

MOVING THE STONE

An example of a participatory exercise from the Inspiring Unity Programme



Painting by Jackie Gillespie

1. STUMBLING BLOCKS

“Let us therefore no longer pass judgement on one another, but resolve instead never to put a stumbling-block or hindrance in the way of another.” Rom14:13

Discussion point: *Where are the stumbling blocks to peace and justice in our communities?*

Activity: (resources – a pile of stones of different colours and sizes)

- Invite each person to choose a stone to represent what they most want to roll away, perhaps the stumbling blocks in their own efforts to bring about unity in their community.
- Everyone takes their stone away and is asked to think during the week of how that stumbling block could be overcome.

2. ROLLING AWAY THE STONE

“So if the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed.” Jn 8:36

“When hard pressed, I cried to the Lord; he brought me into a spacious place.” Ps 118:5

“Jesus said to them, “Have you never read in the Scriptures:

‘The stone that the builders rejected
has become the cornerstone.

This was the Lord’s doing,

And it is amazing in our eyes.’?” Mt 21:42

Activity: (resources –spare stones, pens to write on hard surfaces)

- Everyone is invited to write on their stone a word of liberation, reconciliation or justice.
- Stones are placed in the centre of the group and those who wish share what their stone meant to them and what potential they see for change.

Discussion point: *what are the grounds for hope in tackling divisions in our communities?*

Participant comments on this exercise:

What will stay with you from this evening?

“We picked our own this evening but often the stones are not of our choosing. The pebble in my shoe can worry me more than the boulder I make others walk round.”

“The simple stone. It is practical, simple and I can see it and hold it in my hand and feel it. Session 6 was the right time for me to receive it because I can see things quite clearly.”