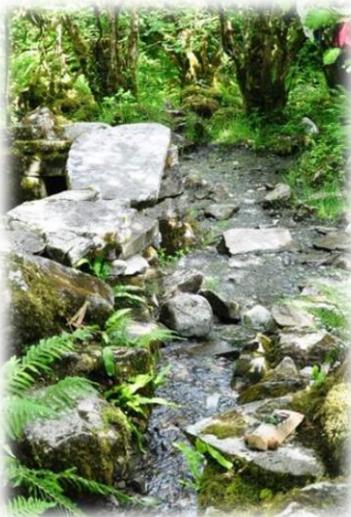




A Scout's *Scouts' Own Book*

A Scouts' Own should be:

- a gathering of scouts
- simple and concise
- reflective and inspiring
- quiet and loud
- still and active
- meaningful and appropriate



A Scouts' Own is as short spiritual and reflective activity that allows us to explore a particular theme. It should involve a selection of components such as prayers, stories, songs, simple activities, fables, thoughts and silence. A Scouts' Own can be used as a reflective time, but also to explore a relevant theme.

Possible format of a Scouts' Own:

- Opening Thought – introduce the main idea
- A reading/reflection – something to get everyone thinking about the theme
- A simple exercise – an easy and active way to engage with the theme
- Prayers – a time to think about things beyond ourselves, to the spiritual
- Music – a suitable song or piece of music
- Closing – thought to end the activity

Organising One: A small group of scouts should organise the activity. Firstly, think about a theme you want to explore, maybe it will help some people with the Crean Award or maybe it might be a good way of bring up an idea, for example discussing friendship after some tension in a patrol. Once you have your theme pick some readings, prayers, songs etc. Work with some of your Scouters in preparing this.

Location: The location of a Scouts' Own is very important. It needs to be held in a quiet place where no external distractions will ruin the atmosphere. Clearings in forests, near streams or water, around a campfire, or even on mountain tops are all good spots. Also, choose the time carefully, early in the day or especially in the evening – at or after sunset – are good times.

Atmosphere & Involvement: It is extremely important that there is the right atmosphere, otherwise it won't work. Explain to everyone what is going on and make sure the group is calm. Also, it is important to give as many people as possible a role. Between prayers, readings and songs there is plenty for everyone to do.



The items in this resource have been gathered from numerous sources, including: Lee Valley Scout County Reflections Book; People for Others Blog; Girl Scout Sunday & Sabbath Service Ideas; Faith & Belief Materials EuroJam 2005; The Big Book of Scout Worship Services; MacScouter Prayers Webpage; A Scout is Reverent Prayers and Graces Book.



Scout Promise:

I promise that I will do my best,
to do my duty to God,
to serve my community,
to help other people, and
to live by the Scout Law.

or

I promise that I will do my best,
to further my understanding and
acceptance of a Spiritual Reality,
to serve my community,
to help other people, and
to live by the Scout Law

Scout Law:

Scouts are...
Friendly, Kind, Honest,
Can be Trusted,
Respectful, they care for themselves and
for others.
And Brave, they stand up for right and
good.

Variation:

Friendly and Kind,
Honest to Trust,
Respectful and Brave,
Loyal and Just

Prayers

The Scout Prayer (Prayer of St. Ignatius with adaptation for all faiths)

Dear Lord,
Teach me to be generous,
Teach me to love and serve You as You deserve,
To give and not to count the cost,
To strive and not to heed the wounds,
To toil and not to seek for rest
To labour and to look for no reward
Save that of knowing that I do Your Will, Amen.

Prayer for Scouts

Lord, thank you for bringing us together in Scouting.
Be with our Troop and all its members.
Keep us loyal to our Promise, to each other and to ourselves;
And in everything we do, help us to put other people first.
Amen.

Morning Prayer - Kate E. Ritger

Thank you for this beautiful day! Please help me to see the beauty in every day,
and help others to see the beauty in your wonders. Guide me through perils toward
your brilliant light. Amen.

