
Session: Family Traditions

Description

When we ask our grown children today about special memories from their childhood it always surprises me to hear that their favorite memories weren't of a fancy trip or a Christmas gift they had been longing for. Instead they describe traditions. Loud, messy Thanksgiving dinners filled with family, raucous games and laughter. Annual beach trips with hours of playing in the sand, 8pm baths and story time before bed. They talk of pumpkin carving, sock-sliding contests and neighborhood gatherings for sledding and cocoa on the first day of snow.

What seemed to me at the time like little things, insignificant things were in fact, to my children, the big things. Love in the form time.

Family stability can come in the form of family traditions. You may have grown up without family traditions, or maybe those times spent together were stressful. This is an opportunity to break those patterns and intentionally create some new traditions that will provide your family with a sense of connection and bond you together for generations. The sky's the limit!

Big or small traditions remind us that we are in this together. They ground us to a sense of shared identity affirming who we are and what we value.

In this session you will examine your family traditions and create some new ones.

Materials Needed

Piece of paper for each member of the family and pens. Access to this website for ideas: <https://www.connecticutchildrens.org/coronavirus/resilience-is-family-ideas-for-new-family-traditions/>

Handouts

None

Family Traditions

Read aloud the quote or scripture

“Sometimes the smallest things take up the most room in your heart.” –
Winnie the Pooh

Questions for discussion
(10 minutes)

1. Do you think it's important to have family traditions? Why?
2. Do you think God values traditions? Explain. Talk about some religious or church traditions. Do you think God created those traditions or man? Explain. Do they honor God?
3. Do you feel that the younger generations value (family / church) traditions as much as the older generations? Explain for both.
4. Do you have any personal traditions or activities you do to feel closer to God? Explain.
5. How do you think God feels when he sees your family spending time together? Explain. If you believe in the trinity (Father, Son and Holy Spirit) do you believe the three have fellowship with one another? Explain.

Rule of life activity

Family traditions

1. Give every person in your family a piece of paper and a pen or pencil. Set the timer for 5 minutes.
 2. Ask each individual person to write down a list of your family traditions. Littles can draw pictures of the traditions.
 3. These can be daily traditions, annually, or anything in between.
 4. After 5 minutes come together and have each person share what they wrote down and how they feel about those traditions.
 5. Discuss whether there are lots of duplicates between family members. Are there differences?
 6. Now discuss whether there are some you would like to do more as a family. Are there some you wish to stop doing?
 7. How about new traditions? Discuss as a family whether there are any new traditions you would like to start? (See website under “materials” for ideas.)
 8. Now get out your calendar(s) and write down any new traditions or current traditions that everyone agrees you would like to do more of to make sure they happen.
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Examen

How did it go? Debrief highs and lows

1. Each person shares their favorite part of the conversation / activity and why.
 2. Each person shares their least favorite part and why.
 3. Did you do a Serving/Giving activity last week? How did it go?
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Serving /giving ideas for any time this week: Choose one or create your own. These can be done individually or as a group. You will be sharing your serving experience in the next session.

- Sign up to serve Thanksgiving dinner this year at the homeless shelter. This could be a new family tradition!
- Make a fun home video of your family and send it to a family member that you are not able to see in person.
- Write a thank you letter to your mail carrier and give it to them.
- Go on an evening walk around the block with your family and say hello to neighbors and people in the community. Maybe leave some flowers or treats on their porches with a nice note.
- Host a neighborhood baking event. Invite neighbors over to bake different kinds of cookies then divide them up so everyone has treats to take home.