

LESSON 10: An Introduction to Journalling



REFERENCE

Page 140-141 [INTRODUCTION TO JOURNALLING]



WHAT YOU NEED

- (2) LSM: 'Journalling'
- (2) RE Journals

AIM

- To encourage learners to use journalling to reflect on experiences in the light of faith

OUTCOMES

- KUI Learners know how to keep a spiritual journal, and understand its purpose.
- DAP Learners use journalling as a way of facilitating their own spiritual development.

TEACHER'S NOTE

This lesson aims to help learners to see the importance of keeping a spiritual journal. It is adapted from Carol Gura's *Ministering to Young Adults*. Italicised passages in the Lesson Outline are direct quotations from this source.

During the lesson, pass on these tips on journalling to the learners:

- Use a special book. Label it 'Private' and keep it in a safe place.
- If the pages are bound and numbered, you will be less tempted to tear out things that seem too honest.
- Date each entry.
- Be totally honest in your writing, and write for yourself alone, or your internal censor will stifle the expression of much that needs to emerge.
- Go back and read over what you wrote a while back.
- Try using your journal in conjunction with spiritual direction.

(Michael Burke. 1991. 'Journalling – some tips' 107 in *Connections*. Pietermaritzburg: Centaur Publications, p 128)

Many classes will contain learners from a range of faith backgrounds. If so, simply allow learners to draw on their own faith experience when doing the journalling tasks. However, you will need to be sensitive with the wording of your closing prayer, if you include one. You might, for instance, invite learners to approach God and to hold in mind the name/s they use most in their own prayer. Christians will naturally think of Jesus. This will allow you to read the prayer, but to leave out the sentence referring to Jesus Christ.

LESSON OUTLINE

I Introduction

- Begin the lesson by telling the learners that they will be looking at journalling in the following two lessons.
- Ask them what they think journalling is all about. Elicit answers and write them on the board. If necessary, supplement their responses along these lines:

A journal is a personal written reflection on a particular idea, passage, experience, or event. It is a tool that can help you to discover and internalize the meaning of what you want to reflect on. It takes a little time and a little patience, but you will most likely find the result worth the effort. Remember that what is in the journal is yours. No one has the right to read what you say. This should be reassuring for those of us who worry about our grammar, too. Journaling is not creative writing or journalism. It is a way of putting down what's floating around in our heads and hearts so that we can consider it in new ways.

- iii Conclude by sharing the tips on journaling from *Connections* as indicated in the Teacher's Note above.

2 Exercise

- i 2.1 Provide each learner with a copy of the Lesson Materials page 'Journaling' and introduce the exercise along these lines:

The best way to learn about journal writing for spiritual growth is to plunge right in. This handout contains some passages on journaling, followed by the directions for your writing. Read the passage and then write a response to the instructions. Remember you can be totally open, because this journal exercise is a conversation you have with yourself. Write what comes into your mind, not worrying about grammar or if it is "right." The only "right" is to say what is most honest.

- ii Give the group plenty of time to complete the tasks given on the handout. When everyone seems to be finished, check with the class to be sure it is all right to move on.

3 Discussion

Ask the learners to turn to the person next to them. Ask them to share the answers to some questions that you will give them. Write these on the board. However, reassure them that they will not be sharing their writings, as this is private – just their experience of journaling.

Ask:

- *What feelings did you have during this experience?*
- *Were you surprised by anything you found yourself writing? Were there any revelations?*
- *Did you find yourself "correcting" what you said? Did you try to edit out some feelings, reactions, or ideas? Why do we tend to do this? (If appropriate, remind them that they should reflect on what they tried to edit out. This desire to cover up may be telling them something too.)*

4 Conclusion

Congratulate the learners on their first journal entry and their openness to God during this activity.

OTHER IDEAS

5 Closing Prayer

'Creator God, thank you for bringing us here. We came to learn a way of reflecting on our experiences more thoroughly, so that we can see your hand working in our lives and so that we can grow in our faith, hope and love. We are confident that Your Spirit will guide us. We ask all this in the name of Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.'

