



Soulful Home

Finding the Sacred in
Everyday Spaces

Practicing Resistance
January 2026

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A Blessing of Resistance

The Welcome Mat

What Does it Mean to be a Family who Practices Resistance?

When I think back to when my kids were little, I realize that so much of my parenting has been about choosing to resist the easy path. For instance, letting my children climb on their own, knowing they might get hurt (we have a saying in our house: “How do we do dangerous things? Carefully!”). Or letting them pick out their own clothes, knowing they will never match. And, of course, letting them pour their own juice, knowing it would most likely end in a mess.

This was the type of parent I set out to be, but it was (and still is) not easy. Some days, being a parent—or a family—feels like navigating a river with hidden currents. You can see the surface, you can plan your route, and yet the water always has its own ideas. There are choices at every turn—some tiny, some enormous, and some that catch you completely off guard. These are the moments when healthy resistance shows up. It’s the quiet courage of sitting with discomfort rather than looking away. I think back again to the tree-climbing days of my youngest. How much I have resisted saying, “No, that’s too dangerous!” and instead have said, “That makes Mamma really nervous, so please be careful and take your time.”

What parenting has taught me is that resistance is the deliberate pause before reacting, the careful choice to listen instead of lecture, the gentle insistence that fairness and kindness matter—even when it’s hard. It’s offering patience when frustration bubbles up rather than giving in to irritation. Being a family of resistance doesn’t mean constant conflict or dramatic gestures. It means choosing love and courage over complacency. It means noticing what’s happening around us—and sometimes within us—and making the choice to act with integrity, even in the ordinary moments.

These seemingly “small” acts of resistance may not feel like you are making much of a difference for your child or the world, but, in truth, they are exactly how we shape the character of our children. Each moment of daily parental resistance announces to our children what values we believe in. And it is children of character and clear values that will alter the patterns of our hurting world.

And so, this month, I invite your family to explore resistance as a daily practice. Resistance is a practice that grows stronger when we do it together. And in practicing it, your family is not just resisting harm; you are creating a space where courage, love, and integrity thrive.

Blessed be,
April



At the Table

Exploring Hope Through Discussions

The At the Table section engages the theme through question-driven family discussions. The questions are designed to be used at a family gathering, most often dinner, but can also be used during a quiet moment in the living room or while driving in the car. This section strengthens family bonds as members learn more about each other through evocative questions.

How To Go About It

The most straightforward approach is to have parents and/or caregivers read off the questions they believe will resonate most with family members, and then have everyone take turns answering. Another fun way to do this is to create a family question jar. To make this easier, we've listed all the questions below at the end of this packet with dotted lines you can cut along to make "question strips." You can then pull out the question jar and have family members choose a question/strip a few times each week.

Discussion Questions

1. When someone asks you to try something new—a game, or a food, or a style—is your first feeling excitement, or resistance? Why?
2. Are “rule followers” always better than “rule breakers”? Why?
3. Who in your family is the most creative and skilled when it comes to resisting doing their chores?
4. If you could, would you resist growing up?
5. What are some things you resist, even though you know they are good for you? Why do you think you resist them?
6. In what ways does our family resist doing things the way most other people do them?
7. Resisting peer pressure is hard. Which friend of yours is really good at it? And which of their resistance strategies do you want to make your own?
8. What ideas from previous generations does your generation resist?
9. How do you resist comparing yourself to others online?
10. Is resistance to injustice always “big” and “loud”? What are some “quiet” and “small” ways people can resist injustice?
11. Can kindness be a form of resistance? How?
12. Sometimes resistance means saying “no,” but sometimes it means saying “yes” — yes to hope, love, or justice. What’s something you want to say “yes” to?
13. What gives you the courage to resist? Who or what helps you keep going when it’s hard to do the right thing?



At Play

Playing With Resistance as a Family

At Play suggests games, crafts, and activities to help families experience the theme through joy and fun.

