



Journeys in the Spirit

inward outward upward downward

Children's work edition January 2018 Issue 113



Hope in turbulent times: Living with Change

Getting ready

This issue of Journeys in the Spirit considers coping with change. Change, for some, can be a difficult topic. Be aware that the children in the group may have recently experienced a painful change and be sensitive to their feelings. Consider your own thoughts and feelings; do you have any positive or negative underlying emotion towards the idea of change?

Change can be happy and exciting but it can also bring anxiety, worry and fear. Often, when things are out of our control they can seem scary or confusing and it can be difficult to adjust feeling a sense of loss that something is not the same as it was before. Even when change is positive it can be hard to adapt to new routines, new people or new places. But change is happening all around us all of the time. By understanding the changing nature of things and that nothing, no matter how good or bad lasts forever, we can begin to accept change as an inevitable part of life.

Make the atmosphere warm and friendly. Approach the subject gently. Encourage the children to share their own experiences but give them the opportunity to remain quiet if they would prefer. Encourage only one person to talk at a time, and the rest of the group to listen to the person who is talking.

Resources: A3 Paper, 15-20 pre-cut of leaves (see *Additional resource 113.B*), colouring pencils/pens, glue-sticks. You will need enough for each child.

Gather

Sit in a circle on cushions on the floor and familiarise yourselves with one another. You might try a name game, or prefer to ask the children to share something about their week. Thank each child for their contribution, and make sure that you share something of your week with the group too. One idea for a name game: Introduce yourself and go around the circle encouraging each person to introduce themselves in turn. Then begin the game by re-introducing yourself and the person on your right. The person on your right then introduce you, themselves, and the person on their right. This goes on until the last person in the circle has introduced the whole group. Or if the group is already known to each-other begin by saying "My name is....., and on my right is my good friend.....", the person on the right then takes their turn to introduce themselves and their "very good friend....." on their right and so on.

This is only a suggestion for gathering. If you have a preferred way, then that is fine too. It is important for the group to be comfortable and so do what works for you and them.

Journeys in the Spirit offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with children and young people.

This children's work edition comes out monthly. It offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with 5–12 year olds in a Quaker setting.

It provides opportunities for exploring, creating and learning in an atmosphere of worship in partnership on our shared journey in the spirit.

Underpinning references

Advices and Queries 1.02.7.

"Be aware of the spirit of God at work in the ordinary activities and experiences of your daily life..."

Advices and Queries 1.02.27

Engage

Exploring Change

Ask the children what they think about when they hear the word change. Give them a few minutes to consider and answer the question. Do they think of considerable changes like; a baby being born, the loss of a loved one, moving, growing up or changing a habit?

Or more subtle changes like; day and night, changing seasons, changing a library book, getting a haircut or the time?

Or do they consider the emotions that accompany change rather than the changes themselves? Can they think of examples of how a person might change?

Invite the children to take it in turns to share an experience of change.

- Was the change happy or sad?
- How did they cope with the change?
- What advice would they give to someone experiencing the same kind of change?
- How do the other children in the group think they would cope with the same kind of change?

Thank the children for sharing and share a change experience of your own. You may like to go first to get the group started. Try to think of a change that has had a happy or positive outcome and ensure that your story is appropriate for the ages of the children present.

Sand Mandalas

Ask the children if they have heard of a sand mandala. Can anyone explain what they are? Show some from *Additional resource sheet 113.A* (see sidebar).

A mandala is a brightly coloured, hugely detailed, geometric work of art. They take time to make and require great patience (a sand mandala that was displayed in Manchester, took 6 days to construct). Tibetan Buddhists use sand mandalas to remind us that nothing in life is permanent and that everything changes. Once a mandala is complete, a monk brushes his knuckles through the sand, disrupting its detailed pattern. The coloured sand is then swept away patiently and then finally dispersed into flowing water, where it returns, as a gift, to the earth.

Can the children think of any examples of things that require care, time and patience, but are not permanent?

How would they feel if a work of art they had created, was destroyed and disposed of after they had put time and effort into making it?

Play a Game of Change

Take turns, in pairs if there are younger children, to leave the group (ideally go into another room, but if this is not possible, ask the rest of the group to close their eyes) and change or remove one item of clothing or an accessory. This might be a sock, turning a belt upside down, a hairband, putting a jumper on backwards. Return to the group and see if they can work out what has changed. Take it in turns until everyone that wants to has had a go or two.

Reading Time

The Memory Tree, and the Fox and the Star, are beautifully illustrated books (see sidebar) that tackle change sympathetically. Consider reading one of these to the group ahead of the diversi-tree activity (in **Respond**) as an introduction to that activity.

