

**March Theme**  
***Revolution, The Practice of Grit***

*“The revolution WILL put you in the driver’s seat” - Gil Scott-Heron*

Angela Duckworth, a current thought leader in the area of grit, says, “that grit is the single trait in our complex and wavering nature which accounts for success; it is the strong current of will that flows through genetic inheritance and the existential temperament, choice, contingency - everything that makes life life.” It is also defined as the ability to persist in something you feel passionate about and persevere when you face obstacles. Grit is continually grinding it out, perseverance, with an end, long-term goal in mind.

Revolution, from the Latin, *revolutio*, means a turn around. It is a change that occurs, somewhat rapidly and massively, that leads to a fundamental transformation. Depending on how much change is needed revolutions can be either conservative or radical in nature.

When one thinks of revolution, the historical and well known national revolutions come to mind. Our own American Revolution, the birth of this country, is probably the first one we think of. In recent times, there have been revolutions in Bosnia, Kosovo, Egypt, and Iran to name a few.

Beyond the nation changing revolutions, there have been those that changed the culture. Both of our religious heritages, Unitarian and Universalism, were begun by people revolting against the established church by bringing new ideas to the forefront. People in the United States have lived through the agricultural, industrial, and information revolutions. More recently, we have seen other social revolutions begin, and continue right before our eyes, such as the events leading to the onset of Black Lives Matter and others standing for the rights of people of color, the Me Too movement for women’s rights, immigrant rights, and transgender rights. Many of us here at First Parish in Sherborn are deeply connected to these current revolutions, taking a deep stand for them, calling on and exhibiting grit for the long battles that lie ahead to make a difference.

All of the above mentioned revolutions took place on a grand, national scale. Must all revolutions be so large, involve so many people? An individual person can make a turn around in any area of life, indeed most have and continue to do so throughout life. We make dramatic changes in our health, in our religious beliefs, in careers, and in relationships to name a few. Being successful in our personal revolutions requires new knowledge, new connections, and, perhaps most of all, grit. We must, as those who participated in revolutions throughout history, tough it out, bring passion, keep the long-term goal in mind, and persevere for the radical changes to take place.

This month’s theme was composed by Alan Cantor and the Worship Associates

As mentioned, Unitarianism and Universalism were established as the result of revolutions. The seven UU principles (link below) are all the outcomes of these revolutions as well as fuel and a starting point for current revolutions and many to come in the future. An example of one that is current, ongoing, and so needed is the fifth principle - The right of conscience and the use of the democratic process within our congregations and in society at large. This was at the heart of the American revolution and many others. It is needed for the peaceful success of the current revolutions and for those to come.

### **Questions for discussion and discernment on your own, or with each other:**

1. Where in your life is revolution necessary?
2. How do you start your own personal revolution?
3. What do you call on to revolt? In other words, what is grit in your life?
4. What is your purpose in life? Your passion?
5. What current revolutions are important to you? How are you engaging in them?
6. When you hear the word 'revolution', what do you think?
7. When you hear the word 'grit', what do you think?
8. What do you rely on to make a choice about joining a revolution or not?

### **Quotes and Short Readings**

“What do you think an artist is? An imbecile who only has eyes if he’s a painter, ears if he’s a musician, or a lyre in every chamber of his heart if he’s a poet – or even, if he’s a boxer, only some muscles? Quite the contrary, he is at the same time a political being constantly alert to the horrifying, passionate or pleasing events in the world, shaping himself completely in their image. How is it possible to be uninterested in other men and by virtue of what cold nonchalance can you detach yourself from the life that they supply so copiously? No, painting is not made to decorate apartments. It’s an offensive and defensive weapon against the enemy.” ~ Pablo Picasso

The future rewards those who press on. I don't have time to feel sorry for myself. I don't have time to complain. I'm going to press on. Barack Obama

The true revolutionary is guided by a great feeling of love. It is impossible to think of a genuine revolutionary lacking this quality. Che Guevara

Grit is important because it is a driver of achievement and success, independent of and beyond what talent and intelligence contribute. ~ Angela Duckworth

The Seven UU Principles: <https://www.uua.org/beliefs/what-we-believe/principles>  
For more on this month’s theme go to: <http://uuac.org/worship/themes-for-spiritual-practice/>  
The Worship Associates are: Matt Andrus, Jeff Brown, Jen Ryan Brown, Alexandra Businger (chair), Alan Cantor, Erin Collier, Jess Jonas, Katherine McHugh, and Gary Strichartz.

## **Web Based Resources:**

5 Characteristics Of Grit -- How Many Do You Have?

How to Start a Revolution

My Reject Revolution: Out of darkness, something new can bloom. Ree Jackson

Stormy winds blow through your hair  
And reflecting in your eyes is a mirage  
You decide now is the time to face once again  
The life born in the rift between light and dark

Even if the very mirror reflecting the times cracks and shatters  
You will still be alive, crying out for the love you ceaselessly seek

People continue to wander, holding on to ideas they can't give up on  
Rather than look up at the walls that stand in your way,  
Drive away those illusions and have faith you can knock them down  
This is where it all starts, always

The wish that I misplaced in the repeating days  
Even if I cover my eyes, I know the truth

Strength and weakness, kindness and scars,  
I want to vanquish them out of my wavering heart

Unable to hide our loneliness in this painted townscape  
We will still be alive,  
We're seeking out the power to conquer tomorrow

You're pretending to be tough, I want to tie in your fragility and love it  
The tracks of your tears and your unforgettable pain  
Catch them, don't forget them, and so our tomorrow will change  
Awaken your slumbering power

People continue to wander, holding on to ideas they can't give up on  
Rather than look up at the wall that stand in your way,  
Drive away those illusions, and have faith you can knock them down  
This is where it all starts, always ~ Megumi Hayashibara, Plenty Of Grit

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You say you want a revolution  
Well, you know  
We all want to change the world  
You tell me that it's evolution  
Well, you know  
We all want to change the world  
But when you talk about destruction  
Don't you know that you can count me out  
Don't you know it's gonna be  
All right, all right, all right  
You say you got a real solution  
Well, you know  
We'd all love to see the plan  
You ask me for a contribution  
Well, you know  
We're doing what we can  
But if you want money for people with minds that hate  
All I can tell is brother you have to wait  
Don't you know it's gonna be  
All right, all right, all right  
You say you'll change the constitution  
Well, you know  
We all want to change your head  
You tell me it's the institution  
Well, you know  
You better free you mind instead  
But if you go carrying pictures of chairman Mao  
You ain't going to make it with anyone anyhow  
Don't you know it's gonna be  
All right, all right, all right  
All right, all right, all right  
All right, all right, all right  
All right, all right ~ Songwriters: John Lennon / Paul McCartney

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