**Playfulness**

Greenville UU Fellowship

Covenant Group Session Plan

**Advance Task**

 You are invited to bring a memento, picture or other object related to your playfulness to this session for the Covenant Group Table. We’ll invite you to describe it at Check-In.

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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

**Opening Reading**

We light this chalice to embrace the child in each of us. The child that knows how to play. The child that is fascinated by keys and dandelions, by clouds and balls that bounce. The child that dreams and imagines and creates wonders out of nothing. The child who is always in the moment yet touches and embraces where dragons fly and horses run free. The child that doesn’t yet know the difference between the possible and impossible.

~ Stephanie Certain Matz

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

**Readings (Words from the Common Bowl: Quotes/Readings)**

Clowning demands...that you get in touch with the untamed inner child that abides by its own carefree, irrational rules.

~ Pepa Plana, a female Spanish clown

To Native Americans, the path of the Sacred Clown is…considered a spiritual calling, essential to the smooth functioning of the tribe. Most every tribe had their Clowns. The Oglala and Lakota called them Heyoka (”crazy”), the Arapaho called them Ha Hawkan (”holy idiot”) and both peoples considered them religious specialists. The Salish people honor the memory of a Clown who… challenged a missionary. The missionary was enticing people to come to his church by handing out little mirrors to them while urging them to cover their bodies with white folks’ clothes. It is told with a smile that the Clown… walked into the church one Sunday wearing nothing but a hat and old shoes!… Nothing was sacred to a Sacred Clown. (S)he was a social critic of the highest order… The power of the Clown is the power of life itself.

~ Peggy Andreas, [*Path of the Sacred Clown*](http://dreamflesh.com/essays/clownpath/)

By laughing at me, the audience really laughs at themselves and realizing they have done this gives them… a spiritual second wind for going back into the battles of life.

~ Emmett Kelly, Sr.

Wearing underwear on the outside of your clothes can turn a tedious trip to the store for a forgotten carton of milk into an amusement park romp.

~ Hunter Doherty "Patch" Adams (born May 28, 1945) American physician, social activist, clown and author.

When my spirit is playful, the price of the toy doesn't matter.

~ author unknown

Laughter is the shortest distance between two people.

~ Victor Borge

We don’t stop playing because we grow old, we grow old because we stop playing.

~ George Bernard Shaw

**Questions to prompt and guide discussion.**

1. What were your favorite ways to play as a child? What made them interesting and exciting?
2. How do you cultivate playfulness in your life now?
3. What new play experiences would you like?
4. How does playfulness interact with your religious / spiritual journey?

**Silence**

**Sharing:** (Deep listening--no cross talk) This is a time to speak without interruption and for deep listening. Please share one or more of your responses to the session questions.

**Sitting in Silence:** Breathe together in silence for two minutes.

**Open Discussion:** (Cross talk allowed) This is a time to respond to something another person said or to relate additional thoughts that may have occurred as others shared.

**Announcements/Plans**

**Personal Check Out:**

*How would you like to be held in heart and mind before we meet again?*

**Closing Reading:**

 May I remember to keep my face to the sun,

To play, laugh, and experience joy whenever possible,

To celebrate the world and my fellow human beings,

To say *YES!* to life each day.

~ James Madison Barr, *I Do Not Pray* (adapted), (March 17, 1919 - June 10, 2009), UU Minister

**Extinguish the Chalice**