



# *Soul Matters*

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## Living with Intention



RE Resources  
Pre-K and First Grade

January 2022

# Contents

<b>WELCOME TO LIVING WITH INTENTION</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>CALENDAR CONNECTIONS</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>LESSON A: IT TAKES EMPATHY</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>LESSON B: IT TAKES PASSION</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>LESSON C: IT TAKES PERSISTENCE</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>LESSON D: IT TAKES ACCEPTING MISTAKES</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>LESSON E: IT TAKES PAUSING</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>OPPORTUNITIES FOR LEADER SUPPORT</b>	<b>28</b>

# Welcome to Living with Intention

Welcome to the Soul Matters Multi-Platform Packet for PreK through First Grades for the month of January. This year our monthly themes invite us to think about not only what values our UU faith calls us to but also the actions and skills that *our times* require of us. Pandemic time, along with our racial, political and environmental challenges, exposes the need for humanity to change and adjust in key ways. So each month we will explore a different skill that we need to lean into so that we don't just return to normal after the pandemic is over, but actually bring about a "new normal."

This month we explore the ways in which our times call us to "Live with Intention." There are five ways we will explore the skills it takes to live with intention. Here they are:

**Lesson A: It Takes Empathy** - The activation of our intentions.

**Lesson B: It Takes Passion**- The driver of intention.

**Lesson C: It Takes Persistence** - The fuel of intention.

**Lesson D: It Takes Accepting Mistakes** - The impacts of intention.

**Lesson E: It Takes Pausing** - The replenishment and sorting of intention.

For our littlest children, we will be exploring the theme as "We Care and Want to Be Kind," as well as using some of the bigger words so that they hear the same words as the older children, youth and adults around them.

Intention is a big word for children. So is Persistence. I was struggling with the connection when one early morning it came to me: The Little Engine that Could! I had just played and read this to my grandchildren. That little train embodies the understanding of persistence more than any fancy explanation could. A great reminder about thinking through a child's lens rather than using my adult brain!

That said, I encourage leaders to use the word "persistence" even with little ones, just a few times, to bridge the understanding between ages. Adults will be hearing about intention and persistence in sermons and reflecting on it in small groups. A family can use a common word now and then. Just don't make everything about words. Shall we tell our worship leaders about this? Can you imagine the whole congregation reading, chanting "I think I can, I think I can, I think I can" and being inspired by that plucky little train?

That's my hope for all of you this month. May our exploration of intention not only bring you closer to your goals, but also closer to an inner understanding of intention, that is not just words!

**Katie**, on behalf of the [entire Soul Matters Team](#)

DRE for Soul Matters, [soulmattersre@gmail.com](mailto:soulmattersre@gmail.com)

*PS. If you would like to read or review our overall approach to the 21-22 RE Packets, check out our ["Welcome to Soul Matters RE" Google Doc](#).*

*Legend:*

1. *Purple Font* = online adaptations and alternatives
2. *Double asterisks (\*\*\*)* = books recommended by the Widening the Circle Research Team

# Calendar Connections

## January 2022

*Click on the name of each event for more information or inspiration.*

### Interfaith:

- [Twelfth Night](#) (Christian) - [Jan. 5](#)
- [Epiphany](#) (Christian) - Jan. 6
- [World Religion Day](#) (Baha'i) - Jan. 16, 2022 (more found [here](#) and [here](#))
- [Tu BiShevat](#) (Jewish) - Jan. 16 -17, 2022 (more [here](#) and [here](#) and [here](#))

### Unitarian Universalist:

- [Thirty Days of Love](#) - Side with Love Campaign - Jan.15 - Feb.14
- [Millard Fillmore's](#) Birthday - Jan. 7, 1800 (Unitarian President; on his contradictions [here](#) & [here](#))
- [Joseph Tuckerman's](#) Birthday - Jan. 18 (1778) (more [here](#))

### National & Cultural:

- [New Year's Day](#) - Jan.1
- The Emancipation Proclamation issued by President Abraham Lincoln - Jan. 1 (1863)
- MLK, Jr. Day - Jan. 21 (connections [here](#) and [here](#))
- [Rowe vs. Wade](#) Anniversary - Jan. 22 (more [here](#))
- International Holocaust ([Shoah](#)) [Remembrance Day](#) - Jan. 27 (more [here](#) and [here](#))

### For Fun and On the Fringe:

- [National Hug Day](#) - Jan.21
- [I'm Not Going To Take it Anymore](#) Day - Jan. 7th
- Birthday of [Thomas Merton](#) - Jan. 31 (1915) (more [here](#) and [here](#))
- [Belly Laugh Day](#) - Jan. 24 (more [here](#) and [here](#))

# Lesson A: It Takes Empathy The activation of intention (Core Story: New Shoes)

## Theme Angle

Our theme this month is Living with Intention. When it comes to intentionally going about social change, one of the key things needed is empathy. When we are able to empathize with and have a personal experience around a social inequality, it activates our intention and our desire to change things.

