

Common Fire

Leading Lives of Commitment in a Complex World

A LEADER'S GUIDE

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Common Fire: Leading Lives of Commitment in a Complex World

by Laurent A. Parks Daloz, Cheryl H. Keen, James P. Keen and Sharon Daloz Parks
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An accompanying *Common Fire* video is available from Whidbey Institute.
For ordering information, call 1-360-341-1884.

Introduction

In a world where challenges are pressing and often overwhelming, how can we kindle a sense of hope that we can make a difference and create a positive future for all of us? When more and more people seem to be looking out for themselves and their own kind, how do we nourish the human potential for generosity and concern for the common good? Where life seems to grow ever more fragmented and isolating, how can we connect with others and re-create a sense of a just and loving community?

In the years since *Common Fire* was published, it has offered hopeful answers to these questions for thousands of people. Many have read and reflected on the book alone, wishing they might talk with others about it. The book affords a unique opportunity for groups who wish to refresh their hope, purpose and commitments.

This guide is designed for leaders of groups in Unitarian Universalist congregations working with the text of *Common Fire*. We hope that the discussions that emerge will touch the heart, inform the mind, and build a sense of companionship for shared work. And we hope that those who share a spiritual vocabulary as well as those who are uncomfortable with spiritual language will find common ground here in the search for more meaningful lives and work.

The main goal of this program is to engage the participants in a productive, reflective dialogue about purpose and meaning in their lives, particularly about how they can care more fully for the common good. In addition, it is our hope that the dialogues will foster greater commitments within congregations, help to create a “common space” in congregations that is more diverse and inclusive, and inspire participants as they develop workable strategies for practicing commitment.

Getting Started

Promote the Program

Many congregations have a number of resources for publicizing new programs in the community. It is always a good idea to create flyers and post notices on bulletin boards and in newsletters. Announcements could also be made during meetings and services. You might consider targeting specific groups to embark on this journey. For example, your congregation's social justice committee might use the program to deepen commitments and to strengthen connections between members. Some congregations find success in promoting new programs by organizing "Kick-off Sundays," which include a sermon by a minister or lay leader about a topic related to the program.

Adjust the Format as Needed

This program is designed to be completed in 3 sessions, each of which should last about 2 1/2 hours, but can be adapted to shorter sessions or even to 1 session. We recommend a group size of no more than 12 people. For some discussions, you might choose to separate into pairs or groups of 3-4 so that everyone has a chance to answer questions in depth. Still, it is important for the group to engage as a whole, even if only for an opening or closing discussion.

Prepare Materials for Each Session

Before each session, make enough photocopies of the handouts for all of the participants. Be sure to give HANDOUT 1 to each participant *before the first session*. Also, gather materials needed for the exercises. Generally, the sessions call for newsprint, paper, pens, markers and masking tape, but in Session II, the group will create an altar that you will focus on during the discussion of Chapter 5. Materials needed for this session include cloth, chalice, light and tables or boxes to serve as platforms for the altar. (See Session I, "Preparation for the Next Session" and Session II, "Create an Altar.")

Always bring a copy of the book to use as a reference during your discussions. Also, you might ask volunteers to provide snacks or beverages for session breaks.

Provide a Comfortable, Safe Space

The physical space where you meet can affect the quality of dialogue in profound ways. Insofar as possible, create a space that welcomes relaxed, thoughtful conversation—one that reflects the qualities of a warm home rather than a classroom. Sitting in a circle on comfortable chairs rather than in rows facing a leader is a good way to start. Some discussions will be carried out in small groups (3-4 people), so it is important to find a space that will enable uninterrupted discussion for small groups as well as for the larger group. Indirect, incandescent lighting rather than harsh or florescent lights can set a warmer tone.

