

**Touchstones REACH**

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

**Lifespan RE Resources for Spirituality**

**Introduction**

This packet provides resources on the theme of Spirituality, generally, with materials on spirituality and spiritual practice. While the theme relates to our 3rd principle and 7th principle, the topic of spirituality is not really covered in Tapestry of Faith. While spirituality is a little too abstract for children and even some youth, spiritual practices are concrete and easily accessible. Experience is the coin and goal of spirituality and children are quite open to such experiences.

Fortunately, there are extensive materials available on the theme from other sources.

The sequence of materials that have been included are in seven groupings:

* ***Being Present, Connection, and Listening:*** Being present is the ability to focus on the present moment in order to make connection with one’s self, others, and the world, especially the natural world. Listening includes listening to our minds, emotions, and bodies.
* ***Breathing:*** Mindful or conscious breathing is both a practice in itself and an important component in many other spiritual practices. In a sense, breathe is the foundation of spirituality, since the Latin word, *spiritus*, refers to both “spirit” and “breathing.” Among the ancients, the spirit was associated with breathing, a fundamental life process. Conscious breathing can help children to focus, to reduce stress, anxiety, or fear, and to center.
* ***Mindfulness, Meditation, and Metta:*** Mindfulness is an approach to being present to the depth of life. It is enhanced by the practice of meditation to clear and focus the mind. Metta is a specific form of meditation that is focused on lovingkindness. These arise out of Buddhism, which began as a reform movement within Hinduism.
* ***Nature:*** Connection with nature is a primary way of cultivating spirituality. The awe that nature evokes opens people to a unique experience that is often transforming. Beauty and mystery combine to awaken us to life. Notable is the Japanese practice of Shinrin-Yoku or forest bathing.
* ***Quiet, Silence, and Stillness:*** Whether in meditation or in nature, these qualities allow us to center and deepen. Distraction and busyness fall away as we direct our attention to matters of consequence.
* ***Tai Chi:*** Tai chi, a Chinese mind-body practice, is an embodied spirituality that emerged out of Qigong in the 17th century. By contrast, Qigong is about 4,000 years old. Many of the tai chi routines are easy for children to learn. The main components of tai chi are movement, meditation, and breathing. As they become second nature, the meditative component is enhanced. [There are five styles of tai chi. The one most popular in the West is the Yang style. See <https://www.taichi.ca/about-what-is-tai-chi-taiji-quan-qi-gong-push-hands-yang-chen-wu-sun-hao-mississuaga-brampton-maple-vaughan-etobicoke-toronto/the-5-family-styles-of-tai-chi-taiji-quan-qi-gong-yang-chen-wu-sun-hao/> for a description of the five styles.
* ***Yoga:*** The practice of yoga emerged over 5,000 years ago in India. The word means “to join or yoke together.” [The most popular traditions of yoga are: the yoga of action (karma yoga), the yoga of knowledge or wisdom (jnana yoga), the yoga of devotion (bhakti yoga), the yoga of the body (hatha yoga), and the royal path of yoga (raja yoga).] The most popular form of yoga in the West refers to hatha yoga (or yoga as exercise) which employs breathing, stretching, poses, and, sometimes, meditation. There are at least nine distinctive approaches to hatha yoga in the West as outlined at <https://dailyburn.com/life/fitness/yoga-for-beginners-kundalini-yin-bikram/>.

The books featured in section 4.0, are grouped in the above seven areas.

Given the above, there are many ways to explore spirituality in concrete and interesting ways beginning with mindful breathing. Sections 5.0 and 8.0 feature a lot of videos regarding the above even areas. Section 6.0 offers a wide range of written materials regarding the even areas.

**List of Resources**

**1.0: Pins**

**Resources for Children**

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

**No resources identified**

**3.0: Wisdom Stories**

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

# 3.2: *The Dream* (365 words)

**3.3:** ***The Woodcarver* from The Way of Chuang Tzu** (274 words)

# 3.4: *The Wise Fool* (226 words)

# 3.5: *The Perfect Peace Harvest* (1,072 words)

# 3.6: *Worship at Camp Taylor* (863 words)

# 3.7: *Sitting on the Answer* by Eckhart Tolle (119 words)

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

# 3.9: *Grandmother’s Lesson* by Elisa Davy Pearmain (965 words)

# 3.10: *The Wind in Both Ears* (254 words)

# 3.11: *How Coyote Lost His Songs, Music, And Dance* by Rev. Kenneth W. Collier (1,330 words)

# 3.12: *May Sarton* (502 words)

# 3.13: *The Wise Sailimai, a Muslim Tale from China* by Sarah Conover and Freda Crane (1,015 words)

# 3.14: *The Sword of Wood*, A Jewish tale from Afghanistan (1,136 words)

# 3.15: *A Lamp in Every Corner* by Janeen K. Grohsmeyer (1,215 words)

# 3.16: *Love Without Boundaries* (798 words)

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

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

# 3.19: *Odd Velvet* by Mary E. Whitcomb (700 words)

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

# 3.21: *Mullah Nasruddin Feeds His Coat* (598 words)

# 3.22: *The Wandering Teacher* (252 words)

# 3.23: *William Ellery Channing’s Struggle with His Unwanted Emotions* (373 words)

**3.24:** *Toribio Quimada Making A Difference* by Ellen Gold (831 words)

# 3.25: *Pablo Casals* (243 words)

# 3.26: *Margaret Fuller’s Mystical Experience* (1,311 words)

**3.27:** *Learning by Heart: Sophia Lyon Fahs* by Polly Peterson (916 words)

# 3.28: *She’d Had Enough* (367 words)

**3.28:** *Flame of Learning, Chalice of Love*by Janeen K Grohsmeyer (878 words)

# 3.29: *The Shape of the Spirit* (526 words)

# 3.30: *Journey of a Snowflake* (306 words)

# 3.31: *Finding Your Way Ethelred Brown* by Janeen K Grohsmeyer (913 words)

# 3.32: *Mind Meets Body* (235 words)

# 3.33: *The Journey of the Birds* (449 words)

**3.34:** *Here They Come* by Rev. Dr. Judith C. Campbell (746 words)

**3.35:** *The Gates of the Forest* by Elie Wiesel, from The Gates of the Forest (237 words)

# 3.36: *Understanding the Elephant* (209 words)

# 3.37: *The Messiah Is Among You* (995 words)

**3.38:** *The Strong Man Who Cried* by Rabbi Marc Gellman (525 words)

**4.0: Children’s Books about Spirituality & Spiritual Practices**

# *Being Present, Connection & Listening*

**4.1:** *What Does It Mean to Be Present?* by Rana DiOrio, author & Eliza Wheeler, illustrator (2010)

**4.2:** *Listening to My Body* by Gabi Garcia, author and Ying Hui Tan, illustrator (2017)

**4.3:** *Find Your Calm: A Mindful Approach To Relieve Anxiety And Grow Your Bravery* by Gabi Garcia, author and Marta Pineda, illustrator (2020)

**4.4:** *The Other Way to Listen* by Byrd Baylor, author and Peter Parnall, illustrator (1997)

# 4.5: *The Invisible String* by Patrice Karst, author and Geoff Stevenson, illustrator (2000)

# 4.6: *All I See is Part of Me* by Chara Curtis, author and Cynthia Aldrich, illustrator (1994)

# 4.7: *You Are Stardust* by Elin Kelsey, author and Soyeon Kim, illustrator (2012)

# *Breathing*

# 4.8: *My Magic Breath* by Nick Ortner & Alison Taylor, authors and Michelle Polizzi, illustrator (2018)

**4.9:** *Breathe Like a Bear*by Kira Willey, author & Anni Betts, illustrator (2019)

**4.10:** *Breathe Like a Bear: 30 Mindful Moments for Kids to Feel Calm and Focused Anytime, Anywhere*by Kira Willey, author & Anni Betts, illustrator (2017)

**4.11:** *Listen Like an Elephant* by Kira Willey, author & Anni Betts, illustrator (2019)

**4.12:** *Bunny Breaths* by Kira Willey, author & Anni Betts, illustrator (2020)

**4.13:** *Peaceful Like a Panda: 30 Mindful Moments for Playtime, Mealtime, Bedtime-or Anytime!* by Kira Willey, author & Anni Betts, illustrator (December 2020)

**4.14:** *Breathe and Be: A Book of Mindfulness Poems* by Kate Coombs, author and Anna Laitinen, illustrator (2017)

**4.15:** *Alphabreaths: The ABCs of Mindful Breathing* by Christopher Willard PsyD and Daniel Rechtschaffen MA, authors and Holly Clifton-Brown, illustrator (2019)

**4.16:** *Each Breath a Smile* by Sister Susan, author and Nguyen Thi Hop and Nguyen Dong, illustrators (2002)

**4.17:** *Big Breath: A Guided Meditation for Kids* by William Meyer, author and Brittany Jacobs, illustrator (2019)

# *Mindfulness, Meditation & Metta*

**4.18:** *Catching Thoughts* by Bonnie Clark, author and Summer Macon, illustrator (2020)

# 4.19: *Mindful Bea and the Worry Tree* by Gail Silver, author and Franziska Hollbacher, illustrator (2019)

# 4.20: *A Handful of Quiet: Happiness in Four Pebbles* by Thích Nhất Hạnh, author and Wietske Vriezen, illustrator (2008)

# 4.21: *I Am Peace: A Book of Mindfulness* by Susan Verde, author and Peter H. Reynolds, illustrator (2017)

**4.22:** *Happy: A Children’s Book of Mindfulness* by Nicola Edwards, author and Katie Hickey (2019)

**4.23:** *Mindful Monkey, Happy Panda* by Lauren Alderfer, author & Kerry Lee MacLean, illustrator (2011)

**4.24:** *Puppy Mind* by Andrew Jordan Nance, author & Jim Durk, illustrator (2016)

**4.25:** *Peaceful Piggy Meditation* by Kerry Lee McLean (2004)

# 4.26: *Moody Cow Meditates* by Kerry Lee MacLean (2009)

# 4.27: *The Lemonade Hurricane: a story of mindfulness and meditation* by Licia Morelli, author and Jennifer E. Morris, illustrator (2015)

**4.28:** *Sitting Still Like a Frog: Mindfulness Exercises for Kids (and Their Parents)* by Eline Snel (2010)

**4.29:** *A World of Pausabilities: An Exercise in Mindfulness* by Frank J. Sileo, PhD, author and Jennifer Zivoin, illustrator (2017)

# 4.30: *Crab and Whale: a new way to experience mindfulness for kids* by Mark Pallis & Christiane Kerr, authors and James Cottell, illustrator (2018)

# 4.31: *Finding Your Happy Voice* by Teniele Arnold, author & Pauline Murphy, illustrator (2018)

# 4.32: *Peace, Bugs, and Understanding: An Adventure in Sibling Harmony* by Gail Silver, author and Youme Nguyen Ly, illustrator (2014)

# 4.33: *Wild Mindfulness* by Laura Larson, author and Duli Sen, illustrator (2019)

# *Nature*

# 4.34: *A Walk in the Forest* by Maria Dek (2017)

# 4.35: *A Stone Sat Still* by Brendan Wenzel (2019)

# 4.36: *You Belong Here* by M.H. Clark, author and Isabelle Arsenault, illustrator (2016)

# 4.37: *A Walk Through the Woods* by Louise Greig, author and Helen Musselwhite, illustrator (2018)

# 4.38: *Finding Wild* by Megan Wagner Lloyd, author and Abigail Halpin, illustrator (2016)

# *Quiet/Silence/Stillness*

# 4.39: *Charlotte and the Quiet Place* by Deborah Sosin, author and Sara Woolley, illustrator (2015)

# 4.40: *The Silence Slips In* by Alison Hughes, author and Ninon Pelletier, illustrator

# (2019)

**4.41:** *The Quiet Book* by Deborah Underwood, author and Renata Liwska, illustrator (2010)

***Tai Chi***

**4.42:** *A Morning with Grandpa* by Sylvia Liu, author and Christina Forshay, illustrator (2020)

# *Tao te Ching*

**4.43:** *Voyage to the Sun: A Children’s Version of the Tao te Ching* by Ruth Ann Oskolkoff, author and Joan Hunter Iovino, illustrator (2015)

# *Yoga*

**4.44:** *I Am Yoga* by Susan Verde, author and Peter H. Reynolds, illustrator (2015)

**4.45:** *Good Night Yoga* by Mariam Gates, author and Sarah Jane Hinder, illustrator (2015)

**4.46:** *Good Morning Yoga* by Mariam Gates, author and Sarah Jane Hinder, illustrator (2016)

**4.47:** *You Are a Lion!: And Other Fun Yoga Poses* by Taeeun Yoo (2012)

**4.50:** *Jenny’s Winter Walk: A Kids Yoga Winter Book* by Giselle Shardlow, author and Vicky Bowes, illustrator (2015)

**4.48:** *Smile with Yoga: Fun, Mindful, and Engaging Yoga for Kids* by I. Rekem, author and Alifstyle, illustrator (2018)

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

# 5.1: Music

# 5.1.1: *Colors* by Kira Willey

# 5.1.2: *I Am Yoga Song* by Emily Arrow (2:42)

# 5.1.3: *Let the Rain Fall Down: Qi Gong Song* by Donna Henderson (2:24)

# 5.1.4: *Let the Rain Fall Down Qi Gong for Children* / Movements & Song) (6:23)

# 5.1.5: *Walking Meditation Plum Village Song* (3:47)

# 5.2: Being Present, Listening & Connection

**5.2.1:** *Mindfulness for Kids: What does being present mean?* (2:06)

# 5.2.2: *Mindfulness Meditation for Kids: Being Present* (5:11)

**5.2.3:** *3 Minutes Body Scan Meditation - Mindfulness For Kids And Adults* (3:26)

**5.2.4:** *Mindful Listening* (4:02)

**5.2.5:** *Listen Better Kids #1- Lesson “Howard B. Wigglebottom Learns to Listen”* (10:24)

**5.2.6:** *Because we’re all connected* (0:40)

**5.3: Breathing**

**5:3.1:** *Kids Meditation: Counting Breaths* (2:30)

**5.3.2:** *3 Minutes Belly Breathing for Relaxation - Mindfulness For Children / Calmer Classrooms* (2:42)

**5.3.3:** *Kids Meditation / Five Finger Breathing* (4:10)

**5.3.4:** *Breath Meditation for Kids* (5:56)

**5.3.5:** *Mindfulness Meditation for Kids | BREATHING EXERCISE | Guided Meditation for Children* (12:02)

**5.3.6:** *Rainbow Breath—Flow* by GoNoodle (4:02)

**5.3.7:** *Calming Exercises for Kids: Deep breathing brain break* (4:02)

# 5.4: Mindfulness, Meditation, and Metta

# 5.4.1: What is MINDFULNESS and how do you do it? by Cosmic Kids Zen Den (7:45)

**5.4.2:** *Kids Mindfulness: Calm Compilation* (18:42)

**5.4.3:** *Mindfulness for Kids - Learning about our thoughts* (4:13)

**5.4.4:** *Meditation Instructions for Kids* (2:27)

# 5.5: Nature

**5.5.1:** *Mindfulness Meditation for Children: The Flower* (15:46)

**5.5.2:** *Mountain Meditation* for Children (teens) and Adults (5:10)

**5.5.3:** *Kids in Nature: Like A Tree Meditation* by Jessica Amos (9:11)

**5.5.4:** *Unwind with 20 minutes in nature* | Springwatch – BBC (21:02)

**5.5.5:** *Gifts Forest Give Kids* (1:05)

**5.5.6:** *Mindfulness Month: Day 29: A Walking Meditation* (2:51)

**5.5.7:** *Walking Meditation for Kids* (3:35)

# 5.6: Quiet, Silence, Stillness

# 5.6.1: *Stillness - (Mindful Moments with Kids)* (3:52)

# 5.6.2: *Stillness: Discovery at Home Kids and Family Yoga* with Kathy Damron (4:37)

# 5.7: Tai Chi

# 5.7.1: *Tia Chi for Children* by Deborah Adams (24:23)

# 5.8: Yoga

# 5.8.1: *Yoga For Kids: Sun Salutations A & B* (7:37)

# 5.8.2: *Alphabet Yoga A-Z* (9:12)

# 5.8.3: *Toddler Yoga: Animal Poses!* (3:02)

# 5.8.4: *Toddler Yoga: Partner Poses* (3:56)

# 5.8.5: *Toddler Yoga: Night Time Routine* (4:05)

# 5.8.6: *Toddler Yoga: Moon Salutation* (4:40)

# 5.8.7: *Yoga for Kids!* (25:04)

# 5.8.8: *Sun Salutations & Yoga with Animals* by Yoga for Kids (7:24)

# 5.8.9: *Yoga for Kids* with Alissa Kepas (16:53)

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

# Tapestry of Faith

# 6.1: Love Connects Us: Program on Living in Unitarian Universalist Covenant for Grades 4-5

# 6.1.1: *Session 10: Peace Inside*

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

# 6.2.1: *Session 11: Science and Religion*

# *Other Resources*

# 6.3: Spirituality for Kids

**6.4: Being Present, Listening & Connection**

**6.4.1:** *6 Ways Children Live in the Present Moment* by Vince Gowmon

**6.5: Breathing**

**6.5.1:** *Deep Breathing Exercises for Kids*

**6.6: Mindfulness, Meditation, and Metta**

# 6.6.1: *The Benefits of Meditation for Kids*

**6.6.2:** *25 Fun Mindfulness Activities for Children and Teens* by Courtney E. Ackerman, MSc. (January 2020)

**6.6.3:** *18 Mindfulness Games, Worksheets and Activities for Kids* by Courtney E. Ackerman, MSc. (December 2020)

**6.6.4:** *18 Amazing Mindfulness Activities for the Classroom*

# 6.6.5: *Walking Meditation Booklet*

**6.6.6:** *Mindful Games For Kids: 50 Fun Activities to Stay Present, Improve Concentration, and Understand Emotions* by Kristina Sargent, author and Kelsey Buzzell, illustrator (2020)

**6.6.7:** *Mindfulness for Little Ones: Playful Activities to Foster Empathy, Self-Awareness, and Joy in Kids* by Heidi France Ed.D, author (2020)

**6.6.8:** *Mindfulness for Children: 150+ Mindfulness Activities for Happier, Healthier, Stress-Free Kids* by Tracy Daniel (2018)

**6.6.9:** *Teach Your Child Meditation: 70 Fun & Easy Ways to Help Kids De-Stress and Chill Out* by Lisa Roberts (2018)

**6.7: Nature**

**6.7.1:** *Sit Spotting: Nature Meditation with Kids* by Brandi Rondinell

# 6.7.2: *Forest Bathing with Children: Listening to the Trees and Bowing to the Flowers*

# 6.7.3: *Forest Bathing with Kids*

**6.7.4:** *A Nature Meditation: A Guided Practice of Being Mindful in Nature* by Mark Coleman & Sara Overton

# 6.7.5: *Walking Meditation for Kids* by Jennifer Cohen Harper

# 6.8: Quiet / Silence / Stillness

# 6.8.1: *Learning Early to ‘Taste the Stillness’ Can Set a Child Up for Lifelong Well-being* b[y K.C. Compton](http://earlylearningnation.com/author/k-c-compton/)

# 6.8.2: *Stillness—Slowing Things Down for Children* by Teaching Ace

# 6.9: Tai Chi No resources identified

# 6.10: Yoga

# 6.10.1: *Kids Yoga Lesson Planning 101* by Sara J. Weis

**Resources for Youth & Adults**

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

**7.1:** *Nature Poem: Searching* by Nitin Das (83 words)

**7.2:** *The Spirituality of the Ordinary Is Luminous* by Omid Safi (258 words)

**7.3:** *Howard Thurman’s Spirituality* by Vincent Harding (245 words)

**7.4:** *Martin Luther King’s Spirituality* by Vincent Harding (274 words)

**7.5:** *The Spirituality of Resilience* by Hebah H. Farrag (255 words)

**7.6:** *Spirituality Without God & Krista Tippett* by Karyn Miller-Medzon (250 words)

**7.7:** *What Is Spirituality?* at Taking Charge of Your Health & Wellbeing website (254 words)

**7.8:** *What does it mean to be spiritual?* by Galen Watts (266 words)

**7.9: *Secular Spirituality* by Jeff Valdivia (264 words)**

**7.10:** *Being Present as a Spiritual Practice* by Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat (262 words)

**7.11:** *Mindlessness and Mindfulness* by Ellen Langer (265 words)

**7.12:** *A Lovingkindness Meditation* by Sylvia Boorstein (270 words)

**7.13:** *Spiritual Life Begins Within the Heart* by Joan Chittister (258 words)

**7.14:** *We Want Relief. Cure Is Painful* by Anthony de Mello (247 words)

**7.15:** *School Prayer* by Diane Ackerman (126 words)

**7.16:** *Art as Spirituality* by Susan Sontag (161 words)

**7.17:** *Science and Spirituality* by Carl Sagan (230 words)

**7.18:** *The Spirituality of Imperfection* by **Ernest Kurtz** and **Katherine Ketcham (266 words)**

**7.19:** *Nature and Spirituality* by Rachel Carson (199 words)

**7.20:** *Character Development and Spirituality* by Angeles Arrien (252 words)

**7.21:** *Key Elements of Spirituality* by Diarmuid O’Murchu (223 words)

**7.22:** *Spirituality: A Cosmic Dance* by Ursula King (285 words)

**7.23:***Deep Connection* by Robert Kull (255 words)

**7.24:** *The Spiritual Child* by Lisa Miller (240 words)

**7.25:** *The Beauty of Ordinary Moments* by Kent Nerburn (276 words)

**7.26:** *Global Spirituality* by Beverly Lanzetta (275 words)

**7.27:** *A Spirituality of Anger* by Evelyn Eaton Whitehead and James D. Whitehead (243 words)

**7.28:***We Are Each Other’s Destiny* by Mary Oliver (271 words)

**7.29:** *A Spirituality of Brokenness* by Kent Ira Groff (253 words)

**7.30:** *The Discipline of Silence* by James W. Jones (263 words)

**7.31:** *There Is No Road* by Antonio Machado (56 words)

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

***Youth***

# 8.1: Mindfulness, Meditation, and Metta

# 8.1.1: *Mindfulness: Youth Voices* (2:58)

# 8.1.2: *Under Pressure* - 2018 Version - Mindfulness in Schools - Mindfulness for Teens by Cheryl Brause (7:20)

# 8.1.3: *You are not your thoughts* (4:02)

# 8.1.4: *STOP for Mindfulness* (3:26)

# 8.1.5: *Lesson 1 Mindfulness Basics* (3:35)

# 8.1.6: *How to Meditate for Beginners (Animated)* (5:35)

# 8.1.7: *How to Meditate* by Lavendaire (4:09)

# 8.1.8: *7 Easy Ways to Meditate More Consistently* | Meditation for Beginners (9:46)

# 8.1.9: *Mindfulness Meditation to help Relieve Anxiety and Stress* (9:22)

**8.1.10:** *A Lovingkindness (Metta) Meditation* by Sylvia Boorstein (7:26)

# 8.2: Nature

# 8.2.1: *Forest Bathing* by Nancy Wood (4:25)

# 8.2.2: *Forest Bathing | Shinrin-Yoku | Healing in Nature* | Short Documentary (4:34)

# 8.2.3: *Introduction to Shinrin Yoku* (2:57)

# 8.2.4: *Shinrin-Yoku* (2:23)

# 8.2.5: *Kids Gardening with Liz Episode 14: Forest Bathing* (2:17)

# 8.2.6: *Forest Therapy: Connecting with nature* – with Vicky Kyan (4:40)

# 8.2.7: *What is Forest Therapy?* (4:00)

# 8.2.8: *Shinrin-Yoku (forest bathing) trailer* (1:00)

# 8.2.9: *Forest Bathing | A Simple Yet Powerful Nature Meditation* (3:05)

# 8.2.10: *Nature Calm | Healing with Nature* (2:30)

# 8.3: Tai Chi

# 8.3.1: *Tai Chi* with Helen Liang (15:17) (Also see 8.7)

# 8.4: Yoga

# 8.4.1: *Yoga for Teens* by Yoga With Adriene (20:55)

# 8.4.2: *Teens Yoga Class* with Yoga Ed.

# 8.4.3: *30 Minute Teens Yoga Class* with Yoga Ed. | Ages 13-18 (28:50)

# 8.4.4: *Yoga for Teens: Energizing Flow Yoga Class* (30:02)

# *Adults*

# 8.5 Mindfulness, Meditation & Metta

**8.5.1:** *22 Mindfulness Exercises, Techniques & Activities For Adults* (+ PDF’s) by Courtney E. Ackerman, MSc. (October 2020)

**8.5.2:** *Practicing Mindfulness in Groups: 9 Activities and Exercises* by Dr. Jeremy Sutton, Ph.D.

**8.5.3:** *How to Meditate* (5:57)

**8.5.4:** *A Lovingkindness (Metta) Meditation* by Sylvia Boorstein (7:26)

# 8.6: Nature (see 8.2 above)

# 8.7: Tai Chi

# 8.7.1: *Tai Chi for Beginners 01 “Tai Chi Fundamentals”* by Dr. Daniel Hoover (27:38)

# 8.7.2: *Tai Chi for Beginners 02 “Balance and Flow”* by Dr. Daniel Hoover (29:00)

# 8.7.3: *Tai Chi for Beginners 03”Opening & Expanding your Frame”* by Dr. Daniel Hoover (28:19)

# 8.7.4: *Tai Chi for Beginners 04 - “Place of Power”* by Dr. Daniel Hoover (28:03)

# 8.7.5: *Tai Chi for Beginners 05 - “Awareness”* by Dr. Daniel Hoover (28:03)

# 8.7.6: *Tai Chi for Beginners 06 - “Transitions”* by Dr. Daniel Hoover (28:06)

# 8.7.7: *Tai Chi for Beginners 07 - “Deepening Your Practice”* by Dr. Daniel Hoover (29:18)

# 8.7.8: *Tai Chi Origins, Philosophy and Wellness* with Dr. Daniel Hoover (27:30)

# 8.8: Yoga

# 8.8.1: *Gentle Yoga Flow - 30-Minute All Levels Yoga Class* (27:39)

# 8.8.2: *Yoga for Seniors | Slow and Gentle Yoga* (28:39)

**9.0: Popular Music**

**9.1:** *Everything is Holy Now* by Peter Mayer (4:55)

**9.2:** *The River of Dreams* by Billy Joel (with lyrics) (5:45)

**9.3:** *Exactly* by Amy Steinberg with lyrics (5:12)

**9.4:** *Losing My Religion* by REM (4:54)

**9.5:** *Prayer of St. Francis* by Sarah Mclachlan with lyrics (2:05)

**9.6:** *Spirit* by Beyoncé (From Disney’s ‘The Lion King’ - Official Video) (4:30)

**9.7:** *I’ll Be Missing You* by Puff Daddy, Sting & Faith Evans (4:26)

**9.8:** *Saturn* by Sleeping at Last (4:49)

**9.9:** *Everybody Hurts* by R.E.M. (Official Music Video) (5:44)

**9.10:** *Fly Like an Eagle* by Kashy Keegan (3:41)

**9.11:** *Rise Up* by Andra Day (4:56)

**9.12:** *Somewhere over the Rainbow* by Israel ‘IZ’ Kamakawiwoʻole (3:47)

**9.13:** *Praying* by Kesha (4:59)

**9.14:** *Spirit Dances* by Kashy Keegan (4:24)

**9.15:** *My Sweet Lord* by George Harrison with lyrics (4:49)

**9.16:** *In the Arms of the Angel* by Sarah McLachlan with lyrics (4:10)

**9.17:** *Dust in the Wind* by Kansas with Lyrics (3:29)

**9.18:** *Nature’s Way* by Spirit (2:29)

**9.19:** *Spirit in the Sky* by Norman Greenbaum (4:02)

**9.20** *Spiritual* by Donald Lawrence (Lyric Video) (6:35)

# 9.21: *Atlantic* by Sleeping at Last (Micro Music Video) (6:35)

# 9.22: *Pacific* by Sleeping at Last (Micro Music Video) (2:58)

# 9.23: *Hearing* by| Sleeping at Last (4:09)

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

**10.1:** *The Taoist Monk and the Blackberry Bush* by Voevoda from the move Telling John (2:15)

**10.2:** *Spirituality* by Hear Something (3:29)

**10.3:** *Spirituality and Meaning Film Trailer* by Norman Bosworth (4:20)

**10.4:** *Radical Spirituality* by Andrew Cohen (5:51)

**10.5:** *Crazywise: Spirituality* by Sandy Jeglum (1:07)

**10.6:** *Spirituality* by Xi Pan (0:35)

**10.7:** *Feminist Spirituality* by the Omega Institute (2:12)

**10.8:** *Spirituality* by Colourise Festival (0:40)

**10.9:** *Spirituality* by Ronit Herzfeld (1:58)

**10.10:** *Selfie Stick Spirituality* by Buckingham Community Church (0:49)

**10.11:** *Spirituality* by Energy Healers TV (1:10)

***Ted Talks***

**10.12:** *My Failed Mission to find God and What I Found Instead* by Anjali Kumar (15:29)

**10.13:** *Breath—five minutes can change your life* by Stacey Schuerman (9:05)

**10.14:** *The powerful secret of your breath* by Romila “Dr. Romie” Mushtaq, MD (15:25)

**10.15:** *Teaching the ABCs of Attention, Balance and Compassion* by Susan Kaiser Greenland (17:03)

**10.16:** *Bite-Sized Mindfulness: An Easy Way for Kids to be Happy and Healthy* by Kira Willey (14:06)

**10.17:** *Why Aren’t We Teaching You Mindfulness* by AnneMarie Rossi (14:26)

**10.18:** *30 seconds to mindfulness* by Phil Boissiere (8:47)

**10.19:** *Self-Transformation Through Mindfulness* by Dr. David Vago (19.34)

**10.20:** *The Power of Mindfulness: What You Practice Grows Stronger* by Shauna Shapiro (13:45)

**10.21:** *Positive mindfulness – positive transformation* by Dr Itai Ivtzan (18:42)

**10.22:** *The heart of mindfulness* by Charity Bryant (13:01)

**10.23:** *How Mindfulness Transforms Us* by Jo Pang (13:32)

**10.24:** *Transform Your Mind, Change the World* by Sharon Salzberg (18:18)

**10.25:** *Reaching Your Fullest Potential Through Meditation* by Jenn Fairbank (8:06)

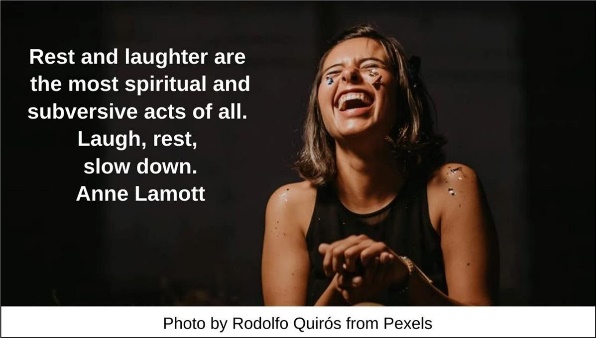
**10.26:** *Prescribing Nature for Health* by Dr. Nooshin Razani (17:47)

**11.0:** *Chart of blends of Core Emotions based on the movie Inside Out*

**Resources**

**1.0: Pins for Spirituality**













**Resources for Children**

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

**No resources found.**

**3.0: Wisdom Stories**

**3.1:** *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>

# 3.2: *The Dream* (365 words)

Based on a European Jewish folk tale.

Once there was a woman who lived in a simple village. She had a simple life, with few needs. One night, she had a dream. She dreamed a treasure was buried under a bridge far away, in the capital city. The dream did not feel like a dream at all. It felt as though it was really happening to her. Have you ever had a dream like that? She saw herself approaching the city, digging under the bridge, and discovering a beautiful box full of the best treasures. The dream filled her with desire for something she previously did not even know she lacked.

The next night, the woman had the same dream. It was just as before. She was even wearing the same clothes and her gray coat.

On the third night, she wondered if she would dream again. She did and all the details were the same. She was now convinced that there was indeed treasure to be found under the capital bridge. She asked her neighbors to watch her house, put on her gray coat, and set off for the long trip to the capital.

After a few days, she arrived. When she approached the capital bridge, she was surprised to see a guard. Thinking that the guard would surely not let her dig under the bridge, she waited. But she could not gain access to the bridge; when one guard went off duty, another came on. Finally, she could stand it no longer. She approached the guard and confessed that she had dreamed she would come to the capital bridge, dig in the earth, and find a rare treasure.

‘That is funny,’ said the guard.’ For the past few nights, I have had a most vivid dream, too. I dreamed of a woman, looking just like you, who lived in a simple house in a simple village, far, far away. But the strangest part of the dream was that in the oven of the woman’s house was hidden a rare, beautiful treasure.’

