

# Journeys in the Spirit

inward outward upward downward

Issue 20

October 2008

Children



## Stop bullying – some Quaker ways

This children's work edition of "Journeys in the Spirit" comes out monthly. It offers resources and ideas to Quakers engaging with children aged 4 –12 years in a Quaker setting. It is offered with the intention of providing an opportunity for exploring, creating and learning in an atmosphere of worship in partnership on our shared journey in the spirit.

Included are sections on: **getting ready**, for those co-ordinating the programme; **gather**, meeting, centering, focusing: **engage**, beginning to think about the theme; **respond**, activities linked to the theme; **reflect**, ending appropriately; and **review**, evaluating what has happened. To offer a balanced session you should aim to do something from each section. Some of the activities are included on additional sheets. Timings or ages are not stated, as this will depend on the group and how the guidance and activities are used.

Underpinning each issue is the idea that there are four directions to our spiritual journey. **Inwards** to ourselves; **outwards** to others; **upwards** towards God, the deeper mystery; **downwards** to the world we live in.



## Twelfth in the series exploring Quakers: a people of God: being and doing

### Getting ready

#### Preparing Hearts & Minds

'Treat others as you would like people to treat you' Luke 6 vs.31. Quaker Testimonies, like the words of Jesus are not forms of words to aspire to but are a challenge to be lived out on a daily basis in our lives.

We have all had the experience of dealing with the use and abuse of power. Most children have had experiences of being bullied and being bullies, although they may not recognise it. This is not a comfortable subject and should be approached with sensitivity. By addressing the issues and helping the children to recognise patterns of behaviour, it will help them to develop confidence and the skills to deal with it. Hopefully, it will also assist them on their path to understanding the Testimonies to Equality and Peace.

**Some questions for getting ready include:** Have I had time to think through the coming session? Have I thought through the impact of the topic on the children and the volunteer helpers? Have we considered the wider impact on the Meeting and adult members who may have experienced bullying themselves that has not been dealt with, within the family, workplace or elsewhere. Would it be appropriate to speak with Elders/Overseers to let them know that this topic is to be addressed in the Children's Meeting? Are there other issues that we need to think through? Have we reflected on the theme and had the opportunity to hold the coming session in the light?

**Equipment needed:** Materials for preparing a cartoon strip for the story and/or for preparing the 'story board' for a TV news item and props to help with the role play e.g. a microphone, clipboards etc. Photocopies of the outline of a coat, coloured paper, coloured tissue, good quality felt pens, oil and wax crayons, scissors and glue, a CD or tape player and appropriate reflective music.

#### Underpinning references

"Bullying is the wilful, conscious desire to hurt another and put him/her under stress"  
Tattum (1992)

*The Bible:*  
Luke 10 vs. 25-28

*Quaker Faith & Practice,*  
Advices and Queries 33:

'Are you working to bring about a just and compassionate society which allows everyone to develop their capacities and fosters their desire to serve?'

# Gather

Ask one or two children to be elders of the children's meeting. Explain what this involves. Prepare the room beforehand, creating a welcoming circle with chairs and cushions. The aim is to provide a comfortable environment which will help the children feel safe while tackling an uncomfortable topic. You may wish to arrange flowers, a candle and a 'sunny' picture to give the circle a focal point. Play some suitable music that will add to the sense of ease that you are trying to create. Ensure that any volunteer helpers are sat alongside the children so that there is a sense of this being a joint activity in which all are a part of the whole. Encourage the children to share their news then light a candle and in the silence ask them to think of a time when they have felt really happy. Provide a soft object e.g. furry material, not necessarily a toy, that the children can pass around. Invite everyone to stroke the object and talk about how it feels to be happy. Make it clear that it is ok to pass and to stay quiet.

# Engage

Exploring the topic with the group – why bullying happens, what it feels like and some ways to deal with it. Bullying is often talked about as something that happens at school but it can also happen within the home. It is important that the children realise that although it happens, no one deserves to be bullied - it is wrong - and that there are things that you can do to stop bullies and help the bullied. The material can be adjusted for use by all age groups.