For Safety/Guidance

Dear Lord, be good to me...
The sea is so wide,
and my boat is so small.





Evening Prayer

Thank you, Lord, for my family and friends.

Thank you for Scouting, the places I visit and the friends that I meet.

Thank you for the food we eat and the air we breathe.

Thank you, Lord, for all these things.

Be with us, Lord, when we journey, when we rest, when we eat together, when we share our thoughts, when we doubt, when we believe today and always.

Scout's Prayer at night

Into God's hands I entrust my spirit,

Both when I sleep as when I wake;

And with my spirit, my body also:

God is with me,

I will not fear.

Scout's Grace

Let us be thankful for the food and drinks we are about to receive before us.

Let us be thankful for the shelter that protects us while we sleep at night.

Let us be thankful for the water that rejuvenates our mind, body & soul.

Let us be thankful for the earth we walk on and the air we breathe.

Let us be thankful for the fire that keeps us warm and gives us light.

Let us be thankful for natural surroundings that give the earth beauty and life.

Let us be thankful for the family and friends that are helpful when we need them the most.

Let us be thankful for the staff and leaders that lead us on our way.

We Pray for Peace - From Shasta Abbey

We pray for peace in all the world; We pray that evil may be overcome by good;

We pray for harmony in the Sangha, and for the cessation of all disaster.

Nature: Job 12: 7-10

Job said, "Ask the animals, and they will teach you; the birds of the air, and they will tell you; ask the plants of the Earth, and they will teach you; and the fish of the sea will tell you all. There is not one such creature who does not know that all is of God's own making. God holds in loving power the soul of every living being and the breath of each."

Scout Christian Prayer

Dear Father in Heaven, we know we are your children, we want to serve you faithfully, and we want to keep our Scout Promise. Help us to listen to your voice; help us to be willing and quick to do your work; help us to be friendly and loving; and help us to thank you every day for all your gifts to us. Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.





World Hunger Grace

For food in a world where many walk in hunger
For faith in a world where many walk in fear
For friends in a world where many walk alone
We give you humble thanks, oh Lord

“In God’s Name be the course and the mooring; let us embark.”
Holy Qur’an. Surah 11.41 (Prayer of Noah)

Muslim Prayer for Scouts

In the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful look with compassion on the whole human family; take away the controversial teachings of arrogance, divisions and hatreds which have badly infected our hearts; break down the walls that separate us; reunite us in bonds of love; and work through our struggle and confusion to accomplish Your purposes on earth; that, in Your good time, all nations and races may jointly serve You in justice, peace and harmony. Amen

God Is...

over all things, under all things, outside all things
within but not enclosed; without, but not excluded
above, but not raised up; below, but not depressed
wholly above, presiding; wholly without, embracing
wholly within, filling.

(Hildevert of Lavardi, 11th century Thanks to the Presbyterian Record)

Scout Hindu Prayer

O Lord God almighty, May there be peace in celestial regions. May there be peace on earth. May the waters be appeasing. May herbs be wholesome, and may trees and plants bring peace to all. May all beneficent beings bring peace to us. May your Vedic Law propagate peace all through the world. May all things be a source of peace to us. And may your peace itself bestow peace on all.

A Christian Benediction

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy spirit be with us all. Amen.

A Scouting Benediction

Dear God, thank you for the opportunity to be here in your garden. Give us the strength to endure, the wisdom to enjoy each moment, and the courage to push ourselves further than we have ever before. Bless our patrols, scouters and fellow scouts all over the world as we journey through scouting together.





Deep peace of the running stream to you,
Deep peace of the flowing air to you,
Deep peace of the quiet earth to you,
Deep peace of the shining stars to you,
Deep peace of the Son of Peace to you

The stars shining over us,
Their light shines before us,
Oh God of Nature,
Grant to us a perfect peace

Scout Buddhist Prayer

When someone is wronged he must put aside all resentment and say, My mind shall not be disturbed; no angry word shall escape my lips; I will remain kind and friendly, with loving thoughts and no secret spite.

