



Spiritual Teachers 3: Levels of Spiritual Teachers



Opening Affirmations

Before we begin our Soul Talk, we want to remind you that we are coming together to learn from one another. This means that this is a safe place to share our ideas and questions. Please take the hand of the person to the right and left side of you and share one of two possible affirmations.

“I am happy to share my ideas with you.”

[or]

“I respect and honor you and your beliefs.”

The Heart of the Soul Discussion: “Levels of Spiritual Teachers”

1. We have talked about what a spiritual teacher is and the different kinds of spiritual teachers. Was there a spiritual teacher you just heard of for the first time? If so, who was this teacher?

[Go around the circle and have everyone take a turn answering the question]

- Maybe you just heard about an Imam, a teacher in the Muslim faith
- Perhaps you learned about Rabbis and Cantors from Judaism
- You may have learned about Buddha and how Buddhists refer to priests as Venerable
- Maybe you learned about the founder of the Baha'i faith, Baha'u'llah
- You may have learned about Jesus and some of the names for various spiritual teachers in the Christian faith

2. What did you learn or what could you learn from this teacher?

[Go around the circle and have everyone take a turn answering the question]

- Maybe you learned about a spiritual teacher who is very strong
- Perhaps you learned more about a spiritual teacher who is very loving
- Some of you may have learned about a spiritual teacher who is very kind
- Maybe you learned about a spiritual teacher who had to make hard choices
- Some of you may have learned about a spiritual teacher who is very fair

3. Many people believe simply living and learning from our choices and the things that happen to us, can serve as a very valuable spiritual teacher. If you believe this, what are some of the biggest life lessons you have learned?

[Go around the circle and have everyone take a turn answering the question]

- Maybe you have learned that giving to others feels just as good as receiving (Sometimes even better)
- Perhaps you have learned that we have more in common with one another than differences. For example we all wish for happiness, love, and understanding
- You may have learned that listening to others is just as important as sharing your thoughts

4. If you decided to be a spiritual teacher, what kinds of things would you teach?

[Go around the circle and have everyone take a turn answering the question]

- Maybe you would share special skills you have and how good they make you feel (For example: sports, art, math, science, theatre)
- Perhaps you would teach how important it is to listen to one another with kindness
- You may teach different ways to feel and share happiness
- Maybe you would teach others how to love with their whole heart

Activity - Option 1: Appreciation Cards

Materials Needed:

Card stock or Construction Paper

Markers or Crayons

The activity for this Soul Talk is to make thoughtful cards for the people we have in our lives.

Directions:

- Start by making a list of people who you learn different things from. This could be your parents, teachers, friends, or family members. Also try to include people you may not normally think of. Maybe the person who delivers your mail, someone who works at the grocery store you frequent, or a person who works at your favorite restaurant
- Use your paper and markers to create a card filled with words or pictures that describe what these people have taught you. Maybe this is a love-filled note for your best friend or a happy picture for someone you may not know too well
- Try to make a card for every day of the week. You could do this by making a card every day, or doing a few in one day
- Try to share a card with a new teacher every day]

[Feel free to play one of our recommended songs while the kids work on their projects]

Follow Up Discussion:

How did it feel to create the cards for different people? Were you surprised by who your teachers are? Did you find yourself possibly discovering something new that someone has taught you? Maybe how much someone can affect what you know and believe?

If you gave out your cards, how did people respond? Sometimes, when we acknowledge what others have taught us, we can appreciate what we are capable of giving to the world.

Activity - Option 2: Story Time

[In order to complete this activity, your group will need a copy of one of the suggested books. Our library has a collection of books dedicated to each Soul Talk which is updated constantly! You can visit our library at the link below. Search for the Spiritual Teachers section.] https://spiritualplaydate.com/spiritual_playdate_library

Since our Soul Talk was about *Levels of Spiritual Teachers*, we are going to read a book out loud. As you listen, start to think about how this story relates to what we just spoke about.

Calming Exercise: Meditation

[Invite the group to find a relaxing position, take a mat or towel, if you are working on a hard floor. They may sit or lie down to be comfortable. Speak slightly slower in a soft, soothing tone throughout, pausing briefly between sentences. You may play soft, instrumental music in the background while reading the meditation script]

Welcome to our Meditation Time: The time where we relax and connect to the spirit in and around us. I invite you to sit or lie down and make yourself comfortable. Quietly do that now.

[Wait until the group is settled, then read the meditation script] [Optional: Begin music.]

I am going to guide you through our meditation to help you relax. Let's close our eyes, and let's start by putting our hands on our bellies, and taking a deep, long breath in. Feel your belly rise as you breathe in – to the count of 1, 2, 3. Then feel your belly fall, as you slowly breathe out – to the count of 1, 2, 3. Now breathe in – 1, 2, 3. And slowly breathe out like a tire losing air – 1, 2, 3. Continue to breathe in and out slowly and steadily. Relax your body into the floor beneath you. Keep breathing.

Just as there are many types of spiritual teachers, there are many ways that spiritual teachers teach. As we relax our minds and bodies, let's imagine these different ways. Let's imagine a church, temple, or mosque with a teacher sharing a lesson. *[Pause.]* Now let's imagine a spiritual teacher in prayer with someone. *[Pause.]* Now let's imagine a spiritual teacher at a hospital, comforting someone who is sick. *[Pause.]* Now let's imagine a spiritual teacher inspiring people to stand up for what is right. *[Pause.]* Now let's imagine ourselves as spiritual teachers to someone who needs our love or help. *[Pause.]* Maybe you will not become a priest, rabbi, imam, minister, nun, or guru ... but you can shine your Spirit Light with everyone you meet, teaching them about Love, Peace and Joy. And those are powerful spiritual lessons for everyone! *[Pause.]*

Now let's take one more deep breath, and slowly let it out. Now slowly open your eyes and slowly roll to the side and sit up to end our time of meditation.

[Optional: Turn off music] [Optional: Say: Please return your cushion to its starting place]

Closing - Choose One:

Closing Affirmation - Option 1:

Turn to the person to your right, look them in the eye and say "I am happy I could share this time with you and hear about your beliefs."

Closing Prayer - Option 2:

The light of god surrounds us
The love of god enfolds us
The power of god protects us
The presence of god watches over us
Wherever we are, god is and all is well!