

**VIRTUE ETHICS:
AN ETHICAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM FOR HIGH SCHOOL YOUTH**

A Tapestry of Faith Program for Youth



BY JESSICA YORK

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This program and additional resources are available on the UUA.org web site at
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THE PROGRAM

Live a good life. If there are gods and they are just, then they will not care how devout you have been, but will welcome you based on the virtues you have lived by. If there are gods, but unjust, then you should not want to worship them. If there are no gods, then you will be gone, but will have lived a noble life that will live on in the memories of your loved ones. — Marcus Aurelius

We make hundreds of decisions every day. Some are small. Some are life changing, although we may not know their significance when we make them. This program's premise—in the words of the Buddha, recited in every workshop Opening—is that "our thoughts and actions become habits and our habits shape our character." We have some control over our character. We can shape the person we want to be by making intentional, thoughtful decisions.

In Workshop 1, youth explore how we make decisions. Subsequent workshops each present a virtue commonly considered ethical. Participants question what they have been taught about each virtue, how the virtue operates in the real world, and whether and how they might practice it. In each workshop, the youth practice ethical decision making in response to hypothetical situations and stories they share from their own experiences.

The virtues presented in this program were selected, from a large number one might cultivate, to provide a gateway into ethical decision making and character development. It is hoped that youth will use these virtues throughout their lives.

GOALS

This program will:

- Build capacity to identify messages received from media, family, religion, peers, and society about specific virtues, and to discern how to apply these virtues in real life
- Demonstrate the healthy practice of virtues
- Explore personal experiences relevant to a variety of virtues
- Engage group processing of a variety of ethical dilemmas
- Invite a grappling with ethical choices that pit one virtue or belief against another deeply held value
- Encourage participants to lead intentional, ethical lives.

LEADERS

No particular background is needed to lead Virtue Ethics. Leaders should bring an open mind and an open heart. They should be ready to support youth to decide for themselves if and how they wish to practice virtues in their lives.

Look for leaders who are flexible and can stay calm and non-judgmental when youth share from personal experience. Leaders should understand their role as mandated reporters (see Before You Start). If the youth have had previous, positive experiences with a leader, that is a plus.

Youth Leadership

Because these workshops follow a standard template, it would be possible for youth to co-lead this program with adults. You could begin the program without a youth co-leader, and after presenting a few workshops ask if anyone would like to volunteer to assist in leading activities. Adult leaders often have more time and resources for preparation, so consider keeping those responsibilities yourself. If you decide to explore additional virtues not included in these workshops, seek topic suggestions from youth. Invite anyone who suggests a topic to help you plan and lead the workshop.

PARTICIPANTS

Virtue Ethics is designed for use with high school-age youth. All youth do not arrive at each developmental stage at the same time, yet knowing what to expect overall from fourteen- to eighteen-year-olds can be helpful, especially for first-time leaders. In her book, [*Nurturing Children and Youth: A Developmental Guidebook*](#) (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2005), Tracey Hurd discusses typical developmental characteristics of older youth:

- practices increased cognitive skills
- expresses growing interest in abstract values and moral principles
- engages in moral relativism
- becomes less egocentric and more interested in the larger society
- struggles with gender and sexual identities
- continues to develop ethnic or racial identity
- needs to belong and have a sense of self worth
- demonstrates empathy
- conceptualizes religion as an outside authority that can be questioned

- questions faith, sometimes leading to deeper ownership of personal faith or disillusionment
- deepens or attenuates religious or spiritual identity
- explores sexuality
- navigates greater risks relating to alcohol, drug use, and unsafe sexual activity
- sustains the personal fable that "it couldn't happen to me"
- considers friendships and peers important, with some shifting of alliances.

INTEGRATING ALL PARTICIPANTS

No one should be excluded from this program or its activities by real or perceived physical or other limitations. Inclusiveness sometimes requires adaptation; you may need to modify an activity or use an alternate activity to fully include youth with a range of physical and cognitive abilities and learning styles.

Take note of activities that might pose difficulties for youth who are differently abled. All spaces, indoor and outdoor, need to be accessible to anyone who might be in the group. Check the width of doorways and aisles, the height of tables, and the terrain of outdoor landscapes. When you will invite youth to write on posted newsprint, meet in small groups, gather around a centering table, or otherwise move about the space, make sure everyone can move as you are requesting, or adapt the activity. Strategize how you will include youth with sight or hearing limitations when an activity relies on these senses.

When possible, arrange volunteers to read aloud before a workshop and give them the written material in advance. Allow youth the opportunity to pass on any roles that require reading. Be prepared to support young people who wish to read, but need assistance.

Find out about participants' medical conditions and allergies, particularly to food. Make sure all your youth can eat the food you plan to use for an activity, or change the food.

Always be ready to do what is needed to keep the workshops safe for any participant who needs assistance or accommodation to ask for and receive it.

A helpful resource book is Sally Patton's [Welcoming Children with Special Needs](#). The congregation's religious educator is another resource for making workshops as accessible and inclusive as possible.

FAMILIES

An adolescent's notion of family expands to include their close friends, while the home family remains a touchstone. This curriculum is designed to include the family and friends of participants as well as your wider faith community. Two features engage these important people in the program's themes and ideas:

1. Each workshop provides a **Taking It Home** handout with ideas for youth to lead conversations and activities with their friends and family. Collect the email addresses of participants' parents/caregivers so you can send them the Taking It Home section after each workshop.

2. Each workshop offers a **Faith in Action** activity. Most of these engage congregational leaders and/or parents/caregivers to interact with the youth about the topics the youth are exploring.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

After the first one, all workshops share the same basic structure. Activities explore the meaning of a particular virtue and its "upside" and "downside," the virtue's role in participants' lives so far, hypothetical dilemmas, and finally, ways the youth could incorporate the virtue into their actions and thus their character. If you wish to extend the program, you can use the workshop template to explore additional virtues you find worthy.

Faith in Action is an important element in the Tapestry of Faith curriculum family. Some Faith in Action activities can be completed in one meeting or simply by extending the workshop time. Others are longer-term and/or need dates and locations outside your regular meeting time and space.

Every workshop offers alternate activities. Use these to replace a core activity, extend a workshop, or enhance an extracurricular gathering such as a family retreat, multigenerational dinner, or youth group.

Each workshop provides:

Quote

Co-leaders may like to discuss the quote while preparing for a workshop. This can help you each feel grounded in the ideas and activities you will present and can also help co-leaders get "on the same page." The quotes also appear in Taking It Home sections.

Introduction

The Introduction gives an overview of the workshop's concepts. It will alert you to special preparation that is needed.

Goals

The Goals section provides general outcomes for the workshop. Review the goals to connect the workshop's

content and methodologies with the four strands of the Tapestry of Faith religious education programs: faith development, Unitarian Universalists identity, spiritual development, and ethical development.

Learning Objectives

The Learning Objectives section describes specific participant outcomes which workshop activities are designed to facilitate. They describe what a participant will learn, become, or be able to do as a result of the activity.

Workshop-at-a-Glance

This table lists the core workshop activities, in the suggested order from the Opening through Closing, with time estimates to help you construct a 90-minute workshop. The table also shows a Faith in Action activity and at least one alternate activity—however, the 90-minute workshop does not include time for these.

Time Estimates

Many variables inform the time required for an activity. Small teams can do some activities more rapidly than one large team, but you may then need more time for all the teams to re-gather and share with the large group. Youth enthusiasm may lead you to continue an activity longer than planned. Youth disinterest may lead you to move on more quickly than you expected. Watch the time, and try to stay flexible. Note: Time estimates for activities do not include leader planning and preparation.

Spiritual Preparation

Each workshop offers a spiritual exercise for leaders that calls forth your life experiences and beliefs relevant to the virtue at hand. The Spiritual Preparation exercise is intended to help you provide the best possible learning experience for youth and the most rewarding one possible for you. Taking time in the days before the workshop to reflect on its content, and in the moments before the workshop to center yourself, will support and free you in your work with youth.

Workshop Plan

The Workshop Plan presents every core activity in detail, in the sequence shown by the Workshop-at-a-Glance table. It also includes a Faith in Action activity, Leader Reflection and Planning, Taking It Home, Alternate Activities, and Resources.

Downloading and Adapting the Curriculum

If you are reading this program online, you can move as you wish among the workshop's elements: Opening, Closing, Activity 4, Faith in Action activity, Story text, etc. Each element occupies its own web page. You can click on "Print This Page" at any time—for example, if you wish to print one page—for example, a single activity, or just the workshop's central story. However, if you click

on "Download Entire Program" or "Download Workshop" you will have a user-friendly document on your computer to customize as you wish, using your own word processing program. Once you decide which activities and resources you will use, you can delete unneeded material from your document, and then format and print the materials you need.

Opening: Each Opening includes lighting the chalice with a reading from the *Dhammapada*, a sacred Buddhist text, to reinforce the premise of this program: We can thoughtfully decide the kind of person we wish to be.

Activities: Four to six core activities are suggested for each workshop. Each activity includes a materials list, preparation steps, and a full description to guide you through conducting the activity. Many suggest optional variations.

The sequence of activities has been carefully designed. You may certainly make any changes you like, but read the full workshop first to make sure your adjustments are logical and practical.

Also, the activities of each workshop are arranged to mix reflective and active engagement and to engage a variety of skills and learning styles. Keep this balance in mind as you adjust the workshop to meet the group's needs.

Every workshop includes a core story. Many are true narratives about individuals who have practiced virtues to live an intentionally ethical life.

Two core activities occur in all the workshops:

1. Dilemma. Youth consider hypothetical situations that call for ethical decision-making.
2. Practice. Youth reflect on and commit to choices to nurture a virtue in their day-to-day lives.

Faith in Action: Faith in Action activities suggest specific, practical ways for youth to realize and apply their faith for the betterment of the world and their communities. Faith in Action activities, like core and alternate activities, are presented in the curriculum with required supplies and preparation steps. If your group meets for longer than 90 minutes, you can easily incorporate Faith in Action activities on a regular basis. You may also substitute them for other activities, or use them outside the program, perhaps as the basis of youth group projects.

Try to include some form of Faith in Action. As the saying insists, actions do often speak louder than words, for both actor and observer.

Closing: Each workshop closes with a quotation as the chalice is extinguished.

Leader Reflection and Planning: Many religious educators find it is helpful, at the end of their workshops, to spend a few minutes reviewing what they have done and planning what they will do next. This segment of each workshop offers prompts for discussion.

Taking It Home: This section provides activities and suggestions for involving family and friends in the ideas, themes, and projects of Virtue Ethics. They reinforce key points from the workshop and offer activities, reflection questions, and resources to extend learning at home. Distribute this section as a participant handout as well as an email message to parents/caregivers, to facilitate conversation at home.

Alternate Activities: The format for alternate activities is similar to that of core activities. You can substitute these for core activities if you feel they better suit the group, or add them—possibly outside the regular workshop time. Alternate Activity 1 in Workshops 1-12, Real Life Challenges, invites youth to process ethical challenges of their own experience, whether or not these relate to the featured virtue. If you have time, you might incorporate this into your regular, core workshops.

Resources: Each workshop contains the stories, handouts, and any other resources you will need to lead the workshop activities.

Under "Story" you will find the full texts of the workshop's central story and any additional stories.

Under the heading "Handouts" you will find any material that needs to be printed and copied for all participants.

Under "Leader Resources" you will find all the additional instructions, background sheets, and other resources you will need to lead the activities—for example: role play scenarios, a diagram to help you plan an activity, or an illustration to show the group, which you may print as a hard copy or display on a computer as a PowerPoint slide.

Find Out More: Each workshop concludes with an annotated selection of resources to further explore the topics.

LEADER GUIDELINES

Allocate time to prepare for each workshop, including time to do the Spiritual Preparation exercise, perhaps with your co-leader. Remember, this curriculum is primarily about the young people. The Spiritual Preparation exercise guides you to process your own feelings, so you will be ready and able to focus on the participants' needs.

Adapt the workshops to fit the space and time available and your group's culture, interests, and range of learning styles. Plan tight—yet be ready to execute loosely. The real-life ethical dilemmas participants bring to the group

are a crucial part of this program. Leaders should always be ready to make adjustments to support youth as they work through ethical decision-making. At times, you may need to let go of a planned activity so the group can complete an important discussion. Your willingness to do so will build trust and group cohesion. The greatest gift you can give youth is your time.

Each workshop invites participants to pay attention to the difference between how a virtue is commonly perceived and how it is really lived. Leaders should do this, too. Some virtues—such as humility and forgiveness—can have negative connotations. Others—such as fairness and courage—can be hard to absolutely define. It is important for leaders to provide a safe space for youth to honestly unpack their feelings about virtues. Try to approach each virtue with an open mind and open heart and invite youth to do the same.

IMPLEMENTATION

The curriculum design is modular. You can provide the series of workshops in sequence or offer stand-alone workshops. In the recurring activity, Practice, the youth create an anklet. You will want to revise or delete this activity if you are doing only a few workshops.

The full series includes twelve 90-minute workshops. There are also many wonderful alternate activities that offer more depth and different approaches. If your program meets more than twelve times, you can spread some of the workshops across multiple sessions and use more of the alternate activities. You can also use the Virtue Ethics workshop template to plan new workshops on any abstract concept. You might choose another virtue. Or, choose a value (e.g., the work ethic), or a feeling (jealousy). Modify "Up Side, Down Side," "Two Sides to Every Virtue," or "Ideal vs. Reality" to help youth examine the concept. Then, find a story to share and discuss that demonstrates the concept. Follow the story with hypothetical situations relevant to youth ("Dilemmas"). Add "Real Life Challenges" and "Practice," and you have a new workshop.

At the end of the Introduction, you will find feedback forms for leaders and participants. Asking youth to submit feedback builds leadership skills. By giving your feedback, you directly influence faith development resources for the entire Association. All feedback is read and deeply appreciated.

BEFORE YOU START

Read the curriculum before you begin the program, focusing especially on the materials lists. Take note of activities that require extra preparation, and plan ahead so you will have the necessary materials in time. For example, you will need journals and materials to make anklets at the first workshop and throughout the

program. Several workshops suggest online resources; be sure to preview the websites and test Internet connections in advance.

Decide whether the group needs extra meetings for additional activities or a long-term Faith in Action project. Before you set your calendar or commit to a project outside the regular meeting time or location, obtain the support of your congregational leadership and the youth's families.

Making the Anklet

Youth begin a braided anklet in Workshop 1 and add a bead to it in each subsequent workshop. Choose a braiding fiber, such as hemp, string, or embroidery floss. Choose beads for youth to decorate. Each anklet will use up to 12 beads. You can purchase cork beads online from [KitKraft](#). Other options are large wooden or glass beads. Obtain decorating materials—for example, waterproof markers, acrylic paint—that will stick to the surface of the beads you plan to use.

Plan how you will instruct participants to make the anklet (Workshop 1) and where you will store anklets-in-progress and extra materials between workshops. It is recommended that you give each youth a clipboard to work on their anklet for the duration of the program. You might ask someone with craft skills to help you choose materials and demonstrate at the first few workshops. Watch an instructional video online, such as [How to Make a Simple Beaded Hemp Anklet](#) on YouTube. The [How To Make Jewelry](#) website has a page on anklets, with several demonstration videos. Consider arranging for a computer with Internet access to show the youth these videos during Workshop 1.

Mandated Reporting

As a teacher, you may be required by law and/or your congregation's policies to report information youth share that involves a youth hurting someone or being hurt, or any situation that could be construed as illegal or dangerous that involves youth. Ask your religious educator what is expected of you, including to whom you should report which kinds of information. The workshops guide you to state your role as a mandated reporter before inviting youth into personal sharing.

RESOURCES

Living Values Activities for Young Adults by Diane Tillman (Deerfield Beach, FL: Health Communications, Inc., 2000)

Ethical Leadership: The Quest for Character, Civility, and Community by Walter Earl Fluker (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009)

The Gift of Faith: Tending the Spiritual Lives of Children by Jeanne Harrison Nieuwejaar *Second Edition* (Boston: Skinner House Books, 2003)

Welcoming Children with Special Needs: A Guidebook for Faith Communities by Sally Patton (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2004)

Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder by Richard Louv (Chapel Hill, NC: Algonquin Books, 2005)

FACILITATOR FEEDBACK FORM

We welcome your critique of this program, as well as your suggestions. Thank you for your feedback! Your input improves programs for all of our congregations. Please forward your feedback to:

Faith Development Office
Ministries and Faith Development
Unitarian Universalist Association
24 Farnsworth Street
Boston, MA 02210-1409
religiouseducation@uua.org

Name of Program or Curriculum:

Congregation:

Number of Participants:

Age range:

Did you work with (a) co-facilitator(s)?

Your name:

Overall, what was your experience with this program?

What specifically did you find most helpful or useful about this program?

In what ways could this program be changed or improved (please be specific)?

Did you enrich the program with any resources that you would recommend to others?

What impact, if any, do you think this program will have on your life going forward?

What impact, if any, do you think this program will have on your congregation going forward?

PARTICIPANT FEEDBACK FORM

We welcome your critique of this program, as well as your suggestions. Thank you for your feedback! Your input improves programs for all of our congregations. Please forward your feedback to:

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Name of Program or Curriculum:

Congregation or group:

Your name:

Overall, what was your experience with this program?

What specifically did you find most helpful or useful about this program?

In what ways could this program be changed or improved (please be specific)?

What impact, if any, do you think this program will have on your life going forward?

What impact, if any, do you think this program will have on your congregation going forward?

WORKSHOP 1: DECISION MAKING

INTRODUCTION

Every intersection in the road of life is an opportunity to make a decision. — Duke Ellington

This first workshop lays the foundation for the program by demonstrating how we make decisions and how ethical decision making can shape one's character for life. The workshop presents information on ethical theory. Yet this program is not about theories; rather, it is an opportunity to examine how living our Unitarian Universalist faith calls us to make ethical decisions even though to do so is often difficult. In this and future workshops, participants work together to untangle situations where conflicting ethical standards make it hard to discern the "right" decision.

This workshop introduces anklet making and journaling as spiritual practices to assist in ethical decision making. The youth create a group covenant, a commitment particularly important because of the personal experiences participants may share. Make sure to post the completed covenant where the group can refer to it throughout this program.

GOALS

This workshop will:

- Postulate that actions resulting from decision making shape our character
- Develop a covenant to create safe space for sharing personal experiences
- Explain some of the science behind how we make decisions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Recognize how the ethics we use to make decisions help shape our character
- Understand a simplified scientific explanation for how the brain makes decisions
- Create a group covenant
- Reflect on workshop concepts, through journaling and jewelry making.

WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	25
Activity 1: Covenant	15
Activity 2: Story — The Debate Among Parts of the Brain	20
Activity 3: Practice	25
Faith in Action: Congregational Decisions	
Closing	5
Alternate Activity 1: Real Life Challenges	
Alternate Activity 2: Newsworthy?	30
Alternate Activity 3: The Charioteer	20
Alternate Activity 4: The Brain, Making Decisions	20

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Welcome to Virtue Ethics! Because it is important to start as you mean to continue, set aside time for your own spiritual preparation. Decide if you will prepare alone or with co-facilitators... or both. Find a comfortable location where you can spend several minutes undisturbed.

Practice a bit of creative visualization for the program: Imagine yourself leading the workshop activities with a group of youth. Do you know any of the youth? Have your previous experiences with them been positive? If so, remember what that was like. If not, go ahead and remember the difficult interactions, too; avoiding thinking about these times will not make them go away. Now, envision yourself sharing positive interactions with these youth. How will that happen? Are you more knowledgeable about their ways, or more flexible in how you might respond? Have the youth matured or changed? How will you relate to new youth, especially youth who are new to the congregation? How will you relate to parents and caregivers? As any other situations in our lives, you will have many decisions to make while facilitating this program. Some of your decisions will not work well. Acknowledge that, and forgive yourself in advance. Some of your decisions will be great!

Feel how uplifting it can be to feel connected to a group of energized, inquisitive youth and adults. Carry that feeling forward as you start this new adventure. Blessings!

OPENING (25 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- A basket, and a variety of snacks
- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle

Preparation for Activity

- Gather snacks for a basket—enough for each participant to have a snack. Include several types of fresh fruit, string cheese, carrot sticks, candy, and at least one item not frequently thought of as a snack item, such as a fresh beet or cabbage. There should not be two of any one snack. Make sure you know of any food allergies in the group.
- Arrange the snacks in the basket.
- Write the chalice lighting words (below) on newsprint, and set aside. These words will open every workshop, so consider laminating or otherwise preserving them and finding a place where you can post them for the duration of the program.
- Label a sheet of newsprint "Bicycle Rack" and set aside.

Description of Activity

Participants experience how and process how they make decisions; then, the workshop is formally opened.

As participants enter, greet them individually and invite everyone to take a snack from the basket for snack time.

Once everyone is settled, say you will start the workshop shortly with a chalice lighting and reading, but first, you are curious about their snacks. Tell the youth they are welcome to eat their snacks now, but first they should explain what they were thinking when they picked the snack they picked. In other words: How did they decide what snack to pick?

Answers will vary. Some youth might not have picked a snack. Ask them why they made that decision.

After everyone has shared, acknowledge that many factors influenced their snack decision: hunger level, previous experience with the items in the basket, how often they are allowed to enjoy certain snacks, a desire to eat for health, a desire to eat for pleasure, how much mess the snack might make, letting their friend have the only banana (for example), allergies and dietary restrictions, etc... If no one picked the unusual snack (beet, cabbage, etc...), ask why.

Remind them that this was just a snack—not a terribly important decision.

Invite participants to sit in a comfortable position and, if they choose, close their eyes, to share a meditation you will read aloud. Once youth are settled, share:

See yourself lying in your bed. At some point, you decided to get out of bed. How did you choose to wake up? Did you set an alarm? Did a family member rouse you? Did you leave it up to chance, knowing you generally wake up in time? Did you leave it up to chance because you did not feel compelled to get up at a particular time?

What other decisions did you make this morning? Did you have to negotiate bathroom time with family members? How did you decide what to wear today? Are you wearing a favorite top or bottom? Are you wearing simply what was clean? Did you plan your wardrobe last night or just grab something out of the drawer this morning?

Did you eat breakfast? If not, why? No time? Not hungry? Nothing you like in the cupboard? If you did eat, did you have any of the same thoughts when choosing breakfast as you did when choosing a snack? If not, why were the decisions different: time of day, location, offerings?

You came to our congregation today. Was that your decision? If so, why did you come? Did you have expectations? Are the expectations being met? What do you think now about the choice you made to come here?

Think of all the decisions you have made since you work up this morning. Think of all the decisions you make in a day. Each one is based on so many factors. How do we decide? What do our decisions say about us?

Pause for a moment, then invite participants to open their eyes.

Now say it is time for Opening words and lighting the chalice. Tell the group that each time you meet you will start by reciting together words attributed to the Buddha. Post the chalice lighting words you have written on newsprint. Invite a volunteer to light the chalice while you lead the group to recite these chalice lighting words:

The thought manifests as the word
The word manifests as the deed;
The deed develops into habit;
And habit hardens into character;
So watch the thought and its ways with care,
And let it spring from love
Born out of concern for all beings...

As the shadow follows the body,
As we think, so we become.
— from *The Dhammapada, Sayings of the Buddha*

Tell the youth this program will be about making ethical decisions. Invite definitions of "ethical." Offer this definition (from the Dictionary.com website): "pertaining to right and wrong in conduct."

Ask:

- When you have to make a decision, is the "right" decision always clear?
- What are some reasons it is not always clear? [Answers may include: because what is right in one situation might not be right in another, you might not know the right thing to do, you might need more information to make a good decision, you have conflicting values (e.g., it would be kind to help a friend on a test, but it would also be cheating), and different people might have different ideas about what is right.]
- Why is it important to make ethical decisions? What does the chalice lighting reading suggest about the importance of making good decisions? [You may wish to call attention to key phrases, for example, "the deed develops into habit" or "As we think, so we become."]

Say, in these words or your own:

As the meditation showed us, we make thousands of decisions a day. Few of these decisions are life changing. Yet, even our smallest decision could have consequences unforeseen. The quote from *The Dhammapada* says our thoughts becomes words, words become deeds, deeds turn into habits, and our habits shape our character. Do you believe this is true?

Think of young children. In the beginning, we all think the world revolves around our needs and desires. At some point, someone started to teach us that we should share. We recognized that other people have needs and desires, too. Not only that, we witnessed that we could fulfill the needs and desires of others. At that point, we made an ethical decision. We decided that we would try to fulfill the needs of others or we decided we would not or maybe we decided that sometimes we would, but only after our needs were met. Our decision manifested as a deed or action and at some point, it became habit. Think about your peers. You know which ones you consider generous and which ones you would never want to ask a favor. Some are in the habit of helping others and some are not.

We could also say some have a generous character and some are stingy or selfish. Can you think of a time you intentionally decided to change your actions or deeds and develop a new habit? How did that habit influence your character? [Take responses.]

Now let's work backwards: If you believe the Buddha's words are true and you want to possess a strong, ethical character, what should we do about our habits? How should we act or perform deeds? What kinds of words and thoughts should occupy our minds?

This program will explore these questions. We will do this by discussing various virtues, character attributes that most people would agree are consistent with a strong, ethical character. We will work to understand these virtues better, what they mean for us individually, decide if we want them to be part of our character and make intentional plans for living these virtues in our daily lives so they become habits.

To conclude the Opening, indicate the "Bicycle Rack" newsprint you have posted. Tell the youth that from time to time, situations that require decision making will come up in group discussions but there will not always be time to discuss them right away. Encourage the youth to help you "park" interesting dilemmas in the Bicycle Rack today and in future workshops.

ACTIVITY 1: COVENANT (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape

Preparation for Activity

- Ask your religious educator and/or youth advisor for a standard covenant youth groups use in your congregation. If one exists, ask if you may build on it with the youth in this group.
- If no covenant exists, have suggestions ready to help the group create one. Find suggestions by researching youth covenants online. You might include:
 - Start and end on time.
 - Respect the space.
 - Assume others' good will/best intentions.
 - Honor diversity of identity, opinion, and approach.
 - Keep personal sharing confidential.
 - Share the floor; make space for the quieter voices.

- Apologize if you make a mistake.
- Speak up if someone else's behavior breaks the covenant.
- Do not feel the need to "fix" anyone or anything.
- Post blank newsprint.
- Optional: Copy existing covenant to distribute to the youth.

Description of Activity

Participants decide how they wish to be together.

Explain that a covenant is a promise, an agreement as to how we will relate to each other. Ask if anyone can explain the purpose of creating a group covenant. Affirm that it is important to build trust and safety in the space you share together. You might say:

Throughout the program, participants will share some of their personal dilemmas in making ethical decisions. We need to talk about what can and cannot be shared outside the group, and how we will support each other in a discussion, even if we have differing opinions.

If there is a pre-existing covenant, share it with participants. Does everyone agree with items on the covenant? Is anything missing?

If you are starting from scratch, invite participants to suggest guidelines for how they will behave with each other during the program. Write all suggestions on newsprint. When the group has no more suggestions, propose any suggestions you and your co-leader wish to add.

Ask participants if they would have concerns about or difficulty agreeing to any items listed. Discuss those items and decide as a group whether to keep, edit, or eliminate them.

Pay particular attention to confidentiality. Youth will be invited to share from their experiences facing ethical choices, and to make commitments toward future behavior. Sometimes this will be very personal and private information. The youth may wish to covenant that they will not share others' personal stories outside the group. Or, they may decide it is okay to share what they learned from hearing someone else's story without sharing names of the involved parties. Whatever is decided, remind participants that they may always ask for complete confidentiality when sharing a personal story.

Let the group know that should someone disclose information about themselves or someone else being harmed or harming others, or about the possibility of harm, you are required to report the information to an

adult in a position to help the situation. Safety is one need that trumps confidentiality.

ACTIVITY 2: STORY — THE DEBATE AMONG THE PARTS OF THE BRAIN (20 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Story, "[The Debate Amongst the Parts of the Brain](#)" (included in this document)
- Newsprint with chalice lighting words (Opening)

Preparation for Activity

- Read the story so you can present it effectively.
- Make sure the chalice lighting words from the Opening are still posted.
- Optional: Copy the story for all participants.
- Optional: Print drawings of the parts of the brain and use them as simple puppets while telling the story. The [National Institute of Health](#) website has a diagram of brain parts.

Description of Activity

Tell or read the story.

Then, say:

The story illustrates what science calls the "binding problem." How does our brain process information and make decisions? We know that it is not straightforward and sequential. For example, when you heard the invitation to choose a snack, your brain leapt into action, with all of the parts from the story acting at once. We know this because scans of the brain show how the neurons in each part of the brain fire virtually at the same time—not one after the other. They are communicating from the first instant to make the decision. Some of the brain parts help you make conscious decision. Some parts of the brain perform their jobs without you being aware of their contribution to your decision. Some of those decisions are based on past actions.

For example, if you have frequently bitten into worms when eating peaches, neurons in parts of your brain will fire off repulsion to peaches, which you will interpret as a conscious decision to not take the peach.

Here is another example: Have you ever found money that did not belong to you? [Wait for a show of hands.] Sometimes, if you turn it in, you receive a reward. The reward could be monetary, but it could also be someone's sincere appreciation or the pleasure you receive

from knowing you committed the actions of a good person. Your memory keeps these positive experiences. Every time you return lost money and get a positive consequence, you are more likely to return money the next time you find it because that section of your brain that deals in memory will be more inclined to tell you to return the money because other parts of the brain want that good feeling again. Does this make sense?

Lead a discussion with these questions:

- Is your understanding of the process of decision making different now than before the story? If so, how?
- Is someone willing to volunteer to try to imagine the processes your brain went through when you chose your snack?
- Is the quote from the Buddha supported by what we know about how the brain makes decisions? [Indicate the chalice lighting words you have posted.]

Say:

There is still so much we do not understand about brain science. Scientists are trying to answer the question: What makes us human and different from other animals? One difference is the size and nature of the cerebral cortex and many think that holds the answer. One idea postulated by scientists is that as humans came together in communities, we were forced to communicate and cooperate and this grew our cortex. The larger our communities became, the larger the cortex. This idea might have some validity since many of the animals with the largest cortex (chimpanzees and elephants, for example) live in larger communities. For many years, scientists have believed that tool making "made" us human. Some now think that living in community "made" us human: In other words, we only became human in the presence of each other.

ACTIVITY 3: PRACTICE (25 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Journals and writing instruments
- For anklets: String or hemp, beads, waterproof markers and/or other bead-decorating materials, scissors, and clipboards (one for each youth)
- Optional: Computer with Internet access and a large monitor or digital projector

Preparation for Activity

- Obtain a journal for each youth.
- Read tips for planning the anklets in the Before You Start section of the program Introduction. Watch instructional videos: [How to Make a Simple Beaded Hemp Anklet](#) on YouTube, or videos on the website, [How To Make Jewelry](#). Optional: Arrange to show the videos to the youth.
- Obtain the materials for making the anklets. Each participant will need a clipboard to use for the duration of the program, some string/hemp, and 12 beads to decorate. Cork beads are recommended.
- Gather bead-decorating materials—for example, paints, brushes, and cups for water. Test the decorating materials on the beads you have chosen to make sure decorations will adhere.
- Identify a place to keep journals and anklet-making materials between meetings. Decide whether you will allow the youth to take journals home.
- Optional: If someone in your congregation makes jewelry as a hobby or profession, invite them to come to this workshop and help the youth begin making their anklets.

Description of Activity

Participants receive journals, start building their anklets, and become familiar with the recurring Practice activity.

Tell the group, in your own words:

The goal of spending time together discussing ethical decision making is to help us practice for real life. Therefore, every workshop will include three elements: Some talk about real life ethical issues, an activity to examine hypothetical ethical dilemmas, and "Practice," a time for you to decide individually on the importance of the featured virtue in your life and plan how you wish to nurture this virtue in the future. During the Practice activity, you will have time to capture your thoughts in personal journals.

Distribute journals and writing implements. Continue:

Today, please write your name on your journal. We will start working in the journals next time.

What you write in your journal is yours alone to know. You will have opportunities to share your thoughts with the group, for those who wish to do so. Thoughts can be written, drawn, or captured in any way you choose.

You will also be encouraged to express your feelings about the featured virtue artistically. Every Practice activity will allow time to decorate a bead. The beads will be strung together to make an anklet. The anklet will be made of waterproof material so it will be safe in the shower or bath. You can wear your anklet as long as you like and it will be a reminder to you of your commitment to make ethical decisions.

Today, you can decorate a name bead. Include your initials or name if you wish, but take a moment to decorate it uniquely to express something about who you are. After you have decorated the first bead, we will start building the base of the anklet.

If a guest will help the youth start their anklets, introduce the guest. If you are using an instructional video, show it now.

Distribute beads and markers. Allow seven minutes to decorate the name bead, but if everyone finishes earlier, distribute clipboards and hemp and guide the youth to begin the anklets.

As youth are ready, help them add the first bead and knot the hemp to hold the bead on.

Watch the time. Leave a few minutes to collect the clipboards and anklets, and the journals if you plan to keep them between meetings, and to put away art materials.

CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- [Taking It Home](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Adapt the Taking It Home section and copy for all participants.
- Optional: Print the closing quotation (below) for a volunteer to read.

Description of Activity

Tell the group that in every workshop, you will ask a volunteer to read a quotation while another volunteer (or the entire group) extinguishes the chalice.

Have a volunteer read this quote from the novelist Richard Bach while another extinguishes the chalice:

All we see of someone at any moment is a snapshot of their life, there in riches or poverty, in joy or despair. Snapshots don't show the million decisions that led to that moment.

Distribute Taking It Home.

FAITH IN ACTION: CONGREGATIONAL DECISIONS

Materials for Activity

- Minutes from meetings of the congregation's governing board
- Index cards of two different colors

Preparation for Activity

- Obtain the minutes from several meetings of the congregation's governing body. Highlight material pertaining to votes on actions the congregation will take. Make copies for the youth to share.
- Obtain minutes from a recent meeting of the entire congregation, and make copies for the youth to share.
- Obtain a schedule of upcoming meetings of the governing body and/or the entire congregation, and obtain agendas for these meetings. Make copies for the youth to share.
- Familiarize yourself with how your congregation decides on actions it will take.

Description of Activity

Youth examine decisions made by the congregation's governing body.

Ask the youth if they know who makes decisions for the actions of the congregation. The answer is probably a combination of congregational members and the congregation's governing body. Discuss the following, adapted for the process, policies, and specific recent actions of your congregation, to make sure participants understand how decisions are made:

- Some decisions are made by the entire voting congregation. These may include election of board members and committee chairs, the budget, decisions about public witness statements, decisions related to a congregational building, and calling a new minister or other staff decisions. Who gets to vote? [Members] How do you become a member? How many voting members are in the congregation? Can non-members speak at congregational meetings? What other rules govern the congregational meeting? [May include how far in advance meetings must be announced, number of meetings required in a year, etc...] Who reports to the congregation at meetings?

- Some decisions are made by the congregation's governing body. What is that body's name [e.g., Board of Trustees] and composition? How are its members chosen? Are there youth and/or young adults on the governing body? What kind of decisions does this body make (versus the full congregation)? Are their meetings open? Are the minutes from the meetings available to everyone? Who reports to this body?

Ask if anyone has attended any congregational and/or board meeting recently. If so, what was it like? Can they remember any decisions that were made? Were the decisions voted upon?

Distribute the meeting minutes you have assembled. If decisions were made and the group is interested, ask them to vote on whether they think the best decision was made by holding up index cards, where one color means "Yes" and the second color means "No." Pick decisions where you can impartially supply background the youth need to make informed decisions. Can youth imagine what emotions came into play as decisions were made? What about the reasoning involved?

Say that voting members make the best decisions for the congregation they can make at the time. Sometimes, in hindsight, they may wish they had decided differently. Yet, we believe the democratic process is usually the best tool for making decisions that affect us all. Ask if there is evidence that JUs believe this. [Hint: Look at the seven Principles.]

Ask if anyone else makes decisions in the congregation. Committees, staff, volunteers, and individual members make decisions all the time. Are the youth involved in any congregational decision making?

Variation

Plan for the youth to attend a congregational or board meeting together. Before the meeting, gather the group to discuss the agenda and any decisions that may come up for a vote. If any youth are members, they might decide to speak at the meeting and share from the group's discussion. If non-members can speak at meetings, urge youth to do so about any decision they feel strongly affects them.

LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Reflect on the workshop with your co-leader. Did the group experience all the activities as you planned or should you make time adjustments for future workshops? Both group size and group dynamics will influence the pace. Was there a good amount of participation in discussions? It is early yet: Some individuals will need to feel more comfortable and safe in the group before they will speak up. Was starting the

anklet successful? This activity happens in every workshop. Make adjustments as soon as possible.

Look at the next workshop and decide who will be responsible for which preparations.

TAKING IT HOME

Every intersection in the road of life is an opportunity to make a decision. — Duke Ellington

IN TODAY'S WORKSHOP... we talked about decision making. We heard a story about how the brain makes decisions. Understanding decision making is important because our decisions help shape who we are. We learned a quote from the Buddha which we will read every time we meet, to remind us that thoughts become deeds, which become habits, which become our character. Therefore, we need to be careful where our thoughts and deeds lead us.

The Brain. Find out more about why scientists think humans have the largest cerebral cortex. Here is a [blog posting](#) with one opinion. An episode of the PBS science series NOVA, "[The Human Spark](#)," also discusses this phenomenon.

Virtue Snapshots. Richard Bach wrote, "All we see of someone at any moment is a snapshot of their life, there in riches or poverty, in joy or despair. Snapshots don't show the million decisions that led to that moment." Yet, we constantly judge or make a decision about people based on these snapshots. Is this fair? Try taking "virtue snapshots." Notice when people around you, especially strangers, make moral decisions and take a snapshot in your mind. Look for both virtuous and not-so-virtuous acts. The person in line in front of you gives the cashier back the extra change they accidentally gave them. A baby drops its pacifier and a stranger walks by without picking it up. A friend passes a rumor about another friend without ever asking if it was true. Why do you think that person made that decision? What experiences have you had that would lead you to make the same, or a different, decision?

A Ritual. The book, *How to Bury a Goldfish: And Other Ceremonies and Celebrations for Everyday Life*, by Louise Nayer and Virginia Lang (Boston: Skinner House, 2007) includes a ritual on making choices on pages 148-149. It might be helpful in situations where you have conflicted feelings.

Virtues Survey. This program has a limited number of meeting times. Therefore, we can only explore a limited number of virtues. Have you ever thought about which virtues are the most important? Survey your family and friends. Ask for the top five most important virtues in leading a good life. Compare the lists. Are there any

surprises? Bring the list to the next workshop and ask the leaders which ones the group will discuss.

Old-fashioned "Virtue." The word "virtue" can feel old fashioned. We do not often use it in everyday speech. Are you comfortable using the word? What does "living a virtuous life" mean to you? Do you think of yourself as virtuous? Is there another, similar word you might use instead?

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: REAL LIFE CHALLENGES

Materials for Activity

- "Bicycle Rack" newsprint sheet (Opening)

Preparation for Activity

- Post the Bicycle Rack newsprint sheet.

Description of Activity

Youth discuss ethical challenges they have faced.

If someone shared an experience in check-in or during any workshop activities that the group would like to explore further, do so now. This could be particularly useful if an experience resonated with many participants. If several challenges are already listed on the Bicycle Rack, invite the youth to choose one to discuss. It need not be related to this workshop's topic.

You might use these questions to structure a discussion:

- What virtues could this challenge bring into play?
- Did this challenge involve a conflict of values? If so, what values? How do they conflict?
- What are possible solutions to this challenge? Are they equally good? Why or why not?

Affirm that it is always easier to see good solutions in hindsight and that living a life according to virtues we want to nurture or values we hold dear is not always easy. We do not need to always "get it right," but we do need to keep trying.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: NEWSWORTHY? (30 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- News items from various sources including newspapers, magazines, and/or Internet
- Optional: Computer with Internet access

Description of Activity

Ask participants to form groups of two or three and search the news sources for stories that involve ethical dilemmas. Examples could include politicians or business leaders investigated for fraud, theft, or deceit,

or a situation in which someone has been charged with a crime based on an action which could be seen as good rather than bad. Invite youth to share any news stories they have recently heard. Discuss stories to articulate the ethical conflict in each and to identify stories in which someone has made a virtuous choice. Do the news sources treat these stories differently? What values or virtues do the news sources seem to highlight? What messages come through from the way news sources describe ethical dilemmas?

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 3: THE CHARIOTEER (20 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Handout 1, [Ethical Theories Chart](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Copy the handout for all participants.
- Read the Description of Activity and familiarize yourself with the spoken material so you can present it to the group in your own words.

Description of Activity

Distribute Handout 1, Ethical Theories Chart.

Tell the group that throughout time, many different theories have been put forward concerning how we make ethical decisions and a few are detailed on this chart.

Have volunteers read the chart.

Invite someone to put forward a simple ethical dilemma. If none is forthcoming, suggest this one: You are going to visit someone in a retirement home. On the steps, you find a \$10 bill. What do you do?

Ask participants to answer the question and supply their reasoning using the different ethical theories in the chart.

Say, in your own words:

David Starr Jordan said, "Wisdom is knowing what to do next. Virtue is doing it." Jordan, born in 1851, was an accomplished and successful scholar, teacher, and author. He was one of the first to teach evolution at American universities. His study and cataloging of fish species is legendary. He was a prolific author, with dozens of books published and was at one time the best-selling author of Beacon Press, a UU publishing company. At the age of 34, he became president of Indiana University, making him the youngest university president ever appointed. Later, he was appointed president of Stanford University. High schools and scientific

prizes are named after him. He was a charter member of the Sierra Club, president of the National Education Association (NEA), and an honorary associate of the Smithsonian Institute, which offered him positions he declined because he believed he could do more good working in education. Jordan was also a vocal peace activist, serving as director of the World Peace Foundation and receiving the Herman Peace Prize for the best educational plan for preserving world peace. His call for an end to war is viewed by many as a virtuous act. Do you agree or disagree?

David Starr Jordan was also a eugenicist. Eugenics, as defined on the Dictionary.com website, is "the study of or belief in the possibility of improving the qualities of the human species or a human population, especially by such means as discouraging reproduction by persons having genetic defects or presumed to have inheritable undesirable traits (negative eugenics) or encouraging reproduction by persons presumed to have inheritable desirable traits (positive eugenics)." One of David Starr Jordan's primary criticisms of war was that it eliminated the strongest and most fit members of a society, and thus weakened the gene pool. He was a founding member of a eugenics organization that promoted compulsory sterilization of the less fit members of society (though he himself did not advocate for this) and he wrote *The Blood of the Nation: A Study of the Decay of Races through Survival of the Unfit* in 1902. It was published by the American Unitarian Association. In fact, his parents were Universalists and he was a friend and colleague of many UUs. Does this surprise you? Disappoint you? Is any organization or individual always right or virtuous? What do you think about that?

Today, many people would not find his position on eugenics virtuous. However, eugenics—based on misinterpretation of Darwin and evolutionary theory—was popular among American scholars in the late nineteenth century and among Americans in general in the early twentieth century. Ivy League universities and other colleges taught courses in eugenics. Eugenic beliefs in the fit versus the unfit in society were used as an argument to create laws supporting segregation, immigration restriction, and forced sterilization so that a person could not physically reproduce. Though eugenics became unpopular after Nazi Germany's effort to create a super Aryan race, you can still find traces of this way of thinking

among white supremacist groups and in other places. In 2011, North Carolina became the first state to consider reparations to victims of forced sterilizations, which were legal in 33 states for much of the twentieth century. Most of the people forced to be sterilized were declared unfit because of mental or physical disability, poverty, criminal records, or race or ethnicity.

