



# On the Road Together

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## The Path of Renewal



A Youth Group Resource  
from Soul Matters  
September 2020

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# Welcome

Welcome to the “On the Road Together” youth packet! This month we travel the road of Renewal.

Congregations are closed to in-person meetings due to the COVID-19 pandemic. So for this packet (and moving forward), we’re focusing on activities for youth groups who are meeting online rather than in person.

As the pandemic stretches on and wears us down, the theme of renewal is especially important. For instance, when my husband and I found out that our favorite Utah river trip had just opened up, we grabbed the chance to be renewed by nature, by just the two of us and our canoe floating down the labyrinths of Canyonlands National Park on the Green River. We were socially distanced, no people for miles, for 5 days, camping along the riverbank. We cooled ourselves from the heat of the desert by dipping our hats and shirts in the river. We viewed the night stars. What an antidote to the worry and uncertainty of the pandemic! This was truly a time when wonder washed over us. I hope our session on wonder helps you and your youth experience the same relief and replenishment!

September is a season of homecoming for us UUs. Renewing our commitments to each other and our values is central to that. This idea of “renewing commitments” shapes all four sessions in our packet:

- In light of the current events which have catalyzed the world, we renew our commitments to dismantling white supremacy.
- We renew ourselves with wonder, so much so that we’ve put it in the first of our UU sources which calls us into relationship to the “Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life.” With this in mind, we renew our commitment to the practice of “letting wonder wash over us.”
- As a covenantal religion, nothing is more central than renewing our commitment to repairing our relationships.
- And finally, we focus on the all-important work of renewing our commitment to self-care.

Our commitments are never just “responsibilities.” Commitments are ultimately about connections, connections that keep us whole, that make us more, that give us the feeling of “being home.” So maybe this month of renewing commitments isn’t just about “filling ourselves back up.” Maybe it is also a journey back home, back to your larger self.

With gratitude for the many ways we renew each other and help us find our ways back home,

**Katie** on behalf of the entire Soul Matters Team

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# Session 1

## Recommit to Dismantling Racism

### (Anti-Racism Focus)

#### Theme Angle:

*Each month we are dedicating one packet session to anti-racism work, with our theme guiding us toward which aspect(s) of the work to focus on. So to explore the connection between renewal and anti-racism, this session invites us to renew our commitments to:*

- *Noticing white privilege*
- *Using white privilege in helpful ways*

- I. Getting Started**
- II. Spiritual Practice**
- III. Discussion Starters**
- IV. Express Yourself**
- V. Fun & Games**

## I. Getting Started

### Connecting to Our Community & The Skill of Personal Sharing

#### Leader Tip

You will be sharing videos and music through Zoom. Learn how to play music on Zoom: [How to play music and videos on Zoom](#), and how to play just music on Zoom [Soul Matters' How to play music PDF](#).

#### Centering or Chalice Lighting Quotes

It was my conviction and determination that the church would be a resource for activists -- a mission fundamentally perceived. To me it was important that individuals who were in the thick of the struggle for social change would be able to find renewal and fresh courage in the spiritual resources of the church.

- *Rev. Dr. Howard Thurman (quoted in Mark Morrison Reed's Black Pioneers)*

#### Check In Prompt

In one word or a simple phrase, name a feeling you have about the current protests and struggles for racial justice.

## II. Spiritual Practice

### Connecting to Our Soul & The Skill of Mindfulness

#### Centering:

I invite you to move into our meditation position.

Sit comfortably in your chair or on the floor.

Put your hands on your lap or on your knees.

Focus your eyes in front of you.

Find your breath moving in your body by taking in one breath through your nose and then slowly breathing it out through your mouth.

#### Mindfulness Moment: A Journey from Silence

Use this video poem as the centerpiece of your mindfulness moment, "[Simon's Spoken Word](#)."

