

FRIENDS (adapted from the session developed by Barbara Bates, First Unitarian Society in Newton, MA)

OPENING WORDS & CHALICE LIGHTING:

"We need one another when we would be comforted.

We need one another when we are in trouble and afraid.

We need one another when we are in despair, in temptation, and need to be recalled to our best selves again.

We need one another when we would accomplish some great purpose, and cannot do it alone.

We need one another in the hour of success, when we look for someone to share our triumphs.

We need one another in the hour of defeat, when with encouragement we might endure, and stand again.

We need one another when we come to die, and would have gentle hands prepare us for the journey.

All our lives we are in need, and others are in need of us.

Singing the Living Tradition #468 George E. Odell

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

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: Friends

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

For Discussion:

Reflect on your friends and choose one very good friend (not necessarily your 'best' friend). Describe your friendship and how it developed.

What were the defining moments in the friendship?

What have you received from and what have you given to this friend?

Alternately, reflect on how friendship in general has played a part, or not, in your life.

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:

"One friend in a lifetime is much; two are many; three are hardly possible."

-- Henry Brooks Adams (*Chap. 20 The Education of Henry Adams*)

Lean on me, when you're not strong, and I'll be your friend, I'll help you carry on, for it won't be long, 'til I'm going to need somebody to lean on."

- "Lean On Me"

When the night has come, And the land is gone, And the moon is the only light we'll see

I won't be afraid, no I won't be afraid, Just as long as you stand, stand by me. *Stand by Me* by Ben E. King