

**Touchstones REACH**

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

**Lifespan RE Resources for Worth & Dignity**

**Introduction**

This packet provides resources on the theme of Worth & Dignity, which encompasses our first principle, “the inherent worth & dignity of every person,” and our seventh principle, “respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.” While respect is a separate Touchstones theme, it is also related to worth & dignity. While some say that respect is earned, it is also an independent action by which we can acknowledge, affirm, support, celebrate, and protect another’s worth and dignity. Consider that humiliation, an affront to worth and dignity, is opposite to respect. With younger children approaching worth & dignity through the importance of respect may make them more accessible.

The phrase worth & dignity is a little problematic because the word “dignity” was defined as the “state of being worthy” (from the Old French *dignite* around 1200 CE). In this sense, dignity is based on and derived from one’s worth or value.

In terms of usage, dignity has declined dramatically from 1800 forward, yet the term, “human dignity,” is relatively recent, notably appearing in the 1948 *Preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*: “Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.”

Other elements that are related to worth and dignity include self-esteem, acceptance, gift of others and ourselves, seeing others with awe, the golden rule, diversity, human rights, acceptance of and respect for difference, self-worth, social-identity, fairness, pluralism and multiculturalism.

**List of Resources**

**1.0: Pins**

**Resources for Children**

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

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

**2.2:** *Supporting the People Who Need Us* by Mandy Neff (374 words)

**2.3:** *Who Was That Samaritan?* by Martha Dallas (491 words)

**2.4:** *The Promise and the Practice: Repairing Our Mistakes with Love* by Rev. Jaelynn Pema-la Scott and Rev. Erika A. Hewitt (328+ words)

**2.5:** *The Spider and the Very Important Person* by Diana Davies (549 words)

**2.6:** *We Are the Shepherds* by Rev. Erika A. Hewitt (475 words)

**3.0: Wisdom Stories**

**3.1:** *Sophia’s Guest* by Becky Brooks (822 words)

**3.2:** *Wake Up to Injustice* by Gail Forsyth-Vail (376 words)

**3.3:** *Who Loves the Dark?* by Sheri Phillabaum (1,392 words)

**3.4:** *Tiny the God* by Becky Brooks (806 words)

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

**3.6:** *Owen and Mzee* (645 words)

**3.7:** *The Real Gift* (661 words)

**3.8:** *Harriot Kezia Hunt Making A Difference* (428 words)

**3.9:** *The Brementown Musicians* by Gail Forsyth-Vail (790 words)

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

**3.11:** *The Rooster Who Learned To Crow* by Janeen K Grohsmeyer (1,151 words)

**3.12:** *Annie Arnzen Making A Difference* (883 words)

**3.13:** *Maya’s Questions* (1,037 words)

**3.14:** *Muddy Children Hosea Ballou* by Janeen K Grohsmeyer (1,184 words)

**3.15:** *A Different Kind of Superhero: Christopher Reeve* (912 words)

**3.16:** *Grandmother’s Lesson* by Elisa Davy Pearmain (953 words)

**3.17:** *Belonging: Fannie Barrier Williams* by Janeen K Grohsmeyer (875 words)

**3.18:** *The Dervish in the Ditch* (263 words)

**3.19:** *The Scratched Diamond* (495 words)

**3.20:** *The Ugly Duckling* (1,497 words)

**3.21-** *Susan Stanton’s Story* (365 words)

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

**3.23:** *The March at Selma* (773 words)

**3.24:** *Balance* by Rev. Susan Manker-Seale (346 words)

**3.25:** *The Flower Ceremony, A Plain and Simple Beauty* (468 words)

**3.26:** *Building Respect: Reverend Joseph Jordan 1842-1901* by Janeen K Grohsmeyer (599 words)

**3.27:** *Oshun Loses Her Beauty* (601 words)

**3.28:** *John L. Cashin, Witness for Justice* (654 words)

**3.29:** *Jesus and the Sheep* (582 words)

**3.30:** *The Wounded Seal A Folk Tale from Scotland* (819 words)

**3.31:** Hide-and-go-seek by Elisa Davy Pearmain (124 words)

**3.32:** *Mullah Nasruddin Feeds His Coat* (598 words)

**3.33:** *Know Yourself* (277 words)

**3.34:** *The Messiah Is Among You* (996 words)

**3.35:** *The Lost Son* (442 words)

**3:36:** *Love Without Boundaries* (798 words)

**3.37:***The Green Man* by Rev. Dr. Sophia Lyon Fahs (788 words)

**3.38:** *The Prince And The Rhinoceros* (637 words)

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

**3.39:** *We Are Each Other’s Business* by Eboo Patel (465 words)

**4.0: Children’s Books about Worth & Dignity**

# 4.1: *Made by Raffi* by Craig Pomranz, Author and Margaret Chamberlain, illustrator (2014)

# 4.2: *The Name Jar* by Yangsook Choi (2003)

# 4.3: *Giraffes Can’t Dance* by Guy Parker-Rees and Giles Andreae (1999)

# 4.4: *A Color of His Own* by Leo Lionni (2006)

# 4.5: *A Bad Case of the Stripes* by David Shannon (1998)

# 4.6: *Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes (1991)

# 4.7: *Hey, Little Ant* by Philip and Hannah Hoose, authors and Debbie Tilley, illustrator (1998)

**4.8:** ***Be Nice to Spiders* by Margaret Bloy Graham (1967)**

**4.9:** ***Abuela* by Arthur Dorros, author and Elisa Kleven, illustrator (1991)**

# 4.10: *The Paper Bag Princess* by Robert Munsch, author and Michael Martchenko, illustrator (1980)

# 4.11: *Let’s Talk About Race* by Julius Lester, author and Karen Barbour, illustrator (2005)

# 4.12: *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* by Jon Scieszka, author and Lane Smith, illustrator (1989)

**4.13:** ***It’s Okay to Be Different* by Todd Parr (2001)**

**4.14:** ***Julián Is a Mermaid* by Jessica Love (2018)**

**4.15:** *Ellie Bean the Drama Queen* by Jennie Harding, author and Dave Padgett, illustrator (2011)

**4.16:** *Sulwe* by Lupita Nyong’o, author and Vashti Harrison, illustrator (2019)

**4.17:** ***Whoever You Are* by Mem Fox, author and Leslie Staub, illustrator (1997)**

# 4.18: *Happy in Our Skin* by Fran Manushkin, author and Lauren Tobia, illustrator (2015)

# 4.19: *The Boy Who Grew Flowers* by Jen Wojtowicz, author and Steve Adams, illustrator (2005)

# 4.20: *I Am Enough* by Grace Byers, author and Keturah A. Bobo, illustrator (2018)

# 4.21: *Pink Is For Boys* by Robb Pearlman, author and Eda Kaban, illustrator (2018)

# 4.22: *Parker Looks Up: An Extraordinary Moment* by Parker Curry & Jessica Curry, authors and Brittany Jackson, illustrator (2019)

# 4.23: *Let the Children March* by Monica Clark-Robinson, author and Frank Morrison, illustrator (2018)

# 4.24: *Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman, author and Caroline Binch, illustrator (1991)

# 4.25: *I Want Your Moo: A Story for Children About Self-Esteem* by Marcella Baker Weiner & Jill Neimark, authors and Joann Adinolfi, illustrator (2009)

# 4.26: *Junkyard Wonders* by Patricia Polacco (2010)

# 4.27: *Marisol McDonald Doesn’t Match / Marisol McDonald no combina* by Monica Brown, author and Sara Palacios (20110

# 4.28: *Nerdy Birdy* by Aaron Reynolds, author and Matt Davies, illustrator (2015)

# 4.29: *Not All Princesses Dress in Pink* by Jane Yolen and Heidi E.Y. Stemple, author and Anne-Sophie Lanquetin, illustrator (2010)

# 4.30: *You Are Special* by Max Lucado, author and Sergio Martinez, illustrator (1997)

# 4.31: *The Shiny Bee Who Felt Out of Place* by Natalie Meraki (2018)

# 4.32*: What If Everybody Did That?* by Ellen Javernick, author and Colleen M. Madden, illustrator (2010)

# 4.33: *Do Unto Otters* by Laurie Keller (2007)

# 4.34: *BIG,* a Little Story About Respect and Self-Esteem by Ingo Blum, author and Antonio Pahetti, illustrator (2018)

**5.0: Music & Videos for Children**

# 5.1: *Culture of Dignity* by Rosalind Wiseman (1:58)

# 5.2: *30 Tips of Dignity & Respect Book* by Dignity & Respect (4:00)

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

# *from Tapestry of Faith*

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

**6.1.1:** *Session 9: Chalice Flannel Board*

**6.1.2:** *Session 11: A Special Jigsaw Puzzle*

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

**6.2.1:** *Session 3: The Gift Of Forgiveness*

**6.2.2:** *Session 6: The Gift Of Friends*

**6.2.3:** *Session 8: The Gift Of Families*

**6.2.4:** *Session 12: The Gift Of Acceptance*

**6.2.5:** *Session 15: The Gift Of Ourselves*

**6.3: Creating Home: A Program on Developing a Sense of Home Grounded in Faith for Grades K-1**

**6.3.1:** *Session 13: Our Worship Home*

**6.3.2:** *Session 16: Memories of Home*

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

**6.4.1:** *Session 2: Unconditional Love, a Gift from Our Universalist Heritage*

**6.4.2:** *Session 4: Be Fair*

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

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

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

**6.5.3:** *Session 7: Seeing Others with Awe*

**6.5.4:** *Session 8: Do unto Others*

**6.5.5:** *Session 16: Working Together*

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

**6.6.1:** *Session 5: We Are Loved, Flaws and All*

**6.6.2:** *Session 8: Love Is Accepting*

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

**6.7.1:** *Session 1: The Journey Begins*

**6.7.2:** *Session 3: Welcoming Superman*

**6.8: Signs of our Faith: A Program about Being UU Every Day for Grades 2-3**

**6.8.1:** *Session 13: Finding Beauty in Uniqueness*

## ****6.9: Windows and Mirrors: A Program about Diversity for Grades 4-5****

**6.9.1:** *Session 4: Building A Community Of Forgiveness*

**6.9.2:** *Session 5: The Blessing Of Imperfection*

**6.9.3:** *Session 8: Eyes On The Prize*

**6.9.4:** *Session 9: Lean On Me*

**6.9.5:** *Session 14: All Work Has Honor*

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

**6.10.1:** *Session 4: Telling Right From Wrong*

**6.10.2:** *Session 7: The Second U*

**6.11: Families: A Jr. High School Youth Program that Explores the Diversity, Commonality, and Meaning of Families**

**6.11.1:** *Workshop 2: Many Families*

**6.11.2:** *Workshop 3: Our Families*

**6.11.3:** *Workshop 10: Photos And Stories: Representing Ourselves*

**6.12: Heeding the Call: A Program on Justicemaking for Junior High School Youth**

**6.12.1:** *Workshop 3: The Call for Understanding*

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

**6.12.3:** *Workshop 11: The Call for Forgiveness*

**Resources for Youth & Adults**

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

**7.1:** *Mutual Worth & Dignity* by Gregory C. Ellison II (234 words)

**7.2:** *Gay Pride and Doubt* by Joe Perez (248 words)

**7.3:** *Dignity in Mecca* by Abdellah Hammoudi (250 words)

**7.4:** *From Dignity to Reverence* by Abraham Joshua Heschel (253 words)

**7.5:** *Creating a Culture of Human Rights* by Richard Amesbury and George M. Newlands (207 words)

**7.6:** *Aging with Dignity* by Tom Neal (236 words)

**7.7:** *The Declaration of Dignity* by Donna Hicks (211 words)

## 7.8: *What is Pluralism?* by Diana L. Eck,The Pluralism Project at Harvard University (305 words)

**7.9:** *Dignity’s Fragility* by Remy Debes (264 words)

**7.10:** *What Is the Real Meaning of Dignity?* by Donna Hicks (252 words)

**7.11:** *What is Dignity?* by Cultures of Dignity (187 words)

**7.12:** *What’s the Difference Between Dignity and Respect?* by Charlie Kuhn (222 words)

**7.13:** *The Dignity of Making Art* by Julia Cameron (265 words)

**7.14:** *Dignity* by Remy Debes (218 words)

**7.15:** *Human Being versus Human Doing* by Leland R. Beaumont (174 words)

**7.16:** *Dignity in Buddhism* by Sallie Tisdale (229 words)

**7.17:** *Dignity* by Too-qua-stee (199 words)

**7.18:** *The Preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (*1948) by the United Nations (320 words)

**7.19:** *The Elements of Dignity* by Joanna Smykowski (232 words)

**7.20:** *Dignity’s Shallow Roots* by Remy Debes (218 words)

**7.21:** *The Seven Pillars of Dignity & Respect* by the Dignity & Respect Campaign (276 words)

**7.22:** *What Does It Mean to Dignify Others?* by People First Productivity Solutions (232 words)

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

**7.24:** *Restoring the Dignity of Old Age* by Marc Agronin (249 words)

**7.25:** *Hospitality Affirms Dignity* by L. Shannon Jung (245 words)

**7.26:** *Dignity’s Gentleness* by Musa Kazim Gulcur (235 words)

**7.27:** *The Dignity of Compassion* by His Holiness the Dalai Lama (286 words)

**7.28:** *Calling Forth Innate Dignity* by Seyyd Hossein Nasr (237 words)

**7.29:** *We Are Each Other’s Destiny* by Mary Oliver (273 words)

**7.30:** *Even Your Enemy Has Dignity* by Walter Wink (225 words)

**7.31:** *Invocation for Children* by Angeles Arrien (270 words)

**7.32:** *To Be A Hope* by Cornell West (273 words)

**7.33:** *You Have Duties to Yourself* by Susan Neiman (258 words)

**7.34:** *Responsibility lies at the heart of human dignity* by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks (252 words)

**7.35:** *Love Bestows Dignity* by Tavis Smiley and Cornel West (256 words)

**7.36:** *Moments of Dignity* by Shannon L. Alder (143 words)

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

***Youth***

**8.1: Videos**

**8.1.1:** *Before You Judge Someone - WATCH THIS* by Jay Shetty (3:05)

**8.1.2:** *Before you Judge Someone, Watch This* by Jay Shetty (4:07)

**8.1.3:** *Give Respect Get Respect 2013 – Winner* by Meghan H (2:24)

**8.1.4:** *Give Respect Get Respect 2014 Video* - Acton High School (1:12)

**8.1.5:** *Give Respect Get Respect High School Challenge 2011 – Posters* (2:12)

**8.1.6:** *Respect Challenge Video* by Futures Without Violence (2014) (1:59)

**8.1.7:** *The Respect Challenge* by Futures Without Violence (2012) (1:10)

**A Tapestry of Faith**

**8.2: Virtue Ethics: An Ethical Development Program for High School Youth**

**8.2.1:** *Workshop 4: Respect*

**8.3: A Chorus of Faiths: A Program That Builds Interfaith Youth Leaders**

**8.3.1:** *Workshop 2: We Need Not Think Alike to Love Alike*

***Adults***

**8.4: Building the World We Dream About/For Young Adults: An Anti-racist Multicultural Program**

**8.4.1:** *Workshop 1: Telling Our Story: Multiple Truths and Multiple Realities*

**8.4.2:** *Workshop 2: You Are How You’ve Lived: Exploring Individual and Group Identity*

**8.5: What Move Us: A Unitarian Universalist Theology Program for Adults**

**8.5.1:** *Workshop 1: George de Benneville*

**9.0: Popular Music**

**9.1:** *Brave* by Sara Bareilles (3:57)

**9.2:** *True Colors* by Cyndi Lauper (4:06)

**9.3:** *Know Your Worth* by Khalid (3:02)

**9.4:** *Will I Lose My Dignity* from the musical Rent (2:42)

**9.5:** Cover of Bob Dylan’s *Dignity* by GandharvaMusic (8:18))

**9.6:** *Death with Dignity* by Sufjan Stevens (4:00)

**9.7:** *The Dignity Song* by Frank Horvat, featuring Romy Mounzer (4:52)

**9.8:** *Dignity* by Deacon Blue (4:16)

**9.9:** *Dignity* by Karine Polwart (4:32)

**9.10:** *Wounds in the Way* by Rachelle Ferrell (4:29)

**9.11:** *Respect* by Aretha Franklin (2:29)

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

**10.1:** *Hidden Dignity* by Noah Malone (1:35)

**10.2:** *Dignity* by Human (1:50)

**10.3:** *Dignity* by Ander Cerrato (2:36)

**10.4:** *Exploring the Meaning of Dignity* by Donna Hicks (3:32)

**10.5:** *Ask yourself: a film about respect* by WerkenbijDeloitte (3:22)

# 10.6: *Dignity vs Respect* by Cultures of Dignity (2:20)

**10.7:** *Dignity & Respect YouTube Channel*

**10.8:** *Dignity and Respect* by dignityrespectlady (5:56)

***Ted Talks***

**10.9:** *The Answer is Dignity & Respect* by Candi Castleberry Singleton (18:04)

**10.10:** *Declare Dignity* by Donna Hicks (19:39)

**10.11:** *The Dignity Economy* by Robert Blaine (12:37)

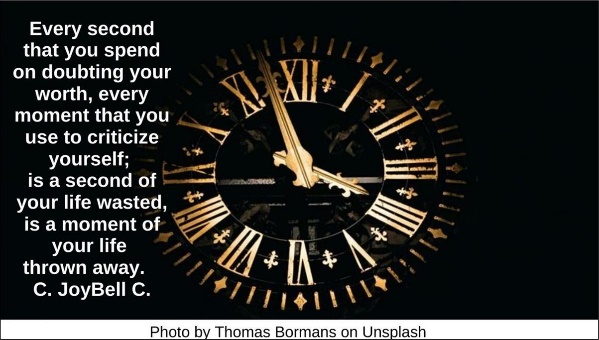
**10.12:** *Restoring Human Dignity at the US Southern Border* by Sister Norma Pimentel (12:19)

**10.13:** *Food for Thought, Choice, and Dignity* by Maggie Kane (14:24)

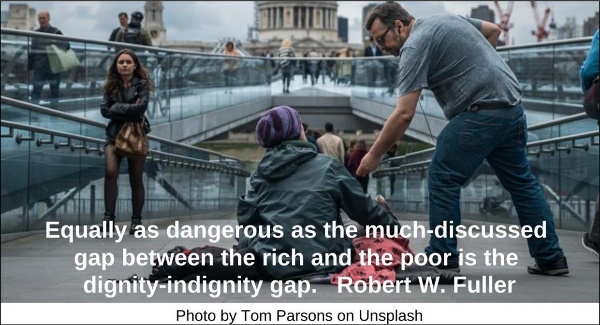
**10.14:** *Depth, Dignity and Devotion* by Eddie Koh (12:01)

**Resources**

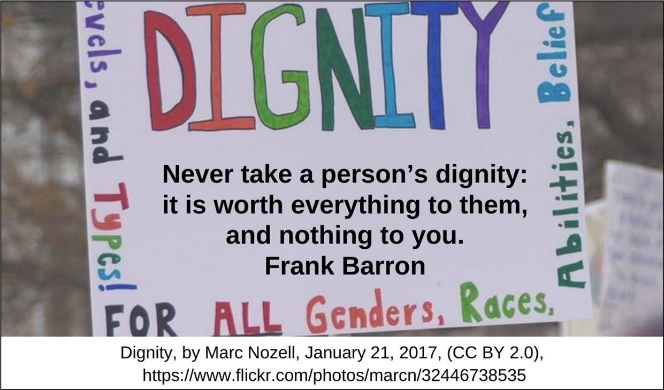
**1.0: Pins for Worth and Dignity**













**Resources for Children**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**2.2:** *Supporting the People Who Need Us* by Mandy Neff (374 words)

I want to tell you a story about being new—and how sometimes it’s fun and sometimes it isn’t.

Once there was a second grader named Paul. In September, he moved to a new town, had a new teacher and a new class and a brand-new desk. There was a boy sitting across from him with bright red hair, and his name was Ryan. He told Paul a knock-knock joke, and he was really funny—so that first day was a good day.

The second day, three other boys came up to Ryan and he thought, “Oh, great. They want to make friends with me too!” But that wasn’t what happened. They came up and started poking Paul, and even calling him names.

He looked at his friend Ryan. Ryan really didn’t want to hear what was going on, so what do you think he did? What would you do if you didn’t want to hear something that was going on?

Wait for kids to answer.

Well, what he did was this. Stick your fingers in your ears.

That second day wasn’t such a good day. But the next day was even worse, because the three boys came up to Paul at lunchtime, and they stole his lunch. He didn’t have anything to eat!

The next day, Paul didn’t come to school at all. The three boys were cheering that day because Paul wasn’t there. Then, even though he didn’t want to, Ryan heard them planning mean things they were going to do when Paul came back to school. But this time he didn’t stick his fingers in his ears. What do you think he did?

Wait for answers again.

That’s right, he told the teacher. And when Paul came back to school and there was recess, the three boys came around. But then, the teacher came around too.

And Ryan said, “C’mon, come play with me!” And that day was the best day of all, because that day, Paul and Ryan became best friends.

And so, my hope for all of you this year is that, when you hear something you’d rather not hear, that you don’t stick your fingers in your ears. I hope that when you see or hear someone that needs your help, that this year, you find a way to support someone who needs you.

The basis of this story is Becky Ray McCain’s Nobody Knew What To Do: A Story About Bullying, illustrated by Todd Leonardo, Albert Whitman & Company, 2001.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/story/151171.shtml>

**2.3:** *Who Was That Samaritan?* by Martha Dallas (491 words)

This morning I’ve invited a special guest to join us, someone who has quite a story to tell. [Pull out costume and put on hat and blanket/cloak. Prepare to change your voice just a bit, and your manner, so as to be in character.]

Good morning. Thank you for allowing me to join you for a little while. I appreciate the opportunity to share this story. I tell you, sometimes I hardly believe it myself.

You see, I was on a journey. I had to go from my home in Jerusalem, over to Jericho. Oh, and I don’t mean the Jericho near here. No, both of these cities are very far from here. Anyhow, it was a long walk and along the way, something awful happened. I was attacked by robbers! They took everything I had and beat me up really bad. They kicked me and punched me till I fell down in a ditch by the side of the road. I think I must have passed out, because then I remember waking up all bruised and sore and bleeding. I could hardly sit up and I had no idea what I would do or how I would carry on. I cried out for help, but this was a desolate road and I doubted anyone would hear me.

But as I was lying there, I heard footsteps and saw a priest coming toward me. I felt hopeful, because priests are good people, but this man walked right on by as if I had not even been there. And then, more hope: a man, a temple priest – I could tell – came up the road. My people, the Hebrews, are friends with the temple priests, so I tried to call out to him and lift a hand towards him, but he quickened his step and walked right by without even glancing my way.

Now you are probably appalled already, but I haven’t even gotten to the most unbelievable part of the story. There I lay, all hope lost, at this point fading in and out of consciousness, when I felt a warm, gentle hand on my brow. It was gently wiping at the dust and blood on my face. I opened my eyes to see...to see...I can barely say it...A SAMARITAN!! [Say the word like it’s a foul taste in your mouth.] Can you believe it?! A Samaritan! My people, we HATE Samaritans! We can’t stand them! And… and… here was one of THEM… helping me!? I know, I know! Unbelievable! But let me tell you more: This Samaritan tore off part of his shirt to bandage my wounds. He cleaned my wounds with oil and gave me water to drink. I was shocked and stunned by how kind and caring he was! Then he lifted me onto his donkey and carried me to an inn where he kept me and cared for me, truly, until I was healed.

Well, that’s my story. And I wouldn’t believe it myself unless it had happened to me. Samaritans. Who’da thunk it? Anyhow, thank you for your time. [Take off costume and return to your own voice.] Thank you for your respect and attention towards our guest. We’ll sing you on your way.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/story/who-was-samaritan>

**2.4:** *The Promise and the Practice: Repairing Our Mistakes with Love* by Rev. Jaelynn Pema-la Scott and Rev. Erika A. Hewitt (328+ words)

This message for all ages involves two people, one of whom will need to bring forward a broken mug, plate, or bowl. These two leaders might hold a private rehearsal so that, in worship, this feels natural and playful — and yet meaningful. Please research pronunciation of the word “kintsugi,” whose Japanese roots are KIN (gold) + TSUGI (joinery).

Person A invites the children forward, and explains that they and Person B will be showing them a beautiful bowl.

Person B comes forward sorrowfully with their bowl: “I was so excited to show you this bowl — but it broke on the way here this morning, and now I’m feeling upset. Can we try to fix it?”

Person A (defensively): “I didn’t break it.”

Person B: “I know you didn’t break it — but can you help me fix it anyway?”

Person A: “You mean help you fix it even though I didn’t break it? I just need you to understand that I’m a good person. I don’t go around breaking bowls.”

Person B (patiently): “It’s important to me that we figure out how to fix this bowl, because it means a lot to me.”

Person A *invites the children to agree that yes, we should help Person B fix their broken bowl. Then*: “Okay, then: do you have any ideas about how we could fix the bowl?”

Person A solicits suggestions, offering some themselves, if necessary. Possibilities to present to the children include:

* tape
* glue
* give everyone a piece of chewing gum, and then use it on the bowl

After several suggestions, Person B brightens: “I have an idea, too! It’s called kintsugi.”

(keen-tsoo-gee: note that the “ts” is audible, and the g is a hard g, as in “gorilla.” In Japanese all syllables are given equal emphasis)

Person A: “What’s kintsugi?”

Person B explains that kintsugi is the ancient Japanese art of repairing broken pottery and ceramics: gold is used to highlight the beauty of the imperfections that remain when a broken item has been repaired. As Person B explains, you might show photos — on video screens or on a tablet — of different examples of kintsugi.

Person A: “So what I’m learning is that the point of kintsugi isn’t to hide the broken parts, right?”

Person B: “That’s right! The gold is used to remind the user, over and over, that something that was once broken is whole again and it has a different beauty.”

Person A: “In a way, that’s what happens when other things break, right?”

Person B: “What kinds of things?”

Person A: “Like, relationships. Friendships. Sometimes we hurt each other’s feelings, and it’s like the thread between two (or more) people breaks. But as Unitarian Universalists, we don’t ignore that: we try to rebuild the relationship so that it’s stronger than it was before.”