This Month's Treasure Hunt – Acts of Resistance Scavenger Hunt

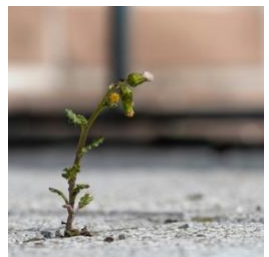
This month, invite your family to look for and share signs of resistance—the ways people (and even nature!) push back against harm and choose hope instead. You can do this at home, in your neighborhood, or on a nature walk. Take pictures, draw what you see, or write notes in a shared journal.

Find or Do These Acts of Resistance

1. Something Growing Through a Crack
 - A plant pushing up through the sidewalk or fence.
 - Talk about how life finds a way even in hard places.
2. A Sign of Kindness or Inclusion
 - A rainbow flag, a “welcome” sign, a food pantry, a little free library.
 - Discuss how welcoming others resists hate and fear.
3. An Example of Teamwork
 - Two people helping each other, or doing a shared task.
 - Notice how cooperation resists isolation.
4. A Piece of Art or Music That Speaks Truth
 - A mural, protest art, or even a song about fairness or freedom.
 - Talk about how creativity can be a voice of resistance.
5. A Place Where Someone is Being Careful or Protective
 - Masks, safety signs, recycling bins, community gardens.
 - Notice how caring for others resists harm.
6. A Time You Said “No” to Something Unkind
 - Or when someone else did.
 - Celebrate moral courage—resisting injustice starts small.
7. A Time You Said “Yes” to Hope
 - Doing something helpful, planting a tree, writing a thank-you note.
 - Resistance is also saying “yes” to love, joy, and connection.
8. Sharing Resources
 - Stocking a community fridge, tending a garden, or leaving food in a mutual aid box.
 - Community care resists systems that leave people behind.

Family Reflection

- Which acts of resistance felt *big* to you? Which felt *small but powerful*?
- Which ones could we do more often as a family?
- How do love and joy show up in resistance?



Additional At Play Options

Option A: Tape Resist Art

Have a craft day and make some Tape Resist Art. What is Tape Resist Art, you ask? It is the process of using tape to create borders and negative space on an art project. When the tape is removed, the unpainted areas are revealed, and a masterpiece is born.

- Supplies: painter's tape (different widths), canvas, acrylic craft paint, paintbrushes, and a paint palette
- How To: Invite everyone to use the tape to create a design on their canvas. Once the design is done, paint over each section. Once the paint is dry, remove the tape.

To see how this type of art is done or to get some ideas, check out this tutorial:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aFjp_3n5LO8

Option B: Family Game Night

Gather the family (and friends) for a fun game night! Soul Matters has heard from many sources that the following games will surely get everyone flexing their **Resistance** muscles! So give them a try this month and see if you agree!

- **[Outfoxed!](#) (ages 5+)** - This is a cooperative mystery game where players work together to find clues and catch the fox who stole the pie. It helps kids explore and understand that justice isn't about blame—it's about working together to uncover truth and stand up for fairness.
- **[Stone Soup](#) (ages 5+)** - In this game, players work together to match ingredients before the fire goes out, echoing the folktale where villagers resist fear and scarcity by sharing what they have. It is a great way to explore the importance of resisting greed and isolation by choosing community and generosity.
- **[Wildcraft! An Herbal Adventure Game](#) (ages 7+)** This game invites players to journey up a mountain, helping each other gather herbs to heal ailments along the way. It is a wonderful way to introduce the importance of resisting harm to the Earth and remembering that caring for nature (and each other) is an act of healing and resistance.
- **[The Mind](#) (ages 8+)** - This is a great card game that highlights the importance of resisting the urge to rush and trusting the group process. It is a super fun way to explore patience, intuition, and connection, all gentle forms of resistance in a noisy world.
- **[Rise Up! Game of People & Power](#) (ages 10+)** - In this game, youth and adults alike can strategize together, pondering whether it's more important to add members, reach a new constituency, organize online, or work with the media. All players are on the same team, running different parts of a movement, struggling to beat "The System."