Act as a Facilitator

As the group leader, your task is not so much to “teach” as to foster and create a space for good conversation that will offer participants concrete ideas for next steps and new connections with others who share their commitments. Most people approach *Common Fire* asking, “Am I one of these people?” We hope that you will help them to answer, “Yes, at least in part.” You might note that there are millions of people in the U.S. whose lives are represented in the book, including “many in this room.” When readers ask, as they often do, how people were selected for the study, you may refer to the relevant discussion in the book (pp. 5-8; 243-247).

Create a Supportive Emotional Tone

People need to feel safe to express their deeper, tentative and sometimes more tender feelings as they share experiences. This is an important time to encourage participants to practice listening more closely, responding thoughtfully, and exercising mutual regard for one another. Your role as leader is to ensure that it is safe for participants to share freely by modeling this way of being and encouraging participants to do the same.

Establish Ground Rules

We suggest that the group draft a set of ground rules during the first meeting, post them on newsprint, and review them at the beginning of each session. If all participants give input, everyone will be accountable to the group’s needs. You might initiate the process by suggesting such guidelines as: personal stories should remain confidential (nothing should be shared outside of the group); everyone should have a chance to speak; participants must stay on track with the conversation; participants should speak in the first person and not speak for others; cell phones and pagers should be turned off; and whatever else would allow the group to feel comfortable.

Balance Direction with Responsiveness

As a discussion leader, it is important to establish a balance between too much control on the one hand and too little direction on the other. For the most part, you will be working with concerns, questions, and stories that people bring to the group that can cause the discussion to veer constantly. For this reason, it will be important to be responsive in your leadership and to draw people out, yet keep the conversation on track.

Enable Shared Participation

Invariably, some people in the group will be more vocal than others. If a few people end up dominating the conversation, you might discuss it in a general way with the group or pull the more voluble members to the side to speak to them directly. It can also be of value to remind the group that it is all right to be silent together, or simply to open a space for those who have not spoken to do so if they wish.

Use People's Own Experience

Adults often prefer to include their own experience of success and disappointment, loss, frustration, or failure as they reflect on new ideas. Typically, participants will recognize themselves in some of the people in the book. This can be a good way for some to enter into the discussion, but others may feel very modest about their commitments. It is important to affirm that everyone's life is distinctive—that each person brings something valuable to the discussion and to the wider community. We believe it is best to provide ample opportunity for participants to reflect on their own experience in light of the themes of the book. This is particularly valuable as a way to ground the discussion when it threatens to become too abstract.

Announce Reading Assignments

Leave time aside to prepare participants for upcoming sessions. Announce the chapters to be covered in each session: Session I, Chapters 1-2; Session II, Chapters 3-5 and the Interludes (optional), Session III, Chapters 6-7 and the Epilogue. Ask participants to reflect on the pre-discussion questions on HANDOUT 1 prior to each session. Also, tell participants that you will ask them to bring something that supports them in their commitments (a song, story, image, symbol, poem, photo, etc.) for an altar that the group will create during Session II.

Evaluate the Program

Two evaluation forms are provided in the last pages of this guide. Participant Evaluation Forms should be distributed at the end of the final session so participants can give feedback to group leaders. (Note that questions 7 and 8 on the form give leaders a chance to pose their own questions to participants.) Also, be sure to send Beacon Press your completed Leader Evaluation Form. We are striving to meet the program needs of UU congregations, and your continued feedback and suggestions will bring us a long way toward reaching our goal. We really want to hear from you!

Unitarian Universalist Principles and Purposes

The *Common Fire* discussion program upholds the Principles and Purposes of the UUA in that:

- by valuing all efforts to give service to community, the program affirms and promotes the worth and dignity of every person;
- through dialogue about social justice and the path toward systemic change, the program affirms and promotes justice, equity and compassion in human relations;
- by exploring ways for individuals and congregations to practice commitment, the program affirms and promotes acceptance of one another and encouragement to spiritual growth in our congregations;
- by encouraging open and honest dialogue, the program affirms and promotes a free and responsible search for truth and meaning;
- by supporting periodic assessments of congregational activity by all members of the community, the program affirms and promotes the right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large;
- by challenging us to rekindle our commitments to the wider world, the program affirms and promotes the goal of world community with peace, liberty and justice for all;
- and finally, by reminding us of the significance of inter-being and community connectedness, the program affirms and promotes respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Materials: Paper, pens, colored markers, newsprint, masking tape, duplicates of HANDOUT 2

Opening and Check-In: (15 min.)