During its popularity, proponents of eugenics would have thought that trying to improve the gene pool of the human race was a virtuous act. This raises a number of questions: How timeless are virtues? Does what we call virtuous behavior depend on the time, the place, and other environmental factors? Does the fact that we do not always act virtuously, or the fact that virtues may not be eternal, negate their usefulness as tools to help us shape our own character and live our daily lives?

This program is based upon what is commonly called "virtue ethics." It corresponds to the Aristotelianism column on the chart in the handout. It is one way of thinking about ethical decision making. As the chart demonstrates, it is not the only way. Aristotle's ideas about ethics and virtuous living are similar to the ideas of Confucius in ancient China; the entire religion of Confucianism is based upon ethical decision making.

Some of Aristotle's ideas about virtue ethics are outdated. For example, he likened the brain during decision making to a chariot. The horses were our emotions, which are base, animalistic things, wanting to run wild and unfettered. Thankfully, the chariot has a charioteer to keep things under control. The charioteer is reason. Aristotle saw decision making as a struggle between reason and emotions. The best decisions were made when reason was in total control. You can also envision this as a battle between the heart and the head. Where else have you heard the heart/head dichotomy used to distinguish two different ways of being? Have you heard the term "bleeding heart liberal?" Does this phrase—used derisively by conservatives—imply that some liberals are ruled by the heart instead of the brain? And that this is not a good thing?

We know from our story about modern brain science that this is a false analogy. Both the emotions and reason are used when we make decisions and some decisions are best made by the emotional part of the brain. Does the fact that Aristotle's charioteer theory is wrong negate the usefulness of virtue ethics?

Aristotle's charioteer and the eugenics movement in the United States are two examples that illustrate how complex ethical decision-making can be. During our program, we will wrestle with complexities. I can promise you, we will not always get it right. Yet, I believe trying to consciously make virtuous, ethical decisions is better than the alternatives: Leaving it up to chance, or letting others make our decisions for us.

What do you think? What value do you see in using virtues as a tool to make ethical decisions?

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 4: THE BRAIN, MAKING DECISIONS (20 MINUTES)

Preparation for Activity

- Prepare several scenarios that involve making a decision.

Description of Activity

Participants use knowledge of brain science to examine decision making.

Invite participants to role play making decisions. Ask the role players to imagine (aloud) what processes they think their brain might be going through. Of course, since a great deal of it is unconscious, we cannot be sure. The activity is just fun speculation.

STORY: THE DEBATE AMONG THE PARTS OF THE BRAIN

Based on Aesop's "The Belly and the Other Members of the Body."

Once upon a time, the various parts of the brain got together to discuss their contributions to the uniqueness of the human being. Each part of the brain thought the human ought to know that it was the most important in determining what it means to be human.

"You know, you really could not breathe without me," said the brain stem, the oldest part of the brain, at the very bottom. "Let me see how *special* you feel with no oxygen in your lungs!"

The diencephalon, the next part moving upwards, chimed in. "Yes, but I produce hunger pangs to let you know when to eat. Without me, you would starve."

The limbic system tried to speak, but the other parts rudely told limbic that its animal impulses, like lust and violence, created some of humankind's worst problems and would not listen to it.

"Everyone who has spoken so far belongs to what humans like to call the 'primitive brain,'" explained the cerebral cortex. "I am what makes humans unique. I present to you the four lobes of GREATNESS!" And each of the cerebral cortex's lobes then spoke:

"I am the occipital lobe. I am involved with vision."

"I am the parietal lobe. I receive sensory information from the body. But that is not all. I also take the letters the occipital lobe sees or the letters I feel (if using braille), and I form them into words. I then string together words to form complete thoughts." The other parts of the brain were impressed, and applauded. Though a bit of a braggart, the parietal lobe had the decency to blush.

The bar was now set higher. "You all know me," smirked the temporal lobe. "I'm all over the place. I do a little vision work, interpret most of what you hear, coordinate language, learning, memory, and even dabble in emotions. I'm a jack of all trades."

"Yes, but where would any of you be without me," said the frontal lobe. "I do all the problem solving, decision making, and conscious behavior. I make sure you do not act in (sniff) inappropriate ways." Frontal looked directly at limbic while making this remark. "It is my use of reason that makes a human unique."

"Hey, wait," shouted temporal. "You forgot to mention that you, too, are involved with emotions. You are not just dealing in reason. Within your folds is the orbitofrontal cortex or OFC. I know because we're good friends and communicating all the time. The OFC integrates emotions into the decision making process."

"Yeah, OFC and I are buddies, too," said limbic. "It is always in touch with us 'primitive brain' parts. Before you make any decision to act, frontal lobe, the OFC has checked out how the person feels about the action needed and decided it is the best thing to do. You could not make that decision without consulting the parts of the brain responsible for emotions and those parts are all over the place. The old idea that human beings are mostly rational animals is outdated. Even you, frontal—the most rational part of the brain—consult emotions to do your job, which is making conscious decisions."

"In fact," the OFC piped up (it had been present all along, but preferred to work behind the scenes), "conscious decisions are not literally conscious at all. All decisions involve some unconscious processing that happens before the consciousness is even aware that a decision needs to be made. The unconscious thoughts are influenced by emotions, yes, but also strongly influenced by memory. We, the brain parts, ask ourselves, 'Have I encountered this situation before?' and use the answer to inform the decision. Therefore, the human's previous experiences and even their habits inform your actions on a conscious and unconscious level."

"So be careful of your habits and actions or deeds," said temporal.

"Likewise, be careful with your thoughts and words," said parietal.

"Wow! We are really wise when we work together," said the brain.

HANDOUT 1: ETHICAL THEORIES CHART

Immanuel Kant (1724 -1804) was a German philosopher. Aristotle (384 BCE-322 BCE) was a Greek philosopher.

Moral system	Consequentialism: An action is right if it produces best consequence	Deontology: An action is right if it follows a moral rule	Virtue Ethics: An action is right if it is what a virtuous person would do in the situation
Ethic is based on ...	Ethic of conduct	Ethic of conduct	Ethic of character
Example of a theory	Utilitarianism	Kantianism	Aristotelianism
Question asked	How do I get what is best for society?	What is the rational thing to do?	What is the best kind of person to be?
Right and wrong	The action is right if it results in the best consequence.	The action is right if it fits the moral code, no matter the consequence.	The action is right if it embodies the greatest virtue.

FIND OUT MORE

Ethics Theory

The adult Tapestry of Faith curriculum [What We Choose: Ethics for Unitarian Universalists](#) unpacks a variety of ethical frameworks in detail. You can read more about the theories presented in Alternate Activity 3 on the [Wadsworth](#) philosophy for higher education website. Find a longer article on virtue ethics in the online [Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy](#).

The Brain

Many details in the story about how the brain makes decisions come from a fascinating book, *How We Decide* by Jonah Lehrer (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2009).

A [slide show](#) describing the lobes of the cortex has been posted online by "neurosciust." It is informative. However, one slide states there are five lobes, while subsequent slides discuss four lobes (there are only four distinct lobes).

Eugenics

Read the entry for David Starr Jordan in the [Dictionary of Unitarian and Universalist Biography](#).

Find out more about the American eugenics movement on this [Image Archive](#). A five-part series about North Carolina's forced sterilization's victims can be found in the [Winston-Salem Journal](#) online.

WORKSHOP 2: MODERATION

INTRODUCTION

Moderation in all things, including moderation.
— Petronius, Roman author of satires

The exploration of virtues begins with a focus on moderation, because moderation is a virtue that touches all the other virtues. In future workshops, youth will respond to questions such as "Can you be too honest?" and "What can happen if you are too forgiving?" This workshop lifts up moderation to set a tone for the entire program, to steer youth from pursuing virtues so intensely that virtuous living becomes its own vice.

GOALS

This workshop will:

- Unpack the meaning of moderation
- Explore situations where moderation is used or called for
- Invite youth to identify ways they do, or could, use moderation.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Explore the meaning of "moderation"
- Apply moderation to a hypothetical dilemma
- Identify ways they have used moderation, assess the effects of using moderation, and commit to future use of moderation in their lives.

WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	15
Activity 1: Up Side, Down Side	10
Activity 2: Story — A Huge Lump of Gold	10
Activity 3: A Time For All Things	20
Activity 4: Dilemma	10
Activity 5: Practice	20
Faith in Action: Newsletter Article	60
Closing	5
Alternate Activity 1: Real Life Challenges	

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Thomas Paine said, "Moderation in temper is always a virtue; but moderation in principle is always a vice." Moderation is sometimes viewed as wishy-washiness or too much willingness to compromise. But it can also be viewed as disciplined and mature. What are your personal feelings about moderation? When has the use of moderation been helpful? A hindrance? Is there an area of your life where moderation could be useful now?

OPENING (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- Group covenant (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Bicycle Rack newsprint sheet (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Alternate Activity 1, [Real Life Challenges](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read Alternate Activity 1, Real Life Challenges. Prepare to incorporate it into this Opening, if you think you will have time and you observe that youth want to discuss challenges shared in their check-in.
- Post the chalice lighting words.
- Post the group covenant.
- Post the Bicycle Rack sheet the group began in Workshop 1, Opening, or label a new sheet of newsprint "Bicycle Rack," and post.

Description of Activity

Invite a volunteer to light the chalice while you lead the group to recite the chalice lighting words:

The thought manifests as the word
The word manifests as the deed;
The deed develops into habit;
And habit hardens into character;
So watch the thought and its ways with care,
And let it spring from love
Born out of concern for all beings...
As the shadow follows the body,
As we think, so we become.
— from *The Dhammapada, Sayings of the Buddha*

Invite the youth to check in by sharing any moral challenges they have experienced since the last meeting. If appropriate, use Alternate Activity 1 to further explore the group's challenges. If youth appear interested in discussing a particular challenge but you feel there is not enough time in this meeting, ask the person who shared it to write a short description of the challenge on the Bicycle Rack.

Say, in your own words:

Today we will talk about moderation as a virtue. Another word for moderation is "temperance." [Ask if that word is familiar to anyone. If no one else does, mention the Temperance Movement

which during the 19th and early 20th century worked to encourage, and eventually legislate, the moderate use of or abstinence from alcohol.] Today, the Temperance Movement is often mocked or played for laughs. It is portrayed as being promoted by stuffy old ladies who did not want anybody to have fun. Are you surprised to know that many prominent Unitarians and Universalists, including Susan B. Antony and Joseph F. Jordan, one of the first African American Universalist ministers, were involved in this movement?

This was because in the early nineteenth century, advances in the distillation of alcohol had led to growing rates of alcoholism and drunkenness, which contributed to crime, poverty, and health problems. The Temperance Movement was a cause that attracted many women because drunkenness among men affected many women and children. Alcoholism was a big contributing factor in growing rates of desertion of families and domestic abuse. A woman with a husband who drove the family into financial destitution, deserted the home, or beat them and/or the children had little recourse: Seldom could she find reputable work or get a divorce. She would never be entitled to custody of her children, because the legal status of a woman was almost like that of a child—a man's property. In the same legal and social situation, what would you do if you had an alcoholic husband or father?

Moderation is a virtue Unitarian Universalists believe in, as do most other religions.

Mention also that moderation is something to keep in mind as you discuss all virtues. Taking anything to the extreme—even virtuous behavior—can be bad for you. Share the quote from Petronius that introduced this workshop:

Moderation in all things, including moderation.

Remind youth of the discussion on decision making from in the previous workshop. Remind them of the notion of balancing values, to make decisions that do the least harm.

ACTIVITY 1: UP SIDE, DOWN SIDE (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape

Preparation for Activity

- Post two sheets of newsprint, one headed "Moderation — Up Side", the other headed "Moderation — Down Side."
- Post a third sheet headed "Moderation means..." and write these definitions: "restraint," "temperance," "avoidance of extremes," "mildness," "balance," and "within reasonable limits."

Description of Activity

Participants identify positive and negative aspects of the day's virtue.

Invite youth to take a moment and think about "moderation" as a virtue. Point out the definitions of "moderation" you have posted. Lead a discussion, using these prompts as needed:

- What have you been told about moderation: What it means, when to use it, when not to use it? [For example, youth may have seen "enjoy in moderation" messages on beer commercials, or be aware of people who are "political moderates."]
- Who defines moderation? Does it mean different things to different people? [Example: Standards of moderation are different in different cultures.]
- Is there anyone you admire who uses this quality regularly?
- Do you have friends and/or family members who do not use moderation? How do you feel when you are around this person?
- What other thoughts come to mind when you think about moderation? [Example: Do you think people grow more moderate as they age?]

During the discussion, begin to capture on newsprint participants' "up side" (positive) and "down side" (negative) comments about moderation as a virtue. Then, focus the youth on these questions...

- What are the advantages to using moderation? [Example: Using moderation when eating will help you stay healthy.]
- What are disadvantages? [People who believe in using moderation in style would be limited in their fashion choices.]

...and continue recording their comments on the newsprint.

To conclude, review the comments on the newsprint.

ACTIVITY 2: STORY — A HUGE LUMP OF GOLD (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Story, "[A Huge Lump of Gold](#)" (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read the story so you can present it effectively.
- Optional: Copy the story for all participants.

Description of Activity

The group hears and discusses a Buddhist story about moderation.

Read the story, without identifying its source. Then, invite the youth to guess what religious tradition the story comes from. After everyone knows it is a Jataka tale from the Buddhist tradition, ask if anyone can identify a tenet of Buddhism that support moderation. The answer is the Middle Path, which the Buddha said is the path between indulging in too much pleasure and indulging in too little.

Process the story with these additional questions:

- The wealthy woman hid the lump of gold from robbers by burying it. Why was this not a helpful thing to do?
- Breaking the lump into four pieces made sense because it was easier to move. Yet the farmer did not need to divide the use of the gold. He could have used all four pieces to purchase a luxurious house. What do you think his reasoning was behind dividing it up the way he did?
- What does this story have to do with moderation?
- If you had a lump of gold, how would you divide it?
- Have you ever had someone give you a large sum of money ("large" is relative; to a seven-year-old, \$20 might seem large) and say, "Don't spend it all in one place?" Why would they say that?
- Does this story remind you of anything you or someone you know has done? [If a prompt is needed, ask if anyone earns an allowance or a paycheck and divides the money between savings and spending.]

ACTIVITY 3: A TIME FOR ALL THINGS (20 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Handout 1, [Ecclesiastes 3](#) (included in this document)
- Drawing paper and implements such as pencils, charcoal, pastels, crayons, and markers
- Optional: A recording of the song "Turn, Turn, Turn" by the Byrds, and a music player

Preparation for Activity

- If you plan to play the song, queue the music and test the music player.

Description of Activity

Distribute Handout 1 and lead the youth to read the text together. Ask if anyone is familiar with these words and if they know the source (Hebrew scripture). If you have a recording of the song, "Turn, Turn, Turn," play it now.

Discuss the scripture text using the questions below. If participants enjoy making art, invite them to draw a representation—literal, or metaphoric—of one of the lines from the handout. Suggest that the artwork reflect experiences in their lives when they experienced these "times." For example, "a time to plant, a time to pluck what is plant" could depict someone planting a tomato plant and harvesting tomatoes or it could depict a biology student studying an anatomy chart and then operating on a patient.

- Do you think it is true that there are times when opposite actions are appropriately called for?
- Have you experienced all these actions/feelings in your life? What helped you survive the bad times? Do bad times make you better appreciate the good times?
- Does believing there is a "time to weep and a time to laugh" make it easier to deal with grief?
- Some people would say there is never a time to make war. Are there items you disagree with on this list?

ACTIVITY 4: DILEMMA (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 1, [Moderation Dilemmas](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Print several copies of Leader Resource 1—one for you, the others for volunteer readers.

Description of Activity

Youth discuss scenarios involving ethical dilemmas.

Seek a volunteer to read one of the two scenarios. Open the floor to reactions and answers. Ask:

- Does this remind you of other dilemmas you have encountered or heard of (real, or fictional)?
- How could moderation play a part in this dilemma?

ACTIVITY 5: PRACTICE (20 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Participants' journals, and writing instruments
- Participants' clipboards with anklets (Workshop 1, Activity 3, Practice)
- Beads, and waterproof markers and/or other decorations
- Extra clipboards and string/hemp, and scissors

Preparation for Activity

- If needed, read instructions for making the anklets in the Before You Start section of the program Introduction and in Workshop 1, Decision Making.
- Retrieve participants' clipboards with anklets, and participants' journals if these are also kept on-site.
- Write these questions on newsprint, and post:
 - When was there a time that you used moderation?
 - What made it possible for you to use moderation then?
 - Have you ever experienced circumstances where it would have been helpful for you to use more moderation?
 - What are the areas of your life now where you could apply moderation to help you be the person you want to be?

Description of Activity

Participants understand how the use of moderation affects their lives.

Invite youth to take five minutes to journal, using the questions on newsprint as prompts, or to draw or meditate on the questions. While the youth are journaling, you may also offer these prompts: Do extracurricular activities take so much of your free time

that you do not spend as much time with family and friends as you would like? Are there substances, such as cigarettes, alcohol or other drugs, or food, with which you overindulge?

After five minutes, ask participants to stop journaling. Invite volunteers to share journal writing to their level of comfort. Remind youth that you are a mandated reporter: If anyone discloses behavior that could be dangerous to themselves or others, you will need to report it.

When sharing is complete or after ten minutes, distribute participants' clipboards, new beads (one per youth), and decorating materials. Invite youth to take the next five minutes to decorate a bead while reflecting upon their personal experiences with moderation. Remind them that this bead will remind them to use moderation.

As participants finish, have them add this bead to the anklet they started in Workshop 1.

If any participant missed Workshop 1, provide them with a clipboard, hemp, a bead for their name bead, and instruction to begin their anklet.

Collect journals, clipboards, and anklet-making materials, and store for the next workshop.

CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- [Taking It Home](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Adapt the Taking It Home section and copy for all participants.
- Optional: Print the closing quotation (below) for a volunteer to read.

Description of Activity

Choose a volunteer to read this amusing quote, and another to extinguish the chalice.

Temperate temperance is best; intemperate temperance injures the cause of temperance. — Mark Twain

Distribute Taking It Home.

FAITH IN ACTION: NEWSLETTER ARTICLE (60 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Optional: Computer with Internet access

Preparation for Activity

- Find out the best way to submit articles for the congregational newsletter, including deadlines and any format requirements.

Description of Activity

Participants write an article about moderation for the congregation's newsletter.

Invite the group to write an article on moderation for the congregation's newsletter. They could focus on their discussion of the dilemmas, or they might share one or two volunteers' personal stories. (If you use a story that mentions people outside the group, do not use real names. Change the story if needed to make sure these people cannot be identified.)

Variation

Invite the youth to research online and then write an article that shows what various religions have to say about moderation. You might start [here](#), on a website that gives examples from Islam of Muhammad's sayings about moderation in religious practices. Engage readers to comment on the youth's article; you might invite congregants to share their stories or favorite quotes about moderation.

LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Reflect on the workshop, with your co-leader. Which activities did the group enjoy most? How were varied learning styles addressed? Are the group dynamics taking shape in a healthy way? Are there issues you should address? Did participants keep to the covenant? Do co-leaders feel the work is shared equally? Did you have fun?

Look at the next workshop and decide who will be responsible for which preparations.

TAKING IT HOME

Moderation in all things, including moderation.
— Petronius, Roman author of satires

IN TODAY'S WORKSHOP... we discussed moderation as a virtue. We talked about the Temperance Movement, which involved many Unitarians and Universalists in making laws to limit consumption of alcohol. We heard about the Buddhist Middle Path and read from the biblical book of Ecclesiastes, which says that all things have their natural seasons or times to be important. We reflected on times we had used moderation, times we had not used moderation, and times we might want to use moderation in our lives.

Did you know? The author of the quote, Petronius, was an artist in the court of the Roman Emperor Nero. He

wrote satires—literary compositions which hold up human folly and vice for ridicule—but, ironically, was renowned (as was Nero) for being extremely self-indulgent.

Satire. Characters in satire are frequently larger than life and do not exhibit moderation. Their character traits—both the virtuous and more dastardly—are exaggerated, to make a point. Have you ever read or seen satire? Much of Mark Twain's work is satire, as are the fantasy novels of Terry Pratchett. The movie, *Dr. Strangelove: How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love the Bomb*, is a famous work of satire about the atomic bomb. The television shows *South Park* and [The Colbert Report](#) are, too, as is the comic strip, [Doonesbury](#). Read or watch some of these online. Can you identify when characters are NOT using moderation? Are there characters involved that do exhibit moderation? Often these characters represent the views of the satire's creator.

Moderation and Addiction. Read about the Temperance Movement on this [United States History site](#). Our society offers us many stimulations. It is easy to go from one fun and exciting activity to the next. However, research shows our senses become acclimated to stimuli, and soon a particular stimulant becomes less effective. This is why addicts need to constantly increase the amounts of drugs, alcohol, or other stimulants they use. Have you ever heard a parent joke that their kids soon stop playing with their new toys and start playing instead with the boxes the toys came in? Sometimes simpler is better. Where in your life is simplicity needed? What activities used to bring you pleasure but now are a bore? Take time out to engage in simplicity. Lie on a blanket under the night sky and marvel at the stars with a younger sibling or a friend. Play with your pets. Sit on your front porch and engage your neighbors in conversation.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: REAL LIFE CHALLENGES

Materials for Activity

- "Bicycle Rack" newsprint sheet from Opening

Description of Activity

Youth discuss ethical challenges they have faced.

If someone shared an experience in check-in or during any workshop activities that the group would like to explore further, do so now. This could be particularly useful if an experience resonated with many participants. If several challenges are already listed on the Bicycle Rack, invite the youth to choose one to discuss. It need not be related to this workshop's topic.

You might use these questions to structure a discussion:

- What virtues could this challenge bring into play?
- Did this challenge involve a conflict of values? If so, what values? How do they conflict?
- What are possible solutions to this challenge? Are they equally good? Why or why not?

Affirm that it is always easier to see good solutions in hindsight and that living a life according to virtues we want to nurture or values we hold dear is not always easy. We do not need to always "get it right," but we do need to keep trying.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: BETWEEN TWO EXTREMES (30 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape

Preparation for Activity

- Research organizations in your area that provide assistance for addictions. Post their website addresses and phone numbers on newsprint, folding the page over so you can reveal the information at the end of the activity.

Description of Activity

Teams role play moderate behavior.

Divide the group into teams of three or more. Ask each team to think of a common situation, such as at school, with friends or family, or at a job, where they have witnessed extreme behavior. The role play should include both sides of extreme behavior (over-indulging versus never indulging), and it should also show using moderation.

You might suggest getting tattoos/piercings; exercise; physical appearance/fashion; schoolwork with an eye toward grades. Give teams a few minutes to rehearse. Then re-gather the group and have teams present their role plays.

After the role plays, process:

- Are there some behaviors that you think you should never indulge in?
- Sometimes people over indulge in behaviors because of an addiction. Can an addict always simply stop their addictive behavior? What ways exist for people to seek help with addictions?

Display the newsprint and ask everyone to copy the information in their journals or, if you created a handout, pass it out now.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 3: ARISTOTLE'S SCRAMBLE (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 2, [Aristotle's Virtues](#) (included in this document)
- Two baskets

Preparation for Activity

- Print Leader Resource 2. If the group is large, print several copies. Cut apart the list of virtues and the list of extremes. Put them in separate baskets. Keep the bottom of the Leader Resource intact so you have the answers. If you have a large group, print a few copies and prepare a few pairs of baskets.

Description of Activity

Youth explore Aristotle's view that all virtues are means between extremes, in a matching game.

Tell the group that the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle talked about several virtues. Place the basket with virtue strips before the group. He postulated that the virtues were the means in between extreme behaviors. Ask if the youth know from their math studies what a "mean" is. Affirm that it is not exactly a midpoint, nor an average, but a different kind of "middle." To Aristotle, a virtue might be a balanced way to behave, a moderate way to act that sits in between extremes.

Place the second basket before the group. Invite the group to play a matching game. One person pulls a virtue out of the first basket and they work with a partner to find the extremes in the other basket. For the purpose of the game, there are ten virtues in the baskets, though Aristotle defined more.

After all the matches are complete, ask if any terms need defining. Did any virtues come as a surprise? Do participants agree with Aristotle about virtue being a mean between extremes? Do they agree that the virtues identified truly are virtues? Why or why not?

STORY: A HUGE LUMP OF GOLD

A retelling of a Buddhist Jataka Tale.

Once there was a village that was prosperous. The wealthiest of the villagers was afraid that the town's reputation would attract thieves, so they buried a huge lump of gold in a field for safe keeping.

Many years passed and the village lost much of its wealth. The wealthy villager died and all knowledge of the gold was lost.

One day, a poor farmer decided to plow an abandoned field. After several long days of plowing, the farmer struck something large and hard. They thought it must be a rock or a tree root, but as they uncovered it, they were delighted to find the huge lump of gold. The farmer did not want to be seen carrying around such a piece of gold. They covered it up loosely with dirt, determined to come back at night to claim it.

Night fell. The farmer returned for the gold. However, it really was a HUGE lump of gold. It was too heavy for the farmer to even lift, much less carry home. The farmer became frustrated at the thought of their potential riches being forever out of reach.

After a while, the farmer decided to sit and think about the situation and an idea occurred to them.

"I will break the lump of gold into four smaller pieces. Then I will be able to carry the pieces home. One piece will be enough for my day-to-day living for quite some time. One piece I will save for emergencies. One piece I will invest in my farm and the fourth piece I will give to the poor and needy."

With a peaceful mind, the farmer broke the gold into pieces and carried them home on four separate trips.

The farmer lived happily ever after.

HANDOUT 1: ECCLESIASTES 3

From Hebrew scripture (*New Revised Standard Version*).

1 For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

2 a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;

3 a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

4 a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

5 a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

6 a time to seek, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away;

7 a time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

8 a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.

LEADER RESOURCE 1: MODERATION DILEMMAS

Dilemma 1

Both you and your friend have cell phone plans with unlimited texting, but that doesn't mean your time has no limits! Your friend texts you all throughout the day, even during school hours and late into the night. They get upset if you don't hit them back within five minutes, but you cannot stop everything to respond to so many texts. You want to keep them as a friend, but their texting needs are driving you up the wall. What should you do?

Dilemma 2

Crack cocaine and powder cocaine are two forms of the same drug. Both are illegal. Yet, the law has treated them differently. Crack cocaine, the only drug for which there is a federally mandated minimum sentence for mere possession, carries a minimum five-year prison sentence for possession of five grams. However, you would need to possess at least 500 grams of powder cocaine to get the same sentence. A 2006 study found that 82 % of Americans sentenced for possession of crack are black, even though they comprise only 30 % of users. Crack is the form of cocaine used more often by blacks and people with lower incomes, as opposed to powder cocaine which is more expensive. Most people would say our justice system should be fair, balanced—moderate. Would you agree that the sentencing policy for crack cocaine possession shows moderation? [A law to rectify some of this disparity was signed by President Obama in 2010.]

LEADER RESOURCE 2: ARISTOTLE'S VIRTUES

VIRTUES

Courage	Generosity
Temperance	Pride
Patience or Good Temper	Truthfulness
Wittiness	Modesty
Friendliness	Righteous Indignation

EXTREMES

Cowardice/Foolhardiness	Boastfulness/Self-Depreciation
Self-indulgence/Insensibility	Buffoonery/Boorishness
Extravagance/Stinginess	Obsequiousness/Unpleasantness
Vanity/Humility	Bashfulness/Shamelessness
Irascibility/Apathy	Envy/Spite

GUIDE FOR LEADER

Courage = Cowardice/Foolhardiness
Temperance = Self-indulgence/Insensibility
Generosity = Extravagance/Stinginess
Pride = Vanity/Humility
Patience or Good Temper = Irascibility/Apathy
Truthfulness = Boastfulness/Self-Depreciation
Wittiness = Buffoonery/Boorishness
Friendliness = Obsequiousness/Unpleasantness
Modesty = Bashfulness/Shamelessness
Righteous Indignation = Envy/Spite

FIND OUT MORE

[The Art of Manliness](#) website has an article on how moderation can help you enjoy life more.

Reverend Dr. Monica Cummings, a Unitarian Universalist minister, has created a series of short animated videos for youth. View her video "[Youth Struggling with Addiction](#)" on YouTube.

The Unitarian: A Monthly Magazine of Liberal Christianity (1886-87) was a monthly periodical in which temperance was a frequent topic. On Google Books, read "[The Duty of Clergymen in Relation to the Temperance Reform.](#)"

WORKSHOP 3: INTEGRITY

INTRODUCTION

Be Impeccable With Your Word. Speak with integrity. Say only what you mean. Avoid using the word to speak against yourself or to gossip about others. Use the power of your word in the direction of truth and love. — Miguel Angel Ruiz, spiritualist and author

This workshop deals with integrity. Since integrity requires being true to yourself, participants will also examine the related virtues of honesty and trustworthiness. Activities highlight the importance of our reputations, and youth discuss the effects of peer pressure in their lives. If you have time, you might add Alternate Activity 2, Are Humans Born Good?

GOALS

This workshop will:

- Examine the meanings of integrity, honesty, and trustworthiness
- Wrestle with ethical dilemmas involving integrity, honesty, and trust
- Guide youth to identify themselves as people of integrity, who are honest and trustworthy.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Explore the meaning of integrity
- Consider how honesty and trustworthiness relate to integrity
- Discuss a dilemma that involves compromised integrity
- Identify experiences where they acted with integrity, honesty, and trustworthiness, and some where they did not
- Commit to using the virtue of integrity in the future.

WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	10
Activity 1: Ideal vs. Reality	15
Activity 2: Dilemma	15

Activity 3: Story — Sita's Reputation	10
Activity 4: Gossip Game	15
Activity 5: Practice	20
Faith in Action: Countering Misinformation	
Closing	5
Alternate Activity 1: Real Life Challenges	
Alternate Activity 2: Are Humans Born Good?	15
Alternate Activity 3: Are You a Saint?	10
Alternate Activity 4: Story — Feathers on the Wind	15

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

To be a person of integrity, you must be trustworthy. Trusting and being trusted contribute to our feeling secure in the world. Some people trust easily; others have been taught to be distrustful or have developed distrust because of previous hurts. Where do you fall on the spectrum? Where and with whom do you feel the most trust? Why do you feel you can trust these individuals? Think back to your experiences with them and try to identify what in their behavior created the trust you have in them. Do people seem to trust you? If so, what qualities in you help create this trust? How do you show these qualities in your work with youth in this program?

OPENING (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- Group covenant (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Bicycle Rack newsprint sheet (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Alternate Activity 1, [Real Life Challenges](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read Alternate Activity 1, Real Life Challenges. Prepare to incorporate it into this Opening, if you think you will have time and you observe that youth want to discuss challenges shared in their check-in.
- Post the chalice lighting words.
- Post the group covenant.
- Post the Bicycle Rack sheet the group began in Workshop 1, Opening, or label a new sheet of newsprint "Bicycle Rack," and post.

Description of Activity

Invite a volunteer to light the chalice while you lead the group to recite the chalice lighting words:

The thought manifests as the word
The word manifests as the deed;
The deed develops into habit;
And habit hardens into character;
So watch the thought and its ways with care,
And let it spring from love
Born out of concern for all beings...
As the shadow follows the body,
As we think, so we become.
— from *The Dhammapada, Sayings of the Buddha*

Invite the youth to check in by sharing any moral challenges they have experienced since the last meeting. If appropriate, use Alternate Activity 1 to further explore the group's challenges. If youth appear interested in discussing a particular challenge but you feel there is not enough time in this meeting, ask the person who shared it to write a short description of the challenge on the Bicycle Rack.

Tell participants that today you will talk about three related virtues: integrity, honesty, and trust.

ACTIVITY 1: IDEAL VS. REALITY (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape

Preparation for Activity

- Post blank newsprint.

Description of Activity

Participants identify positive and negative aspects of the day's virtue.

Choose a volunteer to take notes on newsprint. Ask the group to define "honesty." Do the same for "trust", and "integrity." The first two terms are easy. Integrity is harder. There are two primary definitions. One is "adherence to moral and ethical principles; soundness of moral character; honesty." The other definition is "the state of being whole, entire, or undiminished." Talk about how these two definitions relate to this program. Guide the group to define integrity as a virtue.

You might say:

The ancient Greek philosophers believed that true happiness resulted when something fulfills its true purpose. They believed the true purpose of human beings is to survive, thrive, and form meaningful relationships. How will living a life of honesty, trust, and integrity help you do that?

Now invite the youth to play "Ideal versus Reality." In this game, one person takes center stage and states an ideal that surrounds this virtue. Then the floor is open and anyone can take center stage and state a reality that conflicts with the ideal. Here are examples:

Ideal: Honesty is the best policy.

Reality: Being too honest can lose you a friend or a job.

Ideal: You can trust a priest or a minister.

Reality: Some ministers and priests abuse trust and harm children.

Ideal: The world respects people who act with integrity.

Reality: Many people become rich by cheating others.

End the game, then invite participants to share other questions or thoughts about integrity, honesty, and trust. Mention the quality of trustworthiness, which means that others can trust you. Use these questions:

- How have integrity, honesty, trust, and trustworthiness played out in your life?
- Who do you know that you consider a person of integrity? Why?

- Have you ever lost trust in someone? What were the circumstances?
- Has anyone ever lost trust in you? What were the circumstances? Were you able to regain their trust? How?
- What are some of the reasons people lie? Are these reasons legitimate excuses sometimes?

Including All Participants

If some participants have mobility limitations, play Ideal vs. Reality with everyone seated; allow youth to call out contributions "popcorn style."

ACTIVITY 2: DILEMMA (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 1, [Integrity Dilemmas](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Print several copies of the Leader Resource, for yourself and volunteer readers.

Description of Activity

Youth discuss scenarios involving ethical dilemmas.

Have a volunteer read the first scenario. Invite responses. Ask participants if this reminds them of other dilemmas they have encountered or heard of, real or fictional. How does honesty play a part in this dilemma? What about trust? What would a person of integrity do?

Now have a volunteer read the second dilemma. Invite discussion. If no one mentions peer pressure, introduce the topic:

- Risky behavior amongst youth is often chalked up to peer pressure. Do you think peer pressure influences youth decision making? Has peer pressure been a strong factor in your life?
- Are youth the only people influenced by peer pressure? How have you witnessed peer pressure contributing to the decision making of children and adults?
- What role does the media play in peer pressure?
- Does peer pressure always take you away from acting with integrity? Can you think of a time that you made a healthy or ethically sound decision *because of* the influence of your peers?

ACTIVITY 3: STORY — SITA'S REPUTATION (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Story, "[Sita's Reputation](#)" (included in this document)
- Leader Resource 2, [Sita](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read the story so you can present it effectively.
- Print the Leader Resource to show participants.
- Optional: If you expect you might have time, plan to invite participants to act out the story with as much melodrama as they wish.
- Optional: Copy the story for all participants.

Description of Activity

Youth hear a Hindu story about Sita, the embodiment of honesty, trust, and integrity.

Tell the group this story comes from the *Ramayana*, a classic Hindu text. Orthodox Hindus consider the *Ramayana* a complete guide to God-realization, the path to which lies in righteousness. The *Ramayana* portrays human beings at their most ideal, so people can emulate those ideals to become ideal human beings and ideal citizens.

Show Leader Resource 2, *Sita*, to participants. Then, tell or read the story and discuss it with the following questions:

- Now that you know Sita's story, why do you think Hindus would pray to her? What traits does she represent? What is she the goddess of?
- Does Sita seem too good to be true? Is she too patient, too loyal, too self-sacrificing? Remember that the *Ramayana* is intended as moral instruction. Sita is the incarnation of a goddess in human form. She therefore embodies perfect patience, perfect chastity. She is worshipped as the perfect daughter, wife, and mother.
- Sita's husband, Rama, who is also the reincarnation of a god, put the good of the city above what was fair to Sita. Is Rama the perfect husband?
- Though we might consider this story sexist in that Sita is expected to be patient, long suffering, and obedient, it may not mean the story has no value for us today. One way of thinking about Sita is that she was confined by

the gender roles of her time. Have you ever felt that way? Are gender expectations different today, or pretty much the same? Are males, or females, expected to have more integrity than another gender? Or are our standards for integrity the same for all genders?

- Have you been in a situation where people believed you had done something wrong, but you had not? In your school or with your peers, do people gossip about someone's wrongdoing at times when they have no proof of it?
- How important is your reputation?
- What are some things that can damage your reputation?
- What can you do if your reputation is unfairly damaged by rumors, gossip, and lies?
- Despite what others thought, Siva knew she had stayed true to herself and that she was morally uncompromised. Because of her integrity, she was able to do great and miraculous things. She withstood a trial by fire, raised her twin sons alone, and is credited with being the true destroyer of the evil Ravana—after all, it was his desire for her, her standing up to him, and Rama's desire to rescue her that caused his ultimate downfall.
- Have you ever had a moment when you had to act with moral certainty? What was that like?

ACTIVITY 4: GOSSIP GAME (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Blank paper and writing instruments
- Optional: A copy of the Unitarian Universalist Principles

Preparation for Activity

- Optional: Write a few complicated sentences on slips of paper.

Description of Activity

Youth discuss the damage gossip can do.

Say to the group that though Sita's story does not explicitly say the people of Ayodhya gossiped about Sita, we can imagine that they did. Ask for a definition of gossip. Affirm, or offer: Gossip is the unnecessary sharing of potential harmful or hurtful information. Ask if anyone has played the game, Gossip. Invite them to play now.

Have everyone form a circle. Ask a volunteer to write a sentence on a strip of paper. The more difficult the

sentence, the more fun the game. Or, start the game with a sentence you have prepared.

The writer gives the written sentence to someone on their right or left. That person reads it quickly, then hands the paper back to the writer and whispers the sentence to the person next to them. The group passes the sentence along, with the writer hearing it last. Compare the final version with the written sentence.

Play as long as time allows, leaving time for discussion using these questions:

- What does this game help us understand about gossip?
- What does gossip have to do with integrity, honesty, and trust? If you believe what you are saying is true, is gossip wrong? What if you did not intend harm? If your friend posts on Facebook that they are breaking up with their partner, is it gossip if you tell your friends who are not on Facebook? What if you speculate to others about why they are breaking up, or talk about overhearing them argue? What if they do not break up, after all?
- How do you know if what you are thinking of sharing is gossip or not? Is there a test? One suggestion might be to ask the person you are talking about if they are comfortable with your sharing. Another might be to ask yourself: "If this was said about me, how would I feel?"
- Have you ever been hurt by gossip? Have you ever hurt others, whether intentional or not, by passing on unnecessary information?
- How does gossip relate to our UU Principles?
- Author Bob Burg on his [website](#) advocates for a Reverse Gossip game. In this game, instead of sharing negative comments, you repeat only positive things about people. For example, if someone says, "Alex and Robin never hang out with us after school. They must think they are too good to be with us," you can respond with "People have different levels of comfort when it comes to socializing, but Alex and Robin have always been good friends to me and there when I need them."

Including All Participants

If any participants have hearing difficulties, skip this activity, as it relies on youth mishearing what others whisper.

ACTIVITY 5: PRACTICE (20 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Participants' journals, and writing instruments
- Participants' clipboards with anklets (Workshop 1, Activity 3, Practice)
- Beads, and waterproof markers and/or other decorations
- Extra clipboards and string/hemp, and scissors

Preparation for Activity

- If needed, read instructions for making the anklets in the Before You Start section of the program Introduction and in Workshop 1, Decision Making.
- Retrieve participants' clipboards with anklets, and participants' journals if these are also kept on-site.
- Write on newsprint, and post:
 - When was a time you felt someone expected you to forsake your integrity?
 - How important is it to you that you are seen as trustworthy? What about you makes you seem trustworthy/untrustworthy?
 - When was a time you were honest even though your honesty meant someone (maybe you) would get hurt? Why were you honest then?
 - Has there been a time when you were hurt by someone else's lies? Did it affect your relationship with that person?
 - Can you be too honest?
 - Can you have too much integrity? What if someone had to choose between personal integrity and the welfare of a group they belong to?
 - Have you ever experienced circumstances where it would have been helpful for you to be more honest, trustworthy, or truer to your values?
 - What are the areas of your life now where you could apply the virtues of integrity, honesty, trust, and trustworthiness to help you be the person you want to be?

Description of Activity

Participants understand how the use of integrity affects their lives.

Invite youth to take five minutes to journal, using the questions on newsprint as prompts, or to draw or meditate on the questions.

After five minutes, ask participants to stop. Invite volunteers to share journal writing, to their level of comfort. Remind youth that you are a mandated reporter: If anyone discloses behavior that could be dangerous to themselves or others, you will need to report it. Listen to what the youth say. Affirm that living a life of integrity is not easy. Challenges will arise throughout our lives; living according to our values, being true to ourselves, is a lifelong endeavor. If appropriate, share with the group a time when you were disappointed in your own behavior. Help youth understand that we will fall short, but recognizing it and committing to do better next time is a hallmark of a person with integrity.

When sharing is complete or after ten minutes, distribute participants' clipboards, new beads (one per youth), and decorating materials. Invite youth to take the next five minutes to decorate a bead while reflecting on their personal experiences with integrity, honesty, and trust. Remind them that the bead will act as a reminder to live according to their highest values.

As participants finish, have them add this bead to the anklet they started in Workshop 1.

If any participant missed Workshop 1, provide them with a clipboard, hemp, a bead for their name bead, and instruction to begin their anklet.

Collect journals, clipboards, and anklet-making materials, and store for the next workshop.

CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- [Taking It Home](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Adapt the Taking It Home section and copy for all participants.
- Optional: Print the closing quotation (below) for a volunteer to read.

Description of Activity

Have a volunteer read the quotation while another extinguishes the chalice.

A good name is more desirable than great riches; to be esteemed is better than silver or gold. — Proverbs 22:1

FAITH IN ACTION: COUNTERING MISINFORMATION

Description of Activity

Participants examine the press for dishonesty.

Invite the group to discuss a political or social issue that is important to them. It could be immigration or gay rights or racism. Ask what information they have heard about the issue that could well be untrue, and is harmful to people. For example: "Mexicans don't pay taxes on their earnings," "All gay people are sexually promiscuous," or "All Asians are smart."

Spend time tracking down misinformation. Examine TV news, Internet blogs, publicity of local organizations, and other sources. Where did the misinformation begin? How has it spread? Discuss how you could counter such misinformation. Does the organization need to be educated? Should the TV channel be boycotted? Would it be useful to support groups that are putting out the truth? Choose an action the group can take safely, and take it. Analyze the results.

LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Reflect upon the workshop with your co-leader. Which activities did the group enjoy the most? Were varied learning styles addressed? Are the group dynamics taking shape in a healthy way or are there issues you should address? Did the group understand the relationship between integrity, honesty, and trust? Were participants careful with their words and speaking with integrity?

Read the next workshop for any advance preparation needed and decide who will be responsible for what.

TAKING IT HOME

Be Impeccable With Your Word. Speak with integrity. Say only what you mean. Avoid using the word to speak against yourself or to gossip about others. Use the power of your word in the direction of truth and love.
— Miguel Angel Ruiz, spiritualist and author

IN TODAY'S WORKSHOP... we examined the relationship among integrity, honesty, and trust. We heard a story about Sita, perfect daughter, wife, and mother. We talked about reputations and peer pressure.

Honesty and Truthfulness. Play the game "Two Truths and a Lie." In this game, everyone makes three statements, one of which is untrue. Your friends try and guess which statement is the lie. It is a fun way to find

out new things about your friends and to see who has the best "poker face."

Integrity and Peer Pressure. [Kids Health](#) has information on identifying and dealing with peer pressure.