At the Bedside and in the Book Nook

At The Bedside & In the Nook suggests books that help families engage with the monthly themes with their imagination. This story-centered section honors the unique way stories enrich our sense of what's possible, expand our empathy, and build our identities.

[The Story of Ferdinand](#) by Munro Leaf

(Suggested for kids 3-6)

Ferdinand is a gentle young bull who would rather sit quietly under his favorite cork tree and smell flowers than fight with the other bulls. When he's mistakenly chosen for the bull-ring in Madrid, he still refuses to fight — instead, he sits and smells the flowers in the ladies' hair. Ferdinand resists the pressure to conform (to be fierce, aggressive, "bull-like") and stays true to his nature of peace and tranquility.

***Invitation to Connect:** Parents, ask your children how they resist the pressure to fit in and what they do to stay true to themselves.*

[The Youngest Marcher: The Story of Audrey Faye Hendricks](#) by Cynthia Levinson

(Suggested for kids 5-10)

At nine years old, Audrey Faye Hendricks became the youngest known child to be arrested for civil rights protests in Birmingham, Alabama, during the 1963 Children's March. The book tells her story, how she resisted the idea that children were too small to matter; she claimed a place in the movement.

***Invitation to Connect:** Parents, use this as an opportunity to ask your children if they have ever felt too young to do something they felt strongly about, and what's one thing your family can do this week to resist something unfair (big or small) together?"*

[Black Beach](#) by Shaunna Stith & John Stith

(Suggested for kids 6-8)

"This true story of the first Earth Day - told through the eyes of a fictional child - will inspire readers of all ages to stand up for their planet."

***Invitation to Connect:** Parents, use this as an opportunity to go outside with your child(ren) and look for places in your neighborhood you'd like to protect, talk together about "how do we resist harm to nature in our daily life?" Maybe plant a tree or pick up trash together as a family act of resistance.*

[Resist!: Peaceful Acts That Changed Our World](#) by Diane Stanley

(Suggested for kids 7-11)

"A great book filled with a collection of short biographies of people who peacefully resisted injustice, oppression, or neglect, and acted for change.

***Invitation to Connect:** Parents leave this book out for your kids as an opportunity to reflect on these questions: "What would you do in that situation?" or "How can our family 'resist' something unfair in our community?" Use it as a springboard for reflection..*



In Front of the Screen

Watching Meaningful Movies Together

In Front of the Screen offers families ways to connect with the monthly theme and each other through movies and TV shows.

Bluey – "Obstacle Course" (Season 3, Episode 2) (G)

In this episode, Bluey initially resists losing to her dad, Bandit, by finding ways to cheat and change the rules to her advantage. However she eventually learns that a victory gained through cheating is hollow and that true resilience means facing challenges and practicing to win fairly.

Invitation to Connect: *After watching, talk about how it feels to accept disappointment and do things fairly.*

Finding Nemo (G)

Snuggle up as a family and watch Marlin travel across the ocean to rescue his son, resisting fear and facing numerous obstacles.

Invitation to Connect: *Parents, use this movie as an opportunity to talk with your kids about resisting fear, taking courageous action, and advocating for loved ones despite danger.*

Zootopia (PG)

Judy Hopps, the first bunny police officer in Zootopia, uncovers a conspiracy while challenging stereotypes and prejudice.

Invitation to Connect: *Parents, use this movie as an opportunity to talk with your kids about bravely resisting systemic bias, persevering despite expectations, and seeking justice through courage and creativity.*

Hidden Figures (PG)

True story of African-American women mathematicians at NASA who resisted racist and sexist barriers to make historic contributions.

Invitation to Connect: *Parents, use this movie as an opportunity to talk with your kids about resisting discrimination, asserting intelligence and capability, and believing in yourself even when society wants you to think otherwise.*

The Hunger Games Saga (PG-13)

Katniss Everdeen becomes a symbol of rebellion and resistance against an oppressive regime.

