

Stories to Inspire You

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with original illustrations
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P o p u l a r

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Stories to Inspire You

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Contents

Foreword	12
Nonviolence	14
Queen Victoria and Prince Albert	14
Saint Francis and the Wolf	14
Steven Spielberg	17
Nonviolent Communication	18
Expressing Needs	19
Asking a Favor	19
Let It Cool Down	20
Sheherazade	20
How Venice Was Saved	21
The Power of Nonviolence	22
Force	23
Satyagraha	23
Peace Journalism	23
The Gift of Insults	24
The Healing Poison	26
The Tiger's Whisker	28
Peace and Disarmament	30
A Binational Zone	30
How Haiti Abolished Its Military	32
Demilitarizing Panama	34
Security Versus Peace Discourse	35
Turning Enemies Into Allies	36
The Black Hole	37
The Effect of Germany's Occupation on Norway	39

On the Historic Role of the Peace Movement	41
The Origins of Peace Research	42
Peace Research Is Value-Oriented	44
An Active Peace Policy	45
How Switzerland Ended Its Involvement in War	48
Women Preventing War	51
A Joke Can Release Tension	51
Humor Defeating the Law About Conscientious Objectors	52
The Camera Is Mightier Than the Sword	55
Peace Is the Way	56
Peace is Like an Olive Tree	56
Structural Violence	56
Heaven and Hell	58
A Key to Heaven and Hell	58
World Law	59
The Burlington 23	59
Replacing Bullets With Ballots	60
Self-Determination and Peace	60
Bishop Desmond Tutu	63
Amy Biehl	64
Reconciliation in Bosnia	65
Meeting With a Prime Minister	67
Prevented From Speaking	68
Responsibility	69
Holding Officials Accountable	70
Random Inspections	72
Keeping a Secret	73
Conflict Resolution	74
A Buddhist Bookstore	74

Saving a Marriage.....	75
Commuters.....	76
Creating Harmony at Work.....	81
Who Is Right?	81
Common Ground.....	82
The Good Friday Agreement.....	83
Keeping Peace in Transsylvania.....	83
The German-Danish Border	85
Camp David.....	86
Put Out the Fire Before it is Too Late	86
The Secret of a Happy Marriage.....	87
Cultivating Grass	88
Opportunity Creation	89
Picking Berries	90
A Snowflake.....	90
A Warm Room.....	92
Buckminster Fuller	92
World Game.....	94
Conflict and Cooperation.....	94
Numbness.....	96
The Milgram Experiment	96
A Butcher Knife	98
Killing Babies.....	98
Bisons and Bears.....	99
Hot Water	100
The Robber Baron.....	100
The End of Dueling.....	101
The Origins of European Unification.....	101
Lucky Coincidence.....	102
Alexander Yakovlev	104

Costa Rica Prospers Without a Military.....	104
Offering Help.....	105
A New Friendship	105
Jack	106
The Art of Listening	108
Respect Can Heal	109
Sunshine.....	109
Accept Help.....	109
Improving Rural Health.....	110
Words Can Save Lives.....	111
Mother's Love	112
A Glass of Milk.....	113
Kindness Rewarded.....	114
How Sarvodaya Was Founded.....	115
A Big and a Small Dog	116
Rufus Jones.....	118
Clean Water	118
Making Health Care Available to All.....	119
Compassion.....	120
The Joy of Volunteering	120
The Lion and the Mouse.....	121
The Mouse Trap.....	121
Mango Trees	122
100 Pigs	123
Dedication	123
A Lake Without Fish.....	124
The "Greedy" Monk.....	125
Misunderstanding.....	126
Gandhi's Shoes	126

Danilo Dolci.....	126
Corals.....	127
A Butterfly	128
The Leaking Pot.....	129
The Stolen Horse.....	131
True Help.....	133
Comfort.....	133
The Fishbowl.....	133
How a Town Fought Hate.....	135
What Really Counts	136
Daniel Jeanrichard.....	136
Making Globalization Work for All.....	138
Global Cooperation	138
Starfish.....	139
The Appetite Clinic	140
Stamps	140
Emil and the Kitten.....	141
Two Brothers	142
An Angel	143
Two Lizards	144
Self-Sacrifice.....	145
Saving Lives.....	145
Happiness.....	146
The Happy Hermit	146
Fishing.....	146
Home is Heaven	146
The Satchel.....	147
How Much Land Do We Need?.....	148
A Broken Piece of China	151

The Beggar.....	153
A Wild Flower.....	153
Whom to Help?	154
Diogenes.....	154
The Happy Shepherd.....	154
Cheer Up.....	155
Forgiving	155
The Raft.....	155
A Birthday Gift	156
Catching Monkeys.....	156
Criticism	158
Why Criticism Fails	158
Monuments for the Criticized.....	158
Self-reliance	158
The Donkey in the Well.....	158
Father, Son and Donkey	160
Be Yourself	160
Helplessness	161
Circus Elephants.....	161
Learned Helplessness	162
Fear Can Kill.....	162
Persistence	163
The Black Belt.....	163
A Marriage Sealed in Heaven.....	164
Persistence	164

Play With the Hand You Got	167
Reaching the Top	167
Sidney Poitier	167
Economic principles	168
Quality	168
The Good in Short Supply.....	169
Price Controls.....	170
Paprika	170
Rewarding Innovation	171
Sail and Rudder.....	172
Vilfredo Pareto	173
China's Glory Project	173
Respect.....	176
Cherries.....	176
Education	178
Education as Key to Development.....	178
Louis Pasteur	178
Carl Friedrich Gauss	179
Insights Emerge From Dialogues.....	180
Learning Early.....	181
Building a Fire.....	182
Letting a Flower Bloom.....	182
If I Had My Children to Raise Over Again.....	183
Family	183
Reading	185
Leadership	185
Leadership.....	185

The Seed.....	186
Rosa Parks	188
The Abolition of Slavery	191
The Nevada-Semipalatinsk Anti-Nuclear Movement	192
Teaching Leadership for Peace.....	193
Nelson Mandela	193
The King of Birds.....	194
Our Fate Is in Our Hands.....	195
 Wisdom and Stupidity	 196
Pay Attention.....	196
Repetition	196
Getting Rid of a Nightmare	197
The Model Inmate	197
Rehabilitating Prisoners.....	198
Family Tradition.....	198
Solomon's Judgment.....	199
Be Like a Pencil	199
Changing Perceptions on Homosexuality	200
Oppression Breeds Secrecy	200
Majority Rule.....	201
Leprosy	201
Dogs as Teachers	203
Seven Men and an Elephant	203
The Whole Truth.....	204
Framing Questions	204
Cultural Differences	205
Different Customs	206
Lost in Translation	206
Unwelcome Help	206

The Twenty-Ninth Day	207
The Dull Ax	207
Big Rocks.....	207
Improve Yourself	209
True Skill	209
Flying Lessons.....	210
Honesty	211
Bureaucracy	211
Love Me, You Scoundrel!	211
Greed.....	212
An Immodest Wish.....	213
The Olive Jar.....	214
Forgiven and Forgotten	217
Hidden Gems.....	217

How a Bad Luck Can Turn Out to be a Good Luck ...	220
All Is to the Best.....	221
How a Loss Can Turn Into a Gain	221
A Best Selling Author.....	222
Alfred Nobel.....	223
Smoke Signal	223
Thrust Into Freedom.....	224
Dare to Change	225
The Oak Tree and the Reed.....	225

Foreword

We typically hear news about war and violence, human failures and folly, accidents and natural disasters, sometimes about poverty and destruction of the environment. It is important to be aware of these problems, but they are not everything. The media seems to have turned around the old saying, "no news is good news" into "good news is no news." But as the golfer Tiger Woods once said, "I learn more from my best shots than from my mistakes."

This is a collection of some successes, of what individuals have been able to do to make life more worthwhile, of bringing peace and happiness to others. They are intended to encourage everyone to try their best.

I have been inspired by Johan Galtung, who pointed out that children should not only learn stories about war and victory in war, but instead about successful conflict transformation and the solution of problems, to prepare them for life.

This short volume also includes some metaphors. Analogies and metaphors make use of something already familiar to explain something new, or less considered. Here is an example:

A monkey picked up a fish from the sea and put it on a tree branch. Asked why he did this, he said, "To save it from drowning".

We know immediately how wrong and stupid that is. But we may seldom realize that trying to impose our own way of life, political or economic institutions or religious beliefs on others is equally wrong. Such an analogy can help open our eyes.

I did not invent all those stories. I heard or read them over many years, selected those that I liked most, and have retold them in my own words, to the best of my memory. Where I remember the source, I have indicated it.

I hope you enjoy some of these stories, and can find some useful lessons in them.

Basel, April 2013

Dietrich Fischer



Nonviolence

Queen Victoria and Prince Albert

Queen Victoria and Prince Albert had a quarrel, as it occasionally happens in a marriage. One word led to another, and suddenly Prince Albert angrily stormed out of the bedroom, went to his study, slammed the door and locked it. Queen Victoria ran after him, knocked on the door and demanded, "Open!" There was no answer. She pounded the door with her fist and shouted, "Open at once!!" No answer. She shouted at the top of her voice, "I am the Queen of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, the Empress of India and of the entire British Commonwealth, I am the Commander-in-Chief of all the British armed forces, and I order you hereby to open this door!!!" Still no answer. Finally she said in a soft voice, "Albert, I am sorry, I love you and miss you." Now the door opened.

This shows that nonviolence is more powerful than violence.

Saint Francis and the Wolf

(a free translation)

The ferocious wolf of Gubbio had eaten one of the villagers. All the villagers went out into the forest with knives, axes and hayforks to find and kill the wolf. St. Francis, who was said to be able to speak the languages of animals, went to see the wolf and had the following dialogue with him: "Brother Wolf, what is your problem?" "I am hungry." "But that is no reason to eat one of the

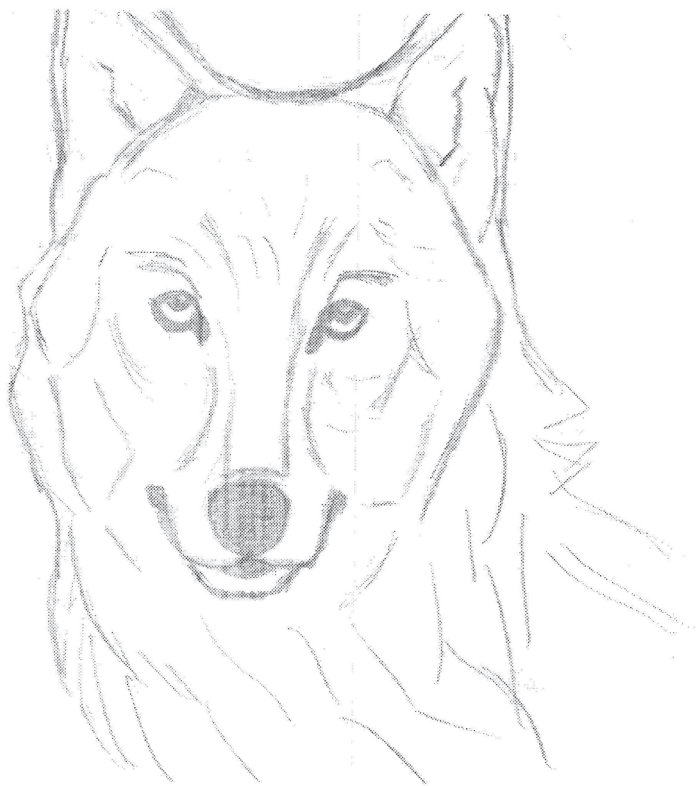
good-hearted, innocent citizens of Gubbio!" "There was no alternative." "What if the villagers put out a big pot with all their leftover food at night, would you be willing to eat that instead?" "I will try, but only once!" "Thank you, Brother Wolf." Then St. Francis went to Gubbio, assembled all the villagers and asked them, "What is your problem?" "It is the wolf, he ate one of us and we want to kill him." "The wolf said he is hungry. Would you be willing to put out a big pot with all your leftover food at night so that the wolf can eat that instead?" "We will try, but only once!" And so the villagers of Gubbio began to feed the wolf, and the wolf stopped eating people. And they became friends.

Understanding the cause of an evil act does not mean excusing it, but if one can remove the cause, it can help prevent similar acts in the future.

Johan Galtung suggested to members of Italy's general staff, who are familiar with this story from childhood, that this approach could have been used with Saddam Hussein instead of attacking Iraq. They replied, "Saddam is certainly a wolf, but we are not St. Francis."

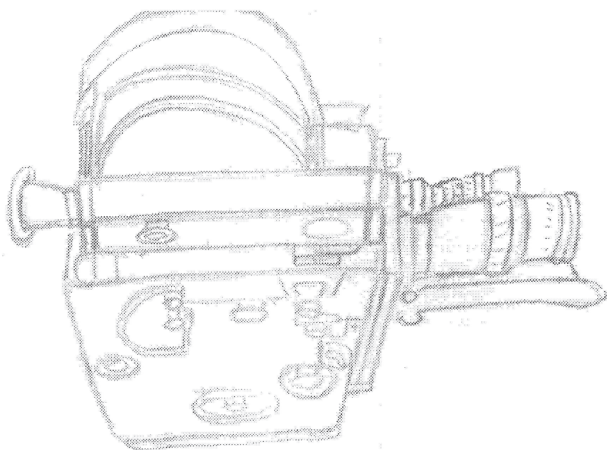
After the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington of September 11, 2001, Galtung was on a podium discussion on Austrian television, which included the US Ambassador in Vienna. When Galtung observed that we must try to understand why this terrorist act occurred, the Ambassador was furious and asked, "So you are trying to justify what happened?" Galtung had to explain that nothing can justify such an atrocity, but if we fail to understand why it happened, we cannot prevent a

future recurrence. We must understand the causes of violence, in our own interest, to prevent it in the future. In no way does this justify violence, or blame the victims.



