

WHAT IS A SCOUTS' OWN?

Scouts' Owns were introduced at the Crystal Palace Rally in 1909. They were originally meant to be simple, interdenominational religious celebrations. Often consisting of songs, prayer and a yarn, the *Scouts' Own* encouraged quiet times of reflection and were used at camp and in Scout and Guide meetings. Although invented by '**Uncle**' **H. Geoffrey Elwes**, these ceremonies increasingly mirrored Baden-Powell's ideas about individual development and expression. Scout and Guide lore was blended with religious stories and ideas in writing and in practice. Emphasis was on good deeds and upright character, not on salvation after death. As Baden-Powell wrote,

'You will find that heaven is not a kind of happiness somewhere up in the skies after you are dead, but right here and now in this world'.

"Uncle" H. Geoffrey Elwes was a prominent early member of the Scout Movement and before that was involved in the Boys Brigade. Founder of the 1st Colchester troop, editor of the Headquarters Gazette from 1911 to 1922 and Scouter from 1923 to 1926. He had to use a wheelchair after 1922 but worked with the Scouts until his death in 1936. He supported Robert Baden-Powell, the founder of Scouting but clashed with him over religion, Elwes was staunch in his Christianity while Baden-Powell favoured a less sectarian approach. He invented the idea of Scouts Own (known as Guides Own by Girl Guides) and introduced at the Crystal Palace Rally in 1909.

He was a solicitor, admitted in 1895, and founded a young men's club in 1902 in Colchester before founding a Boy Scout troop there in 1908. He was a member of the Headquarters Committee of Scouting from its establishment in 1909 until his death in 1936.

THE POWER OF TEAMWORK

You get one Scout up the front flapping their 'wings' and they're the **lead goose**.

Then you get the next two standing at his/her shoulders also flapping their 'wings' as the **next geese in the skein**.

And so on until you have all of them in a '**V formation**' all flapping madly while you tell the yarn about the geese migrating and how much easier it is for them to slipstream each other.

Then you take the lead goose by the 'wing' and peel them off the front of the skein and drop them in at the back to demonstrate how the **2nd in command** takes over to give the leader a rest.

Then you show how part of the skein will peel off and fly slower than the rest of the main group to protect an **injured or tired goose** until they can all catch up on the feeding grounds again as a big team.

If you can keep the yarn flowing while they are all doing the actions it's pretty effective and **a bit of fun with a serious message**.

CONFIDENCE BOOSTER

Put a mirror in a box.

Tell the Scouts that the box contains the most incredible thing in the world.

Just for fun, ask them what could be in the box.

...follow by a confidence boosting talk about how blinking wonderful they all are, despite what other people might say!

SCOUTS INVENT THEIR OWN LORD'S PRAYER

Dear Lord – please spare us from porridge and I pray next camp its cornflakes

Dear Lord – please teach our leaders map reading so we don't get lost on the hike again....and so on...

WHEN A WORD HAS BEEN SPOKEN...

Explain all about people getting on a soapbox, especially in London's parks, to speak their mind...This is a short poem on reminding children to be careful what they say, and think before they speak...

You can whisper, you can thunder,
You can chatter, you can roar,
You can question, you can threaten,
You can even be a bore.

You may stammer, you may stutter,
You may find your words to fail,
You can mutter, sputter,
Mumble, grumble, tell an idle tale.

But, before you climb upon your soapbox,
Before your words run on ahead;
Remember once a word is spoken
It can never be unsaid!

SMARTIES – WE ARE ALL ALIKE

Props – Packet of Smarties, small bowl of water, sieve.

Start by explaining your feelings about racism, how it affects other people, and how it should be avoided at all costs...colour especially.

Take a handful of Smarties and show them around, ask some Scouts which is their favourite colour.

Throw the Smarties into the water and swill them around until all the colour fades away.

Pour them into the sieve and show to the Scouts.

Moral:

Everyone has their favourite colour but if you wash the colour off, we are all the same deep down.

THE BANK ACCOUNT

Start by explaining to the young people that they each have a bank account which is credited with £86,400 every day. The money is theirs to spend.

However at the end of the day, what's remaining is taken away from them. The following day, a fresh £86,400 is credited to their account and the cycle begins again.

You then ask for suggestions as to what the young people would spend this money on and after two or three days spending, they very quickly begin to run out of ideas.

This is when you ask them if they've made the most of what was available to them and begin to question whether they can see further meaning in the discussion.

The final point is that there are **86,400 seconds in a day** and once they've gone, they'll never be available again. This should make young people reflect on how wisely they use their time, and is particularly suitable for a long camp to encourage them to make the most of it.

THE LEGEND OF THE STICKS

(Need to have prepared beforehand a bunch of sticks (may be spray-painted silver or gold, enough for one for each Scout, plus enough sayings about friendship for each Scout)

Once, a group of friends were having an argument. They made so much commotion that Edward, the older of one of the Scouts, came over to see what the matter was. He listened quietly as each one accused the other. "She's not being fair", said one. "It's my turn", said another. "No, it's my turn", said another.

