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Thursday, June 29, 1995

Dear Robert,

I realize that this is something of a long-shot, but it may still be worth a good try.

I would you to arrange a speaking trip to Madison, putting as many opportunities together as possible in a two or three day period.

I have not set any particular time for this visit. So I will work around whatever seems best for the UU organizations in Madison.

Enclosed you have copies of my sermon list, adult education list, and college student and young adult list. There is also a pink sheet on events to be co-sponsored by Channing-Murray and some other campus group, perhaps something like a student union or other organization that invites speakers to campus to speak on subjects of interest to a wide range of students.

Co-sponsored events have worked well in Minneapolis, drawing students who would never think of attending a group sponsored by the University Unitarian Universalists. We have co-sponsored events with the Minneapolis Union, the Students Committee for Bio-medical Ethics, and with other religious groups.

The first step is to see which (if any) of the local UU groups would like to invite me to speak or lead a workshop. This is the purpose of the enclosed materials. If one responds, that can be used as a lead-in for others to take advantage of my presence in the city that week-end. (It could be any time during the next year.)

I hope starting now will allow these suggestions to get into the hands of planning committees who are responsible for inviting guest speakers as they begin their work for the coming year, 1995-96.

Please use whatever methods you think best for getting this information into the hands of the most appropriate people in each of the UU groups.

And if you can think of other approaches that I ought to try, please let me know.

Thanks,



Introducing James Park

BACKGROUND

James Park grew up in Minneapolis, where he attended public school and the University of Minnesota, where he earned a Bachelor of Arts degree (philosophy and humanities).

He also holds a Master of Divinity degree from Union Theological Seminary in New York City. (Thesis subject: Jean-Paul Sartre: "How is a Sartrean Theology Possible?")

For two years he was Methodist Campus Minister to Carleton and St. Olaf Colleges in Northfield, Minnesota, serving two rural parishes at the same time.

Since leaving that post, he has been living a free-lance life in Minneapolis, teaching in various adult education programs, writing, and publishing.

PUBLICATIONS

He is the author of 6 books, totaling 888 pages, including such titles as:

Love Among Authentic Persons	
Becoming More Authentic: The Positive Side of Existentialism	(complete
Capacities of the Human Spirit: Spirituality for Humanists	booklist
Romans: An Existential Interpretation	available)

His largest book, written and revised over a period of more than 20 years, is **Our Existential Predicament: Loneliness, Depression, Anxiety, and Death**. Besides the four inward dilemmas mentioned in the sub-title, it includes chapters on: absurdity, meaninglessness, the existential void, inward splitting, guilt, despair, and insecurity.

UNITARIAN-UNIVERSALIST CONNECTIONS

Since 1977 he has been offering adult education classes at the First Unitarian Society of Minneapolis. He has been a member since 1980.

For seven years in the late 80s and early 90s he was a paid staff member of the Minnesota Unitarian Universalist Campus Ministries. In recent years he has been a volunteer staff member and continues to serve on the MUUCM Board of Directors.

LIFE-STYLE

James Park describes himself as an existential philosopher. He advocates voluntary loving relationships, voluntary families, voluntary poverty, and voluntary death.

He spends about 20 hours a week reading serious books, completing about 100 books a year. He has organized his notes on reading into 65 subject areas and sub-divisions. The largest of these illustrate his main intellectual interests: Women's Studies (110 books), Love (77), Sex (71), Marriage (56), Men's Studies (29), Death (66), Right to Die (80), Medical Ethics (46), Cancer (21), Hospice & Terminal Care (21), Existentialism (34), Authenticity (24), and Cults (74).

He has published bibliographies of the best books in the following areas: Science & Religion; Critiques of "New Age" Thinking; The Right to Die; Preparing for Death; Critiques of Romantic Love; Gender; Sex-Scripts; & Sexual Exploitation by Professionals.

For the last quarter century, he has been offering adult education classes thru a wide variety of organizations. His current list of 66 classes is divided into 5 areas: (1) Spirituality & Religion; (2) Personal Growth & Life-Styles; (3) Love, Sex, & Gender; (4) Existential Philosophy, Psychology, & Literature; and (5) Death and Dying. (A complete list of courses is available.)

In 1993-94 he took a year off for treatment of colon cancer, a life-threatening crisis that made his work in death and dying more immediate and practical.

Now back to his normal life, he spends his time thinking, writing, and preaching. (He periodically revises his list of Top 40 Sermon Subjects. He speaks extemporaneously, without notes or manuscript. Quote: "If I can't remember what I have to say, how can I expect you to remember it?")

