



Foreword

The production of this document has been made possible through the initiative and hard work of a group of people.

The initial work was done by Dorothy Crocker from Girl Guides of Canada/Guides du Canada, Peggy Shriver from Girl Scouts of the USA and Jan Holt, former Director, World Bureau (1990–1997).

This work was then further developed by a group representing the 5 main world religions and from the 5 regions of WAGGGS, including a representative from the “Laique Associations” with professional support from the World Bureau.

The kit was finalized by the writer Nikki Arthy with support from the World Bureau.

Thanks are due to all those who have contributed their cultural, faith perspective and experience to this project: Nikki Arthy (UK), Michal Bar (Israel), Lesley Bulman (UK), Dorothy Crocker (Canada), Sara Foti (Italy), Nesrin Hahdidi (Egypt), Jan Holt (UK), Shanta Jayalath (Sri Lanka), Saroj Lalwini (India), Cristina Loglio (Italy), Lydia Mutare (UK), Beverley Plummer (UK), Ramatullie Secka (The Gambia), Peggy Shriver (USA), the late Consuelo Zea (Colombia). We thank them for their hard work and enthusiasm.

Acknowledgement has been given to the source of all quotations used throughout the document. Where this has not been possible, we apologise and will be happy to make amendments in any future edition.

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Introduction

The recognition of a spiritual dimension to life is one of the universal core values of the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts. These values are at the heart of the Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting Movement.¹

The Promise and Law of all National Organizations that belong to WAGGGS must contain the essence of the fundamental principles defined at the 21st World Conference in 1972. The Promise of each Association must express a spiritual dimension as detailed below:

‘The essence of Duty to God is the acknowledgement of the necessity for a search for a faith in God, in a Supreme Being, and the acknowledgement of a Force higher than man, of the highest Spiritual Principles.’²

WAGGGS is the largest voluntary organization for girls and young women in the world. It is constantly growing and now has over 10 million members drawn from over 140 countries. In providing a dynamic, flexible, values-based programme relevant to the needs of girls and young women, WAGGGS provides a chance for those members to begin to take action in the world around them. In encouraging friendship among girls and young women of all nations, WAGGGS contributes to world peace and understanding.

Spirituality underlies both WAGGGS’ call to action and the contribution of its members through friendship to world peace and

understanding. Service and friendship are important elements of a spiritual dimension to life recognised not only by all the major world religions but also by people of good intent who do not profess a faith.

The growth of interest throughout the world in the spiritual dimension of life is no accident. At the outset of the new Millennium, people are asking searching questions about the meaning of life and about our relationships to each other and to God or to a Supreme Being. Of course, people have always asked these questions. They are older than recorded history and part of the oral tradition of most cultures. This is why the spiritual dimension of the individual has been intrinsic to Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting since its beginning in 1910. What is different is the increased sense of connectedness of all peoples, faiths and cultures brought about through advances in new technologies, communication and travel. The sharing of information and experiences of life contribute to our spiritual growth.

Girls and young women have a particular contribution to make to the development of spiritualities world-wide. For too long our lives have been fashioned by male experience and domination and this impacts on our spiritual lives too. The publication of this document is timely, for it invites Girl Guides/Girl Scouts throughout the world to explore their understanding of spirituality and to learn from each other as they do so. Once again WAGGGS encourages its Member Organizations to

recognise a spiritual dimension to life and the belief in the possibility of creating a better world.

Through its educational programmes, based on the Fundamental Principles, WAGGS concentrates on the personal development of each Girl Guide/Girl Scout. Such programmes assist in strengthening the whole individual by developing the intellectual, spiritual, physical, emotional, social and moral aspects of the individuals. These six aspects are all inter-related and it is hoped that a balanced individual will reach a level of maturity in each.

The spiritual aspect of life is perhaps the most difficult to describe. It is related to our deepest thoughts and beliefs. It speaks of a force that is more important than the material part of life. It is linked closely to the values an individual holds and provides moral and ethical guidance for everyday living. It is the responsibility of each leader to provide an environment in which the spirituality of each girl and young woman may be nurtured.

Life has been described as being a spiritual journey. Some people make that journey within the context of various faith communities, such as Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. Others profess a belief in God or a Divine Being yet do not identify themselves with a formal faith system. But everyone owes it to themselves to think about their place and purpose in the universe and the values and responsibilities that underpin that. But spirituality is not just about our individual journey. It is about our journey within the context of a community. We find spiritual strength in each other, through friendship, service, the arts and nature. We can find sacredness in the ordinary events of life as well as the extraordinary. Spirituality is about adventure and risk and above all, openness to all that life brings.

Purpose of the document

Many leaders are looking for new ways of helping young people grow spiritually.

In today's multi-cultural and ever-changing society, this is no easy task. Without proper guidance some leaders have tended to impose moral and religious attitudes on young people.

This document is not a religious document. Its aim is to highlight and concentrate on the spiritual development of each individual Girl Guide/Girl Scout through:

1. strengthening the spiritual dimension in Girl Guides/Girl Scouts.
2. introducing the user to the experience of spirituality around the world.
3. encouraging the exploration of the nature of spirituality both in the life of an individual and of communities.