Welcome participants and make sure everyone knows where to find restrooms, water, a telephone, etc. Introduce the program, allowing time for people to ask basic questions. Circulate a sheet of paper and ask everyone to write down their contact information for your records.

Each session will begin with a general check-in. In this first session, participants should introduce themselves and briefly state their expectations for the program.

Ask a volunteer to record on newsprint as participants determine ground rules for participation in this group (see “Getting Started”). Post the rules and review them at the beginning of the next session.

Introduction:

In this session, which covers Chapters 1 and 2, we will explore our ideas about the commons, our relation to it, and how we were oriented to it in our formative years.

■ **Chapter 1**

Connection and Complexity: The Challenge of the New Commons (30 min.)

Use the following questions (pre-discussion questions, HANDOUT 1) to move the group toward defining “the commons” based on their own experiences. Allow the discussion to go on for about 15 minutes.

Where in your daily life do you find “the commons” or anything approaching it? In a sentence or two, what is the nature of your experience? Drawing on your own experience, how does our culture’s commons reflect community values, priorities and issues of control? How has your experience of the commons evolved in your lifetime?

Ask participants to separate into groups of 3-4 people, and allow about 15 minutes for discussion of the following questions:

Did you ever feel like Margo or Raphael when considering service to the community? In what sense might it be “harder to be human than it used to be”?

Give an example of a situation in which people have had conflicting ideas of what constitutes the common good. What efforts brought these situations toward resolution or closure?

At present, how do you view your and/or our congregation's "capacity for connection, for reflective, creative, strategic responses to suffering and tough problems"?

Break: (10 min.)

■ Chapter 2

Community: Becoming at Home in the World (85 min.)

Exercise: Community Mapping

Goals:

To bring awareness to inter-being, interdependence and community as constants in our lives;

To draw attention to how a positive sense of being at home early on affects our sense of trust, agency and confidence that our actions can affect change.

Activity: (15 min.)

Have each participant create a visual depiction of communities—individuals, groups, organizations and locations—that have significantly impacted their lives at one time or another. However they choose to depict their communities, ask participants to make themselves the point of departure. When everyone has finished, post their drawings/diagrams together to reflect the connectedness of this group.

Discussion: (20 min.)

Note similarities/differences in the ways people expressed their ideas, then have participants discuss the following questions in small groups:

Who and/or what made up your community in your early years?

In what ways did your community shape your values, ideas and beliefs?

In what ways did it shape your sense of yourself and your value as a human being?

What else did you gain from your community?

Does anyone stand out as a "threshold person" or any place a "hospitable space" (pp. 52-53)? If so, how did they affect you?

Did values, ideas and beliefs learned from family life and the larger community complement or contradict each other? In what ways?

At what point in your life did your contributions to the community become important to you and for what reasons? How did you contribute in your early years?

How has your sense of community involvement changed over the course of your life?

Break: (10 min.)

Exercise: Recalling a Challenge

Goals:

To bring awareness to the richness that a mentoring relationship brings to a young person;

To encourage participants to recognize opportunities their congregations/communities have to be mentoring environments for young people.

Activity:

Distribute a copy of HANDOUT 2 to each member of the group. Indicate that this is a writing exercise and that participants should not identify themselves on their pieces. Let them know that they should disclose only as much as they are comfortable sharing. Indicate that you will read all responses aloud for discussion, and that it is okay for someone to indicate that she/he does not want her/his response to be read aloud. Also note that it is okay for participants to abstain from writing a response.