In this poem, he says we are immobilized by thoughts "as if being in harmony is more important than creating a ripple in the fabric of injustice" and he exhorts us to be "making justice with our own two hands." This is a great reminder about renewing our commitment to dismantling white supremacy. Use the above centering instructions and then invite the youth to listen mindfully, with an ear toward identifying the one phrase that most captures their attention. You might frame it by asking the youth to listen for the one phrase that "lights up as if written in neon lights."

#### Reflection Question:

- Which line stood out for you most?

# III. Discussion Starters

## Connecting to Our Minds & The Skill of Reflection

**Leader Tip:** As you guide your youth through these discussions, keep in mind that experts often recommend using a [caucus affinity group](#) to help white and BIPOC youth process according to their unique needs. You can do this by utilizing Zoom’s “[breakout room](#)” feature.

### Discussion Starter Option #1:

#### Renew An Awareness about Your White Privilege (for white youth)

White people are being [challenged](#) to look at and uncover the many ways they benefit from white privilege. Use this checklist to help your white youth renew their commitment to increasing their awareness of their white privilege.

White Privilege Checklist <https://projecthumanities.asu.edu/content/white-privilege-checklist>

Pick 10-12 of the items from the checklist in this article and read off those items you’ve chosen to your youth. Have them first listen for which 1-2 items are ones that are true for them but they’ve never thought about before. Afterward, invite them into a discussion about what items they would add to the list.

#### Possible Discussion Questions:

- Which 1-2 items on the list are ones that are true for you but you’ve never thought about or noticed before?
- What items would you add to the list?

### Discussion Starter Option #2:

#### Trip to the Grocery Store - On using white privilege to confront racism

Watch this video of an experience of two sisters at a checkout line.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GTvU7uUgjUI>

While this video is aimed at those with white privilege, it serves well as a focal point for discussion by groups made up of both white and BIPOC youth.

#### Possible Discussion Questions:

- What *feelings* arose for you as you watched this video?
- What *thoughts* arose for you as you watched this video?

### Discussion Starter Option #3:

#### On renewing our commitment to staying engaged with current events related to racial justice.

**Watch this video:** Can Black Lives Matter & Law Enforcement See Eye To Eye? (15 min)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S6rDvbQ-mz4&list=PLBVNJJo7nhINSjBZdNezW15PzOTCc-10m9&index=13>

(See [How to play music or a video on Zoom](#))

The video is 15 minutes so you may want to pull out and show a smaller portion of it.

#### Possible Discussion Questions:

- What new insight did the video give you? What point or argument expanded your learning the most?
- Was there anything about the “other side’s” point of view that you agreed with or had sympathy with?

## IV. Express Yourself

### Connecting to Our Creativity & The Skills of the Expressive Arts

#### Find 'N Show - Share Your Connection to Dismantling White Supremacy.

What items keep the call of racial justice in front of you? Invite youth to show and share stories about clothing (T-shirts, pins, masks, etc.) and other accessories they have that voices their support for racial justice. Use this activity to lift up the importance of re-committing ourselves to weaving our support for racial justice into the fabric of our lives.

In order to not exclude or shame youth who don't have items to share, consider having the youth pull up these websites and identifying one of the items that resonates with them, something that captures the message they would want to "wear on their sleeves":

- <https://www.the-outrage.com/collections/black-lives-matter>
- <https://www.teepublic.com/stores/bipoc-artists>
- <https://www.etsy.com/market/bipoc>

## V. Fun & Games

### Connecting to Our Bodies & The Skill of Play

#### Who Am I? Race Awareness Game for iPhone and iPad (free)

<https://apps.apple.com/us/app/who-am-i-race-awareness-game/id372945923>

Review: <https://www.common sense media.org/app-reviews/who-am-i-race-awareness-game>

