

The Cracked Jar

Part 1 - Getting Ready

- I. Introduce the Session: What is a Chaplain? What is spirituality? Light the Candle. Introduce the bell. Group guideline: Raise your hand if someone is talking. Respect each other - no cross talk or talking on top of each other. Participants are welcome to pass. Singing is a communal activity, not a performance. Participants who are disrespectful will be brought back to the day room.

- II. SONG: **Wider Circles** (By Lisa G. Littlebird)

We are moving in wider circles

We are opening our circle

We are moving in wider circles

We are opening our circle

Oh be a compass, I will be your lighthouse
Speak your words with triumph, I will listen to your voice

I'll march with you my sibling to your place of fearing
We'll dive into those waters, swim into the clearing

- III. Intro of Participants: Share you name, Pronouns + Name a special gift that you have that helped others and they were grateful for.

- IV. SONG: **I Am Here in the Heart of Love** (by Erin McGaughan)

I am here in the heart of peace.

Peace is here in the heart of me.

Like the wave in the water

and the water in the wave.

I am here in the heart of peace

I am here in the Heart of love.

Love is here in the heart of me.

Like the Wind in the springtime

and the springtime in the wind.

I am here in the heart of love.

I am here in the heart of hope.

Hope is here in the heart of me.

Like the flame in the fire

and the fire in the flame.

I am here in the heart of hope.

Part 2 - The Story

V. INTRO: Godly Play / Spirit Play

“Like a treasure in a golden box, stories (parables) are gifts to us. Sometimes they are very ancient (parables are at least 2000 years old), and sometimes they are new. Stories call forth stories: which means that stories invite us to reflect about our own stories and personal journeys. Sometimes a story easily opens up to us, but there are also times when a story is hard to open - they are hard to crack. If they're hard to crack open, do not worry, because you can visit that story as many times as you need until it opens up to you. That story is waiting for you. It is given to you as a gift.” (NOTE: words adapted from Godly Play)

VI. SHARE THE STORY USING THE BOX (or feel free to just read the story, if you like).



The Parable of the Broken Jar

Once upon a time, there were two water jars used by a peasant to draw water from a well to his house. One jar was perfectly new, while the other one was old and cracked. The jars hung on opposite sides of a pole that the owner put over his shoulders. The old jar was feeling depressed and sorry for itself for being old, worn and having a crack. So one day, it spoke to the owner: "I'm sorry for all of your hard work you are doing each day to bring water to your family. However, I continue to be unhelpful and useless. Because of my crack, I spill the water that you carry from the well to your house."

The owner replies: "Tomorrow when we get water from the well and walk back to the house, I want you to look at your side of the path, and notice what you see."

So on the way back from the well, the old jar did the usual spilling of its water on the path. But the owner reminded him: "See on your side of the path? It is filled with beautiful flowers. I always knew about your crack, so I threw flower seeds on your side. And because of the water that you've spilled, the seeds have grown into flowering plants. I have picked these flowers, placed them in a vase in our house for my family to enjoy. So if it were not for your crack, how could my family have benefited from the flowers that you have provided all these months?"

VII. Ring the bell 3X; ring tsing-ha bell after 1 minute.

VIII. Wonderings (Use the talking object for the first two questions - A & B)

- I wonder what you found to be the most important in the story? (What did you find most interesting? or What caught your attention in the story?)
- Where are you in the story? Which character(s) do you identify with the most? (The owner, the new jar, the old jar, the well, the path going up the hill, the seed growing into a plant, the family in the house)d
- Is there anything about the story that you wonder about that is not fully explored?

After the wondering questions are done, close with these lines: “Keep sharing your stories. Keep listening for what the spirit is saying in your story, in the story of others, and in the silence.”

