

Session 3

Moving Up!

The objectives of this session are:

- to consider that the people we love are always with us, not in possessions but in our hearts
- to consider how holding on to the past keeps us from living fully in the present
- to examine the idea that death cannot break the bonds of friendship and love
- to consider how accepting loss and letting go allows us to move on with our lives
- to explore the idea that life is the biggest adventure of all!

Materials and supplies you will need:

- a copy of the DVD of the *Up*
- DVD player and TV monitor
- a chalice and matches or lighter
- a pair of scissors
- pencils or pens
- a copy of Resource #4 for the opening exercise
- One copy of Resource #4 for each person
- One copy of *Singing the Living Tradition*

Things to do ahead of time:

- locate the DVD or rent it if necessary
- Watch the episode in its entirety prior to the session (even if you have seen it before). Watch for the scenes that portray love, loss, and acceptance
- cue the DVD to scene # 22 (Dinner)
- cut apart the quotes on Resource #4 and place them face down on the worship table. (Or fold them and put them in a bowl.)

Session Outline

Opening Activity: Check-in, Chalice lighting and reading, opening activity (15 min)

Premiere: Introduction and watching the excerpt from *Up* (35 min)

Reflection: Time to Move On - Discussion and reflection questions (10 min)

Processing: Life is an Adventure (5 min)

Closing: Closing reading and extinguishing the chalice (2 min)

Opening Activity (15 min.)

Ask for a volunteer to light the chalice and share with the group (or ask for a volunteer to read) the opening words (#529) “The Stream of Life from *Singing the Living Tradition*.”

“The same stream of life that runs through my veins night and day runs through the world and dances in rhythmic measures.

It is the same life that shoots in joy through the dust of the earth in numberless blades of grass and breaks into tumultuous waves of leaves and flowers.

It is the same life that is rocked in the ocean-cradle of birth and death, in ebb and flow.

I feel my limbs are made glorious by the touch of this world of life. And my pride is from the life-throb of ages dancing in my blood this moment.”

-- Rabindranath Tagore --

Begin the session with a brief check-in: ask participants take one of the quotes (from Resource #4) and then check-in with their names and the quote they have drawn. (i.e., “My name is John and my quote is ...”)

Premiere

Watching Up (35 min.)

Introduce the video by telling the group you will be watching an excerpt from the film, *Up*. Ask if anyone has ever seen this movie or the more recent animated feature film. If anyone has, ask them if they would be willing to share a brief summary of the episode with the group. If not, introduce the video yourself by saying something along these lines:

A young Carl Fredrickson meets a young adventure-spirited girl named Ellie. They both dream of going to a lost land in South America. After 70 years together, Ellie has just died. Carl remains in his home, a retired and sour recluse, as the city grows around him. He is encouraged to move to a retirement home due to increased construction all around him, but often argues with the foreman and refuses to leave. Carl remembers the promise he made to Ellie. When a construction worker accidentally breaks Carl's mailbox, a part of the house and a part of Ellie that Carl cherishes, Carl hits him over the head with his walker. The assault lands him in court where he is forced to move out of his home by the next day. Workers from Shady Oaks retirement home arrive to pick him up the following morning but are shocked to find Carl releasing millions of helium balloons into the air which detach his house from its foundation, lifting it over the city and into the sky. However, he has a stowaway aboard: an 8-year-old boy named Russell, who's trying to get an Assisting the Elderly badge. Together, they embark on an adventure, where they encounter talking dogs, an evil villain and a rare bird named Kevin.

Start the DVD and watch scenes 22 (Dinner) through the end of the movie. Stop the DVD just after Russell and Carl share ice cream and the credits begin to roll.

Reflection (10 min.)

Time to Move On

Begin the discussion by asking for general impressions, and things which occurred to

the group as they were watching the video. Then, if no one brings it up, ask the group to consider:

This film has more than one theme in it – what are some that you can see in it? (Possible answers are grief or loss, letting go, living in the past, living life to the fullest, finding purpose and meaning in your life, etc.) Why do you think that Carl wanted to hold on to his home, even though the construction company was offering him more money than he would ever need for life? Do you think that Carl was enjoying life? Why or why not? How does Carl react when he finds out that Russell is “onboard” his floating house? Do you think that Carl can relate to Russell at all? (A possible answer is that Russell reminds Carl a little of himself when he was 8 years old.) What does Carl find out about heroes when he meets his own childhood hero, Charles Muntz? What does Dug the dog bring to Carl's life? How about Kevin the bird – what does Kevin bring to Carl's life? Why do you think that Carl chose to save his house rather than protect Kevin from being captured by Muntz? When Carl is looking through Ellie's adventure book, he always stops at the page entitled “Stuff I'm going to do.” Why? Why do you think that Carl is so surprised to see all of the pictures from his and Ellie's life together in her adventure book? How does all of this bring about his change of mind about going to rescue Kevin and Russell? What does Carl mean when he tells Russell, “It's only a house?” How is this attitude very different from Carl's attitude at the beginning of the movie?

Processing (5 min.)

Life is an Adventure!

Pass out a copy of Resource #4 to each participant along with a pen or pencil. Invite everyone to read through the quotes and circle their favorite ones. If anyone wants to share why they picked a particular quote invite them to do so. Remind everyone that they always have the option to pass. Thank everyone for participating in today's group.

Closing (2 min.)

To close, ask everyone to rise and form a circle around the chalice. Read (or ask for a volunteer to read or volunteers to share reading) the Closing thought, #557, “A Common Destiny” from *Singing the Living Tradition*.

“All living substance, all substance of energy, being, and purpose, are united and share the same destiny.

All people, those we love and those we know not of, are united and share the same destiny.

Birth-to-death, we share this unity with the sun, earth,

Our brothers and sisters, strangers,

flowers of the field, snow flakes,
volcanoes and moon beams.

Birth – Life – Death

Unknown – Known – Unknown

Our destiny: from unknown to unknown.

May we have the faith to accept this mystery and build upon its everlasting truth.”

-- Nancy Wood --

After a moment of reflection, extinguish the chalice (or have someone else do so).



The greatest healing therapy is friendship and love.

Hubert H. Humphrey

I tell you the past is a bucket of ashes, so live not in your yesterdays, nor just for tomorrow, but in the here and now. Keep moving and forget the post mortems; and remember, no one can get the jump on the future.

Carl Sandburg

Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity. It can turn a meal into a feast, a house into a home, a stranger into a friend.

Melody Beattie

The greatest gift that you can give to others is the gift of unconditional love and acceptance.

Brian Tracy

No matter what your heartache may be, laughing helps you forget it for a few seconds.

Red Skelton

Acceptance doesn't mean resignation; it means understanding that something is what it is and that there's got to be a way through it.

Michael J. Fox

Be willing to have it so. Acceptance of what has happened is the first step to overcoming the consequences of any misfortune.

William James

Acceptance and tolerance and forgiveness, those are life-altering lessons.

Jessica Lange

Letting go has never been easy, but holding on can be just as difficult. Yet strength is measured not by holding on, but by letting go.

Len Santos

Believe that life is worth living and your belief will help create the fact.

William James

In three words I can sum up everything I have learned about life: It goes on.

Robert Frost