And a great way to get that kind of experience albeit second hand, is with a new spin on the old game of Candy Land. Offer it to the children or as a multigenerational event in a special version called Unfair Candy Land, We have tweaked the classic game so that instead of having the players pursue candy, players experience the impacts of unfair rules.

Note: We suggest this lesson as a less formal session to be used on the first Sunday of New Year's. It can be offered to children alone, children and youth, or as a multigenerational activity.

## Translating this for Young Children

We want to understand what it feels like to be treated unfairly. So we play a game with some unfair rules. Then, we will understand what it's like. Understanding helps us care and be kind to people who are treated unfairly.

## Light It!

*We know that everyone approaches chalice lighting differently. Some use the same chalice lighting words for the entire month, while others pick a new one each week and tailor it to that week's particular theme connection. So instead of offering specific chalice lightings for you to use, we offer four "places" for you to find the chalice lighting that fits your approach:*

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- [Tapestry of Faith and other common Chalice Lightings for Children](#)
- *Our monthly Soul Matters worship packets*
- *Your own congregation's special chalice lighting words*

## Extinguish It!

*Signal the end of "sacred time" or "Chalice time" with a short ritual for extinguishing the chalice. It might be just after any of the below sections or at the end of the session. Use a [candle snuffer](#) if you use real candles for dramatic effect, or just blow it out. Here are some resources for you to find the chalice extinguishing words that fits your approach:*

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- *Worship Web:* <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/closing/6049.shtml>
- *Katie's Words*

*We gather the warmth of love, the light of truth, and the energy of action into our hearts. Back into the world of do and say, Carry it forward into the dawning day. Go Now in Peace, Amen.*

*(Move your arms to express the actions: gather using a cupping motion from the flame of the chalice to your heart, spread that outward again.)*

# Introduce It!

## (Wonder Box)

### Getting Ready to Play the Game

#### Preparation

Make sure each group playing Unfair Candy Land has the game board, tokens and rules.

**Reflection Objects:** some of the tokens from a Candy Land Game.

Online Adaptation: Candy Land could be played at home during a Zoom by the families on Zoom simultaneously. The reflection and debriefing then could also be shared on the Zoom.

#### Suggested Script

“Happy New Year! One of the things that is a part of “holiday break” for many people is game playing. One of the things that we do for New Year’s is to make up a resolution. Let’s do both for our monthly theme of “Living with Intention.”

Here are some Gingerbread people from the game Candy Land. What is your favorite color?

We are going to play a version of Candy Land called “Unfair Candyland.” That means there are special rules.

The first part of the rules are unfair, just like our society has been unfair to people of color and other people. Stick with the game, even though it is unfair, and find out how it feels to live in an unfair world. We want to understand what it feels like to be treated unfairly. So we play a game with some unfair rules. Then, we will understand what it’s like. Understanding helps us care and be kind to people who are treated unfairly.

So today we’re going to explore how it feels to live with unfairness. Are you ready?! Let’s begin!”

# Tell It and Talk About It!

## (Story)

### Suggested Introductory Words

“A great way to explore what it was like to live with unfairness is by sharing this book [**hold it up**].

In this story, a girl is upset because at the time the book takes place, in the 1950’s, black children and adults were not allowed to try on shoes at many shoe stores. It’s a great reminder about what the unfairness of that time was like.”

**New Shoes** by Susan Lynn Meyer (Author), Eric Velasquez (Illustrator)

**Book:** [HERE](#)

**Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-G45QZmHxlg> (start at :46)

### Reflection Prompts

- What was your favorite part of the book?
- If you couldn’t try on shoes, what might you have done?
- What did you think about the shoe store which the girls opened up?
- What have you come up with when you are being treated unfairly?

### Notes on the Book

*A 2016 NAACP Image Award Nominee, and a Jane Addams Children's Book Award winner.*

### Online Permission Note

*Holiday House Publishers has authorized its books for online use as long as you follow their specific use guidelines found [HERE](#). Just scroll down to the section titled “Holiday House”*

# Explore It!

## (Group Activities and Experiential Learning)

Here are a variety of suggestions for digging deeper into the theme. Choose the one(s) just right for your group! In many cases, these will work as well online as in-person. We also offer an online adaptation or alternative and *highlight it in purple*.