It's Not Fair!

Dear God,
Whenever we say, "It's not fair",
We should remember those who have nothing to eat;
Whenever we say, "It's not fair",
We should remember those who sleep in the street;
Whenever we say, "It's not fair",
We should remember those in the middle of a war;
Whenever we say, "It's not fair",
We should remember those who are sick and poor.
Help us to remember how lucky we are
And not to say, "It's not fair."
(written by British Cub Scout Owen Shadick)

A Blessing

May you walk in Peace,
Live with Love, work with Joy,
and May Your God go with you.

Wolf Cub Prayer, Bolivia

Kind and good Lord, teach me to be humble and generous,
to imitate your example, to love you with all my heart, and to follow your path.

Isaiah 55:12

You will go out with joy and be led forth in peace;
the mountains and hills will burst into song before you,
and all the trees of the field will clap their hands.





Thoughts

Only when the last tree has died and the last river been poisoned and the last fish been caught will we realise we cannot eat money. - Cree Prophecy

A falling tree makes more noise than a growing forest.

Psalm 24:1-2

The earth is the Lord's, and all it contains,
The world, and those who dwell in it.
For He has founded it upon the seas,
And established it upon the rivers.

The very fact you know about someone who is in trouble means that in some way you are able to help. Otherwise, why would this knowledge have entered your world? - Baal Shem Tov

Twenty years from now you will be more disappointed by the things you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines. Sail away from the safe harbour. Catch the trade winds in your sails. Explore. Dream. Discover. - Mark Twain

Disciple: What's the difference between knowledge and enlightenment?

Master: When you have knowledge, you use a torch to show the way. When you are enlightened, you become a torch. - Anthony De Mello

I've missed more than 9000 shots in my career. I've lost almost 300 games. 26 times I've been trusted to take the game winning shot and missed. I've failed over and over and over again in my life. And that is why I succeed. – Michael Jordan

The best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now. – Chinese Proverb

The most worth-while thing is to try to put happiness into the lives of others. – Baden Powell

A little bit of kindness, to each other now and then;
A little bit of blindness to the faults of others when;
A little bit of happiness, a lively Scouting smile;
A little bit of friendship, we'll find it's all worthwhile.

Life is short, live it. Love is rare, grab it. Anger is bad, dump it. Fear is awful, face it. Memories are sweet, cherish it.





The best thing about the future is that it comes only one day at a time. -Abraham Lincoln

When I stand before God at the end of my life, I would hope that I would not have a single bit of talent left and could say, I used everything you gave me. –Erma Bombeck

What is life? It is the flash of a firefly in the night. It is the breath of a buffalo in the wintertime. It is the little shadow which runs across the grass and loses itself in the sunset. – Blackfoot, Native American Chief

Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter. - Martin Luther King

When one door of happiness closes, another opens, but often we look so long at the closed door that we do not see the one that has been opened for us. –Helen Keller

The battles that count aren't the ones for gold medals. The struggles within yourself—the invisible battles inside all of us—that's where it's at. –Jesse Owens

The greatest glory in living lies not in never failing, but in rising every time we fail. – Nelson Mandela

It is better to have less thunder in the mouth and more lightning in the hand. – Apache Saying

Thousands of candles can be lit from a single candle, and the life of the candle will not be shortened. Happiness never decreases by being shared. – Buddha

Sometimes your joy is the source of your smile, and sometimes your smile is the source of your joy. - Thich Nhat Hanh, Vietnamese Buddhist Monk,

There is nothing more dreadful than the habit of doubt. Doubt separates people. It is a poison that disintegrates friendships and breaks up pleasant relations. It is a thorn that irritates and hurts; it is a sword that kills. - Buddha

Don't compare your inside to someone else's outside

Always remember to forget, the things that made you sad.
But never forget to remember, the things that made you glad.