6 My Book

You could use 'Experiment 5: My Book' from Betsy Caprio's *Experiments in Growth*, p 59-63. In this exercise, learners visualise a book titled *The Story of...* (*learner's name*) with chapters that are proposed by the teacher. They then fill in their personal details by writing or sketching. The chapters are:

- 1 Baby is born
- 2 Baby is three months old
- 3 Baby's home
- 4 Friends and Pets
- 5 Playing (or School or Growing Up)
- 6 Today
- 7 The End
- 8 The Beginning (beyond the end)

MATERIALS

LEARNER

- Carol Gura. 1993. 'Journalling about our Experiences' in *Ministering to Young Adults*. Winona: St Mary's Press, p 124-127



Lesson Materials



Journalling

On the back of this sheet of paper, write a list of the most important events of your life: events, meetings, points in relationships that have been pivotal in making you the person you are today. Before you actually write, though, take a few moments to relax. Close your eyes, sit back, and let your mind roam through your memories.

Writing has the dynamic character of a movement into the unknown. It cannot fully be pre-controlled by our intellect, and therefore we can never be sure of what the writing might yield. When we take pen in hand we grasp a door handle and begin to open areas of our life history and present awareness which are deeper than we had imagined. We write more than we are fully conscious of.

Look back at the list of your key life events. Peruse your list meditatively, and select one event that has been especially influential. When you have picked one key event, list who was there – all the people who took part; beside each name describe briefly his or her role; tell where the event took place and whether the place was important; write down how old you were and what was going on in your life at the time; tell why the event occurred. Finally, reflect back on your list; then write an explanation of why this event was so essential in making you who you are today. How do you evaluate what this event did to you?

Every experience has a religious dimension. At root, every experience embodies the challenge God offers us in love to become more integral and Christ-like ... Each of our days is a gift and a call from the Creator. To reflect on our experiences, then, is to unwrap the gift, to listen to the call ... This reflection can be a way of being God-centered, a way of hearing God's Word addressed to us as individuals in the uniqueness of our person. Our task is to hear that Word as it wells up in us from our being and experience. We listen to that Word with love and fear as we let it speak from our depths.

Read again your reflections on the key event in your life. Pause for some moments and ask yourself, What was God telling me in that experience? Then write down God's message in that pivotal happening in your life.

© Carol Gura. 1993. *Ministering to Young Adults*. Winona: St Mary's Press, p.126

LESSON 11: Object Meditation



REFERENCE

Page 138 – 139[OBJECT MEDITATION]



WHAT YOU NEED

- (1) Objects on display
- (2)(4) Journals

AIM

- To expose the learners to a new method of prayer

OUTCOMES

- KUI Learners understand the method of object meditation.
- SKL Learners are able to apply the method.
- DAP Learners deepen their prayer life through using a variety of methods.

TEACHER'S NOTE

Do this exercise in a comfortable place, outside the classroom environment if possible, to help the learners to relax and enjoy the experience.

Make sure that you have various objects that can be displayed, such as:

- Photos cut out from magazines (- photocopies of a selection will do)
- Objects chosen for their symbolic potential e.g. knotted rope, chains, rusty nail, feathers, flowers, basket, a woven mat, something knitted, an open and a closed book
- Stones
- Simple drawn symbols, one per card (triangle, circle, cross, loop, etc)
- Different kinds of fruit

Have a number of each so that each learner is able to choose one that strikes him or her.

As with Lesson 10, all learners can be accommodated. Many objects will have symbolic meaning in more than one culture or religion; some are likely to have relevance for cultural and religious backgrounds represented in your class. You could invite some learners to bring additional objects to be part of the display – or, over time, you could develop a more representative selection of objects of your own.

LESSON OUTLINE

I Introduction

Set up a display of the objects. Put different objects in different areas of the place you have chosen for this lesson. Try to give the displays a “feeling” or atmosphere.

Welcome the learners and introduce them to the exercise. The focus will be on experience.

Display on a board or newsprint the following four questions or ask the learners to write them down.

- Where am I now?
- How do I see my life?
- Where do I see God/Jesus/Spirit in my life?
- How would I describe my relationship with God/Jesus/Spirit?

