



TODAY'S TOPIC:
Flexible and Strong

You are welcome to use this lesson to inspire spiritual conversation in your family or youth classroom. It is written for elementary age but could be adjusted as needed.

THINKING JOB: Ask a "thinking job question" to get everyone thinking about something pertinent to the lesson. This could be asked moments or hours before your conversation.

Do I like surprises?

Lesson

Materials	Things to Prepare	Today's Goal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pipe cleaners ● Popsicle sticks ● Yarn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 	Know that you can flexible and strong.

Pass around popsicle sticks, yarn and pipe cleaners. Keep one set for yourself to use as a demonstration.

EXPERIMENT: Have them feel the different materials. Ask them what they observe.

- Popsicle sticks really can't bend without breaking. (Demonstrate by bending and breaking a stick. Have the kids try and break their stick.)
- Yarn is super flexible but has no structure that allows it to stand on its own. (Have everyone try and make it stand up.)
- Pipe cleaners are cool because they are flexible but they still have some rigidity to them. That means they keep their shape. Flexible means bendy, able to bend without breaking. (Demonstrate how it can bend into many positions but not break. Have the kids do the same.)

MOVE: Do some stretches. Have kids bend their fingers. Some people are very flexible like dancers and gymnasts and people who do

yoga and martial arts. But it's not just about how we bend our bodies. We can also be flexible in how we think (point to your head) and in how we treat each other. Part of it is being nice, but it's so much more than that.

- It's being willing to not go first.
- It's choosing not be bossy and the one who's always in charge.
- It's not always telling the other person what to do.
- It's not telling your friends what you will play when.
- It's giving other people a chance to have it their way instead of having it your way all the time. It's working together to solve a problem.
- It makes other people feel good and other kids want to be around a kid who is flexible.
- It makes you enjoy surprises.
- It helps you feel better if things change or don't go the way you want.

ASK: How does it **feel** when we practice being flexible? Good, friendly, accepting. How does it feel when we are not flexible? Angry, upset, rigid. Some ways to be more flexible is to jump to center, take a breath, consider how other people feel, you can even talk to God.

ASK: Should you ALWAYS be flexible? No. You don't have to always let somebody else have a turn first, always give somebody else the first choice of what color they want to be when playing a game or always having somebody else go ahead of them. You can be kind and flexible and still ask for what you want.

FINAL THOUGHTS: You have the choice! Will you be limp like yarn and bend only the way others want you too? Will you be super rigid, like a popsicle stick, and break if you don't get your way? Or will you be able to bend but not break like a pipe cleaner?

AFFIRMATION – I am flexible and strong. repeat 4X

Note: Printable affirmations and coloring sheets for this lesson are available at <https://www.milehichurch.org/youth-family/> .