May you sleep deep and wake refreshed, with the sun shining down on you and a happy heart.



Readings for Scouts

The First International Jamboree Olympia, London, 7 August 1920

The First World War ended with the Armistice of November 11, 1918. It took a terrible toll on all sides. The number of killed and wounded in the allied armies was greater than what they would experience in the Second World War...When the whole arena was a sea of Scouts...Baden-Powell saluted them, then joined them to walk across the arena through an impressive and colourful lane of flags of all the nations represented at the Jamboree.

Mounting the highest tier of the dais, he turned and faced the great gathering. The moment had come for him to close the Jamboree, to bid the Scouts good-bye. But before he knew what was happening, he heard a clear boyish voice proclaim aloud, "We, the Scouts of the World, salute you, Sir Robert Baden-Powell -- Chief Scout of the World!" Chief Scout of the World! B-P hesitated, taken completely aback. As he slowly raised his hand in the Scout sign, the cheering abruptly ceased. There were a few seconds of impressive silence before his voice rang out with its accustomed force to the farthest corners of the building:

"Brother Scouts, I ask you to make a solemn choice. Differences exist between the peoples of the world in thought and sentiment, just as they do in language and physique. The war has taught us that if one nation tries to impose its particular will upon others, cruel reaction is bound to follow. The Jamboree has taught us that if we exercise mutual forbearance and give-and-take, then there is sympathy and harmony. If it be your will, let us go forth from here determined that we will develop among ourselves and our boys that comradeship, through the world-wide spirit of the Scout brotherhood, so that we may help to develop peace and happiness in the world and good will among men. Brother Scouts, answer me -- will you join in this endeavor?"

A thundering shout answered him: "Yes!" God speed you in your work," Baden-Powell concluded. "And fare you well."

World Scout Jamboree Address - Baden-Powell 1929

"I would urge that, at the Jamboree, we do not let our Scouts be content with the mere fact of being in camp with those of other nations, but that we should encourage them to utilise every minute of the short time they are there to make acquaintance, and from acquaintance friendship, with their brother and sister scouts, their future family in the world. Each one could then go forth from the Jamboree with a new responsibility upon him, namely that of an apostle, to his particular district, of peace and goodwill."



Stories

Family

Aamir got a car from his brother as an Eid present (Eid is a three-day Muslim holiday that marks the end of Ramadan). On Eid day when Shuaib came out of his house, a poor boy was walking around the shiny new car, admiring it. "Is this your car, Sir?" he asked. Aamir nodded. "My brother gave it to me for Eid." The boy was astounded.

"You mean your brother gave it to you and it didn't cost you nothing? Boy, I wish..." He hesitated. Of course Aamir knew what he was going to wish for. He was going to wish he had a brother like that. But what the boy said really surprised Aamir. "I wish," the boy went on, "that I could be a brother like that." Aamir looked at the boy in astonishment, then impulsively he added, "Would you like to take a trip in the car?" "Oh yes, I'd love that."

In the car, the boy turned and with his eyes aglow, said, "Would you mind driving in front of my house?" Aamir smiled a little. He thought he knew what the lad wanted. He wanted to show his neighbours that he could ride home in a big fancy car. But Aamir was wrong again. "Will you stop where those two steps are?" the boy asked. He ran up the steps. Then in a little while Aamir heard him coming back, but he was not coming fast. He was carrying his little brother who had to use a wheelchair to move around. He sat him down on the bottom step, then sort of squeezed up against him and pointed to the car.

"There it is, little brother, just like I told you upstairs. His brother gave it to him for Eid and it didn't cost him a penny. And some day I'm gonna give you one just like it...then you can see for yourself all the pretty things in the shop windows that I've been trying to tell you about." Aamir got out and lifted the boy to the front seat of his car. The shining-eyed older brother climbed in beside him and the three of them began a memorable car trip. That Eid, Aamir learned what the great teacher, Rasul Allah, meant when he had said: "love for your brother what you love for yourself".