2 Reflection

Ask them to choose an object that will best help them to respond to the questions above. They should find a comfortable place to sit alone and undisturbed. They should draw comparisons with the object, writing down key words to their questions in their journals. Remind them that these journals are their private conversations with God and they will not need to share this. Allow the learners time to complete their reflections and their writing.

3 Sharing

Ask the learners to come back together as a group and invite some comment on the activity by asking:

- Who enjoyed the meditation?
- Which object did they choose?
- Would anyone like to share why they chose a particular object?
- Are there any other comments, questions, or thoughts on this exercise?

4 Conclusion

- i. Remind the learners to log this prayer activity, and to comment on their experience of it.
 - ii. Thank them for their participation, and remind them that this mix of prayer, meditation, and reflection is a way of building a closer relationship with God.
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OTHER IDEAS

5 Describe God

Give the learners a collection of objects and ask them to describe

- i. what the objects say about God, and
- ii. what God is saying to them about their lives through these objects.

MATERIALS

- No further materials are provided for this lesson.



LESSON 12: Touching



REFERENCE

Page 141 [BEING ALIVE TO LIFE]



WHAT YOU NEED

- (3) TSM: 'Touching'
- (5) Log Books or Journals

AIM

- To help learners grow in awareness and to help them realise its importance for prayer

OUTCOMES

- SKL Learners are able to go beyond superficiality in their awareness.
- DAP Learners appreciate the value of heightened awareness in prayer.

TEACHER'S NOTE

Either follow the given script closely or add your own variations. However, if you make changes, prepare your script thoroughly beforehand as losing your way in the middle of the exercise can spoil the experience for all.

This exercise lends itself to being in an environment other than the classroom to encourage the learner's imagination. The learners, however, need to be fairly close to you to for audibility.

When you have completed the exercise, ask them to log this awareness experience and to offer a personal comment on it. This comment should note both their feelings and thoughts.

LESSON OUTLINE

1 Introduction

Tell the learners that the lesson will be experiential. They will be doing an awareness exercise. They should put *everything* away. This will help them to stay more focused. Give them a preview of the lesson, telling them that

- You will *first* go through some physical settling exercises.
- Then* you will ask them to close their eyes. They should keep them closed to the end.
- Then* you will read to them and they should use their imaginations and involve themselves as much as possible. They should ignore all that is happening around them and go 'inside' themselves.
- Lastly*, they should not worry about drifting off into their imaginative worlds. You will bring them back to concrete reality at the end of the exercise.

2 Settling

Prepare the learners for the meditation by giving the following instructions:

- Stand and stretch your muscles.
- Pull all your muscles tight. Then relax deeply.
- Now sit and take deep slow breaths. (Breathe with them, slowly, at least three times, slower every time.)

- iv. Close your eyes and relax their muscles, breathing calmly and in a relaxed way.
- v. Open your eyes, focusing attention on some object without straining. (If you prefer, keep your eyes closed, but relaxed.)

3 Awareness Meditation

When all is quiet and relaxed, follow the steps as laid out in the Lesson Materials page 'Touching'.

4 Feedback

- i. Ask who enjoyed the experience.
- ii. Ask learners if anyone would like to share a part of their experience?
- iii. Ask if anyone has any questions or comments?

5 Conclusion

Thank the learners for their participation. Remind them to note this experience in their logbooks and to record a short comment on it.

OTHER IDEAS

6 Silent Meditation

You could do a silent meditation with your learners. You could remind them beforehand of the settling activity, and of good meditative posture – but once the meditation begins each learner could settle into it at their own pace and initiative. Again, before starting, you would need to introduce a focus – awareness of breathing (a drawing in and letting out), or sound (whatever is available to the ear), or holding a candle with a soft gaze (i.e. with gently unfocused eyes). (You could also ask learners to hold an awareness of all three – or in a semi-guided way, introduce them one at a time.) Aim for five minutes – but this can be shorter or longer depending on the extent to which the group is able to become immersed in this activity. Bring the meditation to an end with an agreed signal – Buddhists may use a gong, but a gentle ring of a bell will do, as will a vocal invitation to return quietly, and at each individual's pace, to the 'present'.

