

**First Parish Church of Groton, Small Group Ministry**  
**Fall 2012 Session No. 3: Humility**

Facilitator \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Supplies Needed:** Chalice, matches, drawing/writing paper, art supplies for drawing such as markers, crayons, colored pencils; questions from the session topic to hand out

**1. Chalice Lighting/Opening Words:** 5 mins.

“Humility is perfect quietness of heart, It is to expect nothing, to wonder at nothing that is done to me, to feel nothing done against me. It is to be at rest when nobody praises me, and when I am blamed or despised. It is to have a blessed home, where I can go in and shut the door, and kneel in secret, and am at peace as in a deep sea of calmness, when all around and above is trouble.”

- Andrew Murray

**2. Check-in/Sharing:** up to 30 min

Each person takes a few minutes to check-in.

*What are you passionate about this week?*

*How is it with your spirit?*

*Do you have a spiritual moment to share?*

**3. Topic:** total time 60 mins.

**3a. Introduction and Questions:** 10 mins.

"Many people believe that humility is the opposite of pride, when, in fact, it is a point of equilibrium. The opposite of pride is actually a lack of self-esteem. A humble person is totally different from a person who cannot recognize and appreciate himself as part of this world's marvels."

– Rabino Nilton Bonder

"We learn humility through accepting humiliations cheerfully."

– Mother Teresa

"One who has true humility is no longer capable of experiencing humiliation."

– unknown

"Pride is concerned with who is right. Humility is concerned with what is right."

– Ezra Taft Benson

"When we become aware of our humility, we've lost it."

– Unknown

"Humility is to make a right estimate of oneself."

– Charles H. Spurgeon

"Humility and humiliation are two totally different things. Very often here in the West we take humility as humiliation. Why should we allow anybody to trample us, to degrade us? No, that is called humiliation. But humility is something that spontaneously grows in our day-to-day life because it is the sweetest, softest, mildest and at the same time most fertile ground in us."

– Sonia Cabanillas

**3b. Questions** (See the list on the last page)

**3c. Silence for Reflection/Writing/Drawing:** 5–10 mins.

Coaches should either post the questions above or hand out copies of them. Invite the group into 5-10 minutes of silence during which time they are asked to reflect on the questions. Participants are invited to use this time for writing and drawing their responses if they wish. *(You might wish to remind people that the skill of their artwork is not the issue here. They may or may not wish to share their drawings with the group if they create one.)*

**3d. Sharing:** 40 mins.

Coaches should invite each person to share their response, as they feel moved, rather than clockwise. Give each person an equal amount of time to share. *If there is time* after each person has shared and very brief comments or responses have been given, invite people into a more free flowing discussion of the theme. Coaches may need to repeat the questions.

**4. Check-out:** 10 mins.

Encourage people to check out with a final thought or reflection about what it was like to reflect on gratitude (or any other thoughts or reflections about the session) and how having done so might shape or impact their life in any way in the week ahead.

**5. Closing Words and Extinguish the Chalice:** 1 min.

“It is almost impossible to overestimate the value of true humility and its power in the spiritual life. For the beginning of humility is the beginning of blessedness and the consummation of humility is the perfection of joy. Humility contains in itself the answer to all the great problems of the life of the soul. It is the only key to faith, with which the spiritual life begins: for faith and humility are inseparable. In perfect humility all selfishness disappears and your soul no longer lives for itself or in itself but for love: and it is lost and submerged in love and transformed into love.”

– Thomas Merton

**6. Blessing:** 1 min.

May the efforts we have made here today  
To listen with caring and compassion  
Sustain us in the days ahead  
May these efforts bring peace into our lives  
And into the lives of all those whom we touch.

May love surround us  
May joy gladden us  
May peace lie deep within  
May our lives, and the lives of all those we love  
Go well.

## **Questions for Reflection: Humility**

How have you cultivated a sense of equilibrium between humility and pride?

Have you experienced humiliation? What was that like?

What is humility to you? What does it look like, sound like, feel like?

Think about someone you know whom you find to be humble - what is it about them that tells you this?

Can you think of an example of when you have responded with humility? What was it like?

Can you think of an example of when you have responded without humility? What was it like?