

## All-Church Social Change Kick Off

### Exploring the Road to Respect

Delivered at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Boulder in September, 2011.

#### Facilitation Notes

Source: This workshop is adapted from ideas that appear in a lesson set on immigration and refugees prepared by Marianne Schroeder, retired DRE.

Summary: Social change begins by changing ourselves. Living our First Principle is the place to start - to develop inside ourselves a Respect for all Beings. Spiritual practices help us do that.

This is an intergenerational event that helps people develop spiritual disciplines to increase their levels of compassion. It was used to launch a church-wide social change project focused on immigration.

#### Schedule

Noon - 12:30      Lunch  
12:30 - 1:30      Large group opening  
1:30 - 3:30      Rotational workshops  
3:30 - 4:00      Wrap up

#### Supplies for Large Group Opening

- \* Together in Pinecone Patch by Thomas Yezerski
- \* Map of the world
- \* Sticky notes so families can write their names and place it on the world map
- \* Computer, screen
- \* PowerPoint slide of Statue of Liberty
- \* PowerPoint slide of Map of U.S.
- \* Signs with state names: California, New York, Florida, Texas, Colorado
- \* Theological Questions Poster
- \* Contemplative Practices Poster
- \* Name tags
- \* Passports
- \* Stickers
- \* Folders for adults
- \* Group leader folders with instructions, discussion questions, travel schedule

#### Supplies for Mindful Eating & Cooking Workshop

- \* Corn tortillas and small flour tortillas (so the children can choose one or try both)
- \* Canned refritos
- \* Jar of salsa
- \* Grated cheese
- \* Stickers for passports
- \* Contemplative Practices Poster
- \* Theological Questions Poster

#### Supplies for Singing and Meditation

- \* Meditation jars
  - \* Handouts
  - \* Song sheets
  - \* Passport Stickers
  - \* Contemplative Practices Poster
  - \* Theological Questions Poster
- Supplies for Deep Listening Workshop
- \* Papers with charade topics
  - \* Bowl
  - \* Passport Stickers
  - \* Contemplative Practices Poster
  - \* Theological Questions Poster
- Supplies for Art Workshop
- \* Contemplative Practices Poster
  - \* Theological Questions Poster
  - \* 4 foot x 6 foot paper with tree trunk and branches drawn on it
  - \* 8 1/2 x 11 paper for each person
  - \* Crayons
  - \* Glue sticks
  - \* Leaves of all different types - one for each person registered for workshop

#### Lunch & Ingathering

Time: 15-25 minutes

Preparation:

Name tags (name and group assignments already on them) laid out at entry and a person assigned to greet and instruct people as they arrive  
 Tables set up for lunch with sign indicating color of group (group members sit together at lunch)

Family folders, Leader folder, passports, small sticky notes, pencils, and hymnals assembled on tables

Lunch and service items ready before folks arrive with volunteers to prepare and serve

(we obtained lunch from a local immigrant group)

Have chime or bell available

Promptly at starting time, sing grace, #1010 0 We Give Thanks

Invite folks to eat and introduce themselves within group.

#### Large Group Opening

Time: 1.25 hours

Preparation:

Hang a large world map in an easily accessible spot.

Place signs with state names (Minnesota, Texas, California, and New York)

on floor in approximate relational positions they would be on a map of the United States.

Hang a large poster with the theological questions for the day.

Have projector, computer and screen ready with PowerPoint presentation

Have chime or bell available

Have chalice ready

Obtain a copy of Together in Pinecone Patch by Thomas Yezerski and become familiar with the story so that you can tell it without reading all of the text.

Place discussion questions in Leader Folders.

Chalice Lighting:

As soon as participants have been served and the initial lunch flurry is over, begin activities. Participants may continue to eat during discussion. Come into this circle of love and justice.

Come into this community where we can dream and believe in those dreams.

Come into this holy space where we remember who we are and how we want to live.

Come now, and let us learn together.