Invitation to Connect: *Parents, use this movie as an opportunity to have a family discussion about defying tyranny, choosing courage over fear, and inspiring collective action.*



In the Toolbox

Strategies to Help Our Kids and Ourselves Navigate the Complicated Stuff

In the Toolbox offers parents resources to better understand the well-established and newly emerging challenges of being a child today. It's all about equipping parents to be better guides and companions for their kids.

Resource One: The Surprising Secret Behind Kids' Resistance and Opposition

<https://www.neufeldinstitute.org/editorials/the-surprising-secret-behind-kids-resistance-and-opposition>

“Why is it that young children can lock down in protest at the mere suggestion of getting dressed or undressed? Why do school-age kids seem to resist directions and expectations when homework needs to get done? At first glance, these scenarios seem unrelated... But they all share similar roots. Kids come with an instinct to resist and oppose, or do the opposite of, what they are told. But this isn't news to parents or teachers. What may be surprising is that resistance can stem from the 'counterwill' instinct that is innate to all humans...”

Resource Two: Monkey Mind at Bedtime

<https://confidentparentsconfidentkids.org/2016/11/03/monkey-mind-at-bedtime-reflecting-on-childrens-thinking/>

Helping your child understand, deal with, and resist their monkey mind at bedtime can help them and your entire family. Instead of feeling helpless, they can find ways to “sit in the driver's seat of their train of thoughts.

Resource Three: Four Things Psychologists Want You To Know About Your Strong-Willed Child

<https://www.goodinside.com/podcast/11142/parenting-on-empty/>

“Is your child strong-willed or highly spirited? Do they play harder, go further, or demand more? If so, it could be that your child has what child psychologists are calling an exuberant temperament. Understanding your child's temperament — the biological foundation for their personality — can help you know how to parent them, bolster their strengths, and reduce the power struggles that seem to accompany strong-willed children...”



Resource Four: On How Parents Resist Rest & Why Taking Care of Yourself is the Most Powerful Thing You Can Do

<https://www.mothersrefuge.org/blog/rest-is-resistancenbspwhy-taking-care-of-you-is-the-most-powerful-thing-you-can-do>

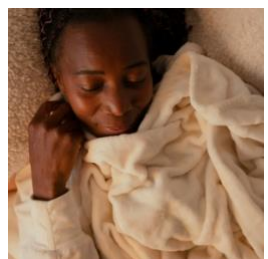
“You don’t need a fancy degree in parenting. You don’t need to follow every parenting trend or have it all figured out. Just by being yourself, you’re already teaching your child more than you know. When you choose to rest when you’re tired...When you say, “That’s too much for me right now”...When you ask for help instead of powering through...When you take a deep breath instead of snapping...When you cry in front of them and then remind them that feelings aren’t bad... You are giving them permission to listen to their own needs, to set boundaries, to feel their emotions without shame, and to ask for support...”

Resource Five: Resisting the Forces that Separate Us from Radical Self-Love

When one thinks of resistance, the first thing to come to mind is usually *not* self-love, rest or joy. But several thought leaders - especially leaders of color - are trying to change that. Author, poet and activist, Sonya Renee Taylor, is one of those leaders. Her message of *radical* self-love is essential for all parents, as we struggle to help our kids resist the cultural messages that separate them (and us) from the inherent worthiness we came into the world with. A sense of worthiness, by the way, that also has the power to change the world! Here’s a taste of what you will find in the videos and podcasts below:

“You’ve never seen a toddler who [wasn’t] in awe of their own bodies... We all arrived here that way. So the question is not, ‘How do I learn to love myself?’ The question is, ‘What are all of the messages that I have received throughout time that have separated me from my inherent knowledge of my own worthiness and love? And that brings me to the question, ‘How do you deal with the constant day in and day out struggle of what we’re taught?’...”

- Tamron Hall Show Interview:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6ovLYCQp9I0>
- Bodies As Resistance: Claiming the political act of being oneself:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MWI9AZkuPVg>
- Podcast Interview:
<https://brenebrown.com/podcast/brene-with-sonya-renee-taylor-on-the-body-is-not-an-apology/>



On the Porch

Connecting and Sharing Stories with Your Village

On the Porch uses thoughtful questions to open space for you and your parenting partners or parent/caregiver friends to connect more deeply with each other and think more deeply about how the monthly theme has shown up in your life and can show up in a more intentional way.