Virtue Practice. The Teens Health website has a link to a neat feature "[Making a Change in Your Life: Your Personal Plan](#)". You can use this feature to create a personalized workbook to help you reach a goal by setting and taking small steps. If there is a virtue you have identified as one that you wish to grow, this guide might help you plan concrete steps to take.

Sexing. Find accurate and appropriate information about sexing and other issues in sexuality at these websites: [Scarlet Teen](#), [Sexetc](#), [Seventeen](#), and [Go Ask Alice](#).

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: REAL LIFE CHALLENGES

Materials for Activity

- "Bicycle Rack" newsprint sheet from Opening

Description of Activity

Youth discuss ethical challenges they have faced.

If someone shared an experience in check-in or during any workshop activities that the group would like to explore further, do so now. This could be particularly useful if an experience resonated with many participants. If several challenges are already listed on the Bicycle Rack, invite the youth to choose one to discuss. It need not be related to this workshop's topic.

You might use these questions to structure a discussion:

- What virtues could this challenge bring into play?
- Did this challenge involve a conflict of values? If so, what values? How do they conflict?
- What are possible solutions to this challenge? Are they equally good? Why or why not?

Affirm that it is always easier to see good solutions in hindsight and that living a life according to virtues we want to nurture or values we hold dear is not always easy. We do not need to always "get it right," but we do need to keep trying.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: ARE HUMANS BORN GOOD? (15 MINUTES)

Description of Activity

The group debates human nature.

Here are questions for the group to debate:

- Are people born good? Are we inherently good? Or do we need to be taught virtues? If practicing virtues makes us better at achieving them, does that mean we are not born virtuous?
- What about our first Unitarian Universalist Principle, the inherent worth and dignity of all people? Does that mean humans are inherently worthy and full of integrity?
- Some people say humans are born flawed by original sin. Original sin is the taint all humankind carries because, according to the biblical story, Adam and Eve disobeyed God and ate of the Tree of Knowledge. What do we, as Unitarian Universalists, believe about original sin?
- If people are not born virtuous, why do some people exhibit some virtues very early on while others do not? Why do some children seem inherently generous or empathetic? Is this learned behavior or genetics? How much of our character is inherited from our parents? How much of it do we learn learned (nature versus nurture)?
- What does Unitarian Universalism say about nature versus nurture?
- What or who is the best teacher of virtues? How have you learned to be "good?"

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 3: ARE YOU A SAINT? (10 MINUTES)

Description of Activity

Participants examine a moral decision step-by-step.

Tell the group that there is a classic story about St. Godric, a Christian holy man known for his kindness to animals. Invite them to use the story to play a game, "You Are St. Godric."

You, St. Godric, are a hermit, living in the woods. You hear horns, from a distance. The hunt must be on. How do you feel about the hunt?

[Pause.]

You love animals and would never want to see one hurt. You go outside. From here, you can even hear the hunters, riding through the forest. A beautiful stag comes crashing through the brush. You realize he is the subject of the hunt. What do you do?

[Pause.]

You empathize with the poor hunted animal. You look into the eyes of the stag and see fear. It is trembling and

exhausted. You open the door to your hut and urge the stag inside. You hear the hunting party approaching. What do you do?

[Pause.]

You, St. Godric, sit outside your hut, in quiet meditation. The dogs, in hot pursuit of the stag, come leaping into the clearing, but stop short at the man and the hut. The hunters follow. They look around for the stag and not seeing him, they ask you, "Where is the stag we were chasing?" What do you say?

[Pause.]

You open your eyes, fixing the hunters in your gaze. "God knows where he may be." The hunters think, "This is a holy man. He would never lie. If the stag had come this way, he would tell us." Thinking that they have lost the prey, the hunting party goes home. When the forest is clear, you open the door and the stag goes free. How do you feel?

After the activity, discuss it. These questions may help:

- What is the conflict in this story?
- Does St. Godric lie to the hunters?
- Why did the hunters trust St. Godric? If someone puts their trust in you, do you feel more responsible for acting in a trustworthy way?
- St. Godric felt he needed to hide the truth for a greater good: to protect the stag. Can you think of examples where you might be willing to hide the truth or perhaps even lie for a greater good? What about lying to keep from hurting someone's feeling? Where do you draw the line?
- At every step, St. Godric had a decision to make about how he would behave. Have you ever had a situation where you made one bad choice and everything turned out badly? Is there anything you can do in such a situation?

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 4: STORY — FEATHERS ON THE WIND (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Story, "[Feathers on the Wind](#)" (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read the story so you can present it effectively.
- Optional: Copy the story for all participants.

Description of Activity

Participants share a story about harmful words.

Tell or read the story.

Lead a discussion, using these questions:

- Has there ever been a time when you have said something you wish you could take back later? Share what happened. Change the names of others in the story to make it more anonymous.
- Sometimes we unintentionally hurt others with our words. For example, some gay, lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgender people are "out" in some situations, so that others are aware of this aspect of their identity, but not "out" in other areas of their life. Sometimes someone who does not know this may say something that informs others that a person is gay against the person's wishes. Have you ever experienced this personally, or witnessed it happening to others?
- Gossip is defined as sharing unnecessary information that can be harmful or hurtful to others. How do you know if what you are thinking of sharing is gossip or not? Is there a test? One suggestion might be to ask the person you are talking about if they are comfortable with your sharing. Another might be to ask if this was said about you, how would you feel?

STORY: FEATHERS ON THE WIND

A retelling of a European Jewish wisdom tale.

Once there was a man whom the entire village knew to be a gossip. He could not wait to share the juiciest piece of gossip with whoever would listen. It did not matter to him if the stories he spread were true, or not—he never stopped to ask.

One day, after hearing the rabbi speak about the harm gossip causes, this man went to the rabbi and said, "Rabbi, I am truly sorry for all the pain I have caused with my loose lips. I repent and will gossip no more. Can I be forgiven?"

"Yes," replied the rabbi, "but here is what you must do. Go home. Find a feather pillow. Open the pillow and release the feathers on the wind. Then, come back to me."

The man thought this a strange request, but he did as he was told. When he came back, the rabbi said, "Now, go gather all the feathers released from the pillow."

"But that is impossible! They have flown all over the place. I do not even know where most of them have traveled!"

"So it is with words: you do know where your gossip and rumors have traveled. Once words have been uttered, they cannot be taken back."

The man understood. From that day on, he was careful and thoughtful when speaking of others, and spoke with integrity.

STORY: SITA'S REPUTATION

A retelling of stories from the *Ramayana*, an ancient Hindu text.

Perfect daughter, perfect wife, perfect mother. This is the way Hindus revere Sita. How could she not be virtuous and noble? Sita was the reincarnation of the goddess, Lakshmi. Hindus pray to Sita for moral strength, loyalty, and integrity. She is considered the perfect woman.

It was easy for Sita to be a good daughter. King Janaka and Queen Sunanya, while ploughing a field to prepare for a sacrifice to the gods, had found the baby Sita. They knew this must be a special child—a gift, indeed, from the gods. Since they both desired a daughter, they brought her back to the palace and raised her as their daughter. She grew to be smart, beautiful, and obedient. The perfect daughter.

Because of her attributes, many princes desired Princess Sita. The royal family held a contest for her hand in marriage, and the brave Prince Rama won it.

They loved each other very much, but it was not as easy for Sita to be the perfect wife. Her husband, Rama, was the oldest son and in line to become king of his kingdom, Ayodhya. Through political intrigue, Rama's younger half-brother obtained the throne instead, and out of fear, banished Rama for 14 years. Sita was prepared to go into exile with her husband, but he argued that she should not come. What should the perfect wife do? Sita was not always an obedient wife: She decided that loyalty to her husband was more important than obedience. This is why people pray to her for loyalty. She waited until he had his say, then explained why it was her duty to accompany him. Through her patience and devotion, Rama was convinced and they fled into exile.

There existed an evil creature, Ravana. He, too, desired Sita. He kidnapped her and tried to seduce her. It was said no woman ever resisted him. Sita did: She remained true to Rama and was not deceived by Ravana's tricks or swayed by his gifts and sweet words. Again, Sita exhibited loyalty, moral strength, and integrity.

After many hardships and bloody battles, Rama rescued Sita and regained the throne. At first, Rama did not believe Sita had remained faithful to him. Neither did the people of Ayodhya. Sita asked for a fire to be built and said if she had been sexually intimate with anyone besides her husband, she would burn. When she exited the fire safely, Rama believed she was telling the truth, but some in city still doubted.

As he sat in the royal palace, Rama heard the whispers of the people in his kingdom. "What kind of king takes

back a wife who has lived with another man?" "Sita says she was true, but everybody knows no woman ever resisted Ravana." Rama worried that citizens would use Sita as an excuse to be promiscuous. More importantly, he felt his position as king was threatened by keeping Sita by his side. Rama was disturbed by the way people spoke about her and decided her presence was too disruptive. He had to decide what to be loyal to: his city or his wife. He chose his city, and banished Sita. Did he see the irony of the situation? Who knows.

Did Sita see the irony? If she did, she did not say anything. Being the perfect wife, she did not plead or curse Rama. She did not even tell Rama she was pregnant. She simply packed and left. She found refuge at the hermitage of a wise old man, Valmiki. Valmiki knew Sita was a woman of great integrity and honesty. He knew she needed a warm and safe place to raise the twin boys she gave birth to a short time later.

Being the perfect mother was not easy. Sita had to raise her sons alone. Although they were princes, they lived in exile, and did not enjoy the comfort of a court or a kingdom. Yet, Sita kept her integrity by being loyal to them.

For many years, Rama did not know he had sons. One day, when they were young men, he met Luv and Kush. He asked them to come live with him in the palace. Wishing the best for her sons, Sita urged them to go, but she refused to go back. Now that her sons were safe and on the way to receiving their rightful due, she asked to be released of her burdens—being perfect takes a heavy toll.

Now it was the pantheon of the gods and goddesses who desired Sita. The goddess of the earth opened up for her, wrapped her in her warm and loving arms, and carried Sita to the heavens, where she exists to this day, a shining example for all women.

LEADER RESOURCE 1: INTEGRITY DILEMMAS

Dilemma 1

A friend confides to you that he has committed a particular crime and you promise never to tell. Discovering that an innocent person has been accused of the crime, you plead with your friend to give himself up. He refuses and reminds you of your promise. What should you do? In general, under what conditions should promises be broken?

Dilemma 2

Integrity can be compromised by pictures as well as by words. About 20% of youth admit to sexting: sending sexual messages and/or nude photos through text messaging. If the photos are of a minor, this is child pornography and a felony crime. At least 10 states have charged teenagers in court. If convicted, these youth's names can be added to a database of sex offenders, where they can remain for decades. Often, youth send nude photos to a boyfriend or girlfriend, thinking the photos will remain private. However, if one party becomes angry or thinks it is funny, these photos can get all over the Internet. Once a photo is posted, it is virtually impossible to delete it from the cyber world. Even if the photo is not posted, once it is sent, you have no control over who the receiver shows it to. For example, if the receiver looks at a nude photo of you in public, strangers may look over their shoulders and see it.

Some people argue that this is an issue about personal freedom. Others say it is about the law. How is this also an issue of integrity? What do you think about sexting?

LEADER RESOURCE 2: SITA

[Idol of Sita at Sita Marhi](#) photograph by Bala Subs.



FIND OUT MORE

The complete *Ramayana* can be found [online](#) or in book form. The *Ramayana For Children* (New York: Penguin, 2004) is an easy-to-read version.

A Hidden Wholeness (San Francisco: Wiley, 2004) is a wonderful book about integrity by the Quaker teacher and theologian Parker Palmer.

The Tapestry of Faith program [A Place of Wholeness](#) guides young people in living lives of integrity as Unitarian Universalists.

WORKSHOP 4: RESPECT

INTRODUCTION

The soul that is within me no man can degrade.
— Frederick Douglass

Today's workshop focuses on respect. Respect, like several other virtues, goes both ways: One should respect others, and one must respect oneself. This virtue is embedded in our first Unitarian Universalist Principle, the inherent worth and dignity of each person.

The Faith in Action activity, Respect Videos, is a project that will also work well with other virtues. If you have the time and technology to provide this activity and the youth enjoy it, consider making an entire video series.

GOALS

This workshop will:

- Examine the meaning of respect
- Explore situations where respect is used or called for
- Introduce Reverend Joseph Jordan, a 19th-century Universalist minister and the first African American ordained in the Universalist denomination
- Guide youth to identify themselves as users of respect.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Explore the meaning of respect
- Learn about the 19th-century Universalist minister, Reverend Joseph Jordan
- Discuss dilemmas where respect is tested
- Identify ways they do or could practice respect, and commit to the future practice of respect in their lives.

WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	15
Activity 1: Story — Joseph Jordan	10
Activity 2: Two Sides to Every Virtue	10
Activity 3: Dilemma	20

Activity 4: Respect Role Models	10
Activity 5: Practice	20
Faith in Action: Respect Videos	
Closing	5
Alternate Activity 1: Real Life Challenges	
Alternate Activity 2: Easy A, the Movie	120
Alternate Activity 3: Respect Role Models, Part 2	

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Spend time reflecting on the first Unitarian Universalist Principle: the inherent worth and dignity of every person. Does this translate into "respect everyone?" Why, or why not? Are there people in your life for whom you have lost respect? How did that happen? How do you feel about the loss? If it is hurtful to you, is there a way the respect can be regained? Does the person know they no longer have your respect? If not, perhaps a conversation is in order. If respect was lost because of someone's behavior, do you fully understand why they acted the way they did? Could they explain themselves to you? Should they have to?

Consider also the reverse: Is there a friend who has lost respect for you? Is a conversation in order? Do you wish to explain yourself? Should you have to?

Is it easier to lose respect for someone we care about and feel we know well, than for a stranger?

How do you define or describe "respect?"

OPENING (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- Group covenant (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Bicycle Rack newsprint sheet (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Alternate Activity 1, [Real Life Challenges](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read Alternate Activity 1, Real Life Challenges. Prepare to incorporate it into this Opening, if you think you will have time and you observe that youth want to discuss challenges shared in their check-in.
- Post the chalice lighting words.
- Post the group covenant.
- Post the Bicycle Rack sheet the group began in Workshop 1, Opening, or label a new sheet of newsprint "Bicycle Rack," and post.

Description of Activity

Invite a volunteer to light the chalice while you lead the group to recite the chalice lighting words:

The thought manifests as the word
The word manifests as the deed;
The deed develops into habit;
And habit hardens into character;
So watch the thought and its ways with care,
And let it spring from love
Born out of concern for all beings...
As the shadow follows the body,
As we think, so we become.
— from *The Dhammapada, Sayings of the Buddha*

Invite the youth to check in by sharing any moral challenges they have experienced since the last meeting. If appropriate, use Alternate Activity 1 to further explore the group's challenges. If youth appear interested in discussing a particular challenge but you feel there is not enough time in this meeting, ask the person who shared it to write a short description of the challenge on the Bicycle Rack.

Tell participants that today the group will explore respect.

ACTIVITY 1: STORY — JOSEPH JORDAN (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Story, "[Building Respect: Reverend Joseph Jordan](#)" (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read the story so you can present it effectively.
- Optional: Copy the story for all participants.

Description of Activity

Youth learn about the first ordained African American Universalist minister.

Tell or read the story. Then discuss it using these questions:

- As a free African American, born in 1842, where do you think Joseph might have experienced respect? Where might he have experienced disrespect?
- What did Joseph Jordan learn from Christianity about respect?
- In most areas of life, African Americans were not, at this time, treated with respect and dignity. This is why Frederick Douglass said, "The soul that is within me no man can degrade." Why do you think the Universalist Ordaining Council took Jordan seriously and treated him respectfully?
- We should remember that in 1889, when Jordan was ordained, Universalism was a Christian denomination, as was Unitarianism. Although some UUs today identify as Christian, many do not, and our faith is not a Christian denomination. Still, our Christian roots are an important part of our character today. What in your UU faith do you owe to our Christian roots?
- In 1863, the Universalists ordained the first woman minister in the U.S. In 1889, they ordained their first African American minister at a time when to do so was unusual for a predominately white Protestant denomination. In 2001, the UUA became the first predominately white religious body to elect an African American as their leader. How does this UU history make you feel? Does it mean that within Unitarian Universalism sexism and racism do not exist? Does it mean that some women and some people of color were not discouraged from being leaders in the faith? What does it mean?
- Jordan not only preached, he opened a school for African American children. What connection

do you see between education and respect for the newly freed black people?

- Joseph Jordan is one of our faith ancestors. What lesson does his life hold for us today as Unitarian Universalists?

ACTIVITY 2: TWO SIDES TO EVERY VIRTUE (10 MINUTES)

Description of Activity

Participants identify positive and negative aspects of the virtue of respect.

Invite youth to sit for a moment and think about "respect" as a virtue. These prompts might be useful:

- What have you been told about respect: What it means, when to use it, when not to use it?
- What does respect mean to you? What does disrespect mean to you? Have you ever been told you acted in a disrespectful way? Who decided it was disrespectful? Did you agree, or not?
- Can one ever be too respectful? What happens if respect is not moderated?
- Is respect earned, or do you respect everyone? What does our first Principle ("The inherent worth and dignity of every person") say about respect?
- Have you ever lost respect for someone or something? What did that feel like?
- For the most part, do people treat you with respect?
- To whom do you give the most respect? Are there people for whom you have absolutely no respect? If so, how do you reconcile this with the first Principle?
- What other questions come to mind when you think about respect?

Invite youth to share their reflections, with statements that begin "On the positive side..." or "On the negative side..." For example, "On the positive side, people who are widely respected can use their power for good causes, as with rock stars who promote charities;" "On the negative side, society tends to put people on a pedestal when they earn a great deal of respect and this can backfire, such as when a politician commits an act of corruption." Another example: "On the positive side, we may feel like a good person if we respect our elders; on the negative side, if an elder treats others disrespectfully, we may not hold them accountable for their behavior because we do not want to disrespect an elder." If youth offer observations about respect that are

neither clearly positive nor clearly negative, process these as a group.

Make sure the discussion includes these points:

- Some people disrespect people because of their age, gender, racial/ethnic identity, social or economic class, level of education, body size, ability, or other identities. Have you witnessed or experienced this?
- Respect is one of those virtues that gets frequent lip service even when it is not an actual lived experience—that is, people may be quick to say they respect someone, yet their actions show otherwise. Have you witnessed or experienced this?

ACTIVITY 3: DILEMMA (20 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 1, [Respect Dilemmas](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Adapt the Leader Resource to include just the dilemmas you plan to use in this activity. Make copies—for yourself, for volunteer role-players, and, if you wish, for all participants.
- Find a space for the role play actors to rehearse, away from the regular meeting space.

Description of Activity

Youth role play scenarios involving ethical dilemmas.

Instead of discussing the dilemmas, as they have done in previous workshops, invite the youth to role play them. Seek volunteers to enact both dilemmas. Let the volunteers decide on roles, and give them five minutes to rehearse. Have the youth present two role plays for each scenario: one demonstrating respect and one demonstrating disrespect. Ask them to keep each role play under two minutes. Encourage the actors to be as dramatic as they like and, if they wish, to add layers to the dilemmas as written.

While the actors rehearse, open the floor for responses to the dilemmas. Ask participants if this reminds them of other dilemmas they have encountered or heard of, real or fictional. For each dilemma, ask "How could respect play a part in this dilemma?"

Conduct the role plays. Thank the actors. Discuss what participants liked about the respectful solutions.

ACTIVITY 4: RESPECT ROLE MODELS (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- A large, soft ball or a small pillow

Preparation for Activity

- Read Alternate Activity 3, which offers an extension of this activity. If you have time, you may wish to substitute Alternate Activity 3 here.

Description of Activity

Youth identify respect role models.

Introduce this activity by saying there are different levels of respect. We may try to respect all life because of its "inherent worth and dignity." People earn additional respect from us by their actions.

Invite the group to form a circle. Everyone should think of people or groups they respect and why they respect them. When the pillow or ball is tossed to them, they should name someone they respect and why. There are no right or wrong answers. The respected role models may be someone they know, someone famous, or just someone they heard about. For example, a participant could say, "My history teacher is a respect role model because he encourages people to voice different opinions in class discussion." After they speak, the participant throws the ball to someone else.

End the game by asking the group to identify commonalities they heard in the respect role model sharing.

ACTIVITY 5: PRACTICE (20 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Participants' journals, and writing instruments
- Participants' clipboards with anklets (Workshop 1, Activity 3, Practice)
- Beads, and waterproof markers and/or other decorations
- Extra clipboards and string/hemp, and scissors

Preparation for Activity

- If needed, read instructions for making the anklets in the Before You Start section of the program Introduction and in Workshop 1, Decision Making.
- Retrieve participants' clipboards with anklets, and participants' journals if these are also kept on-site.
- Write on newsprint, and post:
 - When was a time that you practiced respect?
 - What made it possible for you to practice respect in this instance?

- Have you ever experienced circumstances where it would have been helpful for you to show more respect?
- What are the areas of your life now where you could practice respect to help you be the person you want to be?

Description of Activity

Participants understand how the use of respect affects their lives.

Invite youth to take five minutes to journal, using the questions on newsprint as prompts, or to draw or meditate on the questions.

Additional prompts you may add, while the group journals:

- Are there individuals or groups of individuals that make respect a challenge? If so, what would help you to feel at least basic respect for them?
- Are your friends respectful to others or do they like to put people down? If they frequently insult and disrespect others, how does this make you feel? What should you do about it?
- How do fortune and fame influence whether or not we respect someone? Who does society or our peers tell us to respect and why?
- On what do you base your level of respect? Do you respect someone more because they behave in virtuous ways? Do you respect someone more because they attain high levels of success in their chosen fields? Does the high school athlete being recruited by several colleges get more respect than the second string player or does the first chair violinist deserve more respect than the last chair player?
- What does our first Principle ("The inherent worth and dignity of every person") say about the importance of respect to us as people of faith?
- Is respect necessary for true feelings of compassion?

After five minutes, ask participants to stop. Invite volunteers to share journal writing, to their level of comfort. When sharing is complete or after ten minutes, distribute participants' clipboards, new beads (one per youth), and decorating materials. Invite youth to take the next five minutes to decorate a bead while reflecting on their personal experiences with respect. Remind them that the bead will act as a reminder to use the virtue of respect.

As participants finish, have them add this bead to the anklet they started in Workshop 1.

If any participant missed Workshop 1, provide them with a clipboard, hemp, a bead for their name bead, and instruction to begin their anklet.

Collect journals, clipboards, and anklet-making materials, and store for the next workshop.

CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- [Taking It Home](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Adapt the Taking It Home section and copy for all participants.
- Optional: Print the closing quotation (below) for a volunteer to read.

Description of Activity

Have a volunteer read the quotation while another extinguishes the chalice.

The respect that is only bought by gold is not worth much. — Frances Ellen Watkins Harper

Distribute Taking It Home.

FAITH IN ACTION: RESPECT VIDEOS

Materials for Activity

- A variety of costumes and props
- Optional: A video camera
- Optional: A computer with Internet connection

Preparation for Activity

- Two options are suggested for creating respect videos: live actors on film or cartoons created using software available on the Internet. Verify the feasibility of both options before offering the youth a choice.
- For the cartoon option, explore [Nawmal](#) software online or Microsoft Agent Scripting Helper (MASH), which is freeware that can be downloaded to use with the [Microsoft Agent](#) (c) application.
- Test electronic equipment before the workshop.

Description of Activity

The group creates videos for younger children, demonstrating respectful behavior.

Invite the youth to choose the live actors or animated characters option for a video they will make for younger children (or, if they have only one option, briefly tell them about it).

Engage the group to write a script. Brainstorm to identify three or four scenarios younger children might encounter where respectful behavior should be encouraged. One way to demonstrate respect is to show a scene where someone is disrespectful and then show the scene again, demonstrating respect. Humor, flashy or outrageous costumes and props can make the videos more fun. Consider inviting congregational adults of various ages to play roles.

Choose a venue to show the videos. You might work the videos into a children's chapel or congregational worship service. Post them online, perhaps on your congregation's website or Facebook page or on YouTube, to give the videos a longer life and a wider audience. Arrange with your religious educator for the youth to show the video to a group of younger children and to lead a discussion about respect afterward. Encourage the youth to invite the children to share other situations where they have witnessed respect or disrespect.

LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Reflect on the workshop with your co-leader. Which activities did the group enjoy the most? Were varied learning styles addressed? When volunteers were sought, did any of the quieter participants step forward? Are there participants who always volunteer, always need to speak first, and perhaps need to step back a bit? How will you handle asking participants to "step forward" or "step back" without singling out individuals and putting them on the spot? If the group covenant includes this, refer to the covenant.

Are participants treating one another in respectful ways? If not always, discuss how you can use the learnings from this workshop to remind the group, in the future, to be respectful. Do co-leaders feel their contributions are respected?

Read the next workshop for any advance preparation needed and decide who will be responsible for what.

TAKING IT HOME

The soul that is within me no man can degrade.
— Frederick Douglass

IN TODAY'S WORKSHOP... we heard about Joseph Jordan, the first ordained African American Universalist minister. We identified aspects of his life that exemplified respect. We named respect role models and acted out respect dilemmas.

Explore Respect

- The movie *Easy A* echoes one of the dilemmas presented in this workshop. In the movie, a girl pretends to have sex with male friends to increase their standing among a group of males, but, by doing so, she loses other people's respect. Watch the movie with your peers. Does this story reflect reality in your school? Watch it with a parent/caregiver. Does the story reflect their high school experience, too?
- The singer Aretha Franklin recorded a famous song, "Respect", written by Otis Redding. The Staple Singers are famous for the song "Respect Yourself." Why do you think respect is a common theme of African American popular music artists? You can read the lyrics of these songs on the [Poem Hunter](#) website, along with lyrics of many other songs about respect. Do you know any of these songs? Listen to a few on YouTube if you do not have them on CD.
- Help spread countercultural messages about respect and popularity. One girl's attempt is on YouTube. Watch [meganheartsmakeup](#) video on respecting yourself and read people's responses, including one from [ruauch800](#). These videos talk mostly about girls and respect. Can you find video messages for boys? Do some males also end up in relationships where they are not respected? If you should find yourself in a relationship where you are not respected, or you know someone who is, seek resources. If you do not know who to call in your community, you can start with the [Love is Respect](#) website.

Role Models

[16 Guidelines for Life](#), an initiative of The Foundation for Developing Compassion and Wisdom, tries to help people strengthen their moral character with a focus on many of the virtues that are part of this program, including respect, loyalty, forgiveness, courage, and humility. Find the page with bios of two respect role models.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: REAL LIFE CHALLENGES

Materials for Activity

- "Bicycle Rack" newsprint sheet from Opening

Description of Activity

Youth discuss ethical challenges they have faced.

If someone shared an experience in check-in or during any workshop activities that the group would like to explore further, do so now. This could be particularly

useful if an experience resonated with many participants. If several challenges are already listed on the Bicycle Rack, invite the youth to choose one to discuss. It need not be related to this workshop's topic.

You might use these questions to structure a discussion:

- What virtues could this challenge bring into play?
- Did this challenge involve a conflict of values? If so, what values? How do they conflict?
- What are possible solutions to this challenge? Are they equally good? Why or why not?

Affirm that it is always easier to see good solutions in hindsight and that living a life according to virtues we want to nurture or values we hold dear is not always easy. We do not need to always "get it right," but we do need to keep trying.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: EASY A, THE MOVIE (120 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- DVD of the film *Easy A* (PG-13, directed by Will Gluck, 2010)
- DVD player and digital projector or large monitor

Preparation for Activity

- The movie deals with sexual topics. Preview it to determine its suitability for your group.
- Test electronic equipment.

Description of Activity

Youth discuss how a contemporary movie for youth represents issues of respect.

Watch the film *Easy A*. Discuss with group the way high school youth are portrayed:

- Does the movie seem to make a fair representation?
- What about the sexual double standard the movie portrays? Is this accurate for your peer group? At your school, are females and males expected to earn respect in different ways?
- Are male and female characters three-dimensional—that is, like real people you might know—or are they a bit cartoonish?
- Could you see a story like this happening in your school?
- What do you think of the decisions the youth in the film make? Who acts with respect? Who acts with integrity? Who uses moderation?

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 3: RESPECT ROLE MODELS, PART 2

Materials for Activity

- Drawing paper and drawing implements including color markers, multicultural skin tone markers, crayons, and/or color pencils

Description of Activity

Tell the group:

Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, one of our faith ancestors, said, "The respect that is only bought by gold is not worth much."

Invite the group to respond to Harper's quotation:

- What do you think about this?
- What messages do we receive in society about the relationship between wealth and respect? Can you give some examples?
- Can money buy respect? Can fame buy respect? Can power buy respect? Is the respect that comes from money, fame, or power true respect?

Continue:

Sometimes when a person who is wealthy, famous, or powerful commits an act that is not virtuous, no one holds them accountable. Do we allow the rich and mighty to act badly out of respect for them? Or maybe out of fear, or envy?

Society has other benchmarks that designate those who should receive respect—even if their actions are disrespectful of others. These include people with degrees of higher learning, and people in certain professions where they hold some expertise or authority, such as a physician, or a judge.

This is not to say that all rich, famous, powerful, and well-educated people act badly. The question is: Do some people get more respect than others? Do they deserve it? And if so, why?

Ask the youth if they have ever displayed posters of people they admired on their bedroom walls. Ask whom the posters depicted. Ask if admiration is the same as respect. If it is different, how is it different? What about the relationship between respect and envy? Do we ever get these feelings confused? Do you think some people admire certain sports figures and movie stars because of their abilities, or are envious of their nice salaries and extravagant lifestyles? [Most of us have felt admiration for someone based on their wealth, fame, or power, at one time or another; if you have, too, sharing this with

the group might ease feelings of embarrassment. Using humor might, too.]

Distribute paper and drawing implements, and invite participants to create a poster of someone they admired when they were younger. Their choice can be real or fictional, human or not human. It can be Barney, the purple dinosaur or Eleanor Roosevelt. Assure the group that accurate drawing ability is not important; they may write labels on their drawings.

After ten minutes, invite volunteers to share their poster. Ask the youth if they still admire the object of their childhood admiration. What qualities in the object are admirable? Do they respect the object of their admiration? If they do, why? Is the respect based on the object's inherent worth and dignity only, or also their actions? What actions has the object of their admiration done that the participant finds worthy of respect?

Including All Participants

If the group includes a youth with limited sight or fine motor ability who cannot make and share a two-dimensional drawing, have a volunteer partner with the youth in sharing verbal descriptions of someone they each admired when they were younger.

STORY: BUILDING RESPECT: REVEREND JOSEPH JORDAN (1842-1901)

By Janeen Grohsmeyer.

When Joseph Jordan (pronounced *Jerden*) was born in Virginia in 1842, slavery was still legal. Most people of African descent were treated as property, like horses or dogs. They were bought and sold; they had no rights. Whether enslaved or free, people of color were not treated with respect.

Joseph had been born free, in a small community on the Elizabeth River. He learned to read and write. At a young age, he began to work on the river harvesting oysters, alongside the men. When he was twenty-one, he moved to the city of Norfolk. Joseph found work, first as a laborer, then as a grocer, and finally as a carpenter, building furniture and houses with his hands.

He married Indianna Brown, and they had three children and built a new life together. The Civil War had ended by now. Slavery was gone, and many other people also needed to build new lives. Joseph worked hard. He bought land and built more houses, which he rented to other families.

But even though people could no longer be bought and sold, true freedom had not yet arrived for African Americans. The laws were unfair, and it was hard for African Americans to find places to live, or good jobs, or schools of any kind. Joseph had become a Baptist minister, and when he preached on Sundays he sometimes spoke of the sins of the white oppressors, and how God would surely punish them by sending them to burn in hell for all eternity.

Then a friend gave Joseph a book, *The Plain Guide to Universalism*, and he read of God's promise of salvation to all: the powerless and the powerful, the oppressed and their oppressors alike. Universalism said that everyone, no matter who they were or what they had done, was a child of God. Joseph also knew that Jesus had said: "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." So Joseph stopped preaching a message of vengeance, and he began preaching a message of respect and love.

Joseph wanted to learn more about the Universalist faith, so he went to Philadelphia to study with a Universalist minister at a Universalist church. The people there treated him as a person instead of a thing, as a fellow child of God, as someone worthy of respect. The seven members of the Universalist Ordaining Council found him to have a "clear and bright mind" and gave him a unanimous recommendation. On the thirty-first of March 1889, Joseph Jordan officially became a Universalist minister, the first African American to be ordained by the Universalist denomination.

Joseph returned to Norfolk, Virginia and opened the First Universalist Church of Norfolk in a rented room. He built the pulpit with his own hands. His friend Thomas Wise, who was the second African American to be a Universalist minister, founded another mission in the nearby town of Suffolk. The congregations grew quickly, and with the help of donations from other Universalist churches, the Universalists in Virginia soon built new meetinghouses and schools.

Dozens of African American children came to learn, for there were few other schools available to them. Joseph knew that education was vital and would help provide people with lives of dignity and purpose. Joseph worked every day, teaching during the week and preaching on Sundays, sharing the Universalist message of God's love for everyone.

Joseph Jordan died in 1901, when he was fifty-nine years old. Over many decades, the churches and schools Joseph Jordan helped build gave thousands of families in Virginia a chance to learn and a place to be treated with respect.

LEADER RESOURCE 1: RESPECT DILEMMAS

Dilemma 1

People, especially women and girls, are often told to respect their bodies and themselves by rejecting pressure to have sex when they do not want to. Saying "no" is associated with good self-esteem and sexual health. However, other messages in society, especially messages aimed at men and boys, encourage sexual activity. In certain groups, peer respect is gained by the number of sexual "conquests" you claim. When there is a double standard—two different sets of rules—for the male and female genders, how does a young person decide which path to pursue for respect? If you do not want to be sexually active, how do you handle a partner who feels they need to be sexually active to garner respect from their peers? Do you have to end the relationship?

Dilemma 2

Someone you have had a crush on for months is finally paying attention to you. One afternoon, you are home alone and they call to ask if they may come over. You know your family is not crazy about you having guests when they are not home, but there is not a rule that says you can't. When your crush arrives, you are having a great time until your crush does something that is off limits at your house and which you consider dangerous and/or not smart. Perhaps they pull out a cigarette and start smoking. Maybe they are diving into the shallow end of the pool or making crank phone calls to 911. What do you do? Do you express your feelings and tell them that behavior is off limits? If so, how do you do that in a respectful way?

Dilemma 3

Your beloved grandparent makes a racist or homophobic joke or starts to rant about how undocumented immigrants are ruining our country. Other family members are silent. What do you do? To whom do you show respect? How do you show it?

Dilemma 4

You are a high school senior. After graduating, you plan to enter the Air Force. This will help your family pay for your college education, and prepare you to help defend your country, should the need arise. You tell your best friend, who calls you a warmonger and says you are making a bad decision. What do you do? To whom do you show respect? How do you show it?

FIND OUT MORE

Read more about Rev. Joseph Jordan on the websites of the [Harvard Square Library](#) and the [Dictionary of Unitarian and Universalist Biography](#).

The Respect Institute encourages the spread of respect across generations, read their "[respect basics](#)."

Find food for thought in definitions, synonyms, and reflections on respect on the [Emotional Competency](#) website.

WORKSHOP 5: FAIRNESS

INTRODUCTION

The future, which we hold in trust for our own children, will be shaped by our fairness to other people's children. — Marian Wright Edelman

This workshop focuses on fairness. Because some lists of virtues include justice and not fairness, the workshop touches on justice, also.

Here is the challenge before us: How do we instill the virtues of fairness and justice, when youth can see our society confers fortune and fame on those who do not treat everyone fairly? How do we help youth understand the greater reward in shifting the arc of the universe—even just a tiny bit—toward justice?

GOALS

This workshop will:

- Examine the meaning of fairness
- Explore situations where fairness is exhibited or called for
- Guide youth to identify themselves as fair, just people.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Explore the meaning of fairness
- Learn about Lotta Hitschmanova, Czech- and Jewish-born refugee who escaped Nazism, immigrated to Canada, and directed the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada's work in international aid
- Discuss dilemmas where fairness is tested
- Identify ways they do or could practice fairness, and commit to the future practice of fairness in their lives.

WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	40
Activity 1: Up Side, Down Side	10
Activity 2: Story — Lotta Hitschmanova, Mother	10

of a Thousand

Activity 3: Dilemma 10

Activity 4: Practice 15

Faith in Action: Designing a Fairness Game 40

Closing 5

Alternate Activity 1: Real Life Challenges

Alternate Activity 2: Tug of War 10

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Can you remember your first experience with unfairness or injustice? Perhaps it was something personal and small, such as a sibling receiving a treat you were denied. Maybe it was a larger injustice, such as noticing that some people in your community were rich while others were poor. Can you remember what that felt like to realize that not everyone plays fair, or that sometimes people (and groups) are greatly rewarded for their unfair practices?

Youth often have a very strong love of justice, and, like you, these youth will have heard many times that "the world is not fair" and will have been challenged to "play fair." They understand that injustice exists in the world and often feel driven to eradicate it. Was that your experience as a youth? What was that like? Were you encouraged? Or were you told—explicitly or implicitly—that you were powerless to change unfairness in the world?

Check in with yourself: Is your love of justice still strong and vital to your faith and daily life? How can you plan to facilitate today's workshop in a way that grows youth's passion for justice and fairness? Remember those who encouraged the virtue of fairness in you, and honor their spirit by dedicating your work today to them.

OPENING (40 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- For Fairness Game. Board games such as Monopoly (C), Hi Ho Cherry-o (C), and Jenga (C), and several decks of playing cards; (optional) miscellaneous game pieces, such as playing cards, tokens, dice, timekeeping devices, and spinners
- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Chalice, candle and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- Group covenant (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Bicycle Rack newsprint sheet (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Faith in Action: Designing a Fairness Game
- Optional: Alternate Activity 1, [Real Life Challenges](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- The Fairness Game requires the first 25 minutes of this 40-minute Opening. If you have an extra 15 minutes, you might like to use the Faith in Action activity, Designing a Fairness Game, instead of this version of the Fairness Game.
- Read Alternate Activity 1, Real Life Challenges. Prepare to incorporate it into this Opening, if you think you will have time and you observe that youth want to discuss challenges shared in their check-in.
- Post the chalice lighting words.
- Post the group covenant.
- Post the Bicycle Rack sheet the group began in Workshop 1, Opening, or label a new sheet of newsprint "Bicycle Rack," and post.

Description of Activity

Youth experience and discuss the presence of fairness in games, then open the workshop.

Tell the group that because they have worked so hard in previous workshops, today they have earned free time. Say you would like them to spend the time together as a group or at least in teams. Invite them to form teams and play any of the board games or a game with the playing cards. You and your co-leader can join. Let play continue as long as possible, at least 15 minutes. At the end of your time, ask each game team to declare a winner.

Invite the winners to sit in front of the group. Ask what enabled them to win: Chance? Skill? Previous experience with the game? Determination? Intelligence? Ask if the game was fair. If not, why was it not fair?

If the game involved chance (such as a card game or a game with dice or spinners), ask if chance is fair. If chance is not fair, does it at least attempt to "level the playing field?"

Say that being fair sounds easy, but it often is not. People come to the game with different skills and gifts. Some have good fine motor skills. Others are good at thinking and planning ahead. It is hard to design any experience that is fair in that it enables everyone to use their own abilities to compete evenly with everyone else.

Ask for any observations from the group about games and fairness.

Now, gather the group for the workshop Opening. Invite a volunteer to light the chalice while you lead the group to recite the chalice lighting words:

The thought manifests as the word
The word manifests as the deed;
The deed develops into habit;
And habit hardens into character;
So watch the thought and its ways with care,
And let it spring from love
Born out of concern for all beings...
As the shadow follows the body,
As we think, so we become.
— from *The Dhammapada, Sayings of the Buddha*

Invite the youth to check in by sharing any moral challenges they have experienced since the last meeting. If appropriate, use Alternate Activity 1 to further explore the group's challenges. If youth appear interested in discussing a particular challenge but you feel there is not enough time in this meeting, ask the person who shared it to write a short description of the challenge on the Bicycle Rack.

ACTIVITY 1: UP SIDE, DOWN SIDE (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape

Preparation for Activity

- Post two sheets of newsprint, one labeled "Fairness: Up Side," the other labeled "Fairness: Down Side."
- Post a third sheet, headed "Does fairness mean... " and write: "Treat everyone the same?" "Proper under the rules?" and "Free from bias, dishonesty, or injustice?"

Description of Activity

Participants identify positive and negative aspects of the virtue of fairness.

Affirm that the group will explore fairness. Invite youth to sit for a moment and think about "fairness" as a virtue. Indicate the possible definitions you have posted on newsprint. Lead a discussion; these prompts may be useful:

- What have you been told about fairness, or being fair: What it means, when to use it, when not to use it?
- How would you define "fair?"
- Who defines what is fair and what is not? Does it mean different things to different people? How do you know if you have treated someone fairly?
- Is there anyone you admire who regularly uses fairness?
- Do you have friends and/or family members who consistently act unfair? How do you feel when you are around these people?
- What does "play fair" mean? Have you ever been told to play fair? Have you ever played with someone who does not play fair? Do you always play fair? Why or why not?
- Sometimes people say, "The world is not fair." Do you agree? Whether you agree or not, do you think belief in this statement might influence one's actions? In other words, might thinking the world is unfair make one more or less likely to act fair?
- What are the advantages of trying to be fair always? What disadvantages?
- What other questions come to mind when you think about fairness?

Encourage participants to discuss these and other questions about fairness while writing comments on the newsprint. The "Up Side" is for positive remarks about fairness; the "Down Side", for negative. Review the comments on the newsprint.

Conclude with the following:

We know we should try to be fair in our day-to-day lives. Fairness is commonly listed as a virtue. However, some lists of virtues, for example Plato's Four Classic Virtues, list justice, but not fairness. How do you define justice? Do you think there is a difference between justice and fairness? Is there a relationship?

Remind participants you are not looking for right or wrong answers, but want to encourage youth to ask the

question and think about answers that make sense to them.

ACTIVITY 2: STORY — LOTTA HITSCHMANOVA, MOTHER OF A THOUSAND (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Story, "[Lotta Hitschmanova, Mother of a Thousand](#)" (included in this document) "
- Leader Resource 3, [Lotta Hitschmanova](#) (included in this document)
- The Unitarian Universalist Principles, poster or handout
- Optional: Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Optional: Computer with Internet connection and digital projector or large monitor

Preparation for Activity

- Read the story so you can present it effectively.
- Print the Leader Resource to show participants.
- Optional: Copy the story for all participants.
- Optional: If you are not copying the story, create the time line on a handout and copy for participants, or create the time line on newsprint, and post.
- Optional: Set up a computer with Internet access to browse the USC website with the group. Alternatively, download material from the USC website or request sample materials.

Description of Activity

Youth learn about a faith ancestor who worked for fairness.

Show Leader Resource 3, Lotta Hitschmanova, to participants. Then, tell or read the story and discuss it with these questions:

- How did fairness play a part in Lotta's life and career choice?
- How do you think Lotta felt helping to secure visas for other people when her own visa was denied? What does it say about her character that she did this?
- Look at the time line. Can you see Lotta's sense of fairness growing throughout her life? How did she take a sense of personal fairness in her daily life and grow it into justice work that touches millions of lives?
- When you think of what you would like to do in your adult life, what role does fairness play?

- Margaret Mead, a famous anthropologist, has an often-repeated quote: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." Do you believe this? Can it be applied to one person instead of a group? Did Lotta do her work alone? Can you think of other examples of people who witnessed unfairness and started organizations or gathered a group of people to help them alleviate unfairness?
- Which of our UU Principles says something about fairness (or justice)?
- When is it hardest to be fair? Easiest?
- What inspires you about this story?

