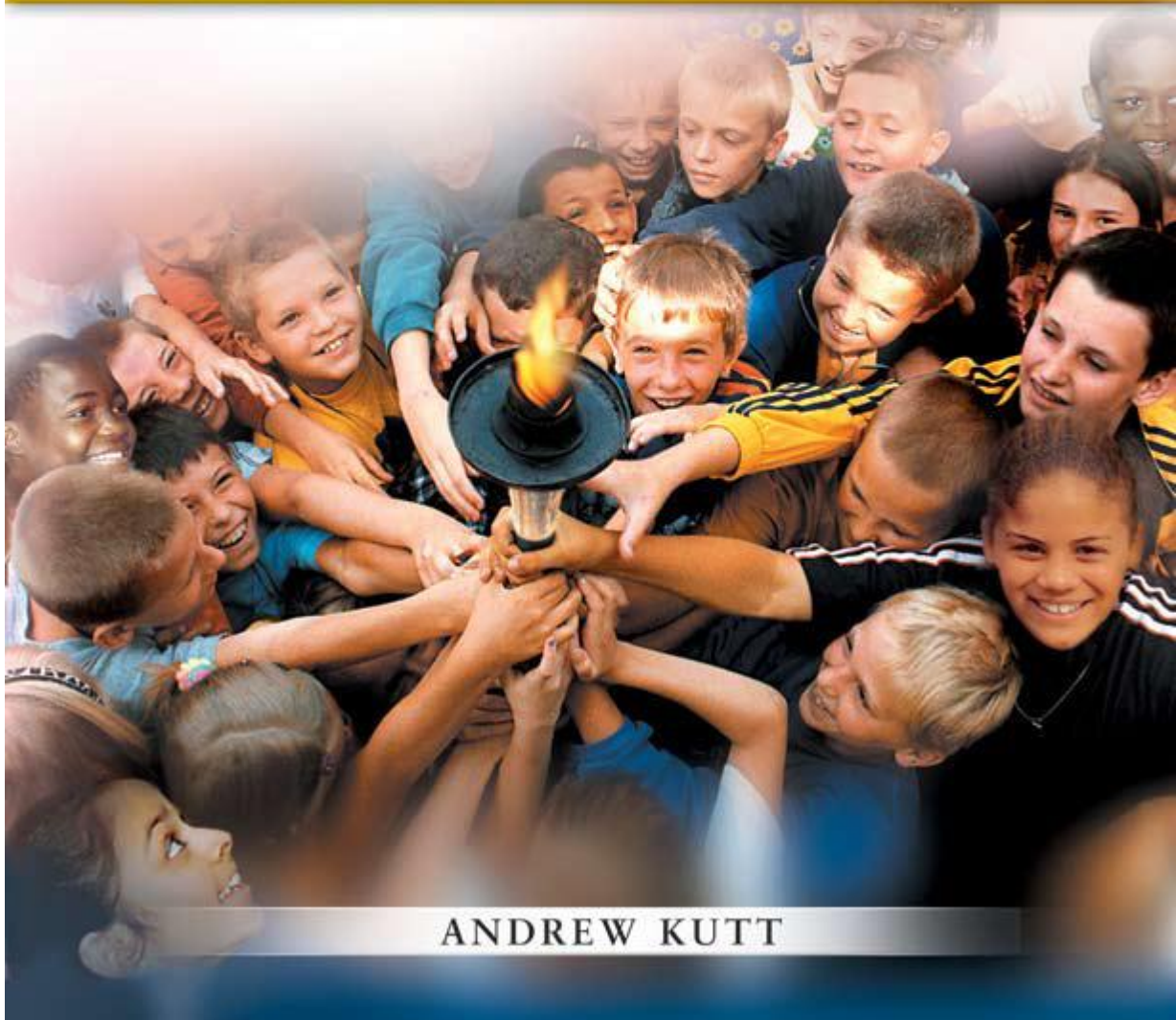


# *Living in Harmony*

**Empowering Children to Become  
World Harmony Builders**



**ANDREW KUTT**

# *LIVING IN HARMONY*

*Empowering Children to Become  
World Harmony Builders*

Curriculum adapted for NYC Parks and Recreation  
Centers Summer Camp Programme

Andrew Kutt

Illustrations by Radha Honig

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*The summer camp curriculum contains seven out of the original twenty chapters as well as a few additions and modifications to the content.*

# Dedication to the UNESCO 2010 International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures



We are honored to dedicate this harmony-building curriculum to the **International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures** as designated by the United Nations and UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization). In the action plan for 2010 UNESCO states - "The main goal of the International Year will be to demonstrate the benefits of cultural diversity by acknowledging the importance of the transfers and exchanges between cultures and the ties forged between them since the dawn of humanity."

**Secretary General of the United Nations, Mr. Ban Ki-moon** gave the following message<sup>1</sup>:

"The International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures is an important initiative. During the year, we will be celebrating cultural diversity and showing how intercultural dialogue and understanding are essential for a more peaceful world. We will also be highlighting the crucial role of culture in development. Let us work together to make the Year a resounding success."

**Dr. Davidson Hepburn, President of the General Conference of UNESCO** offered the following words of support to all participants of the World Harmony Run<sup>2</sup> – in which the NYC Parks and Recreation Center summer schools are also planning to participate in August 2010.

"The International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures presents a wonderful opportunity to creatively celebrate cultural diversity and its role in forging ties between cultures and people. There is great value in bringing together different kinds of people, different forces, different views, different religions, and different beliefs..."

The multi-cultural, international, and local participation of the World Harmony Run demonstrates the concept of peace and harmony in a unique and practical way and reinforces the goals and objectives of UNESCO's mandate and the International Year.

A guiding principle of UNESCO's mandate, and all its work, is the notion that "Since Wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed." Therefore, it is with great pleasure that I support and encourage initiatives like the World Harmony Run that touch and inspire people's hearts and put values of diversity, dialogue, and understanding so central to UNESCO's work into action.

Throughout 2010: International Year for the Rapprochement of Cultures, I wish all the organizers and participants in the World Harmony Run many successful events and joyful shared experiences. May your activity contribute to the global recognition of the intrinsic relationship between sustainable development and the promotion of cultural diversity, mutual understanding, and a culture of peace."

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.unesco.org/en/rapprochement-of-cultures/high-panel-on-peace/message-from-ban-ki-moon/>

<sup>2</sup> For a copy of the full message:

[http://www.worldharmonyrun.org/images/gallery/usa/2010/newyork/0412/d\\_hepburn\\_unesco\\_message\\_harmony\\_run\\_2010.pdf](http://www.worldharmonyrun.org/images/gallery/usa/2010/newyork/0412/d_hepburn_unesco_message_harmony_run_2010.pdf)

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# *Introduction*

*Living in Harmony* is intended to provide a pathway for students and teachers towards the goals of fostering greater harmony in their schools, in their communities and in the world. There are two primary aspects of our experience as human beings – an inner, personal, and individual aspect; and an outer, social and communal aspect. In order to build a world of greater harmony, we must first establish some measure of harmony in our own personality. Then we must learn the skills of creating harmony in our relationships with others. With a sense of harmony within ourselves, combined with the tools necessary to create harmonious relationships with others, we have the resources with which to build harmonious communities – both local and global.

*Living in Harmony* focuses on these aspects of human development. The inner aspect is addressed in Part I and the outer aspect is the focus of Part II. In Part I, we explore ten ways for students to get in touch with their own inner world – that is, with their own feelings, thoughts, and dreams. The first and primary relationship we have is with ourselves. It is on this relationship that all of our other relationships hinge. Children who are balanced, confident, sensitive individuals with a healthy self-image are more likely to have positive and productive relationships with others. Their ability to accept who they are, to appreciate their own talents, and to express their feelings and ideas in constructive ways will directly affect their capacity to be caring, understanding, and communicative partners with others.

The first ten chapters of this book (*all chapters not included in adapted summer camp version*) present a broad spectrum of activities designed to help foster and guide this inner aspect of development. Studying the curriculum of the inner life is different from studying math, reading, geography or science. When we teach ‘normal’ academic subjects, we look to books and to the world around us. To help students study the subject of their inner world, we turn their attention to their feelings, ideas, dreams and visions. To study academic subjects, we encourage students to use their minds, and the aim is to gain knowledge and skills. To study the inner life, we must help students make a connection to their own private selves - their hearts and souls. The aim here is to help them gain wisdom, peace, and the development of their nobler qualities. The ‘inner’ curriculum is about helping students become more aligned with their own source, in order that they may attain greater happiness and be of better service to the world.

The second ten chapters of the book (*all chapters not included in adapted summer camp version*) help teachers and students move from the realm of the personal to the realm of society. These chapters are aimed at building what Riane Eisler would call partnership skills - that is, skills in building relationships based upon mutual trust, respect, and communication. The relationships built by means of partnership skills are ones undertaken with a clear understanding of the common benefits working together can bring. Some partnership skills have to do with helping students gain a better understanding of the geography and the history of the world, so that they are able to begin to place their own culture, perspectives and opinions into a broader global context. Other partnership skills, such as cooperation skills and conflict

resolution skills, focus on helping students learn to weave the fabric of relationships – communication – into productive results. Still other partnership skills have to do with helping students develop their inborn human capacity for caring, compassion, and empathy. All of these partnership skills comprise the larger building blocks of leadership qualities that students can develop with the ultimate purpose of building a peaceful and just society on earth.

The language of *Living in Harmony* is directed at students. In other words, it is written to bypass the need of the teacher to interpret the lessons and to put them into child-oriented language. It is intended to be less like an instructional manual for teachers and more like a storybook. The teacher of students in grades 1-3 can simply read the book aloud to the students. Students in grades 4-6 can read some sections silently, but they will benefit from reading aloud to each other, or teachers of students in these grades can read the entire book aloud to the students. Students in grades 7 and 8 can read some sections silently on their own, read other sections aloud to each other, or they can occasionally read sections to younger students.

The chapter lessons are intended to appeal to a wide variety of learners. The activities are designed to appeal to different interests and to involve many learning modes – imagination, creativity, mind-body fitness, language, nature, etc. There is a wide enough variety of activities to suit all kinds of learners. By exposing children to a full spectrum of activities, we enhance their holistic development into healthy, balanced, insightful, happy, and confident young adults. The language, and the topics covered, lend themselves to many opportunities for additional spelling, vocabulary, writing, reading, and artistic activities that could be created by the teacher and the students – if they have the space in their curriculum.

“The language of the heart is the only language that everybody can understand,” as Sri Chinmoy says. The ultimate goal of this book is to put students in touch with their own hearts, so that they can ultimately express their nobler qualities and develop their unique talents for the greater good of the world at large. The world desperately needs a new generation of leaders who understand and speak the language of the heart. It is hoped that this book will facilitate the students’ journey to their own highest and best selves, and from there outward towards the communities they will be charged with constructing as future leaders. Riane Eisler has said, “I see a world where the most highly valued work will have the consciousness of caring.” It is hoped that *Living in Harmony* will help students, teachers, and parents alike to move forward towards the fulfillment of that vision.

I want to thank Sri Chinmoy for all of his work for world harmony and for inspiring the writing of this book. I want also to thank Riane Eisler for being a source of spiritual light and wisdom. Thanks to all of my colleagues – especially Tim Seldin, Jonathan Wolff, Margaret Wolff, Paul Epstein, Ann Epstein and Aline Wolf for their tireless support and encouragement. Thank you to dear friends, Zoe Handerson, June Lang, Stefania Rubino and Sahayak Plowman for their invaluable contributions. I also want to thank Paula Kleinman for her invaluable help in editing this book. Finally, thank you to all the students, fellow teachers, and parents throughout the years from whom I have gained insights, ideas, and inspiration in ways great and small.

-Andrew Kutt 2005

**Note to summer camp teachers:**

Each chapter has several lessons and activities. It will probably not be possible to get to them all but the variety allows you to choose the ones you feel are best suited for your class. Some can also be done independently or on a different day. We have also added several activities especially for the Summer Camp program that can prepare students for the World Harmony Run event being planned for August 19<sup>th</sup> at Flushing Meadow-Corona Park so that your students can get the most out of the experience.

