



Soul Matters

The Path of
Resistance



**RE Resources
Second to Fifth Grade
April 2023**

Resisting by Changing Our Habits

Honoring Earth Day

Theme Angle

The theme this month is Resistance. In this lesson we explore how we resist being complacent by changing our habits. The holiday of Earth Day is a perfect time to explore this, as we learn and relearn the habit of living gently and simply on the earth.

Materials Needed:

Name tag inserts and holders

Markers/crayons

Chalice/candle

Chimes

Wonder box - a piece of recyclable paper (also needed a trash can and a recycle basket plus think of a form of reward you like such as a sticker, a party toy, a chime.)

Joys and Sorrows bowl

For activity: petition sheets, clipboards

Set-up:

Have some chairs around one table for making name tags and posters. On the other side of the room, have the chalice and joys & concerns bowl in the center with chairs in a circle around it. Keep in mind to leave space between chairs.

Arrival Time

The Leader sits by the door to greet the children (and parents) as they arrive. Ask each young person how they are feeling today and acknowledge this.

Have children go to one of the tables with the Assistant. Ask parents of younger children (grades 1-3) to sign in their child(ren) on the sheet on the table by the door. Let parents know they can pick up after faith formation hour ends at 12p.

The Assistant greets children as they sit at a table and gives them a name tag insert. Ask them to write their name in a dark color (or write for them if need be). Invite them to draw 2 things they like on it, and then place it in the name tag holder. If they wish to put a sticker on their name tag holder to show consent for touching/hugs, let them do so.

As the children finish their name tags, invite them to sit in a circle on the floor or in a chair around the chalice table.

When everyone is seated, ring the chime. Invite them to listen carefully to the sound and when it ends.

Welcome!

Welcome everyone to “Heads, Hearts, and Hands”. Introduce yourselves. Let the group know that today we will hear a story, have some fun, and get to know each other a little bit.

Light It!

(Children can sit or stand in the circle) As Unitarian Universalists, we light a flaming chalice as a way to center ourselves when we gather. Here in Faith Formation, we light our chalice with our own special words and motions:

We light this chalice (invite someone to turn on the candle or pretend to strike a match)

To celebrate Unitarian (make a U with one hand) Universalism (make a U with the other hand)

With open minds (touch hands to head, then open outward)

With loving hearts (cross hands over heart)

With helping hands (hold hands in front, palms up)

Together we care for our planet Earth (hold hands as if holding a large ball)

And for each other. (hold hands towards another person, or hold the person’s hand)

Joys and Sorrows

Explain to the children that we take time to share our joys and sorrows when we are together. We want to know all the happy and sad things that are happening to them.

Pass the bowl around the circle and invite each child to take a stone. Explain that we’ll take turns and go around the circle. When it’s your turn, say your name, and one thing you are sad or happy about today. Then put your stone into the bowl. If you don’t want to share, just say “pass” and put your stone in the bowl. When everyone has gone, put in a stone and say, “This is for the joys and sorrows that were not spoken, but are in our hearts.”

Introduce It! (Wonder Box)

Reflection Object: a piece of recyclable paper (also needed a trash can and a recycle basket plus think of a form of reward you like such as a sticker, a party toy, a chime.)

Suggested Script:

[At first tell this with the trash can convenient and the recycle basket farther away]

“What is in the Wonder Box? It’s an old paper that I don’t need anymore. So I’m going to get rid of it.

[Throw the paper in the convenient trash can.]

But I want to change my habits for Earth Day and not be lazy about recycling anymore. One researcher says to change a habit we must ask ourselves 4 questions.

To change a habit, we ask ourselves:

- How can I make it obvious?
- How can I make it attractive?
- How can I make it easy?
- How can I make it satisfying? - <https://jamesclear.com/three-steps-habit-change>

So let's try it for getting me to change my lazy habit and recycle this paper instead of throwing it out:

1. How can I make it obvious?

Instead of having the trash can closest to me, I move the recycling bin closer and handier.

2. How can I make it attractive?

I can [put my favorite chime/sticker/party toy] near the recycling bin.

3. How can I make it easy?

I throw the paper into the recycling bin which is the easiest to get to now.

4. How can I make it satisfying?

I am rewarded by [ringing my favorite chime/ remembering where I got the sticker/blowing the party toy for a bit of fun]

Each time I put something in the recycle bin, I get to have a bit of fun. It's easy to find. I think my habit will change!