Wealth

A farmer came running up to a holy woman, who was resting under a tree. "The stone! The stone! Give me the precious stone!" "What stone?" asked the holy woman. "Last night I dreamed that I would find a holy woman who would give me a precious stone that would make me rich forever," replied the farmer.

The holy woman rummaged through her bag and pulled out a stone. "Do you mean this one," she said as she handed it to the farmer. "I found it on a forest path a few days ago. You can certainly have it." The farmer looked at the stone in wonder. It was a diamond, probably the largest diamond in the whole world. "Thank you so much", said the farmer, who took it and walked away so delighted.





All night the farmer was unable to sleep. Next day at the crack of dawn the farmer ran back to the holy woman and woke her saying, "Give me the wealth that makes it possible for you to give this diamond away so easily."

Seeing God

Several citizens ran into a hot argument about God and different religions, and each one could not agree to a common answer. So they came to the Lord Buddha to find out what exactly God looks like. The Buddha asked his disciples to get a large magnificent elephant and four blind-folded people. He then brought the four blind-folded people to the elephant and told them to find out what the elephant would "look" like. The first blind-folded person touched the elephant leg and reported that it "looked" like a pillar. The second person touched the tummy and said that an elephant was a wall. The third person touched the elephant ear and said that it was a piece of cloth. The fourth person held on to the tail and described the elephant as a piece of rope. And all of them ran into a hot argument about the "appearance" of an elephant. The Buddha asked the citizens: "Each person had touched the elephant but each of them gives a different description of the animal. Which answer is right?"

The Holy One

Word spread across the countryside about the wise holy person who lived in a small house atop the mountain. A man from the village decided to make the long and difficult journey to visit this holy one. When he arrived at the house, he saw an old servant inside who greeted him at the door. "I would like to see the wise Holy One," he said to the servant. The servant smiled and led him inside. As they walked through the house, the man from the village looked eagerly around the house, anticipating his encounter with the Holy One. Before he knew it, he had been led to the back door and escorted outside. He stopped and turned to the servant, "But I want to see the Holy Man!"

"You already have," said the servant. "Everyone you may meet in life, even if they appear plain and insignificant... see each of them as a wise Holy person. If you do this, then whatever problem you brought here today will be solved."

The Mirror

There was once a monk who would carry a mirror where ever he went. A priest noticed this one day and thought to herself "This monk must be so preoccupied with the way he looks that he has to carry that mirror all the time. He should not worry about the way he looks on the outside, it's what's inside that counts." So the priest went up to the monk and asked "Why do you always carry that mirror?" thinking for sure this would prove his guilt.

The monk pulled the mirror from his bag and pointed it at the priest. Then he said "I use it in times of trouble. I look into it and it shows me the source of my problems as well as the solution to my problems."



**Act**

To the disciples who were always asking for words of wisdom the Master said, "Wisdom is not expressed in words. It reveals itself in action." But when they plunged headlong into activity, the Master laughed and said, "That isn't action. That's motion."

Advice

A woman once came to Gandhi and asked him to please tell her son to give up eating sugar. Gandhi asked the woman to bring the boy back in a week. Exactly one week later the woman returned, and Gandhi said to the boy, "Please give up eating sugar." The woman thanked the Mahatma, and, as she turned to go, asked him why he had not said those words a week ago."

Gandhi replied, "Because a week ago, I had not given up eating sugar."

The Gift

Ryokan, a Zen master, lived the simplest kind of life in a small, remote hut. One night a thief entered the hut, only to discover there was nothing in it to steal. Ryokan returned and caught him in the act. "You may have come a long way to visit me," he told the disillusioned prowler, "and you should not return empty-handed. Please take my coat as a gift." The thief was bewildered. But he took the coat and crept back into the night. Ryokan sat shivering without a coat, watching the moon. "Poor fellow," he mused. "I wish I could have given him this beautiful moon."