Allow about 15 minutes for participants to complete this exercise, and ask them to give you their responses. Read each response aloud, then move on to questions for reflection.

Discussion: (15 min.)

Ask participants what caught their attention as they heard the responses, then ask:

How did supportive/mentoring adults tend to enter the picture in the situations described?

What roles did peers take?

Have you ever mentored anyone? Is there any way that these stories lead you to want to make yourself available as a mentor for a younger person?

What qualities foster a supportive or mentoring relationship between an adult and a younger person?

Preparation for the Next Session: (5 min.)

Ask participants to read Chapters 3, 4, and 5 for the next session and to spend time thinking about the pre-discussion questions for Session II (HANDOUT 1). Note that for the next session, participants should bring an object that represents the source of their courage, love of community, and/or conviction so that the group can create an altar. Objects can be whatever they choose—photos, religious symbols, books, poetry, plants, letters, music, and so forth.

To set the stage for the altar, bring a large cloth or several cloths, as well as a chalice and light. Flowers and other items can also add beauty to the arrangement.

Closing Circle: (5 min.)

Ask participants to join hands and take a moment to reflect on the strength that we gain and lessons that we learn from being and working in community. Invite anyone to share a thought on the subject.

SESSION II

(2 1/2 hours)

Note: Inclusion of the Interludes (optional) in this discussion could add another 40 minutes to the session.

Materials: Cloth, chalice, light and other items to create an altar

Create an Altar:

Before participants arrive, establish a space for the altar. You can construct a two-tiered altar by placing a box (or small table) on top of a larger table. Drape the entire altar with a cloth (or several cloths) so participants can place their items on top. Make the altar area easily accessible so that people can touch the objects. Include the chalice in this setting.

When participants arrive, ask them to place their items on the altar. Let them know that you will focus on the altar in the discussion of Chapter 5.

Check-In: (10 min.)

Review the ground rules. Ask participants to describe something that happened since the last session that may have been influenced by one of the previous discussions.

Introduction:

Session II covers Chapters 3-5 and the two Interludes (optional). In this session, we will investigate how valuing connections across difference, maintaining critical habits of mind and keeping affirmative images before us can help us to hold our commitments.

■ Chapter 3**Compassion: Living Within and Beyond the Tribe (45 min.)**

Take about 15 minutes to discuss the following questions in the large group (pre-discussion questions, HANDOUT 1):

What conditions determine otherness, separation and difference between Joanna Chapman (Jo) and the people she works with? What are Jo's goals in working at the prison?

What images of the prison environment stand out in Jo's story? Do the prisoners have any opportunities to shape their environment? How do they affect people from the "outside"?

Ask participants to separate into groups of 3-4 people to discuss the following questions. Encourage participants to join with people they have yet to work with. Allow about 15 minutes for discussion.

On p. 64, the authors discuss a particular use of the term, "tribe." Think about the tribes in your life. What tribes are you a part of? What tribes do you think of as different from yours? How does one's tribal affiliation influence her/his sense of her/his place in the world?

When you express your care for your community and the wider world, how do you reach across such differences as race, culture, class and gender? What are the conditions and dynamics in society that work against people creating an empathic bond across differences? What are the conditions/dynamics within our congregation?

Reconvene to the large group for final question, allowing about 15 minutes for discussion:

In the context of our congregation, how might we work toward creating opportunity for genuine meeting across various forms of difference?

Break: (10 min.)

■ Interlude (optional)

For the Hundreds of Years that Come After

What elements of mentoring did Jim Jackson receive from the adults who surrounded him?

What were some situations that challenged Roy Matthews in his early years? From what sources did he draw inspiration? How did he transform his faith into action?

What were some lessons that Rosalyn Williams gained from her relationship with Dorothy Height?

■ Chapter 4

Conviction: Developing Critical Habits of Mind (35 min.)

In the large group, take about 10 minutes to discuss the following pre-discussion questions (HANDOUT 1):

How did Sue Drucker's family life contradict some of the old paradigms that were part of her world as she was growing up?

