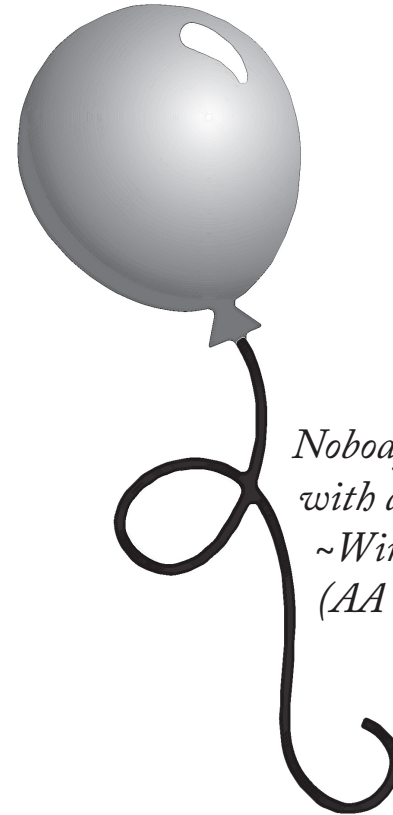


The Covenant

I commit myself:

- to come to meetings when I possibly can, knowing that my presence is important to the group.
- to honor the group by letting the leader know if I will be absent and to come to the group one last time and say goodbye if I need to quit.
- to share with the leader the responsibility for good group process by watching how much time I take to speak and noticing what is going on for others.
- to avoid cross talk, giving feedback or trying to fix anyone
- to not gossip about what is shared in the group, and not tell other people's stories.
- to listen to what others share with an open heart, and to share deeply in my turn.

Play



*Nobody can be uncheered
with a balloon.
~Winnie the Pooh
(AA Milne)*

Play

Chalice Lighting

May this flame burn and remind us that each of us can offer goodness and love, and that each of us can be a blessing to the world.

~Petr Samojsky

Sharing of Joys and Sorrows

Silence, holding ourselves and each other in silent support.

Shared Readings:

A child who does not play is not a child, but the man who does not play has lost forever the child who lived in him. ~Pablo Neruda

Almost all creativity involves purposeful play. ~Abraham Maslow

Man is most nearly himself when he achieves the seriousness of a child at play. ~Heraclitus

Human beings need pleasure the way they need vitamins.
~Lionel Tiger

It is a happy talent to know how to play. ~Ralph Waldo Emerson

Life is playfulness... we need to play so that we can rediscover the magical around us. ~Flora Colao

Men do not quit playing because they grow old; they grow old because they quit playing. ~Oliver Wendell Holmes

Those who play rarely become brittle in the face of stress or lose the healing capacity for humor. ~Stuart Brown

Be glad of life because it gives you the chance to love and to work and to play and to look up at the stars. ~Henry Van Dyke

Deep Sharing/Deep Listening

Round I

Name a childhood activity that brings back memories of play for you.

Round II

Using insights you gained from doing the homework, talk about the role of play in your life. What about play is important and meaningful? How do you balance a need for play with the more serious aspects of life?

Round III

In this session, how did your attitude toward play change, if at all? What was especially meaningful for you?

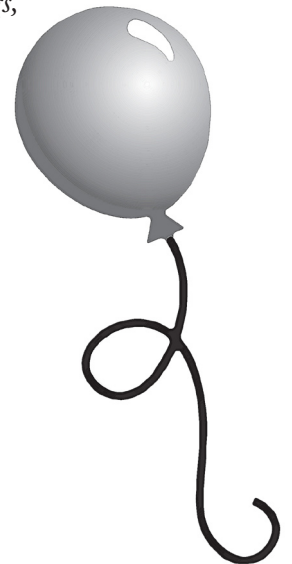
Closing Words

*May I remember to keep my face to the sun,
To play, laugh, and experience joy whenever possible,
To celebrate the world and my fellow human beings,
To say YES! to life each day.*

~James Madison Barr

Song "Go Now in Peace"

Group Business



Leader's Notes for Play

This session focuses on the role of play in our lives.

