



Journeys in the Spirit

Children's work

February 2018

Topical Activity

Building each other up



When we find ourselves teaching – as we all do in our relationships within meeting – can we draw upon that respect for one another and faith in one another's potential that will enable the other to feel taller and more capable? At Rufus Jones's memorial meeting one of his students simply said: 'He lit my candle'.

Barbara Windle, 1988

Quaker faith & practice 23.78



Resources needed: a copy of 'The dot' by Peter H Reynolds ISBN: 978-1844281695 available from your local library or the Quaker Bookshop 020 7663 1030 quakercentre@quaker.org.uk or watch on youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=swn-alwgFVo> (internet connection needed). Enough paper for each child, coloured pens or pencils, scissors, sticky tape.

“So support one another. Keep building each other up as you have been doing”.

1 Thessalonians 5:11 The Voice Bible

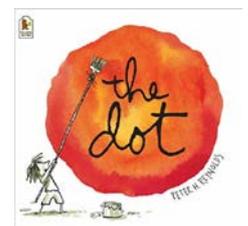
This Topical Activity looks at how we can love and support each other. In the Bible, Paul a follower of Jesus, wrote to the new Christians in Thessaloniki to encourage them in their new Christian faith. He urged them to support and build each other up. The early Christians lived through dangerous and difficult times with many hardships because their faith was illegal at that time. Paul's letters were a way of him sending encouraging words to his friends.

Sometimes we experience hard times when we feel down and disheartened, and the support and love of our friends is the thing that can make all the difference.

Start the session with a short period of stillness. Perhaps light a candle or have a picture of a candle. Follow this by asking if anyone has any news from their week or anything they would like to share. Tell the children that this week you will be looking at how we can build each other up or encourage each other. Ask if anyone has any suggestions on how to do this or even if they've managed to do this recently.

Read

Read or show the story of *The dot* to the children. In this story, Vashti feels she can't draw until her teacher makes her feel like she can. This helps Vashti feel confident and eventually she produces a whole wall of pictures. Ask the children if they've ever been encouraged by someone's kind words or actions.



Activity

Give each child a piece of paper and pen and ask them to draw around their hand and then cut this out. Some children may need help doing this. Each child should write their name in the middle of their hand. Each 'hand' is then put where everyone can reach them. Children can then go and write words of encouragement on each other's hands. Make sure that each hand gets filled. This hand can be worn on the back of the children's clothing using sticky tape to attach it, if they are happy with that, becoming a 'pat on the back' or can be a 'high five' for them to take home.

Finish with a time looking at all the hands and what has been written on them.



Let's root for each other and watch each other grow.

Further ideas:

Build it up, knock it down game - a fast paced game that would work for slightly older children.

Resources needed: Enough bricks or other stackable objects for each team to be able to build a good tower and a small ball for each group.

Give each group an equal amount of bricks and place these two piles in the centre of the room

Split the group into two and have each group sit equal distance from the pile of objects that they will build with.

The first person on each group must run to their pile and stack all the bricks until a tower is built. When it's complete they run back to their group and tag the next person.

The next person has a choice. EITHER run straight to their own group's tower and unstack and re-stack the bricks OR toss the ball to knock down another group's tower. If the ball is tossed, the next person in line must retrieve the ball and bring it back to the group before the person who tossed it can run to their tower and unstack and re-stack the bricks.

If a group's tower is knocked down by another group, the person who originally stacked that particular tower must run to their pile and stack them again before the next person can go and unstack and re-stack the bricks.

The first group to have everyone on the group finish unstacking and re-stacking their tower wins.

The groups have a choice to focus on building their own towers or taking time to knock down the other group's towers so that they slow others down. Bear in mind that they could knock down more than one tower with one throw – including their own.

When the game has finished, ask the children whether it was easier to build up the bricks or knock down the other groups? Wonder with the children how this is like what we say to each other? How helping someone feel good about themselves might take time but is worth it rather than saying or doing things that only take a moment but might hurt.

Further reading for younger children: *Alfie gives a hand*, Shirley Hughes
ISBN-13: 978-1862307858

In this story Alfie leaves his much needed security blanket in an act of kindness that encourages his friend to be brave enough to enjoy the party.

