

AGING

(adapted from the session developed by the Countryside Church Universalist, Palatine, IL)

OPENING WORDS & CHALICE LIGHTING:

Ten thousand flowers in spring,
the moon in autumn,
a cool breeze in summer,
snow in winter.
If your mind isn't clouded by unnecessary things,
this is the best season of your life.
----Wu-Men

PURPOSE: We come together to build connections and to talk about what deeply matters.

CHECK IN: What you share may be about your physical or spiritual health, cares or concerns for loved ones, issues you are facing. What are you leaving behind to be here today?

READING OF GROUP COVENANT

FOCUS: Aging

Each person in the group speaks uninterrupted; if time remains, general response and conversation are welcome.

A quote and additional reading for reflection

"To me old age is always fifteen years older than I am." –Bernard Baruch

*Birth is a beginning, and Death a destination;
From childhood to maturity and youth to age,
From innocence to awareness and ignorance to knowing.
From foolishness to discretion and then, perhaps, to wisdom.
From weakness to strength or strength to weakness, and back again.
From health to sickness and back, we pray, to health again.
From offense to forgiveness, from loneliness to love.
From joy to gratitude, from pain to compassion.
From grief to understanding, from fear to faith.
From defeat to defeat
Until looking backward or ahead, we see that
Victory lies not at some high place along the way,
But in having made the Journey, stage by stage. -A Yom Kippur Prayer*

Questions for Discussion

1. How old is your 'person' in the mirror? If there's a difference from your actual age, what's the reason for the disparity?
2. What's your view of aging? Can you sum it up or is it too complicated? What or who do you think influenced you toward this view?
3. Do an "aging" inventory for yourself. What's BAD about aging for you? What's GOOD about aging for you?
4. How can we approach aging in a life-affirming way?

CONFIDENTIALITY CHECK: Is there anything that you shared here today that you would like held confidential? Otherwise, this is a reminder that we treat each other's sharing with kindness and respect.

CHECK OUT:

CLOSING WORDS: May we know once again that we are not isolated beings,
But connected, in mystery and miracle,
To the universe, to this community, and to each other.

-Singing the Living Tradition #434