



Soul Matters

Living with Intention



RE Resources
Second to Fifth Grade

January 2022

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Welcome to Living with Intention

Welcome to the Soul Matters Multi-Platform Packet for Second through Fifth Grades for the month of January. This year our monthly themes invite us to think about not only what values our UU faith calls us to but also the actions and skills that *our times* require of us. Pandemic time, along with our racial, political and environmental challenges, exposes the need for humanity to change and adjust in key ways. So each month we will explore a different skill that we need to lean into so that we don't just return to normal after the pandemic is over, but actually bring about a "new normal."

This month we explore the ways in which our times call us to "Live with Intention." There are five ways we will explore the skills it takes to live with intention. Here they are:

Lesson A: It Takes Empathy - The activation of our intentions.

Lesson B: It Takes Passion- The driver of intention.

Lesson C: It Takes Persistence - The fuel of intention.

Lesson D: It Takes Accepting Mistakes - The impacts of intention.

Lesson E: It Takes Pausing - The replenishment and sorting of intention.

This month, I've included some origami in Lesson C: It Takes Persistence. I especially like the videos made by a [father and son duo](#) together. When I started as a religious educator, I was seduced by origami. Paper cranes were beautiful in the pictures! But the basic fact is that origami is HARD! Especially for children's fingers (and I dare say, my own fingers, too.) So, after several Sundays of the recycle bin full of crumpled wads and a few paper airplanes, I finally learned that it's frustrating for children to try to precisely fold paper for the origami paper cranes. So, I've steered away from the cranes, until the children are older, and I choose projects like an origami paper box. It's so practical, yet active and engaging enough for the children to want to try to finish the project. These projects pop up in the "kid culture" of school, things that the children teach each other for fun. That is just the reason why this origami is a good exercise for teaching persistence. The children really WANT (INTEND) to learn and finish the project! I have fond memories of watching children give up, crumple up their paper, and then with some words about patience and persistence, they try again, really concentrate, and come up with success, surrounded by a BIG SMILE!

That's my hope for all of you this month. May our exploration of intention not only bring you closer to your goals, but also closer to your smile!

Katie, on behalf of the [entire Soul Matters Team](#)
DRE for Soul Matters, soulmattersre@gmail.com

PS. If you would like to read or review our overall approach to the 21-22 RE Packets, check out our ["Welcome to Soul Matters RE" Google Doc](#).

Legend:

1. *Purple Font* = online adaptations and alternatives
2. Double asterisks ("**") = books recommended by the Widening the Circle Research Team

Calendar Connections

January 2022

Click on the name of each event for more information or inspiration.

Interfaith:

- [Twelfth Night](#) (Christian) - [Jan. 5](#)
- [Epiphany](#) (Christian) - Jan. 6
- [World Religion Day](#) (Baha'i) - Jan. 16, 2022 (more found [here](#) and [here](#))
- [Tu BiShevat](#) (Jewish) - Jan. 16 -17, 2022 (more [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#))

Unitarian Universalist:

- [Thirty Days of Love](#) - Side with Love Campaign - Jan.15 - Feb.14
- [Millard Fillmore's](#) Birthday - Jan. 7, 1800 (Unitarian President; on his contradictions [here](#) & [here](#))
- [Joseph Tuckerman's](#) Birthday - Jan. 18 (1778) (more [here](#))

National & Cultural:

- [New Year's Day](#) - Jan.1
- The Emancipation Proclamation issued by President Abraham Lincoln - Jan. 1 (1863)
- MLK, Jr. Day - Jan. 21 (connections [here](#) and [here](#))
- [Rowe vs. Wade](#) Anniversary - Jan. 22 (more [here](#))
- International Holocaust ([Shoah](#)) [Remembrance Day](#) - Jan. 27 (more [here](#) and [here](#))

For Fun and On the Fringe:

- [National Hug Day](#) - Jan.21
- [I'm Not Going To Take it Anymore](#) Day - Jan. 7th
- Birthday of [Thomas Merton](#) - Jan. 31 (1915) (more [here](#) and [here](#))
- [Belly Laugh Day](#) - Jan. 24 (more [here](#) and [here](#))

Lesson A: It Takes Empathy

The activation of intention

(Core Story: New Shoes)

Theme Angle

Our theme this month is Living with Intention. When it comes to intentionally going about social change, one of the key things needed is empathy. When we are able to empathize with and have a personal experience around a social inequality, it activates our intention and our desire to change things.

And a great way to get that kind of experience albeit second hand, is with a new spin on the old game of Monopoly. Yes, that's right, Monopoly. Offer it to the children or as a multigenerational event in a special version called [Intergroup Monopoly](#), as recommended by the Widening the Circle Research Team. The game was developed to clarify how inequality and privilege works. The creator has tweaked the classic game so that instead of having the players pursue privilege, it allows them to experience the impacts of unequal privilege.

Note: We suggest this lesson as a less formal session to be used on the first Sunday of New Year's. It can be offered to children alone, children and youth, or as a multigenerational activity. In addition, we have developed an additional game which we call "Unfair Candyland," aimed at younger children.

Light It!

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- *Katie's Words*

*We gather the warmth of love, the light of truth, and the energy of action into our hearts.
Back into the world of do and say,
Carry it forward into the dawning day.
Go Now in Peace, Amen.*

(Move your arms to express the actions: gather using a cupping motion from the flame of the chalice to your heart, spread that outward again.)

Introduce It!