How to Go About It

Bring these questions with you when the time comes to hang out with your co-parent or parenting/caregiver buddy. Treat the questions less as a quiz and more like doorways inviting you into the world of mutual storytelling and memory. Go through them all or pick a few that call to you the most.

Questions

1. What aspect of parenting/adulthood do you most resist? How do you overcome this resistance when it's time to get the thing done?
2. In what ways does your family lifestyle resist dominant norms? Does being outside of the mainstream in this way energize you, cause tension for you, or something else?
3. How does your body resist when you are pushing yourself too hard?
4. When do you give into the path of least resistance in your parenting? Under what circumstances have you chosen to follow this path from time to time?
5. What does resistance mean in your family life? How do you talk about standing up for what's right with your children?
6. When do you encourage your child to "go along," and when do you encourage them to "speak up"? How do you help them know the difference?
7. How do you model resistance to harmful norms, like consumerism, racism, rigid gender roles, or classism, through your daily choices or conversations?
8. What does peaceful or compassionate resistance look like at home? (For example, how do you resist yelling or giving up when things get hard?)
9. When your child resists you, how do you tell the difference between healthy autonomy and unhelpful defiance?
10. What spiritual or emotional tools help your family sustain resistance when the world feels overwhelming? Is your tool gratitude? Humor? Community? Ritual? Something else?
11. How do privilege and identity shape the ways your family experiences or practices resistance?
12. What kind of resistance do you hope your children will practice as they grow? How can you nurture the courage, empathy, and critical thinking they'll need for that?



Alongside the Chalice

Family spiritual practices and rituals are crucial for kids, youth, and adults. While lighting a chalice at home is a beautiful family practice, it can often be the only explicit UU identity practice we bring into our homes. So our Alongside the Chalice section offers a different UU practice, observance, or ritual for families to try out each month, with the hope that a few stick and become woven into the repeated and treasured rhythms of family life.

Resistance Chalice Lighting

We light this chalice to celebrate the ways we stand up for what is right.
May its light remind us to be brave, to care for each other,
and to choose love, even when it's hard.

Fun Resistance Band-Based Exercises for Kids

https://stroops.com/training-room/articles/5-fun-resistance-band-based-activities-for-kids/?srsId=AfmBOoob_rLO3Xbo6_dhC8tDdNnp0PkQcollWRbjcGb1LOagoGOPkr1q

For lots of people, exercise can be a spiritual practice. It connects movement to mental and emotional well-being through mindfulness, ritual, and purpose and can foster a sense of presence, clear the mind, and build mental strength by enduring physical challenges, similar to how one grows spiritually...One effective way to make exercise fun and exciting for kids is by incorporating resistance bands into their workouts. While it's primarily a workout tool, kids and their parents and leaders can find many ways to make it a lot of fun while still getting plenty of exercise.

Rest as Resistance: A Spiritual Practice

In a world that equates busyness with worth, choosing to pause, slow down, and rest is a way of resisting exploitation, overwork, and societal pressure. Rest allows us to reconnect with ourselves, our loved ones, and our values, making space for clarity, creativity, and courage.

1. Mindful Pause Breaks

Resist and interrupt the rush of daily life by taking 5–10 minute “family pauses,” in which the whole family stops and joins in quiet reflection, deep breathing, or gentle stretching.

2. Nature Rest

Spend time outside without an agenda (or cell phones)—sit under a tree, watch clouds, listen to birds.

3. Creative Rest

Use quiet time for gentle creative activities: coloring, journaling, knitting, or simple crafting.



The Extra Mile

The Extra Mile section is for families who want to continue exploring the theme of the month through larger adventures, more complex projects, or simply through additional modalities not otherwise included in the packets. A bit more effort, but well worth it!

