



Transitions

Covenant Group Session Plan

Greenville Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Greenville, South Carolina

Session revised by Denise Frick, April 2020

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:

Change is situational. Transition, on the other hand, is psychological. It is not those events, but rather the inner reorientation and self-redefinition that you have to go through in order to incorporate any of those changes into your life. Without a transition, a change is just a rearrangement of the furniture. Unless transition happens, the change won't work, because it doesn't "take."

~William Bridges, *Transitions: Making Sense of Life's Changes*

Questions to prompt and guide discussion:

1. What have been the biggest transitions in your life?
2. What transitions in your life have been most difficult? What helped you through this time?
3. What are the ways that you have been able to cope with transition? Share an experience of your own inner reorientation.
4. Share a time when you may have not had a good transition or when you fought it.

Sitting in Silence (Reflect on questions just posed as you prepare to hear readings)

Readings- Words from the Common Bowl: Quotes/Readings

Sharing - Please share your thinking about one or more of the questions. During this time everyone has the opportunity to speak without interruption while others listen deeply. Everyone gets to speak once before anyone speaks twice. Deep listening means we are being entirely attentive. We don't interrupt or give advice. There is no need to fix or save or set someone straight. We are simply making and holding a safe place where we are allowed to show up.

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

Open Discussion - This is a time for active conversations when we may respond to something another person said about the topic, or relate additional thoughts that may have occurred as others shared their thoughts. Continue to practice deep listening.

Closing reading:

The changes we dread most may contain our salvation.

~Barbara Kingsolver, *Small Wonder*

Announcements/Plans

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

Extinguish the Chalice

Readings

Light precedes every transition. Whether at the end of a tunnel, through a crack in the door, or the flash of an idea, it is always there, heralding a new beginning. ~ Teresa Tsalaky, *The Transition Witness*

A lot of people resist transition and therefore never allow themselves to enjoy who they are. Embrace the change, no matter when it is; once you do, you can learn about the new world you're in and take advantage of it.

~ Nikki Giovanni, American poet, writer, commentator, activist, and educator

Life is pleasant. Death is peaceful. It's the transition that is troublesome.

~ Isaac Asimov, American writer and professor of biochemistry at Boston University.

It's not so much that we're afraid of change or so in love with the old ways, but it's that place in between that we fear...It's like being between trapezes, its Linus when his blanket is in the dryer. There's nothing to hold on to.

~Marilyn Ferguson, American Futurist

Look on every exit as being an entrance somewhere else.

~ Tom Stoppard, Czech-born British playwright and screenwriter

God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, courage to change the things I can, and wisdom to know the difference. ~ Reinhold Niebuhr, American Reformed theologian

Transitions are not the issue, but how well you respond to their challenges.

~ Jim George, American author

Life is a process of becoming, a combination of states we have to go through. Where people fail is that they wish to elect a state and remain in it. This is a kind of death.

~Anais Nin, French-Cuban American diarist, essayist, novelist, and writer

Because transition is a process by which people unplug from an old world and plug into a new world, we can say that transition begins with an ending and finishes with a new beginning.

~William Bridges, *Managing Transitions - Making the Most of Change*

Don't be afraid of some change.

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Today will be a joyful day;

enter, rejoice and come in.

~ verse 4 from Song 361, *Singing the Living Tradition*, Words and Music by Louise Ruspini