

## Growing ministry for everyday life – Ronni Lamont and Phil Greig

*We have explored the various ways in which the group experienced God- now here's the next stage in the thinking development.*

### **Spiritual styles- a very brief summary**

- ❑ Research on Spiritual styles (Joyce Bellous, David Csinos, Denise Peltomaki , Canada[1]) indicates there are 4 differently centred approaches which they named Word, Emotion, Symbol and Action. The one we favour will affect our interaction with the world.

#### *Word*

- ❑ Word and accuracy are more important than aesthetics.
- ❑ When the words are right, the world makes sense.
- ❑ Ethical living of great significance. Emotion not relevant to truth.
- ❑ Extreme cases don't recognise that thinking and feeling work together.
- ❑ Contribution comes from intellectual wealth.

So a typical *Word* person may be a lawyer or an accountant, (or a bishop). They speak using words accurately and succinctly and find it hard to recognise that not everyone does that! Tend towards 'left brain'.

#### *Emotion*

- ❑ Compassionate, relational
- ❑ Use language to express feelings rather than facts
- ❑ Often charismatic leaders
- ❑ This person may refuse to be accountable for the hold they have over their peers.
- ❑ Decisions may be made following hunches, thus steering a group towards possible harm.
- ❑ Will often clash with word.

*Emotion* people tend to use language more approximately than word people. They love joining groups, are often found working with other people and tend to be more 'right brain' creative types.

*For further reading: 'Children's ministry that fits' David Csinos, pub. Wipf and Stock 2011*

### *Symbol*

- Withdraws from trying to express outwardly what is perceived inwardly.
- Life is a mystery, more felt than spoken.
- Combines emotion, symbol, solitude, ritual and 'the music of the spheres'.
- Aim to form a connection with the world that doesn't need to be expressed through words.
- May live in quiet and isolation.

May be shy or introverted, *Symbol* people will be out in the country whenever they can. They find it hard to express their spirituality through language, but love a mountain top.

### *Action*

- What one does, not what one says.
- Desire for justice, world changing conditions.
- Single minded, passionate, observant and impatient for change.
- Sometimes unable to express their needs through language.

*Action* people get frustrated in meetings where the debate doesn't seem to be moving towards action. They often work for NGOs and may get very frustrated with those who like to ponder rather than act.

Questions to consider for your ministry

- ❖ Which style do I favour? How does this affect my day to day ministry?
- ❖ How could I be more inclusive in my approach to other people's spirituality?
- ❖ How does this knowledge help me to engage with the spirituality of folk outside the church?
- ❖ How do these ideas challenge me to grow and change?

*There are questionnaires with a (half day minimum) workshop available to explore Spiritual Styles and how they affect your parish and its development.*

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