Person B: “I agree! The work of healing is all of our jobs, no matter how big or small we are. And when we repair our mistakes with love and with our covenant, we remember that our relationships are more beautiful once we have acknowledged hurt, asked for forgiveness, corrected our mistakes, and made a sacred promise to do better in the future.”

Person A: “When our children go to their Religious Exploration classes, we adults will be thinking about how to heal our relationships with Black Unitarian Universalists, so that our faith and our congregations will be more beautiful than they were before.”

Source: <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/time-all-ages/promise-and-practice-repairing-our-mistakes-love-time-all-ages>

**2.5:** *The Spider and the Very Important Person* by Diana Davies (549 words)

Characters: Narrator, Very Important Person, Enemies (including Leader of the Enemies), Spider, and at least four Cave Rocks. Materials needed: Grey, silver, or white yarn.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**2.6:** *We Are the Shepherds* by Rev. Erika A. Hewitt (475 words)

Jesus was a teacher, long ago, of love and compassion. When Jesus spoke to his followers, it was often about how to share more, love more, and forgive more. Jesus also talked a lot about the great, unfolding mystery named Love. He called it God, the way many other people do.

Sometimes, Jesus’ followers needed help to understand his teachings, so he told stories to help them understand. We call those parables.

This is one of the parables that Jesus told his followers. It’s about a shepherd. (Someone tell me what a shepherd is.)

A shepherd is someone who cares for sheep: who makes sure their bellies are full, and they’re safe from predators—because a lot of critters would hurt sheep, if they could.

In the days when Jesus told this story, a shepherd wouldn’t have had a fancy pen, or corral, for her sheep. There was no fence to create a big space for her flock. Instead, she would have had to take her sheep out into the hills to fill their bellies.

In this parable, the shepherd didn’t have just one or four or ten sheep. She had ONE HUNDRED sheep! (Can you imagine how loud and smelly it would be if there were 100 sheep here in our sanctuary?)

At the beginning of each day, the shepherd took all one hundred sheep to the hills of green grass, and counted to make sure they were all there. At the end of the day she brought them home again, counting to make sure that all one hundred sheep had come home.

The shepherd came home one night, counted her sheep… and saw only ninety-nine instead of one-hundred. She counted again to make sure, and then again. And even though it was cold and dark, and there were critters in the hills that might hurt a shepherd, too, she left the ninety-nine sheep who were safe at home and went out to find the lost sheep who was in danger.

When Jesus told his parable to his followers, he was trying to tell them two things:

First, that the great unfolding mystery that we call Love, and that some call God, loves each of us so much that Love will always, always, go to those who are left behind or din danger.

Second, we understand ourselves to be part of the great, unfolding mystery called Love. Most of us who are Unitarian Universalist want to be like that great unfolding mystery; we want to be Love’s partner and its helper. That means we are the shepherd: when everyone else is safe, we’re called to notice the few who are in danger, and to go out into the cold and dark to be with them.

Love doesn’t rest and wait; Love—in the form of the shepherd—leaves comfort behind to be a helper.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/time-all-ages/we-are-shepherds>

**3.0: Wisdom Stories**

**3.1:** *Sophia’s Guest* by Becky Brooks (822 words)

Once upon a time there was a teacher named Sophia. Sophia had been a teacher in the town where she lived for so long that the kids she first had in her class grew up and had kids of their own and sent them to her class too. Nearly everyone in the town knew Sophia and loved her because not only was she an excellent teacher, but she was also very kind.  
 One day when Sophia got to work, she found a note on her desk. The note read:

Dear Sophia,I will be around tomorrow.I wonder if I might stop by your house for tea tomorrow afternoon.Your Friend,God

At first Sophia thought it was a joke. But the more she thought about it, the more she realized that if it was a joke, it wasn’t a very funny joke. And she couldn’t think of anyone who would play a joke on her like that.

Then she thought: what if it wasn’t a joke? What if God really was going to come to her house tomorrow afternoon? Sophia thought she should get ready, just in case.

On her way home from work, she stopped by the store and bought one of those mats people put on their porch that says, in big letters: WELCOME!

When she got home, she cleaned her house from top to bottom. She brought in fresh flowers from the garden and put them in a vase in the living room. She cleaned and cleaned until everything was sparkly.

In the morning, Sophia realized didn’t know what God liked to eat, so she baked bread and made a casserole and fruit salad, and baked some cookies too. And what about the tea? Did God like hot tea or iced tea? She thought she better make both. And what if God’s favorite thing in the whole world was lemonade? She thought she should make some of that too.

She was so nervous! She didn’t know what to expect.

Just then, there was a knock at the door. Sophia’s heart went pat pat pat.

She took a big breath, opened the door slowly, and on the other side was... the Mayor of the town.

“Hello Sophia! I was walking by and smelled the delicious fresh baked bread!”

Sophia said, “I’m so glad you’re here, come in, come in! I am expecting a very important visitor who you might want to meet! Please come in and make yourself at home.”

Sophia and the Mayor sat, having a nice discussion when there was a knock at the door. Sophia’s heart went pat pat pat. She took a deep breath, opened the door slowly, and on the other side was...a group of children from her class.

“Hello Miss Sophia! We were walking by and noticed the smell of fresh baked cookies!”

Sophia said, “I’m so glad you’re here, come in, come in! I am expecting a very important visitor who you might want to meet! Please come in and help yourself to some cookies.”

The children were giving the Mayor some much-needed advice when there was a knock at the door. Sophia’s heart went pat pat pat. Deep breath…open door… It was...the entire women’s covenant group from church!

“Hello Sophia! We heard the tea kettle and laugher and thought you might be having a party!”

Sophia said, “I’m so glad you’re here, come in, come in! I am expecting a very important visitor who you might want to meet! Please come in and make yourself at home.”

In the afternoon people stopped by Sophia’s house, lured by the yummy smells and happy sounds. The townspeople filled her house, upstairs and downstairs and overflowed into the back yard and the front yard. As they got hungry, they made dinner together and ate as the sun set and the moon rose.

It was a great party. People were playing games and telling stories and baking and playing music and talking together. Sophia had such a nice time that she completely forgot about her very important guest. Even as she waved goodbye to her friends at the end of the night, she felt only contentment at having such a lovely party.

In the morning, though, Sophia woke up and remembered everything. She was confused. Whatever had happened to God?  
 All during her walk to work she tried to figure out what had happened. Along the way she smiled and waved to the people she ran into who had been at her party. She thought to herself that she really should do that again sometime.

When Sophia arrived at work, she was surprised to find another note on her desk. It read:

Dear Sophia,I had such a wonderful time yesterday. The bread was delicious, the cookies were divine! Tea mixedwith lemonade is my very favorite! Thank you for being such a wonderful host!I hope we can do it again soon!Love,God

Source: <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/story/sophias-guest>

**3.2:** *Wake Up to Injustice* by Gail Forsyth-Vail (376 words)

This story was created collaboratively by several religious educators. As you prepare to share it, read the 1966 Ware Lecture “Don’t Sleep Through the Revolution,” by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered at the Unitarian Universalist Association General Assembly in Hollywood, Florida, May 18, 1966.

There was a man named Rip van Winkle who liked to share stories and was kindly to children, but he avoided hard work or anything he thought unpleasant. One day, as the story goes, he found a nice grassy place on a mountain and he fell fast asleep. But this was no ordinary nap. Rip Van Winkle slept for over 20 years!

Twenty years!!! What do you suppose he missed *[take several answers*]. As a matter of fact, the most important thing that Rip Van Winkle missed was the American Revolution. When he went up the mountain, he lived in a British colony. When he came down 20 years later, he lived in the new United States.

This is an old and famous story, but would you be surprised to know that it was a favorite of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King? It is one he told a lot. As a matter of fact, he told it to a huge crowd of Unitarian Universalists in 1966, about 50 years ago. He talked about the Civil Rights movement, and urged all those who heard him to wake up, to not sleep through the big changes that were happening all around as Black people and their supporters worked to gain equality rights. He asked white people in particular not to be asleep and ignore injustice. He urged people to Wake Up!

Well, in the last few months a new set of leaders from the People of Color community are sending the same message Dr. King sent 50 years ago, “Wake Up! Many of the injustices- much of the unfairness- is still here. And there are some new injustices. Wake up!”  
 So I’m going to ask you to help me deliver this message to the Unitarian Universalists who are sitting right here in the sanctuary with us. Can you help me wake everyone up? Let’s practice saying, “Wake Up to Injustice!” *[Say this with them a couple of times, and invite the children to be loud! On the third try, invite the whole congregation to join you.]*

And many people who have not been paying attention, who have been “asleep” are waking up to injustice thanks to the new young leaders. We’ll talk more about waking up in our RE groups, and perhaps you may want to talk with your families about times when they have “woken up” to injustice- and perhaps are “waking up” even today.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/story/wake-injustice>

**3.3:** *Who Loves the Dark?* by Sheri Phillabaum (1,392 words)

There once was a child who got lost in the woods. As night began to descend, the child became more and more frightened. I’m sure any of us would be frightened too, in that situation, but what made this child even more frightened, was that he had always been afraid of the dark. He was more afraid of the dark than any of his friends, or his siblings. He didn’t know why he was more afraid than his friends or his siblings; he only knew that when the sun went down, he was always very glad to be inside his brightly lit house.

When the sun was all the way down, and the only light was just a tiny bit of light from the moon and the stars, the child got so frightened all he could do was sit down and cry, which he did. Soon, he heard a voice say, “What’s all that racket?”

He looked down and saw a mole squinting up at him.

“I’m lost in the woods,” he said, “and it’s dark, and I’m afraid.”

“Well,” said the mole, “perhaps you could take your noisy crying farther down the path. I hate having to come out of my warm, comfortable DARK hole to tell people to be quiet.”

Then the child heard another voice: “Go on back into your hole, Mr. Mole. I’ll take care of this.”

The child looked up, in the direction that this newer voice seemed to come from, and in the darkness, he could see two glowing eyes looking down at him. Before he could scream, which was his first impulse, there was a flutter of wings and the creature flew down near him, and he could see that it was an owl, who said, “Please excuse Mr. Mole. He hates to come out of his nice dark hole for anything, to be honest.”

At this, the child burst out crying even harder than before. Because, as frightened as he was of the dark, having non-human animals speak to him was beyond his experience, and a little frightening in itself.

“No need for that crying.” Said the owl. “If you just give me your address, I can guide you home.”

With that, the child did indeed stop crying, partly out of relief that someone might be able to lead him home, and partly out of curiosity as to how an owl could locate his home with or without the address. But, deciding he had little to lose, the child choked back his tears and replied that he would be very grateful to be guided home and gave the owl his address. And I hope everyone here has his or her home address memorized in case an owl ever has to guide you home!

So, this strange pair headed off through the dark forest, in what the child hoped was truly the direction of his home. When his fear left him just a little but, the child looked around, and though the moonlight was dim, he began to notice his surroundings a bit. At one point, he noticed a kind of flower that he had never seen before, and slowed his pace just a little so he could gaze at it.

“That,” said the owl, as they continued walking, “was an evening primrose. Did you know that there are some flowers that bloom only at night? There are moon flowers, and night gladiolas, too, flowers you would never see if you never went out at night.”

After a while, the owl said, as if musing aloud to herself, “and of course, there are animals too, who love night and the darkness. Me, for example, I love the dark. In the daytime, the light hurts my eyes. So that’s when I like to go into my tree and sleep.”

To this, the boy replied, “Well, I like the daytime – I can see to kick a ball; I like the hot sun at the beach. When the dark isn’t scary, it’s just boring!”

“Boring, you say?” replied the owl, and she clearly had some opinions to express on this point, but just then, there was a fluttering and squeaking around their heads. It took the child just a few seconds to figure out what it was, and he shrieked, “A bat!” and he started flailing his arms to knock the creature away, shrieking the whole time.

The shape backed away and, hovering just out of reach, said, “Excuse me. That’s just my way of saying hello.”

“Well, hello to you, Mr. Bat,” said the owl. “This child was out here lost in the forest, and I’m helping him find his way home. You’re not hurt, are you?”

“Well,” said the bat, “I’ll probably have a bruise on my backside, but I think I’ll live.”

“But you’re a bat!” said the child.” A creature of darkness. Weren’t you trying to drink our blood?”

“No,” said the bat, “but I’ve been eating lots of yummy insects who would have been biting you if I hadn’t been around. Anyway, I couldn’t help overhearing what you said about darkness being boring. If you want to come just a little bit out of your way, I can show you something really exciting.”

“My parents always told me never to go any place with strangers,” said the child.

“Owl will vouch for me,” said the bat. “We’ve known each other for years and years.”

Owl agreed that Mr. Bat was indeed an upstanding citizen, so the group went off the path and traveled through the deepest forest for what seemed like just a few minutes, and they came out onto a dark beach.

“Here we are,” said the bat.

The child gazed out at the beach, lit very gently by moonlight, and thought, “This is certainly beautiful, even in the dark, but I wouldn’t call it exciting.”

Just then, there was movement in the sand, like a little bubble of sand rising up. Then there was another little bubble, and then another, it looked almost as if the beach in the area they were looking at were boiling. Then, out of one of those little bubbles of sand, popped a rounded shape.

“Looks like we got here just at the right time,” said the bat.

As they watched, more and more shadowy shapes came up out of the sand, and soon the child realized what he was seeing – lots of baby turtles, hundreds, climbing out of the sand. This was truly exciting. Once each turtle-shape pulled itself up out of the sand, it started crawling as fast as its legs could carry it, towards the water.

“When baby sea turtles hatch,” said Owl, in a sort of teacherly voice, “they need to find their way to the water, and they almost always do this at night time, because to find the water they need darkness everywhere else to follow the moon and star light reflecting off the water. Daytime sunlight is too bright and scattered everywhere.”

“Ohh,” said the child.

As they turned to leave and head back towards the child’s home, Owl spoke again, as if thinking aloud to herself. “You know who else loves the darkness, besides all the nighttime plants and animals? The moon and the stars love the darkness. That’s when they can really shine. Oh, they’re there in the daytime as well, hidden behind a wall of light. But when that wall goes down with the sun, the stars and the moon reveal their beauty.”

After what seemed like a very short time, the child and Owl left the forest and walked down a street that the child recognized as his own. He was very happy and relieved but also a little sad to say goodbye to Owl, to whom he gave a very gentle hug and a thank you. He went into his home and, being extremely tired, got ready for bed right away.

Before he went to bed, as a matter of habit, he bent down to turn on the night light that he always kept glowing through the night to keep the dark at bay. But before his fingers touched the switch of the night light, he smiled and pulled his hand away. He got into his bed, pulled up the covers, and let the comforting arms of the darkness soothe him to sleep.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/story/who-loves-dark>

**3.4:** *Tiny the God* by Becky Brooks (806 words)

Once upon a time there was a tiny, little, itty bitty, very small, tiny little god named Tiny. She lived her life hearing stories of all the big gods and, well, let’s face it, she was jealous. She knew she needed to think of some kind of special spark of an idea that would make her existence meaningful.

After watching humans for a long time, she hit upon something that just might work, something to make people think, yeah, that Tiny has really got a good idea going. This was it! This was going to make her famous! Ready? Here it is: “You Are Not Alone!”

She took the form of a very light breeze, and in a voice so quiet each person heard it only in their mind, she said, “You are not alone . . .you are not alone.”

People loved it. It was perfect because who doesn’t want to hear that?

Pretty soon Tiny was comforting people all over with “You are not alone.” Every evening she took the form of the breeze and whispered it in people’s minds.

Until one day, she encountered someone who wasn’t comforted at all. When Miriam heard Tiny’s words in her mind, instead of feeling comforted, she felt... agitated. Something was just kind of off about it. She kept saying it to herself over and over again: “You are not alone, you are not alone.” She tossed and turned. She couldn’t sleep!

In the morning, she went to read the paper, and instead of skimming everything she found herself drinking in every single story. She was only halfway through when she found herself crying. “I am not alone,” she said. “I am . . .connected . . .to every one of these people. They live in my town and my country and my world. They love their children like I love mine. They’re scared sometimes and so am I. They hurt like I hurt. I am not alone. I can help.”

Tiny was surprised. It hadn’t occurred to her that someone might think of it that way.

Tiny kept watch over Miriam to monitor this interesting development. Miriam and a coworker met online in a meeting and talked about a law they hoped the Senate would pass, and Tiny noticed when Miriam wrote a letter to her senator about it right away.

She noticed that when Miriam turned in her grocery order, she bought a few extra things for her neighbor and left them, with a colorful note, on their porch.

She noticed that Miriam had tears in her eyes when she joined in her congregation’s worship on her computer and she heard her favorite hymn through the small speakers. Miriam got out her phone and made an extra donation to her congregation.

She watched as Miriam wrote postcards to friends and family near and far, waved to the dog walkers who passed by her house, and strung up colorful lights in her living room window.

But most importantly for Tiny, she noticed when Miriam received a phone call one evening from a friend she hadn’t heard from in a long while. His voice was shaking. “I’m having a hard time,” he said. He started to tell her about his troubles, but he began to cry.

Miriam got herself comfortable in her favorite chair. “Take your time. I’ll stay on the line with you. You are not alone. I am here.”

“I am here.” Tiny heard those words like an echo in her mind, “You are not alone. I am here. You are not alone. I am here.” [ask congregation to repeat back, “You are not alone. I am here.”] In that moment, Tiny knew that she was nothing without Miriam’s hands and heart and spirit. And she knew that what she wanted—what the world needed more than anything—was what Miriam had learned to give.

So Tiny went to work. Instead of just spending her evenings spreading the gospel of “You are not alone,” she spent her night-times doing it too, and her mornings and afternoons. Pretty soon she was spending every moment doing it, until she became the breeze itself.

And that is why there are no paintings of Tiny. No busts or holy books. Just a breeze, a low voice, and many, many helping hands, loving hearts, and caring spirits.

You can hear the echo, if you listen closely [congregation repeats]: “You are not alone. I am here.” When water bottles are left in the desert for those who risk their lives to cross it: “You are not alone. I am here.” At the bedside of a dying man: “You are not alone. I am here.” In the jailhouse and the sanctuary: “You are not alone. I am here.” Separate and together: “You are not alone. I am here.”

May it be so.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/worship/words/story/tiny-god>

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**3.6:** *Owen and Mzee* (645 words)

Once upon a time in Kenya, on a peaceful river near the east coast of Africa, a herd of hippopotamus was surprised by heavy rain. The rain washed them away from their river home, toward the Indian Ocean. Then came something worse. A tsunami! In the huge, windy storm the ocean waters became strong.

The hippos were in danger. They had to get back to the shore. But the tsunami made the ocean very strong and wild. Most of the hippos did not make it.

When the tsunami came, the people who lived near the ocean were afraid. Neighbors rushed to help rescue fishermen who were out on their boats in the wild ocean. Families ran away from the ocean. They were afraid that the water and wind would wreck their homes, and they wanted to get to a safer place as fast as they could. Nobody was thinking about the hippos.

A few days later, the sky was blue again and the Indian Ocean was quiet again. Many homes had been destroyed by water and wind. People began to clean up and fix everything.

On the shore of the ocean, one survivor needed help. It was one of the hippos, a baby hippo. He was the only one of his family left, and he was standing on a reef in the ocean, all alone.

People ran to help rescue the hippo and many more came to watch. A hippo is very big and heavy, even a baby. And this hippo was also wet, tired, and upset. Would he let the people help him?

(Ask the children how they think the people could rescue the hippo. Allow some responses.)

Here is what they used. Ropes. Cars. Boats. Fishing nets, very big ones. But the baby hippo was frightened and did not want to come along. He was so large, fast, and slippery, nobody could grab him to bring him to safety. Finally, when the hippo was tangled up in a big fishing net, a strong man named Owen jumped on the hippo and captured him.

Kenya has a wildlife refuge where animals that lose their homes in the wild can be safe in surroundings like what they are used to. Paula Kahumbu worked at that wildlife refuge. She came to the ocean to get the baby hippo and bring him to Haller Park, where he would be safe. She brought a veterinarian, Dr. Kashmiri, and an animal caretaker, Stephen Tuei.

With lots and lots of help, Paula Kahumbu and Stephen Tuei managed to get the baby hippo onto their truck. The people by the ocean who had watched the incredible rescue agreed the baby hippo should be named Owen, after the man who had successfully tackled him. Dr. Kahumbu brought the baby hippo to Haller Park.

Baby Owen was confused and scared when they got to Haller Park. Right away, he found someone to protect him. Do you think he found a new hippopotamus mother or dad? Not exactly. He ran right over to Mzee. Mzee was not a hippo. Mzee was a giant tortoise, a kind of turtle, so big he was almost the same size as Owen. Mzee was 130 years old.

At first Mzee acted surprised that Owen was following him around and trying to sleep right next to him, just like a baby hippo would do with its hippo mother. Stephen Tuei wondered what was going to happen. After a few days, Mzee did not seem to mind the baby hippo’s company. Tortoises and hippos both enjoy going in the water. Owen followed Mzee when he went swimming, and tried to share Mzee’s food, too. Mzee didn’t like that so much. But the two stuck together most of every day. Owen became more and more used to his new home in Haller Park. And he always slept right next to Mzee.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/home/session7/60092.shtml>

**3.7:** *The Real Gift* (661 words)

Nelson was worried. He had been worried about something all week and this afternoon, it was going to happen. During clean-up at church school, he decided to talk to his teacher, Lilia.

“Nelson, is everything okay?” she asked.

“Well, not really. My Nana Elsa is moving in with me and my dads today.”

“It sounds like you do not want her to move in,” Lilia said.

“Our house will be too crowded,” Nelson said. “And now I will have three grown-ups telling me what to do. My grandmother, and my dads.”

Lilia took a minute to think. Then she said, “You know, Nelson, both your dads are my friends, and I know your grandmother, too. I know they all love you very much. It may take time to get used to her living with you. But, I think it is important that you welcome Nana Elsa, even though you are worried.” Lilia said.

“Welcome her? Why? She is already in my family,” Nelson said, puzzled.

“Nana Elsa may be worried today, too,” said Lilia. “She is moving into a home where three people already live. She might be worried that you and your dads don’t really want her there. It will be important to let her know that you do love her.”

Nelson thought Lilia was probably right. Nana Elsa might be feeling worried, today too. When he got home, Nelson made a card for his grandmother. He drew himself, his dads, and Nana Elsa standing in front of their apartment building. He wrote, “Welcome, Nana. I love you, Love, Nelson.” He brought the card into the extra bedroom where his grandmother was putting her clothes into the dresser drawers.

“Hi, Nana. I wanted to give you something,” he said.

“Oh, thank you very much Nelson,” she said. “I love this card. I wanted to give you something too, but then I thought it would be better for us to make it together.”

“Make what?” Nelson asked.

“May I teach you how to crochet? It is easy. We could make a small blanket together, to put on your legs when you watch TV,” Nana Elsa said.

“Can I pick the color? I really like green,” Nelson said.

The next day, Nelson and his grandmother walked to the craft store and bought green yarn and crochet needles. For two weeks, almost every day, Nelson sat with Nana Elsa after school, talking and crocheting. When the blanket was finished, Nelson took it to church to show Lilia.

“Wow, you made that with your grandmother?” Lilia said. “That sounds like fun, and, it looks warm.”

Nelson loved that blanket. He took it everywhere with him. Because he took it everywhere, one day when he wanted to take it to bed with him, he couldn’t find it. Soon the whole family was looking for it. But the green, crocheted blanket was gone.

At bedtime, Nelson was still upset. Nana Elsa sat on his bed and held his hand. “Nelson, I hate to see you so sad,” she said.

“But Nana, we made that blanket together. I love it so much, and now it’s gone!” he cried.

“I know you feel bad, but you know, Nelson, the most important gift was not the blanket,” said his grandmother. “It was the time we spent making it.

“You made me so happy when you welcomed me into your home. I wanted to spend special time with you making something and we did that. The real gift was the time we spent being together. We will always treasure that time and our love for each other and our family.”

Nelson looked up at Nana Elsa. He rubbed the tears away from his face. He realized his Nana was right. The time they spent together was the real gift. And he realized he was glad, now, that his grandmother lived with him and his dads.

“I love you very much, Nana,” he said.

“I love you very much, too, Nelson.”

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session1/118116.shtml>

**3.8:** *Harriot Kezia Hunt Making A Difference* (428 words)

Adapted from multiple sources including a 2005 article, “Mrs. Mott, ‘The Celebrated Female Physician,’” in Historic New England online magazine.

Harriot Kezia Hunt, 1805-1875, was barred from medical study at Harvard College because male students objected to her presence. She learned medicine from Elizabeth Mott, who practiced homeopathic medicine in Boston. She applied unsuccessfully to Harvard Medical School — the first woman to try — yet became the first woman in the U.S. to practice medicine professionally. She was a Universalist.

Harriot’s younger sister, Sarah, was very sick. Harriot was beginning to feel desperate because nothing the doctors did was helping. In fact, the treatments seemed to make Sarah worse instead of better.

You see, this was more than a hundred years ago — before any of your great-grandparents were even born. No one knew about germs the way we do today, or why people got sick. Most doctors believed you had to force sickness out of a person. They would give sick people medicines made with turpentine and mercury. When the medicines made people vomit or drool, the doctors thought the medicines were working and making the sickness come out. Actually, these were signs the medicines were poison.

Sometimes doctors would cut a patient on purpose. They thought if blood came out of a sick person, it would bring the sickness out with it. Doctors thought this helped patients, but actually it made their bodies weaker and less able to fight their illness.

For one year, Harriot’s sister Sarah had suffered through these sorts of treatments. It was time to try something new. Sarah went to see a new kind of doctor: Dr. Mott. She didn’t care that everybody thought he was a quack, a fake doctor. He treated Sarah in an entirely new way. He explained that she should get plenty of rest, eat healthy food, and exercise every day. Finally, Sarah began to improve and after some time was cured.