Please note that this is only a selection of the chapters and activities from the full version of this book and we have also made a few modifications. The original book can be found at: [http://www.worldharmonyrun.org/schoolsandkids/living\\_in\\_harmony](http://www.worldharmonyrun.org/schoolsandkids/living_in_harmony).





## *Chapter One*

# **Imagination**

### ***Chapter Inspiration:***

“Imagination is more important than knowledge. Knowledge is limited. Imagination encircles the world.” –Albert Einstein

“Formulate and stamp indelibly on your mind a mental picture of yourself as succeeding. Hold this picture tenaciously. Never permit it to fade. Your mind will seek to develop the picture... do not build up obstacles in your imagination.”

–Norman Vincent Peale

“There is only one admirable form of the imagination: the imagination that is so intense that it creates a new reality, that it makes things happen.” – Sean O’Faolain

“Imagination is the beginning of creation, you imagine what you desire, you will what you imagine and at last you create what you will.” – George Bernard Shaw

“Imagine the beauty of an earth without tears.  
Imagine a world with happy smiling faces.” –Sri Chinmoy

“I am certain of nothing but the holiness of the heart’s affections and the truth of imagination. What the imagination seizes as beauty must be truth – whether it existed before or not.” –John Keats

“Imagination rules the world.” —Napoleon I

“Imagination grows by exercise.” —Somerset Maugham

“Only when we have established peace in our entire being can there be peace all over the world.” –Sri Chinmoy

### ***Chapter Story:***

Once there was a young boy who grew up on a farm. The boy used to lie in his bed at night and be very still. In the peaceful silence he would see himself shooting a basketball and he would picture it swishing through the net over and over again. He imagined himself in different places on the basketball court and how he would shoot the ball from each place. Each time, he

imagined the ball going smoothly and perfectly through the hoop. He used his imagination to visualize or 'see' how his hands were holding the ball, how he was preparing the ball, and then how he would let go of the ball. He even imagined how his arm and fingers would stay outstretched after the ball was released.

Then he would imagine himself in different situations during a basketball game. In each situation he would use his imagination to see how he would shoot the ball in that situation. One of his favorite situations to imagine was that it was at the very end of the game and there was only time for one last shot. The boy visualized himself shooting the final shot and of course, in his imagination, the shot was a perfect swish through the basket to win the game! Thousands of times the boy would imagine playing basketball in this way.

This boy's name was Larry Bird and he became one of the greatest basketball players in the history of this sport. Of course the skill he was most famous for was shooting the ball. Larry Bird was one of the best basketball shooters ever.

## ***Chapter Overview:***

Imagination can be a very powerful and helpful force. People use the word 'imagination' quite often, but how do we define imagination? One way to think of it is that it is to see something that doesn't exist yet, but that will exist or can exist. For example, you can imagine what it might be like on your summer vacation when you go to the beach. In your mind you can 'see' the water, smell the salt, and feel the sand under your feet. This way of experiencing things in your mind we can call visualizing. We can also call it seeing with your 'mind's eye.' Or we can simply call this using our imagination. In the chapter story, Larry Bird used his imagination very well to see himself shooting a basketball and being successful as a basketball player. We can use our imagination for many kinds of things. Imagination can help us accomplish whatever goals we have. Imagination can help us to reach for our dreams. Imagination can also help us solve problems.

## ***Chapter Lessons:***

### *Lesson #1 — The invisible heart*

Imagine that you have a special place inside you, in the middle of your chest. It is a place that is very peaceful and full of love. We can call it our heart, but it is not the physical heart that is beating and pumping blood through our bodies. Let's call it our 'invisible heart,' because when we love someone, we say that the feeling comes from our heart, even though we cannot see that heart. Your invisible heart is a magical place where you can go. It is a place where you can feel that you are connected with the whole world – people, animals, plants, even mountains. Close your eyes for a minute or two and see if you can feel your invisible heart.

### *Lesson #2 – Expanding and becoming light*

Close your eyes and imagine you are looking up at the sky. Maybe it is a blue sky with white clouds, or maybe it is a night sky full of stars. Imagine any kind of sky you wish and that you are

looking up at it. Maybe you are standing on a mountaintop or lying on your back in a meadow or at the beach. See how big the sky is. It goes on forever and ever. We can't know how big the sky is because nobody has seen the end of space. Now as you breathe in imagine you are expanding and becoming light and floating upward. You keep growing and expanding, becoming lighter and lighter, until you are as light as the air. Finally imagine you are as big and wide as the sky itself. How does it feel to be as large and as light as the sky? Stay as big as the sky for as long as you like, and then let yourself shrink slowly back down to your regular size. Now you are back where you were looking up at the sky. Let yourself rest for a few moments and then open your eyes.

### *Lesson #3 – Concentration and the breath*

Just sitting and being quiet with yourself is the simplest thing in the whole world. When you sit and pay extra attention to your breathing and to the silence, this is called concentration. If you focus on your breathing, this makes you feel more relaxed. If you focus on the silence, you can get even more positive feelings, new ideas, and creative images. The way you focus is to just remember what you are concentrating on. If you start thinking about something else, just say, "Oops, I am trying to focus on my breathing," or "Oops, I want to focus on the silence." Practicing concentration like this can help you in lots of other ways. It can help you do well in your schoolwork and to be patient when things that you do not like are happening.

### *Lesson #4 – Personal reflection*

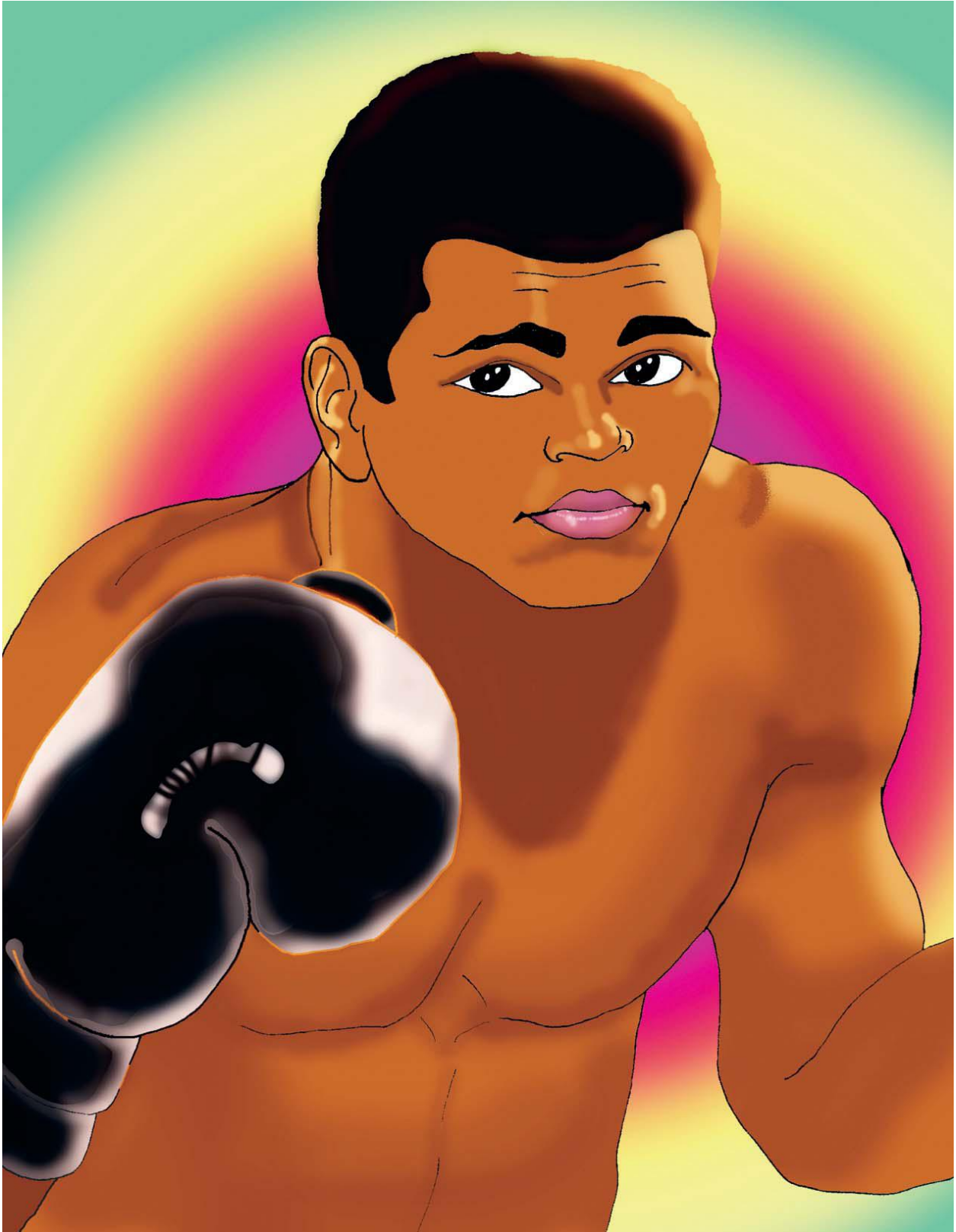
After you have been sitting for awhile, ask yourself this question: "What is the best thing about me?" Are you kind? Peaceful? Friendly? Cheerful? Funny? Helpful? Caring? What is the most special thing about who you are? Whatever that thing is, say to yourself: "I am friendly," or, "The best thing about me is I am cheerful." Say this to yourself three times. You will most likely think of several things that are the best things about you. On a piece of paper write down these things. Each time you sit quietly, you can choose a different one of these things to think about. The best things about you are called your positive qualities or your good qualities. These are the things that make you 'you'!

## ***Discussion Questions:***

- a) What do you think Albert Einstein meant when he said, "Imagination is more important than knowledge"?
- b) Can you think of some of the things that would not exist if someone did not imagine them first? There are quite a few. You can make a list of them!
- c) What are the three best qualities about you? Make a list of them. Then draw a picture or write a poem about one of them.
- d) How do you think you would feel if you were able to sit quietly for a few minutes each day?

## ***Supplemental Activities:***

- For any of the lessons you can draw a picture or write about what you saw during the imagination activities. You can share these with the rest of your class and display them on the wall or on the bulletin board.
- Your invisible heart is where you keep many happy feelings. Sometimes though you might feel sad. This happens to everyone. What do you sometimes feel sad about? Share with the class if you want to. When you are sad you can use your imagination to make yourself feel better. You can imagine your favorite things, imagine something that makes you happy, or imagine just being inside your invisible heart. You can practice any of the lessons in this chapter to help yourself to feel happy and peaceful again.
- See if you and your class can practice one of the lessons in this chapter each day for a week or even a month. If you can't do it at school, maybe you can try it at home with your mother or father.
- Close your eyes and pay attention to your heartbeat. You can feel it by softly putting two fingers on top of the veins on your opposite wrist; or you can touch your thumb to your pointer finger; or you can put your fingers on the large vein at the side of your neck. Just focus on your heartbeat for a while. This can be a good way to practice concentration and also to notice the difference between your physical, beating heart and your 'invisible heart.'



## *Chapter Two*

# **Building Harmony through Affirmations**

### ***Chapter Inspiration:***

“The happiness of your life depends upon the quality of your thoughts.” –Marcus Aurelius Antoninus

“The language of the heart is the only language that everybody can understand.”  
–Sri Chinmoy

“I am the greatest.” –Muhammad Ali

### ***Chapter Story:***

Muhammad Ali grew up in a very poor section of Louisville, Kentucky. In those days his name was Cassius Clay. His family did not have very much money. One of his only possessions was his bicycle. He loved his bicycle and he loved to ride all over the neighborhood. One day somebody took his bicycle from the front of his house. He was very sad but he was determined to get his bicycle back. Cassius went looking for his bicycle at the local Boys' Club. There he did not find his bicycle, but he saw some young boys who were practicing boxing. He could not take his eyes off them. He watched how they moved their arms and their feet. He watched their eyes and how they breathed. It was as if Cassius were in a trance. He forgot all about his bicycle. He felt a powerful feeling well up in his heart. Suddenly he said to himself, “I want to be a boxer. I can become a great boxer. I will be the greatest boxer of all time!” He asked the boxing coach if he could take lessons.

