

## **Staying Positive in a Negative World**

### **Candle Lighting and Opening Words:**

Warmth, Joy, Togetherness

Out of the darkness, light.

Out of the light, warmth.

Out of the warmth, joy.

Out of the joy, togetherness.

May this flame hold us for the time we are here with one another. - Ben Soule

### **Check-In:**

**Focus Readings:** “I have for many years endeavored to make this vital truth clear, and still people marvel when I tell them that I am happy. They imagine my limitations weigh heavily upon my spirit, and chain me to the rock of despair. Yet, it seems to me, happiness has very little to do with the senses. If we make up our minds that this is a drab and purposeless universe, it will be that and nothing else. On the other hand, if we believe that the earth is ours, and that the sun and moon hang in the sky for our delight, there will be joy upon the hills and gladness in our fields because the Artist in our souls glorifies creation. Surely it gives dignity to life to believe that we are born into this world for noble ends, and that we have a higher destiny that can be accomplished with the narrow limits of this physical life.” -Helen Keller

“The beginning of freedom is the realization that you are not “the thinker.” The moment you start watching the thinker, a higher level of consciousness becomes activated. You then begin to realize that there is a vast realm of intelligence beyond thought, that thought is only a tiny aspect of that intelligence. You also realize that all the things that truly matter – beauty, love, creativity, joy, inner peace – arise from beyond the mind. You begin to awaken...The moment you realize you are not present, you are present. Whenever you are able to observe your mind, you are no longer trapped in it. Another factor has come in, something that is not of the mind: the witnessing presence.” -Eckhart Tolle

“Each [of us] is building our own world. We both build from within and we attract from without. Thought is the force with which we build, for thoughts are forces. Like builds like and like attracts like. In the degree that thought is spiritualized, it becomes more subtle and powerful in its workings. This spiritualizing is within the power of all. Everything is first worked out in the unseen before it is manifested in the seen; in the spiritual before it is manifested in the material.” -Ralph Waldo Trine

### **Moment of Silence for Reflection**

**Questions:**

1. Sometimes it may seem that the unpredictable happens and we find ourselves caught in a maelstrom not of our making. Have you ever been in this situation? How did you avoid or process the feelings of helplessness, powerlessness, confusion and/or despair in which we may find ourselves?
2. In this high tech world in which we are living, filled with internet, social media, 'instant' worldwide news and such, how do you manage to remain positive in the face of all the negativity that is thrown so graphically and constantly at us?
3. Negativity is actually necessary, for without negativity, we cannot grow. However, too much negativity can stop us in our tracks. How have you been able to use a negative situation to turn your life around and grow from it?
4. How has being a UU helped you live a more positive life?

**Likes/Wishes****Closing Words:**

May the nourishment of the earth be yours,  
may the clarity of light be yours,  
may the fluency of the ocean be yours,  
may the protection of the ancestors be yours.  
And so may a slow  
wind work these words  
of love around you,  
an invisible cloak  
to mind your life.

--John O'Donohue, last stanza of Beannacht, from "To Bless the Space Between Us"