Steven Spielberg

When Steven Spielberg (born 1946), the award-winning movie director, was a young boy, he was plagued at school by a big bully who regularly ridiculed him, hit him, or put his head under the water fountain. One day, Steven's mother gave him a movie camera for his birthday. He decided to make a movie in which he needed someone to play the role of a big bully. He asked the boy who had repeatedly harassed him if he would play the role of a bully in his movie. He accepted with delight, and played the role very well. In this way, that boy became Steven's friend, and protected him against other big boys if they tried to hurt him (Arthur Kanegis). A proverb says, "The only way to get rid of your enemies is to make them your friends."



Nonviolent Communication

Psychologist Marshall Rosenberg (born 1934) was invited to speak at a meeting of a group of young Palestinians in a refugee camp on the West Bank. The Israeli police had recently entered the camp to quell protests. The ground was strewn with tear gas shells labeled "Made in USA". When the organizer introduced him as an American citizen, one of the young men shouted, "Murderer!" Instead of getting angry or defensive, Rosenberg asked, "Do you feel upset that my government is paying for weapons and tear gas that are used to oppress you?" The young man shouted, "Of course!" Rosenberg continued, "Would you rather wish that that money was spent to create jobs and build schools, hospitals, roads and water supply systems in Palestine?" "Exactly!" the man replied. Rosenberg asked him, "Would you wish that more Americans came to visit here to understand your difficult situation?" The man agreed wholeheartedly. He said all he wished was for his children to be safe, to be able to play on the streets without fear, like normal children. After some more conversation like this, that man invited Rosenberg to a Ramadan dinner at his home! Rosenberg has coined the term "nonviolent communication" for a method of dialogue that does not blame others, but expresses our own observations and feelings, and shows that we understand our dialogue partners' concerns by expressing them in our own words.

Expressing Needs

A father and mother quarreled again, as they did frequently. He had forgotten to take out the garbage, and she whined, "You are so irresponsible. You never remember what you promised to do." He: "This is the first time this year that I forgot to take out the garbage, but I had more important things to worry about." She: "That is always your excuse. I can't stand it!" Their nine year old daughter said to mother, "Why don't you simply tell father what you need?" Mother said what she wanted, and to her surprise, the father agreed. She asked her daughter in amazement: "Where did you learn that!?" "At school." the daughter replied. The daughter had gotten a day of training in "nonviolent communication". It avoids blame or praise, it only expresses appreciation for help received. It emphasizes saying what we need, and express a request, not a demand. A request is something the other party can say no to without reprisals, whereas a if a demand is denied, there are bad consequences. Mother asked her daughter, "Can I learn this, too?" The daughter said, "In a month, the same training will be offered to parents." Mother did not want to wait, and signed up for a course in a neighboring town where she paid for registration.(Freely recounted after Marshall Rosenberg, who developed the techniques of nonviolent communication)

Asking a Favor

A couple was quarreling endlessly. They sought advice from a wise woman. She suggested, "Don't claim as a right what you can ask as a favor." The quarreling stopped.

Let It Cool Down

(A folktale from Uganda, told by Stella Sabiiti)

A king had a beautiful daughter. Many men asked to marry her, but the king gave them a difficult test. They had to drink a jug full of boiling hot water. Many tried, but burnt their tongue and had to give up. Finally a man smart as a rabbit came. As usual, the whole village came to watch whether he could pass the test. He went from one villager to the other, showed to each one the pitcher full of hot water and said, "Look at all this hot water, I am going to drink this!" By the time he had shown the jug to the last villager, the water had cooled down enough so that he could drink it without burning his tongue, and he could marry the princess. If a conflict is too hot to handle, wait until tempers have cooled down.

Sheherazade

A cruel prince in 8th century Baghdad returned early from hunting and surprised his wife in the company of another man. He ordered both of them executed. He vowed that he would never let himself be betrayed by another woman, and married a new wife every day, and had her executed the next morning, so that she could never cheat on him. When he married Sheherazade, she told him a fascinating story. Since the night was not yet over, she began another story, but left it unfinished at a suspenseful moment when morning came. The prince thought, "I want to hear the end of this story. I will keep her for one more night, and then have her executed the next day." The next night, Sheherazade finished that story,

and then began a new one, again leaving it unfinished at a critical point when the morning came. Again, the prince wanted to hear the end of just that one more story and planned to have her killed after that. But she began to tell another story, and then another one, and so on, for 1001 nights. During that time, she bore the prince three sons, and finally he decided that he loved Sheherazade too much and could not kill her. These stories are recorded in 1001 nights. This story is from a dark age, but it is an illustration of the power of nonviolence. If Sheherazade had tried to smuggle a dagger with her to kill the murderous prince, his powerful bodyguards would easily have overwhelmed her. She used her superior wits to disarm the prince. This suggests an effective defense strategy available to small countries: play a useful, preferably indispensable role for your neighbors, so that they would hurt themselves if they attacked you.

How Venice Was Saved

In 1618, at the beginning of the 30 years war in Europe, when Spain was trying to expand its influence throughout Europe, it saw the naval power of Venice as a dangerous rival, a thorn in her eye, and wanted to destroy the city. Having stolen large quantities of gold from Mexico, Spain could afford to hire a French mercenary army to do this. Its members sneaked secretly into Venice, singly and in small groups, disguised as merchants and visitors, hiding their weapons under their clothes. The leader of the French army visited the Doge, pretending to be a friendly diplomat, but was in fact trying to find out in conversations with the Doge how the city was defended, so as to be better able to plan its destruction. When

he saw the marble palace of the Doges, he was astounded by its architectural beauty and felt some remorse and hesitation about having to destroy it with the rest of the city. While he was talking with the Doge, the Doge's daughter entered the room, a young woman of stunning beauty and charm. He immediately fell deeply in love with her. He realized that if the conspiracy was carried out, she might be raped by soldiers and possibly killed. He could not bear that thought. So he confessed the conspiracy to the Doge and thus saved the city.

The Power of Nonviolence

When Ferdinand Marcos tried to rig elections to stay in power in the Philippines in 1986, two army units defected. He sent the rest of his army to crush them, but they were surrounded and protected by half a million unarmed civilians. When a nun knelt in front of a tank, prayed and did not move, the tank driver finally pulled back, because he just could not in good conscience crush a nun to death. If a soldier had tried to stop the tank by firing at it with a machine gun, the tank driver would hardly have stopped. In the fall of 1989, when thousands of civilians held weekly demonstrations against the communist regime of the then German Democratic Republic in Leipzig, the police had orders to shoot at the demonstrators to disperse them. The police waited for some pretext, like a stone thrown at them, or a Molotov cocktail, but the demonstrators remained absolutely nonviolent, and the police and army never fired. Soon the regime fell. Violent demonstrations would probably have been brutally suppressed by the army.

Force

Rachel Findlay, the founder and director of Nuclear Dialogue, and organization that brought together members of the peace movement with non-elected public officials for dialogues during the Cold War, told that she once attended a meeting in Washington and sat next to an American General at dinner. He said with deep conviction, "The only language the Soviets understand is the threat of force." After a while, she asked him, "Would you yield to the threat of force?" He looked at her in disbelief and said, "Never! Are you out of your mind?"

Satyagraha

A British platoon blocked a road against a satyagraha force, one of Gandhi's nonviolent but implacable acts of mass civil disobedience. Both groups were in knee-deep flood water. The British troops were on short duty because of the difficulty and the dangers of the rising water. Gandhi's patient followers were not working limited hours. They helped the British troops, and lifted their overturned boats. The platoon commander remarked to a reporter, "If they fought back, if they used weapons, I knew how to handle them. But this is something I don't understand."

Peace Journalism

Johan Galtung is often asked to define peace journalism. In the most concise way, he said, it is to ask two questions (in addition to the usual questions like how many bombs were

dropped, how many buildings destroyed, who is winning, etc.): "what is the conflict about, and what could be the solutions?" If George W. Bush were asked, "What is the conflict with Iraq about?", he would probably reply, "It is a struggle between good and evil." "Would you like to expand on that?" "No." "What is the solution?" "To crush evil!" "Would you like to expand on that?" "No." If he were asked this twenty times, and quoted each time, he could not get away with it forever. Bush is being under-quoted. In the 18th century, we had "disease journalists" who reported in detail how epidemics were spreading and how people suffered, but little was known about cures and little reported. Today we have "health journalists" who write about current research on new cures for diseases, and healthy lifestyles that help prevent disease. The time has come for "peace journalists" to write not only about war, but also about its causes, prevention, and ways to restore peace. They need not invent solutions to conflicts themselves--in the same way as health journalists need not invent cures for diseases themselves, they ask specialists. Similarly, peace journalists can ask various peace organizations and mediators about their ideas for preventing or ending a violent conflict, and report about it. Health pages in newspapers are very popular, and it can be anticipated that the same will be true for reporting about peace proposals, once it becomes available. People thirst for peace. All we ask is, "Give peace a page."

The Gift of Insults

A great Samurai warrior, now old, had decided to teach Zen Buddhism to young people. Despite his age, the legend was

that he could defeat any adversary. One afternoon, a young warrior - known for his complete lack of scruples - arrived there. He was famous for using techniques of provocation: he waited until his adversary made the first move and then swiftly counterattacked, skillfully taking advantage of any slightest mistake his adversary made. He had never lost a fight. Hearing of the Samurai's reputation, he had come to defeat him, to increase his fame. All the students were against the idea, but the old master accepted the challenge. All gathered on the town square, and the young man started insulting the old master. He threw a few rocks in his direction, spat in his face, shouted every insult under the sun - he even insulted his ancestors, something inconceivable in Japan. For hours, he did everything to provoke him, but the old man kept smiling calmly and ignored his insults. At the end of the afternoon, by now feeling exhausted and frustrated, the young warrior left. Disappointed that the master had received so many insults and provocations, the students asked: "How could you bear such indignity? It would have been better to fight, even if you lost, instead of displaying such cowardice in front of us all!" "If someone comes to you with a gift, and you do not accept it, to whom does the gift belong?" asked the Samurai. "To the one who tried to deliver it," replied one of his disciples. "The same goes for envy, anger and insults," said the master. "When they are not accepted, they continue to belong to the one who brought them."

The Healing Poison

by Yang Jwing-Ming

A long time ago, a girl named Li-Li got married and went to live with her husband and mother-in-law. In a very short time, Li-Li found that she couldn't get along with her mother-in-law at all. Their personalities were very different, and Li-Li was angered by many of her mother-in-law's habits. In addition, she criticized Li-Li constantly. Days passed days, and weeks passed weeks. Li-Li and her mother-in-law never stopped arguing and fighting. But what made the situation even worse was that, according to ancient Chinese tradition, Li-Li had to bow to her mother-in-law and obey her every wish. All the anger and unhappiness in the house was causing the poor husband great distress. Finally, Li-Li could not stand her mother-in-law's bad temper and dictatorship any longer, and she decided to do something about it. Li-Li went to see her father's good friend, Mr. Huang, who sold herbs. She told him the situation and asked if he would give her some poison so that she could solve the problem once and for all. Mr. Huang thought for a while, and finally said, "Li-Li, I will help you solve your problem, but you must listen to me and obey what I tell you." Li-Li said, "Yes, Mr. Huang, I will do whatever you tell me to do." Mr. Huang went into the back room, and returned in a few minutes with a package of herbs. He told Li-Li, "You can't use a quick-acting poison to get rid of your mother-in-law, because that would cause people to become suspicious. Therefore, I have given you a number of herbs that will slowly build up poison in her body. Every other day prepare some pork or chicken and put a little of these herbs in her serving. Now, in order to make sure that nobody suspects you when she dies, you must be very careful to act very friendly towards her. Don't argue

with her, obey her every wish, and treat her like a queen." Li-Li was so happy. She thanked Mr. Huang and hurried home to start her plot of murdering her mother-in-law. Weeks went by, and months went by, and every other day, Li-Li served the specially treated food to her mother-in-law. She remembered what Mr. Huang had said about avoiding suspicion, so she controlled her temper, obeyed her mother-in-law, and treated her like her own mother. After six months had passed, the whole household had changed. Li-Li had practiced controlling her temper so much that she found that she almost never got mad or upset. She hadn't had an argument in six months with her mother-in-law, who now seemed much kinder and easier to get along with. The mother-in-law's attitude toward Li-Li changed, and she began to love Li-Li like her own daughter. She kept telling friends and relatives that Li-Li was the best daughter-in-law one could ever find. Li-Li and her mother-in-law were now treating each other like a real mother and daughter. Li-Li's husband was very happy to see what was happening. One day, Li-Li came to see Mr. Huang and asked for his help again. She said, "Dear Mr. Huang, please help me to keep the poison from killing my mother-in-law! She's changed into such a nice woman, and I love her like my own mother. I do not want her to die because of the poison I gave her." Mr. Huang smiled and nodded his head. "Li-Li, there's nothing to worry about. I never gave you any poison. All of the herbs I gave you were simply to improve her health. The only poison was in your mind and your attitude toward her, but that has been all washed away by the love which you gave to her." The way we treat others is how they will usually treat us.

