

**Touchstones REACH**

***Touchstones REACH* (Religious Education Arts Clearing House)**

**Lifespan RE Resources for Kindness**

**Introduction**

This packet provides resources on the theme of Kindness. It is directly referenced in the children’s version of our second principle: “We believe that all people should be treated fairly and kindly.” As outlined below, the constellation of kindness topics includes empathy, caring, and helping. Author Roald Dahl said “I think probably kindness is my number one attribute in a human being. I’ll put it before any of the things like courage or bravery or generosity or anything else.”

In his explorations of emotions, Aristotle included kindness in his list of 14 emotions. Kindness is one of 24-character strengths researched and included by Chris Peterson and Martin Seligman in their 2004 book, *Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification*. They assert that kindness is part of the virtue that they call humanity. Kindness is an orientation of the self toward others that is supported by generosity, nurturance, care, compassion, and altruism (which they call altruistic love and which includes empathy.) Another list of the components of kindness, as cited by Kori D. Miller, is as follows: good listening skills, being social, generosity, being charitable, helping, being courteous, engaging in perspective-taking, and caring/nurturing (see <https://positivepsychology.com/character-strength-kindness/>).

Empathy supports kindness. While we tend to think of empathy generically, there are actually different types of empathy per the following from <https://www.skillsyouneed.com/ips/empathy-types.html>:

* “Cognitive empathy, also known as ‘perspective-taking,’ is not really what most of us would think of as empathy at all. Cognitive empathy is basically being able to put yourself into someone else’s place, and see their perspective.”
* “Emotional empathy is when you quite literally feel the other person’s emotions alongside them, as if you had ‘caught’ the emotions. Emotional empathy is also known as ‘personal distress’ or ‘emotional contagion’. This is closer to the usual understanding of the word ‘empathy,’ but more emotional.”
* “Compassionate empathy is what we usually understand by empathy: feeling someone’s pain, and taking action to help. …Compassionate empathy is consistent with what we usually understand by compassion. Like sympathy, compassion is about feeling concern for someone, but with an additional move towards action to mitigate the problem.”

The focus of compassionate empathy, with an emphasis on action, is aligned with and reinforcing of kindness. Shannon L. Alder writes, “Kindness is love in action, not feeling emotions or thoughts of empathy only. Kindness is doing!” Another relevant term in the kindness constellation is caring, which Peterson and Seligman view as being synonymous with kindness. Finally, related to these three: kindness, empathy, and caring is the simple act of helping.

**List of Resources**

**1.0: Pins**

**Resources for Children**

**2.0: Children’s Homilies, Sermons, Time for All Ages & Resources**

# 2.1: *The Spider and the Very Important Person* by Diana Davies (547 words)

**2.2:** *Churches are Helpers* by Martha Dallas (455 words)

**3.0: Wisdom Stories**

**3.1:** *Fruits* by Rev. [Christopher Buice](http://www.uua.org/directory/people/christopher-buice) (870 words)

# 3.2: *Amelia and Her Super Magical Powers* by Gail Sphar (939 words)

**3.3:** *Jesus Teaches the Beatitudes* (339 words)

# 3.4: *The Teachings of the Rain God* (525 words)

# 3.5: *Two Brothers* (629 words)

# 3.6: *The Dog at the Well* (730 words)

# 3.7: *The Prince And The Rhinoceros* (637 words)

# 3.8: *The Very Short Rule* by Sophia Lyon Fahs (1,203 words)

# 3.9: *Crossing the Finish Line Together* (214 words)

# 3.10: *The Noble Ibex: A Jataka Tale* by Sarah Conover (1,046 words)

# 3.11: *A Calabash of Poi* (698 words)

# 3.12: *Craig Keilburger and Free the Children* (595 words)

# 3.13: *Maya’s Questions* by Elisa Pearmain (1,037 words)

# 3.14: *For the Love of Stars* by Gail Forsyth-Vail (564 words)

# 3.15: *We Are All One* (1,078 words)

**3.16:** *Mussa and Nagib* (484 words)

**3.17:***The Picture on The Kitchen Wall* by Sophia Lyon Fahs (1,304 words)

*A story from China. Sophia Lyon Fahs, From Long Ago and Many Lands.*

**3.18:** *Russell* by Rev. Jose Ballester (425 words)

**3.19:** *The Gift of Giving* by Janeen Grohsmeyer (1,231 words)

# 3.20: *Fragments and Front Porches* by Rev. Elizabeth Buffington Nguyen (519 words)

# 3.21: *The Dervish in the Ditch* (263 words)

# 3.22: *The Good Samaritan* (576 words)

# 3.23: *The Answer is in Your Hands*, *****Adapted from an Indian folk tale***** (580 words)

# 3.24: *The Ugly Duckling* (1,496 words)

# 3.25: *Jelly Beans* by Isabel Champ Wolseley (503 words)

**4.0: Children’s Books about Kindness,**

***Kindness***

**4.1:** *Be Kind* by Pat Zietlow Miller, author and Jen Hill, illustrator (2018)

**4.2:** *Kindness Is Cooler, Mrs. Ruler* by Margery Cuyler, author and Sachiko Yoshikawa, illustrator (2007)

**4.3:** *What Does It Mean To Be Kind?* by Rana DiOrio, author and Stephane Jorisch, illustrator (2015)

**4.4:** *The Invisible Boy* by Trudy Ludwig, author and Patrice Barton, illustrator

**4.5:** *I Walk with Vanessa: A Story About a Simple Act of Kindness* by Kerascoët, (aka Marie Pommepuy and Sébastien Cosset) (2018)

**4.6:** *Each Kindness* by [Jacqueline Woodson](https://www.amazon.com/Jacqueline-Woodson/e/B000APM3QO/ref=dp_byline_cont_ebooks_1), author and [E. B. Lewis](https://www.amazon.com/s/ref=dp_byline_sr_ebooks_2?ie=UTF8&field-author=E.+B.+Lewis&text=E.+B.+Lewis&sort=relevancerank&search-alias=digital-text), illustrator (2012)

**4.7:** *Good People Everywhere* by Lynea Gillen, author and Kristina Swarner, illustrator (2012)

**4.8:** *A Hat for Mrs. Goldman: A Story About Knitting and Love* by Michelle Edwards, author and G. Brian Karas, illustrator (2016)

**4.9:** *Because Amelia Smiled* by David Ezra Stein (2012)

**4.10:** *The Kindness Quilt* by Nancy Elizabeth Wallace (2006)

**4.11:** *The Big Umbrella* by Amy June Bates, author & illustrator and Juniper Bates, author (2018)

**4.12:** *Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon* by Patty Lovell, author and David Catrow, illustrator (2001)

**4.13:** *The Jelly Donut Difference: Sharing Kindness with the World* by Maria Dismondy, author and Patrick S. Brooks, illustrator (2017)

**4.14:** *Adrian Simcox Does NOT Have a Horse* by Marcy Campbell, author and Corinna Luyken, illustrator (2018)

# 4.15: *Kind* by Alison Green, author and Beatrice Alemagna, illustrator (2019)

**4.16:** *Here Comes the Cat!* by Frank Asch, author & illustrator, and Vladimir Vasilʹevich Vagin, author & illustrator. (1989/2011)

**4.17:** *Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters: An African Tale* by John Steptoe (1987)

**4.18:** *The Sweetest Fig* by Chris van Allsburg (1993)

**4.19:** *Have You Filled a Bucket Today? A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids* by Carol McCloud, author and David Messing, illustrator (2015)

**4.20:** *A Sick Day for Amos McGee* by Philip C. Stead, author and Erin E. Stead, illustrator (2010)

**4.21:** *Ordinary Mary’s Extraordinary Deed* by Emily Pearson, author and Fumi Kosaka, illustrator (2002)

**4.22:** *Those Shoes* by Maribeth Boelts, author and Noah Z. Jones illustrator (2009)

**4.23:** *Horton Hears a Who* by Dr. Seuss (1954)

**4.24:** *How Kind!* by Mary Murphy (2004)

**4.25:** *The Last Stop on Market Street* by Matt de la Peña, author and Christian Robinson, illustrator (2015)

**4.26:** *The Monster Who Lost His Mean* by Tiffany Strelitz Haber, author and Kirstie Edmunds, illustrator (2012)

**4.27:** *Do Unto Otters: A Book About Manners* by Laurie Keller (2008)

**4.28:** *You Go First* by Mercer Mayer (2013)

**4.29:** *Share a Little Kindness: A Children’s Book about Doing Good in the World*by Colleen Brunetti (2020)

**4.30:** *Kindness is My Superpower: A children’s Book About Empathy, Kindness and Compassion* by Alicia Ortego (2020)

***Empathy***

**4.31:***You, Me and Empathy: Teaching children about empathy, feelings, kindness, compassion, tolerance and recognizing bullying behaviors* by Jayneen Sanders, author and Sofia Cardoso, illustrator) (2017)

**4.32:***Chocolate Milk, Por Favor: Celebrating Diversity with Empathy* by Maria Dismondy, author and Donna Farrell, illustrator (2015)

**4.33:** *One* by Kathryn Otoshi (2008)

**4.34:** *Ferdinand the Bull* by Munro Leaf, author and Robert Lawson, illustrator (1936)

**4.35:** *I Am Human: A Book of Empathy* by Susan Verde, author and Peter H. Reynolds, illustrator (2018)

**4.36:** *Stand in My Shoes: Kids Learning About Empathy* by Bob Sornson, author and Shelley Johannes, illustrator (2013)

**4.37:** *Empathy Is My Superpower: A Story about Showing You Care* by Bryan Smith, author and Lisa Griffin, illustrator (2018)

***Caring***

**4.38:** *How to Heal a Broken* Wing by Bob Graham (2008)

**4.39:** *Fly Free* by Roseanne Thong, author and Eujin Kim Neilan, illustrator (2010)

**4.40:** *We Really Do Care* by Tami Lewis Brown, author and Tania de Regil, illustrator (2019)

**4.41:** *How Do You Care for a Very Sick Bear?* by Vanessa Bayer, author and Rosie Butcher, illustrator

**4.42:** *Bear Feels Sick* by Karma Wilson, author and Jane Chapman illustrator (2007)

**5.0: Music, Videos, and Related Resources for Children**

# 5.1: Music

# 5.1.1: *Be Kind Song* by Joe Reilly with children (3:31)

# 5.1.2: *True Colors* Cyndi Lauper 2019 by PS22 Chorus (2:31)

# 5.1.3: *Don’t Give Up on Me* by Andy Grammer with PS22 Chorus

# 5.1.4: *The Lovingkindness Song* by Charity Kahn (3:28)

# 5.1.5: *Kindness* by The Juicebox (3:18)

# 5.1.6: *Kindness is a Muscle* by Universal Kids ft. William Alexander, Mimi Ryder, Gloria Manning, and Aidan Prince (2:54)

# 5.1.7: *Try a Little Kindness* with Tori Kelly from Sesame Street (1:54)

# 5.2: Videos

# 5.2.1: *A short story on kindness* posted by Jigyasa Vyas (3:05)

# 5.2.2: *Color Your World with Kindness* (2:13)

**6.0: Curriculum & Theme-Based Classroom Activities for Children**

# Tapestry of Faith

# *Kindness*

**6.1: Wonderful Welcome: A Program for Children Grades K-1**

**6.1.1:** *Session 4: The Gift of Kindness*

**6.2: World of Wonder: A Program on the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism for Grades K-1**

**6.2.1:** *Session 11: Kindness in Nature*

**6.3: Moral Tales: A Program on Making Choices for Grades 2-3**

**6.3.1:** *Session 8: Do unto Others*

**6.4: Love Connects Us: A Program on Living in Unitarian Universalist Covenant for Grades 4-5**

**6.4.1:** *Session 9: Kindness is the Key*

**6.5: Amazing Grace: A Program about Exploring Right and Wrong for Grade 6**

**6.5.1:** *Session 15: Saving the World*

# *Empathy*

**6.6: Moral Tales: A Program on Making Choices for Grades 2-3**

**6.6.1:** *Session 4: In Another’s Shoes*

**6.6.2:** *Session 6: Welcome One and All*

**6.7: Love Will Guide Us: A Program for Grades 2-3 that Applies the Wisdom of the Six Sources to the Big Questions**

**6.7.1:** *Session 8: Love Is Accepting*

**6.8: Faithful Journeys: A Program about Pilgrimages of Faith in Action for Grades 2-3**

**6.8.1:** *Session 3: Welcoming Superman*

**6.9: Heeding the Call: A Program on Justice-making for Junior High School Youth**

**6.9.1:** *Workshop 4: The Call for Empathy*

# *Caring*

**6.10: Love Surrounds Us: A Program on the UU Principles and Beloved Community for Grades K-1**

**6.19.1:** *Session 15: Caring for the Earth*

# Helping

**6.11: Chalice Children: A Program about Our Unitarian Universalist Community for Preschoolers**

**6.11.1:** *Session 10: Helping Others*

# *Other Resources*

**6.12: Kindness Curriculum for Pre-K & Kindergarten** by Richard Davidson

**6.13:** **Kindness: A Lesson Plan** by Rebecca Alber

**6.14: Kindness Curriculum** by Random Acts of Kindness Foundation

**6.14.1:** *K-5 Kindness Curriculum* by Random Acts of Kindness Foundation

**6.14.2:** *6-8 Kindness Curriculum* by Random Acts of Kindness Foundation

**6.15: 40 Kindness Activities & Empathy Worksheets** for Students and Adults by Courtney E. Ackerman, MSc.

**6.16: Teaching Tolerance: Understanding Empathy** (grades 3-5)

**6.17: Start Empathy: A Toolkit for Promoting Empathy in Schools** (85 pages)

**Resources for Youth & Adults**

**7.0: Reflections, Readings, Stories & Poetry**

**7.1:** *Kindness: A Public Statement of Personal Dignity* by Christopher Titmuss (244 words)

**7.2:** *How to Start a Kindness Revolution* by Jill Suttie (267 words)

**7.3:** *The Kind Life* by Adam Phillips and Barbara Taylor (220 words)

**7.4:** *Practice Kindness* by Jack Kerouac (88 words)

**7.5:** *The Kind Life* by Adam Phillips and Barbara Taylor (220 words)

**7.6:** *Consider Kindness* by Albert Einstein (127 words)

**7.7:** *This Perfect Moment, Called Now* by Jacqueline Woodson (272 words)

**7.8:** *Be Cool to the Pizza Dude* by Sarah Adams (248 words)

**7.9:** *Kindness Devalued* by Adam Phillips and Barbara Taylor (195 words)

**7.10:** *Try to Be Kinder* by George Saunders (396 words)

**7.11:** *Kindness: Longing and Dread* by Adam Phillips and Barbara Taylor (194 words)

**7.12:** *Up From The Ashes* by Charlie Chaplin (222 words)

### 7.13: *The Importance of Kindness* by Karyn Hall Ph.D. (268 words)

**7.14:** *Radiating Photons of Goodwill* by Marc Ian Barasch (221 words)

**7.15:** *In Search of Kindness* by Omid Safi (244 words)

**7.16:** *A New Vision of Kindness Starts with Paying Attention* by Sharon Salzberg (276 words)

**7.17:** *Kindness Unaware* by Piero Ferrucci (288 words)

**7.18:** *Fierce Kindness and Real Kinship* by Matthew Fox (240 words)

**7.19:** *Be Wisely Selfish* by Sharon Salzberg (255 words)

**7.20:** *Blessed by Kindness* by Henri Nouwen (156 words)

**7.21:** *The Power of Kindness* by Daphne Rose Kingma (213 words)

**7.22:** *Everyday Kindness* by Stephanie Dowrick (239 words)

**7.23: *Deliberate Acts of Kindness*** by Meladee and Hanoch McCarty (186 word)

**7.24:** *The Healing Power of Kindness* by Jean Maalouf (234 words)

**7.25:** *Kindness as Personal Dignity* by Christopher Titmuss (259 words)

## 7.26: *A Dog Walks into a Nursing Home* by Sue Halpern (255 words)

**7.27:** *A Medicine Called Kindness* by Robert J. Wicks (207 words)

**7.28:** *Redeemed by Kindness* by Jack Kornfield (144 words)

**7.29:** *A Ritual of Kindness* by Erik Kolbell (243 words)

**7.30:** *Kindness as a Way of Life* by Stephanie Dowrick (231 words)

**8.0: Curriculum & Theme-Based Classroom Activities for Youth & Adults**

***Youth***

# 8.1: Videos

# 8.1.1: *Different*, an Award-Winning Short Film by Tahneek Rahman (5:17)

# 8.1.2: *The Importance of Kindness* by George Saunders (2:12)

**8.1.3:** *Kindness: The World We Make* by Inspire Kindness (2:34)

**8.1.4:** *Kindness 101* from Random Acts of Kindness Foundation by Storytellers for Good (2:46)

**8.1.5:** *Kindness Week* by Ashur Benjamin (4:26)

**8.1.6:** *Make Kindness a Habit* by Sadie Zinn (6:16)

**8.1.7:** *The Power of Kindness* by Brooklyn Decker (12:59)

# 8.2: Curriculum

**8.2.1:** *High School Kindness Curriculum* by Random Acts of Kindness Foundation

# *Adults*

# *Caring*

**8.3: Spirit of Life: An Adult Program on Unitarian Universalist Spirituality**

**8.3.1:** *Workshop 3: The Stirrings of Compassion: Caring For One Another*

**9.0: Popular Music**

**9.1:** *Humble and Kind* by Tim McGraw (two versions)

# 9.2: *Be Kind Song* by Joe Reilly with children (3:31)

**9.3:** *Kind and Generous* by Natalie Merchant (3:58)

**9.4:**  *Lean on Me* by (1) Bill Withers, (2) Playing for Change & (3) Hall of Fame

**9.5:** *I Was Here* by Beyoncé (United Nations World Humanitarian Day Performance Video) (4:33)

**9.6:** *Here I Am* by Dolly Parton and Sia (3:02)

**9.7:** *Stand by You* by Rachel Platten (with lyrics) (3:39)

**9.8:** *A Random Act of Senseless Kindness* by South Sixty Five (Official Video) (4:30)

**9.9:** *Conviction of the Heart* by Kenny Loggins (4:38)

**9.10:** *Kill Em With Kindness* by Selena Gomez (3:01)

**9.11:** *Count on me* by Bruno Mars with lyrics (3:17)

**9.12:** *Bridge over Troubled Water* by Simon & Garfunkel (from The Concert in Central Park) (4:40)

**9.13:** *Anytime You Need a Friend* by Mariah Carey (3:46)

**9.14:** *Just Like You* by Keb’ Mo’ (3:18)

**9.15:** *You´ve Got A Friend in Me* by Lyle Lovett & His Band with Randy Newman (3:16)

**9.16:** *The Power of One Change the World* by Israel Houghton (5:49)

**9.17:** *Give a Little Kindness* by Orange Kids Music (3:11)

**9.18:** *The Power of One* by Teddy Pendergrass (5:17)

**9.19:** *We Build* by Nichole Nordeman (5:08)

**9.20:** *Try A Little Kindness*—two versions: (1) Glen Campbell and (2) Brad Paisley

**9.21:** *Treat People with Kindness* by Harry Styles (3:18)

**10.0: Videos, Short Films, Movie Clips, Audio Recordings & Photography**

**10.1:** *Simple Acts of Kindness* (Part 1) (3:05)

# 10.2: *Simple Acts of Kindness* (Part 2) (2:56)

**10.3:***Kindness* by Giant Ant for Random Acts of Kindness Foundation (1:12)

**10.4:** *Kindness* from Gojek by [Clarebear](https://vimeo.com/user2746466) (2:16)

**10.5:** *Preschool Kindness* by Storytellers for Good (2:36)

**10.6:** *World Kindness Day* by Edgar's Mission Farm Sanctuary (1:46)

**10.7:** *Kindness* by Sila (6:06)

**10.8:** *Inspire Kindness* by Inspire Kindness (0:56)

**10.9:***One Day, a Kindness Boomerang* by Life Vest Inside (5:44)

**10.10:** *Kindness Videos* from Life Vest Inside

**10.11:** *Kindness Videos* from the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation

***Ted Talks***

**10.12:** *Kindness* by Orly Wahba (10:16)

**10.13:** *Overcoming Objections to Self-Compassion* by Karen Neff (12:23)

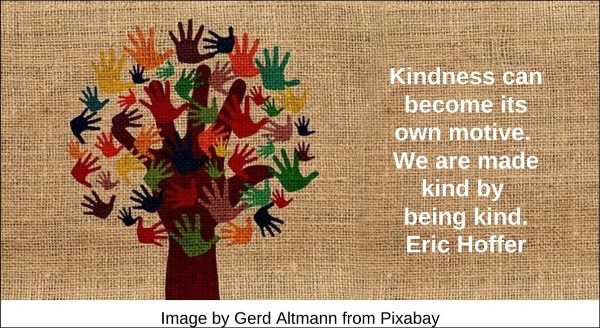
**10.14:** *How one act of kindness a day can change your life* by Mark Kelly (6:10)

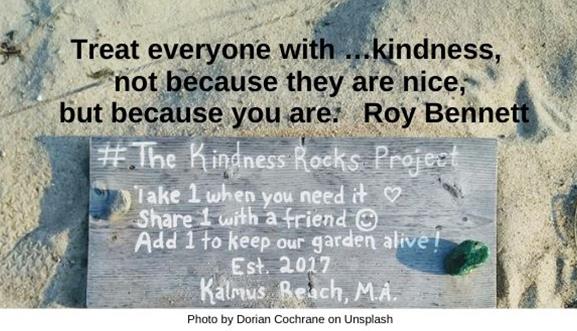
**10.15:** *The Power of Kindness* by Raegan Hill (11:25)

**10.16:** *Why Everyday Kindness and Simple Giving Matter* by Jenny Schell (10:35)

**Resources**

**1.0: Pins for Kindness**

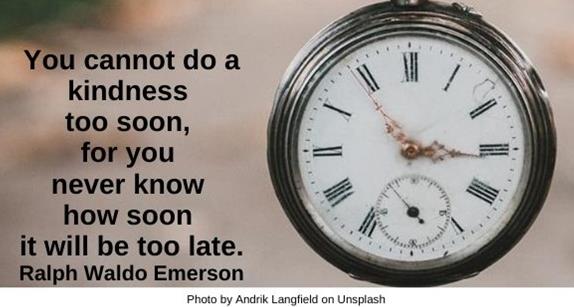


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**Resources for Children**

**2.0: Children’s Homilies, Sermons, Time for All Ages & Resources**

# 2.1: *The Spider and the Very Important Person* by Diana Davies (547 words)

Characters: Narrator, Very Important Person, Enemies (including Leader of the Enemies), Spider, and at least four Cave Rocks.

Materials needed: Grey, silver, or white yarn

Narrator: I’d like to share a story with you today—a story about a simple little spider who did an amazing thing. You’ll find versions of this story in Christian, Jewish and Muslim traditions, and in ancient Japanese folktales, as well. In the Christian version, the baby Jesus, Mary, and Joseph are hiding from king Herod; in the Jewish version, a young David is hiding from King Saul; in the Muslim version, the prophet Muhammad and his friend Abu Bakr are hiding from a crowd of people who want to harm them, outside the city of Mecca; and in the Japanese version, the great Shogun warrior Yoritomo is hiding from his enemies. In all these stories, though, the spider is – just a spider. I’m going to need some help with the scenery…

Narrator gathers at least four people from the congregation to play the part of the Cave Rocks. Narrator positions two people standing across from each other, upstage (their hands outstretched toward each other to form the roof of the cave), and two people kneeling or sitting across from each other, downstage (they will be the cave door). Optional: some people may also play the part of Enemies, who will simply follow their Leader.

Spider begins wrapping the Cave Rocks in yarn, leaving an opening at the front of the “cave.” The Very Important Person stands to the side, observing.

Narrator: Once upon a time, a Very Important Person was watching a spider weaving her web, and the very important person thought to herself:

VIP: Why in the world did God make spiders? What good are they? They aren’t beautiful or cute. They can’t do tricks. They don’t guard the house or make anything we humans can eat or wear. They don’t sing or make interesting sounds. And those webs they’re always building are just a nuisance!

Narrator: And the little spider overheard her, but she didn’t care. She just kept working on her web.

Soon, though, the Very Important Person was in trouble. Her enemies were out to get her! She had to run and hide! She hid in the deepest, darkest cave she could find, but still she was worried that her enemies would find her. (VIP runs around and then hides inside the “cave.” Once the VIP is crouched inside, Spider begins wrapping yarn across the front of the “cave,” closing off the entrance.)

Just then, she noticed that the little spider had started building a new web at the entrance to the cave. She was afraid to shoo her away, for fear that her enemies might hear, so she just stayed very quiet and watched the spider work. In no time, the cave entrance was completely covered by the web. And it was just in time, because right then, the Very Important Person’s enemies came running up to the cave, but they didn’t go in.

(Angry enemies run in, several of them following their Leader, who runs up to the entrance of the cave and peers in.)