Ask the youth if any had heard of the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada (USC) before hearing this story? If you have pre-arranged to do so, visit the [Canadian USC website](#) and/or review their materials with the youth now. Let the group know that our Canadian cousins were part of the Unitarian Universalist Association until recently, but now have their own, unique organization. Note that Universalism is a distinctly American religion and is not part of the Canadian Unitarians' name. Unitarianism is more widely found in other countries. However, what is called Unitarianism in other countries is not always the same as what we think of when we say "Unitarian Universalism."

If you have time, view the Canadian USC material alongside the website or print publications of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UJUSC). What differences do you see? [Answers may include the USC's focus on food and farming, materials in French, no "Universalism" in their name.] What similarities? [Answers may include 1) both work for justice all over the world, and 2) gender equality is a focus for both groups.]

ACTIVITY 3: DILEMMA (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 1, [Fairness Dilemmas](#) (included in this document)
- Optional: Workshop 4, Respect

Preparation for Activity

- Adapt the Leader Resource to include the dilemmas you plan to use in this activity. Make copies—for yourself, (optional) for volunteer role-players, and, if you wish, for all participants.
- Optional: Review Workshop 4, Activity 3 and decide whether you would like the youth to role play one or more dilemmas. Find a space for the

role play actors to rehearse, away from the regular meeting space.

Description of Activity

Youth discuss scenarios involving ethical dilemmas.

Seek a volunteer to read one of the dilemmas. Open the floor to reactions and answers. Ask participants if this reminds them of other dilemmas they have encountered or heard of, real or fictional. For each dilemma, ask "How could fairness play a part in this dilemma?"

If you have time, invite volunteers to role play the dilemmas, as in Workshop 4.

ACTIVITY 4: PRACTICE (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Participants' journals, and writing instruments
- Participants' clipboards with anklets (Workshop 1, Activity 3, Practice)
- Beads, and waterproof markers and/or other decorations
- Extra clipboards and string/hemp, and scissors

Preparation for Activity

- If needed, read instructions for making the anklets in the Before You Start section of the program Introduction and in Workshop 1, Decision Making.
- Retrieve participants' clipboards with anklets, and participants' journals if these are also kept on-site.
- Write on newsprint, and post:
 - When was there a time that you practiced fairness?
 - What made it possible for you to be fair in this instance?
 - Have you ever experienced circumstances where it would have been helpful for you to practice fairness?
 - What are the areas of your life now where you could practice fairness to help you be the person you want to be?

Description of Activity

Participants understand how the practice of fairness affects their lives.

Invite youth to take five minutes to journal, using the questions on newsprint as prompts, or to draw or meditate on the questions.

Additional prompts you may add, while the group journals:

- Is capitalism a fair economic system? Why or why not?
- What about our courts: They say justice is blind. What does this mean? Does this blindness lead to fairness?

After five minutes, ask participants to stop. Invite volunteers to share journal writing, to their level of comfort. When sharing is complete or after five minutes, distribute participants' clipboards, new beads (one per youth), and decorating materials. Invite youth to take the next five minutes to decorate a bead while reflecting on their personal experiences with fairness. Remind them that the beads will act as a reminder to use their highest values.

As participants finish, have them add this bead to the anklet they started in Workshop 1.

If any participant missed Workshop 1, provide them with a clipboard, hemp, a bead for their name bead, and instruction to begin their anklet.

Collect journals, clipboards, and anklet-making materials, and store for the next workshop.

CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- [Taking It Home](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Adapt the Taking It Home section and copy for all participants.
- Optional: Print the closing quotation (below) for a volunteer to read.

Description of Activity

Have a volunteer read the quotation while another extinguishes the chalice.

Learn to look with an equal eye upon all things,
seeing the one Self in all.
— Srimand Bhagavatam, author

Distribute Taking It Home.

FAITH IN ACTION: DESIGNING A FAIRNESS GAME (40 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape

- Board games such as Monopoly (C), Hi Ho Cherry-o (C), and Jenga (C), and several decks of playing cards
- Miscellaneous game pieces, such as playing cards, tokens, dice, timekeeping devices, and spinners

Description of Activity

Participants reflect on the presence of fairness in games and design a fair game.

Note: Part 1 of this activity is the same as the Fairness Game segment of the workshop Opening.

Part 1. Tell the group that because they have worked so hard in previous workshops, today they have earned free time. Say you would like them to spend the time together as a group or at least in teams. Invite them to form teams and play any of the board games or a game with the playing cards. You and your co-leader can join. Let play continue as long as possible, at least 20 minutes. At the end of your time, ask each game team to declare a winner.

Invite the winners to sit in front of the group. Ask what enabled them to win: Chance? Skill? Previous experience with the game? Determination? Intelligence?

Ask if the game was fair.

If a game involved chance (such as a card game or a game with dice or spinners), ask if chance is fair. If chance is not fair, does it at least attempt to "level the playing field?"

Say that being fair sounds easy, but it often is not. People come to a game with different skills and gifts. Some have good fine motor skills. Others are good at thinking and planning ahead. It is hard to design any experience that is fair in that it enables everyone to use their own abilities to compete evenly with everyone else.

Part 2. Can the group name games that truly are fair and do not involve chance? Invite them to design one.

If the group is larger than eight, break into smaller groups. Indicate the materials you have brought for them to use, and, if appropriate, direct them toward materials outside your meeting space. Say:

The goal is to design a completely fair non-chance-based game. It should be accessible to everyone. It should be able to be completed within ten minutes or in rounds that last no more than ten minutes. Give teams ten minutes to design the games and two minutes each to explain their game to the larger group. Ask for any observations from the group about games and fairness.

Variation

If you have enough time and all the necessary materials, play each game.

LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Reflect on the workshop with your co-leader. Did the workshop include enough physical activity for this group? Are youth sharing their personal ethical and moral dilemmas? Make sure you always leave room to discuss these during the workshop.

Is the group starting to bond? If not, perhaps some time to play games or an extended check-in is in order for the next few workshops.

Read the next workshop for any advance preparation needed and decide who will be responsible for what.

TAKING IT HOME

The future, which we hold in trust for our own children, will be shaped by our fairness to other people's children. — Marian Wright Edelman

IN TODAY'S WORKSHOP... we learned about the life of one of our Canadian Unitarian ancestors, Lotta Hitschmanova. We talked about whether everyday games we play are fair, and how fairness relates to justice.

Leveling the Playing Field

- When it is time to pick a leader or who goes first in a game, how do you choose? The person for whom it has been the longest since they were first? Rock/Paper/Scissors? Dealing out cards until the first diamond is dealt? Shortest straw? Can you think of some creative ways that are just as random? How about the person with the most consonants in their name? The person who has saved the most "Sent" messages in their cell phone? The person who can open a phone book or a dictionary the closest to page 100?
- No country in the world has a perfect justice system, if for no other reason than that people are not perfect. Many organizations around the world advocate for justice for the imprisoned and wrongfully accused. [Amnesty International](#) is one such organization. So is the [Southern Poverty Law Center](#). Visit these websites and read about the cases they support and how you can help.
- [Standing on the Side of Love](#) (SSL) is a Unitarian Universalist campaign to spread love and justice. Visit the website. Does your congregation visibly stand on the side of love by demonstrating or marching in public? Your youth group might start a congregational trend by purchasing SSL shirts and wearing them during group justice activities, such as serving at

a soup kitchen or the Martin Luther King Day March or PRIDE Parade. You can customize them with the name of your congregation, too.

Fairness Dilemmas

Remember this dilemma from today's workshop?

As part of an experiment, you are offered \$100. There are two stipulations to the offer: 1) You must share it with a partner. However, you decide how much to keep and how much to share. 2) If your partner refuses their share, neither of you gets a penny. How much do you offer your partner? 50/50? What if the partner says, "I won't accept anything less than \$90." What do you do?

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: REAL LIFE CHALLENGES

Materials for Activity

- "Bicycle Rack" newsprint sheet from Opening

Description of Activity

Youth discuss ethical challenges they have faced.

If someone shared an experience in check-in or during any workshop activities that the group would like to explore further, do so now. This could be particularly useful if an experience resonated with many participants. If several challenges are already listed on the Bicycle Rack, invite the youth to choose one to discuss. It need not be related to this workshop's topic.

You might use these questions to structure a discussion:

- What virtues could this challenge bring into play?
- Did this challenge involve a conflict of values? If so, what values? How do they conflict?
- What are possible solutions to this challenge? Are they equally good? Why or why not?

Affirm that it is always easier to see good solutions in hindsight and that living a life according to virtues we want to nurture or values we hold dear is not always easy. We do not need to always "get it right," but we do need to keep trying.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: TUG OF WAR (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 2, [The Tee Shirt Pull](#) (included in this document)
- A long rope

Preparation for Activity

- Read the scenario presented in Leader Resource 2. If needed, adapt the numbers so this activity will work with your group. Print the Leader Resource—one copy for you, one for a volunteer reader.
- Set up an open space where the group can safely play tug-of-war.

Description of Activity

Tell the group:

Sometimes it does not matter what is fair, but how much pull you have.

Ask the youth to name experiences they have had where "pull" mattered. Keep their examples in mind as possible scenarios to use if you decide to play tug of war more than once.

Invite the group to explore how "pull" ("influence") works by playing a game of tug of war. Ask for a volunteer to read a scenario aloud. Tell the group that by the end of this activity, everyone will have a role.

Have the volunteer read the scenario from Leader Resource 2, The Tee Shirt Pull. As each character is introduced, identify the required number of volunteer to join the tug of war on the appropriate side of the rope.

After the game, ask how a game of tug of war can be made more balanced and fair. Does evening the numbers make for a fair competition? Tell the group that this dilemma really happened and it played out in a similar fashion.

Whom were participants cheering for in the game? Did they feel their side won? Was the winning fair? Have there been times that winning is so important that you don't care whether it is fair or not? Talk more about these situations. Distinguish the different values that are clashing. Acknowledge that though being fair is extremely important, there may be times that other values may be more important.

If time permits, play again with a scenario suggested by youth.

STORY: LOTTA HITSCHMANOVA, MOTHER OF A THOUSAND

By Janeen Grohsmeyer.

A century ago, when Lotta Hitschmanova was young, she lived with her sister Lilly and their mother and father in a spacious home in the ancient city of Prague. Their nanny spoke to them in Czech, the language of the local people, their governess spoke to them in French, and their mother and father spoke to them in English, German, Italian, or Spanish, depending on the day. Lotta studied Latin and Greek at school. "Learn to speak with different people," her mother said, "and you will go far."

When Lotta was twenty-three, she traveled to France and studied political science and journalism at the Sorbonne University. But in 1938, soon after she came home to Prague, the Nazis invaded her country. In her articles for the newspaper, Lotta wrote against the Nazis. "It is not fair," she wrote, "for them to take our country and our homes." But the Nazis took what they wanted and killed those who disagreed.

So, Lotta left her home and her family, and traveled to Belgium. Soon, the Nazis invaded Belgium. Lotta went to France and tried to get a visa so she could travel to the United States, far across the ocean. She was denied a visa, but she worked in an office helping other people to leave, speaking to them in their own languages. She began working with the Unitarian Service Committee, and when the Nazis invaded France, the Service Committee helped Lotta escape.

In 1942, she sailed across the Atlantic Ocean to Canada, where she settled in Ottawa and joined a Unitarian church. But Lotta did not forget the people who were still in Europe, the people caught in a terrible war. With her knowledge of many languages, she translated documents and letters, helping her new country fight the Nazis. She also traveled around Canada, speaking at churches and public meetings, asking for food, medicine, blankets and clothing to send to the people whose countries were being destroyed by war.

In 1945, the war against the Nazis ended, but the need for help didn't end. Thousands of people, many of them children, were hungry or wounded and had no place to live. Lotta Hitschmanova helped to create the Unitarian Service Committee of Canada, and her work went on. "We have much," she told the people in Canada. "The war refugees have nothing, and that is not fair." Canadians gave money, food, and clothes, and Lotta took it all to Europe to share. There, she gave the people what she had. Then she asked them what they needed to take care of themselves. "We must listen first," she said, "then help."

In time, and with help, people in Europe rebuilt their countries. But other places and people were still being shattered by war, by drought, by disease: Italy, Japan, Korea, Vietnam, India, Bangladesh, Lesotho, Greece, Jordan, Palestine, Botswana, Indonesia, Nepal. For thirty-five years, Lotta would travel to these places and ask how she could help. Then she would return to Canada, asking for donations and letting people know how they could share.

Lotta Hitschmanova devoted her life to helping others. She never married and she never had children of her own. But she was known as the "Mother of a Thousand Orphans" and she created a legacy of love and fairness that lasts to this day.

Time Line

1909 Born November 28 in Prague, in today's Czech Republic into a Jewish family

1929-1935 Studies at the Sorbonne in Paris and at Prague University, where she obtains a doctorate in French literature.

1938-1942 As a journalist in Prague, opposes the Nazis and is forced to flee, first to Belgium and then to France

1942 Arrives in Canada as a political refugee

1945 Creates the Canadian branch of the Unitarian Service Committee

1946 Undertakes her first fundraising tour of Canada for the victims of war in France and Czechoslovakia and later in Austria, Greece, and Italy.

1952 Launches an aid program for South Korea and Hong Kong

1955-1980 Launches aid programs in India, Palestine, Vietnam, Jordan, Bangladesh, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Indonesia, Nepal and Cyprus.

1981 Suffering from the onset of Alzheimer's disease, she retires.

1990 Dies on August 1 in Ottawa, Canada

LEADER RESOURCE 1: FAIRNESS DILEMMAS

Dilemma 1

As part of an experiment, you are offered \$100. There are two stipulations to the offer: 1) You must share it with a partner. However, you decide how much to keep and how much to share. 2) If your partner refuses their share, neither of you gets a penny. How much do you offer your partner? 50/50? What if the partner says, "I won't accept anything less than \$90." What do you do?

Dilemma 2

Here is a fairness/justice issue you may not have thought about, but will affect you as a young taxpayer. The U.S. has a huge national debt that has been accumulating for decades. It is not new, but it does keep growing. If we do not make major cuts in spending, the future for young Americans seems bleak.

Some politicians call for cuts in public programs, saying the government is not responsible for funding such assistance as grants for lower income youth to attend college, contributions to Planned Parenthood, Headstart, and school lunch programs. However, some people say these cuts hurt the most vulnerable members of our society and are unfair.

Other politicians say we should cut defense spending and stop offering tax cuts to the wealthy.

Very few call for cuts in Medicare. Medicare is a program that supplements the health care costs for citizens over 65. As baby boomers flow into the Medicare system, the cost of maintaining this program will grow exponentially. Many people say it would not be fair to cut Medicare or reduce the number of people who qualify (by raising the qualified age, or cutting benefits to wealthier recipients), because people should be able to rely on Medicare to help them after they retire.

What do you think? Cuts need to be made and someone will suffer, no matter what. Who suffers cuts? What is fair?

Dilemma 3

Pat, Corey, and Sam all cannot wait to audition for the school musical. They all hope to be cast in the lead. Corey had the lead in the musical last year and was a big hit. The music director decides that Corey can have the lead this year without an audition because Corey will be perfect for the part. What does Corey do?

Pat and Sam are waiting by Corey's locker on the day of the audition. "Let's go to the audition together!" they say to Corey. They are both excited at the opportunity to get the lead. What does Corey say to Pat and Sam? How would you feel and react if you were Pat or Sam, and Corey told you they were pre-cast in the lead, without an audition?

LEADER RESOURCE 2: THE TEE SHIRT PULL

Main Street High School has a dilemma. A student wears a tee shirt that some people think is inappropriate, but some do not. The dilemma will be solved by a tug-of-war.

[Bring out the rope.]

A youth wears a tee shirt to school that says, "Gay? Fine by me."

[Pick a volunteer to be the tee shirt wearer. Ask them to hold one end of the rope.]

A parent sees the tee shirt and is upset about the tee shirt, which they say encourages homosexuality in school.

[Choose another volunteer to be the first parent. Position them opposite the tee shirt wearer.]

The parent calls two other parents to protest. [Two volunteers join the parent side.]

These parents call the principal, who sides with them. [Principal joins parents.]

Two friends of the youth start wearing the same tee shirt in protest.

[Two volunteers join tee shirt wearer's side.]

A youth prints tee shirts saying, "Gay? NOT fine by me." They get their friend to wear it with them.

[Two more join the parents' side.]

A couple of parents hear about the ruckus and choose to support their children's freedom of speech.

[Two volunteers join the tee shirt wearer's side.]

The principal takes the issue to the five-member school board, which, hearing mostly from parents, sides with the principal and others who do not want the youth to wear the tee shirt.

[Five people join first parent.]

The youth contacts the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), who inform the principal that if any tee shirt with words is allowed in school, they must allow "Gay? Fine by me." tee shirts. The ACLU has over 500,000 members.

[The rest of the group, including facilitators, join the tee shirt wearer's side. This should make that side the winner. If not, invent reasons for people to defect over to the first youth's side, such as "The school board did not want a lawsuit." or "Parents who loved liberty saw the logic of this and stopped the protest."]

LEADER RESOURCE 3: LOTTA HITSCHMANOVA

Used with permission from USC Canada, <http://www.DrLotta.ca>



FIND OUT MORE

Read more about the life of Lotta Hitschmanova at the [Canadian Museum of Civilization](#), the [Dictionary of Unitarian and Universalist Biography](#), *The Canadians: Adventures of our People* by Margaret Gooding (Toronto: Canadian Unitarian Council, 1985); or [Notable American Unitarians](#).

[Visible Thinking](#) is a Harvard University program intended to nurture thoughtful students. The website offers many different ways to think about dilemmas, including using fairness and creativity.

WORKSHOP 6: RESPONSIBILITY

INTRODUCTION

You cannot hope to build a better world without improving the individuals. To that end, each of us must work for our own improvement and, at the same time, share a general responsibility for all humanity, our particular duty being to aid those to whom we think we can be most useful.
— Marie Curie, scientist

This workshop focuses on responsibility. Youth identify responsibilities they already fulfill and gain confidence about handling future responsibilities. The story and activities ask participants to articulate how they are responsible not only for themselves and their families, but also for other people and all life that shares our planet.

GOALS

This workshop will:

- Examine the meaning of responsibility
- Explore scenarios in which people's not taking responsibility causes problems
- Guide youth to identify themselves as responsible people.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Explore the meaning of responsibility
- Discuss dilemmas where responsibility is needed
- Identify experiences where they have or have not accepted responsibility, and commit to being responsible in a particular aspect of their life.

WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	10
Activity 1: Two Sides to Every Virtue	10
Activity 2: Who Is Responsible?	15
Activity 3: Dilemma	10
Activity 4: Story — Paper, Plastic, or Cloth?	10

Activity 5: Creating a Web	15
Activity 6: Practice	15
Faith in Action: Cloth Bags	
Closing	5
Alternate Activity 1: Real Life Challenges	
Alternate Activity 2: A Sound of Thunder	30
Alternate Activity 3: A Web of Responsibility	15

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Being responsible can be a burden if we feel we have to solve all the world's problems by ourselves. Some people become overwhelmed by their own sense of responsibility, and give into feelings of impotence and become apathetic. Others take responsibility for justice causes to such a degree that they neglect responsibilities to family, friends, or themselves. Moderation is the key. How do you find balance in your practice of the virtue of responsibility?

If responsibility is coinage, how do you spend yours? Are there justice causes you feel dedicated toward, and others you feel you cannot spend time on? Have you struggled with competing responsibilities? If you have insights into what works for you, consider sharing them with the group, in an appropriate manner.

OPENING (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- Group covenant (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Bicycle Rack newsprint sheet (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Alternate Activity 1, [Real Life Challenges](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read Alternate Activity 1, Real Life Challenges. Prepare to incorporate it into this Opening, if you think you will have time and you observe that youth want to discuss challenges shared in their check-in.
- Post the chalice lighting words.
- Post the group covenant.
- Post the Bicycle Rack sheet the group began in Workshop 1, Opening, or label a new sheet of newsprint "Bicycle Rack," and post.

Description of Activity

Invite a volunteer to light the chalice while you lead the group to recite the chalice lighting words:

The thought manifests as the word
The word manifests as the deed;
The deed develops into habit;
And habit hardens into character;
So watch the thought and its ways with care,
And let it spring from love
Born out of concern for all beings...
As the shadow follows the body,
As we think, so we become.
— from *The Dhammapada, Sayings of the Buddha*

Invite the youth to check in by sharing any moral challenges they have experienced since the last meeting. If appropriate, use Alternate Activity 1 to further explore the group's challenges. If youth appear interested in discussing a particular challenge but you feel there is not enough time in this meeting, ask the person who shared it to write a short description of the challenge on the Bicycle Rack.

Tell participants that today you will talk about responsibility.

ACTIVITY 1: TWO SIDES TO EVERY VIRTUE (10 MINUTES)

Description of Activity

Participants identify positive and negative aspects of the virtue of responsibility.

Invite youth to sit for a moment and think about responsibility as a virtue. These prompts might be useful:

- What have you been told about responsibility: What it means, when to use it, when not to use it?
- What does "irresponsible" mean to you? Have you ever been told that you acted in an irresponsible way? Who decided it was irresponsible?
- Is there anyone you admire who is responsible?
- Can someone be too responsible? What does that look like?
- To whom, or to what, are you responsible? Who decides?
- What other questions come to mind when you think about responsibility?
- What happens if responsibility is not moderated?

Invite youth to share their reflections, with statements that start off with "On the positive side..." or "On the negative side...". For example, "On the positive side, when I have responsibilities in a group, I feel I truly belong." or "On the negative side, if I take on too many responsibilities, I get burned out and then I'm no good to myself or anybody else." If youth have statements that do not fit either clause, discuss them as a group.

Make sure the discussion covers these points:

- Sometimes being responsible toward one person or commitment can cause you to act less responsibly toward someone, or something, else. At times, you may need to balance competing responsibilities.
- The virtue of moderation has a place here, too. Everyone must decide for themselves where to place the bar on matters of responsibility. Take the issue of drunk driving. You might be responsible to the level of: "I don't drink and drive." Or, you might set your bar higher, to the level of: "I prevent my friends from driving drunk." What is the difference? Is there yet another level?

- Encourage the youth to think of responsibility as coinage. You cannot take on responsibility for the entire world. You need to decide which responsibilities are most important to you.

ACTIVITY 2: WHO IS RESPONSIBLE? (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Leader Resource 1, [Who Does It?](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read the Leader Resource. If you wish to add items to the list, insert them where they belong in the progression of responsibility the list offers. Print the Leader Resource.
- Prepare two sheets of newsprint. Write “Me” on one and “Someone Else” on the other. Post at opposite ends of the room, leaving open floor space in between.

Description of Activity

Participants acknowledge the responsibilities they already carry and observe the responsibilities of their peers.

Indicate the two newsprint sheets you have posted. Tell the youth you will read items and ask youth to move to the “Me” sheet if they have responsibility for the activity all the time, stand in the middle if they have responsibility sometimes, and move to the “Someone Else” sheet if they never have responsibility for it.

Read the first item. Once the youth choose sides, allow some discussion. Continue until you have read all the items on the list.

Process with these questions:

- Your level of responsibility has probably increased with age. What responsibilities did you have when you were six? Ten?
- When you are given a new responsibility, did someone show you how to carry out your responsibility?
- What happens when you do not do the acts you are responsible for?
- What responsibilities do you anticipate gaining over the next few years?
- Have you even been given a responsibility you did not feel ready for?

Share, in these words or your own:

Could we all agree that we each are responsible, to a great extent, for our own behavior? Maybe so, yet many people have a difficult time accepting responsibility when their behavior has negative consequences. Some people have a harder time than others. Then, if you accept responsibility for yourself, your friends, and your family, you will spend more of your “responsibility coinage.” Then, if you widen your circle to include groups you belong to, like your neighborhood and city, community organizations, your congregation, that is another layer of responsibility, known as social responsibility.

As you mature, it becomes appropriate for you to accept more responsibility. No one would ask a six-year-old to make decisions about how to decrease their carbon footprint. However, a child can accept responsibility for not littering. As good citizens, we are asked to assume some responsibility in many areas, including the well-being of the planet. At each of these stages, you need to decide how much coinage to spend and where to spend it.

Ask:

Who has an example of a decision about how to spend “responsibility coinage? When could choices related to responsibility be difficult or stressful for you?

ACTIVITY 3: DILEMMA (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 2, [Responsibility Dilemmas](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Print the Leader Resource for yourself and volunteer readers.

Description of Activity

Youth discuss scenarios involving ethical dilemmas.

Seek a volunteer to read one of the two scenarios. Open the floor to reactions and answers. Ask participants if this reminds them of other dilemmas encountered or that they have heard of, real or fictional. How could responsibility play a part in this dilemma? What are some of the reasons people act in ways that seem irresponsible?

ACTIVITY 4: STORY — PAPER, PLASTIC, OR CLOTH? (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Story, "[Paper, Plastic or Cloth?](#)" (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read the story and prepare to present it.

- Optional: Copy the story for all participants.

Description of Activity

Participants consider how to act responsibly as stewards of the planet, by hear and discussing a story.

Read or tell the story.

Lead a discussion, with these questions:

- What reasons are stated for why the Tanzanian government wants to decrease the use of plastic bags? Were any of these reasons new to you?
- Do you believe plastic bags cause similar problems to the ecology of our community? Why, or why not?
- Do you think legislation is a good way to insure more responsible ecological behavior? What other ways might work?

Ask the youth for their observations about paper, plastic, and cloth shopping bags. Allow some comments, then say:

Not too many years ago, there was a movement to return to the use of paper bags instead of plastic. Then, the movement toward cloth bags moved into the mainstream of American life.

In terms of what we eat, people started demanding organic food in order to ingest fewer chemicals. But some organic food has to be shipped long distances, creating a heavy carbon footprint. Now many people advocate for eating locally. Yet, sometimes local fruits, vegetables, and dairy products in the grocery store cost much more than non-local items. This means people with lower incomes may have to choose: Should I be responsible to the earth, or to my household budget?

Every day we are learning more about how production and consumption of our food and other goods affect the earth. Is it hard to sometimes know which action is most responsible towards the earth? How do we find a balance—use moderation—when we have to make decisions about being ecologically responsible?

ACTIVITY 5: CREATING A WEB (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 3, [We Are Connected](#) (included in this document) and a basket
- A ball of yarn

Preparation for Activity

- Alternate Activity 3, A Web of Responsibility, a longer version of this activity, results in a large mural. Read both activities and choose one.
- Print Leader Resource 3. Cut apart the quotations (18 are provided) and place in a basket.
- Identify a table surface or open floor space to display the yarn web this activity creates, at least through this workshop.

Description of Activity

Participants learn an earth-centered religious perspective on our responsibility to each other and to the earth and experience interconnectedness by playing a game.

Say, in these words or your own:

Our seventh UU Principle says we agree to affirm and promote respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. This Principle recognizes the strong identification many Unitarian Universalists feel with earth-centered or pagan beliefs. These religions—many with roots in the ancient religions of indigenous people—emphasize our connection to the earth. The earth is a living creation and our home; therefore, we are responsible to help sustain and protect it.

Since we are all citizens of the living planet, we are all connected: to each other, to our animal and plant siblings, too. Our way of being should respect these connections. We are responsible to each other and all living things.

Invite participants to pick quotes from the basket and then gather in a circle. Holding the ball of yarn, read your quotation aloud, then wrap the yarn around your wrist 3 or 4 times. Invite someone across the circle to read their quotation. When they have finished, toss them the ball of yarn. Have them wrap the yarn around their wrist, then choose someone else to read a quotation. Continue until everyone has had a turn. Have the last reader toss the yarn back to you.

Say, in these words or your own:

We are connected. The web of existence means my actions affect you and your actions me and our actions affect the planet.

We are responsible. I am responsible to you and you are responsible to me and we are responsible to the living planet, the only home we have.

Ask participants to think of ways they act responsibly: for themselves, one another, other life forms, or the planet as a whole. An example might include, "I compost to return nutrients to the earth." Go first, to model: State your example, then carefully untangle yourself from the web without letting go of the yarn. Have volunteers take turns; encourage the group to keep the web intact. After everyone has extracted themselves, carry the web together to the place you chose to display it.

ACTIVITY 6: PRACTICE (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Participants' journals, and writing instruments
- Participants' clipboards with anklets (Workshop 1, Activity 3, Practice)
- Beads, and waterproof markers and/or other decorations
- Extra clipboards and string/hemp, and scissors

Preparation for Activity

- If needed, read instructions for making the anklets in the Before You Start section of the program Introduction and in Workshop 1, Decision Making.
- Retrieve participants' clipboards with anklets, and participants' journals if these are also kept on-site.
- Write on newsprint, and post:
 - What activities are you currently responsible for?
 - When was there a time that you acted responsibly?
 - What made it possible for you to accept responsibility in this instance? Has fulfilling the actions you are responsible for now taught you anything about how to be successfully responsible in the future?
 - Have you ever experienced circumstances where it would have been helpful for you to be more responsible?
 - What are the areas of your life now where you could apply the virtue of responsibility to help you be the person you want to be?

Description of Activity

Participants understand how the use of responsibility affects their lives.

Invite youth to take five minutes to journal, using the questions on newsprint as prompts, or to draw or meditate on the questions.

Additional prompts you may add, while the group journals:

- Is it always clear when you should accept responsibility? If your actions have unintentional consequences, should you still accept responsibility for the outcome?

Invite participants to share journal writing to their level of comfort. You may wish to remind youth that you are a mandated reporter and, if anyone discloses behavior that could be dangerous to themselves or others, you will need to report it. Listen to what is said.

When all who wish to have shared, remind the group that though the world has many problems, they are not responsible for fixing them all. People who feel they need to fix everything often become burned out. People who are apathetic and feel responsible for nothing are frustrating. Remember that moderation is also a virtue. Use these words, or your own:

Malcolm X said, "If you're not part of the solution, you're part of the problem." He did not say, "If you are not the solution, you are the problem." The human race has to work together to solve the problems the species created. Sometimes you might be a part of the solution in a small way, like using cloth bags. At other times, you might play a bigger part. You might lobby your legislator to support the Clean Air Act. You might work for the Environmental Protection Agency.

Share these words from Unitarian minister Edward Everett Hale:

I am only one
but still I am one.
I cannot do everything,
But still I can do something.
And because I cannot do everything
I will not refuse to do the something that I can do.

Be sure to save five minutes for the youth to decorate their cork beads. Distribute participants' clipboards, new beads (one per youth), and decorating materials. Invite youth to decorate a bead while reflecting on their personal experiences with responsibility. Remind them that the beads will act as a reminder to use their highest values.

As participants finish, have them add this bead to the anklet they started in Workshop 1.

If any participant missed Workshop 1, provide them with a clipboard, hemp, a bead for their name bead, and instruction to begin their anklet.

Collect journals, clipboards, and anklet-making materials, and store for the next workshop.

CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- [Taking It Home](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Adapt the Taking It Home section and copy for all participants.
- Optional: Print the closing quotation (below) for a volunteer to read.

Description of Activity

Have a volunteer read the quotation while another extinguishes the chalice:

It's a very Aboriginal thing to do, to give younger people greater responsibilities within the community as they become able to take those responsibilities on. It is a culturally appropriate transfer of roles that involves respect in both directions... from the younger to the older and the older to the younger. — Jackie Huggins, author, historian and human rights activist

Distribute Taking It Home.

FAITH IN ACTION: CLOTH BAGS

Materials for Activity

- Plain cloth shopping bags
- Fabric paint
- Stencils of the congregation's logo, chalice, or other artwork

Preparation for Activity

- You can purchase plain cloth bags from many vendors, including Michael's craft stores and websites [The Cloth Bag Company](#) and [EcoBags](#).

Description of Activity

Youth decorate cloth shopping bags.

Gather as a group and decorate cloth bags with your congregation's logo, a chalice design, or other artwork. Sell the bags for cost or add an additional amount to raise funds to donate to an environmental organization.

LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Reflect on the workshop with your co-leader. Which activities did the group enjoy most? Were varied learning styles addressed? Are group dynamics taking shape in a healthy way or are there issues you should address? Did participants keep to the covenant? Do co-leaders feel the work is shared equally? Did you have fun?

Read the next workshop for any advance preparation needed and decide who will be responsible for what.

TAKING IT HOME

You cannot hope to build a better world without improving the individuals. To that end, each of us must work for our own improvement and, at the same time, share a general responsibility for all humanity, our particular duty being to aid those to whom we think we can be most useful.
— Marie Curie, scientist

IN TODAY'S WORKSHOP... we talked about the virtue of responsibility and the ever-widening circle of whom and what we are responsible to and for. We talked about personal responsibility, responsibility at home and school, and responsibility for the care of the planet. We explored the complexities of making good choices, including how to balance feelings of responsibility.

Today's Quote

Marie Curie says we have a particular duty to people "to whom we think we can be most useful." Could this guideline help you decide where to spend your socially responsible coinage? Think about the ways you give to society now. Are you using your gifts and talents in the most helpful way?

Personal Responsibility

- Quizilla is a website where people post quizzes and other items they create. [Take a quiz](#) about personal responsibility. Design a quiz with your friends based on your true life experiences. Do not use real names or details that identify people you know. Give the quiz to other friends. Would they act in the same way as you?
- Sometimes elders tell stories about how great their responsibilities were when they were growing up. Have you heard stories like that? Next time you do, hold a serious discussion with the elder. What was their life like? Did they have responsibilities similar to yours? Share with them your responsibilities. It's possible you have responsibilities they did not have and never thought of.

Ecology

- Read about [buying clothing](#) according to the "rule of three," or [calculate](#) your ecological footprint.
- Check out [The Story of Stuff Project](#) (at www.storyofstuff.com/). A short, fun video provides details on the process of how modern things get into our hands: from manufacturing, to shipping, to sales. If you click on "Teaching Tools" you will find some activities to pursue on your own.
- [The Plastic Bag Report](#) keeps track of places that pass legislation reducing the use of plastic bags. Is your state on the list?

Did You Know... ?

Dorothy Day (1897-1980) was a crusader for justice. This radical Catholic reformer started the [Catholic Worker Movement](#) and has been nominated for sainthood. One of her most famous sayings is included in *Singing the Living Tradition*, our Unitarian Universalist hymnbook:

People say, what is the sense of our small effort.
They cannot see that we must lay one brick at a
time, take one step at a time.

A pebble cast into a pond causes ripples that
spread in all directions. Each one of our
thoughts, words and deeds is like that.
No one has a right to sit down and feel
hopeless.

There's too much work to do.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: REAL LIFE CHALLENGES

Materials for Activity

- "Bicycle Rack" newsprint sheet from Opening

Description of Activity

Youth discuss ethical challenges they have faced.

If someone shared an experience in check-in or during any workshop activities that the group would like to explore further, do so now. This could be particularly useful if an experience resonated with many participants. If several challenges are already listed on the Bicycle Rack, invite the youth to choose one to discuss. It need not be related to this workshop's topic.

You might use these questions to structure a discussion:

- What virtues could this challenge bring into play?
- Did this challenge involve a conflict of values? If so, what values? How do they conflict?

- What are possible solutions to this challenge? Are they equally good? Why or why not?

Affirm that it is always easier to see good solutions in hindsight and that living a life according to virtues we want to nurture or values we hold dear is not always easy. We do not need to always "get it right," but we do need to keep trying.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: A SOUND OF THUNDER (30 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- An audio recording of the Ray Bradbury short story, "A Sound of Thunder"
- A computer with Internet connection, and an audio player

Preparation for Activity

- Obtain an audio recording of the story "A Sound of Thunder," included in *R is for Rocket* by Ray Bradbury. You can access an audio version on [YouTube](#), in three parts, with a total run-time of about 25 minutes. Your local library might have another version, such as *Something Wicked This Way Comes and A Sound of Thunder [Unabridged] [Audible Audio Edition]* by [Ray Bradbury](#), narrated by [Stefan Rudnicki](#) (Blackstone Audiobooks, 2006). This story was the basis of a 2004 movie, but the movie is not recommended.
- Test audio equipment and queue the story. If using the YouTube version, open three screens and queue all three segments before you begin.

Description of Activity

Participants reflect on interconnectedness by hearing a story.

Tell the group they will hear a story whose author, Ray Bradbury, is a well-known science fiction writer and a Unitarian Universalist.

Play the audio. Discuss the story afterward. Ask:

- What does this story have to do with responsibility?
- Ray Bradbury writes mostly science fiction, but sometimes his stories are dark fantasy, more horrific. Does the premise of this story—that the death of a single butterfly could change human history—frighten you? Why or why not?
- Why do you think Bradbury wrote this story? What seems Unitarian Universalist about it? Does it connect with any of our Principles? How?

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 3: A WEB OF RESPONSIBILITY (30 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 3, [We Are Connected](#) (included in this document) and a basket
- A ball of yarn
- A large roll of plain paper, markers, and tape

Preparation for Activity

- Activity 5, Creating a Web is a shorter version of this activity. Read both, and choose one.
- Print the Leader Resource. Cut apart the quotations (18 are provided) and place in the basket.
- Identify and measure an open floor space the youth will create when they gather in a circle. Cut enough sheets of paper to cover the floor space. Then, tape the sheets of paper together to form a "carpet" where the youth will be able to place the yarn web they make.
- Decide if you will affix the yarn web to the paper or trace the web pattern on the paper, with markers. Bring the markers (and tape if you will need it) when you form a circle with the youth.
- Find a place to display the paper as a large mural, and obtain any permission you will need.

Description of Activity

Participants learn an earth-centered religious perspective on our responsibility to each other and to the earth and experience interconnectedness by playing a game.

Say, in these words or your own:

Our seventh UU Principle says we agree to affirm and promote respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. This Principle recognizes the strong identification many Unitarian Universalists feel with earth-centered or pagan beliefs. These religions—many with roots in the ancient religions of indigenous people—emphasize our connection to the earth. The earth is a living creation and our home; therefore, we are responsible to help sustain and protect it.

Since we are all citizens of the living planet, we are all connected: to each other, to our animal and plant siblings, too. Our way of being should respect these connections. We are responsible to each other and all living things.

Invite participants to pick quotes from the basket and then gather in a circle. Holding the ball of yarn, read your quotation aloud, then wrap the yarn around your wrist 3 or 4 times. Invite someone across the circle to read their quotation. When they have finished, toss them the ball of yarn. Have them wrap the yarn around their wrist, then choose someone else to read a quotation. Continue until everyone has had a turn. Have the last reader toss the yarn back to you.

Say, in these words or your own:

We are connected. The web of existence means my actions affect you and your actions me and our actions affect the planet.

We are responsible. I am responsible to you and you are responsible to me and we are responsible to the living planet, the only home we have.

Instruct the youth to extract themselves from the yarn, one at a time, trying to keep the web intact, and then together lay the web on the paper you have placed on the floor.

Pass markers around the circle. Ask participants to think of ways they act responsibly: for themselves, each other, other life forms, or the planet as a whole. An example might include, "I compost, to return nutrients to the earth." Have a co-leader and/or volunteer begin taping the yarn to the paper, keeping the web's shape, or tracing the web pattern with marker—whichever you have decided to do.

Tell the youth you would like them to write their responsible act inside the group's web, to create a mural together. Tell them where the mural will be displayed.

Go first to model stating your example, then writing the example in one cell of the web.

Engage volunteers to carry the web to its display location. Post it as a visible reminder of the virtue of responsibility, in action.

STORY: PAPER, PLASTIC, OR CLOTH?

The ban started in 2006, on Tanzania's Zanzibar archipelago. The Zanzibar islands on the Indian Ocean are famous for their pristine beaches and their history of trade in spices and slaves. Today, Zanzibar depends on tourism for most of its income. One month after this island paradise was named as potentially becoming one of the most environmentally endangered islands on the planet, the ban took effect.

What was banned?

Plastic bags.

Thin, plastic bags, used by most vendors, were endangering the islands' fragile ecology. A study found that the bags clogged water channels, killed marine life and livestock, polluted the soil, and creating breeding places for malaria-carrying mosquitoes. A partial ban was passed in 2006. In 2011, the Tanzanian government was considering a complete ban on the manufacture and use of all plastic bags everywhere in the country, which is also home to the Serengeti National Park, a world famous site for safaris.

A total ban will mean anyone manufacturing, dispersing, or importing plastic bags in Tanzania could face six months in prison, a fine, or both. Retailers and manufacturers have fought the ban, claiming it is impossible to enforce and will hurt the economy. Others say it will help the economy, because plastic bags manufacturing is mostly automated, and the ban will create jobs for people to produce reusable cloth bags. Cloth bags will need farmers to supply hemp and sisal. Hemp and sisal are biodegradable, unlike the plastic bags, which can take up to 1,000 years to break down, and leave tiny pieces of plastic in the soil.

Paper, plastic, or cloth?

Tanzania is not the only nation to ban plastic bags. Other countries and some U.S. cities have banned them.

Environmentalists started voicing concerns about plastic bags decades ago. Aside from the bags' danger to animals, waterways, and soil, plastic is a non-renewable resource, created from oil. But do they need to be banned? Plastic bag recycling is available in some places, and people are reusing plastic bags more than ever before. This keeps them out of landfills longer. Plastic bags are also inexpensive. Some people prefer plastic bags.

Paper, plastic, or cloth?

Some people switched to paper bags. Paper bags are biodegradable. Paper comes from trees, and trees can be planted and grown, so paper could be considered a renewable resource. Paper bags do not pose a threat to wildlife. On the other hand, there are concerns. Some paper companies cut down old-growth timber, so even with replanting, forests are being harvested at a greater rate than they can be replenished. Paper bags cost more than plastic bags, so some retailers that use them increase the prices of their products to cover the cost of the bags. Still, some people prefer paper bags.

Paper, plastic, or cloth?

Some people are using cloth bags. This is how our ancestors shopped: They took their cloth bags to market with them. Cloth bags can be reused for years, and many are biodegradable. Nowadays, you can buy them at the check-out stands of most major retailers. Although you pay for a cloth bag out of pocket, versus getting a plastic or paper bag for free, in the end many say a cloth bag pays for itself many times over because it does not cause environmental damage that someone must pay to fix—if it can be fixed at all. On the other hand, some people say it is hard to remember to bring them when shopping and that they can carry germs, if not properly laundered.

Paper, plastic, or cloth? What do you say at the check-out, when offered this option?

Other factors affect how "green" your bag is: How much energy and other resources are needed to produce it? How far from you is the bag manufactured? Shipping the bag a long distance uses fossil fuels, which emit carbon dioxide that harms the environment.

Which solution seems the most responsible choice to you: plastic bags, paper bags, or cloth? Maybe you use a combination. Whatever you decide, make a conscious, informed choice. That is the responsible thing to do.

LEADER RESOURCE 1: WHO DOES IT?

At Home...

Laundry

Brushes your teeth

Cooks meals

Decorating your bedroom

Choosing what to watch on television

Driving

Feeds pets

Pays the utility bills

Decorating the house

Babysitting

Deciding how to spend money

Mows the lawn

Dishes

Gathers recyclables

Paying rent or a mortgage

At School or Work...

Choosing lunch

Homework

Getting good grades

Choosing friends

Choosing mates

Helping sibling with homework

Working outside the home

Community and Beyond...

