



## Relationship to Money

Greenville UU Fellowship, Greenville, South Carolina

### Covenant Group Session Plan

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**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:** *Money is a paradox in our culture. It enslaves and it frees. It is intensely private, but it is also very public. It creates, but it also destroys. We see it as a measure of worth, yet it is no measure of real worth.*  
~Victoria Curtiss

**Readings** (see below)

#### Questions to prompt and guide discussion:

1. What does money mean to you? What is your relationship with money? How does money's power affect you?
2. How does money interconnect with spirituality for you?
3. Do you worry about money and whether you will have enough to last your lifetime? How does it affect the way you live your life?
4. Do you believe in Capitalism? If not, what do you think is an effective alternative?
5. Are we morally obliged to share our wealth? If so, do we share what we have at any level or do we save for ourselves and then give to others?
6. Why are we so reluctant to talk about money? Why is it considered impolite in many situations to talk about it? What are the consequences of this reticence?
7. How was money dealt with in your family of origin? Were money issues resolved successfully or did conflicts over money become sources of tension and possibly worse? How do you think your early experiences with money affect your understanding of money today?

**Sitting in Silence** (Reflect on questions and readings as you prepare what you would like to share.)

**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 responses to one or more of 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:** *Do not let your lack of money and possessions make you feel negative about your worth as a human being. Do not let your credit score, man-made poverty, and/or racism define your extreme power.*  
~Tricia Hersey, *Rest Is Resistance: A Manifesto*

#### Announcements/Plans

#### 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:

Money gives you permission to walk away from everything that isn't just the way you like it. ... Maybe you should think more about what is good enough, not confuse your needs with your wants. That way you wouldn't be spending your life criticizing, escaping, and worrying about stuff that doesn't really matter. ~Angel, to Chuck Palahniuk, *Diary*

Pay attention to what is important. Money is like gasoline during a road trip. You don't want to run out of gas, but you're not doing it for a tour of gas stations. ~Tim O'Reilly

I'm living so far beyond my means that we may almost be said to be living apart. ~Saki, *The Unbearable Bassington*

Money is probably the most emotionally meaningful object in contemporary life; only food and sex are its close competitors as common carriers of such strong and diverse feelings, significances, and strivings. ~Krueger, D. (1986), *The Last Taboo: Money as Symbol Reality in Psychotherapy Psychoanalysis*.

Wealth consists not in having great possessions, but in having few wants. ~Epictetus

Money often costs too much. ~Ralph Waldo Emerson

What we really want to do is what we are really meant to do. When we do what we are meant to do, money comes to us, doors open for us, we feel useful, and the work we do feels like play to us. ~Julia Cameron

You can only become truly accomplished at something you love. Don't make money your goal. Instead, pursue the things you love doing, and then do them so well that people can't take their eyes off you. ~Maya Angelou

My formula for success is rise early, work late and strike oil. ~JP Getty

If you want to know my real spirituality, look at my calendar—and my checkbook. ~Rev. Arvid Straube

Nature still obstinately refuses to co-operate by making the rich people innately superior to the poor people. ~Sidney and Beatrice Webb, English social critics (1923)

Behind every great fortune is a crime. ~Honoré de Balzac, French novelist (1799-1850)

Money in its proper place is a worthwhile and necessary instrument for a well-rounded life, but when it is projected to the status of a god it becomes a power that corrupts and an instrument of exploitation. ~Martin Luther King, Jr.

"If wealth was the inevitable result of hard work and enterprise, every woman in Africa would be a millionaire." ~George Monbiot

Anyone who has ever struggled with poverty knows how extremely expensive it is to be poor. ~James Baldwin