Harriot was very relieved that her sister was better. But she saw other people suffering from the same sorts of treatments that Sarah had experienced. She knew someone had to do something to change things. She decided to take action and become a doctor. She tried to go to medical school, but the students were all men. They protested that they would not study with a woman. So, instead, Harriot studied medicine with Dr. Mott’s wife, Elizabeth. Her sister Sarah learned with the Motts, too. Soon, Harriot was treating patients. She taught women how to stay healthy by the same ways that had helped Sarah get better: proper exercise, eating healthy food, and getting enough sleep. Harriot became the first woman to practice medicine in the United States.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/journeys/session1/making-a-difference>

**3.9:** *The Brementown Musicians* by Gail Forsyth-Vail (790 words)

The story, “The Bremen Town Musicians,” was told by the brothers Grimm in Germany, in the early 1800s. This session comes from Gail Forsyth-Vail’s book, Stories In Faith: Exploring Our Unitarian Universalist Principles and Sources Through Wisdom Tales (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2007).

Read or tell the story.

A farmer once had a donkey who was growing old and unable to work. Thinking that it was no longer worthwhile to feed the old donkey, the farmer became determined to put an end to that donkey. The donkey, sensing that something was amiss, ran away. The donkey was thinking they would go to Bremen and become a musician. The donkey was: On the road to Brementown. A musician they would be.

After traveling a ways, the donkey came upon a tired dog lying beside the road and panting. “What are you doing lying there, my friend?” the donkey asked.

“Alas, I am old and weak and can no longer hunt, so my owner decided to do away with me. I ran away, but now I don’t know how to make my living. The only thing I can still do is bark.”

“Well,” said the donkey, “you and your bark can join me. I’m off to become a town musician in Bremen .” And when the dog joined the donkey, they were: On the road to Brementown. Musicians they would be.

It was not long before the two came upon a cat sitting in the road, looking mournful. “What’s the matter with you?” said the donkey. “Why are you looking so sad?”

“Oh,” meowed the cat. “How can I be cheerful when my life is in danger? I am growing old and would rather lie about by the fire than chase mice, so my owners resolved to drown me. I ran away from them, but I don’t know what I shall do to earn my food.”

“Well,” said the donkey, “you are certainly a good singer! Come and join us. We’re going to Bremen to become town musicians.” The cat quickly agreed, and they were: On the road to Brementown. Musicians they would be.

Soon enough, they came upon a rooster perched on a farmer gate, screaming for all he was worth. “Cock-a-doodle-doo! Woe is me! Tomorrow they will put me in the soup pot. Whatever am I to do?”

“You can certainly add something to a concert,” said the donkey. The donkey invited the rooster to join the group. In short order, they were: On the road to Brementown. Musicians they would be.

The animals could not reach the town in one day, so they decided to settle in the forest for the night. The donkey and dog lay under a tree, and the cat in the branches. The rooster flew to the topmost branch and had a look around. “There must be a house not a far way off,” said the rooster, “for I can see a small light.”

Hungry and cold, all four agreed to go and see if they might find food and shelter. When they arrived at the cabin, they arranged themselves to peek in the window. The donkey put their front hooves against the side of the cabin; the dog climbed on the donkey’s back. The cat sat on the dog’s shoulders and the rooster flew up to sit on the cat’s head. When he looked inside, the rooster reported seeing some robbers sitting and making merry in front of the fire. There was a table spread with all manner of good food.

The foursome made a plan for getting rid of the robbers. At the donkey’s signal, all four of the Brementown musicians began to sing. The donkey brayed, the dog barked, the cat meowed, and the rooster screamed. The frightened robbers ran from the place, leaving the wonderful feast to the four friends, who happily ate their fill and settled down to sleep.

After a time, the most courageous of the robbers decided to come back. All was quiet now. Maybe the robbers had left too hastily. The robber crept cautiously into the dark cabin. There the robber saw the cat’s open eyes, looking like two live coals. The robber took out a match to strike, and the cat sprang at the robber’s face and gave it a big scratch. The robber ran for the back door, and the dog jumped up and bit that robber in the leg. The donkey helped the robber cross the yard with a hefty kick, and all the while the rooster screamed, “Cock-a-doodle-doo!”

The robber returned, shaken, to their companions and hastily explained what had happened in the cabin: “A horrid witch scratched me with their bony fingers, then a killer with a knife stabbed me, a monster with a club beat me, and the devil sat on top of the cabin crying all the while calling, ‘Bring the rascal here!’”

The robbers never dared to go back to the cabin again, and the four friends remain together to this day, making music in the woods.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session12/brementown-musicians>

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

By Ellen Gold. 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>

**3.11:** *The Rooster Who Learned To Crow* by Janeen K Grohsmeyer (1,151 words)

A story from A Lamp in Every Corner: Our Unitarian Universalist Storybook (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2004).

Read or tell the story.

There once was a farm in a valley that was practically perfect in every way, except that it had no rooster to crow at the crack of dawn, and so everyone was always late getting out of bed. The dog never woke up in time to fetch the newspaper for the farmer. The farmer never woke up in time to milk the cows before the sun rose. The cows never woke up in time to eat the grass when it was still wet with morning dew, which is when it is most tasty. Everyone was always late on that farm, and so everyone was always a bit cranky in the morning, and sometimes that crankiness lasted all day.

Until one day, a chicken arrived at the farm. Everyone was excited because she had four little yellow balls of fluff peeping and cheeping behind her. “Uh, pardon me, Mrs. Chicken,” snuffled the pig, who was always exceedingly polite. “But would one of your chicks there happen to be, that is, might one be, a he?”

“Why, yes,” answered Mrs. Chicken, and she pointed with the tip of her wing to the last chick in line. “That’s my son.”

“A rooster chicken!” squealed the youngest of the lambs, and all the other animals squealed (or whinnied or quacked or oinked), too. “We won’t be late anymore! We have a rooster on the farm!”

But they didn’t. Not yet. They had to wait for the chicks to grow up. And grow they did, from little yellow balls of fluff with legs to bigger yellow balls of fluff with legs. As the days passed, all the young chickens grew fine white feathers and bright yellow feet, and then — finally — young Mr. Rooster Chicken began to grow long swooping feathers on his tail.

“A tail, a tail!” squealed the youngest of the lambs. “Soon you’ll be old enough to crow!”

“You look very handsome today, young Mr. Rooster,” snorted the pig, who was always exceedingly polite. “A very fine-looking fowl, if I so may say.”

“Thank you,” said young Mr. Rooster, with a bob of his head and a quiver of his cockscomb, but then he walked away, his long tail feathers drooping and his cockscomb down, too.

“What’s wrong?” asked his friend, the gray-and-white cat who lived in the barn.

“Oh, nothing.”

“Something’s wrong,” said his other friend, the yellow duck who swam in the pond. The pig came over to listen, too.

“Well,” said the young rooster, scratching in the dirt with his strong yellow toes, “everybody’s waiting for me to grow up and crow. I’m doing the growing-up part all right, but . . .”

“But what?” asked the cat.

“But I don’t know how to crow! I’ve never even heard a rooster. I don’t know what I’m supposed to do!”

“We shall help you,” announced the pig, who was always exceedingly helpful as well as exceedingly polite.

“We will?” asked the cat, with every single one of his eyebrow whiskers raised. “How?”

“Yes, how?” quacked the duck.

“We shall teach him,” said the pig. “You have heard a rooster crow before, have you not, Mrs. Duck?”

“Yes, I have!” said the duck. “I can show you.” She flew to the top of the chicken coop nearby. Then she folded her wings back, tilted her bill up, and crowed. “Quack-a-whack a-whack a-whack.”

The cat crouched down and flattened his ears.

“Hmmm,” said the pig. “Thank you, Mrs. Duck, though that’s not perhaps

quite . . .”

“I hope not!” said the rooster, looking very much alarmed.

“I shall demonstrate,” said the pig. “First, one must climb, though you will no doubt fly, to a high point.” The pig climbed to the top of the manure pile. “Then, tilt your head back — Mrs. Duck did that part quite well — clear your throat and . . . crow.” The pig tilted his head back and cleared his throat. “Oink a-snuffle, oink a-snort!”

The cat closed his eyes and shook his head.

“Hmmph!” said the duck, not at all impressed.

“Yes, well . . .” The pig climbed down from the manure pile. “That is not quite, uh, that is . . . it does sound a bit . . . you understand . . . with a real rooster . . .”

“I’ll show you,” said the cat, and he leapt to the top of the fence and curled his tail around his toes. He washed one paw and looked up at the sky. “Meow a-meow-a-meow-a-meow.”

“Hmmph!” said the duck.

“Hmmm,” said the pig.

“Oh, dear,” said the rooster, looking even more alarmed.

“Maybe another chicken,” suggested the duck, and they went to fetch one of the hens. But all she managed was “Cluck a-cluck a-cluck a-cluck!” The dog gave them “Woof a-woof a-woof a-woof!” The lamb went “Baa a-baa a-baa a-baa!”

The rooster sadly shook his head. “I’ll never learn how to crow. I won’t be any good at waking people up. Nobody will like me anymore.”

“Sure, we will!” said the cat. “I like you right now, and you’ve never crowed a day in your life.” All the other animals agreed, with baas and moos and stomping of feet. “Besides,” added the cat, “I don’t want you waking me up. I like to sleep late.”

“You will,” said the rooster, as gloomy as a rainy day.

“I wonder,” said the pig, “have you yourself ever tried to crow, Mr. Rooster?”

“Me?” said the rooster. “But . . .”

“You’re more of a rooster than any of us,” said the duck.

“And we’ll like you no matter what you sound like,” said the pig.

“Even if you don’t make any sound at all!” said the cat.

And so, the rooster decided to try. He flew up to the top of the chicken coop. He folded his wings back. He tilted his head. And he tried to make the same noises all his friends had tried to make before. Softly at first: “Cock-a-doodle-doo!” and then again, louder, “Cock-a-doodle-doo!” and then very loud indeed: “Cock-a-doodle-doo!”

After that, no one had any doubt that young Mr. Rooster knew how to crow, not even young Mr. Rooster himself.

There is a farm in a valley that is practically perfect in every way. It even has a fine young rooster, who crows at the crack of dawn, and so everyone always gets out of bed exactly on time. The dog always wakes up in time to fetch the newspaper for the farmer. The farmer always wakes up in time to milk the cows before the sun rises. The cows always wake up in time to eat the grass when it is still wet with morning dew, which is when it is most tasty. Everyone is always wide awake on that farm, because they have a rooster whose friends helped him learn how to crow, just like this: “Cock-a-doodle-doo!”

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session13/rooster>

**3.12:** *Annie Arnzen Making A Difference* (883 words)

Adapted from “A Week at SOS Children’s Village, Tlokweng, Botswana,” by Annie Arnzen, on the “A Precious Cause” website. Used with permission.

Annie first went to Botswana in 2006, when she was in eighth grade. She and her family attend the North Parish, Unitarian Universalist, in North Andover, Massachusetts. She is still helping to raise funds for children affected by AIDS in Botswana .

“Look out the window, Annie,” my dad exclaimed. Gripping the arm of my seat, I gazed out the plane window. For the first time, I laid eyes on the country of Botswana.

Over the years I had heard many stories from my dad about his time in Africa while in the Peace Corps. When I learned he was going to Africa on business, I asked to go along. I was eager for an adventure, to attempt to make a difference and to find my own stories in this place, which felt a world away.

My dad said he would bring me with him to Botswana. He had two conditions: One, I had to find some meaningful work to do while we were there. Two, I had to earn the money to pay for half of the ticket. With those words, I could already see my wildest dreams begin.

While earning money by babysitting, pet-sitting, and shoveling snow for our neighbors, I got my heart set on working in an orphanage. When I learned that Botswana has the second worst rate of AIDS in the world, all I could think was, there must be thousands of children whose parents cannot take care of them because of this disease.

Finding an orphanage in such a small country, so far away, that would allow a thirteen-year-old girl from the United States to volunteer doesn’t sound easy. It was even harder than it sounded! Finally, five days before our trip to Botswana, we got a call saying the SOS Children’s Village would be happy to have me. I felt like I was on top of the world. You can imagine the awe and joy I felt while sitting on the plane, finally flying to Botswana.

The next morning, as we pulled in through the front gate of the SOS Children’s Village, it felt like we were entering another world. I was expecting something that looked like the orphanage in the movie Annie, but I was greeted by something very different. I was startled by a cluster of fifteen houses painted in neon shades of purple, pink, blue, green, and brown.

There are two SOS Children’s Villages in Botswana. Both villages have sixteen houses as well as a few youth houses, providing a safe environment for four hundred children. In each house they build a “family” of about ten children, including a mama and an auntie to look after them. Brothers and sisters who come to SOS together are not split up. The purpose of SOS is to build families for children whose parents cannot take care of them, and educate them so they can flourish on their own in the future.

After Derrick James, the director, gave us a tour of the orphanage, my dad and I expected time for a typical American good-bye. But the principal of the kindergarten said, “Come with me,” and I quickly followed. I looked back at my dad, whose face was a mixture of shock and encouragement as he watched me walk away.

We stopped in front of a small building, which stood just before the kindergarten. “This is where you will work with the babies,” she said and then turned and walked away. I stood and looked at the door for a few minutes. Then I took a deep breath and walked in. I was greeted by ten little faces the color of ebony, all between the ages of one and three.

A woman walked over to greet me. She introduced herself as Mama Florence, and those were the only words of English I would hear from her all week. For the entire week, I played and worked with those ten little children.

When I arrived home, I was full of new stories, experiences, and friends. But I felt so empty thinking about the children I was leaving behind and could no longer do anything to help. This is why when I received a letter from Derrick James six months later, a bubble of joy rose within me. His letter said SOS was trying to build another orphanage, because there were still so many children who needed a safe place to live and learn. Derrick said an orphanage costs a lot of money. They were still $300,000 short. He was writing to see if there was anything I could do to help here in the United States.

This was my chance to make a difference for those kids who had made such a difference in me. My family and I started a project called “A Precious Cause” to raise money for SOS. I have been speaking at churches and schools and selling jewelry to reach the ultimate goal of $300,000 for a new orphanage for the children in Botswana. I have been moved by the outpouring of support from people who did not know about SOS before hearing my story. My hope is that as more people learn how the disease, AIDS, is hurting the children of the world, they too will be moved to make a difference.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/journeys/session1/132145.shtml>

**3.13:** *Maya’s Questions* (1,037 words)

Read or tell the story.

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

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

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

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

“Not so good.” She replied.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“I have?” Maya looked confused.

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

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

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

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

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

Source: [https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session15//mayas-questions](https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session15/mayas-questions)

**3.14:** *Muddy Children Hosea Ballou* by Janeen K Grohsmeyer (1,184 words)

From A Lamp in Every Corner: Our Unitarian Universalist Storybook.

*To make the story more engaging and to help make it very clear who is speaking during dialogues, try developing different voices for the different characters in the story, especially the father.*

*Before you begin, look around the room and make eye contact with each person. Read or tell the story.*

*Ring the chime (or other sound instrument) to indicate that the story is over.*

Over two hundred years ago, in a small house in a small town, on the edge of a forest of very big trees in the state of New Hampshire, there lived a small boy. His name was Hosea Ballou.

Hosea, just like other children, liked to learn and do new things. He was always asking questions, about what and why and how. And, just like other children, Hosea liked to play. He liked to play hide-and-seek with his nine older brothers and sisters. He liked to play word games inside when it was rainy, and he liked to play tag outside when it was sunny. In the winter, he liked to jump into snowdrifts. In the summer, he liked to jump into the creek. In the fall, he liked to jump into leaf piles. And in the spring — why, spring was Hosea’s favorite season of all — because in the spring, it would rain and rain and rain, and then Hosea could jump into mud.

Hosea, just like other children, loved mud. He liked it when it was soft and squishy, and he liked it when it was thick and sticky. If it didn’t rain quite enough, that wasn’t a problem. Hosea would carry water to the dirt and create glorious mud puddles all of his own. He liked to poke sticks into puddles and see how deep the mud was. He liked to make mud pies and to build mud dams. He liked to jump in puddles hard with both feet and make the muddy water splash really high, so that the mud splattered all over his brothers’ and sisters’ clothes, and he loved to step in puddles v-e-r-y slowly, so that the mud oozed up just a little bit at a time between his toes.

Yes, Hosea loved mud.

Now, you can imagine that not everybody in his family liked mud quite as much as Hosea did. His mother had died when he was not quite two, so his older sisters took care of him. His sister, who did laundry and scrubbed the family’s dirty clothes in big washtubs, didn’t like having to scrub all that mud off Hosea’s clothes — or off everybody else’s clothes, either, after Hosea had stomped in a mud puddle extra hard.

His other older sister, who kept the little children clean, didn’t like having to scrub all that mud off Hosea. And Hosea (just like other children) didn’t like having baths, either, especially when it meant he had to stand in a washtub in front of the fire and have water dumped over his head. But his sisters loved him, so they took him home and washed him and dried him and made him clean.

Then Hosea’s sisters went to their father and said, “Father, please tell Hosea to stop playing in the mud.”

“Hosea,” said his father, very sternly, “you should not play in the mud.”

“Why?” asked Hosea, because (just like other children) asking questions was another thing he loved to do.

“Because,” said his father, who was one of the preachers in the Baptist church the family went to, “just as we try to live a good life, to be kind to other people and to follow God’s plan, we try to stay clean.”

“Yes, Father,” Hosea said, and after that day, he did indeed try to stay clean.

But it wasn’t easy. He stopped stomping in the mud puddles on purpose and splashing the muddy water everywhere, and he stopped making enormous mud pies, but sometimes the mud was just there. Then he had to walk through the mud to get across the yard to gather the eggs from the chickens. He had to walk in the mud to feed the pigs. And sometimes, when he was already muddy from doing his chores, he played in the mud, just a little bit, and got even muddier. His sisters, who loved him, took him home and washed him and dried him and made him all clean.

But Hosea’s sisters went to their father again and said, “Father, please tell Hosea to stop playing in the mud.”

“Hosea,” said his father even more sternly, “you must not play in the mud.”

“Yes, Father,” Hosea said. He was sad, because he had truly tried not to get muddy, most of the time anyway. “Are you very angry with me, Father?”

“I am disappointed in you, Hosea, and I am a little angry with you.”

Hosea hung his head and kicked at the dirt with his toes, then he dared to look up, just a little, to ask, “Do you still love me?”

“Hosea,” said his father, and his father didn’t sound stern anymore, “I will always love you, Hosea, no matter what you do.”

“Even if I get muddy again?”

“Yes.”

“Even if I get really, really muddy?”

“Yes.”

“Even if I get mud all the way up to my eyebrows and between my fingers and my toes and in my hair?”

“Even then,” his father said with a smile. Then he added, very stern again, “But remember, Hosea. You must try to stay clean.”

“I’ll remember, and I’ll try,” Hosea promised, and he did. He stayed clean, most of the time anyway. As he grew up, he stopped liking mud quite so much, but he still liked to ask questions about what and how and why.

“Father,” Hosea asked when he was a teenager, “how can it be that our church believes that God will let only one in a thousand people into heaven, even if many of those thousand people lead good lives?” His father didn’t have an answer for that question.

“Father,” Hosea asked, “if I had the power to create a living creature, and if I knew that the creature would have a miserable life, would suffer and die, and then go to hell and be miserable forever, and I went ahead and created it anyway, would that be a good thing or a bad thing? And would I be good or bad?”

His father didn’t have an answer for that question, either. Hosea had to find his own answers. So, he read the Bible, a book with many stories about religious people and about God. He went to some Universalist churches and asked more questions there. At the age of nineteen, Hosea decided that he believed in universal salvation, which is the idea that everyone everywhere — everyone in the universe — will be given salvation. Eventually, everyone will be “saved” from hell. And not only did Hosea believe that God would let more than a thousand people into heaven, Hosea Ballou believed God would eventually let everyone into heaven, good and bad.

“How can you believe that?” asked his father. “How can you believe that God would let bad people into heaven?”

“Because, Father, I remember what you told me when I was small. I believe that even if God is disappointed with people, or a little angry with them, God will always love them and want them to be happy, no matter what they do, and no matter how muddy they are.”

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/journeys/session2/muddy-children>

**3.15:** *A Different Kind of Superhero: Christopher Reeve* (912 words)

It was a hot, muggy morning. Christopher was not sure he really wanted to be out riding in a competition. His thoroughbred horse, Eastern Express, seemed a bit off, as if maybe he would rather be grazing in the field than doing the demanding work of running and jumping with a big, muscular man on his back. Maybe, Christopher thought, it would be nicer to take the kids sailing today, where there would be a cool breeze. “Well,” he thought, “I’m a lucky man to be able to choose between riding and sailing.”

In fact, plenty of people watching Christopher that day thought the same thing. He was many people’s idea of a superhero. He was the actor who played Superman in the movies and, in real life, he fit the part: handsome, strong, always striving toward a goal, chasing his best time, or learning a new skill.

And then, in an instant, everything changed. Eastern Express balked at a jump, sending Christopher crashing to the ground. When he woke up in the hospital, Christopher couldn’t move his hands or feet. He couldn’t even breathe without the help of a machine. Although doctors could repair his neck, they could not fix the injury to his spinal cord. Now Christopher’s brain was unable to communicate with most of his body. Even though he still had all his strength, intelligence, and will power, there was simply no way for him to move any part of his body below his head.

Despair washed over Christopher. If he could not do anything, could not be useful to anyone, why not put him out of his misery, like they did with horses that were injured too badly to walk again? “Maybe,” he said to his wife, Dana, “we should just let me go.”

But Dana spoke words that helped start him on the road toward his new life: “But you’re still you. And I love you.”

Of course, Christopher Reeve had never actually been able to leap tall buildings in a single bound, but he had been a tremendous athlete. He had always liked a goal, a challenge, something to work for. Before his accident, Christopher’s challenges involved acting, directing, and sports. Now his challenges were different. Now it took all his strength and determination to sit up in a wheelchair and steer it by puffing on a straw.

His heart ached with all he had lost. He might never again be able to hug his wife and sons, or ride a horse or sail. But he realized he still had a lot — the love of his family, and money and fame from his career. Christopher decided to use everything he still had to work for a new goal.

As always, Christopher Reeve dreamed big. He hoped there might be a cure for spinal cord injuries, not just for himself, but also for many thousands of others whose lives had changed when their backs or necks were broken. He and his wife set up the Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation. They asked people for money to help pay scientists to research a cure. Then, Dana realized how lucky they were to be able to afford a ramp into their home and a big van that could fit Christopher’s wheelchair. They collected money to help pay for ramps and other helpful things, so more people with spinal cord injuries could also have them.

Christopher realized that, even though he could no longer use his arms and legs, he had a power that many people do not. He was famous. People thought of him as Superman. Now he could really be a hero, not by flying through the air to rescue people, but by speaking up. Because he was famous, people would pay attention. They would listen, and they would want to help.

It wasn’t easy. Christopher didn’t want people to feel sorry for him. He didn’t want to be embarrassed if he could not use his mouth to speak well, or if his body, as sometimes happened, jerked around without his control. But he knew this was a special chance to use the power he had and make the world a better place. So, Christopher started speaking. He asked Congress to support stem cell research that might lead to a cure for spinal cord injuries. He asked groups of people to get involved and donate money. He talked with others who had experienced injuries like his. He even spoke, on television, to millions of people during the Academy Awards, showing everyone that, although his abilities had changed, his heart and his soul were strong and capable.

A writer for Reader’s Digest magazine interviewed Christopher Reeve near the end of his life, in 2004, and asked him why he had joined a Unitarian church. He answered, “It gives me a moral compass. I often refer to Abe Lincoln, who said, ‘When I do good, I feel good. When I do bad, I feel bad. And that is my religion.’ I think we all have a little voice inside us that will guide us. It may be God, I don’t know. But I think that if we shut out all the noise and clutter from our lives and listen to that voice, it will tell us the right thing to do.”

Christopher Reeve showed what a real-life hero is: a person who listens to the voice inside them, and acts when that voice tells them the right thing to do.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/journeys/session3/132246.shtml>

**3.16:** *Grandmother’s Lesson* by Elisa Davy Pearmain (953 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>

**3.17:** *Belonging: Fannie Barrier Williams* by Janeen K Grohsmeyer (875 words)

Our hearts should be too warm and too large for hatred.

More than one hundred fifty years ago, back when trains were new and airplanes and cars hadn’t been invented, back when women always wore long skirts and everyone wore hats, a girl named Fannie Barrier lived in a town in New York State.

Fannie lived with her older brother, George, and her older sister, Ella, and their parents. During the week, Fannie and George and Ella would get up and get dressed and eat breakfast, and then go to school. In the afternoon, they would play in the woods or maybe go sledding in the snow with their friends, then do their chores, eat dinner, do their homework, and go to bed.

On Sundays, the whole Barrier family would go to church. Fannie’s father was a deacon, a leader at the church. Her mother taught Bible school. When Fannie was old enough, she played the piano while people sang hymns. She sang, too, and painted pictures. Maybe some of you like to do those things, too.

Maybe Fannie’s life sounds a lot like your life, even if she did wear long skirts instead of pants and use kerosene lamps instead of electric lights and cook food on a wood stove instead of in a microwave oven. Going to school and to church, doing homework and chores, making music and playing with friends – these are all things we still do today.

But Fannie’s life was different. Very different. Because back then, one hundred fifty years ago in the United States of America, most people didn’t believe that everyone was equal. Most people believed that some groups of people were better than other groups. They believed that men were better than women. They believed that Protestants were better than Catholics or Jews. And they believed that people with light skin were better than people with dark skin.

Fannie Barrier had dark skin.

When she was a teenager, she went to the city of Boston to study music. Some of the other students said, “We don’t want her here. She’s dark, so she doesn’t belong. If she stays, we’ll all go.” The school asked Fannie to leave.

So, Fannie went to Washington DC to study painting. She had to hide behind a screen so no one could see her. “If the other students know you’re here,” the teacher told Fannie, “they’ll want you to leave.”

Over and over again, all through her life, Fannie was told she wasn’t wanted and couldn’t belong, just because she had dark skin.

When she was forty years old and living in the city of Chicago, some women invited her to join a women’s club. But some other women in the club said, “We don’t want her here. She’s dark, so she can’t belong. If she stays, we’ll all go.” The people in the club argued about it for more than a year. Finally, they voted to let Fannie in. But when she joined, those other women left.

Now, Fannie didn’t like that. It hurts when people won’t let you belong. It hurts when people don’t want you around. Some days Fannie felt angry about it. Some days she felt sad.