(Adapted from Marilyn J. Sewell)

Large Group Discussion/Lecture on Immigration and Social Change (10 minutes)

Explain that during the upcoming year, we will be talking about people who come to our country to live, as well as people who move around the country for seasonal work. We will learn more about these people and also learn how immigrants, refugees, and migrant workers relate to us as Unitarian Universalists.

Point out that America is a nation made up of immigrants because nearly everyone in America (except Native Americans) originally came from somewhere else.

Explain to the class that most immigrants fled their homelands to escape hardship in their homelands, including religious and political persecution (define persecute); war, starvation, poverty, lack of opportunity (like the Buckley's and the Pazik's in the story). They came to America by choice for freedom and opportunity. But some immigrants were brought here against their will. Ask students to name one group of people brought against their will. Explain that slaves were forced to come here from Africa on slave ships.

Tell students that because 50% of the U.S. population can trace its roots to Ellis Island, this landmark has come to symbolize the immigrant experience in America. (Show the children a picture of Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty via PowerPoint slide.)

Story: (7 minutes)

Read/tell the story and show pictures (you might want to select a few to put on the projector)

Discussion (15 minutes)

1. Group leaders will have questions in their folders.

Why did Keara's and Stefan's families leave their homes and come to the United States?

Why did Keara and Stefan not like each other at first?

Are there people you don't really know but don't like?

How do you decide who to like and who not to like?

What Are Your Roots? (10 minutes)

1. Give the following instructions and then allow time for participants to carry them out.

\* As a family, talk about the countries from which your ancestors immigrated

\* Put your family's name and the name of a country from which your ancestors immigrated on a stick note. Use as many sticky notes as you need to list all of the countries.

\* Now, go to the world map and place your notes on the right countries.

\* When you get home, share stories about your roots, if you have them

2. Gain the attention of the large group and together look at the map and note any patterns that seem important. Encourage families to share stories about these roots when they get home.

3. Conclude by saying,

"The first step in doing social change is to love and respect ourselves. Part of that, is knowing where we came from."

Where Were You Born? (10 minutes)

1. Point out the state names on the walls.

2. Ask them to imagine that they are standing in a giant map of the United States. You can check understanding by asking the group to point to the place where some un-labeled states would be. (Florida, Alaska, Maine, and Kentucky are good examples)

3. Give the following directions and allow time for the participants to carry them out.

\* Go to the area of the U.S. where you were born

\* If you were born outside the U.S., go to the world map

\* Parents - help your kids if necessary

Ring a bell. Then at the sound of the bell, everyone comes together in the middle to Colorado which is where we live now. (10 minutes)

4. Gain the attention of the large group and together name the states/countries that they are from. Note any patterns that seem important.

5. Conclude by saying,

"The first step in doing social change is to love and respect ourselves. Part of that, is knowing where we came from."

Theological Questions For the Day (3 minutes)

1. Ask participants to return to their tables.

2. Remind them that today's workshop is called Exploring the Road to Respect

3. Any kind of journey requires preparation special equipment, decide a route.....

4. We are starting a journey to social change and we need to prepare

ourselves

5. The first step on this journey is getting ourselves ready to respect all beings-this is our First Principle,

We affirm and promote the inherent worth and dignity of every person

Respect all beings

6. Today, we will do that by thinking about these questions:

Who is important? Everyone

What makes them important? Just being who they are

How do we treat all beings? With respect.

How do we do that? By developing spiritual practices that help us.

Show the Tree of Contemplative Practices (see PowerPoint slide and [www.contemplativemind.org](http://www.contemplativemind.org))

7. As a group, you will now go to four workshops, steps on the Road to Respect

\* Your group leader has your travel schedule - each group starts at a different workshop and moves around to all of them.

\* Each family should take a folder for handouts

\* Each person should take a passport with "The Road to Respect" on the cover and write your name inside it.

\* Groups leave for first workshop

Rotational Workshop - Cooking

Time: 30 minutes

Theme: Mindful eating and cooking are practices that help us to be respectful and compassionate.

Mindful Eating Exercise (10 minute)

1. Eating well is a way we take care of ourselves. If we don't take care of ourselves, we can't take care of anyone else.

