

Trust ~ USG SGM ~ February ~ 2019

drawn from Soul Matters materials

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Introduction

In religious circles, "trust talk" most often revolves around having faith that life will look after us. For instance, Christian friends sing hymns about God "watching over us" and keeping "an eye on the sparrow." Our Jewish friends lift up the Exodus story to encourage faith that God will help us make our way even when things look bleak. Likewise, prayer practice for our Muslim friends is all about reminding oneself that you are in Allah's safe hands. We UUs translate similar sentiments using the language of trusting "a Love that will not let us go."

It's easy to convince ourselves that life is a foe, so we need our faith communities to restore our faith that life is ultimately a friend. We need to know that when we fall we can count on being picked up.

But don't we need to count on being pushed also? As we welcome in Black History Month, we don't want to forget about a Love that disturbs and does not let privilege remain hidden, but unsettles those who have it. A Love that tells those of us who are marginalized and tired, "I won't let your pain be ignored."

And just when that call to trust seems the one we all need to listen to, another voice adds itself to the mix. This one telling us to trust that it's not all up to us. That sometimes it's ok to rest. That doesn't disturb but instead assures us that we can let go. That tells us to trust that we can - for a while - put the work down because others are ready to pick it up, knowing that we will be there to pick it up when rest calls to them.

So, what is it: Trust life to pick us up? To push and poke us? To tell us it's ok to put the work down for a while? Maybe it's mostly about trusting that we'll know which call is right for us. Maybe it's about having faith in ourselves and not letting anyone tell us what we need to trust.

There's no one message this month after all. Everyone's heart is wrestling with a loss of faith in its own way. The trust you need to repair is likely different than mine. What we both long for is safe space. Space to say how hard that work of repair is. Space to say how much it hurts to have to repair it in the first place.

So let's remember that and prove that we all can be trusted to offer each other that precious space.

Spiritual Exercises

Baby Steps

Overcoming our fears is not one big leap, but instead many small steps. Identify one of your core fears and then find one small way of facing it. Fear you'll never get in shape? Forget the gym, commit to taking walks this month. Social anxiety? Don't force yourself to go to a party, just invite a co-worker or two out for lunch. Doubting your courage to pursue that entrepreneurial dream? Don't quit your job. Instead commit to drafting a business plan. Whatever your fear, the bottom line is not to jump into self-trust head first. Start with a few small steps.

Love and Trust

Love and trust go hand in hand. Psychologist and researcher, John Gottman, claims that small things build trust more than grand gestures: things like bringing your partner coffee or putting down your phone when they're talking or remembering that they have a big presentation coming up next week. Take some time to learn about Gottman's theory by watching the below video. Then commit yourself to trying it in practice.

Video to Watch: <https://brenebrown.com/videos/anatomy-trust-video/>

Chalice Lighting

It is mutual trust, even more than mutual interest that holds human associations together.

~ H.L. Mencken

Check-in *Share your highs and lows since we last met focusing on what drains you and what lifts you up. We give each other the gift of listening without asking questions or offering advice to allow people the safety to share what's in their hearts.*

Quotes for Inspiration/Readings

As you start to walk out on the way, the way appears. ~ Rumi

I imagine trust as these invisible hands that we stretch out into the world looking for someone to hold on to as we walk into the unknown future. ~ Alya Titarenko

To have faith is to trust yourself to the water. When you swim you don't grab hold of the water, because if you do you will sink and drown. Instead you relax, and float. ~ Alan Watts

Distance doesn't ruin a relationship, doubts do. ~ Unknown

A bird sitting on a tree is never afraid of the branch breaking, because her trust is not in the branch but in her own wings. ~ Unknown

You may be deceived if you trust too much, but you will live in torment if you don't trust enough. ~ Frank Crane

The only way you can make a [person] trustworthy is to trust [them]. ~ Henry Stimson

I don't need a certain number of friends, just a number of friends I can be certain of. ~ Alice Walker

Questions

Pick the one question that speaks to you most and let it lead you where you need to go. The goal is to figure out what being a part of a people of trust means for you and your daily living.

1. Who has taught you the most about risking trust?
2. What have you trusted since childhood? What have you never lost faith in?
3. Have you ever been surprised that someone was willing to trust you?
4. When broken trust left you broken-hearted, what voice in your head or word from a friend helped you pick up the pieces?
5. What would it mean to trust people to be who they are rather than what you wish they were?
6. Worried about how something will work out? Could you trust that you will be fine either way?
7. What have you learned about trusting grief, rather than trying to make it go away?

Sitting in Silence *Take a few moments to sit quietly and reflect upon your thoughts.*

Sharing/Deep Listening *Respond with your thoughts and experiences with the topic. We create a safe space by listening deeply and not responding. When sharing, connect with what is true for you. When listening, give the speaker your full attention rather than thinking about what you will share.*

Reflection and Gratitude *This is a time to respond briefly to something another person said or to relate additional thoughts that may have occurred as others shared. Consider lifting up one comment or experience for which you are particularly grateful.*

Singing I Will Be Your Standing Stone ~MUSE Choir <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YminLnyYU5w>
I will be your standing stone
I will stand by you

Extinguishing the Chalice Today I want to greet joy Without a trace of suspicion. ~ Amy Loyd