Opening Activity: 12-15 minutes for “My Childhood Top 10 list”

Jon Leiseth, Vocation Associate

You need to be sitting at a table with **someone else**, preferably at least three other people. You need a **pen/cil**. You need your **blank top 10 list**.

Take 90 seconds to write down as many as you can—nothing is too silly (Jedi knight, someone who reads or could talk with animals). Include items that aren’t just jobs (relationships, abilities, etc.)

90 seconds to go around the table, sharing one thing from your list at a time and then the next person shares—try to get as many out there as possible!

 🡪If there are any you don’t want to share right now, that’s just fine

🡪Perhaps other people’s ideas can jog your memory—write them down if they’re true for you

3-4 minutes (for two partners): Turn to someone sitting next to you at your table and share your whole list, asking the question, What about your list is current?

🡪You might have to stretch your imagination. This might not be about literally doing the thing. Example of Jedi knight: No, you probably won’t grow up to be a Jedi knight, but you may have a keen interest in fairness, in standing up for what’s right. That seems like something that’s going to stick around for a while, something core to who he is.

 2-3 minutes (for two partners): Look at your list again, asking the question,

 Have you misplaced or potentially misinterpreted a childhood dream?

🡪The author Parker Palmer carefully wrote books about aviation as a third grader. He thought this was a clear message that he was to be a pilot. It’s worth looking again. In Palmer’s case, it turns out that he’s spent decades in writing and publishing.

A few ideas on ending:

* Point towards the questions on the back of the handout.
* This activity could lead to further reflection. Collect the slips and mail them back in a month.
* This activity could lead to further exploration. Encourage individuals to come up with one action to which they could commit over the next week/month/semester. Conversation partners could serve as accountability partners.