

Milestones Circle 2023 October 22

Sharing Our Lives Now

Opening Words and Chalice Lighting: Let there be joy in our coming together. Let there be truth heard in the words we speak and in the songs we sing.

Song (TBA)

Welcome & Introductions: The what, who, and why of the Milestones Circle. Older adulthood is a time to take stock of one's journey and to affirm that which is of most importance. It can be a rich time in the lives of adults- a time when we are often open to new learning and discovery, a time of deepening friendships and relationships, a time of theological reflection as we explore questions of meaning and purpose. The Milestones Circle is an open, drop-in small group for older adults to meet, share thoughts and concerns, and receive support and friendship in a UU setting.

Our proposed Covenant Statement: *(to be read silently and discussed if there are questions or concerns.)*

- We will use "I" statements when speaking and avoid interrupting others while they are speaking.
- What we say in this Circle will be held in confidence so that we all will feel free to share our truth openly.
- We will listen with compassion and empathy because we understand that all human beings are fallible and need the kindness offered in friendship.
- We acknowledge the right to pass or not share, when that feels appropriate.

Check-in: State your name and briefly describe where you are in your life now.

Reading: Attitude and Aging . Adapted from the pamphlet "Your Attitude and You" by Channing L. Bete Co., Inc.

A positive attitude about growing old throughout the lifespan can help you live longer, yet society constantly reinforces negative stereotypes of old age and aging. Such stereotypes include that aging adults are senile, frail, and cranky, and that growing old is generally something to be lamented. When primed with such negativity, you can be likely to conform to such stereotypes and live up to those low expectations, thus performing at lower functioning levels in old age. It is therefore important to recognize and value the contributions, accomplishments, and wisdom of senior adults. Such a societal change in attitude toward aging will affect both today's and tomorrow's seniors for the better. When armed with a sense of happiness and purpose, reinforced by a positive attitude, older adults are more apt to suppress negative thoughts and carry on as the competent, productive members of society that they are, regardless of age or ability.

Sitting in Silence: *Take this time in silence to reflect on the reading, and the questions to consider which are below. (It is recommended that the song be repeated here.)*

Questions to Consider:

1. How would you describe your attitude today?
2. Can you share a time in your life when you felt most alive?
3. Who are the people in your life that you depend on for companionship?
4. What are some questions or concerns that you face as you look towards your future?

Sharing/Listening round our Circle *We will first go around our Circle to ensure that everyone gets an equal opportunity to speak. You may wish to address one of the questions above or you may wish to offer your own unique thoughts on the theme of "Sharing our lives now."*

Open Discussion/reflections *We will share additional thoughts on our theme, this time in no particular order.*

Last thoughts/Check Out *As time allows, we are invited to give expression to appreciations on the sharing that has been offered or offer our own final thoughts.*

Do Things that Make You Happy *(read aloud if there is time)*

According to Martin Seligman, Ph.D., the creator of positive psychology, everybody has a right to be happy. Dr. Seligman also believes that happiness helps provide a sense of purpose in life because it is something that you can create and nurture. The Pursuit of Happiness organization has identified seven habits of happy people.

Happy people:

- • build close relationships;
- • care for others;
- • engage in healthy, active lifestyles;
- • embrace spirituality;
- • practice positive thinking;
- • embrace a hobby or activity; and
- • identify strengths.

Closing Words and Extinguishing the Chalice Let us give thanks for the people who bring us an open heart and welcome us with joy as we journey to tomorrow.

Next meeting will be on Sunday, November 26, 2023.

Note: If you have thoughts or ideas on future topics of discussion, please email or call me. Kathie Bergman, temporary group facilitator