

SELF-EXPRESSION

Getting to Know Me

God is all. All there is, is the manifestation of the self-knowingness of God.

Our life is eternal, continual, and forever expanding.

Life is eternally good, eternally loving, and eternally giving. We depend on this.

Spiritual Truth

Self-Knowingness

"The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step" (Lao Tzu, Tao De Ching).

In each stage of a person's spiritual development, there is an unfolding much like a rose. As we open to knowing ourselves in a deeper way, more of the Truth of who we are is revealed. In learning to function in the world of "effects," though, we may start "believing" that who we are is in relationship to the world around us. Often we use the people who matter most as mirrors into what we may believe is our own soul. When we rely on "other's" opinion to form our beliefs about ourselves, we may develop erroneous views of who we are. Yet it is in these beliefs that we have the opportunity to reconnect with our own "inner compass" to direct us to the Truth of who we are: Perfect individualizations of God.

Make It, Take It

Journal-making

Purpose: so that the children can participate in the spiritual practice of journaling

Before class

- Make cups of glue with cotton swabs in them

In-class activity

- Have children glue decorative items to their journals (alternative: children can use stickers and markers to personalize their journals)
- Put each child's name on his/her journal and keep them in a place where the children can easily access them throughout the month
- Either take pictures of the children (optional), or have parents bring pictures in to put on the journal cover.

Circle In

Community Spiritual Practice (prayer and ritual)

Reading Skippyjon Jones by Judy Schachner

Read from beginning to "I am not a Siamese cat . . . I am a Chihuahua!"

Discussion Skippyjon Jones liked to pretend he was different animals, but his mom was upset because he was avoiding being who he really was.

- What are some of the different things Skippyjon like to do that really only birds do?

It is important to try different things to get to know yourself more, and it's important to discover what is true about yourself in order to know yourself.

- Is Skippyjon really a bird?
- What about a Chihuahua?
- No? Then, what is he? [answer: a Siamese cat]

We can learn new things about ourselves by hanging around people from different cultures, backgrounds, groups, etc., and ultimately our goal is to know what is true about ourselves apart from what others think about us.

- What is something new you learned about yourself this week (possibly a new like or dislike)?

Activity Believes About Me

Directions

- Read the statements bellow one at a time.
- Ask children to stand up if the statement is something they know to be true about themselves, or if other people think it is true about them.
- Tell the standing children that they have a choice about what to accept as true. Ask each child if they want to accept that belief about themselves, if it is the Truth of who they are.
 - If they respond with "no", they sit back down.
 - If they respond with "yes", they remain standing. Then you say: "[Child's name], you are [quality]"
For example: "Michael, you are creative."

Statements:

- I am creative.
- I am smart.
- I am funny.
- I am friendly.
- I am strong.

Optional: Ask the children to say a truth statement about themselves. Make sure every child gets to stand and declare a truth, either from the above list or one that they create.

Lesson: People may believe different things about you and the world may make assumptions about who you are, but only you know the Truth of your being. You are a perfect expression of God.

Music "I Love Myself So Much!" (chant by Dr. Michael Bernard Beckwith and Rickie Byars Beckwith)

Spiritual Practice Celebrating Me Journal

Have children create an introductory page listing the following details:

- Full name
- Date of birth
- Today's date

Have children journal about the following questions by writing or drawing:

- My favorite color is . . . (color that color)
- My favorite food is . . . (draw a picture of that food)
- My favorite sports/activities are . . . (draw a picture)
- My favorite things to do are . . .

Connecting Getting to Know Me

Purpose: have children share their unique characteristics and get to know each other

- Have children sit in a circle
- Show them how the tape recorder will record their voices
- Go around the circle and have each child answer three questions (for example: What is your favorite ice cream? What do you and God talk

about? What will you be for Halloween?)

- When everyone has had a turn, play it back and let the kids guess who was talking

Conscious Giving Time, Talent, or Treasure

Circle Out Closing ritual

Materials Needed

- **Make It, Take It: Journal-making**
 - Spiral notebooks or journals (depending on your class size, you may want to purchase extra ones so that new children who come throughout the month can be included)
 - Suggested source: "The Book About Me!" Journal Craft Kit, item IN-48/3632, from Oriental Trading Company (<http://www.orientaltrading.com/>)
 - Glue
 - Small disposable cups
 - Cotton swabs
 - Decorative items: foam pieces, small buttons, stones, shells, string or ribbon
 - Alternative: stickers and markers
 - Optional: camera
- **Book: Skippyjon Jones by Judy Schachner**
- **Spiritual Practice: Celebrating Me Journal**
 - Pencils and crayons
- **Connecting: Getting to Know Me**
 - Tape recorder
 - Cassette tape

References • Motivational & Inspirational Corner. http://motivational-inspirational-corner.com/motivational_inspirational_quotes.html (accessed 6/24/2008).

- Schnachner, Judy. (2003) Skippyjon Jones. Dutton Juvenile.
- "Believes about Me" activity created by Rainbow Weldon, RScP.

- Beckwith, Dr. Michael Bernard, and Rickie Byars Beckwith. "I Love Myself So Much!"
- "Celebrating Me Journal" activity created by Rainbow Weldon, RScP.
- "Getting to Know Me" activity created by Debbie Sztain, RScP.