**Say** that today, we are going to talk about bullying. What does this mean? (*Talk about this in age appropriate ways - include examples such as name-calling, teasing, ostracism – excluding from groups – pushing and jostling, intimidation etc).*

**Ask** everybody to think of a time when they were bullied. If it has happened to them, to put up their hand - facilitators should also raise their hand to indicate that everyone has had the experience.

**Talk** about difference. We are all different, some are tall, some are short, we have different coloured hair, eyes and different abilities.

*Collect, have ready and lay out lots of pictures of different children on the floor or table See Sheet 20.A for some pictures.*

**Talk** about bullying and why people are bullied - perhaps because they are seen as different, have a disability, are shy or new to the school or area.

**Ask** why do people act as bullies? Maybe they have been bullied at home, by other children, perhaps they feel that they do not fit in or they want to make themselves look tough. There are many possible reasons but try to draw out some understanding of why it happens.

*(Ask wondering questions: 'I wonder. Why do you think some people might bully other people?)*

**Say**, 'I wonder what it would feel like to be bullied? Draw out feelings, such as feeling scared and alone.

*(As you ask this question lay out plain white paper or card, good quality pens, drawing and coloured pencils, oil pastels and wax crayons. Invite people to draw, doodle or write what they think or feel as well as or instead of speaking. Hold the silence if nobody speaks. Repeat the question after a little time.)*

**Ask** what can you do if you/a friend are being bullied? You have to try to stop the bullying. It is wrong. If you cannot talk to the bully, tell your teacher or a parent.

**Say**, 'I wonder how you can stop bullying?' Listen to people's ideas and talk about them. Drop ideas into any conversation such as trying to show that you are not upset because bullies love to get a reaction, trying to avoid being on your own somewhere the bully could pick on you, think of ways of making the situation better, talking with your friends, your teacher, your parents. *(Again, as you ask this question you could lay out more paper or card - Invite people to draw, doodle or write).*

**Summarise** what the group has said and outline any emerging issues.

## References & other resources

*Quaker Faith and Practice 23.14.*

John Woolman writing about oppression

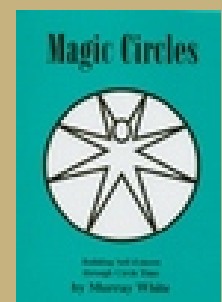
*Quaker Faith and Practice 23.33:*  
First paragraph - Meg Maslin writing about mutual and self respect

## Anti-bullying week



November  
17th – 21st  
2008

[www.antibullyingweek.co.uk](http://www.antibullyingweek.co.uk) for resources and information



A book of activities on building self-esteem using circle time. Available from November 2008 from [www.luckyduck.co.uk](http://www.luckyduck.co.uk) or to borrow from the Quaker Life Resources Room

## References & other resources

The **Department for Education and Science** publishes material on the Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning.

Part of this material is about stopping bullying. It is written for schools but does have good stories and activities that can be copied for further work on or thinking about bullying.

There are sections for different age groups.

[www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/publications/banda/seal/](http://www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/primary/publications/banda/seal/)

(You will need Adobe Reader for this.)

Quaker resources about peer group mediation can be obtained from the QPSW Peace Education Programme at:

[www.quaker.org.uk](http://www.quaker.org.uk) and follow the links to Quaker Faith in action and peace and social witness.

[www.stopbullying.org](http://www.stopbullying.org) a site full of activities and links

# Respond

**For school aged children.** The activities revolve around the story about Harry - see *Sheet 20.B* - and vary according to age and ability of the group.

Begin with discussing the story about bullying, drawing out the reactions of children to 'difference' both acceptable and unacceptable, and explore the idea that the main bully, Jake, may have been bullied himself. Read the story carefully in order to reveal the reason for Harry's 'difference' at the very end. Discuss the impact of the events on Harry, Jake and Charlotte and work through the following questions.

Questions: Try to draw out reactions to 'difference' and acceptable responses such as curiosity and unacceptable such as bullying.

- How was Harry different?
- How did he feel starting a new school?
- Who was bullied in this story? How?
- Do you think that Charlotte bullied Harry or was she trying to be friendly?
- Do you think that the teacher knew that Harry was being bullied?
- What did Harry tell his mother at the end of the day?
- I wonder, what should the teacher do?
- I wonder, what should Harry do?