7 Imaginative Prayer

You can find other awareness experience material in Betsy Caprio's *Experiments in Prayer*. Alternatively, write your own script for any one of the other senses – smell, hearing, sight...

MATERIALS

TEACHER

- Dominic Baldwin. 1987. 'Touching' in *In Touch*. Hilton, South Africa: Order of Preachers, p 32-37



Lesson Materials



Touching

We speak of beauty as being only 'skin deep', or of superficiality as being only 'skin deep'. Most times we are not even that, as we live so unconsciously, so unaware.

Feel your body – your hair, your clothes – feel the ground, the chair, whatever is near or around you. Enter into the different sensations – smoothness, roughness, hardness and so on.

When our nerves are taut we say we are 'on edge'. There is a difference between being 'on edge' and *at the edge*. This is to be aware.

When we wish to keep a relationship alive, we say – 'let us keep in touch'. *IN TOUCH*. Note – to contact – comes from the Latin words 'cum+ tactus' – with touch. We need to keep in touch – first of all – with ourselves – that is with our feelings – with what really motivates us – with the world around us – with God.

Feel something rough – really become aware of the roughness. Is it wholly unpleasant? Think of some difficult time you have had – a 'rough' time.

What made it rough?
How do you feel now?

How did you feel then?

If your rough time involved some-one, imagine that that person is sitting opposite you. Tell him/her how you felt about what happened. Think of Jesus' experience in the garden of Gethsemane:

He threw himself on the ground and prayed that if it were possible, this hour might pass him by. 'Abba (Father),' he said, 'Everything is possible for you. Take this cup away from me. But let it be as you, not I, would have it.' He came back and found his disciples sleeping and he said to Peter, 'Simon, are you asleep? Had you not the strength to keep awake one hour? You should be awake and praying not to be put to the test. The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.' Again he went away and prayed, saying the same words. And once more he came back and found them sleeping, their eyes were so heavy; and they could find no answer for him. (Mark 14:35-40)

Return to your own experience and alternate it in reflection with the Gethsemane experience. Notice how you feel now. Did the 'roughness' teach you anything about yourself, or others, or God? If you wanted to remove some dirt you're your hands would you take a soft cloth or a scrubbing brush – especially if the dirt is ingrained?

A voice cries/...

Lesson Materials

TOUCHING (cont)

A voice cries:

*In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up,
and every mountain and hill be made low,
the uneven ground shall become level
and the rough places a plain. (Is. 40:3-4)*

*This has been my comfort in my suffering
that your promise gives me life. (Ps. 119:50)*

Feel again your body, the chair, the ground. Things are different – hard, soft, smooth and rough. So it is with touch and being in touch – life would be very dull if there were no variety.

A touch can be gentle – a touch can wake us up!

Elijah wished he were dead. 'Yahweh,' he said, 'I have had enough. Take my life!' ... Then he lay down and went to sleep. But an angel touched him and said: 'Get up and eat.' He looked around and there at his head was a scone baked on hot stones, and a jar of water. He ate and drank and lay down again. But the angel of Yahweh came back a second time and touched him and said: 'Get up and eat or the journey will be too long for you.' So he got up and ate and drank and strengthened by that food he walked forty days and forty nights until he reached Horeb the mountain of the Lord. (1 Kgs. 19:4-8)

Elijah had 'had enough.' And like many of us in such circumstances, rather than face up to realities – he goes to sleep! He shuts off. But twice he is awakened by the touch of Yahweh – awakened to what is being offered, that he may truly experience the presence of God. Do you 'Shut-off?' In what way? Sleep? Drink? Food? Become aware of the ways you 'Shut off', and start to open up to reality, to God's touch. To be in touch is to be aware of the presence of God.

If you are making this meditation in a group, strike the person on your right, otherwise strike yourself! A touch can be crippling.