The Tiger's Whisker

(A Korean Folktale)

A woman came to seek help from a famous herbalist. [My husband is unkind since he returned from the war. If he does not like the food I prepared for him, he pushes it away., sometimes he sits on top of a hill, staring for hours into the distance when he should work in the field. Can you prepare a potion that will cure him?] The herbalist said, "I can make such a potion, but the most important ingredient is the whisker of a living tiger." The woman was worried: "How can I get a whisker from a living tiger?" "You will find a way." The herbalist said. The woman went out that night and walked towards the cave where the tiger was known to live, but she did not dare to go too close and returned without a whisker. The next night, she prepared a bowl of rice and meat sauce, and went again a little closer, and waited for the tiger, but he did not come. This went on for six months. Each time, she dared to go a little closer, and finally the tiger ate the food she brought him. She did that for several nights. One night she said to the tiger, "Don't be angry, but I need one of your whiskers", and pulled one out. The tiger calmly let her pull a whisker. Happily she ran to the herbalist and showed him her find. He examined the whisker carefully, and found that it was from a real living tiger. Then he threw it into his fireplace and burnt it. The woman was incredulous. "What have you done with my precious whisker, you destroyed it, how can you now make the potion for my husband?" the herbalist replied, "You don't need any potion. If you have been able to tame a blood-thirsty tiger with patience and kindness, don't you think you can equally tame a man?"



Peace and Disarmament

A Binational Zone

In the peace treaty of Rio de Janeiro of 1942, after a border war in 1941, Peru and Ecuador had failed to draw the border high up in the Andes mountains. Later, they agreed that the border should run along the watershed in the upper Amazon basin. But depending on rainfall, the watershed shifted back and forth. They then tried a river as border, but it came and went, depending on precipitation and glaciers melting. Since 1942, Ecuador and Peru have fought three wars over this barely inhabited 500 square kilometer territory and were about to engage in another round of war. The Peruvian air force already had made plans to bombard Ecuador's capital city Quito.

At a peace conference in Guatemala in 1995, Johan Galtung was invited to meet with Ecuador's chief negotiator in the border talks with Peru, a former President. Galtung patiently listened to him complain about Peru's inflexibility. But he also always carefully listens to what people do not say. The negotiator never said that each square meter of territory must belong to one and only one country, because he assumed that to be obvious. That was a principle built into the peace treaty of Westphalia in 1648. So Galtung asked him what he thought of the idea of making the disputed border territory into a jointly administered "binational zone with a natural park," attracting tourists to bring additional income to both countries. The Ex-President said, "In 30 years of negotiations, I have never heard such a proposal. This is

very creative--but I am afraid it is too creative, it will take at least 30 years to get used to such an entirely new idea, and another 30 years to implement it. It does not help us now." But out of curiosity, he proposed it to Peru in the next round of peace negotiations, and to his surprise, Peru accepted it with some minor modifications. This led to the Peace treaty signed in Brasilia on October 27, 1998.

This zone has been implemented, and free trade zones, where merchants from the two countries can exchange goods duty-free, have been added.

Galtung pointed out that this initiative cost only \$250 for an extra stopover in Ecuador while he was in Latin America, a night in a hotel, and a dinner for the ex-president and his wife. By comparison, the 1991 Gulf War to expel Iraq from Kuwait cost \$100 billion, not counting the destruction it caused. Most of all, peaceful conflict transformation before violence begins can save many lives.

Most governments wait until a conflict erupts in war and then intervene with military force, instead of seeking a peaceful solution long before it leads to violence. Such a policy is comparable to driving a car with closed eyes, waiting until we hit an obstacle and then calling an ambulance, instead of anticipating dangers and avoiding them.

We need a UN Agency for Mediation, with several thousand professionals, who can detect emerging conflicts and help transform them peacefully before they lead to war. That would be an excellent and inexpensive investment for a more peaceful world.

How Haiti Abolished Its Military

A soft-spoken, retired Quaker couple from Troy, New York, took a crucial step that led to the complete abolition of Haiti's army, which in 1991 had violently overthrown the democratically elected government of President Aristide and arbitrarily arrested, tortured and murdered many Haitian citizens.

In 1994, Sue and Marvin Clark from Troy, New York, founded a small NGO, "Global Demilitarization." In February 1995 they were able to meet in New York with Oscar Arias Sanchez, the former President of Costa Rica, who won the 1987 Nobel Peace Prize for his role in ending the war in Nicaragua. They asked him what country he thought might be the next to follow Costa Rica's example, which had abolished its military in 1949.

Arias suggested Haiti, since most Haitians saw their army as threatening their personal security rather than protecting them from foreign aggression. From informal conversations with many ordinary Haitians, he estimated that about 80 percent wished the army were abolished. He was disappointed that nobody seemed to pay attention to his observations, but was convinced that if an internationally recognized polling firm could confirm his impressions, the world would notice. But that would cost about \$20,000, and he did not have that money.

When Sue and Marvin Clark heard this, they wrote to all their friends and friends of friends, sending out about thousand letters, explaining this opportunity and asking for donations. Within a few weeks, they raised \$27,000 and sent it to the Arias Foundation for Peace and Human Progress, and soon the poll was conducted.

At a news conference in Port-au-Prince on April 28, 1995, Oscar Arias could announce that 62 percent of the Haitian people wished to abolish the army, and only 12 percent wished to keep it, with the rest expressing no opinion. When President Aristide heard this, he stepped to the microphone and spontaneously announced, in front of the assembled military leadership, that given the clear wish of the majority of his people, he herewith declared the army abolished!

The international media almost totally ignored this important event. But when President Aristide was asked on a nationally televised interview in the United States after the election of his successor what he considered his greatest achievement during his term in office, he said abolishing the Haitian military.

It is impressive how much difference the efforts of individuals can make. Not even the U.S. Navy was able to abolish Haiti's army. When President Clinton sent the navy in 1994 to land in Port-au-Prince and help restore the democratically elected government, it turned around in the face of a violent demonstration on the landing pier by a small group of backers of the military dictatorship. Who would have thought that two individuals, without power or wealth, would succeed in helping abolish the Haitian military, simply by talking to the right people and taking the right action at the right time. We can all take courage and hope from this. If we have a dream and pursue it step by step, never giving up, we can ultimately reach it. After their initial success, Sue and Marvin have launched a campaign to dismantle all nuclear weapons, enlisting a

support group of several hundred peace activists who send monthly appeals to the heads of nuclear states to give our children the gift of life instead of the threat of a nuclear holocaust.

As Margaret Mead has said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Demilitarizing Panama

In 1989, President Bush ordered the invasion of Panama. Manuel Noriega, the military dictator, was captured and brought to Florida, where he was sentenced to 20 years in prison.

Guillermo Endara had earlier won the presidential election in a landslide, with over 70% of the votes, but was prevented from taking office by Noriega. After Noriega's capture, he could finally take office. But the only government that had recognized him as President was the United States. Despite having been popularly elected, the other Latin American governments did not want to set a precedent by recognizing a government that was put into office by a US military intervention. Endara was desperately seeking recognition by other Latin American governments.

Oscar Arias Sanchez, the President of Costa Rica and recipient of the 1987 Nobel Peace Prize for mediating an end to several civil wars in Central America, saw a chance. He called, Endara and said, "Listen, I will recognize your government under one condition, if you abolish the army in Panama." Endara seized this

opportunity and enthusiastically agreed. He needed to do nothing, the Panamanian army had dissolved during the US invasion, soldiers got rid of their uniform and weapons to escape arrest of death. All that Endara had to do was not to rebuild a new Panamanian army.

In 1995, also with Oscar Arias' involvement, Haiti abolished its army. In 1948, President Jose Figueres Ferrer of Costa Rica had abolished the Costa Rican army, after a civil war in which the army supported the losing side. Costa Rica has been at peace since then, whereas its Central American neighbors suffered from many wars. In addition, Costa Rica's per capita income is about twice that of its neighbors, because it can spend on the civilian economy what others waste for arms.

There are about 30 countries without a military in the world, most of them small, but they are doing well.

Security Versus Peace Discourse

(after Johan Galtung)

The prevailing discourse used by governments today is the "security discourse," which briefly is the following: "We have a problem, our enemies. Through military superiority we can deter or prevent their evil designs and achieve security, and through this peace." The peace discourse, largely ignored today, can be summarized as follows: "We have a problem, an unresolved conflict. By transforming it with peaceful means, i.e., by exploring all the participants' goals through dialogues with empathy, dividing the goals into legitimate and illegitimate, and then bridging the legitimate goals in creative, nonviolent ways,

we can achieve peace, and through this mutual security." There are situations where the security discourse is applicable. For example, it may be a good idea to buy a secure and well locked door in an area where burglaries are frequent. But today it is vastly overvalued. It applies in perhaps 10 percent of all cases, while the peace discourse is applicable in 90 percent of all cases, yet today their use is just the reverse. A typical example of how the peace discourse has been used effectively is the creation of the European Union (emerging from the first step in the form of the European Coal and Steel Community), which has brought peace to Europe, where centuries of competitive arms races only produced one war after another.

Turning Enemies Into Allies

At the 1919 Versailles peace conference after World War I, the French Prime Minister Georges Clémenceau insisted that Germany be held solely responsible for starting World War I, and be forced to pay huge reparations over the next fifty years, to bring Germany to its knees, so that it would never be able again to build up its industrial capacity and become a military threat to its neighbors. John Maynard Keynes, who was a member of the British delegation to the peace talks, warned that this would inevitably lead to deep German resentment and a desire for revenge, laying the foundation for another round of war. When his advice was ignored, he resigned in protest from the British delegation, and denounced the Versailles treaty in his book "Economic Consequences of the Peace" (1919). Sadly,

history proved him right. German resentment against that treaty helped Hitler win the 1933 elections in Germany with the promise to abrogate the Versailles treaty.

After World War II, the United States learned that lesson. By helping its former enemies Germany and Japan (and many other devastated European countries) rebuild their countries with assistance in form of the Marshall Plan, the U.S. turned its former enemies into allies.

Nelson Mandela pointed out, "Peace is something you make with your enemies, not with your friends."

The Black Hole

When Johan Galtung, widely recognized as the founder of the academic discipline of peace research, founded the first International Peace Research Institute in Oslo in 1959, he and his colleagues sent copies of their working papers regularly to about 400 social science institutes around the world, including the Institute for World Economy and International Relations (IMEMO) in Moscow. They received acknowledgements from many places, but never heard anything from IMEMO. It was as if the papers disappeared in a black hole, leaving no trace. Despite of this lack of feedback, the members of the Oslo team persistently kept sending their papers on alternative approaches to peace, security, development to IMEMO throughout the 1960s and 1970s.

In 1982, Johan Galtung attended a conference at IMEMO. During a break, the librarian took him to the back of the library, opened a locked room, opened a locked cabinet inside the room, and showed him a pile of

papers. Here was the entire collection of papers that he and his friends had been sending over the years. The "black hole" had been identified. Surprisingly, the papers were worn out from having passed through many hands, edges bent and torn, with portions underlined and numerous notes in the margins.

In 1991, Vladimir Petrovsky, then Soviet Deputy Foreign Minister, came to see Johan Galtung in Oslo and said, "I really wanted to tell you once how grateful we were for all your papers that you kept sending us, even though we could never respond. During the Brezhnev era, I was part of a group of young scholars at IMEMO who met frequently to discuss new ideas, and we studied your books and papers intensively, among others. We knew that our system needed reform, and that the time for change was coming, but we had no clear ideas what form those reforms should take. You provided us with valuable new concepts and concrete ideas how to proceed. And you were neither Marxist nor anti-Marxist."

The end of the Cold War has many sources, but new ideas developed by Western peace movements--on human rights, economic and political participation, nonviolent conflict resolution, security based on mutual cooperation instead of threats and confrontation, conversion of military industries to civilian use, and nonoffensive defense--which seeped into the former Soviet Union through various discrete channels and apparently found receptive ears, have played an important role.

Can individuals make a difference for the course of history, or are their efforts insignificant compared to major trends, like the movement of a single molecule in the wind? It is clear that if a situation is not ripe for change, if nobody wants to hear new proposals, one individual can make little difference. But if people are unhappy with their present conditions and search for new ways, a good idea, persuasively argued, can go a long way. Yet even when an opportunity for major change arises, someone must seize it or it may be missed. Similarly, if one plants a fruit tree in the desert, it will die. But even in the most fertile soil, under the best climatic conditions, only weeds may grow unless we plant something better. And we never know for sure whether an apparent desert may not hide fertile ground just below the surface, in which one seed can over time give rise to a whole forest. Even if we do not see the results of our efforts for peace immediately, we should not give up, because they may bear fruit some day in unexpected ways.

Effect of Germany's Occupation on Norway

Johan Galtung's father, an ear-nose-throat doctor, was Deputy Mayor of Oslo in the 1920s and a member of the Conservative Party, with a great sense of responsibility for those most in need, embracing the concept of social welfare. He had never had any social contact with members of the labor party, except as patients. Then came the German-Austrian invasion in 1940. In February 1944,

Johan's father was arrested as a "prominent person" and put in a concentration camp in Norway. His family was very worried that he might be deported to Germany, but he survived and returned home a month before the end of the war. In the barracks of the concentration camp he and others in the "bourgeois parties" for the first time met directly, person to person, with people from the labor party because they were incarcerated together and got a chance to hold extensive dialogues with each other, often for the first time. Out of such discussions in many places and many camps emerged a consensus to form a coalition, with the Conservative Party agreeing not to oppose the welfare state, and the Labor Party agreeing not to oppose a common foreign policy. When Germany was defeated on May 8, 1945, this coalition formed the Norwegian government. The consensus lasted for decades, and helped Norway achieve the first position on the United Nations Development Program's Human Development Index. Facing Norway's occupation by Nazi Germany helped the two parties, which had long opposed each other, to form a joint program and government, for mutual benefit.

Joint suffering can sometimes bring former opponents together if three conditions are fulfilled: first, the suffering is caused by an external actor or event, not by one of the two parties; second, the suffering is felt about equally; and third, the decision-making elites of the two parties are also affected, not only the rank and file members.

On the Historic Role of the Peace Movement

One can distinguish between four forms of power: military, economic, cultural and political. Military power says, "If you don't do what I want, I will hurt you." Economic power says, "If you do what I want, I will reward you." Cultural power says, "If you do what I want, I will praise you, and if you don't do what I want, I will criticize you." Political power manipulates the other three forms of power to achieve goals.