2. Mindful eating is a practice we do that helps us think about all the things that went into our food. Can you find this practice on the poster?

3. We are going to "be" with an orange (or other seasonal, local fruit or vegetable).

Notice the color, shape and surface of the orange. Notice these characteristics in great detail. Pay attention to things you've never noticed about an orange before.

Close your eyes and spend another few minutes feeling the orange. Use your fingers, your forehead, your cheek, your tongue, and the back of your neck. Roll it between your palms. Open your eyes and throw it from one hand to another. Feel its weight. What temperature is it? Squeeze it. Would it explode if you squeezed harder? Will it roll in a straight line? Can you balance it on top of your head?

Listen to your orange. No kidding. Just put it up to your ear and listen very carefully. Will it make a sound if you squeeze it? Tap it with your finger, then with an object nearby. Compare the sounds. How are they alike and how are they different?

Without using any utensils, begin dissecting your orange. Explore the

inside of the peel using the same strategies you used to explore the outside of it. The color is different from that of the outside. Exactly where does the color change? Closer to the inside surface of the peel or the outside surface? How is the inside texture different from the outside? Where does that change take place?

Now explore the taste, which most of us think is the most important characteristic of an orange. What does a little piece of that white stuff we usually try to avoid taste like? Put a slice of orange in your mouth. Will it melt? What does it feel like under your tongue? With a slice between your tongue and the roof of your mouth, very slowly squeeze some juice out. Does it squirt, ooze, or do both in different directions?

4. Now think about the elements that went into the orange - soil, water, sun.

5. Now think about who planted the orange trees, who harvested the oranges.

6. Often, immigrants are the people who plant and harvest our food. Let us think of them with gratitude.

7. If you get tired of oranges and have the courage, try eating an entire meal this way.

8. Choose one activity you perform regularly - washing dishes, eating, exercising, taking a shower, even breathing. Whatever you choose, do the activity with full attention. Notice the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, and other sensations associated with the activity. Aim to be aware of every detail. If your attention wanders, simply note this fact and refocus on the activity at hand.

9. You might make some amazing discoveries. You might really taste food for the first time in years. You might notice the world around you in more detail. You might rediscover the beauty of a sunset or the laughter of a friend. You might also notice that unpleasant things such as headaches or other pain begin to disappear.

Mindful Cooking (20 minutes)

1. Mindful cooking is another way we can take care of ourselves and develop gratitude.

2. Make Bean and Cheese Quesadillas

3. Have ready

\* Corn tortillas and small flour tortillas (so the children can choose one or try both)

\* Grated cheese

\* Refritos

\* Jar of salsa

4. Heat refritos in microwave or on the stove. Heat the tortillas in the microwave. Let each person assemble their quesadillas using the refritos, cheese, and salsa.

Wrap up (5 minutes)

1. As we eat, let's remember that we are taking care of ourselves. And let's be grateful for all that goes into the food.

2. If time, share a story of when we weren't respected and how that felt.

3. Mindful eating and cooking are practices that help us be respectful and compassionate (refer to the contemplative practices poster)
4. Remind them of the theological questions for the day:  
Who is important? Everyone. We are all important, and we need to take of ourselves by eating well. Everyone who makes our food is important.  
What makes them important? Just being themselves.  
How can we treat ourselves? With respect!  
How do we treat others? With respect!  
How will we remember to do that? Through spiritual practices like being mindful and grateful.
5. Give stickers for each person's passports

### Rotational Workshop - Meditation and Music

Time: 30 minutes

Theme: Loving kindness meditation and singing are practices that help us be respectful and compassionate

Welcome (? Minutes)

1. "Everyone come in and make yourselves comfortable."

Exclude one group/family: "Sorry, you people will have to stand by the door..."

- How does it feel to be excluded?
- UUs try to give everyone respect;

Everyone is important because everyone is a special, unique expression of the spark of life we all share.

You are important just as you are.

- We show people they're important by treating them with respect and compassion.

That reinforces the connection between us, and makes us both feel better!

- Music and meditation can help us remember compassion for others.

2. Use poster

As Unitarian Universalists, what do we believe about all beings? They are important!

