



## January Family Guide to Theme Based Discussion & Practices

PRAIRIE UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST SOCIETY  
2010 WHENONA DRIVE ■ MADISON, WI ■ UUPRAIRIE.ORG ■ 608.271.8218

### YOUR CHILDREN

*By Kahlil Gibran*

Your children are not your children.  
They are the sons and daughters of life's longing for itself.  
They come through you but not from you,  
and though they are with you yet they belong not to you.  
You may give them your love,  
but not your thoughts,  
for they have their own thoughts.  
You may house their bodies but not their souls,  
for their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.  
You may strive to be like them,  
but seek not to make them like you.  
For life goes not backwards nor tarries with yesterday.  
You are the bows from which your children as living arrows are sent forth.  
The Archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite,  
and bends you with might that the arrows may go swift and far.  
Let your bending in the Archer's hand be for gladness.

## Letting go...

By Holly Tellander, DRE

January is a time for new beginnings. A time when individuals, families and communities take time to consider new directions, new ideas, new goals. It is also a time for releasing that which no longer serves us.

As Unitarian Universalists we are committed to a focus on introspection, to a questioning of the status quo. Prairie UU's religious education program wants to provide support in this endeavor, not only for our students, but also for their families. Our work is only strengthened when we all come together for the betterment of our world.

This month we'll join together in spirit and in body to consider how *letting go* can serve our hearts, our outreach and our community.

Letting go is a hard life lesson, one that many of us struggle with, but one that also has potential for great personal growth. We all inherently understand the need for and feel the urge to make room for the new as our planet begins to turn once again toward the sun.

This newsletter has been stuffed full of ideas for how your family can engage with the idea of 'letting go'. We've compiled resources that will help your family engage with this month's theme. We hope you find them useful, engaging and thought-provoking.

Prairie UU Religious Education strives to meet parents and families at the place of utmost impact, and our hope is that if we do not see you on Sunday mornings, that you are still involved in our community through our shared discussions, shared resources and our shared vision for a better world.

We seek to support you in your parenting goals for your children's social, emotional, spiritual/moral and adaptive development, and welcome your comments, requests and ideas as to how we can better meet this need in your family.

As always we wish you well.



# Round the Table

**TELL ABOUT A TIME when a situation didn't turn out the way that you expected. How did you let go of your expectation? What did you learn?**

**TALK ABOUT THE CHANGES that your family has undergone in the last year. Have you had to let go of something important? How did each of you feel about this process? What lesson did this experience teach you?**

**WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE to others who are experiencing big changes?**

## Resources on 'Letting Go'



- √ Up (2009)
- √ Goonies (1985)
- √ The Parent Trap (1961 & 1998)
- √ Tuck Everlasting (2002)
- √ Finding Nemo (2003)

- √ Free Bird ~ Lynyrd Skynyrd
- √ You Gotta Sing ~ Raffi
- √ Hit the Road Jack ~ Ray Charles
- √ Galileo - Indigo Girls
- √ Go Your Own Way - Fleetwood Mac



- √ When Sophie Gets Angry ~ Molly Bang (preschool - early elementary)
- √ Charlotte's Web ~ E.B. White (all ages- middle to upper grades)
- √ Throw Your Tooth on the Roof ~ Selby Beeler (preschool - early elementary)
- √ Dust of Eden ~ Mariko Nagai (heavy themes -12ish & up)



## Principles in ACTION

Unitarian Universalists affirm and promote 7 core principles

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1. Everyone is important.
2. Be kind in all you do.
3. We are free to learn together.
4. We can all search for our own truth.
5. Everyone has a voice.
6. We work together to build a fair and peaceful world.
7. We care for our planet.

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How can your family practice 'letting go' in the context of living out one or more of our principles? Share your ideas & experiences on our Theme Board downstairs!

## Some ideas

- ◇ Round up old toys, books and clothes and 'let them go' to a worthy cause
- ◇ Think about how you might be able to 'let go' of your frustrations next time you disagree with someone
- ◇ 'Let go' of thinking there is only one right way to do something
- ◇ Let go of a bad habit- identify a family habit that could be made more 'earth friendly' - make a plan to change it

# The Forever Trap a fable

One night as owl was returning home from a long night of doing work that owls do he saw Hunter sneaking around at the base of the big banyan tree. Owl watched as Hunter tied a shiny glass bottle to the root that stuck out from the base of the big banyan tree.

Owl thought this more than just a little strange because a glass bottle cannot run away. After Hunter finished tying up the bottle he took some things out of his pocket and he put them into the bottle. Then Hunter crept quietly away. Everything grew quiet and nothing happened for a long while. Owl's eyes closed and he fell asleep.

Suddenly he heard a chattering and a chattering coming from the base of the big banyan tree. "Oh me, oh my, I'm trapped! This bottle has me trapped and I'll be trapped forever! EEE! I'll never get loose, and I want to get loose right now!! Oh me, oh my!"