**Workaround:** Since not everyone has an iPad, share one iPad to the screen to play with everyone together.

#### Talking Points and Takeaways:

- Introduce the game by explaining that anti-racist leaders or experts say that a piece of anti-racism work involves making room for people to tell their own story about themselves. It's easy and human to stereotype people according to their racial and cultural identity. So, we all have to do the work of remembering each person is a unique individual in addition to the group they are a part of. This game is a great way to engage this idea experientially.
- It's a two-player game meant for a parent and child but we suggest adapting it for an online group meeting. The Chooser shows the iPad screen so the players see a set of faces. The Chooser selects a face. The other players, the Lookers, try to guess which face the first player chose. Players can test out their detective skills by asking questions about the physical appearance of the target face to eliminate the other choices. The Lookers discuss among themselves and try to reach consensus about which face was chosen. The Chooser can read more about the selected person. There are conversation tips between rounds.
- The important part of this game is to "act as a catalyst for meaningful discussions ... about race, ethnicity, and culture. It contains photographs and personal quotes from a wide selection of real people." - Common Sense Media review

#### Activity:

Play the Who Am I? Race Awareness Game

#### Chat about It Prompts/Questions:

There are conversation starters that are included when you pick a photograph.

**Lead With Strategy:** Invite group members with an iPad to share "Chooser" roles by sharing their iPad screen online while the other youth try to guess the person indicated.



# Session 2

## Let Wonder Wash Over You

### (First UU Source Focus)

- I. Getting Started
- II. Spiritual Practice
- III. Discussion Starters
- IV. Express Yourself
- V. Fun & Games

#### Theme Angle:

*Our faith reminds us that wonder is a central source of renewal, so much so that we've put it in the first of our UU sources: "Direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces which create and uphold life." So what's one of the ways our faith guides us into becoming a people of renewal? It tells us to "Let wonder wash over you!"*

## I. Getting Started

### Connecting to Our Community & The Skill of Personal Sharing

#### Leader Tip

You will be sharing videos and music through Zoom. Learn how to play music on Zoom: [How to play music and videos on Zoom](#), and how to play just music on Zoom [Soul Matters' How to play music PDF](#).

#### Centering or Chalice Lighting Quote

"The Universe said, 'Let me show your soul something beautiful.'"

- Aberjhani, Elemental: The Power of Illuminated Love

#### Check In Prompt

Name what piece of nature you think is most full of wonder, and why. (i.e. the stars, Grand Canyon, newborn kitten, whales talking to each other, etc.)

## II. Spiritual Practice

### Connecting to Our Soul & The Skill of Mindfulness

#### Waves of Light Meditation

Use the below videos to create a mindfulness moment that reflects on our connection to the wider universe.

#### Centering:

I invite you to move into our meditation position.

Sit comfortably in your chair or on the floor.

Put your hands on your lap or on your knees.

Close or focus your eyes in front of you.

Find your breath moving in your body by taking in one breath through your nose and then slowly breathing it out through your mouth.

#### Meditation Video Options:

Option #1: Waves of Light

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5FiNZvuOkzY>

Option #2: "We Are Star Dust" - Symphony of Science

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8g4d-rnhuSg>

Option #3: 'We Are All Connected'

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGK84Poeynk>

#### Reflection & Discussion Questions:

- Share times when they have gazed at the stars.
- Were you surprised by any thoughts during your meditation?

# III. Discussion Starters

## Connecting to Our Minds & The Skill of Reflection

### First Thoughts: Where Do You Find Wonder?

*Choose the question or two which you think will resonate with your group. Read them aloud and then invite the group members to share and discuss.*

- How is “summer renewal” different from “fall renewal” for you? How is the wonder of summer different from the wonder of fall?
- Do you think wonder can be found in city environments or is it mainly located “out in the wild” and “out in nature”?
- What is your personal experience of “the messages of the stars”? Some people say stargazing makes them feel small and insignificant. Others say it makes them feel like they are connected to something greater than themselves. Others say it makes them feel like “we can’t be the only thinking beings in the universe.” How about you?