In 1960, Cassius Clay won the Olympic gold medal in boxing. Then he went on to also become the professional champion of the world. When he converted to the Muslim religion, Cassius changed his name to Muhammad Ali, to show that he was making a new commitment in his life. From the age of twelve, and continuing throughout his boxing career, he repeated his affirmation, “I am the greatest,” thousands and thousands of times. This helped him tremendously to believe in his goal. Lo and behold, he achieved his goal. He became the greatest!

### ***Chapter Overview:***

Affirmations are like messages we give to ourselves. When Mohammad

Ali said, "I am the greatest," it might sound as if he were bragging. What he was actually doing was giving himself a positive message. The message was that even though he was very, very poor, even though he was not good at school, even if nobody else believed in him, he still could be a champion if he believed in himself.

## ***Chapter Lessons:***

### *Lesson #1 – Your first affirmation*

Here is your first affirmation to practice:

There are so many good things in me—  
I just close my eyes to clearly see.

I am a good person, even if I sometimes make mistakes. What are some of the good things about you? Put them into a picture or a poem or even just a list.

### *Lesson #2 — Changing the world from inside out*

Harmony begins with me.

This is the motto of the World Harmony Run. If you are peaceful and loving inside yourself do you notice more peace around you? Try it today. You will be surprised how much you can change the world around you for the better by changing yourself first.

*The World Harmony Run consists of a team of runners who are running through every state in the United States – right now – carrying a torch and spreading this message: 'Harmony begins with me' (that's You!). They started running from New York in April and will be getting back home to New York in August – when they will come and visit your summer camp! You can follow the story of the runners from the road every day on:*

*<http://www.worldharmonyrun.org/usa/news/2010>*

### *Lesson #3 — Speaking the truth*

I try to speak the truth and do what's right.  
I soar with integrity, like an eagle in flight.

Do you stand up for yourself? It takes a lot of courage to say how you feel or to say, 'no,' if you feel something is wrong. Using some role-plays to create different situations, practice telling someone how you feel or practice telling someone 'no.'

### *Lesson #4 — Achievement*

There are no limits to what I can achieve,  
If I work hard and just believe.

I can do anything I want to in my life, if I believe in myself and if I work hard. What is something you would like to achieve? Close your eyes and imagine yourself doing it. Now repeat the affirmation while you are holding this image of you!!!



*Lesson #5 – Good and bad feelings*

Feelings come and visit me,  
Happy, or sad, or maybe angry.  
There are many things that I can feel,  
And all of them are really real.  
I let bad feelings go away —  
Feelings that are good can always stay.

Our feelings are part of who we are, yet our feelings change from day to day or even from minute to minute. Try to be aware of what you feel right now. Can you say what feeling you are experiencing right now? Are you happy, sad, angry or frustrated? This is called owning your feelings or being with your feelings. Being present to your feelings in this way is very healthy and empowering. Share your feelings with the class or with a partner – only if you want to.

*Lesson #6 – A magical day*

Today can be a magical day,  
Cheerful and positive I will stay.

Our thoughts are very powerful. To a great degree, we can shape the kind of experience we are going to have by being conscious of our thoughts. If we can say a positive affirmation at the start of each day, it can help us to get started on a positive note. Create some mini skits to show the power of positive and negative thoughts.

*Lesson #7 — Accepting people who are different*

I do not see people as black or white,  
I see in every heart a special light.

This affirmation can be very helpful in shaping an accepting attitude towards others. Inside of everyone is the same kind of invisible heart. It is important to remind ourselves of this every day.

Try making a group picture with this affirmation written at the top. This will be a good way to cooperate and to share your feelings about the meaning of the affirmation.

## ***Discussion Questions:***

a) When he was a child he was called Cassius Clay. Later in his life, when he converted to the Muslim religion, Cassius changed his name to Muhammad Ali. Do you know anyone who is a Muslim? A Muslim is someone who believes in the teachings of the prophet Muhammad, which are written in a book called the *Koran*. When and where did the prophet Muhammad live?

b) Did you like practicing affirmations? Do you think it would be good or helpful to practice them more often?

c) What was your favorite affirmation? Can you say why?

## ***Supplemental Activities:***

- Borrow a copy of the *Koran* from a Muslim friend. Show it to the class – the beautiful cover and binding, the pages, and the special writing, which is usually Arabic. If it also has an English translation, choose a part of the *Koran* to read to the class.
- Gather some books and videos about Muhammad Ali. These can be shared by the class. There are many lessons to be learned from the life of this amazing man.
- Create an affirmation that is special to you. Write it down in beautiful handwriting on a special piece of paper. Then decorate the paper with crayons, markers, colored pencils or other art materials.



## *Chapter Three*

# **Feeling and Expressing Harmony through Art**

### ***Chapter Inspiration:***

“The purpose of art is to transmit to others the highest and best feelings to which human beings have risen.” –Count Leo Tolstoy

“Art is man’s nature; nature is God’s art.” –Philip James Bailey

“If you want to remain always happy, always perfect and always fulfilled, then always keep inside your heart a pocketful of sweet dreams.” –Sri Chinmoy

### ***Chapter Story:***

Claude Monet (1840-1926) was an artist who lived in France. What Claude loved more than anything was to observe different kinds of light – morning light, regular daylight, evening light, moonlight, starlight and even foggy light. Claude would pay close attention to the way that the light changed the objects that it touched. He noticed that the light gave different feelings to objects – sometimes happy and bright, sometimes peaceful, sometimes sad, and sometimes even scary. Then Claude painted the different kinds of light touching all kinds of things, such as bridges, rivers, oceans, gardens, farms, meadows and people. One of his favorite things to paint was a flower. He didn’t paint these things the way they were ‘supposed’ to look. Instead, he painted the deep feelings that the things gave him – especially when the light touched them. Claude became famous for his painting. His style of painting was called Impressionism. When Claude was an old man, he became almost totally blind. Still he was able to paint the most beautiful paintings even though he could hardly see. Because he had painted the feelings of light for his whole life, he didn’t really need to see things anymore to be able to paint.

### ***Chapter Overview:***

Enjoying art can be one of the best ways for us to feel harmony and to express ourselves. There are many different kinds of art. When we make something with colors and shapes, it is called visual arts. The visual arts include things like drawing, painting, sculpture and mosaics. Every one of us sees the world in our own unique way, because we each have special feelings, ideas and dreams that nobody else has. When we practice art we have a chance to create pictures of the world the way we see the world, and at the same time to express the feelings that we have about different things in the world. Art is one way for us to connect to our inner world – who we are inside. When we have a chance to express ourselves through art, we feel harmony and a sense of accomplishment inside us.

## **Chapter Lessons:**

### *Lesson #1 – Colored pencils, crayons or markers*

Take a minute or two to sit silently, with your eyes closed, and imagine how the world around you would look if there was harmony everywhere. Try to feel what it would be like living in that world. Now open your eyes and try to draw what you imagined or felt. No one else has to be able to recognize or understand what you are drawing – just you. It can be colors and shapes or it can be words and pictures. You can see drawings of harmony made by other children like you from around the world on: <http://www.worldharmonyrun.org/usa/schoolsandkids/artwork>. If you'd like, you can scan and submit your own artwork or keep it to give to the World Harmony runners in August.

As an extension activity – you can also learn the World Harmony Run song, create your own instruments, and make your own arrangement. You can perform your arrangement for the runners and the other camps during the World Harmony Run ceremony in August. Recordings and a musical score for the song can be found at: <http://www.worldharmonyrun.org/usa/song>.

### *Lesson #2 — Watercolors (a). Paint with just one color*

Choose one color you want to work with. First dip your paintbrush into the water. Then just move your paintbrush back and forth on the paper, and get a feeling for how the brush moves across the wet paper. You can make a beautiful painting without any color at all – just using the water! Now dip your brush into the color you want to use. You will use only one color for this lesson. Use the watercolor paint to gently put swatches of your color onto the paper. You will see that the paint will go onto the paper in dark and light shades. Pay attention to the different shades and to how one color can have so many different variations!

### *Lesson #3 — Watercolors (b). Paint your favorite time of day*

For this activity you will use two or three colors. What is your favorite time of day? Choose the colors that will be best to paint the light at this time of day. Follow the instructions in Lesson #3 to prepare your paper and to begin painting. Try to paint the light at your favorite time of day. Pay special attention to the feelings that you get when you think of that time of day. Try to paint those feelings into your picture – just like Claude Monet did!

### *Lesson #4 – Using pastels*

Go to visit some cherry or apple trees when they are in blossom, or go to visit some daffodils or lilacs nearby. You can also bring cherry blossoms, apple blossoms or other flowers into the classroom. Use the pastels on your art paper to try to express the feelings of the colors and fragrance of the flowers. Share or display your work – it doesn't have to be 'perfect.'

## **Discussion Questions:**

a) Discuss the first quotation. What do you think Leo Tolstoy meant by the “highest and best feeling to which human beings have risen”? Can you give some examples?

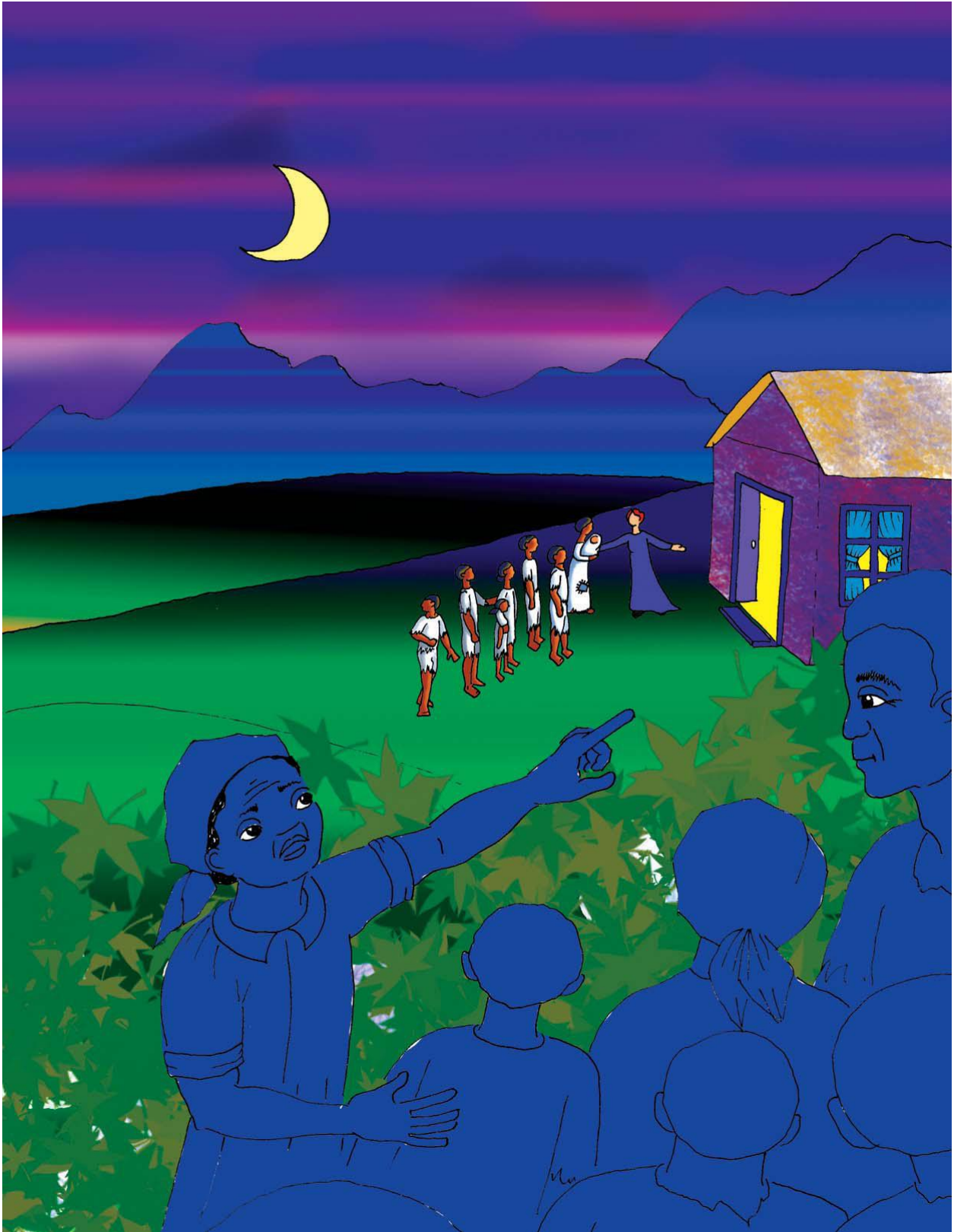
b) Discuss what you think the first part of the second quotation means, when it says, “Art is man’s nature.” What about the second part?