Enemy Leader: Ick! No need to go into that cave. Look at that big spider web. It’s clear no one has been in there in a loooong time. (Frustrated, Enemies sulk offstage. VIP comes crawling out from under the web and looks back at the spider, who is still working away.)

Narrator: And the Very Important Person realized something very important that day:

Very Important Person: Wow – Spiders are the best!! So, what if they’re not beautiful or cute, and can’t do tricks or sing, and can’t guard the house or make things that humans can eat or wear… the spider deserves our kindness and respect, just like all animals!

Narrator: And the spider just shrugged her many little shoulders, and said…

Spider: Eh! Just doing what spiders do… but thanks for noticing.

Narrator: Have you ever looked closely at a spider’s web? Each individual thread is so thin and delicate you can barely see it (picks up one piece of yarn), but the web itself is incredibly strong (pulls at the web; the Cave Rocks should be completely bound up at this point). And this great, strong web is made by just one, little spider, just doing what spiders do best. What the Very Important Person in our story came to understand is that ever being is worthy of respect and kindness. Every being has a precious life to live. Even the littlest spider can save the life of a Very Important Person. Even the littlest spider is Very Important, too.

(Narrator cuts the yarn, releasing the Cave Rocks.)

Source: <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/time-all-ages/spider-and-very-important-person>

**2.2:** *Churches are Helpers* by Martha Dallas (455 words)

Have you ever wondered how it came to be that churches are known as places where you can get a helping hand when you need one?

It seems to me that a key source of the charitable nature of churches goes all the way back to the time of Jesus. You see, in the society in which Jesus lived—in his time and place—things were very unfair and unjust. At that time, there were a few people at the top who were rich and powerful. And there were a bunch of people at the bottom, and these were people who were: thirsty, hungry, and poor. They were homeless and sick and disabled. And in that society, the people at the bottom were considered to be “untouchable.” It was thought that people who needed these kinds of help were so much at the bottom that if you even touched one of them, you risked becoming untouchable, yourself. There were even rules and codes to follow to make sure that the classes of society remained safely separated from each other.

And you know what Jesus thought about this? He absolutely believed it was wrong, and he rejected this unfair society with people on the bottom who were considered untouchable. He preached against it, and what’s more: he acted against it. He deliberately hung out with the untouchable people. And what’s more, he touched them. In fact, there are stories of Jesus’ healing touch—touching all these people at the bottom whom society told him not to touch.  Jesus showed these people mercy, compassion, and love, and the stories of his healing touch have come down through the centuries to us.

Well, the Gospels that speak about Jesus, and the early church that emerged—took this part of Jesus’ message to heart. The church believed that if someone is thirsty, you should give them something to drink. If you find someone who’s hungry, you offer them food. If you see someone who is poor, give them some money so they can buy what they need. For people who are homeless, offer them shelter. With those who are sick, help them get medicine and treatment for their illness. And for people with disabilities, offer them a helping hand so they can get around in the world. Following Jesus’ example, this is what the church has worked to do.

Because when you see someone who has a need for help, and then you decide to offer them the kind of help that they need, well, that’s God, right there. When you offer a helping hand to someone who needs it, you allow a little bit of Heaven to shine, right here on earth. And that’s what we’re doing today.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/story/churches-are-helpers>

**3.0: Wisdom Stories**

**3.1:** *Fruits* by Rev. [Christopher Buice](http://www.uua.org/directory/people/christopher-buice) (870 words)

Once upon a time, a mother and her daughter were carrying bags of food to a neighboring village where people were hungry and had no food of their own. The two had to travel a great distance, which made them very tired, so they stopped to rest. As they sat down, they heard a voice call out to them.

“Hello,” said the voice.

The two travelers looked around, but saw no one.

“Hello!” said the voice again. “Look over here by the rock.”

The mother and her daughter looked over by the rock and there they saw a thorn bush. The two looked at the thorn bush for a moment and then they looked at each other.

“I believe that thorn bush is talking to us,” said the little girl.

“I am not a thorn bush!” said the voice. “I am a beautiful apple tree. If you like, you may sit awhile and admire my beauty.”

“If you don’t mind my saying so,” said the little girl. “You do not look anything like an apple tree and you do look exactly like a thorn bush.”

“Silly girl!” said the voice. “I am the most beautiful apple tree in all the land. Please feel free to sit and enjoy my beauty.”

“Are you quite sure you are an apple tree?” asked the mother.

“Yes,” said the voice from the thorn bush. “I am quite sure.”

“Then perhaps you can help us,” said the mother. “You see, we are carrying food to a neighboring village where people are hungry. Since you are an apple tree, you could give us some apples to take to the people who have nothing to eat.”

“No,” said the voice from the thorn bush.

“No?” asked the mother. “Why not? The people are very hungry. They don’t have any food at all. They would love to have some of your apples.”

“No,” repeated the voice from the thorn bush. “You see, I don’t have any apples right now.”

“Oh,” said the mother. “That’s too bad.” After a moment she said, “Well, we must be going.” And the mother and daughter stood up and continued on the road to the village.

“Come back!” cried the thorn bush. “Come back and admire my beauty!” But the mother and the daughter did not hear the thorn bush.

After the two had traveled many miles, they became very tired once again and decided it was time to stop and rest. They had not been sitting long when they heard another voice.

“Hello,” said the voice.

The mother and her daughter looked around awhile before they noticed a very small man sitting next to a rock. The man was dressed in very stylish and expensive clothes.

“Don’t worry,” he said. “I’m not a bad man. I won’t hurt you. In fact, I’m a very good man.”

“You’re a good man?” asked the mother uncertainly.

“Oh, yes!” he said. “I’m a very, very good man. I read the holy book everyday for hours and hours. I pray each morning when I rise and pray again in the evening when I go to bed.”

“Are you quite sure you’re a good man?” asked the mother.

“Oh, yes!” he replied. “I’m quite sure.”

“Well, then, perhaps you will help us,” said the mother. “My daughter and I are carrying food to a neighboring village where the people are hungry. We’re very tired from walking for so long. Would you please help us carry these bags to the village so that the people there will have something to eat?”

“No,” said the little man. “I’m a good man, but if I were to help you carry those bags, I might mess up my nice new clothes. Then I might not look as good. How would anyone know I’m a good man if I don’t look fine? Sorry, but I can’t help you.”

“Oh,” the mother said. “That’s too bad.” After a moment she said, “Well, we must be on our way!” And the two picked up their bags of food and continued down the road.

“No! Come back!” yelled the little man. “Stay here with me, for I am very lonely!”

But the mother and her daughter didn’t hear the little man, and they continued walking on the road to the village.

For a while the two walked in silence. Finally, the daughter said to her mother, “I’m confused. Today we have seen a strange plant that claimed to be an apple tree. And we also saw a strange little man who claimed to be a good man. But how can we be sure? I mean, how can we tell a real apple tree from a fake one? Or a real good person from a fake one?”

“Well,” said the mother. “It isn’t always easy to tell the difference between something that is real and something that is fake. But it seems to me that if you want to call yourself an apple tree, then you should give the world some apples! And if you want to call yourself a good person, then you should give this world some loving kindness and a helping hand. After all, it is by our fruits that we are known.”

Source: <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/story/fruits>

# 3.2: *Amelia and Her Super Magical Powers* by Gail Sphar (939 words)

This is the story of a young girl named Amelia. Amelia was fascinated by tales of people with super powers, like Wonder Woman, or magic like Harry Potter. She yearned to have powers like that so she could help people. Like the boy she often saw sitting all alone at lunch, looking very sad. “If I had magic powers, I could make him smile,” she said to herself. Or like the little kids who were being picked on in the school yard by an older girl. “Oooo... super powers would straighten her out fast!” she said. And whenever she walked past the old, run-down park near her house, she imagined how magic powers could fix it up so kids had a place to play.

One night, just as Amelia was about to fall asleep, a fairy godmother came into her room. “Hello Amelia,” she said. “I’m here to help you. What have you been wishing for?” “Oh” said Amelia. “Please give me some super magic powers so I can make a difference!” “Well,” said the fairy godmother, “I’m happy to give you some magic, Amelia, but my...” “Oh thank you, thank you,” cried Amelia—and with that she fell right to sleep!

The next morning when Amelia woke up, she remembered what had happened the night before. She jumped out of bed, eager to get going and test out her new super powers. As she walked to school, she realized she’d forgotten to ask what she needed to do to release those powers--you know, say some secret words, give a high sign or something else--but she decided she’d figure it all out as she went along.

That day at lunch she saw that same sad boy sitting by himself at lunch again. “Let’s try my magic,” she said, as she wiggled her fingers at him from a distance. Nothing. “Maybe I need to be closer,” she thought. So, she walked closer to him and he looked up at her. She couldn’t help but give him a friendly smile, and when she did, his face beamed with his own huge smile. “HA!” thought Amelia. “I really do have magic.” “Can I join you for lunch?” she asked. “Sure!” he said, smiling even bigger. The two of them laughed and talked all during lunch time. She learned his name was Bobby, he’d lost his father earlier in the year, and he and his mother had moved here after that. He didn’t know anyone and was too shy to go up to kids and talk. Well, Amelia and Bobby became good friends and Bobby smiled a lot from then on.

One day soon after that, Amelia and Bobby were in the playground when they saw Karen bullying two younger kids by the swings. She’d read what to do about bullies, but she had never tried any of it before because she wasn’t really sure she could do it. But now with her super powers she was ready. “Come on, Bobby. Let’s go help those kids.” So, they walked up to where Karen stood over the two children and Amelia wiggled her fingers at her and said loudly, “Karen, stop it right now! Come on, Dodie and Lou. Come with Bobby and me. You’re safe with us.” After they four of them had left, Amelia told the two, “If she bothers you again, just turn around and walk away. Act like you don’t hear her. Don’t show any emotion. And if she keeps on trying to hurt you, let Mr. Crenshaw in the office know. I’ll go with you if you need me to.” They did just as Amelia said and Karen never bothered those kids again.

Well, by now Amelia was feeling pretty good about her super magic powers. “How can I use them to fix up our old park?” she wondered. Wiggling her fingers didn’t work. She still didn’t know any magic words. “Maybe if I start working to clean it, something will occur to me.” And so, she did.

She took trash bags to the park and started picking up trash that had been left there. Before long a couple friends came by and asked what she was doing. “I’m fixing our park so we can play in it again.” That sounded like a great idea to her friends and they began to help. Soon other kids joined them. They picked up trash, pulled weeds, and cleared out dead brush. Little by little the park began to look better.

When some of the parents saw the improvement, they decided to help. Some mowed the grass, others built picnic tables, and still others convinced the city to buy some new equipment.

It was hard work and it took many days, but they got their new park. When it was all done, the whole neighborhood had a picnic in their new park to celebrate it.

After the picnic, Amelia fell exhausted into bed. She was just about asleep when the fairy godmother came back. “Oh, I’m so happy to see you,” said Amelia. “I want to thank you for giving me all those super magic powers!” “But I tried to tell you my wand was broken. I didn’t give you any,” said the fairy godmother.

“You must have given me powers,” protested Amelia. “How else could I have made Bobby happy, stopped a bully and given our neighborhood a wonderful park?!”

The fairy godmother just smiled. “My dear, you did that because you possess three powers that you developed yourself: kindness, bravery, and determination. With those three things, you are making a difference.”

And with that, Amelia fell fast asleep.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/time-all-ages/amelia-and-her-super-magical-powers>

**3.3:** *Jesus Teaches the Beatitudes* (339 words)

An adaptation of Matthew 5:1-11, Christian scripture.

Jesus was a teacher. He lived thousands of years ago; in the part of the world we now call the Middle East. Jesus taught people how to use words and actions in a loving manner.

There are many different ideas about God. Jesus’ idea about God was that God is a kind father who wanted us to treat each other kindly and with love.

People loved to listen to Jesus. One day there were so many people waiting to be taught by Jesus, he had to climb way up a mountain. Sitting on the mountain, he could see far away. The people just kept coming. There were families with children and teenagers and elders. There were fishermen and farmers and shepherds. Some shepherds had their sheep and goats, stopping on their way home from grazing.

Jesus called his friends to come and sit by him on the mountain. Then all of a sudden it got quiet. People were ready to listen to Jesus. They watched him and listened to his words. Jesus taught all the people of all ages a lesson called the Beatitudes.

The Beatitudes teach us how to treat other people. The Beatitudes teach us how to act. Jesus knew our relationships with each other are the most important thing about life. Let’s listen now to the words from Jesus, the teacher. Listen for what kinds of people he asks us to pay attention to:

* Blessed are the poor in spirit, for they will one day get to heaven
* Blessed are those who are sad, for they will be comforted
* Blessed are those who are gentle, for they will have all the earth
* Blessed are those who seek justice, for they will make a difference
* Blessed are those who forgive, for they will be forgiven
* Blessed are those who treat others with kindness, for they will see God
* Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called the children of God
* Blessed are those who try to do the right thing, for they will go to heaven.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/lovesurrounds/session2/jesus-teaches>

# 3.4: *The Teachings of the Rain God* (525 words)

Adapted from a version on the 2003 *Internat*i*onal Year of FreshWater website*.

One day a long time ago, the elephant acted like a bully. He challenged the Rain God.

“You covered the Earth in green,” the elephant said, “and I’ll bet you feel pretty good about yourself. But guess what! If I tear up the grass and the trees and the bushes, the green will all be gone. What then?”

“What then?” answered the Rain God. “I’ll stop sending rain. No more green will grow, and you won’t have anything to drink or eat. That’s what!”

But a few words weren’t going to stop the elephant. He ripped up all the trees, the bushes, and the grass with his trunk. All the green disappeared from Earth.

That made the Rain God mad. He stopped the rain. Deserts began appearing everywhere.

Soon the elephant was dying of hunger and thirst. He tried digging where the rivers used to be, but he didn’t find a drop of water. So, the elephant changed his tune. He praised the Rain God and apologized.

“I’m sorry,” the elephant said. “I was too proud, and I misbehaved. But now I’ve learned my lesson. I repent, so please make it rain!”

But the Rain God said nothing. Every day the world dried up more.

The elephant knew the rooster was loud, so he asked the rooster to praise the Rain God.

After looking all over the place, the rooster found the Rain God hidden behind a cloud. The rooster praised the Rain God with such fine words that the Rain God relented. A little rain fell and made a small pool very close to the elephant’s home.

The same day, the elephant decided to go into the woods and look for food. He ordered the tortoise to protect the pool.

“Don’t let anybody drink here,” the elephant said. “Tell them the water is mine and nobody else’s.”

The tortoise tried to obey, and turned some small animals away. But then the lion came, and the lion wasn’t impressed. He growled at the tortoise and drank all he wanted.

When the elephant returned, he grew very angry at the tortoise.

“Sir,” said the tortoise, “what could I do? The lion was big and had sharp claws. And all the other animals were mad at me, so I got out of the way.”

“I’ll show you mad,” the elephant said. He raised one foot and stamped on the tortoise to crush her.

The tortoise was very strong, and the elephant did not kill her. But he flattened her out, and the tortoise has remained flat ever since.

Suddenly the Rain God spoke. His loud voice filled the sky, and he warned the animals not to follow the elephant’s example.

“If you want more rain, don’t be like the elephant,” the Rain God said. “Don’t challenge powerful gods or anything more powerful than you. Don’t wreck the things you need. Don’t make weaker animals protect your property, and don’t punish animals that are trying to help you. Most of all, don’t be too proud and don’t try to have everything for yourself. If you are lucky and have a lot, share it with others who need it.”

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/multigenerational/gather/workshop2/teachings-rain-god>

# 3.5: *Two Brothers* (629 words)

The story, “Two Brothers,” in this session is based on a story widely thought to come from the Jewish Talmud that may have older roots in Muslim and Hindu culture. Contemporary versions of the story include “Brotherly Love,” in Angels, Prophets, Rabbis and Kings, fromThe Stories of the Jewish People, by Jose Patterson.

Read or tell the story.

Once upon a time in the land of Israel, there lived an old farmer. When he died the farmer left his land to his two sons. They divided the land evenly and built their own houses on opposite sides. The younger brother soon married and had a family. The older brother did not marry but lived alone. Both brothers remained the best of friends and often helped each other on their farms.

One year at harvest time, both brothers undertook the process of harvesting their crop of (barley). They bundled the stalks of grain into sheaves, counted them, and took them into their barns to store. (Later, they would take some of it to the market to sell.) After a long day of work, the brothers usually slept well. But on this night, the elder brother lay awake.

“It is not right,” he thought, “that I should reap as much grain as my brother. He has a family to feed and I have only myself. He needs more barley to sell so that he can buy all that he needs for his family.” Making up his mind to set things right, he dressed and slipped out to his barn. There he took as many sheaves as he could carry across the field to his brother’s barn. Feeling better, he returned to his bed and slept well.

The younger brother also had slept badly that night. He awoke and lay worrying. He too thought of his brother. “It is not right,” he thought, “that I should reap as much grain as my brother. I have a family to help me, and to care for me in old age, while he works alone.” So saying, he too rose, dressed, and went to his barn, not long after his brother had left. There he took as many sheaves as he could carry and walked across the fields to his brother’s barn. Feeling better, he returned to his bed.

The next day the two brothers each went to their barns. They looked and looked again at their grain. There was as much there as there had been the day before. The two brothers worked again in their fields all day and did not speak of what had happened.

The next night they did the same thing. First, the older brother, taking as many sheaves of grain as he could carry to his brother’s barn, and then the younger brother, narrowly missing him, did the same. Again, the next day both brothers stood in awe and counted their grain, which was as much as before they had given it away. Again, both kept their thoughts to themselves.

Then on the third night, both brothers rose late. The moon had gone down and they went to their barns. Again, they gathered as much grain as they could carry and headed out across the field to their brother’s barns.

It was so dark, that they almost collided in the middle of the fields. They both stopped and peered at one another. What they saw made them smile, and then laugh. They dropped their bundles, and hugged one another for a long, long time. They promised one another that there would always be help for each other, no matter what. Then they each knelt down right there in the field, and thanked God for giving them such a thoughtful and generous brother.

It is said that King Solomon, who was the ruler of that place, could understand the speech of the animals. They told him of the two brothers and their tale of generosity. The king was much moved and decided to build a great temple on that spot where the two brothers had met. The temple became the center of Jerusalem. It still stands there today.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/toolbox/session13/two-brothers>

# 3.6: *The Dog at the Well* (730 words)

Permission to use “The Dog at the Well” in this curriculum granted by Marilyn McFarlane, author of Sacred Myths: Stories of World Religions (Sibyl Publications, 1996).

One day Muhammad told his friends and followers a story about a thirsty man, a well, and a dog. This was the story:

A man left his home to take a long journey. It was a hot day, and he had not walked far before his head began to ache and his mouth felt dry. The sun blazed overhead, the fields he passed were brown and withered, and no water could be seen.

“I’m so thirsty. I must find water,” he muttered. “Surely I will soon come to a well.”

Just as he had the thought, he saw a well by the side of the road. Thankfully, he hurried to it, almost tasting the sweetness of the cool water that lay in its depths. But when he peered into the well, he saw no water. The well was dry. Disheartened, and even more thirsty now, he continued along the scorching road, hoping to find another well. Sure enough, before long he saw one. “At last, water!” he whispered, looking into the well. But it too was dry.

There wasn’t a drop of moisture in the land. With a parched throat and feeling weak, the man walked on. “I can’t go much further without water,” he thought. And then he saw a well. Almost afraid to hope, he looked over the edge. Far below, in the darkness, water sparkled.

“Allah be praised!” the man said. He looked around for a rope and bucket to lower into the well so he could bring up the life-giving water. There was no rope, no bucket. How could he reach the water he needed so badly?

Only one way remained. If the water would not come up to him, he would have to go down to it. He scrambled over the top and carefully, bracing himself against the sides with his arms and feet, descended into the well. Deeper and deeper he went, until at last he touched the cool, wet water. Cupping his hands, he scooped the water and drank and drank. He murmured, “Praise Allah for the liquid of life.”

Feeling much better, the man began the long, difficult climb up out of the well. At last he reached the top and stood again on the road under the hot sun. He was starting to walk away when he heard a sound—a soft, sad whine. He looked down and saw a dog, sniffing at the ground. The dog looked miserable. His eyes were glazed, and he was panting with thirst. He came up to the man and licked the edge of his robe, which was wet from the trip down the well.

“This poor animal is as thirsty as I was,” the man thought. “He’ll die in this heat if he doesn’t get water.”

The dog looked up at the man and wagged his tail, grateful for the bit of moisture.

The man made his decision. “Wait here,” he said. “I will bring you some water.”

Into the well he went. Again, he descended down, down, all the way to the bottom where the cool liquid lay. When he got there, the man braced himself against the walls of the well and took off his soft leather boots. He dipped one boot and then the other into the water and filled them. He clamped the tops of the boots between his teeth and began to climb up again.

This time the trip to the top was much harder. The heavy, water-filled boots pulled on his mouth, and his teeth hurt. Once the slick, wet leather slipped, and he almost dropped the boots, but he tightened his grip and held on. Slowly he kept climbing until he reached the top.

When he was on the ground again, he knelt and opened the boots so the dog could drink. The dog drank all the water in both boots, his tail wagging happily.

The man smiled. “Now neither of us will die of thirst,” he said. He pulled on his damp boots, patted the dog again, and continued on his way.

Allah was pleased by this kind act. He was so pleased that all the man’s past sins were forgiven, and years later, when the kind man died, his soul was taken to heaven.

The blessed prophet Muhammad concluded his story by saying, “You too will be rewarded for being good to all living creatures.”

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/multigenerational/gather/workshop7/149663.shtml>

# 3.7: *The Prince And The Rhinoceros* (637 words)

*An Indian tale of speaking kindly, from Teaching Tolerance, Rhinos & Raspberries kit. Permission pending.*

Read or tell the story.

Once upon a time in India, a rare rhinoceros was born, with skin so beautiful it almost glowed. The rhinoceros was given to a noble prince who was very lonely and whose kingdom was poor. The prince was so delighted with the unusual gift that he laughed joyfully. So he named the little calf Great Joy.

The prince treated the rhino with great kindness. He fed her rice, fruit and choice tender plants, and he always spoke in a kind and gentle voice. Great Joy grew and was happy. The prince thought Great Joy was quite beautiful.

At sunrise she would be golden. At sunset, she would be a canvas of pink and red and orange, and later the dark blue of evening. Sometimes after a rain, she would reflect everything around her. She seemed almost enchanted.

“You are wonderful and special to me,” the prince whispered softly.

In time, Great Joy grew into an enormous rhino. She was very strong. One day she thought about her good life with the prince and what she could give him in return. “I am only a rhino, but I can use my strength to help him earn gold for his kingdom.” She suggested to the prince that she compete in a contest of strength against the town’s strongest bulls.

A rich merchant with many fine oxen agreed to the wager: Great Joy would pull a hundred loaded wagons usually towed by his team of eight oxen. The bet was one thousand gold pieces.

The next day, the prince inspected the wagons and harnessed Great Joy to the front. Then he climbed onto the driver’s seat. Great Joy waited for a few kind words of encouragement before starting. Instead, the prince, thinking only of the gold, waved a whip in the air and shouted, “Pull, you big wretch. Move, you worthless rhino.”

Great Joy was shocked at her beloved prince’s words. Wretch? Worthless? “I’m no wretch,” she thought. “I’m not worthless, either.” She stiffened her huge legs and refused to move an inch.

Humiliated, the prince ran home and hid in his royal bed. “I’m ruined,” he cried.

Great Joy was filled with pain and sorrow. She needed to understand what she had done to deserve such cruel insults. After many days and nights without food or sleep, she went to the prince’s palace, which had grown shabby due to his impoverished state. “Oh, Prince, in all our years together, have I ever done anything to hurt you?”

“No, never.”

“Then why did you say those terrible things to me? Was the thought of gold worth more than what I can offer?”

The prince hung his head. Tears ran down his face. “The gold distracted me. I forgot the importance of our friendship. I am so ashamed.”

“Then we will try again,” Great Joy said. “Go back to the merchant and double your bet.”

Again, the carts were loaded, and Great Joy was harnessed to the front. The prince climbed up and sang out, “All right, you marvelous marvel, you splendid rhino, my Great Joy. It’s up to you!”

The powerful rhino snorted, pawed the ground and charged forward. Her sides heaved as she pulled, until the last cart crossed the finish line. The townspeople cheered wildly as they covered her with garlands of flowers and strands of tinkling bells.

The prince collected his two thousand pieces of gold, then humbly thanked Great Joy for a job well done. That very evening, the prince and the rhino walked along the river in the red glow of sunset.

“I didn’t mean to say such hurtful words to you,” the prince whispered. “Please forgive me.”

“I already have,” said Great Joy.

And that’s how they lived forever after — in friendship and great joy. Never again did an unkind word pass between them.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session3/prince%20-rhinoceros>

# 3.8: *The Very Short Rule* by Sophia Lyon Fahs (1,203 words)

From From Long Ago and Many Lands by Sophia Lyon Fahs, second edition (Boston: Skinner House, 1995).