There was one who wrestled with Jacob until daybreak, and seeing that he could not master him struck him in the socket of his hip, and Jacob's hip was dislocated as he wrestled with him. He said: 'Let me go for the day is breaking.' But Jacob answered. 'I will not let you go unless you bless me.' 'What is your name?' 'Jacob,' he replied. He said: 'Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel – because you have been strong against God you shall be strong against men.'

Jacob then made this request/...

Lesson Materials

TOUCHING (cont)

Jacob then made this request: 'I beg you tell me your name.' But he replied, 'Why do you ask my name?' And he blessed him there. Jacob named the place Peniel, 'Because I have seen God face to face.' (Gen. 32:26-31)

Yahweh could not master Jacob so he struck him. Maybe the only way God can get through to us at times is to cripple us! The struggle continued until daybreak – light begins to dawn. Jacob begins slowly to see, to understand what is really taking place. 'Why do you ask my name?' It is no longer necessary to give the name, since now Jacob knows who it is that he has been wrestling with. (Job 2:10)

It is easy to touch God in good things, but to be truly *In Touch* is to be aware of God in the whole of our lives. If we take happiness from God's hands must we not take sorrow too? We sometimes need a blow to make us aware of God's presence.

Think of a blow that you have had, and how you coped with it. Now reflect on what happened to Jesus before the Sanhedrin:

The high priest questioned Jesus about his disciples and his teachings. Jesus answered, 'I have spoken openly for all the world to hear in the synagogue and in the Temple where all the Jews meet together; I have said nothing in secret. But why ask me? Ask my hearers what I taught; they know what I said.' At these words, one of the guards standing by gave Jesus a slap in the face, saying, 'Is that the way to answer the high priest?' Jesus replied, 'If there is something wrong in what I said, point it out to me; but if there is no offence in it, why do you strike me?' (John 18:19-23)

Return to your own experience and see how you feel now.

When something moves us we say, 'It is touching.' We show compassion and concern often with a touch.

A leper came to Jesus and pleaded on his knees: 'If you want to', he said, 'you can cure me'. Feeling sorry for him, Jesus stretched out his hand and touched him. 'Of course I want to', he said, 'be cured'. And the leprosy left him at once and he was cured. (Mark 1:40-42)

By touching the untouchable Jesus not only shows compassion but he almost as if were identifies with the leper. This is suggested by what follows:

'He could no longer go openly into any town, but had to stay outside in places where nobody lived.' (Mark 1:45) Just like the lepers!

To touch is to show compassion/...

Lesson Materials
TOUCHING (cont)

To touch is to show compassion and solidarity with the outcasts.

The woman with a haemorrhage was cured by touching Jesus' cloak.

He felt power go out of him. (Mark 5:25-31)

To touch lovingly is to allow the power of Jesus to flow to others. To be touched is to feel the power of Jesus.

Touch the person on your right – really feel their body.

How do you feel? As toucher – and as being touched?

On the night before Herod was to try him, Peter was sleeping between two soldiers, fastened with double chains, while guards kept watch at the main entrance to the prison. Then suddenly the angel of the Lord stood there, and the cell was filled with light. He tapped Peter on the side and woke him. 'Get up' he said. 'Hurry.' – And the chains fell from his hands. (Acts 12:6-7)

Peter was heavily chained in the prison – even the entrance was guarded. How carefully guarded we keep our feelings and emotions: We need a touch to free us. To touch and to be touched is to be free – free from fear.

LESSON 13: He Touched Me



REFERENCE

Page 141 [BEING ALIVE TO LIFE]



WHAT YOU NEED

- (1) Blank A3 or A4 paper
- (1) Kokis
- (2) TSM: 'He Touched Me'
- (4) Journals

AIM

- To familiarise learners with the idea of a spiritual autobiography so that they recognise God in their lives, and not just in the lives of saintly people

OUTCOMES

- KUI Learners recognise God working in their everyday lives.

TEACHER'S NOTE

This exercise invites learners to consider where they might be able to discern God's work in their lives. Although the worksheet assumes Christian participants, learners from other faith backgrounds can be invited to explore their relationship to God in relation to their own family, faith community, experience, culture, and religious practices. You might ask learners to identify a passage that speaks of God's closeness to them in their own religion; apart from this, learners will fill in their timelines according to their own experience and faith practice anyway.