What enabled her to sustain her growing commitment to her work in the face of growing complexity and ambiguity?

Have participants break down into groups of 3-4 people and ask them to discuss the following questions (allow 15 minutes for discussion):

On p. 108, the authors outline basic habits of mind that foster humane, intelligent, constructive responses to complex challenges. How would you rate the practice or awareness of these habits in your interactions? In our congregation's? Give an example of an episode when you have had to call on these resources, either individually or as part of a group.

Reconvene to the large group for final questions (10 minutes):

If "everything is relative," how do you maintain a "moral compass" in your life?

What does "practical wisdom" mean for you in your life and work?

Break: (5 min.)

■ Chapter 5

Courage: A Responsible Imagination (40 min.)

Ask participants to share the meaning behind the pieces that they brought for the altar. Ask how they have gained strength and purpose from their messages or from what the objects represent.

Allow about 25 minutes for this discussion. When everyone has finished, move on to the next question for reflection (15 min.):

American culture bombards us with images, particularly through television and magazines. What efforts can be made to help young people better distinguish experiences and images that promote negative imagining (violence, consumerism, individualism) and those that contribute to a sense of connection, compassion and community?

■ Interlude (optional)

Evansburg

What factors contributed to economic decline in Evansburg, and how did this affect the neighborhood surrounding the old Chickering House?

What efforts did community members make to bring about change? In what ways did they support each other in their transforming work? Who or what fueled their sense of commitment?

On p. 166, Jessica asks, “How can we balance our lives to make sure our families get the time we need?” How well does she answer her own question? How does this issue play out in your own life?

Preparation for the Next Session:

Ask participants to read Chapters 6, 7, and the Epilogue, and to spend time thinking about the pre-discussion questions on HANDOUT 1 for Session III.

Closing Circle: (5 min.)

Ask participants to join hands and to take a moment to look at and connect with each member of the group, using eye contact to acknowledge and appreciate the lessons that everyone is bringing to the group. Note that there is a richness that comes to us through our connections with the past and through our willingness to take risks with each other. Invite anyone to share a brief thought on this subject.

Materials: Duplicates of HANDOUTS 3 and 4, pens

Check-In: (10 min.)

Going around the circle, invite participants to share one thing they'll have to let go of to be in the moment. Ask participants to take a moment to meditate, breathing deeply and bringing themselves fully into the room.

Introduction:

In this final session, which covers Chapters 6, 7 and the Epilogue, we will look at how our personal wounds and/or shortcomings affect our service to community and how our deep sense of fulfillment sustains us. We will end by making commitments to next steps.

■ Chapter 6

Confession: The Struggle with Fallibility (50 min.)

Have participants break down into groups of 3-4 people and ask them to discuss the following questions (35 min.):

As you think back to painful experiences in your own life, how might they have prepared you to express more empathy and compassion for others? Have they led you to your sense of your own calling? If so, how?

In times when you have felt despair about the state of the world, how have you come to a place of renewed hope?

Why is it important to acknowledge and articulate your motivations in pursuing your life of commitment?

If you find that "taboo" motivations (anger, power, need for control, ambition, need to please or to be needed, fear, guilt, perfectionism, etc.) are more dominant at any given point, how do you get yourself back on track?

Reconvene to the large group for the final questions (15 min.):

A number of the people of color interviewed for this study, particularly African Americans, suffered a significant degree of ill health. Is this happening in our community? What efforts can our congregation make to support the health and well-being of people whose life's work is commitment to the community?

Break: (10 min.)

■ Chapter 7

Commitment: The Power of the Double Negative (30 min.)

Exercise: Interviews in Pairs

Have participants pair up in order to discuss the questions below. Allow one person to interview her/his partner for 15 minutes, then have partners switch roles. Note that in the role of “interviewer,” participants may probe more deeply if they need a more complete answer, but they should do so without projecting their own values or biases in the questioning.

