

Summer

step out of the box

AIM

To create a simple sketch for two people exploring the challenge of stepping away from those things that restrict or burden us.

INTRODUCTION

There is a person crouching in something to represent a box. It could be a table with a sheet over it, a large golfing umbrella, a recess between some furniture - or even a large box! The person playing Jesus can move about, but never approach the box too closely. Jesus needs to always be compassionate, good humoured and encouraging, even though he's asking the person in the box to do something they find very difficult. The only other prop is a tattered and dirty-looking sheet or blanket. If you can have the word 'fear' written on it in very large letters that would be good. The sheet needs to be secured by some means behind the person (ie tied to the table leg) so that when they leave the box, it stays behind. Where there is an asterix in the script (*) please alter the wording to suit the person – and it doesn't have to refer to age – ask the person to make up something suitable.

THE SKETCH: STEP OUT OF THE BOX

Jesus: (assertive but not harsh) Step out of the box – come out of there! Boxes are for things, not people.

Person: (making excuses) But I like my box, I know every inch of it. It's even quite cosy in here ... and I feel safe.

Jesus: Boxes are a human invention. I didn't make that box for you. Come on – step out!

Person: (despairingly) Oh I've tried so many times! But everyone else seems to have a box, I feel odd if I'm not in one too. And they don't like it if I just stand around outside – they get nervous.

Jesus: Who's 'they'?

Person: Well ... everyone else – everyone, you know, just ... people

Jesus: 'just people' – and you give them power over you?

Person: Oh! (voice gradually trails away) Err ... well ... err ... umm ...

Jesus: Come Out! That's not your place. It's too cramped for you. (slightly softer voice) You've been growing recently – haven't you noticed?

Person: Well ... it does feel a bit snug these days. I thought perhaps if I lost some weight ...?

Jesus: (firmly but with good humour) Oh no you don't! The only weight I want you to lose right now is your baggage. For instance – put that security blanket down.

Person: (feigning innocence, looking all around - but not down to the sheet) Security blanket? ... What security blanket?

Jesus: (Silence)

Summer

step out of the box

- Person: (suddenly looking down at the sheet and grabbing hold of part of it) Oh! Do you mean this old thing? This doesn't mean anything to me. It's a piece of old rag, I could put that down anytime!
- Jesus: (surprised but encouraging) Go on then.
- Person: (flustered) Oh, yes, well, yes ... just give me a minute.
- Jesus: You've had [insert appropriate amount of time] years* so far – how much longer to you need? Let it go.
- Person: (pleading) Can't you take it off me? It seems to be a bit, a bit ... (picking ineffectually at the sheet) stuck on.
- Jesus: Step out – it will fall off.
- Person: (indignantly) That's two scary things at once.
- Jesus: (in a calm, matter of fact voice) Yes. (pause) Are you coming?
- Person: (sounding weak and helpless) Can't you come and get me?
- Jesus: (staying firm but gentle) Yes, but I won't. You have to do this. You have to decide.
- Person: (looking scared) Gulp!
- Jesus: (smiling) Perhaps I can help you. Remember when you allowed me out of the box you'd put me in? What happened?
- Person: (pause to think, then Enlightenment dawns. Speaks, smiling) You got bigger. More difficult to understand maybe, but I prefer you to be big. You're God. You're meant to be big.
- Jesus: (Smiling encouragement) So are you meant to be big! I don't put people in boxes. I lead them to spaces. Your box isn't the right space – it's too small for you. It's too restricting. Come into the space I've prepared for you.
- Person: (shyly but eagerly and longingly) Tell me about it?!
- Jesus: (slowly – one statement at a time)
It's everywhere I call you.
It's where I can give you everything you need.
It's where you have to rely on me.
It's closer to me.
It's freedom in my Kingdom.
It's the right space for you.
It's the place where I can be Your God, and you can be who I created you to be.
It's where your brothers and sisters are.

Summer

step out of the box

It's where you belong and are needed.

(pause)

Jesus: (beckoning and grinning encouragingly) Come out! Come and take your place. No more hiding. Stand tall my little giant!
(faces Person, His arms open to embrace them)

(pregnant pause. Everyone holds their breath – will they, won't they?)

Person: (suddenly and excitedly the person dashes out of the box. The security blanket is left behind)
I'm running into space! (runs anywhere but to Jesus)
I claim my freedom in Christ! (stands on own, arms in air like the winner on a podium)

Jesus: (One hand on hip, grinning hugely, even though Person hasn't come to Him)

(pause)

Person: (looking around, feeling lost, sounding frightened)
Now what Jesus?

Jesus: (grinning and holding out His hands to Person again) Over here! Walk with me ... one step at a time.

Person: (turns to face Jesus. Face beams and arms reach out. Takes one step forward)

Freeze action

Prayer

Loving God, you understand us so well! Thank you for understanding that growing or moving on can seem scary to us. Thank you for being there to help us, encourage us and challenge us. Thank you for believing in us, for trusting us and for waiting for us. Help each of us to recognise the things that restrict or burden us. Help us to keep our eyes fixed on your love and presence as we step out of our boxes. Keep calling us, keep reminding us of all you offer so we can leave our baggage behind. Lead us into freedom Lord; the freedom you have prepared for each of us. And keep us loving towards others who are just stepping into freedom. May we never hold them back but join with them in this adventure; the adventure of discovering who you made each of us to be. Amen

EVALUATION

Please try to answer these questions for yourself and for others who will use this material:

1. What was the most helpful thing?
2. What was the least helpful thing?
3. What would you like to try now?

Summer

step out of the box



THE NEXT STEP

If you want more seasonal items please revisit the website. Summer items include other suggestions concerning healing and prayer.

Acknowledgements

This material has been produced by Ruth Sermon to whom copyright belongs and who has given permission for it to be used in the Vision4life process.

HOW TO FEEDBACK TO VISION4LIFE?

If you wish to offer any feedback – brickbats and bouquets are equally welcome! – you can do so in various ways.

You can email the Vision4Life steering group about general or website V4L issues via the website or at admin@vision4life.org.uk

If you have comments and particularly contributions to the prayer year, you can email the V4L prayer year coordinator via prayer@vision4life.org.uk

If you want to make contributions or ask questions about other V4L years you can email:

Year 3 – Transformed for Evangelism: evangelism@vision4life.org.uk