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Fourth Edition, 1995

Top 40 Sermon Subjects by James Park

How to use this list: All subjects can be adjusted to suit your particular group.
 Mark the sermons you would most like to hear. A slash (/) indicates an alternative title.
 If this were the table of contents of a magazine, which articles would you read first?
 The sermon code is explained on the other side of this sheet.

Medical Ethics and Death

	<i>sermon code</i>
1. Living Authentically in the Shadow of Death: Preparing to Die is Preparing to Live	
2. How Having Cancer Has Changed My Life	D
3. The Right to Die: Voluntary Death and Mercy Death / And a Time to Die: Voluntary Death and Mercy Death in the 21st Century	D N
4. Ten Safeguards for Life-Ending Decisions	D N
5. Three Differences between Suicide and Voluntary Death	D N
6. The One-Month-Less Club: Live Well Now and Omit the Last Month	D N
7. Your 'Living Will': Decide Your Medical Ethics and Write Your Advance Directive	D
8. When is a Person? Pre-Persons and Former Persons	D N
9. The Living Cadaver: Medical Uses of Permanently Unconscious Bodies	D N
10. Twelve Ways to Reduce Health-Care Costs	D N
11. Scientific and Philosophical Questions about Life after Death	C D

Religion and Spirituality

12. Lingering Questions about Our Childhood Religious Beliefs	C D O
13. Emerging (or Recovering) from Conventional Religious Beliefs	C D O
14. An Existential Interpretation of Christian Mythology: Demythologizing the New Testament	C O
15. Christmas without Angels: How Did the Birth-of-Christ Narratives Arise?	C N O
16. The Logic of Belief: Science/Pseudo-Science, Critical Inwardness/Dogma	C
17. From Rule-Morality to Rational Ethics: Let's-Debate the Ten Commandments	C D
18. A Faith without Illusions: A Philosophy without Superstition	C D O
19. A Critique of Guilt-Based Religions	C D O
20. Spirituality for Humanists: Six Capacities of Our Human Spirits / Spirituality without Gods	D O
21. Five Disciplines for Spiritual Growth	

Our Existential Predicament

22. Introducing Existential Spirituality: Kierkegaard, Bultmann, Tillich	
23. Our Existential Predicament and Its Solution: Spiritual Reasons for Suicide	
24. The Loneliness of Our Human Spirits: Deeper than the Reach of Love	
25. Existential Guilt: A Guilt Deeper than Morality	C D
26. Existential Anxiety: <i>Angst</i> : Being Afraid of the Nothing	D
27. Being Depressed in Spirit: Deeper than Psychological Depression	D
28. An Existential Understanding of Death: A Phenomenology of Ontological Anxiety	

Life Choices and Personal Growth

29. Keeping Journals: Personal, Spiritual, Relationship	D
30. Becoming More Authentic: The Positive Side of Existentialism	
31. Simplify, Simplify: The Advantages of Voluntary Poverty	D N
32. Turning Points in the Second Half of Life	D
33. New Meanings for the Second Half of Life: Re-Creating Ourselves after Children and Work	D

More Sermon Subjects by James Park

Loving Relationships

sermon code

- | | | | |
|-----|--|---|---|
| 34. | Romantic Love is a Hoax! Exploring Emotional Programming | D | N |
| 35. | Love Among Authentic Persons | D | |
| 36. | Loving without Needing:
Seven Preconceived Needs and How to Transcend Them | D | |
| 37. | From Clinging Dependence to Loving Authentically: 21 Ways for Love to Grow | | |
| 38. | Romantic Jealousy: Cause and Prevention | D | |
| 39. | Loving without Marrying: Create Your Own Unique Relationship /
Write Your Own Script for Loving | | |
| 40. | Imprinted Sex-Fantasies: A New Theory of Human Sexuality | D | N |
| 41. | I-It Sex versus I-Thou Sex / Sexuality and Spirituality | D | |
| 42. | A New Way of Loving: Non-Comprehensive Relationships | D | |
| 43. | I AM a Women's Libber--But I'm Not a Woman!
Men's Place in the Women's Movement | D | N |
| 44. | Masculinity/Femininity: Loving Beyond our Gender-Personalities | D | N |

Public Policy Issues

- | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|
| 45. | Us and Them: Transcending Tribal Thinking | D | |
| 46. | Enforcing Disarmament: A World Peace Force of Women | D | |
| 47. | Let's License Parents--And Solve Many Problems at Once | D | N |
| 48. | To What Degree Are We Still Racists? | D | |
| 49. | Similarities between Religious Cults and Street Gangs | D | |
| 50. | The War on Drugs: The New Prohibition? | D | N |
| 51. | Prison Reform: 3 Kinds of Sentences and 10 Levels of Prison | D | N |
| 52. | The Reversible Income Tax: Replacing Social Security, Welfare, & Deductions | D | N |