### Engaging the Ideas of Others: Is There Life Elsewhere?

*One thing which opens us to wonder are the questions, like “Are we alone in the Universe?” This video clip includes believers and skeptics about that question. Have some fun watching the debate and figuring out which side you are on!*

#### **Video to discuss:**

Have Aliens Made Contact with Earth: Believers and Skeptics

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YXAbsnmh06E>

We recommend you only watch a shorter portion of the video: (min. 3:30 - 10:20)

#### **Discussion Questions:**

- What new idea did you learn?
- Are you a skeptic or believer?
- Are we alone in the universe?

## IV. Express Yourself

### Connecting to Our Creativity & The Skills of the Expressive Arts

People are Wonders too! .... So send a Message in a Star!

#### Talking Points and Takeaways:

- Sometimes we wonder at “big things,” like the Grand Canyon. But often what’s most amazing in life is how much people go out of their way to support us or be kind. Acts of care, friendship and love are some of the most wondrous and amazing things we experience. There’s a reason we say “You’re wonderful” when someone does something nice for us.
- So use this activity to say thanks to the wonderful people in our lives.
- Sometimes we forget that we are wonders. In that case, you can use this activity to write reminders to yourself about how much of a wonder you are.

#### Star Origami with a Message

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JugN18GDWFM>

#### Transition Tool: Play again while the group is folding.

Waves of Light <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5FiNZvuOkzY> (4 min.)

(See [How to play music or a video on Zoom](#))

#### Chat about It Prompts/Questions:

- Who in your life makes you feel wonderful?
- Who introduced you to an amazing thing?

#### Make a DIY Night Light Star Jar!

Bring some wonder of the sky inside your house by doing one of these awesome crafts:

DIY Night Light STAR JAR

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SlCmkrRRL4Y>

## V. Fun & Games

### Connecting to Our Bodies & The Skill of Play

#### Two Truths and a Lie from [Deep Fun](#)

<https://thesource4ym.com/two-truths-and-a-lie/>

*What “wonder-ful” truths can you discover about each other?*

Have each person in the group come up with two facts and one falsehood about themselves. Go around the circle and have each person present the three statements as if they are all true. Then have each member of the group guess which of the three statements is false.

Variation: Two Lies and a Truth.

# Session 3

## Repair and Renew Your Relationships

### (Yom Kippur Focus)

- I. Getting Started
- II. Spiritual Practice
- III. Discussion Starters
- IV. Express Yourself
- V. Fun & Games

***Theme Angle:** As a covenantal religion, our faith places relationships and our promises to each other at the center of our faith. Since we're human, we sometimes break those promises and hurt those relationships. This makes renewal and repair necessary and sacred work. So what's one of the ways our faith guides us into becoming a people of renewal? It tells us to "Get comfortable with saying you're sorry and beginning again!"*

## I. Getting Started

### Connecting to Our Community & The Skill of Personal Sharing

#### Leader Tip

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#### Centering or Chalice Lighting Quote

We become human when we break those promises, and yet somehow find ways to reconnect and begin again – when we repair the relationship because we know we need each other – even when we think the other isn't doing enough – even when our partner is annoying us, or isn't listening well, or isn't doing things the way we want them done – even then – when we realize right then, that we are still connected, and we can't give up – and so we return, and begin again – it is this beginning again that is what it means to be human. - Rev. Gretchen Haley

#### Check In Prompt

On a scale of 1-10, with #1 representing "I stink at it" and #10 representing "I'm fantastic at it," rate how good you are at saying "I'm sorry."

## II. Spiritual Practice

### Connecting to Our Soul & The Skill of Mindfulness

#### Meditations on Repair and Renewal

*Engage in this creative visualization which invites the youth to imagine repairing and renewing their relationships. Spend a couple more minutes in silence with the reflection question below. Afterward, take some group time to share what came up for everyone as they meditated on these words and this reflection question.*

#### **Centering:**

I invite you to move into our meditation position.

Sit comfortably in your chair or on the floor.

Put your hands on your lap or on your knees.

Focus your eyes in front of you.

Find your breath moving in your body by taking in one breath through your nose and then slowly breathing it out through your mouth.