(Wonder Box)

Get Ready to Play the Game

Preparation

Make sure each group playing Intergroup Monopoly/ Unfair Candyland has the game board, tokens and rules.

Reflection Object: some of the tokens from a Monopoly Game. (or if you have a younger group, from a Candyland game.)

Online Adaptation: Either Monopoly or Candyland could be played at home during a Zoom by the families. The reflection and debriefing then could be shared on the Zoom.

Suggested Script

“Happy New Year! One of the things that is a part of “holiday break” for many people is game playing. One of the things that we do for New Year’s is to make up a resolution. Let’s do both for our monthly theme of “Living with Intention.”

Here is a shoe, a train, and a dog. They are all tokens from a Monopoly game. What is your favorite token? Can you show us? Some of you might be playing Candyland and have different tokens to show us.

We are going to play a variation of Monopoly called Intergroup Monopoly. [and/or Candyland called “Unfair Candyland.”] There are special rules. At first, “players begin with unequal amounts of money and are given individualized rules that reflect differing degrees of privilege or disadvantage. For example, a privileged player might receive \$350 rather than the standard \$200 for passing Go, whereas a disadvantaged player might be permitted to move only half the amount rolled on each turn.” Notice that the rules are unfair? That is the point. Be prepared to find out just what it feels like to live in a society that creates and continues inequality.

If you are playing Candyland, it will be the same thing. The first part of the rules are unfair, just like our society has been unfair to people of color and other marginalized people. Stick with the game, even though it is unfair, and find out how it feels to live in an unfair world.

So today we’re going to explore how it feels to live with inequality and what intentions we discover in ourselves about working for fairness. Are you ready?! Let’s begin!”

Tell It and Talk About It!

(Story)

Suggested Introductory Words

“A great way to explore what it was like to live with inequality is by sharing this book **[hold it up]**. In this story, a girl is upset because at the time the book takes place, in the 1950’s, black children and adults were not allowed to try on shoes at many shoe stores. It’s a great reminder about what the inequality of segregation was like.”

New Shoes by Susan Lynn Meyer (Author), Eric Velasquez (Illustrator)

Book: [HERE](#)

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-G45QZmHxlg> (start at :46)

Reflection Prompts

- What was your favorite part of the book?
- If you couldn’t try on shoes, what might you have done?
- What did you think about the shoe store which the girls opened up?
- How have you come up with a creative solution to being treated unfairly?

Notes on the Book

A 2016 NAACP Image Award Nominee, and a Jane Addams Children's Book Award winner.

Online Permission Note

Holiday House Publishers has authorized its books for online use as long as you follow their specific use guidelines found [HERE](#). Just scroll down to the section titled “Holiday House”

Explore It!

(Group Activities and Experiential Learning)

Here are a variety of suggestions for digging deeper into the theme. Choose the one(s) just right for your group! In many cases, these will work as well online as in-person. We also offer an online adaptation or alternative and *highlight it in purple*.

Explore It with Intergroup Monopoly**

Practice empathy and activate intention with this version of Monopoly.

“All that's needed to play Intergroup Monopoly are a standard Monopoly game and a set of rule sheets for the players (see below for the rules I use). Intergroup Monopoly is played in much the same way as classic Monopoly, with two exceptions: (1) the rules differ from player to player, and (2) there are two phases of play rather than one.” <https://www.actionteaching.org/award/intergroup-monopoly>

Online Adaptation: Play as families on Zoom, then share the debriefing. The play will go faster than with normal Monopoly using the Intergroup Monopoly rules.

Notes on the Activity

**ARAOMC Context from the Widening the Circle Research Team

The WTC team chose this game because of what it teaches. The “pull yourselves up by the bootstraps” ideology is prevalent in our society because of White Supremacy Culture. This activity shows that historic differences in resource distribution continue to affect players even after the rules have been changed to be the same for everyone.

Discover an Intention

How did playing this game make you feel? Did you discover an intention you wish to pursue?

Explore It with Candyland

If your group is on the younger end in age, play this simple variation of Candyland. Or have both options going at once, so a group can choose.

Unfair Candyland - a Soul Matters version based on the concept of “Intergroup Monopoly.”

Visit the [Google Doc](#) for play and rules developed by Katie Covey using a regular Candyland board game.

Discover an Intention

Did playing this game help you discover something you intend to do?

Explore It with an Interview

Congregational Special Guest

Who in your congregation has known or experienced unfairness in housing, education or income? Or who in the congregation has experienced privilege in housing, education or income? After the group plays the game, invite them to share how they experienced inequality or privilege and what intention it has helped them discover.

Lesson B: It Takes Passion The Driver of Intention (Core Story: We are Water Protectors**)

Theme Angle

The theme of the month is Living with Intention. Living with intention requires passion. Indeed, the driver of intention is passion. Passion is the, as they say, the “fire in the belly” that animates our intentions. Passion can also be explained as “caring deeply.” For instance, in our faith, we ask, “What do you care most about?” So in this session, we explore how passion takes our inner steering wheel and drives us toward what is most important to us. This way our passions steer our values and our actions, not just social pressures and messages from society.

So when it comes to living with intention, our faith clearly asks us, “What has your heart?”

Light It!

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Introduce It!

(Wonder Box)

Steering toward What is Important

Reflection Object: A little car

Suggested Script

“Here is a little car. There must be a driver in here somewhere holding on to the steering wheel, driving it left and right.

