

PARENTS TAKE-IT-HOME: Information detail & for faith formation follow up at home for Sunday, APRIL 2, 2017 (Pre-K through High School)

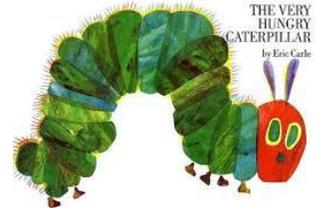


PRE-K PARENTS TAKE-IT-HOME Handout for April 2, 2017

Topic: TRANSFORMATION

Unitarian Universalists believe that it is important to keep learning and growing.

- **Principle 4** reminds us to keep searching for what is true because that's how we learn. Learning transforms us on the inside!
- Learning about people's stories and experience helps us to understand others and that helps us want to make a fair and peaceful world (**Principle 6**). The story, about the transformation of a caterpillar, reminds us that all things in nature are awe inspiring. People (also a part of nature) also transform on the inside and out and are a wonder as well!



STORY: The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=siTVaOz2EtM>

ACTIVITY: Make caterpillar art!

PARENTS – try these activities at home (try at meal time, drive time, bed time, family time)

- Take a walk, or look in a park- What kind of changes outside have you noticed happening in nature?
- Look at a [video](#) of caterpillar transforming into a butterfly. Nature is awe inspiring!
- Talk about the ways people change or transform on the inside and outside.
 - They grow bigger, they learn how to do different things, on the outside
 - They can change their mind and how they act over time to be kinder.



4th-5th Grade – PARENTS TAKE-IT-HOME HANDOUT –April 2, 2017

Topic: John Murray (1741-1815- Universalist History & Transformation.

Unitarian Universalists believe that it is important to continually to transform ourselves into being the best people we can be even when the life hands us lemons (as it did for John Murray for part of his life).

- As we grow, we continue searching for what is true (**Principle #4**)
- We encourage one another to spiritual Growth (**Principle # 3**)
- We encourage each other to work to transform ourselves and the world into a peaceful, fair, and free place for all. (**Principle # 6**)

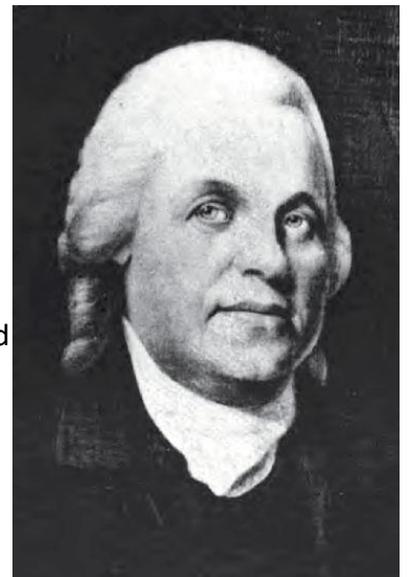
STORY: John Murray and the Winds of Change

<http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/home/session12/60161.shtml>

ACTIVITIES:

Thinking about personal transformation & sharing our UU values in the world

- [Focus on the Journey](#) One habit I'd like to develop...One habit I'd like to break...I would like to learn how to...I will stop being afraid of...I would like to spend more time...I would like to spend less time...
- [Make a UU Fortune Teller](#): Our UU Principles help guide us to be better people- share with others who ask what you believe in... keep it in your back pack...



Parent's you might appreciate this : Murray's memoir "concludes with an episode that portrays him as not only courageous, but ready with a bon mot. As Murray was giving a lecture in Boston, someone threw a rock through the window, intending to injure or intimidate him. Murray calmly stepped over to where the rock rested, picked it up and said, "This argument is solid, and weighty, but it is neither rational nor convincing." Then, after his friends suggested that the situation might be too dangerous for him to proceed, he proclaimed that "not all the stones in Boston, except they stop my breath, shall shut my mouth, or arrest my testimony." <http://uudb.org/articles/johnmurray.html>

K-3 PARENTS “TAKE IT HOME” Handout - K-3 Grade UU Explorers- April 2, 2017



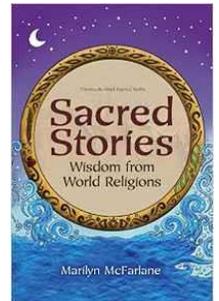
TOPIC: The Buddha and the Bodhi Tree (the Tree of Knowledge)

UU Sources: Direct Experience & World Religions (Buddhism)

UU Principle #4 - Search for what is true.

STORY: The Buddha & the Bodhi Tree –adapted summary from story in Sacred Stories: Wisdom from World Religions by Marilyn McFarlane

Prince Siddhartha was born into a wealthy, royal family. His father did not want him to go out into the world and so locked the palace gates. But his son - despite having every pleasure - yearned to know about the world outside the palace walls. Eventually, Siddhartha found a way out and encountered for the first time: sickness, hungry beggars, the old and dying. He is profoundly saddened and can't stop thinking about his experience and the big questions that surfaced afterwards: What is the meaning of life? Why must people suffer?



