

The Gift of Transformation



Let mystery have its place in you; do not be always turning up your whole soil with the plowshare of self-examination, but leave a little fallow corner in your heart ready for any seed the winds may bring, and reserve a nook of shadow for the passing bird; keep a place in your heart for the unexpected guests, an altar for an unknown God.

-Henri-Frederic Ariel

Monthly Theme Resources

March 2024

UNITARIAN
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CHURCH OF
JACKSON



Calendar Connections: March 2024

| Date | Event |
|-------------|--|
| Month | Women's History Month Irish American Heritage Month |
| March 1 | Peace Corps Established (1961) |
| March 2 | National Day of Unplugging (1 st Friday of March) |
| March 6 | Dred Scott Case (1857) |
| March 7 | Selma–Montgomery Marches (1965) 1st march |
| March 8 | International Women's Day |
| March 9 | Selma–Montgomery Marches (1965) 2nd march |
| March 10 | Harriet Tubman Day |
| March 10 | Ramadan (Islam) begins, learn more here and here [continues until April 9] |
| March 11 | James Reeb died/martyred (1965), learn more here and here |
| March 13 | Susan B. Anthony died (1906) |
| March 14 | Pi Day |
| March 15 | Everything You Think is Wrong Day |
| March 17 | St. Patrick's Day |
| March 19 | Vernal Equinox/Spring or Ostara (Pagan/Wiccan), learn more here |
| March 21-25 | Selma–Montgomery Marches (1965) 3rd march |
| March 22 | Climate Justice Month begins [continues until April 22] World Water Day |
| March 23-24 | Purim (Jewish), learn more here and here |
| March 24 | Archbishop Oscar Romero died/martyred (1980) |
| March 25 | Holi (Hindu), learn more here and here Viola Liuzzo died/martyred (1965) Ida B. Wells died (1931) Tolkien Reading Day |
| March 28 | Lent (Christian) ends [began Feb. 14 th] |
| March 29 | Good Friday (Christian) |
| March 31 | Easter (Christian) International Transgender Day of Visibility , learn more here |

Recommended Resources for Personal Exploration & Reflection

Wise Words

Human beings are works in progress that mistakenly think they're finished

[Daniel Gilbert](#)

Living involves tearing up one rough draft after another.

[author unknown](#)

And the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom.

Anais Nin

Let difficulty transform you. And it will. In my experience, we just need help learning how not to run away.

Pema Chodron

The trouble with steeling yourself against the harshness of reality is that the same steel that secures your life against being destroyed secures your life also against being opened up and transformed by the holy power that life itself comes from.

[Frederick Buechner](#)

Our survival adaptations are so tough, but our wounds are so delicate. To heal, we have to lift the armor carefully – it saved our lives, after all. It's like moving your best friend off to the side of the path. You don't trample on her, you don't hit her with a sledgehammer. You honor her presence like a warm blanket that has kept you safe and sound during wintry times.

[Jeff Brown](#)

No transmutation without fire... the self must lose to find and die to live.

[Evelyn Underhill](#)

Change happens at the speed of trust.

[author unknown](#)

What is defeat? Nothing but education. Nothing but the first step to something better.

Wendell Phillips

One does not become enlightened by imagining figures of light, but by making the darkness conscious.

Carl Jung

The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change.

[Carl Rogers](#)

I believe in waking up in the middle of the night and packing our bags and leaving our worst selves for our better ones.

Leslie Jamison

This I now know for certain: I do all of growing during the times in my life when I am offering compassion to the parts of myself that have not yet grown. I never once managed to shame myself into a version of me I loved more

[Andrea Gibson](#)

Personal growth is not about amassing knowledge, it's about becoming more conscious,... more mindful of inner knowing.

Peter Shepherd

Watch yourself about complaining. What you're supposed to do when you don't like a thing is change it. If you can't change it, change the way you think about it.

Maya Angelou

If you see what needs to be repaired and how to repair it, then you have found a piece of the world that God has left for you to complete. But if you only see what is wrong and what is ugly in the world, then it is you yourself that needs repair.

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson

If you want to change the world, first, be sure you are changing yourself.

[Rev. Sean Parker Dennison](#)

Every moment we have a choice. Every moment we can be a plus, minus or zero
author unknown

Ours is not the task of fixing the entire world all at once, but of stretching out to mend the part of the world that is within our reach. Any small, calm thing that one soul can do to help another soul, to assist some portion of this poor suffering world, will help immensely. It is not given to us to know which acts or by whom, will cause the critical mass to tip toward an enduring good. What is needed for dramatic change is an accumulation of acts, adding, adding to, adding more, continuing. We know that it does not take everyone on Earth to bring justice and peace, but only a small, determined group who will not give up during the first, second, or hundredth gale...