Upon hearing this, the woman hurried back home. Sure enough, there was a treasure hidden in her oven. It had been right where she could possess it all along.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/bridges/workshop1/185618.shtml>

**3.3:** ***The Woodcarver* from The Way of Chuang Tzu** (274 words)

Khing, the master carver, made a bell stand of precious wood. When it was finished, all who saw it were astonished. They said it must be the work of spirits. The Prince of Lu asked the master carver: ‘What is your secret?’

Khing replied: ‘I am only a workman: I have no secret. There is only this: When I began to think about the work you commanded, I guarded my spirit, did not expend it on trifles that were not to the point. I fasted in order to set my heart at rest. After three days of fasting, I had forgotten gain and success. After five days, I had forgotten praise or criticism. After seven days, I had forgotten my body with all its limbs. By this time all thought of your Highness and of the court had faded away, all that might distract me from the work had vanished. I was collected in the single thought of the bell stand. Then I went to the forest to see the trees in their own natural state. When the right tree appeared before my eyes, the bell stand also appeared in it, clearly, beyond doubt, all I had to do was to put forth my hand and begin.’

‘If I had not met this particular tree there would have been No bell stand at all. What happened? My own collected thought encountered the hidden potential in the wood. From this live encounter came the work.’

Khing, the master carver, made a bell stand of precious wood. When it was finished, all who saw it were astonished. They said it must be the work of spirits.

Source: <https://www7.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/wholeness/workshop12/168036.shtml>

# 3.4: *The Wise Fool* (226 words)

Once the great Sufi holy man and wise fool Nasreddin Hodja was walking down the street when a group of women came running up to him. Obviously distressed, they cried out to him, ‘Help us, Hodja! Help us.’

‘What can be done I will try to do,’ the Hodja replied. ‘What seems to be the trouble?’

‘Our husbands,’ the women cried. ‘They’ve all decided that they must go out into the desert in order to dedicate themselves to finding Allah. Our children and we have been abandoned.’

‘This should not be,’ the Hodja declared, and he set out after the pilgrims as fast as his donkey could carry him. As he approached the band of men, he began to shout, ‘Help me! Help me, my brothers.’

‘What seems to be the trouble, Hodja?’ the men called back.

‘My donkey,’ he said. ‘I’ve lost my donkey and can’t find him anywhere. Oh, help me search. I must find him!’

‘But he’s right there,’ the men replied, laughing. ‘Can’t you see that you’re sitting right on top of him? You don’t have to go anywhere to look for him.’

‘And why do you,’ the Hodja said, pulling his donkey to a stop, ‘feel that you must go anywhere to look for Allah? Go back to your wives; go back to your lives.’ And that’s just what they did.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/practice/workshop8/60540.shtml>

# 3.5: *The Perfect Peace Harvest* (1,072 words)

From the book, Aisha’s Moonlit Walk: Stories and Celebrations for the Pagan Year, by Anika Stafford (Boston: Skinner House, 2005).

Tell the children you will signal them with a drumbeat (or another signal) when it is time to join in the refrain.

Every year on Lammas, we clamor our way to City Hall with posters and placards to picket for peace. Every year since I was a baby, we have a big rally. Speakers and singers, dancers and screamers, we all gather to say that we want ‘peace now, peace now.’ Lammas is a time to raise your voice, even when it’s hard. It’s a time to say no to war and to anything else that hurts anyone, anywhere in the world.

Most of the people at the rally aren’t pagans, but they all yell, ‘Peace now, peace now,’ which is as much of a Lammas celebration as anything I can think of.

We carry drums to bang and cymbals to clang. Since I’ve been coming here all my life, it’s not too hard to get ready to clang and bang. I come ready to make some noise.

On Lammas you’ve gotta stomp your dancing feet,

On Lammas you’ve gotta raise your voice and speak,

Lammas is the harvest, we’ve gotta harvest peace.

This year there are at least a hundred people, maybe more. There are people with canes, people with crowns, people draped in crazy costumes, yelling, ‘Peace now, peace now!’

There are people with puppets taller than the treetops and people holding signs that say ‘No War.’ Standing in back are people watching in silence until we all yell, ‘Peace now, peace now!’ Then everyone yells together.

My family and I meet people under a banner that says ‘Pagans for Peace.’ There are pagans we know who greet us with big happy hugs and pagans we don’t know but we all yell, ‘Peace now, peace now!’ for Lammas.

On Lammas you’ve gotta stomp your dancing feet,

On Lammas you’ve gotta raise your voice and speak,

Lammas is the harvest, we’ve gotta harvest peace.

There are babies snug in their snuggly carriers and toddlers toddling on the grass. They yell, ‘eace, now, eace, now,’ which is definitely close enough to ‘peace now’ for any of us. ‘That’s how you used to say it when you were little,’ my dad tells me. My brother Eli yells and sings, and I swing him up onto my shoulders.

There is a stage at the front of the rally with microphones and banners. Huge flags with doves and peace signs wave in the August wind. There are old women in crazy hats who step up and sing for peace. But there are no kids up there. There are teenagers in silly skirts and socks who step up and cheer and chant for peace. But there are no kids. Everyone speaks out, but there are no kids at the microphones.

‘This is ridiculous,’ I burst out to my mom. ‘I have been coming here my whole entire life and I’ve never seen a single kid on that stage!’

‘Aisha,’ my mom says, ‘what a great idea! Run up and tell them you want to speak. Hurry!’

I freeze. I hadn’t meant me. Just some kid. My heart thuds in my chest. I just meant someone, anyone else.I look at the crowd: a hundred people, maybe more. I am ten years old. I do not want to speak in front of all of them.

But I have been coming here for ten years, and for ten years I’ve chanted the same words:

On Lammas you’ve gotta stomp your dancing feet,

On Lammas you’ve gotta raise your voice and speak,

Lammas is the harvest, we’ve gotta harvest peace.

My stomach is fluttery. My legs are jittery. This feels nothing like peace, but I’ve got to do it. I know I do. So, I slowly lift my brother off of my shoulders and put him on the ground.

‘I’m going to go up,’ I tell my mom, and she grins her biggest grin. ‘I’m going to go up!’ I exclaim loudly to everyone around us under the ‘Pagans for Peace’ banner. Our friend Alex comes over to me. ‘Hooray!’ he yells. He picks me up in a big bear hug and swings me around. ‘Good for you!’ our friends cheer. Now I have to do it.

I run all the way up to the stage before I can lose my nerve and run back. There are organizers standing next to it. ‘I am here to speak,’ I tell the grown-ups on the stage.

One man looks at me. ‘There isn’t enough time,’ he says.

I want to run back but I don’t. Instead, I take a deep breath and try again. ‘There are never any kids speaking,’ I tell him. Then I turn to the other organizers. ‘What if I only say just four quick things?’ The organizers look at each other and shrug. ‘Okay,’ they say.’ Just four quick things.’

I stand at the microphone with my fluttery stomach and jittery legs. I have been coming here since I was a baby, but raising my voice in front of the whole crowd is one of the hardest things I’ve ever done. Even though I don’t feel the littlest bit of peace, I take a deep breath and begin.

‘War doesn’t help anything,’ I say. ‘It doesn’t give us clean water.’

Everyone yells back, ‘No!’

‘It doesn’t give us land to grow our food!’ I say.

And again, the crowd yells, ‘No!’

‘It doesn’t let kids grow up healthy!’ I call out.

‘No! No!No!’ everyone yells.

‘We all need the Earth and the water, and we all need each other.’ I raise my voice loudly into the microphone. ‘So,’ I finish, ‘what do we want?’

And the crowd goes wild, yelling, ‘Peace now, peace now, peace now!’

I look down and see that our ‘Pagans for Peace’ group is starting a big, snaking, twisting, spiral dance through the crowd. I run down and grab hands with them as more and more people join us, taking each other’s hands and singing.

We sing and smile, dancing our way through the crowd and around the buildings. Our song fills me with bouncy gleefulness. With my legs strong and sturdy again, I imagine our song is like water splashing us.

On Lammas you’ve gotta stomp your dancing feet,

On Lammas you’ve gotta raise your voice and speak,

Lammas is the harvest, we’ve gotta harvest peace.

I have come here every Lammas since I was a baby, but speaking in front of the whole entire crowd is the most perfect peace harvest I’ve ever made.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/journeys/session7/132410.shtml>

# 3.6: *Worship at Camp Taylor* (863 words)

Ricardo and his grandparents arrived at Camp Taylor for the congregation’s weekend retreat. This was Ricardo’s third year at the retreat and he had been looking forward to this weekend for months. He helped bring the bags to their cabin. Then, he looked all over for his friends Abby and Kamal, but they had not yet arrived.

Instead he found his grandfather in the large, group kitchen. ‘Time will pass faster if you keep busy,’ his grandfather said, and he asked Ricardo to help him place bread in baskets for Friday night’s dinner.

Grandfather was right: Time did move faster when you kept busy. In fact, Ricardo was busy all weekend. When he wasn’t playing with his friends, he helped prepare meals and clean up after activities. At Saturday’s lunch, the minister, Rev. Hendrix, sat by Ricardo. ‘Ricardo, you are really being helpful this weekend. I like to see such leadership in the children of the congregation.’

‘Leadership?’ asked Ricardo.

‘Sure. Leadership doesn’t only mean being the person in charge. Pitching in where help is needed is leadership, too. I need a young person to help with tomorrow’s worship service. Would you like to help?’

‘Sure,’ said Ricardo, though he wasn’t sure how he could help. What did he know about creating worship?

That night, the worship planning team met. Rev. Hendrix explained that they would keep the planned components short to leave plenty of room for people to share. The theme for the service was ‘All Together Now.’ She used newsprint to list the parts of the worship service.

‘When we gather at the pond, people will come from all over. Let’s gather people with a song, a song some people know and others can learn quickly,’ she said.

‘How about, ‘Come, Come Whoever You Are?’ asked Ricardo. ‘We learned that in RE and we sing it a lot on Sunday mornings.’

Everyone liked that idea. Someone wrote the title of the song on the newsprint. Another member of the team suggested they open with a chalice lighting. Ricardo was surprised to see that someone had brought a chalice to the retreat. They knew it would be needed because all the worship services at the congregation started with a chalice lighting.

More ideas for the worship service were added to the newsprint, including two more hymns and a meditation led by one of the congregation’s elders.

‘Will you give a sermon?’ Ricardo asked Rev. Hendrix.

‘Not this time,’ said Rev. Hendrix. ‘Alex has prepared a short sermon,’ Alex was a college student, who was new to the congregation. Ricardo was surprised that someone besides a minister could give a sermon—especially someone almost as young as himself.

‘At the end of my sermon, I will invite anyone who wishes to do so to say a few words about what coming together for this retreat means to them. Instead of our usual Joys and Concerns, this is what we will ask participants to give during the service,’ said Alex. Ricardo liked that. He thought everyone would be able to participate in this way.

The next morning, Ricardo went to the pond in time to start singing ‘Come, Come Whoever You Are’ exactly at ten o’clock with the other worship planners. As more people arrived, they quickly joined in. Some brought chairs or blankets, and others just sat on the grass. Rev. Hendrix placed the chalice on a large stone. Different people led the group through the parts of the worship service. The songs were easy—no hymnbooks were needed.

Then Alex stood up to give a sermon. Ricardo was surprised to realize that Alex was talking about him! ‘Because we all took time to be together here,’ Alex said, ‘I have received some amazing gifts this weekend. One of these gifts was the special time I got to spend with my young friend Ricardo this morning, planning this worship gathering together.’

After Alex finished speaking, it was time for people to share what the retreat meant for them. One person said, ‘Taking time away from the busyness of our everyday lives allowed me to just be right here, in the moment, without thinking about what I have to go and do next. I feel refreshed and renewed.’

A parent said, ‘I got to spend more time with my children this weekend than I have for months.’

An elder said, ‘I almost didn’t come. I thought the retreat was really only for families with kids. But some of you encouraged me to come, and I’m so glad I did. I got to know people better. We shared many stories. Young and old people should talk together more often.’

Ricardo had thought worshipping in the woods would be strange, and complicated. But it was easy. It turned out they didn’t need hymnbooks, or an altar—just people, willing to share what was important to them with each other in a spirit of love and togetherness. After the closing words, Ricardo extinguished the chalice. It was time to go home.

‘See you at Camp Taylor next year,’ Ricardo called out to Rev. Hendrix.

Rev. Hendrix laughed and called back, ‘See you at the congregation next Sunday.’

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/signs/session11/287930.shtml>

# 3.7: *Sitting on the Answer* by Eckhart Tolle (119 words)

From The Power of Now (Novato: New World Library, 2004).

A beggar had been sitting by the side of a road for over thirty years. One day a stranger walked by.

‘Spare some change?’ mumbled the beggar, mechanically holding out his old baseball cap.

‘I have nothing to give you,’ said the stranger. Then he asked: ‘What’s that you are sitting on?’

‘Nothing,’ replied the beggar. ‘Just an old box. I have been sitting on it for as long as I can remember.’

‘Ever looked inside?’ asked the stranger.

‘No,’ said the beggar. ‘What’s the point? There’s nothing in there.’

‘Have a look inside,’ insisted the stranger.

The beggar managed to pry open the lid. With astonishment, disbelief, and elation, he saw that the box was filled with gold.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/signs/session4/answer>

# 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: *Grandmother’s Lesson* by Elisa Davy Pearmain (965 words)

A contemporary story by Elisa Davy Pearmain, based on the Jewish tradition of the Passover Seder.

Before telling the story, set out a goblet for Elijah and invite a child to go and open the meeting room’s door. These actions are customary during a Passover Seder.

Once upon a time a there lived a brother and sister named Leah and Sam who were about your age. They were Jewish and Passover was their favorite holiday because there was so much to do. The day before the Seder they would help sweep the house clean of all bread crumbs, help set the table with special Passover dishes, and put an extra chair and cup for Elijah the Prophet. Then on the evening of Passover the relatives would arrive, and the Seder would begin just after sunset.

One year they came to a place near the end of the Seder where their father poured wine into Elijah the Prophet’s goblet and asked the children to go and open the door for him. This was one of their favorite parts because it was so mysterious. They ran to the door and looked up and down the street. They didn’t see anyone except the new children next door. They had just moved from Haiti and they were playing in their yard. No Elijah.

Leah came back to the table feeling sad. ‘Where is Elijah?’ she asked. ‘Every year we pour him wine and open the door but he never comes. What does he look like? Will he ever come for Passover?’

Her parents looked at Grandmother.

*[Here you may wish to put on a shawl or reading glasses — something to set the grandmother’s character apart. If you are comfortable, you can slightly deepen your voice and slow the tempo to suggest an older person who is thinking back.]*

‘I have seen him,’ she said, ‘though I didn’t realize it at first. Elijah comes in many disguises.

‘I saw him long ago when I was about your age. One cold day just before Passover I was minding my younger brothers and sisters and my mother was resting. There was a knock at the door. I opened the door and there stood a beggar. He was dressed in rags and had an old sack over his back. I saw that his shoes were full of holes.

‘‘May I come in and sit by your fire and have some food?’ he asked. ‘I am so hungry and cold.’

‘I knew we were not a wealthy family. My parents worked hard and still had barely enough for a simple meal, let alone a Passover feast. ‘We have nothing extra for you,’ I said, and I shut the door.

‘I peeked out the window and saw the beggar walk to our next-door neighbor’s house. The neighbors had even less than we did, since the father had died. The mother worked very hard taking in sewing but she had many mouths to feed. I was sure that she would turn the beggar away. But I saw her open her door and invite him in.

‘The next day, my mother was cooking our Passover meal and I was setting the table. Suddenly, there came a cry from the kitchen. Our dog had grabbed the chicken from the counter, knocking over the apple-raisin pudding my mother was preparing. When my father got home, he found us sitting and crying. There was no money to buy another chicken or to make another desert to celebrate our Passover.

‘We were still sitting and crying when we heard a knock on the door. It was our poor neighbor. She smiled at us and said, ‘It seems that misfortune has come to you. I would like to invite you to celebrate Passover at our home this evening. I don’t have much, as you know, but somehow I was able to make more matzoh balls than usual from my flour, and my soup kettle is full.’ My parents thanked her and promised to bring the foods they had prepared that had not been spoiled.

‘After our neighbor had gone, my mother asked me, ‘Who was that that knocked at our door while I was resting yesterday?’

‘I said, ‘It was a beggar. I told him we didn’t have enough and sent him away.’

‘‘Where did he go?’ she asked.

‘‘To the neighbors,’ I shrugged.

‘My parents looked at each other. ‘Do you know who that beggar was?’ my father asked.

‘‘No.’

‘‘That was the prophet Elijah,’ said my mother. ‘He comes to see if we are helping to make the world a better place by being welcoming and generous.’

‘We had a wonderful Passover with our neighbors. We found that when we shared from our kitchen, there was plenty for all. When it came to the part in the Seder where my father poured wine into the Elijah cup, I asked if I could go and open the door for Elijah. My parents smiled.

Grandmother finished the story by saying, ‘I didn’t see Elijah again, but ever since then I try to treat everyone as if they were Elijah, and I find that there is always enough.’

*(Here, you might take off the shawl or glasses and return to being the narrator.)*

When Grandmother’s story was finished everyone was quiet. Then Sam asked, ‘What do you mean that you treat everyone like Elijah, Grandmother?’

Grandmother looked at them and asked a question: ‘What was the last kind and welcoming thing that you did for someone?’

‘I helped my teacher to carry some books because she was tired,’ Sam answered.

‘I invited the new girl at school to play with me and my friends at recess,’ said Leah.

‘How did it feel?’ asked Grandmother.

‘Good.’ ‘Warm and happy,’ they replied.

‘That is how it feels to treat everyone like Elijah,’ Grandmother said.

Then Leah jumped up from the table. ‘I think Elijah would like us to invite our neighbors to celebrate Passover with us. Can we invite them to our Seder?’

Mother and father looked at each other and smiled. The new neighbors weren’t Jewish. They had recently moved to the neighborhood from Haiti. This was exactly the spirit of welcoming that Elijah taught. ‘Yes, go and tell them that if they would like to join our Seder meal, they will find our door open.’

It seemed that Elijah did visit that Passover day after all!

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session5/grandmothers-lesson>

# 3.10: *The Wind in Both Ears* (254 words)

‘The Wind in Both Ears,’ by Angus MacLean, in The Wind in Both Ears (Boston: Beacon Press, 1965).

*Introduce the story by explaining that the author, Angus MacLean was a Universalist, a professor of religious education, and dean of the Theological School at St. Lawrence University. His influence included a call for religious education to be relevant, to address problems in the world, and to support the family as the prime source of religious education. Read the story aloud, asking the questions included in the text.*

My father sent me up from the root cellar to see about the wind. He was rechecking the winter’s potatoes to remove all signs of rot and was planning on setting out nets for some fresh cod later on. Was there a steady breeze, he wanted to know. Yes, there was. ‘Now face it,’ he said, ‘so that the wind sings in both your ears. Then tell me where your nose points to.’

*[Ask, ‘What do you learn by figuring out where the wind sings in both ears? How is that a metaphor for finding direction in life?’]*

We wonder about truth, about all the whats and whys and whithers of life. Wondering is very important, but it should bear the fruits of faith and thought, and it should turn our faces to whatever is coming down the winds of time and circumstance. We should be finding ourselves on the highway to the realization of great human goals, but here is no clear light on the highway except as an individual may see it for himself [sic].

*[Ask, ‘How has wondering borne fruit in your religious and spiritual life?’]*

... What is it that’s coming down the wind to meet us? We have decided to make do with an orientation in this life, and all that lies between us and life’s exits calls for courage, thought, and imagination, and active concern...

... Anyway, let’s keep the wind singing in both ears, and pray for the courage to interpret and act upon what it brings to us.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/newuu/workshop3/160304.shtml>

# 3.11: *How Coyote Lost His Songs, Music, And Dance* by Rev. Kenneth W. Collier (1,330 words)

From Our Seven Principles in Story and Verse: A Collection for Children and Adults by Kenneth Collier (Boston: Skinner House Books, 1997). Used with permission.

Read or tell the story.

Here is a new story about Coyote. One day it occurred to him that he didn’t need any of the other creatures. There he was, sitting pretty all by himself. What did he need anyone else for? He had his songs, his flute and drum, and his fire. He had his dancing and his huge tipi. Besides, all the other creatures were kind of strange. There was Rabbit, with his huge ears and enormous legs, and all he ever did was run around. And there was Moose, with that absurd head of antlers, wandering up to his knees in marshes. And there were all these pesky birds, flitting around, twittering, and never letting Coyote nap. Ridiculous! Who needed them? Not Coyote!

So, he decided to just leave them all behind. He picked himself up and wandered off, trying to find a place where he could be alone. Entirely alone, with none of these silly and absurd creatures to bother him, where he could dance his dances by himself and sing and play his flute and drum for no one but himself, a place where he wouldn’t have to share his fire and he could nap in peace.

As Coyote was leaving, Rabbit happened to see him and tagged along. At first, he ran ahead with his big legs and then he ran back, and then ahead, and then back. Coyote ignored him, hoping he would just go away.

‘Hey, Coyote,’ Rabbit yelled. ‘Where ya goin’?’

Coyote ignored him.

Rabbit ran on ahead and came back. ‘Hey, Coyote,’ he said. ‘Know what’s on the other side of that hill? I do. I just saw it.’

Coyote was curious, but he ignored Rabbit and just kept on walking. Rabbit ran on ahead and came back.

‘Hey, Coyote,’ he said. ‘There’s something over there, where you’re headed, and you ought to know about it. I just saw it. Want me to tell you about it?’

Well, Coyote did want to know, but he just ignored Rabbit, hoping he’d go away and leave him alone. Ridiculous Rabbit.

Rabbit’s feelings were a bit hurt. ‘Coyote, you know what? You’re crazy.’ And he went away.

That night, a funny thing happened. Coyote stopped and built his fire and sat down to sing, as he did every night. But as hard as he tried, he couldn’t remember any of his songs. And so all he could do was play his flute and drum, and dance a little. But he couldn’t sing. And the night was strangely quiet.

The next day, Coyote was off again, feeling a little sad and a little strange. But he still wanted to get away from these ridiculous creatures with their absurd ways of being. Before long, he came to a marsh. It was so wide he didn’t see how he could go around it, and, shrugging his shoulders, he started to go through it. Pretty soon he ran into Moose, who was as usual up to his knees in mud and weeds. Moose lifted his huge head of antlers when he saw Coyote coming. ‘Well, hello Coyote,’ he said. ‘What brings you way out here to the marshes?’

Coyote ignored him and kept looking for a way to cross the mud. Moose swung his great head this way and that, a little miffed that Coyote was ignoring him.

‘Coyote, if you’re looking for a dry path, I could help you,’ he said.

Coyote looked right at him and said nothing. What a ridiculous creature, Coyote thought to himself. If I had such silly things growing out of my head, I wouldn’t let anyone see them!

Moose’s feelings really were hurt by now. ‘You know what, Coyote? You’re crazy!’ And Moose walked away.

Coyote finally did find his way across the marsh and went on. That night something strange happened. Again, Coyote built his fire and tried to make his music, but not only had he forgotten his songs, now he couldn’t remember how to play his flute and drum. All he could do was dance around the fire. And the night was frighteningly silent.

The next day, Coyote was really upset and a little afraid, but he had decided that he would get away from all these silly creatures, and get away he would. So, he set off again. This time, he came to a little stream that flowed down out of the mountains. All along its banks were bushes and flowers and it was beautiful and still and cool. And since he was thirsty and a little tired, Coyote took a long drink, sat down, and decided to take a nap.

As they often are, the bushes were filled with birds, and just as Coyote was about to go to sleep, the little birds started singing their songs. This was exactly what he wanted to get away from. It really made him angry that the birds wouldn’t let him sleep in peace. And he was a little afraid and jealous that they could sing and he had forgotten his songs and even how to sing. And so, he leaped up and snarled and barked at them to frighten them away.

And he succeeded. They flew up and off. But one bird, a little braver than the others, said to him — being careful to fly just out of his reach — ‘Coyote, you’re crazy!’ And off she went.

Coyote was kind of pleased with himself for getting rid of the birds and so he decided to stay right there. That night he made his fire, but the strangest thing happened. Not only could he no longer sing, and not only could he no longer play his flute and drum, but now he couldn’t even remember how to dance! All Coyote could do was stare into the silent fire and think about how much he had lost.

Finally, he fell asleep and dreamed. In his dream, White Buffalo Woman appeared to him and asked him why he was so sad and scared. Coyote explained how he had lost his songs and music and dance. He didn’t know what to do, and he was afraid that he would also lose his fire.

White Buffalo Woman asked him why he was out here all alone. Coyote explained that he was tired of being surrounded all the time by those silly creatures who looked strange and acted strange and lived such ridiculous lives, and he had decided that he would live by himself, away from them all.

‘Coyote,’ said White Buffalo Woman, ‘don’t you understand that your music and your dance, and even your fire, are nothing but the spirits of those creatures who are different from you? As you drove them away, they left even your heart and took their spirits with them. If you want your music and dance back, you must go back to your friends and accept them back into your heart. Only then will you be able to go on.’

The next morning when Coyote awoke, he couldn’t remember his dream, but when the birds began to sing, as they always do in the morning, he sat still and listened to them. And then he began to go back the way he had come. That night when he built his fire, he could remember his dance. And the next day he went on, back the way he had come, and chanced upon Moose. And he asked Moose how to get across the marsh.

That night, when he built his fire, he remembered how to play his flute and drum and the night was not so lonely. And the next day he still went back the way he had come, and suddenly up ran Rabbit. Coyote ran with Rabbit and played and had a good old time. And that night, when he had built his fire, the air was filled with Coyote’s songs. And never again did Coyote forget how easily he could lose his music and his dance and even his fire.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session6/118305.shtml>

# 3.12: *May Sarton* (502 words)

There once was an inquisitive, thoughtful girl named May. She was born in Belgium, about 100 years ago. She lived there only a few years until the German invasion in 1914. Fleeing Europe, May Sarton and her family came to live in Cambridge, Massachusetts, where May’s father became a professor.

When she was ten, May’s friend Barbara brought her to a Unitarian church. She liked the minister very much. She liked listening to his sermons. One day she heard him say something that would stay with her for the rest of her life: ‘Go into the inner chamber of your soul—and shut the door.’ These words would be with her always.

As May grew older, her love of poetry and writing grew. She also loved acting in the theater. Once her poetry was known, she began to tour the country doing poetry readings and lectures all around the country. She traveled to Santa Fe, New Mexico, where she met and fell in love with a woman named Judith.

Judith and May loved one another. With Judith, May felt for the first time what it meant to be home with someone. But May also felt a need to be by herself, too. After the death of her parents she went to be alone to contemplate and write in a house in New Hampshire. And this is why we are talking about her now.

It was there in the solitude of that house that she could do what the Unitarian minister so long ago told her to do. She could go into the inner chamber of her soul. And go she did. Her book, Journal of Solitude, which she wrote there begins, ‘I am here alone for the first time in weeks, to take up my ‘real’ life again at last.…Without the interruptions, nourishing and maddening, this life would become arid. Yet I taste it fully only when I am alone.’

Alone, she was free to look deeply into her life. She explored inside herself. She paid close attention to what she was thinking and feeling. Her quiet noticing brought her to joyful understanding—revelations about herself, her life, and life itself.

May wrote, ‘If one looks long enough at almost anything, looks with absolute attention at a flower, a stone, the bark of a tree, grass, snow, a cloud, something like revelation takes place.’ It is these words, in which she directs us to look with absolute attention, that we focus on today. As we look deeply at anything in nature, any part of life, we can see within it a miracle unfolding or the whisper of a miracle already unfolded.

Like May Sarton, by paying close attention, we may find miracles. They are all around us, waiting to be revealed. Will we draw the miracles we see? Write about them, like May Sarton, perhaps to share with others? It may be enough simply to know miracles. Let them feed our awe and wonder at the universe and our place in it.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/multigenerational/miracles/session-2/may-sarton>

# 3.13: *The Wise Sailimai, a Muslim Tale from China* by Sarah Conover and Freda Crane (1,015 words)

A Muslim folk tale from Ayat Jamilah: Beautiful Signs, A Treasury of Islamic Wisdom for Children and Parents collected and adapted by Sarah Conover and Freda Crane (Spokane: Eastern Washington University Press, 2004); originally from Mythology and Folklore.

Begin by saying, ‘Today we will hear a story about a wise young girl. She will teach us how love surrounds us in many ways.’

Note: ‘Sailimai’ is pronounced SAIL-ee-my. ‘Hui’ is pronounced ‘Whee.

Long, long ago in the country of China, lived a young woman of the Muslim Hui people whose name was Sailimai. Although she was a farm girl, too poor to attend school, Sailimai nonetheless paid close attention to life around her. When an old woman in the village needed help, but was too proud to ask for it, Sailimai would know just the right time to visit. When children scraped their knees, Sailimai arrived to assist, even if they were not her own children. She may have been poor and unschooled, but Sailimai possessed a wise and deep heart.

Once, her father-in-law, a carpenter...

(Leader: Who has the hammer that the carpenter used? Please stand.)

...named Ali, was ordered by the emperor to make some repairs in his palace. Fearful of doing less than his best for the emperor, Ali pushed himself to work his very hardest, working both day and night. Yet, as it sometimes happens, the time came when Ali went beyond his limits. Dizzy with fatigue, hands shaking, momentarily careless, Ali tipped over the emperor’s most precious vase. The pieces shattered—all too loudly—in the great hall. Servants came running.

Soon enough the emperor heard the story of his ruined, priceless vase.

‘Bring this carpenter...

(Leader: Who has the hammer that the carpenter used?)

...to me at once,’ he demanded.

Handcuffed and escorted by three guards, Ali, trembling, stood speechless before the emperor. The emperor drew his sword. As it hovered over Ali’s head, Ali at last spoke up; ‘Forgive me your worship! I did not mean to break the vase. I promise to pay for it. I promise to pay!’

The emperor lowered his sword just a bit. ‘A poor, old Hui like yourself could never replace such a treasure. Do not jest with me!’

‘Have mercy on me,’ Ali begged. ‘I will pay.’

The emperor re-sheathed his sword with a sly smile. ‘Very well old Hui, I do not expect you to replace my vase. Instead, I will give you ten days to find me four things.’ The emperor hesitated in thought, tugging lightly on his beard. ‘The first thing you must get me...

(Leader: Who has the ‘Number 1’ sign?)

‘...is something more black than the bottom of a pan.’

(Leader: Who has the pan?)

‘Second: ...

(Leader: Who has the ‘Number 2’ sign?)

‘...You must find me something clearer than a mirror.’

(Leader: Who has the mirror?)

The emperor waited a moment, watching Ali’s reactions, but Ali stared blankly at the floor. The emperor continued. ‘The third:...

(Leader: Who has the ‘Number 3’ sign?)

‘...Something stronger than steel.’

(Leader: Who has our strong metal?)

The emperor smirked. ‘And lastly,

(Leader: Here is the fourth thing. Who has the ‘Number 4’ sign?)

‘...find me something as vast as the sea.

(Leader: Who has the picture of the vast sea?)

‘...If you fail at any of these, I will chop off your head.’ Finished, the emperor smiled broadly, quite pleased with himself.

Ali looked stricken. ‘How,’ he wondered, ‘could I achieve these impossible tasks? Does the emperor simply wish to torture me for the last ten days of my life?’ Sick with dread, he hung his head, turned away and headed home.

For the next week he could neither eat nor sleep. His family knew that something was terribly amiss, but Ali would not discuss it. ‘Please father,’ Sailimai said, calling her father-in-law by the customary term of respect. ‘What is the trouble? Perhaps we can help?’ Begging and pleading, Sailimai at last coaxed Ali into talking. He cradled his head between his hands and wept as he named the emperor’s four impossible tasks.

But Sailimai responded as if these were everyday requests. ‘This isn’t a problem! Father, don’t worry. I will have all these things when the emperor comes tomorrow. I shall present them to him myself.’

Ali assumed that Sailimai was trying only to comfort him. He didn’t want her to get in trouble with the emperor too. ‘Don’t be foolish, Sailimai,’ he warned. These four things do not exist. The emperor just wanted to make me suffer further before killing me.’

Sailimai persisted. ‘Father, I really do have these things. I know you don’t believe me now. But wait until tomorrow. I will show them to both you and the emperor!’

And so, it was that the very next day, the tenth day since the broken vase, the emperor appeared—surrounded by troops—at Ali’s door. ‘Old Hui! Come forward and give to me the four things you owe me,’ bellowed the emperor.

Ali came outside with Sailimai by his side. They both bowed humbly, never daring to meet the emperor’s gaze. Sailimai then stepped forward. ‘Your majesty,’ she said, ‘The four things you requested are ready to be presented. Please name them one by one.’

‘The first thing I must have, ‘said the emperor, ‘is that which is more black than the bottom of a pan.’