Volunteer at the congregation

Volunteer at another organization

Voting in elections

LEADER RESOURCE 2: RESPONSIBILITY DILEMMAS

Dilemma 1

Are scientists and inventors responsible for the uses of their creations? Hilda is a scientist in a lab that sometimes accepts contracts from outside companies. While working to discover a cure for a disease, Hilda accidentally discovers a biological agent that could be very destructive in the wrong hands. Because Hilda is working under contract to Mass Destruct, Inc., the patent for the new agent belongs to them. Mass Destruct, Inc. could produce the agent and sell it to any nation or person they wish. They decide to sell the agent to the highest bidder, a country called Peaceful Land. Peaceful Land is attacked, without provocation, by Angry Land. In defense, Peaceful Land uses the agent against Angry Land, and kills thousands. Who is responsible for the deaths? Peaceful Land, for using the agent? Angry Land, for starting the war? Mass Destruct, Inc. for selling the agent? Hilda, for creating the agent?

Dilemma 2

A website was recently created that featured ugly remarks about some of the students and teachers at Learning High. Gary overheard some guys talking in the hallway and consequently knows who created the anonymous website. Everyone at school is talking about who might have posted the remarks. The principal purchases software that tells him everyone who visited the website. If the creators do not come forward, she will question every student who visited the website, in the presence of their family. What should Gary do? Does he have a responsibility to tell what he knows? If he takes responsibility, he could help the principal address the problem more efficiently, saving the principal some work and saving other students from embarrassment. Or should he let the principal take care of it her way?

LEADER RESOURCE 3: WE ARE CONNECTED

"We do not inherit the earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children." — Native American Proverb

"Ours is not the task of fixing the entire world all at once, but of stretching out to mend the part of the world that is within our reach." — Clarissa Pinkola Estes, author and psychoanalyst

"What is the use of a house if you haven't got a tolerable planet to put it on?" — Henry David Thoreau

"The care of the Earth is our most ancient and most worthy, and after all our most pleasing responsibility. To cherish what remains of it and to foster its renewal is our only hope." — Wendell Berry, poet

"Peace comes within the souls of men when they realize their oneness with the Universe." — Black Elk

"No one has a right to sit down and feel hopeless.

There's too much work to do." — Dorothy Day

"We never know the worth of water till the well is dry." — Thomas Fuller

"The maltreatment of the natural world and its impoverishment leads to the impoverishment of the human soul. It is related to the outburst of violence in human society. To save the natural world today means to save what is human in humanity." — Raisa Gorbachev, wife of ex-Soviet leader Mikhail and activist

"Let us a little permit Nature to take her own way; she better understands her own affairs than we." — Michel de Montaigne, French author

"And there is no creature on (or within) the earth or a bird that flies with its wings except that they are nations (communities) like you." — Quran 6:38

"Only after the last tree has been cut down; Only after the last fish has been caught; Only after the last river has been poisoned; Only then will you realize that money cannot be eaten." — Cree Indian Prophecy

"We are nature. We are nature seeing nature. We are nature with a concept of nature. Nature weeping. Nature speaking of nature to nature." — Susan Griffin, eco-feminist author

"All of nature is a canvas painted by the hand of God." — Anonymous

"Then God said to Noah and to his sons with him: "I now establish my covenant with you and your descendants after you and with every living creature that was with you — the birds, the livestock, and all the wild animals, all those that came out of the ark with you - every living Creature on the earth." — Genesis 9:8-9.

Love your Mother.

"Woe to the shepherds of Israel who only take care of themselves! Should not the shepherds take care of the flock? You eat the curds, clothe yourselves with the wool and slaughter the choice animals, but you did not take care of the flock! You have not strengthened the weak or healed the sick or bound up the injured. You have not brought back the strays or searched for the lost. You have ruled them harshly and brutally." — Ezekiel 34:2-4.

"The earth is a living thing. Mountains speak, trees sing, lakes can think, pebbles have a soul, rocks have power." — Henry Crow Dog, American Indian activist

"I had assumed that the Earth, the spirit of the Earth, noticed exceptions — those who wantonly damage it and those who do not. But the Earth is wise. It has given itself into the keeping of all, and all are therefore accountable." — Alice Walker, author

FIND OUT MORE

Personal Responsibility

A short article from the [Evansville Courier and Press](#) gives practical advice for motivating young people to be more responsible at home.

Social Responsibility

Community Service and Social Responsibility in Youth, by James Youniss and Miranda Yates (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1997), uses a case study of urban youth to demonstrate how community service can help youth develop a sense of social responsibility and see themselves as agents of change.

Stewards of the Earth

[The Plastic Bag Report](#) keeps track of places that pass legislation reducing the use of plastic bags. Is your state on the list?

[Boomerang Impact](#) sells eco-friendly bags.

The [Eco-Ethical](#) website compiles comments on popular ecological issues individuals face.

An article in the British periodical [The Independent](#) examines the complexities of organic food as the "right" ethical choice.

WORKSHOP 7: COMPASSION

INTRODUCTION

One's life has value so long as one attributes value to the life of others, by means of love, friendship, indignation and compassion. — Simone de Beauvoir

This workshop brings scientific information, religious exploration, and, of course, opportunities for youth to share from their personal experiences with the virtue of compassion. When it comes to compassion, knowing where to draw the line can be difficult. Be sure to include the workshop's questions about balance.

Several activities can be enriched with resources available on the Internet. A computer with Internet access will prove useful, even if you do not have a large monitor for viewing.

Note: Activity 5, Dilemma offers three scenarios, and one involves the death of a pet. If someone in the group has recently experienced the death of a pet, you may wish to use an alternate scenario.

GOALS

This workshop will:

- Examine the meaning of compassion
- Explore situations that call for compassion
- Guide youth to identify themselves as compassionate people.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Explore the meaning of compassion
- Discuss a dilemma where compassion is called for
- Identify experiences when they have, or have not, used compassion, and commit to practicing the virtue of compassion in a particular aspect of their life.

WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	10
Activity 1: Mirror Neurons	10
Activity 2: Ideal vs. Reality	10

Activity 3: Story — The Prodigal Son	15
Activity 4: Compassion and Religion	15
Activity 5: Dilemma	15
Activity 6: Practice	10
Faith in Action: Everyday Compassion	30
Closing	5
Alternate Activity 1: Real Life Challenges	
Alternate Activity 2: Compassionate Heroes	20
Alternate Activity 3: Compassion as a Spiritual Practice	20

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Spend a few moments with Handout 1, Prayer for Compassion by Reverend Elizabeth L. Tarbox. Consider how compassion is, or could be, a spiritual practice in your life.

OPENING (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- Group covenant (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Bicycle Rack newsprint sheet (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Alternate Activity 1, [Real Life Challenges](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read Alternate Activity 1, Real Life Challenges. Prepare to incorporate it into this Opening, if you think you will have time and you observe that youth want to discuss challenges shared in their check-in.
- Post the chalice lighting words.
- Post the group covenant.
- Post the Bicycle Rack sheet the group began in Workshop 1, Opening, or label a new sheet of newsprint "Bicycle Rack," and post.

Description of Activity

Invite a volunteer to light the chalice while you lead the group to recite the chalice lighting words:

The thought manifests as the word
The word manifests as the deed;
The deed develops into habit;
And habit hardens into character;
So watch the thought and its ways with care,
And let it spring from love
Born out of concern for all beings...
As the shadow follows the body,
As we think, so we become.
— from *The Dhammapada, Sayings of the Buddha*

Invite the youth to check in by sharing any moral challenges they have experienced since the last meeting. If appropriate, use Alternate Activity 1 to further explore the group's challenges. If youth appear interested in discussing a particular challenge but you feel there is not enough time in this meeting, ask the person who shared it to write a short description of the challenge on the Bicycle Rack.

Tell participants that today you will talk about compassion.

ACTIVITY 1: MIRROR NEURONS (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Optional: Computer with Internet access, and digital projector or large monitor

Preparation for Activity

- Optional: Preview a six-minute segment on mirror neurons from the PBS program "[The Human Spark](#)." Test equipment and Internet connection before the workshop. Queue the segment to show the group.

Description of Activity

Share the following:

Have you ever seen a competitive ice skater miss a move and fall on the ice? Did you say, "Ouch?" If so, your brain was probably using mirror neurons.

Mirror neurons are brain cells that specialize in carrying out and understanding not just the actions of others, but also their intentions—the social meaning of their behavior and their emotions.

Scientists first discovered the work of mirror neurons almost twenty years ago, while monitoring the brain functions of monkeys. They discovered that certain regions of the brain were active when monkeys ate peanuts. Then, much to their surprise, they discovered that the same regions of the brain were active when the monkeys watched a lab assistant eat a peanut. The regions were also active when monkeys simply heard someone open a peanut.

We now know that mirror neurons in humans are even more developed and flexible than in monkeys. This makes sense because human society is extremely dependent on each of us understanding and engaging with not only the actions of other members of society, but also the reasons and emotions behind actions. Mirror neurons help explain how human beings learn, why people enjoy watching certain sports or forms of art, why exposure to violent media may be harmful, and why some people enjoy pornography.

Scientists are still researching how these complex brain cells work. But we know that the same cells in your brain are activated when you kick a ball, when you watch someone else kick a ball, or when you say "kick the ball." Not only do these cells let you understand that you are watching someone kick a ball, but you also understand that the person wants a good kick. If someone playing kickball gets out and expresses disappointment, you, too, feel the disappointment. Your previous experience with kickball has created a template in your head that you reference every time you play

kickball, watch kickball or even hear a story about kickball. How fascinating is that!

If you have Internet access, watch the PBS segment on mirror neurons.

Discuss implications of this research:

- How do mirror neurons play a part in learning a new behavior? Why did generations of children learn to cook by watching the family cook in the kitchen, even before being able to try cooking themselves?
- If we learn almost as much by watching and listening to others as we do by doing things ourselves, what role does storytelling play in learning?
- The implications might be clear for learning physical actions. What are the implications for learning values and virtues, like compassion? Do mirror neurons increase our capacity for compassion?

ACTIVITY 2: IDEAL VS. REALITY (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape

Preparation for Activity

- Write “Compassion” on a sheet of newsprint, and post.

Description of Activity

Participants identify positive and negative aspects of the day’s virtue.

Ask the group to define “compassion.” Choose a volunteer to take notes on newsprint. Share the definition from the Dictionary.com website: “a feeling of deep sympathy and sorrow for another who is stricken by misfortune, accompanied by a strong desire to alleviate the suffering.” Offer:

Sometimes people distinguish “sympathy” from “compassion” by saying sympathy is feeling sorry for someone, but compassion means you feel their pain and want to alleviate it. Like the definition, most people link compassion with action: Feeling bad is not compassion, you also want to try to end the other’s pain and suffering.

Remind the group that the ancient Greek philosophers believed true happiness resulted when something fulfills its true purpose. They believed the true purpose of a human being is to survive, thrive, and form meaningful relationships. How will living a life of compassion help you do that?

Point out that compassion is central to many religions, including Buddhism, Confucianism, and Christianity; acts of lovingkindness are commanded in Judaism. Why do religions lift this virtue up?

Invite the group to play “Ideal versus Reality.” Explain that one person will take center stage and state an ideal associated with today’s virtue, compassion. Then the floor is open, and anyone can take center stage and state a reality that conflicts with the ideal. For example, an ideal related to compassion is “We should all feel compassion for all living things.” A reality might be “We are animals that consume other living material to live.”

More examples:

- Ideal: Our government should reflect the compassion we feel. / Reality: Different factions in society fight for special treatment, at the cost of others.
- Ideal: Those who are most at risk (sick children, victims of tragedy) should be the ones we feel the most compassion toward. / Reality: Some people despise the needy, labeling them as “weak” and see them as burdens on society.

After the game, invite participants to share other questions or thoughts about compassion. You can prompt with these questions:

- How has compassion played a part in your life?
- Who do you know that you consider a deeply compassionate person? Why?
- What experiences have you had where people were not being compassionate?
- When is it hard to be compassionate? Are there certain people or situations that make compassion difficult? It is hard to feel compassion for people who are not compassionate?
- Have you ever felt compassion for someone you felt was your “enemy?” What was that like? Did it affect your relationship?
- Have you ever met someone you thought was an awful person until you realized some of the pain and difficulty they were living with?
- “Compassion fatigue” is defined as a secondary traumatic stress disorder that results from a person focusing so much on the suffering of others or being so preoccupied with the care of others, that they cease to take proper care of themselves. Signs of compassion fatigue include depression, apathy, isolation, substance abuse, and other destructive behavior. Though you may not know someone who suffers from this actual clinical disorder, have you ever felt as

if the problems of the world are so many they simply could not care anymore? If you have had this feeling, did it pass?

ACTIVITY 3: STORY – THE PRODIGAL SON (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Story, "[The Prodigal Son](#)" (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read the story so you can present it effectively.
- Optional: Copy the story for all participants.
- Optional: Plan to invite youth to act out the story.

Description of Activity

Youth apply the virtue of compassion to a biblical story.

Tell or read the story.

If you have time, invite youth to act out the story, with as much melodrama as they wish.

Lead a discussion:

- What virtues does the father exhibit? What about the older son? What about the youngest?
- This story is often used to illustrate forgiveness. However, this translation does not say the father forgave the younger son. It says he felt compassion. The son humbled himself and asked for forgiveness. But, did the father feel that was necessary? What is the connection between forgiveness and compassion?
- Have you ever been moved to compassion by someone who hurt you? What allowed you to feel compassion? Did your compassion lead to forgiveness? What did that feel like? In hindsight, are you glad you were moved by compassion?
- This is a parable told by Jesus. When he told it, whom did the father represent? Who are the sons?
- This story is also about unconditional love, called "agape." Some religions teach that God loves all people unconditionally, and that although we sometimes love imperfectly, we are to emulate God. What is the connection between love and compassion?

ACTIVITY 4: COMPASSION AND RELIGION (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 1, [Who Says?](#) (included in this document)
- Leader Resource 2, [Charter for Compassion](#) (included in this document)
- Painter's tape or another adhesive that will not harm walls
- Optional: Workshop 7, Faith in Action: [Everyday Compassion](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Print two copies of Leader Resource 1, Who Says? Set one aside as your "answer key." Cut the other copy into three pieces: quotations 1-4, quotations 5-8, and quotations 9-12. Then, cut each quotation apart from the person who said it.
- Identify three separate wall spaces. In each space, tape four quotations to the wall and the four names to a table or the floor below.
- Print Leader Resource 2, Charter for Compassion for yourself, co-leaders, and volunteer readers.
- Optional: This workshop's Faith in Action activity explores the Charter for Compassion project in more detail. If you have time, consider incorporating it into this activity.

Description of Activity

Participants identify the theme of compassion in different religions.

Invite the group to match quotes with the people who said them. If your group has fewer than 12 youth, they can do it as a group. If larger, invite the group into three teams, each with one set of quotes. Give the group four minutes.

The matching may be difficult. Afterward, process with the following questions:

- Was the matching easy or hard? Why? Was it difficult to discern one religious belief from the next? Why do you think this was so?
- If compassion is central to every major religion, including our own, why does there seem sometimes to be a serious lack of compassion in people's behavior?

Introduce Leader Resource 2, Charter for Compassion. Ask volunteers to read. Share that the Charter for Compassion was started by Karen Armstrong, an ex-

nun and a best-selling writer about world religions. Though the idea was Armstrong's, the actual document was written by a group. The call for the charter was posted on the Internet and over the next six weeks, more than 150,000 people from 180 countries and many religions and philosophies contributed words.

- What does the charter say about religions and compassion?
- How does compassion play a part in your Unitarian Universalist faith?

If you have Internet access, visit the [charter's website](#). You can watch a short video about the charter online. Invite youth to affirm the charter.

ACTIVITY 5: DILEMMA (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 3, [Compassion Dilemmas](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Adapt the Leader Resource to include the dilemmas you plan to use in this activity. If someone in the group has recently experienced the death of a pet, you may prefer to eliminate the scenario that deals with this topic.
- Copy the Leader Resource for yourself, volunteer readers, and, if you wish, all participants.

Description of Activity

Youth discuss scenarios involving ethical dilemmas.

Seek a volunteer to read one of the dilemmas. Open the floor for reactions and answers. Ask participants if this reminds them of other dilemmas they have encountered or heard of, real or fictional.

Have another volunteer read the next dilemma.

For each dilemma, ask "How could compassion play a part in this dilemma?"

Variation

Form small groups and assign each group a dilemma to discuss. Give groups five minutes, then re-gather the large group and have small groups briefly report on their discussions.

ACTIVITY 6: PRACTICE (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Participants' journals, and writing instruments

- Participants' clipboards with anklets (Workshop 1, Activity 3, Practice)
- Beads, and waterproof markers and/or other decorations
- Extra clipboards and string/hemp, and scissors

Preparation for Activity

- If needed, read instructions for making the anklets in the Before You Start section of the program Introduction and in Workshop 1, Decision Making.
- Retrieve participants' clipboards with anklets, and participants' journals if these are also kept on-site.
- Write on newsprint, and post:
 - When was there a time that you felt compassion for another creature?
 - Did feeling compassion change your behavior? If so, how?
 - What conditions can you identify that increase the likelihood that you will act compassionately towards others?
 - Are there those to whom you cannot possibly feel compassion?
 - When has balancing a sense of compassion with day-to-day realities been difficult?
 - What are the areas of your life now where you could apply compassion to help you be the person you want to be?

Description of Activity

Participants understand how the use of compassion affects their lives.

Invite youth to take five minutes to journal, using the questions on newsprint as prompts, or to draw or meditate on the questions.

Additional prompts you may add, while the group journals:

- When have others acted compassionately towards you? How did that make you feel?
- Can you be a good person without feeling compassion?
- Can you be a good person if you feel compassion, but do not act on it?

After five minutes, ask participants to stop. Invite volunteers to share journal writing, to their level of comfort. When sharing is complete or after five minutes, distribute participants' clipboards, new beads (one per youth), and decorating materials. Invite youth to take the

next five minutes to decorate a bead while reflecting on their personal experiences with compassion. Remind the youth that the beads will remind them to use their highest values.

As participants finish, have them add this bead to the anklet they started in Workshop 1.

If any participant missed Workshop 1, provide them with a clipboard, hemp, a bead for their name bead, and instruction to begin their anklet.

Collect journals, clipboards, and anklet-making materials, and store for the next workshop.

CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- [Taking It Home](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Adapt the Taking It Home section and copy for all participants.
- Optional: Print the closing quotation (below) for a volunteer to read.

Description of Activity

Have a volunteer read the quotation while another extinguishes the chalice:

Love is that condition in the human spirit so profound that it allows me to survive, and better than that, to thrive with passion, compassion, and style. — Maya Angelou, novelist and poet

Distribute Taking It Home.

FAITH IN ACTION: EVERYDAY COMPASSION (30 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Activity 4, [Compassion and Religion](#) (included in this document)
- Computer with Internet access, and (optional) a digital projector or large monitor
- Leader Resource 2, [Charter for Compassion](#) (included in this document)
- Optional: A copy of *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life* by Karen Armstrong (New York: Knopf Doubleday, 2010)

Preparation for Activity

- Read Activity 4, Compassion and Religion; this Faith in Action activity is designed as an extension of Activity 4.

- Test Internet access equipment. Locate and preview the websites you wish to show the youth. Possibilities include:
 - Karen Armstrong introducing the Charter of Compassion concept, on the [TED \(Technology, Entertainment, Design\) website](#)
 - The [website](#) for the Charter for Compassion project.
- Optional: Read the book *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life*, and prepare to discuss it with the youth briefly and invite them to follow one or more of the steps.

Description of Activity

This activity picks up where Activity 4, Compassion and Religion leaves off. Youth further explore and then (optional) participate in the Charter for Compassion online project.

Watch the video where Karen Armstrong first introduced the concept of the Charter of Compassion on the TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) website.

Visit the Charter for Compassion's website. Read some of the stories. Note that not all describe major events; many share small kindnesses, everyday acts of compassion the youth might find opportunities to emulate. Do participants have stories to share? Help youth post their stories.

Read some of the commitments on the website. Again, these are small, individual acts. Encourage youth to make specific commitments. Perhaps they pledge to act more compassionately to their siblings, spend more time playing with or walking a pet, or sit at lunch with a youth who always sits alone. Invite participants to post their commitments on the website. Ask how they will hold themselves accountable for keeping their commitments. Perhaps a reminder could be posted on the wall of your meeting space. You do not need to list the specific commitments. It could simply say, "Were you compassionate today?"

LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Reflect on the workshop with your co-leader. Which activities did the group enjoy most? Were varied learning styles addressed? Are the group dynamics taking shape in a healthy way, or are there issues you should address? Read the next workshop for any advance preparation needed and decide who will be responsible for what.

TAKING IT HOME

One's life has value so long as one attributes value to the life of others, by means of love, friendship, indignation and compassion. — Simone de Beauvoir

IN TODAY'S WORKSHOP... we talked about the virtue of compassion and ways to make compassion a spiritual practice.

More Stories about Compassion. Read "[Making It Through](#)," a story in *UU World*, by Unitarian Universalist minister and author Meg Barnhouse, about finding compassion in unique places.

Read *Twelve Steps to a Compassionate Life* by Karen Armstrong (New York: Knopf Doubleday, 2010). Your public library may have a copy. Write down the steps Armstrong suggests. Choose some of the concrete actions she mentions that might help you become a more compassionate person.

[Nickelodeon television's Halo Awards](#) honor youth making a difference in the world. On the website, you can nominate youth or watch videos of past winners.

Compassion does not sound like a very controversial topic, does it? Yet there are hot issues. Animal rights is one. Another is assisted suicide. Some people believe terminally ill patients should be able to decide for themselves when to end their lives. They want them to have a humane choice, such as medically assisted suicide, that would assure a painless death. The 2009 movie *You Don't Know Jack* (directed by Barry Levinson) is about the true-life, radical crusade of Dr. Jack Kevorkian for this cause.

Prodigal Son. Horror writer Dean Koontz wrote a novel in 2009 titled *Frankenstein: Prodigal Son*. It is a retelling of the Mary Shelley classic, *Frankenstein*. Read either novel; they are about much more than the Frankenstein movies. How is Shelley's tale like the story of the prodigal son? Mary Shelley's mother, [Mary Wollstonecraft](#) attended a Unitarian congregation for a portion of her life and was a radical activist for women's rights, long before the suffragette movement.

Compassionate Games. There are many video games for those who like violence, but not many for people who embrace compassion and giving service to the world. One such game is [Quest Atlantis](#). Play with your friends.

Show your friends the [website for Charter for Compassion](#). Invite them to affirm the charter and post commitments. Make it a game by asking each other, every Monday, how they lived out their commitment. Reward each other for sweet behavior with sweet treats. You can play the game with your family, too.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: REAL LIFE CHALLENGES

Materials for Activity

- "Bicycle Rack" newsprint sheet from Opening

Description of Activity

Youth discuss ethical challenges they have faced.

If someone shared an experience in check-in or during any workshop activities that the group would like to explore further, do so now. This could be particularly useful if an experience resonated with many participants. If several challenges are already listed on the Bicycle Rack, invite the youth to choose one to discuss. It need not be related to this workshop's topic.

You might use these questions to structure a discussion:

- What virtues could this challenge bring into play?
- Did this challenge involve a conflict of values? If so, what values? How do they conflict?
- What are possible solutions to this challenge? Are they equally good? Why or why not?

Affirm that it is always easier to see good solutions in hindsight and that living a life according to virtues we want to nurture or values we hold dear is not always easy. We do not need to always "get it right," but we do need to keep trying.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: COMPASSIONATE HEROES (20 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- A computer with Internet access and digital projector or a large monitor

Preparation for Activity

- Preview the [CNN website](#) you will show the youth. Test equipment and Internet connection before the workshop.

Description of Activity

Tell the group:

The Cable News Network (CNN) hosts a special that highlights the humanitarian work of several heroes every year. The 2010 Hero of the Year, Anuradha Koirala, rescues some of the 20,000 girls in Nepal who are abducted for or coerced into a sex trafficking ring every year.

On the [CNN website](#), read about the heroes for the current year. Discuss:

- Do their biographies detail events that helped them develop strong skills of compassion?
- Do you think these individuals were born with compassion, have learned it, or a combination?

Invite the youth to pick an organization led by one of the CNN Heroes. Make a plan to educate your congregation about the organization's work and raise funds to contribute. Suggest youth share information about the organization on their Facebook pages.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 3: COMPASSION AS A SPIRITUAL PRACTICE (20 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Handout 1, [Prayer for Compassion](#)
- Writing paper and pens/pencils

Preparation for Activity

- Copy the handout for all participants.

Description of Activity

Youth explore making compassion a spiritual practice.

Ask the group to define "spiritual practice." Affirm that a spiritual practice is any activity done regularly to nurture one's spirituality. Brainstorm different spiritual practices: prayer, meditation, reading, nature walks, yoga, etc.

Ask:

- Can acting compassionately can be a spiritual practice? If so, how will you remember to engage in it regularly?

Suggest that one way is to pray or meditate on compassion not just once, but on a regular, scheduled basis. Lead the group to read the Prayer for Compassion (Handout 1) aloud together.

Tell the group that Buddhism includes meditations for "loving-kindness," which is equivalent to compassion. In Taoism, the Three Jewels of Taoism are compassion, humility, and moderation.

Distribute writing materials. Invite participants to create poems, meditations, or prayers to help them remember to practice compassion. Remind them that their anklet is also a reminder to live their highest values.

If you wish, leave time for volunteers to share.

STORY: THE PRODIGAL SON

From Christian scripture, Luke 15:11-32 (*New Revised Standard Version*).

Then Jesus said, "There was a man who had two sons. The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me.' So he divided his property between them. A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and travelled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living. When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need. So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs. He would gladly have filled himself with the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything. But when he came to himself he said, 'How many of my father's hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands."' So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him. Then the son said to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.' But the father said to his slaves, 'Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!' And they began to celebrate.

Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing. He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on. He replied, 'Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.' Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him. But he answered his father, 'Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!' Then the father said to him, 'Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.'

HANDOUT 1: PRAYER FOR COMPASSION

By Reverend Elizabeth L. Tarbox; used with permission.

Spirit of Life, I give thanks for the opportunities to love that present themselves in the turmoil of life.

When the light catches the tears in another's eyes, where hands are held and there are moments without words, let us be present then, and alive to the possibility of changing. Let us seek to make another's wellbeing the object of our concern. Let us seek to be present to another's pain, to bathe another's wounds, hear another's sadness, celebrate another's success, and allow the other's story to change our own.

Let us stand in the morning on damp grass, hear the syllables of bird song, and fill up on sweet air that rolls over oceans and continents. Let us look up at the stars and the planets that fill the night sky with majesty. Let us witness the first fresh buds of spring amid the brown sticks of winter. And for all this, let us be grateful.

Let us not defend ourselves against the discomfort of unruly emotion, nor seek to close down our hearts for fear a new love will come to shake our foundations. Let us instead be open to discovering a new way of seeing an old problem, or appreciating the perfection of a seashell, or the possibility of friendship. For in giving ourselves to what we do not understand, we receive life's blessings, and in taking care of another, we are cared for.

LEADER RESOURCE 1: WHO SAYS?

1. Wisdom, compassion, and courage are the three universally recognized moral qualities of men.

[Confucius](#) (Confucianism)

2. I have observed that religious practice is not a precondition either of ethical conduct or of happiness itself. I have also suggested that, whether a person practices religion or not, the spiritual qualities of love and compassion, patience, tolerance, forgiveness, humility and so on are indispensable.

[Dalai Lama](#) (Buddhism)

3. Christ has no body on earth but yours, no hands but yours, no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which Christ's compassion for the world is to look out; yours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good; and yours are the hands with which He is to bless us now.

[Saint Teresa of Avila](#) (Christianity)

4. It is a man's sympathy with all creatures that truly makes him a man. Until he extends his circle of compassion to all living things, man himself will not find peace.

[Albert Schweitzer](#) (Humanist)

5. It ill becomes us to invoke in our daily prayers the blessings of God, the Compassionate, if we in turn will not practice elementary compassion towards our fellow creatures.

[Gandhi](#) (Hinduism)

6. A religious man is a person who holds God and man in one thought at one time, at all times, who suffers harm done to others, whose greatest passion is compassion, whose greatest strength is love and defiance of despair.

[Abraham J. Heschel](#) (Judaism)

7. ... we must become articulate about our belief and choose those actions which will demonstrate that we do not just talk about compassion and love and understanding, but that they are values which we incorporate into our inner frame of reference.

Dorothy Tilden Spoerl (Unitarian Universalism)

8. The whole idea of compassion is based on a keen awareness of the interdependence of all these living beings, which are all part of one another, and all involved in one another.

[Thomas Merton](#) (Christianity)

9. No man is a true believer unless he desireth for his brother that which he desireth for himself.

[Muhammad](#) (Islam)

11. He who feels no compassion will become insane.

[Hasidic Saying](#) (Judaism)

12. ... Justice, equity and compassion in human relations...

Second Principle (Unitarian Universalism)

LEADER RESOURCE 2: CHARTER FOR COMPASSION

[Charter for Compassion](#), 2009; used with permission.

The principle of compassion lies at the heart of all religious, ethical and spiritual traditions, calling us always to treat all others as we wish to be treated ourselves. Compassion impels us to work tirelessly to alleviate the suffering of our fellow creatures, to dethrone ourselves from the centre of our world and put another there, and to honour the inviolable sanctity of every single human being, treating everybody, without exception, with absolute justice, equity and respect.

It is also necessary in both public and private life to refrain consistently and empathically from inflicting pain. To act or speak violently out of spite, chauvinism, or self-interest, to impoverish, exploit or deny basic rights to anybody, and to incite hatred by denigrating others—even our enemies—is a denial of our common humanity. We acknowledge that we have failed to live compassionately and that some have even increased the sum of human misery in the name of religion.

We therefore call upon all men and women to restore compassion to the centre of morality and religion — to return to the ancient principle that any interpretation of scripture that breeds violence, hatred or disdain is illegitimate — to ensure that youth are given accurate and respectful information about other traditions, religions and cultures — to encourage a positive appreciation of cultural and religious diversity - to cultivate an informed empathy with the suffering of all human beings—even those regarded as enemies.

We urgently need to make compassion a clear, luminous and dynamic force in our polarized world. Rooted in a principled determination to transcend selfishness, compassion can break down political, dogmatic, ideological and religious boundaries. Born of our deep interdependence, compassion is essential to human relationships and to a fulfilled humanity. It is the path to enlightenment, and indispensable to the creation of a just economy and a peaceful global community.

LEADER RESOURCE 3: COMPASSION DILEMMAS

Dilemma 1

If a person approaches you on the street and asks for money for food, do you give them what money you can spare? Some people are afraid that the person might be addicted and will spend the money on alcohol or other drugs. Therefore, your money is feeding their addictions. Others say that if you refuse to help people, you are not practicing compassion and eventually your heart will turn cold. What other thoughts go through your mind when you encounter a panhandler? Is there a balance to giving money to everyone who asks and not giving to anyone?

Dilemma 2

Your cat is sick and you take it to the vet. The prognosis is terminal: You know your cat will die. You have the option to let your cat die naturally or to "put it down." The vet assures you euthanizing the cat will be painless and quick; you can be with your cat until the end. How do you decide? What if your cat's death may be painful and drawn out? What if your cat has kidney disease and the vet says its death may take weeks, but involve no pain; the cat will simply grow more and more tired, sleep a great deal, and eventually one day fall asleep and not wake up. Does the manner of the natural death influence your choice?

Dilemma 3

Financial donations to international service organizations give us a way to express compassion toward people we will never meet. Yet, so many organizations are seeking funds. How do you choose where to send your donation? Do the long-term problems of a marginalized segment of another country's population activate your compassion? If so, does it matter to you what kind of relationship the people's country has with the U.S.? Should you send money to help educate girls in the Middle East, or children born with cleft palates in India? Do you prefer to keep your charitable contributions closer to home? What parameters do you and your family consider when choosing from thousands of deserving charities seeking contributions?

FIND OUT MORE

[Religious Tolerance](#) has information and quotations on the Ethics of Reciprocity and the Golden Rule.

Buddhism is well known as a religion that calls for compassion. The Dalai Lama has written a practical book on the subject, *An Open Heart: Practicing Compassion in Everyday Life* (New York: Back Bay Books, 2002).

On [The Compassion Fatigue Awareness Project](#) website, take a test to see if you are experiencing compassion fatigue, and find resources for recovery.

["Cells That Read Minds"](#) (*New York Times*, Jan. 10, 2006) is an easy-to-read article on mirror neurons. ["Role of Mirror Neurons May Need Rethink"](#) (*New Scientist*, May 2009) offers a counter-argument to the prevailing understanding of mirror neurons.

WORKSHOP 8: HUMILITY

INTRODUCTION

Compassion directed to oneself is humility. — Simone Weil

Our culture offers mixed messages about the virtue of humility. While expressions of humility are socially acceptable, even encouraged, we are also expected to stand up for our rights and take credit for our contributions. The youth learn that practicing humility as a virtue does not mean pretending you do not have talents and accomplishments. It does mean acknowledging that, despite your many gifts, you are not perfect—you still have room for improvement; there will be people who can outshine you. Humility helps us acknowledge our mistakes and failures. It empowers us to let other people's lights shine brightly, too.

GOALS

This workshop will:

- Examine the meaning of humility
- Explore situations where humility is exhibited or called for
- Guide youth to identify themselves as humble people.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Explore the meaning of humility
- Discuss a dilemma where humility could have a role
- Identify times they have practiced humility, and discover and commit to ways to practice humility in their lives.

WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	10
Activity 1: Up Side, Down Side	10
Activity 2: Story — The Value of a Gift	10
Activity 3: Said and Done	30
Activity 4: Dilemmas	10
Activity 5: Practice	15

Faith in Action: Untouchables

Closing 5

Alternate Activity 1: Real Life Challenges

Alternate Activity 2: Gratitude as a Spiritual Practice 20

Alternate Activity 3: My Care and Feeding Booklet 30

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Read Handout 1, Gratitude for What We May Take for Granted. This is not an easy prayer. The author, a UU minister, calls us to a grateful response to experiences we would characterize as negative. The prayer does not ask us to be happy about life's pain. It acknowledges that our anger, tears, or feelings of brokenness can make gratitude difficult. Yet negative experiences are part of life, for which we are grateful.

Does being grateful for our life mean we should be thankful for the "downs" as well as the "ups?" What has been your experience? What can you communicate to youth, during the workshop, about the humbling experience of simply being a human being?

OPENING (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- Group covenant (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Bicycle Rack newsprint sheet (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Alternate Activity 1, [Real Life Challenges](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read Alternate Activity 1, Real Life Challenges. Prepare to incorporate it into this Opening, if you think you will have time and you observe that youth want to discuss challenges shared in their check-in.
- Post the chalice lighting words.
- Post the group covenant.
- Post the Bicycle Rack sheet the group began in Workshop 1, Opening, or label a new sheet of newsprint "Bicycle Rack," and post.

Description of Activity

Invite a volunteer to light the chalice while you lead the group to recite the chalice lighting words:

The thought manifests as the word
The word manifests as the deed;
The deed develops into habit;
And habit hardens into character;
So watch the thought and its ways with care,
And let it spring from love
Born out of concern for all beings...
As the shadow follows the body,
As we think, so we become.
— from *The Dhammapada, Sayings of the Buddha*

Invite the youth to check in by sharing any moral challenges they have experienced since the last meeting. If appropriate, use Alternate Activity 1 to further explore the group's challenges. If youth appear interested in discussing a particular challenge but you feel there is not enough time in this meeting, ask the person who shared it to write a short description of the challenge on the Bicycle Rack.

Tell participants that today you will talk about humility.

ACTIVITY 1: UP SIDE, DOWN SIDE (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape

Preparation for Activity

- Post two sheets of newsprint, one headed "Humility — Up Side", the other headed "Humility — Down Side."
- Post a third sheet headed "Does Humility mean...?" and write these definitions: "lack of pride," "subservience," "modesty," "lack of boastfulness," "lowering one's self," "honest opinion of one's self- worth," "I'm okay/You're okay," and "to feel inferior."

Description of Activity

Participants identify positive and negative aspects of the day's virtue.

Invite youth to take a moment and think about "humility" as a virtue. Point out the definitions of humility you have posted. Share that the adjective "humble" is the Begin a discussion, using these prompts:

- Do the words "humble" and "humility" stir the same feelings within you? What is the difference?
- What have you been told about humility, or being humble: what it means, when to use it, when not to use it? [For example, "humble" is often used with "meek," "poor," or "lowly." Are they all synonymous?]
- Who defines humility? Does it mean different things to different people?
- Is there anyone you admire who exhibits humility regularly? Give an example.
- Do you have friends and/or family members who do not exhibit humility? How do you feel when you are around these people?
- Has anyone ever "humbled" you? Intentionally or unintentionally? If intentionally, why do you think they did that? Do you know people who seem to feel the need to put down others in order to feel good about themselves?
- How does pride relate to humility? Is it the opposite? Does that mean pride is bad? Or could pride belong on our list of virtues, too?
- What is "false humility?"
- What other questions come to mind when you think about humility?

During the discussion, begin to capture on newsprint participants' "up side" (positive) and "down side" (negative) comments about moderation as a virtue. Then, focus the youth on these questions...

- What are the advantages to using humility?
- What are disadvantages?

...and continue recording their comments on the newsprint.

To conclude, review the comments on the newsprint.

ACTIVITY 2: STORY — THE VALUE OF A GIFT (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Story, "[The Value of a Gift](#)" (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read the story so you can present it effectively.
- Optional: Copy the story for all participants.

Description of Activity

Youth respond to a true story about humility.

Tell or read the story.

Process the story with these questions:

- How do you think Ann felt to receive the earrings?
- How do you think Rita felt, giving Ann the earrings?
- Ann could afford to buy earrings that were more expensive than the ones Rita wore. Why do you think Rita gave them to Ann? Why do you think Rita waited until the last day to give her gift?
- What might be the value of the earrings to Ann? To Rita?
- Have you ever received a gift, a boon, something made more valuable than just the price tag because of who gave it to you or the way in which you received it?
- Have you ever had a humbling experience? What happened? How did you feel?

Share this quotation from the author C.S. Lewis:

The point is that each person's pride is in competition with everyone else's pride. It is because I wanted to be the big noise at the party that I am so annoyed at someone else being the big noise. Two of a trade never agree. Now what you want to get clear is that Pride is essentially competitive—is competitive by its

very nature—while the other vices are competitive only, so to speak, by accident. Pride gets no pleasure out of having something, only out of having more of it than the next [person]... We say that people are proud of being rich, or clever, or good-looking, but they are not. They are proud of being richer, or cleverer, or better-looking than others. If everyone else became equally rich, or clever, or good-looking, there would be nothing to be proud about. It is the comparison that makes you proud: the pleasure of being above the rest. Once the element of competition has gone, pride has gone.

Ask:

- What do you think of this quote?
- If pride is competitive, is humility cooperative? Could humility be competitive, too?

ACTIVITY 3: SAID AND DONE (30 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 1, [Humility Quotes](#) (included in this document) and a basket

Preparation for Activity

- Print the Leader Resource. Cut apart the quotations and put them in the basket.
- Decide how you will form teams.
- Read over the quotes with your co-leader and be ready to suggest possible real life scenarios, should youth need help.

Description of Activity

Participants use quotes about humility to create skits.

Tell the group that Confucius said, "Humility is the solid foundation of all the virtues." Ask:

- What do you think Confucius meant by this?
- Can you give an example?

Say that sometimes an idea can sound great in abstract, but is harder to translate well to real life situations. Invite youth to practice translating noble sentiments into real life situations. The group will break into teams. Each team will randomly pick a quote and invent a real life situation to illustrate the wisdom of the quote. Turn the situation into a short skit, three minutes or less.

Divide into teams of three or more. Do not have more than four teams. Let each team pick a quote from the basket, without reading it beforehand. Let teams discuss and rehearse in private spaces, if available, for 10 minutes. If a team has difficulty thinking of a skit to

illustrate their quote, either be ready with suggestions or let them pick another quote.

After 15 minutes, gather the group back together and ask teams to present their skits. Afterwards, discuss the skits.

- What was the process like?
- Some quotes did not mention the word "humility" at all. Was it difficult to establish what the quote had to do with humility?
- If the Marianne Williamson quote was used, what is the difference between what she describes and pride?
- Did participants use humility during the planning of the skit? In what ways? Does humility—understanding that you are no better nor worse than anyone else, acknowledging that everyone has unique gifts to share, not seeking to promote your ideas above anyone else's—make for a good team player?
- What qualities have you seen in the opposite: a "bad sport"?
- What common themes could be identified in the skits?
- In what ways did constructing the skit help you understand the practice of humility?

ACTIVITY 4: DILEMMAS (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 2, [Humility Dilemmas](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Print the Leader Resource for yourself and volunteer readers.

Description of Activity

Youth discuss scenarios involving ethical dilemmas.

Seek a volunteer to read each of the two scenarios. For each dilemma, open the floor to reactions and answers. Ask the youth if it reminds them of other dilemmas they have experienced or heard of, real or fictional. What part does humility play in the dilemma?

ACTIVITY 5: PRACTICE (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Participants' journals, and writing instruments

- Participants' clipboards with anklets (Workshop 1, Activity 3, Practice)
- Beads, and waterproof markers and/or other decorations
- Extra clipboards and string/hemp, and scissors

Preparation for Activity

- If needed, read instructions for making the anklets in the Before You Start section of the program Introduction and in Workshop 1, Decision Making.
- Retrieve participants' clipboards with anklets, and participants' journals if these are also kept on-site.
- Write on newsprint, and post:
 - When was there a time that you practiced humility?
 - What made it possible for you to practice humility in this instance?
 - Have you ever experienced circumstances where it would have been helpful for you to practice more humility?
 - What are the areas of your life now where you could practice humility to help you be the person you want to be?

Description of Activity

Participants understand how the practice of humility affects their lives.

Invite youth to take five minutes to journal, using the questions on newsprint as prompts, or to draw or meditate on the questions. While they work, you might offer this additional prompt:

- The person with humility can acknowledge a mistake, which is a necessary step to learning from one's mistakes. Have you ever, out of pride, refused to admit your mistake? Did this work for you, or against you? How?

Invite participants to share journal writing to their level of comfort. You may wish to remind youth that you are a mandated reporter and, if anyone discloses behavior that could be dangerous to themselves or others, you will need to report it. Listen to what is said.

When sharing is complete or after ten minutes, invite youth to take the next five minutes to decorate cork beads. Distribute participants' clipboards, new beads (one per youth), and decorating materials. Invite youth to decorate a bead while reflecting on their personal experiences with humility. Remind them that the beads will act as a reminder to use their highest values.

As participants finish, have them add this bead to the anklet they started in Workshop 1.

If any participant missed Workshop 1, provide them with a clipboard, hemp, a bead for their name bead, and instruction to begin their anklet.

Collect journals, clipboards, and anklet-making materials, and store for the next workshop.

CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- [Taking It Home](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Adapt the Taking It Home section and copy for all participants.
- Write the closing quotation on newsprint, leaving room for editorial changes. Post the newsprint.

Description of Activity

Tell participants:

Today's quote is from the 19th century and speaks of "great men." At the time, this gender exclusion was common, but it is not acceptable today.

Ask the youth to help you make this quotation inclusive of all genders, including transgender people:

I believe that the first test of a truly great man is his humility. I don't mean by humility, doubt of his power. But really great men have a curious feeling that the greatness is not of them, but through them. And they see something divine in every other man and are endlessly, foolishly, incredibly merciful. —John Ruskin (1819-1900), art critic

Write the editorial changes on the newsprint.

Have a volunteer read the modified quotation while another extinguishes the chalice.

Distribute Taking It Home.

FAITH IN ACTION: UNTOUCHABLES

Materials for Activity

- Optional: Computer with Internet access and a digital projector or a large monitor

Preparation for Activity

- Preview the [Akshaya](#) website. If you will not have a computer with Internet access when you

lead the activity, print information from the website to share with the group.

- Optional: Test the computer, Internet connection, and website link.

