

# LFD NEWSLETTER

## Keeping the Vultures at Bay

from the COA Handbook for Congregations by Sarah Gibb Millspaugh, Hndt 4

Just recently our middle grades class in our Coming of Age program, discussed the following article. I want to share it with you as a way to remind you about the personal connection of our first principle “inherent worth and dignity” and how it applies to your own life too. Remember, you too are worthy of love and respect. I wonder how many of us thought about it in this way.

Self put-downs are like vultures, Vultures are birds of prey, like eagles or hawks, but vultures do not hunt for strong or lively animals. Instead, they look for animals that are weak, helpless, or even dead. Then they swoop in and inflict their damage, increasing the pain and suffering of those creatures who are already hurt. Self put-downs are like this. When we experience sadness, pain and disappointment, we are already hurting. But then if we let the vulture of the self put-down come-in—telling us we’re stupid, lazy, ugly or no good—the vulture inflicts more sadness, pain, and disappointment, and we are hurt very deeply. Because one vulture has picked on us, we are weaker and more helpless.

However it does not stop there: Vultures love weakness and helplessness. So after one visit, the vultures start to circle around us. More and more of them swoop down—“idiot!” “Loser!” “Freak!” –and do their damage. Soon after, sense of self-worth is lying on the ground in shreds and tatters.

Following these suggestions can help you make the vultures fly away:

- Remind yourself that you have inherent worth and dignity and are worthy of love and respect. UU’ism affirms this.
- Learn to tell the difference between a put-down that has some grain of helpfulness and a put-down that just makes you feel bad. If you put yourself down for being lazy about chores, there is probably something you can do about that: You can pay attention to your chores. Labeling yourself as “lazy” never helps the matter. Put-downs like “I’m so stupid” are never helpful; they just hurt.
- Develop some good comebacks. This way, if you put yourself down, you can also reply with a more affirming statement. For example, if you put yourself down for being clumsy, you can say, “Actually, I have pretty good coordination. I am not perfect, but 95% of the time I do just fine.” If you call yourself stupid, you can say to yourself, “I’m pretty smart about most things. Sometimes I mess up, but everybody does at some time or another. I’ll learn from this experience so I can do better next time.”

Vultures do not like it when we show understanding and compassion to ourselves. Every time we follow the suggestions above, we make them fly farther and farther away from us. The stronger we get, the fewer vultures we have hovering around our heads.

Sidney Simon, *Vulture: A Modern Allegory on the Art of Putting Oneself Down*

## Covenant Group News



Our spiritual theme for the month of **November & December** is “Call to Vision.”

We will read and discuss the words from Rev. Theresa Soto - “**Bring your broken hallelujah here**” and introduce the poem, “**Let America Be America Again.**” that Langston Hughes wrote in 1935, during the Depression. The poet was a leader of the Harlem Renaissance, which lifted up cultural expressions of Black people in the U.S. who had been part of the Great Migration from the South to Northeastern and Midwestern cities. Invite the group to hear, through the poem, the dissonance between U.S. American ideals and the actual experiences of those people on the margins.

Hughes’ poem offers hope, but it also offers a portrait of our country that has fallen short of its ideals. During these two months we will respond to questions that ask us:

To think of the United States today, and share what makes you angry, sad, or ashamed.

Share something about our country that is bringing you hope, encouragement, and possible joy.

What constitutes a “great” America to you?

What words and images from the Hughes poem speak to a vision you have for our country?

## Adult Education

Adult Education *continued...*

### Bystander Training

**Facilitator:** Cory Ness

**Date:** Wednesday, November 15, 2017

**Time:** 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

**Location:** UUCSV Library

Whether you are an introvert or an extrovert, bystander training empowers participants to intervene in (and prevent) potentially harmful situations. Stepping in to assist another person that is experiencing harm or abuse is an important part of helping and supporting people in our community. Join us for a two-hour training where we will discuss exactly what is a bystander, why people do not act, how to help if someone is being harassed and the 4'D's. Don't know the 4'D's, join us to find out.

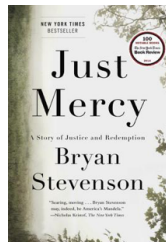
### Book Club - Just Mercy:

A Story of Justice and Redemption by Bryan Stevenson

**Facilitator(s):** Cory

**NEW Date & Time:**

Thursday, December 7th @  
1:30 p.m.. in UUCSV Library



A powerful true story about the potential for mercy to redeem us, and a clarion call to fix our broken system of justice—from one of the most brilliant and influential lawyers of our time.

### SoulCollage®

**Facilitators:** Cory & Ashley Ness

**Date:** Saturday, January 13, 2018

**Time:** 1:00 p.m. – 5 p.m.

**Location:** UUCSV Narthex & Library

**Cost:** \$10/person includes all supplies

Originated by Seena Frost, SoulCollage® is a process for accessing your intuition and creating an incredible deck of cards with deep personal meaning that will help you with life's questions and transitions.

**For more information contact:**

**Cory Ness, Director of Religious Education  
at 717-487-8036 or corythedre@gmail.com**



Join **Cory Ness** and **Marie Francis** as we co-facilitate **SAFETY PIN BOX BOOTCAMP**.

We will begin the 6 sessions on **Sunday, February 4<sup>th</sup> – March 25<sup>th</sup> @ 9 a.m. at the UUCSV**.

The cost is **\$54 per attendee** for the entire **6 sessions**. The money supports **Black Women Being**, which pays out scholarships to assist Black women in community leadership roles.

*If you are interested and can commit to register and/or pay a scholarship for another individual to attend, that will help us in planning and purchasing the curriculum.*

**Sign up is in the Narthex on the LFD Counter. Last day for sign up is January 7.** You can write a check to UUCSV and mark it for SPB Bootcamp.

*Registration will be refunded if we do not have enough interest for the program.*

Below are links to informative videos about the **SPB Bootcamp** and **Black Women Being**:

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=3AD3mG0Vjho>

or google/Safety Pin Box presents #SPBBootcamp - for Groups!

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=QkEgAOgjrQ>

or google/Safety Pin Box presents Black Women Being

### Special Fiber Art Project

You are invited to discuss the beautification of the UUCSV Narthex through fiber art. If you have a love of **design, creation, and construction** with fiber art we want you to attend a meeting on Sunday, November 26 at 9:30 a.m. in the church library.

### Winter Holiday R.E.sources

You are invited to pick up the **Winter Holiday R.E.sources** located in the Narthex on the LFD Counter and read the booklet Cory compiled. As our winter holiday season quickly unfolds, I hope you find these resources helpful in navigating our holidays with a joyful and peaceful heart.

Cory tried to include something for everybody and hopes this resource will in some way add a deeper richness to the time you and your family spend together. Enjoy.