**Do either Activity 1 or 2:**

**Activity 1.** Helping children to respond to the story and have a deeper understanding of what was happening. Do this by using a co-operative activity that includes discussion, decision-making and clear purpose.

- Ask the group to draw a strip cartoon of the story. *Sheet 20.C for a cartoon grid*
- This can be as long or short dependent on the time available
- Ask each child to draw the whole cartoon or just one picture each to make up the story
- Talk about the pictures and what is happening.
- Bring the material to the whole Meeting and explain its purpose.

**Activity 2.** Working co-operatively in identifying the major issues and communicating them effectively.

- Ask the group, however small, to prepare a TV news item on the story.
- Once the 'story line' has been decided they can draw the events on a 'story board' - a cartoon of the characters and events in each part of the news item as it will appear. This can take the form of a series of quick cartoons on individual pieces of paper or card to be fixed to the wall in chronological order or on a long strip of wallpaper for the same purpose.
- The events could be read and shown as a news item with parts for the interviewer and main participants taken by different people and presented to the Children's Meeting or to the Meeting as a whole.

**For younger children.** The activities revolve around the story of Joseph and his special coat.

- Tell the story of Joseph and his brothers - ref - Genesis Chapter 37 vs. 2-36. See *Sheet 20.D* for a child friendly version of this difficult and complex story
- It is the tale of a spoilt young man whose behaviour is bad and whose brothers don't like him and who do some terrible things to him. The story is often told with Joseph as the victim but it can also be used to show that even if people are not very nice to those around them, it is no reason for bullying. Whilst doing the activity as outlined below have conversations with everybody about the treatment of Joseph, and other ways he might have behaved and his brothers responded. Conclude with the fact that the story has a satisfactory ending!

**Activity.**

Copy, print or draw the coat on *Sheet 20.E* enough times for everybody. Invite everybody to decorate a copy of their coat. (*You could do one large coat*). Talk about Joseph's coat, what it might have been made of, the colours etc. *You will need coloured paper and tissue, good quality pens, pastels and crayons and scissors and PVA glue for the children to decorate the coat.*

## Reflect

Bring everyone back together into the circle and quietly reflect on the topic for today. Affirm what the children have shared. We have been talking about bullying, why it happens and ways of dealing with it. It is wrong and should be stopped but there are people to help. As Quakers, we believe that we are all equal, difference is not important so we must treat everyone in the way that we would want them to treat us. We will hold hands in the circle, play some music and light a candle. As we watch the flame we will remember that everyone is special, we all have special gifts and that no one should be bullied.

## Review

The review can be done at the time or later and could include the facilitator, volunteer helpers and children's committee. It would be important to ensure at the time that adults involved with the session(s) have coped with the material as such an emotive subject may 'trigger' past, unresolved experiences. What went well, what needs to be followed up? What have we learnt from this session and what might be done differently another time. Remember national anti-bullying week. Most schools have an anti-bullying policy and some have set up peer group mediation programmes, which involve all-school training and participation. If appropriate this might be included in future sessions.

## Topical activity

### CERN. The European Nuclear Agency

- First see *Sheet 20.F* for a picture of CERN and where it is.
- Children of most ages will have heard something about CERN – the big machine underground in Switzerland that is going to bang tiny, tiny bits of stuff (like atoms but smaller!) together to find out more about how everything began. See *the sidebar for a CERN website with some explanations*.
- There have been lots of scary stories about this - be reassuring if you start a conversation about it with children.
- One of the phrases used to describe the work of CERN is about looking for the 'God particle'. On *Sheet 20.F* there are two activities. One is a worship activity that draws on the idea of there being a particle of God in each of us and puts that in the context of there being places of great space in each of us if only we imagine them. This may also help with imagining the greatness of the creation of which we are all part. The other is about what these tiny things look like?

## Links to other organisations and resources

[www.quaker.org.uk/cyp](http://www.quaker.org.uk/cyp) - click on Ideas Store.

[www.quaker.org.uk/cyp](http://www.quaker.org.uk/cyp) - the Quaker Life Resources Room can be found via this link - phone and email for resources on the contact details below.