Johan Galtung (The Peace Movement: A Structural-Functional Exploration", in *Essays in Peace Research*, Vol. VI, pp. 322-42. Copenhagen: Christian Ejlers, 1988) has observed that in medieval times, all four forms of power--military, economic, cultural and political--were concentrated in a few hands of an absolute monarch and top church leaders. The reformation (1517), with the translation of the bible into everyday language, broke the monopoly of the church over cultural power by enabling ordinary people to read the scriptures by themselves without depending on the clergy to interpret them. The American declaration of independence (1776) broke the monopoly of the British crown over political power, an important milestone on the way towards democratization, a trend that still has a long way to go. The French revolution (1789) broke the monopoly of the monarchy over economic power. Before, the king granted exclusive franchises to families of the nobility over certain sectors of the economy, and nobody was allowed to compete, under severe penalties. This system made possible extreme

exploitation of the people and was a cause of deep misery. The bourgeois class fought for the right to free competition in the realm of economics. Economic and political Power was further democratized with the abolition of slavery, the workers movement, the women's movement and the anticolonial movement. The environmental movement can also be seen as following the tradition of democratizing economic power, by saving future generations and nature from exploitation. The trend towards democratization has by no means been linear. There have been many setbacks. Some of the greatest tyrannies emerged in the twentieth century. But people have a very healthy desire to govern themselves, or at least to choose the representatives who make decisions on their behalf. Only military power is still concentrated in very few hands of heads of state, a few generals and leaders of military industries, under the pretext of the need for secrecy. They say to us, "If you knew what we know, you would reach the same conclusions as we do, but we cannot tell you." They hold the rest of us as involuntary nuclear hostages. That is madness. The role of the peace movement is to break that last bastion of monopoly power and wrest control over decision over war and peace from the few who now make them. To do that, however, the peace movement has to become much more constructive and professional.

The Origins of Peace Research

Johan Galtung, born 1930, refused to do military service in Norway. He did one year of civil service as a ditch-

digger and (lousy) cook, the same amount of time as those who do military service, but refused to serve an additional six months as penalty, arguing that those who do military or civilian service should be treated equally. Or, if not, that at least those extra six months should be for peace. That request was denied, and he was sentenced to six months in prison in winter 1954-55. While in prison, he completed his first book, "Gandhi's Political Ethics", together with his mentor, the philosopher Arne Naess.

Before that, in fall 1951, he had studied in Finland, and had asked the librarian for any books about peace research. But he was told, "No such books exist." He found it strange that thousands of books have been written about war and military strategy, but none about research for peace. He saw this as a missing academic discipline, and vowed to help create it. Ever since then, he has worked tirelessly to study, write and teach about peace in all of its many aspects. By 2010, he had published 143 books and more than 1500 articles and book chapters about peace, development, human rights and related fields. He has also helped mediate in over 100 conflicts from the individual to the global level all over the world.

In 1959, Galtung founded the first institute in the world with the word peace in its name, the Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO). In 1964, he founded the Journal of Peace Research. In 1979, Professor Anita Kemp from the University of Nevada conducted a survey among the members of the International Peace Research Association, which Galtung had helped found in 1965. To the question, "Which person, dead or alive, has influenced your thinking

the most", many names were given, but nearly half (44 percent) mentioned Johan Galtung, with the next runner-up receiving 12 percent. He has been able to help inspire a generation of dedicated peace workers around the world.

Peace Research Is Value-Oriented

Imagine you are sick and visit a doctor. He takes your temperature, pulse, listens to your lungs and looks at your tongue. Then he tells you, "You have a very interesting disease, I will write it up in my next scientific publication." You ask, "But don't you have a cure for me?" The doctor protests, "Oh no, I am objective! I simply observe, I do not intervene."

This is how Johan Galtung demonstrated the absurdity of the claim of many political scientists that all science must be "value-free" (or of "war correspondents" that their job is simply to report the facts). They claim that peace researchers portray the world the way in which they wish it would be, rather than how it really is. Nothing is further from the truth.

There is nothing wrong with a goal-oriented science, like medical science and peace research. It does indeed have a preference for peace over war, but it is not alone in this respect. Medicine also has a preference for health over disease, and yet it must be strictly scientific if it is to serve the goal of promoting health. If a scientist--as has happened--paints black spots on tissue samples of mice in an effort to "prove" his hypothesis of the origin of cancer, he does not advance, but harms human health. To achieve a goal, it is necessary to be strictly scientific.

Another value-oriented science is engineering. A physicist may study how a bridge collapses under a heavy weight, which point breaks first and how the process unfolds. An engineer will want to use this insight to design a bridge that will not collapse. A biologist may study how an organ decays under the influence of microbes. A medical researcher will use that insight to develop ways to prevent or cure disease. Similarly, while political scientists and historians may study why and how countries went to war, a peace researcher will want to make use of these discoveries to develop ways to prevent or end wars. Being scientific and value-oriented is not incompatible. On the contrary, to achieve a goal, we must use scientific methods of careful observation and learning from facts. To say that because engineering has a goal it is therefore unscientific is nonsense. The same is true about peace research.

The well-known international lawyer Richard Falk once said, "The greatest utopians are those who call themselves realists, because they falsely believe that we can survive the nuclear age with politics as usual. The true realists are those who recognize that we need new approaches."

An Active Peace Policy

In the nuclear age, we can no longer afford to wait until war breaks out and then react with military force. We must pursue an active peace policy that seeks to avoid or resolve conflicts long before they lead to war.

It is instructive to contrast our national security policies with the far more sensible measures we have taken to improve traffic safety:

- We observe certain rules, such as stopping at red lights.

- We drive more carefully than the law requires, so that even if others make mistakes, we do not immediately have an accident.

- We learn to drive and must pass a test before obtaining a license.

- We build safe roads, with fences along cliffs, etc.

These four principles improve everyone's safety on the road, not just our own safety at the expense of others. What would a national security policy using analogous principles look like?

First, we would adhere consistently to international law. When the Reagan administration mined Nicaragua's harbors in violation of international law, this undermined the United States' ability to bring cases before the World Court. Some argue that adhering to international law would restrict a country's sovereignty and freedom. But only by adhering to certain mutually beneficial norms can we gain better control over our destiny. Clearly, traffic laws restrict our freedom to drive zigzag, but give us the more important freedom to reach our destination safely and on time.

Second, we should avoid provocative behavior. Calling other nations "evil" does not help, even if no law prohibits this. If we arrive at an intersection with a bicycle and see a heavy truck arriving at high speed, it is in our interest to wait, even if we have the right of way. Caution is in our own interest. A noteworthy tombstone inscription says: "May he rest in peace. He had the right of way."

Third, it is ironic that anyone must pass a driving test before being allowed to drive a car, but before taking control of the nuclear arsenal, all a President has to do is to pledge to adhere to the constitution. Would we issue a driver's license to anyone based on a pledge to drive safely? Of course, being elected is a kind of test, but more a test of popularity than actual competence. Imagine a group of air travelers choosing the most popular among them to be their pilot. This could be a prescription for disaster. Like controlling an airplane, defusing international conflicts is a skill that can be taught and learned. Good will alone is not enough. We would not even allow our own mother to perform open heart surgery on us, even though there is now doubt that she has the best intentions.

Finally, we should cooperate with other nations to avoid ecological catastrophes, combat hunger and disease, end the arms race. This improves our common security, not just one country's security at the expense of others.

Let us compare such a security policy with the national security policies currently applied or debated.

Extended nuclear deterrence threatens the first use of nuclear weapons against a conventional attack. This is as if we loaded our car with dynamite, wired to explode on impact, to kill anyone hitting us (and ourselves too). This should certainly deter anyone from colliding with us intentionally. But we might also be hit accidentally.

Proponents of the "nuclear war fighting" doctrine advocate destroying the nuclear forces of an opponent before he can use them, if war appears imminent. That

would be like mounting a machine gun on our car, threatening to kill anyone who drove dangerously close to us. That would of course invite others to get an even bigger machine gun and if in doubt, kill us before we could kill them.

Star wars is not the answer either. Relying on defense against nuclear weapons would be like driving over a cliff wearing a safety belt. Even worse, it would entrust the fate of the earth into an extremely complex technical system, which could go wrong catastrophically. The tragedies of Bhopal, the Challenger and Chernobyl have warned us.

Some argue that these are the only realistic alternatives, because nuclear weapons cannot be disinvented. We have not disinvented cannibalism either, but we abhor it. Why can't we develop an equal abhorrence against incinerating our planet?

How Switzerland Ended Its Involvement in War

For the first 200 years of its history, Switzerland was involved in many wars, first to defend itself against repeated attempts by the German emperor to reconquer the cantons that had declared themselves independent in 1291, and later to acquire more territory. Two events brought an end to this involvement in war.

In 1481, at a meeting of representatives from all member cantons in Stans in the Canton of Nidwalden, two cities, Fribourg and Solothurn, applied for membership in

the Swiss confederation. The other cities were in favor if it, because they expected that more cities would make Switzerland more powerful. The rural cantons were opposed, arguing that cities always fight wars, and then get into difficulty, and require troops to help them, and they would have to send their men to go to war instead of cultivating and harvesting the fields. There was a long debate, and the two sides could not agree. Finally they decided to send a joint delegation to ask for the advice of Niklaus von der Flue.

Niklaus von der Flue used to be the mayor of Stans, but he found that he was always too busy and did not have sufficient time to reflect. So he retreated to a cave in the mountains, where he had time to meditate. His wise council was widely sought, and he lived from donations of food from people who asked him for advice. For example one man went to see Niklaus and asked him, "How should I punish my wife? She has not been faithful to me." Niklaus said to him, "Go home and apologize to your wife. I am sure you were not kind to her, otherwise she would have been faithful to you."

When the representatives of urban and rural cantons came to explain to Niklaus their different points of view and ask him whether they should admit Fribourg and Solothurn to the Swiss confederation or not, he proposed: "Let these two cities join Switzerland, but make it clear to them that they are only entitled to help in their defense if they are attacked from outside. If they start a war and get into trouble, they should not expect to be rescued by the other cantons." Both sides felt that this was

a fair proposal that met both the cities' and rural cantons' main concerns. This creative solution may well have avoided a breakup of Switzerland, and possibly a civil war.

This injected for the first time in people's mind the idea that there is a difference between defense, which is legitimate, and aggression, which is wrong. But it took another 34 years until that idea was fully heeded.

In 1515, the French King and the Pope fought a war in Northern Italy. At the battle of Marignano, two Swiss armies, one allied with the French King and another allied with the Pope, encountered each other on opposite sides of the battle field, and almost completely wiped each other out, in bloody hand to hand combat that lasted through the night. When the few wounded survivors brought the news of that battle back to Switzerland, people felt that war makes no sense. Killing "enemies" had not made the same impression. This was not even a civil war, where the two sides were angry at each other and wanted to kill each other. It was a totally senseless, unintended mutual massacre.

After that event, Switzerland decided to become a neutral country, defending only its borders, but not participating in wars among other countries. With the exception of a brief occupation by Napoleon's troops from 1798 to 1803, Switzerland has been able to stay out of war for nearly 500 years. Each time a war raged in the rest of Europe, including the thirty-year war of 1618-1648, the Franco-Prussian war of 1870 and the two world wars, Switzerland's neutrality helped it keep out of war.

This confirmed people's conviction that neutrality is the best policy to avoid war. While not participating in other countries' wars is a good idea, Switzerland should now join more actively with other countries to help solve global problems that no country can solve alone. It finally joined the United Nations in 2002 as one of the last holdouts

Women Preventing War

In 1905, Norway declared its independence from Sweden. Norwegian and Swedish troops faced each other along the border, ready to fight. The Norwegians were fewer in number, and did not really expect to win, but they had a great urge to beat up the Swedes who had ruled Norway since 1814, when it was taken from Denmark and given to Sweden, because Denmark had fought on Napoleon's side who lost the war. What prevented the Norwegian and Swedish armies from getting at each other were large numbers of women from both countries, who camped out together at the borderline, between the two opposing armies. The soldiers' conscience did not allow them to hurt their own women. Finally, Sweden agreed to grant Norway independence without a fight.

A Joke Can Release Tension

Jokes can sometimes help to defuse a tense situation. Before the first summit meeting between Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan in November 1985 in Geneva, a Soviet journalist asked me, "What could Gorbachev say to Reagan when they first meet?" I said that Reagan was a staunch anti-communist, but he liked a

good joke. If Gorbachev could tell him a joke, that might help break the ice. The journalist asked, "What kind of joke?" I suggested one where a listener asks Radio Yerevan, "What shall we do in case of a nuclear war?" Radio: "Cover yourself with a white bed sheet and walk slowly towards the nearest cemetery." Listener: "Why slowly?" Radio: "So as not to cause any panic." The journalist thought this joke was too well known, Reagan might have heard it before. When they met, Gorbachev showed Reagan a cartoon with the two standing at opposite ends of a wide abyss, with Gorbachev proposing they should get closer, and Reagan replying, "That is a good idea, why don't you take the first step." Reagan laughed, and this helped create a good atmosphere for their first meeting.

