

Living the Truth I Know

I Have My Own Mind

Wisdom Story		“The Emperor’s New Clothes” Han Christian Anderson
Key Issue		Deciding whether to go along with the crowd or express my own thoughts is not always easy.
Living the Truth		When I fully express my Christ-self I honor both myself and others.
Unity Principle		#5 - Through thoughts, words and actions, we live the Truth we know.

Adult Review & Enrichment

- “Nothing that you do will ever feel good if you let people convince you that you have no choice.” – Fiona Apple
- “There are two primary choices in life; to accept conditions as they exist, or accept the responsibility for changing them.” – Denis Waitley
- “Understand that the right to choose your own path is a sacred privilege. Use it. Dwell in possibility.” – Oprah Winfrey
- “In every single thing you do, you are choosing a direction. Your life is a product of choices.” – Dr. Kathleen Hall
- “Man’s power of choice enables him to think like an angel or a devil, a king or a slave. Whatever he chooses, mind will create and manifest.” – Frederick Bailes

Centering & Coming Together

Beginning by engaging in some centering time helps to build connections and to create a prayerful and sacred environment. Encourage each member of the family to contribute and to take turns leading the different activities.

Set Up Your Sacred Space

Encourage each member of the family to contribute to creating the space. Items to consider:

- Colorful scarf or cloth on which to place the items
- Electric Candle
- Crystals/Stones – nature items
- Prayer cards
- Items that have a special meaning to an individual
- Electric Tealight

Light the Candle

As you turn on or light the candle, invite all to focus on the flame and know that the Christ presence within, is always alive in us.

- Prayer the **Prayer for Protection**
 - *The Light of God surrounds us*
 - *The Love of God enfolds us*
 - *The Power of God protects us*
 - *The Presence of God watches over us*
 - *Where we are, God is!*

Check In

- Each person chooses a tealight and then shares their name, an I AM statement, such as, *I am Diane and I am powerful*, and turns on their tealight. For each person, the group then repeats the name and affirmation in order to give a blessing, "*Diane, you are powerful.*" Go around the circle until all are affirmed.
- Next invite each person to share 3 of their favorite things. (*Color, movie, sport, bug, animal, song, planet, game, etc...*)

Sacred Breath

- This is the time when we use a breathing exercise to de-stress and to move our attention into the present moment. Choices include:
 - Smile, Take a Breath & Relax
 - Tighten all muscles, breath in, hold, and release

Celebration Leader

- Invite people to think of one or two things they would like to celebrate. As each person shares, make a joyful noise. *This activity invites us to look for the good even in very small and simple ways.*

Share the Story

Story is used to create a common experience. The story reflects an issue that the participants might be experiencing and invites us to consider that we are not alone in what we are thinking, believing, and/or experiencing.

"The Emperor's New Clothes," by Han Christian Anderson

This is a story of how people reacted to a set of "invisible" clothes.

Story Focus

This story explores the difference between going along with the crowd and expressing our own Christ self.

Share the Story

Many years ago, there was an Emperor so exceedingly fond of new clothes that he spent all his money on being well dressed. He cared nothing about reviewing his soldiers, going to the theatre, or going for a ride in his carriage, except to show off his new clothes. He had a coat for every hour of the day, and instead of saying, as one might, about any other ruler, "The King's in council," here they always said, "The Emperor's in his dressing room."

In the great city where he lived, life was always gay. Every day many strangers came to town, and among them one day came two swindlers. They let it be known they were weavers, and they said they could weave the most magnificent fabrics imaginable. Not only were their colors and patterns uncommonly fine, but clothes made of this cloth had a wonderful way of becoming invisible to anyone who was unfit for his office, or who was unusually stupid.

"Those would be just the clothes for me," thought the Emperor. "If I wore them I would be able to discover which men in my empire are unfit for their posts. And I could tell the wise men from the fools. Yes, I certainly must get some of the stuff woven for me right away." He paid the two swindlers a large sum of money to start work at once.

They set up two looms and pretended to weave, though there was nothing on the looms. All the finest silk and the purest old thread which they demanded went into their traveling bags, while they worked the empty looms far into the night.

"I'd like to know how those weavers are getting on with the cloth," the Emperor thought, but he felt slightly uncomfortable when he remembered that those who were unfit for their position would not be able to see the fabric. It couldn't have been that he doubted himself, yet he thought he'd rather send someone else to see how things were going. The whole town knew about the cloth's peculiar power, and all were impatient to find out how stupid their neighbors were.