Read or tell the story.

When Jesus came into town, someone who knew him was sure to pass the word around. A plan would be worked out for him to be at a certain place when evening came and the day’s work was done. Then men and women who had to work during the day could gather and listen to what Jesus had to say.

Sometimes they would find him in the house of a friend. And the number of people who would come might fill the whole house and the street outside, too. Other times they would follow Jesus to the lake. He and some of his fishermen friends would step into a boat. They would anchor it near the shore. The people would sit on the rocks and grass nearby, and Jesus would stand up in the boat and talk to everybody.

Sometimes there were men and women who listened to Jesus who were very much discouraged. Some were so poor they did not get enough to eat. Some had sick children to take care of at home. Some were old and crippled and always in pain. Some felt that nobody cared for them. They were always given the meanest jobs to do and they were always being scolded because they did not do them well enough.

There were others who felt it was scarcely worth while trying to be good at all. No one was ever pleased with what they did no matter how hard they tried.

These people went regularly once a week to the synagogue on the Sabbath. They heard the Bible read to them, but they could not remember all that they heard, so they did not do all that they were told they ought to do. They knew they were not praying as often as they were told to pray, but it was so hard to remember the words to say. They knew they were not giving as much as they were told to give to the synagogue, but they had so little to live on, how could they give more? They admitted that they did some work on the Sabbath while the teachers said they should never do any work at all on that day. But the hours in the week were not long enough to get everything done that had to be done to keep the children from starving.

Often, they would go home after listening to Jesus, and they would remember just one little story or one short sentence that Jesus had said. But that little bit they remembered a long, long time, because somehow, they liked to remember it.

Such people as these were naturally discouraged. They felt all the time that their teachers were not pleased with them. If their teachers were not pleased, then probably God was not pleased either. This thought made them feel even more discouraged.

One day as Jesus was sitting in a boat and the people were squatting on the rocks along the shore, one of these discouraged men asked a question. ‘I am a shepherd,’ he said. ‘I have to spend long hours in the open fields. When eating time comes, I cannot always find a brook where I can wash my hands before I eat. It is the rule, is it not, that a man should always wash his hands before eating? Do you think, Jesus, that I am a bad man because I have to eat my lunch without washing my hands?’

‘Certainly not,’ said Jesus with a smile. ‘You are not a bad man simply because you eat without washing your hands when you are in the fields and cannot do so. Unwashed hands cannot make a person bad anyway. Goodness and badness are inside of you, not in your skin.’

Then a woman spoke up and asked another question. ‘There are many of us here, Jesus, who have never learned to read. We have not gone to school. We have not been able to study the laws in the Bible. We can’t remember all the laws the preachers in the synagogue tell us about. There seem to be hundreds of laws the preachers say we must follow if we want to please God. But we simply cannot remember them all. Do you think, Jesus, that we are bad because we can’t remember all the laws? Our other teachers seem to think we are no good just because we don’t know much.’

Then Jesus would encourage these people. He would say: ‘For many years, our teachers have been adding more and more laws to the ones that are in the Bible. They have meant to help us but what they have really done is to make living a good life so hard that none of us can be counted good.

‘I say to you, friends, that being good is not just obeying a large number of rules. You could obey every single one of the rules the teachers have made, and still not be really good. Whether one is good or not depends on how one feels inside in one’s heart. Do you feel hateful or loving toward others? Do you feel angry or patient with the person who hurts you? Those are the things that count.’

‘That kind of talk sounds good, Jesus,’ said a man who had been busy all day long hauling stones for building a road. ‘But I wish you would tell us in just one sentence what is most important so that we can’t forget.’

Jesus smiled at this and said: ‘Your wish reminds me of what someone once said to Hillel, that great teacher of ours of whom you all have heard. The story is told of how a student one day said to Hillel: ‘Tell me, Rabbi, what all the laws put together mean and tell me so simply that I can hear it all while I stand on one foot.’’ At this everyone laughed.

‘Hillel gave the student a very good answer and a very short one,’ said Jesus. ‘Hillel said: ‘Never do to anyone else the kind of thing that is hateful to you. This is all the laws put together. All the rest is just an explanation of that one short rule.’ Then Jesus added his own thought.

‘I would say this rule in just a little different way. I would say it this way. Do those things to others that you ‘Would like to have others do to you.’

‘That’s a good rule,’ said the workman who had asked the question. ‘I could have stood on one foot easily while you said that.’

‘Try the rule,’ said Jesus. ‘It doesn’t take long to say it, but it may take a long time to learn to follow it.’

When his talk was over, the people got up from the ground and walked along the shore to their homes. Some of them seemed very much relieved. Jesus had given them something they could understand and something they could not forget.

‘Do those things to others that you would like to have others do to you.’ It was a very short rule, but one that is still remembered after nearly two thousand years. We call it our Golden Rule.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session4/118229.shtml>

# 3.9: *Crossing the Finish Line Together* (214 words)

Based on a true story which happened at the 1976 Special Olympics in Seattle, Washington.

Years ago, at the Seattle Special Olympics, nine contestants lined up at the starting line for the 100-yard dash. At the sound of the starting gun, they all started off in their own way, making their best effort to run down the track toward the finish line. That is, except for the one young boy who stumbled soon after his start, tumbled to the ground and began to cry. Two of the other racers, hearing the cries of the boy who fell, slowed down and looked back at him. Then without hesitation, they turned around and began running in the other direction—toward the injured boy.

While the other contestants struggled to make it to the finish line, the two who had turned around to run in the other direction reached for the boy and helped him to his feet. All three of them then linked arms and together they walked to the finish line. By the time the trio reached the end, everyone in the stands was standing and cheering, some with tears rushing down their faces. Even though by turning back and helping the boy who fell, they lost their own chance to win the race, they all had smiles on their faces because they knew they had done the right thing.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveconnects/session4/161765.shtml>

# 3.10: *The Noble Ibex: A Jataka Tale* by Sarah Conover (1,046 words)

From the book Kindness: A Treasury of Buddhist Wisdom for Children and Parents.

Once upon a time, the Buddha was born as a magnificent ibex. The forest in which he lived was far from civilization and therefore tranquil, inhabited by many creatures both small and large. Along the banks of clear, babbling brooks were found rare flowers, which blossomed nowhere else on earth. Trees towered above the lush undergrowth and kept the forest cool and mild.

The noble ibex that lived in this forest, the Former Buddha, was as beautiful as he was sleek and swift. He had the body of an animal but the intelligence and empathy of a human being. So deep was his kindness for all living creatures that he often trod delicately so as not to crush anything. He ate nothing but the tips of grasses already gone to seed.

As this region was renowned for its great beauty, hunting parties would at times make long journeys to reach it. On one such occasion, a king and his friends camped on the edge of the forest, hoping to bag large amounts of game before the end of their stay. One morning, the king set out on horseback with his small group following him. Not long after, the king caught a glimpse of the splendid ibex and wanted to hunt him down. Snapping his reins across his horse’s neck, the king dashed away in chase, leaving the group far behind.

When the ibex heard the quick pounding of hooves, he turned and saw the king swiftly bearing down upon him. The king’s bow was drawn taut and an arrow ready in the sites. Although the ibex could have fought the king’s attack, he chose to avoid violence, even in self-defense. So, the ibex spun around and took off with great speed towards the dense center of the forest, confident the king could not catch him. Through the thick forest he sprang, still pursued by the king, but the distance between them was increasing. The ibex came to a familiar, small, deep chasm and leapt over it effortlessly. But the king’s horse, coming to that same rocky cliff, abruptly pressed his weight backwards and refused to jump. The king had been watching the ibex, not the forest floor. So when the horse stopped with a jolt, the surprised king fell forward, headlong, into the chasm.

After a time, the ibex heard no hoof beats in pursuit. He slowed and twisted his head around to examine the situation behind him. There in the distance he spotted the rider-less horse at the chasm’s edge and correctly guessed what had happened to the king. A sudden welling of kindness overcame him. He anticipated that the king must be in severe pain, surely having broken a number of bones in the fall. He knew also that the king would never survive long in this forest because there were many tigers and other beasts.

The ibex walked up to the chasm edge and saw the king far below, moaning and writhing in pain. He no longer looked upon the king as his enemy, but felt his suffering keenly. The Former Buddha gently inquired, “I hope your majesty has no serious wounds? Might the pain of your injuries be diminishing by now?”

The king looked up at the ibex in utter astonishment. He felt a dreadful pang of remorse for his behavior towards this noble animal. Oh, how the king felt his shame!

“You see, your Excellency,” comforted the Ibex, “I am no wild devil to be hunted for sport. I am just a peaceful creature living within the bounds of this beautiful forest.”

“Oh!” blurted the king. “It is I who acted as a beast, not you! Can you ever forgive me?” he asked. “My physical pain right now,” continued the king, “is far less than the pain I feel for having threatened a noble creature as yourself.”

“Sire,” responded the ibex, “let me help you out of your predicament. I can rescue you if you’ll trust me.” The ibex took the king’s silence as a sign of goodwill and knew that the king would accept his help. He then searched for a boulder as heavy as a man and practiced lifting it. When he felt he could do it safely, without slipping, he made his way down the rocks beside the king. “If you mount me as you would your horse, your Excellency, I believe I can leap out of the chasm with you on my back,” offered the ibex.

The king followed these directions and held on as best he could. In an instant the ibex leapt in a great arc onto the cliff rim. There the king found his waiting horse but was so overtaken by the goodness of the ibex he could not leave. “What can I do to repay you?” begged the king. “If you would come to my palace, we would see that your every need was met. I can’t bear to think of you left in this forest with hunters in pursuit. Please, please come back with me,” insisted the king.

“Sire, do you think I, who am so contented in the forest, could really adjust to that? I love nothing better than to live here, in peace. But there is one great favor I would ask of you.”

“Anything,” said the king.

“I ask that you give up hunting for sport. You now realize that all creatures want happiness and security. Can it be right to do to them what you yourself would despise? A true king,” proclaimed the ibex, “will gain his people’s love by showing great goodness, not by showing power.”

The grateful king agreed to the request. “Now, let me show you the way back to safety,” suggested the ibex. “Mount your horse and I will guide you home to your camp.”

The king soon returned to his palace, and the ibex disappeared into the shelter of the forest. But forevermore, the king lived by the wise words of the noble ibex, the Former Buddha. He forbade hunting for sport throughout his kingdom’s domain. He protected his people, but no longer waged costly wars against nearby countries. His kingdom flourished. And thus, the good king was greatly loved and respected by his people as the gentlest and wisest of all kings.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/wonder/session11/noble-ibex>

# 3.11: *A Calabash of Poi* (698 words)

Based on “A Calabash of Poi,” originally published in In the Path of the Trade Winds by Coral Wells Thorpe (New York/London: G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 1924).

It was a sizable house, as Hawaiian houses go, perhaps fifty feet long, its side thatched with ti-leaves—a sign of rank. Its only window, about a foot square, looked out on a carefully planted taro patch, while rows of coconut palms and fruit-laden banana plants made a pretty background.

Pele, the goddess of fire, was walking down the mountainside. Today she had disguised herself especially as an old, feeble woman with a hard face, and bitterness in her eyes. She grasped her cane, and hobbled up to the big house.

“Aloha,” she said to the small group of people sitting in the doorway.

“Aloha,” was the reply, in a not-too-friendly voice.

Pele waited. Apparently, there was to be no invitation to enter or to refresh herself.

“I have walked many miles,” she said finally, using a weak voice. “I am very hungry. Perhaps you have a calabash of poi for me.”

“We are very sorry, but we have no poi,” said the Hawaiian chief, the master of the house. “Besides our evening meal is pau.”

“Then, perhaps, a small piece of salted fish?”

“No, nor fish,” was the short rejoinder.

“Then, at least, some ripe berries? I am parched with thirst?’

“Our berries are all green, as you can see for yourself, providing your eyes are not too dimmed by age.”

Pele’s eyes were far from dim! At other times, flashes of fire blazed in her eyes at a moment’s provocation. But this time, bowing low, she made her way in silence to the gate. A few steps further down the hard road, she entered a smaller garden and paused at a small hut. The work of the day and the evening meal were over. The children played. A man and woman sat watching the last golden rays of the sun sinking behind the gentle slopes of Mauna Loa.

“Ah, I see your evening meal is past;” sighed Pele. “I am sorry for I am tired and hungry, and had hoped for a little refreshment after a day’s walk down the steep mountain.”

“Neither fish nor awa have we,” said the poor fisherman, “but to such as we have, you are most welcome.”

Even as he spoke, his wife had risen, motioned Pele to a place on the mat, and set before her a large calabash of poi.

Pele ate happily. Dipping her finger in the calabash, she raised it dripping with poi, and placed it in her mouth. She finished the entire contents in no time and, looking up, remarked:

“I am still hungry. Would it be too much to ask for another calabash?”

The woman arose and placed before her a second calabash of poi, not perhaps as large as the first, but filled to the brim.

Again, Pele emptied the calabash eagerly. She sighed as she finished the last mouthful, calling attention to the empty calabash in her lap.

This time, a third calabash—smaller than the second, but quite full—was placed before her. Pele finished half of it, arose to her feet, and, uttered these words:

“When your neighbors plant taro, it shall wither on its stem. Their bananas shall die on the stalk, and their coconuts shall fall on their favorite pig. But when you plant taro at night, you may pull it in the morning. Your cane shall mature overnight and your bananas ripen in one day’s sunshine. You shall have as many crops as there are days in the year!”

Then Pele trudged out of the gate and was seen to disappear toward Ha-le-mau-mau in a cloud of flame.

When the astonished fisherman walked outside his hut the next morning, yellow bananas hung on new plants, the full-grown taro stood ready to be pulled, and the cane-cuttings reached to the eaves of his house. Looking across to his rich neighbors’ land, he saw that, indeed, the curse of Pele had already come. In place of prosperous acres stood only sun-parched remnants of yesterday’s proud crop.

In modern times, they say: “Whether you believe in the old lady Pele or not, don’t ever forget to be nice to the old folks. It just might be Pele. You can’t always tell.”

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/signs/session10/calabash>

# 3.12: *Craig Keilburger and Free the Children* (595 words)

Adapted by Lynn Ungar from a story by Jerrilyn Jacobs on the My Hero project website and information on the Free the Children website.

You could say it all started with a little thing. Craig Keilburger watched his older brother Marc get excited about a science project when Marc was 12 years old. Marc’s project was more than science; it was also service. Craig was impressed when his brother collected signatures for a petition to ban products harmful to the environment. Craig says: “I remember watching him and thinking how amazing it was [that] he’s changing the world...and I wanted to follow in his footsteps.”

This little bit of inspiration went a long way. When Craig himself was 12, he read an article about another 12-year-old boy—this one in Pakistan. Iqbal Masih was murdered for calling the world’s attention to the terrible conditions endured by children working in the carpet-making industry. “I saw him as a hero for speaking out about child labor,” says Kielburger. “I suddenly understood that a young person can make a difference.”

Craig decided to educate himself about human rights. He became so passionate about it that his parents—reluctantly—allowed him to leave his home in Canada to travel through South Asia with a human rights worker. There Craig saw, first-hand, the personal horrors behind child labor issues. He came home to Canada determined to find a way to help the children he had met.

Craig managed to get six of his friends excited about how kids could help other kids across the world, and the seven of them founded a group called Kids Can Free the Children. Craig and his friends worked to make it possible for children to get education instead of jobs. Free the Children created Friendship Schools, a program that connected schools in North America, Europe, and other wealthier, industrialized countries with schools in developing countries. More and more kids joined in on the effort, raising money with bake sales and car washes and learning about human rights and the needs of other kids around the world.

Craig Keilburger founded Free the Children in 1995. Since then, the organization has accomplished a lot:

* Built more than 500 schools in developing countries, providing education to more than 50,000 children every day
* Established Youth in Action groups in more than 1,000 schools in Canada and the United States, engaging more than 20,000 young people
* Distributed more than 207,500 school and health kits to children in need
* Shipped medical supplies worth more than $15 million and built health care centers to help improve the lives of more than 512,500
* Equipped 23,500 women to be economically self-sufficient
* Improved access to clean water and sanitation for 138,500 people

One boy who wanted to help the world turned into two brothers who believed they could make a difference. One brother who wanted to make life better for child laborers on the other side of the world got six friends involved. Now the organization they started has tens of thousands of kids and adults making change around the world.

“Of all the well-known people I’ve met, the person who inspired me the most would be Mother Teresa,” says Craig Kielburger. “She had this incredible power about her...because she had such a big heart. I asked her how she kept her hope in the face of so much poverty and she said ‘We must always realize that we can do no great things, only small things with great love.’

“You have the spirit of Mother Teresa or Nelson Mandela inside you. No matter what your gifts, no matter what your talents, kids can help change the world.” Craig Keilburger’s life is proof that his words are true.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveconnects/session7/keilburger-free-the-children>

# 3.13: *Maya’s Questions* by Elisa Pearmain (1,037 words)

Once upon a time a girl named Maya was playing in her front yard with her big sister and some of her sister’s friends, while her father watched from the kitchen window. Soon Maya’s friend Annie came along and wanted to join in the game. Maya’s big sister and her friends whispered to Maya, “You can play with us, but not Annie, she’s too little.” So, Maya said, “Sorry, Annie. I can’t play with you right now.” Annie walked away sadly.

Soon Maya’s father called her in for some lunch. “Hey,” he said, “how do you think it made Annie feel when you wouldn’t play with her today?”

“Sad, maybe,” Maya answered. “But it was because the big kids told me to say that.”

“I know,” he said, “but how did it feel to you?”

“Not so good.” She replied.

“Right,” he said. “I know that you want to be a kind person, but sometimes it is confusing as what is the right thing to do isn’t it?”

“Yes,” Maya replied. “I don’t always know who to pay attention to, or who I should listen to, or what to do.”

“I think those are excellent questions to think about,” said her father. “Let me see if I can repeat them: Who is the important person to pay attention to? And what is the best thing to do? I think you know the answer to the question of who to listen to, right?”

“Yeah, listen to my heart or ask a grown-up who I know,” Maya answered.

“Why don’t you take those questions and go ask your grandmother,” her father suggested. “She would like a visit from you this afternoon, and she will know the answers to your questions.”

So, Maya went over to her grandmother’s house which was only next door. Grandmom was out back working in her garden. She was transplanting seedlings into the ground in neatly divided rows. Maya could see that she was tired. Grandmom’s face was flushed, and she had swipes of dirt across her brow. “Grandmom,” Maya said, “why don’t I bring you some lemonade and you sit down and watch me work for a while. I want to ask you some questions so that I can be the kindest person possible.”

Grandmom settled herself on the steps. Maya went in the house and came out with two glasses of lemonade — one for her grandmother, and one for herself. “Thank you,” said Grandmom. “Now, what are your questions?”

“Well, who are the most important people to pay attention to? What is the most important thing to do?” Grandmom smiled, but she didn’t say anything. Maya thought that her grandmother was trying to think of the answers so she kept on working. She dug little holes, planted the seedlings, tamped down the dirt and watered each seedling with care as her grandmother had taught her.

After a while she got tired and stopped for some lemonade. “Can you tell me the answers now, Grandmom?” But it looked like Grandmom had dozed off. So, Maya went back to the seedlings that still needed to be planted. There were only a few more.

All of a sudden, a cry came from out in the street. Maya ran out the side of the yard and around the house. There was Annie, laying on the sidewalk all tangled in Maya’s bicycle with a bloody knee and elbow and tears streaming down her face. “Grandmom!” Maya called, and her grandmother came quickly, too.

They helped Annie into the house. Maya got a wet cloth to clean Annie’s scrapes. She was very gentle so as not to hurt Annie, who was still crying. Maya patted her on the back and offered her a cool glass of lemonade. Soon Annie was calm. Maya helped her grandmother put several large bandages on her knee and elbow.

“What were you doing?” asked Maya. She had noticed her bike on the sidewalk.

“I was mad at you for not playing with me,” said Annie. “So, I took your bike from your driveway. I was going to hide it until you said you were sorry. But I hit a bump on the sidewalk and fell over.”

“I am sorry I told you I couldn’t play,” said Maya.

“I know,” said Annie, “And I can see you are a good friend by the way you are taking care of me and helping me feel better. I wanted to hurt you, but now I am sorry.”

“I’m glad you know I am your friend. I’m really sorry I hurt your feelings,” said Maya.

“Thanks,” said Annie. “And thanks for the band-aids and the lemonade.”

Maya and Annie picked up Maya’s bicycle and leaned it on the side of Grandmom’s house. Then Annie went home. Maya and her grandmother went back out into the garden and worked, side by side, for a while, to put the last seedlings in the ground.

“Grandmom, are you ever going to tell me the answers to my two questions?” Maya asked.

“Well I don’t need to, Maya,” she smiled. “You figured them out yourself.”

“I have?” Maya looked confused.

“Yes,” said Grandmom. “You asked me, ‘Who is the most important person to pay attention to?’ When you first came over the most important person to pay attention to was me, and the most important thing to do was to help me because I was tired. Because you stayed to help me, you were here to help Annie, and she got a chance to see how kind you are. Now she is no longer mad at you and she didn’t want to hide your bike anymore!

“When Annie hurt herself, she was the most important person to pay attention to,” Grandmom continued. “And the most important thing to do was to help her.”

“You mean, Grandmom, that the most important people to be with are the ones who need our attention right now? And the most important thing to do is to treat them kindly?” Maya asked.

“Yes,” said Maya’s grandmother. “If you pay attention to the people who are around you, and be kind, you will always be doing the most important thing. And I think you knew that, all along.

*(Written by Elisa Pearmain, this story is an adaptation of the story, “The Three Questions.” This Buddhist-like story is often attributed to Leo Tolstoy who included it in his collection, Fables and Fairy Tales (New York: New American Library, 1962, origin)*

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session15//mayas-questions>

# 3.14: *For the Love of Stars* by Gail Forsyth-Vail (564 words)

Adapted from Stories in Faith by Gail Forsyth-Vail, a Tapestry of Faith Toolkit book (Boston: UUA, 2007). Used with permission.

Once there was a little girl named Cecilia who fell in love with the universe. She felt her heart leap with joy every time she learned something new about the world around her. She wanted to grow up to become an astronomer who studied the stars. Throughout her whole life, she studied and observed the stars, asking, “What are stars made of? How are they born? Do they die? And how do we know?” Throughout her whole life, her heart sang with each discover, each bit of new understanding about the wonders of the far-off sky.

When Cecilia was a small child in England, she saw a meteorite blaze across the sky. Her mother taught her a small rhyme so she could remember what it was: “As we were walking home that night / We saw a shining meteorite.”

She later told a friend that from that moment, she knew she would grow up to be an astronomer. She learned the names of all the constellations in the sky, picking out the Big Dipper, Orion’s Belt, and others. She was naturally very observant and precise, able to remember small details. By age twelve, she had learned to measure things and to do math problems easily. At her school, they had an interesting way of increasing the students’ powers of observation. Once a week, students were required to find with their eyes (not touching) three little brass tacks scattered somewhere in the school garden. For Cecilia, always an observer, this exercise strengthened her resolve to be a scientist.

In 1912, when Cecilia was a teenager, there was very little education available for a young woman who wanted to be a scientist. She spent hours in a makeshift laboratory, which she called her chapel, where she conducted “a little worship service of her own,” in awe before the magnificence of the natural world. Persistent, she found people who would teach her science at school, and she pored over her family’s home library until she found two lonely science books to study: one about plants and the other containing Sir Isaac Newton’s observations about gravity.

In 1919, Cecilia entered college to study botany, or plants. This was one of the fields of science permitted for women. She went through her courses, but also attended lectures in physics, where she found “pure delight.” Each new bit of knowledge about physics and astronomy transformed her. Leaving botany behind, she persuaded the college to allow her to take a degree in physics: astronomy is a branch of physics.

After finishing her degree, Cecilia Payne left for the United States, where she would study as an astronomer at Harvard University. As an astronomer, she figured out that stars are primarily made of hydrogen. In today’s world of satellites and computers, we know this to be true, but it was an extraordinary statement at that time. How can you possibly know what a makes a star from so far away? Because of this discovery, Cecilia was the first person, male or female, awarded a Ph.D. in astronomy.

Cecilia choice to be an astronomer was not popular, or appreciated, because she was a woman. People kept her from advancing in her carrier or just flat out didn’t believe her. Nevertheless, she was right. And through it all, she held on to her love for the scientific quest, and her love for the stars.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveguide/session9/168798.shtml>

# 3.15: *We Are All One* (1,078 words)

*Adapted from the story, “We Are All One,” in* Stories in Faith*by Gail Forsyth-Vail (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2007), which was adapted from a Cantonese tale adapted by Lawrence Yep.*

Once there was a young woman who lived simply but happily with her husband and their three children until one day a strange illness of the eyes came into their home. First her husband and then their eldest son started having trouble with their eyesight. Everything looked blurry and grey to them. They went to the local doctor and they tried medicine after medicine. But nothing worked, and soon they found they could not see at all.