#### **Meditation Suggested Script:**

Imagine the energy of holding back an apology, or an unresolved conflict, or an unrepaired relationship as a gooey gum which covers your heart. Or dust from under the bed, or dirt from a gutter. Your heart is heavy, swollen, and feels stale. Take a few breaths and feel that heaviness. [PAUSE]

Now imagine offering an apology. Take several breaths as you make this step towards repair. Feel the gooey gum separate from your heart, slowly. Does it cause you pain when it is separating? Is there a sound? [PAUSE]

Imagine a stream of fresh water which washes away the dust and dirt. Can you hear the stream of water? At first it simply swells with the water, making mud. Then it starts falling away, bit by bit, leaving a fresh piece of your heart showing each place it rinses. (PAUSE)

Now imagine your heart is getting cleaner and fresher. You can take a breath more easily. You feel your shoulders drop. You feel your tongue drop off of the roof of your mouth. You feel your jaw relax. [PAUSE]

Finally, you feel your heart glowing. There is a clean, fresh light which fills your whole body. Fill your lungs with deep breaths, expanding the clean, fresh light into every part of your whole body. Your body feels lighter and renewed. [PAUSE]

With the next breaths, send that clean, fresh light out into the world, inviting repair and renewal to all beings. [PAUSE]

Return to this place and this time, remembering the feeling of the clean, fresh light.

**Reflection Question:** How did this creative visualization feel to you? What relationship came to mind which needs repair and renewal to remove the goo off of your heart?

# III. Discussion Starters

## Connecting to Our Minds & The Skill of Reflection

### First Thoughts: Return and Repair

#### Talking Points and Takeaways:

- Re-read the quote: *What our faith asks of us, what our faith imagines for us, is that somehow, right at that moment when our hearts break, we will find our way to see through that heartbreak. We will stay put – not close off, not run away, not hurt back – but keep on being in relationship, doing what we can to repair the world and each other.* - Rev. Gretchen Haley
- The important part of repairing is that first step.

#### Discussion Prompt:

Identify a relationship of heartbreak in your life. Maybe it involves a friend or family member, maybe even someone who is no longer living. Maybe a neighbor. Maybe even an institution, like your church or our government. Share it and share ideas for how you might return and repair that relationship.

#### Alternative Prompts:

- Where have you withdrawn, been betrayed or broken something yourself?
- What work of return and repair will you do?

### Engaging the Ideas of Others:

*In this video about apologies and forgiveness the host outlines some steps towards a sincere apology. What do you think?*

#### Video to discuss:

How to Apologize: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NY1Lbf8HTFU>

#### Discussion Questions:

- Which step do you struggle with the most?
- Do you disagree with any of the steps she named?
- Have you ever refused an apology?
- Have you ever had an apology not accepted?

## IV. Express Yourself

### Connecting to Our Creativity & The Skills of the Expressive Arts

#### Online Acrostic Poem

Write down the letters in a word relating to this session, such as “REPAIR” or “RENEW.” Write the word vertically down the side of a piece of paper. Create a number of phrases about apologizing well starting with each letter, without using the original word or using a word that has been used in another example. For example...

- R - reap the rewards of apologizing
- E - emphasize elemental energy
- P - persuade you are genuine
- A - accept “I’m sorry.”
- I - interrupt disconnection
- R - remedy retchedness (ha, it really starts with w)

Share your poem with the group!



# V. Fun & Games

## Connecting to Our Bodies & The Skill of Play

*Deepen your understanding of renewal with these below activities.*

### Pepper and Soap Experiment

Invite everyone to set up the Pepper and Soap experiment for themselves. Go to your kitchen and bring back:

- A plate,
- A glass of water
- Pepper
- Dish soap

Here's a video which describes the science experiment:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ho0o7H6dXSU>

The symbolism of the experiment for Apologies and Forgiveness:

- The water is the symbol of the energy between you and someone else.
- The pepper is the junk which gets in between you.
- Apology is the soap, the act of saying "I'm sorry."