Humor Defeating the Law About Conscientious Objectors

When Jorgen Johansen from Norway (born 1956) was 18, he received a letter requesting that he join the army. He wrote back that he would not do so, as a conscientious objector to military service. He was convinced that nonviolent methods were more effective in dealing with conflicts. He was sentenced to 16 months in prison, the standard Norwegian punishment at that time for refusing military service. Before he went to prison, he received a call from his friend, a lawyer who had helped defend him, telling him that he also faced a trial for refusing military service, asking Jorgen for help. Jorgen said, "I am not a lawyer, can't you defend yourself?" His friend said, "I

don't want you to defend me, but to accuse me!" He asked Jorgen to call the real prosecutor on the morning of the scheduled court appearance. Jorgen identified himself as a clerk of the court and said that due to illness of the defendant, the trial had been postponed by two weeks. So the prosecutor stayed home. Jorgen went to the prosecutor's office and took one of several black robes that were hanging on the wall. He wore it, put on a tie and went to the court, identifying himself as the prosecutor to the judge. The judge said, "I have never seen you here before." Jorgen replied, "Yes, I am quite new." Jorgen took a very harsh position and argued, "Your honor, when even lawyers, who should be well familiar with the law, break it, the punishment should be at least doubled. I request that this lawyer be sentenced to 32 months in prison." The court room was packed with their friends, two of them with hidden cameras, who recorded the entire process. During the entire 4-hour trial, nobody realized that Jorgen was not the real prosecutor. A week later, they told that story to the media. At first, nobody believed it, but when they showed the video-recording, journalists found it hard to stop laughing. The Norwegian national television network bought the video and showed it. Throughout the country people were laughing at the repressive system. Jorgen had suddenly access to the media, all papers wanted to interview him. Then he was accused of impersonation and disrespect for the court, an offense that carries a minimum sentence of 3 months in prison. Six months later, the case was dropped due to "lack of evidence." It was simply too embarrassing for the

government. They did not want more laughter. Jorgen wrote a written confession and appealed the decision. When the government refused to convict him, he broke into prison! It is difficult to break out of prison, but to climb the outside wall with a ladder and descend inside with ropes is relatively easy. Twelve climbed into the prison, where two of their friends were serving a sentence as conscientious objectors. Newspapers, radio and television were alerted in advance.

When the twelve jumped over the wall, the alarm bells rang, and guards with dogs came running, thinking it was an attempted escape. When they realized that they were climbing inside the prison, the guards got confused. Jorgen and his friends demanded to receive the same sentence as their two friends in prison, because they all held the same beliefs that the use of violence was wrong. They demanded to speak with the prison director, who came after one hour. He explained, "We are sorry, we cannot accept you because the prison is full." They offered, "We can share rooms." The director accepted their request to hold a press conference inside the prison. The twelve refused to leave. After four hours, they were carried out of prison by the police and charged with illegal entry. Everyone was laughing. The case was dropped again for "lack of evidence." They appealed and showed the pictures to the police. The court was helpless, there was no possible sentence to threaten them with, because they had asked for imprisonment! They had turned the system upside down. Two years later, the law was changed. Instead of 16 months in prison, conscientious

objectors now receive only two to three months. Using humor around serious political questions is a very efficient tool that is used too &+ by social movements. It would be dangerous to use that approach in countries like Colombia today, but in many countries it is still possible. And humor is always an important ingredient in good political action, because people enjoy it and it captures their attention.

The Camera Is Mightier Than the Sword

From 1936-79, Nicaragua was ruled by the corrupt Somoza family, which owned more than half of Nicaragua's land. In the 1970s, the Sandinista guerilla movement fought against the Somoza dictatorship. The movement took its name from Augusto Cesar Sandino (1895-1934), a resistance leader, who was lured by General Anastasio Somoza to the government palace with the promise of peace negotiations, but then brutally murdered. Because of US military aid to the Nicaraguan government, the Sandinistas had little prospect of defeating the government army. But then in 1979, a soldier of Somoza's troops shot an American journalist, who was kneeling on the floor, in cold blood in the back from a short distance and killed him. Another journalist was able to capture that scene on a film camera and escape. This tape was shown repeatedly on US television, and the public outcry forced President Carter to suspend weapons shipments to the Nicaraguan army. Shortly afterwards, the Somoza dictatorship fell. The pen--or the camera--is mightier than the sword.

Peace Is the Way

Gandhi said, "There is no way to peace, peace is the way." It is impossible to establish peace once and for all, and to expect that it will remain that way. It requires a daily effort to reestablish it again and again. Similarly, it would be an illusion to think that once we have cleaned up a room, it will remain that way. We need to put things constantly into their correct place, otherwise we will soon have total chaos.

Peace is Like an Olive Tree

by Jorgen Johansen Building peace takes time. There is no easy way out. It is easier to start a war. If you plant an olive tree, it takes 50 years until you can harvest olives, but you can cut it down in 2 minutes. Building peace is like nurturing an olive tree.

Structural Violence

Early in 1969, Johan Galtung was working at a Center for Gandhian Studies in Varanasi in India. One evening, he sat on the flat roof of the building thinking of the homeless people sleeping in the street, children crying from hunger, and sick people waiting to die, with nobody caring for them. It struck him that this is a form of violence as much as violent crime or war, even if nobody walks around with a gun intentionally shooting people. They suffer as a result of gross inequality, of an unjust structure of society. He created the term "structural violence" for such phenomena,

in contrast to direct violence. Later he added the concept of cultural violence--the intellectual justification for direct and structural violence in education, the media, literature, films, art, monuments celebrating war "heroes", etc. Gernot Köhler and Norman Alcock (in "An Empirical Table of Structural Violence", *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 12, No. 4, pp. 343-56, 1976) sought to estimate the relative size of direct and structural violence. They observed a positive correlation between per capita income and life expectancy across countries, which increases rapidly at first, and then makes only small gains as income increases further. It is clear that increasing the annual per capita income from 100 to 200 dollars extends life expectancy considerably more than increasing it from 20,000 to 20,100 dollars. If per capita income had been equally distributed across all countries, 14 million lives could have been saved during the year 1965. They did not have data on income inequality within countries, so this is a low, conservative estimate of the extent of structural violence. During the same year, about 140,000 people died in all international and civil wars. Therefore, structural violence is at least one hundred times greater than direct violence. Charles Zimmerman and Milton Leitenberg (in "Hiroshima Lives On", *Mazingira*, Vol. 9, 1979, Nairobi: United Nations Environment Program) pointed out that structural violence is equivalent to 236 Hiroshima bombs being dropped on the children of the world each year. But because the suffering is diffuse, not concentrated in one place at one time, it is ignored by the media.

Heaven and Hell

St. Peter showed a visitor heaven and hell. First they came to a large room crowded with people. There were pots full of delicious food, but they had long spoons tied to their elbows with which they could not reach their own mouths, no matter how hard they tried, and they were terribly hungry. "This is hell," St. Peter explained. "Now I will show you heaven." He took the visitor to another room, which looked exactly the same. The visitor asked surprised, "But what is the difference?" St. Peter explained, "Here they are feeding each other. "Through cooperation we can turn hell into heaven.

A Key to Heaven and Hell

The physicist Richard Feinman once met a Buddhist monk. The monk said, "I will tell you something that you will never forget. Humanity possesses a key that opens the gates to heaven. But the same key also opens the gates to hell." Feinman said he never forgot it. That key is science.

World Law

Grenville Clark, the co-author with Louis B. Sohn of "World Peace Through World Law," rode through a town in the U.S. Midwest around the year 1900. He noticed that every man was carrying two loaded guns in his belt. A year later he returned and was surprised to see that nobody had a gun. He asked people what had happened. "Shortly after you left," someone told him, "there was a series of fatal shootings. A judge passed through our town and offered to come by once a week to sit to court if we would agree to give up our guns and appoint a sheriff. We thought, why not try, and have indeed felt much safer since then." The same simple insight still has to dawn on the leaders of the world's nations.

The Burlington 23

During the Vietnam war, a group of citizens in Burlington, Vermont, USA, tried for a long time in vain to persuade their Congressman to hold hearings about the legality of the war. Finally, 23 of them sat down in his office in protest and refused to leave. The Congressman called the police to arrest them. Richard Falk, who taught international law at Princeton University, spent his time teaching law and writing about it, and has rarely been in a court room. But he volunteered to help defend those citizens when they were brought to trial for "breaking and entering". He told the jury, "If someone breaks a window to enter a house and steal something, that should be punished by the law. But if someone sees a house in

flames and hears a baby cry inside, and breaks the window to enter the house and save the baby's life, that person should not be punished for breaking and entering. These citizens did not enter the Congressman's office for personal gain. They did so to uphold international law and save the lives of men, women and children in Vietnam, and our young soldiers who are being sent there to die." The Jury was persuaded and unanimously spoke them free.

Replacing Bullets With Ballots

Former US President Jimmy Carter, who has observed many elections, found that in a civil war, all sides are usually deeply convinced that the people are on their side. If they can be assured that there will be fair elections, with all parties having equal access to the voters in the campaign before the elections, no fraud on election day, and that all parties will honor the outcome, whatever it may be, they are often willing to let the people speak, and replace bullets with ballots, ending the civil war.

Self-Determination and Peace

What can be done to prevent or end civil wars? A comparison between two similar conflicts--in Northern Ireland and in Switzerland--may give an indication. In both cases, a Catholic minority felt oppressed by a Protestant majority. The British government long tried unsuccessfully to suppress a separatist movement with military force. Trying to suppress a conflict by force

without addressing the underlying problem is comparable to pressing the lid on a pot to stop the steam from escaping without removing the pot from the heat. It will inevitably lead to an explosion. The Good Friday agreement of 1998, which allows the Catholics to participate in the government and foresees a local referendum on the future of Northern Ireland, has brought the violence largely to an end. A similar procedure brought a peaceful solution to the conflict in Switzerland. The Catholic French-speaking minority in the Jura region within the Canton of Bern in Switzerland had long felt regularly overruled in the cantonal parliament by the Protestant German-speaking majority. The simmering resentment erupted in 1950 when Bern rejected a well-qualified candidate from the Jura region for minister of public construction, arguing that as French-speaker he would have difficulty overseeing construction in the mostly German-speaking canton. This infuriated people in the Jura. Street demonstrations were held and a separatist movement formed. The Bernese government kept telling the people of the Jura that they were much better off remaining part of the Canton Bern, since they received more subsidies than they paid in taxes. But only the people of the Jura know what they value more, subsidies or self-determination. Some cases of politically motivated arson began to appear. Nobody was killed yet, but if the problem had remained unsolved, it might have escalated into a full-scale civil war. Finally, the Bernese government agreed to let the people in the

contested region decide their own future in a referendum. The first vote was almost evenly split. No matter what would have been decided, half the affected people would have been deeply dissatisfied. A year later, the government of Bern organized another referendum, separately in each of six districts. In three northern districts, districts, which were bordering on France, a majority preferred forming their own separate canton, whereas in three other districts, which were bordering on the German-speaking part of the canton, the majority chose to remain in the Canton Bern. Each community along the new borderline was then allowed to vote whether it wanted to switch sides. Some switched. In 1978, the new Canton Jura was welcomed into the Swiss Confederation, essentially ending the conflict. A few extremists on both sides were still not satisfied, because they did not get everything they wanted, but they no longer enjoyed popular support and were isolated. Most people felt they were given a chance to choose what they wanted, and got it. Self-determination is no guarantee that people will always make the optimal decision. But if they make a mistake, it is their own mistake, and they have nobody else to blame. They will learn from their mistake and make a better choice next time. However, if a central government forces them to do something against their will, and they suffer as a consequence, they will naturally turn their anger against that government. Self-determination helps avoid such conflicts.

Bishop Desmond Tutu

Bishop Desmond Tutu, born 1931, first worked for three years as a high school teacher. Then he studied theology and became an Anglican priest in 1960. From 1962-66 he pursued further theological studies in England and then taught theology in South Africa. In 1975 he was appointed Dean of St. Mary's Cathedral in Johannesburg, the first black to hold that position in a church with a predominantly white congregation. In 1978 he became the first black General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches. In 1984 he won the Nobel Peace Prize for his nonviolent struggle against apartheid. In 1995, one year after the first democratic elections in which all South Africans were allowed to participate, President Nelson Mandela appointed Bishop Tutu to head the 17-member South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which exposed atrocities committed by all sides during the long apartheid regime. Perpetrators of politically motivated crimes who came forward and honestly told the truth about what they had done and asked for forgiveness were granted amnesty. The hearings were broadcast live on radio, and millions of people listened. Bishop Tutu's charisma was an important factor in the success of the commission in bringing about a measure of healing to the nation. When perpetrators and victims faced each other before the commission and a tense audience, he would often begin the hearings by asking everyone to sing together. This took off some of the tension. Here is one example of how he conducted those hearings and helped

bring about reconciliation. Beth Savage, a 50 year old white woman, who was an opponent of apartheid, had gone with her husband to a whites only club. She was severely wounded in a grenade attack by some young members of the Pan African Congress, so much that after she returned home from the hospital, her children had to feed, bathe and clothe her. She could not even pass through a security check at the airport, because metal fragments were still lodged in her body that set off alarms. After she told her story, Bishop Tutu asked her what she wanted. "I do not want revenge," she said, "all I want is to meet the people who did this and ask them why." Bishop Tutu got up, embraced her, and said, "You are a great woman, we need you in South Africa." She did meet with those who perpetrated the attack, and they expressed remorse about what they did. She has been meeting with them on a regular basis. They have become friends.

Amy Biehl

Amy Biehl was a young Princeton graduate who went to Capetown, South Africa, in 1992 as a volunteer to work with an NGO to help overcome apartheid. One evening, she gave a lift to a colleague, a young black woman, into her township. There happened to be a youth meeting of members of the Pan-African Congress, and the young people were all fired up and angry at the white minority that had oppressed them for so long. They did not feel that the new democracy would meet their expectations. After Amy dropped off her friend, she saw a group of young black men approaching her friend, and thought she was in

danger. She ran out of her car towards the group to protect her friend. The crowd was full of anger at whites and attacked Amy, and she died from her wounds. All South Africans, especially in the black community, were shocked, angry and ashamed that such a good person had been killed. Three young men, aged 19-22, were arrested, charged with murder and sentenced to life in prison. They applied for amnesty before the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Amy's parents came to be present at the public hearing, at which the youngsters told what had happened and sincerely apologized. After Amy's parents heard the context in which the murder had happened, they said they held no grudge against those youngsters, that they were willing to forgive all three. If the committee decided to grant them amnesty, they would abide by that decision. That generous statement was shown repeatedly on national television, as a gesture of reconciliation. The three youngsters were granted amnesty. Amy's parents, who had had nothing to do with apartheid, went even further. They set up a fund to support work with youngsters who had become involved in violence during the apartheid regime, to help continue their only daughter's work after she had died. This magnanimous act had a healing effect on the whole nation.