As Edward listened, he began to stoop down and pick up some sticks that were lying on the ground. Finally, the friends grew quiet and were watching him. Edward then gathered all the sticks together in a bundle and tied them together with a string. He handed the bundle to one of the group. "Can you break this bundle of sticks?", he asked. Each Scout, in turn, tried to break the bundle, but not one of them could.

Then Edward untied the bundle and separated the sticks. To each friend, he gave one stick. "Now", he said, "see if you can each break a single stick." Of course, the single sticks snapped in two with only the slightest effort.

"All of us are like these sticks", Edward said. "Each one of us, standing alone, is weak. Each one of us can be broken as easily as a single stick. Yet, all of us, working together, can be as strong as this whole bunch of sticks - so strong that nothing can break us."

(Each Scout then comes forward and picks up one stick. After doing so, he/she reads a little saying about friendship and friends - some examples follow)

*Let us keep the memories and friendship of today until we come together on another day
More precious than silver and gold are friends - both new and old
Friendship is one mind in two bodies
A friend is someone you can trust
The only way to have a friend is to be one*

*F is for friends that you can trust
R is relying on those being trusted
I is for including, and not excluding
E is for everyone you must include
N is for nice, so don't be nasty
D is for dear friends you must be
S is for saying what you like, and not what you hate
H is for helping those in need
I is for importance for everyone
P is for peace, and not for war*

COLOURS

Based on a Native American Legend

Materials needed for each person involved with the ceremony:

*1 strip of paper of each colour: Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, Violet
Rainbow Colours “Richard Of York Gave Battles In Vain”)*

Colour streamers can either be attached to walls or placed on the floor where the colours are to stand --- for a nice touch.

Narrative:

Once upon a time the colours of the world started a quarrel: all claimed that they were the best, the most important, the most useful, the favourite.

RED shouted out: “I am the ruler of all of you ---I am blood---life’s blood! I am the colour of danger and of bravery. I am willing to fight for a cause. I bring fire into the blood. Without me, the earth would be as empty as the moon. I am the colour of passion and of love, the red rose, the poinsettia and the poppy.”

ORANGE started next to blow her trumpet: “I am the colour of health and strength. I may be scarce, but I am precious for I serve the needs of human life. I carry the most important vitamins. Think of carrots, pumpkins, oranges, mangos, and pawpaws. I don’t hang around all the time, but when I fill the sky at sunrise or sunset, my beauty is so striking that no one gives another thought to any of you.”

YELLOW chuckled: “You are all so serious. I bring laughter, gaiety, and warmth into the world. The sun is yellow, the moon is yellow, the stars are yellow. Every time you look at a sunflower, the whole world starts to smile. Without me there would be no fun.”

GREEN said:; “Clearly, I am the most important. I am the sign of life and hope. I was chosen for grass, trees, leaves---without me, all animals would die. Look over the countryside and you will see that I am in the majority.”

BLUE interrupted: “You only think about the earth, but consider the sky and the sea. It is the water that is the basis of life and drawn up by the clouds from the deep sea. The sky gives space and peace and serenity. Without my peace, all of you would be nothing.”

INDIGO spoke, much more quietly than all the others, but with just as much determination: “Think of me. I am the colour of silence. You hardly notice me, but without me, all of you become superficial. I represent thought and reflection,

twilight and deep water. You need me for balance and contrast, for prayer and inner peace.”

VIOLET rose to her full height. She was very tall and spoke with great pomp: “I am the colour of loyalty and power. Kings, chiefs, and bishops have always chosen me for I am the sign of authority and wisdom. People do not question me---they listen and obey.”

And so the colours went on boasting, each convinced of his or her own superiority. Their quarrelling became louder and louder. Suddenly, there was a startling flash of bright lightning...thunder rolled and boomed. Rain started to pour down relentlessly. The colours crouched down in fear, drawing closer to one another for comfort.

In the midst of the clamour, rain began to speak: "You foolish colours, fighting amongst yourselves, each trying to dominate the rest. Don't you know that you were each made for a special purpose, unique and different? Join hands with one another and come to me."

Doing as they were told, the colours united and joined hands. The rain continued: "From now on, when it rains, each of you will stretch across the sky in a great bow of colour as a reminder that you can all live in peace. The rainbow is a sign of friendship and hope for tomorrow."

And so, whenever the rain washes the world, look up... and as the rainbow appears in the sky, let us all remember our friendships new and old... and that tomorrow is always a new day."

THE TRAVELLER

A traveller reached the gates of a city one night and knocked at the gate. The gatekeeper answered and the traveller asked, "I need a place to stay. What are people like in your city?" The gatekeeper replied, "What are people like in **your** home city?" "Stingy, mean and unkind to strangers," replied the traveller. "Well, we're just the same here," replied the gatekeeper. "Buzz of." He walked on....