Within a week, the illness had spread and now their middle son also could not see, and their youngest, a daughter, was showing the beginning symptoms of the illness, rubbing her eyes and complaining that everything looked blurry. Some of their neighbors, as well, were afflicted with this strange illness. The people of the village began to wonder if they would all soon lose their eyesight.

The woman was beside herself with worry. She visited doctor after doctor until finally one doctor told her of a miracle herb that might cure this illness. This healing herb was a plant that grew only in the deepest part of the forest. The woman decided she must leave her family to seek the herb.

Early the next morning she headed into the forest. She looked under bushes. She looked behind trees. She looked everywhere, but the herb was nowhere to be seen. Many hours later, exhausted, but still determined, the woman came upon a small stream. She sat down to rest, still looking around her for the herb.

Then she noticed a big rock had fallen into the stream, making the water run out of the stream to form a little pool. That little pool of water was flooding an anthill. Although she was in a hurry to find the herb, her heart went out to the ants. The woman stopped looking for the herb long enough to remove the big rock and dig a new channel for the water. With satisfaction, she watched as the water flowed away from the anthill. “We are all one,” she stated simply, and she continued on her way.

The woman slept soundly that night, curled up under a large tree with a blanket to keep her warm. As she slept a strange dream came to her. In it she was inside the anthill, surrounded by cheering ants. The queen ant stepped forward majestically. “Do not be afraid,” she reassured the woman. “We have brought you here to thank you for saving our home and our lives. In return, if you ever need our help, all you need do is call for us, and we will hear you and come to your aid.” As the dream faded and the woman began to wake, she heard the queen ant’s voice calling after her, distinctly saying, “We are all one.”

All through that day, the woman searched for the herb. She wondered if she were already too late — and if everyone in her village was already blind. She was startled from her thoughts by the sound of a bird, intent upon catching a small centipede. The centipede was scurrying across the ground as quickly as his many legs would carry him. Taking pity upon the defenseless centipede, she quickly scooped him up and frightened the bird from her prey. Saying, “We are all one,” she carried the centipede to some leaves and placed him gently in their cover.

That night she again had strange dreams. This time she was visited by the centipede. “Thank you for saving my life,” the tiny voice proclaimed. “And now I will help you as you helped me. The herb you seek can be found by an ancient oak tree, in the very center of the forest.” An image of a gnarled and twisting trunk came to her mind as she heard the centipede state, “We are all one.” Then she awoke.

The woman spent the next morning making her way into the heart of the woods, searching for the oak tree. As the day progressed, she noticed that the trees around her were getting blurry. Gazing towards the sky, she saw that the sun was still high in the sky. With a dawning horror she realized that she, too, must have contracted the strange illness. Quickening her pace, she continued toward the center of the forest, but with every step her eyesight worsened.

Just as she was giving way to despair, she found the ancient oak tree! Even though she could barely see, she could tell it looked just like the one she had seen in her dream. Stumbling and out of breath, she began to search for the herb frantically. It was no use — her eyes could no longer tell one plant from another. Crying with frustration she wept for her husband, her children, herself, and the people of her village.

She turned to try to retrace her steps to her home and then she remembered. The ants! Perhaps they could help her now. She called to them and soon enough small voices responded.

“Bend down,” the queen ant’s voice called. “The herb you seek is right here. I am standing on it.”

Gently the woman knelt and reached towards the sound. With cautious movements so as not to harm the queen ant, she found the herb and plucked it. Slowly and carefully she tore a small piece of the leaf and chewed it. Almost instantaneously, her sight was restored! Joyfully she harvested the herbs and prepared to return to her village. Before she left, however, she thanked the ants and proclaimed one last time, “We are all one.”

The woman walked as swiftly as she could — all day and then all night, by the light of the moon. She hoped, oh, how she hoped, that she would return on time to save her village from blindness.

Finally, she reached her home. As she called to her children, they followed her voice, for by now they were all completely blind. Anxiously she gave them bits of the herb and then she waited to see what would happen. One minute passed — and then another — and then her eldest son laughed with joy. “I see you!” he shouted, “I truly see you!”

Soon everyone in the village had been cured of the strange illness and the woman who had saved them all returned to her simple but happy life with her husband and their three children. And she never forgot that “We are all one.”

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session1/123113.shtml>

**3.16:** *Mussa and Nagib* (484 words)

Adapted from a story by Malba Tahan (pen name for Julio Cesar de Mello e Souza, 1895-1975), a mathematician from Brazil who also wrote The Man Who Counted (Editoria Record, 2001), which was first published in Brazil in 1949.

Once, two friends named Mussa and Nagib made a journey through the mountains of Persia on camel back. *(Leader — If you have fashioned clay camels, you can start with the characters on camel back outside of the theater.)*

They came after a time to a place where a stream flowed by a sandy bank and trees gave shade. *(Leader — Walk the characters down to the river’s edge.)*

There they had a discussion, which turned into an argument. Nagib grew angry, and for the first time ever, he slapped Mussa across the face. *(Leader — You may wish to act this out with the characters explicitly or less so.)*

Mussa was stunned. He felt angry. He wanted to slap Nagib back. But then he thought, ‘I cannot be too mad at my friend because I could have done the same thing. We are alike, and I care about him, and I don’t want to fight with him anymore.’ So, he walked over to the trees instead and picked up a stick. *(Leader — Show this with the character.)* With the stick he wrote in the sand, ‘Today my best friend slapped me.’ *(Leader — Use the toothpick to write this in the sand for all to see.)*

Then he and his friend stood in silence and watched as the desert wind blew the words in the sand away. *(Leader — Blow the sand gently, until the writing disappears.)*

By the time the writing had disappeared Nagib had said that he was sorry. The friends got back on their camels and rode to their destination in a distant city. On their trip back through the mountain pass they stopped again at the same river. *(Leader — You can show this with the characters leaving the stage and then returning.)*

This time the two friends decided to take a swim. Since their first visit, the rains had made the current stronger and river much deeper. Mussa, the friend who had been slapped, stepped into the water first. Right away, he slipped on a rock, was dragged under by the current, and began to drown. Nagib jumped in without a second thought and pulled his friend to safety. *(Leader — Show these actions with the clay figures.)*

The two friends again sat in silence for some time until Mussa had regained his breath. Then he rose and went to his saddlebags. There he found a carving knife. This time he went to a rock near the river. *(Leader — Show the character moving off and back.)*

Into the rock he carved these words, ‘Today my best friend saved me.’ *(Leader — Use the toothpick or other sharper object to write the words in the clay.)*

Again, the two friends sat in silence. Finally, Nagib spoke, ‘My friend, after I hurt you, you wrote the words in sand. Now after I saved you, you wrote the words in stone, why?’ *(Leader — Demonstrate this dialogue, using the characters.)*

Mussa replied, ‘When someone hurts us, we should write it down in sand where the winds of forgiveness can erase it away. This way our hearts are free from bitterness, and we can renew our friendships. But, when someone does something kind for us, we must engrave it in stone and in our hearts so that we will never forget.’

‘Thank you, my friend,’ said Nagib. ‘I am very grateful for our friendship. I don’t ever want to hurt you again.’

The two friends embraced and continued on their journey together. *(Leader – Have the two characters embrace. You can have them continue their journey, if you made camels, or just say, ‘The End.’)*

# Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session5/123298.shtml>

**3.17:***The Picture on The Kitchen Wall* by Sophia Lyon Fahs (1,304 words)

*A story from China. Sophia Lyon Fahs, From Long Ago and Many Lands.*

Long, long ago in the land of China there lived a very old grandfather, named Chang Kung, who had a very large family. First, there were Chang Kung’s own sons. When his sons grew up, they all married and their wives came to live in Chang Kung’s house. Then grandchildren were born. When these grandsons grew up, they also married and their wives were added to Chang Kung’s family. Then came the great-grandchildren. So Chang Kung’s family grew and grew until there were several hundred people in it — all living together. There were old people and young people, middle-sized people and children. Always there were a number of babies.

Besides all this, Chang Kung’s family was very fond of pet animals, especially dogs. It is said that at one time one hundred pet dogs belonged to the household.

As Chang Kung’s family grew larger and larger, his house had to grow bigger and bigger too, until it became a collection of houses standing side by side around a large open courtyard. A high stone wall stood like a fence around all the houses, and that made all the houses together seem like one big home.

The larger his family grew; the happier old Chang Kung became. He liked to eat at one of the big long tables with his big and little children beside him. He enjoyed sitting in the sunny courtyard where he could watch his great-grandchildren play.

But Chang Kung’s family is not remembered after these many years simply because it was such a large family. Many people of China have large families. Chang Kung is still remembered because, it is said, the members of his family never quarreled. At least so the story goes. The children never quarreled in their play. The old people never quarreled with each other and never scolded the children. Nobody—big or little—ever said a cross word. Nobody ever did a mean thing. Some said jokingly that even the dogs did not quarrel or bite. When they were brought their bones, they would not even bark, but all would wag their tails and wait their turns.

Stories about this remarkable household spread far and wide over the country just as the breezes blow far and wide in the spring. Finally, news of Chang Kung’s happy family reached the ears of the Emperor.

Now it so happened that the Emperor was about to make a journey to the Western Hills, to a place not far from the home of Chang Kung. So, he decided to visit this wonderful household on his way back, and to see for himself whether or not the rumors he had heard were true.

What a sight it was the day the Emperor arrived outside the village gate. First in the royal procession came the very tall guards dressed in blue and red, carrying long bows and arrows in their hands.

Then came the mandarins, those important men in the Emperor’s court. Their long silk gowns were beautifully embroidered with figures of colored birds. Blue and green peacock feathers waved from their round hats. Other attendants followed, playing flutes and harps as the procession marched down the street.

At last came the Emperor himself in his richly adorned sedan chair, carried on the shoulders of four men in red. When the Emperor entered the gate of Chang Kung’s home, the old man himself was there, to bow many times and to greet his Emperor with very polite words.

“Very excellent and very aged Sir,” said the Emperor, “it is said that inside your walls no cross words are ever spoken. Can this be true?”

“Lord of ten thousand years,” said Chang Kung, “you do my poor house far too much honor. It is true that my family does not quarrel, but it would please us greatly if you would consent to walk about our humble courts and judge for yourself.”

So, the Emperor made his way from one house to another and from one room to another. He talked with everyone he met. In the great Hall of Politeness, he was served delicious food and drink. As he sipped his tea from a dainty cup, he said to Chang Kung: “You must have a golden secret in order to keep so many people living together in such order and peace. I, too, should like to know your secret. “

Then old Chang Kung called his servants to bring a tablet of smooth bamboo. (In those long-ago days there was no paper. All writing was done on wood or on stone.)

Chang Kung asked also for his brush and ink, and the ink stone with its little well of water. He took the brush in his hand and, dipping it into the water and then on the ink, he wrote one word on the tablet. He wrote the word a second time and a third time. He wrote the word over and over until he had written it one hundred times. Then with a low bow, he placed the tablet in the hands of the Emperor.

“You have written many words,” said the Emperor, “but at the same time you have written only one word.”

“Ai, ai,” said Chang Kung, “but that one word is the golden secret, 0 Son of Heaven. It is KINDNESS over and over without any ending.” Chang Kung nodded his gray head as he spoke.

The Emperor was so pleased with the golden secret that he, too, called for a bamboo tablet. Taking the brush that Chang Kung had used, the Emperor wrote these words on his tablet: “Let all the families of China learn the golden secret of Chang Kung and his family.”

When the Emperor had finished writing, he said: “Let this tablet be fastened to the outside of the gate where everyone passing may read it.”

Not many years after the Emperor’s visit Chang Kung died, but the story of his happy household has never been forgotten. People asked the Emperor to have pictures of the old man painted and sold so that families might hang his picture on the wall above their kitchen stoves to remind them to keep the golden secret that Chang Kung and his family had learned.

That is why, after these many, many years, in thousands of homes in China, at the New Year season, a fresh bright picture of Chang Kung is pasted on the wall behind the kitchen stove. Many Chinese will tell you it is a picture of a god, but you should know that Chang Kung was once just a very kind and good man who helped the members of his family to learn to live happily together without quarreling. Since so many people think that God is perhaps much like the very best person that can be imagined, such a good person as Chang Kung seems to them to be like God himself.

To look at the picture of Chang Kung over the kitchen stove every morning helps to remind many thousands of people in China to speak kindly to one another. They feel as if Chang Kung were watching them and listening as they go about their work. They can sometimes imagine they hear him speak that golden word — KINDNESS.

Once a year on the night before New Year’s, the picture of Chang Kung is taken down and burned. As the flames and smoke go upward, the people think: “Chang Kung is flying back to heaven to tell the great God of all the people just how well everyone has behaved during the past year.”

Three days later, they will paste new pictures of Chang Kung on the walls over their kitchen stoves and they will say: “He has now come back again to the earth to keep watch over us for another year.”

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session8/the-picture>

**3.18:** *Russell* by Rev. Jose Ballester (425 words)

Russell was an amateur geologist, paleontologist, and professional teacher. He took his young charges on an overnight field trip. While sitting around the campfire, he brought out a bag, took out five rocks, and held up a round, grapefruit-size rock. “This rock,” he began explaining, “looks ordinary on the outside. But inside there is hidden beauty.”

He opened the two halves of the rock to reveal all the purple crystals inside. He then picked up another rock of equal size and opened it to reveal a fossil inside. “This is the fossil of a trilobite,” Russell explained. “It was a sea creature that lived millions of years ago. All that remains is this impression of him. Minerals seeped into the mud that held his body, and this is all that remains.”

Next, he picked up something that looked like a small, wooden object and said, “This branch is another fossil that looks like wood, but it really is a rock. And as we know, wood burns, but not rocks.”

Russell threw the rock that looked like a branch into the fire; it did nothing. He then took out a flat, palm-sized rock and said, “Now watch closely.” He threw the flat rock into the fire, and it soon began burning. “That rock is called ‘oil shale’ and has been used for fuel for hundreds of years.”

He then began our lesson in earnest. “People can be as complex as these rocks. Too often all you see is a dull, rough exterior and never suspect there is beauty inside in the form of a crystal or a fossil. Sometimes people look like something else and behave in unexpected ways. And here is the true lesson from the rocks.”

He picked up a round, black stone from a water-filled container.

“I found this stone earlier today in the stream. As you can see, the water has rounded the rock, and the minerals have turned it black.” He then hit the stone with a hammer and it broke in two. “You can also see that the outside is still wet, and the water has made it round and dark, but the inside is still dry and gray. A human heart—like a stone—can be shaped by outside forces, but its inside remains unchanged. Over time, this stone will be further reduced, perhaps becoming a grain of sand that will find its way into an oyster and become a pearl. You never know what a human heart will become over time, so never lose hope in its potential.”

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/btwwdaya/workshop6/russell>

**3.19:** *The Gift of Giving* by Janeen Grohsmeyer (1,231 words)

On Steve’s sixth birthday, many people gave him gifts.

His mother gave him a chess set and promised to teach him how to play after dinner.

His grandfather gave him a black rope that was twenty-five feet long and would be good for making forts and building bridges and all kinds of things.

His friend Shanaya gave him modeling clay, his friend Tom gave him a toy racing car, his aunt sent him ten dollars with a birthday card, and his dad gave him a book about dinosaurs. Steve took cupcakes to school, and his classmates sang “Happy Birthday” to him. His teacher let him be first in the line when they went outside to play.

Steve thought it was the best birthday he’d ever had.

That night after dinner, Steve was waiting for his parents to finish watching the news on TV so he and his mom could play chess. He was busy making a dinosaur out of the modeling clay when he heard the man on the TV say, “It’s his sixth birthday today.”

Steve looked up right away, but the TV man wasn’t talking about him. On the screen was a picture of a boy in a T-shirt and shorts standing on dusty ground in front of a small building. It looked like the tool shed in Steve’s back yard, except it was kind of crooked. The boy was barefoot and he wasn’t smiling, even though it was his birthday, and Steve didn’t see any gifts anywhere.

“He lives here with his parents, his grandmother, and three brothers and sisters,” the TV man said. “Usually they eat only one meal a day. Some days they don’t eat at all.”

“Why don’t they eat?” Steve asked.

“There’s been no rain,” his dad answered. “Their plants won’t grow.”

“Can’t they go to a store and buy food?”

“They don’t have money,” his mom said.

Steve had money. He had the ten dollars his aunt had given him, plus a lot of coins hidden in his sock drawer upstairs. “How much does food cost?” he asked.

The TV man answered that question. “Just a few dollars a day would provide food for this family of seven.”

While Steve and his mom were getting out the chess pieces, he said, “How long would ten dollars last, for food for that family on TV?”

“About four days,” his mom answered.

“Can I send my birthday money to that boy?”

“Oh, Steve,” she said. “That’s very nice of you! We could ask the TV people where they live.”

That sounded good. “But what happens after the four days?” Steve asked next. “When the ten dollars is used up?” He wouldn’t have any more money to send, except the coins.

His mom nodded. “That is a problem,” she agreed. “But I heard about an idea at church last week. I’ll ask your RE teacher if you can talk about it next Sunday.”

Sunday finally came, and Steve and his family went to church. In the RE room, pictures of animals were on the walls: bunnies and chickens and ducks, goats and sheep, a pig and a black-and-white cow, and a big animal that looked like the cow except it was all black and had bigger horns and sideways ears.

“That’s a water buffalo,” his friend Shanaya said. “They live in China and Korea and places in the east.”

“That’s right, Shanaya,” said their teacher. Then it was time to gather in a circle and light the chalice and sing. After that, everyone sat down and talked more about the animals, how the birds laid eggs, and the sheep grew wool, and the goat and the cow gave milk. “People use all those things,” said the teacher. “We get food and clothes and help from animals, every day.”

Steve nodded. Animals didn’t get all used up in four days, like his money would have. They lasted for a long time. “What’s the water buffalo do?” he asked.

“They give milk, too,” the teacher said, “and people also use them to carry things or pull plows and help farm the land.”

Steve wondered if a water buffalo would help the boy on TV.

“One of the most important gifts these animals give,” said the teacher, “is more animals. They have babies, and when those babies are grown up, they make milk or eggs or wool, too.”

“And those babies make babies!” said Shanaya.

“Then after a while, everyone can have an animal,” Steve said. That meant everyone would have food and clothes. This was great! “How do we give other people an animal?” he wanted to know.

“We don’t have any ducks or goats or pigs,” said Shanaya. “And definitely no water buffalos.”

“We give money to an organization that does, and they give an animal to a family who needs one. Does everyone want to do this?”

Everyone said yes, and then they started talking about what kind of animal to give. Steve and Tom voted to give a water buffalo, and two girls voted for bunnies, but Shanaya and five others all voted to give a goat, so the goat won.

“A goat costs one hundred twenty dollars,” the teacher told them. “How can we get that?”

“I’ll give my birthday money,” said Steve. “Ten dollars.”

“I have five dollars to give,” said Shanaya, and the other kids said they had money too. When they added it all up, they had sixty-two dollars.

“We need fifty-eight more dollars,” their teacher told them.

“We could sell cookies,” suggested Tom. So, the next Sunday they used the church kitchen to make cookies and sell them after the service. They put out a donation jar, too, and some of the grownups put in five dollars or even ten dollars. When Steve told his aunt what he had done with his birthday money, she sent him twenty more dollars for the goat.

Soon, they had the one hundred twenty dollars they needed, and the class sent the money to the organization that gave animals to people who needed them.

“Who is the goat going to?” Steve asked. “What’s their name? Where do they live?”

“We don’t know,” answered his teacher. “There are many, many people all over the world who need animals. The goat may be given to a family in China or Uganda or Poland or maybe in our own country.”

Steve had wanted to give the goat to the boy on TV. And maybe the goat would live there. Or maybe the goat wouldn’t. Maybe the family the goat lived with would have another six-year-old boy. Or a six-year-old girl. Or maybe they’d have all older children, or only babies. It didn’t really matter.

Because Steve knew that wherever the goat lived, and whomever she lived with, the family would take care of her. And when the goat had her kids, the family would take care of the kids, too. The people could drink the goat’s milk or maybe sell some of it to buy clothes or other food. They would give the kids away to other families, and soon everyone would have a goat. And one of those people would probably be having a birthday, and maybe that person would be six years old.

Or maybe not. And it didn’t matter, because Steve knew those ten dollars were the best birthday gift he’d ever given away.

# Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session7/118343.shtml>

# 3.20: *Fragments and Front Porches* by Rev. Elizabeth Buffington Nguyen (519 words)

When I was 24, my father gave me a new name. I was learning Vietnamese in graduate school. The professor required all students who only had an English name to ask their parents to give them a Vietnamese name. My father chose Hien, meaning ‘gentle.’

As a teenager I had yearned to have a Vietnamese name—all of my cousins had one. To me, not having a Vietnamese name was just another way that I was not whole, not authentically Asian, not Vietnamese enough, not worthy of my own family. I was, in theologian Rita Nakashima Brock’s words, restless in my longing to belong. Years later, when my father named me as Hien, I didn’t feel the simple relief of belonging that I had so craved. Instead I found something more sacred, something expansive, fierce, complex and true: I was born Elizabeth and I am also Hien; I am white and of color, American and Vietnamese.

Anti-oppression and antiracism work for me has always begun with my own identity. It has been the work to excavate my mind from the silt of internalized racism and the oppression of dominant culture. It has also begun with my own spirit, embracing both my yearning for wholeness and my love of this fragmented, multiple identity. In my Unitarian Universalist community faith I find companions, theology, and rituals that honor the fragments of my identities, my halves, my multi, my hyphenation, my two names.

This work is not just about courageously loving myself—it is also about courageously loving my Unitarian Universalist kin as we try to live the Beloved Community of Dr. King’s dream. It is about talking with white people about racism, about supporting people of color, Latino and Latina, and multiracial within Unitarian Universalism, about ‘isms’ and power and answering the call of love. It is about having hard conversations with ministers who understand race very differently than I do, creating worship that is multicultural and alive, that resists tokenism and essentializing. It is about shifting resources and facilitating workshops, about sharing experiences of racism and asking questions, about embracing conflict with song and prayer. It is about encountering my own limits, as an ally and an antiracist person of faith. About messing up, and failing, and about asking for forgiveness and beginning again in love.

And it is about celebration—about moments of connection across great difference. Buddhist writer Jack Kornfield writes that in meditation: ‘Instead of clinging to an inflated, superhuman view of perfection, we learn to allow ourselves the space of kindness. There is a beauty in the ordinary. We invite the heart to sit on the front porch and experience from a place of rest the inevitable comings and goings of emotions and events, the struggles and successes of the world.’

I love this image for thinking not just about meditation, but also for talking about race across difference.

When I am in conversation with someone who I think is very different from me, I try to let go of perfection and find that space of kindness. I invite my heart out onto the front porch.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/btwwdaya/workshop6/fragments-front-porches>

# 3.21: *The Dervish in the Ditch* (263 words)

Once upon a time, in a land to the east, a Dervish holy man and their student were walking from one village to the next. Suddenly they saw a great huge cloud of dust rising in the distance. They stood and stared at a grand carriage, pulled by six horses approaching at a full gallop. Riding on top were two liveries dressed in red, each holding a rein. The Dervish and the young student soon realized that the carriage was not going to slow down, let alone veer to the side to avoid hitting them. The carriage was coming at such a speed that they had to throw themselves from the road and jump into a ditch to save themselves. Covered with dirt and grass, the two got up. They looked after the carriage as it sped away into the distance.

The student was first to respond. They began to call out and curse the drivers. But the teacher ran ahead, cupped his hands over the student’s mouth, and called to the carriage: “May all of your deepest desires be satisfied!”

The student stared at the teacher and asked, “Why would you wish that their deepest desires be satisfied? They nearly killed us!”

The old Dervish replied, “Do you think all their deepest desires are satisfied? If they were happy, would they be so thoughtless and cruel as to nearly run down an old man and a student?”

The young student had no answer, for they were deep in thought. And so, in silence, the two continued their journey down the dusty road.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveguide/session13/dervish-ditch>

# 3.22: *The Good Samaritan* (576 words)

One day a lawyer came to Jesus and asked what he needed to do to live forever or, “to get into heaven” or “to become enlightened.”

Jesus asked him what the law of the Ten Commandments said. The lawyer answered, “You shall love God with all your heart, and with all of your soul, and with all your strength, and your neighbor as yourself.” “Right!” said Jesus. Then the lawyer asked, “But, Teacher, who is my neighbor?” In other words, “who do I have to treat lovingly?” This is the story that Jesus told to the man:

Once, a man was walking on a lonely stretch of road between Jerusalem and Jericho. Suddenly a gang of thieves jumped out from the side of the road and surrounded him. “Give us your money,” they demanded. “I need my money” he cried. “I have to buy food with this money, for myself and my whole family.”

One of the thieves picked up a rock from the side of the road and hit the man in the head. He fell to the ground with a groan, bleeding. Seeing no one around the thieves jumped on the man and took everything he had, including his money, and his clothing. One of the thieves picked up a stick and hit the man hard several times before leaving him on the side of the road half dead.

