

Assemblies: Home Learning

Ideas for continuing Reflective/ Spiritual times at home

Bristol, South Gloucestershire and Swindon SACRE (advisory councils for RE) are keen to support you in the amazing work you're doing supporting children and young people in these challenging times.

Managing learning at home with a family is very demanding, especially as most of us are not qualified teachers. Homes can be busy places, and it might be hard to maintain normal routines. Having a **period of reflection and time to pause and reflect** can be vital at this time and is something to consider. It may offer opportunities to celebrate and be grateful, as well as offer young people a chance to give voice to their worries or concerns. It may also allow families to consider the needs of others. The following links are here to support the possibility of creating some "time to breathe" at home and offer opportunities that children and young people might manage for themselves or to share with their families. We appreciate that **many families may have their own beliefs, rituals and rhythms** that they will be maintaining at this time and we do not want to interrupt that.

A time of reflection could provide a unique time and space to offer shape, meaning and hope whilst at home. This list, and many of the resources it links to, will continue to be added to over time.

Simple home candle mindfulness time

During this unusual time it can be useful to build times of reflection, or step away times, into the day or week. These build breaks to allow for well being and good spiritual and mental health.

Here is a simple idea that could be built into a weekly or daily rhythm.

1. Choose a time in the day (or week) with minimal interruptions, such as after a morning break or lunchtime.
2. Create a space - clear the table; maybe put out cushions and a special piece of material, a candle or nature based focus objects.
3. Ensure your child(ren) / young people know why they are entering into a time of stillness and silence is a good idea - practise closing your eyes gently, adults too, and breathing in and out slowly.
4. Play some soft soothing music and fade it down gently. You could then use a bell or a chime to signify the beginning of the mindfulness (awareness of thoughts and feelings) time.

<https://www.contemplativeoutreach.org/centering-prayer-mobile-app> is a good app for finding chimes and it offers a timer too (other apps are available).

5. As a rule of thumb, time spent in mindfulness can be related to the youngest child's chronological age, e.g. 5 mins for a 5 year old, 10 mins for a 10 year old.

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6. Many traditions suggest using a word or phrase to concentrate on as you breathe in and out and to return to that word when your mind wanders. An example might be saying 'Love' on the in breath and 'Peace' on the out breath

However, feel free to create your own that is right for you/ your family. You may find it helpful to think on something beautiful or an item on your table.

Or you can just keep counting the breaths in and out until you get to 10 and then start again. If your mind wanders so you cannot remember the number, and it may well, just start again at 1.

7. When the time is over, ring the bell/ sound the chime, fade in the quiet music and take time to 'return' to the room.
8. You may wish to allow some time to discuss anything that was felt or thought during that time of mindfulness.
9. Don't give up! Children and adults may be restless and find this difficult. Build the routine and rhythm and you will adapt and benefit. Create a new norm - you might need to change the time or the day until it is right.

Jigsaw materials

Many of our schools use Jigsaw materials for their PSHE lessons and they include some great mindfulness activities. Jigsaw have released two stories including "Calm Me" times that you can use at home during this time.

<https://families.jigsawpshe.com/stuck-at-home/>

Heart Smart resources

A few schools use Heart Smart materials and they too are offering regular reflections for families at home and some follow up materials, some clips are designed for this unique time while we are isolating.

<https://www.heartsmart.family/>

BBC resources

The Assembly Toolkit offers many materials, particularly seasonal to the month and to the key stage of a child/ young person. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/p00nkdqx>
School Radio also offers some great assemblies that encourage reflection and depth of thought for all age groups.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/articles/4tfZ9z97zphTq9xSLLqZC01/assemblies>

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BBC Teach

Has stories on YouTube for Collective Worship

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC4KN50fal7f45fx2DqG7ttg/search?query=Collective+Worship> - simply watch the clip together, ask and discuss the question:

What might we learn from this for our own lives?

Reviewing the day reflectively

At the end of your day, find a comfortable place, and remind yourself that 'all will be well'.

Now look back over your day.

Were you at home? Did you go out? Where did you go?

What made you happy today?

Did somebody say or do something that made you feel good? (someone in your family, a teacher, maybe someone online or someone else?)

Did you say or do anything that made you feel good?

Was there something that you really enjoyed?

Whatever made you feel happy today, give thanks for those things now.

Did anything make you sad today?

Maybe something that happened or that someone said or did?

Did you do something that made you feel unhappy?

Maybe there is something you want to say sorry for?

Whatever made you feel sad or unhappy today, remember that you are precious and that nothing ever changes that.

Now think about your day tomorrow.

Is there anything you would like to ask about the day?

Is there anything you are worried about, or anything that you need?

Talk about it now and ask for peace and happiness to be with you through your day.

Finish with: All will be well. May love abide (or words you are more comfortable with).

Suggestion: You could keep these responses in a daily journal and note your responses.