

Wonder & Questioning: A Theory of Childhood and Children's Spirituality

Manna Session 2 – February 2020







What is a Child?!

Six Perspectives on Childhood:

Marcia Bunge

Children's Spirituality – SPIRIT Acronym

Rebecca Nye

**“God’s way of being with
children and children’s way
of being with God.”**

Rebecca Nye

Spirituality is like a bird; if you hold it too tightly, it chokes; if you hold it too loosely, it flies away. Fundamental to spirituality is the absence of force.

Rabbi Hugo Gryn



Spirituality: essential – to faith, childhood and being whole



Faith



Childhood



Being whole

Space

- **Physical**

- How does this room feel? Is there a focal point? Is the room looked after?
- What might make a space feel that God is there? – ask the children!

- **Emotional**

- How do we help the children/young adults learn to give space to one another?

- **Auditory**

- Talk less, listen more.
- Don't be too keen to leap in and give your viewpoint.
- Right v wrong
- Listen, show your response through facial expression and 'mmms'.
- Silence needs to be taken seriously...

Process

- It's not about the end product!
- Limit the idea that 'producers' and 'products' get all the recognition/reward.
- Remove the need to please the leader, parents or wider church. (But it is ok if they want to show others – the decision is theirs!)
- Allow the children/young people to create what they want, give them space to talk, accept that the process might be messy or unfinished or confusing.
- Resist the urge to ask them what they are doing or comment on their work – this may be a deep spiritual time for them

Imagination

- Can seem worrying but Christian art, literature and drama allows for children and young people to imagine and create.

Relationship

- Listening to and valuing each child individually.
- Learning from others.
- Model a way of responding that shows each person has value.
- Don't shoot down and don't disagree.
- Listening or working out what you're going to say
(This one is hardest for some children or young people who usually 'know' all the answers!)

Intimacy

- A safe place to explore and feel safe sharing with one another
- Can be problematic in groups where people change from week to week.

Trust

- Trust God that he will speak and come close to the children and young people.

Spiritual Styles

Reflection