Reconciliation in Bosnia

In 2000, Dr. Hossain B. Danesh, the President of Landegg International University in Wienacht, Switzerland, was invited by all three nationalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina (Bosniaks, Croats and Serbs) to introduce

education for peace, based on the principles of the oneness of humanity and unity in diversity. He started with a pilot project, teaching the basics to teachers and journalists in three cities: Sarajevo, Banja Luca and Travnik. In Travnik, there were two communities (Bosniaks and Croats). For one and a half years of weekly lectures, they did not mingle at all. All the Croats, who are Catholics, sat on the left side of the room, along with a nun, separated by a walkway from all the Bosniaks, who are Muslims, who sat on the right side, along with an Imam. During breaks, they went to separate rooms to drink tea. One day, a Croatian mother of three children, whose husband had died in the war, died of an illness. The Croatian community attended the funeral, and announced they would be late. That day, Dr. Danesh changed his lecture, and spoke for two hours about untimely death and how people mourn the loss of loved ones in various religions and cultures. Suddenly, one of the Muslim men turned towards the Croats and said, "I have never had the courage to tell this before, but when my sister was caught behind enemy lines during the civil war (among the Croats in Bosnia) and became seriously ill, some members of your community drove her eight hours to a hospital in Zagreb and saved her life. I wish to thank you for this." He had tears in his eyes, and everyone was deeply moved. Some Croats told stories of how their relatives found refuge with Muslim families who were hiding them in their basements to protect them and fed them during the war, risking their own safety. This prompted other Muslims to tell about good deeds and help they had received from

Croats, and so on. During the break, they mingled for the first time and members of the two communities became very warm towards each other. After the break, they did no longer sit separately, but mixed. This was a breakthrough, which contributed to healing and reconciliation. For Bishop Tutu in South Africa, who had grown up with the Anglican and Catholic practice of confessing sins and then have them forgiven, found it natural to apply that process in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. But in some cultures, people find it very difficult and a great loss of face to admit mistakes. It is easier to say kind things about former adversaries. In such cases, an alternative process of reconciliation is required. Based on this and many other relevant examples, Dr. Danesh has developed a new approach to healing the wounds of large scale violent conflict. The approach is called, "Creating a Culture of Healing."

Meeting With a Prime Minister

by Hossain B. Danesh

"You have five minutes!" shouted the secretary when we entered the prime minister's office at the appointed time. The prime minister was tense and asked, "What do you want from me?" "We wish to thank you," I said. Incredulously, the prime minister leaned back in his chair. He was used to people seeing him with petitions. "What do you wish to thank me for?" "For your excellent refugee policy," I said. He was surprised and pleased. "Nobody has ever come to thank me before," he said. We began to

talk about a whole range of issues related to peace and the fulfillment of human needs. After five minutes, the secretary opened the door and told the prime minister, "It is time for your next appointment." "Ask them to wait," the prime minister said. We stayed for 35 minutes. Leaders are used to being criticized incessantly, so they either take a defensive attitude, or hide what they are doing. We need to overcome the false belief that criticizing people will improve anything. Leaders, like ordinary people, respond much better to expressions of gratitude than to blame and criticism. Expressing honest appreciation is very different from false flattery.

Prevented From Speaking

Dr. Hossain Danesh, founder of Education for Peace, was invited to give a series of training sessions on peace education to a group of 100 teachers in Banja Luca in 2000. Banja Luca was the capital of the Republica Srpska during the Bosnian war. The town itself was largely spared from destruction, but many of the residents participated in the war, and committed atrocities against Bosniaks and Croats. When Dr. Danesh began to speak about peace, some of the teachers in the room protested, "We are a civilized nation with a proud history. You don't need to teach us anything about peace. Do you know our great history and civilization? We don't want to listen to you!" He invited those teachers to come in front and teach him about their history, and sat in the audience. The teachers began to argue with each other about various historic events and their interpretation. After a while, most

of the other teachers in the audience asked them to stop and sit down, saying they preferred to hear what Dr. Danesh had to say. So he could go back to the podium and continue his lecture. If instead he had tried to persist with his lecture against the vocal opposition of a small minority, it would have produced conflict between him and his audience.

Responsibility

One can distinguish between two concepts of responsibility, in the narrow sense of someone who has caused a problem, and in the wider sense of anyone who can correct a problem, even if he or she has not caused it, as the following story told by Roger Fisher illustrates. During World War II, he was assigned to an air force unit. One day, they were given the task of testing a plane that had been fitted with a new engine. The test pilot had twice before his license revoked for reckless flying, but he had it again. As the plane was high up in the air, he turned off one of the four engines. The plane flew fine. He turned off a second and third engine, and the plane barely managed to stay in the air. To frighten the others on the plane a little, he turned off the fourth engine for a moment, and the plane began to dive towards the rocks on the ground. Then he wanted to turn on the engines again. But nothing happened. He frantically turned the ignition key, but nothing worked. Suddenly he remembered that to have power in the battery, at least one of the four engines had to be running. Fortunately, a technician in the back of the plane remembered that they had an emergency diesel

generator on board, intended to be used to start the plane in places without electricity on the ground, like in Greenland. He connected it to the battery, and the pilot could start the plane just in time before a crash landing. In the narrow sense, this problem was only the pilot's responsibility, he alone had caused it, but it affected everyone on the plane. In a wider sense, all who can do something to correct the problem, even if they have not caused it, should feel responsibility to do so. Peaceworkers, who have not started a war or intensified a conflict, but seek ways to resolve it peacefully, feel responsibility in the wider sense.

Holding Officials Accountable

I met Bona Malwal Madut Ring from Bahr El Ghazal in South Sudan when we were both students and lived at International House in New York. One day in 1969, he received a long phone call from London, and went there a few days later. He explained to me that since he had studied in Khartoum, he knew people from both the Northern and Southern Sudan, and they both trusted him. A civil war raged in the Sudan that began when the mostly Arabic Muslim North tried to extend its language and laws on the African South, where Christianity or local religions predominated. After more than a decade of fighting and suffering, the two sides were tired of war and were seeking to arrange a cease-fire. Delegations from the North and the South were in different hotels in London, but could not agree where to meet. So they invited Bona to London, and he shuttled back and forth between the two

hotels with messages. This led to an agreement that the two sides would meet a year later in Addis Abeba, Ethiopia, and there they agreed on a cease-fire and a new government. President Nimeiry invited Bona to become Minister of Culture and Information in the new government, the only minister from the South. The three Southern provinces were granted autonomy. This brought a period of peace that lasted ten years. During that time, Bona requested that government officials regularly pay visits to every village in the South every three months, to ask the people what they needed from the government. He frequently went along on such trips. During one of these trips, he wanted to visit the next village on the map. The local official explained that because of the rainy season, the roads were flooded and their jeeps could not go there; they would have to skip that village and go to the next one. Bona said, "Let's go as far as we can, and if we cannot drive further, we will walk, I want to visit that village." So they went there, and actually were able to drive there without problem. But when they arrived, the village was empty. Later they found out that the village had never been visited by a government official in over three years. The people thought that the civil war was still going on, and that the jeeps were an army patrol. So Bona played some local music on a tape recorder. Slowly, some of the children could no longer suppress their curiosity, came closer and watched from behind trees what was going on. Bona explained to them that they had come to help them, and would not harm them. Finally, the grownups also assembled around the visitors. Bona asked

how things were going for them. They explained that they were mostly doing alright, they had enough food. The only problem was that the fountain, which the government had installed in the village some years ago, had stopped working three years ago, and so they spent much time fetching water every day from a river. Bona asked the local official responsible for looking after people's well-being to check the fountain. It turned out that a rubber ring, which was needed to pump the water out of the ground, was broken. The official had dozens of those rings in his bag, and replaced it. Suddenly, they could pump fresh and clean water out of the ground again. The villagers burst into joy, and prepared a big feast and entertainment for the visitors, and asked them to spend the night with them. In front of the villagers, Bona demoted the negligent official, who had failed to visit that village in many years, to a low ranking desk job. That period of relative peace came to an end in 1983, when President Nimeiry gave in to pressure from the Muslim Brotherhood and revoked the South's autonomy, and began to impose Sharia, the cruel Islamic law that punishes adultery with stoning and petty theft with amputation of the hand. Bone resigned as minister and went into exile in England, from where he published Sudanow, a magazine about Sudanese affairs. Not surprisingly, the civil war resumed.

Random Inspections

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is charged with supervising the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), in an effort to prevent the spread of nuclear

weapons. But it can now inspect only sites that member countries voluntarily place under its supervision, at regular 6-month intervals. If a suspected drug smuggler could tell a border guard, "You may check my trunk, but don't open the glove compartment," such an "inspection" would be meaningless. The IAEA must have the power to inspect any suspected nuclear facilities, without advance warning, even in non-member countries, otherwise it is impossible to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. Many governments today would strongly object to such intrusive inspections as a "violation of their national sovereignty." But many airline passengers also protested first against having their luggage searched for guns or explosives, when that policy was introduced after a series of fatal hijackings. Today, most realize that they can only be secure if everybody's luggage is inspected, including their own. Those who have nothing to hide have nothing to fear. Sooner or later, governments will reach the same conclusion. The question is only whether this will happen before or after the first terrorist nuclear bomb explodes.

Keeping a Secret

After the American troops were defeated by the British at the battle of Trenton, George Washington was walking through the night in a dense fog, covering his face with his coat. A woman recognized him and asked, "Mr. Washington, where are you going?" He asked, "Can you keep a secret?" She said excitedly, "Certainly!" He said, "Well, me too" and moved on.

Conflict Resolution

A Buddhist Bookstore

A husband and wife grew increasingly apart. The husband, a businessman selling bicycles, brought his accounting books home and pored over red and black figures in the evening. His wife, who had become increasingly interested in her spiritual life and was fascinated with Buddhism, felt disgusted by her husband's materialism. She blamed him, "Why are you only interested in money?" He retorted, "If it were not for these black figures, you would not live so well. Look at your good food and fancy clothes, and our nice house that you enjoy!" She protested, "I don't need all those external luxuries. I prefer a rich inner life." Both developed affairs, and there was a risk that the marriage could end in divorce. Johan Galtung was asked for advice. He found that both had some legitimate and some illegitimate goals. Earning an income for the family, and being interested in Buddhism, were both perfectly legitimate. What was illegitimate was their effort to convert their spouse, to become like themselves. The best way to bridge the legitimate goals is a "joint project" that combines the interests of both partners. He suggested that they open a Buddhist bookstore together. It took only one week until the wife began to develop an interest in red and black figures. And after about a month, the husband for the first time read one of the books he was selling. They are still happily married.

Saving a Marriage

after Johan Galtung

An Italian husband was fitting bathrooms with tiles for a living, while his wife, who was eight years younger, stayed home and took care of the household. Her main concern was her security in old age. Since Italian women live on average eight years longer than men, she expected to outlive her husband by about sixteen years. But his preference after working for 40 years was to spend some hours after work in the evening drinking a glass of wine and discussing with his friends at the local pub. She complained that he had stopped working overtime. He told her that she had no idea how difficult it was to fit the last tiles behind a toilet or bathtub, that his shoulders were aching, and that after many years of hard work he deserved to spend some time with his friends in the evening. The tension slowly escalated. One evening, in a fit of anger, she called him impotent. He felt deeply hurt and hit her in revenge. She screamed and called the police. The police told her husband that if he ever did this again, he would spend half a year in jail. At this point, through a friend of a friend, Johan was called to mediate, maybe in the malicious joy that this was a conflict that even he could not solve, or in the faint hope that there may yet exist some solution. Johan carefully listened to the wife's legitimate concern for financial security in her old age, and the husband's legitimate wish to suffer less strain and to have some fun with his friends in the evening after working all day. He also felt that the wife had a great deal of free time which she could use in some income-

generating activity. But the patriarchal model, which neither he nor she questioned, demanded that the husband work outside of the house earning money, and the wife stay home taking care of the household. So Johan proposed to break out of that mental jail, suggesting that they operate a bar together, and divide the income equally. At first, the husband demanded that he get two thirds, and his wife only one third of their profits. But Johan was firm and insisted that they split their income equally, even though conventional wisdom maintains that a mediator should let the conflict parties arrive themselves at an agreement, and not influence the outcome. They agreed to operate the bar together and divide the income in half. This gave the husband an opportunity to spend time with his friends who visited the bar after work, and his wife to use her time more productively, chat with the customers, and set aside some savings for her old age, and it gave both the chance to cooperate together. They are still happily married, and the bar is a success.