### Explore It with ...

#### Candy Land

**Unfair Candy Land** - a Soul Matters version based on the concept of "[Intergroup Monopoly](#)." Visit the [Google Doc](#) for play and rules developed by Katie Covey using a regular Candy Land board game.

##### Discover an Intention

Did playing this game help you discover something you intend to do?

#### Other Games

Invite the children to play another game that they know with "unfair" rules. It might be a game of I Spy, or even building with blocks. This time the children can think up "unfair" rules on their own to try out and see how it feels. Keep it short so the children don't get upset.

#### Sesame Street Video

*After all the "unfairness" above, play a song which brings the children back to wanting to care and be kind to everyone!*

**We All Sing with the Same Song** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MYXJlfcFKU&t=63s>

#### Fingerplays

*Do some movement together to commit to fighting unfairness!*

Come on over and clap your hands  
Come on over and clap your hands  
Come on over and clap your hands  
Clap your hands together - Together we will make a fair world!  
Come on over and jump up high  
Come on over and jump up high  
Come on over and jump up high  
Jump up high together - Together we will make a fair world!  
Come on over and swing your arms  
Come on over and swing your arms  
Come on over and swing your arms  
Swing your arms together - Together we will make a fair world for everyone!

# Lesson B:

## It Takes Passion

### The Driver of Intention

(Core Story: We are Water Protectors\*\*)

#### Theme Angle

The theme of the month is Living with Intention. Living with intention requires passion. Indeed, the driver of intention is passion. Passion is the, as they say, the “fire in the belly” that animates our intentions. Passion can also be explained as “caring deeply.” For instance, in our faith, we ask, “What do you care most about?” So in this session, we explore how passion takes our inner steering wheel and drives us toward what is most important to us. This way our passions steer our values and our actions, not just social pressures and messages from society.

So when it comes to living with intention, our faith clearly asks us, “What has your heart?”

#### Translating This for Young Children

We want to care and be kind.

## Light It!

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*We gather the warmth of love, the light of truth, and the energy of action into our hearts  
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Carry it forward into the dawning day.  
Go Now in Peace, Amen.*

*(Move your arms to express the actions: gather using a cupping motion from the flame of the chalice to your heart, spread that outward again.)*

# Introduce It!

## (Wonder Box)

### Steering toward What is Important

**Reflection Object:** A little car

### Suggested Script

“Here is a little car. There must be a driver in here somewhere holding on to the steering wheel, driving it left and right.

Now pretend the car is a caring car. It drives up and down, checking on everyone, making sure they are OK and happy. Little car says, “Are you happy, Michael?” “Are you OK, Marlo?” [Check in with other children.]

The little car steers toward what is important - caring and kindness. Can you be like the little car and steer toward what is important - caring and kindness?

So today we’re going to explore a bunch of ways that we intend to be caring and kind! Are you ready?! Let’s begin!”

# Tell It and Talk About It!

## (Story)

### Suggested Introductory Words

“Today’s story is an example of the way passion, or caring deeply, can drive our intention to do amazing things. By caring deeply about water, rivers, and pollution, the Ojibway people intend to fight the “black snake” of pollution. Let’s listen to the story together!”

**We are Water Protectors\*\*** by Carole Lindstrom (Author), Michaela Goade (Illustrator)

**Video:** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CD8shbwrK40>

**Book:** [HERE](#)

### Reflection Prompts

- What was your favorite part of the story?
- How did you feel when she said that water is alive?
- Has water ever felt alive to you?
- Would you take the Water Protector Pledge? Why?
- Is there a part of nature you care deeply about? Have passion for? For instance, birds or whales or oceans or rivers? What are some ways you can be a protector of that?

### Notes on the Book

#### \*\*ARAOMC Context from the Widening the Circle Research Team

The WTC team chose this book because of how it shines light on a recent injustice forced upon Indigenous folks. The story illustrates how caring deeply, being passionate about something, drives the urge to live with intention.

#### Online Permission Note

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# Explore It!

## (Small Group Activities and Experiential Learning)

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### Explore It with...

#### Kindness and Caring Fingerplay

Five Little Children

[http://ifnotyouwho.org/activities/detail/activity\\_13\\_character\\_traits](http://ifnotyouwho.org/activities/detail/activity_13_character_traits)

#### The Water Protector Pledge

If your group chooses to Live with Kindness by taking the Water Protector Pledge, visit the [Water Protector Activity Kit](#) pages for a copy of the pledge, as well as a letter from the author, and other activities. How does caring passionately about protecting water drive the intention to help care for water resources?

#### A Kindness and Caring Bracelet

Invite the children to make an easy “kindness and caring” bracelet by twisting chenille stems together to go around their wrist (option: try adding one heart bead to the middle of the bracelet but be aware of choking hazards if there are younger children in the family.) This will remind you of what you are passionate about and remind you to live with kindness and caring.