Description of Activity

Say in these words or your own:

This is a true story of a man who was humbled and it changed his life:

Narayanan Krishnan was on his way to becoming a five-star chef in Switzerland when he encountered a man on the street of his hometown in Maduria, India. The man belonged to a group called "untouchables." Though India is working to combat classism, classes still exist. One traditional class that has brought infamy to the country is Untouchables. These people are considered so low that many people will literally not touch them. Narayanan reached out to touch the old man and his life was changed forever. Not because he was stained or cursed by the touch, but because he was blessed to find his life's work. He started feeding the hungry fresh-cooked meals, using his personal savings. His ministry to literally "the least of these" has grown and become Akshaya USA. This organization is currently trying to build a homeless shelter so they can help more people.

The Akshaya website makes this statement: "Today, did you... shower, eat something, get your medicine, sleep indoors? Now imagine those starving, exhausted, mentally ill, filthy, abused and left for dead on the street. If it were your street, your neighborhood, you know what you'd do... "

Ask the youth:

- What would you do?
- Who are the untouchables in your life? Are there people in your neighborhood who some people feel are not worthy of a helping hand?
- What can your group do to help those who are slipping between the cracks and do not get services to help with their needs?

One group the youth might identify is the mentally ill. Some homeless people on our streets have mental illness that makes their search for resources all the harder. If youth do not, suggest mentally ill homeless people. Lead a discussion about how the youth can help. Is there a local hospital or community center which serves the mentally ill and needs donations? Designate a volunteer to find out what items are needed and have the group hold a collection drive.

Consider baking holiday treats for a hospital or community center for Valentine's Day. Tell their patrons that somebody loves them.

Perhaps services for the mentally ill need more public funding. The group could write to their local, state, or national legislators and urge them to allocate funds.

Or, encourage the youth to hold a fundraiser for the shelter being built by Akshaya.

LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Reflect upon the workshop with your co-leader. Which activities did the group enjoy most? Were varied learning styles addressed? Are the group dynamics taking shape in a healthy way, or are there issues you should address? Did participants keep to the covenant? Do co-leaders feel the work is shared equally? Did you have fun?

Read the next workshop for any advance preparation needed and decide who will be responsible for what.

TAKING IT HOME

Compassion directed to oneself is humility. —
Simone Weil

IN TODAY'S WORKSHOP... we discussed the virtue of humility. We read quotations from holy texts and wise people on humility and turned those words into real life situations. We journaled about ways we might practice the virtue of humility in our lives.

Just for Fun. [The Virtues Project website has a game called Five Spread.](#) It resembles a Tarot card reading, but with suggested virtues to help you with a dilemma you are experiencing. Remember: No game on a computer can understand you or your personal situations. The game's predictions are random and should not be taken too seriously. However, if you find information that seems useful, consider it. After all, who among us cannot benefit from practicing virtues?

Humility. Rap music is known for its boasting. Virtually every rap artist and group has a song espousing their supremacy. For example, Kanye West in "Stronger" commands us to, "Bow in the presence of greatness." While boasting is often associated with men, female rap artists get in the act, too. Joanna Newsom says, in "The Book of Right-On," "Do you want to sit at my table?/ My fighting fame is fabled/ And fortune finds me fit and able." The [Am I Right](#) website (Making Fun of Music, One Song at a Time) collects boasts from music. Many samples have been sent in and you can see that rap is not the only genre full of boasting. Do you have lyrics to submit?

On the [Gratefulness](#) website, you can light a candle in appreciation for good things in your life or if you feel in need of support for something troublesome. Share this site with your friends.

The Doctor (PG-13, 1991, directed by Randa Haines) is a movie about a cocky physician who becomes seriously ill and is humbled by his experiences as a patient. What other movies about humbling experiences can you think of?

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: REAL LIFE CHALLENGES

Materials for Activity

- "Bicycle Rack" newsprint sheet from Opening

Description of Activity

Youth discuss ethical challenges they have faced.

If someone shared an experience in check-in or during any workshop activities that the group would like to explore further, do so now. This could be particularly useful if an experience resonated with many participants. If several challenges are already listed on the Bicycle Rack, invite the youth to choose one to discuss. It need not be related to this workshop's topic.

You might use these questions to structure a discussion:

- What virtues could this challenge bring into play?
- Did this challenge involve a conflict of values? If so, what values? How do they conflict?
- What are possible solutions to this challenge? Are they equally good? Why or why not?

Affirm that is always easier to see good solutions in hindsight and that living a life according to virtues we want to nurture or values we hold dear is not always easy. We do not need to always "get it right," but we do need to keep trying.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: GRATITUDE AS A SPIRITUAL PRACTICE (20 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Handout 1, [Gratitude for What We May Take for Granted](#) (included in this document)
- Optional: A computer with Internet access and a digital projector or a large monitor
- Optional: Participants' journals, or writing paper; pens/pencils
- Optional: Soothing music, and a music player

Preparation for Activity

- Post blank newsprint.
- Optional: Obtain participants' journals, if they are stored on-site.
- Optional: Choose some soothing music. Test your music player and queue the music.
- Optional: Preview the [Gratefulness](#) website. Test equipment and Internet access in the meeting space.

Description of Activity

Participants focus on gratefulness as a by-product of humility and practice being intentionally grateful.

Ask the group what is the relationship between humility and gratefulness. If no one offers, suggest that humility helps us see we have many undeserved gifts for which we should be grateful.

Brainstorm ways people express that they are grateful. Note contributions briefly on newsprint. Use these prompts, if needed:

- Saying "thank you"
- Offering a prayer of gratitude
- Sending thank-you cards
- Donating money to organizations that help people in need
- Directly helping others who are in need
- Lighting candles during a worship service (Joys and Concerns)

Tell participants that some people practice gratefulness as a spiritual practice. A spiritual practice is an activity you do regularly that helps you feel spiritually connected or fulfilled. A spiritual practice is a time to focus on being the kind of person you wish to be. Some spiritual practices offer a "time-out" from the regular hustle and bustle of our days. Others may be an activity you do, perhaps with others, as an expression of your spiritual self.

Gather ideas for how you could practice gratefulness regularly. You may find ideas on the newsprint list.

Suggest the group try one or more practices now. Play soothing music if you have brought some. If you have journals or writing paper, distribute to the youth and invite them to quietly write or draw. Or, youth can pray or meditate.

Distribute Handout 1, Gratitude for What We May Take for Granted, by Unitarian Universalist minister L. Annie Foerster. Have volunteers take turns reading sections of the prayer aloud. Ask, "What do you think about the way the prayer poses difficult situations, like oppression,

illness, and death, as experiences to be grateful for?" The author seems to say we should be grateful for everything that makes us human. Acknowledge that this is challenging, and requires intention. Is this prayer one participants feel is valuable?

Point out that this prayer speaks to one of the messages of this program: We are all imperfect beings, practicing being virtuous people... ailing... and practicing again.

Variation

If you have Internet access, visit the [Gratefulness](#) website and lead the group to light a virtual candle in appreciation of something for which they are grateful. Encourage youth to consider making a spiritual practice of gratefulness.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 3: MY CARE AND FEEDING BOOKLET (30 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- 8 1/2 x 11-inch writing paper and construction paper
- A stapler
- Pens/pencils/markers
- Optional: Additional decorating materials, such as stickers, glitter, etc.

Description of Activity

Youth create a booklet on the care and feeding of humility.

Say, in these words or your own:

Have you ever read a booklet or a web page on how to take care of a new pet or plant? Living things, if they are to survive, need nurturance

What does a plant need to survive? [Affirm correct responses.]

What does your pet need to survive? [Affirm correct responses.]

Now, think of the virtue of humility. If you want to stay humble, keep humility alive in you, how will you nurture it? [Responses may include remembering to be grateful; sharing credit for group projects; practicing an art, craft, or sport to become better; or praising others for their hard work. Prompt if needed.] As a reminder of what you need to practice to keep humility alive in your life, you can make a booklet, "My Care and Feeding of Humility Booklet."

Demonstrate how to fold a few sheets of paper in half and staple to make the booklet. Use construction paper

for the cover. Invite participants to make booklets, fill the pages with tips on the care and feeding of humility, including illustrations, and design a cover.

Encourage the youth to share ideas.

If time permits, invite a few volunteers to share their booklets. Invite the youth to take their booklets home.

STORY: THE VALUE OF A GIFT

What is the value of a gift given?

Is it just the dollar amount on the price tag or are some gifts worth much more?

Let me tell you about a gift that was not worth much monetarily, but which made a wealthy woman richer than she could have imagined.

I was fortunate to participate in an international charitable organization's trip to Honduras. The trip was for educators, which was defined broadly: some of the people on the tour were schoolteachers, others volunteered at local schools to help children learn about the work of the organization. Our support for this organization and belief in the value of education was what we shared. Otherwise, we were an eclectic bunch, varied in age, location, ethnicity, and class. We were led by Rita, a local woman, married to the Presbyterian minister who organized the Honduras program.

I was assigned to a dorm with three other women. One of those women was Ann. Ann was tall and lanky. She was gregarious and loud. She wore comfortable clothes in muted colors, but they looked expensive. Even her shoes looked expensive. Ann did not need to work for a living; she lived in a small New England town and volunteered at the local historical society. After the trip, she planned to share her experiences with the rest of the ladies at the historical society. As her roommates, we heard all about it. We heard about her horses, her antique jewelry, her summer place, her two Mini Coopers. Ann's conversation revolved around her possessions. We heard all about them because my other two roommates virtually drooled over her lifestyle. You could hear the longing and envy in their urges for her to tell more.

During the day, we toured sites where the charity was working with local partners to end hunger. Ann strode into villages, with a bright smile and jovial banter, and made easy friends. She was funny and a master of sparkling conversation — what was there not to like? She always had questions and was generous with her opinions.

She noticed other people's possessions. She complimented our translator/guide, Rita, on her earrings. She raved about my green hiking boots. She was always the last one back from shopping trips, one time purchasing a large, hand-carved bench that was going to cost almost as much to ship to her home as what she had paid for it.

During one long bus ride, she leaned over to me and whispered, "Look inside their houses!" I started peeking quickly into open doorways of the simple huts sitting beside the road. In many of them, I only saw a hammock

or two, maybe a plastic chair, pots and pans. This was poverty beyond what I had seen in the States. Still, Ann seemed more shocked than I. After all, if hunger was a reality for these villages, they would not spend money on extraneous furniture.

On the last day, we packed our bags, stripped our beds, and loaded the bus. I came back into the dorm room for the last time, to retrieve a bag I had forgotten. Ann was sitting on her naked bed, her head lowered, her arms outstretched in front of her. She said nothing as I entered the room, so I knew something must be wrong.

"Ann, are you okay?" I asked. For a time, she said nothing.

"She gave me her earrings," she finally volunteered, still not looking up.

"Who gave you her earrings?"

"Rita. I complimented her on her earrings the other day and she brought them today just to give them to me. I can't believe she did that. She has so little... ." her voice drifted off, her hands unclenched and I saw the inexpensive little beaded earrings in her palms. She looked up, deep into my eyes. Tears were rolling down her face. In the silence of the tiny room, I swear I could feel Ann's heart beating stronger and louder than humanly possible. I smiled at her. She smiled back. Together, we picked up our bags and walked to the bus to start our journey home.

HANDOUT 1: GRATITUDE FOR WHAT WE MAY TAKE FOR GRANTED

By Reverend L. Annie Foerster, in *For Praying Out Loud: Interfaith Prayers for Public Occasions* (Boston: Skinner House, 2003), used with permission.

SPIRIT OF ALL GIFTS AND GRACE

We are not ungrateful—not all the time.

We know that life is a precious gift. Though we would appear at times to squander it, remember the ways we do not:

When we are happy, accept our joy as gratitude for all opportunities, accepted and ignored.

When we are broken, accept our tears and anger as gratitude for feeling deeply.

When we reach out to others, accept our compassion as gratitude for conscience and compassion.

When we choose solitude, accept our silence as gratitude for the deepness of spirit we are seeking.

When we act thoughtlessly, accept our mistakes as gratitude for the freedom we have in our lives.

When we act foolishly, accept our lapses as gratitude for the lessons we have yet to learn.

When we share our stories, accept the telling of our lives as gratitude for community and family.

When we worship, accept our ritual mumblings as symbols of gratitude for all they represent.

Spirit of Thanksgiving, when we remember to give thanks for life and love, for knowledge and wisdom, for freedom to act and for freedom from oppression, accept our obvious omissions as unspoken gratitude for suffering that brings us compassion, for sorrow that helps us grow, for disappointment that gives us determination, for illness that offers healing, and for death that makes way for new cycles of life and creation.

Amen.

LEADER RESOURCE 1: HUMILITY QUOTES

1. from The Tao de Ching, Chapter 22, translated by J.H. MacDonald

If you want to become whole,
first let yourself become broken.

If you want to become straight,
first let yourself become twisted.

If you want to become full,
first let yourself become empty.

If you want to become new,
first let yourself become old.

Those whose desires are few gets them,
those whose desires are great go astray.

For this reason the Master embraces the Tao,
as an example for the world to follow.

Because she isn't self centered,
people can see the light in her.

Because she does not boast of herself,
she becomes a shining example.

Because she does not glorify herself,
she becomes a person of merit.

Because she wants nothing from the world,
the world can not overcome her.

When the ancient Masters said,
"If you want to become whole,
then first let yourself be broken,"
they weren't using empty words.

All who do this will be made complete.

2. from The Tao de Ching, an excerpt from Chapter 67,
translated by J.H. MacDonald

There are three jewels that I cherish:
compassion, moderation, and humility.

With compassion, you will be able to be brave,

With moderation, you will be able to give to others,

With humility, you will be able to become a great leader.

To abandon compassion while seeking to be brave,
or abandoning moderation while being benevolent,

or abandoning humility while seeking to lead
will only lead to greater trouble.

The compassionate warrior will be the winner,
and if compassion is your defense you will be secure.

Compassion is the protector of Heavens salvation.

3. Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others. — Marianne Williamson, in *A Return To Love: Reflections on the Principles of A Course in Miracles*

4. The (true) servants of (God) the Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them, reply with (words of) peace. — Quran, 25:63

5. Religion is to do right. It is to love, it is to serve, it is to think, it is to be humble. — Ralph Waldo Emerson

6. It is a wholesome and necessary thing for us to turn again to the earth and in the contemplation of her beauties to know of wonder and humility. — Rachel Carson

7. Better it is to be of an humble spirit with the lowly, than to divide the spoil with the proud. — Hebrew scripture, Proverbs 16:19

LEADER RESOURCE 2: HUMILITY DILEMMAS

Dilemma 1

Your table in geography class is assigned to work together as a team to create a PowerPoint presentation on Cuba. Everyone at the table takes responsibility for the information in four slides. Everyone together decides on slide design and progression. You suggest adding mambo music to the PowerPoint. You find the music and spend hours working out how to add it to the presentation. When presented in class, the teacher loves the addition of the music. She praises it. One of your tablemates says, "Yeah, we thought it would be a nice touch." No one mentions that it was your idea. Your feelings are hurt. You feel as if your tablemates do not appreciate the time you put into adding the music which enriched the PowerPoint and helped attain the A-plus. What do you do?

Dilemma 2

It is time for elections in your school's Gay/Straight Alliance (GSA). You served as vice president last year and are prepared to step into the presidency. The GSA has made many plans for the future and you were heavily involved in setting the group's goals. Your friends are excited about electing you. They know you have sacrificed playing sports and being involved in leadership in other clubs to focus on strengthening the GSA. The day before the election you find out that the quietest member of the GSA—a new student who transferred to your school mid-year—was president of the GSA at their old high school. That school has a reputation for having a very active and widely supported GSA. You are wondering which of you would make the best president. You doubt that the new member will even be nominated. What do you do?

FIND OUT MORE

The [Humanity Quest](#) website promotes the exploration of 500 values, including humility. A search under any particular value will give you links to resources that may include quotations, art and other activities, e-lists and newsletters dealing with this value, art that expresses this value, and reference material.

Read an interesting, scholarly article on boasting: "[Flytes of Fancy: Boasting and Boasters from Beowulf to Gangsta Rap](#)" by Alta Cools Halama in *Essays in Medieval Studies*.

Mother Nature has a way of humbling us all, especially when a natural disaster occurs. In his article "[Humility in a Climate Age](#)," Paul Wapner (*Tikkun* magazine, May/June 2010) looks at two ways to approach our current environmental crisis: with humility, which calls for lifestyle changes, or with "mastery," which argues that we should devise technologies to fix our problem.

WORKSHOP 9: GENEROSITY

INTRODUCTION

To practice five things under all circumstances constitutes perfect virtue; these five are gravity, generosity of soul, sincerity, earnestness, and kindness. — Confucius

This workshop demonstrates that a generous spirit involves more than a willingness to give of one's financial resources. Participants acknowledge abundance in their lives and identify different resources they can share generously. They explore the concepts of gratitude for what we have (no matter how little it may seem to others) and joy we can experience when we give.

GOALS

This workshop will:

- Examine the meaning of generosity
- Highlight resources, other than financial, that youth can give generously
- Explore situations where generosity is used or called for
- Guide youth to identify themselves as generous people.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Explore the meaning of generosity
- Discuss dilemmas where generosity is needed
- Identify times they have used generosity and commit to the future use of generosity in their lives.

WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	10
Activity 1: Story — The Other Half	10
Activity 2: Two Sides to Every Virtue	10
Activity 3: What Have I Got to Give?	15
Activity 4: A Generous Spirit	15
Activity 5: Dilemma	10
Activity 6: Practice	15

Faith in Action: Gleaning

Closing 5

Alternate Activity 1: Real Life Challenges

Alternate Activity 2: Grace 30

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

At which are you better, giving or receiving? Some people love to give, but are less comfortable receiving from others. If this is the case with you, think of a time you gave away something, although you did not possess it in abundance. How did that feel? Did you feel liberated? Did you feel generous? Did your act give you joy? Holding that feeling, imagine someone giving something to you—a resource you lack. Perhaps someone shown patience with you, when you were impatient with yourself, or shared wisdom with you exactly when you needed it. Imagine the giver being filled with that sense of liberation, that joy. Realize that by graciously receiving their generosity, you enabled these wonderful feelings.

Now think about the kind of giver you are. Is there something you have been called on to give, but of which you cannot let go? Are you debating stepping up to accept a position of leadership? Are letters from charities piling up on your desk? Imagine yourself giving this resource away. Could your giving transform someone's life? Imagine their joy. Imagine your feeling of liberation.

Imagine your soul's capacity for generosity growing, as you focus on abundance instead of scarcity. Balance the benefits with the real possible consequences. What is the worst that could happen? How would you survive it? Would the risk be worth the potential gain? Only you can decide. The trick is to make sure your choices reflect your values.

OPENING (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- Group covenant (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Bicycle Rack newsprint sheet (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Alternate Activity 1, [Real Life Challenges](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read Alternate Activity 1, Real Life Challenges. Prepare to incorporate it into this Opening, if you think you will have time and you observe that youth want to discuss challenges shared in their check-in.
- Post the chalice lighting words.
- Post the group covenant.
- Post the Bicycle Rack sheet the group began in Workshop 1, Opening, or label a new sheet of newsprint "Bicycle Rack," and post.

Description of Activity

Invite a volunteer to light the chalice while you lead the group to recite the chalice lighting words:

The thought manifests as the word
The word manifests as the deed;
The deed develops into habit;
And habit hardens into character;
So watch the thought and its ways with care,
And let it spring from love
Born out of concern for all beings...
As the shadow follows the body,
As we think, so we become.
— from *The Dhammapada, Sayings of the Buddha*

Invite the youth to check in by sharing any moral challenges they have experienced since the last meeting. If appropriate, use Alternate Activity 1 to further explore the group's challenges. If youth appear interested in discussing a particular challenge but you feel there is not enough time in this meeting, ask the person who shared it to write a short description of the challenge on the Bicycle Rack.

Tell participants that today you will talk about generosity.

ACTIVITY 1: STORY – THE OTHER HALF (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Story, "[The Other Half](#)" (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read the story and prepare to present it.
- Optional: Copy the story for all participants.

Description of Activity

Youth hear and discuss a true story about a family's generosity.

Introduce the story by saying it is true. Tell or read the story, then discuss it with these questions:

- The Salwen family's generosity amounted to one million dollars, half the value of their mansion. Did they sacrifice to give such a large sum of money, and, if so, what did they sacrifice?
- What else did the Salwens give besides money?
- What did they gain by giving?

Tell the group *The Power of Half* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010) is a book written by the father and daughter. The dad tells the story, interspersed with suggestions from Hannah on ways readers can engage with this work. One suggestion is to consider what can you give away half of. For the Salwens, it was a house. Hannah gives a couple of suggestions, including giving away half your clothes to a second-hand shop. Ask:

- Could you do this? Which half would you give away?
- What other suggestions do you have for resources you might cut in half and then give half away?

Conclude:

This experiment caused the Salwens to view generosity in a new way. Though they were already donating to charities and helping out in soup kitchens, they decided it was not enough. How do you know when you are giving enough to make the world better?

ACTIVITY 2: TWO SIDES TO EVERY VIRTUE (10 MINUTES)

Description of Activity

Participants identify positive and negative aspects of the virtue of generosity.

Invite youth to sit for a moment and think about generosity as a virtue. These prompts might be useful:

- What have you been told about generosity: What it means, when to use it, when not to use it?
- What have you been told about stinginess? What is the difference between being “frugal” and being “stingy?”
- What resources do you have that you could be generous with? Does the amount of resources you have influence how generous you might be? How do you measure your generosity, especially if what you are giving is not money? What “amount” are you comfortable with in different situations?
- Is there anyone you admire who is generous? In what way do they live out their generosity?
- Has being generous ever backfired on you?
- What other questions come to mind when you think about generosity?

Invite youth to share their reflections, with statements that start “On the positive side...” or “On the negative side...”. For example, “On the positive side, I feel liberated when I am generous with my money. I feel it reflects my commitment to value people more than possessions.” Or, “On the negative side, some people are always giving things away: money or possessions. When someone gives to me more than I feel I can give back, I feel indebted and I resent that.” Do youth have statements that do not fit either clause? Discuss these as a group.

Make sure these points are discussed:

- Sometimes a situation can be positive when looked at one way and negative another.
- Do moderation and balance have a place here, too? Is there such a thing as being too generous? If so, where is the line drawn? Who draws it?

ACTIVITY 3: WHAT HAVE I GOT TO GIVE? (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape

Preparation for Activity

- Draw the outline of a person on newsprint, and post.

Description of Activity

Youth consider diverse ways to be generous.

Say in these words, or your own:

Often, when we talk about generosity, we limit ourselves to thinking of money only. Giving financially to organizations and people who are trying to help the world be a more just place or to people who have material needs is important, but it is not the only way we can be generous.

Ask the group to brainstorm resources with which we can be generous. Make sure they include: our time, our talents or expertise, our knowledge, our heart (loving generously), and our support or enthusiasm. Write, or have a volunteer write, each suggested resource on the newsprint in an appropriate place on the body. For example, they might write “knowledge” on the head. Let the resources be as general or specific as the youth like.

Now invite participants to think quietly for one minute of a time someone was unexpectedly generous to them with a resource other than money. After one minute, have the youth partner with one other person and share their stories. Give pairs four minutes, telling the pairs when two minutes have passed and they should switch speakers.

Re-gather the group. Ask a few volunteers to share their own story with the entire group. In each story, help the youth identify what resource was given. Ask the storyteller how it felt to be the recipient of such generosity. Remind the group that during the Practice activity, they will be asked to find an area of their life where they could be more generous. Point to the brainstormed list and say that generosity is not about having a lot of money to give away. It is about having a generous spirit or soul.

ACTIVITY 4: A GENEROUS SPIRIT (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Chalice and centering table
- Candles for all participants (including leaders), and a lighter, or LED/battery-operated tea lights for all participants
- Story, "[The Gift of a Gemstone](#)" (included in this document)
- Handout 1, [Litany of Generosity](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Plan how you will engage the youth in a worship experience. Youth might read the chalice lighting, read the story, open a reflection, read parts in the Litany of Generosity (Handout 1), and/or each light a candle. Assign reading parts to volunteers ahead of time, and give them their parts in advance.

- Copy the handout for all participants.
- Set the chalice and the candles or tea lights on a centering table, with the chalice.

Description of Activity

Youth explore generosity as a spiritual practice.

Invite the youth to participate in worship with you. Assign volunteer roles you have not yet assigned. Distribute handouts as needed.

Gather the group around the chalice. If it has been extinguished, relight it with these words by Jacques Yves Cousteau:

It takes generosity to discover the whole through others. If you realize you are only a violin, you can open yourself up to the world by playing your role in the concert.

Tell or read the story “The Gift of a Gemstone.”

Invite participants to reflect silently on gifts transformed: Has there been a time they gave away something that was insignificant to them but of great value to someone else? Have they ever given a gift they assumed would be used in one way, but the recipient used it in another? How did they feel? Were they able to give freely and feel joyful for the recipient? After two minutes, invite volunteers to share.

Indicate the candles or tea lights. Ask everyone to join in the litany. Explain who will read which lines and how you would like the group to light the candles. For example, you might have volunteers each read a line in the litany, then light a candle. Have youth without a reading part each light a candle during the refrains that start, “Spirit of Life and Love...” or invite them to add their own line to the litany.

Including All Participants

Arrange the space for this worship so everyone can meaningfully participate. A youth with mobility limitations could have a partner light their candle while they read a line of the litany. Do not put any youth on the spot to read aloud.

ACTIVITY 5: DILEMMA (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 1, [Generosity Dilemmas](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Print the Leader Resource for yourself and volunteer readers.

Description of Activity

Youth discuss scenarios involving ethical dilemmas.

Seek a volunteer to read one of the two scenarios. Open the floor to reactions and answers. For each dilemma, ask participants if this reminds them of another dilemma they have encountered or heard of, real or fictional. Ask, “How could generosity be expressed in this dilemma?”

ACTIVITY 6: PRACTICE (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Participants’ journals, and writing instruments
- Participants’ clipboards with anklets (Workshop 1, Activity 3, Practice)
- Beads, and waterproof markers and/or other decorations
- Extra clipboards and string/hemp, and scissors

Preparation for Activity

- If needed, read instructions for making the anklets in the Before You Start section of the program Introduction and in Workshop 1, Decision Making.
- Retrieve participants’ clipboards with anklets, and participants’ journals if these are also kept on-site.
- Write on newsprint, and post:
 - When was a time you felt your actions were generous?
 - What made it possible for you to be generous in this instance?
 - Have you ever experienced a situation where it would have been helpful to me more generous?
 - In what areas of your life now could you use generosity to help you be the person you want to be?

Description of Activity

Participants understand how the use of generosity affects their lives.

Invite youth to take five minutes to journal, using the questions on newsprint as prompts, or to draw or meditate on the questions. Remind participants one can be generous with many different resources, not just money. For example, you can give your time, your talent, your feelings, or your knowledge.

Additional prompts you may add, while the group journals:

- What can I uniquely share with my community (family, friends, congregation, city, world)?
- Whose generosity have I not acknowledged?
- Whose generosity do I admire? Why?
- Do I use one type of generosity too much because I am afraid or unwilling to give of myself in other ways?

Invite participants to share journal writing to their level of comfort. You may wish to remind youth that you are a mandated reporter and, if anyone discloses behavior that could be dangerous to themselves or others, you will need to report it. Listen to what is said. If needed, guide the group toward concrete examples of practicing the virtue of generosity in real life. If remarks seem too abstract, challenge youth to create specific “to do” items based on their reflections.

Distribute participants’ clipboards, new beads (one per youth), and decorating materials. Invite youth to decorate a bead while reflecting on their personal experiences with generosity. Remind them that the beads will act as a reminder to use their highest values.

As participants finish, have them add this bead to the anklet they started in Workshop 1.

If any participant missed Workshop 1, provide them with a clipboard, hemp, a bead for their name bead, and instruction to begin their anklet.

Collect journals, clipboards, and anklet-making materials, and store for the next workshop.

CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- [Taking It Home](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Adapt the Taking It Home section and copy for all participants.
- Optional: Print the closing quotation (below) for a volunteer to read.

Description of Activity

Have a volunteer read the quotation while another extinguishes the chalice:

It takes generosity to discover the whole through others. If you realize you are only a violin, you can open yourself up to the world by playing your role in the concert. — Jacques Yves Cousteau

Distribute Taking It Home.

FAITH IN ACTION: GLEANING

Materials for Activity

- Supplies for gleaning work—for example, gardening gloves or latex gloves; bags, baskets, or other approved containers; sturdy shoes
- Optional: A computer with Internet access

Preparation for Activity

- Does the [Society of St. Andrew](#) have a branch in your community? If so, organize your gleaning trip through them. If not, research groups in your area that do gleaning or food recovery work and will accept the youth as volunteers. Determine if a representative of the organization can speak to youth about local hunger issues. If no speaker is available, prepare to present from the Internet site of the group you are working with or to print out materials to share. Find out how the youth should equip themselves for this project. Make arrangements to bring any needed supplies.
- Make plans for a service project the youth can do.
- Research current information on hunger in the world, the U.S., and your community. Two websites that might help are the [World Food Programme](#) of the United Nations and [Food Research and Action Center's list of states' anti-hunger organizations](#). If you will have a guest speaker, ask them to include this information: It is important youth know why they are providing service and to whom. Make sure this part of the activity includes telling youth where and how the recovered food will be used.

Description of Activity

The group works with an agency whose mission is to alleviate hunger locally.

Present information on the Society of St. Andrew. If you have Internet capability, have the youth peruse the [Society of St. Andrew](#) website. If you have the option to work with different groups, present information about all the options and let the group decide which organization best suits their needs.

Explain that "gleaning" is a process where fields that have been harvested are picked over for any small remains. Gleaning appears in the Hebrew scriptures, where farmers are commanded to leave the corners of their land unharvested so the hungry can come and glean food they need. Modern day gleaning includes working with farmers who have leftover produce they cannot sell and bringing that produce to people who are hungry, sometimes through food recovery agencies that

package food to distribute, other times through soup kitchens.

Once you choose an organization, arrange a date to glean. Arrange for a representative of the organization to talk to the youth beforehand about local hunger issues. Make sure you have information on how the food gleaned will be used. If possible, involve the youth in delivering the gleaned food.

Including All Participants

Inform the organization you will work with about accessibility needs of your group.

LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Reflect on the workshop with your co-leader. Which activities did the group enjoy most? Were varied learning styles addressed? Are group dynamics taking shape in a healthy way or are there issues you should address? Did participants keep to the covenant? Do co-leaders feel the work is shared equally? Did you have fun?

Read the next workshop for any advance preparation needed and decide who will be responsible for what.

TAKING IT HOME

To practice five things under all circumstances constitutes perfect virtue; these five are gravity, generosity of soul, sincerity, earnestness, and kindness. — Confucius

IN TODAY'S WORKSHOP... we discussed having a generous spirit, which allows one to be generous with all resources and gifts, not just money. We learned about the Salwens family, who sold their home and gave half the proceeds to a village in Ghana.

The Salwens

Read *The Power of Half* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010). It offers great suggestions from the daughter, Hannah, on how to grow a more generous spirit.

Watch [this excerpt](#) from an ABC television interview.

Living with Less

Generous can mean giving away extra. It can also mean living with less. With today's threats to our environment, people in affluent countries need to learn to live with less. By moving to a smaller home and working together for a common, long-range goal, the Salwens rediscovered the joy of spending time together as a family. Discuss with your family ways you could live with less. What could be some benefits of doing so? Giving up a resource can be liberating. Perhaps another way to

ask this question is to ask, "What would you like to liberate?"

What Do You Have That You Can Give?

Want to recognize someone's birthday or special occasion, but lack funds? Give a service IOU. Give your sibling a coupon good for one bedroom cleaning. Give your best friend an IOU promise to go see a movie you do not want to see but they do.

Hunger

Invite family and friends to do the [30 Hour Famine](#) with you. This activity will help you start to understand what millions experience every single day. Seek sponsors for your famine and donate funds to a group that works to end hunger.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: REAL LIFE CHALLENGES

Materials for Activity

- "Bicycle Rack" newsprint sheet from Opening

Description of Activity

Youth discuss ethical challenges they have faced.

If someone shared an experience in check-in or during any workshop activities that the group would like to explore further, do so now. This could be particularly useful if an experience resonated with many participants. If several challenges are already listed on the Bicycle Rack, invite the youth to choose one to discuss. It need not be related to this workshop's topic.

You might use these questions to structure a discussion:

- What virtues could this challenge bring into play?
- Did this challenge involve a conflict of values? If so, what values? How do they conflict?
- What are possible solutions to this challenge? Are they equally good? Why or why not?

Affirm that it is always easier to see good solutions in hindsight and that living a life according to virtues we want to nurture or values we hold dear is not always easy. We do not need to always "get it right," but we do need to keep trying.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: GRACE (30 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- A treat—one for each youth
- For swans: Paper for origami, 6-inch squares in different colors

- Handout 2, [Grace Reflections](#) (included in this document)
- Handouts 3-7, [Origami Instructions – Swan](#) (included in this document)
- Optional: Music, and music player
- Optional: For doves: 8-inch diameter paper dollies
- Optional: A computer with Internet access, and a digital projector or large monitor

Preparation for Activity

- Print Handout 2 and Handouts 3-7 for all participants.
- Optional: Choose music that evokes generosity of spirit. Test the music player.
- Optional: If you will have Internet access, plan to show a video on how to fold an origami dove or origami swan. One simple, short dove origami video is posted on [YouTube](#). Here is one for a [swan, by Howcast](#) and another, longer, more complex [swan posted by Rob](#).

Description of Activity

Youth grapple with the religious concept of grace.

Present the treat to the group. The treat could be edible, such as cups of sherbet, or inedible, such as small, attractive stones, pieces of amethyst, or dollar store gifts. Ask the group if they know the occasion for the gift. After guesses, tell them you gave it to them “just because.”

Ask if anyone has ever given them a gift “just because” before. Seek volunteers to talk about the situations involving the gifts. Focus on how it felt to be given something they did not expect, possibly did not even feel they deserved.

Distribute Handout 2 and read the definition of grace from Babcock, a Christian scholar. The Christian concept says that humans are saved not because they are good but through God’s grace, which comes from God’s great love. It is God’s grace that allowed Jesus to be born a man, suffer, and die for human salvation. Can the concept of grace have meaning for non-Christians?

Read the Unitarian Universalist quotations from the Handout. Then, lead a discussion with these questions:

- Do any of these definitions resonate with you?
- Chance Hunter gives examples of small acts of grace. Have you ever had experiences like the ones he describes?
- Does the gift have to be something materialistic? Can you think of a time you received a non-material gift that was unasked

for and undeserved? For example, has a teacher ever surprised them with a gift of “no homework?”

Invite participants to think of ways they could be generous and give the gift of grace. Ask them to think of someone who would benefit from knowing they are thinking of them. Perhaps it is someone they witnessed doing a quiet act of kindness, or someone dealing with illness or hardships gracefully. They might want to give them a swan. Another option is folding an origami dove for someone whose life seems particularly stressful and chaotic at the moment. Distribute Handouts 3-7, Origami Instructions – Swan, and paper for folding.

If you have Internet access, show the instructional video(s). Be ready to stop and start the video to allow everyone to move at their own pace.

If you are not using instructional videos, or after the videos are finished, play music you have brought while youth fold animals.

STORY: THE GIFT OF A GEMSTONE

A wisdom tale from many cultures, including Buddhist.

A wise woman, a teacher, was passing through a forest. There, among the leaves, was something shiny. She wiped away the leaves and dirt and beheld a beautiful, large gem. "My, this is pretty," the wise woman said. She put the jewel in her pouch and continued on her way.

When the sun was high in the sky, she sat down under a tree to eat her simple lunch. She was barely settled, when she saw a figure approaching. It was a man and, to judge from his dress, a poor man. "Kind and gentle lady, do you have any food to share with a poor beggar?"

"I have plenty," she replied with a smile, digging into her small sack. She pulled out the gem that was on top, a loaf of bread and a piece of cheese. She offered the bread and cheese to the beggar. But the beggar's eyes had grown big at the sight of the lovely gem.

"Sweet lady, that is a magnificent jewel!" he exclaimed.

"Yes, do you like it? Here, take it, too." And she gave the man the gem, the bread, and the cheese.

The beggar could not believe his luck! He wrapped the gem in his cloak and quickly scampered off.

The wise woman arose and started off on her way again.

She was surprised a few minutes later to hear footsteps behind her. She turned and saw the beggar before her again.

The beggar held out the jewel. "Wise woman, may I give this back to you. I don't want it!"

"What do you want?" she asked.

"I want whatever it is you have that allowed you to give it away."

STORY: THE OTHER HALF

Hannah Salwen looked left. She saw a man who was homeless, sitting on a fence. She looked right, at the Mercedes beside them at the intersection. "Dad," she said, "if that man"—she pointed to the Mercedes—"had a less nice car, that man there"—she pointed to the man who was homeless—"could have a meal."

Hannah's father, Kevin answered, "Um, yeah. But you know, if *we* had a less nice car, he could have a meal."

So began the saga of the Salwen family and how they learned you can give away millions, and still receive something greater in return.

The Salwen family was sitting pretty. Kevin and Joan had successful jobs, with nice incomes and benefits. In 1994, they moved with baby Hannah to Atlanta and bought a historic home on Peachtree Circle. Joseph was born soon after. They went to church and believed in helping others. Joan chaired the United Way campaign at her workplace to collect money for charity. Kevin and Joseph built homes for Habitat for Humanity. Hannah spent many more hours at the soup kitchen than she needed to fill a community service requirement at school. They were, by most standards, good people. Yet, after the stop light epiphany, Hannah began to wonder if it was enough. She challenged the rest of the family to think bigger. The stakes were raised when Joan asked if they really needed their two million dollar mansion. This question led to a series of family meetings. Opinions flew fast and furious. "What is it you want to accomplish?" "Am I supposed to give up everything I own?" "How much do we really need?" After many discussions—some ending in anger, some in tears—the decision was made: They would sell their house, give half of it away to people in need, and move into a smaller home.

One million dollars is a lot of money. More family meetings were called for to decide how and where to spend it. In the process, the Salwens made a discovery: They had drifted apart. Sports, time with friends, working late, electronic entertainment, and other distractions occupied so much of their time that quality time spent together was virtually nonexistent. Now that they were meeting to discuss how to spend "the half," they remembered how much fun they had together. They discussed topics that were meaningful. Brother and sister became closer.

The family listened to presentations from several organizations eager to put their gift to good use. They picked The Hunger Project. There were complications. They committed to donating money, but their house was hard to sell. They had to repeatedly reduce the price. Now, the sale of the house would not amount to the money they pledged to donate. Family meeting. The

decision? They would find ways to make up the deficit and stick to their original promise.

In the end, the Salwens donated enough money to build a community center in Ghana. The Salwens traveled to Ghana to meet the people in the villages. They listened to the villagers decide what they could use the most. The new center included a mill that villagers use to grind their grain so they could sell it for more to other villages. There was space for a schoolroom for girls, and a clinic. This relationship has grown over the last few years to include another village and the Salwens have donated more than the original million, as they have discovered other sources to generate income for projects, including writing a book, *The Power of Half*. One dollar from each book sale goes to Rebuilding Together, which provides money for critical home repairs to low income homeowners.

The Salwens keep giving. But they also want everyone to know that what they receive—the liberation from materialism, the joy of seeing other families pull themselves out of poverty—is more precious than gold.

HANDOUT 1: LITANY OF GENEROSITY

Spirit of Life and Love,

Bless me with a generous heart

A generous heart that knows how to give...

When I feel as though I do not have enough to share,

When I feel unappreciated,

When I believe my gifts will fall short of what is needed,
expected or desired,

When my enemy is in need of mercy, whether asked for
or not.

Spirit of Life and Love,

Bless me with a generous heart

A generous heart that knows how to accept with grace...

When I receive gifts that I fear are undeserved

When I am forgiven by those I have hurt

When I am hurting and comfort is received.

Spirit of Life and Love,

Bless me with a generous heart

That I may give joyfully,

Receive gratefully,

And create loving kindness in my life and the lives of
others.

HANDOUT 2: GRACE REFLECTIONS

Excerpts used with permission.

"[Grace]... is God's granting Salvation not in reward for the moral worth of the human but as a free and undeserved gift of love."

William S. Babcock, Christian scholar

"To trust the context—the place in which we must live out our lives—to trust in spite of the chaos and the tragedy, rather than living in terror of what we have not made and cannot control—this is to live gracefully.

To accept the givens of our personal existence and to act responsibly, to act purposefully, in trust, this is to achieve and to experience a state of grace, a graceful being. Yet I have not known anyone who has lived grace-fully who has not struggled to live in that way, struggled to learn from pain that has no meaning, and borne the cost of letting go and letting be.

But, I assure you, there is grace. I have felt it at times engulf me, restore me, and bless me with a passing vision of harmony and balance. I do not believe that grace is a gift imposed on us from above. I believe that grace is a standing invitation, the universe outstretched as a hand we beat against until we are finally able to rest into it."

Edward Frost (Unitarian Universalist minister) from "[Amazing Grace](#)" an article from the blog, *Frostings*.

"So what is grace? Grace is getting more than we deserve. It's not winning the jackpot—winning the lottery is luck, not grace. Instead, grace is finding an

unexpected moment of peace while taking a walk. Grace is learning something new and amazing about a friend you've had for years. We encounter grace when we hear a song by a group we've never heard of that changes our lives, or when we make a difference volunteering because we signed up and showed up.

Grace can feel like a wave of relief or a spike of pain, but it always leads us in the path of more hope, more trust, more love.

Grace is always there, waiting to happen. Grace is very patient. And polite. Grace never imposes itself. Grace can surprise us, but it doesn't force itself on us. Grace is a willing partner and a constant friend, but it never invades, even when our experience of grace feels overwhelming. This is at the core of the universalist message: There is always more than enough grace to go around.

There's no amount of good deeds we can do, and there's no magic prayer we can pray, that will guarantee we receive grace. We receive grace, not because we deserve it, but because the universe is fundamentally a generous place... . Grace isn't just something we receive; it's also something in our power to give. In the early verses of the book of Genesis, it says that we are created in God's image. If it's the nature of God to give grace, then it's our nature, too. We are most like God when we are being graceful to one another, when we make room for the presence of another, whatever the consequences."

Chance Hunter from "[Grace wins in the end](#)" an article from *UU World* (Spring, 2011)

HANDOUT 3: ORIGAMI INSTRUCTIONS — SWAN

From the [Origami-instructions website](http://www.origami-instructions.com), www.origami-instructions.com. Used with permission.

For swan:

Fold the paper along one diagonal, then unfold it.

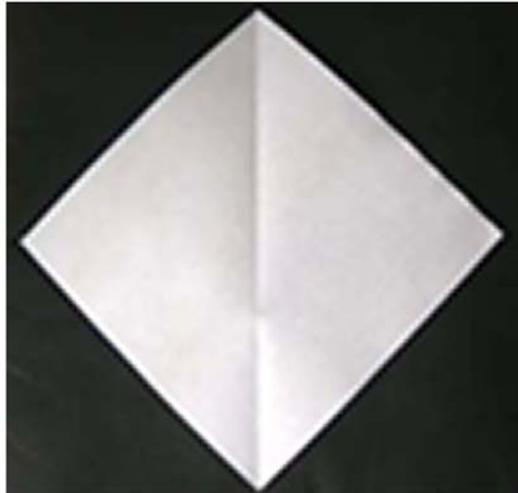
Now fold the lower edges of the square into the centerline as shown. This is your kite base. Flip the kite base over.

Next make a double fold as shown. Repeat on the other side.