Now pretend the car is our intention. That is the theme of the month, Living with Intention. Living with intention requires passion. Indeed, the driver of intention is passion. Passion can be explained as “caring deeply.” For instance, in our faith, we ask, “What do you care most about?”

So in this session, we explore how passion takes our inner steering wheel and drives us toward what is most important to us. This way our passions steer our values and our actions, not just social pressures and messages from society.

So when it comes to living with intention, our faith clearly asks us, “What has your heart?”

And on top of that, when we steer our values and our actions to what is most important, we really live by intention. We don’t just flop around and follow what everyone else says to do, we do what we know we **MUST** do, what **WE** really want to do. So today we’re going to explore a bunch of ways that passion drives intention! Are you ready?! Let’s begin!”

Special Guest Strategy

Who in your congregation has found their passion and is dramatically living it with intentionality? An artist, the minister, a musician, an international aid worker or Peace Corps volunteer? Invite them to share how their passion has shaped and driven their life.

Tell It and Talk About It!

(Story)

Suggested Introductory Words

“Today’s story is an example of the way passion, or caring deeply, can drive our intention to do amazing things. By caring deeply about water, rivers, and pollution, the Ojibway people intend to fight the “black snake” of pollution. Let’s listen to the story together!”

We are Water Protectors** by Carole Lindstrom (Author), Michaela Goade (Illustrator)

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CD8shbwrK40>

Book: [HERE](#)

Reflection Prompts

- What was your favorite part of the story?
- How did you feel when she said that water is alive?
- Has water ever felt alive to you?
- Would you take the Water Protector Pledge? Why?
- Is there a part of nature you care deeply about? Have passion for? For instance, birds or whales or oceans or rivers? What are some ways you can be a protector of that?

Notes on the Book

****ARAOMC Context from the Widening the Circle Research Team**

The WTC team chose this book because of how it shines light on a recent injustice forced upon Indigenous folks. The story illustrates how caring deeply, being passionate about something, drives the urge to live with intention.

Online Permission Note

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Explore It!

(Small Group Activities and Experiential Learning)

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Explore It with...

The Water Protector Pledge

If your group chooses to Live with Intention by taking the Water Protector Pledge, visit the [Water Protector Activity Kit](#) pages for a copy of the pledge, as well as a letter from the author, and other activities. How does caring passionately about protecting water drive the intention to help care for water resources?

An Intention Bracelet

Invite the children to make an easy “friendship” bracelet (see examples [HERE](#) and [HERE](#)) and rename it an “Intention” bracelet, (option: try adding one heart bead to the middle of the bracelet as you make it.) This will remind you of what you are passionate about and remind you to live your passion with intention. Maybe figure out a way to have the various beads represent the various parts of nature the kids want to protect.

A Steering Wheel Race

If passion is the driver of intention, passion needs a steering wheel, right? Here's a printable template for a steering wheel, some speed limit signs, etc. Play a game of running around “driving” at different speed limits. There are even speeding tickets. This nice outdoor activity pairs with drawing a racetrack on the sidewalk to follow. This could also be paired with a “[Red Light, Green Light Game.](#)”
<https://www.himama.com/daycare-activities/steering-wheel-race>

A Heart Drawing

Cut out hearts. Help the children fill in the words, “To this I give my heart” and then write or draw the important person, object, or value that they feel passionate about and want to be intentional about living it.

An Interview

Congregational Visitor (online or in person)

In the spirit of cultivating multigenerational relationships, continue the conversation with your special guest. Who in your congregation has found their passion and lived it with intention? An artist, the minister, a musician, an international aid worker or Peace Corps volunteer? Invite them to share how their passion has shaped their life.

Lesson C: It Takes Persistence The Fuel of Intention

(Core Story: Higgins; A Drop with a Dream)

Theme Angle

The theme this month is Living with Intention. Living with intention takes persistence and patience. It takes persistence and patience because living with intention is hard. Fulfilling our intentions often takes a long time. And what happens when we try to do something that is hard? When we try to play a musical instrument, or fold origami, or try to memorize a poem? We have to take baby steps! We have to remind ourselves not to give up. We have to remind ourselves that our goal can't be reached all at once. It needs to happen in tinier parts - baby steps!! And a long road only taking baby steps certainly requires persistence and patience!

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Introduce It (Wonder Box)

I Think I Can

Reflection Object: a toy train engine (or the book, *The Little Engine That Could*)

Suggested Script:

“Here is a toy train. Do you know the story of *The Little Engine that Could*? She puffs up the mountain, not sure that she can make it, pulling the train carrying all the toys and good food for the children on the other side of the mountain. And what does she say, as she tries and tries? “I think I can. I think I can. I think I can.” That is called persistence. She kept on trying and trying.

The theme this month is Living with Intention. Living with intention takes persistence and patience. It takes persistence and patience because living with intention is hard. Fulfilling our intentions often takes a long time. And what happens when we try to do something that is hard? When we try to play a musical instrument, or fold origami, or try to memorize a poem? We have to remind ourselves not to give up. We have to remind ourselves that our goal can't be reached all at once. It needs to happen in tinier parts – baby steps!! And a long road only taking baby steps certainly requires persistence and patience!

So today we're going to explore what happens when we stay persistent while trying to live by our intention. Are you ready?! Let's begin!”

Tell It and Talk About It

Our Story: Higgins, a Drop with a Dream

Suggested Introductory Words

“Here’s a story that tells us that It takes persistence and patience to live by our intentions. Here we go.”