#### A Steering Wheel Race

Remember our little kindness car? We need a steering wheel, right? Here's a printable template for a steering wheel, some speed limit signs, etc. Play a game of running around “driving” at different speed limits. There are even speeding tickets. This nice outdoor activity pairs with drawing a racetrack on the sidewalk to follow. This could also be paired with a [“Red Light, Green Light Game.”](#)  
<https://www.himama.com/daycare-activities/steering-wheel-race>

#### A Heart Drawing

Cut out hearts. Fill in the words, “Kindness and Caring” and then draw the important person, object, or value that they feel passionate about and want to practice kindness and caring for.

# Lesson C: It Takes Persistence The Fuel of Intention

(Core Story: The Little Engine That Could)

## Theme Angle

The theme this month is Living with Intention. Living with intention takes persistence and patience. It takes persistence and patience because living with intention is hard. Fulfilling our intentions often takes a long time. And what happens when we try to do something that is hard? When we try to play a musical instrument, or fold origami, or try to memorize a poem? We have to take baby steps! We have to remind ourselves not to give up. We have to remind ourselves that our goal can't be reached all at once. It needs to happen in tinier parts - baby steps!! And a long road only taking baby steps certainly requires persistence and patience!

## Translating This for Young Children

It's hard to work for caring and kindness. We have to keep trying and trying.

## Light It!

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# Introduce It (Wonder Box)

## Baby Steps

**Reflection Object:** a baby doll, or use “walking fingers”

**Suggested Script:**

“Here is a baby doll. It takes baby steps. Teeny tiny steps.

The theme this month is Living with Intention. That means trying to care and be kind. It takes persistence and patience. It takes persistence and patience because living with intention is hard. And what happens when we try to do something that is hard? When we try to play a new game, or learn to skip, or try to build a tower? We have to remind ourselves not to give up. It needs to happen in tinier parts - baby steps!! And being kind and caring means taking baby steps with persistence and patience!

So today we’re going to explore what happens when we stay persistent. Are you ready?! Let’s begin!”

# Tell It and Talk About It

## Our Story: The Little Engine That Could

### Suggested Introductory Words

“Do you know the story of The Little Engine that Could? She puffs up the mountain, not sure that she can make it, pulling the train carrying all the toys and good food for the children on the other side of the mountain. And what does she say, as she tries and tries? “I think I can. I think I can. I think I can.” That is called persistence. She kept on trying and trying. Here we go.”

### The Little Engine that Could by Watty Piper

**Video** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= 2EhWYGbi5o>

**Book:** [HERE](#)

### Reflection Prompts

- What part of the story do you remember the most?
- What did you like about the story?
- Have you ever felt all alone with no one to help you like the train with the toys did?
- Have you ever helped someone like the little blue engine?
- What do you think this story teaches us?
- Have you ever kept on trying and trying until something really happened?

**Online Permission Note:** Penguin Random House Publishers, [which owns](#) Golden Books, has authorized its books for online use as long as you follow their specific use guidelines found [HERE](#). Just scroll down to the section titled “Penguin Random House Publishers.”

# Explore It

## (Small Group Activities and Experiential Learning)

Here are a variety of suggestions for digging deeper into the theme. Choose the one(s) just right for your group! In many cases, these will work as well online as in-person. When an activity doesn't work for both in person and online, we offer an online adaptation or alternative and *highlight it in purple*.

Living with intention takes persistence and patience. Experience the feeling of frustration and how one has to keep on trying with these activities. While the children try these activities, here are some phrases which help encourage persistence:

*"Look at all of your hard work."*

*"Good for you, you didn't give up."*

*"The more you practice, the better you get."*

*"You did that even though it wasn't easy or fun."*

*"That was hard, but look how easy you made it by trying." - from [6 Ways to Teach Kids Persistence](#)*

## Explore It with...

### Sesame Street Video

*Keep trying and be strong!*

Will. I. am. "What I Am"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cyVzjoj96vs&t=107s>

### Outside Movements

What outside movements can you try? Hopping, skipping, twirling? Go outside and note how it takes perseverance to master the technique.

### Minute to Win It "Defy Gravity"

Each player has to try to keep 3 balloons in the air for a minute. For preschoolers, adapt this to one balloon.

### An Obstacle Course

Create an indoor or outdoor obstacle course. Balance on a 2" x 4" board, crawl under a tunnel of chairs, swing from a rope, carry buckets of water, hop across stepping stones, etc. Encourage persistence.

## A Block Song

Lyrics from Preschool Express (which they adapted from a poem by Peggy Sloan).

