

Notes to the Leader for T385— What Does It Mean to Live a Life of Devotion?

Session Preparation

Have extra copies of the preparation available at the gathering for people who have forgotten to bring their copies. Cut the pages of quotations into individual slips and put into a bowl or other container.

Centering Practice:

Say the following slowly, with pauses in between phrases.

Lower or close your eyes. ... Take a few deep breaths. ... Become aware of all the sounds you can hear right now. ... Pick just one of those sounds and focus all your attention on it. ... If your attention strays, bring it gently back to that sound. *(Allow 2 or 3 minutes.)*

- based on an embodied practice developed by Thandeka, a UU minister who is associate professor of theology and culture at Meadville/Lombard Theological School

Preliminaries

Prior to beginning the session, take a few minutes to go over the announcements of the church events from a recent church bulletin. Remind members of the next meeting date and location. Get a volunteer to light the chalice. Pass around the bowl of quotations.

Discussion

The discussion period is meant to allow group members to go deeper, to share things they may have forgotten to share, and to exchange ideas. It is important that people not comment on others' sharing except in a very supportive way.

Timekeeping

Use this timetable as an aid to keep the gathering on track. It leaves 15 minutes available in case the sharing portion runs longer or if a Life Ritual is planned. If it appears that portions of the session will run long, the group members can decide whether to stop continue or eliminate other portions.

Centering practice	3 minutes
Preliminaries	2 minutes
Opening	2 minute
Check-in	15 minutes
Readings from the bowl	10 minutes
Silence	3 minutes
Deep listening	60 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Singing	1 minute
Closing	1 minute
Total	112 minutes

Preparation for the Next Session

Remind people of the date of the next session, and either pass out copies of the preparation for that session or tell members you will send it by email.