**Soul Matters Circle for Parents and Caregivers**

**Making space for reflection**

So often our lives are busy, juggling multiple needs which divide our attention. This Sunday morning ‘mini-retreat’ creates a space to connect with parts of ourselves that may not otherwise get a lot of air-time in our lives. It’s allowing oneself to wander and wonder in safety, making time for new insights to emerge. Parker Palmer refers to this as the practice of ‘honoring the shy soul’.

*The soul is shy. Just like a wild animal, it seeks safey in the dense underbrush, especially when other people are around. If we want to see a wild animal, we know that the last thing we should do is go crashing through the woods yelling for it to come out...a circle of trust is a group of people who know how to sit quietly ‘in the woods’ with each other and wait for the shy soul to show up.*

**Deep Listening**

When we listen deeply, we let go of the need to advise, to fix. We simply witness. We listen with our whole heart. We create room for others to share. We let go of judgment completely. And we allow their insights to impact our perspective and our life.

*Simple Science shows us that no two things can take up the same space at the same time. So it is with listening. You cannot think and listen; read and listen; daydream and listen; write and listen; agree,disagree, interpet, mind read, rehearse, plot, plan, placate or even listen to listen. Listening requires our full and focussed attention on the other person.*

*John Milton Fogg*

**Being Heard Deeply**...is a powerful and wonderful thing.

When someone deeply listens to you

It is like holding out a dented cup

You’ve had since childhood

And watching it fill up with

Cold, fresh water.

When it balances on top of the brin,

You are understood.

When it overflows and touches your skin,

You are loved

*John Fox*