Interview Questions:

What thoughts come to mind when you apply the word “commitment” to your own life?

Describe a situation where you have had to speak or act with courage (as described by Rosalyn Williams on pp. 125-131).

Where, with whom, and in what work does your own “heart’s deep gladness” rest?

What “deep hunger” of the world speaks most powerfully to you?

What role does visioning play as you commit yourself in your work for the common good?

What role does our faith community take in helping us sustain our commitments?

Break: (10 min.)

■ Epilogue

Compass Points: The Power of Location and Direction (20 min.)

Exercise: A Journal Connection

Distribute a copy of HANDOUT 3 to each participant.

In this exercise, participants will write journal entries in which they make commitments to next steps. Participants will write out commitments to themselves, to their households, and to their faith community(ies). This exercise expands upon steps described on pp. 217-241. Note to participants that they can continue this exercise on their own for these and other sectors of society in which they are involved. Let participants know that this writing exercise is for personal reflection and not necessarily for group discussion.

Closing Circle: (10 min.)

Ask participants to join hands and call out commitments that they made today, using the statement, “I will...”

Evaluations: (10 min.)

Distribute Participant Evaluation Forms (HANDOUT 4). Ask participants to complete them and return them to you.

For further reading, we recommend:

Community Service and Higher Learning: Explorations of the Caring Self, by Robert A. Rhoads, State University of New York Press, 1997.

Everyday Spiritual Practice, Scott Alexander, ed., Skinner House Books, 1999.

Habits of the Heart: Individualism and Commitment in American Life, by Robert N. Bellah, et al, University of California Press, 1996.

Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation, by Parker J. Palmer, Jossey-Bass, 2000.

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HANDOUT 1

Pre-Discussion Questions

■ SESSION I

Chapter 1

Where in your daily life do you find “the commons” or anything approaching it? What is the nature of your experience? Drawing on your own experience, how does our culture’s commons reflect community values, priorities and issues of control? How has your experience of the commons evolved in your lifetime?

Chapter 2

Who and/or what made up your community in your early years? In what ways did your community shape your values, ideas and beliefs? In what ways did it shape your sense of yourself and your value as a human being? What else did you gain from your community?

■ SESSION II

Chapter 3

What conditions determine otherness, separation and difference between Joanna Chapman (Jo) and the people she works with? What are Jo’s goals in working at the prison? What images of the prison environment stand out in Jo’s story? Do the prisoners have any opportunities to shape their environment? How do they affect people from the “outside”?

Chapter 4

How did Sue Drucker’s family life contradict some of the old paradigms that were part of her world as she was growing up? What enabled her to sustain her growing commitment to her work in the face of growing complexity and ambiguity?

Chapter 5

What is the meaning behind the piece that you are taking for the altar? How have you gained strength and purpose from its message or from what the object represents?

■ SESSION III

Chapter 6

As you think back to painful experiences in your own life, how might they have prepared you to express more empathy and compassion for others? Have they led you to your sense of your own calling? If so, how?

Chapter 7

What thoughts come to mind when you apply the word “commitment” to your own life?

HANDOUT 2

Mentoring Relationships

Describe an episode during your adolescence/young adulthood in which you faced a particular challenge, such as an opportunity for growth, a difficult situation, a success, a failure or disappointment. How did it make you feel? Who did you feel most comfortable sharing this situation with? How were your parents/guardians involved? Were any mentoring adults involved? Write about what support s/he was able to give to you. If you did not have access to a mentoring adult, write about what it felt like not to have a mentor to talk to about this situation. How did the situation get resolved? Had you been available as a mentoring adult, what information or advice would you have offered?