What makes them important? Just being themselves.

How do we treat them? With respect and compassion?

How do we remember to do that? Loving kindness meditation and singing help us.

Buddha's Brain (10 minutes)

Source: Buddha's Brain by Rick Hanson, PH.D. and Richard Mendius, MD

1. One way to develop respect for all beings is to make our brains bigger. Yep, we can make certain parts of our brains bigger. And the parts of the brain that help us have respect for people are called the insula and anterior cingulate cortex - the limbic networks. (Buddha's Brain: 126).

2. Scientists have found that meditation strengthens anterior (frontal) cingulate cortex and insula - for improved attention, empathy, and compassion.

3. Show picture of brain.
4. Printed handout for adults: <http://www.wisebrain.org/papers/MettaRegulatesLimbic.pdf>. For more resources:  
<http://www.wisebrain.org/science/key-scientific-papers>  
<http://www.wisebrain.org/>  
 Buddha's Brain by Rick Hanson, PH.D. and Richard Mendius, MD  
 Article from Science Daily. Compassion Meditation Changes The Brain  
<http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2008/03/080326204236.htm>

Meditation (10 minutes)

Source: Peaceful Piggy Meditation by Kerry Lee MacLean

Have meditation jars in the room - pre-made following instructions in Peaceful Piggy Meditation.

1. Meditation

...makes our brains bigger (handout), our bodies calmer, and our hearts more loving.

...helps us to see and feel who we really are inside.

...helps us to feel connected to all living things and the spirit of Life. That connection is Love, Compassion.

2. Let's try a short meditation.

\* Sit comfortably. Be still and quiet. Hold bottle.

\* Shake the bottle-the swirling glitter is like all the thoughts swirling in your brain.

\* Watch the glitter settle; allow your thoughts to settle too.

\* When you are ready, you can set the bottle down and close your eyes, or continue to gaze into the bottle. (ring bell)

\* Notice your breathing - comfortable and relaxed.

\* Each breath makes you more relaxed.

\* If thoughts come, allow them to drift away like clouds, and return to your breath...

\* Breathing IN, return to HERE, in your body;

\* Breathing OUT, return to NOW, in your body...

\* IN - here; OUT - now...

3. Somewhere deep inside you is a peaceful, warm light. Can you be very still and find it? Sometimes you find it when you stop trying...

\* This light is specially yours.

\* Each person has their own special light.

\* They are all part of the Universal Light that connects us to each other and all things.

\* Allow that light to expand and fill you with love and compassion for yourself, your family, and the others here...

\* Think of someone who may be struggling right now.

\* Maybe it's someone you don't even know.

\* Maybe it's someone who feels like a stranger.

\* Maybe it's someone who's sick or sad.

- \* Can you expand your circle of light to include them?
- \* As you breathe in and out, send light, love and compassion to them...
- 4. Coming back to your breath, give thanks for the light within you, and for the gift of life. Slowly open your eyes. (ring bell)

Learn a song of freedom and love (10 minutes)

1. Music can also help us to feel the life within us, and feel connected to others....it can inspire us and energize us too!
2. We are going to learn a UU song about loving other people. When we go to immigration vigils or protests, we can sing this song.
3. Teach song and practice. Love Will Guide Us (Hymnal 131)

Wrap up (5 minutes)

1. Discussion
  - \* How did the meditation feel?
  - \* How did the singing feel?
  - \* Did the meditation and/or music create any changes within you in how you feel about yourself? ...others?
2. Loving kindness meditation and singing are practices that help us be respectful and compassionate (refer to the contemplative practices poster)
3. Remind participants of the day's theological questions:
  - Who is important? Everyone!
  - What makes them important? Just being themselves.
  - How will we treat people? With respect and compassion!
  - How do we remember to do that? By having spiritual practices - like meditation and singing.
4. Give stickers for passports
5. Pass out hand outs

Rotational Workshop - Charades Game

Time: 30 minutes

Theme: Listening deeply is a practice that helps us be respectful and compassionate

Empathy about language. (10 minutes)

Tell the students to imagine they have just arrived in America and can't speak or understand the English language.