The moral: Saying "I'm sorry" doesn't make the pain go away (the pepper remains), but it opens up space for something to emerge (the apology opens up a space for new starts).

# Session 4

## Care for Who You Are (Inherent Worth Focus)

- I. Getting Started
- II. Spiritual Practice
- III. Discussion Starters
- IV. Express Yourself
- V. Fun and Games

### I. Getting Started

#### Connecting to Our Community & The Skill of Personal Sharing

**Leader Tip:** You will be sharing videos and music through Zoom. Learn how to play music on Zoom: [How to play music and videos on Zoom](#), and how to play just music on Zoom [Soul Matters' How to play music PDF](#).

#### Centering or Chalice Lighting Quote

“Taking care of yourself doesn't mean me first, it means me too.” - *L.R. Knost*

#### Check In Prompts

What's your favorite form of self-care?

### II. Spiritual Practice

#### Connecting to Our Soul & The Skill of Mindfulness

#### Commitments to Yourself

In her poem, [My Commitments to Myself](#), Laura Mancuso lists all the things she does for self-care and self-renewal. To read it is to be reminded of the many avenues available to us for personal rejuvenation. It's also a reminder that refreshing our spirits is not a one-time or singular thing. To feel grounded and full takes constant care through the use of numerous carefully chosen commitments.

Use this poem as a reflective meditation, by reading through it and asking the youth to use their intuition/inner voice to practice deep listening by identifying the one particular line from the poem that sticks out for them the most.

Then do another round by having a different person read it. Invite the youth to listen again for the one line that pops out to them.

Afterward invite the youth to share if the same line popped out for them each time. Either way, also invite them to share a bit about why they think their intuition/inner voice was directing them to pay attention to the lines that stuck out for them.

#### My Commitments to Myself by Laura Mancuso

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/meditation/my-commitments-myself>

## Mindful Moment Option #2: The Path to Your Inner Voice

### Centering:

I invite you to move into our meditation position.

Sit comfortably in your chair or on the floor.

Put your hands on your lap or on your knees.

Focus your eyes in front of you.

Find your breath moving in your body by taking in one breath through your nose and then slowly breathing it out through your mouth.

### Meditation Suggested Script:

We are each special and unique. We each have something special and unique that we love to do, to renew ourselves. Travel in your imagination with me to hear your inner voice. It helps if you close your eyes. Take another deep breath. In and out.

Imagine that you are in a forest and see a path. Are there stepping stones on the path? Is it a twisted path or a straight path? Does it go up a hill or down into a valley? Follow your path.

[Pause]

You walk on the path for a long time. It goes on and on and you begin to wonder if you are lost.

You look around to see anything. You see a guide. What does the guide look like? [pause]

The guide beckons to you to come a little bit closer. It points to a large tree with a hole among the roots. You bend down and look into the hole and see a treasure box. You reach in and bring the treasure box out. Spend a few moments gazing at the locked treasure box. [pause]

Your guide reaches in its pocket and pulls out a key. Your guide hands you the key. Somehow you know that this is the key to your own unique inner voice. The guide smiles and nods at the treasure box. Your guide then leaves you, so you can be alone for this moment. Say goodbye and thanks to your guide. [pause]

You insert the key into the lock and slowly open the treasure box. You bring it up to your ear. There is a voice inside, speaking softly but clearly. You listen. It says, "Love who you are." It whispers more about the things you love to do, that are special to you. Take a few moments and listen to the voice as it describes what brings you joy. [pause]

Now, whisper in your own voice, some of the things that you love to do.

When you are done listening and whispering, take an imaginary look around you. Are there other beings around you? Who has appeared as you listened to your inner voice? Who supports you? Imagine these beings all around you, smiling at you because you have listened to your inner voice. [pause]

Now that you have heard from your inner voice, lock the treasure box, and place it back among the roots. Whenever you need to find your inner voice, you can look here and listen again. Place the key near the box. Step back and return on your path. [pause]

When you have returned to this place and this time, open your eyes and join us, remembering your inner voice.