Sermon Code:

- C. Christian.** Sermons for people with significant connections with the Christian tradition, helping them to make the transition from Christian roots to UUism.
- D. Discussion.** Subjects that lend themselves especially well to group discussion, panels, etc. We all have experiences, thoughts, questions, and stories to share on these themes.
- N. Newsworthy.** These subjects are so current and perhaps controversial that the local news media might be invited to cover the event. (Does your congregation want such additional publicity?)
- O. Outreach.** Sermons especially appropriate for a Sunday on which you intend to *advertise for visitors* from the general public, people who have never before attended a UU service. These sermons presuppose no previous knowledge of UU thinking or traditions. And they address subjects already alive in the minds of the people on the verge of becoming UUs.

To arrange a talk, sermon, panel, etc. on any of these themes (or others you suggest), call or write:

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Fifth Edition, 1995

Adult Education Classes by James Park

Over the last quarter century, I have led over 200 classes for adults, in a wide variety of settings. Offering such courses has been the most consistent dimension of my life. From my files of course descriptions, I have created the following list of seminars, workshops, and classes I am still interested in offering. These classes usually meet once-a-week in the evening, with 10-20 people, lasting 4-6 weeks. But they can easily be adapted to many other formats: retreats for a weekend or a week; day-long workshops; or brief presentations interspersed with questions and answers. All of them include **maximum discussion among the participants**. My most popular classes have alternative titles (separated by slashes/). I welcome co-facilitators who wish to create new possibilities around related themes. To arrange any of the following classes, call or write: James Park, 1816 Stevens Ave. So., #25, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55403-3822. Phone: (612) 871-PARK. E-mail: PARKx032@GOLD.TC.UMN.EDU. Full course descriptions are available.

Spirituality & Religion

1. Spirituality for Humanists: Six Capacities of Our Human Spirits
/ Listening to Our Depths / Seminar for Persons of Spirit
/ Sharing Our Spirits: Disclosing Our Depths
2. Introducing Existential Spirituality: Kierkegaard, Bultmann, Tillich
3. Our Existential Predicament and Beyond
4. Spiritual Loneliness, Absurdity, Insecurity, & Despair
5. Existential Loneliness & Depression: Finding Fulfillment and Joy
6. Existential Anxiety: *Angst*
7. Existential Anxiety and other Dimensions of Our Existential Predicament
8. Seeking Completeness and Joy: Spiritual Growth for Humanists
9. Obstacles to Existential Freedom
10. Spiritual Reasons for Suicide
11. Lingered Questions about Our Childhood Religious Beliefs
12. Recovering from Orthodox Religious Beliefs
13. Exploring New Testament Mythology / Romans Demythologized: An Existential Interpretation / An Existential Interpretation of Paul's Letter to the Romans
14. Four Dialogues on Religious Themes (selected from Top 40 Sermon Subjects)

Personal Growth & New Life-Styles

15. Becoming More Authentic: The Positive Side of Existentialism
/ In Quest of Authenticity / Self-Actualization Seminar
16. Creating a Community of Authentic Persons
17. Sharing for Personal Growth
18. Authenticity for Young Adults / Looking for the Meaning of Life
/ Creating Your Philosophy of Life
19. Alternative Vocations and Voluntary Poverty / Right Livelihoods and Low-Impact
Life-Styles: A New Philosophy of Earning and Spending / Workaholic Recovery
20. Practical Simplicity: The Advantages of Voluntary Poverty
/ How I Live on \$100 a Month (plus housing and health care):
The Philosophy and Practice of Voluntary Poverty
21. Authenticity in the Middle of Life and Beyond
22. Surviving Your 'Mid-Life Crisis'
23. Authenticity for Women
24. New Meanings for the Second Half of Life:
Re-Creating Ourselves after Children and Work

more Adult Education Classes by James Park

Love, Sex, and Gender

25. Love Among Authentic Persons
26. Romantic Love is a Hoax! / Getting Off the Roller-Coaster of Romance
27. How to Avoid Seduction: Recognizing the Romantic Predator
28. Loving without Needing: 7 Preconceived Needs and How to Transcend Them
29. 21 Ways for Love to Grow: From Dependent Toward Authentic
30. Romantic Jealousy: Cause and Prevention
31. Multiple Loving without Jealousy
32. Masculinity/Femininity: Loving Beyond Our Gender Personalities
33. Androgyny: The Best of Both Genders
34. Imprinted Sex-Scripts: A New Theory of Sexual Response / The Sex-Script Hypothesis: Toward a Comprehensive Theory of Human Sexuality
35. Planning to Marry? Why? / Marriage: For and Against
36. Voluntary Parenthood: Should We Have (More) Children?
37. Alternatives to Marriage: Write Your Own Relationship Contract
38. Feminism and Marriage: Can a Liberated Woman Be Married? / The End of Marriage: The Coming Feminist Revolution
39. The End of Love: Letting Go of Harmful Relationships / Recovering from Love Gone Bad
40. Making Creative Transitions: Facing Times of Change / Turning Points
41. Dialogue of the Sexes: What Women Like/Dislike about Men; What Men Like/Dislike about Women
42. Transcending Machismo: Positive Masculinity Workshop
43. Feminist Studies for Men
44. Readings in Men's Liberation
45. 'Love' Addictions: Romance, Sex, Relationships
46. Singles Studies: The Pros and Cons of Life without Marriage
47. New Patterns for Voluntary Families
48. Creating Your Philosophy of Loving / Philosophies of Loving

