

### **Third Principle - Acceptance of one another and encouragement of spiritual growth in or congregations. Rocky Bayer 7/10/11**

#### **Intro: Link ACCEPTANCE and SPIRITUAL GROWTH.**

**Spirituality** can refer to an ultimate or an alleged immaterial reality; an inner path enabling a person to discover the essence of their being; or the “deepest values and meanings by which people live.” Spiritual practices, like meditation, prayer and contemplation, can develop an individual's inner life; spiritual experience includes that of connectedness with a larger reality, yielding a more comprehensive self; with other individuals or the human community; with nature or the cosmos; or with the divine realm.

Secular spirituality emphasizes humanistic qualities such as love, compassion, patience, tolerance, forgiveness, contentment, responsibility, harmony, and a concern for others, - aspects of life and human experience which go beyond a purely materialist view of the world, without necessarily believing in a supernatural reality or divine being. Spiritual practices such as mindfulness and meditation can be experienced as beneficial or even necessary without any supernatural interpretation or explanation.

Spiritual growth can be a mutually supportive process but also can create some anxiety and friction. People are uncomfortable being challenged to broaden their spiritual perspectives. The congregation can creatively challenge people, but we must be careful not to assume that another person's “growth” means moving towards our own beliefs.

This morning I want to introduce you to a body of information, developed by Unitarian Universalist theologian Peter Richardson. Rev. Richardson writes that there are at least four spiritual paths in any religion. He says they correspond to the natural divisions outlined in typologies developed by Carl Jung and the *Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* (MBTI), which is used widely in counseling, business, and education. How many of you have taken the MBTI? How many of you remember your letters?

1. Some of us are drawn to the Journey Of Unity – seeking consistent, universal principles that bind life and nature into one, searching for truth and clarity, and focusing on bringing about systemic change as the preferred means of improving the world around us.  
- Social Action - Board of Trustees
  
2. Some of us are drawn by the Journey Of Devotion - responding to myths and relating them to personal experience, and responding directly to human needs as they are encountered.  
– Church Family - R.E. - Haven
  
3. Some of us are drawn to the Journey Of Works - seeking a clear idea of right and wrong, accepting responsibility and stewardship, and finding meaning in work.  
- Building & Grounds - Long Range Planning - Stewardship
  
4. Finally, some of us are drawn to the Journey of Harmony - pursuing balance in our lives at multiple levels, questing to understand, living our highest ideals, and focusing on relationships.  
- Breakfast Forum - Worship

Of course none of us are one path at all times. We might switch paths or share paths, or find new ones. We might challenge ourselves with a path we're not particularly comfortable with as a way to stretch and grow.

## Spiritual Toolkit

Breakfast Forum, Movie Madness, Book Discussion Group, UU World Magazine, Pagan Group, Christian Group, R.E. and Adult R.E. Classes Committee Work, Coffee Hour, Our website with links to the UUA and other sources of ideas and information, Forgive me for any I haven't mentioned.

Worship Service: Meeting together in this exalted space, ringing the bell, chalice lighting, unison words, joys & concerns, wonderful music, Inspired readings, thoughtful meditations, and I haven't even gotten to the sermons yet, especially in the hands of our own Rev Don., and finally, joining hands for the closing words.

.....Let's not forget the wisdom of the Seven Principles

Use the tools, don't let them rust.

The late, great mythologist and cultural anthropologist coined the phrase "follow your bliss" – Not as an endorsement of hedonism, but as a description of exactly the kind of spiritual living that we've talked about here today.

In one of the fascinating interviews conducted by Bill Moyers for PBS, Campbell put it this way ----

**BILL MOYERS:** Do you ever have the sense of... being helped by hidden hands?

**JOSEPH CAMPBELL:** All the time. It is miraculous. I even have a superstition that has grown on me as a result of invisible hands coming all the time - namely, that if you do follow your bliss you put yourself on a kind of track that has been there all the while, waiting for you, and the life that you ought to be living is the one you are living. When you can see that, you begin to meet people who are in your field of bliss, and they open doors to you. I say, follow your bliss and don't be afraid, and doors will open where you didn't know they were going to be.

## MEDITATION

### "The Oversoul"

Let us learn the revelation of all nature and thought; that the Highest dwells within us, that the sources of nature are in our own minds.

As there is no screen or ceiling between our heads and the infinite heavens, so there is no bar or wall in the soul where we, the effect, cease, and God, the cause, begins.

I am constrained every moment to acknowledge a higher origin for events than the will I call mine.

There is deep power in which we exist and whose beatitude is accessible to us.

Every moment when the individual feels invaded by it is memorable.

It comes to the lowly and simple; it comes to whosoever will put off what is foreign and proud; it comes as insight; it comes as serenity and grandeur.

The soul's health consists in the fullness of its reception.

Forever and ever the influx of this better and more universal self is new and unsearchable.

Within us is the soul of the whole; the wise silence, the universal beauty, to which every part and particle is equally related; the eternal One.

When it breaks through our intellect, it is genius; when it breathes through our will, it is virtue; when it flows through our affections, it is love.

-- Ralph Waldo Emerson

## CLOSING WORDS

#683 in the hymnal – Theodore Parker