But most days, Fannie had no time to feel angry or sad, because she was busy making groups of her own. Fannie knew how much it hurt to be left out. And she knew it would be a lot easier, and more fun, to get things done together with others, than by yourself. She and her husband, the lawyer S. Laing Williams, joined the All Souls Unitarian Church in Chicago. They helped start a hospital, where everyone was welcome, no matter the color of their skin. They created a group to study art and music.

Fannie Barrier Williams helped start a home for girls in Chicago, and she started a center where people could live together, no matter the color of their skin. She was part of the group that started the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (the NAACP), along with Frederick Douglass, Ida Wells Barnett, Frances Watkins Harper, and W.E.B. DuBois.

Fannie also worked with suffragists like Susan B. Anthony, helping women get the chance to vote. Because back then, remember, people thought that men were better than women. Women couldn’t own property or have a bank account or vote in elections.

In 1920, when Fannie was sixty-five years old, women were finally allowed to vote. And about fifty years after that, people starting letting everyone vote and everyone belong to groups, no matter the color of their skin.

Fannie Barrier Williams didn’t live to see that. She didn’t live long enough to see the United States of America become a place where most of the people believe that everyone is equal.

But she helped make it happen. When some groups kept people out, Fannie Barrier Williams started groups that let everyone in. When the laws of our country said she and thousands of others couldn’t belong because of the color of their skin or the church they went to or because they were girls instead of boys, Fannie Barrier Williams worked to change the laws so that everyone could belong – and would belong – no matter what.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/journeys/session4/132836.shtml>

**3.18:** *The Dervish in the Ditch* (263 words)

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

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

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

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

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

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This story is found in a number of sources, including From Once Upon a Time... Storytelling to Teach Character and Prevent Bullying by Elisa Davy Pearmain; Doorways to the Soul: 52 Wisdom Tales from Around the World, edited by Elisa Pearmain (Pilgrim Press, 1998); Buddha Is As Buddha Does by Surya Das (Harper One, 2008); and Milk from the Bull’s Horn: Tales of Nurturing Men by Doug Lipman (Yellow Moon Press, 1986).

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

**3.19:** *The Scratched Diamond* (495 words)

Based on a tale told in the 1700s by the Jewish teacher, Jacob ben Wolf Kranz, Maggid of Dubno. Other versions can be found in The Hungry Clothes and Other Jewish Folktales by Peninah Schram, The Maggid of Dubno and His Parables by Benno Heinemann, and A

There was once a very wealthy king who owned many beautiful things. He had cloth tapestries, piles of gold, and statues made by the very best sculptors in the land. Of all of his belongings, his very favorite possession was the most glorious diamond you can imagine. It was huge—as big around as his hand. And it was pure—clear and flawless, without any marks or blemishes. He loved to go and sit with that diamond, gazing at its beauty and perfection. (Leader: (optional) Hold up a crystal and gaze at it.)

One day when the king went to look at his diamond, he discovered to his horror that it had a long, deep scratch. He couldn’t believe his eyes! What could have happened to his flawless diamond?

Immediately he sent for all of the best stone cutters and diamond cutters in his kingdom. One by one they came to inspect the diamond. Each looked at it closely and then sadly shook his head. The scratch was too deep. If they tried to polish it they might break the diamond into pieces.

Finally, one last diamond carver came before the king. He looked at the diamond closely, gazing at it from every angle. (Leader: (optional) Act this out, with the crystal.)

The king watched with bated breath as the diamond carver turned the diamond over and over, pursing his lips and shaking his head.

Suddenly the diamond carver’s face broke into a big smile. “I know how to fix this, your majesty!” he exclaimed. “Leave it to me. In two weeks time I will return your diamond to you, better than ever. However, you may not visit me during this time or check on my progress. You must wait until it is finished.”

The king was very excited. Soon his flawless diamond would be back with his other lovely things, perfect again, the scratch removed. It took all the king’s willpower to resist the temptation to visit the diamond carver to watch him work.

As for the diamond carver, day after day, night after night, he brought out his tools to fix that diamond. Bit by bit, he worked on that scratch. It was slow, tedious work. He knew he had to work carefully or the diamond could crack into pieces.

Finally, the diamond cutter was finished. Carefully he wrapped the diamond in cloth to protect it, and he brought it before the king.

“Here it is, your majesty,” he said. With a flourish he opened the cloth and presented the diamond.

The king gasped at what he saw. Where there had once been a scratch, a horrible flaw in his precious diamond, there was now an exquisitely beautiful flower carved into the diamond. Unable to polish the scratch out of the diamond, the diamond carver had instead turned the flaw into something beautiful.

The king loved his diamond more than ever. Now when he went to hold it in his hands and gaze upon it, he was reminded that even something imperfect or ugly or flawed can become something exquisitely beautiful.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveguide/session5/168619.shtml>

**3.20:** *The Ugly Duckling* (1,497 words)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**3.21-** *Susan Stanton’s Story* (365 words)

Transgender individuals face much discrimination in the United States, in part because their struggles and their journeys are not well understood. In the spring of 2007, a public battle arose in Largo, Florida, around the struggle of one transgender person.

Susan Stanton, then known as Steve, had been working as City Manager for the city of Largo for more than fourteen years and was a recent recipient of a sizable merit pay increase. Someone leaked to the local paper the fact that Stanton was in the midst of a gender transition from male to female. The Saint Petersburg Times published the story and “outed” Stanton against her wishes. Stanton’s wife was already aware of her circumstances, but her 13-year-old son was not. Stanton rushed home the afternoon before the story broke in order to share her struggle first-hand with her son, whom she feared would be harassed at school following the public disclosure.

Once the news was published, there was an immediate outcry from local residents demanding that Stanton be fired. City Commission (city council) members were inundated with phone calls and emails from residents denouncing Stanton, describing her as “disgusting.” One local Baptist minister went so far as to publicly claim that Jesus would want Stanton fired.

Stanton wanted to continue in her position as City Manager, a job which she enjoyed and at which she was successful. Local Unitarian Universalist ministers and lay people rallied in support of Stanton, arguing that job retention should be based on merit, and not on aspects of identity. There were, however, no legal protections in Largo that prohibited discrimination on the basis of gender identity or expression. Within days of the initial newspaper article, Largo’s City Commission held a highly emotional emergency hearing. At the conclusion of the hearing, the Commission voted to terminate Stanton’s employment with the city. Several City Commissioners cited as justification for their votes their belief that the public had “lost confidence” in Stanton and, under those circumstances, Stanton could not be retained. In making this important decision, the Commission stood with the majority of residents, and argued that their actions led to a “good” outcome for the maximum possible number of people.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/ethics/workshop3/191788.shtml>

**3.22:** *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>

**3.23:** *The March at Selma* (773 words)

In February of 1965, the United States was at another turning point in the Civil Rights Movement. The Civil Rights Act had been passed in 1964, but critical rights were still not legally secured for African Americans. Black men and women routinely faced physical violence, biased “literacy tests,” and other obstacles when they attempted to register to vote.

In Selma, Alabama, African Americans’ attempts to register had been met with an injunction by local judges forbidding groups of two or more to talk about civil rights. Organizers with the Southern Christian Leadership Coalition (SCLC), led by the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and including James Bevel, had begun to work on voter registration campaigns and protests in response.

On February 18th, during a protest in nearby Marion, 26-year-old Baptist deacon Jimmie Lee Jackson was shot by police as he tried to protect his grandfather from their beating. Eight days later, Jackson died from those wounds. Surrounding communities erupted in grief and anger, and James Bevel called for a march to Montgomery, the capital of Alabama, to protest police violence and demand voting rights from Governor George Wallace.

More than 500 people showed up to march the 54 miles to Montgomery on March 7, 1965. As they approached the Edmund Pettis Bridge, just outside Selma, state troopers arrived on the order of Gov. Wallace and told marchers to turn back. When marchers refused, the troopers attacked with nightsticks and tear gas, while mounted divisions charged into the crowd on horseback. Televised images of the encounter shocked the nation. Seventeen marchers were hospitalized, and that day became known as “Bloody Sunday.”

Dr. King immediately called for a second march, issuing a call to clergy and others around the country to participate. One who responded was Unitarian Universalist Rev. James Reeb. Another religious leader who answered the call was the Conservative Jewish Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, who had escaped the Holocaust just before World War II and was a long time ally of the Civil Rights Movement.

On March 9, 2,500 people were present to repeat the march—but again, they only reached the Edmund Pettis Bridge. A judge had temporarily forbidden marching until the state troopers’ role could be examined in court and SCLC organizers decided to temporarily obey. The marchers returned to Selma to prepare for a third attempt.

That night, Rev. Reeb and Unitarian Universalist ministers Clark Olson and Orloff Miller had dinner at an integrated restaurant (one that welcomed blacks and whites). As they were leaving, they were easily identified as outsiders, and therefore Civil Rights marchers, by some angry local men, who attacked the ministers with clubs. Rev. James Reeb’s skull was cracked, and he died.

The death of a white man brought a level of national outrage among other whites that Jimmy Lee Jackson’s death had not inspired. Protests were held around the country. In response to the death, the march, and years of pressure, President Lyndon Baines Johnson introduced a Voting Rights Act to Congress on March 15, 1965.

The march, however, was still left to be completed. On March 21, tens of thousands set forth from Selma for a five-day, four-night trek to the state capital. Rabbi Heschel and Rev. King led the march, linked arm-in-arm; Heschel would later say that when they walked, it was as if his “legs were praying.” When the highway became thinner, some marchers walked through while others were transported by volunteer drivers, including Unitarian Universalist Viola Liuzzo.

Liuzzo was a white woman, a mother of five, a new member of the Unitarian Universalist movement, and a resident of Detroit. She was also someone who believed that the racism in the United States was unacceptable, and when she heard the call for volunteers, she went. The night of that final march, Viola was driving an African American activist to Montgomery when a car full of Ku Klux Klan members started following them and shouting threats. (The Ku Klux Klan or KKK is America’s most infamous hate group. Still existing today, the KKK targets blacks, Jews, immigrants, homosexuals, and others.) She sang freedom songs in response. Miles later, on a lonely stretch of road, the KKK members pulled up and shot Viola through the window, killing her.

Viola’s death brought a fresh wave of outrage. National response grew, as television broadcasts showed the marchers’ determination and the power of Dr. King’s speech when the marchers arrived in Montgomery. Just months later, on August 6, 1965, the Voting Rights Act passed into law. The Christians, Jews, Unitarian Universalists, and others who worked together to march from Selma to Montgomery had changed our country forever.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/chorus/workshop3/173645.shtml>

**3.24:** *Balance* by Rev. Susan Manker-Seale (346 words)

This story is an excerpt from the essay “Balance” by Unitarian Universalist minister Susan Manker-Seale, included in the book Everyday Spiritual Practice: Simple Pathways for Enriching Your Life, edited by Scott W. Alexander (Skinner House Books, 1999).

My daily spiritual practice is to balance. A major part of that practice involves balancing the busy, taking-for-granted moments of the day with moments to pause and appreciate what is before me in my life. I probably wouldn’t even have considered this a spiritual practice, except that I’ve been learning to redefine the meaning of what is spiritual, and to ponder for myself what is important in my faith.

The message many of us have been given through our religious heritage is that if one wishes to be “spiritual,” one must leave the worldly world. Yet the reality is that, if we have family and work, integrating a traditional spiritual practice into our daily lives is a real challenge. Try meditating with a baby in the next room!

We can practice spirituality in our daily lives, in our daily activities, by remembering to pause, pay attention, and feel appreciation for what is before us. Paying attention means using all of our senses in being in the world and in the moment. Stop a moment. Feel the chair in which you are sitting. Notice the temperature around you. Listen for the sounds of your background symphony. Breathe. Appreciate the colors of your clothes, your skin, the sky, or the ceiling. Focus on appreciating the peace out of which you have found the time to read or listen to these words. Remember the feeling of oneness with creation, and try to bring that back into being. This practice takes only a few moments and is not bound by place or time or ritual...

Out of our busy-ness, we are called back into balance, back into ourselves and the silence of present being. But it is not just back into ourselves to which we are called; it is also to the awareness of the continuous presence of the environment around us and within us. We are called to remember our relationships and our dependencies. We are called to once again feel the oneness which sustains our being in balance with creation, and to do so with wonder and appreciation.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/life/workshop5/159265.shtml>

**3.25:** *The Flower Ceremony, A Plain and Simple Beauty* (468 words)

Adapted from a story by Janeen K. Grohsmeyer in her book Lamp in Every Corner: Our UU Storybook (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2004). Used with permission.

In the city of Prague, in the land of Czechoslovakia, in the year nineteen hundred and twenty-three, there was a church. But the building did not look much like a church. It had no bells, no spires, no stained-glass windows. It had no organ to make beautiful music. It didn’t even have a piano. It had no carvings of wood or statues of stone. It had no candles or chalices. It had no flowers.

The church did have some things. It had four walls and a ceiling and a floor. It had a door and a few windows. It had some wooden chairs. But that was all, plain and simple.

Except... the church also had people who came to it every Sunday. It had a minister, and his name was Norbert Capek (pronounced CHAH-peck). He had been the minister at the plain and simple church for two years. Every Sunday, Minister Capek went to church, and he spoke to the people while they listened, sitting quietly and still in those hard, wooden chairs. When he was done speaking, the people talked a little bit among themselves, and then they went home. And that was all—no music, no candles, no food. Not even coffee or doughnuts.

Springtime came to the city of Prague and Norbert Capek went out for a stroll. The rains had come, the birds were singing, and flowers were blooming all over the land. The world was beautiful.

Then an idea came to him, simple and clear, plain as day. The next Sunday, he asked all the people in the church to bring a flower or a budding branch, or even a twig. Each person was to bring one.

“What kind?” they asked. “What color? What size?”

“You choose,” he said. “Each of you choose what you like.”

And so, on the next Sunday, which was the first day of summer, the people came with flowers of all different colors and sizes and kinds. There were yellow daisies and red roses. There were white lilies and blue asters, dark-eyed pansies and light green leaves. Pink and purple, orange and gold—there were all those colors and more. Flowers filled all the vases, and the church wasn’t so plain and simple anymore.

Minister Capek spoke to the people while they listened, sitting quiet and still in those hard, wooden chairs. “These flowers are like ourselves,” he said. “Different colors and different shapes, and different sizes, each needing different kinds of care—but each beautiful, each important and special, in its own way.”

When he was done speaking, the people talked a little bit among themselves, and then they each chose a different flower from the vases before they went home. And that was all—and it was beautiful, plain and simple as the day.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/lovesurrounds/session7/flower-ceremony>

**3.26:** *Building Respect: Reverend Joseph Jordan 1842-1901* by Janeen K Grohsmeyer (599 words)

When Joseph Jordan (pronounced Jerden) was born in Virginia in 1842, slavery was still legal. Most people of African descent were treated as property, like horses or dogs. They were bought and sold; they had no rights. Whether enslaved or free, people of color were not treated with respect.

Joseph had been born free, in a small community on the Elizabeth River. He learned to read and write. At a young age, he began to work on the river harvesting oysters, alongside the men. When he was twenty-one, he moved to the city of Norfolk. Joseph found work, first as a laborer, then as a grocer, and finally as a carpenter, building furniture and houses with his hands.

He married Indianna Brown, and they had three children and built a new life together. The Civil War had ended by now. Slavery was gone, and many other people also needed to build new lives. Joseph worked hard. He bought land and built more houses, which he rented to other families.

But even though people could no longer be bought and sold, true freedom had not yet arrived for African Americans. The laws were unfair, and it was hard for African Americans to find places to live, or good jobs, or schools of any kind. Joseph had become a Baptist minister, and when he preached on Sundays he sometimes spoke of the sins of the white oppressors, and how God would surely punish them by sending them to burn in hell for all eternity.

Then a friend gave Joseph a book, The Plain Guide to Universalism, and he read of God’s promise of salvation to all: the powerless and the powerful, the oppressed and their oppressors alike. Universalism said that everyone, no matter who they were or what they had done, was a child of God. Joseph also knew that Jesus had said: “Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you.” So Joseph stopped preaching a message of vengeance, and he began preaching a message of respect and love.

Joseph wanted to learn more about the Universalist faith, so he went to Philadelphia to study with a Universalist minister at a Universalist church. The people there treated him as a person instead of a thing, as a fellow child of God, as someone worthy of respect. The seven members of the Universalist Ordaining Council found him to have a “clear and bright mind” and gave him a unanimous recommendation. On the thirty-first of March 1889, Joseph Jordan officially became a Universalist minister, the first African American to be ordained by the Universalist denomination.

Joseph returned to Norfolk, Virginia and opened the First Universalist Church of Norfolk in a rented room. He built the pulpit with his own hands. His friend Thomas Wise, who was the second African American to be a Universalist minister, founded another mission in the nearby town of Suffolk. The congregations grew quickly, and with the help of donations from other Universalist churches, the Universalists in Virginia soon built new meetinghouses and schools.

Dozens of African American children came to learn, for there were few other schools available to them. Joseph knew that education was vital and would help provide people with lives of dignity and purpose. Joseph worked every day, teaching during the week and preaching on Sundays, sharing the Universalist message of God’s love for everyone.

Joseph Jordan died in 1901, when he was fifty-nine years old. Over many decades, the churches and schools Joseph Jordan helped build gave thousands of families in Virginia a chance to learn and a place to be treated with respect.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/virtueethics/workshop4/building-respect>

**3.27:** *Oshun Loses Her Beauty* (601 words)

Based on a Santerian story. Special thanks to Lesley Murdoch for her insights to Afro-Caribbean religions.

The Orisha are gods that came originally from Nigeria, in West Africa, as part of the Yoruba religion. The gods travelled with African people who were stolen as slaves from Africa and brought to North and Central America. Today, a religion named Santeria is based on these gods and is practiced in Cuba, Brazil, and parts of Central America. We also have practitioners here in the United States. Though stories about the Orisha may not mean the same to us as they do to Santerians, we can find great wisdom in them and we are thankful for being allowed to share them.

Olodumare, the Creator God, sits far up in the heavens. Other gods, Orishas, like to leave the sky and walk amongst the people on earth. All the Orishas have things they are in charge of:

Yemaya rules over the seas and lakes. She is called the Mother of All and protects pregnant women.

Shango rules over thunder, lightning, fire, and the dance. He loves the drums and having fun.

Eleggua is the god of doors and roads. He carries messages between humans and Orisha.

Oshun is the youngest goddess. She is found in the sweet waters of the world, such as streams and rivers. She is also the goddess of fertility.

Once, some of the Orisha decided they were tired of obeying Olodumare. He sat so far away. What did he know about running the universe? They had control over all things on earth. They thought he was no longer needed.

Olodumare knew the other Orisha were rebelling. He could have struck them down, but he decided to withhold the rains instead. Without the rain, the earth dried up. The rivers, lakes, and streams ran dry. No crops grew; animals were dying. Humans, too. The people cried out to the Orisha, “Save us! What have we done to anger you?”

The Orisha heard their cries. They knew that it was they, not the humans that had angered Oloddumare. They pleaded with him to bring the rain. But Olodumare was too far away and did not hear.

They asked for forgiveness and promised to obey him again. But Olodumare was too far away and did not hear.

Several of the Orisha tried to ascend into the heavens, but they could not reach Olodumare.

Oshun asked if she could try. The other Orisha laughed at her. “How can someone so small and young do what her elders could not? Just go back to sitting there, looking pretty.” Oshun persisted. Finally, out of sheer desperation, the other Orisha agreed that she could try. They did not expect her to succeed.

Oshun turned herself in a beautiful peacock. She flew off towards the heaven. It was so far away, that her feathers begin to fall off. As she reached the sun, her colorful feathers were scorched and all the delicate feathers burned off her head. Yet she was determined to reach Olodumare and she flew on.

When Oshun thought she could not fly another mile, she reached the home of the Creator god, Olodumare. She collapsed in his arms and he saw that the beautiful peacock had been transformed into a vulture. Olodumare took Oshun and nursed her back to health.

“Your bravery and determination has softened my heart. I will bring the rains,” said Olodumare. And he did. “From now on, you, dear vulture, will be the Messenger of the house of Olodumare and I will communicate only through you.”

Oshun, as a vulture, returned to earth to honor and praise. Her gifts of determination and inner strength had saved the world.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/signs/session13/oshun>

**3.28:** *John L. Cashin, Witness for Justice* (654 words)

One day in Alabama, in 1968, as farmers worked in their fields, a small airplane swooped into view. The farmers looked up wonderingly as papers fluttered out of the plane, into the sky and came swirling down to earth all around them. The papers were flyers about the upcoming elections—flyers with a picture of an eagle and the names of the candidates the pilot of the airplane liked the best.

That pilot was John L. Cashin. He hoped those farmers would vote for the candidates of the National Democratic Party, a political party he founded to help African Americans run in Alabama’s elections. He wanted the farmers, and everyone else, to know that these candidates, if elected, would use their positions in government to make life better and more fair for the farmers, their families, and all their neighbors.

John Cashin was not only a pilot, he was a dentist, too, and a husband, and a father of three children. He himself had run for mayor in his town, Hunstville, Alabama. He did not win. Later in his life, he would run for governor of the state of Alabama. He didn’t win that election, either, but then again, he had not expected to win.

In those days in Alabama, African Americans had little chance of winning public office. Even though about one third of Alabama’s people were Black, the Alabama state government had no elected officials who were African American. Very few Blacks ran for election. Very few Blacks could even vote in elections. They were kept away by unfair laws—sometimes called “Jim Crow” laws—and by threats of violence by white people who did not want their black neighbors to vote.

So, with so little chance to win, why did John L. Cashin run for mayor, and then for governor? Well, John was an activist who understood the power of public witness. And he had made a promise when he was 11 years old, to do whatever he could to get Blacks involved in the political process and to speak out against the injustices that kept them away. Every time John Cashin put his name on a ballot and his picture on election posters and flyers, he caught the dreams of other African Americans in Alabama. Campaign speeches gave him a chance to make some noise for justice, and speak out against laws that were not fair to African Americans.

When John Cashin formed the National Democratic Party, he chose as its symbol, an eagle—the well-known symbol of American freedom. With eagles printed all over their flyers and signs and posters, the National Democratic Party made sure even blacks who could not read could vote for justice-loving candidates, the ones with the eagles by their names. Soon, African Americans in Alabama were running for sheriff, city councils, and judgeships—and the National Democratic Party helped get many get elected.

Cashin did not have to witness alone. His family, his Unitarian Universalist congregation in Huntsville, Alabama, and many other UUs and friends joined him. They came to his rallies, made their own speeches to support him, and helped him raise money to run for elections. Like John, they believed that to witness against the wrongs committed against African Americans was an important way to show their faith.

Over time in Alabama, more African Americans voted. More African Americans ran for public office, and won. As more African Americans became part of the Democratic and Republican parties, John Cashin’s National Democratic Party was less important for public witness, and it was dissolved.

John Cashin died in 2011. We can be a new generation witnessing for justice. Every time we speak up against a wrong or support people to speak up for themselves, we are part of John Cashin’s legacy. He witnessed for the justice he wanted to see in his community and in our nation—an America where everyone’s vote is counted.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/signs/session15/288119.shtml>

**3.29:** *Jesus and the Sheep* (582 words)

Excerpts from the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible.

Sheep were important in biblical times. They provided not just wool, but also meat and milk. Their horns were used as musical instruments or to hold oil. The skins were made into clothing and coverings for walls.

If you read the Bible today, you’ll find that sheep and shepherds are mentioned many times. One person who counted says the Bible talks about sheep and shepherds 247 times.

The first part of the Bible, called the Hebrew scripture, includes a famous song called the twenty-third Psalm. It begins with these words: “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He makes me lie down in green pastures.” In other words, people are like sheep, cared for by God.

The second part of the Bible is the Christian scripture. It tells about Jesus’ life and teachings. In one famous story told by the disciple John, Jesus calls himself a shepherd. He says these famous words: “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So, there will be one flock, one shepherd.”

Of course, when Jesus said “Father,” he meant God. But it wasn’t always easy to know exactly what Jesus meant. That is because he often taught by telling stories called parables. One of the best known is called “The Parable of the Lost Sheep.” Here is the way the disciple Luke tells the story:

So, he told them this parable: “Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? When he has found it, he lays it on his shoulders and rejoices. And when he comes home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found my sheep that was lost.’ Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who need no repentance.”

Why is this story so important? There are two reasons. The first is that it helps people know the difference between right and wrong. When there is a problem, the story says, you should not go away and ignore it. You should actively try to fix it.

The second is that the story talks about God’s forgiveness. If you do something wrong, that is bad. But if you repent, God will celebrate. Repenting means feeling badly about what you did. If you repent, you admit that you were wrong, you say you are sorry, and you find ways to make things better.

So, sheep in biblical times were good for more than meat, milk, wool, and skin. They and their shepherds were a big help to religious leaders and teachers who wanted people to know the difference between right and wrong.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/grace/session8/jesus>

**3.30:** *The Wounded Seal A Folk Tale from Scotland* (819 words)

Adapted from a Scottish folktale in The Fairy Mythology by Thomas Keightley (George Bell & Sons, 1882).

Long ago in Scotland there was a small fishing village that stood at the edge of the sea. Now in this village was a man who had made his living from the killing of seals and selling their skins in the market. His father and grandfather before him had done it and it was the only way that he knew how to make a living.

One day the Seal Hunter got into his small boat and rowed out from the rocky shores. *(Leader — “Can you show me what a rowing movement would look like? Let’s all try it. When you hear this sound (rain stick or bell) it will be time to stop the movements and the story will continue when everyone is quiet.”)*

He rowed, and rowed until he came to the place where the seals were gathered. He put in his oars and let the boat drift. He watched as the seals swam, and played together. *(Leader — “Can you pretend to be the seals swimming and playing together?” This can be done sitting or standing and can be done in place or moving around the room.)*

Soon a large grey seal came up beside the boat. Quickly he stabbed his knife into the seal, and reached for his net. But before he could throw the net over the seal it swam away, with the Seal Hunter’s knife still in its side. *(Leader — “What movement can we make for the seal swimming away? What sound do you think it was making? What were the other seals doing? Can one person be the wounded seal and everyone else be the other seals? What do you think the wounded seal was feeling?”)*

The Seal Hunter fished for small fish that day, and then rowed home.