[www.teachernet.gov.uk](http://www.teachernet.gov.uk) - Teachers' websites including much material about bullying

[www.niccy.org/priorities.aspx?menuId=319](http://www.niccy.org/priorities.aspx?menuId=319) – web pages on bullying from office of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People

**This issue was written by Anne Bennett and edited by Chris Nickolay who also wrote the Topical Activity**

**Published by Children & Young People's Staff Team, Quaker Life**

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### Linking with the wider meeting:

The story of Joseph could be told, followed with a period of worship. Everybody could make a Joseph's coat in response to the story.

Alternatively the God particle worship could be introduced and shared together.



A CERN website for children, and adults working with them, that helps explain some of the physics. Look for children's drawings and the play dough matter/anti-matter activity:

<http://livefromcern.web.cern.ch/livefromcern/antimatter/index.html>

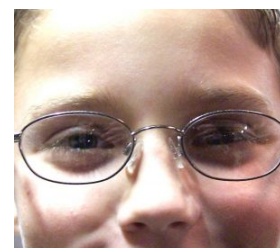
### The next children's work issue of

'Journeys in the spirit', Issue number 21, November 2008 will be on Advices and Queries; Issue 22, December 2008 will be on 'Quaker work in South Asia'; Issue 22 January 2009 will be on 'Non-violence'.

# Journeys in the Spirit

Children

Sheet 20.A Engage Pictures of children



# Journeys in the Spirit

## Children

### Sheet 20.B Respond For school aged children - Harry's story



#### Harry's new school

I was so excited. I was going to my new school. It had been lonely at home since we moved and I hoped that there would be lots of children to play with - some new friends. People stared at us as we went through the school gate but my Mum held my hand tight and I felt OK.

Mrs Johnson was the teacher of class 5 and she told the children that my name was Harry - that's not my real name but it's easier for people to say. Mrs Johnson smiled and I tried to smile as they said 'good morning Harry'. But I could see two girls laughing at me.

'Jake.' said Mrs Johnson, 'you were new last term so I'd like you to look after Harry, you remember what it's like to settle into a new class'.

Jake did not look too keen but I sat next to him. He stuck out his tongue when the teacher was not looking and when I put up my hand and answered a question he said rude things very quietly about the size of my ears. I felt pretty miserable by break time and wanted to go home.

In the playground I watched Jake try to join a game of football with some bigger boys but they pushed him away. Charlotte and her friend came to chat. They asked about my old school and I told them about the football team. They asked about my big eyes and I did not know if they were trying to be friendly or nasty.

In the afternoon we had games and when the children picked four teams no one wanted me in their team. Mrs Johnson put me in the Yellow team and I was at the last one to run in the relay race. The other teams had good runners but the Yellow team was not very good and by the time it was my turn to run, we were way behind everyone else. I ran the last lap and ran like the wind, my long legs and big feet took me past the others and I could hear the Yellow team shouting 'Harry, Harry'. I was first and they crowded round me at the end of the race! I was so pleased. My long legs and big feet make me look different to the other children at school but I come from Planet Zog and there I look like everyone else. I was glad that although I come from Planet Zog I could run even faster than Earthlings.

At the end of the day my Mum asked me about my first day at the school. I told her what had happened and she spoke to Mrs Johnson.

I think tomorrow will be OK.

# Journeys in the Spirit

Children

Sheet 20.C Respond For school aged children -a cartoon grid




# Journeys in the Spirit



## Children

### Sheet 20.D

### Respond

### A story of Joseph in two parts

- Once upon a time there was a man called Jacob.
- He was dad to 12 sons – Asher, Benjamin, Dan, Gad, Issachar, Joseph, Judah, Levi, Naphtali, Reuben, Simeon and Zebulon.
- But, O dear, he liked one more than the others – the youngest, Joseph. He liked Joseph so much that he gave him a very beautiful coat. Most coats then were plain – this was made of all sorts of colours. But when Joseph wore it his brothers were hurt and jealous. He had a lovely coat and they didn't. Their dad liked him more. It wasn't fair.
- Things got very bad between the brothers. Joseph would tell their dad when his brothers did things they shouldn't do or didn't do what their dad wanted them to.
- The brothers got really angry.
- Then it got even worse! Joseph told his brothers about one of his dreams. He said that in the dream he and his brothers were in a field tying up bundles of wheat. Suddenly the bundles stood up and his brother's bundles all bowed down to Joseph's. Joseph liked the idea of his brothers bowing down to him but his brothers didn't!
- ...and it got worse again. Joseph really didn't see how annoying he was being so he told his brothers another dream in which the sun, the moon and eleven stars bowed down to him.
- The brothers were now so angry that they forgot that Joseph was their brother.
- Jacob, the dad, sent Joseph with a message for the brothers. They were with all their sheep.
- When the brothers saw Joseph in the distance, they made a plan to kill him. But when Reuben, Joseph's oldest brother said, "Let's not kill him, just throw him in a well out here in the field." He said this because he was secretly planning to come back and rescue Joseph when the other brothers had left.
- So when Joseph came to them, they took off his beautiful robe and they threw him in an empty well.
- Just then some men came by who were going to a country called Egypt to sell special herbs and spices. They wanted a slave – the brothers sold Joseph to them.
- The brothers told their dad that Joseph had been killed by a wild animal and showed him the coat. He was very sad and tore his own clothes.