Weekly Screen-Free Resistance Day

Once a week this month, your family will turn off or unplug screens—TVs, tablets, computers, phones—as a way to resist the constant pull of technology and reclaim time for connection, creativity, and presence. It’s a small but powerful act that says: Our family values people, play, and presence over passive consumption.

We know this will be hard at first since we are all so connected to our devices. This is why we call it an extra mile. But, parents, we invite you to use this activity as a chance to model resistance in everyday life and explore together ways families can resist unhelpful pressures or distractions—from kindness over gossip to noticing the Earth around you.. It’s also an opportunity to talk with your children about why you’re resisting screens. If we want to protect our kids from the harm of social media and screentime, it is not enough just to tell them to put their phones down. We have to *explain* to them why it is essential to being fully human.

How to get started:

1. Pick Your Day: Choose one day each week this month (e.g., every Sunday afternoon, Wednesday evening).
2. Unplug Together: Turn off TVs, tablets, video games, and phones. Put them in a drawer or another room.
3. Plan Your Activities:
 - Read a book together (like a resistance-themed story!)
 - Take a walk outside
 - Play a board or card game as a family
 - Do a creative project: draw, paint, build, or craft
 - Journal or share stories about your week
 - Bake or cook a meal together
4. Reflect: At the end of the day, ask:
 - “What was hardest about turning off the screens?”
 - “What new things did we notice or enjoy?”
 - “How did it feel to resist the pull of screens?”
 - “In what ways did our unplugged day leave you feeling more human?”

Optional Twist

Document Your Day: Resist using your camera phone and instead draw pictures to make up a small scrapbook or collage about all the experiences that your screen-free day gifted you with.



Blessing of Resistance

Dear brave hearts,
courage seekers,
and everyday resisters,

This month, my wish for your family is this...

May you give yourselves permission to stand firm,
and remind yourselves that forgoing the easy path
is a strength you can return to again and again.

May you notice the courage in your children's words and actions,
and let it inspire your own heart to speak up,
to act with love, and to care fiercely for others.

May you find rest and replenishment in those ordinary family moments
filled with listening, laughter, and stories,
and may you treasure the small acts of kindness
as much as the grand ones.

May resistance take root in your family,
and may you journey together through life's challenges,
with courage and clarity about what you believe.

And in doing so, may you model for others
That there is a different way to be in the world.

Blessed be, and may it be so.

~ ***April Rosario***



Question Jar Cut-Outs

We invite you to write your own questions as well

We also remind you that questions that evoke stories are often the most impactful.

When someone asks you to try something new—a game, or a food, or a style—is your first feeling excitement, or resistance? Why?

Are “rule followers” always better than “rule breakers”? Why?

Who in your family is the most creative and skilled when it comes to resisting doing their chores?

If you could, would you resist growing up?

What are some things you resist, even though you know they are good for you? Why do you think you resist them?

In what ways does our family resist doing things the way most other people do them?

**Resisting peer pressure is hard.
Which friend of yours is really good at it?**

And which of their resistance strategies do you want to make your own?

What ideas from previous generations does your generation resist?

How do you resist comparing yourself to others online?

**Is resistance to injustice always “big” and “loud”?
What are some “quiet” and “small” ways people can resist injustice?**

**Can kindness be a form of resistance? How?
Sometimes resistance means saying “no,”
but sometimes it means saying
“yes” — yes to hope, love, or justice.
What’s something you want to say “yes” to?**

**What gives you the courage to resist?
Who or what helps you keep going
when it’s hard to do the right thing?**

Connect With More Inspiration For You and Your Family!

Parents can Join our Facebook and Instagram pages for
daily Inspiration on our themes:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/soulmatterssharingcircle/?ref=settings>

Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/soul_matters_circle/

Parents and youth will want to check out
our [Spotify](#) & [YouTube](#) music playlists on the monthly themes.

Credits

Soulful Home packets are prepared by

April Rosario,

Our Soul Matters Director of RE Resources and [Family Ministry Coordinator](#)

You are free to use any of this material verbatim in worship, newsletters
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