Higgins, A Drop with a Dream by Rev. Christopher Buice

Story Online in Worship Web: <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/higgins>

Video by Halcyon Domanski: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urv7D3cwmmM>

Reflection Prompts

- What part of the story do you remember the most?
- What did you like about the story?
- Have you ever felt lonely like Higgins did? Like you needed a helper, but no one came forward to support you?
- Was there a time when you wanted to change or achieve something but couldn’t do it on your own?
- Have you ever helped someone achieve their dream?
- What do you think this story teaches us?
- Have you ever kept on trying and trying until something really happened?

Online Permission Note: Worship Web material has been authorized for online use. See “[Permission Source](#).” Permission granted for the video from Halcyon Domanski, Director of Faith Development, Each Shore UU Church, Kirkland, OH.

Explore It

(Small Group Activities and Experiential Learning)

Here are a variety of suggestions for digging deeper into the theme. Choose the one(s) just right for your group! In many cases, these will work as well online as in-person. When an activity doesn't work for both in person and online, we offer an online adaptation or alternative and *highlight it in purple*.

Living with intention takes persistence and patience. Experience the feeling of frustration and how one has to keep on trying with these activities. While the children try these activities, here are some phrases which help encourage persistence:

"Look at all of your hard work."

"Good for you, you didn't give up."

"The more you practice, the better you get."

"You did that even though it wasn't easy or fun."

"That was hard, but look how easy you made it by trying." - from [6 Ways to Teach Kids Persistence](#)

Explore It with...

Origami

Origami is hard! It takes persistence and patience. Invite the children to try making one of these folded paper pieces. Reinforce that it is hard, and they have to keep trying.

Ninja Star: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gioWqu5sBSs&t=0s>

Origami Ball (or balloon - you blow it up!):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ijuBZzl8mA>

Origami Box with Lid: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SjPj9wWkzUw>

Mini-Origami Envelope:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8ERT6LXSQVI>

Outside Games

What outside games do you or your families have? Corn Hole, Croquet, Boca Ball? Play the game outside and note how it takes perseverance to master the technique.

Minute to Win It "Defy Gravity"

Each player has to try to keep 3 balloons in the air for a minute.

An Obstacle Course

Create an indoor or outdoor obstacle course. Balance on a 2" x 4" board, crawl under a tunnel of chairs, swing from a rope, carry buckets of water, hop across stepping stones, etc. Encourage persistence.

An Interview

Who in your congregation has a story about a time when they had to keep on trying in order to live with an intention? Was it someone who tried to write a book and kept getting rejected? Someone who was a lawyer but found out they really wanted to be a chef? Invite them to share how hard it was and how they kept their intention in front of them.

Lesson D: It Takes Accepting Mistakes Noticing the Impacts of Our Intention

(Core Story: Beautiful Oops)

Theme Angle

The theme this month is Living with Intention. It takes accepting mistakes to live with intention because mistakes are part of living. We need to acknowledge that good intentions can sometimes cause harm. We need to know how to accept that we have caused harm without defensiveness. We can hope that when we make a mistake, we can apologize sincerely, and hope that we learn from our mistake. Or to put it another way, we also have to be intentional about fixing our mistakes! We can all trust that the beauty of wholeness will be the gift of learning from our mistakes.

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Introduce It!

(Wonder Box)

Good Intentions can Cause Harm

Reflection Object: wadded up newspaper and a trash bin

Suggested Script

“Here is a wadded-up newspaper. I can play a game of trying to sink the wadded newspaper into a trash bin. Some of the time I make it. Some of the time I make a mistake in my aim and miss. Our theme this month is Living with Intention. My intention is to make the basket. But the impact is a miss. Not such a big deal with a wadded piece of newspaper. BUT...

Imagine this wadded newspaper is an arrow. It is my intention to hit the target. But here’s the thing... There are people on either side of my target. If I miss, I will hit them and hurt them. I certainly didn’t mean to do that but sometimes our good intentions have hurtful impacts.

Have you ever heard the phrase, “It’s the thought that counts?” But when we think about it, if your actions accidentally hurt someone, telling them “my thoughts were good” probably won’t help them feel better. Would it make you feel better? No. More is required. We learn this more and more as we get older. We might think we are doing a nice thing, but we find out that someone or something was hurt by our intention.

Here are some examples of good intentions causing harm:

“...some famous, kindly billionaire who wants us all to have sports cars got a law passed declaring if you are driving a car it must be a Ferrari. ...it’s a great idea. However, ... understand what that would mean — walking a lot more! If the only cars you can drive are Ferraris, then most people won’t be able to afford to drive at all.”

<https://www.learnliberty.org/blog/the-real-effects-of-good-intentions/>

“In the 1970's, catfish farmers introduced Asian Carp into their fisheries with the good intention of keeping the water clear of plankton and algae, allowing for healthier catfish. The voracious and aggressive Asian Carp, which can reach over a hundred pounds, fly through the air, injuring boaters, and decimate native fish species. It has now overtaken the Mississippi and Ohio Rivers and threaten to do the same to the Great Lakes.”

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/resilience-bullying/2016/05/16/baby-bison-dies-after-yellowstone-tourists-put-it-in-their-car-because-it-looked-cold/>

“... when two tourists saw a baby bison [in Yellowstone Park], they decided it looked cold and needed to be rescued. So they loaded it in the trunk of their car and drove it to a ranger station...On Monday, the park revealed that it was also deadly — for the bison. The newborn calf had to be euthanized, the park said in a statement, because its mother had rejected it as a result of the “interference by people.”

