

Session 5

Practising Forgiveness

Key learning

Pupils explore the complexity and transformational power of forgiveness, including self-forgiveness and reconciliation.



Before the session

You will need:

- Slides for this session, with sound
- Chairs/tables arranged for role-play or interviews
- Quiet space for reflection
- Pens, pencils
- Drawing paper



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Notes

Story

Be Curious (Community)

Notes



Children's literature

Finish reading or watching *Varmints*.

Suggested questions for discussion:

- Whose voice is heard in the story?
- Whose voice is missing?
- How was forgiveness practised? Was it linked to actions, or did the creature demonstrate forgiveness towards itself to move on?

Discussion

Read this quote with your group:

**"It is the heart that makes
[someone] rich."**

Henry Ward Beecher

Ask:

- Reflect on a time when you might not have recognised the richness of another person because you focused on material wealth, access to technology, or held an attitude of superiority. **How could you view things differently?**

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- When engaging with forgiveness, we can pursue restoration. Forgiveness can be within ourselves or with others. To forgive someone may also involve working on making things right with them, finding a way to repair the relationship and understand each other better. **What could this look like in practice?**



Bible passage

"Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you."

Ephesians 4:32 (NIV)

This verse teaches us that forgiveness and kindness are important in building and repairing relationships. Christians believe that God always forgives those who are sorry.

Space

Be Present (Embrace)



Activity

Role play or interview

Ask your pupils to conduct an interview or engage in role play with the creature from *Varmints* to explore themes of empathy and self-forgiveness.

Suggested questions:

- How did it feel when your home was taken away?
- What do you wish others had understood about you?
- Have you been able to forgive those who caused the destruction?
- Was it hard to forgive yourself? Why or why not?
- What helped you find peace and move forward?
- What advice would you give to someone who feels like they've lost everything?



Children's literature

Reflect on *Varmints*. In the story, the creature's home is destroyed by urban development, and it feels helpless. However, it finds peace by focusing on what it can control – rebuilding and nurturing a new environment – rather than dwelling on what it couldn't change. This involves the creature forgiving itself for not preventing the destruction and embracing its ability to create positive change.

Notes

Ask pupils how they would help the creature understand that self-forgiveness is key to finding peace and moving forward.

Through this discussion, pupils can learn that, like the creature, they too can find peace by focusing on their strengths, acknowledging their efforts, and practising self-compassion in challenging times.

Sanctuary

Reimagine (Power)

Suggested questions for reflection:

- How can we find spaces of peace?
- Why is this important?
- What does peace look like?





Activity

Places of peace

Notes

Here are some optional ways for your pupils to respond:

1 Create a peace map

Ask pupils to draw or map out places where they feel peaceful – this could be a real place (e.g. bedroom, garden, reading corner) or imagined (e.g. floating on a cloud, a forest with animals). Encourage them to include details that make that space peaceful (colours, sounds, smells).

2 Art response: “Peace looks like...”

Provide art materials and ask pupils to draw or paint what peace looks like to them. This can be abstract (e.g. calming colours and shapes) or literal (e.g. friends playing, someone meditating, nature scenes).

3 Peace journal prompt

Ask your pupils to write a short paragraph or poem answering one of these prompts:

- Where do you go when you need peace?
- Why is that place important?
- What does peace sound, feel, or look like for you?

4 Mindfulness reflection

Lead a short mindfulness activity (e.g. deep breathing, listening to peaceful music). Then, have pupils reflect silently or with a partner:

- How did that feel?
- How can we create these peaceful moments in our daily lives?

5 Class discussion or circle time

Encourage pupils to share where they feel most calm and why. Use talking objects to ensure everyone has a chance to speak and be heard.



Bible passage

"Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid."

John 14:27 (NIV)

This verse teaches us that it's possible to find peace even when we feel worried or unsure. It encourages us to stay calm and not be afraid, knowing that we are not alone.



Reflection

You may want to read this reflection aloud to your pupils.

Finding places of peace is important for everyone. These are places where we feel calm and happy, like a cosy corner at home, a quiet spot in the park, or while reading a favourite book. It's also important to be kind to ourselves, giving ourselves breaks when we need them and speaking gentle words to ourselves. By discovering our own peaceful places and practicing self-kindness, we can bring more calm and happiness into our lives and the lives of those around us.

 **Notes**



Prayer

Dear God,

Thank you for the peaceful places in our lives where we can feel calm and happy. Help us to find and cherish these moments of tranquillity, whether it's a cosy corner at home, a quiet spot in the park, or enjoying a favourite book. Teach us to be kind to ourselves, giving ourselves the breaks we need and treating ourselves with gentle words. May we share this peace and kindness with those around us, spreading your love and serenity.

Amen.

 Notes



End of session 5

difference.