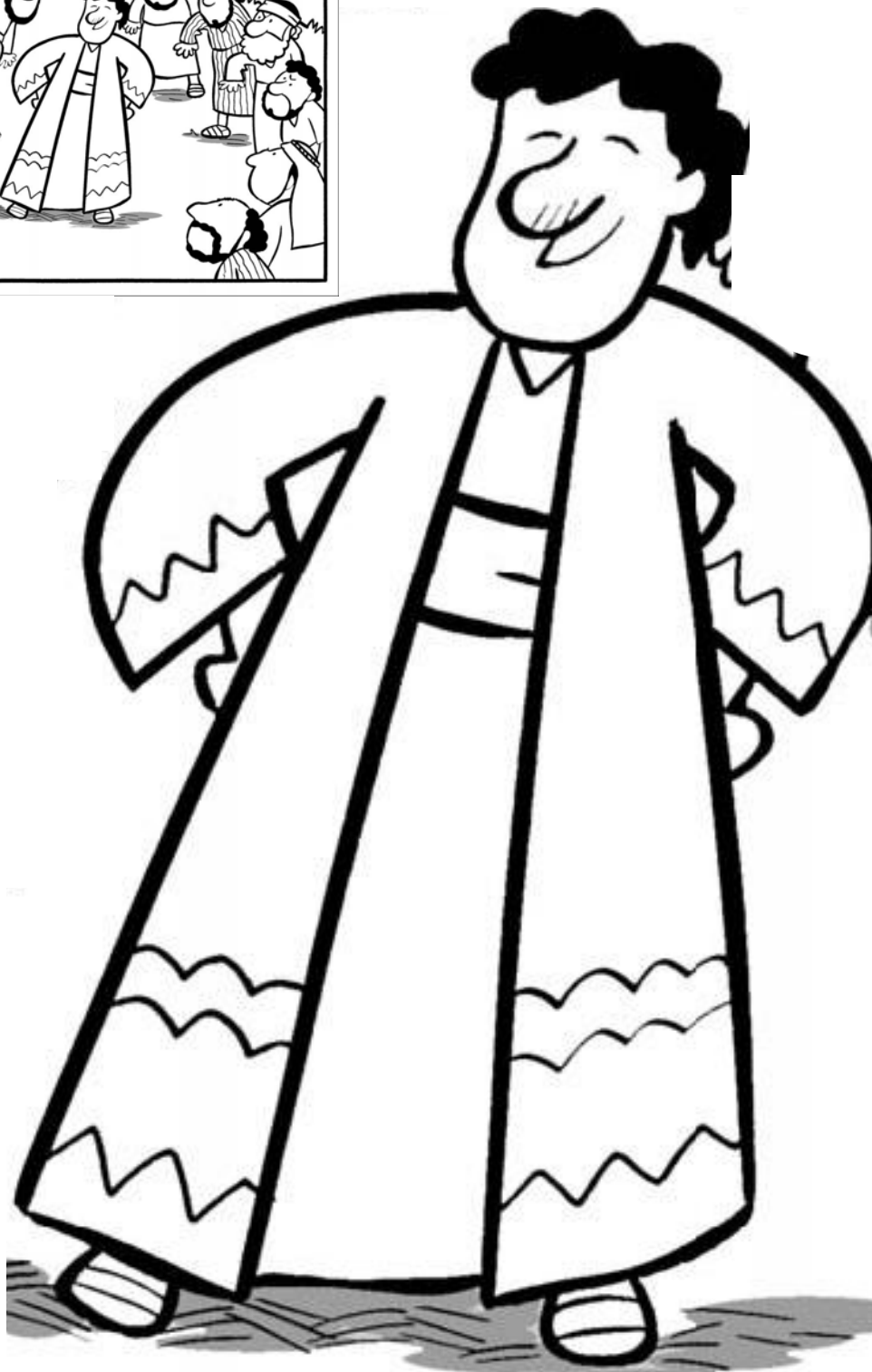
- In Egypt Joseph was still a slave. He now had to work for Potiphar. Potiphar was in the king's army – their name for a king was Pharaoh. Joseph worked hard and had lots of special jobs to do for Potiphar. But soon he was in trouble again – Potiphar's wife told lies about Joseph and he was put in prison.
- Now, do you remember that Joseph had dreams? Well, when he was in prison other people had scary dreams and Joseph told them what their dreams might mean. The king, the Pharaoh, had a dream that everybody was going to be hungry. The king asked Joseph for help.
- The king gave Joseph a very special job to make sure there was enough food in case the dream was true.
- Now, one terrible day there wasn't enough food in the part of the world where Jacob and his sons lived but there was a lot where Joseph lived.
- Jacob sent all of his sons except Benjamin there to buy some. Joseph recognised his brothers but they had no idea who he was. He said they were bad people come to steal things. They said they weren't. Joseph gave them wheat but said he would keep Simeon in prison and they would have to come back with their youngest brother – Benjamin.
- Soon they were hungry again. They went back to Egypt and took Benjamin as Joseph had asked.
- Joseph was so pleased that they had done what he asked that he let Simeon out of prison. They went home with more wheat. Now, there was one more test for the brothers. Joseph had hidden a beautiful silver cup in Benjamin's sack of wheat to test how good his brothers were. It looked like they had stolen it.
- They took the cup back. Joseph said Benjamin must be a slave because he had stolen the cup. Judah, who had sold Joseph, said, "NO! Take me instead – my dad's heart will break if he loses another young one."
- Joseph knew then that his brothers had changed and told them who he was. They cried and laughed and they all came to live with Joseph.