<http://www.preschoolexpress.com/music-station14/block-songs.shtml>

Can be sung to the Final Jeopardy theme music. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B3ILYOGDsts>

Pick a block to put on top.

Careful now, don't let it dro-o-o-o-op!

Higher, higher – up you go.

Take your time, just do it slow.

Balance one block, two blocks, three

See how tall your stack can be-e-e.

Invite the children to invent something using wooden blocks or other manipulatives, such as Legos. Sing the song while the children invent.

# Lesson D: It Takes Accepting Mistakes Noticing the Impacts of Our Intention

(Core Story: Beautiful Oops)

## Theme Angle

The theme this month is Living with Intention. It takes accepting mistakes to live with intention because mistakes are part of living. We need to acknowledge that good intentions can sometimes cause harm. We need to know how to accept that we have caused harm without defensiveness. We can hope that when we make a mistake, we can apologize sincerely, and hope that we learn from our mistake. Or to put it another way, we also have to be intentional about fixing our mistakes! We can all trust that the beauty of wholeness will be the gift of learning from our mistakes.

## Translating This for Young Children

We all make mistakes. We say, “I’m sorry” and try not to do it again.

## Light It!

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# Introduce It!

## (Wonder Box)

### Good Intentions can Cause Harm

**Reflection Objects: two flowers**

**Suggested Script**

Place inside: two flowers, one of which can be bent or broken. (This would be an ideal skit for a puppet)

What is in the Wonder Box today? It is a flower! It is so pretty! I wave it all around and OOPS! It is bent. Oh, oh! Now it won't stand up in the vase. And if I give it to my friend, it will droop. I wish I hadn't been so rough. I was going to give it to my friend and now it is spoiled. Here's another flower. What should I do?

Invite responses.

Can I put a band-aid on the bend and make it better. No.

Maybe I could still give it to my friend and apologize and see if they mind if it is shorter.

Or give it as just a blossom floating in a cup of water, without a stem at all.

What should I say? "I'm sorry I was so rough with the flower."

What should I do? I could give my friend the other one and be more gentle. But I was hoping to keep that one for myself.

But that's not the right thing to do, I should give the best one as a gift to my friend. I can still make the bent one look pretty. And the right thing to do is to apologize for being so rough with the flower.

And what will I learn from this mistake?

Next time, I will be gentle with the flower!

So, let's explore living with intention. It takes accepting mistakes and learning from them. Are you ready?! Let's begin!"

# Tell It and Talk About It!

## Our Story: Beautiful Oops

### Suggested Introductory Words

“Here’s a story about making mistakes. If we learn from our mistakes, we can sometimes make something beautiful instead. Here we go.”

### Beautiful Oops by Barney Saltzberg.

Video with Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2fZjMYdQjGM>

Book: <https://www.amazon.com/Beautiful-Oops-Barney-Saltzberg/dp/076115728X>

### Reflection Prompts

- What part of the story do you remember the most?
- What did you like about the story?
- What didn’t you like about the story?
- What do you think this story teaches us?
- Have you ever made a mistake but were able to learn from it or even make something more beautiful?

**Online Permission Note:** *Workman Books has not publicly shared direction about online use, so you will need to make your own judgement call about use of this story. For help thinking through that see our Soul Matters document: [Copyright Guidance for Online Story Reading](#).*

# Explore It!

## (Small Group Activities and Experiential Learning)

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### Explore It with...

### Mistakes Fingerplays

#### The Eensy Weensy Spider Revisited - the possibility of being wrong and learning from a mistake

*Sing the Eensy Weensy Spider*

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QK2DVfExS-I>

*Is a gutter a good place to climb? Not really if it rains a lot. Did the eensy weensy spider make a mistake climbing up the gutter again? It's possible. Ask the children if the eensy weensy spider learned from her mistake? Can you make up other places where she might climb and sing it in the song. I.e.*

*The eensy weensy spider*

*Climbed up the big old tree*

*Down came the rain and she didn't wash right out!*

*Out came the sun and dried up all the rain*

*And the eensy weensy spider stayed in the big old tree.*

*Where else could she learn to climb and not be washed right out? A fence, under a leaf, a wall. Sometimes, like the eensy weensy spider we make mistakes, and then we can learn from them.*

### 5 Little Ducks

*Mama Duck makes a mistake by losing one of her babies each day!*

5 Little Ducks went out one day

Over the hill and far away

Mama Duck said quack quack quack quack!

But only 4 little duckies came back

4 Little Ducks went out one day

Over the hill and far away

Mama Duck said quack quack quack quack!