"I'll send my honest old minister to the weavers," the Emperor decided. "He'll be the best one to tell me how the material looks, for he's a sensible man and no one does his duty better."

So the honest old minister went to the room where the two swindlers sat working away at their empty looms. "Heaven help me," he thought as his eyes flew wide open, "I can't see anything at all". But he did not say so.

Both the swindlers begged him to be so kind as to come near to approve the excellent pattern, the beautiful colors. They pointed to the empty looms, and the poor old minister stared as hard as he dared. He couldn't see anything, because there was nothing to see. "Heaven have mercy," he thought. "Can it be that I'm a fool? I'd have never guessed it, and not a soul must know. Am I unfit to be the minister? It would never do to let on that I can't see the cloth."

"Don't hesitate to tell us what you think of it," said one of the weavers. "Oh, it's beautiful, it's enchanting." The old minister peered through his spectacles. "Such a pattern, what colors!" I'll be sure to tell the Emperor how delighted I am with it."

"We're pleased to hear that," the swindlers said. They proceeded to name all the colors and to explain the intricate pattern. The old minister paid the closest attention, so that he could tell it all to the Emperor. And so he did.

The swindlers at once asked for more money, more silk and gold thread, to get on with the weaving. But it all went into their pockets. Not a thread went into the looms, though they worked at their weaving as hard as ever.

The Emperor presently sent another trustworthy official to see how the work progressed and how soon it would be ready. The same thing happened to him that had happened to the minister. He looked and he looked, but as there was nothing to see in the looms he couldn't see anything.

"Isn't it a beautiful piece of goods?" the swindlers asked him, as they displayed and described their imaginary pattern.

"I know I'm not stupid," the man thought, "so it must be that I'm unworthy of my good office. That's strange. I mustn't let anyone find it out, though." So he praised the material he did not see. He declared he was delighted with the beautiful colors and the exquisite pattern. To the Emperor he said, "It held me spellbound."

All the town was talking of this splendid cloth, and the Emperor wanted to see it for himself while it was still in the looms. Attended by a band of chosen men, among whom were his two old trusted officials-the ones who had been to the weavers-he set out to see the two swindlers. He found them weaving with might and main, but without a thread in their looms.

"Magnificent," said the two officials already duped. "Just look, Your Majesty, what colors! What a design!" They pointed to the empty looms, each supposing that the others could see the stuff.

"What's this?" thought the Emperor. "I can't see anything. This is terrible!

Am I a fool? Am I unfit to be the Emperor? What a thing to happen to me of all people! - Oh! It's very pretty," he said. "It has my highest approval." And he nodded approbation at the empty loom. Nothing could make him say that he couldn't see anything.

His whole retinue stared and stared. One saw no more than another, but they all joined the Emperor in exclaiming, "Oh! It's very pretty," and they advised him to wear clothes made of this wonderful cloth especially for the great procession he was soon to lead. "Magnificent! Excellent! Unsurpassed!" were bandied from mouth to mouth, and everyone did his best to seem well pleased. The Emperor gave each of the swindlers a cross to wear in his buttonhole, and the title of "Sir Weaver."

Before the procession the swindlers sat up all night and burned more than six candles, to show how busy they were finishing the Emperor's new clothes. They pretended to take the cloth off the loom. They made cuts in the air with huge scissors. And at last they said, "Now the Emperor's new clothes are ready for him."

Then the Emperor himself came with his noblest noblemen, and the swindlers each raised an arm as if they were holding something. They said, "These are the trousers, here's the coat, and this is the mantle," naming each garment. "All of them are as light as a spider web. One would almost think he had nothing on, but that's what makes them so fine."

"Exactly," all the noblemen agreed, though they could see nothing, for there was nothing to see.

"If Your Imperial Majesty will agree to take your clothes off," said the swindlers, "we will help you on with your new ones here in front of the long mirror."

The Emperor undressed, and the swindlers pretended to put his new clothes on him, one garment after another. They took hold of him around the waist and seemed to be fastening something - that was his train-as the Emperor turned round and round before the looking glass.

"How well Your Majesty's new clothes look. Aren't they becoming!" He heard on all sides, "That pattern, so perfect! Those colors, so suitable! It is a magnificent outfit."

Then the minister of public processions announced: "Your Majesty's canopy is waiting outside."

