

Touchstones Theme: Reason



From the potential unique location – the site of devastation that we might become – we understand that we are no grander than the rest of the world. Indeed, we are less than most things. The smallest stone we pick up randomly from a riverbed has long preceded us and will outlive us. Hu-

mans are barely existing entities: how can we claim privileges? Fundamentally, we are vulnerable, fragile creatures. And if unlike the rest of existence, people are endowed with reason, it is this gift of reason that should lead us to understand how modest our place in the Cosmos actually is. The experience of failure, then, ought to inculcate humility. Rather than a virtue in the narrow sense, humility should be seen, more broadly, as a certain type of insertion into the world, as a way of life. *Costica Bradatan*

The exercise of reason is indeed beautiful. I wish it were invincible. Poet Czeslaw Milosz writes that it “guides our hand so we write Truth and Justice with capital letters, lie and oppression with small.” We Unitarian Universalists would probably want to edit that a little, because we speak of multiple truths rather than one Truth. But Milosz’s point is that reason creates truth and justice and challenges lies and oppression. That truly is a beautiful thing. Reason deters fanaticism, extremism, and irrational, damaging behaviors. That is why he calls it “an enemy of despair and a friend of hope.” Reason isn’t the enemy of passion, love, reverence, or religion. It shines a light. Sandra Fees



Join us in exploring Reason

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