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/animalia/wp/2016/05/16/baby-bison-dies-after-yellowstone-tourists-put-it-in-their-car-because-it-looked-cold/>

Even though we had good intentions, if we cause harm, we need to apologize. We need to apologize without being defensive or trying to prove we had good intentions. Instead we should acknowledge that we caused someone harm and made a mistake. Making mistakes happens. The important thing is to learn from our mistakes and try to do better next time. We can hope that the beauty of wholeness will be the gift of learning.

So, let’s explore living with intention. It takes accepting mistakes. Are you ready?! Let’s begin!”

Tell It and Talk About It!

Our Story: Beautiful Oops

Suggested Introductory Words

“Here’s a story about making mistakes. If we learn from our mistakes, we can sometimes make something beautiful instead. Here we go.”

Beautiful Oops by Barney Salzberg.

Even though this book is for young children, all ages have learned from it.

Video with Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2fZjMYdQjGM>

Book: <https://www.amazon.com/Beautiful-Oops-Barney-Saltzberg/dp/076115728X>

Reflection Prompts

- What part of the story do you remember the most?
- What did you like about the story?
- What didn’t you like about the story?
- What do you think this story teaches us?
- Have you ever made a mistake but were able to learn from it or even make something more beautiful?

Online Permission Note: *Workman Books has not publicly shared direction about online use, so you will need to make your own judgement call about use of this story. For help thinking through that see our Soul Matters document: [Copyright Guidance for Online Story Reading](#).*

Explore It!

(Small Group Activities and Experiential Learning)

Here are a variety of suggestions for digging deeper into the theme. Choose the one(s) just right for your group! In many cases, these will work as well online as in-person. When a more involved online adaptation or alternative is needed, [we highlight this in purple](#).

Explore It with...

Games

Horrible; Beautiful Game

From Tapestry of Faith, Love Will Guide Us, We are Loved, Flaws and All

<https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveguide/session5/168606.shtml>

Explore creating horrible things then beautiful things.

Over Under Intention Game

Over, under, over, under... just like intentions, sometimes we make it, sometimes we don't, we exceed our intentions, or we miss the mark.

Be the fastest team to weave the ball over and under each person.

Needed: two items to pass over and under, representing intentions - two stars, two balls, two balloons.

1. Split everyone into two equal teams. Have both teams line up in parallel lines. Hand the item to the first person in line.
2. Everyone in line needs to be facing the front. When you say "go", the first person of both lines needs to pass the item over their head to the person behind them, while shouting "Over!"
3. The second person in line must pass the item between their legs to the third person behind them while shouting "Under!"
4. The third person passes the item over their head to the next person while shouting "Over!", and so forth in the same "over-under" pattern.
5. At the very end of the line, the last person has to pass it forward in the same pattern as before. The first team that passes the ball back to the first person wins the game.

Variation: the last person has to switch the pattern to the opposite way, i.e. over, under becomes under, over.

A Dance Video

This group of children sings about making mistakes to the tune of "Shake It Off." Join in and dance!

We Gonna Make Mistakes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E4-Hve9RKtg>

A Mistakes Ritual

What do you do when you make mistakes and want to make up? Many faiths have a ritual. UU's don't - YET. Create one because we all make mistakes and need a way to return to our intentions. What can the group create? Use these steps as a general guideline and invite the group to come up with their own ritual.

A mistake hurts and reminds us we are failing. How do we return to our intentions?

- Opening words. Tell the story about the mistake.
- Meditation. Imagine what it would be like if it got better.
- Action Plan. Make a plan. Do something to help make it better.
- Express Gratitude. Song, poem, art. Give thanks and gratitude for what you do have.
- Music. Set aside anger to be free from its poison.
- Celebrate a return to Intention. Permission to heal.

A Path of Intention

Use permanent markers to write the following words on smooth rocks.

Decorate the stones with pictures as well as write the words from Samuel Beckett's *Worstward Ho* - "Ever tried. Ever failed. No matter. Try Again. Fail again. Fail better."

Go outside and create a path outlined with the inscribed rocks. Make a path to remind congregants young and old to keep trying to fulfill their intentions. Invite people to walk the Path of Intention.

Lesson E: It Takes Pausing The Replenishment and Sorting of Our Intentions

(Core Story: The Cricket and the Coins)

Theme Angle

Our theme this month is Living with Intention. To live with intention takes pausing so we can replenish and sort out what is important from what is not-so-important. We can think of it as dropping anchor, to use a sailing metaphor. Sometimes we have to pause and take a minute to rest and also make sure we are going the right way! Without pause, We'll never have the energy to fulfill our intentions and we may even end up way off course!

Light It!

We know that everyone approaches chalice lighting differently. Some use the same chalice lighting words for the entire month, while others pick a new one each week and tailor it to that week's particular theme connection. So instead of offering specific chalice lightings for you to use, we offer four "places" for you to find the chalice lighting that fits your approach:

- *Worship Web:* <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/chalice-lighting>
- [Tapestry of Faith and other common Chalice Lightings for Children](#)
- *Our monthly Soul Matters worship packets*
- *Your own congregation's special chalice lighting words*

Extinguish It!