References & other resources

“Our lives are shaped by the things that happen to us. Our journey is made richer by what we encounter along the way. This in turn shapes and, hopefully motivates us to make life better for our fellow travelers”

Living our beliefs

ISBN: 978-1-907123-91-7

Additional resource 113.A

www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren
select ‘resources for current issue’.



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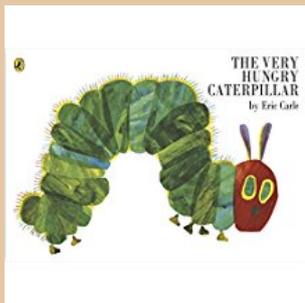
ISBN-10:1846148502

These titles are available from the Quaker Bookshop

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References & other resources



ISBN-10:0241003008

The Very Hungry Caterpillar is a beloved book written and illustrated by Eric Carle. It starts with the caterpillar eating his way through quite a few colourful foods and ends up with a glorious change.

Read the book or watch the story here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=75NQK-Sm1YY>

This is a Youtube clip and you will need to have internet access in order to watch it.

Mandala Templates



Mandala-4free.de

For more inspiration for sand mandalas see:

<https://kidscraftroom.com/sand-art-rangoli-inspired/>

Additional resource 113.B

www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren

Respond



Make a Diversi-tree of change

(This can be done individually or as a group).

On a large piece of paper (A3), draw the trunk of a tree. The children might like to draw their own, or you can have some pre-drawn for them. Explain that the tree is going to represent them. Cut out leaves for all (see *Additional resource 113.A* in sidebar). On most of the leaves, they should write, (or draw), something about themselves, that makes them who they are today.

These leaves will stick to the branches of the tree to form the bloom. On some of the leaves (5 or so), they should write something about themselves that is no longer true, but was once, a change that they have experienced, or something about their past. These will be the fallen leaves on the ground. Explain that change is inevitable. Just as trees grow and shed their leaves with the changing of the seasons, so too we humans grow and develop and shed our pasts. Just like every leaf that falls returns to the soil to feed the tree at its root, every change that occurs in our lives, helps to shape who we are. Every year, through a process of change, trees grows taller, and become more firmly rooted. Every year, through a series of changes, some big, some small, we become 'us', establishing our own thoughts and developing our beliefs. Consider how/where you might display these trees within your meeting house, or see if the children would prefer to take their trees home.

Make a simple sand mandala – (Individually or as a group)

You will need: Coloured sand, small paintbrush(es), straws or outer-tube of a pen, paper/card, a circle template, chalk/colouring pencils, a container.

Ask the children to draw a circle on their paper (you could use a compass for this or draw around a mug/saucer) and a simple pattern inside of the circle (see *Additional resource 113.A*). Use the straw/pen tube like a funnel to direct sand along the outline of their design and then to fill the spaces with a different colour(s). Use the paintbrush to tidy the edges.

Once finished, allow some time for each of the mandalas to be appreciated by the group. How many changes can the children point out about the materials so far? The paper going from plain to drawn on, to being covered by a sand mandala. The sand from the bottle to free flowing, to part of a multi-coloured work of art.

Ask if anyone is feeling bold enough to be the first to dismantle their mandala. Have them swipe or swirl a line through their mandala with their fingers or the back of their hand. Once all of the children have done this, continue to dismantle the mandalas by sweeping them into the container. Reflect again on the changes to the sand throughout its journey.

Consider taking a picture of the mandala/mandalas before they are dismantled so that the children can share with others.

Reflect

Gather together at the end of the activity, approximately 5 minutes.

Share the following prayer and time of quiet.

The Blessing of Old and New

Thank you, dear God,
for the blessing of things that stay the same:
for the people we have known forever and the familiar paths where
we walk.

Thank you, dear God,
for the blessing of things that change:
for the newcomers with new customs, new ways of doing things,
new paths to discover.

Thank you, dear God, for the blessings of old, and the blessings of
new.

Materials available online are:

Additional Resources
Sheets

An easy to use plan for a
Children's Meeting

A simple plan for an all
age Meeting for Worship

These can be accessed
through

www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren by scrolling
down to 'resources for
current issue'.

For a 'How to use
Journeys in the Spirit
guide', the catalogue of
previous issues and a link
to the resources for
recent issues, go to
www.quaker.org.uk/journeyschildren
and scroll
down to find what you
want.

Review

Together, reflect on the session.

What did the children like or enjoy?

Has anything changed about their understanding of 'change'?

What might they change about the session, and how would this
change help to improve the session?

**This issue was written by Katy Jones
and edited by Mel Cook and Howard Nurden.**

Journeys in the Spirit is published in two formats on
alternative months. One month the issue is on a theme,
with an easy to use structure set out in a four page booklet
with additional online resources. The alternative month is a
topical activity – something about the news or of a
seasonal interest.

Available from 1 February 2018: Topical Activity

Available from 1 March 2018: Militarisation in schools

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