

Soul Matters Lesson 4:

Love Who You Are

(Inherent Worth Focus)

Theme Angle:

Our faith reminds us that we renew ourselves by being true to ourselves. This is captured most directly in our celebration of the “worth and dignity of every person.” It’s also captured in the words of the Joseph Campbell quote so many UU’s love to quote: “Follow your bliss.” So what’s one of the ways our faith guides us into becoming a people of renewal? It tells us, “Love who you are!”

Introduce It

(Wonder Box / Object Lesson)

Fingerprints

Reflection Object: a fingerprint

There are so many things that make us unique. Today, we pay attention to our fingerprints.

I’ve invited ___ to be our guest leader today to show us something special. [Invite the showing of the fingerprint.]

Every person’s fingerprint is unique to them. That’s why it is used to unlock a Smart phone. [Can the family of the co-leader demonstrate this?]

Take a look at your own fingerprints. Can you see the patterns?

“...Fingerprints are made of an arrangement of ridges, called **friction ridges**... You leave fingerprints on glasses, tables and just about anything else you touch...

All of the ridges of fingerprints form patterns called loops, whorls or arches:

- **Loops** begin on one side of the finger, curve around or upward, and exit the other side...
- **Whorls** form a circular or spiral pattern.
- **Arches** slope upward and then down, like very narrow mountains.” – from <https://science.howstuffworks.com/fingerprinting1.htm#:~:text=Fingerprints%20are%20the%20tiny%20ridges,developing%20fingers%20in%20the%20womb.&text=Fingerprints%20are%20made%20of%20an,sweat%20glands%20under%20the%20skin>.

There are other ways that you are unique in addition to your fingerprint. You love certain things which are unique to you, such as I love to canoe [or whatever]. Not everyone has to love canoeing. I feel back in balance after I go canoeing. It renews me. I wonder what special things you love to do to be happy. It doesn’t have to be like anyone else, just like a fingerprint. When you do these things you feel renewed and happy, too. We say that fingerprints are the only unique things about us. But its 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.

Lead With Suggestion: Invite a child ahead of time to be your guest leader. Work with their parents to have them find an ink pad and make a fingerprint on a piece of paper. Then for your object lesson have that child show (or pull out of a wonder box) the picture of their fingerprint.

Alternative way to capture your fingerprint:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZiUpaiuN8o>

Supplies: 2B pencil, scissors, paper, clear tape

Tell It and Talk About It (Story)

Lizard's Song

Story from Tapestry of Faith, Creating Home

<https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/home/session4/60032.shtml>

Theme Connection: Part of loving who we are is resisting the social pressure to be like everyone else. We are most happy when we discover our “own song.” That’s what this story is all about...

Summary: In this Native American legend, Lizard sings a happy song about his home: “Zole, zole, zole, zole, zole, zole, rock is my home.” Bear wants to learn the song. Lizard shares the song, but Bear keeps forgetting it. Bear insists again and again that Lizard re-teach her the song. Finally Lizard tells Bear that the reason she can’t remember the song is that “rock” is not her home, “den” is her home. Bear goes off singing the adapted song, which she doesn’t forget.

Lead With Strategy: Invite a pet lizard to join you (or a family with a pet iguana) or use a lizard puppet.

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

As Fast As Words Could Fly Video

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1_Zk4P50WT4

Written by: Pamela M. Tuck, Illustrated by: Eric Velasquez, Read by: Dulé Hill, Run time: 16 minutes

Copyright guidance for video:

<https://www.storylineonline.net/comments-and-questions/>

Theme connection: Sometimes loving who you are means standing up for your worth. That’s what this story is all about.

Summary: “Young Mason Steele takes pride in turning his father’s excited ramblings about the latest civil rights incidents into handwritten business letters. One day Pa

comes home with a gift from his civil rights group: a typewriter. Thrilled with the present, Mason spends all his spare time teaching himself to type. Soon he knows where every letter on the keyboard is located. When the civil rights group wins a school desegregation case, Mason learns that now he will be attending a formerly all-white high school. Despite his fears and injustice from the students and faculty, Mason perseveres. He does well in school—especially in his typing class. And when he competes in the county typing tournament, Mason decides to take a stand, using his skills to triumph over prejudice and break racial barriers.” The story is based on the author’s father’s personal experiences growing up in 1960’s North Carolina.

Lead With Strategy: Find a person involved in justice who would like to share something from their experience of taking a stand with dignity. Invite them for a short sharing, then offer the story video, then invite reflection together.

