Session 8

A Hairy Situation!

The objectives of this session are:

• to examine and explore the difference between a fairytale and a myth
• to consider how the effects of a person's reputation effects their interaction with others
• to consider how the lies people tell us (and the lies we tell ourselves) change our lives
• to look at the concept of betrayal and the effect it has on the relationships in our lives
• to explore the subjective nature of truth
• to consider the feeling of guilt and how it helps or hinders us

Materials and supplies you will need:

• the DVD of the movie, *Tangled*
• DVD player (or VCR) and TV monitor
• a chalice and matches or lighter
• pencils or pens
• writing paper
• One copy of *Singing the Living Tradition*

Things to do ahead of time:

• locate the DVD and rent it from the library or video store if necessary
• If you will not be watching the whole movie, before class starts, use the DVD disc menu to cue up the opening scene of the selection (Scene 7)
• Watch the movie in its entirety prior to the session (even if you have seen it before), paying particular attention to scenes 7 (In the Woods) through 11 (A new Dream). Watch for the scenes that portray lies, guilt, betrayal and hope .

Session Outline

Opening Activity: Chalice lighting, reading, and check-in (10 min)
Premiere: Introduction and watching an excerpt of the movie *Tangled* (45 min)

Reflection: "Tell me Truthfully" Discussion and reflection questions (10 min)
Processing: "Lanterns in the Sky!" – Wrap up (5 min)
Closing: Closing reading (2 min)

Opening Activity (10 min.)

Ask for a volunteer to light the chalice and share with the group (or ask for a volunteer to read) the opening words:

In the flame from this chalice
we find the light of faith,
the glow of hope,
and the warmth of service.
May we ever grow in faith, hope and
service as we kindle our own
lights from its spark.

– Anonymous

Begin the session with a brief check-in: ask participants to check-in with their names what was their favorite story or fairy tale when they were small.

Premiere

Watching *Tangled* (45 min.)

Introduce the video by telling the group you will be watching an excerpt from the movie, *Tangled.* Ask if anyone has ever seen the movie. If anyone has, ask them if they would be willing to share the premise of the film with the group. If not, introduce the video yourself by saying something along these lines:

Centuries ago, a droplet of sunlight fell from the sky and landed on Earth. When it touched the ground, a radiant, glowing yellow flower blossomed. An old crone named Gothel found

the flower and discovered that, when she sang a certain song to it, it emitted a power that restored her youth. Vain and possessive of the flower, Gothel hid it beneath a woven basket and regularly returned to it to keep herself young.

Time passed and a kingdom grew and prospered nearby. The King and Queen desperately wished for a child and, when the Queen became pregnant, the entire kingdom celebrated. However, the Queen soon after fell deathly ill. Upon hearing a rumor that spoke of a legendary flower created by a drop of sunlight with the potential to heal the Queen, the King spared no time and sent his soldiers out to find it. After searching the countryside and nearby forests, the soldiers finally came upon the golden flower that Gothel had been hoarding. They brought it back to the castle where it was distilled into an elixir and given to the Queen. To everyone's great relief, the Queen recovered and soon gave birth to a beautiful baby girl who, unlike her parents, had shining golden hair. The Royal family celebrated the occasion by lighting a paper lantern and sending it into the sky with the emblem of a sun printed onto it.

Gothel, however, was not pleased. She crept into the castle late one night and found the baby princess lying in her crib. She recited the old song and the baby's hair glowed just as the flower had. Gothel attempted to cut just enough magic hair to keep but the clipped hair turned brown in her hands, void of its power. Frustrated and desperate, Gothel kidnapped the princess and fled with her deep into the forest. She took the baby to a secret tower hidden in an alcove where she gave her the name Rapunzel and raised her as her own daughter. She taught the girl to sing the old song to make her hair glow and restore Gothel's beauty and kept her hidden from the world, telling Rapunzel that it was for her own safety and that anyone on the outside wouldn't hesitate to steal her magic hair. The only access to the world Rapunzel had was a wide

window from which Mother Gothel came and went, using Rapunzel's hair as a rope ladder. Rapunzel grows up into a creative young woman, finding numerous ways to keep herself entertained during the day while Mother Gothel is away, including painting, cleaning, brushing, and playing hide and seek with her pet chameleon Pascal. Though she is happy with her life in the tower, she longs to someday explore the outside world and see the place where the floating lights in the sky come from every year on her birthday.