## ***Supplemental Activities:***

- Claude Monet saw the world and painted the world in his own unique way.

What is special about the way you see the world? Close your eyes and visualize a place in nature. It could be a place you have visited that has stuck in your memory, or even a place that you have seen only in a picture. What is special about this place? Why do you remember it so vividly? What do you feel about this place? Now open your eyes and draw or paint this place the way you experienced it or remember it. Don’t draw or paint what it is supposed to look like. Draw or paint what you saw that nobody else could see. Draw or paint what you feel about this place.

- Making a mask of yourself: Use papier mache, clay, or some other material to make a mask of yourself. Paint the mask according to how the best or happiest part of you looks. In other words, paint your face when you are your brightest self. What does the best part of you look like?



## Chapter Four

# The Good Things about Ourselves – Our Virtues

### ***Chapter Inspiration:***

“One path alone leads to a life of peace: the path of virtue.” —Juvenal

“From virtue comes every other good of man.” –Socrates

“ Recommend to your children virtue; that alone can make them happy.”  
–Ludwig van Beethoven

“The very nature of kindness is to spread.  
If you are kind to others, today they will be kind to you,  
And tomorrow to somebody else.” —Sri Chinmoy

“A large part of virtue consists in good habits.” –William Paley

“Is virtue a thing remote? I wish to be virtuous, and lo, virtue is at hand.”  
—Confucius

### ***Chapter Story:***

Harriet Tubman was born into slavery in 1820. Her parents were brought to the United States in chains. They were members of the Ashanti nation – a warrior nation in West Africa.

When Harriet was only five, she was rented out as a worker, and for the next 25 years she lived in slavery. Harriet often worked with the male slaves, cutting wood and doing other kinds of hard labor. She was strong, and by the age of 29, she had had more than enough of slavery. She lived only ninety miles from freedom. When she learned that she had been sold, and was going to be sent to the deep South, she decided to attempt an escape. She was told of a local white woman who helped runaways, and this woman helped her by giving her two slips of paper, each containing the name of a family who would help her on the road northward. Her trip was successful. Over the next eleven years, Harriet made nineteen trips back into slave-holding territory, to help others escape through the Underground Railway. She brought more than 300 slaves to freedom, risking her life for every one of them.

Harriet was a deeply spiritual woman. She knew that God was protecting her, and she remained courageous, believing that she ventured only where God sent her. She often had prophetic dreams about the future. Harriet Tubman lived and died without material wealth, yet she possessed the unlimited wealth of the spirit. She lectured against slavery throughout the North.



During the Civil War, she worked as a spy going deep into the South to gather information on the Confederate army's movements. She led a platoon of black soldiers in three steampowered gunboats on a mission which freed 800 slaves. After that, she worked tirelessly as a nurse, and when the Civil War was over in 1865, she joined the Women's Rights movement. She died in 1913 at the age of 93.

## **Chapter Overview:**

A virtue is a positive quality or attribute that we have inside of us. It is like a variety or a type of goodness, for example, courage, energy, or patience. We can't see a virtue but we can see the expression of virtues. For example, we can't see kindness inside someone, but we can see someone helping a friend when they fall down on the playground. We all have different virtues to share. Some of us have a lot of ambition, while others are very honest.

If we want to have more virtues we can learn about them and try to practice them. Virtues live inside our invisible hearts. They make each one of us very special, because they are like gifts that we have. We can share our gifts, share our virtues, with the world, and we can help others to gain more virtues. When we share our virtues we can make the world a happier and more harmonious place. There is no end to the virtues we can gain and practice. Everybody has virtues. Some people have had a longer time to learn and practice virtues. When people have learned and practiced virtues for a long time, they can become leaders who help to guide others about virtues.

## **Chapter Lessons:**

*As a class, choose some of the virtues listed here that you think are most important – learn more about them through the lessons – and try to practice them. After one week or when the teacher feels everyone is ready take an honest secret vote on who is the girl and boy in the class who has the most kindness or courage (use the virtue the class decided was most important). Do your best to choose the person who really shows that virtue the most – remember that the person may not be the most popular person in class. When the World Harmony Run arrives in August the chosen girl and boy will be honored with the 'Torch Bearer Award' for the positive inspiration they have given to those around them through their own lives and deeds.*

### *Lesson #1 – Kindness*

Kindness is about helping others. Kindness means we open our hearts. Kindness means imagining what it is like for someone else.

Think of one kind thing that you have seen this week. Share that with the class. Who was being kind? How did that person show their kindness? Were they being kind to you or to someone else?

Now think of one act of kindness that you did in your life. What kind thing did you do? How did you help someone or how did it make someone feel?

Using our imagination can be a big help when we are trying to be kind. Think of someone you know who might need help. Who is it that might need your help? What kind of help do you think they might need? Next, think of one kind thing that you can do today, or later this week, to help that person. If you cannot help that person yourself, then maybe you can talk to someone else who can help that person instead.

Write in your journal or diary about kindness.

### *Lesson #2 — Honesty*

Honesty means telling the truth. It also means telling others how you really feel. Sometimes telling the truth can be scary because we think we might get into trouble or hurt someone's feelings. Do you try to tell the truth? Can you think of a time when you did not tell the truth? Why didn't you want to tell the truth? What happened when you didn't tell the truth? Most often, if we don't tell the truth, the situation becomes worse and we have more problems than before.

Can you also think of a time when you did tell the truth, even though it might have been hard or scary? What happened when you told the truth? Did you feel better? It is not easy to be honest and tell the truth, but if we practice, we can make it into a positive habit. There is an old aphorism that says: "Honesty is the best policy." To be honest is to be wise, because being honest can save us a lot of trouble. Being honest is also an important virtue to practice because it is a major part of being a good person.

### *Lesson #3 – Courage*

Courage means following your conscience – that little voice inside of you that tells you what is right and what is wrong. Courage means standing up for fairness and justice. It means speaking out for what you feel is right even if others are telling you something different. Courage means not being afraid to be different.

Courage happens in different ways. Harriet Tubman had courage because she risked her life to help others. Modern Superheroes, and heroes from ancient myths and stories, show courage because they solve big problems and bring freedom and safety to kingdoms or whole lands.

Yet courage is something that everyone can practice. Courage is a virtue that helps us to be good citizens and to improve our community and our world. With your class share stories about courage that you know or that you have heard. They can be stories about any kind of courage, but it is good to have stories showing the different kinds of courage. Write about your favorite story that was shared in class.

### *Lesson #4 – Forgiveness*

Forgiveness means letting go of bad feelings we might have about another person. Maybe someone has pushed us down on the playground or has hurt our feelings by telling us that they won't be our friend anymore. It is important to tell them how we feel when this happens – to tell them we are sad or hurt that they did what they did. Then, once we talk to the person about what happened, and once they acknowledge what they did by saying they are sorry, then we

can practice forgiveness. Forgiveness means being willing to forget what happened and to make a fresh start with the person.

It is easier to practice forgiveness if we remember that everybody makes mistakes, and if we recall a mistake that we ourselves have made recently. We all make mistakes. Mistakes are an important part of life. They help us to learn and to grow into better people. So forgiveness helps us to move past mistakes into learning and growth.

Think of a situation in the past or the present that could be an opportunity to practice forgiveness. What is the thing that happened to you? Did you talk about your feelings with that person, or did that person already apologize? If one or both of these things has already happened, then you can move to the step of forgiveness. If you want to, you can even say to the person, "I forgive you for what you did." This sends a clear and powerful message to the person that you care enough about your friendship to let go of the past and move on to the future together. Make a cartoon about a situation between two people who practice forgiveness.

#### *Lesson #5 — Gratitude*

Gratitude is like saying 'thank you,' for the things that are special to us, the things that make us feel happy, the things that make us who we are. We can express gratitude by saying 'thank you,' directly to the people we love or to someone who has given us something special. We can say 'thank you' to God or to the universe for the good things we have in our life. Or, you can say 'thank you,' just to yourself for being you! We have many gifts in our lives, if we just think about it. Gifts can be special people, things that are precious to us, good feelings or even new ideas.

Can you name one or two of the gifts you are grateful for in your life? Share one of them with the class. Make a list of all the things you are grateful for. Watch out! It might become a pretty long list. Then decorate your list with some art materials to make a beautiful memento of your gratitude lesson. You can hang it on your wall at home or give it to someone special in your life. Gratitude is a special virtue to practice because it can help us to gain appreciation for the gifts in our lives. If we practice gratitude each day it can also help us to develop our other virtues - especially contentment.

#### *Lesson #6 – Determination*

Determination means never giving up. Sometimes we have to try to do something many times before we can do it. Determination also means working for something continually over a long period of time in order to reach a goal. When we want to learn something new or achieve something special we have to try very hard and to practice in order to do that thing. When we have determination and we finally accomplish that special thing, we get a deep feeling of satisfaction. Satisfaction is like a deep happiness or thrill inside of us. We need determination to learn new things, and to grow in our lives. Can you think of a time when you showed determination? Can you think of someone special in your life or someone from history who showed determination?

#### *Lesson #7 – Contentment*

Contentment means being happy right now with who you are and what you have. Siddhartha Gautama Buddha was a great leader who taught that contentment is a very helpful virtue to practice if you want to have a happy life. When you look at a statue of Buddha, he always looks very content.

Close your eyes for a few moments and just feel contentment right here and right now. Just take a few breaths and be happy inside yourself. You have everything inside you that you need to be happy. If you get a new toy or a new game, you might get excited, but then once you get used to it, you might not feel as excited.

You might even want to get another toy at that point. But contentment you can always have, no matter what. You don't need to get anything new or have anything more, you can just close your eyes and feel contentment. When you get new toys it is natural to have fun with them. You can enjoy contentment all the time, whether you get a new toy or not. Draw a picture of yourself feeling contentment or write a poem about contentment.

### ***Discussion Questions:***

a) Talk with your class about quotation #1. Why do you think Juvenal says that virtue is the only path to peace? What do people have to have inside of them in order to be peaceful and to spread harmony in the world?

b) In quotation #2 Socrates says that all other good things come to us if we practice virtues, and in quotation #3 Beethoven says that learning virtues is the only way to be happy. How do you think practicing virtues might help you to gain happiness? What kinds of good things might happen if you practice your virtues every day and every week?

c) In quotation #6 Confucius tells us that practicing virtues is easy once you decide to do it. In fact, he says that if we decide to practice virtues then we are already a better person. Have you decided to try to practice virtues? Can you share what virtues you have noticed classmates, teachers, other school workers, your parents, or your grandparents practicing?

### ***Supplemental Activities:***

- With your class, make a list of all the virtues you can think of. Remember that virtues are positive qualities that make us good and decent human beings. You can make the virtues into a class mural for display on the wall or the bulletin board.

