



UUCMC FAMILY REFLECTION

December 2016

Presence

Our theme this month is Presence, not to be confused with presents. Presence is all about awareness and remembering to “be present” and “live in the moment.” One way to be present is with your body, but what you are thinking and feeling also affects your presence. Have you ever been riding in a car and your mind wanders and you find that you forget where you are? It happens to me all the time!

Learning to be fully present in the moment means that you are using all of your senses to focus on where you are and what you are feeling in a given moment. The practice of learning how to be present can help us understand and work through our feelings. If we know how to focus ourselves, no matter what is happening, we can make good choices. It has even been said that learning how to be present can help us become the people we want to be.

Use this family reflection guide this month to explore presence and mindfulness as a family. It’s best to do this as a part of a ritual. Rituals help us slow down, be mindful and reinforce what is important. I suggest picking one day of the week to have dinner together as a family or maybe bedtime works best. Light a chalice and use the suggested format below in this document or create your own. Most importantly, talk about the reflection question of the week and end with a closing.

Chalice Lighting

We light this chalice for our family.
So that we can learn and grow together,
make peace together,
and show our love to each other and to the world.

~Rev. Virginia Jarocho-Ernst

Activity

1. Watch the reading of the book, [“No Ordinary Apple”](#) , and try eating an apple using mindfulness.

2. Plan a family day after Christmas and get everyone involved in the planning. You could bake together, play games or maybe volunteer. The most important part is that you be together as a family in mind, body and spirit.

Reflection One

This month tends to be a busy and hectic one for many families. It can bring out the best in us, or it can bring frustration and impatience.

Today talk about how you can be present for each other this holiday season, in the good times and rough times. (Examples: I will take a deep breath and listen when you seem frustrated. I will hold give you a hug when you seem sad or upset.)

Reflection Two

Think about how you each can find time to quiet yourselves when you feel overwhelmed, upset or overexcited. (Examples: use a take home finger labyrinth from the RE bulletin board, take three deep breathes and focus on your breathing, or use coloring as a form of medication.)

Reflection Three

Today, let’s think about what you can do together to let go of the to-do lists and hustle and bustle of the day and be present in each other’s life. (Examples: take a walk together, sing together, or play a game together.)

Reflections Four

Reflect on what you already have in your life that you are grateful for, and share it with one another.

Closing

We lift our hearts in thanks today for all the gifts of life.

~Percival Chubb

Additional Resources

- Children Book List on Presence
https://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/wishlist/26FF9FBGH96UO/ref=cm_sw_su_w
- Book recommendation for parents:
[Parenting with Presence: Practices for Raising Conscious, Confident, Caring Kids by Susan Stiffelman](#)