(Leader: Who has our ‘Number 1’ sign?)

He touched the sheath of his sword with a glint in his eye.

Sailimai answered, ‘This, your majesty, can be found in the bottomless, greedy heart.’

The emperor hid his surprise. This girl, he reassured himself, cannot be so smart. She is a farm girl. He nodded briefly, ‘The next thing you must present is something more clear than a mirror. Do you have that?’ he asked.

(Leader: Who has our ‘Number 2’ sign?)

Sailimai answered: ‘Yes, knowledge offers a clarity greater than any mirror.’

The emperor looked dumbstruck. ‘Well,’ he stammered, ‘ Do you have something stronger than steel to give me?’

(Leader: Who has our ‘Number 3’ sign?)

‘Love,’ said Sailimai, ‘is the strongest thing in the world.’

Knowing he had been bested, the emperor stood speechless. Ali glanced at Sailimai, and stood a little taller. At last the emperor cleared his throat and made his last request.

(Leader: Who has the ‘Number 4’ sign?)

‘And what do you have, that could possibly be as vast as the sea?’ he asked.

‘A virtuous heart is as vast as the sea, your majesty.’ Her head lowered, Sailimai smiled and said not more.

Flustered and humbled, the emperor sputtered, ‘It’s time to leave. Old Hui, you are hereby pardoned!’ He turned to his troops and shouted, ‘March!’

As the Emperor of China distanced himself, Sailimai held her father-in-law’s hand. Together, she and Ali bowed in relief and gratitude to Allah. Because of Sailimai’s wise heart, Ali could now live a long and happy life.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/lovesurrounds/session1/wise-sailimai>

# 3.14: *The Sword of Wood*, a Jewish tale from Afghanistan (1,136 words)

Once, on a summer night in the country Afghanistan, the ruler Shah Abbis changed out of his fancy robes and left his palace dressed as a peasant to enjoy the evening air and to wander through the streets unnoticed. He walked and walked until he reached the poorest section at the edge of the town. He soon heard joyful singing coming from a dimly lit cottage. As he peered in the window, he saw a man sitting at a table. He was eating and singing and giving thanks to God. The shah was astonished to see such a poor man in such good spirits and so he asked if he might come in as a guest.

After accepting food and drink the shah asked the man how he earned his living. ‘I am a poor Jew,’ he said. ‘I wander the streets and fix shoes, and in this way, I earn enough money to buy all the food I need for one day.’

‘But what will happen to you when you are too old to work?’ asked the shah.

‘Oh, I do not have to worry about that,’ the man said happily. ‘God blesses me day by day, and I know that somehow there will always be enough.’

The shah returned to his palace and took off his peasant disguise. He was determined to test the faith of this man. The next day he proclaimed: ‘No one is allowed to fix shoes for pay!’

When the Jew went to work, he was astonished to learn of the new law. ‘What is he going to do if he can’t fix shoes and earn money?’ *(Take a few brief suggestions.)*

Here’s what he did. He lifted his eyes to heaven *(Leader — Raise your arms in the air and look up)* and he prayed, ‘God, the Shah has made it against the law for me to fix shoes. But I know you will help me to find a new job.’ He looked around and saw some people carrying water. He decided that he too would become a water carrier.

The Jew carried water to and from the town well and sold it to people, for the rest of the day. And in that way, he earned just enough money to buy food ... for one day.

*(Leader — You may wish to start the children at this point repeating the refrain, ‘to buy food for one day,’ each time you say, ‘he earned just enough money ... ‘)*

The shah again disguised himself and returned to the man’s house. He was very surprised to find the man again singing joyfully and eating. ‘How are you?’ he asked upon entering. ‘I heard of the law and had to see how you had survived the day.’

‘God did not abandon me today,’ the Jew answered happily. ‘The shah closed one door, but God opened another to take its place. I am now a water carrier.’

The shah took his leave again. *(Leader — ‘And what do you think he did?’ After brief answers, continue the story.)* He issued another proclamation: no one was to carry water for pay. Again, the Jew wondered how he could earn money if it was against the law to carry water. But again, he prayed and this time he saw that men were going into the forest to cut trees to sell for firewood. So, he decided to cut trees and sell firewood also, and that’s just what he did. And in that way, he earned just enough money... ‘ *(Leader — Prompt the children to finish your sentence.)* ‘... to buy food for one day.’

Again, the shah came in disguise and learned of the man’s continued faith and good fortune. The next day, he issued a command that his soldiers stop all the woodcutters coming from the forests and bring them to the palace to work. He dressed them all as guards and gave them swords. He told them that they would not be paid until the end of the month.

*(Leader — ‘What will happen if the Jew is not paid until the end of the month? What do you suppose he should do?’ After some answers, continue the story.)*

The Jew was perplexed indeed, for he had no money for dinner that evening, and it would certainly be difficult to wait a whole month for his pay. But he trusted God. So, he prayed and he prayed for an answer to his problem. How would he be able to buy food tomorrow, if he wouldn’t be paid for a full month?

On the way home from the palace, while examining his sword and sheath, the Jew had a clever idea. He would make a sword out of wood, the same size as the shah’s metal sword that would look just like it. Then he could sell the shah’s sword. So, he made a wooden sword and sold the real one and he had just enough money for food for a month!

The shah, in his peasant disguise again, was much surprised to find the Jew singing and eating that night. When he heard the Jew’s story about the sword, he asked him, ‘What will you do if the shah finds out what you have done?’

‘Oh, I do not worry about such things,’ the Jew replied. ‘Every day my life is filled with blessings from God. I know that somehow everything will come out all right.’

The next day the shah ordered all the guards to report to the center of the city where there was to be an execution of a man who had stolen from the royal palace. All the guards came, including the ones who used to be woodcutters, and including the Jew. All the townspeople came to see.

The shah ordered his officer to call the Jew to come forth to cut off the man’s head. ‘Do not ask this of me,’ the Jew cried. ‘I have never even killed a fly.’ The officer said that it was the order of the shah and he must obey or risk his own life.

The Jew asked for a few minutes to pray to God. Then he stood up *(Leader — Stand up and speak dramatically)* in front of all of the townspeople and said out loud, ‘God, you know that I have never killed anyone in my whole life. Please, God, if this man is guilty, let my sword be so sharp as to kill him in a single blow. But if he is not guilty, let my sword turn to wood, as a sign of his innocence.’

*(Leader — Look at the children and ask them to predict what will happen. When they clearly understand what is going to happen with the sword and why, resume telling the story.)*

With all eyes on him, the Jew reached for his sword. *(Leader — Acts this out)* He pulled it out of its sheath, and held it high. The crowd gasped, then clapped and cheered when they saw the wooden sword, for they thought a miracle had taken place.

The shah was delighted when he saw the wisdom of the Jew. He called him near. He told him that he had been the visitor those four preceding nights. ‘And now,’ he said, ‘I hope that you will come and stay with me in my palace and be my advisor, for I see that you are a man of wisdom and unwavering faith, and I have much to learn from you.’

So, the Jew went to live in the palace with the shah. If you went by there in the evenings, you would hear them singing.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session3/story-1>

# 3.15: *A Lamp in Every Corner* by Janeen K. Grohsmeyer (1,215 words)

# from the book *A Lamp in Every Corner: Our Unitarian Universalist Storybook* (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2004).

Many years ago, in the land of Transylvania, in a mountain valley watered by quick rushing streams and shadowed by great forests of beech trees, there was a village of small wooden houses with dark-shingled roofs. The people in the village were of the Unitarian religion, and they wanted a church of their own. A church set on the hillside, they decided, looking down upon the village as a mother looks down upon her sleeping child.

So, all the people of the village labored long and hard to build themselves a church. The stonemasons hammered sharp chisels to cut great blocks of gray stone, then set the stones into stout and sturdy walls. The glaziers made tiny glass panes and fitted them neatly into the windows with leaded lines. The foresters sawed tall beech trees into enormous beams and laid the trusses for the ceiling, then covered the roof with close-fitting wooden shingles that wouldn’t leak a drop of rain. The carpenters carved wood for the pair of wide-opening doors, setting them on strong pegs so that the doors hung straight and square. A bell was brought from a faraway city, then hoisted by ropes, with a heave and a ho, to the top of the tower. The weavers wove fine cloths for the altar table, cloths embroidered with flowers and edged with lace. The smiths hammered black iron into tall lamp stands and hammered thin bronze into shining oil lamps.

Finally, when the building of the church was done, the painting of the church could begin. The painters mixed bright colors: royal red and shimmering gold and brilliant blue, and everyone in the village—old and young, women and men, boys and girls—came to decorate their church. They painted flowers. They painted trees. They painted designs around the windows and different designs around the doors.

And at the end of the day, when it was finished—when their church was finally done—all the people of the village stood back to admire it... and then to sing, a song of happiness and praise. Their village had a church now, a church set on the hillside, looking down upon the village as a mother looks down upon her sleeping child.

‘We will eat now!’ announced an elder of the village, because everyone was hungry after their long day’s work. ‘And later tonight, we will come back to pray.’

So, the people of the village went down the hillside to their homes and their suppers, all except one little girl named Zora and her father, who stayed behind. They had brought their own bread and cheese. They ate their food slowly, sitting on the grass on the hillside and admiring their new church with its strong stone walls, its tall tower, and its magnificent bell.

After they had eaten, they went back inside, opening those carved wooden doors to go into the gloriously painted sanctuary inside. ‘Oh, look, Father!’ Zora cried, running from picture to picture, with her footsteps echoing off the stone walls. ‘See how grand!’

‘Yes, it is,’ said her father, looking around and nodding with pride. ‘Yes, it is.’

‘But Father,’ she said suddenly, ‘we have not finished!’

‘What do you mean?’

‘There are tall iron lamp stands all along the walls, but there are no lamps! The church will be dark when the people come back.’

‘Ah no, little one,’ said her father. ‘The light of the church comes from its people. You shall see!’ He rang the bell to call the people to worship, then took his daughter by the hand and led her back outside. They waited on the grassy hillside, next to their beautiful church of strong gray stone.

The sun had set behind the mountains, and night was coming soon. Yet in the growing darkness, tiny points of light came from many directions and moved steadily up the hill.

‘Each family is entrusted with a lamp, little one,’ her father explained. ‘Each family lights its own way here.’

‘Where is our family’s lamp?’

‘Your mother is carrying it. She will be here soon.’

The many lights moved closer together, gathering into one moving stream, all headed the same way, growing larger and brighter all the time. Zora’s mother arrived, bearing a burning oil lamp in her hands. The father lifted Zora so she could set their family’s lamp high in its tall iron stand. All around the church, other families were doing the same. Soon the church was ablaze with light in every corner, for all the people of the village had gathered to pray and to sing.

All through the worship service, Zora watched the lights flicker and glow. She watched her family’s lamp most of all. When the service was over, her father lifted her high. She took the shining bronze lamp from the lamp stand. Its curved sides were warm and smooth in her hands. Her mother carried the lamp home, with the flame lighting the way.

The lamp flame lit their house when they returned home. Zora washed her face and got ready for bed by the light of that flame. ‘Mother,’ Zora began, as she climbed into bed and lay down.

‘Yes, little one?’ her mother asked, tucking the red wool blanket around Zora’s shoulders.

‘Father said the light of the church comes from its people.’

‘Yes.’

‘But also, the people take their light from the church!’ Over on the table by the fireplace, the shiny bronze lamp was still burning. ‘And we have that light every day.’

‘Yes, indeed,’ said her mother. ‘And even when we are not in church, even when the lamp is not lit, we carry the light of truth in our minds and the flame of love in our hearts to show us the right way to be. That light—the light from truth and love—will never go out.’

‘Never?’ asked Zora.

‘Never,’ said her mother. ‘And this bronze lamp will last for many, many years. When you are grown, we will give the bronze lamp to you, and when your children are grown, you will give the lamp to them, and all of you will carry it back and forth to church every time.’

‘But there is only one lamp,’ Zora said.

‘So, make another, and let the light grow. And someday, tell your children to make more lamps, too. And now goodnight,’ her mother said and kissed Zora once on this cheek and once on that cheek and once on the forehead. Zora closed her eyes and drifted into dreams, while her mother looked down upon her sleeping child.

The years passed; Zora grew. The bronze lamp came into her care. She kept it polished and clean, and when the bell rang out across the valley to call the people to worship, she carried the lamp back and forth to the church on the hillside, the flame always lighting her way.

When the time came, she made more lamps and gave them to her children, who made more lamps and gave them to their children, and so it went, on through the years, even until today.

And always, the light of truth and the flame of love from that Unitarian church on the hillside continued to grow and show them—and us—the way.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/multigenerational/miracles/session-6/lamp>

# 3.16: *Love Without Boundaries* (798 words)

‘I don’t want to go,’ said six-year-old Ruben, with his hands placed firmly on his hips.

‘Don’t want to go where?’ Ruben’s dad, Nic, asked as he rolled back on his heels from where he was kneeling in the rose bed.

‘To the family playground picnic,’ Ruben said.

‘I thought you wanted to see all your playground friends. We just baked cookies and made the sandwiches,’ his father said.

‘We’re not going because everyone will be there with their families,’ said Ruben. ‘Jason who lives down the street has two big brothers, a sister, and a mom. Our family does not have a mom and I do not have sisters and brothers so we can’t go. We aren’t a real family,’ he continued.

‘Hmmm,’ said Nic, standing up. ‘Let’s sit on the garden bench and talk.’

Ruben sat on the wrought iron bench he and his dad had picked out for the garden. Ruben snuggled into his father’s arms and felt safe.

‘Ruben,’ said his father, ‘It sounds like you are worried about what others think. We are a family and so are the others you mentioned. There are all kinds of families. Let’s go to the playground and see what we notice about how different and the same families are.’

‘Do we have to?’ Ruben asked.

‘Yes, we do,’ said Nic.

Later that afternoon, Ruben and Nic walked down to the playground on Besta Street. Ruben’s dad carried the picnic basket and Ruben carried the red picnic blanket. Ruben peeked through the playground fence. The playground was busy with a lot of people, some he knew and others he didn’t.

‘Do we have to go?’ Ruben tried one more time.

‘Yes,’ Ruben’s dad said.

They spread the picnic blanket on the ground by a newly planted tree. Ruben munched on a cheese sandwich while he looked over the crowd.

There was Hannah and her grandma and grandpa. Hannah and her brother, Jake, were living with her grandparents while their parents served in the military overseas. Hannah and Ruben like to swing high on the swing set.

A mom helped a set of triplets get a drink of water at the water fountain. They were in kindergarten and not quite tall enough to reach the spigot. Her name was Nancy and she brought the triplets to the playground each day when she was working at home. Sometimes Nancy flew to Hong Kong and other places for work and then the babysitter, Cassandra, brought the triplets to play.

Ralph, Ruben’s best playground friend, came running over and yelled, ‘Hey, Ruben, I want you to meet my dads!’

‘Dads?’ asked Ruben. ‘How did you get two?’

‘Just lucky,’ said Ralph. ‘That’s why I’m so super at baseball. If one of my dads gets tired out, there’s another one to take my wild pitches.’ Ralph acted out his very unique way of pitching a baseball, which involved multiple steps in a circle and a rotating arm. He looked a little like a windmill going crazy.

Ruben’s dad smiled at Ralph’s antics as he shook hands with both of Ralph’s dads named Marcello and Clyde.

‘Nice to meet you,’ Nic said. ‘I often wish that I had the energy of two for following around Ruben.’

Just then the playground director, Ginny, came by and said, ‘Hey, everyone, games start in ten minutes. I hope you are ready to throw some water balloons.’

Ralph started to warm up his pitch and everyone stepped back two steps, hoping not to get hit by a swinging arm.

Later that night Ruben and his dad walked home in silence. As they entered their yard, they sat down on the wrought iron bench. Nic waited as the stars twinkled and the bullfrog in the pond sang to them. Finally, he asked the question.

‘So, Ruben, what did you learn tonight?’

Ruben took a deep breath and launched into his answer.

‘I learned that all families are different. And I learned that all families can have fun and I learned that sometimes you have to do things you are not sure will turn out okay.’

‘Good job,’ said Nic, ‘but there’s one other message I’d like you to learn about tonight.’

Ruben thought and thought. Finally, Nic said, ‘Look at that rose bush. It’s growing. What does it need to grow?’

‘The rose needs water and sun and dirt,’ said Ruben, not quite sure of the connection between the rose bush and families.

‘The rose needs love, too,’ said Nic, gently. ‘Even with the basics, the rose still needs weeding and fertilizing and mulching to keep it safe.’

‘I get it, Dad,’ exclaimed Ruben. ‘Love grows all kinds of families!’

‘You got it, Ruben. No matter the color, shape, or size of a family, love helps it grow.’

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/lovesurrounds/session5/169999.shtml>

**3.17:** *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>

# 3.18: *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: *Odd Velvet* by Mary E. Whitcomb (700 words)

Odd Velvet by Mary E. Whitcomb, illustrated by Tara Calahan King (San Francisco: Chronicle Books, 1998). Permission pending.

On the first day of school, Velvet’s classmates brought their teacher cinnamon tea, lace handkerchiefs, and heart shaped boxes of potpourri. Velvet handed her teacher an egg carton filled with seven rocks, her favorite red shoelaces. And half a sparrow’s egg. Velvet was odd.

At lunchtime, Velvet not only carried a used brown paper bag, but inside of it were things like carrots and a butter sandwich. And she ate them. At recess, a few of the girls noticed that Velvet was not wearing a new dress even though it was the beginning of the school year. ‘Where did she come from?’ they wondered out loud.

All of this strangeness did not stop after the first day of school. In fact, it got worse. Velvet brought a milkweed pod for show and tell. Luckily, three of the other girls brought a talking doll, a wetting doll, and a crying doll, and saved the day.

Velvet’s nose was freckled, she had a pack of only eight crayons, and her sweater once belonged to her older sister. Nothing was right about Odd Velvet. Although everyone was polite to her, no one was silly enough to pick Velvet for partner play or to walk home with her after school.

No one wanted to be different the way Velvet was different.

On the day of the school field trip, the children were laughing and calling each other by their nicknames. Someone called out... ‘What’s your nickname Velvet?’

It got quiet as Velvet looked around. ‘I don’t have one,’ she said. ‘But my father told me that, on the day I was born, the sun was just rising over the mountains, and outside it looked as though the world had been covered with a blanket of smooth, soft, lavender velvet.’ A few of the boys let out a giggle, but mostly the bus fell quiet. For a moment everyone was thinking of how beautiful that morning must have been, the day Velvet was born.

The following week a school drawing contest was announced. There was no question who the winner would be. Sarah Garvey had the best markers, the biggest paint set, and more colored pencils than anyone else in the class. When the day arrived to announce the winner, the children let Sarah sit right up front. No one was more surprised than she was when the teacher called out Velvet’s name.

Velvet had drawn an apple. ‘It’s just a piece of fruit,’ Sarah protested. Everyone stared at the picture. ‘It looks so real I would like to eat it,’ someone said. ‘It seems like you could pick it up,’ another child added. Sure enough, with just her eight crayons, Velvet had drawn the most beautiful apple the children had ever seen.

Little by little, the things that Velvet said, and the things that Velvet did began to make sense. The teacher had Velvet speak for two whole days about her rock collection. She even had ashes from a real volcano.

Still, on the day that she handed out invitations to her birthday party, the whispering began. ‘I bet her house is old and dark,’ Sarah said. The thought of going to Velvet’s house made everyone feel a little uneasy. Velvet lived in a tiny house at the end of a long road. There was no jungle gym or tether ball. Just a swing hanging from a big, old tree.

At the door, Velvet’s mom and dad politely asked the children in. There were no birthday magicians or wizards. Not even a clown. But they got to turn Velvet’s room into a castle. The royal subjects painted their faces and put glitter in their hair. They jumped high off the bed into a blue blanket moat.

Velvet’s sister made each of them golden crowns with colored jewels. They took turns wearing Velvet’s royal cloak (which used to be a bed cover). They played cards and shot marbles. Velvet even showed them how to draw beautiful apples.

On the last day of school, Velvet’s classmates brought their teacher handfuls of flowers, cards that they had made, and an impressive collection of nice looking rocks. Velvet was different. But maybe she wasn’t so odd after all.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/lovesurrounds/session6/170042.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: *Mullah Nasruddin Feeds His Coat* (598 words)

Adapted from a Middle Eastern Islamic folk tale which is attributed to different countries, including Turkey and Syria.

Mullah Nasruddin had been working in the fields all day long. He was tired and sweaty and his clothes and shoes were covered with mud and stains. Because he had been fasting all day long, for Ramadan, he was also quite hungry. But finally, it was almost sundown and Nasruddin knew that he would soon be able to eat.

The wealthiest man in town had invited everyone to come break their fasts in his home that evening with a huge feast. Nasruddin knew that he would be late if he went home to change his clothes before heading into town. He decided it was better to arrive in dirty clothes than to be late. Oh, what a party it would be! What a feast! As he walked to the wealthy man’s home, Nasruddin imagined the delicious foods that he would soon be eating: dates, lentils and chickpeas, olives and bread, hummus, falafel, chicken and beef — and best of all — the desserts — halvah, date rolls, figs and baklava!

When Nasruddin arrived, the wealthy man opened the door and looked Nasruddin up and down scornfully, from his worn, ragged clothes down to his muddy shoes. Without a word of welcome, he gestured for Nasruddin to come in and walked abruptly away.

*(Leader — Say, ‘I wonder what the wealthy man was thinking or feeling,’ and briefly take a few answers. Return to the story by saying, ‘Let’s hear what happens next.’)*

Nasruddin joined the throngs of people, who were all dressed in their finest clothing. The tables were laden with all sorts of delicious foods: dates, lentils and chickpeas, olives and bread, hummus, falafel, chicken and beef — and best of all — the desserts — halvah, date rolls, figs and baklava!

Despite his efforts to hurry, the seats were all taken and nobody tried to move over or make a space for Nasruddin. In fact, nobody offered him food. He had to reach over and around people to get any food for his plate. Nobody spoke to him. It was as if he wasn’t even there.

*(Leader — Pause and say, ‘I wonder how Nasruddin was feeling about this.’ Briefly take a few answers.)*

The other guests ignored him so completely that Nasruddin could not enjoy the food on his plate, no matter how finely prepared and how tasty it was. In fact, after only a few bites, Nasruddin was so uncomfortable that he decided to leave.

He hurried home and changed into his finest clothing, including a beautiful coat.

*(Leader — Take off worn, ragged clothing and put on the coat or shawl.)*

Nasruddin returned to the feast and this time the host welcomed him with a huge smile. ‘Come in, come in,’ greeted the host. As Nasruddin entered, people waved and called to him from all corners of the room as they invited him to sit near them and offered him food.

*(Leader — Ask, ‘I wonder what the host and the other guests were thinking now?’ and accept a few answers. Then ask, ‘I wonder what Nasruddin was feeling,’ for brief responses before you continue.)*

Nasruddin sat down quietly. Picking up a plump fig, he carefully placed it into a coat pocket, saying, ‘Eat, coat, eat.’ *(Leader — If you have brought fake food, act this out.)* Next, he took a handful of nuts and put them into the pocket, saying, ‘Eat, coat, eat.’ Now he began to feed his coat in earnest, grabbing all sorts of foods. *(Leader — Pause here and invite the children to try to name some foods Nasruddin might have fed to his coat. Use their suggestions: ‘Nasruddin put \_\_\_ in his pocket, saying, ‘Eat, coat, eat!’)*

He fed the coat lentils and chickpeas, olives and bread, hummus, falafel, chicken and beef — and best of all — the desserts — halvah, date rolls, figs and baklava!

Nasruddin became silent as they watched this strange behavior. Soon everyone in the room was staring at Nasruddin, wondering what he was doing. The host hurried over. ‘Nasruddin, whatever are you doing? Why are you feeding your coat in this manner?’

‘Well,’ replied Nasruddin, ‘when I first came to this feast in my old farming clothes, I was not welcome. No one would speak with me. But when I changed into this coat, suddenly I was greeted warmly. So, I realized it was not me that was welcome at this party, but my clothing. And so, I am feeding my coat.’

*(Leader — Use the sound instrument to signify that the story has ended. Briefly ask children how they think the host and the other guests might have been feeling when Nasruddin told them why he was feeding his coat. After they have offered a few answers, ask them whether they think it was fair or kind when the people wouldn’t talk to Nasruddin.)*

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session6/123344.shtml>

# 3.22: *The Wandering Teacher* (252 words)

Once upon a time there was a Teacher who was known far and wide as one who had mastered all the great disciplines of a spiritual seeker. She wandered the country, and whenever people heard she was near, they traveled to seek her wisdom and her guidance.

‘Great Teacher,’ one would say, ‘I wish to get closer to God.’ ‘By what path do you travel now?’ she would ask. ‘I study the scriptures, diligently applying myself day and night to unlocking their mysteries,’ might come the reply. ‘Then you should put down your books and walk in the woods—thinking nothing, but listening deeply.’

Another would say, ‘I do good to every person I meet, doing all that I can to serve their needs.’ ‘Then for a time,’ the Teacher would reply, ‘consider yourself well met and strive to serve your own needs as you have so well served others.’

One day the Teacher noticed someone in the back of the crowd, someone not pushing his way to her as most of the others did. She went to him. ‘What is it I can do for you?’ she asked.

‘I do not know,’ he relied. ‘I feel in need of something, but I do not believe in God and have nothing you could call a ‘practice.’’ ‘When do you feel most alive?’ the Teacher asked. ‘When I am playing with my children,’ the man said without hesitation. ‘Then play with your children,’ said the Teacher. ‘And you will find what you seek.’

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/practice/workshop1/wandering-teacher>

# 3.23: *William Ellery Channing’s Struggle with His Unwanted Emotions* (373 words)

Adapted from multiple sources, primarily the Memoir of William Ellery Channing with Extracts from His Correspondents and Manuscripts, in Three Volumes, William Henry Channing, ed. (Boston: Wm. Crosby and H.P. Nichols, fifth edition, 1851).

William Ellery Channing was born in Newport, Rhode Island to well-connected, but not financially prosperous, parents. According to Channing, his father was distant and aloof. He was, as Channing puts it, ‘a strict disciplinarian at home, and according to the mistaken notions of that time, kept me at too great a distance from him.’ Channing’s mother could be, as one Channing biographer noted, ‘chillingly severe.’ Not surprisingly for someone reared in such an environment, Channing was ‘for the most part a grave and reflective’ boy. As noted in the memoir compiled by Channing’s nephew, Channing ‘was fond of lonely rambles on the beach; liked to go apart into some beautiful scene, with no other playmate than his kite... and according to his own statement, owed the tone of his character more to the influences of solitary thought than of companionship.’ But his loneliness was set aside when Channing went off to Harvard at age 15. There he made lifelong friends and joined fraternal clubs and societies. His life was bountiful with friendship.

After college, at age 18 Channing went to Virginia for a year and a half as a private tutor for the children of a wealthy slaveowner. The work relieved Channing of being an economic burden to his family in Rhode Island. His father had died five years earlier and his mother was left without adequate financial resources to care for her children. Channing’s work as tutor also allowed him time to read in preparation for his subsequent training at Harvard for the ministry. His study routine was rigorous. He usually worked at his desk until two or three o’clock in the morning. Frequently, the sun would rise before he went to bed. When he did go to sleep, he often used the bare floor as his bed. This was his way of trying to overcome what he described as his effeminacy and his unwanted sexual fantasies. Once on the floor, he would spring up at any hour and walk about in the cold in an attempt to toughen his heart. Channing also experimented with his diet and did not exercise. As a result of these routines, he broke down his immune system and was infirmed for the rest of his life.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/movesus/workshop4/unwanted-emotions>

**3.24:** *Toribio Quimada Making A Difference* by Ellen Gold (831 words)

Based on information in the book, Maglipay Universalist, by Fred Muir (Annapolis, Maryland: Unitarian Universalist Church of Annapolis, 2001) and a 2002 review of Muir’s book by Rosemary Bray McNatt in UU World magazine.

I bet some of you love to read. Maybe you have a favorite book. Maybe you like to read street signs out loud, or read magazines at home, or read the words to your favorite songs.

Maybe you do not love reading. But most people agree that reading certainly is useful, especially if you are curious about things.

What if you were not allowed to learn to read? What if you were forbidden to read, or told you could not learn to read or write until you were older?

That is what happened to Toribio Quimada. He grew up in the Philippines in the 1930s. The Philippines are a group of islands off the southeast coast of Asia. Toribio lived on the Island of Negros.

Toribio’s family were farmers. That is one reason Toribio did not learn to read when he was your age. He and his sisters and brothers worked instead of going to school. They planted rice, herded cattle, and did other farm chores. When he was ten, he started school, but school cost money and his family did not have much. He got to go to the Minglanilla School for only a few years.

There was another reason Toribio did not learn to read when he was your age. It was not important in his family’s religion. They were Catholics in a time and place where only priests were allowed to read the Bible. That was one book Toribio very much wanted to read, because he was very curious about religion. But when he was your age, Toribio had no books and could not read at all.

Toribio wanted more from life. He had many questions. He wondered what was true, what God was like, and how religion and faith were connected to all that he did.

In 1937, Toribio’s family moved into the home of a cousin who was not Catholic. Reading the Bible was allowed, and Toribio did it. He studied the Bible very carefully. After reading and thinking and thinking and reading, he made the choice to leave the Catholic Church. He wanted to be part of a religion where the members were allowed to read their religious book. He joined a Protestant church called Iglesia Universal de Cristo, where reading the Bible was encouraged.

Toribio took part in many activities at Iglesia Universal de Cristo. He learned so much that he was asked to teach Sunday school there. He had come a long way from not knowing how to read or write. In time, Toribio became a minister. Sometimes he traveled around the Philippine Islands, so people in many different villages could learn about Iglesia Universal de Cristo. Toribio continued to search for truth and meaning. Yet, even though he was now a minister, neither reading nor his new religion could answer all Toribio’s questions.

The most important questions were about God and love. Toribio believed in a God that loved all people, no matter what country they lived in, what religion they were, what they looked like, or whether they broke any rules. He believed we all ought to love everyone, exactly the way the God in Toribio’s mind would do.

One day, Toribio found out there was a church in America called a Universalist Church. ‘Universal’ was the kind of love Toribio believed in. Toribio was curious and wrote them a letter. Although his letter got lost and nobody replied, he wrote more letters to Universalist churches in America. Can you imagine, before there was any Internet, if a letter arrived at our congregation from as far away as the Philippines? Finally, some Universalists in Massachusetts heard from Toribio Quimada and wrote back.

As Toribio read the books they sent him, he was happy that others shared his Universalist ideas. Universalism talked about a God and a love that included the whole universe — every person, and the world we share. In Universalism, everyone could read the Bible, and more: Everyone was encouraged to think their own thoughts about what they read. Toribio liked that.

In 1955, Toribio founded the Universalist Church of the Philippines. He went on to help many people in his country, working on the Island of Negros where he was raised.

Universalism talked about equal love for everyone, and that meant things should be fair. Some people in the Philippines did not agree with that. Some people thought being obedient was more important than seeking fairness. Some did not like the changes Toribio’s religion might bring to their country. They set his home on fire, and he died there.

But the people who had learned from Toribio kept practicing Universalism, and so did others. His hard work was never forgotten. The Universalist Church Toribio founded was renamed the Unitarian Universalist Church of the Philippines. Its members are part of our faith today. Like us, they continue to search for truth and meaning. They continue to look for justice and freedom for all people, just as Toribio would have wanted.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/journeys/session1/132144.shtml>

# 3.25: *Pablo Casals* (243 words)

Pablo Casals, born in Vendrell, Spain to a Puerto Rican mother, is thought by many to be the greatest cellist who ever lived. His recordings of the Bach Cello Suites, made between 1936 and 1939, are considered unsurpassed to this day.

Casals’ prodigious musical talent became evident early. By the age of four he could play the violin, piano, and flute (having been taught by the church organist and choir director). When he first heard a cello at the age of 11, he decided to dedicate himself to that instrument, and he had already given a solo recital in Barcelona three years later at the age of 14. Five years later he was on the faculty of the renowned Municipal School of Music in Barcelona and was principal cellist of the Barcelona Opera House. He gained international acclaim in a career of such length that he performed in the United States for both President Theodore Roosevelt and President John F. Kennedy.

Yet even having attained such unquestionable mastery of his instrument, throughout his entire life Casals maintained a disciplined regimen of practicing for five or six hours every day. On the day he died, at the age of 96, he had already put in several hours practicing his scales. A few years earlier, when he was 93, a friend asked him why, after all he had achieved, he was still practicing as hard as ever. ‘Because,’ Casals replied, ‘I think I’m making progress.’

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/practice/workshop2/59194.shtml>

# 3.26: *Margaret Fuller’s Mystical Experience* (1,311 words)

Based on multiple sources, particularly a letter from Margaret Fuller to Caroline Sturgis, October 22, 1840. The letter may be found at Houghton Library, Harvard University (call number MS Am 1221 (242)).