But only 3 little duckies came back

3 Little Ducks went out one day

Over the hill and far away

Mama Duck said quack quack quack quack!

But only 2 little duckies came back

2 Little Ducks went out one day  
 Over the hill and far away  
 Mama Duck said quack quack quack quack!  
 But only 1 little ducky came back  
 1 Little Duck went out one day  
 Over the hill and far away  
 Mama Duck said quack quack quack quack!  
 But none of her 5 little duckies came back  
 So sad mama duck went out one day  
 Over the hill and far away  
 Mama Duck said quack quack quack quack!  
 And ALL of her 5 little duckies came back!  
 (happy sounds) Oh quack quack quack! (repeat!)

### **Apples and Bananas**

I like to eat, eat, eat  
 Apples and bananas  
 I like to eat, eat, eat  
 Apples and bananas

Then sing it substituting various mistaken first sounds to the sound of each vowel:

A = ATE ATE ATE AY-PULS AND BA-NAY-NAYS

E = EAT EAT EAT EEPLES AND B-NEE NEEES

I = ITE ITE ITE IPPLES AND BA-NIGH NIGHS

O = OAT OAT OAT OH PULS AND BA-NO NOS

U = UTE UTE UTE UPPLES AND BA-NU NUS

## **Games**

### **Over Under Intention Game**

Over, under, over, under... just like intentions, sometimes we make it, sometimes we don't.

Try this with all the children in a line. Young children may not know the meaning of the words yet but will soon learn.

Needed: two items to pass over and under, representing intentions - two stars, two balls, two balloons.

1. Hand the item to the first person in line.
2. Everyone in line needs to be facing the front. When you say "go", the first person needs to pass the item over their head to the person behind them, while shouting "Over!"
3. The second person in line must pass the item between their legs to the third person behind them while shouting "Under!"
4. The third person passes the item over their head to the next person while shouting "Over!", and so forth in the same "over-under" pattern.
5. At the very end of the line, the last person has to pass it forward in the same pattern as before.

## **A Dance Video**

*This group of children sings about making mistakes to the tune of “Shake It Off.” Join in and dance!*

### **We Gonna Make Mistakes**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E4-Hve9Rktg>

## **Follow the Leader: A Path of Intention**

Go outside and play Follow the Leader. Make a mistake then correct it. For example, go up to a big rock and try to go over it. “I was trying to go over this big rock, but that is a mistake. Instead, I’ll go around it!” or “I almost walked in the street! That is a mistake. I’ll stay on the sidewalk!”

# Lesson E: It Takes Pausing The Replenishment and Sorting of Our Intentions

(Core Story: Anh's Anger/The Cricket and the Coins)

## Theme Angle

Our theme this month is Living with Intention. To live with intention takes pausing so we can replenish and sort out what is important from what is not-so-important. We can think of it as dropping anchor, to use a sailing metaphor. Sometimes we have to pause and take a minute to rest and also make sure we are going the right way! Without pause, We'll never have the energy to fulfill our intentions and we may even end up way off course!

## Translating This for Young Children

We need to take a pause sometimes to feel happy.

## Light It!

*We know that everyone approaches chalice lighting differently. Some use the same chalice lighting words for the entire month, while others pick a new one each week and tailor it to that week's particular theme connection. So instead of offering specific chalice lightings for you to use, we offer four "places" for you to find the chalice lighting that fits your approach:*

- *Worship Web:* <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/chalice-lighting>
- [Tapestry of Faith and other common Chalice Lightings for Children](#)
- *Our monthly Soul Matters worship packets*
- *Your own congregation's special chalice lighting words*

## Extinguish It!

*Signal the end of "sacred time" or "Chalice time" with a short ritual for extinguishing the chalice. It might be just after any of the below sections or at the end of the session. Use a [candle snuffer](#) if you use real candles for dramatic effect, or just blow it out. Here are some resources for you to find the chalice extinguishing words that fits your approach:*

- *UUA:* <https://www.uua.org/genre/chalice-extinguishing>
- *Worship Web:* <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/closing/6049.shtml>
- *Katie's Words*

*We gather the warmth of love, the light of truth, and the energy of action into our hearts  
Back into the world of do and say  
Carry it forward into the dawning day.  
Go Now in Peace, Amen.*

*(Move your arms to express the actions: gather using a cupping motion from the flame of the chalice to your heart, spread that outward again.)*

# Introduce It!

## (Wonder Box)

### Dropping Anchor

Reflection Object: an anchor, anchor jewelry, [anchor picture](#) or [anchor drawing](#)

#### Suggested Script

“Here is an anchor. An anchor is a heavy thing that is attached to a boat by a rope or chain. The anchor is thrown into the water. It sinks and grabs the bottom of the sea to hold the boat in place instead of sailing fast on its way.

