

Adolescent & Adult Stress Relief (Salt Jar Activity)

Activity: Salt Jar

Age: school age children, adolescents, adults

This activity is good for helping children vent and work through emotions that they may not be able to identify or verbalize. It is an activity that creates a meditative state and gives an outlet for emotional content through tactile media and the creation of that meditative state. It also produces a nice product suitable for displaying or giving for a gift.

Materials: a clean glass jar, a keg or two of table salt, colored chalk, sidewalk chalk, or chalk pastels, scrap paper.

Procedure: For this activity you are going to color some salt and layer different colors in the jar to create a three dimensional product with layers of different colors.

First take a piece of paper and pour about a 1/3 cup of salt in the center of the paper. Then take a colored piece of chalk and begin rubbing it across the salt in a circular motion. Continue to rub in a circular motion pushing the salt back to the center until you get the color you want. If you push firmly on the salt the process will go a little faster and the color will be a little darker.

Next, bend the paper and pour the colored salt into the jar. You can level it out or leave hills in it. Repeat the above process with a different color and pour into the jar. Continue to repeat the process until you have filled the jar with layers of different colored salt. You can create some designs by taking a toothpick and poking it down in the jar along the edge to draw the layer above into the layers below. This creates an interesting effect.

Once the jar is full you can simply put the lid on or fill the top with white glue to seal and display. Be careful not to mix or shake the layers together too much or you will end up with gray or brown salt in your jar. Impulsive and smaller children may have a hard time not shaking the jar up and may need some help.

I have great success with this project individually and in groups. I can start out with a loud group and in a couple of minutes all you here is the meditative scratching of the salt on the paper. Try it with your kids and see if it helps them calm down.