By the time Margaret Fuller was nine, she read literature in four languages, translated Virgil and Cicero, and wrote literary critiques of major European philosophic and literary texts. Each night, at the end of Margaret’s grueling day of scholarship, when her father returned home from work, he would enter her bedroom, awaken her by kissing her on the lips, then carry her to his study and make her recount what she had learned during the day. Reflecting on the years she endured this paternal, invasive abuse, Fuller said: ‘I did not go mad, as many would do, at being continually roused from my dreams. I had too much strength to be crushed, — and since I must put on the fetters, could not submit to let them impede my motions. My own world sank deep within, away from the surface of my life; in what I did and said I learned to have reference to other minds. But my true life was only the dearer that it was secluded and veiled over by a thick curtain of available intellect, and that coarse, but wearable stuff woven by the ages, — Common Sense.’

Fuller’s father made the nature and manner of his love for her very clear: It must be earned, as he repeatedly told her. He was tyrannical against his wife, Margarett Crane, for any infraction, and when away, threatened by letter, upon his return, to forcefully remind her of her place. Margaret read all of these letters and learned to conform to his absolute desires and expectations of her. When her younger sister died and her mother emotionally withdrew, Margaret became absolutely dependent upon her father for any show of affection. He was bitter, sarcastic, arrogant, snide and domineering. As an adult so, too, was she. But not all of her succumbed to her father, as she explained in a letter written in November 1832 to her friend James F. Clarke: ‘I have often told you I have two souls and they seem to roll over one another in the most incomprehensible way—All my tastes and wishes point one way and seem forced the other way.’

After her father died of cholera in 1835, Fuller undertook the grueling work of uniting her two souls: her male-trained intellect and her inmost personal feelings and intuitions as a woman. She wanted to become an intelligent woman, rather than a woman with a man’s mind. This union of mind and heart, body and intellect was hard won. To this end, she secluded herself away to mourn her father’s death and at the same time to find her own life. She found the point of contact for her sundered soul. She said she had discovered the divine within her. For her, it was at one and the same time a mystical experience and a transformation of herself into a human rights advocate. She described what happened in her October 22, 1840 letter to her dear friend Caroline Sturgis

... I can say very little now, scarce a word that is not absolutely drawn from me at the moment. I cannot plunge into myself enough. I cannot dedicate myself sufficiently. The life that flows in upon me from so many quarters is too beautiful to be checked. I would not check a single pulsation. It all ought to be; —if caused by any apparition of the Divine in me I could bless myself like the holy Mother. ... Oh Caroline, my soul swells with the future. The past, I know it not... All the souls I ever loved are holy to me, their voices sound more and more sweet yet oh for an hour of absolute silence, dedicated, enshrined in the bosom of the One.

Yet the cross, the symbol you have chosen seems indeed the one. Daily, hourly it is laid upon me. Tremulously I feel that a wound is yet to be given. ... Oh, the prophetic dread and hope and pain and joy. My Caroline, I am not yet purified. Let the lonely Vestal watch the fire till it draws her to itself and consumes this mortal part. Truly you say I have not been what I am now yet it is only transformation, not alteration. The leaf became a stem, a bud, is now in flower. Winds of heaven, dews of night, circles of time, already ye make haste to convert this flower into dead-seeming seed — yet Caroline far fairer shall it bloom again...

[I]n my deep mysterious grottoes I feared no rebuff, I shrunk from no publicity, I could not pause yet ever I sobbed and wailed over my endless motion and foamed angrily to meet the storm-winds which kept me pure...

And then something absolutely amazing happened in the midst of Fuller’s account of her mystical experience. A past recollection rose to her thoughts with what she called ‘charm unspeakable.’ Fuller then described this new thought: her experience a few years earlier, of a winter night she spent attending to a neighbor who had tuberculosis and was dying from the effects of a botched abortion. That experience had taken place shortly after her own father’s death. She recounted being... in the sick chamber of a wretched girl in the last stage of a consumption. It was said she had profaned her maiden state, and that the means she took to evade the consequences of her stain had destroyed her health and placed her on this bed of death. The room was full of poverty, base thoughts, and fragments of destiny. As I raised her dying head it rested against my bosom like a clod that should never have been taken from the valley. On my soul brooded a sadness of deepest calm ... I gazed into that abyss [termed guilt] lowest in humanity of crime for the sake of sensual pleasure[.] [M]y eye was steadfast, yet above me shone a star, pale, tearful, still it shone, it was mirrored from the very blackness of the yawning gulf. Through the shadows of that night ghost-like with step unlistened for, unheard assurance came to me. O, it has ever been thus, from the darkest comes my brightness, from Chaos depths my love. I returned with the morning star. No one was with me in the house. I unlocked the door [and] went into the silent room where but late before my human father dwelt. It was the first winter of my suffering health the musings and the vigils of the night had exhausted while exalting me. The cold rosy winter dawn and then the sun. I had forgotten to wind the clock the day marked itself. I lay there, I could not resolve to give myself food. The day was unintentionally a fast. Sacredest thoughts were upon it, and I comprehended the meaning of an ascetic life. The Angel that meets the pious monk beside the bed of pestilence and low vice, that dwells with him in the ruined hut of his macerated body, hovered sweet though distant before me also. At times I read the Bible at times [poet William] Wordsworth[.] I dwelt in the thoughtful solitudes of his Excursion I wandered like his white doe... The sunset of that day was the same which will shine on my last hour here below. — Winter is coming now. I rejoice in her bareness, her pure shroud, her judgment-announcing winds. These will help me to dedicate myself, all these Winter spirits will cradle my childhood with strange and mystic song. Oh, Child who would’st deem thee mine canst thou read what I cannot write. No only one soul is there that can lead me up to womanhood and baptize me to gentlest May. Is it not ready? I have strength to wait as a smooth bare tree forever, but ask no more my friends for leaves and flowers or a bird haunted bower.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/movesus/workshop5/margaret-fuller>

**3.27:** *Learning by Heart: Sophia Lyon Fahs* by Polly Peterson (916 words)

‘Mama, Mama, why do we just keep going and going and not going anywhere?’ asked little Sophie. Her family was crossing the wide Pacific Ocean on a big ship bound for America. Sophie Lyon was an American girl, three and a half years old, making her first trip to America. She and her older brothers and sisters had all been born in China where their father was an evangelical Christian minister and their mother had started a school for Chinese girls.

When they made that the long trip to America in 1880, Sophie’s parents thought their family would go back to China after one year. But the plans changed, and Sophie never returned to China. As she grew up, her memories of China grew dim. But she hoped when she grew up, she could go to other countries as a Christian teacher, like her parents.

In college, Sophie joined a club for young people who also wanted to become Christian teachers. She met another devoted volunteer named Harvey Fahs. They began writing letters to each other, and made plans to travel and teach together. Six years later, they were married. But instead of traveling to another country, Sophie and Harvey moved to New York City. Harvey had a job, and Sophia Lyon Fahs taught Sunday school and continued her studies, excited about the new ideas she was learning.

Sophia and Harvey’s first child was born in 1904. In those days, many women gave up their outside work after they became mothers. But Sophia was determined to keep learning and to keep teaching Sunday school, and she did. As it turned out, being a mother also helped Sophia learn! She learned about children from being with her own children and listening to their ideas and questions.

*(You may want to pause here and solicit children’s comments on ways children can teach adults.)*

When her children asked questions, Sophia tried her best to answer them. Her children had very interesting questions, like ‘Where does snow come from?’ and ‘Where are we before we are born?’ As she tried to answer her children’s questions, Sophia learned how much she did not know! You might think not having all the answers took away Sophia’s faith, but it was the opposite. She started to believe that to have a strong faith, finding questions you really care about is just as important as finding answers.

One time when Sophia taught a religious education class, she told a lively story about a real person who had been a Christian teacher in another country. The children were eager to hear the story and eager to talk about it. Like her own children at home, the children asked questions — the interesting kind of questions that let Sophia know they were thinking and learning.

Sophia’s ideas about religion changed over time. As a young person, she had thought Christianity was the one true religion and people all over the world should learn Bible stories. She grew to realize the Bible was not the only book with truth in it. She collected stories from all over the world, filled with truth and beauty to help children’s spirits stretch and grow. She published the stories in a book called From Long Ago and Many Lands.

In those days, when most adults thought children’s minds were like empty jars to fill with learning, Sophia thought differently. She thought children were more like gardens, already planted with seeds of possibility for learning and growing. She thought a teacher’s job was to provide the good soil and water and sunlight a garden needs to grow. In religious school, a teacher could help children grow in their spirit and faith.

(*Ask: What do you think would help a child grow in spirit? What should church school teachers like us give you, to help you grow?)*

Affirm or suggest: Teachers can give children a safe place to learn; tools, such as books and art supplies and music. We can show you how adults worship, sing, and celebrate together in faith. We can help you know when your actions are faithful ones, for goodness and justice. We can take you on field trips and tell you stories. But no one can give a child wisdom or faith or spiritual growth. These things can only grow from within. People learn by experiencing the world for themselves — by feeling their own feelings, and by seeing and touching and doing. That is what Sophia Fahs believed.)

When Sophia Fahs wrote about her beliefs, the president of the American Unitarian Association was impressed. He asked her to talk to Unitarian religious educators — people such as (insert your own name(s) and/or the name of your director of religious education). Unitarian Sunday school teachers liked her ideas very much. And that is why, when you come here, we encourage you to see, and touch, and do ... and to ask lots of questions.

When she was 82 years old, Sophia became a Unitarian minister. Her own life was a great example of her belief that every person in a congregation should continue to learn and grow, from the smallest child to the oldest adult. Sophia Fahs lived a long, long time — 102 years — and she never stopped learning new things.

If she were alive today and came to visit us, Sophia Fahs would want to know about our experiences, like the ones we have posted on our Faithful Journeys Path, and how they have helped us learn and grow. She would want to know what stories we have read and how they have helped to awaken our spirits. She would want to know how we ask questions, seek answers, and learn from each other. Imagine how happy she would be to see us watering one another’s seeds of spiritual growth in Faithful Journeys today.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/journeys/session6/learning-by-heart>

# 3.28: *She’d Had Enough* (367 words)

After many years in a congregation, she’d had enough. Knowing the people as well as she did, she knew that what they said on Sunday and what they did on Monday did not always equate. More often than not, Sunday was the one day of the week on which you could tell that people believed what they said they did. The rest of the week, she could see little difference between the other members of the congregation and the hypocrites they denounced.

And the words of the hymns no longer spoke to her—they talked of things she had long ago given up believing, or were words that had no real meaning in her life. And the sermons weren’t much better—entertaining perhaps, sometimes giving her something to think about, but a good book or independent film could do the same. And besides, she’d had to go when she was a kid and when her kids were young, but now?

No, she’d had enough. And so, she began walking in the woods on Sunday mornings. Alone with her thoughts and the rustling leaves, she felt a freedom she had not known in a long time. She got more from the sunshine than from a year of sermons, and the birds surpassed any anthem she’d heard. This was good. This was right. The woods were her sanctuary. The wind was all the preaching she needed.

This continued for some time, until one day she realized that the birds sang together, and the trees swayed as one, but she was by herself. No squirrel cared that she had a new grandchild; no rhododendron could help her wrestle with her mother’s Alzheimer’s. The flora and fauna did not face what she faced as a human, and so could not offer their understanding. Nor could she really offer herself to any of them.

So, she returned to her congregation. And she saw herself in the people who were trying to live what they believed. And she heard her life in the hymns and the readings and the sermons. (Or, at least, some of the time.) And she never gave up her walks in the woods, but she realized she needed both.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/practice/workshop3/59207.shtml>

**3.28:** *Flame of Learning, Chalice of Love*by Janeen K Grohsmeyer (878 words)

*(Light a chalice, if there isn’t already one lit, and have some matches at hand.)*

Have you ever watched a candle burn?

*(Lean forward to impart the secret.)*

The fire is alive.

Watch it! It moves. It flickers. It dances on the wind. It changes with every breath of air. (Demonstrate this.)

Fire is alive. It is born. It grows. And it dies.

*(Blow out candle.)*

But fire is special. It can live again and again.

*(Relight candle and reverently set the chalice someplace where participants can see it.)*

People have always known that fire was special. Long, long ago, before people made matches or candles or even made houses, people knew that fire was special. There was the great fire in the sky, the sun, which made the earth warm and made night into day. And there were the smaller fires that people made, fires that cooked their food, and kept them warm, and brought them light.

People honored the fires, because fire was special. Fire was more than human.

Fire has power. It can create, and it can destroy. It can bring light, and it can burn. It can create, and it can destroy. Fire can be wonderful, and fire can be terrible. We have to be careful with fire.

And so, people thought that fire was something sacred and holy. Some people even worshiped fire, and said that fire was a deity, like a goddess or a god. Other people said fire wasn’t actually the deity, but just meant that the deity was there.

No matter what they believed, people all over the world gave fire a special place in their religions. They had fires in their homes, of course, to cook food and keep warm, and they also had sacred fires in their temples. They set sacred lamps on their altars. They lit sacred bonfires outside on the hilltops and in the groves. They placed sacred torches near the graves of those who died.

We still do this today. In Washington, DC, near the tomb of the Unknown Soldier, burns an eternal flame that never goes out. In churches at Christmas time, many Christians light four candles on an Advent wreath. During the eight days of Hanukkah, Jews light the eight candles of the menorah. At Diwali, Hindus set small lamps all around the house.

And when Unitarian Universalists gather, we light a chalice. This is our sacred fire. The flame gives light and warmth, just like all fires. It’s also a symbol, something we use to represent the light of learning.

The chalice is a symbol, too. A chalice is really just a big cup that you can drink from. When you’re thirsty, the nicest thing someone can do is to give you something to drink. Giving a drink to someone is a way of welcoming them to your house. In a way, it means you’re part of the same family, just like everyone here is part of the same family, the Unitarian Universalist family.

The picture of a flame in a chalice was first drawn by a man named Hans Deutsch during World War II for the Unitarian Service Committee. This was before your parents were born. During the war, the committee needed a symbol to show refugees from many different countries that they were there to help them. When refugees saw the picture of the flame in the chalice, it didn’t matter what language they spoke. They understood that the symbol stood for help. Unitarian Universalists started to use the flaming chalice in their worship services after that.

Just like the sacred fires, people have used chalices in their religions for thousands and thousands of years. Long ago, the Greeks and Romans put wine in their chalices. Other people have put water or blood or milk, or even melted butter in their chalices. The Celts believed that drinking from the cauldron of the Goddess Ceirdwyn would bring people back to life. Jesus shared a cup of wine with his friends. Many Christians still do this in religious celebrations today.

We Unitarian Universalists don’t drink from our chalice. Instead, we use it to hold the flame. The circle of the chalice helps keep the fire small. The flame doesn’t blind us. It doesn’t burn us. It gives us light, so we can see all the different things in the universe. Even the invisible ones, because the Unitarian Universalist flame is a light of learning.

The circle of our family keeps us warm, both our family at home and our Unitarian Universalist family. We help each other, and we share food and drink with each other, and we take care of each other, because that’s what families are supposed to do. And we invite everyone to come be a part of our family, because the Unitarian Universalist chalice is a chalice of love.

The flaming chalice is a symbol of learning and of love. It’s our symbol, the symbol of Unitarian Universalism.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/home/session2/flame-learning>

# 3.29: *The Shape of the Spirit* (526 words)

After many years of being out of shape, he decided it was time to do something about the state of his body. With great excitement and enthusiasm, he went to the local gym, got a membership, and began a circuit-training routine. He felt good. And he kept at it, going to the gym several times a week.

For the first couple of months. And then a business trip intervened. And then he had to work late. And then it was one of his kids’ birthday. And soon he was hardly going at all. Then he could barely remember the last time he’d gone.

So, he went back to the gym and asked the trainer for a suggestion. ‘Have you tried finding a workout buddy?’ she asked. He hadn’t. But the idea made sense, so he talked to a couple of his friends who went to the same gym and found one who agreed to ‘buddy up.’

The two went to the gym together sometimes, but often they continued working out alone. But they checked in with each other. They talked about the difficulties they were having staying motivated; they celebrated each others’ achievements. They gave each other ideas to ‘spice things up.’ They commiserated over aches and pains. And soon he could hardly imagine not working out. His ‘buddy’ helped keep him moving.

After a few years of being back in shape, he decided it was time to do something about the state of his spirit. With great excitement and enthusiasm, he went to his local Unitarian Universalist congregation, became a member, and began taking part in small group ministries and adult education opportunities. And he felt good.

For the first couple of years. But then the freedom and diversity of the congregation weren’t new to him anymore, and the Principles and Sources that had once excited him were now taken for granted. He felt he’d reached a bit of a plateau on his spiritual path and that he needed some new energy and direction. So, he went to the minister and presented his dilemma to her. In the conversation, he happened to mention that he worked out regularly and had a workout buddy.

‘Workout buddy,’ the minister said. ‘What a nice idea. Have you ever thought of finding a ‘spiritual buddy’—one who can be a companion and support to you in your spiritual practices? Someone who can challenge you, support you, and help you stay focused like your workout buddy does?’

‘A spiritual buddy!’ he said. ‘Just what I need!’ That night he called up his friend, the fellow who had introduced him to Unitarian Universalism. And they became spiritual buddies. They met for coffee a couple times per month to discuss their spiritual practices and their theological ideas. Sometimes they meditated together. Once, on the solstice, they hiked up a hill to see the sun rise. Another time they both read the same book about evolution and spirituality. Their friendship grew deeper, and their spiritual lives flourished. He participated in his Unitarian Universalist congregation with renewed excitement, knowing he was on a rich spiritual path and delighting in the company of fellow travelers.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/practice/workshop4/shape-spiirit>

# 3.30: *Journey of a Snowflake* (306 words)

The existence of a snowflake is a journey — like your life, which is a journey, too.

It starts in a cloud. Clouds carry drops of water vapor. Clouds also contain tiny particles of dust. Drops of the water vapor cling to the dust particles. When conditions are cold enough, the water freezes into crystals and a snowflake is born. Crystals can attach in many different ways to make infinite patterns — ‘infinite’ means more numbers than anyone could ever count. The temperature, what the cloud is like and other factors influence how the snowflake grows. So, it is probably true that no two snowflakes are alike. Each one is unique — like you are unique from everyone else who has ever lived. Each snowflake has a journey ahead of it: some parts of the journey are common to all snowflakes, some parts are unique.

The next part of the journey is the same for every snowflake: it falls to the earth. But where it falls can vary. The snowflake may fall on a warm sidewalk and melt into water right away. It may fall on cooler grass and stick. I like it when a snowflake falls gently on my eyelashes. Do you? The snowflake may even fall on top of other snowflakes, making piles of snow you can use to build snow kids.

Eventually, though, all snowflakes take the same journey of melting into water. Some water is soaked into the ground and nourishes plants, flowers and even vegetables, like tomatoes. Some water runs in gullies to rivers, which meet the oceans, the biggest gatherings of ex-snowflakes on the planet!

Water from the oceans and plants and other sources evaporates when it gets warm and turn into water vapor. Where does the water vapor go? Back up into the clouds! Our snowflake has returned from where it began.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/signs/session3/287613.shtml>

# 3.31: *Finding Your Way Ethelred Brown* by Janeen K Grohsmeyer (913 words)

One morning, more than a hundred years ago on the island of Jamaica, a boy named Ethelred Brown went to church. Usually at this church, the people sang their creed, their list of what they believed. But that morning was Easter Sunday, a special Sunday, and so instead of singing the creed, the pastor said one line of it, and the people would repeat it.

This is some of what Ethelred heard:

* We believe the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Spirit is God. And yet they are not three gods, but one God.
* So likewise, the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Spirit Lord. And yet not three lords, but one Lord.
* The Unity in Trinity and the Trinity in Unity is to be worshipped.

And Ethelred thought, ‘What?’ He liked math, and he knew how to add. He knew that three wasn’t the same as one. How could you have a unity in trinity or a trinity in unity? How can three things be one thing? How can one thing be three? It didn’t make sense to him.

So right there, sitting in church, while everyone else was still saying they believed in a unity in trinity and a trinity in unity, Ethelred decided that he didn’t believe that. He couldn’t agree with what everyone else in the church was saying. He would have to find his own way.

That afternoon, he went to his uncle’s house. On the table was a booklet with the words, ‘The Lord our God is one God.’ And Ethelred thought, ‘Yes, that makes sense.’ He borrowed the booklet from his uncle and took it home to read. That booklet was by the Reverend William Ellery Channing, who was a Unitarian minister in the United States. After reading it and some other books, Ethelred decided he was a Unitarian, too. But there were no Unitarian churches in Jamaica, and so Ethelred knew he would have to find his own way.

So that’s what he did, for years and years. He still liked numbers, and when he was a grown-up, he became an accountant, helping other people keep a good track of their money. He got married, and he and his wife had four children. Then, when Ethelred was thirty-two years old, he decided to become a Unitarian minister and start a Unitarian church in Jamaica. He didn’t even know any other Unitarians, but Ethelred Brown didn’t let that stop him. He found his own way. He wrote a letter to ‘Any Unitarian Minister in New York City,’ and he put it in the mail.

Eventually, he got a letter back, telling him he had to go a school in the United States to become a Unitarian minister. Now, Ethelred didn’t have much money, and he’d never left Jamaica. But he didn’t let that stop him. He found a way. He asked people to give him money; he said good-bye to his wife and children, then got on a boat to go the United States.

When he finally got to the United States, they didn’t let him stay because he didn’t have the right papers. Ethelred didn’t let that stop him, either. He found a way. He went back to Jamaica, fixed his papers, and saved more money. Finally, three years after he had decided to go, he arrived at the school. He spent two years there, learning to be a Unitarian minister, and he was ordained in 1912. He was the first Jamaican to go to that school. He was also the very first black person to become a Unitarian minister.

One hundred years ago, that made a difference. Back then, people of different colors didn’t mix. The teachers at the minister school told Ethelred that he couldn’t be at a church with white people; they would want a white minister. Because he was black, he had to be a minister at a church with black people. Except there weren’t any Unitarian churches with black people. So, the Unitarian teachers didn’t think he could be a minister after all.

That didn’t stop Ethelred. He found a way. He went back to his wife and children in Jamaica, and he started a Unitarian church there. It wasn’t easy, because the church didn’t have many people or much money, and he didn’t get much help from other Unitarians, but Ethelred had made his dream of being a Unitarian minister come true.

After eight years, he decided to start another church, this time in the United States. He and his family moved to New York City, and he started the Harlem Community Church in 1920. It wasn’t easy there, either. They still didn’t have much money, and they still didn’t get much help. His wife became sick, and one of his children died. Besides being a minister, Ethelred had to work long hours at an extra job he didn’t like.

But somehow, Ethelred found a way. For the next thirty-five years, Ethelred was the minister at the Harlem Community Church. Over the years, hundreds of people found their way there to pray and learn, worship and sing. Just like we do at our congregation.

In fact, one of the songs we sing has a tune named after the Reverend Ethelred Brown. It’s in our Singing the Living Tradition hymnbook, and it’s called ‘I’m on My Way.’

Ethelred Brown always found a way to do what he believed in, and so should we.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/journeys/session8/finding-your-way>

# 3.32: *Mind Meets Body* (235 words)

Once upon a time there was a head. Just a head. By sheer force of will—or maybe it was some kind of psychokinetic energy—the head was able to move itself around, open doors, pick things up. In fact, the head could do just about anything you or I can do.

And to hear the head tell of it, life is pretty good when you’re a head. No stubbed toes. You never hit your funny bone. No love handles. No stomachaches. No tense shoulders.

Of course, there are also no dips in a hot tub. No lazy days in freshly washed sheets. And while the head could eat food, and taste it just as well as you or I, it could never feel satisfied and full. After a while, the head came to realize that it was incomplete.

So, when one day the head saw a body that had no head of its own, the head got really excited. It floated over and suggested that the two might get together. Of course, the body had no ears, and could use only body language to communicate, but eventually the two of them made a connection. And when the head felt what it was like to have a body, and the body felt what it was like to have a head, what else could they do? And the two have been dancing through life ever since.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/practice/workshop6/59873.shtml>

# 3.33: *The Journey of the Birds* (449 words)

Inspired by the ancient epic poem, ‘The Conference of the Birds,’ by the Persian Sufi Muslim writer Fariduddin Attar.

Once upon a time, all the birds in the land decided they needed a leader for their community. A leader, they thought, would make their community stronger. Representatives of all the bird species gathered to discuss finding a leader.

‘A leader will tell us the right things to do,’ said the robin.

‘Our leader must be wise,’ said the owl.

‘A leader must believe we each are important, big and small,’ said the sparrow.

‘I want the leader to be caring, like a friend,’ said the dove.

‘Yes, the leader help us share and get along better,’ said the jay.

‘The leader must make us feel safe,’ said the hawk.

‘I know where you can find such a leader,’ said the hoopoe bird. ‘It is the Simorgh and it lives far from here.’

The birds were very excited. They said they were willing to go anywhere to find such a leader. ‘It might be dangerous,’ said the hoopoe. A few birds looked troubled, but all the birds voted to go find the Simorgh.

The hoopoe took off and all the birds followed.

They flew at night. They flew in sunshine. Days and days passed. Some birds got tired and left the group. Other birds were filled with doubt. How did they know the Simorgh really existed? Only the hoopoe had ever heard of this bird. Some of the doubters dropped out, but others kept flying.

One valley was filled with fiery mountains. All the birds were afraid.

‘I’m too small to make it over that mountain,’ lamented the sparrow.

‘No, keep flying. We can make it together. We will help you.’ And they did.

The strong flyers helped the weaker flyers. The birds with good vision helped find food for the group. Along the journey, the birds learned how to better respect, share and care for each other. It seemed that every bird had something special and unique to offer that made the journey easier.

Finally, the hoopoe announced, ‘We are here!’

The other birds look around in anticipation. ‘Where is the Simorgh? We don’t see it!’ they cried.

‘Come. It is over here,’ said the hoopoe.

The birds stood beside hoopoe and realized they were on the edge of a lake. They looked in... and saw their own reflections. Then, they understood.

The Simorgh was not another bird. The Simorgh was all of them, and all of them were the Simorgh. They remembered that each of them had something good and strong and special inside of them and that each bird had gifts to bring to the community. They were all that was needed to keep the community strong. They knew now that together they could do anything.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/signs/session9/journey>

**3.34:** *Here They Come* by Rev. Dr. Judith C. Campbell (746 words)

By Judith C. Campbell. Used with permission. From UU & Me!: Collected Stories, edited by Betsy Hill Williams (Boston: Skinner House, 2003). Originally published in uu&me, Volume 3, Number 3, December 1999. UU&Me! is published by the Church of the Largeer Fellowship.

Hello. My name is Bettje and when you say it, it sounds like ‘Bet-tay.’ I live in Transylvania, in the village of Kadacs where my grandfather, Biro Josef, is the Unitarian minister. We say our last names first here, and then our given names — or what you call a first name. My mother teaches first grade in the same school that I go to. For the last three weeks, she has been teaching me and my friends a song in English called ‘My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean.’ We learned it so we could sing it for some American visitors who are coming to our village today.

One of our visitors is a lady minister from our partner church in America. I’ve never seen a lady minister before. I didn’t know there was such a thing. My grandmother, Biro Anna, has been writing letters to her for over four years. They are pen pals. She has sent things for the people in our village from the people in her village of Norwell, in Massachusetts. And she has been selling some of our folk art embroideries and beautiful tablecloths made by women in my village in America. The money from those embroideries really helps us.

We have enough to eat because we all have gardens and most of us keep pigs and chickens. Everyone works in the garden. Almost nobody has cars. We walk everywhere. It’s hard in the winter and spring because it’s so muddy, and the roads in our village are not paved.

Anyway, today is the day. We have all been practicing our English song. Everybody has been doing something for the visit. The ladies have been cooking all week. The men have been repairing the fences and the beautiful carved gates called szekley kapu that many people in the village have outside their houses. The teenagers have been practicing the folk dances of the village so they can perform them. We don’t get to see them except at weddings and times like this. People are beginning to forget how to do the folk dances. The grandparents remember, but there are so few of them left.

Unfortunately, today is also the day that the sheep are driven out to pasture for the summer, and they are going to leave a lot of ‘stuff’ on the road as they go. My grandmother is worried that the visitors, especially the lady minister and her husband, will think our village looks this way all the time.

Here they come! I can see the van and I can see hands waving out the windows. I wonder, which lady is the minister? The van is stopping and they are getting out. Lots of people are coming out of their houses to see and greet them. They don’t look that much different [from] us. Oh, that must be the lady minister, she and my grandmother are hugging each other and crying and another man is taking their picture. Wow, there are flashing lights everywhere!

The man taking pictures of the lady minister is her husband and back in America he has a garden that he loves. He spends many hours each week in that garden making all kinds of things grow. Anyone who has a garden knows that you need more than water and sun to make things grow well; you must have fertilizer. And some of the best fertilizer in the world is the ‘stuff’ that farm animals drop wherever they go. The lady minister’s husband saw the sheep droppings in the road and explained that he doesn’t live on a farm so he has to pay for fertilizer for his garden. He thought it must be wonderful to live in a farming village with so much free fertilizer on the road for anyone to take. Well, I guess that’s one way of looking at it. It sure cheered up the people at my grandmother and grandfather’s house who were worrying that the visitors would think our town was a mess!

The Americans stayed five days, and the lady minister was actually speaking some Hungarian words by the end of the visit. Her husband looked at all the gardens in the village, but he only learned one word, Palinka. That’s a grown-up drink. I think it tastes awful, but like many other things, I guess it depends on how you look at it. I hope they come back. The lady minister said she’d write to me ... in Hungarian!

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/journeys/session13/here-they-come>

**3.35:** *The Gates of the Forest* by Elie Wiesel, from The Gates of the Forest (237 words)

When the great Rabbi Israel Ba’al Shem-Tov saw misfortune threatening the Jews, it was his custom to go into a certain part of the forest to meditate. There he would light the fire, say a special prayer, and the miracle would be accomplished and the misfortune averted.

Years later when a disciple of the Ba’al Shem-Tov, the celebrated Magid of Mezritch, had occasion for the same reason, to intercede with heaven, he would go to the same place in the forest and say: ‘Master of the Universe, listen! I do not know how to light the fire, but I am still able to say the prayer,’ and again the miracle would be accomplished.

Still later, another rabbi, Rabbi Moshe-leib of Sasov, in order to save his people once more, would go into the forest and say, ‘I do not know how to light the fire. I do not know the prayer, but I know the place and this must be sufficient.’ It was sufficient and the miracle was accomplished.

The years passed. And it fell to Rabbi Israel of Ryzhyn to overcome misfortune. Sitting in his armchair, his head in his hands, he spoke to God: ‘I am unable to light the fire, and I do not know the prayer, and I cannot even find the place in the forest. All I can do is tell the story, and this must be sufficient.’ And it was sufficient.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/life/workshop2/159144.shtml>

# 3.36: *Understanding the Elephant* (209 words)

Five people wearing blindfolds were once brought into a room in the middle of which stood an elephant. Each person was directed to a different part of the animal, and then all five were encouraged to explore and discover whatever they could.

The first person explored one of the elephant’s legs. ‘This creature,’ she said, ‘is like a strong tree.’

The second person was led to the elephant’s tail. ‘No,’ he said, ‘it is like thick rope.’

The third person was investigating the elephant’s ear. ‘You’re both wrong,’ he said. ‘It’s like a giant palm leaf.’

‘No, no, no,’ said the fourth person, who was engaged with the elephant’s trunk. ‘It is like a thick snake.’

The fifth, who’d been led to the elephant’s body, simply laughed to herself. ‘How can they all be so wrong?’ she thought. ‘This thing is like a huge boulder.’

The five argued with each other for some time—all certain that they were accurately describing what they were experiencing; none able to change the mind of even one of the others. At last they took off their blindfolds and discovered that each was right, and each was wrong. It was only when they combined their descriptions that they began to understand the elephant.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/practice/workshop10/60893.shtml>

# 3.37: *The Messiah Is Among You* (995 words)

Recrafted with permission of the author, Francis Dorff, O. Praem, of the Norbertine Community of Alberquerque, New Mexico, from his story, ‘The Rabbi’s Gift,’ which is copyrighted by The New Catholic World magazine.

Mr. Cohen was the teacher of the most quarrelsome third grade class you could ever imagine. The kids in that class argued about everything. They argued about who should stand in front of the lunch line. They argued about what games to play during recess. They argued about who was the best reader in the class. And if Mr. Cohen asked them whether it was sunny or rainy outside, they even argued about that!

