



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work July 2018 Issue 116

An easy-to-use plan for a Children's Meeting



Gather

Welcome everyone and ask them to sit in a circle around a centrepiece such as flowers, pebbles or, if it feels safe, a candle. Ask everyone to sit quietly; introduce this, using words that are comfortable for you: e.g. "We will start our meeting today with a little time of stillness to help us to be ready to listen to ourselves and to each other. Be still for a moment, either with your eyes closed or looking at the flowers."

Make sure everyone knows everyone's names.

Tell the children that you will be thinking about dementia today. Explain that dementia is an illness that can affect anyone when they get older. It affects how people think and remember things and can affect how their bodies work. We will be thinking about how memories work and what's really important about each one of us and what might help people who have dementia.

5 minutes

Engage

Ask everyone to think of three things that they remember. Give examples of different types of memory such as facts, skills and physical memories (*see Journeys in the Spirit 116 main sheet p.2*). Ask everyone to share one or two of the things they remember. Discuss how they are all different.

Share Richard's story (*see additional resources 116.A - there is a link to this in sidebar of main issue*). If there is someone in your Meeting whom the children may know, who is living with dementia they may be happy to share something of their story. You must ask their permission. Some children will have grandparents or know other people who are experiencing dementia. They may feel able to share, but be aware that this might be upsetting. Encourage them to ask questions about Richard's story.

15 minutes

Respond

Memory Box: create a box of memories, as in Grandma's Box of Memories (*see sidebar of Journeys in the Spirit 116 in main issue p.2*). You will need a pretty box (perhaps bring in a trinket box or cover a cardboard box with wrapping paper); paper, crayons, scissors and/or model making material (Lego, clay etc.) and/or a collection of possibly meaningful objects.

Think about Richard's life, or the life of someone else you have discussed. Or think about people the children know who are old – grandparents, neighbours, Friends.

Discuss what might be important things/feelings/people that they would want to remember. What objects might help to remind them?

Draw pictures or make models or choose from your selection.

Place these in the special box and talk about how they might help someone who has dementia.

20 minutes

Reflect

Come together in a circle – you might like to gather around the centrepiece you used earlier. Consider what you have done and thought about together. Encourage the children to reflect and to share.

5 minutes