Signal the end of "sacred time" or "Chalice time" with a short ritual for extinguishing the chalice. It might be just after any of the below sections or at the end of the session. Use a [candle snuffer](#) if you use real candles for dramatic effect, or just blow it out. Here are some resources for you to find the chalice extinguishing words that fits your approach:

- *UUA:* <https://www.uua.org/genre/chalice-extinguishing>
- *Worship Web:* <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/closing/6049.shtml>
- *Katie's Words*

*We gather the warmth of love, the light of truth, and the energy of action into our hearts
Back into the world of do and say
Carry it forward into the dawning day.
Go Now in Peace, Amen.*

(Move your arms to express the actions: gather using a cupping motion from the flame of the chalice to your heart, spread that outward again.)

Introduce It!

(Wonder Box)

Dropping Anchor

Reflection Object: an anchor, anchor jewelry, [anchor picture](#) or [anchor drawing](#)

Suggested Script

“Here is an anchor. An anchor is a heavy device that is attached to a boat by a rope or chain. The anchor is thrown into the water. It sinks and grabs the bottom of the sea to hold the boat in place instead of sailing fast on its way.

When we want to live by our intentions, we can sometimes think that it’s best to rush toward our goal as fast as we can. But the problem with that is we end up pooped out and sometimes we discover that we actually took the wrong path and are now pretty lost.

This is where pausing and “dropping anchor” helps. Taking a moment of pause lets us rest and regain our energy. It also gives us a moment to double check that we are going the right way. It allows us to ask, “Is this what I really want to be doing?” “Is this REALLY where I want to go?”

Think of our intention as an anchor that helps us stay connected to what is important. We may be blown about by wind or rain, but the anchor holds us. Sometimes we need to drop anchor. We need to pause and hold ourselves in place to pay attention to what is important. One example of how we can lose our anchor might be playing baseball when what you really want to be doing is playing tennis. Or coloring your hair when you really want to be braiding it. Or going shopping with the gang when you would rather be creative writing.

So today, we’re going to explore how pausing, dropping anchor helps us remember what is important. Are you ready?! Let’s begin!”

Tell It and Talk About It!

Our Story: The Cricket and the Coins

Suggested Introductory Words

“Here’s a video about how two cousins, one from the city and one from the country, reflect about what you hear when you pause and listen to the important things around you. As we view the video, think about what things you hear and what things you listen to. Here we go.”

Lea’s Story: The Cricket and the Coins

Video and Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nz2Rzzt18p4>

Reflection Prompts

- What part of the video will you remember most?
- How did you feel when the City Slicker cousin dropped the coins, and everyone stopped?
- What have you heard when you listen?
- How would you become more intentional about listening?
- What would you do if someone asked you what the sound is of clouds floating by?
- How did Lea’s song make you decide to be intentional about pausing and listening?

More about our video story and song project with Lea Morris...

The Soul Matters Team is thrilled about this year’s creative collaboration with Lea Morris. Each month Lea tells one of our selected & theme-based wisdom tales and then shares a reflection & song inspired by that story. It’s a beautiful blending of her wonderful story-telling skills, luminous songwriting and joy-filled singing.

As with all ten of the videos Lea is creating, the purchase price per video is \$20.

With your purchase comes the following usage rights:

- *Playing the video in online and in-person worship services (including recorded services)*
- *Playing the video in online and in-person children’s religious education programs/presentations (including ones that are recorded and posted online)*
- *Sending out a link to the video to parents so they can watch it with their children at home as part of their family spiritual life activities*

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Explore It!

(Small Group Activities and Experiential Learning)

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Explore It with...

A Meditation

Take Five Breathing to Return to Intention

http://www.teachpeaceofmind.com/site/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/POM_lesson6.pdf

Take Five means to take a break—usually it means a five-minute break. We are going to use Take Five in a different way. We can use Take Five as a way to return to Intention. As you breathe, look inside yourself and find out what your inner voice is telling you is important.

“Hold up your hand like you are going to give someone a high five with your palm facing out and your fingers spread wide. Now take the index finger of your other hand and trace the outline of your hand. What does it feel like when your finger runs between your fingers? Maybe it’s a little tickly? We’re going to do this again, but this time we are going to breathe in when we are tracing up and breathe out when we are tracing down. Starting with your index finger down by your wrist on the outside of your thumb as you trace up your thumb, slowly breathe in, and as you trace down the inside of your thumb slowly breathe out. Repeat this motion with all of your fingers until you are back down at your wrist on the outside of your pinky finger. At this point you will have taken five deep breaths. Take Five is a great way to help you calm down any time you ... just need a break. See if you can try it a few times this week.”

A Mandala

Buddhist Monks pause and meditate by making a special sand design called a Mandala. This one took 6 days of concentration. Watch this time lapse video of the making of a Mandala:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=ga5s_qYgJS8

Make Your Own Mandala and Take a Pause

Below are a few different approaches to making mandalas. As you create your mandala, enjoy the pause from busy things and see if reflections and thoughts from your inner voice arise:

Outside! Two guides to making nature mandalas. Invites a wonderful connection to nature and the UU and Buddhist idea that we are connected to nature:

<https://www.playfullearning.net/resource/making-mandala-art-with-kids/>

<https://littlepinelearners.com/2018/06/how-to-make-nature-mandalas-with-kids/>

Coloring Mandalas! Downloadable mandala templates (To make the process even easier):

<https://www.centrum-mandala.cz/en/mandalas-children>

A Labyrinth

A Maze Option

[A Caution Tape Maze, Part I](#) (turn this idea into a version of a Labyrinth?)

