

# The Cost of Doing “What’s Right” - Sacrifices for Change

BBUUC Journey Circle March 2025

## Chalice Lighting

May we know once again that we are not isolated beings, but  
connected, in mystery and miracle,  
to the universe, to this community and to each other.

**Check-in:** What is most on your mind today?

### **Opening Reading**

1. "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good people to do nothing." – attributed to Edmund Burke
2. "If there is no struggle, there is no progress." – Frederick Douglass
3. "A hero is someone who understands the responsibility that comes with their freedom." – Bob Dylan
4. "A sacrifice to be real must cost, must hurt, and must empty ourselves." - Mother Teresa
5. "I'm trying to maintain a little more life-balance and I'm afraid that's just not in my bandwidth right now." - anonymous BBUUC member
6. "Doing the right thing is its own reward, but let's be honest—sometimes a little pizza afterward helps." — *Unknown*

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### **Topic Exploration**

Our newly adopted Unitarian Universalist (UU) Shared Values call us to action: to actively protect our Earth, to dismantle racism and all forms of oppression and to build and sustain fully accessible and inclusive communities. However, living by our values—both our UU principles and personal convictions—often requires sacrifice.

Change is difficult. Whether in personal life, within institutions, or across society, doing the right thing often comes with a cost. History reminds us that change-makers—abolitionists, civil rights leaders, environmentalists, and whistleblowers—have faced rejection, loss, and even danger. On a smaller scale, our everyday choices can also require sacrifice: financial, social, or personal.

At times, living ethically means losing convenience, paying more, or stepping away from spaces that don't align with our values. Yet, the cost of inaction can be far greater. The question we each must ask ourselves is: "What are we willing to risk for the sake of doing what is right? And how do we weigh that against the cost of inaction?"

## **Discussion: Three Simple Sacrifices to “Do What’s Right” Right Now – Why might these be difficult for some?**

1. **Boycott Facebook** – Protest Meta’s choice to stop fact-checking and its political contributions. The cost? Losing easy connection with friends, family, and communities.
2. **Boycott Amazon & Prime** – Challenge unfair labor practices and corporate monopolization. The cost? Giving up fast deliveries, vast product selections, and Prime entertainment.
3. **Shop Local & Buy Ethical** – Support small businesses and eco-friendly products. The cost? Potentially higher prices, fewer options, and less convenience.

## **Questions / Sharing**

1. Can you think of a time in your own life when you had to struggle or sacrifice something in order to stand up for what you believed in? What happened, and how did you feel about it afterward?
2. Is there something you believe is the "right thing" to do but hesitate because the sacrifice feels too great?
3. Why do people resist change, even when they acknowledge that it is necessary?
4. What historical or contemporary figures do you admire for their willingness to sacrifice for what is right? What can we learn from them?
5. How do we balance the need for change with the personal cost that often comes with it? Is there a limit to what one should sacrifice?
6. What are some ways we can support each other in times when doing the right thing is difficult?

## **Closing Reading**

“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.”

- Clarissa Pinkola Estés

**Check-out and reflections on today’s session:** Please express any closing thoughts about today’s topic or the process of today’s session.

## **Extinguish the Chalice**

We extinguish this flame but not the light of truth,  
The warmth of community, or the fire of commitment.  
These we carry in our hearts until we are together again.