Mr. Cohen was at his wits’ end. There was so much arguing going on that no one was learning anything. When they tried to do multiplication problems, Janie and Stan argued about whether ‘two times two’ was the same as ‘two plus two,’ or not. When it was time for spelling, Carmen and Ling began to quibble about who should get the first turn in the spelling bee. In music class, Carlos and Beth each tried to grab the tambourine and Carlos ended up in the nurse’s office when the tambourine hit him on the head.

Mr. Cohen tried everything. He promised the class an ice cream party if they could get through just one day without an argument. No sooner had he made this offer than Charles and Bobby began to argue about whether they should get chocolate chip ice cream or cookie dough.

Mr. Cohen threatened the kids. He told them he’d send anyone who was arguing to the principal’s office. That didn’t work either. The principal, Mrs. Sanchez, pulled Mr. Cohen aside at lunch time and politely but firmly told him that 15 students in one morning was quite enough, thank you, and she hoped to be able to get some work done that afternoon.

Mr. Cohen called parents. He tried very politely asking the kids to stop. He kept the class in at recess. Nothing worked. There was only thing left to do. Mr. Cohen went to his synagogue on the Sabbath and prayed. His rabbi noticed his look of despair and went to sit by him. The rabbi listened to Mr. Cohen’s tale of the most difficult, argumentative third grade class in history. When she had heard it all, she simply said, ‘Stay home from work on Monday, and leave it to me.’

That Monday, the kids walked into their classroom and found the rabbi sitting at Mr. Cohen’s desk. Of course, they immediately began to argue about whether Mr. Cohen was sick or whether Mrs. Sanchez had finally gotten so tired of the steady stream of arguing children that showed up at her office every day that she’d fired him.

The rabbi sat and listened. She didn’t yell or try to interrupt them. She didn’t plead or scold. She simply sat quietly at Mr. Cohen’s desk. After a while the kids began to wonder what was going on. The arguments gradually died down as the kids watched the rabbi to see what would happen next.

When the classroom was finally quiet, the rabbi slowly stood up. ‘Mr. Cohen will not be here today. I am your substitute teacher but I have only one thing to teach you. Listen carefully for I will not repeat it.’

The kids were too surprised to argue. The rabbi’s voice rang out in the stunned silence. ‘Last night in my dreams, God told me a messiah is among you.’

(Leader: Ask, ‘What do you suppose happened next?’ Wait until someone says ‘fighting’ or ‘arguments.’)

They argued, of course! Pandemonium broke out in the classroom as the kids argued about who might be the messiah.

It couldn’t be Charles; he was always getting into mischief. But on the other hand, Charles could always be counted on to help a friend or share his lunch. And Ling was clearly too bossy to be a messiah. But, then again, Ling went to church every single Sunday and prayed every night before bed. What about Janie? She always did her work so carefully and neatly.

The arguing didn’t stop overnight. When Mr. Cohen returned to school on Tuesday morning, the first thing he heard was Stan’s angry voice. ‘I’m telling you Carmen; Bobby is the messiah! Just the other day I saw him comforting a little first grader who had scraped her knee. Isn’t that the sort of thing a messiah would do?’

Soon, however, the arguments began to disappear. When Janie began to argue with Charles that she should be the line leader, she suddenly offered to stand behind him in line. After all, Charles might be the messiah.

And in music class, Carlos and Beth took turns using the tambourine. After all, one of them might be the messiah.

All that year the kids kept trying to figure out who might be the messiah. They began to think about each other differently. They noticed all of the good things about each other. Stan was a great artist with a huge imagination. Ling was passionate and strong. Carmen was the most loyal friend you could ask for. As for Mr. Cohen, he was a gentle, kind teacher. Maybe he was the messiah.

The kids also began to think about themselves differently. Each child wondered: Could I be the messiah? The children were inspired to try to be the best people they could be.

Soon the kids in Mr. Cohen’s class had a reputation for treating one another well. Teachers came from far and wide to visit the class and ask Mr. Cohen for teaching tips. The year ended and the kids in Mr. Cohen’s class graduated having learned a very important lesson they would never forget: Everyone around you is special, and anyone could be a messiah.

The next fall, Mr. Cohen looked at his brand-new class of third graders. Already, Jon and Anna were arguing about whether or not alligators were the same as crocodiles. ‘Good morning, children,’ he began. ‘Has anyone here ever heard of a messiah?’ He lowered his voice to a whisper, so everyone had to be quiet and listen, and he said, ‘I have been told there is a messiah in this class.’

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session7/messiah>

**3.38:** *The Strong Man Who Cried* by Rabbi Marc Gellman (525 words)

From Does God Have a Big Toe? Stories About Stories in the Bible (HarperTrophy, 1993). Used with permission.

Jacob cried a lot. Jacob cried when he was happy. Jacob cried when he was sad. But mostly Jacob cried when he saw beautiful things. The sight of a fresh new flower or a sunset would fill him with happiness and he would just cry. He couldn’t help it. But his father Isaac was not happy about having a son who cried a lot.

Isaac would not take Jacob hunting because Jacob would cry at the thought of some furry little animal becoming his supper. So, Isaac would take his other son Esau, who loved to hunt and never cried.

‘Why can’t you be more like your brother Esau?’ Isaac would scold Jacob. ‘He hunts and fights and never cries. He is a real man.’

And Jacob would answer, ‘I cry when I feel like crying, I just can’t change that.’ Then Isaac would stomp off, kick the dirt, and mutter strange words.

Meanwhile, Rachel, who was Jacob’s cousin living in a place called Harron, was also having trouble with her father. Rachel was a shepherd, and this drove her father Laban crazy. Day and night, he would yell at her, ‘Get away from those sheep and goats! Why can’t you be more like your sister Leah? She doesn’t smell like sheep. She sits in the tent and cooks and sews. She is a real woman.’

And Rachel would answer, ‘I like being a shepherd. I just can’t change that.’ Then her father would stomp off, kick the dirt, and mutter strange words.

But there was one part of shepherding Rachel did not like. The well for watering the flocks had to be corked up each day with a huge rock so that all the water would not gush out and dry up. The rock was so big that every morning all the shepherds in the area had to push together to move the rock off the well. And every night they had to gather together to push it back on.

One day, on the way to morning rock pushing, Rachel saw a new man at the well. He was small and fair skinned, with warm brown eyes, and he was talking with the other shepherds at the well. Suddenly this little man, all by himself, pushed the big rock off the well. The shepherds were amazed. The man approached Rachel and said, ‘My name is Jacob, the son of Isaac and Rebekah. I am your cousin and I have been on a long journey. I am very happy to see you.’ The Jacob kissed Rachel and started to cry because she was so very beautiful.

When the other shepherds saw Jacob crying, they said, ‘He is strong, but real men don’t cry,’ and they walked away.

But Rachel did not leave Jacob. She sat by him on the rock and they watched the flocks drink from the well. Rachel said, ‘I never saw a man as strong as you who cries.’ Jacob looked at Rachel and said, ‘I never saw a woman so beautiful as you who is a shepherd.’

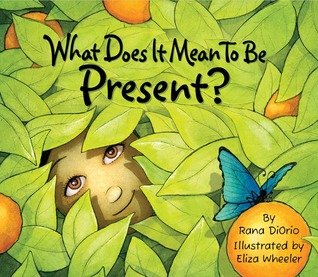
They laughed and Jacob cried, and then after a time they went home—together.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveguide/session8/the-strong-man>

**4.0: Children’s Books about Spirituality & Spiritual Practices**

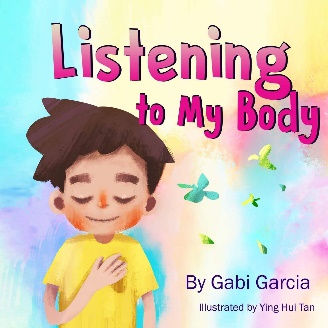
# *Being Present, Connection & Listening*

**4.1:** *What Does It Mean to Be Present?* by Rana DiOrio, author & Eliza Wheeler, illustrator (2010)

’Being present means...Noticing when someone needs help. Waiting patiently for your turn. Focusing on what’s happening now. Follow a group of friends at school, at home, and at the beach as they experience just what it means to be present.’

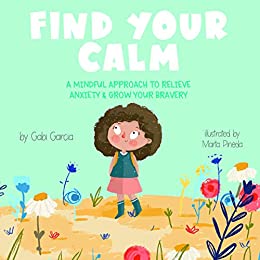
Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=stnz10c2tt0> (3:03)

**4.2:** *Listening to My Body* by Gabi Garcia, author and Ying Hui Tan, illustrator (2017)

This engaging and interactive book guides children through the practice of naming their feelings and the physical sensations that accompany them. From wiggly and squirmy to rested and still, *Listening to My Body* helps children develop a sensations vocabulary so that they can express what they are experiencing. Easy, kid-friendly mindfulness activities are woven throughout to reinforce the teachings. Big emotions can be overwhelming! Help your child build on their capacity to engage more mindfully, self-regulate, and develop emotional resilience.

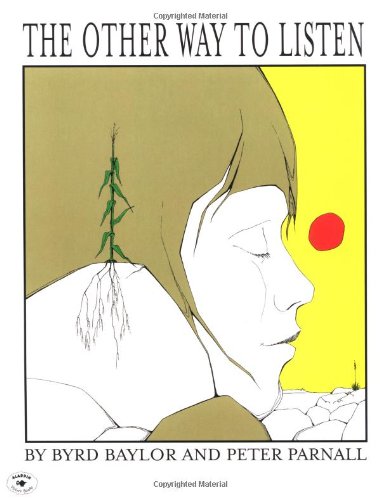
# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-B6Rik-TA-Q&t=3s> (7:11)

**4.3:** *Find Your Calm: A Mindful Approach To Relieve Anxiety And Grow Your Bravery* by Gabi Garcia, author and Marta Pineda, illustrator (2020)

’’Anxiety can feel big and powerful. It can show up suddenly, without warning.’ For many kids, it can be overwhelming. Anxiety is not just a cognitive experience. When children feel anxious, their bodies respond physically to a perceived threat. They need to feel a sense of safety before being able to figure out what to do next. *Find Your Calm* is a wonderfully accessible book that teaches children how to tap into their sense of safety when anxiety sends a false alarm, so they can find their calm. Includes simple activities for them to practice.’

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2ilNbatgwYM> (

**4.4:** *The Other Way to Listen* by Byrd Baylor, author and Peter Parnall, illustrator (1997)

 With a lot of practice, a young boy learns from his old teacher how to listen to the sounds and songs of the natural world. When you know ‘the other way to listen,’ you can hear the wild-flower seed bursting open. You hear rocks murmuring and hills singing, and it seems like the most natural thing in the world. Of course, it takes a lot of practice, and you can’t be in a hurry. Most people never hear these things at all.

This is the story of an old man who had a special way of hearing and of a child who hoped to learn his secrets. Byrd Baylor and Peter Parnall have combined their unique, award-winning talents to celebrate the world of nature.

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YADfBw0hkJU>

# Enactment of the story: <https://vimeo.com/327575024> (15:44)

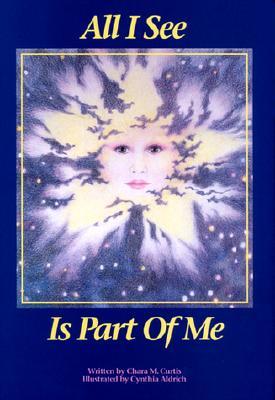
# 4.5: *The Invisible String* by Patrice Karst, author and Geoff Stevenson, illustrator (2000)

’’That’s impossible,’ said twins Jeremy & Liza after their Mom told them they’re all connected by this thing called an Invisible String. ‘What kind of string?’ They asked with a puzzled look to which Mom replied, ‘An Invisible String made of love.’ That’s where the story begins. A story that teaches of the tie that really binds. The Invisible String reaches from heart to heart. Does everybody have an Invisible String? How far does it reach, anyway? Does it ever go away? Read all about it! THE INVISIBLE STRING is a very simple approach to overcoming the fear of loneliness or separation with an imaginative flair that children can easily identify with and remember. Here is a warm and delightful lesson teaching young and old that we aren’t ever really alone and reminding children (and adults!) that when we are loved beyond anything we can imagine. ‘People who love each other are always connected by a very special String, made of love. Even though you can’t see it with your eyes, you can feel it deep in your heart, and know that you are always connected to the ones you love.’’

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2rZNTFf35Aw> (5:26) illustrations by Joanne Lew-Vriethoff

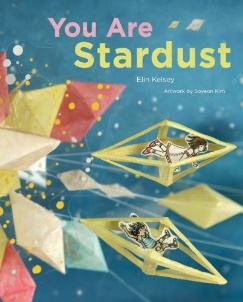
# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U4uPTuGTy6I> (6:47) illustrations by Geoff Stevenson

# 4.6: *All I See is Part of Me* by Chara Curtis, author and Cynthia Aldrich, illustrator (1994)

’In a journey that carries the reader far beyond the printed page, a child discovers his common link with all of life. Inspired by Mr. Sun and Sister Star, he finds the light within his heart and then finds that same light everywhere. ‘Sister Star, how can it be That I am you and you are me?’ She glowed. ‘You’re larger than you know, You are everyplace there is to go. You have a body—this is true—But look at what’s inside of you!’’

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C5V_gv9X9TE> (5:39)

# 4.7: *You Are Stardust* by Elin Kelsey, author and Soyeon Kim, illustrator (2012)

*’You Are Stardust* begins by introducing the idea that every tiny atom in our bodies came from a star that exploded long before we were born. From its opening pages, the book suggests that we are intimately connected to the natural world; it compares the way we learn to speak to the way baby birds learn to sing, and the growth of human bodies to the growth of forests.’

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nRzxDXQ5R8w> (3:47)

# *Breathing*

# 4.8: *My Magic Breath* by Nick Ortner & Alison Taylor, authors and Michelle Polizzi, illustrator (2018)

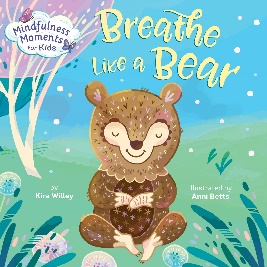
 *‘Do YOU have the magic breath? Let’s see…Take a deeeeeep breath in…and BLOW it out…*

‘…and like magic, you can feel better just by breathing! Sometimes it’s hard to feel happy. But with this interactive picture book, children breathe along as they learn how to make angry or sad thoughts disappear.

‘In a world that is sometimes too busy, with too many things going on, *My Magic Breath* will help steer children into a serene space of mindfulness, self-awareness, and balance.

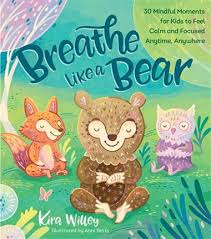
Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NjQzFfv5HXs> (3:39)

**4.9:** *Breathe Like a Bear*by Kira Willey, author & Anni Betts, illustrator (2019)

’With this board book, kids will learn to control their breathing and soothe themselves slowly to sleep, just like a bear in hibernation! Best of all, it can be performed anywhere: in the backseat of a car, at home, or even at a child’s desk at school.’

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vDAEXMYGiqM> (4:33)

**4.10:** *Breathe Like a Bear: 30 Mindful Moments for Kids to Feel Calm and Focused Anytime, Anywhere*by Kira Willey, author & Anni Betts, illustrator (2017)

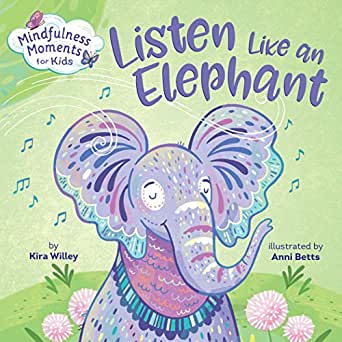
 ‘*Breathe Like a Bear* is a beautifully illustrated collection of mindfulness exercises designed to teach kids techniques for managing their bodies, breath, and emotions. Best of all, these 30 simple, short breathing practices and movements can be performed anytime, anywhere: in the car to the grocery store, during heavy homework nights at home, or even at a child’s desk at school.’

‘Thirty bite-sized mini-meditations—with names such as ‘Candle Breath’ and ‘Wake Up Your Face’—are accompanied by fanciful, super-inviting animal images. The author has sectioned off the meditations by energy: ‘Be Calm,’ ‘Focus,’ ‘Imagine,’ ‘Make Some Energy,’ and ‘Relax.’

Video Trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pqd2lmJv_4Q> (1:47)

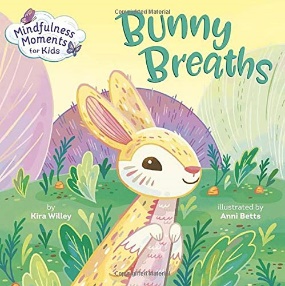
Overview of book & some exercises: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cKeFoOyz3EI> (15:17)

**4.11:** *Listen Like an Elephant* by Kira Willey, author & Anni Betts, illustrator (2019)

 With *Listen Like an Elephant*, kids learn to slow down, listen to the world around them, and focus their minds--no matter how messy life becomes. Best of all, the exercise can be performed anywhere: in the backseat of a car, at home, or even at their desk at school.

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R2ibNZtfTR0> (3:25)

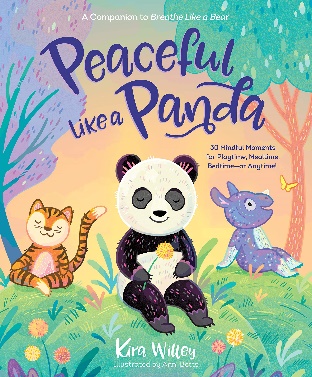
**4.12:** *Bunny Breaths* by Kira Willey, author & Anni Betts, illustrator (2020)

 ‘With *Bunny Breaths*, kids learn to how to replenish their energy with quick, focused breaths...no matter how *blah* they feel. Best of all, it can be performed anywhere: in the backseat of a car, at home, or even at a child’s desk at school.’

Video Link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BwrOS3lC5iU (story begins at 1:37)

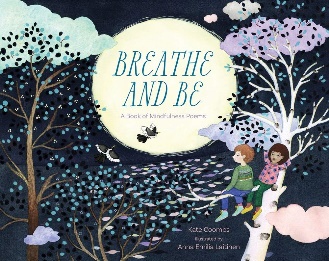
Demonstration of Bunny Breaths: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9MdtyNniSkc> (2:34)

**4.13:** *Peaceful Like a Panda: 30 Mindful Moments for Playtime, Mealtime, Bedtime-or Anytime!* by Kira Willey, author & Anni Betts, illustrator (December 2020)

’These easy-to-follow exercises help kids calmly and mindfully navigate their day, from sunrise to sunset. With sections dedicated to key activities in a child’s routine--waking up, traveling, learning, playing, eating, and bedtime--kids can learn techniques for managing their bodies, breath, and emotions anywhere, anytime.  
  **•**  Wake up bright and sunny, no matter the weather!  
  **•**  Explore the world around you during travel.  
  **•**  Boost your brain before learning.  
  **•**  Make the most of your imagination at playtime.’

**To be published December 2020.**

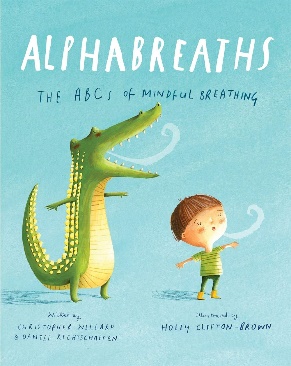
**4.14:** *Breathe and Be: A Book of Mindfulness Poems* by Kate Coombs, author and Anna Laitinen, illustrator (2017)

*I breathe slowly in,*  
*I breathe slowly out. My breath*  
*is a river of peace.*  
*I am here in the world.*  
*Each moment I can breathe and be.*  
 Hear thunder crash, feel your toes touch sand, and watch leaves drift softly away on a quiet stream. The simple poems in *Breathe and Be* help children learn mindfulness as they connect to the beauty of the natural world.

Mindfulness teaches us how to stay calm, soothe our emotions, and appreciate the world around us. Whether we’re watching tiny colored fish darting in the water or exploring the leaves, branches, and roots of a towering tree, the thoughtful words and the lovely art of *Breathe and Be* remind us how much joy we can find by simply living with awareness and inner peace.

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=snKYQU8GTyU> (4:34)

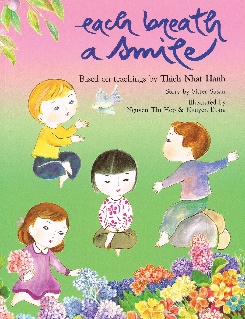
**4.15:** *Alphabreaths: The ABCs of Mindful Breathing* by Christopher Willard PsyD and Daniel Rechtschaffen MA, authors and Holly Clifton-Brown, illustrator (2019)

’In Alphabreaths, children will learn their ABCs and the basics of mindfulness through playful breathing exercises. Breaths like Mountain Breath and Redwood Breath will connect them with nature, while breaths like Heart Breath and Wish Breath will help them remember to fill their heart with gratitude and send good wishes to others.’

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EPHwFz-T5fo> (9:39)

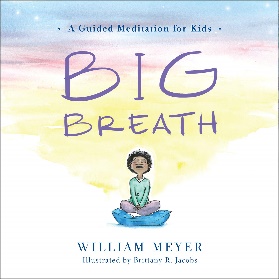
Demonstration of each breathe: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=me67V4GRIAU> (11:20)

**4.16:** *Each Breath a Smile* by Sister Susan, author and Nguyen Thi Hop and Nguyen Dong, illustrators (2002)

’Inspired by the teachings of Thích Nhất Hạnh, in *Each Breath a Smile* children learn how to calm body and mind and enjoy the present moment.’

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hILV5nVDKy0> (5:07)

**4.17:** *Big Breath: A Guided Meditation for Kids* by William Meyer, author and Brittany Jacobs, illustrator (2019)

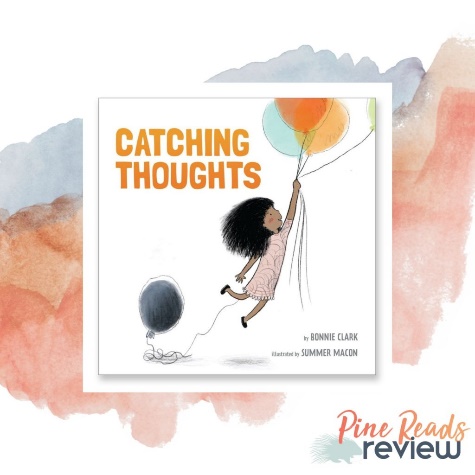
 ‘Calm your worries and build your bravery — or just relax during a busy day or wind down before bed. All day long, you breathe — in and out, in and out — without even thinking about it. But did you know that you can play with your breath, use it to take you on an adventure? All you have to do is find a comfy spot and close your eyes.

‘Does your breath sound like ocean waves? Like the wind before a storm or a breeze at the start of spring? Can you feel it all the way down to the tips of your toes? By the time you open your eyes, you might just feel a little lighter, calmer, more relaxed.’

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O0O3fOsMUT0> (6:21)

# *Mindfulness, Meditation & Metta*

**4.18:** *Catching Thoughts* by Bonnie Clark, author and Summer Macon, illustrator (2020)

 ‘Have you ever had an unwelcome thought that you just couldn’t get rid of, no matter how hard you tried to push it away?

‘In *Catching Thoughts*, a girl is plagued by an unwanted thought. No matter what she does—ignore it, yell at it, cry about it—the thought won’t go away. Frustrated and discouraged, she finally looks that bad thought in the face and says, ‘Hello.’ At last, she is able to notice other more beautiful, positive thoughts all around her. As she catches hold of new thoughts, the girl discovers she can fill her mind with whatever she chooses.’

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Op4fcSgjcs> (3:35)

# 4.19: *Mindful Bea and the Worry Tree* by Gail Silver, author and Franziska Hollbacher, illustrator (2019)

# Mindful Bea and the Worry Tree: Silver, Gail, Hollbacher ...’Bea is anxiously waiting for her friends to show up for her birthday party. The worries start to grow around her like tree branches. She asks herself questions like, ‘What if my friends don’t like the games?’ Her stomach flip-flops and she feels shaky. She tries to run away from the thoughts in the worry tree, but it doesn’t work! Bea uses deep-breathing exercises and visualization techniques to calm herself down. Includes a Note to Parents and Caregivers by Ara Schmitt, PhD, about the ways in which kids can respond to their anxious thoughts.’

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0o1f0fY5RWc&t=137s> (22:13)

# 4.20: *A Handful of Quiet: Happiness in Four Pebbles* by Thích Nhất Hạnh, author and Wietske Vriezen, illustrator (2008)

# A Handful of Quiet: Happiness in Four Pebbles: Nhat Hanh, Thich ...’A Handful of Quiet presents one of the best known and most innovative meditation practices developed by Thich Nhat Hanh as part of the Plum Village community’s practice with children. Pebble meditation is a playful and fun activity that parents and educators can do with their children to introduce them to meditation. It is designed to involve children in a hands-on and creative way that touches on their interconnection with nature. Practicing pebble meditation can help relieve stress, increase concentration, nourish gratitude, and can help children deal with difficult emotions.’

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mRgIdydKiMo> (9:13) (reading a part of the book)

# Pebble Meditation Practice: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eEefWQMXJOI> (5:00)

# The Pebble Meditation: guided meditation for children offered by Thay Phap Luu: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pc1pdjPG9BM> (10:27)

# Pebbles for your pocket meditation: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TXJs9bdcnXw&t=57s> (6:21)

# Pebble Meditation Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GiFwpJF-wLM> (4:43)

# Pebble Meditation Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X8lykoadY94> (4:58)

# 4.21: *I Am Peace: A Book of Mindfulness* by Susan Verde, author and Peter H. Reynolds, illustrator (2017)

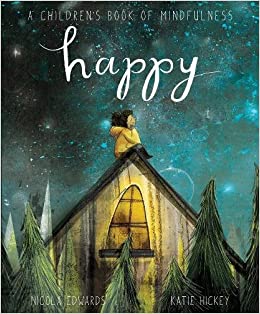
# I Am Peace: A Book of Mindfulness: Verde, Susan, Reynolds, Peter H ... ‘When the world feels chaotic, find peace within through an accessible mindfulness practice…. Express emotions through direct speech. Find empathy through imagination. Connect with the earth. Wonder at the beauty of the natural world. Breathe, taste, smell, touch, and be present.

# ‘Features an author’s note about the importance of mindfulness and a guided meditation for children, *I Am Peace* will help readers of all ages feel grounded and restored.’

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vnR5HDfR3JI> (3:01)

# *I Am Peace song* by Emily Arrow: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uqkPdIjjSFI> (3:12)

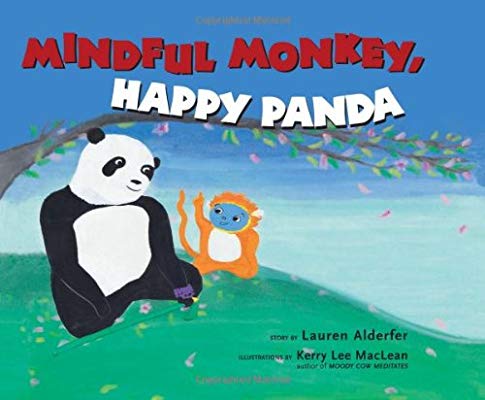
**4.22:** *Happy: A Children’s Book of Mindfulness* by Nicola Edwards, author and Katie Hickey (2019)

 *‘We breathe deep and expand like the galaxy, / We breathe out many thousands of stars, / And if ever we start to feel panicky, / This reminds us of just who we are.*

# ‘The perfect soothing read for quiet time, Happy gently encourages young readers to explore their emotions and the beautiful world around them. This poetic journey to a place of happiness and calm will inspire and empower your child to enjoy the practice of mindfulness.’

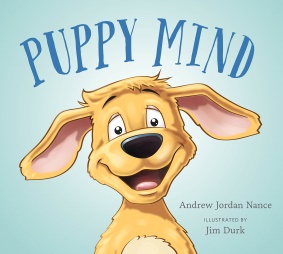
# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TKD0MF9-b7Y> (4:55)

**4.23:** *Mindful Monkey, Happy Panda* by Lauren Alderfer, author & Kerry Lee MacLean, illustrator (2011)

’This wonderful picture book for children and adults alike introduces the powerful practice of mindfulness in a fun and exciting way …with the delightful Monkey and his serene friend Happy Panda… As our story begins, Monkey is not so mindful - his Monkey Mind constantly jumping from one thing to another - but he encounters a mysterious and playful friend in Happy Panda. Panda helps Monkey recognize the simple joy of doing what you’re doing while you’re doing it.’

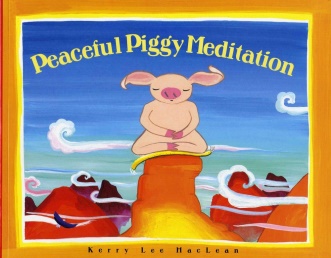
Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5nsySCMH36s> (2:50)

**4.24:** *Puppy Mind* by Andrew Jordan Nance, author & Jim Durk, illustrator (2016)

’In this picture book for children and adults …a young boy discovers his mind is like a puppy, always wandering away, into the past or the future. He sets about learning to train his puppy mind to heel to the present moment. Through remembering to breathe, the boy becomes a stronger and more caring master of his puppy mind, keeping it in the present, if only for a moment.’

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xd7Cr265zgc> (3:02)

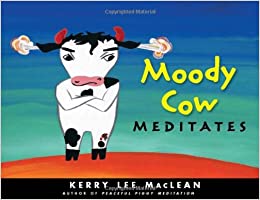
**4.25:** *Peaceful Piggy Meditation* by Kerry Lee McLean (2004)

’What can you do when you’re mad, sad, or anxious? Find a quiet spot, sit, and breathe. When you meditate every day, your mind stays happy, and even bad days are a little easier.’

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5Fhnh7g67bg>

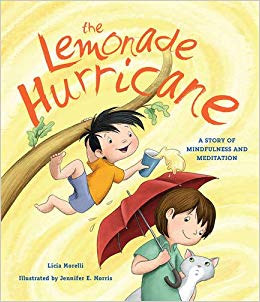
(3:32)

# 4.26: *Moody Cow Meditates* by Kerry Lee MacLean (2009)

’It all started one stupid, rotten day when everything went wrong... Peter the cow is having a BAD day. After missing the bus and wiping out on his bike he loses his temper and gets in trouble. To make matters worse all the other kids are teasing him, calling him Moody Cow. Peter’s day just seems to get worse until his grandfather comes over and teaches him how to settle his mind and let go of his frustration through a simple and fun exercise.’

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WIspzHioVn4> (begins at 1:14)

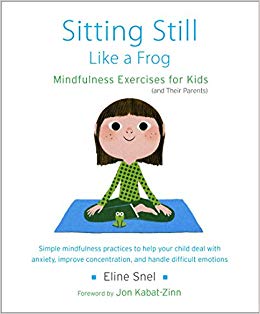
# 4.27: *The Lemonade Hurricane: a story of mindfulness and meditation* by Licia Morelli, author and Jennifer E. Morris, illustrator (2015)

 ‘Emma doesn’t really like hurricanes. After a busy day of school and activities, Emma likes to sit still and rest. Her little brother, Henry, does everything but. She calls him The Lemonade Hurricane.

‘Henry is a lot of fun when he’s not storming through the house, so Emma decides to teach him how to be still. By showing him how to sit, bow, and breathe, Emma is able to calm the hurricane within Henry.’

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Olqt-Ghi-zo> (6:03)

**4.28:** *Sitting Still Like a Frog: Mindfulness Exercises for Kids (and Their Parents)* by Eline Snel (2010)

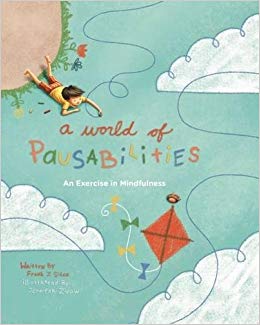
’Simple mindfulness practices to help your child (ages 5-12) deal with anxiety, improve concentration, and handle difficult emotions.’

Video Link: *5 Minutes Mindfulness for Children- Sitting still like a frog:* <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EOckRqbCdG0> (5:23)

Video Link: Shorter version—*2 Minutes Mindfulness for Children- Sitting still like a frog*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m5RkzsbaPiE> (2:09)

**4.29:** *A World of Pausabilities: An Exercise in Mindfulness* by Frank J. Sileo, PhD, author and Jennifer Zivoin, illustrator (2017)

 ‘A pausability is taking a pause just for you, to stop and notice what you feel, think, and do. A pause is being in the moment and giving yourself a break. There’s no wrong way to pause so it’s hard to make a mistake.’

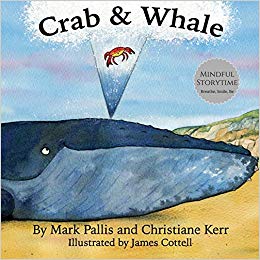
Sometimes we just need to take a pause — to stop, breathe, and take a moment for ourselves. To be mindful.