Ideally, a leader knows a foreign language and says something that people don't understand. If not, we can create a script in Spanish.

There are hundreds of different languages in the world, and people speak different languages in different places.

What language do they speak in France? What language do they speak in China? What language do people speak in Italy?

Then tell them that many words we're familiar with in the English language are actually from other languages, and give examples: tortilla (Spanish), hamburger (German), chef (French), and magazine (Arabic).

Charades - If you can't say it, act it out (20 minutes)

1. Now we're going to have fun and play game. We're going to pretend like we don't speak English, and we have to act things out instead of speaking.

2. That means we have to listen very closely.

3. Listening closely is a spiritual practice.

4. Have you ever heard of the game charades? Charades is a classic party game involving pantomime.

5. Leader has prepared slips of paper ahead of time and placed them in a bowl. Some examples:

\* Movies: Happy Feet, Lean on Me.

\* Famous people: Gandhi, Peter Pan, Martin Luther King, Jr.

\* Songs: Stand by Me, RESPECT

\* TV Shows: All in the Family

\* Books: Just Like Us

6. The first player chooses a slip from the bowl and begins silently to act out the charade while the other kids/adults try to guess what he/she picked.

7. The first player can't say anything, but she can use props and point to other objects if she thinks it will help the other players guess. She can also use certain gestures that the players agree on beforehand. For instance:

\* Pointing to oneself indicates the charade is a famous person.

\* Pretending to sing indicates the charade is a song.

\* Putting one's hands together and opening them indicates the charade is a book.

\* Tracing a square in the air indicates the charade is a TV show.

\* Pretending to crank a movie camera indicates the charade is a movie.

\* The player performing the charade can act out the whole phrase, individual words, part of a word, a rhyming word, or individual syllables.

Here are a few signals to help the other players:

\* Crossing one's arms over one's chest indicates that the player will act out the whole phrase.

\* Slicing one's hand through the air indicates that the player will act out an individual word. If this has already been conveyed, the sign means the word will now be broken into syllables.

\* Holding up fingers in the air indicates the position of a word in a phrase, or a syllable in a word.

\* Cupping an ear indicates that the player will act out a rhyming or similar-sounding word.

\* Holding hands close together indicates that the player will act out a short form of the word - for example, "sing" instead of "singing."

\* Holding hands far apart indicates that the player will act out a longer form of the word - for example, "singing" instead of "sing."

\* Peering forward indicates that the player will act out the future tense of the word.

\* Peering backward indicates that the player will act out the past tense of

the word.

\* Beckoning indicates that the guessers are getting close.

8. When someone guesses a part of the charade correctly, the first player points at that person and nods. Charades gets pretty loud, so she may have to continue pointing until the other players realize that one of the guesses was correct. When a person guesses the entire charade, the first player says so and sits down, and the guesser gets to go next. There are no winners or losers in this version of the game; it ends when everyone has acted out a charade.

9. After each charade, lead a discussion on how this topic relates to our theme today. For example:

\* Why would we pick a song (movie, book) title called \_\_\_\_\_? What does it have to do with our theme?

\* How did Martin Luther King, Jr. feel about all people? How did he show his respect and compassion?

This becomes less about the game and more about the topics and how they reflect our First Principle.

Wrap up

1. Deep listening is a practice that helps to be respectful and compassionate. (refer to it as one of many on the poster)

2. Remind participants of the day's theological questions:

Who is important? Everyone!

What makes them important? Just being themselves.

How will we treat people? With respect and compassion!

How do we remember to do that? By having spiritual practices - like meditation and singing.

3. Give stickers for passports

Rotational Workshop - Art

Time: 30 minutes

Theme: Doing contemplative art is a practice that helps us be respectful and compassionate

Art Journaling (20 minutes)

1. Today we are learning that everyone is important. One way we can remember that everyone is important, and that we all need each other, is to do artwork. Art journaling is a spiritual practice that many people use to help them remember how to be compassionate.

