

Small Group Ministry
Session Plan
Visuals Through Our Ages

Note: See Topic. Members are invited to bring purses, wheels, hats for different ages.

Opening Words:

"I am still every age that I have been. Because I was once a child, I am always a child. Because I was once a searching adolescent, given to moods and ecstasies, these are still part of me, and always will be... This does not mean that I ought to be trapped or enclosed in any of these ages...the delayed adolescent, the childish adult, but that they are in me to be drawn on; to forget is a form of suicide... Far too many people misunderstand what "putting away childish things" means, and think that forgetting what it is like to think and feel and touch and smell and taste and see and hear like a three-year-old or a thirteen-year-old or a twenty-three-year-old means being grownup. When I'm with these people I, like the kids, feel that if this is what it means to be a grown-up, then I don't ever want to be one. Instead of which, if I can retain a child's awareness and joy, and *be* fifty-one, then I will really learn what it means to be grownup."
— Madeleine L'Engle, *A Circle of Quest*

Check-in/Sharing: How are things with you today?

Topic: Our culture has ways of defining us as we pass through various ages. Following are 3 things that we use throughout our lives. They are connections with our various ages, reminders as well as looking forward. You are invited to focus on one. Bring in items or pictures of items for the example. We will consider one or more during the session.

Carrying things What we carry at various ages, and why
a young girl's first purse that makes her feel so grown up,
the book bags and back packs that enlarge as we grow,
a mother's bag large enough to carry things for other children and others,
briefcases and wallets
moving to smaller purses to lighten the load, and
asking or allowing others to carry things for us.

The wheels in our lives Connections to sense of self and mobility
tricycles to two-wheelers with training wheels, bikes,
cars of various sizes throughout our lives,
to driving less
to using assistive devices for mobility
wheels on rolling carts, luggage

The hats we wear — Literally, and our roles at various life stages
baby bonnets,
the hoods of all sizes and shapes that grow as we grow,
helmets for our biking and team sports,
hard hats for dangerous work
caps that advertise our teams, where we work, favorite places
hats to keep our heads warm as our hair thins

Check out/Likes and Wishes: How was this session for you?

Closing Words: One of my measurements for right living is to assess whether I have a friend/relationship with someone in each decade. I review my week to determine if I have interacted with one of more persons from each decade.

I am actively seeking relationships with people in their nineties and one-hundreds. This simple practice brings awe to my life! I am reminded of the extraordinary experience of life. It helps widen my perspective. I can see life from the vantage of multiple decades, not just the experience of someone like me in the 7th decade of my life. The deep relationships between the decades helps me continue to develop a wider lens to receive the rich diversity of people.

Debbie Mattson, Spiritual Practice: A new way of being for all ages" in October 2014
Soul Matters Packet

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