[Caution Tape Maze Part II](#)

Paper Finger Labyrinth Designs to Download

<https://www.relax4life.com/download-paper-finger-labyrinths/>

<https://labyrinthociety.org/download-a-labyrinth>

Other Ideas for Kids

<https://labyrinthociety.org/activities-for-kids>

A Sorting Time

By pausing and dropping anchor we find out what is important. Play some meditative music and invite the children to sort through a game or supply closet or bins. Test and discard “dead” markers. Recycle old papers. Donate unused games and puzzles or throw away broken ones. Another place for sorting is the nursery/preschool room. Use this pause to sort through what is important to keep and what is just clutter.

Online Adaptation: Invite the children to sort through their clothes and/or games at home and share their decisions about what is important and what is clutter, together on screen.

Lego Sorting at Home

Spend some time on screen together sorting LEGOs (or other manipulative) while at home. When do you take time to find and sort all the sizes and shapes? Try this meditative sorting together, using cups, plastic bags, or other holder to collect the sizes.

Children’s Chapel & Time for All Ages Suggestions

Below is a list of picture books, tellable wisdom tales and activity based “message moments” to support your efforts beyond RE classes and groups, such as children’s chapel or Multigenerational times for all ages.

Knowing that some congregations will want to draw from the stories in the sessions above to ensure continuity between worship and RE classes, we first list this packet’s stories to make them all available in one glance.

We also know that some congregations like to have stories in children’s chapel and multigenerational worship that complement but are different from those shared in RE classes. So we’ve also listed some suggestions not found in the sessions above. We hope both lists support whichever approach you use!

From This RE Packet

New Shoes by Susan Lynn Meyer (Author), Eric Velasquez (Illustrator)

Book: [HERE](#)

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-G45QZmHxlg> (start at :46)

Online Permission Note: *Holiday House Publishers has authorized its books for online use as long as you follow their specific use guidelines found [HERE](#). Just scroll down to the section titled “Holiday House”*

We are Water Protectors by Carole Lindstrom (Author), Michaela Goade (Illustrator)**

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CD8shbwrK40>

Book: [HERE](#)

Online Permission Note: *MacMillan Book Publishers, which owns Roaring Brook Press, has authorized its books for online use as long as you follow their specific use guidelines found [HERE](#). Just scroll down to the section titled “MacMillan Books.”*

Higgins, A Drop with a Dream by Rev. Christopher Buice

Video by Halcyon Domanski: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=urv7D3cwmmM>

Story Online in Worship Web: <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/reading/higgins>

Online Permission Note: *Worship Web material has been authorized for online use. See “[Permission Source](#).” Video shared with permission from Halcyon Domanski, Director of Faith Development, Each Shore UU Church.*

Beautiful Oops by Barney Saltzberg.

Video with Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2fZjMYdQjGM>

Book: <https://www.amazon.com/Beautiful-Oops-Barney-Saltzberg/dp/076115728X>

Online Permission Note: *Workman Books has not publicly shared direction about online use, so you will need to make your own judgement call about use of this story. For help thinking through that see our Soul Matters document: [Copyright Guidance for Online Story Reading](#).*

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Additional Wisdom Tales & Message Moments

[The Wise Teacher's Test](#) as told in *Tapestry of Faith, Moral Tales*

"No matter what we do, we always have a part of ourselves that is quietly watching, and that knows right from wrong and can guide us if we listen [and pause.]"

Online Permission Note: *Tapestry of Faith* material has been authorized for online use. See <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/downloading>

[Zusya, Why Were You Not More Like Zusya?](#) told by Martin Buber

To live with intention takes finding our inner passion and voice.

Online Permission Note: Online permission could not be found.

[Learning By Heart Sophia Lyons Fahs](#) as told in *Tapestry of Faith, Faithful Journeys*

It takes persistence to live with intention.

Online Permission Note: *Tapestry of Faith* material has been authorized for online use. See <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/downloading>

[The Fisherman and the Businessman](#) as told on Paul Coelho's blog

When living with intention, be clear about your passion.

Online Permission Note: *There are numerous sources for the parable; choose your favorite version or create a version of your own! Since the story itself is in the public domain, you are free to use and alter it. But be sure to credit a particular source if you use it verbatim or heavily draw on it.*

A Wisdom Story NOT TO USE

[Which Wolf do you Feed](#) (link is to an opinion piece on problems with this story as it is often told, as Native American tale when it is probably a Christian tale)

Message Moment

Song for All Ages *STLT #28 View the Starry Realms*

Below is the story of the intention behind View the Starry Realms written in Dachau by Norbert Čapek. Chosen to honor International Holocaust Remembrance Day, Jan. 27. Adapted with permission from a [sermon by Rev. Patty Willis](#), South Valley UU Society, Cottonwood Heights, UT

Norbert Čapek (pronounced Chapek) composed this hymn in the Dachau concentration camp during WWII, just before he was executed. He was a Czech Unitarian minister.

Čapek's path of intention was in no way linear. In a roundabout way it took him to the United States on the brink of WWI where he encountered many hardships including the death of his wife and mother of their eight children. During his years in America, he remarried a Czech expatriate named Mája Oktavec. He had been a Catholic and a Baptist. But his intention was to celebrate diversity. He found the Unitarians. He still felt attracted to the Baptists and felt that the Unitarians lacked missionary zeal. When his children, however, began attending Unitarian Sunday School and loved it—he and his wife began attending too and he left the Baptists for good. Finally, in 1921, he received a grant from the American Unitarian Association to begin a congregation in Prague...