2. Contemplative art helps us get in touch with our feelings and perceptions as we prepare to do social change work.

3. Knowing ourselves--our feelings and thoughts--helps us determine whether we are being compassionate.

4. Point to the tree and show where this practice is.

5. Do the art project

\* Each person gets a leaf and a piece of 8.5 x 11 paper and crayons.

- \* Fold the paper in half lengthwise.
- \* Draw the leaf. Shade it in with color.
- \* Now turn the paper over and draw the leaf again with your non-dominant hand. Shade it in.
- \* Are they different? Is your perspective different depending on which hand you use? We often view others depending on our perspective. If our dominant perspective is a certain way, we may always see people through that way of seeing. Sometimes we may need to shift our perspective.
- \* How many of you have heard that girls like pink?
- \* That is the dominant perspective or view, isn't it?
- \* Is it possible that there are girls - somewhere in this world - who don't like pink?
- \* What if we only got girls pink presents for their birthdays? Would that be fair?
- \* What other examples do you have of dominant views?
- \* Sometimes we have to think about what our view is about someone. If we're just going with what everyone else thinks, it would like only using our dominant hand to do artwork. Sometimes we need to use our other hand. And it's not always easy. It takes practice.
- \*
- \* Now turn the paper over. Take a crayon in each hand and at the same time, draw whatever you want on the two halves of the paper.
- \* Using both hands creates something pretty cool. It's a little different than something you would create with just one hand.
- \* Now take your real leaf and hang it on the tree on the wall. See how all the leaves are different? And yet, together, they make a beautiful tree. Just like people are all different and make a beautiful world.

Wrap up (5 minutes)

1. Art Journaling is a practice that helps us be respectful and compassionate (refer to the contemplative practices poster)
2. Remind participants of the day's theological questions:  
Who is important? Everyone!  
What makes them important? Just being themselves.  
How will we treat people? With respect and compassion!  
How do we remember to do that? By having spiritual practices - like meditation and singing.
3. Give stickers for passports
4. Participants take their individual drawings with them.
5. Keep tree with real leaves so other groups can add to it. Bring it to final gathering.

Wrap up Session

Time: 30 minutes

Preparation: Same set up as Large Group Opening plus bring in art work, quesadillas, and meditation bottles. Have available any handouts form

## Immigration Ministry Task Force

### Workshop Review (15 minutes)

1. Art show - participants can describe what they created. Show the big tree poster with leaves on it.
2. Music - sing the song we learned - all together
3. Eat any quesadillas left
4. Thank volunteers by name

### Wrap up - 15 minutes

1. Immigration Task Force - GA overview
  2. Hand out from Immigration Ministry Task Force - upcoming events and meetings
  3. Tell them we will be sending them a survey and inviting them to get involved in events planned for the year.
  4. Reminder of how we are grounded in religious values of compassion, reconciliation, and human solidarity.
    - \* Who is important? Everyone!
    - \* What makes them important? Just being themselves.
    - \* How will we treat immigrants? With respect and compassion!
    - \* How will we do it?
    - \* Love ourselves, love each other, love the world.
    - \* Develop spiritual practices - like cooking, mindful eating, deep listening, meditation, singing, art journaling.
    - \* Study and learn more about the issues
    - \* Go out in the world so everyone can see that we respect all beings
- So let's Stand on the Side of Love and Respect All Beings.
5. Sing Standing on the Side of Love

## Evaluation

Sent by Survey Monkey to all participants two weeks following the event.

Not True

Somewhat

Not True

Somewhat True

True

Very True

The All-Church Social Change Kick-off was worth my time

The workshop was worth my family's time

The free lunch influenced my decision to attend

The message of the event was clear: "Social change begins with changing ourselves and developing respect and compassion for all people. Spiritual practices help us do that."

The story of the Polish and Irish immigrants made the message clear

The art workshop made that message clear

The loving-kindness meditation and singing workshop made that message clear

The mindful eating and cooking workshop made that message clear

The deep listening/charades workshop made that message clear

The activities were appropriate for all ages

Working with people of many ages helped my learning

What spiritual practices do you plan to use to increase your compassion?

General comments:

Name: optional