

## **Gaining Confidence in including the Arts in Study Circles**

The role of the tutor in facilitating the arts in Study Circles is an important one. From Ruhi Book 7, Walking Together on a Path of Service

"... you can make a significant contribution to the capabilities of service of those who take part in a study circle by encouraging them to develop their capacity for artistic expression, be it through music, poetry, painting, drama or any of the various types of crafts. To this end, we will urge you to include artistic endeavours in the activity of every study circle. You should not think of this as entertainment or as an extracurricular activity - for which there is ample room in the Institute's programme - but as an essential element enhancing the spiritual development of the participants."

Here are some ideas for gaining confidence in including the arts in your study circles.

If you haven't yet done Unit 3 of Book 7 "Promoting the Arts at Grassroots", then it is strongly recommended that you do.

Ask another tutor who is confident in facilitating art activities if you can attend their study circle when they are doing an arts activity, so that you can observe, participate and learn from them.

Or, ask another tutor to run an arts activity in your study circle.

Attend courses or tutor encounters which include arts activities.

Attend children's class training - art activities for children are wonderful for adults too!

Attend a community arts course in your local area (a wonderful opportunity for meeting people from the wider community, making friends and teaching!).

Call on your study circle participants to offer their talents ... find out at the beginning of the course who is musical, artistic, writes poetry, likes drama or dance etc. and get them to facilitate art activities!

Invite guests who have talents (Bahá'ís or non-Bahá'ís) to offer a "mini" course or a workshop on story telling, art, poetry, singing, etc.

Call on the virtue of courage and pray! Explore and try new ideas. You will be surprised how supportive your study circle participants will be if you have worked at creating a motivating environment from the start.

Try to be organised and well prepared for any art activities.

The more you try, the more confident you will become!! Don't forget - you don't have to be good at the arts yourself, just good at facilitating their use in your study circle!