Existential Philosophy, Psychology, & Literature

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|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 49. Introduction to Existentialism | 50. Introduction to Kierkegaard |
| 51. Existential Fiction | 52. Existential Psychology |
| 53. Introduction to Anti-Psychiatry | 54. Paranormal Phenomena |
| 55. Philosophy and Science | |

Death & Dying

56. Dialogues on Death
57. 'Living Will' Workshop: Write Your Own Advance Directive for Medical Care
58. Preparing for Death: Five Ways to Get Ready
59. Working toward the Right to Die
60. Ten Safeguards for Life-Ending Decisions: Withdrawing Life-Supports, Voluntary Death, and Mercy Death
61. When Is a Person? Pre-Persons and Former Persons
62. Appropriate Care for Alzheimer's Patients and Others with Mental Limitations
63. The Living Cadaver: Medical Uses for Permanently Unconscious Bodies
64. An Existential Understanding of Death or A Phenomenology of Ontological Anxiety
65. Living with Life-Threatening Diseases
66. Is There Life After Death? Scientific and Philosophical Questions

Third Edition, 1995

PROGRAMS FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS AND OTHER YOUNG ADULTS

by James Park

Staff member of the Minnesota Unitarian Universalists Campus Ministries

LOVING RELATIONSHIPS

1. Romantic Love is a Hoax!
the roots of the romantic tradition; emotional programming to 'fall in love'
2. A New Way of Loving: Non-Comprehensive Relationships
from one all-purpose relationship to several open relationships
3. Loving without Needing: Seven Preconceived Needs and How to Transcend Them
security, approval, romance, sex, affection, communication, and structure
4. 21 Ways for Love to Grow: From Dependent toward Authentic
with a relationship score-sheet based on Brenda Schaeffer's thought
5. 'Love' Addictions: Romance, Sex, Relationships
obsessive patterns and what to do about them
6. Romantic Jealousy: Cause and Prevention
comparison, competition, and the fear of being replaced; becoming unique
7. Loving without Marrying: Alternatives to Wedlock
marriage is a cultural institution not suited to everyone; new possibilities
8. Androgyny: The Best of Both Genders
Where are you on the gender-pattern chart? How would you like to change?
9. Imprinted Sex-Fantasies: A New Theory of Human Sexuality
Before age 20 we are imprinted with 'sex-scripts' that control our responses.

PERSONAL GROWTH AND LIFE-CHOICES

10. Becoming More Authentic: The Positive Side of Existentialism
from conformity to autonomy, transcending enculturation, inventing our meanings
11. How I Live on \$100/Month (+ housing & health care): Advantages of Voluntary Poverty
some ideas for living cheaply; the philosophy behind simple living
12. Intentional Pregnancy: Reasons For and Against Having (More) Children
about 30 reasons people give for having children and about 10 against

WORLD PEACE AND DISARMAMENT

13. The Long View: World Disarmament Day and Beyond
when 70-80% of the world's people want to disarm, it will come; 21st century?
14. Enforcing Disarmament: A World Peace Force of Women
to make sure no one defies the ban on armaments and military forces

RELIGION AND SPIRITUALITY

15. Spirituality for Humanists: Six Capacities of Our Human Spirits
self-transcendence, freedom, creativity, love, anxiety, and joy
16. Lingering Questions about Childhood Religious Beliefs
What parts of what we were taught are 'true' (if any)?
17. A Critique of "New Age" Spirituality
pop spirituality says believe whatever makes you feel good; a better test?
18. The Dynamics of Belief: Example Astrology
If UU's don't accept religious dogma, why do so many believe in astrology?
19. Spiritual Reasons for Suicide
spiritual meaninglessness, depression, despair, loneliness, guilt and absurdity

How to use this list: All of these subjects can be adjusted to suit a particular group.

All are well-suited for discussions, panels, workshops, etc. For details, call or write:

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Third edition, 1995