

UUCR Small Group Ministry Session Plan
Responsible Consumption

May your time together be meaningful and full of warm connection! -Rev. Rebekah

CHALICE OR CANDLE LIGHTING

MOMENT OF SILENCE

OPENING WORDS

With thankful hearts we have come together:

to celebrate the bounty of the day,

to bask in the warmth of this community,

to share with friends the tides of our lives,

to entertain, perennially, our hopes for a better future.

We join together to resist injustice and inequality, wherever they may be found.

Our hearts are touched by the human need we feel around us,

whether far away or within reach of our hand.

We come here, to be together, because this is how we believe our lives are best lived:

in questioning and in conversation, in compassion and in service,

in gratitude and in joy, in companionship, and in love.

It is good to be together.

(Adapted from Rev. Alison Wohler)

CHECK-IN

READINGS

“There are two ways to get enough: one is to continue to accumulate more and more. The other is to desire less.” —G. K. Chesterton (1874—1936).

“We no longer live life. We consume it.” ~Vicki Robin

“Today we live in a society that seems to be less and less concerned with reality. We drink instant coffee and reconstituted orange juice. We buy our vegetables on cardboard trays covered with plastic. But perhaps the most dehumanizing thing of all is that we have allowed the media to call us consumers—ugly. No! I don't want to be a consumer. Anger consumes. Forest fires consume. Cancer consumes.” ~ Madeleine L'Engle

“Everything in excess is opposed to nature.” —Hippocrates

“The Christmas presents once opened are Not So Much Fun as they were while we were in the process of examining, lifting, shaking, thinking about, and opening them. Three hundred sixty-five days later, we try again and find that the same thing has happened. Each time the goal is reached, it becomes Not So Much Fun, and we're off to reach the next one, then the next one, then the next.

That doesn't mean that the goals we have don't count. They do, mostly because they cause us to go through the process and it's the process that makes us wise, happy, or whatever. If we do

things in the wrong sort of way, it makes us miserable, angry, confused, and things like that. The goal has to be right for us, and it has to be beneficial, in order to ensure a beneficial process. But aside from that, it's really the process that's important." ~Benjamin Hoff, The Tao of Pooh

"We each begin a personal journey toward responsible consumption from a different place. Wherever we start, we must be mindful of our behavior, attentive to the voices and needs of others, and conscious of the natural rhythms of the world. Our journey continues through education. Through secular and religious education programs, we must challenge ourselves to rethink the underlying assumptions that guide our choices...As more of us become responsible consumers, we pave the way for systemic change. Individual actions are not enough to reverse the relentless tide of reckless societal consumption." ~2001 Statement of Conscience, UUA

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

QUESTIONS and REQUESTS (Please respond to any of the questions and readings you feel moved by. It is not necessary to respond to all of them.)

1. What spoke to you from the readings?
2. Do any of the readings connect to your understanding of your faith or being UU?
3. The holidays are often complicated for people and families around responsible consumerism. How do you navigate the balance?
4. What role does joy, attachment and pleasure play in responsible consumption? Positive and/or negative?

SHARING (up to 6 to 8 minutes each without interruption, depending on the time available, with optional open discussion at the end after all have shared)

MOMENT OF SILENT GRATITUDE

LIKES (celebrations, gratitudes, appreciations for needs met) and WISHES (mournings, requests, acknowledgements of needs not met)

CHECK-OUT (a few words or phrases from each who wants to share)

CLOSING WORDS

"Because of those who came before, we are;
In spite of their failings, we believe;
Because of, and in spite of the horizons of their vision, we – too – dream.
Let us go remembering to praise,
To live in the moment,
To love mightily,
To bow to the mystery."

EXTINGUISH THE CHALICE OR CANDLE