That night as he was eating his dinner there came a knock on the door. *(Leader — Mimic a knocking movement and sound for children to join in.)*

There stood a woman who had come to his door on horseback. She was handsomely dressed, but her eyes were sad. “There is a rich man who would like to buy many seal skins from you,” she said. “I will take you to him.”

She beckoned for the Seal Hunter to jump up behind her on her horse and they rode like the wind. *(Leader — “Can you show me from your seats what it would look like to ride like the wind on horseback?”)*

Soon they came to the edge of the cliffs and they dismounted. The Seal Hunter looked around but he could not see anyone else there. He was about to ask where the rich man was, when the handsome woman took him by the hand and pulled him over the edge of the cliff. Down, down they fell through the air and then into the cold sea below. *(Leader — “Can you show what this would look like and feel like?”)*

They swam deeper and deeper and soon the Seal Hunter realized that he could breathe under water. In fact, he saw that his body and that of his companion had become seal bodies.

They swam deeper and deeper under the water until they came to a cave opening in the side of the rock face. They swam into the cave. *(Leader — “Can you show me what it would be like to swim like a seal under the cave?”)*

As they swam deeper and deeper in to the cave, the Seal Hunter realized that they were in a great seal compound, a place with halls and rooms where many seals lived. The halls were dimly lit, but he could see many seals watching them as they swam by. All of the seals looked very sad, and there was a gloomy feeling all around them. *(Leader — “How do you think the Seal Hunter felt, at this point?”)*

Suddenly his companion stopped and showed the Seal Hunter a large fishing knife. “Is this yours?” she asked.

“Yes,” said the Seal Hunter honestly. “I lost it today when I speared large seal that swam away with it.”

“That seal is my father,” said the companion. “He now lies dying, and only you can save him.”

They came at that point into a darkened room. In the center of the room on a flat rock was a large seal with a deep wound in his hindquarters. All around, seals stood, looking on sadly.

“Lay your hands upon the wound,” instructed the companion.

The Seal Hunter felt afraid, but he swam forward and placed his hand over the wound of the seal. All the seals swam closer to watch him. *(Leader — “Do we want to act out this scene?” Ask for volunteers to be the seal, the Seal Hunter and the other seals watching.)*

The Seal Hunter was surprised to feel a great surge of feelings coming from the seal when he placed his hand upon the wound. *(Leader — “What do you think he might have felt?” All answers are accepted, and can be included in the story line.)*

They were feelings that he had never felt so strongly before. There was great pain, and sadness, and hopelessness, as if the world would never be right again.

But gradually the wound began to heal, and as it did the Seal Hunter began to feel peace spread through him, and then hope, and then the greatest joy.

Suddenly the large seal rose up as if he had never been injured. There was great rejoicing in the compound. *(Leader — “How would you act this out?”)*

The Seal Hunter’s companion took him by the arm and said to him, “I will take you home now, but first you must promise that you will never hunt seal again.”

The man did not know how he would ever make a living, but he also knew that he could not hurt the seals again.

The two swam up out of the cave, and up, up through the cold green water to the surface, and then flew up, up through the air until they stood on the cliffs again. *(Leader — What would that look like to fly through the air?)*

They jumped on the horse’s back and rode like the wind back to the man’s home. *(Leader — Mime riding horseback from a sitting position again.)*

There he jumped down from the horse. As his companion turned to go, she thanked the Seal Hunter. He saw that her eyes were no longer sad. The man kept his word and he never hunted the seals again.  
*(Leader — Use the sound instrument to signal that the story is over.)*

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session4/123253.shtml>

**3.31:** Hide-and-go-seek by Elisa Davy Pearmain (124 words)

Doorways to the Soul, Elisa Davy Pearmain, p. vii. “Hide and Seek,” Cleveland: The Pilgrim Press. Copyright (C) 1998. Used by Permission for this one time use. No reprints or use permitted. All Rights Reserved.

Once upon a time when the earth was new, the Creator decided that she wanted to play a game of hide-and-go-seek.

It was at about this same time that the Creator’s angels were having a meeting. They were afraid that people might try to kidnap or monopolize God, and so they decided that she had to be hidden in a safe place, a place where all people would be able to find her if they searched, but where none could own her exclusively. So, they sent out angel scouts to find this perfect place....

Meanwhile, the Creator had already found her hiding place—the safest, fairest, and warmest place to hide, and yet the most difficult to find—inside each and every human heart.

Source:

<https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/grace/session9/115406.shtml>

**3.32:** *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>

**3.33:** *Know Yourself* (277 words)

Retold by Sarah Conover and Freda Crane. From Ayat Jamilah: Beautiful Signs: A Treasury of Islamic Wisdom for Children and Parents (Boston: Skinner House, 2010).

Kan ya ma kan: there was and there was not a man known far and wide for his generosity. One day, sitting with his friends sipping coffee in the village square, a poor woman approached him with a small request for money to feed her child.

“Of course!” he replied, and without hesitation plucked coin after coin out of his pocket, piling them into the woman’s hand until they spilled on the ground.

Overwhelmed with this show of kindness, the woman began to weep. She bowed her head in gratitude. “May Allah bless you, Sir. You have saved my child’s life.” She carefully placed the coins in a small cloth sack. Glancing up a last time, she thanked him with a frail half-smile.

When she was out of earshot, the man’s friends probed him with questions: “Why did you give her so much money?” asked one.

“That was foolish. Don’t you think she will tell all her friends?” asked another.

“A line of beggars will be at your door tomorrow morning!” warned a third.

“Just yesterday, you gave your zakaat, your charity,” said a fourth. “You weren’t obliged to give her any. Why did you do it?”

The generous man kept silent until their indignation ran its course. At last they quieted down.

“While such a poor woman may be pleased with just a little money from me,” said the generous man, “I couldn’t have been.” He looked from friend to friend. “Unless I give her what I am able to, I won’t be happy. She may not know me, but I know myself.”

And the group of men, thoughtful and contrite, said no more about it.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/grace/session9/know-yourself>

**3.34:** *The Messiah Is Among You* (996 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>

**3.35:** *The Lost Son* (442 words)

Adapted from Christian scripture.

There once was a father, who had two sons. The younger son wanted to leave home and travel to distant lands. He asked to have his inheritance. So the father divided his wealth and gave each son his half. The older son stayed at home, continuing to work with his father as before. But the younger son went on a trip. He spent all his money having fun, and one day it was all gone.

When the younger son’s money ran out, he was in a faraway land where he knew no one and could not find a job. He finally found a job taking care of the pigs that belonged to a farmer. Often the younger son had less to eat than the pigs, for he was now very poor.

One day the younger son said to himself, “I should go home. Back at home, my father’s workers have bread enough to spare, but here I am dying of hunger! I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have wasted your money. I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your workers.’”

So, the younger son went home. When his father saw the younger son coming toward him, he rushed to him and kissed him. The younger son said, “Father, I have wasted your money. I am no longer worthy to be your son.” But the father was so happy to see his son he sent his workers to make a great feast to celebrate the homecoming of his younger son. The father smiled and said, “Let us celebrate. My younger son was lost and now is found.”

About this time, the older son came home from his job. He heard the music and dancing at the welcome home feast. He asked a worker what was going on and was told the celebration was for the safe return of his brother.

The older son got mad and refused to come to the party. His father came out and began to plead for the older son to come inside. The older son said, “Father, for years I have been working with you. I never disobeyed you. You never gave me a party so I could celebrate with my friends. And now, my brother has spent his money and come home poor and you are giving him a party. I’m mad.”

The father said to him, “Son, you are always with me and all that is mine is yours. But we have to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was lost and has been found.”

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/home/session14/60164.shtml>

**3:36:** *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>

**3.37:***The Green Man* by Rev. Dr. Sophia Lyon Fahs (788 words)

From Stories in Faith: Exploring Our UU Principles and Sources Through Wisdom Tales (Boston: Unitarian Universalist Association, 2007).

Once upon a time, there lived a rich and vain young squire. Servants prepared his favorite foods each day. His every wish was granted.

One of the young man’s favorite things to do was to ride through the woods that were part of his kingdom, hunting small animals for sport. He thought that the woods and all its creatures belonged to him and he could do as he pleased with them.

The people in the village had a different idea about the woods. The woods provided a home to all the creatures that lived there: chipmunks, birds, squirrels, rabbits, deer, and wild pigs. They told their children a story about a Green Man who lived in the woods and cared for all of the small creatures. They said he even watched out for children in the woods. The villagers faithfully left out food on winter nights for the Green Man to eat.

One autumn day, the squire decided to go on a hunt. He called to all of his servants to saddle up the horses and get on their riding clothes: they were going into his woods.

They rode into the woods, trampling nests and dens as they went, sending dogs out ahead to chase small animals out of their homes so they could be easily hunted. After a time, the squire became separated from the rest of the hunting party. He was looking for them when he came to a pond — a beautiful, clear, cool pond.

“How clever of me to have a pond in my woods to refresh myself!” he said.

The young man began to remove all of his fine clothing — his shoes, his hat, his jacket, his shirt, his pants, and his socks. He laid his clothes neatly folded by the edge of the pond and jumped into the cool water. He swam back and forth, enjoying himself immensely.

While he was swimming and splashing away, a hand reached out from behind a tree and took his clothing and led his horse away. When the squire got out of the water, he discovered that he had nothing left to wear save a piece of rope. He took the rope and fastened some leaves to it to make a cover up. When his hunting party came looking for him, he was embarrassed to be seen dressed in nothing but leaves. So, he hid.

At night, the squire went looking for some shelter and he stumbled into a cave. He didn’t sleep much that night. It was dark, and he was frightened, and he kept hearing animal noises all night.

In the morning, when the daylight came, he saw that he was not alone in the cave. There was a goat there, and a chicken, and a gourd for holding water. Someone had been living in that cave! He found some grass for the goat and feed for the chicken. He discovered some grain that he could eat as well.

Over time, the squire settled in to life in the cave. He fashioned a whole garment out of leaves. He ate eggs from the hen and drank milk from the goat. He covered his hand with mud to prevent stings and reached into a beehive for honey to eat. He became acquainted with all the small woodland creatures, and he cared for them, helping them over swollen streams when heavy rains fell, making sure they had food and water, and sheltering them in the cave on the chilly nights.

One day he came upon two small children trapped by a wild pig threatening to bite. When he had chased the pig off, they looked at him. There he was, covered head to toe with leaves and mud, with a wild-looking beard and hair. “Are you the Green Man?” they asked.

“I guess I am,” said the man, who no longer looked anything like a squire.

When winter came, the Green Man was happy to go into the village at night and to take the food that the villagers left out for him, sharing it with all his animal friends. A year passed peacefully, until one warm day when a hunting party came into the woods. The Green Man hid behind a tree to watch. A rich young man, a squire perhaps, became separated from his hunting group and decided to take a swim in the clear, cool pond. He took off his clothes, folded them, and left them under a tree. The Green Man reached out a hand and took the clothes and the horse, leaving behind his garment of leaves and a coil of rope. He used a sharp stick to trim his hair and beard, and rode into town, back to his parents’ castle.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session10/green-man>

**3.38:** *The Prince And The Rhinoceros* (637 words)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“No, never.”

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

“I already have,” said Great Joy.

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

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

**3.39:** *We Are Each Other’s Business* by Eboo Patel (465 words)

I am an American Muslim. I believe in pluralism. In the Holy Quran, God tells us, ‘‘I created you into diverse nations and tribes that you may come to know one another.’’ I believe America is humanity’s best opportunity to make God’s wish that we come to know one another a reality.

In my office hangs Norman Rockwell’s illustration “Freedom of Worship.” A Muslim holding a Quran in his hands stands near a Catholic woman fingering her rosary. Other figures have their hands folded in prayer and their eyes filled with piety. They stand shoulder-to-shoulder facing the same direction, comfortable with the presence of one another and yet apart. It is a vivid depiction of a group living in peace with its diversity, yet not exploring it.

We live in a world where the forces that seek to divide us are strong. To overcome them, we must do more than simply stand next to one another in silence.

I attended high school in the western suburbs of Chicago. The group I ate lunch with included a Jew, a Mormon, a Hindu, a Catholic, and a Lutheran. We were all devout to a degree, but we almost never talked about religion. Somebody would announce at the table that they couldn’t eat a certain kind of food, or any food at all, for a period of time. We all knew religion hovered behind this, but nobody ever offered any explanation deeper than ‘‘my mom said,’’ and nobody ever asked for one.

A few years after we graduated, my Jewish friend from the lunchroom reminded me of an experience we both wish had never happened. A group of thugs in our high school had taken to scrawling anti-Semitic slurs on classroom desks and shouting them in the hallway.

I did not confront them. I did not comfort my Jewish friend. Instead I averted my eyes from their bigotry, and I avoided my friend because I couldn’t stand to face him.

My friend told me he feared coming to school those days, and he felt abandoned as he watched his close friends do nothing. Hearing him tell me of his suffering and my complicity is the single most humiliating experience of my life.

My friend needed more than my silent presence at the lunch table. I realize now that to believe in pluralism means I need the courage to act on it. Action is what separates a belief from an opinion. Beliefs are imprinted through actions.

In the words of the great American poet Gwendolyn Brooks: “We are each other’s business; we are each other’s harvest; we are each other’s magnitude and bond.”

I cannot go back in time and take away the suffering of my Jewish friend, but through action I can prevent it from happening to others.

Source: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/chorus/workshop4/we-are>

**4.0: Children’s Books about Worth & Dignity**

# 4.1: *Made by Raffi* by Craig Pomranz, Author and Margaret Chamberlain, illustrator (2014)

# Made by Raffi: Pomranz, Craig, Chamberlain, Margaret ...“Raffi is a shy boy who prefers quiet over rough-and-tumble games. At recess, a teacher offers to teach him to knit. Raffi’s enthusiasm burns as brightly as Chamberlain’s digitally colored drawings of the myriad colors of wool at the yarn shop. The boy knits an enormous rainbow scarf for his dad while on the bus, at breakfast, everywhere. Raffi offers to make a cape for the school play’s prince; a spread gives instructions for readers to replicate. Raffi’s skills are admired by family and friends and he knits many new items with their encouragement. Readers learn that the child likes to sing and draw and knit, but it’s a bit of a stretch that he somehow knows how to sew and easily figures out how make a velvet cape.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N-BqsKpUa84> (9:31)

# 4.2: The Name Jar: Choi, Yangsook, Choi, Yangsook: 9780440417996 ...*The Name Jar* by Yangsook Choi (2003)

# “Being the new kid in school is hard enough, but what about when nobody can pronounce your name? Having just moved from Korea, Unhei is anxious that American kids will like her. So instead of introducing herself on the first day of school, she tells the class that she will choose a name by the following week. Her new classmates are fascinated by this no-name girl and decide to help out by filling a glass jar with names for her to pick from. But while Unhei practices being a Suzy, Laura, or Amanda, one of her classmates comes to her neighborhood and discovers her real name and its special meaning. On the day of her name choosing, the name jar has mysteriously disappeared. Encouraged by her new friends, Unhei chooses her own Korean name and helps everyone pronounce it—*Yoon-Hey*.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PS5XRO1AUT4> (11:02)

# Teaching Resource: <https://www.prindleinstitute.org/books/the-name-jar/>

# Lesson Plan: <https://witsprogram.ca/book/the-name-jar/>

# More Resources: <https://childrenslibrarylady.com/name-jar-2/>

# 4.3: *Giraffes Can't Dance: Andreae, Giles, Parker-Rees, Guy ...Giraffes Can’t Dance* by Guy Parker-Rees and Giles Andreae (1999)

# “Gerald is a giraffe who is tall and awkward. He is best at eating leaves from tall trees. Gerald would like to be able to dance. When he attempts to join in the dancing at the Jungle Dance, the other animals make fun of him and Gera ld feels he is useless. A cricket comes along and encourages Gerald to try to dance by listening to a different song. Skeptical at first, Gerald finds his song and finds he can dance rather well.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4UNRduYI_04> (4:18)

# Teaching Resource: <https://www.prindleinstitute.org/books/giraffes-cant-dance/>

# 4.4: A Color of His Own: Leo Lionni, Leo Lionni: 9780375810916 ...*A Color of His Own* by Leo Lionni (2006)

# “A little chameleon is distressed that he doesn’t have a color of his own like other animals. He is very sad because he cannot move around without changing color. Because he wants to have a color of his own so badly, he finds the greenest leaf and decides to stay there forever. This works until the seasons start to change, and the leaf turns to yellow and then to red. Finally, he finds another chameleon who also changes color and suggests that they travel together. The two chameleons set off on a new life of adventure.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y8rab-HcTN0> (2:53)

# Teaching Resource: <https://www.prindleinstitute.org/books/a-color-of-his-own/>

# 4.5: A Bad Case of Stripes (Scholastic Bookshelf): Shannon, David ...*A Bad Case of the Stripes* by David Shannon (1998)

# “…Camilla Cream is a girl who loves lima beans and worries about others’ opinions of her. On the first day of school, Camilla wakes up to find herself completely covered in rainbow stripes! If the stripes were not bad enough, Camilla’s skin develops everything people suggest she has – someone says ‘checkerboards,’ another says ‘bacteria,’ and she breaks out in checkerboard pattern and bacteria tails. When the doctor, specialists, experts, and many others cannot figure out what’s causing the stripes, a little old woman appears with what just might be the cure.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QqnChSV2mdM> (12:33)

# Teaching Resource: <https://www.prindleinstitute.org/books/a-bad-case-of-the-stripes/>

# 4.6: *Chrysanthemum* by Kevin Henkes (1991)

# Chrysanthemum by Kevin Henkes, Paperback | Barnes & Noble®“From the day she was born, Chrysanthemum was told she had the perfect name. On her first day of school, Chrysanthemum learned that others did not think her name was perfect. She was bullied by the other children for having such a long name and for being named after a flower. This bullying at school continues until one day the other kids in her class are introduced to the charismatic and lovable music teacher Mrs. Twinkle. She expresses a different opinion about the name which results a in a change of heart from Chrysanthemum’s classmates.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7fkR7X4SevE> (12:06)

# Teaching Resource: <https://www.prindleinstitute.org/books/chrysanthemum/>

# 4.7: Hey, Little Ant: Phillip M. Hoose, Hannah Hoose, Debbie Tilley ...*Hey, Little Ant* by Philip and Hannah Hoose, authors and Debbie Tilley, illustrator (1998)

# “A young boy has decided to squish an ant and can think of many reasons why he should. But the ant has his own reasons for why he shouldn’t. The boy has to make a decision, to squish or not to squish?”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ehH6l6v5sYM> (3:46)

# Teaching Resource: <https://www.prindleinstitute.org/books/hey-little-ant/>

**4.8:** ***Be Nice to Spiders* by Margaret Bloy Graham (1967)**

# Be Nice to Spiders: Margaret Bloy Graham, Margaret Bloy Graham ...“Helen the spider visits the Bronx Zoo and builds a web to catch some flies. She built webs in all of the animal cages one by one, eating flies to her heart’s content while also relieving the animals of the pesky flies that filled their cages. One day, the zoo’s cleaners decided to remove the spider webs in an effort to beautify the animals’ cages. Flies again filled every cage, and the animals became very unhappy. The zookeepers realized that Helen filled a vital role ridding the zoo of bothersome flies, and Helen soon becomes a zoo celebrity.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l_UwvdX3Tj8> (9:40)

# Teaching Resource: <https://www.prindleinstitute.org/books/be-nice-to-spiders/>

**4.9:** ***Abuela* by Arthur Dorros, author and Elisa Kleven, illustrator (1991)**

# Abuela (English Edition with Spanish Phrases) (Picture Puffins ...“Come join Rosalba and her grandmother, her abuela, on a magical journey as they fly over the streets, sights, and people of New York City which sparkles below. The story is narrated in English, and sprinkled with Spanish phrases as Abuela points out places that they explore together. The exhilaration in Rosalba’s and Abuela’s story is magnified by the loving bond that only a grandmother and granddaughter can share.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bl3GIsyS66g> (4:58)

# Teaching Resource: <https://www.prindleinstitute.org/books/abuela/>

# 4.10: *The Paper Bag Princess* by Robert Munsch, author and Michael Martchenko, illustrator (1980)

# The Paper Bag Princess by Robert Munsch“An unconventional princess named Elizabeth happily prepares to marry Prince Ronald. Before they are able to marry, a dragon swoops down, burns down the castle and everything with it, and kidnaps Prince Ronald. Elizabeth puts on a paper bag and sets off to save Ronald. Elizabeth outwits the dragon by asking him to perform feats of strength until he passes out. When Ronald sees Elizabeth in a paper bag rather than beautiful princess clothes, he is disgusted. Ronald tells her to come back when she looks like a ‘real princess.’ Elizabeth responds by telling the prince he’s a bum.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pm7AUymn6WE> (5:49)

# Teaching Resource: <https://www.prindleinstitute.org/books/the-paper-bag-princess/>

# 4.11: *Let’s Talk About Race* by Julius Lester, author and Karen Barbour, illustrator (2005)

# Let's Talk About Race: Lester, Julius, Barbour, Karen ...“This book offers an opportunity for …discussions about race and how racial identity affects the way we view one another. While thinking about their own stories and hearing those of their friends, students may begin to find that what looks like an easy question may not have such an easy answer. This will encourage them to break down their own assumptions about race and critically think about them.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zoDUJY9u9Jw> (7:28)

# Teaching Resource: <https://www.prindleinstitute.org/books/lets-talk-about-race/>

# 4.12: *The True Story of the Three Little Pigs* by Jon Scieszka, author and Lane Smith, illustrator (1989)

# The True Story of the Three Little Pigs: Scieszka, Jon, Smith ...“Alexander T. Wolf was framed! All he wanted to do was borrow a cup of sugar to make a cake for his granny. Unfortunately, a bad cold and some unfriendly neighbors land Al in a heap of trouble. Now in jail, Al recounts what really happened to the *Three Little Pigs*. This story raises questions about criminal justice and fairness, how we determine the truth, the significance of intent, and prejudice.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vB07RfntTvw> (8:28)

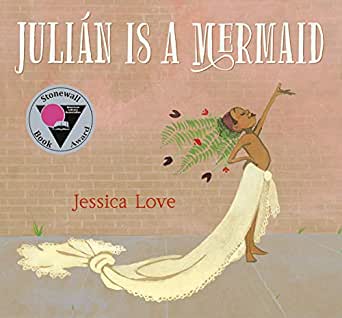
# Teaching Resource: <https://www.prindleinstitute.org/books/the-true-story-of-the-three-little-pigs/>

**4.13:** ***It’s Okay to Be Different* by Todd Parr (2001)**

This book “cleverly delivers the important messages of acceptance, understanding, and confidence…. …This book will inspire kids to celebrate their individuality through acceptance of others and self-confidence—and it’s never too early to develop a healthy self-esteem. *It’s Okay to be Different* is designed to encourage early literacy, enhance emotional development, celebrate multiculturalism and diversity, and promote character growth.”

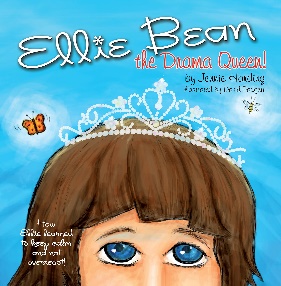
Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sl5U2Z0oQok> (2:51)

**4.14:** ***Julián Is a Mermaid* by Jessica Love (2018)**

“While riding the subway home from the pool with his abuela one day, Julián notices three women spectacularly dressed up. Their hair billows in brilliant hues, their dresses end in fishtails, and their joy fills the train car. When Julián gets home, daydreaming of the magic he’s seen, all he can think about is dressing up just like the ladies in his own fabulous mermaid costume: a butter-yellow curtain for his tail, the fronds of a potted fern for his headdress. But what will Abuela think about the mess he makes — and even more importantly, what will she think about how Julián sees himself?”

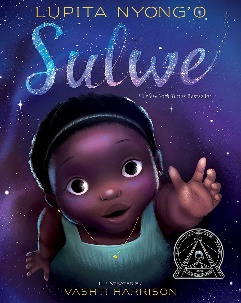
# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFdmkUsQ9ZU> (3:09)

**4.15:** *Ellie Bean the Drama Queen* by Jennie Harding, author and Dave Padgett, illustrator (2011)

“This children’s book helps explain some bizarre or “dramatic” behavior, and gives easy sensory answers to parents and teachers. Written by a mom and special education teacher, this story brings home what it is like to grow up with sensory issues, and helps kids understand that they are not alone. Children will enjoy the fun artwork and empathize with Ellie Bean. By the end of the story, Ellie learns how to cope with her issues and stop being such a drama queen . . . but she does keep her crown.”

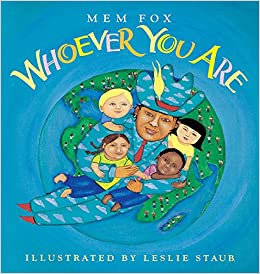
# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rEB2WehtqGw> (5:31)

**4.16:** *Sulwe* by Lupita Nyong’o, author and Vashti Harrison, illustrator (2019)

“Sulwe has skin the color of midnight. She is darker than everyone in her family. She is darker than anyone in her school. Sulwe just wants to be beautiful and bright, like her mother and sister. Then a magical journey in the night sky opens her eyes and changes everything.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9m8JvdBZiSE> (9:37)

**4.17:** ***Whoever You Are* by Mem Fox, author and Leslie Staub, illustrator (1997)**

“Every day all over the world, children are laughing and crying, playing and learning, eating and sleeping. They may not look the same. They may not speak the same language. Their lives may be quite different. But inside, they are all alike. Stirring words and bold paintings weave their way around our earth, across cultures and generations. At a time when, unfortunately, the lessons of tolerance still need to be learned, *Whoever You Are* urges us to accept our differences, to recognize our similarities, and—most importantly—to rejoice in both”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f0J6tKoT53Y> (3:07)

# 4.18: Happy in Our Skin: Manushkin, Fran, Tobia, Lauren: 9780763670023 ...*Happy in Our Skin* by Fran Manushkin, author and Lauren Tobia, illustrator (2015)

# “Just savor these bouquets of babies—cocoa-brown, cinnamon, peaches and cream. As they grow, their clever skin does too, enjoying hugs and tickles, protecting them inside and out, and making them one of a kind.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eabN4NrEMzI> (2:52)

# 4.19: *The Boy Who Grew Flowers* by Jen Wojtowicz, author and Steve Adams, illustrator (2005)

# Boy Who Grew Flowers PB, The: Jen Wojtowicz, Steve Adams ...“Rink is a very unusual boy who grows beautiful flowers all over his body whenever the moon is full. In town and at school, Rink and his family are treated as outcasts although no-one knows his strange botanical secret. But one day a new girl arrives at school, and Rink discovers she has some unique qualities of her own.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pG5TB8dqFm4> (10:18)

# 4.20: *I Am Enough* by Grace Byers, author and Keturah A. Bobo, illustrator (2018)

# I Am Enough - By Grace Byers (Hardcover) : Target“This beautiful poem should just be required reading for everyone. Our natural-haired protagonist compares herself to nature—”like the sun, I’m here to shine”—and tells readers that she—and WE—are complete and enough, as-is. Close this book feeling empowered and knowing your kids are getting the message that all humans are lovely and valuable.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T4jZxWiCxrY> (3:43)

# 4.21: *Pink Is For Boys* by Robb Pearlman, author and Eda Kaban, illustrator (2018)

# Pink Is for Boys: Pearlman, Robb, Kaban, Eda: 9780762462476 ...“Pink is for boys . . . and girls . . . and everyone! This timely and beautiful picture book rethinks and reframes the stereotypical blue/pink gender binary and empowers kids-and their grown-ups-to express themselves in every color of the rainbow. Featuring a diverse group of relatable characters, Pink Is for Boys invites and encourages girls and boys to enjoy what they love to do, whether it’s racing cars and playing baseball, or loving unicorns and dressing up.