Commuters

Alice and Bill happened to sit next to each other at the annual office party. They discovered that they had almost the same commute. Alice used to come to the office with public transportation, and Bill, who lived a little farther away in the same direction, drove to the office by car. He offered to Alice to pick her up on his way to the office every morning and bring her home after work. Both were happy with this arrangement. At first, Bill enjoyed to have company on the way to work instead of driving alone. But

after a while, he began to resent a little that he bore all the costs for gasoline and the maintenance of his car, and Alice contributed nothing. But he was too proud to ask for a contribution. He felt that Alice should know better, and make the first move. But Alice thought that Bill was driving his car anyway, he had done so before, and picking her up was a small detour. It did not occur to her to offer to help cover the costs of commuting. She was happy that she saved time and costs as she no longer had to use the more cumbersome public transportation with bus and street car. She also was a bit embarrassed to offer to pay something to Bill, fearing it could hurt his pride. Bill experienced a tight financial situation, with one of his children getting ill repeatedly and requiring care, but he kept this to himself, even though his resentment over Alice's failure to offer to share the costs of commuting, or at least to express any gratitude, slowly increased. One day, after they had commuted together for about a year, Alice had an important meeting at the start of the work day, but Bill did not show up at the regular time. She waited anxiously and increasingly tense, and when Bill finally arrived 15 minutes late, she yelled at him, "Why are you late?! I have an important meeting this morning and cannot afford to come late, especially today!" That was enough for Bill. Without saying a word, he slammed the car door closed and drove off without Alice. She could not understand his rude behavior, she had only explained to him how important it was for her to be on time, especially on that particular day. Alice called a taxi, and arrived at the office 20 minutes late, being very

embarrassed. She did not tell the others what happened and simply apologized for being late. But she was very angry at Bill for having put her into this humiliating situation. From that day on, Bill withdrew his offer to give Alice a ride. Alice could not understand his apparent overreaction to her simply expressing her needs. And Bill could not understand how someone to whom he had given a favor for such a long time could be so ungrateful and blame him. They stopped greeting each other, avoided looking at each other, and made life at the office mutually difficult, for example by failing to pass on important messages etc. Imagine their encounter that day had gone as follows instead, when Bill arrived late. Alice: "Dear Bill, I really appreciate that you give me a ride to work and back home every day, but why are you late today? I have an important meeting the first thing this morning and especially today I should not be late." Bill: "I am really sorry for being late, but my daughter is sick and had to stay home, and I had to wait until a baby sitter arrived. I did not know that you have a meeting this morning, otherwise I would have called you and advised you to leave early and use public transportation, or to call a taxi." Alice: "I am very sorry that your daughter is ill. I hope she gets better very soon. And I should have called you immediately when you were not here at the usual time to ask what happened, then I might have been able to arrive still on time with a taxi. Next time when I have to be there absolutely at 8 am, I will let you know in advance. I also wanted to offer you for a long time to help pay for the costs of commuting, but I was afraid you

might be offended if I offered you money. Can I pay at least the costs of gasoline from now on, since you drive and contribute your car which requires regular maintenance?" Bill: "Thank you, I would really appreciate that, especially at this time, because we have extra expenses for doctor's bills and a baby sitter." Alice: "I am really sorry I did not offer to help earlier, it was my misunderstanding, not stinginess." Such an exchange could have been healing and defused the tense situation. Even better would have been if Alice had expressed her gratitude from time to time. Saying thank you to someone costs nothing, but can mean a great deal to the people who appreciate an expression of gratitude for kind things they do. And Bill could have said after a few weeks of their common commute, when he began to resent for the first time bearing all the costs of commuting alone: "Alice, I enjoy our conversations on the way to work and am glad not to have to drive alone. But I am in a somewhat tight financial situation at the moment, and was wondering if you would be willing to share the costs of commuting." Then Alice would have known that Bill would not be offended if she offered to help pay, and would have done so much earlier. This would have avoided that Bill's resentment slowly grew, until it exploded when, figuratively speaking, a spark fell on the dry haystack and ignited it. What lessons can be drawn from this? First, it is important that we get clarity about our own needs and aspirations, and those of others. This is the first step of the TRANSCEND method developed by Johan Galtung: mapping a conflict means to identify all parties and their

goals, and to identify where goals may clash. In a second step, legitimate goals (those that do not violate the basic needs of others) are separated from illegitimate goals. In a third step, a creative solution is sought that bridges the legitimate goals of all parties. It is important that we express our needs to others who can fulfill them, and that we ask others about their needs. For example, Bill should have told Alice that he would appreciate some financial contribution to the costs of commuting. And Alice should have in advance alerted Bill, who occasionally was a few minutes late for various reasons, that on that particular day it was important for her to be sharply on time, because she had an important meeting that morning. We should not blame or accuse others, not speak about others and judge them, but speak about ourselves and our own needs and observations, and express concrete requests, as Marshall Rosenberg has emphasized. We should not assume that others will guess our needs and aspirations by themselves. Second, we should listen to each other and ask the reason why someone did something harmful to us, not burst out into accusations without understanding fully what had happened, and why. If Alice had asked Bill WHY he was late and found out that the reason was that his daughter had fallen ill, she would not have shouted at him in anger. And third, it is a good idea to express gratitude freely. It costs nothing, but for the recipient it is a blessing.

Creating Harmony at Work

Mr. Lee, a friend of mine in South Korea is the manager of a factory producing car parts with about 250 employees. He is the first in the factory at 7 am in the morning, switching the lights on, and the last to leave in the evening at 11 pm, switching the lights off. He organizes parties for his employees from time to time, and gives them gifts when they have worked 10 or 20 years etc. The workers know that he works as hard as any of them, and respect him. One time, his company received a big order that they could not have fulfilled within the time required under normal conditions. He assembled all his workers and told them about this opportunity, but also explained that it would exceed the company's normal working capacity. Spontaneously, his workers shouted, "Don't worry, we will work overtime, we can fulfill that order!" This approach works much better than an authoritarian, bossy management style. I remember telling Professor William J. Baumol at New York University, when I was his assistant, "It is such a pleasure to work with you, because you never put pressure on people." He replied, "But this is in my own interest, if I were to put pressure on people, I would never receive such wonderful cooperation as I get!"

Who Is Right?

A quarreling couple went to see the rabbi. First the husband went into his study and talked to him for about an hour, complaining about his wife and emptying his heart. The rabbi listened patiently and told him at the end, "You

are right." Then it was the wife's turn, and she complained to the rabbi about her husband for about an hour. Again, he listened without interrupting her and said to her at the end, "You are right." The two left relieved, walking home happily hand in hand. Then the rabbi's wife, who had secretly overheard the conversations through the wall, confronted him and said, "How could you tell them both they were right when they told such different stories!" He said to her, "You are right, too."

Common Ground

In the early 1980s, Canada was divided into two camps, supporters and opponents of nuclear energy. Animosities between the two groups had risen to such an extent that they would not meet in the same room. The government tried to mediate between the two groups, but was unsuccessful. Dr. Hossain Danesh was asked for help. He met with the opponents of nuclear energy to ask why they opposed it. They explained that they were concerned about future generations. Nuclear energy risked to cause accidents that could release radioactive waste into the environment, and the problem of storing nuclear waste was not solved. Then he met with the supporters of nuclear energy to ask why they supported it. They explained that they were concerned about future generations. Without nuclear energy, Canada would eventually run out of fossil fuels, and future generations would suffer from cold and disease, and industries would have to be closed because of a lack of energy. Telling the two groups that both shared a common concern, about

their children and children's children, their representatives agreed to meet. In dialogues, they were able to agree on a common solution, a few nuclear power plants with very high safety standards. Unity based conflict resolution does not focus on the points of disagreement, but seeks points of unity, common interest, and gradually expands from there, to arrive at a mutually acceptable solution to problems.

The Good Friday Agreement

Former US Senator George Mitchell played a crucial role as mediator in helping bring about a peace settlement between representatives of the Northern Irish Protestants and Sinn Féin, the political arm of the Catholic Irish Republican Army in Northern Ireland. He presided over many sessions, for a long time without much progress. One day, when he arrived, he sang an old hit song by Frank Sinatra. Those present asked him in surprise, "Why did you do that?" He explained, "Because whenever I come here, I hear the same old songs over and over again." The parties got the message and realized that this way they could not make any progress. That day, they worked really hard to hammer out an agreement, and reached the Good Friday agreement on 10 April 1998.

Keeping Peace in Transsylvania

During the 1980s, the main fear of a war in the Balkans focused on Romania, where 1.6 million of its 23 million citizens are ethnic Hungarians. They live mainly in

Transsylvania, a Rumanian border region that had belonged to Hungary before World War I. Romania and Hungary were enemies in both World Wars, and both committed widespread atrocities and seized territory from each other, and mutual fear and distrust still run deep. The Rumanian government had told Rumanian farmers that the Hungarian minority wanted to take their land and return it to Hungary. The infuriated farmers violently broke up a peaceful demonstrations of ethnic Hungarians, heightening tensions. But a private initiative helped defuse tensions. Before the situation got worse, Allen H. Kassoff, Livia B. Plaks and Larry Watts from the Project on Ethnic Relations in Princeton, New Jersey, were able to mediate a peace agreement. They got four senior Rumanian government officials, three ethnic Hungarians and one ethnic German together to an initial meeting in Switzerland, followed one year later by a three-day meeting on the Rumanian Black Sea coast, in a castle that had once belonged to former dictator Nicolae Ceausescu. They were able to help the parties work out a mutually satisfactory agreement, in which minorities were granted the right to print local newspapers and give school lessons again in their own language, in return for a promise not to seek secession. This effort may well have prevented another civil war like in former Yugoslavia. If three people in two meetings of less than a week may be able to prevent a war through skillful mediation, whereas over 20,000 UN troops in Bosnia tried in vain to stop the fighting there during three years, the cost of mediation is about a million times less than the cost of peacekeeping.

Most of all, it can save many lives. This does not mean that peacekeeping should be abandoned. But it means that more resources should also be put into war prevention. By analogy, building fireproof structures can save a great deal of fire-fighting and save lives, but this should not mean that we abandon fire-fighting totally. Many other individuals and NGOs play a valuable role in helping mediate agreements between conflicting parties, but they now rarely receive any publicity. The media tend to report about cases where mediation fails and fighting breaks out, but they almost never report about cases where fighting has been avoided, and how this was achieved. They have turned the old adage "no news is good news" into "good news is no news." Better coverage of success stories could encourage others to help prevent war.

The German-Danish Border

The province of Schleswig had changed hands between Denmark and Prussia several times during the 19th century and was under German control before World War I. In the 1919 Versailles Treaty, it was agreed that a popular referendum should be held to determine if the people of Schleswig wanted to belong to Denmark or Germany. In the Northern part, a majority preferred to join Denmark, whereas the central and southern part preferred to remain with Germany. That new border, determined according to the wishes of the local population, has remained very stable. Not even Hitler tried to shift that border.

Camp David

The key to successful negotiations is to find creative solutions that give all parties what is most important to them. For example, during the talks between Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin and Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, hosted by President Carter at Camp David near Washington in 1978, agreement on most issues was reached. But an impasse appeared when Egypt demanded return of the whole Sinai territory that Israel had occupied, a demand that Israel adamantly refused. Looking at the underlying reasons instead of only the stated positions, it was possible to find a mutually acceptable solution: Egypt was in fact most concerned about its sovereignty; after centuries of humiliation through colonial powers, it was unwilling to give up any of its territory. Israel's main concern was its security: Given its small size, it did not want Egyptian tanks directly on its border. By formally making the whole Sinai Egyptian territory, with the Egyptian flag everywhere, but with a buffer zone along the Israeli border where UN peacekeepers were stationed, both governments could be satisfied simultaneously, and an agreement was reached.

Put Out the Fire Before it is Too Late

written by Ann Avery, based on a story by Leo Tolstoy
There was a man called Nicolas who was happy in life except for one thing: he and a neighbor distrusted each other. One day his chicken strayed into the neighbor's garden. When his wife went to look for the chicken's daily

egg she did not find it. So she asked her neighbor: "Did our chicken lay her egg in your yard, by any chance?" The neighbor replied, "No, your chicken didn't do that." The neighbor's husband heard the story and, because he didn't like Nicolas, he decided that Nicolas' wife was accusing his wife of stealing. That afternoon, he said to Nicolas: "Your wife is a liar. She accused my wife of stealing your eggs." Nicolas said: "I will take you to court if you call my family liars." And so on and on. The two men got more and more angry. Every day there was something more. One day the father of Nicholas said: "Make peace with your neighbor before you have a real problem. Your anger is like a fire. Put it out now, before it grows large. When it is large, it will be very difficult to put it out." Sure enough, one day there was a fire in Nicolas' barn. Nicolas was asleep in the hay, and the fire woke him. He saw his neighbor running away. The fire spread from one house and barn to another. Half the village burned down. Nicolas did not tell the village who started the fire. But he did tell his father, and his father asked him: "Who really started the fire, Nicolas?" Nicolas didn't answer his father, but he said to himself: "It was also my fault, because I did not make peace with my neighbor a long time ago, when the fire of our anger was only small."

The Secret of a Happy Marriage

To have a happy marriage, the secret is to make your partner feel appreciated and comfortable in your presence. The family counselor Ellen Kreider once said, "There is a basic simple secret to keeping a happy marriage: make your partner feel

appreciated and comfortable in your presence." She gave an example. When she and her husband were newly married, neither knew how to cook. She prepared a meal following the instructions in a cookbook. The recipe called for "two cloves of garlic". But she did not know what "clove" means and used two bulbs of garlic. Even though the dish had a very strong garlic taste, the husband was gracious and praised the food. That made her feel at ease and welcome.

Unfortunately, most people do the opposite. A study has found that people tend to feel most relaxed when they walk with their pets, and most tense when they walk with their spouses, because pets are non-evaluative and love us unconditionally. Let us learn from pets.

Luciano de Crescencio said, "We are all like angels with only one wing. We can fly only by embracing each other."

Cultivating Grass

A woman was very particular about her lawn. The height of the mower had to be just right, and the edges to be cut clean. Her lawn was a great source of pride to her. So she did not let just anyone cut the grass, and certainly not her husband! If he tried, she usually blamed him for the unevenness of the cut and the many areas he missed. But one day she had to leave early in the day and the grass really needed to be cut. Since rain was forecast, she gave in to her husband's repeated offers to help. When she returned, she found that he had done his usual poor job, but he had a big smile, thinking that he had improved on his past efforts. But rather than scolding him yet again,

she found herself unexpectedly praising the work he had done. He was overjoyed with her response. She finally realized what was more important: to cultivate her closest relationship, or to cultivate grass.