## III. Discussion Starters

### Connecting to Our Minds & The Skill of Reflection

#### First Thoughts:

Invite the group to find something to share with everyone that represents an aspect of their self-care. A bottle of nail polish for a quiet spa time? A basketball for some hoop time? A favorite book? A fishing pole?

#### Chat about It Prompts:

- Where did you get the idea for this self-care activity? Who taught you how to do it?
- When was the last time you used this self-care activity?

#### Engaging the Ideas of Others:

*In this excerpt from a 2014 newscast, the investigation centers on how social media has changed what is important to youth. The youth they interviewed cited “Fame” as today’s most important value. It used to be “being part of the crowd, or part of the community.” What do you think?*

#### Video to discuss:

How Social Media is Affecting Teens: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7QWoP6jG3k>

We suggest you only watch a portion of the video: (min :00 - 3:24)

#### Discussion Questions:

- What did you learn?
- Do you agree or disagree with what the video says about the impact of social media?
- What is an important value to you?

## IV. Express Yourself

### Connecting to Our Creativity & The Skills of the Expressive Arts

#### Fingerprint Art Doodle

Every person's fingerprint is unique to them. That's why it is used to unlock a Smartphone. Part of self-care is noticing and celebrating what makes you unique. To honor this, take a look at and have some fun with your own fingerprints.

We sometimes say that fingerprints are the only unique thing about us. But it's not the only thing that makes us unique. We all have special patterns and curves in our lives. Nobody throws the baseball the same. Sings the same. This is a part of our First Principle in Unitarian Universalism - the inherent worth and dignity of every person. So create a doodle with your fingerprint that signifies what's special and unique about you. Turn your fingerprint into a self-portrait or use a few of your fingerprints to create a picture of something you love to do. Here are some examples: [https://www.pinterest.com/connie\\_j\\_miller/how-to-draw/finger-print-drawings/](https://www.pinterest.com/connie_j_miller/how-to-draw/finger-print-drawings/)

#### Two ways to capture your fingerprint:

1. With Pencil lead: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZiUpaiuN8o>  
Supplies: 2B pencil, scissors, paper, clear tape
2. With an ink pad.

# V. Fun & Games

## Connecting to Our Bodies & The Skill of Play

### Cooking Together!

*Sometimes self-care is about not pressuring yourself to do things perfectly but working with whatever you've got and being ok with it. So to honor this truth about self-care try some cooking together.*

**Option #1:** Invite the group to share preparation of a dish for which ingredients are likely to already be at everyone's homes. What can they invent together, and then add one or two unique ingredients which make the dish unique to them. For example, flour, water, oil and salt make [tortillas](#) with butter on one, honey on another, and salsa on another version. Love your uniqueness!

**Option #2:** For many people, chocolate is about self-care, and a comfort food for many of us. So make chocolate mug cake (decide if you wish to let the group know ahead of time so they can procure all of the ingredients):

- 4 tbsp. all-purpose flour
- 2 tbsp. unsweetened cocoa powder
- 1/4 tsp. baking powder
- 2 tbsp. granulated sugar
- pinch of salt
- 5 tbsp. milk
- 2 tbsp. vegetable oil

<https://www.spicebangla.com/chocolate-mug-cake/>

# Off Road Excursions

## Things to Do Outside of Regular Sessions

### Schedule a Night of Stargazing (Socially Distant, of course!)

Experience some wonder as a group by first hosting an online Zoom to learn about some star constellations. Then head outside to the darkest place possible when the sun goes down and find those constellations in the sky. Consider using one of the cool stargazing apps out there to assist you!

