



# Flame on the Water

*Celebrate Diversity - Question with Integrity - Build Justice*

## May 2026 Awakening Curiosity

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### UUFJC MAY FORUMS

5/3/26 - Hambo Latham, "Music at the Strait of Hormuz. Latham entertained military people for the USO & Dept of Defense.

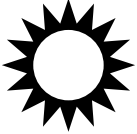
5/10/26 - Betty Cooper, "Mothers' Peace Day"

5/17/26 - Evan Wood, Missouri Life Magazine. Newly re-vitalized.

5/24/26 - Rachael Dunn, New managing editor of the News Tribune.

5/31/26 - Courtney Beyer, Central Missouri Foster Care & Adoption.

“If you take the fundamental things that people tend to want out of life – strong social relationships and happiness and accomplishing things – all of these are highly linked to curiosity.”



– Todd Kashdan, author of the book *Curious*

## UUUJC Annual Meeting

### Sunday, May 31

\*\*We will be voting to change our Affirmation of Covenant from  
Love is the doctrine of this (Church)  
To  
Love is the doctrine of this Community

Our next board meeting  
will be May 17. All are  
welcome to attend.

Intergenerational Book Club's  
Next read  
***The Brother's Karamazov***  
Fyodor Dostoyevsky

Book discussion on  
June 14, 2026 at 2 pm

## **Cultivating Curiosity – Three Ingredients to a More Curious Mind** By: Samantha S Easter

Cultivating a questioning mind requires humility, persistence, and skill to open the doors to innovation. Once in, unheard of possibilities present themselves to make the impossible possible.

Salt-dried pig faces, babies wearing pants with a hole in the back for easy bathroom access, groups of older women dancing by the dozens in the park — everywhere you looked in China, you could find something to spark the imagination. It was like being a child and seeing the world with little context for understanding.

When talking to others, I'd hear the same two lenses:

- “Oh, that’s interesting,” and
- “Oh, that’s weird.”
- 

It rubbed me the wrong way when I'd hear someone use the latter expression. Weird is a limiting adjective, a closed door. Whereas “interesting” invites a more in-depth look. For example, when you see a street-vendor serving “silk-worm larva on a stick,” and your brain places it in the “weird” category, you probably aren't going to try it. But “interesting”, how can you not try something interesting?

These categorizations are typically subconscious. Being aware of your thought processes is the first step to growing a questioning mind. It's essential to be conscious of our thinking patterns and hold them to high standards, knowing barriers, including stereotypes, are continually challenging that goal.

Every stereotype you own increases your feelings of certainty. Certainty is the enemy because it is the key in the lock of your mind, closing the door between what you think you know, and everything else. Certainty shrinks your world. Instead of expanding your thinking

you're actively searching for the information that validates your points while ignoring the evidence that disagrees with it.

In effect, you are in an echo chamber. Sadly, nowadays, many people are. The way out of this chamber is by asking questions.

### The Importance of Questions

Questioning your assumptions opens your world and expands your thinking. Questions trigger ideas, solutions, and results. Think about the last company you purchased from. For me, it was Amazon (...of course). Amazon wouldn't exist if someone didn't question how to sell things better and do things better. Whether you like them as an organization or not, you must admit that they have been innovative.

Asking questions allows people and organizations to expose challenges and generate better solutions. By focusing on solving the first level of a problem without digging deep to see what other problems and solutions exist, we burn energy and limit potential.

Those who succeed are those who ask interesting questions, demand answers, and find solutions to solve the problems we face every day. In short, they are experts at asking questions and executing on them. But asking questions is a form of vulnerability. It exposes a gap in your understanding.

### The Humility of Ignorance

Asking questions can be challenging. We want to project the air of knowing it all, having the answers. Successful people and organizations are expected to be decisive and certain. In short, you're supposed to have all the answers. When we realize we don't have all the answers, we become curious. We ask questions. We learn.

### How to Grow Curiosity:

Say "I don't know"

Being willing to admit when you don't know things helps you keep an open mind while growing your credibility for the areas in which you are an expert.

Focus on Listening

Don't think about what you will ask next while you are listening to the speaker. Focus, instead, on what the person is saying.

Cultivating a questioning mind is the only way to grow and adjust to our changing world. It requires humility, persistence, and skill to open the doors to innovation. But once in, unheard of possibilities present themselves to make the impossible possible.

Meditation Group  
Meets  
Every Wednesday  
7 pm

Drum Circle  
will meet the 2nd  
Monday of the  
month from 7-8 pm  
Next meeting is  
May 11.

Chair Yoga  
Tuesdays @ 11 AM  
By donation

**Please submit your Joys & Concerns to our website:**

<http://uufjc.org/joys--concerns.html> by noon on Friday or on paper forms for in-person contributions as early as possible on Sunday mornings.



Contact us online on our  
homepage:  
[UUFJC.org](http://UUFJC.org)  
or on Facebook

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“Learning is by nature,  
curiosity” – Plato

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