[Clarissa Pinkola Estes](#)

We are the first generation to feel the sting of climate change, and we are the last generation that can do something about it.

[Jay Inslee](#)

There is something dying in our society, in our culture, and there's something dying in us individually. And what is dying, I think, is the willingness to be in denial. And that is extraordinary. It's always been happening, and when it happens in enough of us, in a short enough period of time at the same time, then you have a tipping point, and the culture begins to shift...

[Rev. angel Kyodo williams](#)

In times of rapid change it is the *learners* who inherit the earth; while the *learned* find themselves beautifully equipped to deal with a world that no longer exists.

[Eric Hoffer](#)

Poetry

All that you touch you change.
All that you change changes you.
The only lasting truth is change...
God is change.

[Octavia Butler](#)

God is Change. Beware:
God exists to shape
And to be shaped.

[Octavia Butler](#)

I need a rainstorm...
that drowns out any voices
that would offer easy answers.
I need a cloudburst to flood
everything I think I know...
Give me a gulley washer,
the kind that scours
and remakes its path as it flows.
I want it, and yet
when I feel the first drops
I scramble for the umbrella...

[Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer](#)

You did not come here to pay bills and die
nor did you come to build the fortunes
of those destroying the Earth
Imagine instead
that you came to gather precious things
fallen from the pockets of Ancient Ones...
So fill your pockets as this world dies
knowing some of it will guide you to the next
and some will fall to the ground
in time to be found
by those who'll bring the world back to life.

[Chris Taylor](#)

Music

Click for the Spotify playlist on [transformation](#)
Click for the YouTube playlist on [transformation](#)

Contemporary Music Suggestions

- A Change is Gonna Come - Sam Cooke
- Change the World - Eric Clapton
- Waiting on the World to Change - John Mayer
- Rivers and Roads - The Head and the Heart

Videos & Podcasts

We are In a Time of New Suns

On Being Interview with adrienne maree brown
<https://onbeing.org/programs/adrienne-maree-brown-we-are-in-a-time-of-new-suns/>

The Neoliberal Order Is Over. What Next?

<https://rooseveltinstitute.org/2023/05/04/podcast-the-neoliberal-order-is-over-what-comes-next-with-gary-gerstle/>

What is Transformative Justice?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-BOFz5TXo&t=3s>

David Brooks thinks Americans are getting meaner

<https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/23890762/david-brooks-america-capitalism-democracy-the-gray-area>

Today I Rise - Short Film

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=977HAgu-9-M>

The Unbroken by Rashani Rea

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U-cr6KXy2Kc>

The Transformation that Pottery Made Possible

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=537ezn9HKoM>

A must see poem and visual meditation on aging

<https://davesikkema.wordpress.com/2013/09/14/n-o-going-back/>

The Coming AI Friends

Overview [here](#)

Interview with developers [here](#)

Related article [here](#)

Artists on How AI is Transforming Art & Us

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=G2XdZIC3AM8>

How AI will Augment & Transform Our Brains!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bLCS8O9V9eY>
More [here](#)

The Next Global Superpower Isn't Who You Think

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uiUPD-z9DTg>

The World Ahead 2024: 5 stories to watch out for

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRMVf0PPqZI>

Articles

How Your Personality Changes As You Age

<https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20200313-how-your-personality-changes-as-you-age>

“Our traits are ever shifting, and by the time we’re in our 70s and 80s, we’ve undergone a significant transformation... We become more conscientious and agreeable, and less neurotic... Our willpower increases and we develop a better sense of humor. Finally, the elderly have more control over their emotions. It’s arguably a winning combination...”

How to Thrive in an Uncertain World

<https://www.nytimes.com/2024/01/13/opinion/uncertainty-anxiety-psychology.html>

On how meeting transitions with uncertainty is the key to successfully navigating our ever-transforming world.

Books

[Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds](#)

By **adrienne maree brown**

brown proposes nine principles to help guide emergent thinking, or patterns that can be used to understand and approach today's challenges.

Review:

<https://www.uua.org/leaderlab/emergent-linear-thinkers>

Parable of the Sower

By **Octavia Butler**

In a post-apocalyptic Earth heavily affected by climate change and social inequality, a young woman has become displaced from her home and journeys north with others, discovering a revolutionary religion.

