

Preparation for G176 -Powerful Beyond Measure

"Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, "Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous?" Actually, who are you not to be? Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We are all meant to shine, as children do. We are born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us; it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others."

--Marianne Williamson

Questions:

1. What issues in your life – either personal or social – have you cared about deeply? Why? How have you come to care about them? What is the story behind your caring?
2. On which of these issues have you moved to the next step of taking some sort of action? And which of these did you not act on, despite caring about them? What were the reasons you acted on those you did and didn't act on those you didn't? Is there a defining distinction you can recognize?
3. "Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure." How do you "fear" your own power? Why do you fear it? How does it impact your ability to be an agent of change in your personal and public life?
4. How has action been important to your sense of spirituality? Have you felt a difference between times when you've talked about your beliefs and values and times when you've acted on them? What differences have you felt?
5. Read over the PACT organizing principles on the back of this prep. Reflect on the ones that resonate with you.

PACT at First Unitarian Church



PACT provides leadership training that teaches people the skills to exercise a powerful voice in the public arena through a broad-based organization. Volunteer leaders learn to have substantive conversations with their neighbors, determine common problems, conduct research on the causes of those problems, negotiate solutions with elected officials, and establish long-term accountability with elected officials.

1:1 Listening Campaign: In the summer of 2004, members of First Unitarian conducted over 170 one-to-one visits with fellow members. In these visits, members listened to each other's ideas about the church and their concerns about the local community. From this campaign, two top community concerns emerged: Education and the Third Street Community Center (TSCC).

Research: Combining Education and the TSCC, First Unitarian decided to focus on After School programs in San Jose. Over the past year, the PACT Local Organizing Committee (LOC) at First Unitarian met with principals, teachers, After School program coordinators, school district officials, education reform experts, and elected officials. The LOC gradually narrowed down its focus to more specific reforms that it felt could be made to improve the quality of After School programs in San Jose. *The LOC will be moving to take clear action to implement these reforms in the coming months.*

PACT Organizing Principles

ACTION DEVELOPMENT

- The action is the reaction.
- Relationships are reciprocal.

POWER

- Power is the ability to act.
- Power is in the relationship.
- Who do you love?
- Power is developed locally.

ISSUE DEVELOPMENT

- Organizing is about people; people are about issues.
- The greater distance you are from the problem the more you can philosophize about it.
- Push a problem you get the issue, push the issue, you get the values.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

- Never do for others what they could do for themselves.
- People can't be held responsible for what they don't understand.
- When in doubt, do one-to-ones.
- Take people from where they are not from where you want them to be.
- Empowerment is developmental.
- If people can't say no, what good is their yes.
- Leaders have followers.
- Organizers teach leaders; leaders organize.
- Challenge deepens relationships.
- The first revolution is internal.
- Change involves tension.
- People learn through their own experiences.