LESSON OUTLINE

1 Introduction

Hand out the papers and stationery to the learners.

2 Meditation

When all is quiet and relaxed, follow the steps as laid out in the Lesson Materials page 'He Touched Me'.

3 Feedback

- Ask who enjoyed the experience.
- Ask learners if anyone would like to share an insight they had while doing the exercise.
- Ask if anyone has any questions or comments.

4 Conclusion

Thank the learners for their participation. Tell them that they can put these timelines into their journals as it shows parts of their spiritual journey.

OTHER IDEAS

5 Personal Turning Points

Ask the learners to read the story of Saul's conversion in Acts 9:1-9. Ask them to reflect on how Saul was touched and converted by God to be his faithful and effective servant in the community and society. Muslim and Hindu learners, for instance, may be able to provide a similar narrative for an important person in their own faith tradition; the life story of Siddhartha Gautama (The Buddha) also pivots on a series of important encounters – sometimes referred to as the 'four sights' (poverty, disease, old age, and death) – which led to his own spiritual insight and the beginning of a new religion, Buddhism. Perhaps learners might consider turning points in their own lives. They could also consider what spiritual truth is available to them in 'conversion stories' such as these.

MATERIALS

TEACHER

- Betsy Caprio. 1976. 'He Touched Me' in *Experiments in Growth*. Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, p 54-57



Lesson Materials

He Touched Me

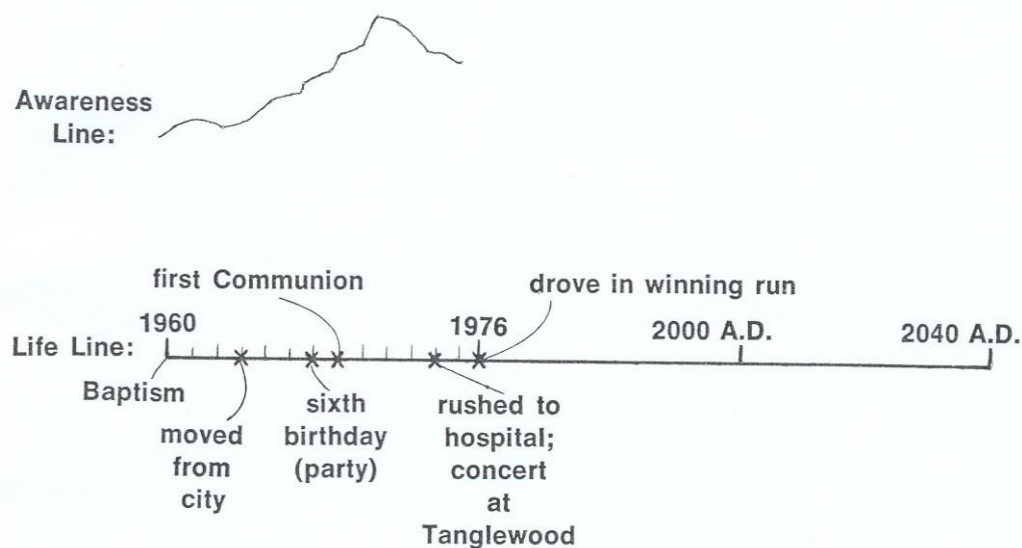
"On your papers, would you please draw a line across the centre? Now, at the left-hand side of it, just at the edge of your paper, put the year in which you were born. . . .

"Now, at the other end, on the right, put the year in which you will be 80 years old. . . .

(Do all this on the board.)

"OK., now if you are _____ years old today, put this year's date at about the right place on your time-line, and then divide up the first segment of your line into as many pieces as you have years.

(This will look like a scale – see the chart which follows.)



"Good. These lines, of course, stand for...? Here's what we're going to do with them.

(Our lives; some may protest that they'll live more than 80 years – fine!)

