



## **ART BRIDGES: Lesson Plans for Enrichment, Growth and Healing**

### **Inside My Heart**

**A Copyrighted Activity Created by and Re-posted with Permission from  
Kristina Marcelli Sargent  
<http://kristinamarcelli.wordpress.com>**

**With a link to Copyrighted Dick Blick Lesson Plan  
“Family Tree”  
[www.dickblick.com](http://www.dickblick.com)**

#### **Objectives:**

The participants will:

1. Identify those people, animals, memories, etc. that they hold dear in their hearts
2. Use color and symbolism to show importance of those listed above in their lives
3. Reflect on their “heart” and acknowledge their feelings

#### **Audience:**

This activity was designed for children but could be helpful for any age of participant in recognizing those people (and other things) that have held importance in their lives.

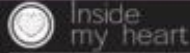


# Inside my heart



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It is okay to love and care about different people. There is room in my heart for many people, memories, animals, and other things that are important to me. I can always think of these people, memories, and other things I love. When I imagine them in my heart, it can help me feel safe and peaceful.

\_\_\_\_\_ 's heart



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I invite you to just take a moment and focus your attention on your heart center in your body. Imagine all of the people, pets, memories, and other significant things resting here. They are being carried with you during your days, helping to

make you who you are. Just thinking and being reminded of this can help calm us and help us make decisions according to what matters most to us.

Just like adults, children have strong emotional connections and love for people, pets, and memories, too. Helping children identify what and who is in their hearts can be very significant. I often help children identify who and what takes up space in their hearts. Then we discuss how we can always think about our hearts and what is important to us to help us feel happy and safe anywhere we go. This activity can help children tap into an inner peace despite the outward chaos they often endure.

Go to: [https://www.dropbox.com/s/hgkz5e2p8o48oy9/inside\\_my\\_heart.pdf](https://www.dropbox.com/s/hgkz5e2p8o48oy9/inside_my_heart.pdf)  
access a printable page for classroom use.

This activity page can be used in many different ways.

1. I use it to help children understand that they can care about and love many people, pets, memories etc.
2. I find it especially helpful for children in the foster care and adoption system. I have had children light up when they realize they can love their mom, previous foster mom, and adoptive mom and that is OKAY.
3. I have also had children complete the activity multiple times throughout treatment as they show interest. For example, I had a client in the foster care system who originally made a heart including his mother, brothers, and other biological relatives. He then asked me to complete another one months later and was excited to include his foster parents from the several homes he had lived in since entering care. He was both surprised and excited to receive validation from me that it is okay for him to still love and care about his previous foster mother despite no longer being able to see her.
4. Children who have losses also benefit from validation that they can still love the person no longer in their lives and hold both the person and memories of that person in their heart space.
5. I also have children complete this activity while their caregivers also fill out their own simultaneously. Children are often surprised and excited to see the similarities and differences between who and what is in each other's hearts. This can also be especially helpful when children with attachment

disorders visually see themselves in their caregivers' hearts and see that there is still room for others.

6. Some children are interested in cutting out the heart and I have had children write or draw on the back of each piece, explaining what they do to show that person or pet that they care about them (e.g. help mom with dinner, tell foster mom I love her, feed my dog, etc.).

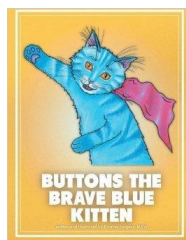
### **Extensions and Adaptations:**

As children think about their families and those they love, consider downloading Dick Blick's lesson plan "Family Tree" [www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/family-tree/](http://www.dickblick.com/lesson-plans/family-tree/). Children have many family members and pets and friends who are "honorary" family. Have students discuss their family and describe how they look using this art plan. This lesson is designed for Grades K-4 but can be used for older kids as well.



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*Heartfelt thanks to **Kristina Marcelli Sargent (MSW)** who graciously gave permission to Hildegard Center to re-post this activity from her website <https://kristinamarcelli.wordpress.com>. Kristina is a mental health therapist (living in Cincinnati, OH) who works with children and their families. Her blog is a place where creative expression and social/emotional well-being can become one, offering creative interventions, activities and inspiration for all ages—please visit it! Kristina has her undergraduate degree in art and creative writing and has written and illustrated her first book, "**Buttons the Brave Blue Kitten**" a story*



*about separation anxiety intended to help children develop empathy and give adults the skills to reinforce its development. The book is available to order on Kristina's website or on Amazon.com. Also check out Kristina's newest book: "Ursula Unwinds Her Anger" which teaches children mindfulness-related skills and offers adults tips on encouraging these skills in children. You can purchase this great book at <http://www.amazon.com/Ursula-Unwinds-Kristina-Marcelli-Sargent/dp/1499073003> .*

*Special Thanks to **Dick Blick** for graciously allowing Hildegard Center to link to DB lesson plans in conjunction with its "Bridges" On-Line Art Lessons for Enrichment, Growth and Healing. Dick Blick's commitment to the educational community extends far beyond providing high-quality products at low prices. DB offers art lesson plans created for all ages and skill levels. Every project also meets several National Standards for Visual Arts education. PDF downloads and videos of these original lessons are available free of charge. Visit [www.dickblick.com](http://www.dickblick.com) to see the many ways DB support schools, communities and art education and make DB your one-stop shopping destination for art supplies.*

**If you have used this activity, we'd love to hear from you! Please send questions or comments through our website [www.hildegardcenter.org](http://www.hildegardcenter.org) .**

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