans

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 are together again.

Reference – Optional reading, audio and links.

Hate, the word or deed, is never to be taken lightly. Hate has an insidious network of tentacles/roots/fibers that grow quickly and silently and, if allowed, will infest all with which it comes in contact. A person who says “I hate _____” (that food, that color, that season, etc.,) will ever so slowly but nevertheless fully grow a feeling of negativity and dissatisfaction such that it becomes increasingly difficult for that person to be happy.

Hate spreads from one person to another to another and can make whole groups of people largely dissatisfied and/or angry and even mean. A hate-filled group of people is a serious force to be reckoned with. A group of people who deliberately set out to hate whatever it is that they don't like/agree with/is different from themselves can make a very frightening and unsafe environment for those who feel differently from that group.

But it doesn't have to be that way. People who are willing to be aware of their own feelings or patterns of speech, behavior and/or action and who notice the level of negativity they espouse most likely do not generally mean it when they say that they 'hate' green beans or the color purple or cats or snow or a certain type of music or art or whatever. I believe that what they most usually mean is that the 'whatever' is not their favorite, or not really to their liking, or may even make them uncomfortable. Given their druthers, they would most likely choose something else.

Hating things is really not necessary. In our vast English language, there are far better terms to use to express our feelings about things. If you really want to live this life you have been given, be more aware of how you feel about the things you think about or encounter. Life is too short to spend it being miserable. Granted, it seems that life is not always fair – and it's not – but it is what it is – and it is what you make it.

~ Pam Stevenson

Audio

Sermon given by Rev. Jeff Jones at GUUF, December 3, 2017, **“Watch Your Language”**.

Rev. Jones' sermon is an invitation, with ample examples, to consider how our language can both reflect and shape our attitudes. 18 minutes.

<https://greenvilleuu.org/services/watch-your-language/>

Resources:

Ten Ways to Fight Hate: A Community Response Guide

<https://www.splcenter.org/resources/reports/ten-ways-fight-hate-community-response-guide-2/>

United Nations resources on Hate Speech

<https://www.un.org/en/hate-speech>