"We're going to chart on the lines the times when God was especially active in our lives. Of course, He's part of those lives all the time – you remember that He said, 'I am with you always.' But there are times when He seems especially to be with us, when we can really say, 'He touched me.' Sometimes when this happens, we are aware of it, and other times we don't realize until much later that He was especially close to us. What is one sort of situation you can think of when God is very much a part of our lives? . . .

Lesson Materials
HE TOUCHED ME (cont)

(Students will have ideas; take them as suggested by the class rather than in the order here.)

"How about very happy times, like birthdays or holidays or vacations or surprises or _____? Do you think God celebrates those good times with us, even if we don't think to remember that He's around? . . .

"Why don't you put a few 'x's' on your time-line for two or three of the happiest times in your life, and label the marks. For instance, the first Christmas you really remember well might have been when you were four, and you got the tricycle you had been asking for, That could go on your time-line. Try to think of the very best happy times in your life and record them. . . .

(Your doing this on the board or a large chart will make it simple; how about using examples from your own life?)

"All right. Now, what other sort of situations are times when God is doing something for us or with us or is especially close to us? . . . How about His coming to us at Baptism or in the other sacraments? Let's put these down, even though we might not have been very aware of Him when these events took place. . . .

(Note the distinction between God's being with us and awareness of His presence.)

"How about times of trouble or sorrow or sickness? . . . Let's chart a few of those on our time-lines . . . and you might ask yourself, when they happened were you in touch with God? . . . Was He there? . . . Did you recall that He was there? . . .

"Then, for each of us, there are times of real success, times when we accomplish something that's important to us. What marks could you put on your line that show achievements? . . . Some of these may already be listed under happy moments, right? . . .

"Do you think God played a part in those times? . . . At the time, were you conscious of His part? . . .

"Is your paper getting crowded? . . . One more set of occasions we can add are times when we come to some sort of crossroads in our lives, times of change and of making decisions, turning points. What would be some possible examples? . . .

(a family's move, graduations, a new school, the decision to break up with someone, a refusal to take a wrong turn.)

Lesson Materials

HE TOUCHED ME (cont)

"Finally, let's add any other times when God seemed very real to us, times when we felt very close to Him. Perhaps, for some of us, it might have been when listening to music, or we might have been especially in touch with God some night on looking up at a starry sky or the moon. Can you remember any particular moments when you could almost say, 'He touched me' ? . . . Some people call these "religious highs."

"Now, let's take a look at what we've got before us. These are special times when God was particularly active in our lives. There are lots of them, aren't there? Can you guess, very roughly, what percentage of them were also times when you were aware that He was there? . . .

"That is, did all these things happen to you without your ever once realizing that He was in on them? . . . Or, about half the time did you realize that He was present and responsible for a lot that was going on? . . . Or all the time? . . . If your answer is the last, you're rather an unusual person – and a very fortunate one! . . .

"Also, what are the patterns here: Were you more aware that God was involved in your life when you were younger? . . . Or are you getting more aware of this as you get older? . . .

(This could be shown in a zig-zagging graph line over the time – line.)

"Here's another pattern to look for. Have you been more tuned in to God in times of trouble and crisis? . . . Do you have what's called 'fire-engine religion'? . . . Or are you as conscious of the Lord in good and happy times as in bad? . . .

"Now, finally, let's look at all the blank space left on our lines. Are there any definite "He touched me" times coming up which you could fill in now? . . .

(Turning points? Celebrations? Trials?)

"How do you think your 'awareness line' will look in the future? . . .

The purpose of this experiment is to help us spot special 'He touched me' times as they come up in our lives, and become more aware of the fact that they are special moments with God as they're happening.

"You might keep your time – lines and add to them as you recall other such times. Why not keep on recording these moments as they happen? What are the six types of events we've defined so far as possible 'He touched me' times? . . .

(Happy times, sad times, reception of sacraments, successes, turning points, "religious highs")

Lesson Materials  
HE TOUCHED ME (cont)

"Some people draw much more spacious lifelong time-lines in a diary or journal, divided by months or seasons rather than by years, as we have done. They put aside a little time each week to record the stories of their life with God. Would that be something you'd like to try? . . .

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