Review:

https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/52397.Parable_of_the_Sower

Trusting Change: Finding Our Way Through Personal and Global Transformation

By Karen Hering

Ten skills for living on the threshold of change and spiritual practices for connecting with your inner wisdom

Review:

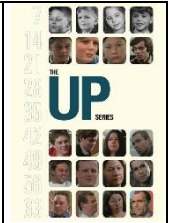





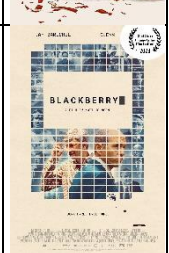
<https://www.uuabookstore.org/Trusting-Change-P19314.aspx>

The Battle for Your Brain: Defending the Right to Think Freely in the Age of Neurotechnology

By Nita Farahany

Farahany argues intrusions into the human mind by technology are so close a public discussion is long overdue and lawmakers should immediately establish brain protections as for any other area of personal liberty.

Movies & TV

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>The UP Series</p> <p>The Up series of documentary films follows the lives of ten males and four females in England beginning in 1964, when they were seven years old. The documentary series has had nine episodes—one every seven years—thus spanning 56 years.</p> |  A poster for 'The UP Series' featuring a grid of 14 small portraits of the subjects, with the title 'THE UP SERIES' in large blue letters. |
| <p>Nomadland</p> <p>A poetic character study on the forgotten and downtrodden, Nomadland beautifully captures the restlessness left in the wake of the Great Recession.</p> |  A poster for the movie 'Nomadland' showing a person in a vast, open landscape under a sunset sky. Text includes 'A MIRACLE OF A MOVIE!', 'EXTRAORDINARY NOMADLAND', and 'A FILM BY CHLOE ZHAO'. |
| <p>The Boy Who Harnessed The Wind</p> <p>A 13-year-old boy is thrown out of the school he loves when his family can no longer afford the fees. He sneaks into the library and learns how to build a windmill to save his village from a famine.</p> |  A poster for 'The Boy Who Harnessed The Wind' showing a young boy building a windmill. Text includes 'THE BOY WHO HARNESSSED THE WIND' and 'IN SELECT CINEMAS AND ON NETFLIX WATCH NOW'. |
| <p>Rectify</p> <p>Daniel Holden, who spends nearly 20 years on death row for the rape and murder of a teenage girl, before new DNA evidence nullifies his conviction. He returns home, but he's far from welcomed. He's an outsider now in a town that remains divided by his alleged crime, and contributing to his uncertain future is the man who prosecuted him -- riding that notoriety to become a state senator -- is plotting to reopen the case.</p> |  A poster for the TV series 'Rectify' showing a group of people standing in a field. The title 'RECTIFY' is at the top. |
| <p>American Symphony</p> <p>In 2022, multi-instrumentalist Jon Batiste receives 11 Grammy nominations and is immersed in composing American Symphony, an ambitious original symphony to perform at Carnegie Hall. His extraordinary trajectory is upended when Batiste's life partner—best-selling author Suleika Jaouad—learns her long-dormant cancer has returned. AMERICAN SYMPHONY delivers a portrait of two inimitable artists at a crossroads and a profound meditation on art, love, and the creative process.</p> |  A poster for 'American Symphony' featuring Jon Batiste and Suleika Jaouad. Text includes 'AMERICAN SYMPHONY' and 'A FILM BY JON BASTIEN'. |
| <p>The Holdovers</p> <p>THE HOLDOVERS follows a curmudgeonly instructor at a New England prep school who is forced to remain on campus during Christmas break to babysit the handful of students with nowhere to go.</p> |  A poster for 'The Holdovers' showing three people in a room. Text includes 'The Holdovers' and 'A FILM BY ANTHONY JOHNSON'. |
| <p>BlackBerry</p> <p>'BlackBerry' tells the story of Mike Lazaridis and Jim Balsillie, the two men that charted the course of the spectacular rise and catastrophic demise of the world's first smartphone.</p> |  A poster for 'BlackBerry' showing a grid of images related to the company. Text includes 'BLACKBERRY' and 'A FILM BY JONAS MEYER'. |

Movie descriptions were extracted from Rottentomatoes.com unless otherwise noted. Images were downloaded from Google.

Reflection Questions

Let these questions be an aid for deep reflection—not to be answered as much as to spur a journey.

Read through the questions 2-3 times until one question sticks out for you and captures your attention, or as some faith traditions say, until one of the questions “[shimmers](#).” Then reflect on the question using the following:

- What is going on in my life right now that makes this question so pronounced for me?
- How might my inner voice be trying to [speak to me](#) through it?
- How might life/my inner voice offer me a word of comfort or challenge through this question?

Writing out your thoughts often enables you to go deeper. It also sometimes helps to read the list of questions to a friend or loved one and ask them which question they think you need to wrestle with.