"Well, I'm supposed to be ready," the Emperor said, and turned again for one last look in the mirror. "It is a remarkable fit, isn't it?" He seemed to regard his costume with the greatest interest.

The noblemen who were to carry his train stooped low and reached for the floor as if they were picking up his mantle. Then they pretended to lift and hold it high. They didn't dare admit they had nothing to hold.

So off went the Emperor in procession under his splendid canopy. Everyone in the streets and the windows said, "Oh, how fine are the Emperor's new clothes! Don't they fit him to

perfection? And see his long train!" Nobody would confess that he couldn't see anything, for that would prove him either unfit for his position, or a fool. No costume the Emperor had worn before was ever such a complete success.

"But he hasn't got anything on," a little child said.

"Did you ever hear such innocent prattle?" said its father. And one person whispered to another what the child had said, "He hasn't anything on. A child says he hasn't anything on."

"But he hasn't got anything on!" the whole town cried out at last.

The Emperor shivered, for he suspected they were right. But he thought, "This procession has got to go on." So, he walked more proudly than ever, as his noblemen held high the train that wasn't there at all.

Discuss the Story

The discussion questions can be used to provoke thought and to allow the participants time to grapple with their own questions and to seek their own answers

- What was the emperor like?
- Who came to town and what did they offer the emperor?
- What kind of cloth did they say they could make?
- What did the emperor think he would be able to do with the new cloth?
- What was the minister's experience as he was checking on the cloth?
- What did the weavers do next?
- Who else did the emperor send and how did they respond?
- What happened when the cloth was ready?
- How did the people respond?
- What did the child point out?
- What did everyone else finally admit?
- How does the story end?
- What was most important to the emperor?
- What do you think were the reasons that the people were afraid to admit that they could not see the cloth?
- For what reasons did the people go along with what the emperor wanted?
- Tell me about a time when you were afraid to speak your mind.
- Tell me about a time when you went along with your group of friends even though you did not agree with them. How did you feel about that?
- What do you think it means to be an Individual?
- Why is it important to listen to your inner wisdom and speak up when you need to?

Activities

The activities are used to give the participants the opportunity to explore the lesson's teachings through art, science, and/or games.

Speaking from the Heart

The intention of this activity is for the children to find their own voice.

Supplies

- Large poster board cut into heart shapes
- Magazines
- Glue Sticks
- Scissors
- Markers

Action

- Invite the children to come up with an issue that they feel strongly about. It could be animal rights, extended recess, no more homework; bullying, anything that is important to them, etc...
- Invite them to think about the issue they decided upon and to come up with a list of words that fit their issue, like: freedom; kindness; strength; power, etc...
- Then ask them to look through the magazines or to create images of their own that reflect their opinions.
- Using the heart shaped poster board, encourage them to create a poster that reflects their views.

Discuss

- What is important about this issue for you?
- It is hard or easy for you to let people know how you feel about it?
- What might happen if you are reluctant to share how you feel about this subject?
- What are the benefits of letting your opinions and voice be heard?
- What can we do that would make it safer for people to speak out about things that are important to them?

Should I or Shouldn't I?

The intention of this activity is to explore what happens when we follow the crowd.

Action #1

- Choose one child to be the leader.
- Play follow the leader around the room.
- No matter who else wants to have a turn being the leader, don't allow the leader to change.
- After a few minutes of play, stop and discuss.

Discussion

- What was it like to follow a leader without having to decide where you were going?
- What was it like to not have a chance to lead?
- What are some things you can do to let your opinions be heard?
- After the discuss, allow different children to take turns leading.

Action #2 – If you have 4 or more people...

- Invite the group to form a circle.
- Choose a color and invite the person wearing the most of that color to step out of the circle.
- Inform that rest of the circle that they are a group that feels complete and they are to link arms and legs and band tightly together.
- The goal is to keep the single person out of the circle.
- The single person wants to join the group and tries their best to get into the circle.
- Allow play to go on for a few minutes. If the person has not made it into the circle, invite the circle to open up and let them in.

Discussion

- What was it like to be a part of the circle?
- What was it like to be on the outside?
- For those in the circle, did you agree with the decision to exclude someone? Why or why not?
- If you went along with a decision you did not agree with, what were your reasons for doing so?
- Where is this kind of thing happening in the world around you?
- What affect does going along with the crowd and not speaking your minds, have on your life?
- What are some ways that you can feel safe enough to speak you mind in a respectful way?