# Journeys in the Spirit

Children

Sheet 20.E Respond For younger children a Joseph picture



These pictures came from the web pages of Cragiebuckler Parish Church, Aberdeen for which, thank you

# Journeys in the Spirit

Children



Sheet 20.F

Topical activity

CERN

The God particle



**CERN** – a picture of where it is and what part of it looks like

**What might the tiniest bits of life or particles look like? Remember nobody has ever seen them. What do you think?**

Have lots of good quality arts materials and paper for people to work with, imagine and create what they think what the tiniest things are like.

**A centering or worship activity. Speak slowly and gently with pauses.**

- Arrange a circle of chairs or cushions.
- In the middle lay out a black cloth. On the cloth spread out lots of stones and pebbles, glass pebbles, marbles and buttons.
- When everyone has settled say: 'Imagine that in each of us is a God particle, some stuff of God. It is not a little piece of God – it is God. Just be still and let that thought grow.'
- What might the God particle in you be like? What shape is it? Where is it? How big is it? Does it have a colour or colours? Is it smooth or rough or...? Is it light, soft, bright, dark or...? Does it move? Is it still, slow, fast or...? Get a picture of it if you can. Just sit still for a little while.
- Remember your God particle – stuff of God. *Pause.*

**This can also be two separate activities used at different times.**

- Now. Carefully. Can you think of a big space inside you? How big can it be? As big as a cup? A bowl? A pool? A tree? A lake? A mountain? A cave? A wood? A forest? The sky? The moon? How big? Think for yourself how big a space is in you. It is not empty. It is full. It's in you so it's nice and safe. Can you get a picture in your mind? Just sit still for a little while.
- Now. Come back slowly to your God particle. Where might it be in your big space? Where do you keep it? Just sit still for a little while.
- Now; slowly, come back together with everybody.
- People can talk about what happened if they would like to but nobody has to. People could draw, colour or paint their particle or space if they would like to. People can simply be quiet or just go and play.