Told in rhyming verse and beautifully illustrated, it is an inviting introduction to mindfulness.

Following a neighborhood on a summer day, readers will learn how to apply mindfulness to simple, everyday moments, and how days are filled with endless possibilities to take a pause.

Includes a Note to Parents and Caregivers that further discusses mindfulness and ways to introduce pauses into your child’s life.’

# 4.30: *Crab and Whale: a new way to experience mindfulness for kids* by Mark Pallis & Christiane Kerr, authors and James Cottell, illustrator (2018)

’How can a tiny crab help a big, beached whale? *Crab and Whale* tells us the simple story of a crab that helps a whale make it through a tough day by using calming breathing and encouraging awareness of his senses. When the whale is washed up onto the shore, the crab tells him, ‘I’ll stay with you until the tide comes in.’ An imaginative and engaging way to introduce mindfulness to children.

# Image result for finding your happy voice4.31: *Finding Your Happy Voice* by Teniele Arnold, author & Pauline Murphy, illustrator (2018)

Join Kaden and his imagination in this beautifully illustrated journey to finding his – and YOUR - happy voice.

When Kaden thinks he has lost his happy voice, he goes on a hunt to find it. It’s quite an adventure, full of imaginary friends and exciting twists and turns. But, is Kaden looking in all the wrong places? When his mother guides him in a mindful and meditative visualization, Kaden realizes where his happy voice has been all along.

# 4.32: *Peace, Bugs, and Understanding: An Adventure in Sibling Harmony* by Gail Silver, author and Youme Nguyen Ly, illustrator (2014)

# Peace, Bugs, and Understanding: An Adventure in Sibling Harmony ... ‘Lily and her little sister Ruby are having a picnic when Ruby spoils their game of checkers. Lily lashes out but soon gets absorbed in a wonderful book, the story of her great grandfather’s encounter with a strange looking frog-like creature called Anger. The precious old journal teaches Lily about Metta, a technique that has helped people transform anger into loving kindness for thousands of years.

# This book ‘is an invaluable tool for parents and teachers, and will help children learn to understand the causes of their own strong emotions, while teaching them peaceful ways to resolve difficulties through mindfulness and meditation.’

# 4.33: *Wild Mindfulness* by Laura Larson, author and Duli Sen, illustrator (2019)

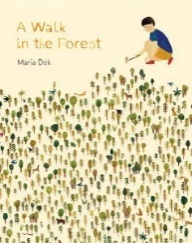
# Amazon.com: Wild Mindfulness (9780578468686): Larson, Laura: Books ‘This picture book is meant to teach, guide and allow children (and adults!) to experience mindful moments through guided imagery and breathing techniques as they follow along a young girl and her adventures camping and exploring in the wild.  As mindfulness is the intentional practice of experiencing the here and now without letting our thoughts or feelings interrupt, this book allows children to be fully immersed in the moment while bringing an awareness and calm to their body while they listen or read.

# ‘They will have moments throughout the book to pause and be guided in a mindful moment as they learn about and practice mindfulness while incorporating themes of nature and wilderness.  Each page is full of colorful and whimsical illustrations that invite readers to put themselves in the story and add to the mindfulness journey.

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fQWpXkccW8U> (12:06)

# *Nature*

# 4.34: *A Walk in the Forest* by Maria Dek (2017)

’A Walk in the Forest is a stunning invitation to discover the woods as a place for both imaginative play and contemplation: collect pinecones, feathers, or stones; follow the tracks of a deer; or listen to the chirping of birds and the whisper of trees. Build a shelter and play hide-and-seek. Pretend the woods are a jungle, or shout out loud to stir up the birds! The forest comes alive in all its mysterious glory….’

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i2jNuv5CyTs> (2:44)

# A Stone Sat Still: (Environmental and Nature Picture Book for Kids, Perspective Book for Preschool and Kindergarten, Award Winning Illustrator): Wenzel, Brendan: 9781452173184: Amazon.com: Books4.35: *A Stone Sat Still* by Brendan Wenzel (2019)

‘‘A stone sat still/ with the water, grass, and dirt, / and it was as it was/ where it was in the world.’ In each spread or vignette, a different wild creature encounters the round rock. …Alert readers will notice that the water beneath the stone rises as the pages turn—eventually, great waves overtake it in spreads that reveal a vast expanse of silvery water. But the stone isn’t gone: under the waves, it ‘sits still in the world,’ a small snail upon it. ‘Have you ever seen such a place?’ Wenzel asks. Look closely, his words say: even the most seemingly insignificant bits of Earth offer splendor.

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C80NidUVOVs> (4:34)

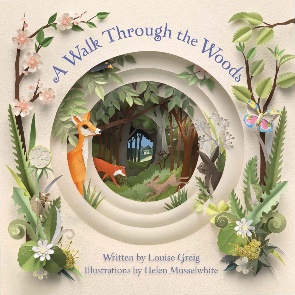
The story Behind A Stone Sat Still at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P11LB4A-pjI> (1:27)

# 4.36: *You Belong Here* by M.H. Clark, author and Isabelle Arsenault, illustrator (2016)

 ‘The stars belong in the deep night sky, and the moon belongs there too, and the winds belong in each place they blow by, and I belong here with you. So begins this classic bedtime book, richly illustrated by award-winning artist Isabelle Arsenault. The pages journey around the world, observing plants and animals, everywhere, and reminding children that they are right where they belong. A beautiful title for new babies, adoptive families, and children of all ages.  
 ‘‘You are a dream that the world once dreamt, / / And now you are part of its song. / That’s why you are here, in the place where you’re meant, / For this is right where you belong.’’

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GEWROuz068w> (3:48)

# 4.37: *A Walk Through the Woods* by Louise Greig, author and Helen Musselwhite, illustrator (2018)

’Listen: the forest is calling. Take a quiet walk through the woods, where shadows fall in the darkness, eyes peek out, and some animals sleep while others run and leap. Simple, poetic text and intricate papercut illustrations introduce children to a deer, black rook, fox, rabbit, and many more beautiful creatures as they wait for morning—and spring—to come.’

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nSXieUjsC2E> (7:34)

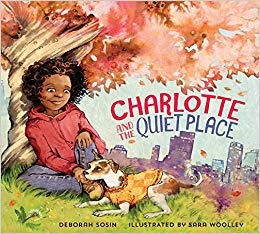
# 4.38: *Finding Wild* by Megan Wagner Lloyd, author and Abigail Halpin, illustrator (2016)

’There are so many places that wild can exist, if only you know where to look! Can you find it? Two kids set off on an adventure away from their urban home and discover all the beauty of the natural world. From the bark on the trees to the sudden storm that moves across the sky to fire and flowers, and snowflakes and fresh fruit. As the children make their way through the woods and back to the paved and noisy streets, they discover that wild exists not just off in some distant place, but right in their own backyard.’

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfoIOVxhhUg> (5:00)

# *Quiet/Silence/Stillness*

# 4.39: *Charlotte and the Quiet Place* by Deborah Sosin, author and Sara Woolley, illustrator (2015)

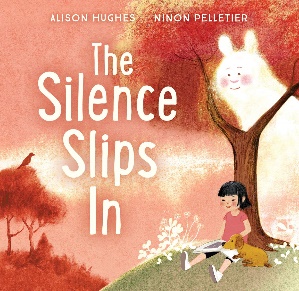
 ‘Charlotte likes quiet. But wherever Charlotte goes, she is surrounded by noise, noise, noise—her yipping dog, Otto; the squeaky, creaky swings; the warbling, wailing sirens. Even in the library, children yammer and yell. Where can Charlotte find a quiet place? Sara Woolley’s magnificent watercolors bring Charlotte’s city to life when Otto leads her on a wild chase through the park. There, Charlotte discovers a quiet place where she never would have imagined!

‘Sometimes children need a break from our noisy, over-stimulating world. Charlotte and the Quiet Place shows how a child learns and practices mindful breathing on her own and experiences the beauty of silence. All children will relate to the unfolding adventure and message of self-discovery and empowerment. Parents, teachers, and caretakers of highly active or sensitive children will find this story especially useful.

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y9D0bbnV3qk> (4:42)

# 4.40: *The Silence Slips In* by Alison Hughes, author and Ninon Pelletier, illustrator

# (2019)

’When the party’s over and the baby finally falls asleep, when the dog is all barked out and the screens are dark, the Silence pads in on soft, furry feet. A warm, comforting presence, the Silence curls up in a sun-beam like a cuddly cat and helps you read, think and be still. The Silence is friends with the Dark. Together they soothe the jagged edges left when the Noise has rolled on and gently launch the boats of your dreams into the night. When the day becomes overwhelming or other feelings become too big, the Silence slips in.

‘With soft illustrations and soothing text, this is a quiet story about learning to find calm in the busy world around you.’

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Iz8oTL3QITM> (4:01)

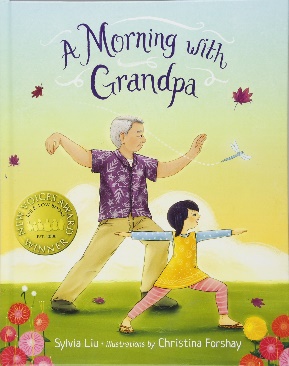
**4.41:** *The Quiet Book* by Deborah Underwood, author and Renata Liwska, illustrator (2010)

’There are many kinds of quiet: Quiet can be delicate. Quiet can be thundering! Quiet can be sweet, and cozy, and can most definitely help you fall asleep. With kid-centric descriptions and irresistible artwork, this gentle picture book explores all the different quiets that can fill a child’s days from morning to night.’

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sEDv55QGHtI> (3:30)

***Tai Chi***

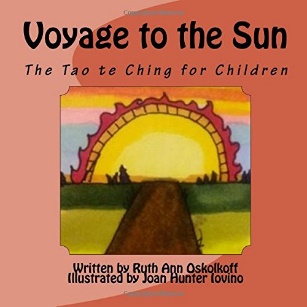
**4.42:** *A Morning with Grandpa* by Sylvia Liu, author and Christina Forshay, illustrator (2020)

 ‘Mei Mei’s grandpa is practicing tai chi in the garden, and Mei Mei is eager to join in. As Gong Gong tries to teach her the slow, graceful movements, Mei Mei enthusiastically does them with her own flair. Then Mei Mei takes a turn, trying to teach Gong Gong the yoga positions she learned in school. Will Gong Gong be able to master the stretchy, bendy poses? …A Morning with Grandpa celebrates, with lively spirit and humor, the special bond between grandparent and grandchild and the joy of learning new things together.’

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k5s83W7HVOg> (7:51)

# *Tao te Ching*

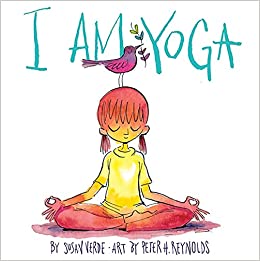
**4.43:** *Voyage to the Sun: A Children’s Version of the Tao te Ching* by Ruth Ann Oskolkoff, author and Joan Hunter Iovino, illustrator (2015)

 ‘A children’s version of the classic Tao te Ching has text that is accessible to the young. The pages contain the ideas present in the original Tao but simplified for children. An additional storyline has been added about an elder’s visit to a family with two children. Whimsical illustrations by Joan Hunter Iovino.

‘This book will teach children about kindness, our shared humanity, recognizing natural patterns, to look for the subtle and the nuanced, and to be bold and learn to think for themselves. It encourages them to put aside hate and take steps to be a positive influence in the world.’

# *Yoga*

**4.44:** *I Am Yoga* by Susan Verde, author and Peter H. Reynolds, illustrator (2015)

 ‘An eagle soaring among the clouds or a star twinkling in the night sky . . . a camel in the desert or a boat sailing across the sea—yoga has the power of transformation. Not only does it strengthen bodies and calm minds, but with a little imagination, it can show us that anything is possible.

‘New York Times bestselling illustrator Peter H. Reynolds and author and certified yoga instructor Susan Verde team up again in this book about creativity and the power of self-expression. *I Am Yoga* encourages children to explore the world of yoga and make room in their hearts for the world beyond it. A kid-friendly guide to 17 yoga poses is included.’

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YSEN5Mj4kUY> (2:28)

**4.45:** *Good Night Yoga* by Mariam Gates, author and Sarah Jane Hinder, illustrator (2015)

# Good Night Yoga: A Pose-by-Pose Bedtime Story: Gates, Mariam, Hinder, Sarah Jane: 0600835443777: Amazon.com: Books’This beautifully illustrated, full-color book tells the story of the natural world as it closes down for the night, while teaching children a simple flow of yoga postures inspired by their favorite characters from nature. Moving from ‘Sun Breath’ to ‘Cloud Gathering’ to ‘Ladybug & Butterfly’ and more, readers learn techniques for self-soothing, relaxing the body and mind, focusing attention, and other skills that will support restful sleep and improve overall confidence and well-being.’

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4lfjNAXGPzA> (6:41)

**4.46:** *Good Morning Yoga* by Mariam Gates, author and Sarah Jane Hinder, illustrator (2016)

# Amazon.com: Good Morning Yoga: A Pose-by-Pose Wake Up Story (Good Night Yoga) (0001622036026): Gates, Mariam, Hinder, Sarah Jane: Books ‘This ‘wake up’ story is so much more than a story. It’s a practice for kids and parents to greet the morning with joy and embark on their daily adventures with intention and confidence. Turn the page and reach up to the sky, press your feet into the earth, and get ready for a great day!’

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u-a4iOERMRs> (5:11)

**4.47:** *You Are a Lion!: And Other Fun Yoga Poses* by Taeeun Yoo (2012)

# Amazon.com: You Are a Lion!: And Other Fun Yoga Poses eBook: Yoo, Taeeun, Yoo, Taeeun: Kindle Store‘With simple instructions and bright, clear illustrations, award-winning artist Taeeun Yoo invites children to enjoy yoga by assuming playful animal poses. And she sparks their imagination further by encouraging them to pretend to be the animal - to flutter like a butterfly, hiss like a snake, roar like a lion and more. Yoga is great for kids because it promotes flexibility and focus—and its relaxing good fun! The charming pictures of children and animals and the lyrical text make this gentle introduction to yoga a book to be treasured.’

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GNsfCwdFHgY> (3:17)

**4.50:** *Jenny’s Winter Walk: A Kids Yoga Winter Book* by Giselle Shardlow, author and Vicky Bowes, illustrator (2015)

# Jenny's Winter Walk: A Kids Yoga Winter Book: Shardlow, Giselle, Bowes, Vicky: 9781505707205: Amazon.com: Books‘Join Jenny as she meets various animals on a winter walk with her mom. Be a squirrel, a fox, and a bunny. Discover winter, explore movement, and learn the five senses. The yoga storybook includes a list of kids yoga poses and a parent-teacher guide’

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yfSa2pQq4S0> (5:48)

**4.48:** *Smile with Yoga: Fun, Mindful, and Engaging Yoga for Kids* by I. Rekem, author and Alifstyle, illustrator (2018)

# Amazon.com: Smile with Yoga: Fun, Mindful, and Engaging Yoga for Kids (and Their Parents) (9789493054028): I. Rekem, Alifstyle, Alifstyle: Books’Fun, mindful, and engaging yoga book for kids and their parents with kid-friendly Yoga poses, playful rhyming poems, fun animal facts, captivating and enjoyable games and activities, easy to follow step-by-step poses…. Encourages children to exercise and practice Yoga and learn about kindness, awareness and compassion along the way.’

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

# 5.1: Music

# 5.1.1: *Colors* by Kira Willey

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ur5AYncDDE0> (2:33)

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amPgFSJBzBw> (2:45)

# 5.1.2: *I Am Yoga Song* by Emily Arrow (2:42)

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FmXL821PklY>

# 5.1.3: *Let the Rain Fall Down: Qi Gong Song* by Donna Henderson (2:24)

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=16Tr1Yvif78&t=15s>

# 5.1.4: *Let the Rain Fall Down Qi Gong for Children* / Movements & Song) (6:23)

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0ewA-dJYmNI>

# 5.1.5: *Walking Meditation Plum Village Song* (3:47)

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=id6Tba6hc4w>

# 5.2: Being Present, Listening & Connection

**5.2.1:** *Mindfulness for Kids: What does being present mean?* (2:06)

“In this video, our classroom takes you through what being in the moment means. …Life unfolds in the present and yet we let the present slip away like quick sand: unseized, unrelished and totally squandered in our worries about the future or in our quest to understand the past.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fmWYD6aHLhg>

# 5.2.2: *Mindfulness Meditation for Kids: Being Present* (5:11)

“This meditation …teaches children mindfulness by helping them bring their attention to body sensations, their breathing, and their emotions. Appropriate for children ages 5 and up.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=shR8DLyOkcg>

**5.2.3:** *3 Minutes Body Scan Meditation - Mindfulness For Kids And Adults* (3:26)

“In *Mindfulness for kids*, Shamash Alidina describes the body scan as a way to get in touch with the body, let go of feelings of needing to get stuff done, and release pent-up emotions. Just like other forms of meditation, the body scan also trains attention. Alidina says: The body scan alternates between a wide and narrow focus of attention; from focusing on your little toe all the way through the entire body. The body scan trains your mind to be able to move from detailed attention to a wider and more spacious awareness from one moment to the next.”

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

**5.2.4:** *Mindful Listening* (4:02)

“Mindful Listening helps bring children’s focus into the present moment.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H0vLuV8e8Y0>

**5.2.5:** *Listen Better Kids #1- Lesson “Howard B. Wigglebottom Learns to Listen”* (10:24)

Listen Better to stay safe, out of trouble and learn more. Listening and paying attention are different and mean way more than do as we are told. The video includes a sing-a-long rap song about listening.

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HH0rQiwKtSs>

**5.2.6:** *Because we’re all connected* (0:40)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OjGe-_OYWQQ>

**5.3: Breathing**

**5:3.1:** *Kids Meditation: Counting Breaths* (2:30)

In this video, count as you breathe with Octopus to find the calm beneath the waves.

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

**5.3.2:** *3 Minutes Belly Breathing for Relaxation - Mindfulness For Children / Calmer Classrooms* (2:42)

“Slow, deep breaths are one of the best ways to calm an anxious child. An anxious or angry child is in flight-or-fight mode with their body primed to handle a perceived threat. This usually leads to fast, shallow breathing, rapid heartbeat, and tense muscles. Practicing slow, deep breathing tells your body that it can calm down, and as the physical arousal decreases, the emotional feeling of anxiety or anger will too.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sn_2GY1gTyo>

**5.3.3:** *Kids Meditation / Five Finger Breathing* (4:10)

“In this video, strengthen your superpowers of focus and calm by taking slow deep breaths as you trace the outline of your hand with your pointer finger.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DSgOW879jjA>

**5.3.4:** *Breath Meditation for Kids* (5:56)

“A calming breath meditation designed to introduce kids to mindfulness. Kids imagine a sail boat rising and falling over waves as they inhale and exhale. They use mental imagery to see their breath as color as they observe the sensation of it passing through the nostrils. Finally, the cultivate beginners mind imagining they were once a fish and are feeling air in their lungs for the first time.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CvF9AEe-ozc>

**5.3.5:** *Mindfulness Meditation for Kids | BREATHING EXERCISE | Guided Meditation for Children* (12:02)

“Let your child indulge in this Mindfulness Meditation for Kids... It is a simple but very effective breathing exercise which is an ideal introduction into Mindfulness. This can be used to help ease worries, anxiety and stress, as well as being a tonic for sleep and relaxation.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bk_qU7l-fcU>

**5.3.6:** *Rainbow Breath—Flow* by GoNoodle (4:02)

“Children learn how to raise their energy and face their day with this exercise.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O29e4rRMrV4>

**5.3.7:** *Calming Exercises for Kids: Deep breathing brain break* (4:02)

“This simple seated routine is a fantastic way to start the day. It’s also great to perform anytime you or your little ones need to take a short time out to calm down. This routine is all about deep breathing and is a great way to open up the spine and stretch the torso.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TXYHdRP8DsA>

# 5.4: Mindfulness, Meditation, and Metta

# 5.4.1: What is MINDFULNESS and how do you do it? by Cosmic Kids Zen Den (7:45)

“Jaime explains what MINDFULNESS is and how she does it!”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rp5bpFIUpg>

**5.4.2:** *Kids Mindfulness: Calm Compilation* (18:42)

“In this video, strengthen your superpower of calm with four mindful games: ‘Bulldog Finds His Quiet Place,’ ‘Butterfly Body Scan,’ ‘Rock-a-bye’ and ‘Imaginary Hugs & Peaceful Place.’”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iEEJT9cYsm0>

**5.4.3:** *Mindfulness for Kids - Learning about our thoughts* (4:13)

“In this video, we talk about thoughts. Thoughts are like bubbles and it is in us, to pop these bubbles as we observe them rising in our brain.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HHm5DzlU9as>

**5.4.4:** *Meditation Instructions for Kids* (2:27)

“Easy to follow meditation instructions with Zafu, the adventurous monkey from the book Zafu’s Quest!”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9CdPQ7X1MzU>

# 5.5: Nature

**5.5.1:** *Mindfulness Meditation for Children: The Flower* (15:46)

“This meditation is focused on a flower.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=18rTmH6SVcI>

**5.5.2:** *Mountain Meditation* for Children (teens) and Adults (5:10)

The focus on a mountain is through audio and photos

“The purpose of the mountain meditation is to become grounded and access our inner strength and stability when faced with stressful and challenging circumstances, both internal and external. The Mountain Meditation is designed to cultivate stillness and calm and to connect with our inner strength and stability in the face of difficult times.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W6rqDZnpCDw>

**5.5.3:** *Kids in Nature: Like A Tree Meditation* by Jessica Amos (9:11)

“This guided practice encourages you to go outside and find a tree to become friends with. Sit at the base of the tree and imagine what life must be like for your new friend. Have fun and feel connected to nature in new ways as you listen to this meditation for kids of all ages.”

# Link to Video: <https://insighttimer.com/staywithyourself/guided-meditations/kids-in-nature-like-a-tree-meditation>

**5.5.4:** *Unwind with 20 minutes in nature* | Springwatch – BBC (21:02)

Exquisite video shots of nature to invite mindfulness.

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VTsz_tO3iSc>

**5.5.5:** *Gifts Forest Give Kids* (1:05)

Nature has its own way of communicating with children and teaching them difficult concepts in simple ways. Beyond the obvious health benefits of being in nature, here are some precious gifts that forests give kids.

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cu7msc6DEuc>

**5.5.6:** *Mindfulness Month: Day 29: A Walking Meditation* (2:51)

“Join us for a mindful meditation walk! Using our senses, we will explore our surroundings. Take three steps wherever you are, then pause. What do you see? Take three more steps. What do you hear? Three more steps. What do you smell? And three more steps. What do you feel? Repeat this series if you like, and the best thing is, you can do this walking meditation wherever you are! Inside, outside, country, city...all that’s required is you and your mindful attention!”

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

**5.5.7:** *Walking Meditation for Kids* (3:35)

“Join Little Flower Yoga founder Jennifer Cohen Harper for a 3-minute walking meditation practice for children.”

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/276093809>

# 5.6: Quiet, Silence, Stillness

# 5.6.1: *Stillness - (Mindful Moments with Kids)* (3:52)

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HgXg3CzKXeA>

# 5.6.2: *Stillness: Discovery at Home Kids and Family Yoga* with Kathy Damron (4:37)

# Take some time to be still and breathe with …yoga with …Kathy Damron.

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aJyERQOaXrQ>

# 5.7: Tai Chi

# 5.7.1: *Tia Chi for Children* by Deborah Adams (24:23)

# Tai Chi routines adapted for children.

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YMVg5diOiMs>

# 5.7.2: *Tai Chi 5 Minutes a Day Module 01* (easy for beginners) (11:00)

# Easy to follow.

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cEOS2zoyQw4>

# 5.8: Yoga

# 5.8.1: *Yoga for Kids: Sun Salutations A & B* (7:37)

# “This video shows the Ashtanga Yoga Sun Salutations A & B, which are core sequences in Ashtanga Yoga practice. This is a great way to help children start their day feeling refreshed and calm!”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOEJnwT3cyo>

# 5.8.2: *Alphabet Yoga A-Z* (9:12)

# “This alphabet yoga video is a combination of yoga poses, animal poses and other fun movements to make up something for every letter of the alphabet.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=E0RUN0e3ZGY&t=54s>

# 5.8.3: *Toddler Yoga: Animal Poses!* (3:02)

# ‘A toddler yoga video using animal poses, adapted to keep children interested. Good for improving flexibility and coordination. And lots of fun!’

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=75m2xWoFBaA>

# 5.8.4: *Toddler Yoga: Partner Poses* (3:56)

# ‘Toddler Yoga: Partner Poses is aimed at a toddler and an adult performing partner poses together. This one is lots of fun and helps develop strength, flexibility, coordination and balance.’

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2mWAPScDMw0>

# 5.8.5: *Toddler Yoga: Night Time Routine* (4:05)

# ‘A nighttime yoga/stretching sequence to help kids to relax and prepare for a good night’s sleep. Children tend to sleep better if they have a consistent bedtime routine, so try adding this video to your toddler’s routine to help them calm down, relax their little bodies and get to sleep quickly!’

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=prEcfjmq9BQ>

# 5.8.6: *Toddler Yoga: Moon Salutation* (4:40)

# “A peaceful moon salutation to help you and your little ones relax while developing strength, balance and flexibility. Moon salutation is usually performed at the end of the day, just as sun salutation is performed in the morning.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AsJ2y3w3GoM>

# 5.8.7: *Yoga for Kids!* (25:04)

# “Follow along as Sophia Khan leads a fun and family-friendly introduction to yoga. You’ll get to warm up, practice breathing and poses, and relax into a power down.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=X655B4ISakg>

# 5.8.8: *Sun Salutations & Yoga with Animals* by Yoga for Kids (7:24)

# “In this …video about yoga, children will learn both sun salutations and yoga poses with animals! This video includes several classic yoga poses such as the cobra and the downward dog. Children will learn to relax themselves when stressed, which will give them more clarity when they need to solve problems.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8oGR5xucItI>

# 5.8.9: *Yoga for Kids* with Alissa Kepas (16:53)

# “A 15-Minute yoga class just for KIDS!”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4ZpkRAcgws4>

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

# Tapestry of Faith

# 6.1: Love Connects Us: Program on Living in Unitarian Universalist Covenant for Grades 4-5

# 6.1.1: *Session 10: Peace Inside*

# Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveconnects/session10>

# See Activity 5: Make Knotted Meditation Beads at <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveconnects/session10/161984.shtml>

Participants will:

* Give examples of how they embody their faith covenant through acts of peacemaking
* Understand, through the story ‘Serenity, Courage and Wisdom,’ how finding peace within themselves can be a means to bring peace to their relationships, communities, and the wider world
* Practice ‘the wisdom to know the difference’ between difficult circumstances they might be able to change and those they might need to accept with serenity
* Practice finding inner peace in sitting and walking meditations
* Embody the ‘tied-together’ theme of the curriculum through creating knotted strands of meditation beads.

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

# 6.2.1: *Session 11: Science and Religion*

# Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveconnects/session11>

# See Activity 1: Wondering Ritual and Guided Meditation at <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveconnects/session11/162296.shtml>

Participants will:

* Consider the example of Unitarian minister and scientist Joseph Priestley, who refused to give up his search for truth even when threatened with bodily harm
* Identify and ponder their own wondering questions in a **guided meditation**
* Experience how science can help us search for truth by conducting simple science experiments.

# *Other Resources*

# 6.3: Spirituality for Kids

Offers online Spiritual Social-Emotional Education Programs: *Winning in the Game of Life™* and *Exploring the Journey of Life™,* each with 12 lessons.The program is designed for children ages 8-12 and is proven to improve their behavior and outlook on life. The price is $99 for one course and $158 for two.

# Link: <https://courses.sfk.org/>

**6.4: Being Present, Listening & Connection**

**6.4.1:** *6 Ways Children Live in the Present Moment* by Vince Gowmon

Thoughtful article. Covers embodiment, beginner’s mind, process-oriented, dreams & imagination, uninhibited & free, and enchantment. Gowmon is the author of ***Let the Fire Burn*—**Nurturing the Creative Spirit of Children.

Link: <https://www.vincegowmon.com/6-ways-children-live-in-the-present-moment/>

**6.5: Breathing**

**6.5.1:** *Deep Breathing Exercises for Kids*

A comprehensive resource of breathing exercises for children.

Link: <https://copingskillsforkids.com/deep-breathing-exercises-for-kids>

**6.6: Mindfulness, Meditation, and Metta**

# 6.6.1: *The Benefits of Meditation for Kids*

# 11 Experts share why we should encourage kids to meditate.

# Link: <https://thriveglobal.com/stories/the-benefits-of-meditation-for-kids/>

**6.6.2:** *25 Fun Mindfulness Activities for Children and Teens* by Courtney E. Ackerman, MSc. (January 2020)

“Research confirms that for children, mindfulness can: Mitigate the effects of bullying (Zhou, Liu, Niu, Sun, & Fan, 2016); Enhance focus in children with ADHD (Zhang et al., 2016); Reduce attention problems (Crescentini, Capurso, Furlan, & Fabbro, 2016); Improve mental health and wellbeing; and Improve social skills when well taught and practiced with children and adolescents.”

# Link: <https://positivepsychology.com/mindfulness-for-children-kids-activities/>

**6.6.3:** *18 Mindfulness Games, Worksheets and Activities for Kids* by Courtney E. Ackerman, MSc. (December 2020)

# Link: <https://positivepsychology.com/mindfulness-for-kids/>

**6.6.4:** *18 Amazing Mindfulness Activities for the Classroom*

# “Activities include breathing, mindfulness, body awareness, and more.”

# Link: <https://www.teachstarter.com/us/blog/classroom-mindfulness-activities-for-children-us/>

# 6.6.5: *Walking Meditation Booklet*

“They are fun for kids, yet have a built-in mechanism to slow children down and help them grow a peaceful place inside.”

# Link: <https://www.mindfulnesshealth-psychotherapy.com/userfiles/1475904/file/Walking%20Meditation%20booklet_%20with%20RAIN%20and%20Mini%20Walking%20and%20Cartoon.pdf>

**6.6.6:** *Mindful Games For Kids: 50 Fun Activities to Stay Present, Improve Concentration, and Understand Emotions* by Kristina Sargent, author and Kelsey Buzzell, illustrator (2020)

# “50 colorfully illustrated, imaginative exercises keep the fun coming while showing kids helpful techniques like deep breathing, visualization, meditation, and more. Many of these off-the-page games take 10 minutes or less, making it easy to practice the magic of mindfulness anytime, anywhere.”

**6.6.7:** *Mindfulness for Little Ones: Playful Activities to Foster Empathy, Self-Awareness, and Joy in Kids* by Heidi France Ed.D, author (2020)

# This book has six activities in each of the following areas: Dance, Wiggle, Move; Fund with Five Sense; Adventures in Feelings; I care, you care, we care; and Winding Down Time

**6.6.8:** *Mindfulness for Children: 150+ Mindfulness Activities for Happier, Healthier, Stress-Free Kids* by Tracy Daniel (2018)

“These simple activities will help you and your child get ready for bedtime, calm down after a stressful situation, discuss your feelings in a safe environment, and more. For example, for energetic children, try a short walk or do some easy, calming yoga poses to sharpen focus. With over 150 meditations for different situations, there’s a strategy in *Mindfulness for Children* fit for every moment and every family.”

**6.6.9:** *Teach Your Child Meditation: 70 Fun & Easy Ways to Help Kids De-Stress and Chill Out* by Lisa Roberts (2018)

“Even children need to learn ways to calm and center themselves. With its hands-on exercises, T*each Your Child Meditation* gives kids ages 5-12 important tools to relieve anxiety, cultivate mindfulness, and gain confidence. More than 70 illustrated exercises—which all have fun names like “Funny Bunny Breath” and “Elephant Shower”—are organized to highlight their special benefits: choose from such categories as “Hocus Pocus, I Can Focus,” “The Chill Zone,” “Stress Busters,” or a section with group exercises that teachers and parents alike will love. Whether the goal is for a child to sleep better, concentrate before a big test or game, or enjoy some much-needed relaxation, this guide helps anyone who loves and plays with children to introduce them to the many benefits of meditation.”

**6.7: Nature**

**6.7.1:** *Sit Spotting: Nature Meditation with Kids* by Brandi Rondinell

“We’ve all heard of meditation but have you heard of sit spotting? Both are similar in that they involve sitting still and concentrating without any outward activity. However, sit spotting involves the natural world around you and it becomes incorporated into your mindful meditation.

The idea of sit spotting is simple: find a special place in nature and then become comfortable with just being there, still and quiet. In this place, nature will surround you, soothe you, entertain you and seep into you.”