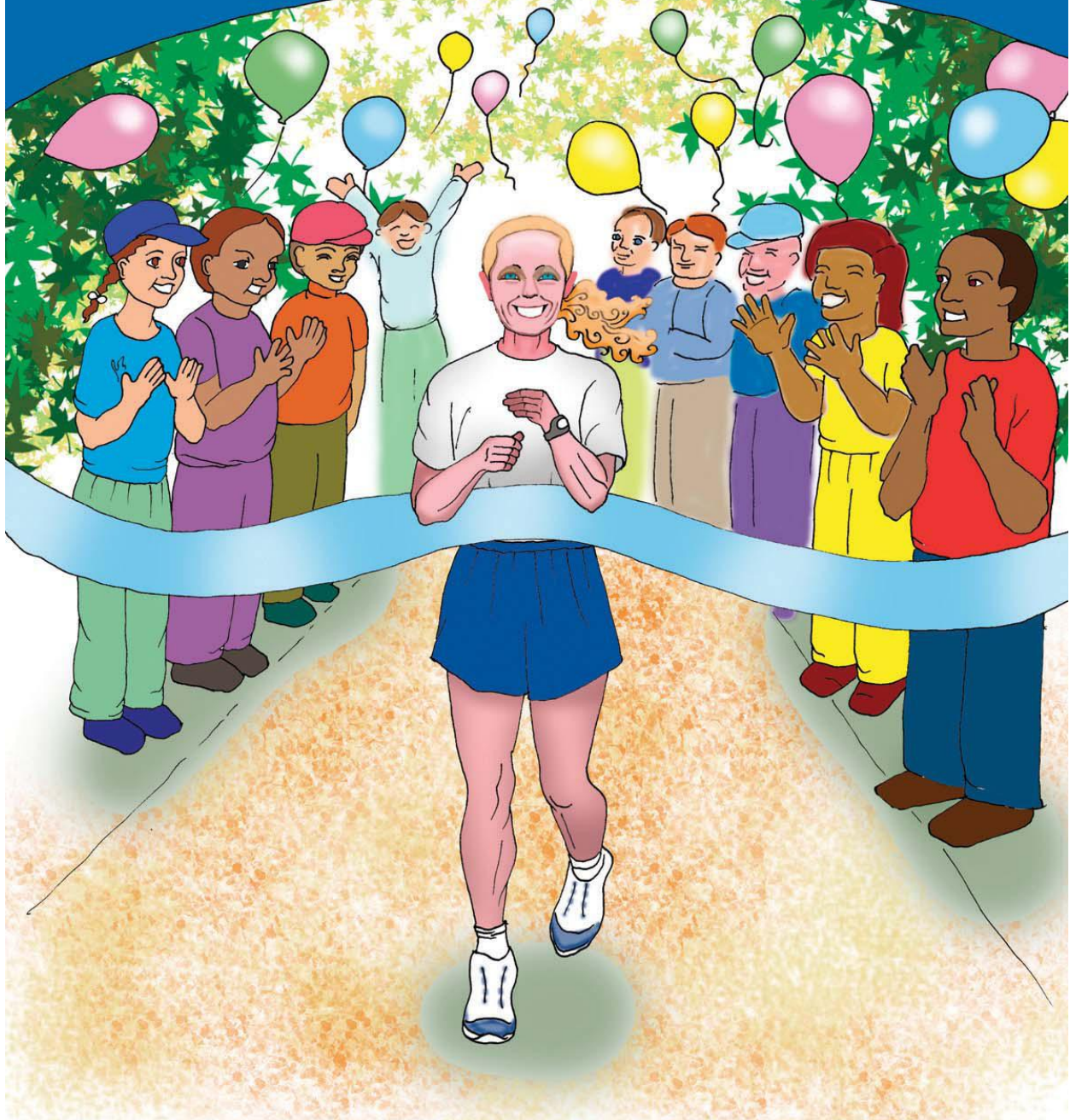
- Fables, fairy tales and other stories are great ways to learn about virtues and to remember to practice them. With your teacher's help, find stories that teach lessons about virtues and share them with the class.

- Once you have heard several stories about virtues, why not write your own?

You can make it a fable, a fairy tale, a myth, a real life story or anything else you want. Just make sure you first decide what virtue your story is going to teach about.

- Which virtue are you going to start practicing first? Maybe if you write it down on a note card and decorate your note card, it will help you to remember the virtue you are practicing. You can do the same for all the virtues you have studied and want to practice.

# SRI CHINMOY 3100 MILE RACE



## *Chapter Five*

### **Fitness**

#### ***Chapter Inspiration:***

“Running ultra-distance races has given me a wealth of first-hand experience of God’s compassion. On my own, attempting to run such long distances, I would be nowhere, but when God’s grace descends, I am able to complete the distance.” –Suprabha Beckjord

“Challenge the fear of trying. You will succeed.” –Sri Chinmoy

“Health is not simply the absence of sickness.” –Hannah Green

“Laughter is by definition healthy.” —Doris Lessing

“Sleep is the golden chain that ties health and our bodies together.” —Thomas Dekker

“Happiness gives us energy which is the basis of health.” –Adele Davis

“By health I mean the power to live a full, adult, living, breathing life in close contact with... the earth and the wonders thereof— the sea – the sun.” —Katherine Mansfield

#### ***Chapter Story:***

Suprabha Beckjord (1956- ) was born and grew up in Washington, DC. Today Suprabha is one of the greatest runners in the world. Suprabha is not known for the speed of her running, but rather for her endurance. She has run races of up to 3100 miles! During her career, Suprabha has set four world records, including in the 1,000-mile, in the 2,700-mile, and in the 3,100-mile races.

Suprabha started running in 1978, at the age of twenty-two, because of the encouragement of her meditation teacher, Sri Chinmoy. The first race she ever ran was a four-mile race. About two years later she ran her first marathon. In the following year she tried a 47-mile race. In 1986, she was inspired to run a 200- mile race in honor of her meditation teacher’s athletic accomplishment of lifting two hundred pounds with one hand.

Ever since then Suprabha has been practicing ultra-distance running. (Ultra-distance running is running over very long distances.) In fact, she has been doing it for 23 years! In addition to staying physically fit, Suprabha gets a special energy and joy from running. She keeps running

because she loves it. She never intended to enter so many races or to become a champion, but that is exactly what happened. In 1998, when Suprabha set the world record for the 3100-mile race, it took her just under 50 days.

Suprabha's running is a great example of how fitness can bring us health, joy and a sense of accomplishment. Running, like other fitness activities, can also bring us many other benefits, such as more energy, new ideas, and a positive attitude. Suprabha's accomplishments in running can be a great inspiration to us, even if we don't run. The lesson we can learn from her running is to find a fitness activity that we like and stick with it. If we keep practicing it, it will help us in many ways. Find your own favorite sport, and stick with it!

## ***Chapter Overview:***

Physical fitness is an essential part of being a healthy and happy person. There are many kinds of fitness activities, including aerobic activities such as running and brisk walking, strengthening activities such as push-ups or sit-ups, flexibility activities such as stretching, and coordination activities such as throwing or kicking a ball.

There is also another kind of fitness, which is "mind-body" fitness. This type of fitness has the goal of bringing our body and mind into harmony, so that we can have positive energy in our day-to-day lives. This chapter will focus on mind-body fitness, as it is a type of fitness that can most easily and quickly help us to bring harmony into our being. It is important to note that all of the kinds of fitness are important, as is good nutrition. If we practice all the different kinds of fitness, as well as good nutrition, we can be assured of being healthy, happy and well-balanced in the physical, emotional and spiritual parts of ourselves.

## ***Chapter Lessons:***

### *Lesson #1 — The Five Tibetan Rites*

Tibetan Buddhist monks say that their long lives are due to the daily performance of these five simple exercises, which they have practiced for hundreds of years.

- a) Gently spin yourself around clockwise. Keep your eyes fixed on one point. This will focus your energy and keep you from getting dizzy. After each revolution, pause briefly. Repeat seven times.
- b) Lie flat on your back. Then raise your legs and head off the ground at the same time. Gently lower your head and legs back down to the ground at the same time. Repeat seven times.
- c) Sit with your knees forward and your feet behind you. Keep your toes folded underneath you so they are not pointing straight back. Begin with your head bent forward and downward. Then gently bend your head backward, arching your back slightly. Pause briefly, then return your



head to the starting position by slowly bringing your head forward and lowering your head. Repeat seven times.

d) Sit with your legs straight out in front of you, your feet together, and your hands on the ground somewhat behind you. Make a bridge by raising yourself upward on your hands, using your feet for balance, and arching your back. Pause briefly then return to your original sitting position. Repeat seven times.

e) With your face pointing downward and your hands and knees on the ground, straighten your legs and push your buttocks upward, making an angle with your body. Pause for as long as is comfortable, then return to the starting position with your hands and knees on the ground. Repeat seven times.

Note: Start out by repeating the five rites seven times each. You can try to increase your repetitions (as time allows) to eventually reach twenty-one – or as many as you feel comfortable with.

### *Lesson #2 — Hatha Yoga*

Yoga is a Sanskrit word that means ‘union.’ Yoga is a vast collection of spiritual techniques and practices, all aimed at integrating mind, body and spirit. Its goal is to achieve a state of enlightenment (wisdom) or oneness (connection) with the universe. What is normally thought of as ‘yoga’ in our Western part of the world is really Hatha Yoga, one of the many paths of yoga. These different paths of yoga are simply different approaches and techniques that all lead to the same goal of enlightenment and oneness.

Yoga is not a religion, but a spiritual practice, or *sadhana*, which does not require any specific belief system to participate. The philosophies of yoga are universal and can be incorporated within any belief system. The goal of Hatha Yoga is to arrive at union of the mind, body and spirit through a practice of yoga postures, yoga breathing, body gestures and internal cleansing. These body-centered practices are used to purify the body, cultivate prana (breath) and activate kundalini, the hidden energies of the body. Yoga, therefore aims at a state of union between the body and the mind, as well as between our individual selves and the universe. When engaging in the practice of Hatha Yoga, the yogic practice of non-violence should be adhered to.

There are hundreds of asanas, or poses, in Hatha Yoga. The Mountain Pose is one of them.

The Mountain Pose:

- Stand with your feet about eight to twelve inches apart.
- Begin with your hands folded in the center of your chest where your invisible heart is located.
- Try to stand straight and tall with your spine in one vertical line, and your shoulders relaxed, arched down and back. Imagine that your feet are rooted in the earth, and that from the earth you are getting strength and stability.

- Close your eyes and breathe in. Imagine that you are breathing in the positive energy of the earth. Imagine that this positive energy is flowing upward from the earth through your feet, up your spine and throughout your whole body.
- As you breathe out, imagine that you are breathing out anything you don't want in your system – restlessness, anger or any other negative emotion. Imagine that these things are flowing right out into the sky and out into the universe.
- Repeat this type of breathing several times. Then gather your energy where your hands are folded – in your invisible heart.
- With your eyes still closed, pay attention to how you feel right now. Is it peaceful, energized, relaxed, and released? Try to name the feeling you are experiencing, so that you can remember it.
- When you are ready, open your eyes and just rest for a few moments.

(Note: The primary sources for the background information in this lesson are the writing of Timothy Burgin and the instructions on [Yogabasics.com](http://Yogabasics.com). For more information go to [www.yogabasics.com](http://www.yogabasics.com).)

### *Lesson #3 – Running*

Start practicing your running so that you can take part in the World Harmony Run and maybe even run with the Harmony Torch. You can have fun practicing by setting up real races and timing yourself over the same distances. Try always to beat your own previous record – that is the real victory – those who are faster than you can be your inspiration, they don't have to be your competition.