15 Best Stargazing Apps

<https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/life/g26089673/best-stargazing-apps/>

### Lay Down Among the Wild Things...and Renew Your Senses (Socially Distant)

In his well-known and beloved poem, [The Peace of Wild Things](#), Wendell Berry speaks of lying down in the midst of nature and letting it renew him. You can read it as instructions for how to tap into nature's restorative power. Engage the exercise with all five of your senses. Simply lie down together, socially distanced, in a natural setting of your choosing and then, with attention and mindfulness, slowly ask these five questions:

1. What do I see?
2. What do I hear?
3. What do I smell?
4. What do I feel against my clothes and skin?
5. What can I taste? (A bit tricky but be creative.)

In each case, follow up each of the five questions with an additional one: "And what is that trying to say to me?" In other words, after you identify what is catching your eye, ask "how is this trying to speak to me?" After noticing what you smell, ask, "What message might this have for my soul?" Remember this is not so much about trying to create a long list and figure out how many things you can notice. Instead it's about trying to sort through the many things you see, smell, hear, touch and taste in order to find the *one thing* that really sticks out to your senses. And then discerning why it was that particular thing that grabbed you and what its deeper restorative message might be. Share this with the group.

### Secret Garden Gnomes

It's harvest season in many zones. Find out who needs help weeding and show up at 6 a.m. with a couple of other youth group members to socially distance weed the flower or vegetable bed of a church member who has been going through a hard time or needs a bit of help. Little red pointy hats help, just kidding. Or mow a lawn! Acts of kindness renew the recipients and the givers.

# Movies

## Watch a movie together online

- People who have Netflix can download an extension from Chrome, and then watch a movie all together (in different locations), putting comments on the side. Here's the link to learn more:

<https://www.netflixparty.com/?fbclid=IwAR23nxb4v3jUvSPxFXazaLDfYBO0MUq8SErXvD9dxMMaJz96VaBZL6SGRAA>

- Watch a Movie together on Zoom and use the chat box to share comments on the side.

## Movies on Renewal recommended by the Youth Packet Creative Crew

- [Secret of Roan Inish](#) - Irish folk tale about the renewal of wonder
- [Isle of Dogs](#) - renewal of worth and dignity when the sick dogs decide to save a boy.
- [Awakenings](#) - On renewing ourselves through our efforts to renew and heal others
- [Whose streets?](#) ® - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=upiJnjJSerw>
- [Arrival](#) - the wonder of alien life
- [Interstellar](#) - on the wonder of searching for homes other than earth in the universe



# More Inspiration

## Inspiration Facebook Page

Offer your youth and youth advisors spiritual nourishment and inspiration by encouraging them to join the Soul Matters Inspiration Facebook Page. Use the memes for your congregational FB page, as well: <https://www.facebook.com/soulmatterssharingcircle/>

## Soul Matters Music Playlists:

We create two different playlists on the monthly theme each month: one in Spotify and another in YouTube. The playlists are full of songs that your youth will connect with. Consider letting them know about the lists. Maybe even create your own list on the monthly theme that they can all contribute to and create together!

Click [here](#) for links to the [Spotify playlists](#) for each month.

Click [here](#) to check out the [YouTube playlists](#).

## Share Your Ideas for Future Monthly Packets!

If you come across an activity, reflection piece or meditation that would be great for any of our upcoming theme packets, send it our way at [soulmattersre@gmail.com](mailto:soulmattersre@gmail.com)

### 2020/2021 Themes:

October:	Deep Listening
November:	Healing
December:	Stillness
January:	Imagination
February:	Beloved Community
March:	Commitment
April:	Becoming
May:	Story
June:	Play

## **Packet Author**

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with the help of a wonderful circle of thought partners!***

A special thanks goes out to our Creative Crew: Ashley Egan and Ivy Breivogel

Thanks as well to the other [Soul Matters Team](#) members who contribute to the content and shape of these packets, especially Rev. Scott Tayler our Team Lead and Teresa Honey Youngblood our Family Ministry Coordinator.

### **Join the Crew!**

We would love one or two more Youth Leaders, Religious Educators or Youth Advisors to join our Creative Crew for this year. Contact Katie (soulmattersre@gmail.com) if you are interested. The role involves a once-a-month Zoom chat on the theme.



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Learn how to join at <https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/>