# Link: <https://runwildmychild.com/sit-spotting-nature-meditation/>

# 6.7.2: *Forest Bathing with Children: Listening to the Trees and Bowing to the Flowers*

How to forest bathe with your kids. Find your spot You’re going to ask your child to slow down in order to take in nature.

# Link: <https://childhoodbynature.com/forest-bathing-listening-to-the-trees-and-bowing-to-the-flowers/>

# 6.7.3: Forest Bathing with Kids

# Explains how to engage the senses while forest bathing.

# Link: <https://www.kidsinparks.com/forest-bathing>

**6.7.4:** *A Nature Meditation: A Guided Practice of Being Mindful in Nature* by Mark Coleman & Sara Overton

# The text is a guided meditation focused on nature.

# Link: <https://www.childrenandnature.org/2016/06/29/nature-meditation/>

# 6.7.5: *Walking Meditation for Kids* by Jennifer Cohen Harper

This simple walking meditation for kids makes learning to pay attention to sensations arising in the body a fun, playful process.

# Link: <https://www.eomega.org/article/walking-meditation-for-kids>

# 6.8: Quiet / Silence / Stillness

# 6.8.1: *Learning Early to ‘Taste the Stillness’ Can Set a Child Up for Lifelong Well-being* b[y K.C. Compton](http://earlylearningnation.com/author/k-c-compton/)

“Not only is it possible to teach mindfulness to small children, says world-renowned neuroscientist Dr. Richard Davidson, it’s easier than teaching it to adults, and it can set them on the path to emotional and physical wellness for a lifetime.”

# Link: <http://earlylearningnation.com/2020/08/learning-early-to-taste-the-stillness-can-set-a-child-up-for-lifelong-well-being/>

# 6.8.2: *Stillness—Slowing Things Down for Children* by Teaching Ace

“A colleague once told me that stillness is almost absent from children’s lives. They are always doing, watching, listening, etc. If you take a minute to notice all of the stimuli in our classrooms at any given time, it is overwhelming. Her goal was to give her students an increasing number of minutes of stillness each day. The hope was to match their age (five minutes of stillness for a five-year-old.)”

# Link: <http://www.teachingace.com/stillness-slowing-things-down-for-children/>

# 6.9: Tai Chi

# No resources identified

# 6.10: Yoga

# 6.10.1: *Kids Yoga Lesson Planning 101* by Sara J. Weis

# This resource combines text and a brief video for 8 planning topics: How to Plan Your Kids Yoga Class, The Welcome, Breathing Exercises, Sun Salutations, Active Movement, Themed Yoga Poses, The Yoga Challenge, and Building Community.

# Link: <https://www.gogoyogakids.com/savasanaforkids/>

**Resources for Youth & Adults**

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

**7.1:** *Nature Poem: Searching* by Nitin Das (83 words)

What are you searching for?

Nature knows

A path to find yourself

A purpose to turn your life

A ray of hope

A drop of joy

A song for your heart

A color for your mood

What are you seeking?

Nature knows

A moment of stillness

A breath of freshness

A memory to keep

A burden to let go

A spark for your spirit

A calm for your soul

Your search

is a journey

And your journey, is often

your answer

Nature knows

Source: [www.Healingforest.org](http://www.Healingforest.org)

**7.2:** *The Spirituality of the Ordinary Is Luminous* by Omid Safi (258 words)

…It is easy to love the extraordinary. It is easy to pursue a spiritual path that is about the sensory overload of the *extra*ordinary. It is easy to fall in love with spiritual practices that lead one to transcendence and ecstasy. It is easy to soar. It is easy to seek the “high.”

And there is something lovely about experiencing the extraordinary, to remember that we have spiritual faculties in us open to the realms beyond.

But what does that say about the ordinary? Where does that leave the everyday? How do we experience the ground? The far less dramatic, the unsexy, the “boring” words like discipline, ritual, community—these are where the ideals of our spiritual path meet the reality of our daily lives.

Let us love the ordinary. …Let us cherish the everyday, the every breath, the where we are.

…Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel …said: … “*Wonder or radical amazement is the chief characteristic of the religious …attitude toward history and nature.”*

Wonder. Awe. Radical Amazement. How I love these qualities.

…This model of spirituality of the ordinary begins by not taking things for granted. We see the patterns in life, in nature, in events, in our own emotions, but we also recognize that each moment, each breath, each guest of the heart is unique. The “ordinary” is already luminous.

…Let us celebrate the ordinary, and locate the immanence of the sacred here. And now.

Let us seek the beauty in the every-breath moments. …May we have …a life filled awe, in the most ordinary of moments.

Source: <https://onbeing.org/blog/omid-safi-the-spirituality-of-the-ordinary-is-luminous/>

**7.3:** *Howard Thurman’s Spirituality* by Vincent Harding (245 words)

…Howard Thurman was—and this was a deep part of his spirituality — a seeker. Thurman was never satisfied with the truth that he had achieved, knowing always that there was more to come, and that he must never think that he had found it all.

…Thurman’s faith was not a door that closed in on him as something to be kept, protected, and guarded. It was an opening door that opened out into the spirit, faith, dreams, and seekings of others. We cannot know the spirituality of Howard Thurman unless we know the spirituality of the open door.

…The spirituality of Howard Thurman was that of the seeker who sought for the healing of his people and of his nation. Therefore, Howard Thurman must be understood as a man of spirit who understood what roots are for. Thurman saw that his roots were not to be worshiped, that his roots were to provide him with tree-like strength to reach out, to explore new possibilities for his life. But even more, to explore new possibilities for the life of his people and his nation. Roots for growth, not for self-admiration. Roots for power, not to control, but to share.

…Thurman’s spirituality was grounded not only in the beauties of the black experience, but grounded as well in the terrors of the black experience…. At the same time, it was a spirituality that says: “And knowing all that, I also know that all human beings are one.”

Source: <https://onbeing.org/blog/dangerous-spirituality/>

**7.4:** *Martin Luther King’s Spirituality* by Vincent Harding (274 words)

…The spirituality of Martin King …was the spirituality of wrestling with the angels, the angels within and the angels around. The demonic angels and the divine angels. No spirituality without wrestling …makes it impossible …to avoid the folks in trouble. A spirituality to work with the poor, to be with the prisoners, to stay close to the brokenhearted, and …the beloved people that don’t know they’re beloved.

So, this was King’s spirituality, that sent him into Albany, Georgia; into Birmingham; into St. Augustine — present, present, constantly present with those in trouble. That’s where he was coming from when he came here to Washington, D.C., in 1963. …He didn’t come down and say “I have a dream” and disappear. He came out of hard struggles that were guided by his spirituality.

…This spirituality took him back to Birmingham to mourn with the mourning mothers and fathers of those bombed-out children. But it also led him to challenge the white supremacy of that Alabama countryside…

Martin Luther King’s spirituality did not stop with marching from Selma to Montgomery.

… King said, “I choose to identify with the underprivileged. I choose to identify with the poor. I choose to give my life for the hungry. I choose to live for and with those who find themselves seeing life as a long and desolate corridor with no exit signs. This is the way I’m going. If it means suffering a little bit, I’m going that way. If it means sacrificing, I’m going that way. If it means dying for them, I’m going that way. Because I heard the voice saying: do something for others.”

That was his spirituality.

Source: <https://onbeing.org/blog/dangerous-spirituality/>

**7.5:** *The Spirituality of Resilience* by Hebah H. Farrag (255 words)

…Black Lives Matter chapters and affiliated groups are expressing a type of spiritual practice that makes use of the language of health and wellness to impart meaning, heal grief and trauma, combat burn-out and encourage organizational efficiency.

…Patrisse Marie Cullors-Brignac [a founder of Black Lives Matter] …is a person dedicated to not only transforming how her community is treated, but how her community organizes and understands itself.

… [Cullors said,] “I come at all my work from a deep philosophical place that [asks], what does it take for humans to live in our full humanity and allow for others to live in their full dignity?” she told me. “I don’t believe spirit is this thing that lives outside of us dictating our lives, but rather our ability to be deeply connected to something that is bigger than us. I think that is what makes our work powerful.”

…For Cullors, spirituality saves souls.

“When you are working with people who have been directly impacted by state violence and heavy policing in our communities, it is really important that there is a connection to the spirit world,” she said. “For me, seeking spirituality had a lot to do with trying to seek understanding about my conditions — how these conditions shape me in my everyday life and how do I understand them as part of a larger fight, a fight for my life. People’s resilience, I think, is tied to their will to live, our will to survive, which is deeply spiritual.”

“The fight to save your life is a spiritual fight,” she said.

Source: <https://onbeing.org/blog/hebah-farrag-the-spirituality-of-resilience/>

**7.6:** *Spirituality Without God & Krista Tippett* by Karyn Miller-Medzon (250 words)

…What does it mean to be spiritual outside the confines of religion? For some, both exist side by side. For others, even those who consider themselves atheists or “nones,” the concept of spirituality might feel critically important. They say it has to do with how we interact with others, with living more contemplatively, and with appreciating nature and the natural world.

… “To me, the root meaning of what we’re talking about when we talk about spirituality is inner life,” KristaTippett says.

…To her, …mind, body and spirit are not separate — she says the spiritually she pursues is about connecting your inner and outer self, making space for discernment and authenticity. It’s about “constantly coming back, looking inward, getting re-centered, looking beyond ourselves,” she says.

Finding ways to connect with people whose views differ from our own can be challenging. She says ideally, the space where we reach out to one another is one where we don’t allow our disagreements to define what’s possible between us.

“The demonization of each other is the layer that gets added on to the real things that divide us and …makes it impossible to see each other as human beings and makes a lot of violence possible both in word and deed,” she says.

Tippett says a more spiritual way of approaching these disagreements is to become clear and passionate about what we love, what brings us joy and what sparks joy within other people — and not to simply accept that “these chasms are forever.”

Source: <https://cookpolitical.com/analysis/national/national-politics/tension-draining-out-presidential-race-will-gop-voters-stay>

**7.7:** *What Is Spirituality?* at Taking Charge of Your Health & Wellbeing website (254 words)

Spirituality …includes a sense of connection to something bigger than ourselves, and it typically involves a search for meaning in life. As such, it is a universal human experience….

…For many, spirituality is connected to large questions about life and identity, such as: Am I a good person? What is the meaning of my suffering? What is my connection to the world around me? Do things happen for a reason? How can I live my life in the best way possible?

…Christina Puchalski …contends that “spirituality is the aspect of humanity that refers to the way individuals seek and express meaning and purpose and the way they experience their connectedness to the moment, to self, to others, to nature, and to the significant or sacred.”

…In spirituality, the questions are: where do I personally find meaning, connection, and value? In religion, the questions are: what is true and right?

…Many practices recommended for cultivating spirituality are similar to those recommended for improving [emotional wellbeing](https://www.takingcharge.csh.umn.edu/node/1245). This is because there is a connection between the two—emotional and spiritual wellbeing influence one another and overlap, as do all aspects of wellbeing. Spirituality is about seeking a meaningful connection with something bigger than yourself, which can result in positive emotions, such as peace, awe, contentment, gratitude, and acceptance. Emotional health is about cultivating a positive state of mind, which can broaden your outlook to recognize and incorporate a connection to something larger than yourself. Thus, emotions and spirituality are distinct but linked, deeply integrated with one another.

Source: <https://www.takingcharge.csh.umn.edu/what-spirituality>

**7.8:** *What does it mean to be spiritual?* by Galen Watts (266 words)

…Spirituality stresses the importance of attuning to our inner life—both as a way of resisting the constant pressure our culture exerts to value what lies outside of us, as well as a means of finding a place of refuge.

…For many, becoming more contemplative or aware of their inner life allows them to interact with others in a way that is less reactive, less harmful and more authentic to who they think themselves to be.

Thus, there are certain virtues which have come to be associated with spirituality: compassion, empathy, and open-heartedness. These virtues naturally flow out of the introspection inherent to spirituality because they ultimately require a high level of self-knowledge. That is, knowledge of why we hold the beliefs we do, knowledge of why we act in certain ways, and most importantly, knowledge of our interdependence.

This knowledge — acquired either through practices like meditation, self-reflection and (in some cases) psychotherapy — leads one to become more sensitive to the emotions of others, and even to one’s surrounding environments, both social and natural.

Thus, the path inward, in its best form, is not rooted in narcissism but …in …a willingness to face one’s demons in order to better understand the human condition.

For some, this path inward is ultimately about self-transformation, or transcending one’s early childhood programming and achieving a certain kind of self-mastery. For others, it entails attuning themselves to the immaterial dimensions of life.

…As the number of people who identify as “spiritual” continues to climb, it is likely that spirituality will come to shape North American societies in important and enduring ways.

Source: <https://theconversation.com/what-does-it-mean-to-be-spiritual-87236>

**7.9: *Secular Spirituality* by Jeff Valdivia (264 words)**

Unfortunately, there is no User Guide to being human.

In its absence, we rely on our limited experiences and instincts to tell us what to do.

The problem is that one lifetime of experience isn’t enough, which is why we tend to fail spectacularly at living our best lives.

…We know something is missing. We feel it in our heart of hearts.

But what is it?

Books like Waking Up by Sam Harris and Why Buddhism is True by Robert Wright …discuss the concept of secular spirituality, which … “emphasizes the personal growth and inner peace of the individual, rather than a relationship with the divine.”

Harris and Wright stress the importance of meditation and mindfulness in the pursuit of secular spirituality.

…One of the consequences of regular meditation is the gradual deterioration of the sense of self.

…Ancient philosophies like Buddhism teach that it is our attachment to our sense of self that is a major cause of our suffering.

…On the flip side, there is a really good reason for our biology to keep us shackled to our sense of self: it motivates us to take care of, and protect, our self.

But what if those ... limits our ability to feel connected to others and the world around us?

…For now, I look at spirituality as the humble exploration of the profound mystery, awe, and beauty of our conscious experience. It is noticing the incredible gift of consciousness that we’re given in every moment. It is the journey of discovering what it means to be human and how to live well.

Source: <https://jeff-valdivia.medium.com/everyone-is-spiritual-these-days-but-that-really-mean-anything-89f624dbc2da>

**7.10:** *Being Present as a Spiritual Practice* by Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat (262 words)

**Being present** in the spiritual life always has a double meaning. There’s present, as in here, in attendance. And there’s present, as in now, a moment of time. What is the spiritual practice of being present? Being here now.

The world’s religions all recommend living in the moment with full awareness. Zen Buddhism especially is known for its emphasis on “nowness.” Hindu, Taoist, Jewish, Moslem, Christian, and other teachers urge us to make the most of every day as an opportunity that will not come to us again.

…The contrasts to being present are living in the past and living in the future. We do the former when we hold on to regrets. …Often this kind of thinking leads to guilt or blaming.

We live in the future when we make assumptions or fantasize about what could happen and then become attached to those expected outcomes. This habit usually results in disappointment. Whether we are consumed with positive expectations (optimism) or negative projections (pessimism), we are not living in the moment.

When you find yourself constantly reacting to your experiences in one of these ways, when you always want to be otherwise and elsewhere, it is time to be present. The companion of this practice is contentment.

#### Daily Cues… [include]

* Having the first cup of coffee, tea, or milk in the morning is my cue to be here now.
* When I sit on a bench, I am reminded of the joys of simply being present to my surroundings.
* Whenever I experience or witness sickness, I vow to appreciate every moment of my life.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/practices/alphabet/view/5/being-present>

**7.11:** *Mindlessness and Mindfulness* by Ellen Langer (265 words)

We have these categories—work, life. And we have …the different distinctions that we make. We make them mindfully, and then we start to use them mindlessly….

…Whatever you’re doing, you’re doing it either mindfully or mindlessly. And the consequences of being in one state of mind or the other are enormous.

I …find that mindlessness is pervasive.

Most people are just not there, and they’re not there to know that they’re not there.

…Mindfulness …is the very simple process of actively noticing new things. When you actively notice new things, that puts you in the present, makes you sensitive to context. As you’re noticing new things, it’s engaging, and it turns out, after a lot of research, that we find that it’s literally, not just figuratively, enlivening.

…You tell people, “Be there, be in the moment” — [yet] when you’re not in the moment, you’re not there to know you’re not there, so it’s really an empty instruction.

…You must have work/life balance. And work/life balance is certainly better than work/life imbalance, but I think that the concept is basically mindless.

…The idea, I think, [is] to replace work/life balance, which treats these categories as independent, [with] work/life integration. And you should get to the point where you’re treating yourself, whether you’re at work or at play, in basically the same way.

…Most of the ills that people experience as individuals, in their relationships, in groups, in cultures, …are a result of mindlessness, one way or the other, directly or indirectly, and so that as the culture becomes more mindful, I think …things will naturally change.

Source: <https://onbeing.org/programs/ellen-langer-science-of-mindlessness-and-mindfulness-nov2017/#transcript>

**7.12:** *A Lovingkindness Meditation* by Sylvia Boorstein (270 words)

You don’t have to sit in a special way. But if you want to, close your eyes. And just take two deep breaths, in and out.

Take a long breath in, and out. And in again, and out.

Feel yourself sitting here. Feel yourself surrounded by all these people. Feel yourself, I hope, happy and content.

And think in your mind a blessing for yourself, the metta practice, lovingkindness practice always begins with a blessing for yourself. So, think for yourself: “May I feel safe. May I feel content. May I feel strong. May I live with ease.”

Bring into your mind, someone that you love tremendously—a parent, a partner, a child, a sibling—someone you love enormously. …Imagine that they can feel you wishing for them so you make this wish in your mind for your person: “May you feel safe. May you feel content. May you feel strong. May you live with ease.”

Think about another person that you love a lot. Imagine them and wish for them….

…Think of a person that’s a familiar stranger and wish for them….

Think about …all the unfamiliar strangers, near and far. …Wish for all those people, all beings near and far: “May you feel safe. May you feel content. May you feel strong. May you live with ease.”

May all of us everywhere feel safe and content and strong and live with ease.

…One of my fantasies, which has become stronger since last week and talking about people power and media power is that the whole world will wish themselves something like that and we’ll have a different world.

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/20121374> (7:26)

Source: <https://onbeing.org/blog/sylvia-boorstein-a-lovingkindness-meditation/>

**7.13:** *Spiritual Life Begins Within the Heart* by Joan Chittister (258 words)

The truth is that we spend our lives in the centrifuge of paradox. What seems certainly true on the one hand seems just as false on the other. Life is made up of incongruities: Life ends in death; what brings us joy will surely bring us an equal and equivalent amount of sorrow; perfection is a very imperfect concept; fidelities of every ilk promise support but also often end.

…There is a point in life when its paradoxes must be not only considered but laid to rest.

The great truth of early monastic spirituality, for instance, lies in the awareness that only when life is lived in the aura of the transcendent, in the discovery of the Spirit present to us in the commonplaces of life, where the paradoxes lie, can we possibly live life to its fullness….

…To the average person whose life is exemplary most of all for its ordinariness …it is what goes on inside of us that matters for the healthy life and real spirituality.

Clearly, the spiritual life begins within the heart of a person. And when the storms within recede, the world around us will still and stabilize as well. …Whatever it is that we harbor in the soul throughout the nights of our lives is what we will live out during the hours of the day.

…Confronting the paradoxes of life around us and in us, contemplating the meaning of them for ourselves, eventually and finally, leads to our giving place to the work of the Spirit in our own lives.

Source: <https://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?tid=2314>

**7.14:** *We Want Relief. Cure Is Painful* by Anthony de Mello (247 words)

Spirituality means waking up. Most people, even though they don’t know it, are asleep. They’re born asleep, they live asleep, they marry in their sleep, they breed children in their sleep, they die in their sleep without ever waking up. They never understand the loveliness and the beauty of this thing that we call human existence. …They are having a nightmare.

I heard a story about this gentleman who knocks on his son’s door. “Jaime,” he says, “wake up!” Jaime answers, “I don’t want to get up, Papa.”

The father shouts, “Get up, you have to go to school.” Jaime says, “I don’t want to go to school.” “Why not?” asks the father. “Three reasons,” says Jaime. First, because it’s so dull; second, the kids tease me; and third, I hate school. And the father says, “Well, I am going to give you three reasons why you must go to school. First, because it is your duty; second, because you are forty-five years old, and third, because you are the headmaster.” Wake up!

…Most people tell you they want to get out of kindergarten, but don’t believe them. …All they want you to do is to mend their broken toys. …That’s all. Even the best psychologist will tell you that, that people don’t really want to be cured. What they want is relief; a cure is painful.

Waking up is unpleasant, you know. You are nice and comfortable in bed. It is irritating to be woken up. [But, as the Buddha said, “I am awake.”]

Source: <https://www.awakin.org/read/view.php?tid=2302>

**7.15:** *School Prayer* by Diane Ackerman (126 words)

In the name of daybreak  
and the eyelids of morning  
and the wayfaring moon  
and the night when it departs,

I swear I will not dishonor  
my soul with hatred  
but offer myself humbly  
as a guardian of nature,  
as a healer of misery,  
as a messenger of wonder  
as an architect of peace.

In the name of the sun and its minors  
and the day that embraces it  
and the cloud veils drawn over it  
and the uttermost night  
and the male and the female  
and the plants bursting with seed  
and the crowning seasons

of the firefly and the apple,

I will honor all life

—wherever and in whatever form  
it may dwell—on Earth my home,

And in the mansions of the stars.

Source: <http://www.yourdailypoem.com/listpoem.jsp?poem_id=91>

**7.16:** *Art as Spirituality* by Susan Sontag (161 words)

Every era has to reinvent the project of “spirituality” for itself. (Spirituality = plans, terminologies, ideas of deportment aimed at resolving the painful structural contradictions inherent in the human situation, at the completion of human consciousness, at transcendence.)

In the modern era, one of the most active metaphors for the spiritual project is “art.” The activities of the painter, the musician, the poet, the dancer, once they were grouped together under that generic name (a relatively recent move), have proved a particularly adaptable site on which to stage the formal dramas besetting consciousness, each individual work of art being a more or less astute paradigm for regulating or reconciling these contradictions. Of course, the site needs continual refurbishing. Whatever goal is set for art eventually proves restrictive, matched against the widest goals of consciousness. Art, itself a form of mystification, endures a succession of crises of demystification; older artistic goals are assailed and, ostensibly, replaced; outworn maps of consciousness are redrawn.

Source: <http://www.susansontag.com/SusanSontag/books/stylesOfRadicalWillExerpt.shtml#:~:text=Susan%20Sontag&text=Every%20era%20has%20to%20reinvent,human%20consciousness%2C%20at%20transcendence>.)

**7.17:** *Science and Spirituality* by Carl Sagan (230 words)

In its encounter with Nature, science invariably elicits a sense of reverence and awe. The very act of understanding is a celebration of joining, merging, even if on a very modest scale, with the magnificence of the Cosmos. And the cumulative worldwide build-up of knowledge over time converts science into something only a little short of a trans-national, trans-generational meta-mind.

“Spirit” comes from the Latin word “to breathe.” What we breathe is air, which is certainly matter, however thin. Despite usage to the contrary, there is no necessary implication in the word “spiritual” that we are talking of anything other than matter (including the matter of which the brain is made), or anything outside the realm of science. On occasion, I will feel free to use the word. Science is not only compatible with spirituality; it is a profound source of spirituality. When we recognize our place in an immensity of light years and in the passage of ages, when we grasp the intricacy, beauty and subtlety of life, then that soaring feeling, that sense of elation and humility combined, is surely spiritual. So are our emotions in the presence of great art or music or literature, or of acts of exemplary selfless courage such as those of Mohandas Gandhi or Martin Luther King Jr. The notion that science and spirituality are somehow mutually exclusive does a disservice to both.

Source: The Demon-Haunted World: Science as a Candle in the Dark by Carl Sagan

**7.18:** *The Spirituality of Imperfection* by **Ernest Kurtz** and **Katherine Ketcham (266 words)**

The problem with organized religions, Bill Wilson once complained, “is their claim how confoundedly right all of them are.” The spirituality of imperfection … makes no claim to be “right.” It is a spirituality more interested in questions than in answers, more a journey toward humility than a struggle for perfection.

The spirituality of imperfection begins with the recognition that trying to be perfect is the most tragic human mistake. …

We are not “everything,” but neither are we “nothing.” Spirituality is discovered in that space between paradox’s extremes, for there we confront our helplessness and powerlessness, our *woundedness*. In seeking to understand our limitations, we seek not only an easing of our pain but an understanding of what it means to hurt *and* what it means to be healed. Spirituality begins with the acceptance that our fractured being, our imperfection, simply is: There is no one to “blame” for our errors — neither ourselves nor anyone nor anything else. Spirituality helps us first to see, and then to understand, and eventually to accept the imperfection that lies at the very core of our human be-ing. Spirituality accepts that “If a thing is worth doing, it is worth doing badly.” …

This is not a spirituality for the saints or the gods, but for people who suffer from what the philosopher-psychologist William James called “torn-to-pieces- hood” (his trenchant translation of the German *Zerrissenheit*). We have all known that experience, for to be human is to feel at times divided, fractured, pulled in a dozen directions … and to yearn for serenity, for some healing of our “torn-to-pieces-hood.”

Source: *The Spirituality of Imperfection* by **Ernest Kurtz** and **Katherine Ketcham**

**7.19:** *Nature and Spirituality* by Rachel Carson (199 words)

I believe natural beauty has a necessary place in the spiritual development of any individual or any society. I believe that whenever we destroy beauty, or whenever we substitute something man-made and artificial for a natural feature of the earth, we have retarded some part of man’s spiritual growth.

I believe this affinity of the human spirit for the earth and its beauties is deeply and logically rooted. As human beings, we are part of the whole stream of life. We have been human beings for perhaps a million years. But life itself — passes on something of itself to other life — that mysterious entity that moves and is aware of itself and its surroundings, and so is distinguished from rocks or senseless clay — [from which] life arose many hundreds of millions of years ago. Since then it has developed, struggled, adapted itself to its surroundings, evolved an infinite number of forms. But its living protoplasm is built of the same elements as air, water, and rock. To these the mysterious spark of life was added. Our origins are of the earth. And so, there is in us a deeply seated response to the natural universe, which is part of our humanity.

Source: *Lost Woods: The Discovered Writing of Rachel Carson*

**7.20:** *Character Development and Spirituality* by Angeles Arrien (252 words)

Character development is about the values we hold and the roles we assume as we move through our lives. We move toward development when we are in touch with our authentic voice, our authentic self, and when we are living with integrity and honesty.

…Spirituality is often expressed in religious terms, but it is the experience of recognizing states of grace, the transcendent, synchronicity, and that which is sacred or holy; it can be found in nature, silence, art, music, family, and friendship. It can bring wholeness to the emotional, physical, and intellectual dimensions of life. The spirit, or life force, within us is the essence or center point of mystery and meaning that is present at the core of our essential nature. It is the force that allows us to integrate our internal and external experiences. The essence of spirituality provides a sense of intactness and wholeness in our nature. When we are in touch with this central core, we experience self-trust and unshakeable faith. Connecting to this core brings us into alignment with what has heart and meaning, and conveys what remains mysterious and transcendent for us all. It is that which makes us unique.

When we are conscious of our character development and spiritual growth, we begin to shift to looking at what is working in our lives and in our own nature. We become happier, healthier, and more effective in our contributions. We begin to look for the goodness in ourselves and others, demonstrating more compassion and generosity.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/21841>

**7.21:** *Key Elements of Spirituality* by Diarmuid O’Murchu (223 words)

…These are some of the key elements …of Spirituality:

* It is an articulation of the human search for meaning in life, a pursuit shared by humans of every time and culture.
* It predates formal religion by several thousand years.
* It comes from deep within (often interpreted as individualistic), uniquely personal and veering more in the direction of meditation, inner experience, and mysticism.
* It’s worth and value are often judged by good feelings; how to interpret personal experience is crucial to how we evaluate the meaning of spirituality in people’s lives. …
* It is widely connected with a love for nature and a desire to live in more convivial and responsible ways with the natural environment.
* Morally, it veers in the direction of situation ethics….
* It tends to view external authority in a negative light, particularly, that which emanates from patriarchal/hierarchical systems.
* Faith in a divine source is common, but frequently perceived to be transpersonal (often interpreted by outsiders as impersonal), and more readily perceived in nature, or in inner solitude, rather than in the transcendent realm adopted by formal religions.
* The need for ritual is often explored, adopting models from indigenous peoples, with an emphasis on natural/seasonal cycles. …
* Heavy emphasis on the interconnectedness of all things; a strong dislike for dualistic divisions….

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/26345>

**7.22:** *Spirituality: A Cosmic Dance* by Ursula King (285 words)

The search for spirituality is often understood as an inner journey or personal quest. This universal theme is found in religious and mythical tales all over the world. Yet several other metaphors can be used. Spirituality has also been likened to wrestling, struggling, or even dancing.

…Comparing the image of a journey with that of a dance, one can think of solitary journeys, but also others undertaken with a companion or friend, or even with a larger group of people. But many journeys are made alone. And a dance can be solitary, too. Yet it is more likely that a dance occurs with two, three, or more people joining. …It seems an appropriate metaphor to speak about the dance of life that involves body, mind, and soul — our whole being.

…The largest setting for life’s dance is the vast web of life, the continuously ongoing process of universal becoming. We are part of the immense rhythm of being born and dying, integral to the evolutionary history of the cosmos itself. Usually we tend to see this rhythm of life rather individualistically, yet our personal life can greatly expand in meaning when it is understood as part of this larger, universal pattern.

…Spirituality as part of our deepest inwardness and innermost being is closely interwoven with our awareness, sensibility, and capacity for reflection. Human yearning and will are involved in fostering and nurturing it; the deepest search for human identity, self-understanding, and transcendence is at stake here.

…Spirituality is …drawing us to ever-larger worlds beyond ourselves, beyond the horizons of the known. The invitation to join the cosmic dance is deeply alluring, but it is not without risks and trials. Life’s dance can be a whirlwind….

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/18472>

**7.23:***Deep Connection* by Robert Kull (255 words)

Late last night…, I went out to the rock. I didn’t really want to but something urged me on. Soft mystic moonlight fell on a calm sea and snowy …cliffs. I sat for a while — thoughts drifting in and out — calling my mind back over and over to my breath and to the sounds around me. Then one of those wandering thoughts snagged my attention.

I’ve been trying to feel part of the community of Life, but in that moment, I remembered that I, myself, am already a community comprised of bacteria, viruses, fungi, mites, and who knows what else.

…Last night I was carried softly and gently into the flow of the world. ...Not the earthshaking transformation I’d expected, but the ebb and flow of solitude carrying me along.

…Last night …I realized …a sense of being woven into the world. In the past I’ve sensed the world as a unified field of sorts. Last night I sensed Life as myriad individual organisms, each maintaining its own inner coherence and all of us organized into a hierarchical web. I sensed myself as belonging to a world of individual beings, but there was no feeling of fragmentation; we were all still one flowing whole, too.

Lately I’m less concerned with trying to figure out how other people can easily find their way to a shift of consciousness. No theory or system can make it happen faster or easier. Like a child growing up, our spiritual lives need to be lived one day at a time.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/18395>

**7.24:** *The Spiritual Child* by Lisa Miller (240 words)

So many parents tell me that they aren’t spiritual, or don’t think of themselves as spiritual, or that they’re not spiritual enough. But ask them if they love their child and the answer is a passionate yes! Worry not, because pure selfless and unconditional love goes a long way. In fact, strong and healthy parental love can fill much of the spiritual developmental need. Unconditional love is spiritual parenting….

The essential developmental support that parents are uniquely positioned to provide includes early exposure, awareness, and cultivation of our spiritual assets, time and space, nature, a vocabulary, and a spiritual social context. As parents, we are biologically equipped to assume the role of spiritual ambassador, by introducing our child to the spiritual dimension and joining in the conversation as a loving, open guide.

You can do this – just loving your child openly and honestly helps develop their natural spirituality. Because they experience transcendence through the same apparatus through which they experience your love, your unconditional affection is a big step in the right direction. And maybe you’ll want to try to take another step.

Spiritual parenting comes in many forms. It is in the many moments that you thoughtfully embody spiritual values, awaken your family to spiritual presence, and meet life’s challenges and opportunities to deepen your child’s spirituality. Science says that this is the most powerful connection you have to your child’s well-being now and throughout life.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/27964>

**7.25:** *The Beauty of Ordinary Moments* by Kent Nerburn (276 words)

The birdsong is different here, full of unfamiliar cadences and unfamiliar melodies. These birds are making different music than the birds outside my window in America, and this fills me with wonder.

I do not often stop to realize how different the music of nature is in each place on earth. But something about this birdsong makes me pause and take notice. It fills me, in a way far deeper than intellect, with a humble awareness of the beauty and mystery of the world around me.

…Our lives are filled with moments like these — ordinary moments when the hidden beauty of life breaks into our everyday awareness like an unbidden shaft of light. It is a brush with the sacred, a near occasion of grace.