Owl looked down and saw Monkey pulling and tugging, jumping up and jumping down with his hand stuck inside the shiny glass bottle that was tied to the root of the Banyan tree.

Owl quickly flew down to get a closer look at the situation and as he looked through the clear sides of the shiny glass bottle he could see right away what had caused Monkey to have his hand stuck in the shiny glass bottle.

Inside the bottle was a whole mess of nuts - Monkey's favorite food! Monkey had his hands wrapped around the nuts. This was why Monkey could not pull his hand back through the small opening at the top of the shiny glass bottle

"You have your hand filled with nuts." said Owl. And Monkey said "I found them, I found them and they're my nuts! They're my nuts and I want to eat them right now!"

"But you have your hand stuck in the bottle." said Owl to Monkey. Monkey said back, "Oh me, oh my, oh my goodness this bottle has me trapped and I'll be trapped forever! EEEK! I want to get loose and I'll never get loose and I want to get loose right now!"

"Well, let go of the nuts and you can take your hand out of the bottle." said Owl to Monkey. And Monkey said back, "They're my nuts! I found them! They're mine and I want them right now!"

Owl said, "If you drop the nuts they will still be in the shiny glass bottle and you will be able to get your hand out of the bottle and then you can decide what to do next while the nuts are still safe in the bottle which you will still be holding."

Monkey looked around to be sure that there was no was near and then opened his hand, dropping the nuts. He slowly withdrew his hand and when his hand was out of the bottle Monkey started to jump up and down shouting joyfully, "I'm free, I'm free! Thank you Owl, oh, thank you owl! I don't know how to thank you enough."

And with those words Monkey saw that the nuts were still in the shiny glass bottle.

Monkey began yelling at Owl, "You tricked me, you tricked me! They're my nuts, and I want them right now!"

Owl waited until Monkey calmed down and then told him, "If you turn the bottle upside down all those nuts will fall out and you will have enough to eat and even to take some with you."

Monkey slowly turned the shiny glass bottle upside down and out of that bottle flowed more nuts than any one monkey could eat at any one sitting.

Monkey was so happy that he started to jump up and down shouting joyfully, "Oh thank you Owl! I don't know how to thank you enough!"

"Well," said Owl, "Those nuts look awfully good and there are more than you can eat... maybe you will share a few of those nuts with me?" And Monkey said, "They're my nuts! I found them! They're mine and I want all of them right now!"

Monkey tried to pick up all the nuts at one time and run off with them but there were more nuts than any one monkey could carry. The more nuts that Monkey tried to pick up the more nuts that he dropped until out of complete frustration Monkey stopped and asked "Oh Owl, what am I going to do?"

Owl cocked his head to one side and he looked at Monkey. Then Owl cocked his head to the other side and he looked at Monkey some more.

Then Owl said, "Monkey, if you put all the nuts back in the bottle there will not be any left on the ground." Monkey grabbed at the nuts and quickly put them all back in the bottle. And then Owl said, "Those nuts look good enough to eat!"

Monkey said, "And I want to eat them right now!" He reached into the bottle, wrapping his greedy little fingers around the nuts but again he found that he couldn't pull his hand back out of the bottle. "Oh me, oh my I'll never get loose! I'm trapped and I'll be trapped forever!"

Owl looked at Monkey and said, "Monkey, that bottle is not what will keep you trapped forever." And then Owl unfolded his wings and flew off to his home where he got a good day's sleep.

## Discussion questions...

- Why do you think the Hunter tied the bottle to the tree?
- What did Owl mean when he said 'the bottle is not what will keep you trapped'?
- Was Owl trying to help Monkey? Did that change by the end of the story?
- What lesson does this story teach you?



## CHALLENGE ACCEPTED....

*How many can you complete this month?*

### *LET GO OF PERFECTIONISM...*

~ Do a messy craft as a family

### *LET GO OF BOREDOM...*

~ Start a new family hobby

### *LET GO OF EXPECTATIONS...*

~ Learn 3 new things about each member of your family this month

### *LET GO OF INFLUENCE...*

~ Commit to one media black-out day this month - see what happens...

### *LET GO OF THE INDOORS...*

~ Plan an outdoor family adventure to a place you've never been this month

### *LET GO OF ROUTINE...*

~ Get outside your comfort zone – visit a new place, read or listen to a new genre, try a new food as a family

### *LET GO OF FEAR...*

~ Have a family challenge to each do one thing that scares you this month and talk about your results

*Join us...*

Sunday, January 24<sup>th</sup> P.A.D. extended day & lunch!

(Register now!)

Special guest speaker: A UU panel!

(Submit all burning panel questions & registrations to [prairie.uu.dre@outlook.com](mailto:prairie.uu.dre@outlook.com) by January 17<sup>th</sup>)