When we want to be kind and caring, we can sometimes think that it’s best to rush toward our goal as fast as we can. But the problem with that is we end up pooped out and sometimes we discover that we actually took the wrong path and are now pretty lost.

This is where pausing and “dropping anchor” helps. Taking a moment of pause lets us rest and regain our energy. It also gives us a moment to double check that we are going the right way. It allows us to ask, “Is this what I really want to be doing?” “Is this REALLY where I want to go?”

Think of our intention as an anchor that helps us stay connected to what is important. We may be blown about by wind or rain, but the anchor holds us. Sometimes we need to drop anchor. We need to pause and hold ourselves in place to pay attention to what is important. One example of how we can lose our anchor might be running around the couch when you really want to snuggle with someone. Or playing house when you really want to be going outside.

So today, we’re going to explore how pausing, dropping anchor helps us remember what is important. Are you ready?! Let’s begin!”

# Tell It and Talk About It!

## Our Story: Anh's Anger/The Cricket and the Coins

### Option #1 Anh's Anger Suggested Introductory Words

"Anh, who is 5 years old, becomes enraged when his grandfather asks him to stop playing and come to the dinner table. His grandfather helps Anh by suggesting that he go to his room and, "sit with his anger." This is the pausing that helps him see what is important. Here we go!"

#### **Ahn's Anger by Gail Silver (Author), Christianne Kromer (Illustrator)**

Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Vn8Rgocoq1k>

Book: <https://www.amazon.com/Anhs-Anger-Gail-Silver/dp/1888375949>

#### **Reflection Prompts**

- What part of the story will you remember most?
- How did you feel when Ahn was sent to his room to sit with his anger?
- Do you feel better when you pause?

**Online Permission:** Parallax Press is granting online permissions for Read Alouds [HERE](#).

### Option #2 The Cricket and the Coin Suggested Introductory Words

"Here's a video about how two cousins, one from the city and one from the country, reflect about what you hear when you pause and listen to the important things around you. As we view the video, think about what things you hear and what things you listen to. Here we go."

#### **Lea's Story: The Cricket and the Coins**

Video and Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nz2Rzzt18p4>

#### **Reflection Prompts**

- What part of the video will you remember most?
- What have you heard when you listen?
- How would you become better at listening?
- What would you do if someone asked you what the sound is of clouds floating by?
- How did Lea's song make you decide to pause and listen?

### **More about our video story and song project with Lea Morris...**

*The Soul Matters Team is thrilled about this year's creative collaboration with Lea Morris. Each month Lea tells one of our selected & theme-based wisdom tales and then shares a reflection & song inspired by that story. It's a beautiful blending of her wonderful story-telling skills, luminous songwriting and joy-filled singing.*

*As with all ten of the videos Lea is creating, the purchase price per video is \$20.*

*With your purchase comes the following usage rights:*

- *Playing the video in online and in-person worship services (including recorded services)*
- *Playing the video in online and in-person children's religious education programs/presentations (including ones that are recorded and posted online)*
- *Sending out a link to the video to parents so they can watch it with their children at home as part of their family spiritual life activities*

**Purchase all ten at a lower price:** *Follow this link to purchase all ten of Lea's story/song videos on all ten of our Soul Matters themes at: <https://www.hopesingseternal.me/stories/alltenstorysongs>*

# Explore It!

## (Small Group Activities and Experiential Learning)

Here are a variety of suggestions for digging deeper into the theme. Choose the one(s) just right for your group! In many cases, these will work as well online as in-person. When a more involved online adaptation or alternative is needed, [we highlight this in purple](#).

### Explore It with...

#### A Meditation

##### Take Five Breathing to Return to Intention

[http://www.teachpeaceofmind.com/site/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/POM\\_lesson6.pdf](http://www.teachpeaceofmind.com/site/wp-content/uploads/2016/05/POM_lesson6.pdf)

Take Five means to take a break—usually it means a five-minute break. We are going to use Take Five in a different way. We can use Take Five as a way to return to Intention. As you breathe, look inside yourself and find out what your inner voice is telling you is important.

“Hold up your hand like you are going to give someone a high five with your palm facing out and your fingers spread wide. Now take the index finger of your other hand and trace the outline of your hand. What does it feel like when your finger runs between your fingers? Maybe it’s a little tickly? We’re going to do this again, but this time we are going to breathe in when we are tracing up and breathe out when we are tracing down. Starting with your index finger down by your wrist on the outside of your thumb as you trace up your thumb, slowly breathe in, and as you trace down the inside of your thumb slowly breathe out. Repeat this motion with all of your fingers until you are back down at your wrist on the outside of your pinky finger. At this point you will have taken five deep breaths. Take Five is a great way to help you calm down any time you ... just need a break. See if you can try it a few times this week.”