After a time, a priest came walking down the road. He saw the man lying on the side of the road and crossed over to the other side as he hurried by.

Soon another man, a Levite appeared. He too, saw the wounded man lying in the hot sun, naked and bleeding and he scurried on by.

A long time passed. Flies buzzed around the man who was dying from his injuries. Luckily someone else was coming down the road. He was a Samaritan riding on his donkey. Now the people of Samaria were not friendly with the people of this man’s country. They were sworn enemies of each other.

But the Samaritan man did not hesitate when he saw the man lying by the side of the road. He didn’t stop to think about whether he should help him because of where he was from, or what group the man belonged to. He saw that this man needed help and he felt compassion.

The Samaritan took healing oil and wine from his bag and cleaned the man’s wounds and bound them up with bandages made from the cloth of his own shirt. He covered him with a robe. He gave the man a drink of water and helped the man onto his donkey. Slowly, for the man was in great pain and the road was long, they walked to the next town. There the Samaritan found an inn and asked the innkeeper to give him what was necessary to make the man comfortable.

The next day, the Samaritan gave money to the innkeeper to pay for the wounded man to stay at the inn until he got better. The Samaritan promised to come back in a few days and pay whatever else was needed to bring the man back to health.

When Jesus finished telling this story, he asked the lawyer, “Which one of these three men acted like a neighbor to the man who fell among thieves?” The lawyer said, “The one who showed kindness.” “Yes,” said Jesus, “go and do the same.”

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session8/123425.shtml>

# 3.23: *The Answer is in Your Hands*, Adapted from an Indian folk tale (580 words)

There was once a wise woman who lived by herself near a small village. Rumor had it that she could always accurately predict when the rains would come, or help heal a sick child with herbs, or calm angry neighbors and help them to resolve their fights and arguments. People came from all over the land to meet with her and seek her advice on matters both small and great. Her reputation was such that was said she was never wrong — not ever.

Some of the children of the village didn’t believe that it was possible to always be right. Surely, she could not know everything! They decided to test her knowledge. First, they asked her to answer questions about the planets, the animals, and the world. No matter how hard the questions, she always answered correctly.

The children were amazed at her knowledge and learning and most were ready to stop testing the wise woman. However, one boy was determined to prove that the old woman couldn’t know everything. Hatching a devious scheme, he told all of his friends to meet him at the woman’s home the following afternoon so he could prove she was a faker.

All through the next day he hunted for a bird. Finally, he caught a small songbird in a net. Holding it behind his back so no one could see what was in his hands, he walked triumphantly to the wise woman’s home. (storytelling tip: take a wooden or stuffed bird and holds it behind your back.)

“Old woman!” he called. “Come and show us how wise you are!”

The woman walked calmly to the door. “May I help you?” she simply asked.

“You say you know everything — prove it — what am I holding behind my back?” the young boy demanded.

The old woman thought for a moment. She could make out the faint sounds of a bird’s wings rustling. “I do not say I know everything — for that would be impossible,” she replied. “However, I do believe you are holding a bird in your hands.”

The boy was furious. How could the woman have possibly known he had a bird? Thinking quickly, he came up with a new scheme. He would ask the woman whether the bird was alive or dead. If the woman replied, “alive,” he would crush it with his hands and prove her wrong. If she answered, “dead,” on the other hand, he would pull the living bird from behind his back and allow it to fly away. Either way he would prove his point and the wise woman would be discredited.

“Very good,” he called. “It is a bird. But tell me, is the bird I am holding alive or dead?”

The wise woman paused for a long moment while the boy waited with anticipation for his opportunity to prove her wrong. Again, the woman spoke calmly, “The answer, my young friend, is in your hands. The answer is in your hands.”

The boy realized that the wise woman had once again spoken correctly and truthfully. The answer was indeed in his own hands. Feeling the bird feebly moving in his hands as it tried to escape his grasp, he felt suddenly very ashamed.

The answer was in his hands — slowly and gently he brought his hands to the front of his body. Looking into the eyes of the delicate bird he apologized, “I am sorry little one,” and he opened his hands to let her go free.

*(Storyteller uses the sound instrument to signify that the story has ended.)*

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session11/story1>

# 3.24: *The Ugly Duckling* (1,496 words)

This story is abridged from one published by Hans Christian Anderson in 1844 and translated by H.P. Paull in 1872. (Hans Christian Anderson: Fairy Tales and Stories).

It was lovely summer weather in the country. A duck was on her nest, watching for her young brood to hatch. At length one shell cracked, and then another, and from each egg came a living creature that lifted its head and cried, “Peep, peep!” “Quack, quack,” said the mother, and then they all quacked as well as they could, and looked about them on every side at the large green leaves.

After a time, she asked “Are you all out?” “No, I declare,” she said, “the largest egg lies there still.”

At last the large egg broke, and a young one crept forth crying, “Peep, peep!” It was very large and ugly. The duck stared at it and exclaimed, “It is very large and not at all like the others. I wonder if it is a turkey. We shall soon find it out, however when we go to the water. It must go in, if I have to push it myself.”

On the next day the mother duck took her young brood down to the water, and jumped in with a splash. “Quack, quack,” cried she, and one after another the little ducklings jumped in. They swam about quite prettily with their legs paddling under them as easily as possible, and the ugly duckling was also in the water swimming with them.

“Oh,” said the mother, “that is not a turkey; how well he uses his legs, and how upright he holds himself! He is my own child, and he is not so very ugly after all if you look at him properly. Quack, quack! Come with me now, I will take you into grand society, and introduce you to the farmyard and to the other ducks, but you must keep close to me or you may be trodden upon; and, above all, beware of the cat.”

The ducklings did as they were bid, but the other ducks stared, and said, “What a queer looking object one of them is; we don’t want him here,” and then one flew out and bit him in the neck.

“Let him alone,” said the mother; “he is not doing any harm.”

“Yes, but he is so big and ugly,” said the spiteful duck “and therefore he must be turned out.”

The poor duckling was bitten and pushed and made fun of, not only by the ducks, but by all the poultry. “He is too big,” they all said, and the turkey flew at the duckling, so that the poor little thing did not know where to go, and was quite miserable because he was so ugly and laughed at by the whole farmyard. So, it went on from day to day till it got worse and worse. The poor duckling was driven about by everyone; even his brothers and sisters were unkind to him, and would say, “Ah, you ugly creature, I wish the cat would get you,” and his mother said she wished he had never been born. The ducks pecked him, the chickens beat him, and the girl who fed the poultry kicked him with her feet. So, at last he ran away, frightening the little birds in the hedge as he flew over the palings.

“They are afraid of me because I am ugly,” he said. So, he closed his eyes, and flew still farther, until he came out on a large moor, inhabited by wild ducks. Here he remained the whole night, feeling very tired and sorrowful.

In the morning, when the wild ducks rose in the air, they stared at their new comrade. “What sort of a duck are you?” they all said, coming round him.

He bowed to them, and was as polite as he could be, but he did not reply to their question. “You are exceedingly ugly,” said the wild ducks, “you cannot be one of our family.”

The duckling remained alone in the moor, where it loved to swim and dive, but was avoided by all other animals, because of its ugly appearance. Autumn came, and the leaves in the forest turned to orange and gold. Then, as winter approached, the wind caught them as they fell and whirled them in the cold air. The clouds, heavy with hail and snow-flakes, hung low in the sky, and the raven stood on the ferns crying, “Croak, croak.” All this was very sad for the poor little duckling. One evening, just as the sun set amid radiant clouds, there came a large flock of beautiful birds out of the bushes. The duckling had never seen any like them before. They were swans, and they curved their graceful necks, while their soft plumage shown with dazzling whiteness. They uttered a singular cry, as they spread their glorious wings and flew away from those cold regions to warmer countries across the sea. As they mounted higher and higher in the air, the ugly little duckling felt quite a strange sensation as he watched them. He whirled himself in the water like a wheel, stretched out his neck towards them, and uttered a cry so strange that it frightened himself. Could he ever forget those beautiful, happy birds; and when at last they were out of his sight, he dived under the water, and rose again almost beside himself with excitement. He knew not the names of these birds, nor where they had flown, but he felt towards them as he had never felt for any other bird in the world.

The winter grew colder and colder; he was obliged to swim about on the water to keep it from freezing, but every night the space on which he swam became smaller and smaller. At length it froze so hard that the ice in the water crackled as he moved, and the duckling had to paddle with his legs as well as he could, to keep the space from closing up. He became exhausted at last, and lay still and helpless, half frozen fast in the ice. It would be very sad, were I to relate all the misery and privations which the poor little duckling endured during the hard winter; but when it had passed, he found himself lying one morning in a moor, amongst the rushes. He felt the warm sun shining, and heard the lark singing, and saw that all around was beautiful spring. Then the young bird felt that his wings were strong, as he flapped them against his sides, and rose high into the air. They bore him onwards, until he found himself in a large garden, before he well knew how it had happened. The apple-trees were in full blossom, and everything looked beautiful, in the freshness of early spring. From a thicket close by came three beautiful white swans, rustling their feathers, and swimming lightly over the smooth water. The duckling remembered the lovely birds, and felt more strangely unhappy than ever.

“I will fly to those royal birds,” he exclaimed, “and they will kill me, because I am so ugly, and dare to approach them; but it does not matter: better be killed by them than pecked by the ducks, beaten by the hens, pushed about by the maiden who feeds the poultry, or starved with hunger in the winter.”

Then he flew to the water, and swam towards the beautiful swans. The moment they espied the stranger, they rushed to meet him with outstretched wings.

The duckling bent his head down to the surface of the water, and waited for death. But what did he see in the clear stream below? His own image; no longer a dark, gray bird, ugly and disagreeable to look at, but a graceful and beautiful swan. The great swans swam round the new-comer, and stroked his neck with their beaks, as a welcome.

Into the garden presently came some little children, and threw bread and cake into the water.

“See,” cried the youngest, “there is a new one;” and the rest were delighted, and ran to their father and mother, dancing and clapping their hands, and shouting joyously, “There is another swan come; a new one has arrived.”

Then they threw more bread and cake into the water, and said, “The new one is the most beautiful of all; he is so young and pretty.” And the old swans bowed their heads before him.

Then he felt quite ashamed, and hid his head under his wing; for he did not know what to do, he was so happy, and yet not at all proud. He had been persecuted and despised for his ugliness, and now he heard them say he was the most beautiful of all the birds. Even the elder-tree bent down its bows into the water before him, and the sun shone warm and bright. Then he rustled his feathers, curved his slender neck, and cried joyfully, from the depths of his heart, “I never dreamed of such happiness as this, while I was an ugly duckling.”

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/multigenerational/hebrewscriptures/workshop7/189184.shtml>

# 3.25: *Jelly Beans* by Isabel Champ Wolseley (503 words)

From Lighting Candles in the Dark: Stories of Courage and Love in Action (Philadelphia: Friends General Conference, 2001). Used by permission.

A family had all heard a story recently in church that included a verse from the bible that read, “If your enemy is hungry, feed them.” It was a confusing idea—be nice to your enemies, treat evil with good. And it seemed a really hard thing to do.

The children who were seven and ten were especially puzzled. “Why feed your enemy?” they wondered.

The parents wondered too.

Day after day, John Jr. came home from school complaining about a classmate who sat behind him in fourth grade. “Bob keeps jabbing me when Mrs. Bailey isn’t looking. One of these days when we’re out of the playground, I am going to jab him right back—at least.”

His parents weren’t too happy either, thinking that Bob was really a brat! Besides, they thought the teacher should be doing a better job with kids in the class. The parents sat at the table wondering what they were going to do when John’s seven-year-old sister, Amelia, spoke up: “Maybe he should feed Bob.”

Everyone stopped eating and stared, with John Jr. asking, “Because he is my enemy?” His sister nodded.

We all looked at each other quickly, clearly uncomfortable with thinking of Bob as an enemy. It didn’t seem as if an enemy could be in the fourth grade. An enemy was someone far off in another country, a grown-up.

John looked at us and asked, “What do you think?”

“Well,” his parents said, “God said it, so maybe you should try it. Do you know what Bob likes to eat? If you are going to feed him, you may as well feed him something he likes.”

Amelia asked, “Does he like goldfish?” which was her favorite snack.

No.

“How about cookies?” his mother who loved to bake asked.

“Maybe, but he can get cookies anywhere,” John answered.

Everyone was quiet.

Especially John.

“Jelly beans!” he shouted. “Bob just loves jelly beans.”

So, John bought a bag of jelly beans to take to school. We would see whether or not enemy feeding worked.

The next day, sure enough Bob jabbed John in the back. John turned around and slapped the bag of jelly beans on his enemy’s desk.

When the bus dropped John off at home, his mom was waiting for him. He got off the bus yelling, “It worked, it worked!”

“After he jabbed me, I gave him the jelly beans. He was so surprised he didn’t say anything—he just took them. But he didn’t jab me the rest of the day.”

Or the next day. Or the next. In fact, John became good friends with Bob, all because of a little bag of jelly beans. John also realized that Bob was never really his enemy. He was just someone John didn’t know. He was just someone who needed John to show him friendship.

Maybe people whom we think of as enemies are just hungry; maybe not for food, but for acts of kindness. Maybe. I think so. What do you think?

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/windows/session2/jelly-beans>

**4.0: Children’s Books about Kindness,**

***Kindness***

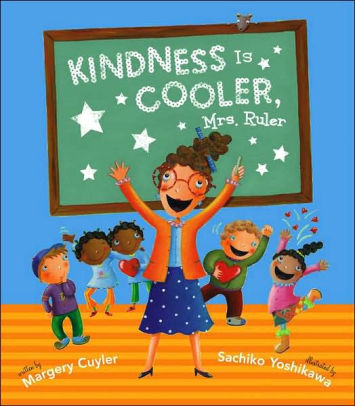
**4.1:** *Be Kind* by Pat Zietlow Miller, author and Jen Hill, illustrator (2018)

“When Tanisha spills grape juice all over her new dress, her classmate wants to make her feel better, wondering: *What does it mean to be kind?*’

“From asking the new girl to play to standing up for someone being bullied, this moving story explores what kindness is, and how any act, big or small, can make a difference—or at least help a friend.”

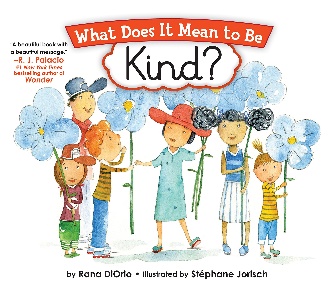
Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0W6CI1eg1eU> (7:02)

**4.2:** *Kindness Is Cooler, Mrs. Ruler* by Margery Cuyler, author and Sachiko Yoshikawa, illustrator (2007)

“When a kindergarten class gets rowdy, Mrs. Ruler knows just what to do. She’s about to teach a new golden rule: KINDNESS IS COOL! Soon the entire class is doing so many good deeds that their kindness bulletin board barely fits their classroom! From clearing the table after dinner, to helping the elderly, one kindergarten class is proving that kids really can make a difference. Count along with Mrs. Ruler’s class. Can all their good deeds really add up to 100 acts of kindness?”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UPO7P1gHAmo> (9:25)

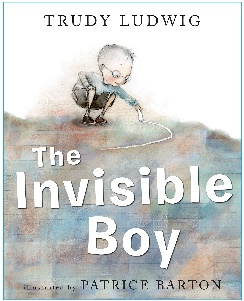
**4.3:** *What Does It Mean To Be Kind?* by Rana DiOrio, author and Stephane Jorisch, illustrator (2015)

“‘Being kind means... Smiling at the new student in class. Giving someone a compliment. Celebrating the differences in others.’

“When the girl in the red hat finds the courage to be kind to the new student in class, her kindness spreads. Kind act by kind act, her whole community experiences the magical shift that happens when everyone understands―and acts on―what it means to be kind. What Does it Mean to Be Kind? is a teacher must-have for the classroom, and for parents in search of kindness and feelings books for children.”

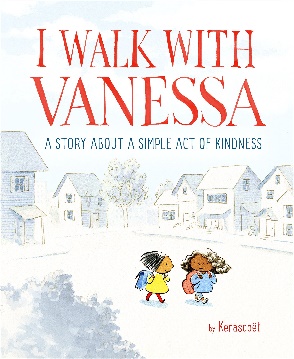
Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o873lAwzcR0> (4:17)

**4.4:** *The Invisible Boy* by Trudy Ludwig, author and Patrice Barton, illustrator

“Shy, quiet Brian feels invisible in the hustle and bustle of his classroom. Then a new student arrives and Brian sees an opportunity to make a friend. The Invisible Boy provides a gentle reminder of how it feels to be left out and how small acts of kindness — something as simple as saying hi — can make a big difference in someone’s life.”

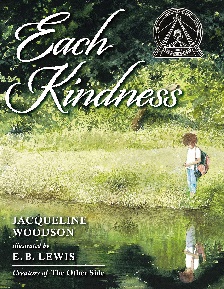
Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=okAJ62ia63Q> (5:18)

**4.5:** *I Walk with Vanessa: A Story About a Simple Act of Kindness* by Kerascoët, (aka Marie Pommepuy and Sébastien Cosset) (2018)

“This simple yet powerful picture book …tells the story of one girl who inspires a community to stand up to bullying. Inspired by real events, *I Walk with Vanessa* explores the feelings of helplessness and anger that arise in the wake of seeing a classmate treated badly, and shows how a single act of kindness can lead to an entire community joining in to help. By choosing only pictures to tell their story, the creators underscore the idea that someone can be an ally without having to say a word. With themes of acceptance, kindness, and strength in numbers, this timeless and profound feel-good story will resonate with readers young and old.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bF1FhV_Bw3w> (3:49)

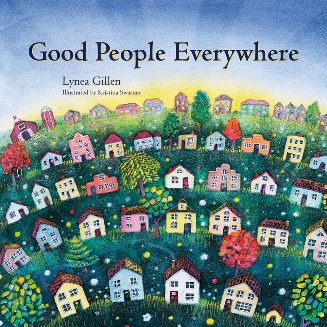
**4.6:** *Each Kindness* by [Jacqueline Woodson](https://www.amazon.com/Jacqueline-Woodson/e/B000APM3QO/ref=dp_byline_cont_ebooks_1), author and [E. B. Lewis](https://www.amazon.com/s/ref=dp_byline_sr_ebooks_2?ie=UTF8&field-author=E.+B.+Lewis&text=E.+B.+Lewis&sort=relevancerank&search-alias=digital-text), illustrator (2012)

“Chloe and her friends won’t play with the new girl, Maya. Every time Maya tries to join Chloe and her friends, they reject her. Eventually Maya stops coming to school. When Chloe’s teacher gives a lesson about how even small acts of kindness can change the world, Chloe is stung by the lost opportunity for friendship, and thinks about how much better it could have been if she’d shown a little kindness toward Maya.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WlNgYno4W14> (8:07)

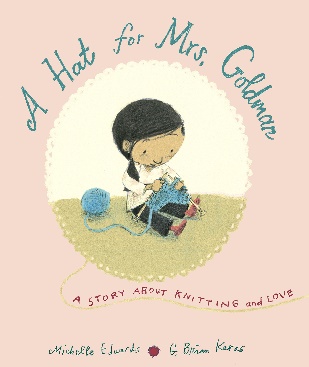
Teaching Resource: <https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/documents/assets/pdf/education-outreach/book-of-the-month-each-kindness.pdf>

**4.7:** *Good People Everywhere* by Lynea Gillen, author and Kristina Swarner, illustrator (2012)

“A colorful picture book that will warm the hearts of children and adults alike, each of its pages contain endearing examples and vibrant illustrations to inspire children to grow into grateful, caring, and giving people. It provides a wonderful way to calm children before sleep, ease their fears, and help them develop an appreciation for good work. Also included are activity pages to help children practice skills for creating gratitude, compassion, and beauty in daily life.”

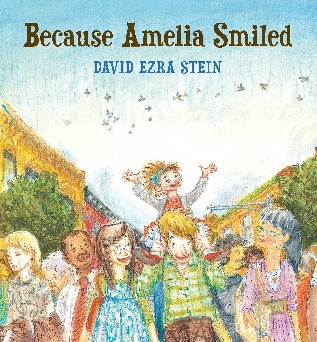
Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QJtSi6TBu7Q> (2:36)

**4.8:** *A Hat for Mrs. Goldman: A Story About Knitting and Love* by Michelle Edwards, author and G. Brian Karas, illustrator (2016)

“Mrs. Goldman always knits hats for everyone in the neighborhood, and Sophia, who thinks knitting is too hard, helps by making the pom-poms. But now winter is here, and Mrs. Goldman herself doesn’t have a hat-she’s too busy making hats for everyone else! It’s up to Sophia to buckle down and knit a hat for Mrs. Goldman. But try as Sophia might, the hat turns out lumpy, the stitches aren’t even, and there are holes where there shouldn’t be holes. Sophia is devastated until she gets an idea that will make Mrs. Goldman’s hat the most wonderful of all. Readers both young and old will relate to Sophia’s frustrations, as well as her delight in making something special for someone she loves.”

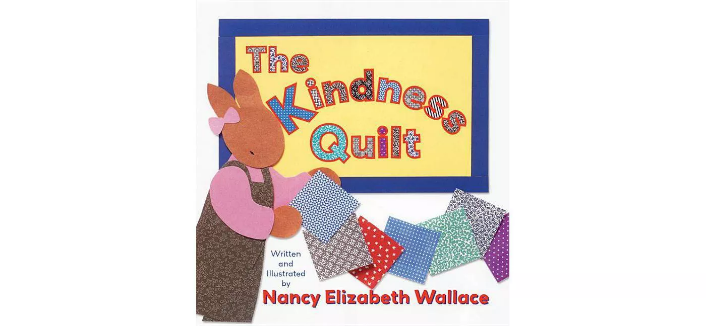
Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M1L002L_jro> (8:19)

**4.9:** *Because Amelia Smiled* by David Ezra Stein (2012)

“Because Amelia smiles as she skips down the street, her neighbor Mrs. Higgins smiles too, and decides to send a care package of cookies to her grandson Lionel in Mexico. The cookies give Lionel an idea, and his idea inspires a student, who in turn inspires a ballet troupe in England! And so, the good feelings that started with Amelia’s smile make their way around the world, from a goodwill recital in Israel, to an impromptu rumba concert in Paris, to a long-awaited marriage proposal in Italy, to a knitted scarf for a beloved niece back in New York. Putting a unique spin on ‘what goes around comes around. David Ezra Stein’s charmingly illustrated story reminds us that adding even a small dose of kindness into the world is sure to spur more and more kindness, which could eventually make its way back to you!”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RDmdGTrmGp8> (3:23)

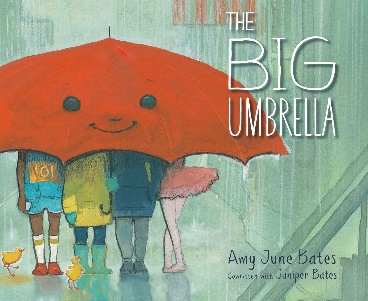
**4.10:** *The Kindness Quilt* by Nancy Elizabeth Wallace (2006)

“Random acts of kindness pictured on a paper quilt. Minna and her classmates have been asked by their teacher, Mrs. Bloom, to work on a Kindness Project. Mrs. Bloom wants them to do and draw and share an act of kindness. Minna and her family do lots of kind things, but Minna can’t decide which one is right for her project. Then she starts writing and drawing and cutting—and an idea for a paper quilt picturing many acts of kindness begins to take shape!”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WbC2mx4d8I4> (9:26)

Video of a craft: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ShQWELb8Nf4> (4:00)

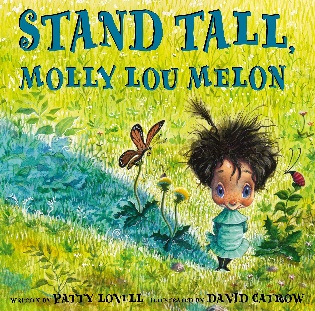
**4.11:** *The Big Umbrella* by Amy June Bates, author & illustrator and Juniper Bates, author (2018)

 “By the door there is an umbrella. It is big. It is so big that when it starts to rain there is room for everyone underneath. It doesn’t matter if you are tall. Or plaid. Or hairy. It doesn’t matter how many legs you have.

“Don’t worry that there won’t be enough room under the umbrella. Because there will always be room.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=c8g0363DaEU> (4:13)

**4.12:** *Stand Tall, Molly Lou Melon* by Patty Lovell, author and David Catrow, illustrator (2001)

 “Molly Lou Melon is short and clumsy, has buck teeth, and has a voice that sounds like a bullfrog being squeezed by a boa constrictor. She doesn’t mind. Her grandmother has always told her to walk proud, smile big, and sing loud, and she takes that advice to heart.