Later, another traveller appeared at the gate and the gatekeeper answered. The traveller asked about the local people and the gatekeeper replied, "What are people like in **your** home city?" "Generous, kind and hospitable to strangers," replied the traveller. "Well, we're just the same here," replied the gatekeeper. "And you're welcome to stay the night." *Do unto others as you would like them to do to you...*

TWO FOR THE PRICE OF ONE

The power of sharing - If I have £1, and you have £1, and we exchange them, we still only have £1 each.

BUT if I have an idea, and you have an idea and we exchange them, we both have TWO good ideas.

I HEAR A CRICKET

A Native American and his friend were in downtown New York City, walking near Times Square in Manhattan. It was during the noon lunch hour and the streets were filled with people. Cars were honking their horns, taxicabs were squealing around corners, sirens were wailing, and the sounds of the city were almost deafening.

Suddenly, the Native American said, "I hear a cricket."

His friend said, "What? You must be crazy. You couldn't possibly hear a cricket in all of this noise!"

"No, I'm sure of it," the Native American said, "I heard a cricket."

"That's crazy," said the friend.

The Native American listened carefully for a moment, and then walked across the street to a big cement planter where some shrubs were growing. He looked into the bushes, beneath the branches, and sure enough, he located a small cricket.

His friend was utterly amazed. "That's incredible," said his friend. "You must have superhuman ears!"

"No," said the Native American. "My ears are no different from yours. It all depends on what you're listening for."

"But that can't be!" said the friend. "I could never hear a cricket in this noise."

"Yes, it's true," came the reply. "It depends on what is really important to you. Here, let me show you." He reached into his pocket, pulled out a few coins, and discreetly dropped them on the pavement. And then, with the noise of the crowded street still blaring in their ears, they noticed every head within twenty feet turn and look to see if the money that tinkled on the pavement was theirs.

"See what I mean?" asked the Native American. "It all depends on what's important to you."

£20 Note

Hold up a £20 note – (photocopy of one will do)

To the Scouts gathered around, ask **“Who would like this £20 note?”**

Hands will go up...

Say **“OK, I am going to give this to one of you, but first, let me do this.”**

Proceed to crumple the bill up. Then ask, **“Who still wants it?”**

Still the hands will go up in the air.

Say **“Well, what if I do this?”** Drop it on the ground, and start to grind it into the floor with your shoe. Pick it up, now crumpled and dirty.

“Now, who still wants it?”

Still hands went into the air.

Say **“Well, you all have learned a very valuable lesson. No matter what I did to the money, you still wanted it, because it did not decrease in value. It was still worth £20.”**

Lesson:

Many times in our lives, we are dropped, crumpled and ground into the dirt by the decisions we make and the circumstances that come our way, and also by bullies.

We feel that we are worthless, but, no matter what has happened or what will happen, you will never lose your value, dirty or clean, crumpled or creased; you are still priceless to those who love you.

The worth of our lives comes not in what we do, or who we know, but, by who we are.

You are all special, don't ever forget it!

TEMPTATION

Start by placing a piece of chocolate in everyone's hands. Make sure you give a clear instruction that they are **not allowed** to eat the chocolate but hold it.

Now ask the Scouts to put their hands up if they have enjoyed the weekend.

Tell all the Scouts to put their tongue out and place their piece of chocolate on it. Again they are **not allowed** to eat the chocolate.

Now ask the Scouts to put their hands up if they have ever been tempted to do something that they shouldn't.

The Scouts can now eat the chocolate.

Your input....

'Temptation means having the desire to do or have something which you know you should not do or have'....

Say **'Put your hands if you can think of anything people may be tempted to do?' Ask them what...**

(Responses maybe things like: Steal, Bully, Drink Alcohol, Take Drugs, Skip Homework....)

Say **'I guess most of you was tempted to eat your chocolate; those of you who didn't give in to the temptation WELL DONE'.**

Final thought - **'There are many things to tempt us in life and sometimes people give into temptation. This can lead to mishaps and people doing the wrong thing'.**

IF YOU HAVE AN IDEA – STICK TO IT.

A young Indian brave was busy at work carving a canoe out of a log. As he worked, members of the tribe passed by. Everybody had a piece of advice to offer the young man.

"I think you are making your canoe too wide," one of them said. The young brave, wishing to show respect for the advice of an elder, narrowed down the canoe.

A little later, another warrior stopped by. "I'm afraid you are cutting the stern too full," he said. Again, the young brave listened to his elder and cut down the stern.

Very soon, yet another member of the tribe stopped, watched awhile, then said, "The bow is too sheer." The young brave accepted this advice as well and changed the line of the bow.

Finally the canoe was complete and the young brave launched it. As soon as it hit the water, it capsized. He hauled it back onto the beach. Then he found another log and began to work again.

Very soon, a member of his tribe stopped by to offer advice, but this time the young brave was ready. **"See that canoe over there?"** he asked, pointing to the useless craft. **"That is everybody's canoe."** Then he nodded at the work in progress. **"This one," he said, "is my canoe".**

Moral: Don't always be lead by other people's opinions – try your own out first THEN if it fails take other people's advice.