## ***Discussion Questions:***

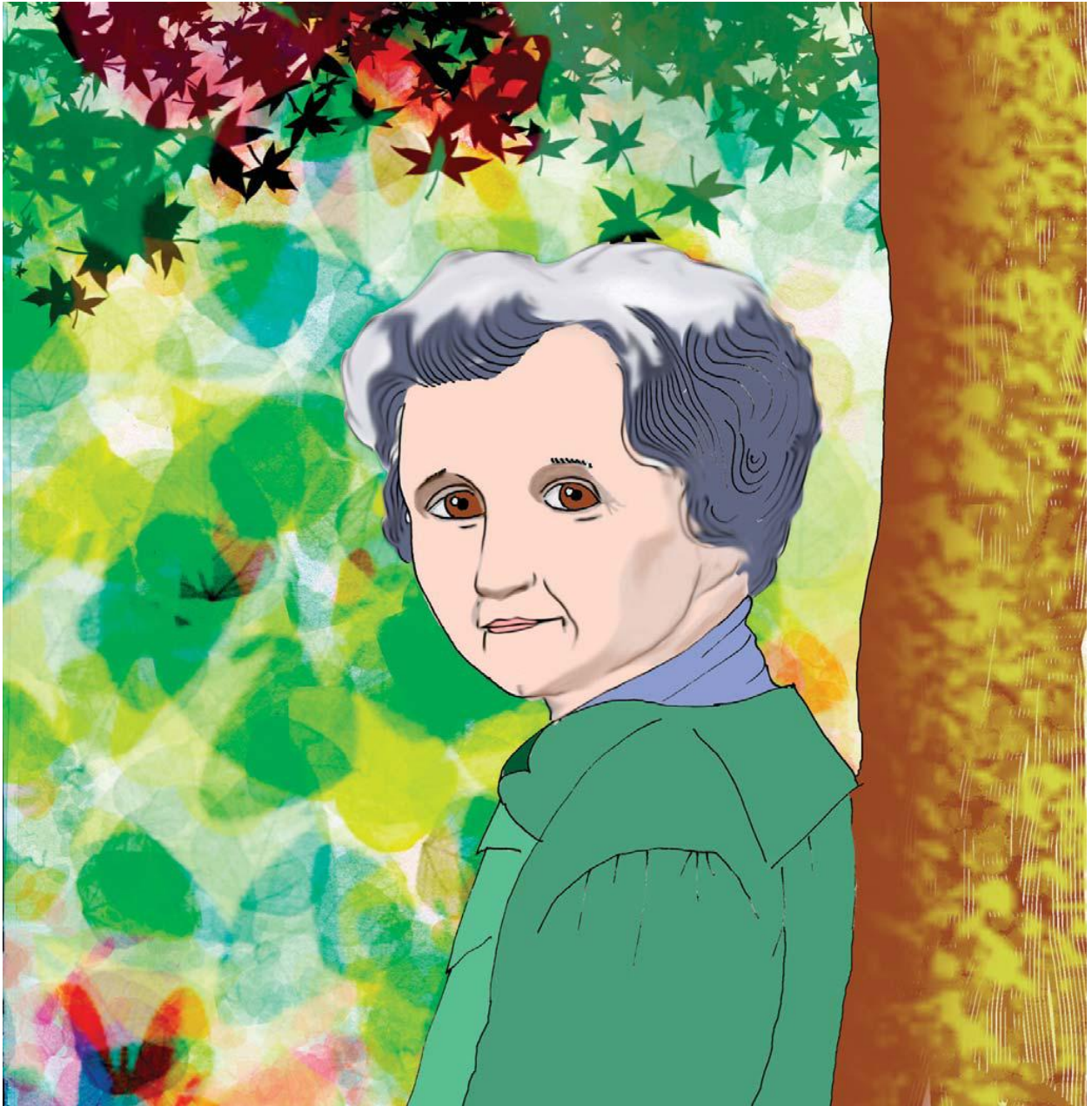
- a) How do you feel after doing some of the exercises in this chapter? Do you feel any changes? Do you feel better? What is your favorite lesson or exercise?
- b) Congratulations! Now you are on the road to becoming an expert on your own body. Why do you think it is important to be in tune with your body?
- c) Can you think of reasons why doing these kinds of exercises with your body might help your mind? You can make a list of your answers.

## ***Supplemental Activities:***

- Watch the video documentary that was prepared about Suprabha: “*The Spirit of a Runner*” – by Jessie Beers-Altman or invite Suprabha as a guest speaker (*Get in touch with the World Harmony Run coordinators to organize this*).
- **Aerobics:** Aerobic activities such as running, walking, or playing sports are extremely important for overall fitness. They help keep our heart and lungs strong, improve our circulation, and cleanse our blood. Which aerobics activities do you practice? Try to practice some aerobic activity each day or at least three times per week.

- Strength: Strengthening activities such as push-ups, pull-ups, sit-ups, or working with weights, help us to maintain healthy muscles. If our muscles are not used they can become weak. Strong muscles not only improve our blood flow and keep our back and joints healthy, they are very useful too! Practice a few strengthening activities such as push-ups or sit-ups.

- Nutrition: Good nutrition is essential to being physically fit. It is also crucial to maintaining emotional balance and mental sharpness. Let's ask everyone in the class to try to go one week without eating any kind of sugar. During this time, try to eat more fruits and vegetables and drink lots of water. After one week, how many students in the class were able to do it? Discuss how those who did it feel. Also discuss any changes you noticed in your routine, in your sleep patterns, and in your ability to do your schoolwork.



## Chapter Six

# Involvement with Nature

### **Chapter Inspiration:**

“Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature’s peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop away from you like the leaves of Autumn.” –John Muir

“I believe in God, only I spell it Nature.” –Frank Lloyd Wright

“The aim of life is self-development. To realize one’s nature perfectly – that is what each of us is here for.” –Oscar Wilde

“Wake up, look around and see the blossoming of a totally new world.” —Sri Chinmoy

“In all things of nature there is something of the marvelous.” –Aristotle

“Nature does nothing uselessly.” –Aristotle

“Think not disdainfully of death, but look on it with favor; for even death is one of the things that Nature wills.” —Marcus Aurelius Antoninus

“In the state of nature ... all men are born equal, but they cannot continue in this equality, society makes them lose it, and they recover it only by protection of the law.” —Charles de Montesquieu

### **Chapter Story:**

Rachel Louise Carson was born in the small, river town of Springdale, Pennsylvania, in 1907. Rachel’s mother was a great lover of nature and living things, and so Rachel spent much of her childhood outside in nature and talking about the natural world with her mother. In school, Rachel loved science and she went on to study science in college. She received a Bachelor’s Degree in Biology from Pennsylvania College for Women and a Masters Degree in Zoology from John’s Hopkins University.

Rachel Carson became famous as a naturalist and science writer for the public. She resigned her job in government service in 1952 to devote herself to writing. During her career as a writer, Rachel wrote several other articles that were intended to teach people about the wonders of the living world. All of Rachel’s writing expressed the philosophy that human beings were only one

part of nature and that human beings had a power that other living things did not have – human beings could either help nature or hurt nature.

Around the time of World War II, Rachel became very concerned about the widespread use of pesticides around the world and the dangerous impact of chemicals on the environment, on animals, and on people. Rachel felt a responsibility to warn people that the chemicals in pesticides were very harmful and that something had to be done to protect people and nature from them. In 1962 she wrote a book called *Silent Spring*, in which she spoke out against the practices of agricultural scientists and the government. In this book, Rachel called for a change in the way people were viewing and treating the natural world.

Some people did not like what Rachel was saying, especially the companies that made the chemicals for the pesticides. Rachel was criticized and sometimes ridiculed by the chemical industry and by some members of the government. Yet Rachel continued to speak out about what she believed and about what her scientific research was showing. She continued to try to teach people to see humanity as part of the fabric of nature, and that if we treat nature badly, we will all suffer in the end. In 1963 Rachel was called to testify before Congress, and during her testimony she pleaded for new policies to protect people and the environment from dangerous chemicals.

Rachel Carson died from breast cancer in 1964. Her work lives on in her books. Her life is an inspiration to all of us to try to be more aware of our capacity to live more harmoniously with nature.

## ***Chapter Overview:***

Living in harmony with Nature is one of our most important jobs as human beings. As Rachel Carson and many others have taught us, we human beings are the stewards of the earth. We have a very important responsibility to treat the earth kindly, to use the earth's resources wisely, and to preserve the beauty and health of the earth for the future. Nature herself can provide us with comfort and support as we try to live up to our responsibility. When we need guidance, wisdom, or inspiration, we can go out into nature to play, walk, run, write, paint, sing, or just to be.

There is a great harmony that exists in nature. As creatures that are a part of nature, we can enjoy that harmony and that connection every time we go out into the forest, to the mountains, to the sea, or just to a local meadow, a park, or our back yard. Nature is one of our most special friends. It is important that we get to know nature's gifts so we can get help and healing from nature when we need it – and so we can support nature when she needs our help.

## ***Chapter Lessons:***

*Lesson #1 — Plant a Tree for World Harmony*

Draw a tree and label all the leaves with a different word or picture that describes how a harmonious world looks like. Now think about what virtues or good qualities each of us will need in order to create the world represented by the tree and write or draw these qualities around the tree. Just like a tree needs water, air, earth and sunlight to grow world harmony needs to be lovingly and carefully grown through all our individual efforts to live in harmony. You may want to discuss with the class what you think harmony means – how it feels and what it looks like and then to display the tree drawings around the room after you finish.

Now you are ready to plant your world harmony seed. Summer is not a good time for planting trees but you can plant a flower or any other small plant. Just like world harmony the seed or little plant will start out small and not so strong. But as you visit it and care for it every day it will grow bigger and stronger. Before you finish planting find a little stone. Hold the stone in your hands near your invisible heart and make a secret wish for harmony – where you think it is needed most. Then as you cover the seed or the roots of your little plant with soil – add the little stone at the bottom. Your wish will grow with the plant. *(If your plant doesn't make it through the season don't worry – your wish will keep growing secretly and silently on its own)*

### *Lesson #2 — Mini Vision Quest*

If possible, the vision quest should take place in a natural setting such as your local park, a nature center, or even to a quiet spot on your playground. Vision quests were and continue to be an important coming of age ceremony in many native tribes of North America. In many Native American tribes, a young person in the early teen years goes out into nature and spends some time by themselves. Sometimes they may even spend a night, or even two or three nights, alone in the wilderness. During this time the young person is expected to practice the skills of living in the wilderness that they have learned, and they are also supposed to spend time in reflection about this important stage of their lives.

When you do your own vision quests, you will not be staying in the wilderness alone for a long time as the young Native Americans do. You will simply go to spend some time in a natural place. Here are a few guidelines you might find helpful for a successful vision quest:

- a) Take the class to a natural place or to a local park.
- b) Each student should bring a pen or pencil and a small notebook to write or draw in. A marble composition book is fine, though a smaller, pocket-sized notebook is even better.
- c) Each student should be prepared to be silent for at least 15 minutes. 30 minutes of silence is ideal. It might be very helpful to practice being silent in class for some minutes each day prior to going on your vision quest.
- d) Once you arrive at your natural location, each student should pick a different spot to be. They should select a spot that 'speaks to them' – a place where they will be comfortable and peaceful and not distracted. It is important for each student to be far enough from other students that they can't really see them directly or at least that they can't really talk to each other.

(Note: an absolutely ideal spot for a vision quest is along a stream where each person can find his or her own spot. The rushing of the water helps to create a private place for each person where they can't really hear any outside noise.)

e) During the vision quest everyone should maintain silence. If someone needs the teacher's attention for some important reason, they can make a signal or a motion to the teacher and the teacher can quietly come over to the student.

f) The teacher's job is to walk around quietly and unobtrusively, to make sure everyone is safe and focused. If everything is going as planned the teacher can sit in a central place and enjoy nature too!

g) Each person should be encouraged to pay attention to the things of nature that surround them – especially the small things. Look and listen to the sights and sounds of nature – the songs of the birds, the rush of the water, the insects on the ground, the flowers, the ferns, the grass and the trees.

h) Each student should be encouraged to listen with their inner ears and to look with their mind's eye during their vision quest. If they do, they very likely will get a message or an image that they want to write down or draw in their notebooks.

i) Sometimes it is best to advise the students to wait until they get back to class to share about their vision quests. This gives each person time to think about and absorb their own experience.

j) Once back at school, invite students to share about their vision quests if they want to. Students should also be invited to write more in-depth journal entries or more detailed pictures once they are back in class. This will make their overall experience much deeper and more memorable. Enjoy your vision quest!

