
Session: Broken Clay Pots

Description

When I was almost six years old my mom died of breast cancer. My dad did his best to manage work and taking care of my brother and I but there were things I'm sure he would rather not have had to contend with. One of those things was my hair. I have, what my family describes as, "crazy hair". Parts are curly, parts are frizzy, parts are wavy. Dad would tell me to brush my hair, and I would! I'd brush the top part that you could see. It hurt too much to brush the underneath part with all the tangles, or what Dad called "rat's nests". So I skipped it.

Then, every Saturday night Dad would get out the comb and do his best to pull out the knots (with great whining on my part). I knew that if I could take the torture, there'd be a bowl of mint chocolate chip ice cream and an hour of Creature Features with Dad, so I gritted my teeth and did my best to sit still.

Lifting up the pretty outside parts, and addressing the snarly parts underneath, is rarely fun. But sometimes we have to move out of our comfort zones for resolution, or to learn.

Conversatio is about the life-long, sometimes painful, sometimes wonderful process of transformation. For Christians, we work toward transforming into the likeness of Jesus – becoming a new creation in Christ.

So how do we untangle our spiritual lives from an "I want it now" culture when we live in that culture? Can we build those spiritual muscles at home, then carry our spiritual lives out into the world in a way that quietly and lovingly, without dominion, impacts culture? Can we be who we are in the middle of the mess?

In this session each family member will break a clay pot and then put it back together in a unique and interesting way. As human beings, we are all broken in different respects, but those cracks (our humanity) can be the very thing that makes us beautiful, and sometimes it's the thing that draws others to us.

Materials Needed

One clay pot for each member of the family. You can order these at Walmart or on amazon. You will also need plastic bags and a hammer or an object to break the pot. Additionally, you will need glue and a variety of art supplies to decorate your new creation.

Handouts

Links to purchase clay pots

Can broken be beautiful?

Read aloud the quote or scripture

"It doesn't happen all at once,' said the Skin Horse.' You become. It takes a long time. That's why it doesn't happen often to people who break easily, or have sharp edges, or who have to be carefully kept. Generally, by the time you are Real, most of your hair has been loved off, and your eyes drop out and you get loose in the joints and very shabby. But these things don't matter at all, because once you are Real you can't be ugly, except to people who don't understand." — *Margery Williams, The Velveteen Rabbit*

Questions for discussion (10 minutes)

1. Have you ever been drawn to someone because of their flaws or struggles? Explain.
2. Who are the people to whom you can be completely honest with about your flaws, struggles or brokenness? Why do you feel safe being fully "you" with them?
3. Have you ever shared your own brokenness in order to get someone to open up about their struggles? How did that go?
4. In your experience, do church, or other leaders share their own personal struggles? How do you feel about this?
5. How do you think God feels about brokenness? How do you think God feels about us sharing our brokenness with others?

Rule of life task

Broken clay pots

1. Get one small clay pot for each member of the family and seal it inside a bag.
2. Take a hammer or heavier object and break the pot into any sized pieces you like. You will be either putting it back together in an interesting way or making something totally new out of it.
3. Now decide what you want to make out of the broken pieces.
4. Pour out the broken pieces of clay pot and make a new creation! Be creative, even if you glue it back together, you can put glitter in the cracks – you are making a new creation!
5. After everyone is finished, each person shares their new creation and describes what it means to them about our brokenness (our faults and flaws) and what good can come of that.

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.

- Write down birth and anniversary dates when you attend a funeral. Enter it on your calendar and then do something kind or encouraging for that person on the anniversary of their loved-one's passing or birthday.
- Pray for someone and let them know that you are praying for them.
- Hide a love note for your spouse or kids.
- Cut someone's grass.
- Take flowers to a nurse's station (for the nurses) with a thank you note attached.