#### A Labyrinth

*Invite the children to trace the labyrinth design with their finger.*

##### Paper Finger Labyrinth Designs to Download

<https://www.relax4life.com/download-paper-finger-labyrinths/>

<https://labyrinthociety.org/download-a-labyrinth>

##### Other Ideas for Kids

<https://labyrinthociety.org/activities-for-kids>

#### A Sorting Time

By pausing and dropping anchor we find out what is important. Play some meditative music and invite the children to sort through a game or supply closet or bins. Test and discard “dead” markers. Recycle old papers. Donate unused games and puzzles or throw away broken ones.

[Online Adaptation: Invite the children to sort through their clothes and/or games at home and share their decisions about what is important and what is clutter, together on screen.](#)

#### Lego Sorting at Home

Spend some time on screen together sorting LEGOs (or other manipulative) while at home. When do you take time to find and sort all the sizes and shapes? Try this meditative sorting together, using cups, plates, sandwich bags, etc.

# Opportunities for Leader Support

## Come share together

### **Online Zoom Labs, Join Us!**

#### **Zoom Information:**

All Labs take place on Zoom at <https://zoom.us/j/5857099120>

Audio only: Dial: +1 408 638 0968 or +1 646 558 8656 Meeting ID: 585 709 9120

Password: 333

### **RE Leader Labs - Katie's Overview and Group Sharing!**

In our leader labs, Katie gives an overview of the packet for the next month's theme, and then RE Leaders share challenges, opportunities and take-aways. These meetings are recorded and posted on the [Soul Matters YouTube Channel](#).

- **Wed. Dec. 8, 2021, 1 p.m. ET for January's theme of Living with Intention**
- **Wed. Jan. 12, 2022, 1 p.m. ET for February's theme of Widening the Circle**

### **Brainstorming Labs**

In our brainstorming labs, RE Leaders support Katie by sharing ideas for upcoming packets. Attendees like the way it gives them ideas in advance. The packets are always stronger when our sharing circle members pitch in their creativity!

**Meeting time:** *First Wednesday of the Month at 1 pm ET. Brainstorm on the upcoming theme 2 months away.*

- **Wed, Dec. 1, 2021, 1 p.m. ET Mar. theme of Renewing Faith**
- **Wed. Jan. 5, 2022, 1 p.m. ET April theme of Awakening**

# Other Resources and Sources of Support

## RE Leader Facebook Page

Don't forget about our RE Leader Support Facebook page. Here is where our colleagues post bulletin board pictures, share books, and ideas. It's a great ongoing source of support. Your colleagues are available to support you at the click of a button and with the ease of a post:

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/545202255591601/>

## Inspiration Facebook Page

Offer your teachers and parents spiritual nourishment and inspiration by encouraging them to join the Soul Matters Inspiration Facebook Page. Use the memes for your congregational FB page, as well:

<https://www.facebook.com/soulmatterssharingcircle/>

## Soul Matters Music Playlists

We create two different playlists on the monthly theme each month: one in Spotify and another in YouTube. Music connects us to the themes in a way like nothing else.

Click [here](#) for links to the [Spotify playlists](#) for each month.

Click [here](#) to check out the [YouTube playlists](#).

## “On the Road Together” - Soul Matters Senior High Youth Packet

A monthly packet for High School Youth Groups! Here's the link to the [Soul Matters Youth Packet](#) page on our website.

Sessions with resources for Check In, Spiritual Practice, Discussion Starters, Expressing Yourself with the Arts, Fun and Games, and Off-Road Excursions.

## Soulful Home Family Guides

Invite your parents to explore the themes at home with their family by subscribing to our monthly parent guides, **Soulful Home**. Here's the link to the Soulful Home page on our website:

<https://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com/soulful-home.html>.

There are three types of subscriptions: congregational, family and gift subscriptions. Check them all out!

## ***Soul Matters RE Packet Author & Support Team***

***Packet Author: Katie Covey, Soul Matters Director of Religious Education***

Special thanks to all the Soul Matters Religious Educators who send in suggestions for our monthly packets and participate in our monthly packet brainstorming calls.

Thanks also to the other [Soul Matters Team](#) members who contribute to the content and shape of these packets:

Rev. Michelle Collins, Soul Matters Small Group & Special Projects Researcher

Rev. Scott Tayler, Soul Matters Team Lead



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**Packets are for use only by member congregations of the Soul Matters Sharing Circle.**

Learn how to join at <http://www.soulmatterssharingcircle.com>