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_b5BsM77lsM> (2:24)

# 4.22: *Parker Looks Up: An Extraordinary Moment* by Parker Curry & Jessica Curry, authors and Brittany Jackson, illustrator (2019)

# Parker Looks Up: An Extraordinary Moment ... - Amazon.com “This book follows Parker, along with her baby sister and her mother, and her best friend Gia and Gia’s mother, as they walk the halls of a museum, seeing paintings of everyone and everything from George Washington Carver to Frida Kahlo, exotic flowers to graceful ballerinas. Then, Parker walks by Amy Sherald’s portrait of Michelle Obama…and almost passes it. But she stops...and looks up!

# “Parker saw the possibility and promise, the hopes and dreams of herself in this powerful painting of Michelle Obama. An everyday moment became an extraordinary one… that continues to resonate its power, inspiration, and indelible impact. Because, as Jessica Curry said, ‘anything is possible regardless of race, class, or gender.’”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QXYgOyew2EU> (7:57)

# 4.23: *Let the Children March* by Monica Clark-Robinson, author and Frank Morrison, illustrator (2018)

# Let the Children March: Clark-Robinson, Monica, Morrison, Frank ...“I couldn’t play on the same playground as the white kids.  I couldn’t go to their schools.   I couldn’t drink from their water fountains.   There were so many things I couldn’t do.  In 1963 Birmingham, Alabama, thousands of African American children volunteered to march for their civil rights after hearing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. speak. They protested the laws that kept black people separate from white people. Facing fear, hate, and danger, these children used their voices to change the world.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bnptqGnM4xQ> (6:08)

# 4.24: *Amazing Grace* by Mary Hoffman, author and Caroline Binch, illustrator (1991)

# Amazon.com: Amazing Grace (Grace-picture Books) (9780803710405 ...“This classic picture book is about a girl names Grace, whose favorite pastime is writing her own stories to act out for her family and friends. When her school holds auditions for *Peter Pan,* the talented Grace is heartbroken to hear that she can’t be Peter because she’s a girl — and black. It’s Grace’s grandmother who teaches her that if she has enough confidence and determination, she can be whatever her heart desires.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DY0fKypLWmk> (5:49)

# 4.25: *I Want Your Moo: A Story for Children About Self-Esteem* by Marcella Baker Weiner & Jill Neimark, authors and Joann Adinolfi, illustrator (2009)

# I Want Your Moo: A Story for Children About Self-Esteem (Gold ...“From her brown features to her “gobble gobble,” there is nothing Toodles the turkey likes about herself. When Toodles goes on a journey around the farm to search for new characteristics and features — things she believes will bring her happiness — she comes to realize that everything about her is exactly the way it’s supposed to be. *I Want Your Moo* is a fun, sometimes even silly, book that teaches young readers about self-acceptance.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hN4ZGs_2hdo> (8:37)

# Junkyard Wonders: Polacco, Patricia, Polacco, Patricia ...4.26: *Junkyard Wonders* by Patricia Polacco (2010)

# “When young Trisha finds out her class at the new school is known as ‘The Junkyard,’ she is devastated. She moved from her old town so she wouldn’t be in a special class anymore! But then she meets her teacher, the quirky and invincible Mrs. Peterson, and her classmates, an oddly brilliant group of students each with his or her own unique talent. And it is here in The Junkyard that Trisha learns the true meaning of genius, and that this group of misfits are, in fact, wonders, all of them. Based on a real-life event in Patricia Polacco’s childhood, this ode to teachers will inspire all readers to find their inner genius.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KH21cQO0yTY> (25:10)

# 4.27: *Marisol McDonald Doesn’t Match / Marisol McDonald no combina* by Monica Brown, author and Sara Palacios (20110

# Marisol McDonald Doesn't Match - YouTube“Marisol McDonald is both Peruvian and Scottish — a fact that her friend Ollie tells her makes her “mismatched.” When Ollie challenges her to be more normal, Marisol realizes just how special all of her mismatched features really are, and finds she is happiest just being herself. This delightful book, which features lots of vibrant illustrations, is written in both English and Spanish.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NwNUqH_rJ_o> (4:52)

# Nerdy Birdy - Kindle edition by Reynolds, Aaron, Davies, Matt ...4.28: *Nerdy Birdy* by Aaron Reynolds, author and Matt Davies, illustrator (2015)

# “Nerdy Birdy likes reading, video games, and reading about video games, which immediately disqualifies him for membership in the cool crowd. One thing is clear: being a nerdy birdy is a lonely lifestyle. When he’s at his lowest point, Nerdy Birdy meets a flock just like him. He has friends and discovers that there are far more nerdy birdies than cool birdies in the sky.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gNv_Oy0rQ4M> (6:01)

# 4.29: *Not All Princesses Dress in Pink* by Jane Yolen and Heidi E.Y. Stemple, author and Anne-Sophie Lanquetin, illustrator (2010)

# Not All Princesses Dress In Pink - By Jane Yolen & Heidi E Y ...“Princesses come in all kinds. Exuberant text from Jane Yolen and her daughter Heidi Yolen Stemple paired with charming illustrations prove that girls can jump in mud puddles and climb trees, play sports and make messes—all while wearing their tiaras! Not every girl has a passion for pink, but all young ladies will love this empowering affirmation of their importance and unlimited potential.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N3dd0cFUbao> (2:37)

# 4.30: *You Are Special* by Max Lucado, author and Sergio Martinez, illustrator (1997)

# You Are Special (Max Lucado's Wemmicks (Volume 1)) - Kindle ...“In the town of Wemmickville there lives a Wemmick named Punchinello. Each day the residents award stickers―gold stars for the talented, smart, and attractive Wemmicks, and gray dots for those who make mistakes or are just plain ordinary. Punchinello, covered in gray dots, begins to feel worthless. Then one day he visits Eli the woodcarver, his creator, and he learns that his worth comes from a different source.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=15QuHygLwFU> (8:21)

# The Shiny Bee Who Felt Out of Place: A Children's Book About Self ...4.31: *The Shiny Bee Who Felt Out of Place* by Natalie Meraki (2018)

# “A shiny bee feels out of place. One night, as she’s reflecting by a lake, a sassy star descends from the sky. Together, they embark on a journey of self-discovery through the universe, and the star shows the bee why she is truly at home wherever, as whatever she is. In the end, the star has a surprising revelation for the shiny bee! This children’s picture book helps people feel at home in their own skin. Everyone has felt like they don’t belong. It is important to remember that no only everyone, but everything, is made of the same stuff. The shiny bee’s family to the universe, and so are each of us.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZCL7NKIcARs> (4:43)

# 4.32*: What If Everybody Did That?* by Ellen Javernick, author and Colleen M. Madden, illustrator (2010)

# What If Everybody Did That?: Javernick, Ellen: 9780761456865 ...“If you drop just one soda can out the window, it’s no big deal ... right? But what if everybody did that? What if everybody broke the rules ... and spoke during story time, didn’t wash up, or splashed too much at the pool? Then the world would be a mess. But what if everybody obeyed the rules so that the world would become a better place? Using humorous illustrations rendered in mixed media, these questions are answered in a child-friendly way and show the consequences of thoughtless behavior.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SD0apYFz5gg> (4:34)

# 4.33: *Do Unto Otters* by Laurie Keller (2007)

# Do Unto Otters: A Book About Manners: Keller, Laurie, Keller ...“Mr. Rabbit’s new neighbors are Otters. OTTERS! But he doesn’t know anything about Otters. Will they get along? Will they be friends? Just treat otters the same way you’d like them to treat you, advises wise Mr. Owl. And so begins Mr. Rabbit’s reflection on good manners.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gh7X8Qask2E> (4:34)

# 4.34: *BIG,* a Little Story About Respect and Self-Esteem by Ingo Blum, author and Antonio Pahetti, illustrator (2018)

# BIG - A Little Story About Respect And Self-Esteem: For Kids ages ...“Circus Wilson has many famous performers: jugglers, acrobats, lion-tamers, and clowns galore. Fire-eaters and knife-throwers thrill the spectators at every small village when the circus comes to town. Lee is one of the most talented of artists. He is a juggler extraordinaire and an acrobat who has mastered the four-time somersault among his other skills, but Lee has one problem. He is little. Lee is a flea, and while he wears sparkling and distinctive yellow pants, the audience never really can see him, only those pants. Lee doesn’t care that he isn’t the fastest or the most dangerous or even the funniest act in the circus. He just wants to be seen. He wants to be big. One day he takes a decision that will change his life forever. See how Lee’s defection causes so much uproar in the Circus Wilson. Lee does matter, and watching Director Wilson as he searches for Lee is entertaining indeed. Where could a flea be hiding, anyway?

**5.0: Music & Videos for Children**

# 5.1: *Culture of Dignity* by Rosalind Wiseman (1:58)

# “From locker rooms to our work-places, our faith communities and halls of government, we constantly see abuse of power and adults forcing young people to respect them. We all grew up hearing that we should “respect our elders.” It’s a core value that unites across ethnicities, religions, countries and class. Using dignity instead of respect gives us a way new way to interact with each other. A way where we can recognize the person’s essential worth apart from their actions. Our schools depend on it. Our communities depend on it. It all begins with young people believing in what we teach them.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OcSg66kudFQ>

# 5.2: *30 Tips of Dignity & Respect Book* by Dignity & Respect (4:00)

# “The 30 Tips of Dignity and Respect challenge us to be mindful of others and to commit to treating them the way they want to be treated. By following these daily recommendations, we can all work to achieve a more inclusive community. treated.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eb9XURIEQAs>

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

# *from Tapestry of Faith*

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

**6.1.1:** *Session 9: Chalice Flannel Board*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/chalicechildren/session9>

“Participants will:

* Understand that all kinds of people can be friends
* Learn that accepting differences is an important part of being a Unitarian Universalist
* Experience a new way of looking at the chalice symbol.”

**6.1.2:** *Session 11: A Special Jigsaw Puzzle*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/chalicechildren/session11>

“Participants will:

* Understand that many different kinds of families make up the congregational family
* Feel pride in the uniqueness of their own family
* Make the connection that individual families are like pieces of a puzzle that make up the whole congregational family.”

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

**6.2.1:** *Session 3: The Gift Of Forgiveness*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session3>

“This session will:

* Introduce forgiveness as an intangible gift
* Explore situations where forgiveness is appropriate and identify ways to express forgiveness
* Show how forgiveness helps us live our Unitarian Universalist Principles, especially the first Principle (inherent worth and dignity of every person) and the second Principle (justice, equity and compassion in human relations)
* Demonstrate that authentic welcoming must include a readiness to forgive
* Engage participants in the spiritual practices of opening and closing rituals”

**6.2.2:** *Session 6: The Gift Of Friends*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session6>

“This session will:

* Introduce friendship as an intangible gift
* Explore the value of having and appreciating friends
* Show how being a good friend helps us live our Unitarian Universalist Principles, especially the first Principle (inherent worth and dignity of every person)
* Engage participants in the spiritual practices of opening and closing rituals.”

**6.2.3:** *Session 8: The Gift Of Families*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session8>

“This session will:

* Guide participants to consider the intangible gifts they bring to and receive from members of their families
* Explore ways to share intangible gifts within our families
* Apply the first and second Unitarian Universalist Principles — the inherent worth and dignity of every person, and justice, equity, and compassion in human relations —to our family life”

**6.2.4:** *Session 12: The Gift Of Acceptance*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session12>

“This session will:

* Introduce the intangible gift of acceptance
* Illustrate the importance of belonging to a faith community that is accepting.
* Affirm our fourth Principle of free and responsible search for truth and meaning
* Affirm our first Principle, the inherent worth and dignity of every person
* Demonstrate that every person has valuable gifts to offer
* Engage participants in the spiritual practices of opening and closing rituals.”

**6.2.5:** *Session 15: The Gift Of Ourselves*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/welcome/session15>

“Participants will:

* Understand that being themselves and paying attention to others around them are gifts they can offer
* Experience the importance and challenge of being centered in oneself, paying attention to others, and responding authentically.”

**6.3: Creating Home: A Program on Developing a Sense of Home Grounded in Faith for Grades K-1**

**6.3.1:** *Session 13: Our Worship Home*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/home/session13>

“Participants will:

* See the gifts others have to offer
* Identify two of their own special gifts
* Learn an abbreviated version of opening words from the Unitarian Universalist hymnbook, Singing the Living Tradition
* Learn about the child dedication worship service
* Recognize the worship space as shared by those in the faith community”

**6.3.2:** *Session 16: Memories of Home*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/home/session16>

“Participants will:

* Have an opportunity to share personal stories about moving and re-establishing home
* Hear and reflect upon stories of others who have moved and re-established home
* Play a game centered on making pairs, connecting identical and then related images of objects and people
* Make a bracelet to give to a friend
* Optional: Have an opportunity to show and tell about a ‘transitional object’ that they love
* Optional: Help provide for some of the needs of homeless people”

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

**6.4.1:** *Session 2: Unconditional Love, a Gift from Our Universalist Heritage*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/journeys/session2>

“Participants will:

* Learn about a childhood experience of Universalist preacher Hosea Ballou, that exemplifies key Universalist beliefs about universal salvation and love
* Experience their congregation as a place where they are loved and give unconditional love to others, despite imperfections, as they identify and affirm some of their own strengths and interests
* Name ways they might act that respond to the signpost “Respect Everyone”
* Name ways they have translated faith into action by participating in the Faithful Footprints exercise
* Take responsibility for creating a safe learning environment by reviewing and signing the Faithful Journeys group covenant”

**6.4.2:** *Session 4: Be Fair*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/journeys/session4>

“This session will:

* Strengthen Unitarian Universalist identity as children learn about Unitarian Fannie Barrier Williams and her work for justice
* Teach and reinforce our second Unitarian Universalist Principle, justice, equity, and compassion in human relations
* Demonstrate how working together for justice is one way of acting faithfully based on our second Principle
* Demonstrate how children can be agents who promote inclusion and say no to exclusion
* Explore how a club can be an effective tool for change
* Teach children how they can and do express their faith — their ideas of right and wrong, their values, and their beliefs — with real actions.”

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

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

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session4>

“This session will:

* Give participants an opportunity to share acts of goodness that they have done (or witnessed)
* Provide a story and active experiences that demonstrate the meaning of the word ‘Empathy’ and how empathy feels
* Teach that an important part of acting out of goodness is to look at things from other perspectives besides one’s own
* Help participants learn to identify, respect and value the perspectives and experiences of others which differ from their own
* Strengthen participants’ connection to and sense of responsibility to their faith community”

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

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session6>

“This session will:

* Present welcome without prejudgment as a corollary to the first Unitarian Universalist principle: the inherent worth and dignity of every person
* Focus participants’ attention on the congregation as a place where everyone is welcome
* Highlight situations of exclusion and help participants develop empathy for those who are excluded
* Make a connection between justice and the inclusion of all people
* Foster welcoming of all people regardless of apparent differences
* Help participants recognize the injustice inherent in prejudgment”

**6.5.3:** *Session 7: Seeing Others with Awe*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session7>

“This session will:

* Explore the implications of the first Unitarian Universalist principle, the inherent worth and dignity of every person
* Introduce the idea of “awe” and the notion that all living beings are worthy of awe
* Acquaint participants further with one another as they learn to value their similarities and differences
* Demonstrate that seeing others with awe leads to interactions that are characterized by justice and goodness”

**6.5.4:** *Session 8: Do unto Others*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session8>

“Participants will:

* Participate in the “Gems of Goodness” exercise
* Hear a story illustrating an act of compassion for a stranger
* Participate in a cooperative game in which they think about how they would like to be treated, and have an opportunity to treat others with care
* Imagine how they might apply the Golden Rule to a variety of scenarios
* Visualize and portray the concept that all people are our neighbors
* Optional: Planning a faith in action projects in which they will practice reaching out with kindness to neighbors near and far.”

**6.5.5:** *Session 16: Working Together*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session16>

“This session will:

* Increase participants’ understanding of our Unitarian Universalist Principles, particularly the inherent worth and dignity of every person, acceptance of one another and encouragement of spiritual growth, the goal of world community, and respect for the interdependent web of all existence
* Create a forum for children to share with one another about acts of goodness and justice
* Foster participants’ pride in sharing acts of goodness and justice that they have done (or witnessed)
* Demonstrate that individuals gain strength by pooling their strengths with others, and sticking together
* Help participants articulate and appreciate situations in which they have experienced cooperation
* Present opportunities for cooperative problem-solving
* Strengthen participants’ Unitarian Universalist identity by demonstrating the connection between the choices we make in our lives and the beliefs and attitudes we hold as Unitarian Universalists, including the Principles and Sources
* Strengthen participants’ connection to and sense of responsibility to their Moral Tales group
* Optional: Give participants opportunities to review and apply learning from previous Moral Tales sessions
* Optional: Model the rightness of celebrating a collective accumulation of acts of goodness performed (or witnessed) by members of the group.”

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

**6.6.1:** *Session 5: We Are Loved, Flaws and All*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveguide/session5>

“Participants will:

* Learn the first Unitarian Universalist Source, “the sense of wonder we all share”
* Transform apparent flaws into beauty, strength, or other positive attributes, in a game and a craft activity
* Understand the possibility of beauty in imperfection through a story, “The Scratched Diamond”
* Explore ways a human characteristic we usually perceive as negative can also have a positive side, e.g., stubbornness can also be persistence.”

**6.6.2:** *Session 8: Love Is Accepting*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveguide/session8>

“Participants will:

* Experience the fourth Source of Unitarian Universalism, “Jewish and Christian teachings which tell us to love all other as we love ourselves,” through a story from Hebrew scripture
* Understand that a Unitarian Universalist faith guides us to accept everyone as they are—the same way we want to be accepted—regardless of how someone’s behavior matches the gender we perceive them to be
* Explore gender roles and stereotypes in an age-appropriate manner
* Build emotional self-awareness, emotional expression, and empathy.”

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

**6.7.1:** *Session 1: The Journey Begins*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/journeys/session1>

“Participants will:

* Experience the rituals and format of the Faithful Journeys sessions
* Begin to connect beliefs about what is right and fair with actions people can take that express their beliefs
* Experience themselves as beginning a journey
* Affirm, by generating a group covenant, each person’s responsibility for creating the shared learning environment
* Explore the language and meaning of the seven Unitarian Universalist Principles.”

**6.7.2:** *Session 3: Welcoming Superman*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/journeys/session3>

“This session will:

* Use the story of Christopher Reeve and his work on behalf of people with spinal cord injuries to explore the first Unitarian Universalist Principle, the inherent worth and dignity of every person
* Educate and encourage participants to live the first Principle by being careful to welcome all people by making sure places are accessible to all
* Foster participants’ empathy
* Demonstrate how to honor different people’s individual gifts
* Teach children how they can and do express their faith — their ideas of right and wrong, their values, and their beliefs — with real actions.”

**6.8: Signs of our Faith: A Program about Being UU Every Day for Grades 2-3**

**6.8.1:** *Session 13: Finding Beauty in Uniqueness*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/signs/session13>

“Participants will:

* Recognize ways they are unique
* See how diversity strengthens our UU community
* Practice respectful cultural sharing.”

## ****6.9: Windows and Mirrors: A Program about Diversity for Grades 4-5****

**6.9.1:** *Session 4: Building A Community Of Forgiveness*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/windows/session4>

“Participants will:

* Practice the skills of offering forgiveness to those who have broken a covenant
* Connect their own thoughts and experiences with a story about a group of Buddhist students’ experience of covenant and forgiveness
* Articulate ways they express and consider ways to enforce the group covenant
* Understand how practicing forgiveness helps heal hurt feelings
* Commit to practicing at home forgiveness skills learned during the session.”

**6.9.2:** *Session 5: The Blessing Of Imperfection*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/windows/session5>

“This session will:

* Convey that Unitarian Universalism celebrates our differences and affirms the inherent worth of every person
* Teach children to take note of their unique gifts and their potential to learn, grow and contribute to their communities
* Demonstrate how rigid standards of perfection can impede fairness, happiness and progress
* Demonstrate the concept of the beauty of imperfection.”

**6.9.3:** *Session 8: Eyes On The Prize*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/windows/session8>

“This session will:

* Build participants’ media literacy, in particular their awareness of how local and national media portray people of color
* Introduce participants to the concept of being a social justice ally
* Help participants identify existing and future opportunities in their congregation and/or community to act as social justice allies with a view toward building the beloved community
* Promote practices that support our Unitarian Universalist Principles, especially our first, the inherent worth and dignity of every person; second, justice, equity, and compassion in human relations; and sixth, the goal of world community with peace, liberty, and justice for all.”

**6.9.4:** *Session 9: Lean On Me*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/windows/session9>

“This session will:

* Promote being a source of support to members of our family and our friends, and explore the challenges of being a supporter
* Create a sense of trust among the Windows and Mirrors group
* Guide participants to identify ways they support people they care about in their lives
* Affirm two of our Principles; the first, respect for the inherent worth and dignity of every person; and the second, justice, equity, and compassion in human relations.”

**6.9.5:** *Session 14: All Work Has Honor*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/windows/session14>

“Participants will:

* Identify the work they do at this time in their lives
* Learn the phrase “dignity of work” and identify its components, which include safe working conditions, others’ respect and fair compensation
* Explore ways child labor is antithetical to dignity of work and learn about anti-child labor protests at the start of the 20th century
* Understand the guidance of our first Unitarian Universalist Principle to consider all individuals’ work as equally valuable and deserving of respect.”

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

**6.10.1:** *Session 4: Telling Right From Wrong*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/grace/session4>

“Participants will:

* Develop a vocabulary of synonyms for ‘virtue’ and ‘sin’
* Learn the story behind the hymn *Amazing Grace*
* Recognize versions of the Golden Rule from different religions
* Continue to examine the role conscience plays in ethical decision-making
* Express and reflect on their own beliefs about faith and right and wrong
* Explore the concept of ethical eating.”

**6.10.2:** *Session 7: The Second U*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/grace/session7>

“Participants will:

* Understand the concept of universal salvation through an activity related to the story of Noah’s ark
* Understand eternal salvation as a religious idea
* Know Augusta Chapin as a Universalist called to serve the religion of universal salvation
* Consider the concepts of religious proselytism and evangelism
* Optional: Explore the idea of a call to save animals.”

**6.11: Families: A Jr. High School Youth Program that Explores the Diversity, Commonality, and Meaning of Families**

**6.11.1:** *Workshop 2: Many Families*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/families/workshop2>

“Participants will:

* Broaden and deepen their understanding and definitions of families, including the roles and functions of families
* Explore the meaning of healthy families in a diversity of forms
* Understand and appreciate the emotional, affective, and spiritual dimensions of family
* Grow and deepen their naturally compassionate souls
* Begin to understand how the living tradition of the UU faith and its Principles interpret and guide families”

**6.11.2:** *Workshop 3: Our Families*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/families/workshop3>

“Participants will:

* Broaden and deepen their understandings and definitions of families, including the roles and functions of families
* Value each person’s individual worth and realize his/her unique perspective as an interpreter of our world and as a teller of our stories
* Understand and appreciate the emotional, affective, and spiritual dimensions of family
* Learn more fully that there is no “objective” point of view
* Experience the roles of photographer/artist and storyteller—visual and/or text—within a faith community”

**6.11.3:** *Workshop 10: Photos And Stories: Representing Ourselves*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/families/workshop10>

“Participants will:

* Value each individual’s perspective as an interpreter of our world and as a teller of our stories
* Build and foster the ability to understand multiple perspectives
* Develop the ethics of care and responsibility through the intimate and ethical process of representing others
* Engage in the shared ministry of focusing—literally and figuratively—on the faces and narratives of congregation members
* Grow and deepen their naturally compassionate souls
* Engage joyfully in the creation of art
* Learn more fully that there is no “objective” point of view
* Learn how the fundamentals of photography translate to our way of living and interpreting the world more generally
* Engage as leaders of a project that serves the greater congregation and affirms more deeply their place in interdependent, multigenerational, congregational life
* Collaborate with peers
* Experience the roles of photographer/artist and storyteller—visual and/or text—within a faith community”

**6.12: Heeding the Call: A Program on Justicemaking for Junior High School Youth**

**6.12.1:** *Workshop 3: The Call for Understanding*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/call/workshop3>

“This workshop will:

* Identify understanding as a quality needed to bring about a more just world
* Encourage youth to increase their understanding of justice issues
* Explore the meaning of ‘abilities’
* Ask youth to consider their own abilities and the abilities of others
* Reinforce the inherent worth and dignity of every person and all of their abilities (first Principle).”

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

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/call/workshop4>

“This workshop will:

* Identify empathy as a quality needed to bring about a more just world
* Examine how we can act with empathy in big and small ways
* Examine how words can demonstrate empathy
* Connect affirming and promoting the inherent worth and dignity of every person (first Principle) to fulfilling people’s basic needs.”