HANDOUT 3

A Journal Connection

Journal Entry: Describe 1-2 next steps for each of the following categories:

Myself (pp. 217-218)

Pay attention to the contradictions, dissonance or needs that stir my conscience

Link with others who share my aspirations for practical action

Take care of myself

Spend time with young people

My Household (pp. 218-220)

Strengthen my family household as the ground of commitment

Recognize that “home” extends beyond domicile

Welcome the world into my home

Encourage an ethic of family service

My Faith Community (pp. 227-229)

Create inclusive communities that practice love, justice and mercy

Pay attention to the strengths and limits of symbols, stories and songs

Foster habits of mind that enable people to see life as it is

Foster a sense of vocation

Bring religious insight and search to dialogue in the commons

HANDOUT 4

Beacon Press Discussion Guides Participant Evaluation Form

Name (optional): _____ Date: _____

Group Leader: _____

Book Title: _____

Please indicate your evaluation of the following:

meeting space	poor	fair	okay	good	great
pacing	poor	fair	okay	good	great
content	poor	fair	okay	good	great
overall	poor	fair	okay	good	great

1. Do you think the sessions were: (Please check one)
_____too long _____about right _____too short

How long would you like the sessions to be? _____

2. Do you think there were: (Please check one.)
_____too many sessions
_____the right number of sessions _____too few sessions

If you thought there were too many sessions, which one(s) would you leave out?

3. If your large group broke into smaller groups for discussion, did this process work? Why or why not?

4. Is there anything that you would like to have talked about that was not included in the sessions? If so, what?

5. What activity(ies) did you especially like? Why?

6. If there was an activity that you feel did not work in this context, can you tell us which activity and why?

7. Question:

8. Question:

9. Please rate your group leader's skills in leading the session(s): (Circle one)

Excellent Good Average Fair Poor

10. What suggestions would you offer to the group leader to improve the way the group is conducted?

Thank you very much for taking the time to give us your feedback! Please return your completed form to:

Beacon Press Discussion Guides

Leader Evaluation Form

Name: _____ Date: _____

UU Society: _____

District: _____

Book Title: _____

1. Do you and/or your participants think the sessions were: (Please check one)
_____ too long _____ about right _____ too short

How long would you like the sessions to be?

2. Do you think that there were: (Please check one)
_____ too many sessions
_____ the right number of sessions _____ too few sessions

If you thought there were too many sessions, which ones would you leave out?

3. If your large group broke into smaller groups for discussion, did this process work? Why or why not?

4. Is there anything that you would like to have talked about that was not included in the sessions? If so, what?

5. What activity(ies) did you especially like and why?

6. If there was an activity that you feel did not work in this context, can you tell us which activity and why?

7. Do you think the discussion guides will help to promote a stronger sense of community in your congregation? Why or why not?

8. Can you suggest other books or subjects that might work in this context?

9. If you changed the format, please describe the changes you made and your reasons for making them.

Thank you for taking the time to give us your feedback!

Please return this form to:

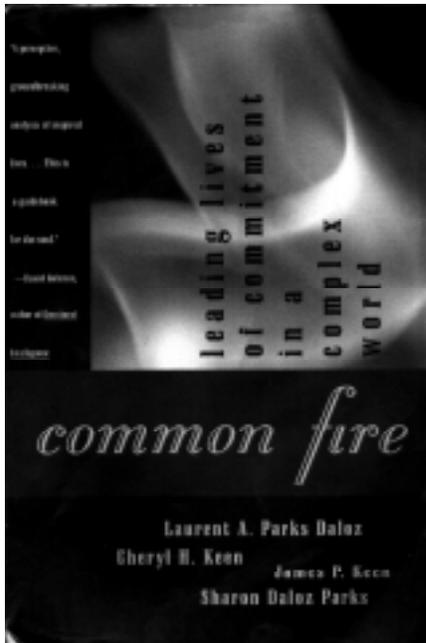
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***Unitarian Universalism's Voice for
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THE BEACON PRESS DISCUSSION GUIDES
FOR UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST CONGREGATIONS



Common Fire

Leading Lives of Commitment in a Complex World

A LEADER'S GUIDE

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(adapted from *Common Fire: Leading Lives of Commitment in a Complex World* Leader's Guide
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