Too often we are blind to these moments. We are busy with our daily obligations and too occupied with our comings and goings to surround our hearts with the quiet that is necessary to hear life’s softer songs.

There is no shame in this. We are only human, and the demands of life make a raucous noise. But we must not let those demands drown out the quieter voices of the spirit. We must take the time to stop and listen, knowing that the voice of the spirit speaks more often in a whisper than a shout.

For spirituality is far more than religious practice. It is a cast of mind, a leaning of the heart, a willingness to see the shadow of the divine mystery in all people and all things. It is …seeing the reflection of the divine in the face of every person we meet on the street.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/15894/ordinary-sacred>

**7.26:** *Global Spirituality* by Beverly Lanzetta (275 words)

What I learned that day and through all the other days over these last thirty years is that our common spirituality — our global spirituality — is forged together by the prayer of love that transcends religions. It is not a reality that is conceived and constructed by the mind, but a state of consciousness we discover is already present by surrendering ourselves to or sinking down into the spiritual core of life. Global spirituality is an affair of the heart that begins deep within one’s soul and is the soul’s active expression of the unity of creation that sustains diversity and difference rather than marginalizing those differences. Global spirituality is not solely concerned with the coming together of different religions, but with following a divine call to love in a new way…. It is a sacred experience on the human horizon that is drawing people toward a mystical, rather than religious expression of faith. For in the mystical traditions, the heart is not primarily the seat of emotions and feelings, but the place that draws us inward and helps us to dwell in our spiritual center.

…Global spirituality works to sustain a sacred community on earth by bringing the voice of the spirit to matters of common economic, political, ethical, and religious concerns. As engaged practice, global spirituality is an orientation toward life that is concerned about the sacredness of, and reverence for, all human and nonhuman life; deeply committed to how social, political, religious, and economic institutions can be in service of the divinity of the world; and founded on the locus of the spirit, where there is absent a sense of “I” and “mine.”

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/16919>

**7.27:** *A Spirituality of Anger* by Evelyn Eaton Whitehead and James D. Whitehead (243 words)

At the mention of anger, [some see] …only the uncontrolled, the anti-spiritual, the negative aspect. But, as with “sensuality” and “desire,” the power of wrath also belongs to the primal forces of human nature.

…A …spirituality of anger demands public acknowledgment of its revolutionary elements. By recovering our tradition of prophecy and the memory of an irritable Jesus, we may allow this emotion to take its place among us once more. This acknowledgment will compel us to recognize that conflict plays an unavoidable role in our shared life. We can argue about our differing visions …without insulting or injuring one another. We can even become angry with one another and still prevent this emotion from escalating into hatred. We can relearn the rules of civility and treat our adversaries with honor and respect.

Democratic societies have taught the world about the healthy role of the loyal opposition. We debate and oppose one another, but then we go forward as colleagues, not enemies. Embedded in the notion of a loyal opposition is the virtue of civility: the strength of combining antagonism with respect, of disagreeing without degrading our opponent. Critics ranging from Cardinal Joseph Bernardin to President Barack Obama have noted the withering of civility in America. When antagonists employ bitter invective and accuse one another of the worst motives, they erode the line between anger and hatred, and vindication becomes vengeance. Then the ordinary conflicts and unavoidable agon of social life become deadly.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/19661>

**7.28:***We Are Each Other’s Destiny* by Mary Oliver (271 words)

Knowledge has entertained me and it has shaped me and it has failed me. Something in me still starves. In what is probably the most serious inquiry of my life, I have begun to look past reason, past the provable, in other directions. Now I think there is only one subject worth my attention and that is the precognition of the spiritual side of the world and, within this recognition, the condition of my own spiritual state. I am not talking about having faith necessarily, although one hopes to. What I mean by spirituality is not theology, but attitude. …In any comparison of demonstrated truths and unproven but vivid intuitions, the truths lose.

I would therefore write a kind of elemental poetry that doesn’t just avoid indoors but doesn’t even see the doors that lead inward—to laboratories, to textbooks, to knowledge. I would not talk about the wind, and the oak tree, and the leaf on the oak tree, but on their behalf. …I would write praise poems that might serve as comforts, reminders, or even cautions if needed, to wayward minds and un-awakened hearts.

…There exist a thousand unbreakable links between each of us and everything else, and that our dignity and our changes are one. The farthest star and the mud at our feet are a family; and there is no decency or sense in honoring one thing, or a few things, and then closing the list. The pine tree, the leopard, the Platte River, and ourselves—we are at risk together, or we are on our way to a sustainable world together. We are each other’s destiny.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/28137/upstream>

**7.29:** *A Spirituality of Brokenness* by Kent Ira Groff (253 words)

“The world breaks everyone and afterward many are strong at the broken places.” This is the gospel according to Hemingway. Finding a secular spirituality, one that does not need to posit a God out there in order to find faith, has everything to do with the mystery of paying attention to the blessed broken stuff in your own life and in the world.

Some glorious mystery resides on the edges, hovers over the brokenness, hangs out at the bottoms of things. This is why worldly mystics such as St. Francis of Assisi or Gandhi or Dorothy Day or Mother Teresa, have always stayed close to the marginalized, *les miserables*, the *anawim* in Hebrew, the least of these, where Messiah is to be found.

This mysterious underground grace can take raw abuse and half-repressed shame and transform it into life-giving resiliency. Often it is *sub*liminal, just beneath the threshold (*limen* in Latin) of awareness. Such half-submerged inklings of grace may contain hidden monsters as well as stars of light. “These resurrected gems are bridgeheads into alien territory,” wrote R.D. Laing in *The Politics of Experience.* They call us back to our true home while on the journey. Falling and rising at the margins of life, we come to the center.

…John Forbes Nash Jr., …the off-the-wall professor teaches us to pay attention to marginal people. Treat mental illness with respect, Nash would remind us, because the voices he hears come from the same mysterious place as the insights for his Nobel Prize-winning gaming theory.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/14246/what-would-i-believe-if-i-didnt-believe-anything>

**7.30:** *The Discipline of Silence* by James W. Jones (263 words)

Spirituality is that disciplined inquiry, it is experimenting with our consciousness to discover for ourselves the seeds of divinity within us.

…Spirituality is process before content. Not memorizing rules, facts, or concepts but freeing the mind and the heart to explore new worlds of insight and connection.

Paradoxically such freedom is the result of discipline. I am only free to improvise on the piano after I have mastered the discipline of playing scales and chords. Likewise, in order to gain freer access to the depths of the inner world, I must master the discipline of silence and learning to listen to myself in new ways.

Our inner world is often like our outer one — something of a chaos. If we try the simple experiment of attempting to be still and quiet, immediately a host of things comes to mind. We will probably be flooded with random thoughts, memories, emotions, images, and bodily sensations.

… If we can gradually put aside our natural tendency to evaluate and react to our thoughts and feelings and just observe them, we will find ourselves becoming increasingly detached from them and the observing part of ourself becoming stronger. Not that thoughts and feelings will stop — they won’t. But they will not matter as much. When this starts to happen, a silence will begin to come into our mind.

…Meditation does not necessarily result in intense emotions but rather in interior states that are more encompassing and unifying than discrete ideas or feelings. This deeper reality will speak to us if we discipline ourself to make room for it.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/16129>

**7.31:** *There Is No Road* by Antonio Machado (56 words)

Traveler, your footprints  
are the only road, nothing else.  
Traveler, there is no road;  
you make your own path as you walk.  
As you walk, you make your own road,  
and when you look back  
you see the path  
you will never travel again.  
Traveler, there is no road;  
only a ship’s wake in the sea.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/15491/there-is-no-road>

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

***Youth***

# 8.1: Mindfulness, Meditation, and Metta

# 8.1.1: *Mindfulness: Youth Voices* (2:58)

“This video features youth and young adults discussing their experiences practicing mindfulness, and how mindfulness has benefited different aspects of their lives. The video also features youth practicing mindfulness, and includes insights from a health professional and mindfulness teacher.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kk7IBwuhXWM>

# 8.1.2: *Under Pressure* - 2018 Version - Mindfulness in Schools - Mindfulness for Teens by Cheryl Brause (7:20)

“Teens today need mindfulness more than ever to cope with the increasing demands they face each day. Mindfulness is something we can all use, from athletes to actors, adults, teens, and children, to be our best selves - to be calm, resilient, strong and wise! This updated version of 2bpresent’s popular video has new celebrity interviews and updated statistics showing the benefits of teaching teens mindfulness.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WJ-ZAyxHd9Y>

# 8.1.3: *You are not your thoughts* (4:02)

“This video explains some of the things you can try when you feel overwhelmed by your thoughts. After the video, take a few moments to observe your thoughts with curiosity, paying attention to how each one makes you feel. Paying attention to your thoughts and sorting through them takes practice and patience.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0QXmmP4psbA>

# 8.1.4: *STOP for Mindfulness* (3:26)

“Mindfulness can help you manage stress, pain and your overall mental health. Practicing mindfulness sounds simple, but it can be difficult to remember to do it. Use the STOP tool to help you remember to be mindful throughout your day. (S)TOP (T)AKE A BREATH (O)BSERVE (P)ROCEED,”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GgBVIZAEQqU>

# 8.1.5: *Lesson 1 Mindfulness Basics* (3:35)

# Artists, athletes, and other celebrities speak about the value of mindfulness meditation.

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=up3MZuYkf-g>

# 8.1.6: *How to Meditate for Beginners (Animated)* (5:35)

# “In this video, I’m going to tell you, where to meditate, how to meditate, how to stop thinking, how long to meditate for, even how long before you start seeing the benefits.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JslvBcIVtDg>

# 8.1.7: *How to Meditate* by Lavendaire (4:09)

# “Meditation is a practice that can benefit your health and wellness in so many ways. I’ve been trying to meditate more lately, so I was inspired to make a basic how to meditate video focusing on creating beautiful visuals and experimenting with ways I can improve my craft.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oq6j9uWrcfg>

# 8.1.8: *7 Easy Ways to Meditate More Consistently* | Meditation for Beginners (9:46)

# “Meditation has amazing benefits and deserves to be in everyone’s daily routine. The hardest part about meditation though, is getting started and staying consistent. Here are some tips for beginners and some easy (& lazy) ways to meditate.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f1GHSOPe31o>

# 8.1.9: *Mindfulness Meditation to help Relieve Anxiety and Stress* (9:22)

# “This is a mindfulness meditation with Josh Wise. This meditation will help you connect with your breath. Relax. Let go of stress. Release anxiety. Allow yourself to relax. Simply breathe and watch your breath. Notice what it feels like. No need to change anything or do anything. Simply accept this moment just as it is. Enjoy.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fpiw2hH-dlc>

**8.1.10:** *A Lovingkindness (Metta) Meditation* by Sylvia Boorstein (7:26)

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/20121374>

# Text: <https://onbeing.org/blog/sylvia-boorstein-a-lovingkindness-meditation/>

# 8.2: Nature

# 8.2.1: *Forest Bathing* by Nancy Wood (4:25)

# “Texas-based artist Nancy Wood has created Forest Bathing, a series of digital paintings exploring whether the beneficial effects of being in nature can also be reproduced by artworks displaying the beauty of nature.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yNiDthwARhQ>

# 8.2.2: *Forest Bathing | Shinrin-Yoku | Healing in Nature* | Short Documentary (4:34)

# “Learn how to create healing experiences in nature for yourself and your loved ones. Visit the link for a course on Shinrin-yoku / Forest bathing. Learn calming nature meditations, forest bathing exercises, and mindfulness activities that reconnect us with nature and ourselves.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y-wHq6yY2CI>

# 8.2.3: *Introduction to Shinrin Yoku* (2:57)

# Shinrin Yoku is a Japanese term that means “Forest Bathing.” It is a health-enhancing practice that is introduced in this brief video, courtesy of <https://www.natureandforesttherapy.org/> Visit our website and join the coalition to promote this wonderful practice and connect more people to nature. It’s not just for health, it’s for our relationships with nature, the type of relationships that support sustainable living.

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LUfbMIGcxkM>

# 8.2.4: *Shinrin-Yoku* (2:23)

# Woman experiencing Shinrin Yoku.

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=phT16wgzHOY>

# 8.2.5: *Kids Gardening with Liz Episode 14: Forest Bathing* (2:17)

# Liz explains the science by which forest bathing affect the five senses.

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QkLe4aBtDt0>

# 8.2.6: *Forest Therapy: Connecting with nature* – with Vicky Kyan (4:40)

# “Bring yourself into alignment with nature.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vROiXeGmZ1Y>

# 8.2.7: *What is Forest Therapy?* (4:00)

# What is forest therapy? - an inspirational video about forest therapy and the healing powers of nature.

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vI7ymWLexyk>

# 8.2.8: *Shinrin-Yoku (forest bathing) trailer* (1:00)

# Forest bathing is the practice of taking a leisurely walk in a forest for health benefits. The practice originated in Japan where it is called shinrin-yoku (森林浴). Proven by scientists to benefit physical as well as mental health Shinrin-Yoku helps to lower heart rate, blood pressure, reduce stress hormone production, boost immunity and mood and improve overall feelings of wellbeing.

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CcZkvXYevU8>

# 8.2.9: *Forest Bathing | A Simple Yet Powerful Nature Meditation* (3:05)

# “‘The clearest way into the Universe is through a forest wilderness.’- John Muir Forest Bathing is a simple, yet powerful to way reconnect with who we are, in our natural setting. Find a place for yourself and settle into the present moment as we expand our senses and experience the natural world around all of us”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MyZb2BS04y0>

# 8.2.10: *Nature Calm | Healing with Nature* (2:30)

# We all search for something in life. Do you know why? Nature knows. Return to nature and find your answers: <http://www.healingforest.org/learn>

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rYI3J0HfyoE&feature=emb_logo>

# 8.3: Tai Chi

# 8.3.1: *Tai Chi* with Helen Liang (15:17) (Also see 8.7)

# “Follow along with this beginner’s guide to a Tai Chi routine. Host Helen Liang will guide you through a variety of movements in this easy-to-follow instructional video.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apIffYvzuS0>

# 8.4: Yoga

# 8.4.1: *Yoga for Teens* by Yoga With Adriene (20:55)

# “This practice is designed for teens but beneficial for all ages”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7kgZnJqzNaU>

# 8.4.2: *Teens Yoga Class* with Yoga Ed.

# “A 15-minute teens yoga class for beginners with Yoga Ed, created for ages 13-18.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6kJgTouHHeE>

# 8.4.3: *30 Minute Teens Yoga Class* with Yoga Ed. | Ages 13-18 (28:50)

# “An introductory yoga class for ages 13-18, grades 9-12”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Ekep9GqvaM>

# 8.4.4: *Yoga for Teens: Energizing Flow Yoga Class* (30:02)

# “In this class we work on vinyasa flow and the core, finding the balance between strength and flexibility.” ~ Jaysea Devoe

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-6erFaJZqP4>

# *Adults*

# 8.5 Mindfulness, Meditation & Metta

**8.5.1:** *22 Mindfulness Exercises, Techniques & Activities For Adults* (+ PDF’s) by Courtney E. Ackerman, MSc. (October 2020)

# Link: <https://positivepsychology.com/mindfulness-exercises-techniques-activities/>

**8.5.2:** *Practicing Mindfulness in Groups: 9 Activities and Exercises* by Dr. Jeremy Sutton, Ph.D.

Link: <https://positivepsychology.com/group-mindfulness-activities/>

**8.5.3:** *How to Meditate* (5:57)

“Meditating can conjure up some extreme images for many people, but it doesn’t have to be practiced atop a mountain during a sunset. Learn why, what, and how in this week’s episode of How to Adult. 1: Set a Timer 2: Take Your Seat 3: Notice What Your Legs are Doing 4: Straighten Your Upper Body 5: Rest Your Hands 6: Set Your Gaze 7: Feel Your Breath 8: Practice Observing 9: Practice Pausing 10: Finish, and Continue with Your Day”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=He3lRAhvjB0>

**8.5.4:** *A Lovingkindness (Metta) Meditation* by Sylvia Boorstein (7:26)

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/20121374>

# Text: <https://onbeing.org/blog/sylvia-boorstein-a-lovingkindness-meditation/>

# 8.6: Nature (see 8.2 above)

# 8.7: Tai Chi

# 8.7.1: *Tai Chi for Beginners 01 “Tai Chi Fundamentals”* by Dr. Daniel Hoover (27:38)

# “Tai Chi Chuan is a slow moving internal martial art that helps improve our balance and health in many ways. Welcome to Tai Chi for beginners. This first episode is an introduction to Tai Chi Chuan concepts and its first two major movement patterns ‘Parting Wild Horse’s Mane’ and ‘Brush Knee.’”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oCnCSOWgIUU>

# 8.7.2: *Tai Chi for Beginners 02 “Balance and Flow”* by Dr. Daniel Hoover (29:00)

# “Tai Chi Chuan is about balance and flow. In this episode we’ve added the following Tai Chi Chaun movement patterns: ‘Golden Rooster Stands on One Leg,’ ‘Wave Hands like Clouds,’ and ‘Repulse Monkey.’ An emphasis is placed on increasing balance and flow throughout the movements.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_AR-RMBS9d8>

# 8.7.3: *Tai Chi for Beginners 03”Opening & Expanding your Frame”* by Dr. Daniel Hoover (28:19)

# “Tai Chi Chuan teaches us how to open and expand our frame/posture using bio-mechanical advantages within our structure that increases power without relying on strength. In this episode we’ve added the following Tai Chi Chuan movement patterns: ‘Wardoff,’ ‘Press,’ and ‘Grasping Bird’s Tail,’ ‘Single Whip,’ and ‘Wave Hands.’”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nVfD906XCLY>

# 8.7.4: *Tai Chi for Beginners 04 - “Place of Power”* by Dr. Daniel Hoover (28:03)

# “Tai Chi Chuan helps us feel our ‘place of power.’ When we are grounded, have an upright posture, and are comfortable with expanding (without compromising our frame/posture), and yielding (without collapsing our frame/posture), you are in your ‘place of power.’ In this episode we’ve added the following Tai Chi Chuan movement patterns: ‘Right and Left Heel Kick,’ ‘Snake Creeps through Grass,’ and ‘Golden Rooster Stands on One Leg.’”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cVS-URvgcwk>

# 8.7.5: *Tai Chi for Beginners 05 - “Awareness”* by Dr. Daniel Hoover (28:03)

# “Tai Chi Chuan helps develop our awareness both inside of ourselves and around us. This subtle awareness helps us cultivate health from the inside out, as well as become more attuned with nature and our surroundings. In this episode we’ve added the following Tai Chi Chuan movement patterns: ‘Jade Lady Works Shuttles,’ ‘Fan Back,’ and ‘Parry Block and Punch.’”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0sW2tLME3uM>

# 8.7.6: *Tai Chi for Beginners 06 - “Transitions”* by Dr. Daniel Hoover (28:06)

# In this episode we’ll be demonstrating the four transition movement patterns in the Yang Style 24 Tai Chi Chuan form: ‘White Crane Spreads Wings,’ ‘Strum the Lute,’ ‘High Pat on Horse,’ and ‘Needle at Bottom of Sea.’ The goal here is to keep moving throughout the form especially during the transitions. Be sure to keep the movements flowing from one into the next while avoiding slowing down, speeding up, or stopping until the form is completed.

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F2NBDXJyzgw>

# 8.7.7: *Tai Chi for Beginners 07 - “Deepening Your Practice”* by Dr. Daniel Hoover (29:18)

# “Welcome to our final episode of the Tai Chi for Beginners series. In this episode we’ll be developing the sensation of Qi in our hands by practicing the Tai Chi Ball with a partner. We’ll also be giving a brief introduction to Tai Chi Push Hands.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bczRFO25J70>

# 8.7.8: *Tai Chi Origins, Philosophy and Wellness* with Dr. Daniel Hoover (27:30)

# “Dr. Daniel Hoover, Founder of SOHMA Integrative Health Center, explores Tai Chi’s origins and examines the philosophy of traditional Chinese medicine, including Tai Chi’s connection to wellness.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dWnpAMIK73I>

# 8.8: Yoga

# 8.8.1: *Gentle Yoga Flow - 30-Minute All Levels Yoga Class* (27:39)

# “Move through a series of stretches, yoga poses and guided breathing to increase flexibility and mobility, decompress, and create more physical space in the body. This yoga class is a great way to get familiarized with the poses (and a back-to-the-basics refresher for more experienced students).”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g13nVd7OLYs>

# 8.8.2: *Yoga for Seniors | Slow and Gentle Yoga* (28:39)

# “Carve out some time on the mat for this relaxing and gentle 28-minute Yoga With Adriene practice. Relieve stress, cultivate a clear mind and a strong body.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kFhG-ZzLNN4>

**9.0: Popular Music**

**9.1:** *Everything is Holy Now* by Peter Mayer (4:55)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KiypaURysz4>

**9.2:** *The River of Dreams* by Billy Joel (with lyrics) (5:45)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p66Q5btJ9ak>

**9.3:** *Exactly* by Amy Steinberg with lyrics (5:12)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WuQ2FxbkT1U>

**9.4:** *Losing My Religion* by REM (4:54)

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

**9.5:** *Prayer of St. Francis* by Sarah Mclachlan with lyrics (2:05)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kiXz3QI0SMM>

**9.6:** *Spirit* by Beyoncé (From Disney’s ‘The Lion King’ - Official Video) (4:30)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=civgUOommC8>

**9.7:** *I’ll Be Missing You* by Puff Daddy, Sting & Faith Evans (4:26)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmrhwerU66U>

**9.8:** *Saturn* by Sleeping at Last (4:49)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dzNvk80XY9s>

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h3lWwMHFhnA> (lyrics)

**9.9:** *Everybody Hurts* by R.E.M. (Official Music Video) (5:44)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5rOiW_xY-kc>

**9.10:** *Fly Like an Eagle* by Kashy Keegan (3:41)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j6HoHkoU7lc>

**9.11:** *Rise Up* by Andra Day (4:56)

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

**9.12:** *Somewhere over the Rainbow* by Israel ‘IZ’ Kamakawiwoʻole (3:47)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V1bFr2SWP1I>

**9.13:** *Praying* by Kesha (4:59)

Video Link; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v-Dur3uXXCQ>

**9.14:** *Spirit Dances* by Kashy Keegan (4:24)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ftco75S7ZqE>

**9.15:** *My Sweet Lord* by George Harrison with lyrics (4:49)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8qJTJNfzvr8>

**9.16:** *In the Arms of the Angel* by Sarah McLachlan with lyrics (4:10)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3pvf_OBuJVE>

**9.17:** *Dust in the Wind* by Kansas with Lyrics (3:29)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Vl3lydJy9s>

**9.18:** *Nature’s Way* by Spirit (2:29)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0V0Vu_utUZY>

**9.19:** *Spirit in the Sky* by Norman Greenbaum (4:02)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xi_3GtQN2IA>

**9.20** *Spiritual* by Donald Lawrence (Lyric Video) (6:35)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s73WSFxBemA>

# 9.21: *Atlantic* by Sleeping at Last (Micro Music Video) (6:35)

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_ByqDXru-lw>

# 9.22: *Pacific* by Sleeping at Last (Micro Music Video) (2:58)

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8nafNv9za_U>

# 9.23: *Hearing* by| Sleeping at Last (4:09)

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yTxhB1TE1xA>

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

**10.1:***The Taoist Monk and the Blackberry Bush* by Voevoda from the move Telling John (2:15)

A traditional story.

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vKMPn0bnDA8>

**10.2:** *Spirituality* by Hear Something (3:29)

Different thoughts about spirituality, belief, and God.

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/29456808>

**10.3:** *Spirituality and Meaning Film Trailer* by Norman Bosworth (4:20)

“Dr. Reich identifies those life questions we all face and must answer every day: Who are you? Why are you? How do you feel about who you are? And: What are you doing about it? Spiritual and relationship connections are significant to framing what matters most.

“Well-being depends upon how we cope with our stress with passion and perseverance, to create the life, we deeply desire.”

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/227983456>

**10.4:** *Radical Spirituality* by Andrew Cohen (5:51)

“The inherently radical nature of transformative spirituality when we decide to go all the way.”

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/296204692>

**10.5:** *Crazywise: Spirituality* by Sandy Jeglum (1:07)

“A short digital media clip produced for the documentary film CRAZYWISE. Hear mental health professionals speak about how spirituality is linked to mental health.”

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/263214013>

**10.6:** *Spirituality* by Xi Pan (0:35)

“The admission that one does not have to understand spirituality to value it.”

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/200463017>

**10.7:** *Feminist Spirituality* by the Omega Institute (2:12)

“Sister Joan Chittister is one of the most articulate social analysts and influential religious leaders of our time, presenting with the Dalai Lama and working with the UN. In this excerpt she speaks to religion, war, and women’s place in spirituality and creating a tomorrow in which we express values that are sound in ethics, empathy, morality, and love.”

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/243899012>

**10.8:** *Spirituality* by Colourise Festival (0:40)

“Equating spirituality with the wind blowing through the trees.”

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/68268443>

**10.9:** *Spirituality* by Ronit Herzfeld (1:58)

“Beneath our struggles, fears and insecurities, there is a space where peace and truth reside—it is that part of us which is grounded with and longs to express our participation with the creative force.”

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/9948506>

**10.10:** *Selfie Stick Spirituality* by Buckingham Community Church (0:49)

“There’s little doubt that our society is selfie obsessed, but in what ways might that self-focus impact our faith and spirituality.”

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/178929320>

**10.11:** *Spirituality* by Energy Healers TV (1:10)

A definition of spirituality.

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/129056973>

***Ted Talks***

**10.12:** *My Failed Mission to find God and What I Found Instead* by Anjali Kumar (15:29)

“I wrote a book to document the spiritual pilgrimage I embarked on when I found myself to be highly spiritual but religiously uncommitted -- what Pew Research calls a ‘None.’ A skeptic with an open mind, and looking for a spiritual home, I set out to find answers to the big questions ... Why are we here? What is the meaning of life? What happens when we die? Is there a God? …It was a journey that challenged my thinking about science, religion and spirituality, gave me life-altering, wonder-infused insights -- and became the basis for this TED Talk.”

Video Link: <https://www.ted.com/talks/anjali_kumar_my_failed_mission_to_find_god_and_what_i_found_instead/reading-list>

**10.13:** *Breath—five minutes can change your life* by Stacey Schuerman (9:05)

Stacey Schuerman leads “…an exercise designed to reset, renew, and rejuvenate our energy …as she teaches …about breathing and calming the mind.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hFcQpNr_KA4>

**10.14:** *The powerful secret of your breath* by Romila “Dr. Romie” Mushtaq, MD (15:25)

“After surviving career burnout and a life-threatening illness, Dr. Romie began her exploration of the medicine behind mindfulness-based therapies as they related to mindful living and the universal benefits of connecting to the present moment. By combining her expertise and professional experiences in neurology and integrative medicine she was able to translate this knowledge to help clients and corporations cope with their stress-infused lives; taking mindfulness from the meditation mat into a mindful way of living...and breathing.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=slKAFdJ8ZHY>

**10.15:** *Teaching the ABCs of Attention, Balance and Compassion* by Susan Kaiser Greenland (17:03)

“Founder of the Inner Kids program, Susan Kaiser Greenland adapted adult meditation practices for kids, seeing a marked improvement in their capacity to focus, calm themselves, and manage stress. She is also the author of The Mindful Child.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LpMvTTIr2p4>

**10.16:** *Bite-Sized Mindfulness: An Easy Way for Kids to be Happy and Healthy* by Kira Willey (14:06)

“Kira presents simple, powerful mindfulness techniques for children that can reduce stress, improve school performance, and help kids manage their behavior and emotions. She shows how easily these short, kid-friendly exercises can be used by anyone, in a variety of settings. Kira Willey is a children’s music artist, kids’ yoga expert and speaker, and creator of Rockin’ Yoga school programs. She teaches yoga and mindfulness to children through her music; her hits include ‘Colors,’ which was featured in a worldwide Dell commercial.” **See her books above at 4.9 to 4.13.**

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

**10.17:** *Why Aren’t We Teaching You Mindfulness* by AnneMarie Rossi (14:26)

“In this powerful talk, an instructor bringing mindfulness to shelters shares her research into how mindfulness can set us up for success and break cycles of transgenerational trauma.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-yJPcdiLEkI>

**10.18:** *30 seconds to mindfulness* by Phil Boissiere (8:47)

“Can you go from feeling stressed to calm in under 30 seconds? Phil Boissiere shares his simple technique to bring mindfulness to your busy life, anytime, anywhere.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ad7HqXEc2Sc>

**10.19:** *Self-Transformation Through Mindfulness* by Dr. David Vago (19.34)

“In this TedTalk, Cognitive Neuroscientist, Dr. David Vago demonstrates that a regular form of mental training using tools such as meditation and mindful awareness has the potential to transform our self and our mental habits in a positive way.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1nP5oedmzkM>

**10.20:** *The Power of Mindfulness: What You Practice Grows Stronger* by Shauna Shapiro (13:45)

“How do we change? In this pioneering talk, Dr. Shauna Shapiro draws on modern neuroscience and ancient wisdom to demonstrate how mindfulness can help us make positive changes in our brains and our lives.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IeblJdB2-Vo>

**10.21:** *Positive mindfulness – positive transformation* by Dr Itai Ivtzan (18:42)

“So, what if we befriended both psychology and spirituality? Dr Itai Ivtzan explores how integrating both into our lives can help us in our quest to become super-heroes – gaining super-strengths of awareness, courage, resilience and compassion.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1wfSiL4tY4>

**10.22:** *The heart of mindfulness* by Charity Bryant (13:01)

“Is the practice of mindfulness just for Zen masters and yoga afficionados? 35 years of scientific research proves this practice of non-judgmental present moment awareness effectively boosts not only creativity, performance and productivity, but also cultivates kindness, compassion, generosity and empathy.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1m-uc6CRB6k>

**10.23:** *How Mindfulness Transforms Us* by Jo Pang (13:32)

“Jo speaks to everyday problems and how difficult it is to be happy—’Considering that everything dies, leaves or disappears.’ Come on a short journey to experience self-awareness and understand how powerful the practice of meditation can be to live a healthy/happy life. Jo Pang is on a mission of mindfulness.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9gi2ER4pSaU>

**10.24:** *Transform Your Mind, Change the World* by Sharon Salzberg (18:18)

“Sharon Salzberg is cofounder of the Insight Meditation Society (IMS) in Barre, Massachusetts. She has been a student of meditation since 1971, guiding meditation retreats worldwide since 1974. Sharon’s latest book is the New York Times Best Seller, Real Happiness: The Power of Meditation: A 28-Day Program”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-jn1ZkwOZ-g>

**10.25:** *Reaching Your Fullest Potential Through Meditation* by Jenn Fairbank (8:06)

“Take a deep breath in... experience the benefits of this guided mediation with Jenn Fairbank. Jenn Fairbank is a nationally-trained mindfulness teacher with a master’s degree in social work. She has over 15 years of experience using mindfulness techniques with individuals, changing lives for the better. In her teachings, she shares the simple message of practicing conscious compassion.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZhYo0-l9VaQ>

**10.26:** *Prescribing Nature for Health* by Dr. Nooshin Razani (17:47)

“Dr. Nooshin Razani talks about the healing power of nature as well as why it is her mission to prescribe time in nature as a way to treat health conditions. Watch Dr. Nooshin Razani’s talk to learn how and why nature can be an essential part of healthy living.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0uk0QriYYws>

**11.0: ABC of Yoga**

**11.2:** *The ABCs of Yoga for Kids* by Teresa Power, author and Kathleen Rietz, illustrator (2009)

‘The ABCs of Yoga for Kids uses the alphabet, rhyming vignettes, and colorful illustrations to introduce children to yoga in a kid-friendly way. Each of the 56 different poses featured in the book delightfully promote flexibility, strength, and coordination while encouraging children to incorporate healthy activity into their daily lives.’

Website: <https://www.abcyogaforkids.com/>

# 11.3: *The ABCs of Yoga for Kids: A Guide for Parents and Teachers* by Teresa Power, author and Kathleen Rietz, illustrator (2016)

“The ABCs of Yoga for Kids: A Guide for Parents and Teachers is a companion to The ABCs of Yoga for Kids, a 32-page, award-winning bestselling picture book that uses the alphabet, rhyming vignettes and colorful illustrations to introduce children to yoga in a kid-friendly way. This guidebook supports parents and teachers who wish to learn more about yoga for kids, including how to implement yoga into the daily lives of children. Readers will gain insight into what yoga is, how it can contribute to a child’s active lifestyle and how to use yoga to alleviate many childhood challenges. This easy-to-use handbook offers basic guidelines for teaching yoga to kids and a sample children’s yoga routine. The increased body awareness afforded by yoga helps kids make better choices for keeping themselves healthy, both physically and mentally. Bonus CD included with the book, featuring 3 new children’s yoga songs by Teresa Anne Power.”

**11.1:** *Chart of Yoga Poses*