**6.12.3:** *Workshop 11: The Call for Forgiveness*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/call/workshop11>

“This workshop will:

* Identify forgiveness as a quality needed to bring about a more just world
* Demonstrate that forgiveness is connected to the inherent worth and dignity of every person (first Principle)
* Explore forgiveness as a challenging and rewarding activity
* Examine forgiveness on different levels, both large and small.”

**Resources for Youth & Adults**

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

**7.1:** *Mutual Worth & Dignity* by Gregory C. Ellison II (234 words)

In [theologian Howard] Thurman’s oft-quoted baccalaureate speech, *The Sound of the Genuine*, he describes an encounter between Jesus and a demon-possessed man. Though the man was sequestered to a living death of rattling his chains in a graveyard on the outskirts of town, Jesus posed two dignity-altering questions that struck the man’s inward center: “Who are you? What is your name?” and for a moment his tilted mind righted itself and he said, “That’s it! I don’t know. There are legions of me and they riot in my streets. If I only knew, then I would be whole.”

By inquiring of the grave-dweller’s name, Jesus bestowed upon him dignity and personhood. Scripture further tells us that after driving out the demons, Jesus sent the once-possessed man back home to face those who had marginalized him. Not only was he commissioned to serve as a credible messenger of the healer who welcomed him as a child of God; the once-possessed man was tasked to love those who attempted to destroy him.

Radical in every right, Jesus said to the disinherited, “Love your enemy.” In outlining the taxonomy of hatred, Thurman explains that contact without fellowship leads to unsympathetic understanding, and finally to an active functioning of ill will. To disrupt the breeding of hate, Jesus advocated love. “The first step toward such love is a common sharing of a sense of mutual worth and value.”

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/28271>

**7.2:** *Gay Pride and Doubt* by Joe Perez (248 words)

Pride isn’t a sin when it’s an expression of healthy self-esteem. Celebrating gay pride is an essential affirmation of our human dignity, whether that takes the form of marching in a parade or being more honest with our friends and family about who we are.

Pride can surely elevate the gay spirit, but what about the gay soul? Feeding the spirit requires that we envision our ideals, put our philosophy of life into action, and have a strong sense that we are a woman or man with dignity and integrity. Positive self-esteem is vital for these endeavors. In contrast, soulfulness …insists on being true to what’s real without pretense or apology. Being soulfully gay means not using false pride as a shield over our pain, shame, and guilt. Authenticity demands that we allow a place for all our feelings, especially the uncomfortable ones that we’d rather cover over with denial, secrecy, and rigid thinking.

…There are times for celebrating gay pride and times for acknowledging our doubts and lack of wholeness. For every man and woman marching gleefully in the parade, there are others who aren’t yet ready to celebrate, at least not until they’ve done their soul work.

The point of doing soul work is …to break down the falseness of our sense of gay pride so that we can eventually emerge from the other side into an authentic form of gay pride. But the soul’s first step down can be a rough and tumbling one: humility.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/16955>

**7.3:** *Dignity in Mecca* by Abdellah Hammoudi (250 words)

At the end of the day, …prayers …invited me to wander off into the night. My night. Those who passed on had crossed a threshold that remained open, awaiting those who would follow. A door, like the one a great painter once drew, cut out of the clear night, often sprang into my imagination. But this time the black cube sent it back into nothingness. This time the circle, seen from above, looked like a gigantic white flower with innumerable petals. Around the cube, life affirmed its energy. And the cloth covering it revealed precisely what it purported to hide: the will to bring life about. The cloth clothed nothing.

Under the sign of the Kaaba, differences didn’t disappear, as apologists never tired of claiming. On the contrary: they stood out clearly and gained strength. They were recognized and simultaneously subjected to the values of solidarity and justice. These values did not imply that conditions had to become equal. Around the black cube, the circle consecrated the equal dignity of all Muslims, but it did not eliminate differences in class or status. People accepted these differences; at the same time, they subordinated them to religion and to testimony, which placed them in the realm of contingency. Equality was expressed in contingent difference, not through measures that would impose it by a universal (and abstract) definition of humanity. I felt this intuition of contingency sharpen in my mind and others’. Injustice that threatened dignity was refused here more firmly than elsewhere.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/14903>

**7.4:** *From Dignity to Reverence* by Abraham Joshua Heschel (253 words)

The inner value of any entity—men or women, trees or stars, ideas or things—is, as a matter of fact, not entirely subject to any purposes of ours. They have a value in themselves quite apart from any function which makes them useful to our purposes….

Further, piety is an attitude toward reality in its entirety. It is alert to the dignity of every human being, and to those bearings upon the spiritual value which even inanimate things inalienably possess. The pious …[person], being able to sense the relations of things to transcendent values, will be incapable of disparaging any of them by enslaving them to his own service. The secret of every being is in the divine care and concern that are invested in it. In every event there is something sacred at stake, and it is for this reason that the approach of the pious …[person] to reality is in reverence. This explains …solemnity and …conscientiousness in dealing with things both great and small.

Reverence is a specific attitude toward something that is precious and valuable, toward someone…. It is a salute of the soul, an awareness of value without enjoyment of that value or seeking any personal advantage from it. There is a unique kind of transparence about things and events. The world is seen through, and no veil can conceal…. So, the …[person] is ever alert to see behind the appearance of things a trace of the divine, and …[this] attitude toward life is one of expectant reverence.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/13272>

**7.5:** *Creating a Culture of Human Rights* by Richard Amesbury and George M. Newlands (207 words)

The claims of human rights make demands on all of us…. Opportunities are many; the challenge is to make the demanding move from spectator to participant in the global struggle for human dignity. …We offer the following ten suggestions for effective action:

1. Think globally. …The denial of human rights anywhere is a scandal everywhere.

2. Act locally. Start where you are…. Ask tough questions. …

3. Try to avoid the arrogance of cultural or national imperialism. …

4. Work in partnership with others. Remember that you are not alone. …Help raise awareness about human rights issues within your community.

5. Have faith that human rights action does make a difference. …

6. Keep hope alive. …Take courage from the example of others, and cultivate the virtue of hope (as distinct from naive optimism).

7. Practice peace and reconciliation. Don’t become embittered by the world’s evils. …

8. Make the most of the available resources, including the moral and intellectual resources of your (religious) tradition.

9. Persevere. Projects without adequate planning, resources, and willpower almost inevitably fail….

10. Focus on what matters most. Don’t become so preoccupied with any particular goal, strategy, or theory that you neglect the needs of the individuals it is meant to benefit.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/18131>

**7.6:** *Aging with Dignity* by Tom Neal (236 words)

…The term “human dignity” has become a commonplace in our culture, which is a great achievement, but sometimes it’s important to step back and reflect on the meaning of words we can sometimes take for granted.

The English word dignity comes from the Latin word, dignitas, which means “worthiness.” Dignity implies that each person is worthy of honor and respect for who they are, not just for what they can do. In other words, human dignity cannot be earned and cannot be taken away. It’s an inalienable gift …and every other good thing in life depends on the safeguarding of our fundamental dignity. As the Universal Declaration of Human Rights puts it, “recognition of the inherent dignity…of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.”

When we are sick, disabled or at the end of life, we especially can feel our own worth is threatened as we lose certain freedoms we once enjoyed; lose a sense of bodily control; suffer the paralysis of pain; or face the fear of death. Aging with Dignity ...operates out of the conviction that not only does each person possess a unique dignity, but that we are also “our brother’s (and sister’s) keeper.” That’s precisely why …help build up around each person a community of love, faith and compassionate support that honors their dignity at the time they find themselves most vulnerable.

Source: <https://agingwithdignity.org/what-is-human-dignity/>

**7.7:** *The Declaration of Dignity* by Donna Hicks (211 words)

Why is there so much conflict in the world—between nations, in our communities, at work—even in our personal lives?

I believe that so many of these struggles are about dignity; about losing sight of the fact that we were all born worthy.

Imagine what the world would be like if we treated each other as if we mattered—if we all valued each other’s dignity?

If we did, we would have to believe that we are all worthy of:

. . . having our identity accepted, no matter who we are

. . . recognition of our unique qualities and ways of life

. . . acknowledgement—to be seen, heard, and responded to

. . . belonging and feeling included

. . .freedom and independence and a life of hope and possibility

. . . being safe and secure

. . . being treated in a fair and evenhanded way

. . . being given the benefit of the doubt

. . . being understood

. . . an apology when someone does us harm

In recognition of the importance of dignity, please join me in embracing this Declaration. We might not change the world, but we can create a more respectful way of being in it together.

Source: <https://declaredignity.com/declaration/>

## 7.8: *What is Pluralism?* by Diana L. Eck,The Pluralism Project at Harvard University (305 words)

The plurality of religious traditions and cultures has come to characterize every part of the world today. But what is pluralism? Here are four points to begin our thinking:

First, pluralism is not diversity alone, but the energetic engagement with diversity. Diversity can and has meant the creation of religious ghettoes with little traffic between or among them. Today, religious diversity is a given, but pluralism is not a given; it is an achievement. Mere diversity without real encounter and relationship will yield increasing tensions in our societies.

Second, pluralism is not just tolerance, but the active seeking of understanding across lines of difference. Tolerance is a necessary public virtue, but it does not require Christians and Muslims, Hindus, Jews, and ardent secularists to know anything about one another. Tolerance is too thin a foundation for a world of religious difference and proximity. It does nothing to remove our ignorance of one another, and leaves in place the stereotype, the half-truth, the fears that underlie old patterns of division and violence. In the world in which we live today, our ignorance of one another will be increasingly costly.

Third, pluralism is not relativism, but the encounter of commitments. The new paradigm of pluralism does not require us to leave our identities and our commitments behind, for pluralism is the encounter of commitments. It means holding our deepest differences, even our religious differences, not in isolation, but in relationship to one another.

Fourth, pluralism is based on dialogue. The language of pluralism is that of dialogue and encounter, give and take, criticism and self-criticism. Dialogue means both speaking and listening, and that process reveals both common understandings and real differences. Dialogue does not mean everyone at the “table” will agree with one another. Pluralism involves the commitment to being at the table -- with one’s commitments.

Source: <https://pluralism.org/>

**7.9:** *Dignity’s Fragility* by Remy Debes (264 words)

…Our concept of dignity is tenuous …[because] it comes with a peculiar existential challenge. …The relative youth of our concept of human dignity is juxtaposed by its present ubiquity. The moralized concept of dignity is a cornerstone of our contemporary Western ethos, standing …with other fundamental ideals such as liberty and equality. In everything from the …Universal Declaration of Human Rights [1948]…, “human dignity” is literally ascribed as the basis of human rights. Judges appeal to it …in court rulings. Humanitarian agencies often cite it in their mission statements. And the oppressed the world over cry out in its name.

And yet, the idea of human dignity is beset by hypocrisy. After all, our Western ethos evolved from, and with, the most violent oppression. For 200 years, we’ve breathed in the heady aspirations of liberty and justice for all, but somehow breathed out genocide, slavery, eugenics, colonization, segregation, mass incarceration, racism, sexism, classism and, in short, blood, rape, misery and murder. It shocks the imagination.

The primary way we have dealt with this shock and the hypocrisy it marks has been to tell ourselves a story—a story of progress. …The story’s common hook is the way it moves the “real” hypocrisy into the past: “Our forebears made a terrible mistake trumpeting ideas such as equality and human dignity, while simultaneously practicing slavery, keeping the vote from women, and so on. But today we recognize this hypocrisy, and, though it might not be extinct, we are worlds away from the errors of the past.” This story has sold especially well in mainstream white America.

Source: <https://aeon.co/essays/human-dignity-is-an-ideal-with-remarkably-shallow-roots>

**7.10:** *What Is the Real Meaning of Dignity?* by Donna Hicks (252 words)

…Few people understand the true meaning of dignity, and even fewer realize the extraordinary impact it has on our lives and relationships.

That’s not to say that people don’t react [to] …the word “dignity.” There is always an immediate recognition of the word and its importance….

The most common response people offer is that dignity is about respect. To the contrary, dignity is not the same as respect. Dignity is our inherent value and worth as human beings; everyone is born with it. Respect, on the other hand, is earned through one’s actions.

…Our shared desire for dignity transcends all of our differences, putting our common human identity above all else. While our uniqueness is important, history has shown us that if we don’t take the next step toward recognizing our shared identity, conflicts in our workplace, our personal lives, and between nations will continue to abound.

The glue that holds all of our relationships together is the mutual recognition of the desire to be seen, heard, listened to, and treated fairly; to be recognized, understood, and to feel safe in the world. When our identity is accepted and we feel included, we are granted a sense of freedom and independence and a life filled with hope and possibility. And when are given an apology when someone does us harm, we recognize that even when we fall short of being our best selves, there is always a way to reconnect. “I’m sorry” are two of the most powerful words anyone can utter.

Source: <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/dignity/201304/what-is-the-real-meaning-dignity-0>

**7.11:** *What is Dignity?* by Cultures of Dignity (187 words)

Dignity, the belief that all humans have equal worth and value…. Everyone has dignity. Everyone has the same amount. It cannot be earned or lost. Dignity is a given. It is an absolute. It is a non-negotiable right.

It may seem simple that everyone has essential value. However, the practice of using dignity to guide our interactions with each other is actually a radical shift. And while we are all born with dignity, we are not born knowing how to act in ways that honor everyone’s dignity, including our own.

Take a moment to remember an adult you respected when you were growing up. Your answer is most likely based on how that person treated you and others, not how successful or powerful they were. You respected them because they were treating others with dignity.

Using dignity instead of respect gives us a new way to interact with each other. A way where we can recognize the person’s essential worth apart from their actions. This is where we get our courage to stand up for ourselves and have the tough conversations we so often shy away from.

Source: <https://culturesofdignity.com/what-is-dignity/>

**7.12:** *What’s the Difference Between Dignity and Respect?* by Charlie Kuhn (222 words)

…Dignity and *respect are words with profound meaning….*

*…*Dignity: From the Latin word *dignitas*, meaning “to be worthy.”As in: All people have the right to be recognized for their inherent humanity and treated ethically. Dignity is a given. You just have it and no one can take it away.

Respect: From the Latin word *respectus,* meaning “to look back at.”As in: showing admiration for someone because of their abilities, qualities or achievements. Respect is earned.

…The problem is we use respect in two distinctively different ways: Recognizing a power or status difference between people or recognizing the value of a person.

…The question …become[s]: …If dignity is a given that can’t be taken away, what does it look like to treat someone you don’t respect with dignity?

If we use dignity as our anchor and ground our work in the belief that every person has value, then we can separate people’s abusive actions from their essential humanity. For example, there may be a boss at work who belittles, bullies, or embarrasses people under them in front of others. The boss does not need to be respected…, but they need to be treated with dignity. It may look like the same thing…, but it is an important distinction. Respect acknowledges the behavior while dignity teaches the importance of civility and humanity.

Source: <https://www.artemisconnection.com/whats-the-difference-between-dignity-and-respect/>

**7.13:** *The Dignity of Making Art* by Julia Cameron (265 words)

As artists, we must be in it for the long haul, not just the showy seasons of success. As artists, we are subject to cycles of acceptance. There will be bleak seasons and fruitful seasons. There will be successes and there will be failures. We cannot control the reception of our work. We must find our dignity in the doing. We must learn to say that our work, even if unsung, does count for something.

There is dignity in the act of making art, no matter how that art is received. Much of the best work I have ever written has never been published or produced. Faith tells me that there must be some reason for that that I cannot yet see. I cling to my faith and turn aside bitterness. I work although my work has come to 'nothing.' I have whole novels that haven't yet sold. I have fine plays that have seen no productions. My artist's faith tells me to keep on writing, that there must be a way, and a reason, to keep on keeping on. Faith allows for a career to take detours. Faith allows for a career to even grind to an apparent outward halt. Faith takes, always, the longer view. It divorces our creative practice from its current reception.

…There is some simple dignity that lies in the labor of doing the art for art's sake and not for the glory and acclaim that we hope will accrue. I am a writer and writers write. Every day that I write, I am keeping my side of the bargain.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/16458>

**7.14:** *Dignity* by Remy Debes (218 words)

Dignity has three broad meanings. There is an historically old sense of poise or gravitas that we still associate with refined manners, and expect of those with high social rank. In this sense, dignity is almost synonymous with “dignified.” Much more common is the family of meanings associated with self-esteem and integrity, which is what we tend to mean when we talk of a person’s own “sense of dignity” or when we say, for example, “they robbed him of his dignity.” Third, there is the more abstract but no less widespread meaning of human dignity as an inherent or unearned worth or status, which all human beings share equally. This is its *moralized* connotation….

This moralized connotation is implied in the couplet “human dignity,” one that picks out the “basic” kind of worth…. “Basic” doesn’t mean “simple”—as if the value in question were less important. It means “fundamental.” It is the kind of worth everyone has, and has equally, just because we are persons.

This fundamental worth is usually taken to be distinctive in some sense. Sometimes, this distinctiveness has been expressed by the claim that humans are *supremely* valuable. …But in modern discussions, dignity is usually said to be distinctive in the sense that it is incommensurable: it can’t be exchanged for other kinds of worth.

Source: <https://aeon.co/essays/human-dignity-is-an-ideal-with-remarkably-shallow-roots>

**7.15:** *Human Being versus Human Doing* by Leland R. Beaumont (174 words)

Dignity—the quality of worth and honor intrinsic to every person—establishes basic entitlements that are the unalienable birthright of every human. It is our intrinsic legitimacy. We are worthy simply because we exist. Dignity is the threshold level of status required to meet basic human needs. It establishes the basic boundaries of humanity. Indignity—trespassing into the territory established by dignity—is the essence of insult, humiliation, and the root of anger, shame, and hate. This trespass is the basic tool of tyranny, oppression, and coercion. All of history is the quest for dignity. We are worthy simply because we are alive; it is a cruel injustice to deny someone their inalienable worth. Dignity is a congruence between the respect we demonstrate and the intrinsic legitimacy of each person.

The intrinsic worth of humans is acknowledged whenever we fawn over newborn babies. Although the infant has not yet accomplished anything, it is universally regarded as precious and worthy of care, attention, and respect. This is the distinction between human *being* and human *doing*.

Source: <http://www.emotionalcompetency.com/dignity.htm>

**7.16:** *Dignity in Buddhism* by Sallie Tisdale (229 words)

Dignity is often thought of as an intrinsic quality, a part of our human nature—inherent worth. Dignity is one of the Buddhist virtues as well, because human life is seen as particularly valuable. …In Buddhist terms, our worth is a product of our ability to choose between right and wrong, between truth and delusion—and these are consequential choices.

…Because human beings can deliberately choose to follow the dharma, we can consciously awaken. This potential for enlightenment is the source of self-worth and self-respect. Dignity is part of our karmic inheritance. This dignity has nothing to do with our conditions or how others view us. People have such worth even if they are completely unaware of their own capacity for enlightenment.

A belief in intrinsic worth is the basis for our modern concept of human rights, yet there is a contradiction in how we respond. In modern terms, the opposite of dignity is humiliation, and this plays out with real consequences. When people are forced into difficult conditions or treated with disrespect, they are said to have lost their dignity. People treated poorly may, in fact, lose self-respect—may come to believe that they have no value, may even feel ashamed. …But if dignity is the expression of intrinsic worth, it cannot be taken away or destroyed by the actions of others—or even by our own self-hatred.

Source: <https://tricycle.org/magazine/on-dignity/>

**7.17:** *Dignity* by Too-qua-stee (199 words)

And what, in fact, is dignity? In those  
Who have it pure, it is the soul’s repose,   
The base of character—no mere reserve   
That springs from pride, or want of mental nerve.  
The dignity that wealth, or station, breeds,   
Or in the breast on base emotion feeds,   
Is easy weighed, and easy to be sized—A bastard virtue, much to be despised.

True dignity is like a summer tree.   
Beneath whose shade both beast, and bird, and bee,  
When by the heated skies oppressed, may come,  
And feel, in its magnificence, at home;   
Or rather like a mountain which forgets  
Itself in its own greatness, and so lets   
Vast armies fuss and fight upon its sides,  
While high in clouds its peaceful summit hides,  
And from the voiceless crest of glistening snow,   
Pours trickling fatness on the fields below;  
Repellant force, that daunts obtrusive wrong,  
And woos the timid steps of right along;  
And hence a garb which magistrates prepare,  
When called to judge, and really seem to wear.   
In framing character on whate’er plan,   
‘Tis always needed to complete the man,   
The job quite done, and Dignity without,   
Is like an apple pie, the fruit left out.

Source: <https://poets.org/poem/dignity> (public domain)

**7.18:** *The Preamble of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (*1948) by the United Nations (320 words)

Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world,

Whereas disregard and contempt for human rights have resulted in barbarous acts which have outraged the conscience of mankind, and the advent of a world in which human beings shall enjoy freedom of speech and belief and freedom from fear and want has been proclaimed as the highest aspiration of the common people,

Whereas it is essential, if man is not to be compelled to have recourse, as a last resort, to rebellion against tyranny and oppression, that human rights should be protected by the rule of law,

Whereas it is essential to promote the development of friendly relations between nations,

Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

Whereas Member States have pledged themselves to achieve, in co-operation with the United Nations, the promotion of universal respect for and observance of human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Whereas a common understanding of these rights and freedoms is of the greatest importance for the full realization of this pledge,

Now, Therefore THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY proclaims THIS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS as a common standard of achievement for all peoples and all nations, to the end that every individual and every organ of society, keeping this Declaration constantly in mind, shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance, both among the peoples of Member States themselves and among the peoples of territories under their jurisdiction.

Source: <https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>

**7.19:** *The Elements of Dignity* by Joanna Smykowski (232 words)

…Dignity …is an intricate web of positivity that develops inside ourselves. It is something that we must be mindful of every single day.

Dignity requires the following.

*Self-worth:* Self-worth is a measure of how much we value ourselves. It requires understanding what makes us special, and why we matter.

*Self-esteem:* Self-esteem is very closely related to self-worth. It stems from the attitudes, feelings, and opinions that we hold about ourselves. It is often the internal voice that tells us "you are …enough."

*Self-love:* Self-love is the concept of loving yourself just as much as you love someone else. …Increasing our self-love requires us to put ourselves first sometimes. We must prioritize our well-being physically, emotionally, and mentally.

*Self-appreciation:* …Appreciation is not just for others; we can show ourselves appreciation too. Anytime we do something that is successful or drives us forward, or when we simply do something that makes us feel good, it is important to take a few moments to thank ourselves for taking the opportunity to do that thing.

*Self-care:* Self-care goes hand in hand with self-love, but it is the action step behind self-love. …Emotional and mental self-care can be achieved by practicing kindness with ourselves, doing meditation, or simply taking time to reflect on the great things in our life. …

*Self-confidence:* Self-confidence is the idea that we can achieve whatever we set our hearts and minds to.

Source: <https://www.betterhelp.com/advice/general/what-is-the-true-meaning-of-dignity/>

**7.20:** *Dignity’s Shallow Roots* by Remy Debes (218 words)

…Why think the concept of human dignity is tenuous? In the first place, it is very young. The term is not in any existing copy of the Magna Carta (1215). It does show up much later in the English Bill of Rights (1689), but not with a moralized meaning. People were not yelling ‘Liberté, égalité, dignité!’ during the French Revolution. And for all its fiery rhetoric about equality and “inalienable” rights, the US Declaration of Independence does not speak of human dignity. Nor does the US Constitution.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights used dignity to justify itself: a conceptual watershed.

You won’t find any moralized talk of human dignity in any of the old slave narratives. And it isn’t in the passionate abolitionist speeches, pamphlets and newspaper editorials of the 19th century. Ditto for suffrage. Mary Wollstonecraft, Sojourner Truth, Frederick Douglass, Susan B Anthony, Jane Austen, Harriet Beecher Stowe: none used the term much, and almost never with its moralized meaning. In fact, until at least 1850, the English term ‘dignity’ had no currency as meaning anything like the ‘unearned worth or status of humans’, and very little such currency well into the 1900s. When the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) used the terminology of human dignity to justify itself, this turned out to be a conceptual watershed. We have not been talking about human dignity for long.

Source: <https://aeon.co/essays/human-dignity-is-an-ideal-with-remarkably-shallow-roots>

**7.21:** *The Seven Pillars of Dignity & Respect* by the Dignity & Respect Campaign (276 words)

**1. Start with You.** *Understand how you see yourself, how others see you, and how your filters guide you, and influence your behavior.* …Know your strengths as well as you know your weaknesses. Understand what has made you you.

**2. Sweat the Small Stuff.** *Understand the concepts of intent vs. impact. Become mindful of how you respond to others and be responsible for your words and actions.*

…Be sensitive to others and aware of your own actions. Hold yourself accountable.

**3. Build Cultural Awareness.** *Respond to employees, customers, and business partners in a culturally appropriate manner. Treat others the way they want to be treated.*

Cultural awareness …involve[s] learning about other cultures or belief systems …understanding …differences and welcoming them into your communities or circles….

**4. Find Common Ground.** *Work through differences and gain agreement while maintaining dignity and respect. Acknowledge the value of different perspectives.*  Set aside differences and look for the commonalities.

**5. Join the Team**. *Create interactions on teams that are respectful of individual differences, build trust and agreement, limit bias and favoritism, and strive for the best overall outcomes.* …Work to find the strengths of your teammates, and figure out the best ways to encourage and inspire each member.

**6. Lead the Way.** *Be inclusive with every person, in every interaction, in everything you do, every day.* …This …can be as small as an effort to smile at everyone you pass on the street.

**7. Do the Right Thing.** *Do your part to make your organization, school, community, and sports team a better place for ALL to live, work, learn, and play.* Don’t do the easy thing—do the right thing. …

Source: <https://dignityandrespect.org/the-7-pillars-of-dignity-respect/>

**7.22:** *What Does It Mean to Dignify Others?* by People First Productivity Solutions (232 words)

Dignity means worthy of honor and respect, having merit. It stems from the Latin *dignitas* meaning “equivalent to.” Dignifying others means to confer honor or dignity or to ennoble them. It means showing respect for another’s worth and acknowledging each person as equivalent to every other person.