Within the kingdom, standing on the roof of the castle, young thief Flynn Rider teams up with his partners, the Stabbington brothers who lower Flynn into the throne room where the missing princess's prized tiara sits on a guarded pedestal. Flynn steals the priceless artifact and is hoisted back to the roof with the palace guards in pursuit, led by the Captain of the Guard and his loyal horse, Maximus. The thieves make it outside the kingdom and Flynn leaves the brothers behind and runs into the forest with the satchel. Seeking refuge, Flynn comes to Rapunzel's tower and climbs the vines to the open window above. Rapunzel sneaks up and hits Flynn over the head while he is admiring the tiara. When he comes to, she proposes a deal. She will give him his satchel with the tiara back (which she has hidden) if he takes her to see the floating lights and brings her back to the tower before Mother Gothel returns. Flynn reluctantly agrees.

Flynn takes her to the nearby Snuggly Duckling Inn which is frequented by an assortment of thugs and bandits. Flynn's plan to scare Rapunzel into going back to the tower backfires when the thugs recognize him from wanted posters and attempt to hold him for a reward while one of their associates goes to inform the guards. Rapunzel pleads with them to release Flynn and asks if any of them have ever had a dream. Her innocence melts their hearts and they all confess their dreams. When the guards arrive at the inn, they help Rapunzel and Flynn escape through a secret tunnel and encourage her to live her dream.

Start the DVD at scene 7 and watch scenes 7 through 11. Stop the DVD just as the credits begin to roll.

Reflection (10 min.)

Tell Me Truthfully!

Begin the discussion by asking for general impressions, and things which occurred to the group as they were watching the video. Then, if no one brings it up, ask the group to consider:

What are some of the ways that Mother Gothel deceives Rapunzel? When they are trapped in the flooded cave facing death by drowning, Flynn tells Rapunzel his real name and she tells him the secret about her hair. Why do you think that it's so difficult for Flynn to be truthful with Rapunzel? Flynn tells Rapunzel that "A fake reputation is all that a man has." How important is a good reputation to you? How important is a reputation in general? Rapunzel finally is about to see the lanterns but is afraid that the experience won't be all that she's dreamed of. Have you ever felt that way about an experience that you looked forward to? Were you happy with the experience once you finally got a chance to do it? Do you think that Mother Grothel actually loved Rapunzel? Why or Why not? At first Flynn only wanted to ditch Rapunzel. When does Flynn change his mind about Rapunzel? When does Maximus (the horse pursuing Flynn) change his attitude about Flynn? When Flynn returns the satchel with the tiara to his partners (who have been hired by Mother Gothel) they knock him out, tie him to the mast and cast him adrift on a boat headed back to the village. Rapunzel doesn't believe he would really leave her, but later seems to believe Mother Gothel. Why do you think Rapunzel doesn't trust her original feelings? Mother Gothel feels betrayed that Rapunzel lied to her and escaped the tower with Flynn. What other examples of betrayal can you spot in this movie?

Processing (5 min.)

Lanterns in the Sky!

Tangled is also a story about hope. The King and Queen never give up hope that the Princess will return home. What other examples of hopes and dreams can you recall from the characters?
Pass out the paper and pencils (if desired) and ask the participant to answer the question: What hopes or dreams do you have? (If you don't have time for the writing exercise, you could just pose the question to the group.)

Give the group a brief time to ponder this question and ask if anyone wants to share any of the thoughts they had during the exercise.

Closing (2 min.)

To close, ask everyone to rise and form a circle around the chalice. Read (or ask for a volunteer to read) the Closing thought "Life is a gift" by Marjorie Montgomery, #452 from the hymnal, *Singing the Living Tradition.*

After a moment of reflection, extinguish the chalice (or have someone else do so), and excuse the youth.

Taking It One Step Further:
If your group will be watching the entire movie rather than just an excerpt, here are some additional ideas to expand the experience and have some fun as a group:

More Discussion:

In the movie, Mother Gother tells Rapunzel, "I love you most." Does she love Rapunzel or does she only love what Rapunzel can do for her? Rapunzel is conflicted about leaving the tower because she lied to her mother. How does Mother Gothel use guilt and criticism to control Rapunzel? What else does she use to keep Rapunzel from leaving? (She constantly tries to

scare Rapunzel by telling her how evil the outside world is.)

More Activities:

Write a film review. Did you like the movie? Why or why not? Choose the theme of the movie – honesty, truth, betrayal, hope – and use specific examples from the movie to prove your argument.
Create a list of lies that the various characters tell. See just how many the group can name.