Meditate on It (Meditation)

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.

Sit up nice and tall.

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 steppingstones 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.

Lead With Strategy: Is there a hiker with a meditative voice who could join you? A person with some magic in their eyes?

Explore It

(small group activities and experiential learning)

Option #1 - What Do YOU Love to Do? Online "Find 'N Show"

Talking Points and Takeaways:

- Introduce the activity by highlighting how everyone has their own way of being in the world, their own special "song."
- The important part of recognizing each person's uniqueness is that you recognize the uniqueness in others. You recognize each person's inherent worth, and are following our first UU principle.

Activity:

Invite the children to find something to share with everyone that they love to do. Invite the co-leader to start the sharing. Do they love to draw, bring their markers. Kick a ball, find their favorite ball. Read a book, tell everyone why you love it.

Love What you Do Add On: Fingerprint Drawings
(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yEaeDnl_Sc)

Invite them to make a fingerprint. If they don't have a stamp pad, use the graphite from a 2B pencil, as demonstrated in this video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZiUpaiN8o>

Draw what they love to do using their fingerprint and then share on screen with each other.

Chat about It Prompts/Questions:

- What was your favorite thing to do?
- Who taught you how to do it?
- When was the last time you were with that person who taught you?
- For fun, describe how fingerprints solved a crime in a movie or book they have read.

Lead With Strategy: a person willing to share what they love to do to renew themselves. (Join Toby as they share their love of soccer.)

Option #2 - “Your Favorites” Game

Talking Points and Takeaways:

- This is a simple but fun online game that celebrates the uniqueness of each of us but also uncovers some surprising connections between the players.

Activity Instructions: Have each child gather 6-8 sheets of blank paper and some crayons or markers. Then name some “favorite things” (see below) and give the children 1 minute to draw their answer. After the minute is up, have each child share their drawing - but here’s the catch - don’t have them say what it is. Instead have the others guess what the picture is of. Often it is easy to guess but it can be fun when the short drawing time makes it hard and others give answers that are way off and goofy.

Lead With Strategy: Invite a person who loves to play games. There’s plenty of opportunity for meaningful discussion along the way. For instance, you can ask the kids to share when they discovered it was one of their favorite things. Or if anyone else in their family shares it as a favorite. And best of all, when more than one child shares the same favorite thing, invite them to talk about why they love it so much or explore ways in which their love for it is subtly different.

Here are some “favorite prompts.” But have some fun creating your own too!

- What’s your favorite food?
- What’s your favorite movie?
- What’s your favorite candy bar?
- What’s your favorite sports team?
- What’s your favorite book?
- What’s your favorite season?
- What’s your favorite subject in school?

Take It Home

(Home based activities)

This section provides ideas for your weekly follow-up emails to parents, giving them some ways to build on themes and activities you did in your online worship and groups.

Family Sharing Tips & Lesson Follow Up

- **Possible Script for Email:** “Hello Parents! During the Small Group time that was focused on how we are renewed by loving who we are, we played a game called “Our Favorites” and drew pictures of what we love to do. Invite your child(ren) to show you the pictures and try to guess what their favorites were.”
- Or “In meditation, we visualized a path to a treasure box with a key given by a guide. Invite your child(ren) to describe what they visualized and who was there.”
- Or “Share this Story Video: Catching the Moon: The Story of a Young Girl's Baseball Dream
<https://www.storylineonline.net/books/catching-the-moon-the-story-of-a-young-girls-baseball-dream/>
Written by: Crystal Hubbard, Read by Kevin Costner and Jillian Estell, Suggested grade level: 3rd - 4th, Run time: 14 minutes

Summary: “If there was anything in the world better than playing baseball, Marcenia Lyle didn't know what it was. As a young girl in the 1930s, she chased down fly balls and stole bases, and dreamed of one day playing professional ball. With spirit, spunk, and a great passion for the sport, Marcenia struggled to overcome the objections of family, friends, and coaches, who felt a girl had no place in the field. When she finally won a position in a baseball summer camp sponsored by the St. Louis Cardinals, Marcenia was on her way to catching her dream...” – from the website
<https://www.storylineonline.net/books/catching-the-moon-the-story-of-a-young-girls-baseball-dream/>

- **Or purchase or make a Journal: Me: A Compendium**
<https://vimeo.com/178109298>

A great way for parents to help their children dig deeper into this week’s work of loving and celebrating who you are! Or you could invite the children to create their own version.