### *Lesson # 3—Nature poem/Circle game*

For this game you will need some special things that you have found in nature – some small stones, some shells, some chestnuts, black walnuts in their green shells, or some other roundish natural objects. You can use apples, oranges, or ordinary balls if you wish. It is quite possible that a few objects will be dropped and lost to the game, so plan accordingly. You should have enough items of the same object, all stones or all shells, for example, so everyone in the circle will have one.

a) For this game, stand in a circle with just enough distance between each person so that everyone can touch hands. During this game you don't actually hold hands, but you gently touch each other's hands by holding your left palm upward and your right palm downward. Eventually you will be receiving an object in your left hand from the person to your left and you will be passing the object on to the person to your right with your right hand.



b) You begin the game, however, with each person holding their object in their own two hands in front of their invisible heart – the left hand palm up and the right hand palm down. In other words, the object will be sitting in the left palm and it will be covered gently by the right hand.

c) You will stand still during this game. The only motion is with your hands and arms. Basically there are only two motions. In one motion you are moving your hands towards your neighbors' hands on your left and right. In the other motion, you are moving your hands back to the middle of your chest, as described above. First you will receive an object in your left hand, then you will move your hands to the middle of your chest, and then you will pass the object to the person on the right.

d) It is important to keep a steady rhythm. Otherwise folks will not pass at the same time. In other words, everyone in the circle needs to do the actions in unison – that is the object of the game. If you think of each motion described above as having one drumbeat, this will help you to 'get it.'

e) There is a poem that goes with the game. Wherever you see the slash ('/') in the poem, that is where your hands are coming to the center. Whenever you are saying the words of the poem, that is where you are receiving or giving the object. It is important to pause briefly after every motion – after every part of the poem. Each part of the poem goes with one beat. Here is the poem:

We give / we care  
We learn / to share  
And as / we give  
We learn / to weave  
A web / of love  
As bright /as stars  
That shine / above

f) When you are done with the game, you can talk about the game – what was challenging and what was fun. You can also talk about the meaning of the poem.

This poem is borrowed from the Rudolph Steiner educational program – also called the Waldorf educational approach.

g) You may find it very helpful to practice this game without any objects first, so you can learn the motions, the proper rhythm, and the words to the poem.

## ***Discussion Questions:***

a) Compare the two meanings of 'nature.' One meaning is Mother Earth and all of her manifestations. The other meaning means the essence of being human.

Can you find one quotation from the chapter quotations above that uses 'nature' in the first way and another quotation that uses 'nature' in the second way? How do you think these two kinds of nature are connected? Brainstorm the different ways – there is not just one 'right' answer!

b) Frank Lloyd Wright was a very famous American architect and philosopher. Discuss what you think he meant in quotation #2.

## ***Supplemental Activities:***

### *The silent nature adventure*

For this lesson we will go on a special adventure in the forest or on our playground. We will go on a walk and as we walk we will pay special attention to what we are experiencing through our senses. For a period of time we will not talk at all. The goal of our nature adventure is to experience nature without words. After our silent nature adventure we will have a chance to draw and write about our experiences. We will also share with each other about what we learned.

a) With our ears we will pay attention to any insects or birds we might hear. If we are near a river or stream, we may hear running water. If we are lucky we may hear some animals such as the chirping of squirrels or chipmunks. We may also hear some sounds that are made by humans and not nature.

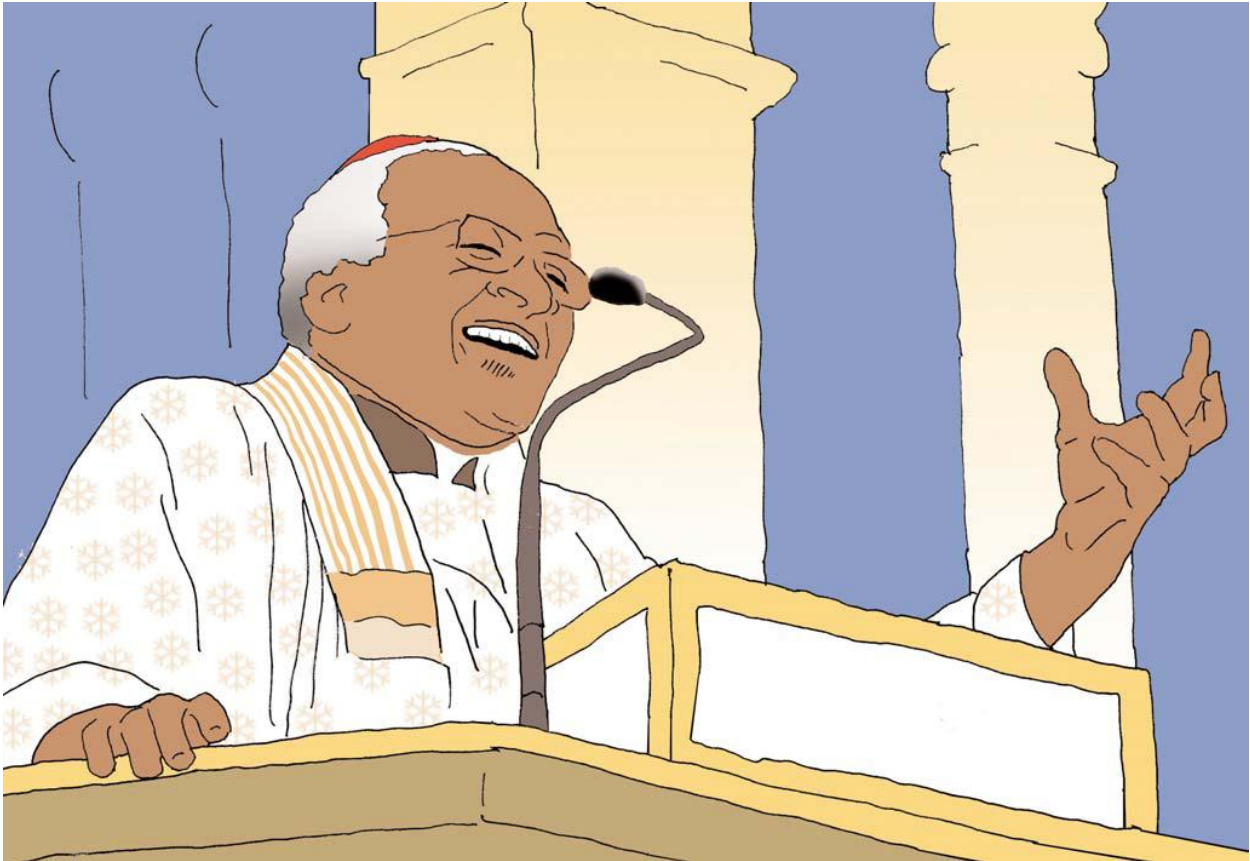
b) With our eyes we can observe things as big as the sky and as small as bugs eating a stump. We might observe a bird building its nest, caring for its young, or speeding through the trees. We might observe a butterfly or a honeybee going from flower to flower gathering nectar and pollinating the plants. We might observe many other things.

c) With our sense of smell we can smell the fragrance of the flowers, or of the earth after a rain, or of the skunk cabbage in a swamp. If we pay close attention we can also tell the difference between the smell of the deep forest compared with the smell near a stream or river, or compared with a meadow.

d) With our sense of touch we can feel a stone. We can feel the cool, soft water of a stream or the warm water of a pond. We can touch the grass. We can hug a tree and feel the bark around it. We can see how soft a dandelion can be and we can carefully feel how sharp is the thorn of a thistle or a rose. We can also feel the air on our faces or on our hands if we hold them outstretched to our sides as we walk.

e) With our sense of taste we might be able to taste some mint growing in a garden. Why not taste a blade of grass, or, better yet, a strand of hay growing in the field? If you gently munch down on the hay you can taste the sweet green juice inside. If there is a honeysuckle bush nearby, we can taste the sweet nectar that is inside by pulling very gently on the white stamen and licking the tiny bubble at the end before it falls off. Garden vegetables are always a wonder

to taste if we have the chance. With wild plants in the forest, we should never taste anything without direct adult supervision and permission.



## Chapter Seven

# Love Starts Here: Building a Just and Peaceful World

### **Chapter Inspiration:**

“If we fight a war and win it with H-bombs, what history will remember is not the ideals we were fighting for but the methods we used to accomplish them. These methods will be compared to the warfare of Genghis Khan who ruthlessly killed every last inhabitant of Persia.” –Hans A. Bethe

“Everyone associates the words: war and peace. Remove the word war. Let’s talk about peace – the peace that is felt in the hearts of human beings, not in their minds.” –Prem Rawat

“Peace is not an absence of war, it is a virtue, a state of mind, a disposition for benevolence, confidence, justice.” –Baruch Spinoza

“Justice does not come from the outside. It comes from inner peace.”  
–Barbara Hall

“Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” – Martin Luther King Jr.,  
Letter from Birmingham Jail

“Justice is the end [goal] of government. It is the end [goal] of civil society. It ever has been and ever will be pursued until [one day] it be obtained.... [We all] wish for a government which will protect the parties, the weaker as well as the more powerful.” –Alexander Hamilton

“Peace is first an individual achievement, then it grows into a collective achievement. Finally it becomes a universal achievement.” –Sri Chinmoy

“You can no more win a war than you can win an earthquake.”  
–Jeannette Rankin

### **Chapter Story:**

Archbishop Desmond Tutu was born in 1931 in Klerksdorp, Transvaal, South Africa. His father was a teacher, and he himself was educated at Johannesburg Bantu High School. After leaving school, he trained first as a teacher at Pretoria Bantu Normal College and then, in 1954, he graduated from the University of South Africa. After three years as a high school teacher he began to study theology.

Desmond Tutu was ordained as a priest in 1960. In 1975 Desmond Tutu was appointed Dean of St. Mary's Cathedral in Johannesburg. He was the first black person ever to hold that position. In 1978 he became the first black General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches. Living with and preaching in South Africa about apartheid, Desmond joined in the struggle of compatriots like Nelson Mandela. Desmond Tutu spoke out courageously and eloquently against the racist policies of the South African Government. He gave many speeches in which he described the pathway that the government should take to become more peaceful and just for all. In the speeches he would say, "South Africa will one day be a democratic and just society without racial divisions."

Desmond Tutu set forward a four-point plan for the achievement of this goal:

1. equal civil rights for all;
2. the abolition of South Africa's passport laws;
3. a common system of education;
4. the cessation of forced deportation from South Africa to the so-called 'homelands'.

Desmond Tutu repeated this plan in speech after speech. His words made sense, and his speeches became famous around the world. What he said strengthened the activities of Nelson Mandela and the African National Congress. More and more people around the world began to unite in the cause of changing the policies of the South African government. In 1984, Desmond Tutu was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his courage and for his nonviolent protests against apartheid. The award of this prize to Desmond Tutu called even more worldwide attention to the unfair situation of blacks in South Africa. It was the beginning of the end for the apartheid system and the old form of government in South Africa.

In 1986 Desmond Tutu became the first black person to be elected the Archbishop of Cape Town. He served in that capacity until 1996. Desmond Tutu has remained active in South Africa's political affairs, and from 1996 to 2003 he headed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This was a very important job because the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was responsible for investigating and documenting human rights abuses during the apartheid era. In other words, the job of the commission was to look back at what happened during the apartheid era and to take note of all the people who were killed, injured, imprisoned and relocated so that there could be a historical record of those terrible times, and so the mistakes of that era would never be repeated.

Desmond Tutu still leads a very active life. He still speaks out for peace and justice in the world. While black people in South Africa might be better off than they were under the apartheid system, many of them still live in poverty. In addition, there are still many places in the world where blacks and other minority groups have not yet achieved equal rights. Desmond Tutu continues to speak and to write about these issues. His latest book is called *God Has a Dream*.

## ***Chapter Overview:***

A world of peace and justice is what all the great religions speak of. It is what all of our spiritual teachers have taught us throughout the ages. It is what all human beings ache for deep in their hearts. We have not yet succeeded in making our world peaceful and just, so much work remains to be done. Some people on our planet live in prosperity while many more live in poverty. Some people can enjoy school and the chance to have a job and a career, while for many others this remains a distant dream. Some live in peace and tranquillity, while other cannot sleep at night because they can hear shooting and bombs. Some citizens of the planet have freedom and can speak their opinions openly and without punishment.