Fold the point of the piece upwards. Then fold the head of the swan downwards. Next, fold the swan in half as shown.

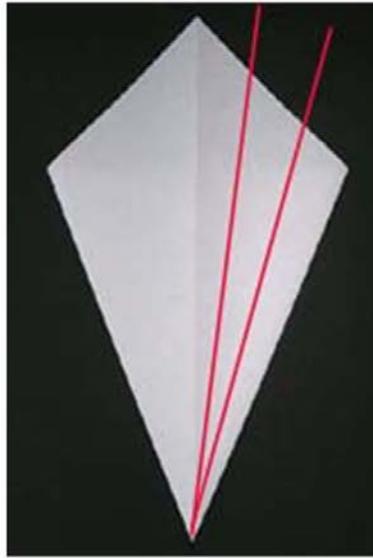
Pull the neck of the swan away from the body, and unfold the head and body.

**Fold the paper along one diagonal,
then unfold it.**



HANDOUT 4: ORIGAMI INSTRUCTIONS — SWAN

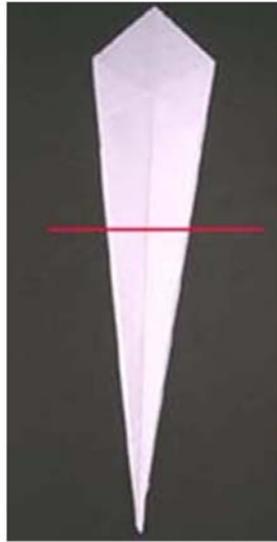
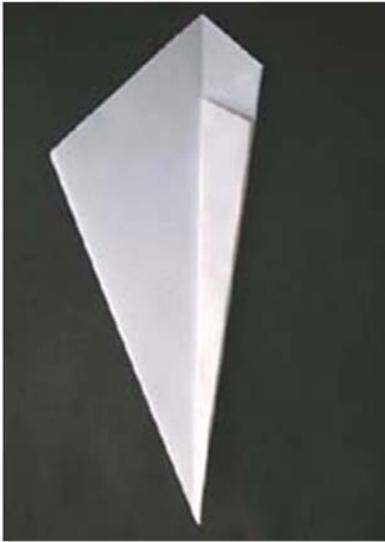
Now fold the lower edges of the square into the centerline as shown. This is your kite base. Flip the kite base over.



HANDOUT 5: ORIGAMI INSTRUCTIONS — SWAN

Next make a double fold as shown.

Repeat on the other side.

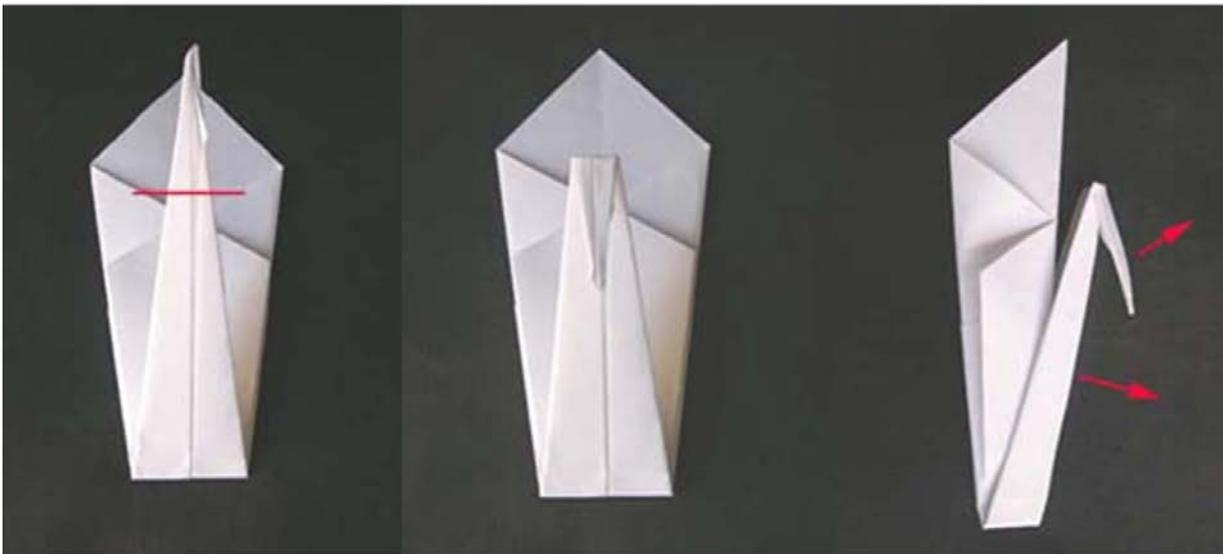


HANDOUT 6: ORIGAMI INSTRUCTIONS — SWAN

Fold the point of the piece upwards.

Then fold the head of the swan downwards.

Next, fold the swan in half as shown.



HANDOUT 7: ORIGAMI INSTRUCTIONS — SWAN

Pull the neck of the swan away from the body, and unfold the head and body.



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LEADER RESOURCE 1: GENEROSITY DILEMMAS

Dilemma 1

There are countless organizations through which you can give money to help those in need. How do you choose? Are children more worthy than animals? What criteria do you use? Does your family use the same criteria? Imagine walking into your congregation and seeing two tables. One is collecting money for Heifer, International; the other, for Greenpeace. Greenpeace endeavors to protect sea life and ecosystems. Greenpeace speaks out and stages actions to call attention to environments that are being endangered by human activity. You like that. However, sometimes, their tactics have been called unlawful, disrespectful, and even dangerous to human lives. Heifer gives animals and plants to people. You like that, too. But some vegetarians and vegans object because many of the animals are eaten. On the other hand, the animals are never given solely for food: All the animals (and plants) provide something the people can sell to increase their household incomes, like wool, milk, or eggs. The income has allowed many families to send children to school or send family members to doctors. You want to give a dollar bill. Neither table has change. Which do you choose and why?

Dilemma 2

Do the means justify the ends? What if your bank made a mistake and deposited an extra \$100 in your account? Which would be better: notifying the bank of its mistake or giving the money to charity?

FIND OUT MORE

Many organizations work to eliminate world hunger, including [Hunger Project](#), [Freedom From Hunger](#), [Action Against Hunger](#), and the [Millennium Project](#).

WORKSHOP 10: COURAGE

INTRODUCTION

I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It's when you know you're licked before you begin but you begin anyway and you see it through no matter what. — Atticus Finch, in Harper Lee's novel To Kill a Mockingbird

This workshop explores the virtue of courage. Youth learn that courage is expressed not by committing dangerous acts, but in acting to do what is right even when there is a price to pay. Courageous actions are not always big—for every Martin Luther King, Jr., there are hundreds of ordinary people quietly saying "No" to oppression and hate—yet a slow accumulation of small acts of courage can truly change the world. This workshop helps youth identify true courage in themselves and others.

GOALS

This workshop will:

- Examine the meaning of courage
- Provide examples of ethical dilemmas that call for courage
- Guide youth to identify themselves as courageous people.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Explore the meaning of "courage"
- Discuss a dilemma that calls for courage
- Examine experiences where they acted with courage and when they did not, and commit to nurturing this virtue the future.

WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	10
Activity 1: What Is Courage?	10
Activity 2: Story — The Farmer on the Hill	15
Activity 3: Whistle a Happy Tune	15
Activity 4: Dilemma	15

Activity 5: Practice	20
Faith in Action: UU Profiles in Courage	
Closing	5
Alternate Activity 1: Real Life Challenges	
Alternate Activity 2: I Wish I Had the Courage To...	20

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Few incidents from our past return to haunt us like the times we wish we had acted more courageously. Do you have a memory of a time that you let someone else down, and perhaps disappointed yourself even more? We all make mistakes. Carrying around guilt from those mistakes is not useful. Recall the quote from Simone Weil in Workshop 8: "Compassion directed to oneself is humility."

However, you can carry the memory without giving into guilt. Could you use the memory to remind you to strive toward your ideal of courage? It takes courage to forgive yourself for times you may have lacked it. It takes courage to reconcile with someone your behavior may have hurt. It is not a bad thing to remember your very human imperfections and how hard we all must work to be the best person we can be. This is lifelong work.

If you witness youth beating themselves up about past incidents during this workshop, consider sharing with them your own efforts to forgive yourself and to try again another day.

OPENING (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- Group covenant (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Bicycle Rack newsprint sheet (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Alternate Activity 1, [Real Life Challenges](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read Alternate Activity 1, Real Life Challenges. Prepare to incorporate it into this Opening, if you think you will have time and you observe that youth want to discuss challenges shared in their check-in.
- Post the chalice lighting words.
- Post the group covenant.
- Post the Bicycle Rack sheet the group began in Workshop 1, Opening, or label a new sheet of newsprint "Bicycle Rack," and post.

Description of Activity

Invite a volunteer to light the chalice while you lead the group to recite the chalice lighting words:

The thought manifests as the word
The word manifests as the deed;
The deed develops into habit;
And habit hardens into character;
So watch the thought and its ways with care,
And let it spring from love
Born out of concern for all beings...
As the shadow follows the body,
As we think, so we become.
— from *The Dhammapada, Sayings of the Buddha*

Invite the youth to check in by sharing any moral challenges they have experienced since the last meeting. If appropriate, use Alternate Activity 1 to further explore the group's challenges. If youth appear interested in discussing a particular challenge but you feel there is not enough time in this meeting, ask the person who shared it to write a short description of the challenge on the Bicycle Rack.

Tell participants that today you will talk about courage.

ACTIVITY 1: WHAT IS COURAGE? (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape

Preparation for Activity

- Post two sheets of newsprint, one labeled "Courage: Up Side," the other labeled "Courage: Down Side."

Description of Activity

Participants identify positive and negative aspects of the virtue of courage.

Tell the group that today they will explore courage. Invite them to sit for a moment and think about "courage" as a virtue. Then, invite the group to define "courage;" let them grapple with definitions. If needed, offer the Merriam Webster definition: "the mental or moral strength to venture, persevere, and withstand danger, fear, or difficulty." Or, share the words of the fictional father and lawyer, Atticus Finch, in Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*: "I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It's when you know you're licked before you begin but you begin anyway and you see it through no matter what."

Now, lead a discussion, recording positive and negative aspects of courage on newsprint as they arise. Use these prompts:

- What have you been told about courage: What it means, when to use it, when not to use it
- How would you define "courage?"
- Who defines what is courageous and what is not? Does it mean different things to different people? How do you know if you acted with courage?
- Is there a relationship between fear and courage?
- Do you need to use courage in moderation, too? Can you have too much courage?
- Is someone doing something dangerous always courageous? What about a lion tamer in a circus? A race car driver? Someone driving way above the speed limit? What if they are driving an ambulance? Is courage defined by just the act, or does the reason for the act—the hoped-for outcome—matter?

ACTIVITY 2: STORY – THE FARMER ON THE HILL (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Story, "[The Farmer on the Hill](#)" (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read the story so you can present it effectively.
- Optional: Copy the story for all participants.

Description of Activity

Say this story is a wisdom tale about courage, from Japan. Tell or read the story. Then, process with these questions:

- Who acts courageously in this story?
- The farmer burning his crops was taking a risk. He had no guarantee that the villagers would help him put it out, especially because he was not in good relationship with the village. His actions showed that he had faith in the goodness of the villagers. How does having faith in people's goodness relate to courage?
- Suppose the farmer was afraid the villagers might not see the fire or might not be willing to help douse it. Did the farmer have a greater fear that overrode that one? Have you ever been in a situation where you weighed fears against each other? How did you choose which fear was greater? How did that shape your actions?
- Think of a time you or someone you know acted courageously. It might have involved speaking up about something, or taking a physical risk. What fears did the person need to push past? What gave them the strength to act with courage? [Possible answers might be love, a belief in doing the right thing, or knowing someone depended on you.]

Variation

If time permits, invite participants to act out the story with as much melodrama as they wish.

ACTIVITY 3: WHISTLE A HAPPY TUNE (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Songs about courage, and music player(s)
- Optional: A computer with Internet access

Preparation for Activity

- Obtain recordings of songs that inspire bravery and courage, and appropriate music players.

(Optional: Print lyrics for all participants.) Many songs can be streamed from the Internet on YouTube and other websites. Here are suggestions:

- "Man in the Mirror" by Michael Jackson
- "What Doesn't Kill You (Stronger)" by Kelly Clarkson
- "This Is It" by Kenny Loggins
- "Never Say Never" by Justin Bieber
- "Get Up, Stand Up" by Bob Marley
- "Strength, Courage, and Wisdom" by India Arie
- "If I Had a Hammer" by Pete Seeger
- "[Courage Is...](#)" by [The Strange Familiar](#)
- "[I Won't Back Down](#)" by [Eddie Vedder](#)
- "Yes, We Can" by Will.i.am, of the Black Eyed Peas.
- Tunes from cartoons and musicals, for example "Be a Man" from Disney's *Mulan*, "[Whistle a Happy Tune](#)" from *The King and I*, "If I Only Had the Nerve" from *The Wizard of Oz*, and "[I Know Where I've Been](#)" from the movie *Hairspray*.
- Songs from the Civil Rights movement, such as "We Shall Overcome"
- Songs of the Vietnam War protest era, such as Bob Dylan's "The Times They Are a-Changin'" and Phil Ochs' "I Ain't Marching Anymore"
- Woody Guthrie's "This Land is Your Land," which puts forth a broad, inclusive patriotism.

Description of Activity

Youth explore how music can inspire bravery and courage.

Explain that while bravery is not the same thing as courage, being courageous often requires one to act bravely—and being brave is not easy.

Ask everyone to think of a time they felt afraid to do something, but were brave. Allow a couple of minutes. Then, ask:

- What helped you be brave? [Affirm answers.]
- Has music ever helped you feel brave? [Take responses.]

Now ask the group if they can think of instances where people have used music to inspire bravery or courage? If no one gives these examples, talk about:

- the use of freedom songs and spirituals during the Civil Rights movement
- the songs sung at anti-war protests and pro-justice rallies
- trumpet, flute, drum, and other music that accompanies armies.

Play the songs you have brought. Distribute lyrics, if you have brought copies. Invite the group to discuss how each song encourages bravery or courage through its lyrics, instrumentation, and beat. What particular parts of each song are especially moving?

Ask:

- Do you have any songs that inspire you to bravery?
- Do you know any songs that inspire you to be a better person?

ACTIVITY 4: DILEMMA (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 1, [Courage Dilemmas](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Adapt the Leader Resource to include the dilemmas you plan to use in this activity. Make copies—for yourself, (optional) for volunteer role-players, and, if you wish, for all participants.

Description of Activity

Youth discuss scenarios involving ethical dilemmas.

Have a volunteer read one of the two scenarios. Open the floor to reactions and answers. Ask participants if this reminds them of other dilemmas they have encountered or heard of, real or fictional. For each dilemma, ask “How could courage play a part?”

If you have time, invite volunteers to role play the dilemmas.

ACTIVITY 5: PRACTICE (20 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Participants’ journals, and writing instruments
- Participants’ clipboards with anklets (Workshop 1, Activity 3, Practice)

- Beads, and waterproof markers and/or other decorations
- Extra clipboards and string/hemp, and scissors

Preparation for Activity

- If needed, read instructions for making the anklets in the Before You Start section of the program Introduction and in Workshop 1, Decision Making.
- Retrieve participants’ clipboards with anklets, and participants’ journals if these are also kept on-site.
- Write on newsprint, and post:
 - When have you felt courageous?
 - What is the most courageous act you have ever witnessed?
 - Who are your role models of courage? Why?
 - Have you ever experienced circumstances where it would have been helpful for you to be more courageous?
 - In what areas of your life now could you apply the virtue of courage to help you be the person you want to be?

Description of Activity

Participants understand how the use of courage affects their lives.

Invite youth to take five minutes to journal, using the questions on newsprint as prompts, or to draw or meditate on the questions. You may offer these additional prompts while the group is journaling:

- Have you experienced a time you lacked courage? What were you afraid of? Was your fear legitimate?
- When has fear prevented you from doing something you really wanted to do? How did that feel? Do you have regrets?
- How do you deal with regret? Do you feel you have a healthy relationship with regret?
- Sometimes lack of courage leaves us feeling guilty. Yet, guilt is generally not a productive emotion. Remember the quote from Workshop 8, “Compassion directed to oneself is humility.” Is there something you are feeling guilty about? Does it help to remember that we all sometimes fall short, but we can try again tomorrow to find our courage to be the best person we can be?

- Remember that one virtue we said should be combined with all other virtues is moderation. What does moderation in courage look like?

After five minutes, ask participants to stop. Invite volunteers to share journal writing, to their level of comfort. Remind youth that you are a mandated reporter: If anyone discloses behavior that could be dangerous to themselves or others, you will need to report it. Listen to what the youth say.

When sharing is complete or after ten minutes, distribute participants' clipboards, new beads (one per youth), and decorating materials. Invite youth to take the next five minutes to decorate a bead while reflecting on their personal experiences with courage. Remind them that the bead will act as a reminder to live according to their highest values.

As participants finish, have them add this bead to the anklet they started in Workshop 1.

If any participant missed Workshop 1, provide them with a clipboard, hemp, a bead for their name bead, and instruction to begin their anklet.

Collect journals, clipboards, and anklet-making materials, and store for the next workshop.

CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- [Taking It Home](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Adapt the Taking It Home section and copy for all participants.
- Optional: Print the closing quotation (below) for a volunteer to read.

Description of Activity

Have a volunteer read the quotation while another extinguishes the chalice.

Courage doesn't always roar. Sometimes courage is the little voice at the end of the day that says I'll try again tomorrow. — Mary Anne Radmacher, author of *Lean Forward Into Your Life*

Distribute Taking It Home.

FAITH IN ACTION: UU PROFILES IN COURAGE

Materials for Activity

- For gathering interviews: Notepads and pens/pencils, cameras, and/or audio/video recording equipment
- For presenting interviews: Bulletin board display materials such as writing/drawing paper, construction paper, color markers, and tape/push pins, and/or audio/video playback equipment

Preparation for Activity

- Plan how you will engage congregational members to share their knowledge of other members' acts of courage, for example, schedule a time when the youth will approach members after worship, at coffee hour.
- Plan how the youth will conduct interviews. Obtain equipment they will need.
- Plan how the youth will share the stories they collect. Arrange a bulletin board display, space in your congregational newsletter, and/or a time to present videotaped interviews to a congregational gathering.

Description of Activity

Participants seek courageous individuals from the congregation to highlight.

There are probably individuals in your congregation who have taken courageous stands in their lives: stood up for something or someone, even when they thought their support would not guarantee success or they had to take a personal risk to provide it. Encourage youth to seek the stories of these individuals. Few people will step forward to describe a courageous act they have performed. So here is the twist: Invite the youth to ask congregants to name *other* people in the congregation who have committed courageous acts. For example, if someone knows a congregational member who was involved in the Civil Rights movement, ask them to help the youth create a Profile in Courage of that individual. Acts do not need to be earth-shattering. If a child heard another child object to a schoolmate saying, "That's so gay!", this courageous act deserves a profile.

Decide as a group where and how you will gather and post UU Profiles in Courage. A simple solution is to post newsprint on a wall in a high traffic area of the building, where everyone will see it and where everyone can reach. Place blank, large-size sticky notes near the newsprint, and post instructions for using a sticky note to add a profile: Include the name of the courageous person and their act. Advertise the UU Profiles in

Courage board. Encourage congregational members to visit it and add someone's profile.

Decide what more you can do with the profiles after they are posted, to highlight how these individuals inspire us all to act with courage to help make a better world. Youth might write an article for the congregational newsletter, or invite the contributors and the people who have been profiled to a special "thank you" brunch. If the group has the equipment and skills to do so, videotape interviews with the profiled individuals or construct a worship service around their stories.

LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Reflect on the workshop with your co-leader. Which activities did the group enjoy the most? If guilty feelings arose, were they dealt with in a healthy way?

There are only two workshops left. What evidence do you see that workshops are having a positive effect on the group? How are the anklets progressing?

Read the next workshop for any advance preparation needed and decide who will be responsible for what.

TAKING IT HOME

I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It's when you know you're licked before you begin but you begin anyway and you see it through no matter what.
— Atticus Finch, in Harper Lee's novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*

IN TODAY'S WORKSHOP... we talked about the virtue of courage. We heard a wisdom tale from Japan about a courageous farmer. We explored ethical dilemmas and songs people have used in different times and circumstances to bolster their courage.

Courage

Have you seen the bumper sticker or tee shirts with this saying?

Lord, help me be the person my dog thinks I am.

Sometimes we act courageously because we do not want to disappoint those we love. Sometimes, we care especially about emulating the good qualities of people we admire and respect. Is there someone in your life whose example helps you stand strong and act with courage? Who are your heroes? You may have a famous hero, like Rosa Parks, and you may also have heroes who are your relatives, or even fictional characters. Tell someone about one of your heroes who sets an example for courageous behavior.

"Dude, You Have No Qur'an!"

In today's Internet age, a small act of courage captured on camera can inspire millions of people. On YouTube, watch this [footage of an everyday hero standing up for religious diversity](#). Jacob Isom stopped a Qur'an burning in Texas by grabbing the kerosene-soaked holy book off a lit grill. (Notice that the majority of people protesting the burning are UUs, though Isom is not identified as such.)

Profiles in Courage in Books and Movies

Courage comes with many different faces. *Profiles in Courage* (New York: HarperCollins, 1956) is the title of a popular book by President John F. Kennedy. The quote for this workshop comes from the movie *To Kill a Mockingbird* (1962, directed by Robert Mulligan) based on the novel by Alabama author Harper Lee. In the story, a young girl learns about courage and justice from the example of her father.

Here are other movies demonstrating courageous acts:

- *Stand and Deliver* (PG, 1988, directed by Ramon Menendez) is a true, but less obvious story about courage. A stubborn and dedicated teacher struggles to inspire his Latino students to achieve academic excellence, overcoming obstacles such as parental objections, pregnancies, and threats and humiliations from officials.
- *12 Angry Men* (1957, directed by Sidney Lumet) is a classic film about the courage of one person to stand alone against the majority.
- *Stranger Than Fiction* (PG13, 2006, directed by Marc Forster) is an odd, wonderful film about a meek man learning who faces death with courage.
- More movies: *Horton Hears a Who* (also a book), *The Autobiography of Miss Jane Pittman*, *It's a Wonderful Life*, *In and Out*, *Erin Brockovich*, *Rabbit Proof Fence*, *Temple Grandin*, *Gorillas in the Mist*, *Babe*, *Silkwood*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, *Hairspray*, *Philadelphia*, and *Rudy*.
- Documentaries about real life heroes include as *Who Are the DeBolts (and Where Did They Get 19 Kids)?*, *The Times of Harvey Milk*, and *The Education of Shelby Knox*. Do you have a favorite movie about courage?

Youth Courage Awards

Openly gay screenwriter, director, and producer Colin Higgins (*Harold and Maude*, *Nine to Five*) established the Colin Higgins Foundation in 1986 to support causes he believed in. Colin died from complications due to AIDS in 1988. To honor his memory, the foundation started giving Youth Courage Awards for bravery in the

face of discrimination, intolerance, and bigotry based on sexual orientation and/or gender. Meet the 2011 honorees [here](#).

The Cowardly Lion

If you have read or seen the 1939 film version of *The Wizard of Oz*, you know that the Cowardly Lion goes to Oz to request courage. Watch the movie again and note the times he acts with courage. Of course, his cowardliness is funny, too. Here is a link to one of his funnier moments, on a website for [Best Speeches in Film](#). You can play the clip to listen to it, too.

The Strange Familiar

On YouTube, listen to "[Courage Is...](#)" by [The Strange Familiar](#). You can see by the comments that this song has inspired many people. ABC Family aired the song in a 2008 episode of *The Secret Life of the American Teenager*.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: REAL LIFE CHALLENGES

Materials for Activity

- "Bicycle Rack" newsprint sheet from Opening

Description of Activity

Youth discuss ethical challenges they have faced.

If someone shared an experience in check-in or during any workshop activities that the group would like to explore further, do so now. This could be particularly useful if an experience resonated with many participants. If several challenges are already listed on the Bicycle Rack, invite the youth to choose one to discuss. It need not be related to this workshop's topic.

You might use these questions to structure a discussion:

- What virtues could this challenge bring into play?
- Did this challenge involve a conflict of values? If so, what values? How do they conflict?
- What are possible solutions to this challenge? Are they equally good? Why or why not?

Affirm that it is always easier to see good solutions in hindsight and that living a life according to virtues we want to nurture or values we hold dear is not always easy. We do not need to always "get it right," but we do need to keep trying.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: I WISH I HAD THE COURAGE TO... (20 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Sticky notes (all one color) and pens/pencils

Preparation for Activity

- Tape two sheets of newsprint together the long way, to make a banner. Across the middle, write: "I wish I had the courage to..." Post the banner where everyone can reach it.

Description of Activity

Participants discover one another's wishes for courage and bolster one another's confidence.

Invite everyone to close their eyes and think of something they really want to do but they are not sure they have the courage to do it—something they will be able to describe briefly and anonymously. Tell them you are not necessarily looking for a physically risky activity, such as skydiving or snowboarding. Encourage them to think of something they might try at which failure could mean hurt feelings or loss of esteem. For example, speaking up when someone's behavior bothers you could lead to a better relationship with that person, but it is risky, and could call for courage. Give participants a couple of minutes.

Distribute sticky notes and pens/pencils. Invite youth to briefly write their wish on a note. If they have more than one wish, have them use additional sticky notes.

Collect all the notes, mix them up, and post them on the newsprint. Ask participants to move to the newsprint and read one another's wishes. Are any similar?

Invite volunteers to read aloud a wish they want to support. For each wish, ask:

- What encouragement can we give someone to have the courage to take such a risk?
- Who has faced a similar situation with courage? What did you do? How did it turn out?

Of course, do not have the group spend time on wishes that could lead to dangerous situations, lawbreaking, or harm to others or oneself.

STORY: THE FARMER ON THE HILL

A wisdom tale from Japan.

On the top of the hill lived the village curmudgeon.

No one knew why the farmer was so ornery, yet he never seemed to have a kind word to say.

No one knew why he was so inhospitable, yet he would not even open his door to visitors.

No one knew why he lived isolated, at the top of a hill that was difficult to traverse, yet it was rumored that he had moved there after the death of his young son.

What everyone did know, was that he wanted to be left alone. And alone he was.

It was time for the festival. Everyone in the village would be there—except for the farmer at the top of the hill. The women sang, the men told tall tales, and the children played, screaming at the top of their lungs as they ripped and ran, trailing long streamers behind them.

It was all the noise that brought the farmer at the top of the hill outside. "What is all the commotion?" he wondered aloud. Looking down the hill, he could see the village festivities. But it was not the bright sights of the celebration that took his breath away. For looking beyond the village, out to the nearby sea, the farmer saw a huge wave rolling toward the shore with tremendous speed. Though he had never witnessed one, he knew what this was: a tsunami.

Though his house was safe, up upon the hill, the tsunami was heading straight for the village.

The farmer yelled out a warning. But because of the festivities, no one could hear him.

He jumped up and down and waved his arms. But because everyone was having so much fun together, no one saw him. The farmer was frantic. How could he stop the tsunami from drowning the entire village?

Suddenly, he knew. Though he might be ornery and inhospitable, he knew the village people were not. They had always reached out to him with kindness. The farmer did the only thing he could think to do. With no concern for his own safety, he rushed into his fields and lit all his crops afire.

A raging inferno ensued, as the dry vegetation quickly wilted and crumbled in the flames. Who saw the flames first? No one knew. Perhaps a bright-eyed child, or an elder with a nose finely attuned for smoke. Whoever it was, the cry of, "Fire!" spread quickly and all the festivities stopped as the villagers' eyes turned toward the hill.

"Quick! Get buckets of water! We have to save the farmer and his land!"

And everyone did. All the villagers rushed up the hill—with buckets, with blankets, and with no concern for their own safety.

They reached the top and doused the last of the flames. By then, all the farmer's crops were destroyed. Yet no one from the village drowned in the tsunami. And they all knew why.

LEADER RESOURCE 1: COURAGE DILEMMAS

Dilemma 1

Eboo Patel, founder of the Interfaith Youth Core, tells a story about a time he wishes he had acted with more courage. In high school, his friend, who was Jewish, suffered a period of persecution. Bullies drew swastikas around the school and verbally harassed the friend and other Jewish students. The school administration did nothing. Patel noticed, but looked away, avoiding contact with his friend during this period. Years later, his friend confronted Patel and told him how abandoned he had felt at that time.

What could Patel have done to stand by his friend during this difficult time? What was Patel afraid would happen, if he acted with courage?

Dilemma 2

You find your younger sibling watching Internet pornography. You know that your parents would be upset and punish your sibling if they find out. Your sibling asks you not to tell. What are your options? Is one option more courageous than others?

FIND OUT MORE

J.M. Barrie, author of *Peter Pan*, gave a famous commencement speech on courage in 1922 that was recently republished in book form (Forgotten Books, 2010). Download the free e-book [here](#).

This [Facebook page](#) has a story about a Wall of Courage created by students in an elementary school, to honor people who served in the military.

The [Dictionary of Unitarian and Universalist Biography](#) has the stories of dozens of our faith ancestors, many of whom exhibited great courage in living their faith.

WORKSHOP 11: FORGIVENESS

INTRODUCTION

The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong. — Mahatma Gandhi

This workshop focuses on forgiveness, of both others and oneself. A story demonstrates how forgiveness helps the individual who does the forgiving, at least as much as it helps the forgiven.

GOALS

This workshop will:

- Examine the meaning of forgiveness
- Provide examples of situations where forgiveness is called for
- Guide youth to identify themselves as forgiving people.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Explore the meaning of "forgiveness"
- Discuss a dilemma that calls for forgiveness
- Examine their own history of forgiveness and commit to the future practice of forgiveness in their lives.

WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	15
Activity 1: Story – A Path to Forgiveness	10
Activity 2: Up Side, Down Side	10
Activity 3: Forgiveness Maze	25
Activity 4: Dilemma	10
Activity 5: Practice	15
Faith in Action: Creating a Ritual	
Closing	5
Alternate Activity 1: Real Life Challenges	
Alternate Activity 2: Story – How Coyote Lost His Song, Music and Dance	25

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

Novelist Faith Baldwin wrote, "I think one should forgive and remember... to look, even regularly, upon what you remember and know you've forgiven is achievement." If there are times when we might celebrate living up to our highest standards, times when we have sought or granted forgiveness may be among these.

Can you think of a time when to forgive was extremely difficult, yet you managed it? Ethicist and theologian Lewis B. Smedes wrote, "You will know that forgiveness has begun when you recall those who hurt you and feel the power to wish them well." Perhaps you have not perfected your forgiving. Moments may still arise when you feel anger or shame at a memory of being wronged. Yet, if you can move to a place where you are able to "wish them well," you can feel good about not settling for the easy way. Remember, we need not be perfect, but only to strive to be the best person we can be. Youth, adults, all of us are all still "becoming."

OPENING (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- Group covenant (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Bicycle Rack newsprint sheet (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Alternate Activity 1, [Real Life Challenges](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read Alternate Activity 1, Real Life Challenges. Prepare to incorporate it into this Opening, if you think you will have time and you observe that youth want to discuss challenges shared in their check-in.
- Post the chalice lighting words.
- Post the group covenant.
- Post the Bicycle Rack sheet the group began in Workshop 1, Opening, or label a new sheet of newsprint "Bicycle Rack," and post.

Description of Activity

Invite a volunteer to light the chalice while you lead the group to recite the chalice lighting words:

The thought manifests as the word
The word manifests as the deed;
The deed develops into habit;
And habit hardens into character;
So watch the thought and its ways with care,
And let it spring from love
Born out of concern for all beings...
As the shadow follows the body,
As we think, so we become.
— from *The Dhammapada, Sayings of the Buddha*

Invite the youth to check in by sharing any moral challenges they have experienced since the last meeting. If appropriate, use Alternate Activity 1 to further explore the group's challenges. If youth appear interested in discussing a particular challenge but you feel there is not enough time in this meeting, ask the person who shared it to write a short description of the challenge on the Bicycle Rack.

Tell participants that today you will talk about forgiveness.

ACTIVITY 1: STORY — A PATH TO FORGIVENESS (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Story, "[A Path to Forgiveness](#)" (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read the story so you can present it effectively.
- Optional: Copy the story for all participants.

Description of Activity

The group hears and discusses a true story about forgiveness.

Introduce the story by saying:

We can say important things about forgiveness by being clear what it is not. Forgiving another person does not necessarily mean you will reconcile a relationship, nor that a person has apologized or even asked to be forgiven. Forgiving another certainly does not mean that what that person did was okay, or that they are "getting away with it" (whatever "it" may be). And for most of us, advice "to forgive and forget" is often unrealistic.

So what is "forgiveness" and how do we choose to embrace forgiveness as part of our spiritual journey? Here is a story of how one man found a path to forgiveness.

Tell or read the story.

Process with these questions:

- Is it helpful to think about forgiveness as a path or a journey, instead of a finite act?
- What do you think of Azim's job offer to Tony? If Tony accepts while Azim is still working with the Foundation, Azim might have to look every day at the person who murdered his son. Where does Azim say he receives the strength to face this kind of commitment?
- What might make it hard for Tony to accept the offer?
- What can you take from this story to apply to your own life?

Say, in these words or your own:

From Azim, we can learn that forgiveness is indeed an opportunity to deepen our lives, spiritually and emotionally. We can choose acceptance over anger, gratitude for what we have over regret for what we have lost. It may be too much to expect we will actually love

those who hurt us, but we can still decide not to hate, and not to hurt as we have been hurt.

None of this is easy and we will not always succeed. However, by making these choices, we truly can live our Principles, accepting and promoting the inherent worth and dignity of others, justice, equity and compassion, acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth. Forgiveness is a gift we can give—to ourselves and to the world.

ACTIVITY 2: UP SIDE, DOWN SIDE (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape

Preparation for Activity

- Post two sheets of newsprint, one labeled "Forgiveness: Up Side," the other labeled "Forgiveness: Down Side."
- Post a third sheet, headed "Does forgiveness mean... " and write: "To pardon?" "To give up resentment of a person or act?" "Mercy?" and "To make an excuse for?"

Description of Activity

Participants identify positive and negative aspects of the virtue of forgiveness.

Invite youth to sit for a moment and think about "forgiveness" as a virtue. Indicate the possible definitions you have posted on newsprint. Lead a discussion; these prompts may be useful:

- What have you been told about forgiveness: What it means, when to practice it, when not to practice it?
- Who defines forgiveness? Does it mean different things to different people?
- Is it harder to forgive yourself or forgive other people?
- Is there anyone you admire who exhibits this quality regularly?
- Do you have friends and/or family members who seem to never forgive? How do you feel when you are around these people?
- How do you feel about the phrase "forgive and forget?" Should you forget? Is forgetting a necessary element in forgiveness?
- Is forgiving the same as condoning what someone did or saying an act is not wrong?

- What other questions come to mind when you think about forgiveness?
- What are the advantages to forgiving? What disadvantages?

As participants discuss the questions, briefly write on newsprint the positive ("Up side") and negative ("Down side") aspects of forgiveness that emerge. Conclude by reviewing the comments you have captured.

ACTIVITY 3: FORGIVENESS MAZE (25 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Handouts 1-2, [Maze](#) (included in this document)
- Pencils and erasers
- Highlighters or erasable color pencils

Preparation for Activity

- Read the instructions on Handout 1 carefully. Make a sample maze to show the youth.
- Copy Handouts 1-2, Maze, for all participants.

Description of Activity

Participants create mazes to illustrate paths to forgiveness.

Tell the group that you will guide them to reflect on a few questions about forgiveness. Invite them to get comfortable and close their eyes if they wish.

Say:

Think of forgiveness as a path. It starts when someone has been hurt or wronged. Perhaps the hurt party is you. Or, perhaps you are the one who has hurt another. How will you maneuver through the path to a place where you can forgive, or can be forgiven?

Have you ever lost a friend because one of you could not forgive the other? What blocked forgiveness?

Have you ever forgiven a friend a big hurt? What helped you forgive?

Has a friend ever forgiven you a big hurt? Do you think any actions on your part helped your friend along the path to forgiveness?

If forgiveness is a path, can you identify doorways to forgiveness? Sometimes an apology can be a doorway. Sometimes a doorway is refusing to hang on to shame or hate.

Can you identify road blocks on the forgiveness path? If someone does not admit to wrongdoing,

is it harder for you to forgive? If you are afraid to own up to a hurt you caused, afraid to face our own shame, is that a road block?

Invite youth to take these thoughts and create a maze of forgiveness. Distribute Handouts 1 and 2, Maze. Tell the youth they have 15 minutes to follow all the steps to construct the maze. Give them five-minute and two-minute warnings.

Call the larger group back together. Ask:

- What road blocks on the path to forgiveness did you identify? What doorways?
- How could this maze help you in the future to practice forgiveness? Are there action steps you can use in a real life situation?

ACTIVITY 4: DILEMMA (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 1, [Forgiveness Dilemmas](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Print the Leader Resource for yourself and volunteer readers.

Description of Activity

Youth discuss scenarios involving ethical dilemmas.

Seek a volunteer to read each of the two scenarios. For each dilemma, open the floor to reactions and answers. How could forgiveness play a part in this dilemma? Ask the youth if it reminds them of other dilemmas they have experienced or heard of, real or fictional.

If you have time, invite volunteers to role play the dilemmas.

ACTIVITY 5: PRACTICE (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Participants' journals, and writing instruments
- Participants' clipboards with anklets (Workshop 1, Activity 3, Practice)
- Beads, and waterproof markers and/or other decorations
- Extra clipboards and string/hemp, and scissors

Preparation for Activity

- If needed, read instructions for making the anklets in the Before You Start section of the program Introduction and in Workshop 1, Decision Making.

- Retrieve participants' clipboards with anklets, and participants' journals if these are also kept on-site.
- Write on newsprint, and post:
 - When was a time you practiced forgiveness?
 - What made it possible for you to forgive in this instance?
 - Have you ever experienced circumstances where it would have been helpful for you to be more forgiving?
 - In what areas of your life could practicing forgiveness help you become the person you want to be?

Description of Activity

Participants understand how the practice of forgiveness affects their lives.

Invite youth to take five minutes to journal, using the questions on newsprint as prompts, or to draw or meditate on the questions. While they work, you might offer these additional prompts:

- What is the relationship between forgiving and forgetting?
- When someone has hurt others greatly, how can you let them know you are forgiving them but do not condone their actions? Is it even your responsibility to let them know this?

Invite participants to share journal writing to their level of comfort. You may wish to remind youth that you are a mandated reporter and, if anyone discloses behavior that could be dangerous to themselves or others, you will need to report it. Listen to what is said.

When sharing is complete or after ten minutes, invite youth to take the next five minutes to decorate cork beads. Distribute participants' clipboards, new beads (one per youth), and decorating materials. Invite youth to decorate a bead while reflecting on their personal experiences with forgiveness. Remind them that the beads will act as a reminder to use their highest values.

As participants finish, have them add this bead to the anklet they started in Workshop 1.

If any participant missed Workshop 1, provide them with a clipboard, hemp, a bead for their name bead, and instruction to begin their anklet.

Collect journals, clipboards, and anklet-making materials, and store for the next workshop.

CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- [Taking It Home](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Adapt the Taking It Home section and copy for all participants.
- Write the closing quotation on newsprint, leaving room for editorial changes. Post the newsprint.

Description of Activity

Let a volunteer read the quotation below from ethicist and theologian Lewis B. Smedes, while another extinguishes the chalice:

You will know that forgiveness has begun when you recall those who hurt you and feel the power to wish them well.

Distribute Taking It Home.

FAITH IN ACTION: CREATING A RITUAL

Description of Activity

Youth create a simple forgiveness ritual and share it with others.

If you have a group that is creative or has quite a bit of worship experience, they might enjoy the challenge of creating a ritual around forgiveness. The ritual could involve a meditation. Use Activity 3, Forgiveness Maze or Activity 5, Practice as a basis for a ritual on the topic "What should I focus on as I steer my mind toward a path of forgiveness?"

The ritual could be more concrete. It could involve an act to signify release, such as burning (keeping safety in mind, always) or burying. It might include tying knots in a string to symbolize acts for which one needs to forgive and cutting or knotting the knots while repeating a mantra of forgiveness.

The group can work on one ritual together, or you can break into smaller groups. Share the ritual(s) in the congregational newsletter or lead them during a worship service or chapel.

LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Reflect on the workshop with your co-leader. After today, only the closing workshop remains. How do you feel about the way the program has progressed?

Read the next workshop for any advance preparation needed and decide who will be responsible for what. If you will hold a short celebration, decide whether you will serve snacks and who will be responsible for providing them.

TAKING IT HOME

The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong. — Mahatma Gandhi

IN TODAY'S WORKSHOP... we talked about forgiveness—of others and of ourselves. We envisioned forgiveness as a path instead of a finite act and identified doorways and road blocks along the way. We acknowledged that forgiving can be a gift we give ourselves to stop thoughts of hatred and anger, which can hurt us emotionally, spiritually, and physically. That forgiveness can also help the forgiven is a bonus.

- *The Tao of Forgiveness*, by William Martin (New York: Jeremy P. Tarcher/Penguin, 2010), has stories and practices to help the reader partake in the "healing power of forgiving others and yourself." The suggestions in Story 13 might be particularly applicable to forgiveness of an incident from long ago.
- Watch this video clip on YouTube [Forgiveness: How Do Children Forgive?](#)
- [The Forgiveness Project](#) is a UK-based charitable organization which works in prisons, schools, faith communities, and with any group that wants to explore forgiveness, reconciliation, and conflict resolution in a political context or in individual lives. The Forgiveness Project has no religious or political affiliations. Their website features dozens of stories from individuals, as well as essays such as "The Dangers of Forgiving Too Easily."
- Governments, through the ages, have attempted to institutionalize a forgiveness process in various ways. One of the most famous was the Truth and Reconciliation Commission established in South Africa after apartheid. Read more at [South African History Online](#).

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: REAL LIFE CHALLENGES

Materials for Activity

- "Bicycle Rack" newsprint sheet from Opening

Description of Activity

Youth discuss ethical challenges they have faced.

If someone shared an experience in check-in or during any workshop activities that the group would like to

explore further, do so now. This could be particularly useful if an experience resonated with many participants. If several challenges are already listed on the Bicycle Rack, invite the youth to choose one to discuss. It need not be related to this workshop's topic.

You might use these questions to structure a discussion:

- What virtues could this challenge bring into play?
- Did this challenge involve a conflict of values? If so, what values? How do they conflict?
- What are possible solutions to this challenge? Are they equally good? Why or why not?

Affirm that it is always easier to see good solutions in hindsight and that living a life according to virtues we want to nurture or values we hold dear is not always easy. We do not need to always "get it right," but we do need to keep trying.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: STORY – HOW COYOTE LOST HIS SONG, MUSIC AND DANCE (25 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Story, "[How Coyote Lost His Song, Music, and Dance](#)"
- Optional: Costumes and props

Preparation for Activity

- Print the story "[How Coyote Lost His Song, Music, and Dance](#)" and copy for all who will need to use it as a script. Note: This version of a Native American wisdom tale is from *Our Seven Principles in Story and Verse: A Collection for Children and Adults* by Kenneth Collier (Boston: Skinner House Books, 1997). It is used by permission of the author in the Tapestry of Faith children's curriculum, Wonderful Welcome.
- Decide how you will cast the performance of the story. If possible, give the story to volunteer narrator(s) and actor(s) in advance.

Description of Activity

Youth act out a story and interpret its meaning in terms of the virtue of forgiveness.

