From the President

Burnout

Almost a year ago, in mid-December 2023, I wrote a reflection entitled “A+”. It was a reflection on my long-standing personality style of driving myself to achieve, to take on too much, to jump in whenever I see an unmet need, or task that needs doing. As I described in my previous reflection, I learned from very early on that my parents valued achievement: straight A’s, honors, awards – anything they could brag about to their friends. I learned that my value, my worth, depended on what I achieved.

Since taking on the role of president, my Type A personality has, hopefully, served UUCSC well – a lot has gotten done. But I now realize that it has not served ME well. I have become depleted, burned out, and exhausted on more than one occasion. This is not solely due to the many responsibilities of serving as president (and there are MANY), but also a result of my choosing to take on extra work on top of UU responsibilities, like co-producing Sandra Laub’s brilliant play, “Picking Up Stones”. Even after falling into a state of exhaustion last January following the play, I did not realize the extent of the changes I needed to make to prevent this from happening again.

Yes, again. Since mid-June (4 months!), I have been in a state of complete and utter exhaustion that I now realize is stress induced. Maybe I am in a state of adrenal fatigue, or maybe it’s become chronic fatigue, or maybe I am simply burned out, but whatever the actual “diagnosis” is, I am depleted, running on fumes.

I guess I needed to be hit on the head with a 2 x 4 to finally and truly make some much needed changes in relation to UUCSC. I am starting to say NO. I am starting to step back. I am no longer taking on tasks simply because no one or no committee “owns” them. This might mean that some things will fall through the cracks. Or others will step up.

I am so grateful to the Board members, each of whom has been wonderfully supportive of me personally, as well as stepping up to take on some of what I have been doing – for example, Russell Stokes, VP, has agreed to chair the Coordinating Council for the rest of my term, not to mention coordinating and running last week’s fire drill. (Thanks Russ!)

We could ask why the president ended up with the responsibility of fire drills! And we should, because it reflects a bigger issue. But that’s a conversation for another time.

In peace,

Nancy