So, if you want to try to change a habit for Earth Day, you can remember these 4 questions to help you create a path to change:

- How can I make it obvious?
- How can I make it attractive?
- How can I make it easy?
- How can I make it satisfying?

Are you ready? Let's begin.

Tell It and Talk About It

Our Story: The Youth Are at the Gates from the UUWorld magazine, by Sherri Daye Scott (Note that this is edited down)

Suggested Introductory Words

Have any of you ever participated in a protest? If so, what for? Invite responses. If you haven't, why do you suppose that is? (Perhaps because they're too young, not aware of protests in the area, etc.)

If you think you're too young, think again! Here is a story about a boy from Florida who is the youngest person in a group of kids who are suing the US government over climate change - and he's a UU!



In many ways, Levi Draheim is your typical Florida kid. His hair and skin are sun-kissed. He'd rather be outdoors than in. Every moment possible is spent in the ocean. "It helps me calm down," he explains.

Levi is the youngest plaintiff in a landmark piece of United States climate litigation, *Juliana v. U.S.* The case was first filed in U.S. District Court in 2015. They allege that by knowingly contributing to climate change for more than fifty years, the U.S. government has violated their Fifth Amendment constitutional right not to be "deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law".

Climate change is personal for Draheim. The Atlantic Ocean is five minutes from his front door, and he sees it rising. He's interested in "the science part" of how warming waters and pollution play into the suffocating, brown algae growth in the nearby Indian River Lagoon. He knows it's important to sound as knowledgeable as possible when speaking—to adults, in particular—about climate change. Anything he doesn't understand, he discusses with his mother, Leigh-Ann.

How the Draheims live is what inspired them to get involved with *Juliana v. U.S.* in the first place. They are a family of grassroots environmentalists who attend the Unitarian Universalist Church of Brevard in West Melbourne. That's where they met the Rev. Dr. Gregory Wilson, an organizer with the [UU Ministry for Earth](#), an environmental justice group based on the Seventh Principle's respect for the interdependent web of life.

"I hope that even if we don't win this lawsuit that it will raise awareness to other people and other youth so they know that they can do things," Levi says. "Even though we're just some kids, we can make a change, even if we can't vote. We probably are going to win this lawsuit, though, because it's kind of hard to argue against science."

Here is a short video interview of Levi:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jtV5M54JDIA>

It is sad to say that the government has tried very hard to stop the Julianna youth from going to trial. They have been fighting this battle in the courts for years! Levi is 15 years old now!

A longer video for those interested-

<https://www.wired.com/video/watch/the-juliana-plaintiffs-vic-barrett-kelsey-juliana-and-levi-draheim-in-conversation-with-sandra-upson>

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!

Explore It with...

Climate Change Petition

Ask the group if they remember talking about polar bears and why they are endangered (climate change). Show them the posters they made that are on the counter. Remind them that one of the actions they had said they could take would be to write to government officials to ask them to change their habits to help the environment, and ultimately, polar bears. Let them know that today they will take some action!

We can support Levi and the Julianna youth by asking adults to sign a petition that is being done by a group called, People vs. Fossil Free, that asks the government to end their opposition to their lawsuit and let the trial start.

Here's what we can do:

- We can put these petition forms onto clipboards
- We can post our poster at a table by the coffee and snacks
- We can staff the table to collect signatures
- We can walk around with clipboards and ask people to sign
- We can tell adults why climate change is important to us
- We can tell adults that there is a young UU who is helping to fight climate change and we want to help him

Decide who wants to help with the above. Then explain that we will go upstairs quietly and get into place so that when worship ends, we can take action!
Parents will meet us at the table, so we need to stay nearby.

Closing Circle

For the last 5-10 minutes: Ring the chime to gather the group. Invite them to sit/stand in a circle. Share thoughts to the following questions posted on the bulletin board:

- Why did we learn this at church?

If you wish to hold hands, you can. Go around the circle and invite each child to share what they liked about their time in Heads, Hearts, and Hands. To make this go faster, you can suggest hand signals: thumbs up, thumbs down, or thumbs sideways.

Extinguish the chalice with these words posted on the bulletin board:

Let's take our chalice light with us,
to guide us through the week,
and bring it back to shine again
for all of us who seek.

Thank each child for sharing and being here today.

What worked well today? What would you change about this session?

Thank you for taking care of our youngsters!

Compiled by Kathy Underwood from Soul Matters materials.

Soul Matters RE Packet Author & Support Team Packet Author: Katie Covey,

Soul Matters Director of Religious Education

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