Two Dogs

A Native American elder once described her own inner struggles in this manner: "Inside of me there are two dogs. One of the dogs is mean and evil. The other dog is good. The mean dog fights the good dog all the time." When asked which dog wins, she reflected for a moment and replied, "The one I feed the most."

Golden Values

A miser hid his gold at the foot of a tree in his garden. Every week he would dig it up and look at it for hours. One day, a thief dug up the gold and made off with it. When the miser next came to gaze upon his treasure, all he found was an empty hole.

The man began to howl with grief, so his neighbours came running to find out what the trouble was. When they found out, one of them asked, "Did you use any of the gold?"

"No," said the miser. "I only looked at it every week."

"Well then," said the neighbour, "for all the good the gold did you, you might as well come every week and gaze upon the hole."





Activities

Community Ties

Have everyone draw up a list of five people in their community who helps other people. Discuss what they do and does it make a difference. Then, get everyone to think about ways they help in their community. Is there something more they can do?

Getting to know you (better)

Gather participants into pairs or threes. Ask them to guess the answers that both they and their partner/s would give to the following questions. You could add other questions.

- Where do they like to go on holiday?
- Which celebrity would they most like to meet?
- What is their favourite type of food?
- What is their favourite colour?

Afterwards discuss what new things everyone found out about their friends.

Talents

Have each person name one talent that they have (this has to be a clearly identifiable skill, like a musical instrument, a sport, being a good listener, computer programming; not, I'm cool!) After everyone in the patrol has listed their skills come up with a story or scenario where you can all use your skills to solve a problem, or perhaps avert a global catastrophe!

Choices

Give each scout the choice of either having the power of invisibility or to be able to fly. Lay out some guidelines at the start, like only you and the cloths touching your body can become invisible, but nothing else; or when you are flying you can only lift what you can normally carry. Discuss why each person chose what they did. Were there large variations in the reasons?

Feet

Your feet are amazing and we can prove it: While sitting down, make clockwise circles with your right foot. While you are doing this, draw the number "6" in the air with your right hand. Did your foot change direction?

Making Themes

Have the scouts gather natural materials (remember Leave No Trace) before the Scouts' Own and ask each patrol to make a symbol or a sign to do with a theme using the items collected. Pick general themes, like peace, friends or nature. Get the patrols to think about improvising and using what they have the best way they can.





Grateful Circle

Each scout should bring a small stone to the Scouts' Own and have everyone sit in a circle. Then, have each person place their stone in the centre to form a circle of stones, each time a scout should mention something they are grateful for. Remember that these should be sincere and thoughtful, not silly things. Try to have everyone remain quiet, have some meditative or religious music playing.

Imaging Camp

Have each scout or patrol draw an image of camp (either this camp or a previous one), something important that happened to them and that they will remember long after camp. Discuss some of these memories. It is best to run this activity towards the end of the camp.

Feeling uncomfortable

Ask everyone to cross their arms and hold the pose for one minute. Then change the pose so that the arms are folded the opposite way with the different arm on top.

- How do people feel when the arms are crossed in a different way?
- How many people felt uncomfortable?
- Are we always resistant to change?

Candles

This activity works best when it is dark or getting dark in a sheltered area. Have a single candle or flame lighting in the centre of the group, with everyone sitting around it. Then, have each scout go up in turn and light a small candle or tea-light and place it in front of them. Ask each scout to think about a particular intention or person as they do this. Try to have everyone remain quiet, have some meditative or religious music playing.

Postcards Home

Ask each participant to write a postcard to themselves! Collect them together, take them back home and post them in a few months' time. Participants might like to answer the following questions:

- These people I am glad to have met
- These things I am glad to have done
- These things I am glad to have found out
- This person I have become this camp
- This is the person I would like to become
- These things I will do when I am home