But then Molly Lou has to start in a new school. A horrible bully picks on her on the very first day, but Molly Lou Melon knows just what to do about that.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0PJbx6cUFo> (5:01)

**4.13:** *The Jelly Donut Difference: Sharing Kindness with the World* by Maria Dismondy, author and Patrick S. Brooks, illustrator (2017)

# The Jelly Donut Difference: Sharing Kindness with the World - Kindle edition by Dismondy, Maria C. Children Kindle eBooks @ Amazon.com.“Leah and Dexter are brother and sister. They don’t always get along. In fact, there are times they can be downright mean to each other. The ooey, gooey jelly donuts in this story are a testament to the power of kindness, caring, and generosity.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o62vknk2BAY> (5:48)

**4.14:** *Adrian Simcox Does NOT Have a Horse* by Marcy Campbell, author and Corinna Luyken, illustrator (2018)

# Adrian Simcox Does NOT Have a Horse: Campbell, Marcy, Luyken, Corinna: 9780735230378: Amazon.com: Books “Adrian Simcox tells anyone who will listen that he has a horse--the best and most beautiful horse anywhere. But Chloe does NOT believe him. Adrian Simcox lives in a tiny house. Where would he keep a horse? He has holes in his shoes. How would he pay for a horse? The more Adrian talks about his horse, the angrier Chloe gets. But when she calls him out at school and even complains about him to her mom, Chloe doesn’t get the vindication she craves. She gets something far more important. Written with tenderness and poignancy and gorgeously illustrated, this book will show readers that kindness is always rewarding, understanding is sweeter than judgment, and friendship is the best gift one can give.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZP5eL86vGpA> (5:34)

# 4.15: *Kind* by Alison Green, author and Beatrice Alemagna, illustrator (2019)

# Kind: Green, Alison: 9781407194561: Amazon.com: Books “Imagine a world where everyone is kind-how can we make that come true? With gorgeous pictures by a host of top illustrators, Kind is a timely, inspiring picture book about the many ways children can be kind, from sharing their toys and games to helping those from other countries feel welcome.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VYyLnke4pXU> (5:20)

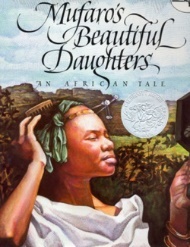
**4.16:** *Here Comes the Cat!* by Frank Asch, author & illustrator, and Vladimir Vasilʹevich Vagin, author & illustrator. (1989/2011)

In this first collaboration between an American author and a Soviet illustrator, a skeptical mouse warns his friends to run from a huge cat, constantly yelling, “Here comes the cat!” Only to finally realize that this is a friendly cat pulling a wagon full of cheese. A tale of fear meeting kindness.

Video Link: <https://archive.org/details/herecomesthecat201706011> (11:45) by Moscow Animation Studio (low sound quality)

Teaching Resource: <https://www.teachingchildrenphilosophy.org/BookModule/HereComesTheCat>

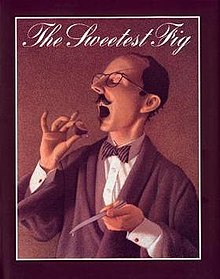
**4.17:** *Mufaro’s Beautiful Daughters: An African Tale* by John Steptoe (1987)

“Mufaro’s two daughters react in different ways to the King’s search for a wife—one is aggressive and selfish, the other kind and dignified. The king disguises himself to learn the true nature of both the girls and chooses Nyasha, the kind and generous daughter, to be the queen.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dP9cQkS8p2Q> (10:10)

Teaching Resource: <https://www.teachingchildrenphilosophy.org/BookModule/MufarosBeautifulDaughters>

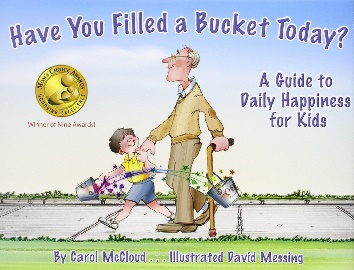
**4.18:** *The Sweetest Fig* by Chris van Allsburg (1993)

“‘These figs are very special,’ the woman whispered. ‘They can make your dreams come true.’ Thus, Monsieur Bibot, the cold-hearted dentist, was given two ordinary-looking figs as payment for extracting a tooth from an old woman’s mouth. Monsieur Bibot refused to believe such nonsense and proceeded to eat one of the figs for a bedtime snack. Although it was possibly the finest, sweetest fig he had ever tasted, it wasn’t until the next morning that Monsieur Bibot realized it indeed had the power to make his dreams come true. While dragging his poor dog, Marcel, out for his walk, he discovered that his strange dream from the night before was becoming all too real. Determined to make good use of the second fig, Monsieur Bibot learns to control is dreams. But can he control Marcel?”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9bNiJoUa8P4> (8:15)

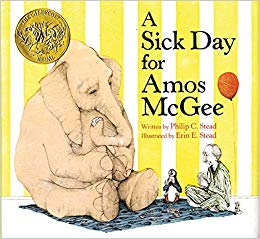
Teaching Resource: <https://www.teachingchildrenphilosophy.org/BookModule/TheSweetestFig>

**4.19:** *Have You Filled a Bucket Today? A Guide to Daily Happiness for Kids* by Carol McCloud, author and David Messing, illustrator (2015)

“While using a simple metaphor of a bucket and a dipper, author Carol McCloud illustrates that when we choose to be kind, we not only fill the buckets of those around us, but also fill our OWN bucket! Conversely, when we choose to say or do mean things, we are dipping into buckets. All day long, we are either filling up or dipping into each other’s buckets by what we say and what we do. When you’re a bucket filler, you make the world a better place to be!”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3EuemNAo6XE> (5:24)

**4.20:** *A Sick Day for Amos McGee* by Philip C. Stead, author and Erin E. Stead, illustrator (2010)

“Friends come in all sorts of shapes and sizes. In Amos McGee’s case, all sorts of species, too! Every day he spends a little bit of time with each of his friends at the zoo, running races with the tortoise, keeping the shy penguin company, and even reading bedtime stories to the owl. But when Amos is too sick to make it to the zoo, his animal friends decide it’s time they returned the favor.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nIU0ZFbHBKo> (4:51)

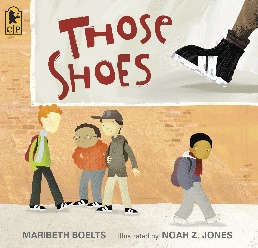
**4.21:** *Ordinary Mary’s Extraordinary Deed* by Emily Pearson, author and Fumi Kosaka, illustrator (2002)

 “A kindness story that promotes caring and compassionate behavior for children and adults.

“Can one child’s good deed change the world? It can when she’s Ordinary Mary―an ordinary girl from an ordinary school, on her way to her ordinary house―who stumbles upon ordinary blueberries. When she decides to pick them for her neighbor, Mrs. Bishop, she starts a chain reaction that multiplies around the world.”

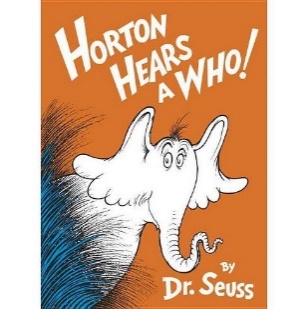
Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h08eyMPw_v0> (11:02)

**4.22:** *Those Shoes* by Maribeth Boelts, author and Noah Z. Jones illustrator (2009)

“Kindness and generosity take center stage as a young man chooses to look past his own desire to fit in and help someone else in need. This is a great discussion starter about peer pressure, kindness, and poverty.”

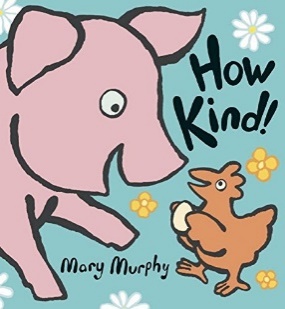
Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LjUFJEduguk> (6:47)

**4.23:** *Horton Hears a Who* by Dr. Seuss (1954)

“One day Horton, with his very big ears, hears a tiny yelp for help coming from a speck. The other jungle animals don’t know what he’s talking about, and they want to destroy the speck. Thus begins Horton’s epic journey to save the Whos. This classic Dr. Seuss tale is such a great way to teach kids that kindness is persistent and that any person, or elephant, can stand up for those who can’t stand up for themselves.”

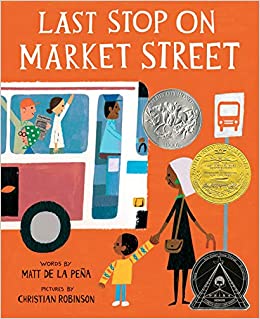
Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B-i1E1UbwVI> (12:52)

**4.24:** *How Kind!* by Mary Murphy (2004)

“Kindness is contagious. When Hen gives an egg to Pig, she starts a domino effect of kindness that spreads throughout the barnyard. This adorable board book is straightforward and simple in its message of expressing kindness to others.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ujy5GLr5q1E> (1:54)

**4.25:** *The Last Stop on Market Street* by Matt de la Peña, author and Christian Robinson, illustrator (2015)

“Messages of optimism, kindness, and serving those less fortunate than you are palpable in every word and page of this beautiful book. A grandmother teaches her grandson to look on the bright side of life and lift up those around him.”

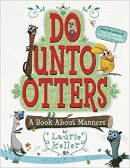
Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QoPS0Ok5YiI> (10:43)

**4.26:** *The Monster Who Lost His Mean* by Tiffany Strelitz Haber, author and Kirstie Edmunds, illustrator (2012)

“Excluded by the other monsters for losing his “M,” Onster goes in search of new friends. This simple story holds several messages about choosing good friends, self-confidence, peer pressure, and kindness.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UtYzQOco6nI> (4:32)

**4.27:** *Do Unto Otters: A Book About Manners* by Laurie Keller (2008)

“A family of otters moves in next door and Rabbit is worried. He doesn’t know anything about otters, but Owl teaches Rabbit to treat the otters with kindness — just the way he would want to be treated. This silly how-to book about the golden rule is both funny and enlightening.”

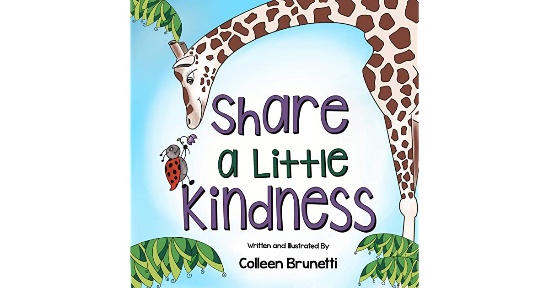
Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BzFn87w5kg0> (4:43)

**4.28:** *You Go First* by Mercer Mayer (2013)

“Everyone’s favorite critter learns a lesson in kindness in a way that’s relatable for children. Little Critter learns to put others first, be considerate, and show kindness through his words and actions.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MpFEulCWz5g> (7:54)

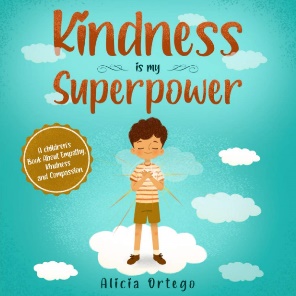
**4.29:** *Share a Little Kindness: A Children’s Book about Doing Good in the World*by Colleen Brunetti (2020)

 “If you could teach your child to be anything in this world, what would it be. Brave? Bold? Kind? Compassionate? Full of imagination? This book sets the stage, and begins.... Share a little kindness, Love. Be the good that others see.

“Look inside and you will find everything *that you can be.* This book is a wish. A wish for every child. A wish for the world.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kPm5pvDee7w> (5:15)

**4.30:** *Kindness is My Superpower: A children’s Book About Empathy, Kindness and Compassion* by Alicia Ortego (2020)

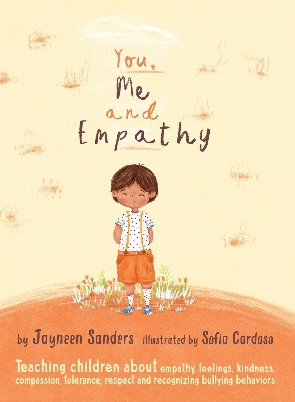
 “This charming story with peaceful rhymes and colorful illustrations will explain to your child that it is okay to make a mistake and say *I’m sorry*. Lucas will teach your child good manners and positive behavior at home, at school, in the store, and on the playground.

“With the perfect examples, this book offers, your child will have more understanding for others, accept diversity, thrive in a multicultural and inclusive environment, and show more empathy. Throughout the story, little superhero Lucas will learn what kindness means and understand what it is like to be kind, sensitive, caring, and generous.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=27O5M1L4r4A>

***Empathy***

**4.31:***You, Me and Empathy: Teaching children about empathy, feelings, kindness, compassion, tolerance and recognizing bullying behaviors* by Jayneen Sanders, author and Sofia Cardoso, illustrator) (2017)

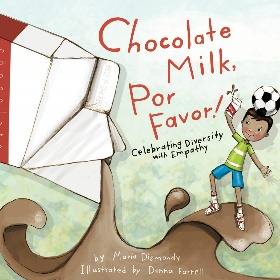
 “One of the most important social skills a child can learn is empathy. Being able to understand how another person is feeling and recognizing their needs helps people to connect to one another across race, culture and the diversity that is ever-present and so important to our world. This charming story uses verse, beautiful illustrations and a little person called Quinn to model the meaning of empathy. Throughout the story, Quinn shows an abundance of understanding, compassion and kindness towards others. Showing empathy towards others is a learnt trait, and one to nurture and cherish with the children in our care.

“Also included are Discussion Questions for parents, caregivers and educators, and suggested activities to promote empathy and kindness.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ySHwEmbbDrc> (7:12)

Teaching Resource: <https://www.teachstarter.com/us/blog/teaching-empathy-kindness-and-compassion-for-kids-2/>

**4.32:***Chocolate Milk, Por Favor: Celebrating Diversity with Empathy* by Maria Dismondy, author and Donna Farrell, illustrator (2015)

“It’s Gabe’s first day of school in America, and he doesn’t speak English. This story shows how a simple act of kindness is worth more than a thousand words. Kindness really is a universal language.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZnIGNmpaBOQ> (9:36)

Video about Gabe: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9kRivAFH2R8> (11:31)

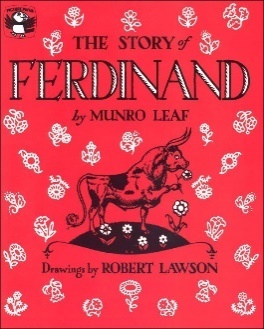
**4.33:** *One* by Kathryn Otoshi (2008)

“Blue is a quiet color. Red’s a hothead who likes to pick on Blue. Yellow, Orange, Green, and Purple don’t like what they see, but what can they do? When no one speaks up, things get out of hand — until One comes along and shows all the colors how to stand up, stand together, and count. As budding young readers learn about numbers, counting, and primary and secondary colors, they also learn about accepting each other’s differences and how it sometimes just takes one voice to make everyone count.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vrlUCPa01Z8> (4:05)

Enacting the Story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1TGaDSMAS1E> (5:54)

**4.34:** *Ferdinand the Bull* by Munro Leaf, author and Robert Lawson, illustrator (1936)

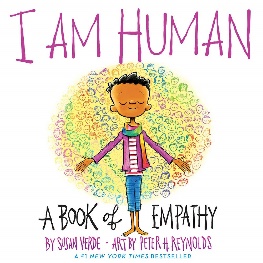
 “All the other bulls run, jump, and butt their heads together in fights. Ferdinand, on the other hand, would rather sit and smell the flowers. So what will happen when Ferdinand is picked for the bullfights in Madrid?  
 “The Story of Ferdinand has inspired, enchanted, and provoked readers ever since it was first published in 1936 for its message of nonviolence and pacifism. In WWII times, Adolf Hitler ordered the book burned in Nazi Germany, while Joseph Stalin, the leader of the Soviet Union, granted it privileged status as the only non-communist children’s book allowed in Poland.  
 “The preeminent leader of Indian nationalism and civil rights, Mahatma Gandhi—whose nonviolent and pacifistic practices went on to inspire Civil Rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr.—even called it his favorite book.  
 “The story was adapted by Walt Disney into a short animated film entitled Ferdinand the Bull in 1938. Ferdinand the Bull won the 1938 Academy Award for Best Short Subject (Cartoons).”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UN62cxSs5Q8> (7:55) (Disney from 1938)

Trailer for 2017 film, Ferdinand: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DY462I2E3IY> (2:31)

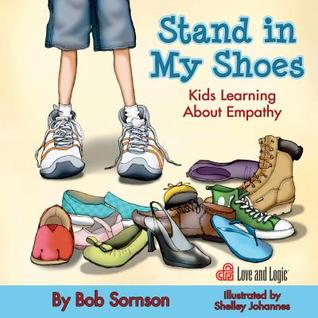
Article—*How “The Story of Ferdinand” Became Fodder for the Culture Wars of Its Era* by Bruce Handy (December 15, 2017): <https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/how-the-story-of-ferdinand-became-fodder-for-the-culture-wars-of-its-era>

**4.35:** *I Am Human: A Book of Empathy* by Susan Verde, author and Peter H. Reynolds, illustrator (2018)

 “*I Am Human* [is] A hopeful meditation on all the great (and challenging) parts of being human, I Am Human shows that it’s okay to make mistakes while also emphasizing the power of good choices by offering a kind word or smile or by saying ‘I’m sorry.’ At its heart, this picture book is a celebration of empathy and compassion that lifts up the flawed fullness of humanity and encourages children to see themselves as part of one big imperfect family—millions strong.”

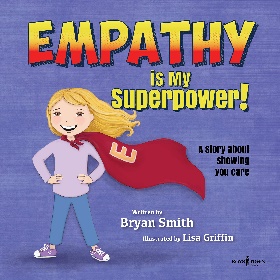
Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FoXlkTmL8q0> (3:33)

**4.36:** *Stand in My Shoes: Kids Learning About Empathy* by Bob Sornson, author and Shelley Johannes, illustrator (2013)

 “When Emily asks her big sister what the word empathy means, Emily has no idea that knowing the answer will change how she looks at people. But does it really matter to others if Emily notices how they’re feeling? Stand in My Shoes shows kids how easy it is to develop empathy toward those around them. Empathy is the ability to notice what other people feel. Empathy leads to the social skills and personal relationships which make our lives rich and beautiful, and it is something we can help our children learn. This book teaches young children the value of noticing how other people feel.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pS4p-7JVs00> (6:54)

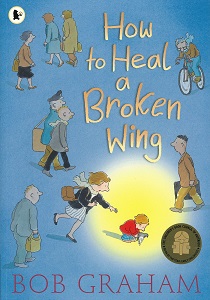
**4.37:** *Empathy Is My Superpower: A Story about Showing You Care* by Bryan Smith, author and Lisa Griffin, illustrator (2018)

“Why does her brother cry when it’s dark? Why does her classmate Kayla take so long to do her math? And what’s up with that strange-smelling dish that Priya brings to lunch every day? With the help of her parents, Amelia soon learns about the importance of empathy and starts to see the power it can have! Will Amelia be able to put her new-found skill to good use and help others find the strength in empathy as well?”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2aJ9E4cr4xo> (8:38)

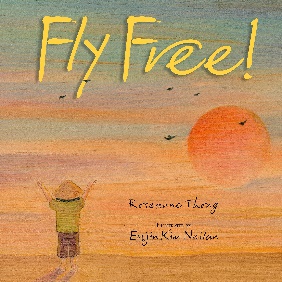
***Caring***

**4.38:** *How to Heal a Broken* Wing by Bob Graham (2008)

“In a city full of hurried people, only young Will notices the bird lying hurt on the ground. With the help of his sympathetic mother, he gently wraps the injured bird and takes it home. Wistful and uplifting in true Bob Graham fashion, here is a tale of possibility — and of the souls who never doubt its power.”

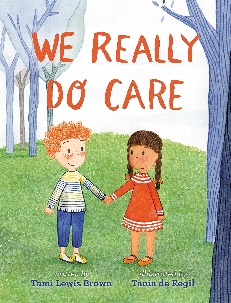
Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z1yDVsCd-xc> (6:05)

**4.39:** *Fly Free* by Roseanne Thong, author and Eujin Kim Neilan, illustrator (2010)

“When you do a good deed, it will come back to you. Mai loves feeding the caged birds near the temple but dreams that one day she'll see them fly free. Then she meets Thu and shares the joy of feeding the birds with her. This sets a chain of good deeds in motion that radiates throughout her village and beyond. Set in Vietnam….”

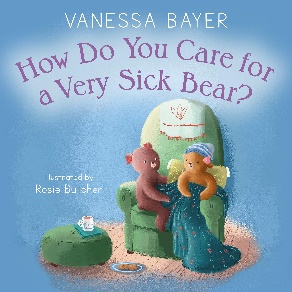
Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eMnBQR3gU30> (8:18)

**4.40:** *We Really Do Care* by Tami Lewis Brown, author and Tania de Regil, illustrator (2019)

“A little boy has a ball. It's his, and he really doesn't care if nobody else has a ball. He's not sharing. He's not sharing his pets either. Or his family. Especially not his brother. But then he realizes that both he and the new little girl he meets--the one who's all alone without a ball or a pet or a family of her own--are actually quite similar. And when he sees their similarities instead of their differences, he's happy to share. Even his little brother.”

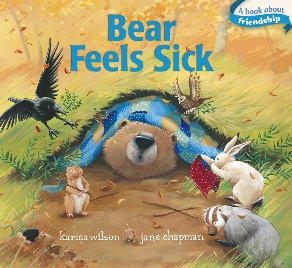
Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CF7Wiwgqa50> (3:34)

**4.41:** *How Do You Care for a Very Sick Bear?* by Vanessa Bayer, author and Rosie Butcher, illustrator

“When someone dear is dealing with illness, it's difficult to know what to do or say. The actor Vanessa Bayer experienced this firsthand when she was treated for childhood leukemia. In her first children's book, she offers gentle, reassuring advice that people of all ages will appreciate.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=swZCeJ3l4R4> (4:45) followed by a discussion with the author

Interview with Author: <https://www.today.com/video/vanessa-bayer-on-the-personal-story-behind-her-new-children-s-book-61142085787> (4:35)

**4.42:** *Bear Feels Sick* by Karma Wilson, author and Jane Chapman illustrator (2007)

“When Bear isn't feeling well, his loyal and trustworthy friends stop by to help him to "get well soon" …. Sweet Bear isn't feeling well at all. He is achy, sneezy, wheezy, and just plain sick! He's in no shape to go outside to play. So, Mole, Hare, Mouse, and the rest of the gang try to make Bear feel as comfortable as possible in his cave. Bear starts to get better--but as soon as Bear is well, all of his friends get sick!”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w-fLRiPi0Ww> (3:46)

**5.0: Music, Videos, and Related Resources for Children**

# 5.1: Music

# 5.1.1: *Be Kind Song* by Joe Reilly with children (3:31)

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zc4JLltnYsY>

# 5.1.2: *True Colors* Cyndi Lauper 2019 by PS22 Chorus (2:31)

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Dlle2mNwslI>

# 5.1.3: *Don’t Give Up on Me* by Andy Grammer with PS22 Chorus

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KL9qp0FNEzU>

# 5.1.4: *The Lovingkindness Song* by Charity Kahn (3:28)

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7YGaumwvKyM>

# 5.1.5: *Kindness* by The Juicebox (3:18)

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H98Rfljxmsc>

# 5.1.6: *Kindness is a Muscle* by Universal Kids ft. William Alexander, Mimi Ryder, Gloria Manning, and Aidan Prince (2:54)

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tP4gLX8FBDA>

# 5.1.7: *Try a Little Kindness* with Tori Kelly from Sesame Street (1:54)

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=enaRNnEzwi4>

# 5.2: Videos

# 5.2.1: *A short story on kindness* posted by Jigyasa Vyas (3:05)

# A charming story about Oscar, the dog, and a mama bird

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Wi0UWLeT9I>

# 5.2.2: *Color Your World with Kindness* (2:13)

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rwelE8yyY0U>

**6.0: Curriculum & Theme-Based Classroom Activities for Children**

# Tapestry of Faith

# *Kindness*

**6.1: Wonderful Welcome: A Program for Children Grades K-1**

**6.1.1:** *Session 4: The Gift of Kindness*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session4>

This session will:

* Introduce kindness as an intangible gift
* Explore the Golden Rule and reveal opportunities for children to use it
* Show how kindness is a way of living our Unitarian Universalist Principles
* Demonstrate that authentic welcoming must include kindness
* Engage participants in the spiritual practices of opening and closing rituals.

**6.2: World of Wonder: A Program on the Seven Principles of Unitarian Universalism for Grades K-1**

**6.2.1:** *Session 11: Kindness in Nature*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/wonder/session11>

Participants will:

* Consider kindness among non-human creatures, through real-life stories about animals helping people or one another and a Buddhist Jataka tale in which an ibex models kindness
* Develop their emotional intelligence, by observing and experiencing kindness and thinking of ways they can be helpful and kind
* Role play stories based on acts of helping and kindness
* Experience leadership roles in the group.

