

UU at Home RE-Sources

Hi Friends,

This month we'll be focusing on the theme of Democracy. To be sure, the current political situation and elections are a big part of that theme, but we'll also be exploring the wider implications of what democracy means in our world, our nation, our community, congregation and, of course, in our homes. Below, you'll find some discussion questions, rituals, books, and other resources that might help you explore and extend that theme with your family at home. As always, feel free to contact me with questions, feedback or with any resources you might know about that I can share with our larger community.

Tony :)

Big Questions & Topics for Discussion:

1. What does democracy mean?
2. When we're trying to make a decision, how do we make sure everyone's voice is heard? What are some of the different ways people might do that? (vote, discussion with the goal of consensus, representatives, etc.)
3. Whatever systems we use, how do we ensure that everyone can access and participate equitably? What are some ways that hasn't happened in the past and what (if anything) has been done to address those inequities?

Questions & Discussions Specific to the Home:

1. How does your family make decisions? You might talk about this with the entire family. Does everyone have a say in things? Does everyone agree that they feel like they have a say in things? Do you talk about decisions ahead of time or only if there is disagreement?
2. How do you resolve differences in your household/family? Does everyone think the process you use is fair?
3. Do you have family meetings or other less formal times when the family talks about the life of the family (meals, maybe)? Would having such a time be useful?

Rituals and Activities:

1. A Constitutional Covenant - Democracy involves both freedom and responsibility - things we get to choose and obligations we take on. You might consider taking some time as a family to make a Covenant with a specific focus on what each member of the family gets to choose and what they don't. For each family member, make two columns: "Things I Get to Choose" and "Things I'm Responsible For". This is a good way to allow children to understand...
 1. What voice and choices they do have within the family
 2. What areas they don't yet have complete democratic autonomy in
 3. That adults, too, are not completely free from obligation and aren't always 100% free to make any choice they feel like choosing.
2. Family Meetings - For a democracy to work, there needs to be processes, structures and forums for the participants to make their voice heard. You might consider having weekly times set aside for Family Meetings. Perhaps post a paper or white-board where family members can put topics that they'd like to discuss. You can ritualize those meetings by lighting a chalice or candle to signify that this is special time and be sure to discuss as a family how those meetings will work. Some families might find that they're naturally comfortable just talking things out and reaching consensus; other families might need to

establish more specific norms for how discussion will happen and how a decision will be reached. Also, be sure to lay out norms that work for your family and to which you can be accountable. As a parent, you can't always allow every decision to be made by the whole family, so be sure to let the children know that ahead of time so that they know the limits.

Online Articles and Resources (PICTURES ARE VIDEO LINKS):

1. Democracy Begins at Home (Article): <https://www.familyeducation.com/life/parent-child-relationships/democracy-begins-home>
2. Eight Ways to Teach Kids About Democracy: <https://www.rebekahgienapp.com/democracy-kids/>
3. Suppressed: The Fight to Vote (Video) You Might watch as a family and discuss:



4. Anti-Racism Activities for Kids & Families (Democracy is also about fighting for others' voices): <https://www.dialogue-coaching.com/diablog/2020/6/9/black-lives-matter-anti-racist-resources-for-kids>
5. Check out this video which counters the falsehood that "European's brought democracy to the Americas". Native Americans explain how democracy was present among the Indigenous Peoples:



6. Talking With Young Kids about Elections, Democracy and Justice for All: <https://www.pbssocal.org/education/at-home-learning/talking-young-kids-elections-democracy-justice/>