While fascism was gaining a stronghold in many nearby countries, Norbert Čapek saw a vision of a community that could not be more different. Instead of valuing homogeneity and exterminating what was “different,” Čapek saw the spring fields of wild flowers as his image of beloved community. While the Third Reich wanted well-ordered rows of perfectly clipped hedges, Čapek saw heaven in the mountain meadows covered in all kinds of flowers. He started our tradition of a Flower Communion. As the congregation grew, fascism was on the rise all around them and in March of 1939, Hitler declared Czechoslovakia part of the Third Reich.

He could have escaped.

In 1939, the AUA offered Norbert a position of minister-at-large for the Unitarian fellowship in the United States. Norbert replied that he did not want to desert his people, and that his intention was to remain. His wife left to continue work in the United States.

Finally, in the spring of 1941 Norbert declared, “I can bear it no longer! I must speak the truth and not be a coward!” He issued his forthright challenge to the Nazis by using his Sunday morning sermon to contradict a speech of Hitler's.

Five days later the Gestapo came to his home, charged him with listening to a foreign broadcast and sent him to prison. At the same time a high-ranking Nazi official, the Butcher of Prague was assassinated by the Czech underground. In retaliation, entire villages were decimated and people who might not have been killed were sent to the gas chamber. Norbert Čapek was sent to Dachau. Norbert was sent to Dachau in retaliation. On his papers were the fatal instructions: “return unwanted.”

In prison, Norbert kept his fellow inmates spirits up with humor, caring and cheerfulness. But, as he was now over 70 years old, he was quickly transported with other older prisoners to that part of the camp where torturous experiments were being conducted. After four months in Dachau, he died in October 1942.

We remember him for International Holocaust Day. His life still lives on in our denomination through the Flower Communion and in the words (and sometimes music) of three songs in our hymnbook. One on page 28: View the starry realm—that he wrote while he was in Dachau concentration camp.

Norbert Čapek's life embodied intention. He set his intention by listening to his innermost values and went against his family's religious traditions. He refused to change his intention even in the face of danger. Throughout his life, he urged people to see the world in a larger context. In his song, "View the Starry Realm", he finds hope and offers his intention to the starry skies and a belief in a God as large as the universe:

Great you are, beyond conception, God of gods and God of stars. My soul soars with your perception, I escape from prison bars. You, the One within all forming in my heart and mind and breath. You, my guide through hate's fierce storming, courage in both life and death. Life is yours, in you I grow tall, seed will come to fruit I know. Trust that after winter's snowfall walls will melt, Truth will flow, walls will melt and Truth will flow.

Opportunities for Leader Support

Come share together

Online Zoom Labs, Join Us!

Zoom Information:

All Labs take place on Zoom at <https://zoom.us/j/5857099120>

Audio only: Dial: +1 408 638 0968 or +1 646 558 8656 Meeting ID: 585 709 9120

Password: 333

RE Leader Labs - Katie's Overview and Group Sharing!

In our leader labs, Katie gives an overview of the packet for the next month's theme, and then RE Leaders share challenges, opportunities and take-aways. These meetings are recorded and posted on the [Soul Matters YouTube Channel](#).

- **Wed. Dec. 8, 2021, 1 p.m. ET for January's theme of Living with Intention**
- **Wed. Jan. 12, 2022, 1 p.m. ET for February's theme of Widening the Circle**

Brainstorming Labs

In our brainstorming labs, RE Leaders support Katie by sharing ideas for upcoming packets. Attendees like the way it gives them ideas in advance. The packets are always stronger when our sharing circle members pitch in their creativity!

Meeting time: *First Wednesday of the Month at 1 pm ET. Brainstorm on the upcoming theme 2 months away.*

- **Wed, Dec. 1, 2021, 1 p.m. ET Mar. theme of Renewing Faith**
- **Wed. Jan. 5, 2022, 1 p.m. ET April theme of Awakening**

Other Resources and Sources of Support

RE Leader Facebook Page

Don't forget about our RE Leader Support Facebook page. Here is where our colleagues post bulletin board pictures, share books, and ideas. It's a great ongoing source of support. Your colleagues are available to support you at the click of a button and with the ease of a post:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/545202255591601/>

Inspiration Facebook Page

Offer your teachers and parents 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. Music connects us to the themes in a way like nothing else.

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

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

“On the Road Together” - Soul Matters Senior High Youth Packet

A monthly packet for High School Youth Groups! Here's the link to the [Soul Matters Youth Packet](#) page on our website.

Sessions with resources for Check In, Spiritual Practice, Discussion Starters, Expressing Yourself with the Arts, Fun and Games, and Off-Road Excursions.

Soulful Home Family Guides

Invite your parents to explore the themes at home with their family by subscribing to our monthly parent guides, **Soulful Home**. Here's the link to the Soulful Home page on our website:

<https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/soulful-home.html>.

There are three types of subscriptions: congregational, family and gift subscriptions. Check them all out!

Soul Matters RE Packet Author & Support Team

Packet Author: Katie Covey, Soul Matters Director of Religious Education

Special thanks to all the Soul Matters Religious Educators who send in suggestions for our monthly packets and participate in our monthly packet brainstorming calls.

Thanks also to the other [Soul Matters Team](#) members who contribute to the content and shape of these packets:

Rev. Michelle Collins, Soul Matters Small Group & Special Projects Researcher

Rev. Scott Tayler, Soul Matters Team Lead



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Packets are for use only by member congregations of the Soul Matters Sharing Circle.

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