

Being Friends Together

Ways of Working > Individual or 1:1 Reflection Processes

Clay or play dough response activity

Moisten your clay and put a polythene bag over it while the clay absorbs water – fifteen minutes. [Alternatively, use play dough or salt dough. Go to www.wikihow.com/Create-Salt-Dough for instructions for making your own salt dough]. Take time to turn your reflections ...to your theme.

When ready take the clay, [play dough or salt dough] into your hands and, maybe with your eyes closed, allow your reflections to take hold of your imagination. Let your hands respond to what you see in your mind.

What emerges might be abstract, or something familiar. Simply work with what you find as you look at it. You might need to take extra clay [or dough] at this point.

It is alright to produce something that is not 'recognisable' or beautiful – after all, if you are working on conflict, hatred or anger, it is unlikely your clay will produce something peaceful or pretty! A group once worked on a piece they called their 'inner judge' – that thing which sits in your mind and mutters disempowering remarks, such as 'you won't succeed at that' or 'everyone's going to laugh at you' - and some very horrifying demons emerged, with huge mouths, fierce claws, ten eyes – well, you have one of your own, so you can imagine it.

Remember: The exercise is not about skill with clay [or dough]. Concentrate mainly on the clay [or dough] itself and not the extras. Keep it simple.

When you have finished, take good time to look at what you have done. This might take place over a period of time, on more than one occasion. Some people have found it helpful to give their piece a 'voice', and hold or write a dialogue with it.

Sometimes you want to keep the piece because it is beautiful or meaningful in some continuing way, but at other times it is good to let go. It is very simple to do this; it can for example be put in an overgrown part of the garden and left to dissolve. We ourselves do not water down and recycle clay for use, as we have found that it is important to have a sense of the freshness of the clay, and that it is personally yours. But if you are doing this on your own, recycling might be acceptable.

Adapted from *Seeding the Spirit: The Appleseed workbook*, Chris Cook and Brenda Clift Heales, Woodbrooke Quaker Study Centre, 2001, and reproduced with permission

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