Chalice Lighting: (2 min)

Ask someone to read the chalice lighting reading found in the bulletin

Sharing of Joys and Concerns: (10 min)

Ask group members to tell in one or two sentences...How you are today? Share information about absent members.

Silence: (3 min)

Give your group the gift of three minutes of silence. Time it!

Shared Readings: (5 min)

Go around your group, letting each person in turn read from Shared Readings found in the bulletin until all readings are finished.

Deep Sharing/Deep Listening: Do your rounds of deep sharing/deep listening. Pay close attention to the time allotted each person to ensure all get to share at least once.

Round I (10 min)

Name a childhood activity that brings back memories of play for you.

Round II (40 min)

Using insights you gained from doing the homework, talk about the role of play in your life. What about play is important and meaningful? How do you balance a need for play with the more serious aspects of life?

Round III (15 min)

In this session, how did your attitude toward play change, if at all? What was especially meaningful for you?

Closing Words (1 min)

May I remember to keep my face to the sun,
To play, laugh, and experience joy whenever possible,
To celebrate the world and my fellow human beings,
To say YES! to life each day. ~ James Madison Barr

Song (1 min)

Go Now in Peace

Group Business: (5 min)

Pass out Q and Q (homework) for next time.

Play

Play. The word evokes total absorption in childhood activities with our focus totally in the moment. When we were children, it encouraged our creativity and allowed us to take risks. It helped us grow and learn—from developing our motor skills to fine-tuning our emotional skills. And it was fun.

Then we became adults. We needed to provide for our material needs as well as pursue our lives' work. We learned to work hard and be responsible and our need for play was diminished. Yet being responsible does not preclude being able to play. Play is important for adults. It is an exercise of the spirit. It helps us live in the moment. It still encourages our creativity and allows us to take risks. It refreshes us and allows us to put our responsibilities in perspective. And it is fun. The problem is for us to find a place for play in our busy lives.

Below are some thoughts about play.

Pausing to listen to an airplane in the sky, stooping to watch a ladybug on a plant, sitting on a rock to watch the waves crash over the quayside – children have their own agendas and timescales. As they find out more about their world and their place in it; they work hard not to let adults hurry them. We need to hear their voices. ~Cathy Nutbrown

If you want to be creative, stay in part a child, with the creativity and invention that characterizes children before they are deformed by adult society. ~Jean Piaget

In our play we reveal what kind of people we are. ~Ovid

It is only in playing that the individual is able to be creative and to use the whole personality, and it is only in being creative that the individual discovers the self. ~Donald Winnicott

It is requisite for the relaxation of the mind that we make use, from time to time, of playful deeds and jokes. ~ Saint Thomas Aquinas

Life must be lived as play. ~Plato

My own prescription for health is less paperwork and more running barefoot through the grass. ~Leslie Grimmer

Play allows us to develop alternatives to violence and despair; it helps us learn perseverance and gain optimism. ~ Stuart Brown M.D

Play is the only way the highest intelligence of humankind can unfold. ~ Joseph Chilton Pearce

Play is training for the unexpected. ~Marc Bekoff

The opposite of play is not work. It's depression. ~Brian Sutton-Smith

Whoever wants to understand much must play much. ~Gottfried Benn

Playfulness is as sacred as any prayer, or maybe more sacred than any prayer, because playfulness, laughter, singing will relax you. And the truth is only possible in a relaxed state of being. ~Joshu Sasaki-Roshi

Questions to Ponder

Here are some questions to think about as you explore the idea of play in your life.

1. Think about playing as a child. What did play feel like? What were your favorite activities? How did your childhood play influence the adult you became?
2. Did you quit playing? If so, when? What did you replace it with?
3. What activities in your life do you consider play? How does play nourish your spirit and enrich your life? Are there activities that you do for recreation or leisure that don't really feel like play? How are these activities important to you?
4. Is play important to you or does it just get in the way of accomplishing your goals? If play is important to you, how can you balance your need to play with your need to fulfill your adult responsibilities? If you could find more time to just play, what would you fill it with?