A note about self-care: *Often these questions take us to a vulnerable space. It is OKAY to ignore the questions that may be triggering – or lean in if that feels safe.*

1. What were you told as a child when you resisted change or expressed fear of it?
2. What have you learned about the relationship between transformation and pain?
3. What have you learned about the relationship between transformation and joy?
4. What have you learned about the relationship between transformation and rest?
5. What is your next challenge in daring to be human?
6. Is your armor in the way of your growth?
7. Is delayed gratification delaying your transformation?
8. Is believing “I don’t deserve it” standing in your way?
9. Is it time to thank your armor for the way it protected & saved you back when things were tough?
10. Who or what do you need to learn to love next?
11. Of all the ways your life partner has transformed you, which is your favorite?
12. If you could go back and change something you said or did this year, what would it be?
13. How do you think your future self might transform its relationship with doubt and distrust?
14. What if the way forward is to soften?
15. What if your transformation lies in asking for what you need?
16. What is the new creation that wants to be born in and through you?
17. What do you know of a brokenness out of which comes the unbroken?

What’s your question? Your question may not be listed above. As always, if the above questions don't include what life is asking from you, spend the month listening to your days to find it.

Meditations, Prayers, & Blessings

Prayer of Co-Creation, Rev. Lyn Cox *

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/prayer/prayer-co-creation>
[Permission Source](#)

Thank you for the breezes of change, clearing our heads and bringing fresh ideas. May they cleanse our minds of the oppressions and isms that divide us.

Thank you for the flame of hope, the heat of righteous anger, the warmth of compassion, and the fire of commitment. May they bubble the cauldrons of transformation...

Relentless, Rev. Sean Parker Dennison*

Found in [Breaking and Blessing](#), UUA meditation manual & Soul Matters "[Common Shelf](#)" Book
Also found [HERE](#)

Letter from Our Better Angels, Rev. Sean Parker Dennison*

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/poetry/letter-our-better-angels>
[Permission Source](#)

We Imagine a Path, Rev. D. Scott Cooper*

Full piece at <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/prayer/we-imagine-path>
[Permission Source](#)

We bow our heads in order to imagine not one path, but many...

Prayer in Time of Transition, Rev. Julianne Lepp*

[Permission Secured by Soul Matters](#)

Dear Goddess, Mother, and Source

Your womb is all of creation

Your love is mother's milk

Please grant us support during this transition

Please help us move through this next stage

Please carry us in arms of support, grace, and love

So that we may bring new life to this ministry

So that we may grow as a community

So that we may birth a whole new way of being together.

We ask this in your Holy, and Sacred name. Amen.

Spoken & Visual Meditation - Beyond Every Door, Rev. Molly Housh Gordon*

<https://www.uua.org/worship/words/time-all-ages/beyond-every-door>
[Permission Source](#)

We suggest viewing a slideshow of doors such as this one made and permissioned by Rev. Michelle Collins:

[https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1r5ehN_EeFb8OLKNGjCGThXNVaEKCMu_-
/edit?usp=sharing&oid=116400167493761236124&rtpof=true&sd=true](https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1r5ehN_EeFb8OLKNGjCGThXNVaEKCMu_-/edit?usp=sharing&oid=116400167493761236124&rtpof=true&sd=true)

Stories for All Ages to Share with Your Family

Everything Changes

Tellable Tale: <https://www.thedailybuddha.com/everything/>

The Day You Begin by Jacqueline Woodson (Author), R. López (Illustrator)

Book: [HERE](#)

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6rLlyFs8eIM>

Laila's Lunchbox by Reem Faruqi (Author), Lea Lyon (Illustrator)

Book: [HERE](#)

Video: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rjZ_EpecEKk

The Stream; a Sufi Story

Tellable Tale: <https://www.questformeaning.org/quest-article/stream-sufi-story/>

The Easter Story by Brian Wildsmith

Book: [HERE](#)

Video: <https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=529957774622191>

The Story of the Root Children by Sibylle Von Olfers

This is a classic story of the changing seasons. The root children spend the winter asleep. When spring comes, they wake, sew themselves new gowns, and clean and paint the beetles and bugs. All summer they play in fields, ponds and meadows before returning in the autumn to Mother Earth, who welcomes them home and puts them to bed once more.

Book [HERE](#)

Maybe Something Beautiful: How Art Transformed a Neighborhood by F. Isabel Campoy, Theresa Howell

What good can a splash of color do in a community of gray? As Mira and her neighbors discover, more than you might ever imagine! Based on the true story of the Urban Art Trail in San Diego, California, *Maybe Something Beautiful* reveals how art can inspire transformation—and how even the smallest artists can accomplish something big.

Book [HERE](#)

Change Sings; A Children's Anthem by Amanda Gorman

Book: [*Change Sings: A Children's Anthem by Amanda Gorman and Loren Long*](#)

Sankofa Read Aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tx-AQQ-6hdI>

[*Sung Aloud version*](#)

Homer's Wings

Tellable Tale: <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/story/homers-wings>