It’s easier to dignify some people than it is to dignify others. We put the burden on the other party instead of accepting our own responsibility for how we treat others. We allow our discomfort regarding those who are unlike us to justify our un-dignifying behaviors.

…The Dignity Project’s principles are:

1. Every human being has a right to lead a dignified life.
2. A dignified life means an opportunity to fulfil one’s potential, which is based on having a humane level of health care, education, income and security.
3. Dignity means having the freedom to make decisions on one’s life and to be met with respect for this right.
4. Dignity should be the basic guiding principle for all actions.
5. Ultimately, our own dignity is interdependent with the dignity of others.

An important exclusion to note: You don’t have to agree with others, endorse their actions, like their choices, be comfortable around them, or share their beliefs in order to dignify them. All you have to do is respect that every other person has merit and worth that is equivalent to your own.

Source: <https://blog.peoplefirstps.com/connect2lead/to-dignify-others>

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

We can bring loving kindness into many features of our life. There is something very satisfying about contributing to the happiness and security of others, although caring …makes us vulnerable. We might be misunderstood, overstretched, or caught up in conflict.

…We may profoundly disagree with other people. We may not feel any sympathy for their values and decisions, but we do not have to build a wall of resistance against them. Let’s never forget that our blood is all of one color. If we believe they are truly different, we cannot act wisely in the face of fresh information. When our mind hardens, it forms a barrier to our deeper feelings. Then we may make cold, negative judgements that probably won’t serve the true interests of others. Where there is kindness, we are willing to struggle with difficult decisions out of respect for others and ourselves.

Some people get the idea that living with kindness is a mistake. Kind people always get walked over, they claim, and so they harden their hearts so that nobody can reach them. That same defensive wall also stops them from reaching deep within themselves. There are risks in kindness. The most obvious one is being taken advantage of by the selfish and the unscrupulous. Yes, that happens, but authentic kindness, tempered with equanimity, will not wither under such exploitation. Our kindness is then a public statement of personal dignity. Furthermore, a good conscience makes for a soft pillow.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/13577>

**7.24:** *Restoring the Dignity of Old Age* by Marc Agronin (249 words)

Rabbi Menachem Mendel Schneerson held that old age is to be viewed not as a failing but as an ongoing opportunity to accomplish one's purpose in life.

…Twentieth-century theologian Abraham Heschel added an existential component to the notion of spiritual wisdom, suggesting that if late life is “an age of anguish and boredom,” then the answer must be to cultivate a sense of significant being as “a thing of the spirit… not entertainment but celebration.” He added, poetically, that “old men [and women] need a vision, not only recreation. Old men [and women] need a dream, not only a memory.” In this forward-thinking view, aging is a formative time, “rich in possibilities to unlearn the follies of a lifetime, to see through inbred self-deceptions, to deepen understanding and compassion, to widen the horizon of honesty, to refine the sense of fairness.”

Heschel offered an antidote to the distorted equating of aging with death or dementia…. “The effort to restore the dignity of old age will depend upon our ability to revive the equation of old age and wisdom,” he wrote. “Wisdom is the substance upon which the inner security of the old will depend forever. But the attainment of wisdom is the work of a lifetime.” Wisdom is thus more than an achievement of aging; it is as integral and essential to the aging process as walking is to the toddler, play is to the young child, and the pursuit of love and partnership is to the young adult.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/20756>

**7.25:** *Hospitality Affirms Dignity* by L. Shannon Jung (245 words)

1. *Hospitality is welcoming.* We know very well the difference between being welcomed warmly and not being welcomed or being welcomed only lukewarmly. …Just as family and friends flourish in the context of a warm welcome and a hospitable meal, so also do …the homeless, the disabled, the displaced, and even strangers and enemies.

2. *Hospitality involves the recognition of the dignity and value of others.*

…Perhaps it is this dignity and recognition that enable people to live a reputable, respectful life. Partly attitude, partly action, recognition means meeting the other as a person whose dynamics are as complicated and whose life is as complex as one's own. …

3. *Hospitality usually involves eating*…. In part, this is an expression of our basic equality and the fact that we all have basic needs.

It is also true that many people in our world are hungry. …Eating with and feeding people is urgent for those without adequate food. As … Ed Loring …likes to say, 'Justice is important, but supper is essential.' …Practicing hospitality is a matter of justice as well as of love.

4. *Hospitality is essential to human well-being.* We all need hospitality; we need to receive it and we need to give it. The claim that only by sharing can we experience wholeness applies to hospitality as well.

…Eating together is a concrete symbol…. It expresses the basic worth of each person and reveals to us that we exist in relationship with others….

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/16827>

**7.26:** *Dignity’s Gentleness* by Musa Kazim Gulcur (235 words)

*Hilm* means being inclined to gentleness or mildness; this adjective describes a person who is quiet and peaceful, slow to anger, quick to forgive, and who is in control of their lower nature. It also …embodies behavior like patience and tolerance in the face of unpleasant situations, keeping one's cool when provoked, and remaining dignified, serious and calm in response to distressing or unkind treatment. *Hilm,* along with humility, …are the source and origin of all other good character traits.

…In addition to dignity and calm, *hilm* also means to act with consciousness and without haste. The result is a good and moral manner…. *Hilm* is one of the basic elements of good morality. With *hilm* it is also possible to perfect the mind and to improve other aspects of one's temperament. Just as knowledge can be gained through learning, so *hilm* can be attained by making an effort. In other words, it is possible to reach *hilm* by working.

*Hilm* is also closely related to controlling one's negative responses and reactions. It is much more difficult for those who cannot control or reign their temper to attain a state of *hilm.* Scholars consider the ability to act with *hilm* to be among the most virtuous practices.

…As we can see, *hilm* indicates total gentleness, as well as behavior such as overlooking faults, forgiving others, and being open to everyone for the sake of dialogue.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/20078>

**7.27:** *The Dignity of Compassion* by His Holiness the Dalai Lama (286 words)

Compassion is one of the principal things that make our lives meaningful. It is the source of all lasting happiness and joy. And it is the foundation of a good heart, the heart of one who acts out of a desire to help others. Through kindness, through affection, through honesty, through truth and justice toward all others we ensure our own benefit. This is not a matter for complicated theorizing. It is a matter of common sense. There is no denying that consideration of others is worthwhile. There is no denying that our happiness is inextricably bound up with the happiness of others. There is no denying that if society suffers, we ourselves suffer. Nor is there any denying that the more our hearts and minds are afflicted with ill-will, the more miserable we become. Thus, we can reject everything else: religion, ideology, all received wisdom. But we cannot escape the necessity of love and compassion.

This, then, is my true religion, my simple faith. In this sense, there is no need for temple or church, for mosque or synagogue, no need for complicated philosophy, doctrine, or dogma. Our own heart, our own mind, is the temple. The doctrine is compassion. Love for others and respect for their rights and dignity, no matter who or what they are: ultimately these are all we need. So long as we practice these in our daily lives, then no matter if we are learned or unlearned, whether we believe in Buddha or God, or follow some other religion or none at all, as long as we have compassion for others and conduct ourselves with restraint out of a sense of responsibility, there is no doubt we will be happy.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/13434>

**7.28:** *Calling Forth Innate Dignity* by Seyyd Hossein Nasr (237 words)

A term often used by Sufis is found also in most of the major languages of the Islamic peoples. It is *adab*, which means at once comportment, courtesy, culture, refined speech, literature, correct ethical attitudes, and many other concepts. It is really untranslatable and perhaps should be used in English in its Arabic form like terms such as *karma* and *guru*, which have entered English recently from Sanskrit, or *jihad* from Arabic. …For traditional Muslims, *adab* encompasses nearly all aspects of life from greeting people to eating to sitting in a gathering to entering a place of worship. As for quintessential *adab*, it has always been associated by Sufis with the actions and words of the Prophet himself. *Adab* is the means of controlling the passions, which affect and often originate human actions. It is also a way of formalizing human actions in such a way that they display harmony and beauty rather than disorderliness and ugliness. *Adab* even disciplines the body and brings out its innate dignity …and teaches us how to carry ourselves in a manner that is worthy of the human state. Its goal is to control the ego and the passions and to inculcate the virtues of humility and charity within the human soul as well as bring out the majestic aspect of our existence. It is therefore closely related to spiritual discipline and is of great value in performing acts of goodness.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/17405>

**7.29:** *We Are Each Other’s Destiny* by Mary Oliver (273 words)

…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…. I am not talking about having faith necessarily, although one hopes to. What I mean by spirituality is not theology, but attitude. Such interest nourishes me beyond the finest compendium of facts. …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…. I would not talk about the wind, and the oak tree, and the leaf on the oak tree, but on their behalf. I would talk about the owl and the thunderworm and the daffodil and the red-spotted newt as a company of spirits, as well as bodies. I would say that the fox stepping out over the snow has nerves as fine as mine, and a better courage.

…I would say that 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>

**7.30:** *Even Your Enemy Has Dignity* by Walter Wink (225 words)

Jesus was not content merely to empower the powerless, however, and here his teachings fundamentally transcend Saul Alinsky's. Jesus' sayings about nonretaliation are of one piece with his challenge to love our enemies. Here it is enough to remark that Jesus did not advocate nonviolence merely as a technique for outwitting the enemy, but as a just means of opposing the enemy in such a way as to hold open the possibility of the enemy's becoming just as well. Both sides must win.

…Today we can draw on the cumulative historical experience of nonviolent social struggle, …but the spirit, the thrust, the surge for creative transformation that is the ultimate principle of the universe, is the same we see incarnated in Jesus. …It seems almost as if his teaching has only now, in this generation, become an inescapable task and practical necessity.

To people dispirited by the enormity of the injustices that crush us and the intractability of those in positions of power, Jesus' words beam hope across the centuries. We need not be afraid. We can reassert our human dignity. We can lay claim to the creative possibilities that are still ours, burlesque the injustice of unfair laws, and force evil out of hiding from behind the facade of legitimacy.

To risk confronting the Powers …is not likely to attract the faint of heart.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/14644>

**7.31:** *Invocation for Children* by Angeles Arrien (270 words)

May you be powerfully loving and lovingly powerful; may you always have love be your guide with family, friends, and colleagues. Remember to listen carefully to your own heart and to the hearts of others.  
 May you have the courage to always follow your dreams. Take an action every day to support your life dream, your love of nature, and your integrity.  
 May you have the strength to overcome fear and pride, and instead follow what has heart and meaning for you.  
 May you be guardians of truth, beauty, creativity, and laughter. May you protect, preserve, and care for nature and the wilderness.  
 May you show respect to people of all ages and races, and help all living things keep their dignity.  
 May you help to make a better world for the poor, the sick, the elderly, and the young by being an active, committed, and positive force in your community.  
 May you value and maintain your health and the health and well-being of others.  
 May you respect all the ways human beings access their spirituality.  
 May you help create a global community committed to peace and nonviolence.  
 May you keep learning; ask questions, explore, discover, and always maintain curiosity and hope.  
 May you honor and respect diversity and the beauty and magic that occur when differences join to create something far greater than one can imagine.  
 May you bring your gifts and talents forward every day without hesitation or reservation.  
 May you honor your ancestors and all those who have gone before you, for they have paved the way for you to do what you are here to do.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/18113>

**7.32:** *To Be A Hope* by Cornell West (273 words)

…I prefer to *be* a hope rather than talk about hope. Being a hope is being in motion, on the move with body on the line, mind set on freedom, soul full of courage, and heart shot through with love. Being a hope is forging moral and spiritual fortitude, putting on intellectual armor, and being willing to live and die for the empowerment of the wretched of the earth.

Race matters in the twenty-first century are part of a moral and spiritual war over resources, power, souls, and sensibilities. In the face of the American way of war — defeat, destroy, devastate — I have the black freedom struggle and the Black musical tradition. I also pull from the rich resources of the LGBTQ communities, the feminist movement, Indigenous peoples' struggles, the environmental justice and otherly-abled communities, and immigrant rights and anti-imperialist organizations. This moral and spiritual way of war—remembrance, reverence, and resurrection—yields a radical love and revolutionary praxis. We remember the great visionary and exemplary figures and movements. These precious memories focus our attention on things that really matter—not spectacle, image, money and status but integrity, honesty, dignity and generosity. This focus locates and situates us in a long tradition of love warriors—not just polished professionals or glitzy celebrities—but courageous truth tellers who fell in love with the quest of justice, freedom, and beauty. And all great love …is resurrectionary. All great love transforms death into new life, turns your world upside-down, shatters callousness and indifference, frees you to treat people more decently and humanely, and bids you to choose a life of struggle with a smile and style….

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/28560>

**7.33:** *You Have Duties to Yourself* by Susan Neiman (258 words)

Do we grow more courageous as we grow up? Cicero says that old age is more confident and courageous than youth because the old have come to disregard death. Sometimes, perhaps, but it's often rather because we recognize that everyone else is as terrified of being found wanting, and faking it, as we are. …You may begin to understand what Kant meant by saying you have duties to yourself, and the basis of these is dignity, preserving the idea of humanity in your own person. Life will still surprise you — if it doesn't you are lost — but you learn to trust your own responses to it. You've begun to construct a story about how the pieces of your life fit together. The story will be revised more than once, and become increasingly coherent, if not always increasingly true, giving shape to your life as it goes on.

…The ability to see your life as the whole it has become allows you to see the strengths with which you've lived it, and develop a sense of your own character. For integrity is never static; it's too easy to lose for that. It's rather a matter of determination: You've begun to figure out what sort of person you want to be, and you resolve to work harder to become it. In doing this you care far less about what people think of you, though you may be more useful to them …from giving back to the world the better things it gave to you, and especially of nurturing the young.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/27939>

**7.34:** *Responsibility lies at the heart of human dignity* by Rabbi Jonathan Sacks (252 words)

…What is striking about Judaism is not just its emphasis on responsibility but its insistence on elaborate support structures. Its welfare provisions sustained people going through hard times. The release of slaves after seven years, the remission of debts every seventh year, and the return of ancestral property in the Jubilee year, gave individuals the chance to begin again. The idea that the highest form of charity is to find someone a job speaks volumes about its understanding of human dignity — people do not *want* to be dependent.

…The ethic of responsibility structures Judaism's entire approach to the world. An obvious example is that biblical ethics is constructed in terms of responsibilities, not rights.

…Rights are passive, responsibilities active. Rights are demands we make on others, responsibilities are demands others make on us. A responsibility-based culture exists in the active mode. It emphasizes giving over receiving, doing not complaining. …Rights are the *result* of responsibilities; they are secondary, not primary. A society that does not train its citizens to be responsible will be one in which, too often, rights-talk will be mere rhetoric, honored in the breach not the observance.

"One feature of the Jewish law of *tzedakah* (i.e., charity as an ethical obligation) …is [to] …speak of the importance of *not receiving*.

That is what makes *tzedakah* something other than charity. It is not merely helping those in need. It is enabling the afflicted, where possible, to recover their capacity for independent action. Responsibility lies at the heart of human dignity.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/14857>

**7.35:** *Love Bestows Dignity* by Tavis Smiley and Cornel West (256 words)

How can we fulfill Walter Rauschenbusch's call for “justice for all, service to others, and a love that liberates” in the troubling 21st century? In these times …when we find little hope, there is a desperate need to resurrect social justice.

…Love for us means everyone is worthy of a life of dignity and decency—just because. Not because of where they were born, who they know, where they live, where they were educated, where they work, or what the size of their annual income is. The sheer humanity of each and every one of us warrants our steadfast commitment to the well-being of each other.

This is what Dr. King had in mind when he suggested that justice is what love looks like in public.

…This is what Nelson Mandela had in mind when he opted for justice over revenge.

…This is what Mahatma Gandhi had in mind when he lived the loving soul force he talked about.

This is what …Jesus had in mind when he commanded us to love our neighbor as ourselves.''

Lest we mislead you, this is not only about a loving heart; rather, it is also about finding loving social (structural and institutional) alternatives to the nightmare of poverty that can be the dawning of a new day for poor people everywhere.

…What kind of person do we really want to be? Cowardly and complacent or courageous and compassionate? What kind of country do we really want to be? Cold-hearted and callous or caring and considerate?

The choice is ours.

Source: <https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/excerpts/view/28346>

**7.36:** *Moments of Dignity* by Shannon L. Alder (143 words)

Dignity /ˈdignitē/ noun

The moment you stop comparing yourself to others because it undermines your worth, education and your parent’s wisdom.

…The moment you live your dreams, not because of what it will prove or get you, but because that is all you want to do. People’s opinions don’t matter.

The moment you realize that no one is your enemy, except yourself.

The moment you realize that you can have everything you want in life. However, it takes timing, the right heart, the right actions, the right passion and a willingness to risk it all. …

…The moment you believe that love is not about losing or winning. It is just a few moments in time, followed by an eternity of situations to grow from.

The moment you realize that you were always the right person. Only ignorant people walk away from greatness.

Source: <https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/1098899-dignity-dignit-noun-1-the-moment-you-realize-that-the>

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

***Youth***

**8.1: Videos**

**8.1.1:** *Before You Judge Someone - WATCH THIS* by Jay Shetty (3:05)

Why did you steal my cookies?

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n5E8gyDPs70>

**8.1.2:** *Before you Judge Someone, Watch This* by Jay Shetty (4:07)

Challenges due to Covid-19.

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MSrhJ1OqNkQ>

**8.1.3:** *Give Respect Get Respect 2013 – Winner* by Meghan H (2:24)

# “For the second year in a row, student Meghan H has submitted a bullying-awareness video -and placed in the finals. This one really is a positive initiative - something we can all do (and should). The music is from ‘Of Monsters and Men’”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sZRwJ0oHDDk>

**8.1.4:** *Give Respect Get Respect 2014 Video* - Acton High School (1:12)

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

**8.1.5:** *Give Respect Get Respect High School Challenge 2011 – Posters* (2:12)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kmTSANPN1h8>

**8.1.6:** *Respect Challenge Video* by Futures Without Violence (2014) (1:59)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r7EpOJjJMlo>

**8.1.7:** *The Respect Challenge* by Futures Without Violence (2012) (1:10)

# “The Respect Challenge is a Futures Without Violence national online campaign and contest promoting the importance of role models in shaping young lives.”

Video Link:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3CQqMaYhtls>

**A Tapestry of Faith**

**8.2: Virtue Ethics: An Ethical Development Program for High School Youth**

**8.2.1:** *Workshop 4: Respect*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/virtueethics/workshop4>

“Participants will:

* Explore the meaning of respect
* Learn about the 19th-century Universalist minister, Reverend Joseph Jordan
* Discuss dilemmas where respect is tested
* Identify ways they do or could practice respect, and commit to the future practice of respect in their lives.”

**8.3: A Chorus of Faiths: A Program That Builds Interfaith Youth Leaders**

**8.3.1:** *Workshop 2: We Need Not Think Alike to Love Alike*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/youth/chorus/workshop2>

“Participants will:

* Understand the Golden Rule as an example of a Unitarian Universalist value inherited from our Judeo-Christian tradition
* Learn the story of the Unitarian Universalist flaming chalice symbol and hear about the interfaith service work of Unitarians Martha and Waitstill Sharp during World War II
* Map their community’s assets for diverse, interfaith cooperation in service work
* Move the group’s interfaith service project forward by identifying potential partners and projects in their community
* Recognize and reflect on the importance of human similarities and differences.”

***Adults***

**8.4: Building the World We Dream About/For Young Adults: An Anti-racist Multicultural Program**

**8.4.1:** *Workshop 1: Telling Our Story: Multiple Truths and Multiple Realities*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/btwwdaya/workshop1>

“Participants will:

* Meet one another and create a covenant
* Recognize that some experiences can create positive feelings of inclusion (mattering) and others can create feelings of exclusion (marginality)
* Hear stories of mattering and marginality from Unitarian Universalists with a variety of ethnic and racial identities
* Reflect on personal experiences of inclusion and marginalization.”

**8.4.2:** *Workshop 2: You Are How You’ve Lived: Exploring Individual and Group Identity*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/btwwdaya/workshop2>

“Participants will:

* Discover that different people bring different perspectives on the same experience
* Become familiar with the concept of identity, and deepen their understanding of the concept through individual, small group, and large group exercises and reflection
* Explore how individuals and groups shape and are shaped by their life experiences, and how life experiences shape “identity”
* Explore how identity shapes perspective on events and experiences.”

**8.5: What Move Us: A Unitarian Universalist Theology Program for Adults**

**8.5.1:** *Workshop 1: George de Benneville*

Link: <https://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/adults/movesus/workshop1>

“This workshop will:

* Build historical knowledge about the power of personal, emotional awareness to create compassion for self and others as a faith in action practice of Unitarian Universalist theology
* Engage participants in thinking theologically about human feelings of guilt and shame, and about how those feelings can be transformed into compassion for oneself and for others as injured and broken souls.”

**9.0: Popular Music**

**9.1:** *Brave* by Sara Bareilles (3:57)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUQsqBqxoR4>

**9.2:** *True Colors* by Cyndi Lauper (4:06)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LPn0KFlbqX8>

**9.3:** *Know Your Worth* by Khalid (3:02)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jh71Nc5PjN0>

**9.4:** *Will I Lose My Dignity* from the musical Rent (2:42)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=okMdC9-YqrE>

**9.5:** Cover of Bob Dylan’s *Dignity* by GandharvaMusic (8:18))

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TX27xnEXfUY>

Lyrics: <https://www.bobdylan.com/songs/dignity/>

**9.6:** *Death with Dignity* by Sufjan Stevens (4:00)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=npvFptU8nTM>

**9.7:** *The Dignity Song* by Frank Horvat, featuring Romy Mounzer (4:52)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tyG6vn2QzQ0>

**9.8:** *Dignity* by Deacon Blue (4:16)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nsr9HCOgQe0>

**9.9:** *Dignity* by Karine Polwart (4:32)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=T4iETQibBZQ>

**9.10:** *Wounds in the Way* by Rachelle Ferrell (4:29)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S539uvimj3I>

**9.11:** *Respect* by Aretha Franklin (2:29)

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FOUqQt3Kg0>

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

**10.1:** *Hidden Dignity* by Noah Malone (1:35)

Sometimes you have to listen to your inner voice.

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/163734536>

**10.2:** *Dignity* by Human (1:50)

“HUMAN worked with Alicia Keys and #cut50 to elevate the plight of women in American prisons. In partnership with We Are Here Movement and the National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls.”

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/240090701>

**10.3:** *Dignity* by Ander Cerrato (2:36)

A video about helping the homeless so that they have dignity. In Spanish with English subtitles.

Video Link: <https://vimeo.com/164893008>

**10.4:** *Exploring the Meaning of Dignity* by Donna Hicks (3:32)

“Donna Hicks is Associate at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard University, and author of the *Dignity: The Essential Role it Plays in Resolving Conflict.* She has 20 years of experience facilitating dialogue between communities in conflict all over the world, including the Middle East, Sri Lanka, Colombia, Cuba, and Northern Ireland. By applying the dignity model, Dr. Hicks has transformed work environments for some of the world’s most prominent companies, non-profits, and governmental agencies, including the World Bank, United Nations, US Navy, and the Senate of Columbia.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qAXBk1Ymgro>

**10.5:** *Ask yourself: a film about respect* by WerkenbijDeloitte (3:22)

Thoughtful exploration.

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

# 10.6: *Dignity vs Respect* by Cultures of Dignity (2:20)

# “What’s the difference between dignity and respect and does it really matter? Getting clear about the difference between dignity and respect is essential and a key reason why we are struggling so much as a society.”

# Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o2lbd-l0hFI>

**10.7:** *Dignity & Respect YouTube Channel*

Features a wide range of videos about dignity and respect.

Link: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCbt_wkv_afdZ29DFJBnCkkQ>

**10.8:** *Dignity and Respect* by dignityrespectlady (5:56)

# “All people want and have the right to be treated with dignity and respect, no exceptions. Most people agree with this statement. But what does this really mean? The Dignity and Respect Lady explains her perspective during the teleconference - Introduction to Dignity and Respect”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uibmjESST9Y>

***Ted Talks***

**10.9:** *The Answer is Dignity & Respect* by Candi Castleberry Singleton (18:04)

“Candi Castleberry Singleton is a leading proponent of inclusion in any interpersonal setting. Her talk centers on a basic principle of dignity and respect, a concept that can help bridge divides between political parties, neighbors, coworkers, and more.”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dNoS8OuI-G8>

**10.10:** *Declare Dignity* by Donna Hicks (19:39)

“Donna Hicks is an Associate at the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs at Harvard University. She has been involved in numerous unofficial diplomatic conflict resolution efforts. Author of ‘Dignity: The Essential Role it Plays in Resolving Conflict’. @DeclareDignity”

Video Link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GPF7QspiLqM>

**10.11:** *The Dignity Economy* by Robert Blaine (12:37)

“The Chief Administrative Officer of the City of Jackson shares his idea for developing a dignity economy, in which policies focused on inclusion could drive growth and quality of life improvements.”

Video Link: <https://www.ted.com/talks/robert_blaine_the_dignity_economy>

**10.12:** *Restoring Human Dignity at the US Southern Border* by Sister Norma Pimentel (12:19)

“After seeing the conditions in which children were held at a detention center on the US-Mexico border, Sister Norma Pimentel established a humanitarian respite center in Texas where people can get clean clothing, a warm shower and a hot meal. In this powerful talk, Sister Pimentel discusses her lifelong work restoring human dignity at the border – and calls on us all to put aside prejudice and lead with compassion.”

Video Link: <https://www.ted.com/talks/norma_pimentel_restoring_human_dignity_at_the_us_southern_border?language=en>

**10.13:** *Food for Thought, Choice, and Dignity* by Maggie Kane (14:24)

“Soup Kitchen 2.0 - It’s time to reinvent the way we feed those in need. This passionate talk spotlights how a pay-what-you-can cafe has brought dignity, choice, and friendship throughout an urban community by inviting everyone to have a place at the table.”

Video Link: <https://www.ted.com/talks/maggie_kane_food_for_thought_choice_and_dignity>

**10.14:** *Depth, Dignity and Devotion* by Eddie Koh (12:01)

“A classroom teacher recalls lessons learnt in school, no longer based on the subjects he teaches but the lived experiences of students he met in school- depth in the stories told, dignity in the lives he has known and devotion to the craft that led him there.”

Video Link: <https://www.ted.com/talks/eddie_koh_depth_dignity_and_devotion>