Others are in prisons because they dared to disagree with their government. Each day we can take a step closer towards our vision of a peaceful and just world. The more we learn about the world and the challenges people face, the more we will want to help. The more we hear about the unfairness in the world, the more we will want to make it fair. The more knowledge we have, the more power we have to do good. And the more we practice giving of ourselves, the larger our 'invisible hearts' will become. Our invisible heart is our source of compassion, healing and oneness with the world. As Sri Chinmoy says, "the heart that loves unites all." Our first and foremost job is to foster a heart that loves. When each one of us on earth has a loving heart, we will all be united, and peace and justice can reign on earth.

We cannot abandon our brothers and sisters around the world. We cannot just enjoy our comforts and our pleasures, without ever thinking of those in the world who have so little and who live in such terrible circumstances. We can have fun, live our lives, enjoy ourselves and still have a sense of social responsibility. There are many little ways we can help build a better world. There is no limit to what we can do if we want to do more. It isn't just a few global citizens that we need. All of us must learn to be global citizens, because the planet is home to everyone. Therefore, as Sri Chinmoy says, "Let it be the bounden responsibility of all human beings to love and help one another." Part of our duty as human beings is to work to make a better world for the children that will inherit the earth after us.

## ***Chapter Lessons:***

### *Lesson #1 - Tug of peace*

Tug of war is a game most of us have played. It is a game in which two teams, of equal size, pull on opposite ends of a rope to see which team can pull the other across the midline to the opposite side. Tug of war can be a fun game, but sometimes it can lead to hurt feelings and even hurt hands from the burns of the rope. Also, the name 'tug of war' is kind of upsetting, considering that there are more than 30 wars going on around the world right now. So why don't we create a different game, called the 'tug of peace'? It can spread the message of peace and it can be a lot more fun. For the tug of peace, we will need to find an old rubber automobile tire and tie it to one end of a rope. We can arrange for teams of two, three, four, or five people to pull the rope. Instead of pulling against another team, we will pull the tire a certain measured distance. We will keep track of how many seconds it takes each team to pull the tire the designated distance. Then each team will get two chances to try to beat their original score. As

each team is trying to transcend itself, the other teams should be encouraging them to beat their previous mark. The tug of peace helps us to practice cooperation, teamwork, and sportsmanship, and nobody's feelings get hurt.

### *Lesson #2 - Modified musical chairs*

Modified musical chairs is a great way to show that we can always find a way to share if we keep a positive attitude and remember that it is never fair to leave someone out. This game is just like normal musical chairs with one big exception: In this version of the game, nobody ever gets left out.

a) Arrange a line of chairs as you normally would for musical chairs. There should be as many chairs as there are people. We will arrange the chairs in an alternating pattern so that the first chair is facing in one direction, and the next chair is facing in the opposite direction, and so on.

b) The group of players stand around all sides of the chairs in a circle (it's really more like an ellipse). We will make sure that the players are far enough apart so they are not touching.

c) The music begins. (We can use a CD player, tape player, or a radio to provide our music. Another option is for the teacher, or an appointed leader who can sing or play an instrument, to make the music that way.) When the music stops, everyone must find a chair to sit in. In the first round everyone will have a chair.

d) After the first round we take one chair away. The music begins again. This time someone will not have a chair to sit in. Instead of 'putting them out', the person who doesn't have a seat will gently sit in someone's lap. This usually creates a lot of laughter.

e) As the game goes on, we will keep removing one chair. Soon everyone will have to sit in someone's lap, and before we know it three people will have to find a way to sit on one chair.

f) By the end of the game, everyone will have to sit on one chair. Of course this is not possible to actually do, but we will try our best to do it.

g) This is intended to be a fun and gentle game. It is important that we make sure that nobody gets hurt.

### *Lesson #3 - The global village*

Read and discuss the following information. Pay special attention to the number of people who don't have some of the basic necessities, and also take note of how the wealth of the planet is distributed.

If we could shrink the earth's population to a village of precisely 100 people, with all existing human ratios remaining the same, it would look like this:



There would be 57 Asians, 21 Europeans, 14 from the Western Hemisphere (North and South America) and 8 Africans

70 would be people of color; 30 would be white

70 would be non-Christian; 30 would be Christian

50% of the entire world's wealth would be in the hands of only six people, and all six would be citizens of the United States

80 would live in substandard housing

70 would be unable to read

50 would suffer from malnutrition

Only one would have a college education

#### *Lesson #4 - 100 hungry people*

In this lesson we will break into three groups:

Group One will represent the U.S, Canada, Japan, Western Europe, Australia, New Zealand, Israel and Saudi Arabia. These are the wealthiest countries in the world and they have about 20% of the world's population, so this group should have a pretty small number of people.

Group Two will represent Russia and Eastern Europe. These countries are not the wealthiest but not the poorest either. They have about 10% of the world's population, so this group should have the smallest number of people.

Group Three will represent Africa, Asia, and Central and South America.

These are among the poorest countries in the world and they have about 70% of the world's population, so this group should have the largest number of people.

We will prepare some kind of snack that we can count easily. For now, the snack will not be for eating. Instead we will use the snack for our demonstration. We will give out 70% of the snack to Group One, 10 % to Group Two, and 20% to Group Three. The snack represents the percentages of food and other resources that the different countries use.

After giving out the snack, discuss the unfairness of the distribution of the snack. How does it feel to get so little? Does it seem right that the group with the most people gets the fewest snacks? This is exactly what happens in the world at large. The wealthiest countries in the world get and consume most of the food, energy and other resources, even though they don't have nearly as many people as the poorer countries do. This is the challenge we all face, and this is the kind of challenge that the United Nations and other world organizations are trying to solve. For now, it is important for us to just be aware of the situation. Then, as we continue to learn the

tools for becoming global citizens, we can begin to do things to help. Now we can divide the snack up fairly and have a treat. If only it were that easy for countries to share their food and resources!

### *Lesson #5 – Organize a world marketplace*

The world we live in is a vast and wondrous place. There are so many different kinds of people on the planet. People live in just about any place you can imagine – high up in snow-covered mountains like in Nepal, inside great canyons like the Grand Canyon, in the middle of the desert like the Outback of Australia, on boats floating on lakes and rivers in Southeast Asia, on frozen tundra in northern Canada, in enormous cities like Shanghai, and in many other strange and fascinating places. Human beings have proven that they can live and thrive in almost any kind of environment. They have learned how to adapt to all kinds of different circumstances. They have had to use creativity to solve problems, ingenuity to build new kinds of tools, appliances, and homes, and determination to stay in their new places in spite of great challenges.

All people on the planet – no matter how they dress or talk – are our brothers and sisters. No matter how different we are, we all share the same planet. As we get to know more about so many special places on the planet, we can also learn about the unique people who live in those places. Each culture we learn about can teach us something new. Each culture has wisdom that has been passed down from generation to generation through the ancestors to the present day. Each culture brings us a special language, music, food, dress, and customs that can make our lives more enjoyable and lively.

You can divide into groups or as a whole class - choose any other country in the world that you already love or want to learn more about. Find out more about the traditional clothes, decorations, music and customs in that country and look for some traditional recipes. You can even learn a few words or sentences from that country's language. Get your parents involved and create your own little village. Check with the other camps if they are also organizing their own country 'stands'. During the World Harmony ceremony each class can set up their stands in the Park – offering a taste of the chosen country (i.e. food, music, etc.). You can visit each stand and learn more about some of the different cultures and nations around the world.

## ***Discussion Questions:***

a) “Justice does not come from the outside. It comes from inner peace.” Given what you have learned in this book and in your other Global Citizen lessons, discuss what this quotation from Barbara Hall might mean.

b) Prem Rawat says, “Let’s talk about peace – the peace that is felt in the hearts of human beings, not in their minds.” Why is it easier for us to feel and to make peace in our hearts than in our minds?

c) “You can no more win a war than you can win an earthquake.” Discuss the meaning of this quotation by Jeannette Rankin.

d) “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” Martin Luther King Jr. spoke these words more than 40 years ago. They are still very true today. As long as injustice exists in some places on earth, then the justice we enjoy is not totally complete or permanent. Discuss.

## ***Supplemental Activities:***

• *Dr. Untangle:* Gather in a group of six to ten people. One or two people will not join the group, but will stand outside the group and wait. They are the ‘doctors’. We will stand in a circle, and then everybody will walk towards the middle of the circle, until the group is kind of bunched up but not squished. Each person should take hold of the hand of another person, using one hand. Using the other hand, they should take hold of the hand of a second person. Each person should now be holding hands with two other people. You are now like a tangled knot. (If you are not tangled enough, the teacher might move you around to get you tangled some more!)

Now, your job is to get everyone untangled and make a circle without breaking the chain – that means without letting your hands go from any of your partners. Dr. Untangle will help you, so listen to his/her instructions. You will have to cooperate to be able to move your bodies in the ways you need to get untangled and to make a circle. Be patient, otherwise your chain will break!

Once you have the circle, it’s all right if some people are looking in one direction and some are looking in the other direction. If it’s too hard to end up in a circle, you can at least try to end up in a straight line. If anyone gets frustrated along the way, Dr. Untangle can administer ‘knot-aid’ by gently breaking a pair of hands and reconnecting them at a better place, to make the task a little easier.

We are still all connected! Now let’s take a break and discuss the meaning of this lesson. The purpose of this lesson is to show that because we are all connected, we must work together to solve our problems. In real life our hands are not chained together, but nevertheless we are all part of one human family. Our human family has to work together to solve the world’s problems, just as we did today in getting ourselves untangled.

### • *Blind trust walk*

Version One:

We are going to walk to a spot across an empty field, across the playground, or across the classroom to see the spot where you will need to go. Then we are going to put on blindfolds and you will try to go to that spot with your blindfold on. We will choose certain people to be ‘spotters’. It will be the job of the spotters to ensure the safety of the participants who are blindfolded.

Version Two:

I am going to show you a route that you will be traveling while blindfolded.

After you get started and after a couple of minutes of observation, stop the group and appoint a leader who will not be blindfolded. It will be the leader's job to get the group safely to the appointed spot, but he/she will only be able to give them three separate sets of directions. If the group starts going off course, the leader can only stop them three times. It will be the leader's job to ensure the safety of the participants.

# *Afterword*

To students: If you have done some, most, or all of the lessons in this book, then congratulations. You are well on your way to becoming a global citizen – a leader who can help build a more peaceful and just world. At the same time, the end of this book is not the end of your learning. It is just the beginning. Now that you are aware of the topics we worked on in this book, you will be able to find more resources that will help you to expand your abilities. As more and more people learn partnership skills – the inner and outer capacities we have discussed in this book – our partners in building world harmony will grow and grow in number. As you continue to learn what it means to be a global citizen, you can begin to teach others what you have already learned. We can all be teachers at the same time as we are learners. As we learn from each other and begin to practice our new skills of partnership, we can watch a new world of peace, justice, and well being for all begin to blossom all around us.

To teachers and parents: Your role in helping guide, support, and nurture the students along the road towards world harmony is an invaluable part of the process. As students move forward on this road, they will also discover the secret that sages and poets have tried to tell us through the ages: that our own fulfillment is greatest when we give to others. As students serve the greater good of the world, they are learning more than community service. They are learning about the meaning of life. As all of us work to help students grow into global citizens, we can celebrate with them that we have been given so many gifts in our own lives – the conscious awareness of our highest and best selves, the knowledge of the vast beauty of our planet, and the empathy we have towards those who are suffering. The path leading to world harmony and the path leading to personal happiness are one and the same.

To all of us: It's time to celebrate the things we have learned and the progress we have made. It feels good to do good things for others. And every time we try to learn the skills of partnership we are doing good things for others. Let's continue to support and encourage each other on this journey. We each have unique talents to offer. We each have important insights to share. We each have a truth to speak. There is a place for everyone in this 'beautiful garden of the Great Spirit'. There is enough work to keep us all busy! But let's always remember that our first work is to make sure we are in harmony with ourselves. Without that we can't bring harmony to the world. Our first and best gift to planet earth is to practice being individuals who walk the way of harmony.