Have the youth enact the story "[How Coyote Lost His Song, Music, and Dance](#)," either with actors making up lines or with a narrator reading text for others to act out.

Afterward, ask:

- There are a few possible morals to this story. What are some of them?

- Would you say this story is also about forgiveness? In what way?
- Is it harder to forgive people who are very different from us or those who remind us of ourselves? [Participants may respond differently.] Why do you think this is so?

STORY: A PATH OF FORGIVENESS

By Shelley Jackson Denham.

This is the story of Azim Khamisa. His decision to forgive deeds many would consider unforgiveable has inspired and transformed people all over the world.

Azim, an international investment banker, lived in San Diego, with his two children, a son, Tariq, and a daughter, Tasreen.

One night in 1995, Azim's world collided with that of a 14-year-old boy named Tony. The impact changed their lives, and many other lives, forever.

Tony, too, lived in San Diego. He had lived with his grandfather, Ples Felix, since 1990 when Tony's mother sent him from their home in Los Angeles. She had come to this decision after Tony witnessed the murder of his cousin and best friend. She wanted Tony to be away from the gangs and violence that were rampant in their neighborhood. With her father, Ples, she decided that Tony would be safer in San Diego. Through the years, Ples tried to assure Tony's future by demanding that he study hard and stay away from the much older boys to whom Tony was drawn. Tony became more and more angry, resenting his strict grandfather and all the rules he imposed.

Finally one evening after he and his grandfather argued, Tony ran away, taking Ples' rifle. He went to find his older friends who belonged to a gang, the Black Mob.

That was the night the lives of Tony and his grandfather tragically crashed into the lives of Azim Khamisa and his son Tariq.

Tariq was a bright, popular student, 20 years old. He had a job delivering pizzas to help pay for his education. That evening, Tariq was delivering pizzas when he encountered the Black Mob. The gang demanded that he give them pizza without paying for it, but he refused. So they told Tony to "bust him." Tony pointed the rifle and pulled the trigger, instantly killing Tariq.

When Azim learned of the death of his beloved son, he was overwhelmed with grief.

As a devout Sufi Muslim, he turned to his faith for prayer, solace, and inspiration. Day by day, he came to know he must walk the path of forgiveness and compassion. He realized that Tony—the youngest person to be tried as an adult in California, and now sentenced to 25 years in prison—was as much a victim of society's violence as Tariq. Azim began to believe *"You do forgiveness for yourself, because it moves you on; the fact that it can also heal the perpetrator is icing on the cake."*

Azim felt that in order for him to move on, he needed to take some kind of action that would honor Tariq's spirit and give him a sense of purpose. He started the Tariq Khamisa Foundation, engaging people of all ages in education, mentorship, and community service programs with one mission: to stop children from killing children. Through its projects, the foundation works to transform violence prone, at-risk youth into nonviolent, achieving individuals and create safe, productive schools.

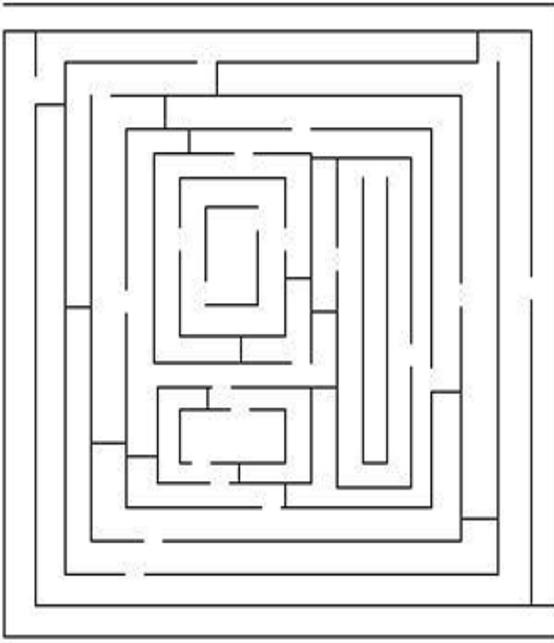
A month after establishing the foundation, Azim invited Tony's grandfather Ples to join him. Since November 1995—only 10 months after Tariq's death—Azim and Ples have considered themselves to be brothers, bringing their story and message of forgiveness and nonviolence to people all over the world.

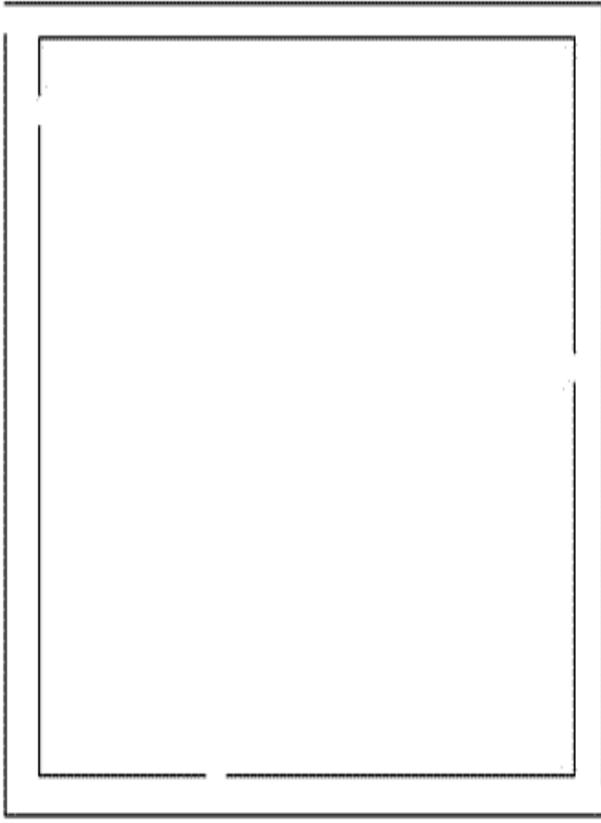
Five years after the murder, Azim met Tony in prison. He told a remorseful Tony that he forgave him, and offered him a job with the Tariq Khamisa Foundation when he was released from prison. Later, Azim wrote to the governor of California, asking that Tony's sentence be commuted.

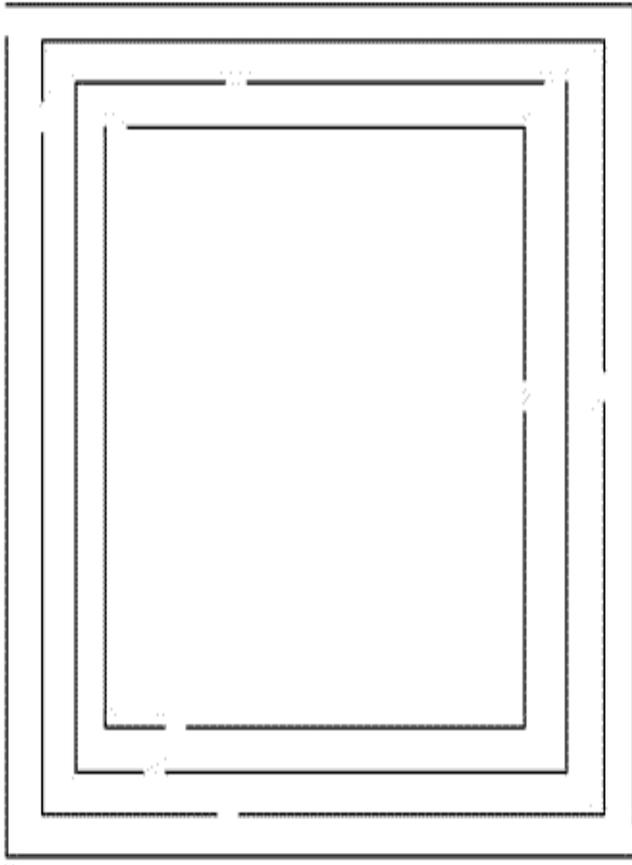
It is difficult to imagine how Azim could transcend the heartbreak of his son's murder, for there are some events in life that are too major to get "over." We just get through them. Azim got through the loss of Tariq by becoming a powerful activist, teaching forgiveness and peace in order to literally change lives and society as a whole. Azim discovered that forgiveness is a path we walk, not an act that we do once and we are finished. Forgiveness doesn't erase pain. It provides a path to transform that pain into something life affirming.

HANDOUT 1: MAZE

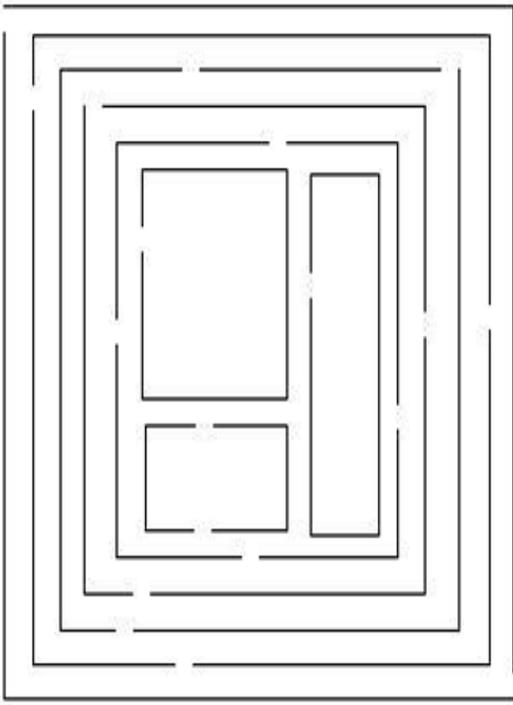
1. Create a list of doorways: Actions or thoughts that help you to forgive others and yourself.
2. Create a list of road blocks: Actions or thoughts that hinder you in forgiving others or yourself.
3. Create your maze.
4. How many doorways are on your list? That is how many openings you should include in your maze—that many, plus two more. The two extra are the doorways you have yet to discover, but hope to find. Locate a path through your maze that uses exactly this many doorways. Create more, if needed. If you have more than these in your maze already, you will need to fill in the lines to close these doorways. Label your doorways.
5. The lines you need to fill in represent road blocks. As you fill them in, label them from the list you created in Step 2. If you need more road blocks, label other solid lines as road blocks.

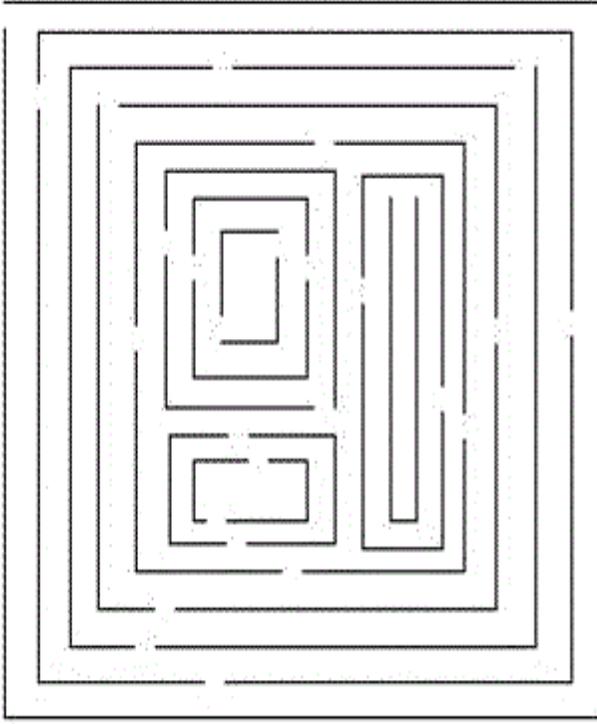






HANDOUT 2: MAZE





LEADER RESOURCE 1: FORGIVENESS DILEMMAS

Dilemma 1

Alex is spreading rumors about you. You would LOVE to start rumors about Alex, but you know that is wrong. Besides, it would not really fix anything. C.J., the popular youth at school that just stopped dating popular Alex, starts spreading rumors about Alex. Alex approaches you after school and says "Now I know what it feels like to have people tell lies on you, and I'm sorry I started rumors about you. I promise never to lie about you again." You forgive Alex. But two months later, after C.J. and Alex make up, they both spread a new lie about you. What should you do?

Dilemma 2

Sometimes governments commit wrongdoing. Prongel is a fictional country. Prongel imprisoned the native population of Miwis for over a hundred years. Now Prongel is working on intentional reconciliation with the Miwi people. They debate two options. Option 1: Pay every Miwi a certain dollar amount, as restitution for the labor extracted from their ancestors. The check would arrive with a letter explaining that the government does not see this financial restitution as an apology because they do not admit that any wrong was ever done. Option 2: No financial remuneration, but the ruling body of Prongel will issue an official apology that clearly states the wrongs historically committed. Which option should Prongel take? [Does this dilemma seem contrived, because the obvious answer is to combine the options? In fact, history shows that governments are most likely to choose either Option 1 or Option 2, not both.]

FIND OUT MORE

The Jewish holy day of Yom Kippur is also known as the Day of Atonement. Read more about the meaning and practice of Yom Kippur in the Tapestry of Faith program Building Bridges, Workshop 5, or on the [Judaism101](#) website. The Unitarian Universalist Association's resources on forgiveness include this UU-flavored [Yom Kippur ritual](#).

Read more about the organization started by Azim Khamisa on the website of the [Tariq Khamisa Foundation](#).

The Tao of Forgiveness, by William Martin (New York: Penguin, 2010), uses true stories, wisdom tales, and spiritual exercises to help you along a path of forgiveness.

[Living into Hope: A Call to Spiritual Action for Such a Time As This](#), by Joan Brown Campbell (Woodstock, VT: Skylights Path, 2010), invites people of faith to bring hope to the work of forgiveness, renewal, creating justice, and building loving communities.

A Little Book of Forgiveness (Pasadena: Fuller Press, 2008), by Unitarian Universalist minister Marilyn Sewell, explores forgiveness as a catalyst for spiritual growth.

The video clip [Forgiveness: How Do Children Forgive?](#) is part of a series the [Spiritual Literacy Project](#) has posted on YouTube featuring excerpts from a DVD series, based on the book *Spiritual Literacy: Reading the Sacred in Everyday Life*, by Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat (New York: Scribner, 1998). Watch more of the videos, visit the website, or read the book.

WORKSHOP 12: LOYALTY

INTRODUCTION

Loyalty is still the same, whether it win or lose the game; true as a dial to the sun, although it be not shined upon. — Samuel Butler, novelist

This workshop focuses on loyalty. Be prepared—youth may be unfamiliar with the word and need a definition. Youth discover different types of loyalty and examine a situation in which loyalties to oneself, one's congregation, and Unitarian Universalism compete.

This workshop concludes the program. Alternate Activity 3, Celebration, offers a wrap-up. Alternate Activity 2, Worship Service, guides the youth to plan a multigenerational worship service in which they share their virtue ethics work with the congregation.

GOALS

This workshop will:

- Examine the meaning of loyalty
- Provide examples of situations where loyalty is used or called for
- Guide youth to identify themselves as users of loyalty.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Participants will:

- Explore the meaning of "loyalty"
- Discuss a dilemma where loyalty is tested
- Practice discerning what and who deserve their loyalty
- Examine their use of loyalty and commit to the future use of loyalty in their lives.

WORKSHOP-AT-A-GLANCE

Activity	Minutes
Opening	15
Activity 1: Two Sides to Every Virtue	10
Activity 2: Loyalty Bingo	20
Activity 3: Story – A Church Divided	10
Activity 4: Dilemma	10
Activity 5: Practice	20

Faith in Action: My Little UU Book of Virtues 60

Closing 5

Alternate Activity 1: Real Life Challenges

Alternate Activity 2: Worship Service

Alternate Activity 3: Celebration 20

SPIRITUAL PREPARATION

The story in this workshop deals with loyalty to congregation, faith, and oneself. What does this mean to you? Do you feel loyalty to your congregation? To Unitarian Universalism? If so, how does this manifest? What does this sense of loyalty stem from: Love? A need to serve? Appreciation? History?

Do you feel loyal to the participants in this workshop? This is the last workshop of the program, but its story need not end. How will your loyalty manifest after this program? Can it be a positive motivator for action and service? Consider future ways you might demonstrate your loyalty to your congregation, your faith, and this group of youth.

OPENING (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- Group covenant (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Bicycle Rack newsprint sheet (Workshop 1)
- Optional: Alternate Activity 1, [Real Life Challenges](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Read Alternate Activity 1, Real Life Challenges. Prepare to incorporate it into this Opening, if you think you will have time and you observe that youth want to discuss challenges shared in their check-in.
- Post the chalice lighting words.
- Post the group covenant.
- Post the Bicycle Rack sheet the group began in Workshop 1, Opening, or label a new sheet of newsprint "Bicycle Rack," and post.

Description of Activity

Invite a volunteer to light the chalice while you lead the group to recite the chalice lighting words:

The thought manifests as the word
The word manifests as the deed;
The deed develops into habit;
And habit hardens into character;
So watch the thought and its ways with care,
And let it spring from love
Born out of concern for all beings...
As the shadow follows the body,
As we think, so we become.
— from *The Dhammapada, Sayings of the Buddha*

Invite the youth to check in by sharing any moral challenges they have experienced since the last meeting. If appropriate, use Alternate Activity 1 to further explore the group's challenges. If youth appear interested in discussing a particular challenge but you feel there is not enough time in this meeting, ask the person who shared it to write a short description of the challenge on the Bicycle Rack.

Tell participants that today you will talk about loyalty.

ACTIVITY 1: TWO SIDES TO EVERY VIRTUE (10 MINUTES)

Description of Activity

Participants identify positive and negative aspects of the virtue of loyalty.

Invite youth to sit for a moment and think about loyalty as a virtue. Offer the Dictionary.com website definition of loyalty: "faithful adherence to a sovereign, government, leader, cause, commitments, obligations, etc... " Synonyms include "devotion" and "faithfulness." These prompts might be useful:

- What have you been told about loyalty: What it means, when to practice it, when not to practice it?
- What does disloyalty mean to you? Have you ever been accused of being disloyal? Who decided you were disloyal?
- Can you be too loyal? What happens if loyalty is not moderated?
- To whom or what are you most loyal? How far would you go for loyalty? Does it trump other virtues? Would you lie to protect something or someone you are loyal to? Would you give preferential treatment to someone out of loyalty?
- Are you a loyal friend? What does this really mean?
- Are you loyal to your country?

Invite youth to share their reflections, with statements that start off with "On the positive side..." or "On the negative side... ". For example, "On the positive side, brand loyalty makes you feel comfortable: you know what you are getting when you buy Breyer's Ice Cream." / "On the negative side, companies can take advantage of your loyalty to their products. They can raise the price or lower the quality, if they feel they can count on you to buy it anyway." Do youth have statements that do not fit either clause? Discuss these together.

Make sure these points are discussed:

- What is the relationship between love and loyalty?
- What is the relationship between peer pressure and loyalty? Remind participants that everyone feels peer pressure, not just youth.

ACTIVITY 2: LOYALTY BINGO (20 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Handout 1, [Bingo Grid](#) (included in this document)
- Leader Resource 1, [Bingo Chips](#) (included in this document)
- A bowl or basket
- Pencils
- Bingo board markers (e.g. pennies), and (optional) bowls for youth to share

Preparation for Activity

- Print Handout 1 for all participants, plus a few extra.
- Using Leader Resource 1, make 16 blank bingo chips for each participant.
- Collect or make bingo board markers. Each youth will need at least 16. Any small item can be a marker: Use pennies, or pieces from old board games. Or, make additional copies of Leader Resource 1, Bingo Chips on different colors of paper, and cut out these chips to use as markers. You might put these in additional bowls the youth can share.

Description of Activity

Participants compare their loyalties to those of their peers by creating and playing a game.

Distribute Handout 1, Bingo Grid and pencils. Ask youth to fill in all the spaces on the grid with someone or something they are loyal to, however they define loyalty. It can be a sports team, a friend, a group (like "my school band"), an activity (such as "scouting"), a cause ("environmentalism") or an ideal or value ("honesty"). Prompt by repeating the definition of loyalty: "faithful adherence to a sovereign, government, leader, cause, commitments, obligations, etc..."

Ask participants to use generic terms, for example, "my sibling" instead of "Eric." If youth have trouble filling 16 boxes, encourage them to break down some items. Instead of saying, "my family," if someone has two moms, a brother, and a cousin, they can put each person in a separate box.

Important: No peeking! Everyone should fill out their grid independently and not share it.

Give the group five minutes or until you see they are done.

Give each participant 16 of the blank chips you made from Leader Resource 1, Bingo Chips. Ask participants

to copy what they wrote on each square on their bingo grid onto a bingo chip.

Collect all the chips and put them in the bowl.

Distribute bingo sheet markers and invite participants to play bingo.

Mix up the chips in the bowl and choose one at a time, reading its text aloud, as you would with numbers in bingo. Instruct the youth that if they have a box on their grid with the words you read from a chip, they may cover that box with a marker. A full row, column, or diagonal line filled with four marked boxes wins.

Play until you have a winner. Play as many times as you can within your time frame. Process the activity:

- Did you learn anything about your loyalties? Did anything surprise you about the loyalties of others? [Remember to hold to your group covenant. This is not an opportunity to comment on another participant's choices.]
- How might what you have learned here affect your loyalties? Might you stop being loyal to something or someone because your friends or family are not loyal to them? Would this necessarily be a bad outcome?
- What if friends/family relate to you a negative encounter with something/someone you are loyal to? Several negative encounters? What if you have negative encounters with an object of your loyalty? What would cause you to lose the loyalty you feel for something or someone? What would make you question it? Share real life examples.

ACTIVITY 3: STORY – A CHURCH DIVIDED (15 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Story, ["A Church Divided"](#) (included in this document)
- Spiritual Preparation section
- Optional: A computer with Internet access, and a digital projector or large monitor

Preparation for Activity

- Read the story so you can present it effectively.
- Do the Spiritual Preparation exercise provided with this workshop. Then, decide if you would like to share any of your reflections with the youth during this activity.
- Optional: Copy the story for all participants.
- Optional: Preview a [video \(12:22\) about the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg \(Pennsylvania\)](#)

which tells the story of the community's addition of an urban campus. If you plan to show the video, check your equipment and queue the video immediately before this workshop.

Description of Activity

Youth hear and discuss a true story about a congregation's split loyalties.

Tell or read the story.

Then (optional) show the [video \(12:22\) about the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg](#). Tell the youth the video was prepared for the UUA General Assembly 2010, where this congregation was honored as a Breakthrough Congregation.

Discuss the story with the following questions:

- In this story, there were not only those who disagreed, but also those who did not express their opinion at all: the non-voters. How do you think the congregants who voted "yes" or "no" felt about the third of the congregation that did not vote? Why do you think so many people did not vote?
- Sometimes we think other people in our communities share the same loyalties we do. But, as we saw in the bingo game, you cannot make assumptions about others' loyalties. Do you think some congregants at UCH were surprised to hear that not everyone thought buying the new building was a good idea?
- Have you ever thought you were being loyal to one thing but, on deep examination or when challenged, you discovered you were loyal to something else? For example, many people say they are patriotic or loyal to their country. Yet, when their country does something they consider wrong, immoral or unethical, they do not defend the country. An example is public outcry about American use of torture. Are protesters loyal to America the nation, or loyal to the ideals of America, which they feel torture violates? When you are loyal to something or someone, must you accept everything about it?
- What does it feel like when something or someone you are loyal to does not live up to your standards? What do you do?
- Thinking about the story, do you think it was easier to be loyal to ideals or abstract qualities ("the congregation", "my faith") or to be loyal to people ("each other")?
- Do you feel loyal to your congregation? Do you feel loyal to Unitarian Universalism? What actions show you feel this way?

Invite the youth to share the ways they have shown loyalty to the congregation and/or the faith. If you wish, give examples of your own. Ask participants to think of ways they might provide service to demonstrate their loyalty in the near future. See if there is energy for a group loyalty project, or if a team of volunteers wish to do a project together.

ACTIVITY 4: DILEMMA (10 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Leader Resource 2, [Loyalty Dilemmas](#) (included in this document)

Preparation for Activity

- Print the Leader Resource for yourself and volunteer readers.

Description of Activity

Youth discuss scenarios involving ethical dilemmas.

Seek a volunteer to read one of the two dilemmas. Open the floor to reactions and answers. For each dilemma, ask participants if this reminds them of another dilemma they have encountered or heard of, real or fictional. Ask, "How could loyalty play a part in this dilemma?"

If time permits, role play the dilemmas.

ACTIVITY 5: PRACTICE (20 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Newsprint, markers, and tape
- Participants' journals, and writing instruments
- Participants' clipboards with anklets (Workshop 1, Activity 3, Practice)
- Beads, and waterproof markers and/or other decorations
- Extra clipboards and string/hemp, and scissors

Preparation for Activity

- If needed, read instructions for making the anklets in the Before You Start section of the program Introduction and in Workshop 1, Decision Making.
- Retrieve participants' clipboards with anklets, and participants' journals if these are also kept on-site.
- Write on newsprint, and post:
 - When was a time you exhibited loyalty?
 - What made it possible for you be loyal in this instance?

- Have you ever experienced circumstances where it would have been helpful for you to be more loyal?
- What are the areas of your life now where using loyalty could help you be the person you want to be?

- Post the chalice lighting words.
- Optional: Print the closing quotation (below) for a volunteer to read.

Description of Activity

Participants understand how the use of loyalty affects their lives.

Invite youth to take five minutes to journal, using the questions on newsprint as prompts, or to draw or meditate on the questions. Additional prompts you may add, while the group journals:

- Who are the people in your life who are most loyal to you? Why do you think they are loyal?
- What is the connection between loyalty and friendship?
- Does your Unitarian Universalist faith inspire you to be loyal? If so, to what?
- Have you ever had to make a decision where loyalties conflicted? What did you do? Were the consequences what you thought they would be?

Invite participants to share journal writing to their level of comfort. Listen to what is said.

When sharing is complete or after ten minutes, distribute participants' clipboards, new beads (one per youth), and decorating materials. Invite youth to decorate a bead while reflecting on their personal experiences with generosity. Remind them that the beads will act as a reminder to use their highest values.

As participants finish, have them add this bead to the anklet they started in Workshop 1. Remind participants that since this workshop is the last one, their anklets are complete. Instead of a temporary bow to keep the ends together, suggest they place the anklet around their ankles to measure, and then use more beads to complete their anklet. Once youth are satisfied with their anklets, offer to help them tie heavy knots to close them.

CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Chalice, candle, and lighter or LED battery-operated candle
- [Taking It Home](#) (included in this document)
- Chalice lighting words (from Opening)

Preparation for Activity

- Adapt the Taking It Home section and copy for all participants.

Description of Activity

Remind participants that this is the last workshop. Ask the group to read together, aloud, the Opening words you have used for each workshop:

The thought manifests as the word
 The word manifests as the deed;
 The deed develops into habit;
 And habit hardens into character;
 So watch the thought and its ways with care,
 And let it spring from love
 Born out of concern for all beings...
 As the shadow follows the body,
 As we think, so we become.
 — from *The Dhammapada, Sayings of the Buddha*

Remind the group that you discussed this reading in the first workshop. Ask, "Does it mean anything to you now, that it did not mean at the beginning?" Take all responses.

Say:

I wish you a lifetime of being loyal to yourself and to the values and virtues you hold dear. The people that we are, the people we are always becoming, are precious and holy. Amen.

Extinguish the chalice. Distribute Taking It Home.

FAITH IN ACTION: MY LITTLE UU BOOK OF VIRTUES (60 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- A loose-leaf binder
- Loose-leaf paper and writing/drawing instruments
- Optional: *The Book of Virtues* by William Bennett (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1995)
- Optional: A computer with Internet access

Preparation for Activity

- Refresh your memory of the stories shared in this program, so you can remind youth about them. Include the stories provided with each workshop as well as dilemmas—provided, and their own—that the youth have discussed.
- Optional: Obtain *The Book of Virtues* and choose and bookmark a passage to read aloud. The story "Please" is recommended. You can preview some pages of the book on GoogleBooks; if you will have Internet access,

choose a passage to read aloud during the workshop. If you plan to have youth read aloud, choose volunteers and give them the passage ahead of time.

Description of Activity

Youth write short stories about virtues.

Tell the group that in the 1990s William Bennett, a conservative politician, wrote a book called *The Book of Virtues*. It was a bestseller, but not without controversy. Bennett seemed to blame our country's problems on a lack of true, old-fashioned virtues. The tone of the book is conservative and preachy. His view is very simplistic.

[If you have the book, invite a volunteer to read a story. Then, ask the group if they believe good manners are important. Most will say yes. If you have used a passage from *The Book of Virtues*, ask if the youth liked the story, and why or why not.

Say:

Although we might say some virtues are timeless, stories are not always so. It matters not only what you are trying to communicate, but how you communicate it.

Ask the group if they could think of stories that effectively illustrate how important virtues are today. Invite each participant to think of a virtue and a story that demonstrates it. Show them the binder and explain they will make a collection of stories: "A Little UU Book of Virtues." Their story can be fiction or non-fiction. They can retell a story from one of the workshops. They may use virtues not covered in the workshops. If they prefer, they can work in pairs. Write the story and include at least one illustration.

Distribute paper and writing/drawing implements.

Give participants at least 30 minutes. Then, re-gather the group and have volunteers share stories.

Collect the stories and invite youth to (1) illustrate a front cover, (2) make a Table of Contents, (3) create a blurb for the back cover, and (4) come up with ideas for sharing the book with the wider congregation.

LEADER REFLECTION AND PLANNING

Reflect on the program with your co-leader. Thank one another for your presence and support. Prepare your feedback for the congregation's religious educator, so they may use it next time your congregation offers this program.

TAKING IT HOME

Loyalty is still the same, whether it win or lose the game; true as a dial to the sun, although it be not shined upon. — Samuel Butler, novelist

IN TODAY'S WORKSHOP... we discussed loyalty. In addition to loyalty to family, friends, and institutions, we talked about loyalty to one's congregation and Unitarian Universalism. This was our concluding workshop, so today we are bringing our completed anklets home. The anklets are physical reminders of our promise to make decisions that affirm we are virtuous and loving people.

- Loyalty to one's faith has led many people to face imprisonment, torture, and death. For example, many Jews, Muslims, and other non-Christians perished during the medieval Crusades. Unitarian Universalism also has its martyrs. Research Arius, Michael Servetus, Norbert Capek, Toribio Quimada, James Reeb, and Viola Liuzzo on the Internet to learn more.
- People are not the only creatures that demonstrate loyalty. Question: Which animal is portrayed as the most loyal? Answer: Dogs. They are "man's best friend," right? Dogs are not the only pets that have committed incredibly loyal acts, sometimes endangering themselves. [Reader's Digest](#) has a collection of animal hero stories. Do you or your friends have stories to tell?
- What do the television shows you watch say about loyalty? Betrayal is a popular subject on many shows, including *Gossip Girl*, *Pretty Little Liars*, *One Tree Hill*, and *Lie To Me*. Some reality TV shows, for example, *Big Brother*, *The Bachelor*, and *America's Next Top Model*, appear to reward betrayals, or, at the very least, encourage dramatic betrayals. Does the mass media portray loyalty or betrayal as the "norm?"
- Businesses spend a lot of time on trying to earn their customers' loyalty. Are you loyal to certain brands of clothing, sneakers, food? What do you gain from such loyalty? What do you look for in a product or a business that makes you loyal? Do you think such loyalty is a virtue?
- The book *Loyalty: The Vexing Virtue* by Eric Felten (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2011) offers both a modern and an historical view of loyalty. It includes an analysis of *Antigone*, a play by the Greek dramatist, Sophocles, which appears on many high schools' required reading lists. This political drama involves a royal teenager who has to choose between her own self interests and her loyalty to a family member. Read a translation from the ancient Greek on

[Googlebooks](#). A modern version was written by the French playwright Jean Anouilh in 1944, during the Nazi occupation of France.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 1: REAL LIFE CHALLENGES

Materials for Activity

- "Bicycle Rack" newsprint sheet from Opening

Description of Activity

Youth discuss ethical challenges they have faced.

If someone shared an experience in check-in or during any workshop activities that the group would like to explore further, do so now. This could be particularly useful if an experience resonated with many participants. If several challenges are already listed on the Bicycle Rack, invite the youth to choose one to discuss. It need not be related to this workshop's topic.

You might use these questions to structure a discussion:

- What virtues could this challenge bring into play?
- Did this challenge involve a conflict of values? If so, what values? How do they conflict?
- What are possible solutions to this challenge? Are they equally good? Why or why not?

Affirm that it is always easier to see good solutions in hindsight and that living a life according to virtues we want to nurture or values we hold dear is not always easy. We do not need to always "get it right," but we do need to keep trying.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 2: WORSHIP SERVICE

Materials for Activity

- Hymnbooks, meditation manuals, and other Unitarian Universalist Association or congregational worship resources
- Newsprint, markers, and tape

Preparation for Activity

- Arrange a date for the youth to lead or co-lead a worship service on virtue ethics.
- Consider inviting your minister, religious educator, music director, or chair of the congregation's worship committee to help plan worship. If any youth have worship experience, invite them to co-facilitate this activity with you.

Description of Activity

Participants plan a multigenerational worship service around a virtue ethics theme.

If you invited a guest to help with planning, introduce them to the group.

Plan a worship service:

1. Start by defining the goals of this service. Will youth invite the congregants to wrestle with one or more of the virtues the group has studied? Will the youth share about how these virtues play out in their lives? Defining the goals will help keep the conversation focused.

2. Help the youth decide what elements the worship will include. For example, will there be a sermon? A homily? Or, sharing of personal stories? Will there be a Story for All Ages? Hymns and/or recorded music?

3. Assign "To Do" items, with deadlines and clear lines of communication.

Plan to hold a second meeting to put all the pieces together. Depending on participants' access to technology, small groups might meet via phone or Skype.

4. Plan a rehearsal date.

5. Publicize the worship service to the wider congregation.

ALTERNATE ACTIVITY 3: CELEBRATION (20 MINUTES)

Materials for Activity

- Food and drink
- Materials produced in the previous workshops

Preparation for Activity

- Arrange/assign food and beverages, paper goods, and other items you wish to have. Find out about and make all food providers aware of food allergies or restrictions in the group.
- Optional: Gather and display materials produced by the youth during the program. You may wish to invite youth to bring their anklets for display.

Description of Activity

The group celebrates the end of the program and the work they have done.

Since this is the last workshop, you might want to set aside time for a small celebration. Include food and drink, brought by participants, families, and/or co-leaders.

Invite the participants and any guests (families, your congregation) to see any materials the youth have displayed, including the youth's anklets. Discuss the virtues examined in the program. Invite the youth to share about recent encounters with any of the virtues.

Play the games you may have designed in this and previous workshops.

STORY: A CHURCH DIVIDED

Based on a 2011 interview with Reverend Howard Dana, who has been the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg's minister since August, 2000.

When you were a child, did you have a favorite toy? Maybe it was a stuffed animal, doll, or toy truck. Did it go everywhere with you: to the market, in the tub, to bed? Were you completely loyal to it, preferring it to all other toys?

We learn loyalty at a very early age. Before we learn to be fair, long before we start to worry about moderation or humility, we learn to love and we show loyalty to what we love. As we grow, we become loyal to truths, loyal to ideas, loyal to institutions that represent our highest values. Sometimes though we need to stop and question our loyalties. Loyalties can become stale and outdated. Mark Twain said "Loyalty to a petrified opinion never yet broke a chain or freed a human soul."

The Unitarian Church of Harrisburg (Pennsylvania) (UCH) learned an important lesson in loyalty. Their young minister, Reverend Howard Dana, had come to this congregation twelve years ago, hoping to help them live their ministry out in the world. Yet he and others in the congregation felt their ministry was too insular, too focused on themselves. The congregation's building was located in the suburbs, and they began to talk about expanding their facility there. They were located near the city of Harrisburg, which was struggling, like most large U.S. cities. Shouldn't their ministry try to help heal this hurting community? Could they really do this by sitting on the suburban sidelines?

And so some members begin to dream: What if the UCH bought an additional church in the inner city, right in the thick of it? Wouldn't they be better able to live out their mission? Wouldn't this build stronger UU souls?

They found the perfect candidate: a church in the neighborhood of Allison Hills, an area where mostly people of color lived and more people rented than owned homes. A small congregation—joint United Church of Christ and Methodist—owned the building, but were excited at the prospect of the UUs buying the building, which needed expensive improvements. In addition, this congregation was already active in the community and willing to partner with the UUs.

The UCH could buy the building and pay for the improvements for much less than it could cost to expand their suburban home.

Not everyone agreed that buying a church in the city was a good idea. After all, our country just experienced a scary recession. Times were hard economically: people were losing jobs, losing their homes. If ever there was a time to be fiscally conservative, this was it! Buying

a big, old church in the heart of Harrisburg, where property values were dismal, seemed absolute madness. Conservative members said they spoke for fiscal accountability: their loyalty was to keep the church, as it existed right now, safe and sound. As it existed right now... . Where was the loyalty of these members?

[Leader: Take a couple of answers.]

Their loyalty was to stewardship of the church home that had nurtured and sheltered them. They wanted to preserve it, so it could stay a home for them and others who might find it.

Other members had a different loyalty. They said, "We cannot live out our mission without engaging with the world. We know that this is a big leap of faith. There is room for failure. But there is also room for greatness." These members were loyal to a vision of living their faith in the world that called them to go forth and do good works... even at personal risk. They looked to their UU tradition of social justice work as a beacon moving forward. They, too, saw themselves as stewards: stewards of the Unitarian Universalist faith.

Two different loyalties. Would you say either loyalty was misplaced?

[Leader: Invite some answers.]

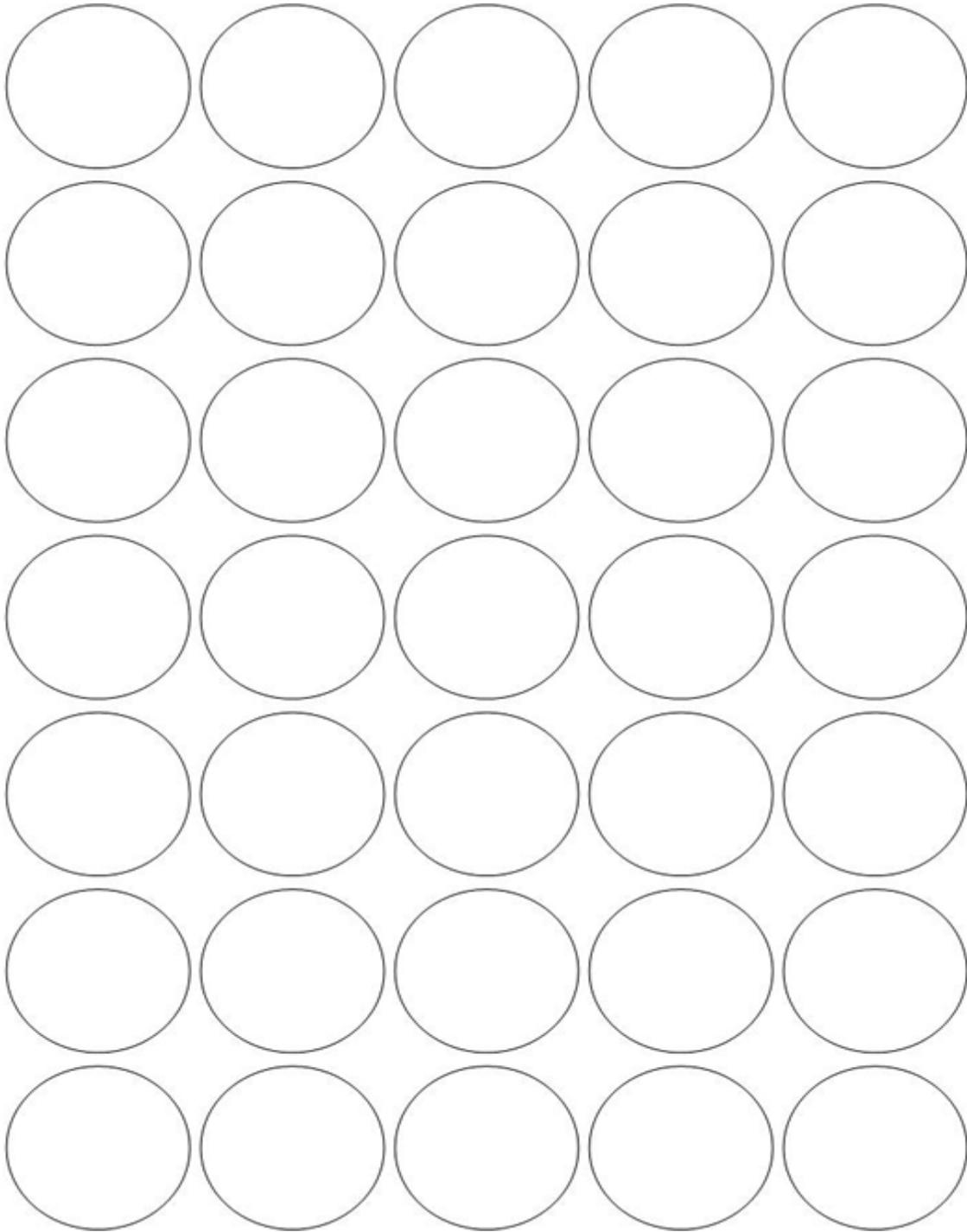
The congregation engaged in deep conversations. Open houses were held at the city property and people met the neighbors. Budgets were examined and financial experts consulted. An outside moderator was brought in for the congregational meeting. Everyone wanted to keep the talks fair. It was proposed that they set up "pro" and "con" microphones for people to speak from the floor. But the congregation refused them. "There is no "us" and "them," they said. We are one congregation. But this one congregation had to decide on one loyalty. Would they be loyal to their church as it now existed or to a church living out its most difficult values in the world?

Guess what? Another loyalty emerged: They could be loyal to each other. After all, isn't that what a congregation really is? Not a building, not a set of abstract beliefs, but people living together every day, just trying to be the best people they can be?

Their loyalty to one another took the group through the process of discernment. Their loyalty made it impossible for them to shout hateful words at each other. Their loyalty kept most of the congregants at the table, wrestling with what was best for their church community. Finally, it came down to a vote: 123 voted to purchase the new property, 101 voted "no" and 151 did not vote. It was settled. The Unitarian Church of Harrisburg added a second church to their religious home.

HANDOUT 1: BINGO GRID

LEADER RESOURCE 1: BINGO CHIPS



LEADER RESOURCE 2: LOYALTY DILEMMAS

Dilemma 1

It is the classic best friends' dilemma: Friend A has decided that a behavior of Friend B has become intolerable and they can no longer hang out or be friends with B. They tell you (Friend C) that if you want to continue to be their friend, you need to stop associating with Friend B, too. What do you do? What do you say immediately to Friend A? How do you answer Friend B when they ask you if you know why Friend A does not return their phone calls? Who do you invite to the movies or your birthday gathering? Who do you call first to share good news or bad?

Dilemma 2

You have played baseball for many years. After all the years of practice, you are on the starting team and your team has a good chance of making the playoffs. There is one problem: This season, the practice time conflicts with the meeting time for your congregation's youth group. You are one of the co-leaders of youth group this year. You cannot be in two places at once. What do you do?

LEADER RESOURCE 3: MARKET STREET CHURCH

Photograph by Rev. Howard N. Dana; used with permission.



FIND OUT MORE

Good Character is a website with examples of ethical and moral dilemmas. One that concerns loyalty is [David's story](#).

Confucianism is heavily steeped in directives on living a virtuous life. Loyalty is one of the most important virtues to Confucius. Read more about this religion or philosophy at [Patheos](#), a website that encourages understanding of different religious traditions.

Here is an [article from Interconnections](#), a Unitarian Universalist publication, about the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg (Pennsylvania)'s purchase of new property.