Small Group Ministry

Group Session Plan – Parent, Adolescents

**Independence**

**Materials Needed:**

Journals

Post it notes

Beads for prayer bracelets, stretchy thread

*Simply Pray*, by Erik Wikstrom

Chalice

**Opening Words:**

When the mind knows, we call it knowledge.

When the heart knows, we call it love.

When the being knows, we call it prayer.

*-Osho*

**Chalice Lighting:** As Unitarian Universalists we explore the wisdom of the world religions for rituals and practices and ideas that seem right and true for ourselves.

**Check in:** This is a time to briefly share how you are doing today, in order to free yourself to be present here. This is a time to listen with full attention to each other and accept each person’s sharing in silence.

**Topic/Activity:** OK, so our kids desire independence. How do we keep our serenity while giving them safe space?

Prayer is a great way to calm yourself and center. Prayer beads are a way to remind yourself of what you are wishing for. In UU Minister Erik Wikstrom’s *Simply Pray* he quotes Madeleine L’Engle who says, “To use beads in a prayer … is to make thoughts tangible.”

So what thoughts are important as we reflect on granting our children independence while holding on to the beautiful baby and sweet child who once needed us so very much?

We are going to construct prayer bracelets. There are ten different beads we are going to add to our bracelets, but first we have to decide what they mean. Each of you can write down on your post it notes qualities you think will help you as you work through this prayer bracelet. Then choose your beads and mark in your journal what your beads represent. They don’t all need to mean the same thing to all of you.

Four beads are provided that represent the earth for stability, the air for spirit, the water for origins, and fire for emotions. What else would be helpful? (patience, open mindedness, trust, hope, etc.)

When we are done, we’ll go around the table and hear what each of you chose as your important prayer words.

**Check-out/Likes and Wishes:** How was the session for you?

**Closing:** Responsive reading

Children are expected to develop their own opinions,

*but we can share our thoughts.*

It is OK if we do not have answers.

*We can assist in finding the resources.*

It is OK if we haven’t formed opinions.

*We don’t have to have opinions on everything.*

It is OK if a topic is not important to us.

*We can accept its importance to our child.*

It is OK to state that things are “right” or “wrong.”

*We can offer our reasons why.*

It is OK to disagree with others.

*We can disagree without saying ours is the only and best way.*

We answer from our experience at a point in time.

*We may give different answers at different times.*

*AND THAT IS TRUE FOR OUR CHILDREN AS WELL*

*Helen Zidowecki, adapted*

*Parenting Adolescents,* Karen Fisk, Unitarian Universalist Community Church, Augusta, ME

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