**6.3: Moral Tales: A Program on Making Choices for Grades 2-3**

**6.3.1:** *Session 8: Do unto Others*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session8>

“Participants will:

* Participate in the “Gems of Goodness” exercise
* Hear a story illustrating an act of compassion for a stranger
* Participate in a cooperative game in which they think about how they would like to be treated, and have an opportunity to treat others with care
* Imagine how they might apply the Golden Rule to a variety of scenarios
* Visualize and portray the concept that all people are our neighbors
* Optional: Planning a faith in action projects in which they will practice reaching out with kindness to neighbors near and far.”

**6.4: Love Connects Us: A Program on Living in Unitarian Universalist Covenant for Grades 4-5**

**6.4.1:** *Session 9: Kindness is the Key*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveconnects/session9>

Participants will:

* Give examples of how they embody their faith through acts of peace-building
* Learn the true story of “The Christmas Truce,” about opposing soldiers who chose to create a brief time of peace on a World War I battlefield
* Embody the “tied together” theme of the curriculum in a multi-legged race
* Consider their full range of options for action in conflict situations
* Practice creative conflict-resolution skills by acting out different solutions to a conflict.

**6.5: Amazing Grace: A Program about Exploring Right and Wrong for Grade 6**

**6.5.1:** *Session 15: Saving the World*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/grace/session15>

This session will:

* Explore the power of the individual
* Consider the nature of universal love
* Plan and practice random acts of kindness

# *Empathy*

**6.6: Moral Tales: A Program on Making Choices for Grades 2-3**

**6.6.1:** *Session 4: In Another’s Shoes*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session4>

“This session will:

* Give participants an opportunity to share acts of goodness that they have done (or witnessed)
* Provide a story and active experiences that demonstrate the meaning of the word ‘Empathy’ and how empathy feels
* Teach that an important part of acting out of goodness is to look at things from other perspectives besides one’s own
* Help participants learn to identify, respect and value the perspectives and experiences of others which differ from their own
* Strengthen participants’ connection to and sense of responsibility to their faith community”

**6.6.2:** *Session 6: Welcome One and All*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session6>

“This session will:

* Present welcome without prejudgment as a corollary to the first Unitarian Universalist principle: the inherent worth and dignity of every person
* Focus participants’ attention on the congregation as a place where everyone is welcome
* Highlight situations of exclusion and help participants develop empathy for those who are excluded
* Make a connection between justice and the inclusion of all people
* Foster welcoming of all people regardless of apparent differences
* Help participants recognize the injustice inherent in prejudgment”

**6.7: Love Will Guide Us: A Program for Grades 2-3 that Applies the Wisdom of the Six Sources to the Big Questions**

**6.7.1:** *Session 8: Love Is Accepting*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveguide/session8>

“Participants will:

* Experience the fourth Source of Unitarian Universalism, “Jewish and Christian teachings which tell us to love all other as we love ourselves,” through a story from Hebrew scripture
* Understand that a Unitarian Universalist faith guides us to accept everyone as they are—the same way we want to be accepted—regardless of how someone’s behavior matches the gender we perceive them to be
* Explore gender roles and stereotypes in an age-appropriate manner
* Build emotional self-awareness, emotional expression, and empathy.”

**6.8: Faithful Journeys: A Program about Pilgrimages of Faith in Action for Grades 2-3**

**6.8.1:** *Session 3: Welcoming Superman*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/journeys/session3>

“This session will:

* Use the story of Christopher Reeve and his work on behalf of people with spinal cord injuries to explore the first Unitarian Universalist Principle, the inherent worth and dignity of every person
* Educate and encourage participants to live the first Principle by being careful to welcome all people by making sure places are accessible to all
* Foster participants’ empathy
* Demonstrate how to honor different people’s individual gifts
* Teach children how they can and do express their faith — their ideas of right and wrong, their values, and their beliefs — with real actions.”

**6.9: Heeding the Call: A Program on Justice-making for Junior High School Youth**

**6.9.1:** *Workshop 4: The Call for Empathy*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/call/workshop4>

This workshop will:

* Identify empathy as a quality needed to bring about a more just world
* Examine how we can act with empathy in big and small ways
* Examine how words can demonstrate empathy
* Connect affirming and promoting the inherent worth and dignity of every person (first Principle) to fulfilling people’s basic needs.

# *Caring*

**6.10: Love Surrounds Us: A Program on the UU Principles and Beloved Community for Grades K-1**

**6.19.1:** *Session 15: Caring for the Earth*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/lovesurrounds/session15>

This session will:

* Introduce the Unitarian Universalist seventh Principle: We believe in caring for our planet Earth and every living thing that shares it with us
* Affirm that although people have damaged our world it is not too late for people to save it
* Develop understanding that we can show love for the earth by actively participating in planet-affirming activities.

# Helping

**6.11: Chalice Children: A Program about Our Unitarian Universalist Community for Preschoolers**

**6.11.1:** *Session 10: Helping Others*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/chalicechildren/session10>

Participants will:

* Understand that caring for others is an important part of being a Unitarian Universalist
* Express their own caring by creating cards for people who are lonely or sick
* Connect the story with their caring feelings.

# *Other Resources*

**6.12: Kindness Curriculum for Pre-K & Kindergarten** by Richard Davidson

The *Kindness Curriculum* is a free 24-lesson guide designed to help pre-k and kindergarten students attend to their emotions, self-regulate, and care for themselves and others. Developed and researched by the Center for Healthy Minds at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, the *Kindness Curriculum* has shown to have a positive impact on academic performance, peer relationships, and teacher-perceived social competence.

Link: <https://centerhealthyminds.org/join-the-movement/sign-up-to-receive-the-kindness-curriculum>

Or <https://www3.pbswisconsineducation.org/kindness>

**6.13:** **Kindness: A Lesson Plan** by Rebecca Alber

Classroom activities and resources for developing a vital character trait.

Link: <https://www.edutopia.org/blog/kindness-lesson-plan-rebecca-alber>

**6.14: Kindness Curriculum** by Random Acts of Kindness Foundation

**6.14.1:** *K-5 Kindness Curriculum* by Random Acts of Kindness Foundation

Six grade-level curricula, each with six units that cover aspects of kindness: Respect, Caring, Inclusiveness, Integrity, Responsibility & Courage

Link: <https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/kindergarten-grade-5-lesson-plans>

**6.14.2:** *6-8 Kindness Curriculum* by Random Acts of Kindness Foundation

Three grade-level curricula, each with six units that cover aspects of kindness: Respect, Caring, Inclusiveness, Integrity, Responsibility & Courage

Link: <https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/grade-6-8-lesson-plans>

**6.15: 40 Kindness Activities & Empathy Worksheets** for Students and Adults by Courtney E. Ackerman, MSc.

Sources: <https://positivepsychology.com/kindness-activities-empathy-worksheets/>

**6.16: Teaching Tolerance: Understanding Empathy** (grades 3-5)

Link: <https://www.tolerance.org/classroom-resources/tolerance-lessons/understanding-empathy>

**6.17: Start Empathy: A Toolkit for Promoting Empathy in Schools** (85 pages)

Link: <https://startempathy.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/StartEmpathy_Toolkit.pdf>

**Resources for Youth & Adults**

**7.0: Reflections, Readings, Stories & Poetry**

**7.1:** *Kindness: A Public Statement of Personal Dignity* by Christopher Titmuss (244 words)

We can bring loving kindness into many features of our life. There is something very satisfying about contributing to the happiness and security of others, although caring …makes us vulnerable. We might be misunderstood, overstretched, or caught up in conflict.

…We may profoundly disagree with other people. We may not feel any sympathy for their values and decisions, but we do not have to build a wall of resistance against them. Let’s never forget that our blood is all of one color. If we believe they are truly different, we cannot act wisely in the face of fresh information. When our mind hardens, it forms a barrier to our deeper feelings. Then we may make cold, negative judgements that probably won’t serve the true interests of others. Where there is kindness, we are willing to struggle with difficult decisions out of respect for others and ourselves.

Some people get the idea that living with kindness is a mistake. Kind people always get walked over, they claim, and so they harden their hearts so that nobody can reach them. That same defensive wall also stops them from reaching deep within themselves. There are risks in kindness. The most obvious one is being taken advantage of by the selfish and the unscrupulous. Yes, that happens, but authentic kindness, tempered with equanimity, will not wither under such exploitation. Our kindness is then a public statement of personal dignity. Furthermore, a good conscience makes for a soft pillow.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/13577>

**7.2:** *How to Start a Kindness Revolution* by Jill Suttie (267 words)

Kindness. That’s a word we don’t hear a lot these days. Perhaps it seems antiquated in our competitive, social-media-infused, politically contentious culture—reserved for fools and chumps, not for those who want to get ahead.

But nothing could be further from the truth, according to Tara Cousineau, researcher and author of the new book *The Kindness Cure*. In today’s world, she argues, we need to cultivate kindness more than ever—not only for the sake of our society, but for our own well-being.

Cousineau points out that we are wired for kindness—that it’s part of our biological heritage, designed to help us foster relationships, work together, and survive in groups. When we are kind to others, it releases neurochemicals in our bodies that increase trust and give us a warm feeling.

Research suggests that being kind toward others is associated with better and stronger mental and physical health, relationships, life satisfaction, communities, and even economies, writes Cousineau. Her book points to some of the research behind these claims, but it is mainly a how-to on starting a kindness revolution—and overcoming barriers to kindness.

…It can be hard to be kind, particularly when we’re stressed out or emotionally spent. …Reactive behavior tears at the fabric of our relationships—at the interpersonal, workplace, and even societal level—making it harder to feel good and to accomplish common goals.

…Cousineau suggests [the following] …

* Reset your stress…
* Practice awareness…
* Use positive conditioning…
* Create circles of caring and kindness…

…As Cousineau writes, “The kindness cure is not just for you, it’s for all of us.”

Source: <https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/how_to_start_a_kindness_revolution>

**7.3:** *The Kind Life* by Adam Phillips and Barbara Taylor (220 words)

The kind life — the life lived in instinctive sympathetic identification with the vulnerabilities and attractions of others — is the life we are more inclined to live, and indeed is the one we are often living without letting ourselves know that this is what we are doing. People are leading secretly kind lives all the time but without a language in which to express this, or cultural support for it. Living according to our sympathies, we imagine, will weaken or overwhelm us; kindness is the saboteur of the successful life. We need to know how we have come to believe that the best lives we can lead seem to involve sacrificing the best things about ourselves; and how we have come to believe that there are pleasures greater than kindness…

In one sense kindness is always hazardous because it is based on a susceptibility to others, a capacity to identify with their pleasures and sufferings. Putting oneself in someone else’s shoes, as the saying goes, can be very uncomfortable. But if the pleasures of kindness — like all the greatest human pleasures — are inherently perilous, they are nonetheless some of the most satisfying we possess.

[…]

In giving up on kindness — and especially our own acts of kindness — we deprive ourselves of a pleasure that is fundamental to our sense of well-being.

Source: On Kindness by Adam Phillips and Barbara Taylor

**7.4:** *Practice Kindness* by Jack Kerouac (88 words)

The world you see is just a movie in your mind.  
Rocks don’t see it.  
Bless and sit down.  
Forgive and forget.  
Practice kindness all day to everybody  
and you will realize you’re already  
in heaven now.  
That’s the story.  
That’s the message.  
Nobody understands it,  
nobody listens, they’re  
all running around like chickens with heads cut  
off. I will try to teach it but it will  
be in vain, s’why I’ll  
end up in a shack  
praying and being  
cool and singing  
by my woodstove  
making pancakes.

Source: <https://www.brainpickings.org/2014/03/12/jack-kerouac-golden-eternity/>

**7.5:** *The Kind Life* by Adam Phillips and Barbara Taylor (220 words)

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[…]

In giving up on kindness — and especially our own acts of kindness — we deprive ourselves of a pleasure that is fundamental to our sense of well-being.

Source: On Kindness by Adam Phillips and Barbara Taylor

**7.6:** *Consider Kindness* by Albert Einstein (127 words)

How strange is the lot of us mortals! Each of us is here for a brief sojourn; for what purpose he knows not, though he sometimes thinks he senses it. But without deeper reflection one knows from daily life that one exists for other people — first of all for those upon whose smiles and well-being our own happiness is wholly dependent, and then for the many, unknown to us, to whose destinies we are bound by the ties of sympathy. A hundred times every day I remind myself that my inner and outer life are based on the labors of other men, living and dead, and that I must exert myself in order to give in the same measure as I have received and am still receiving.

Source: <https://www.brainpickings.org/2012/03/19/einstein-on-kindness/>

**7.7:** *This Perfect Moment, Called Now* by Jacqueline Woodson (272 words)

Dear Young Reader,

In my memoir, *Brown Girl Dreaming*, I write about “this perfect moment, called Now.” I am thinking about this as I lie beside my seven-year-old son, reading to him from a book I at first disliked but have grown to appreciate over the evenings of reading.

…I impulsively kiss the top of my son’s mohawked head (he wants us to let him dye it green — maybe we will — after all, you’re only seven once) and he looks up at me, brow furrowed.

“Why are you kissing me in the middle of the sentence?!”

“Because this moment won’t always be here,” I say.

“Mommy — just read… please.”

…The book I am reading to my son is about a troll who is despised in his small town, loves a girl who may or may not love him back. We’ve just found out the girl is the daughter of Little Red Riding Hood and now the story has my attention — a twist I didn’t see coming.

“I don’t know why the king is so mean,” my son says. “That’s not kindness, right Mommy?”

I refrain from kissing the top of his head again and try not to think that this moment of my youngest child beside me, the two of us inside one story, won’t always be here. This now is what matters, young reader. The moment we’re all living in is what counts — how will this moment, and the stories we’re living inside of change us… forever. …“That’s not kindness, right Mommy?” This is what reading does. This is what matters most. I smile and turn the page.

Sincerely,

*Jacqueline Woodson*

Source: <https://www.brainpickings.org/2019/04/15/jacqueline-woodson-velocity-of-being/>

**7.8:** *Be Cool to the Pizza Dude* by Sarah Adams (248 words)

If I have one operating philosophy about life it is this: ''Be cool to the pizza delivery dude; it's good luck.'' Four principles guide the pizza dude philosophy.  
 Principle 1: Coolness to the pizza delivery dude is a practice in humility and forgiveness. I let him cut me off in traffic…. …After all, the dude is delivering pizza to young and old, families and singletons, gays and straights, blacks, whites and browns, rich and poor, vegetarians and meat lovers alike. …

Principle 2: Coolness to the pizza delivery dude is a practice in empathy. Let's face it: We've all taken jobs just to have a job because some money is better than none. …In the big pizza wheel of life, sometimes you're the hot bubbly cheese and sometimes you're the burnt crust. …

Principle 3: Coolness to the pizza delivery dude is a practice in honor and it reminds me to honor honest work. Let me tell you something about these dudes: They never took over a company and, as CEO, …[brought] the company to the brink of bankruptcy, resulting in 20,000 people losing their jobs while the CEO builds a home the size of a luxury hotel. Rather, the dudes sleep the sleep of the just.

Principle 4: Coolness to the pizza delivery dude is a practice in equality. …I am the equal of the world …because of the kindness in my heart. And it all starts here -- with the pizza delivery dude.

Tip him well….

Source: <https://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?tid=2137>

**7.9:** *Kindness Devalued* by Adam Phillips and Barbara Taylor (195 words)

Today it is only between parents and children that kindness is expected, sanctioned, and indeed obligatory… Kindness — that is, the ability to bear the vulnerability of others, and therefore of oneself — has become a sign of weakness (except of course among saintly people, in whom it is a sign of their exceptionality) … All compassion is self-pity, D. H. Lawrence remarked, and this usefully formulates the widespread modern suspicion of kindness: that it is either a higher form of selfishness (the kind that is morally triumphant and secretly exploitative) or the lowest form of weakness (kindness is the way the weak control the strong, the kind are only kind because they haven’t got the guts to be anything else). If we think of humans as essentially competitive, and therefore triumphalist by inclination, as we are encouraged to do, then kindness looks distinctly old-fashioned, indeed nostalgic, a vestige from a time when we could recognize ourselves in each other and feel sympathetic because of our kind-ness… And what, after all, can kindness help us win, except moral approval; or possibly not even that, in a society where “respect” for personal status has become a leading value.

Source: On Kindness by Adam Phillips and Barbara Taylor

**7.10:** *Try to Be Kinder* by George Saunders (396 words)

I’d say, as a goal in life, you could do worse than: *Try to be kinder*.

In seventh grade, this new kid joined our class. In the interest of confidentiality, her name will be “ELLEN.” ELLEN was small, shy. She wore these blue cat’s-eye glasses that, at the time, only old ladies wore. When nervous, which was pretty much always, she had a habit of taking a strand of hair into her mouth and chewing on it.

So, she came to our school and our neighborhood, and was mostly ignored, occasionally teased (“Your hair taste good?” — that sort of thing). I could see this hurt her. I still remember the way she’d look after such an insult: eyes cast down, a little gut-kicked, as if, having just been reminded of her place in things, she was trying, as much as possible, to disappear. After a while, she’d drift away, hair-strand still in her mouth. At home, I imagined, after school, her mother would say, you know: “How was your day, sweetie?” and she’d say, “Oh, fine.” And her mother would say, “Making any friends?” and she’d go, “Sure, lots.”

Sometimes I’d see her hanging around alone in her front yard, as if afraid to leave it.

And then — they moved. That was it. No tragedy, no big final hazing.

One day she was there, next day she wasn’t.

End of story.

Now, why do I regret that? Why, forty-two years later, am I still thinking about it? Relative to most of the other kids, I was actually pretty nice to her. I never said an unkind word to her. In fact, I sometimes even (mildly) defended her.

But still. It bothers me.

So, here’s something I know to be true, although it’s a little corny, and I don’t quite know what to do with it:

What I regret most in my life are failures of kindness.

Those moments when another human being was there, in front of me, suffering, and I responded … sensibly. Reservedly. Mildly.

Or, to look at it from the other end of the telescope: Who, in your life, do you remember most fondly, with the most undeniable feelings of warmth?

Those who were kindest to you, I bet.

But kindness, it turns out, is *hard*— it starts out all rainbows and puppy dogs, and expands to include . . . well, *everything*.

Source: <https://www.brainpickings.org/2014/04/28/george-saunders-on-kindness-animated/>

**7.11:** *Kindness: Longing and Dread* by Adam Phillips and Barbara Taylor (194 words)

The child’s first, formative trauma is his growing acknowledgment of his need for others (in actuality the mother is as vulnerable to her need for her baby as the baby is to his need for her; parents need their children not to worry them too much). The needy child experiences a trauma of concern (“How can I take care of my mother to ensure that she takes care of me?”), which calls up his natural kindness; but this concern — and the later forms of kindness that emerge from it — is too easily turned away from. This turning away we call self-sufficiency, and when we want to pathologize it we call it narcissism. The pleasure of kindness is that it connects us with others; but the terror of kindness is that it makes us too immediately aware of our own and other people’s vulnerabilities (vulnerabilities that we are prone to call failings when we are at our most frightened). Vulnerability — particularly the vulnerability we call desire — is our shared biological inheritance. Kindness, in other words, opens us up to the world (and worlds) of other people in ways that we both long for and dread.

Source: On Kindness by Adam Phillips and Barbara Taylor

**7.12:** *Up From The Ashes* by Charlie Chaplin (222 words)

I'm sorry but I don't want to be an Emperor. That's not my business. I don't want to rule or conquer anyone.

I should like to help everyone if possible. We all want to help one another—human beings are like that. We all want to live by each other's happiness, not by each other's misery. We don't want to hate and despise one another. In this world there is room for everyone and the earth is rich and can provide for everyone.

The way of life can be free and beautiful. But we have lost the way.

Greed has poisoned …souls, has barricaded the world with hate, has goose-stepped us into misery and bloodshed. We have developed speed, but we have shut ourselves in: machinery that gives abundance has left us in want. Our knowledge has made us cynical, our cleverness hard and unkind. We think too much and feel too little: more than machinery we need humanity; more than cleverness we need kindness and gentleness. Without these qualities, life will be violent and all will be lost.

…Let us fight to free the world, to do away with national barriers, do away with greed, with hate and intolerance. Let us fight for a world of reason, a world where science and progress will lead to …happiness. Let us all unite!

(Charlie Chaplin, excerpted from The Great Dictator (1940))

Source: <https://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?tid=781>

### 7.13: *The Importance of Kindness* by Karyn Hall Ph.D. (268 words)

Kindness is defined as the quality of being friendly, generous, and considerate. Affection, gentleness, warmth, concern, and care are words that are associated with kindness. While kindness has a connotation of meaning someone is naive or weak, that is not the case. Being kind often requires courage and strength. Kindness is an interpersonal skill.

You've heard about survival of the fittest and Darwin. Survival of the fittest is usually associated with selfishness, meaning that to survive (a basic instinct) means to look out for yourself. But Darwin, who studied human evolution, actually didn't see mankind as being biologically competitive and self-interested. Darwin believed that we are a profoundly social and caring species. He argued that sympathy and caring for others is instinctual (DiSalvo, Scientific American, 2017)

…There are different ways to practice kindness. One way to be kind is to open your eyes and be active when you see people in need. Do you notice when people could use a helping hand? A sense of community is created when people are kind to those who need help.

…Kindness is also about telling the truth in a gentle way when doing so is helpful to the other person. Receiving accurate feedback in a loving and caring way is an important part of a trusted relationship. The courage to give and receive truthful feedback is a key component of growth and flexible thinking.

Kindness includes being kind to yourself. Do you treat yourself kindly? Do you speak gently and kindly to yourself and take good care of yourself?

There are many ways to be kind and many opportunities to practice.

Source: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/pieces-mind/201712/the-importance-kindness>

**7.14:** *Radiating Photons of Goodwill* by Marc Ian Barasch (221 words)

Every now and then, I'll meet an escapee, someone who has broken free of self-centeredness and lit out for the territory of compassion. You've met them, too, those people who seem to emit a steady stream of, for want of a better word, love-vibes. As soon as you come within range, you feel embraced, accepted for who you are. For those of us who suspect that you rarely get something for nothing, such geniality can be discomfiting. Yet it feels so good to be around them. They stand there, radiating photons of goodwill, and despite yourself you beam back, and the world, in a twinkling, changes.

…Thus, it is, say the sages, that the harvest of kindness—of kindredness—is winnowed down to a precious few grains. For at the center of all spiritual traditions is the beacon of a truly radical proposal: Open your heart to everybody. Everybody.

Is this even possible?

Nelson Mandela once remarked that he befriended his jailers, those grim, khaki-clad overseers of his decades of hard labor in a limestone quarry, by "exploiting their good qualities." Asked if he believed all people were kind at their core, he responded, "There is no doubt whatsoever, provided you are able to arouse their inherent goodness." If that sounds like wishful thinking, well, he actually did it.

Source: <https://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?tid=633>

**7.15:** *In Search of Kindness* by Omid Safi (244 words)

…Each person brings out a different quality in us. It’s almost like a musical symphony, where each person brings out different “notes” in us. Some people bring out something in us that is kind, generous, and loving. Others bring us qualities of frustration, anger, and resentment.

…I am grateful for any and every encounter—yes, even the ones that left me brokenhearted. Now I know that even the brokenness made me seek the healing. We cannot seek water without thirst. And when I come across people who carry their own pain and suffering—which is all of us, each and every single one — having had my own pain makes it so much more real, more personal, more immediate to sit with them and their pain. We are rarely more human than we are when we see the suffering in one another.

…[So,] give me kindness above all else. It is kindness that I would choose in the person to spend my life with. Kindness in the love glances. Kindness in the touch. Kindness in the listening. Kindness in understanding.

Kindness is love embodied, love that touches us as we would wish to be touched.

May you, we, each of us, be embraced and welcomed into the kind embrace of a kind friend, a kind lover, a kind beloved, a kind neighbor, a kind family.

Let us praise kindness.

Let us seek kindness.  
 Let us cherish kindness.  
 Let us embrace kindness.  
 Let us radiate kindness.

Source: <https://onbeing.org/blog/in-search-of-kindness/>

**7.16:** *A New Vision of Kindness Starts with Paying Attention* by Sharon Salzberg (276 words)

… Kindness [is] associated with meekness, boringness, being forgetful. …[Further,] many of us are familiar with the commonly held assessment that calling someone “nice” is insulting. It means there aren’t any other notable qualities to point out.

To be fair, being “nice” isn’t really the same thing as being kind. Etymologically, to be “kind” is related to the word “kin”—treating others as we would our own kind, our family, ourselves. In our can-do culture that values competition, individuality, self-discipline, and other related “virtues,” kindness can definitely seem cute and old-fashioned at best, ineffective and inefficient at worst.

…But kindness is what is missing in so many of our lives, in terms of how we treat and are treated by others, and how we treat ourselves. I have been thinking a lot about kindness as a value that gives us meaning — especially in an era in which communication has become more convenient, and perhaps less mindful as a result.

…We need mindfulness and kindness now more than ever. And the two are related. Paradoxically, many of us feel an increased sense of fragmentation and compartmentalization in our lives given the networked world we are living in. The antidote to these feelings is mindfulness—gathering our dispersed attention again and again.