Structure of the document

The document is divided thematically into ten modules. The modules cover the following topics:

1. The Spiritual Dimension in Girl Guiding/ Girl Scouting.
2. What It Means to be Human.
3. The Purpose of Life in Joy and Adversity.
4. Religion and Spirituality.
5. Service to Others.
6. Spirituality and Morality.
7. Spirituality and Science.
8. The Interdependence of all Living Things.
9. The Arts and Spirituality.
10. Leadership and Decision-making.

Each theme is inter-related and explores a different dimension of the spiritual journey. Each module contains background material and practical activities designed to help the user to understand the theory and its application to her life.

How the material develops

Each module has an identifying symbol. A candle, symbolising the light of understanding, identifies the background information for trainers/leaders. Hands identify the activity pages. Each page has a clear explanation of the purpose of the activity, the materials needed and what to do.

Unless otherwise noted, the written material may be copied and translated for use within Girl Guiding/Girl Scouting.

The document will be even more useful if you add material relevant to your country or situation. It is possible that WAGGGS will add material in the future. You can also enhance the document by adding music, tapes, photos, pictures, posters, slides and CD-ROMS as is appropriate.

For whom the document is designed

The document is designed for trainers/leaders, those who help girls and young women learn and develop within the membership of WAGGGS. Other organizations and individuals are welcome to use it. The activities are directed towards young adults.

Some countries have ample resource material on spirituality, but others have minimal print resources available to them. This document is intended to enrich the resources of the former and to meet the needs of the later.

WAGGGS has spiritual values. Its membership includes girls and women from most of the world's faith traditions and those with no formal religious ties. We have tried to make the document relevant and acceptable to as wide an audience as possible. An attempt has been made to be inclusive of the faiths represented within WAGGGS. If we have failed in this please tell us. In many places of the world, Girl Guides/Girl Scouts work within

multicultural societies so we believe that all Associations, including denominational ones, can benefit from using the materials.

A word of caution

Be aware that these topics deal with people's deepest feelings. Some people may have never discussed spirituality with anyone and may feel uncomfortable. Some may find ideas that are new and disturbing. It helps to point out gently at the beginning that all of us can feel threatened by ideas new to us and that it is natural for our emotions to wrestle with our minds. Some people are excited and mentally stimulated by philosophical discussions, others are puzzled or frightened. Each of us may respond differently.

When you are encouraging people to discuss their personal beliefs and values, **you can rarely state that something is definitely right or wrong.** When discussing faith issues at any time, especially in a group of people representing more than one faith tradition, encourage people to clarify their own background.

When people discuss matters close to their heart, feelings and tempers can be aroused. Acknowledge this within your group and ask people to be sensitive to the beliefs and experiences of others. If a topic or exercise seems risky, think in advance how you will handle difficult moments. Adapt or ignore activities that seem too high a risk.

This document explores the breadth of spirituality around the world. It is a voyage of discovery that will lead participants to new adventures and risks, raise some questions and answer others.

This document is not intended to be used to convert people to a particular faith or to promote any single religious point of view. To do this would be to deny the very purpose of kit.

Suggestions of how to use the document

- Present the titles of the modules to a group. You may like to make a poster or hand out fliers. Chose a topic by consensus. Present the background for the topic to be explored in the module. Do one or more relevant activities and evaluate the experience.
- Use one or two activities as tasters at an informal gathering of leaders or at a more formal meeting or training event.
- Try the ‘restaurant approach’. Print all the module titles on a ‘menu’ (a chalkboard, poster or personal handout.)

Cafeteria or buffet style: after everyone has had a chance to read the menu, ask them to tick four titles. The one with the most ticks is your ‘food’ for the session. This is the module you begin with.

Take-out: at a residential event, hand out background papers to the modules for people to read and then follow up with a related activity.

Tasters: set up activity corners and ask participants to move at given intervals to get a taste of a variety of topics covered in the modules.

Gourmet: select topics that you think will be particularly enriching for your group and present your meal ‘garnished’ with music, pictures, colour and flowers.

Measuring indicators

How do I know when I have been effective?
Consider the following questions:

1. Look at the purpose for your session. Did you accomplish it? If not, why not? Were there factors beyond your control? Could you have done something differently?
2. Have you helped participants to find their own answers?
3. What effect did this session have on the participants? What effect did it have on you?
4. Have the participants strengthened their own beliefs? Have they experienced a deeper understanding of the beliefs of others?
5. Try this indicator either on your own, or with participants. Use the scale with each statement below.

| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|--|----|----------|-------------|-----------|
| | No | A little | Quite a lot | Very much |

1. Participants showed a keen interest in the topic.
2. Participants were able to share their feelings comfortably.
3. Participants learned new information.
4. Participants felt able to change their daily behaviour in relationships with others.
5. Participants found a new empathy with others.
6. I felt comfortable sharing my beliefs.
7. My feelings adversely affected my presentation.
8. I learned from the participants.
9. I feel able to change my daily behaviour in relationships with others.
10. I feel empathetic towards others.

¹ See *WAGGGS’ Way of Work*, Document 2a presented and accepted at WAGGGS’ 29th World Conference, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada, 1996.

² 21st World Conference, Toronto, Canada 1972