Siddhartha felt compelled to leave his life of ease and his family, to go on a seven year journey to search for what is true. During that time he tried many pathways (followed a hermit, wandered the mountains, denied himself food and shelter). Then the day came when, in a weakened state, he realized that starving himself was not the best path to enlightenment. He ate mild, honey, rice from a golden bowl, and then sat under the Bodhi Tree to focus on meditation. He was determined not to leave until he attained enlightenment. Mara, the master of illusion, the ruler of hope and fear, was angry that Siddhartha sat under the Tree of Knowledge and so tried to distract him, with wind, and floods and scary soldiers. In the midst of this, Siddhartha meditated and his light became a shield. It is said that the soldier's arrows fell to the ground and became flowers.

Gradually, understanding dawned as Siddhartha began to see the way beyond suffering.

If people let go of selfish desires and attachment to the things of this world, they could be free of endless suffering by joining in the spirit which connects everything in the universe and then be at peace.

From all of his experiences - from living only in the world of pleasure to choosing self-denial of food and comfort - Siddhartha came to the conclusion that the Middle way was the way to tranquility. That was the meaning of life and when he felt this, Siddhartha became the “Awakened One” - The Buddha.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- What makes you sad? What makes you feel peaceful?
- Do you take time to sit quietly (or move) while paying attention to your breathing? If so, how do you feel afterwards?
- When there are difficult things happening around you, Do you ever think of focusing on your breathing and being peaceful inside so it can be a “shield” for you?

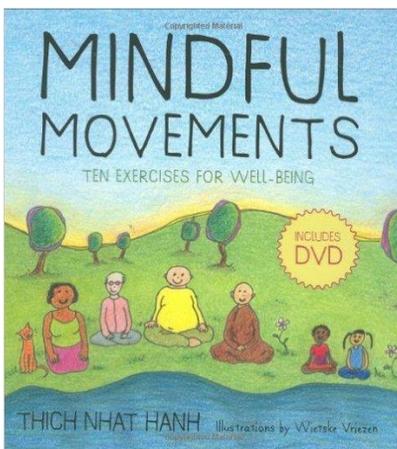
MESSAGE:

- Meditation helps many people when they are pulled by anger, or upset by things in the world, to come to peace inside.

ACTIVITIES:

- Meditation “Ten Exercises for Well-Being” Smile when you breathe out!
- Create a Tree - draw with brown marker or colored pencils a wide trunk and branches, Then sponge paint the long heart shaped leaves of the fig tree.

AT HOME: taste or eat rice with milk, honey & figs





6-7th Grade – Building Bridges – April 2, 2017

Topic is: **HUMANISM**

QUOTES: “I believe in God, but I spell it nature.” — Frank Lloyd Wright

“The responsibility for our lives and the kind of world in which we live is ours and ours alone.” — Humanist Manifesto III

“UU Humanists believe that religion is too important to be based on unprovable beliefs such as a belief in God. They wish to base the meaning of their lives on something that they can be sure of, that is here with us, that gives us meaning and purpose.” — Rev. Christine Robinson

“Humanism refers to the affirmation of the worth and dignity of every person, a commitment to human betterment, and the necessity for human beings to take responsibility for themselves and the world” — Rev. William R. Murry

On Sunday... The group explores Humanism, a philosophy—and for some, a religion—that says humankind has the ability and the sole responsibility to strive to fulfill our highest ideals. We identify Humanistic tenets and explored their presence in Unitarian Universalism, our wider culture (media), and our own lives.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- What basic tenets of Humanism seem like common sense to you? What humanist beliefs were you taught as a child? Do you remember particular incidents when growing up where your family, faith community or school reinforced humanist tenets? Which did you encounter only later in life?

EXPLORE WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS...

- **The American Humanist Association suggests books by the following authors as likely to contain humanist themes:** Louisa May Alcott (Unitarian), Edgar Allen Poe, George Orwell, Beatrix Potter (Unitarian), Robert Louis Stevenson, Mark Twain, H.P. Lovecraft, Dr. Seuss, Charles Dickens, and Kurt Vonnegut (Unitarian Universalist).

Another author from the list is British author Phillip Pullman. Pullman's trilogy, *His Dark Materials*, is a complex fantasy tale about a battle between conservative religious authorities and humanists determined to create "heaven on earth."

- **Movies suggested by the American Humanist Association include** *Huckleberry Finn* (various versions), *Happy Feet* (dir. George Miller, 2006), *Toy Story* (dir. John Lasseter, 1995), and *Contact* (dir. Robert Zemeckis, 1997) Have you seen any of these movies? What is humanist about these stories?



April 2, 2017 (Note Schedule now uploaded to the uuwestport.org)

9-12 gr. YOUTH GROUP (YG) meets 6:00-8:00pm

Meeting House Youth Room

- Greetings & gathering Advisor: Melanie Allen

- **Check in & Topic: LGBTQ...led by DJ Flam & Mia Dimon**
- **Brief Review with larger group of the second draft of the Youth Service** (Note in your calendars: May 6 Rehearsal & May 7 YG will be leading services)
- **End with a Candle lighting Youth Worship closing Mia - optional video from Month's Theme: TRANSFORMATION**

- **Options for personal reflection and conversations with your teen** – in our LFD Adult section of our “This Week” <http://uuwestport.org/lifespan/this-week-in-lifespan-faith-development/>