…Seeing kindness as profound and powerful helps us differentiate kindness and niceness. When someone looks at us with the concern of kindness, we feel seen. There is a sense of connection that is being mutually recognized, and in that we feel our value as humans.

…We don’t have enough models of kindness…. It’s time to change the conversation around kindness, and it starts with paying attention.

Source: <https://onbeing.org/blog/a-new-vision-of-kindness-starts-with-paying-attention/>

**7.17:** *Kindness Unaware* by Piero Ferrucci (288 words)

…In an old Eastern story, God wants to reward a man for his exceptional kindness and purity of intentions. He calls an angel and tells him to go to the man and ask him what he wants: He will have whatever his heart desires. The angel appears before the kind man and gives him the good news. The man replies, “Oh, but I am already happy. I have all that I want.” The angel explains that, with God, you just have to be tactful. If He wants to give us a gift, it is best to accept. The kind man then replies, “In this case, I would like all who come in contact with me to feel well. But I want to know nothing about it.” From that moment, wherever the kind man happens to be, wilted plants bloom again, sickly animals grow strong, ill people are healed, the unhappy are relieved of their burdens, those who fight make peace, and those beset by problems resolve them. And all this happens without the kind man's knowing—always in his wake, but never in front of his eyes. There is never any pride, nor any expectation. Unknowing and content, the kindly man walks the roads of the world, spreading happiness to everybody.

…"The essential point here is transparency of intentions. Whoever succeeds in being kind without ulterior motives is more likely to feel joy than she who does the same but hoping for some benefit. 'What's in it for me?' This question ends up distracting us. We worry that we might not really get what we want, that we might be cheated, that our kindness might go unacknowledged and unrewarded. In this way, however, we forget to enjoy ourselves.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/17448>

**7.18:** *Fierce Kindness and Real Kinship* by Matthew Fox (240 words)

A kind religious world — now there lies a radical idea. Can we imagine a world where Jews and Muslims are not fighting over a Holy Land that supposedly was left exclusively to each by a confused God who is the God of both?

Can we imagine a world where Hindus and Muslims are not killing each other in India and Pakistan and Kashmir? A world where [the Christian Right is] not calling hell and damnation down onto …[gays] and others made in the image of God? And where inquisitions and crusades are outlawed and apologies are made by Popes for anti-Semitism, witch burnings, crusades, and inquisitions of the past? And where the gold stolen from the indigenous peoples of the Americas that still adorns the churches in Rome might be returned to its poverty-stricken rightful owners? Yes, a kind religion would be a revolution.

The word kindness, after all, comes from the word for kin. It is about how we treat those who are nearest to us. It is a family word. If religion were required to be kind it would have to find kinship with other religions, or better still, other spiritual traditions.

A reconstruction of religion on the basis of fierce kindness and real kinship would require a deconstruction as well. Are we capable of deconstructing our religious attitudes to make room for this reconstructed kindness to emerge? …Jesus and Isaiah, Buddha and Muhammad, Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Dalai Lama …taught [this]….

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/14735>

**7.19:** *Be Wisely Selfish* by Sharon Salzberg (255 words)

An essential question we might ask ourselves is, “What do 1 really need right now, in this moment, to be happy?” The world offers us many answers to that question: You need a new car and a new house and a new relationship and… But do we really? “What do I lack right now? Does anything need to change in order for me to be happy? What do I really need?” These are powerful questions.

…"The Dalai Lama has said, “If you are going to be selfish, be wisely selfish.” In other words, if we carefully look at our lives, we can see that we spend an awful lot of time looking for happiness in the wrong places and in the wrong ways. We yearn to be happy, and this is right. It is appropriate; all beings want to be happy. The problem is not in the urge, or yearning, but in our ignorance. So very often we don’t know where happiness is to be found — that is, true and genuine happiness, abiding happiness — and so we flounder, and we suffer and cause suffering to others.

"As I go through all kinds of feelings and experiences in my journey through life — delight, surprise, chagrin, dismay — I hold this question as a guiding light: “What do I really need right now to be happy?” What I come to over and over again is that only qualities as vast and deep as love, connection, and kindness will really make me happy in any sort of enduring way."

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/18426>

**7.20:** *Blessed by Kindness* by Henri Nouwen (156 words)

Kindness is a beautiful human attribute. When we say, “She is a kind person” or “He surely was kind to me,” we express a very warm feeling. In our competitive and often violent world, kindness is not the most frequent response. But when we encounter it, we know that we are blessed. Is it possible to grow in kindness, to become a kind person? Yes, but it requires discipline. To be kind means to treat another person as your “kin,” your intimate relative. We say, “We are kin” or “He is next of kin.” To be kind is to reach out to someone as being of “kindred” spirit.

Here is the great challenge: All people, whatever their color, religion, or sex, belong to humankind and are called to be kind to one another, treating one another as brothers and sisters.

There is hardly a day in our lives in which we are not called to this.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/28405>

**7.21:** *The Power of Kindness* by Daphne Rose Kingma (213 words)

The practice of kindness is the daily, friendly, homely caring form of love. It is both humble — a schoolboy bringing his teacher a bouquet of dandelions — and exalted — a fireman giving his life to save someone else's. Kindness is love with hands and hearts and minds. It is both whimsical — causing our faces to crack into a smile — and deeply touching — causing our eyes to shimmer with tears. And its miraculous nature is such that the more acts of kindness we offer, the more of them we have to give, for acts of kindness are always drawn from the endless well of love.

Kindness is twice blessed. It blesses the one who gives it with a sense of his or her own capacity to love, and the person who receives it with a sense of the beneficence of the universe. Kindness heals us, because it reminds us of our oneness, allows us to see ourselves in one another's eyes, to remember that eyes themselves are a miracle, that seeing is a gift, and that the other, no matter who he or she may be, is, in one way or another, a perfect reflection of ourselves.

The power of kindness is immense. It is nothing less, really, than the power to change the world.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/16698>

**7.22:** *Everyday Kindness* by Stephanie Dowrick (239 words)

Whether you are conscious of it or not, it's in your power to increase other people's joy, satisfaction and safety through simple acts of kindness. A thoughtful word, a smile or acknowledgment, giving something that's needed, listening with care, extending your patience, expressing your concern appreciatively, ordinary courtesies, refraining from criticism or outbursts, acknowledging someone else's point of view or legitimate needs, making time for someone who is struggling, assuming the best: that power is worth everything. It's the basis of your confidence in yourself. It lets you know that regardless of what is happening outside your control, your life is vital, sustaining and absolutely worth living.

Kindness drives connection and engagement, empathy and comfort. It is thoughtfulness in action. It is self-respect and concern for others in action.

Kindness lets you live life to the full. It expresses your gratitude for who you are and what you can contribute.

You can't become kinder to others without also benefiting yourself. You can't be more genuinely self-supportive without also asking and needing less of others—and benefiting them also.

Kindness doesn't mean surrendering your boundaries or meeting every demand that comes your way. It doesn't mean becoming a doormat that others can walk over. It can mean being much clearer about saying no as well as yes. Nonetheless, kindness pushes you to take other people into account constantly, even while it also saves you from harming, demeaning or sacrificing yourself.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/23973>

**7.23: *Deliberate Acts of Kindness*** by Meladee and Hanoch McCarty (186 word)

* **Do It Now.** Be kind. …
* **Start Small.** …little kindnesses will do for now. …
* **There Are No Prerequisites or Tests for Kindness.** …Don't wait for the world's big problems to be solved before you take kind action.
* **Get in the Habit of Kindness.** …[Let] it …be the way you are.
* **Keep It Safe.** …Make sure no one gets embarrassed …because of your desire to do a kindness.
* **Don't Seek Gratitude.** Do kindness because it's the right thing….
* **Enjoy Your Own Kindness.** Let …[it] fill you, heal you….
* **Look Around Your World for Kindness — You'll Find It.** …Appreciate …“fellow kindness revolutionaries.” …
* **Don't Compare Yourself to Anyone Else.** Don't use a secret “kindness meter” to always judge yourself. …
* **Allow Yourself to Be a Receiver Of Kindness.** …It is an act of kindness to be the receiver of someone else's help. …
* **Refraining Can Be a Great Act of Kindness:** …Sometimes what you choose not to do is as important as what you choose to do!
* **Do Your Job Today with Quiet Competence.** Whatever it is you do, just …do it well, to your fullest ability….

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/21336>

**7.24:** *The Healing Power of Kindness* by Jean Maalouf (234 words)

People all over the world are hungry for peace of mind, for finding solutions to their problems, for finding ways to improve their relationships with others, and for finding meaningful ways of life. A loving and generous kindness can …make a difference. Kindness …is one of the sweet expressions of love.

Giving, not because we have to, but for the sheer sake of giving, just out of love, is something really beautiful—out of this world! This kind of gratuitous goodness—a lavish kindness—makes our world a better place in which to live, and makes us better people.

Everyone benefits from kindness. We are so deeply touched by it that we are transformed. In the holy of holies of our being, we feel connected, centered, involved, engaged, and deeply bonded to others, regardless of our divisions due to ideology, religion, race, gender, ethnicity, nationality, economic status, or other factors. After all, we are all made of flesh, bones, and blood. We belong to one human family. We all have the same basic needs. We are one. We are whole. We are human together. We are in the same boat of destiny.

…Kindness means empathy, true intimacy, encouragement, admiration, service, understanding, genuineness, concern, truth, trust…. …Mother Teresa of Calcutta said: “Be the living expression of God's kindness — kindness in your face, kindness in your eyes, kindness in your smile, kindness in your warm greeting.”

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/14224>

**7.25:** *Kindness as Personal Dignity* by Christopher Titmuss (259 words)

We can bring loving kindness into many features of our life. There is something very satisfying about contributing to the happiness and security of others, although caring for the welfare of others, including all forms of sentient life, makes us vulnerable. We might be misunderstood, overstretched, or caught up in conflict. There is enough anger in the world already, so there is little point in adding to it in the name of our ideals.

We may profoundly disagree with other people. We may not feel any sympathy for their values and decisions, but we do not have to build a wall of resistance against them. …If we believe they are truly different, we cannot act wisely in the face of fresh information. When our mind hardens, it forms a barrier to our deeper feelings. Then we may make cold, negative judgements that probably won’t serve the true interests of others. Where there is kindness, we are willing to struggle with difficult decisions out of respect for others and ourselves.

Some people get the idea that living with kindness is a mistake. Kind people always get walked over, they claim, and so they harden their hearts so that nobody can reach them. That same defensive wall also stops them from reaching deep within themselves. There are risks in kindness. The most obvious one is being taken advantage of by the selfish and the unscrupulous. Yes, that happens, but authentic kindness, tempered with equanimity, will not wither under such exploitation. Our kindness is then a public statement of personal dignity. …

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/13577>

## 7.26: *A Dog Walks into a Nursing Home* by Sue Halpern (255 words)

Dogs lead by example. Watching Pransky jump in bed with a nursing home resident or put her head in someone's lap, I could see that the love she was sharing was both simple and profound. It was kindness, compassion, and affection in a single gesture; it was blind; it asked for nothing in return. When …Arthur Schopenhauer wrote about loving-kindness, it was with …cynicism. People were often good to one another because it suited them, he suggested. Love was a kind of ego boost. For loving-kindness to be real, for it to have moral value, he observed, it must be practiced with consideration “of the other's distress alone.” In this was an echo of Buddhism's Four Immeasurables, in which the first, love, was simply wanting others to be happy. Could this be why people trusted and accepted dog love, even from a dog they did not know? Could this be why, when those researchers asked people to show where the people and dogs in their life stood in relation to themselves, the dogs were closer? Dog love was morally uncompromised. It was uncomplicated. It was trustworthy. Dog love—…the love dogs show us—matched Aristotle's idea of “philia,” the place where friendship merged with love or, as he put it, “wanting for someone what one thinks good, for his sake and not for one’s own, and being inclined, so far as one can, to do such things for him.” On the other hand, if there was a dog biscuit in the offing, all the better.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/25004>

**7.27:** *A Medicine Called Kindness* by Robert J. Wicks (207 words)

On a visit to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, I heard about a cardiopulmonary surgeon who was a legend in the hospital among the patients and staff. He was an excellent surgeon, but that was almost a given in this hospital of fine physicians. What he was known for beyond his technical expertise was his visible kindness.

Although he was very busy — in many cases busier than some of his colleagues — he approached his patients with an aura of 'I have all the time in the world for you.' He would come into the patients' rooms, sit down, stretch out his legs, and inquire after their health. He usually didn't stay very long, but it felt like he would stay for hours if needed. Patients felt cared for and at ease. He was present to them.

He was the same with the families. You would occasionally see him perched on a windowsill, leaning forward toward a family member with his chin leaning on his hand, listening intently. He saw both the family and the person who had surgery as worthy of the highest attention. He was not only competent; in a word, he was “kind.”

Kindness requires slowing down, paying real attention, and sharing some of yourself with others.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/11754>

**7.28:** *Redeemed by Kindness* by Jack Kornfield (144 words)

In the Babemba tribe of South Africa, when a person acts irresponsibly or unjustly, he [or she] is placed in the center of the village, alone and unfettered. All work ceases, and every man, woman and child in the village gathers in a large circle around the accused individual. Then each person in the tribe speaks to the accused, one at a time, each recalling the good things the person in the center of the circle has done in his lifetime. Every incident, every experience that can be recalled with any detail and accuracy, is recounted. All his [or hers] positive attributes, good deeds, strengths, and kindnesses are recited carefully and at length. This tribal ceremony often lasts for several days. At the end, the tribal circle is broken, a joyous celebration takes place, and the person is symbolically and literally welcomed back into the tribe.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/13826>

**7.29:** *A Ritual of Kindness* by Erik Kolbell (243 words)

When I think of quiet gestures of unsolicited kindness, I think of Jack McConnell [and the ritual he grew up with].

It was simple, really. Every evening of his youth, when the family would gather for their evening meal—he, his six brothers and sisters, his mother, and his Methodist minister father—they would go around the room and all nine of them would answer one single question the dad would pose. It was the same question, day in and day out: “And what did you do for someone today?”

There are three things I love about this family ritual. First, it is …a forever unfinished project that we can gladly labor over day in and day out. Our eye is not on the destination but on the road itself.

Second, by making the question a part of our daily life we make it a constant companion, which means that we go through our days thinking not only of our own desires but of others' needs. A poet once wrote of how a particular experience must be taken in, learned, and then, most importantly, *forgotten*, by which he meant it must become so much a part of the fabric of our being that we no longer have to bring it to mind. It rides with us.

Finally, I love the fact that it is both concrete and manageable. None of us is able to conquer the world's evils, but all of us are able to resist being conquered by them [through acts of kindness].

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/14569>

**7.30:** *Kindness as a Way of Life* by Stephanie Dowrick (231 words)

Kindness, as a way of life and living, depends on choices made and remade on a daily basis. Sometimes it will be self-evident and easy. Sometimes it will be an effort. Sometimes it will seem intuitive. Sometimes we will have to silence those self-righteous reasons why we should not be kind.

Perhaps we learn most about kindness when we have to think about it, when we are forced by circumstances to leave our comfort zone, question our emotional habits and think hard about the effect of what we are doing or saying. It is particularly powerful when we can be kind for kindness's sake and because we are free to be kind, rather than because it will make us a hero in other people's eyes or win us favors.

Many regard kindness as something sweet. It can sweeten life, sometimes immeasurably. But in practice and as an ideal, it is far tougher than sweet. Whoever we are, and however much self-awareness we have, to behave and live with kindness challenges our egocentricity and the delusion that we are the center of the universe with needs that should always take precedence over others.

Kindness is learned moment by moment. But it will always carry most weight when we take it up as a fundamental attitude rather than as a series of individual acts: when we see it as cause and as effect.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/23973>

**8.0: Curriculum & Theme-Based Classroom Activities for Youth & Adults**

***Youth***

# 8.1: Videos

# 8.1.1: *Different*, an Award-Winning Short Film by Tahneek Rahman (5:17)

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yu24PZIbkoY>

# 8.1.2: *The Importance of Kindness* by George Saunders (2:12)

# A long-ago story of kindness denied.

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-1KCzrTg9ic> (2:12)

**8.1.3:** *Kindness: The World We Make* by Inspire Kindness (2:34)

Sometimes the world feels crazy, lonely, fake. What would happen if we slowed down and started offering kindness to others? Find out by watching this kindness video.

To learn more about Inspire Kindness, please visit <https://inspirekindness.com/>

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/367295122>

**8.1.4:** *Kindness 101* from Random Acts of Kindness Foundation by Storytellers for Good (2:46)

Storytellers for Good profiles students offering their unique takes on kindness.

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/19342096>

**8.1.5:** *Kindness Week* by Ashur Benjamin (4:26)

There are many ways to be kind.

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/7790139>

**8.1.6:** *Make Kindness a Habit* by Sadie Zinn (6:16)

“Helping someone else is the easiest and healthiest way to experience happiness. Sadie has learned through personal experience that giving back to people can make people happier and more connected with people. Sadie Zinn is a junior at Community High School. She started a Service Club for her school and the experience inspired her Ted Talk.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ir0B0pnfzY0>

**8.1.7:** *The Power of Kindness* by Brooklyn Decker (12:59)

“Never underestimate the power of kindness. Brooklyn Decker, Hollywood actress and model, reminds us that even when things don’t turn out the way we want, kindness is the path to success. Decker’s inspirational talk reveals obstacles she has faced in her life and her ability to overcome them while remaining positive. She conveys the importance of compassion in our world today and the way it can impact our lives and the lives of the people around us. Her words evoke the idea of being secure in yourself while allowing others to do the same.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1pEabk_pUiU>

# 8.2: Curriculum

**8.2.1:** *High School Kindness Curriculum* by Random Acts of Kindness Foundation

Sixteen weeks. Weeks 2-7 cover aspects of kindness: Respect, Caring, Inclusiveness, Integrity, Responsibility & Courage. Weeks 8-16 focuses on a community-based project to create more kindness.

Link: <https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/high-school-curriculum>

# *Adults*

# *Caring*

**8.3: Spirit of Life: An Adult Program on Unitarian Universalist Spirituality**

**8.3.1:** *Workshop 3: The Stirrings of Compassion: Caring For One Another*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/life/workshop3>

This workshop will:

* Consider the roles of compassion and care in spirituality

**9.0: Popular Music**

**9.1:** *Humble and Kind* by Tim McGraw (two versions)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=awzNHuGqoMc> (4:29)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bb_qGChk0GI> (4:19)

# 9.2: *Be Kind Song* by Joe Reilly with children (3:31)

Video Link:<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zc4JLltnYsY>

**9.3:** *Kind and Generous* by Natalie Merchant (3:58)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uAwyIad93-c>

**9.4:**  *Lean on Me* by (1) Bill Withers, (2) Playing for Change & (3) Hall of Fame

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f7P8wusL1Z0> Bill Withers (4:29)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LiouJsnYytI> Playing for Change (4:33)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2YapAxPfRyI> Hall of Fame (4:31)

**9.5:** *I Was Here* by Beyoncé (United Nations World Humanitarian Day Performance Video) (4:33)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i41qWJ6QjPI> (

**9.6:** *Here I Am* by Dolly Parton and Sia (3:02)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MPg0V7M1J9g>

**9.7:** *Stand by You* by Rachel Platten (with lyrics) (3:39)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-urmcz2RSwI>

**9.8:** *A Random Act of Senseless Kindness* by South Sixty Five (Official Video) (4:30)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cgoMSvw9h7M>

**9.9:** *Conviction of the Heart* by Kenny Loggins (4:38)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQZbB5CUXFI>

**9.10:** *Kill Em With Kindness* by Selena Gomez (3:01)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1_EHOeD79hc>

**9.11:** *Count on me* by Bruno Mars with lyrics (3:17)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h9O5_Q-oLrs>

**9.12:** *Bridge over Troubled Water* by Simon & Garfunkel (from The Concert in Central Park) (4:40)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WrcwRt6J32o>

**9.13:** *Anytime You Need a Friend* by Mariah Carey (3:46)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wDLFjWM9GrQ>

**9.14:** *Just Like You* by Keb’ Mo’ (3:18)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qT4ndqEnwto>

**9.15:** *You´ve Got A Friend in Me* by Lyle Lovett & His Large Band with Randy Newman (3:16)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LakoLGTZCNg>

**9.16:** *The Power of One Change the World* by Israel Houghton (5:49)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZNBj1CmPLdA>

**9.17:** *Give a Little Kindness* by Orange Kids Music (3:11)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1FXaoEEvcr4>

**9.18:** *The Power of One* by Teddy Pendergrass (5:17)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_6T3jQ-ipHg>

**9.19:** *We Build* by Nichole Nordeman (5:08)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sG3KSZuq64I>

**9.20:** *Try A Little Kindness*—two versions: (1) Glen Campbell and (2) Brad Paisley

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JX7NNMKBPsw> (5:16) Glen Campbell

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KKyPBJKTccc> (3:12) Brad Paisley

**9.21:** *Treat People with Kindness* by Harry Styles (3:18)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pi2Gy7DG75g>

**10.0: Videos, Short Films, Movie Clips,** **Audio Recordings & Photography**

**10.1:***Simple Acts of Kindness* (Part 1) (3:05)

# Actually, not so simple.

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GdYJr03eJjE>

# 10.2: *Simple Acts of Kindness* (Part 2) (2:56)

# Paid in full.

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FKf3vJlFDm4>

**10.3:***Kindness* by Giant Ant for Random Acts of Kindness Foundation (1:12)

# What's nicer than kindness? Nothing, that's what. We worked with the wonderful and kind people at RAK to make an anthem for being better, kinder people, something that we can all stand to hear.

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/261161322>

**10.4:** *Kindness* from Gojek by [Clarebear](https://vimeo.com/user2746466) (2:16)

Instead of only swear words, what if we knew how to express kindness in different languages.

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/374332046>

**10.5:** *Preschool Kindness* by Storytellers for Good (2:36)

“Check out our latest story for the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation's ‘Everyday People, Everyday Kindness’ Campaign. Meet Ethan and Emily, two preschoolers who've raised thousands of dollars to help people in need.”

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/33168154>

**10.6:** *World Kindness Day* by Edgar's Mission Farm Sanctuary (1:46)

An engaging video building on the idea of kindness through kindness for animals.

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/372788264>

**10.7:** *Kindness* by Sila (6:06)

“Kindness: Play it forward. Featuring the song *Emotions* by Sila.” The moral of the video is that kindness leads to kindness.

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/65580267>

**10.8:** *Inspire Kindness* by Inspire Kindness (0:56)

“Together, let’s get intentional about acts of kindness. One small gesture can make a big difference, so we’re challenging others (and ourselves) to be consciously kind to inspire the world’s largest kindness movement.

“From Kindness Goods with motivational messages to connecting folks in the Kindness Community, we believe the power of compassion can create impactful moments. We’re not a brand. United, we’re a movement.”

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/310145213>

**10.9:***One Day, a Kindness Boomerang* by Life Vest Inside (5:44)

“Watch as the camera tracks an act of kindness as it’s passed from one individual to the next and manages to boomerang back to the person who set it into motion.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nwAYpLVyeFU>

**10.10:** *Kindness Videos* from Life Vest Inside

Fifteen videos about kindness.

Link: <https://www.lifevestinside.com/kindness-films/>

**10.11:** *Kindness Videos* from the Random Acts of Kindness Foundation

Twenty videos about kindness.

Link: <https://www.randomactsofkindness.org/kindness-videos>

***Ted Talks***

**10.12:** *Kindness* by Orly Wahba (10:16)

“Life Vest Inside Founder, Orly Wahba, discusses the magic of kindness at TED.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yn9VxUPlC5g>

**10.13:** *Overcoming Objections to Self-Compassion* by Karen Neff (12:23)

“Kristin Neff consider—and rebuts—some of the main objections to treating yourself with kindness.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=YFhcNPjIMjc>

**10.14:** *How one act of kindness a day can change your life* by Mark Kelly (6:10)

“In this talk, he will explain how after meeting 5,000 people within recruitment and his podcast guests he has discovered just how powerfully random acts of kindness can impact on happiness, productivity and positive transformations in society.”

Video Link: <https://www.ted.com/talks/mark_kelly_how_one_act_of_kindness_a_day_can_change_your_life>

**10.15:** *The Power of Kindness* by Raegan Hill (11:25)

“Kindness breaks language barriers, touches people from all distances, and unites us all—different or alike. Focused on the physiological and physical benefits of being kind, Raegan dives deep into central themes such a honesty, humility and being ‘harmless.’ She shows data and statistics that demonstrate that people who enacts kindness may be the biggest beneficiaries. This talk is about helping others, but it also about self-help and mental health.”

Video Link: <https://www.ted.com/talks/raegan_hill_the_power_of_kindness>

**10.16:** *Why Everyday Kindness and Simple Giving Matter* by Jenny Schell (10:35)

“Growing up in a Colorado ghost town, Jenny Schell spent her days hauling water, chopping wood, and learning why everyday kindness and simple gifts matter.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FfwFUjVEIl4>