- IX. **SONG: Come Light of Lights Into My Heart** (by Ruth Cunningham)
Come light of lights into my heart
Come wisdom of spirit into my heart
- X. **READING: Ring the Bells** (by Leonard Cohen)
Ring the bells that can still ring
Forget your perfect offering
There is a crack in everything
that's how light gets in.
- XI. **READING & PICTURE: Kintsugi:** the art of precious scars. In Japan, broken objects are often repaired with gold. The flaw is seen as a unique piece of the object's history, which adds to its beauty.
- XII. **GESTURES:** Receiving from Above, Below, Around, Within + Ring the Bell once
- XIII. **POP SONG: 2 OPTIONS - Just the Way You Are, or True Colors**

OPTION 1

Just the Way You Are (by Bruno Mars)

Oh, your eyes, your eyes
Make the stars look like they're not shinin'
Your hair, your hair
Falls perfectly without you tryin'
You're so beautiful and I tell you everyday
Yeah, I know, I know
When I compliment you, you won't believe me
And it's so, it's so
Sad to think that you don't see what I see
But every time you ask me, "Do I look okay?" ...I say

When I see your face
There's not a thing that I would change
'Cause you're amazing
Just the way you are
And when you smile
The whole world stops and stares for a while
'Cause you're amazing
Just the way you are

When I see [NAME]
There's not a thing that I would change
'Cause you're amazing
Just the way you are
And when you [ACTION]
The whole world stops and stares for a while
'Cause you're amazing
Just the way you are

**NOTE: if you play the guitar, you may sing the names of participants and their gift (action).*

True Colors (by Justin Timberlake)

You with the sad eyes
Don't be discouraged, oh I realize
It's hard to take courage
In a world full of people
You can lose sight of it all
The darkness inside you
Can make you feel so small

Show me a smile then
Don't be unhappy
Can't remember when
I last saw you laughing
This world makes you crazy
And you've taken all you can bear
Just call me up
'Cause I will always be there

*And I see your true colors
Shining through
I see your true colors
And that's why I love you
So don't be afraid to let them show
Your true colors
True colors are beautiful*

Part 3 - The Work - 10 minutes total

*NOTE: This section should begin at about 35 to 40 minutes into your 1 hour program. Otherwise, feel free to delete this section, especially when participants are talkative, or are into the songs.

Part 4 - Closing - 10 minutes total

- XIV. Invite participants to name prayers by naming 3 possible prayers, which you will model: (1) A prayer of thanksgiving, (2) Naming people (themselves or others in their lives) who are dealing with “cracks” in their life, or are needing some good watering of good seeds in their life. (3) Invite them to look at the sheet for possible seeds they’d like to water and grow.

Use the talking object: Model for everyone - the facilitator will begin the sharing: “First, I would like to lift a prayer of thanksgiving for _____. Second, I would like to lift up my brother Jim who is struggling with his health. Third, a seed I would like to plant in my life is strength & resilience.” Pass the talking object to the next person.

- XV. **Blessing:**
Holy One, you WHO HEALS OUR CRACKS, the one who can see our beautiful unique selves, the one who can see our true rainbow colors, watch over us who are in this circle; bless and guide us wherever each of us may be:

- Blessed be your feet: may they keep you standing even when the terrain of the life you stand on is unsteady.
- Blessed be your hands: may they always find hands to hold especially during moments when you feel alone & isolated.
- Blessed be your breath – may it anchor you in the present moment.
- Blessed be your eyes: may they show you grace & more beauty around you.
- Blessed be your mind: may it dream new dreams.
- Blessed be your heart: may it be brave & not afraid.
- Blessed be your body: may it find healing, purpose and rest. May peace, hope, and compassion that your one sacred body gives all flow back to you and hold you in gentle embrace & belonging. AMEN.

XVI. **SONG: I Am Sending You Light** (By Melanie DeMore)

*I am sending you Light, To heal you, To hold you
I am sending you Light, To hold you in Love
I am sending you Light, To heal you, To hold you
I am sending you Light, To hold you in Love*

No matter where you go
No matter where you've been
You'll never walk alone
I feel you deep within

No matter what you feel or what you choose to show
I'm always there for you
And so I want you to know
That ...

I walk the path with you
Go slow dear one don't hurry
I'll go just like you need to go
There is no need to worry
Cause ...