

Notes to the Leader for T313 – Laughter & Playfulness

Session Preparation

The depth of this session will be enhanced if each member thinks about the topic in advance. Please distribute the preparation sheet by email or hard copy well before the session. Have extra copies available at the gathering for people who have forgotten to bring their copies.

Special preparation note: *The prep for this session requests that members consider bringing something to share with the group. Please remind group members to bring any items they want to share.*

Centering Practice: Be Here Now

Leader says (with long pauses between sentences):

Before we begin, let's come fully into this time and this place using the mantra, "Be here now." Here's how it will work. Close your eyes. As you inhale, mentally say, "Be here now." Repeat the phrase as you exhale. Pace your repetition of "Be here now," so one repetition lasts for your whole in-breath and another repetition lasts for your whole out-breath. Continue until you hear the gong. [Allow about 2 minutes for this centering exercise.]

Special Note: *Cut up the sheet of quotations and put the slips of paper into some sort of container that can be passed easily around the circle. Explain that some of the quotes come from congregants.*

Preliminaries

Prior to beginning the session, take a few minutes to go over the announcements of the church events given at the last leader meeting or from a recent church bulletin. Remind members of the next meeting date and location. Get volunteers to light the chalice and read the opening words.

Reading Round the Circle

Reading round the circle is used in this session to read quotes written on slips of paper. Each member draws a slip from a container passed around the circle. The quotes are read one after the other at the designated time in the Order of Worship. Before passing out the quotes, tell members that they don't have to take one if they do not wish to read aloud. There may be more quotes than there are members in your group, so you can choose whether to circulate the bowl until all the slips are drawn or to limit them to one per person.

Discussion

The discussion period is meant to allow group members to go deeper, to share things they may have forgotten to share, and to exchange ideas. It is important that people not comment on others' sharing except in a very supportive way.

Closing Song *Ask group members to stand and/or do motions with the song as they are willing and able.*

Timekeeping

Use this timetable as an aid to keep the gathering on track. It leaves 15 minutes available in case the sharing portion runs longer or if a Life Ritual is planned. If it appears that portions of the session will run long, the group members can decide whether to stop continue or eliminate other portions.

Preliminaries	2 minutes
Opening	1 minute
Check-in	15 minutes
Reading round the circle	5 minutes
Silence	5 minutes
Deep listening	60 minutes
Discussion	15 minutes
Singing	1 minute
<u>Closing</u>	<u>1 minute</u>
Total	110 minutes