Opportunity Creation

A friend of mine and his wife were getting divorced. They quarreled about who should get the house. Both hired expensive lawyers and were close to spending more than the value of the house. I wished to help them and suggested what I considered a fair and simple way to solve the dispute. The result was that each thought I was taking the other's side, and neither of them spoke with me anymore. Around the same time, in 1987, I met a Soviet visitor by chance. I saw two people taking pictures of each other on the campus of Princeton University and offered to take a picture of both of them. It turned out that they were here to take part in the International Debating championship. I casually introduced them to a Visiting Fellow from South Korea, at a time before the two countries had established diplomatic relations. It was as if an electric spark passed between them. They immediately began to make plans for academic exchanges between Seoul National and Moscow State Universities, for mutual visits by delegations of businesspeople, and more. It dawned on me that it is much easier, and often more fruitful, to bring people in contact who are eager to work together for mutual benefit than to try to separate parties in a conflict. One could call that type of initiative "opportunity creation."

Picking Berries

Have you ever picked berries from a thorny bush? If you have eaten all those that you can see from your angle, and move slightly, you suddenly see a whole bunch more. After you have picked those, and move again, you see still more. If you want to pick all or most of the berries, you have to look at the bush from many different angles, ideally from every possible angle, even separate branches to get a look inside the bush. This is a metaphor for work on peaceful conflict transformation. If you look at a conflict from only one point of view, you see a very limited set of problems and possible solutions. To gain a better picture of the whole conflict, it is necessary to hold extensive dialogues with all parties involved, to see the situation from many different angles. This unveils new problems, but also many more possibilities of positive, transcendent outcomes, which create a better future for all parties.

A Snowflake

Randy Kehler, who later became national coordinator of the Nuclear Freeze movement in the United States, was drafted into the Army in the early 1970s to go fight in Vietnam. Like many others, he refused to serve and was sentenced to jail. But unlike many others, he did more than that. Before beginning his jail sentence, he toured the United States, speaking out against the war on university campuses, in churches and to peace organizations. He had no idea whether this would make any difference, but his

conscience demanded that he try to do whatever he could. In one of his audiences was Daniel Ellsberg, the Pentagon analyst and co-author of the "Pentagon Papers," the secret history of the Vietnam war. He had become increasingly disillusioned with the way the United States fought the war, and had begun to doubt its justification. But he said that what finally persuaded him to do something was hearing Randy Kehler speak. Here was a young man willing to go to jail for his conviction that the war was immoral. So Ellsberg secretly made four sets of photocopies of the 7,000 page report, and left them anonymously in boxes in front of the offices of the New York Times, the Washington Post and 17 other major national newspapers. When editors read the reports, they realized that they contain so many accurate facts that they could not have been forgeries by someone outside of the government, and they began to publish them. President Nixon ordered them to halt publication, but the US Supreme Court ruled that prior restraint violated the first amendment of the US constitution guaranteeing free speech. When people read that they had been deceived all these years by their own government, and that the United States was not winning the war, they began to oppose it in large numbers. That forced President Nixon to withdraw U.S. troops from Vietnam in 1973, and led to an end of the war in 1975. At the right moment, one more snowflake can break the branch of a tree. Even if our efforts don't show any immediate result, whatever we do makes it easier for others who follow to complete our work.

A Warm Room

Salvador De Maderiaga from Spain, the chairman of the unsuccessful disarmament talks in the League of Nations in the 1930s, wrote in his memoirs something like, "We failed because we started at the wrong end. We put the cart before the horse. To tell people to disarm in a climate full of hostility and distrust is like telling people to take off their coats in the midst of a cold winter storm. Bring them to a warm room, and they will take their coats off on their own, without any committee having to tell them how to do it." Similarly, if conflicts underlying violence can be resolved, and the wounds and hatred caused by past wars which stimulate a desire for revanche and revenge, can be healed through reconciliation, then the interest in arms declines by itself. Johan Galtung once said, "Disarmament does not appear to be the road to peace, but peace may be the road to disarmament." As long as peace negotiators focus on the elimination of weapons, anyone with a gun or bomb can sabotage the peace process. Violence relates to an unresolved conflict like smoke to fire. To stop the smoke, it is necessary to quench the fire, not the other way round.

Buckminster Fuller

Buckminster Fuller (1895-1983) studied aerospace engineering, and later changed to architecture. One morning he decided to figure out how a house would look like if it was built according to the principles he had learned in aerospace engineering. The basic injunction was, "Do more with less," get the maximum in strength

with the minimum of weight. A plane would never be built as a rectangular box like a typical house, but round, like an egg-shell, which is more sturdy than if it had sharp corners. Bricks, the typical building material, serve a dual function: insulation, and structural support. For insulation against the cold outside, it is not necessary to use something as heavy as a brick. A much lighter material that traps air, like cotton or glass fiber, can meet that need just as well. And for structural support, it is not necessary to build a solid wall, a grid made from metal tubes can provide that support. If the grid elements are quadrangles, the angles could easily be bent out of shape, but a triangle is the most sturdy shape. This gave him the idea of building a dome made out of a triangular grid, covered with plexiglass--the geodesic dome. He found that to enclose the average space of a one-family home, a dome would use about 3 tons of construction material, compared with 150 tons for traditional buildings, a 98 percent saving. He was intrigued, and began to look into other areas where better design could help save on material inputs and energy. He estimated that if existing engineering knowledge was applied systematically to meet human needs, even without counting on new inventions, within ten years, everyone on earth could enjoy a living standard as good as or better than people in the most advanced industrial countries. Of course, this would not mean the same level of wasteful material consumption, but adequate nutrition, shelter, access to information, health care and education. He concluded that the obstacles to such a dream were not technical but political.

World Game

Buckminster Fuller, the US architect, designer and philosopher, designed a "world game," in which the players assume the role of heads of state, and their goal is to meet the needs of their people for food, housing and education. They can try to do so through trade, investment, conquest, anything they choose. If a random group of schoolchildren or adults off the street are invited to play this game, and explained the rules, within the first few minutes they usually conclude that they are all better off if they mutually eliminate all their military spending, because then they have more resources available to meet their people's needs. It is unfortunate that our leaders do not have the wisdom of children.

Conflict and Cooperation

During World War I, Muzafer Sherif from Turkey was in a group of civilians who were massacred by enemy soldiers. He was the only survivor, because he lay motionless under a pile of bodies and the soldiers thought he was dead. After that horrible experience, he decided to do everything he could to understand better the sources of hostility and ways to overcome them. He came to the United States to study psychology. In 1954, together with his American wife, Carolyn Sherif, he conducted a famous experiment in social psychology, the Robbers Cave experiment on conflict and cooperation. At a boy scout camp at Robbers Cave in Oklahoma, they took a bus-load full of boys arriving for summer camp, let them draw a lot

and randomly divided them into two groups. Each group chose its own name and lived in a separate cabin. They let the boys play competitive games with each other, like soccer and tug of war, and let them compete, for example to see who could build a bridge faster across a ravine. These boys came from the same town, and initially had no grudges against each other, but they began to identify strongly with their own group, and to look down on the other group. They called each other bad names, and even fought mock battles, throwing apples at each other. The situation became very ugly. Then they tried various ways to get the two groups to cooperate again. They gave them lectures about the advantage of mutual cooperation, but that had no effect. They organized parties where the two groups could mingle, but this only reinforced their prejudice. They said about members of the other group, "Did you see how much this one ate, or how strange that one was dressed?" But they finally found a method that worked. After a long hike, when the boys returned hungry and tired to the camp, the researchers secretly arranged for the food delivery truck to be stuck in a mud puddle. First one group tried but was not strong enough to push the truck out of the mud. Then the other group tried, also without success. Finally, they reluctantly agreed to push together, and they got the truck moving again. That incident broke the ice. From that day on, they began to talk with each other again, concluded friendships, and realized that there are things that they both want and need, but can reach only through cooperation. Sherif and Sherif coined the term "superordinate goal" for something that

two groups both want, but cannot achieve alone, only through mutual cooperation. Such superordinate goals also exist at the international level, and are among the most powerful means to overcome mutual hostility. For example, when the United States and the Soviet Union faced the common threat of Hitler Germany, they became allies. But it is not necessary to have a common enemy to cooperate. Many global problems can be solved only through global cooperation, in the strong interest of all. They include saving the ozone layer that protects us from cancer-causing ultraviolet radiation, preventing global warming, and preventing the spread of nuclear weapons to terrorist groups. If even one country makes nuclear weapons available to terrorists, all are in grave danger.

Numbness

If a frog is put into hot water, it jumps out. If it is put into tepid water, and the water is gradually heated, he remains in the water until he is boiled. This is the typical attitude towards the danger of nuclear annihilation. We have become used to this idea so gradually that most people do nothing to prevent it.

The Milgram Experiment

In 1961, Stanley Milgram (1933-1984), a doctoral student at Yale University in New Haven, the United States, advertised for volunteers to participate in a psychological experiment. Those who applied were paid \$5 (a good amount at that time) and told that they had been randomly

chosen to play the role of a teacher, and another volunteer had been chosen to play the role of a student' 0 97student" was led away into a cabin where he was presumably hooked to electric wires. The "teacher" was told to ask him a series of questions, and each time he gave a wrong answer, to administer to the "student" an electric shock of increasing intensity, to study if the fear of pain would improve people's concentration and ability to think straight. The "student" was in fact a "confederate", who cooperated with Milgram and only pretended to receive electric shocks, but that was not known to the "teachers." The "teachers" had in front of them a scale with voltage levels ranging from 15, 30, 45 volts up to 450 volts. The ranges were labeled with "mild discomfort," "moderate pain," "severe pain," "danger" and finally simply "???" At 90 volts, the student began to moan in pain. At 150 volts he began to scream aloud and to protest that he wanted to quit the experiment. At 180 volts, he called that he could not stand the pain anymore and pounded with his fist on the wall. At 300 volts the "student" refused to answer any more questions and begged to be allowed to leave. After that, there was silence. Each time the "student" made a mistake, the teacher was told to increase the voltage. Some asked, "Do I really have to?" and the leader of the experiment simply told them, "Yes, you have no choice." When he described this experiment to 14 of his colleagues, all of them predicted that no more than 2 percent of the subjects would go "all the way." Yet 26 of 40 volunteers, or 65 percent, went all the way, and all of them administered shocks of at least 300 volts. The experiment

was repeated in many countries. In Germany, up to 85 percent administered potentially lethal shocks. If people follow blindly the orders of an unscrupulous dictator, this can lead to war and genocide. This experiment should encourage us all to think independently, to uphold our values, and to accept personal responsibility for our actions--not to hide behind the excuse of simply having carried out orders from above.

A Butcher Knife

In modern war, those who issue orders to kill seldom see their victims face to face. Roger Fisher proposed that the secret service agent who at all times carries a briefcase near the US President with the 12-digit code that the President must release to authorize the use of nuclear weapons, should be replaced by a volunteer who has that code hidden in a capsule implanted near his heart, and who carries a butcher knife in his attache case. If the President decided it was necessary to kill millions with nuclear missiles, he would first have to see what it means to kill one human being with his own hands. When he suggested this at a meeting at the Pentagon, the others protested, "That is a terrible idea. It could distort the President's judgement."

Killing Babies

A young woman working as salesperson for a major aerospace company was at an air show, praising the advantages of a new missile, how far it could reach, how

fast it was, how big a payload it could carry, and how accurate it was. Someone asked her, "How many babies can you kill with this?" She was silent. She had recently had a baby, and the question deeply disturbed her. She quit her job and became a leading peace activist.

Bisons and Bears

Nuclear weapons have changed the nature of war. The main victims are innocent civilians, and there are now enough nuclear weapons in the world to end human life itself. We must not cling to past ways of thinking and acting, or we risk human extinction. the following example illustrates this: The bisons that roamed the prairies of North America became nearly extinct, because they did not adjust their behavior to changed conditions. In the past, when the main danger they faced were predators such as bears, the best protection they had against danger was for them to form a circle, with the strong bulls on the outside and the females and young protected inside. But when hunters with guns arrived, forming a circle was the worst thing they could do. Instead of dispersing and running away, they presented a fixed, easy target and were massacred in large numbers. Similarly, in the past, seeking military superiority may have made us safe, but today it could lead to mutual destruction. We must realize that with nuclear weapons we cannot continue to fight wars as in the past, because some day the loser will have nuclear weapons and not hesitate to use them. If we wish to survive, we must abolish war, and abolish nuclear weapons, with strict and universal international verification.

Hot Water

If a frog is put into hot water, he jumps out. If he is put into tepid water, and the water is gradually heated, he remains in the water until he is boiled. This is the typical attitude towards the danger of nuclear annihilation. We have become used to this idea so gradually that most people do nothing to prevent it, and even do not want to think about it.

The Robber Baron

A fierce looking robber baron entered a town and went straight to the barber shop. He casually threw a bundle of gold on the table. Then he pulled out his big, sharp knife and stuck it into the table. He told the barber, if you can shave me clean without cutting me, you can have all my gold, and you will be a rich man for the rest of your life. But if you cut me even a little bit, I will kill you with my knife." The barber trembled and did not dare to try. His assistant did not dare to try either. But the little apprentice boy said confidently, "I will try." He sharpened his knife very carefully and began to shave the robber. He shaved him clean, without cutting him the slightest little bit. The robber was impressed, and gave him the bundle of gold. As he left the shop, the robber turned around and asked the apprentice, "Weren't you scared a little bit?" "Not at all," he replied, "I figured that if I cut your cheek a little, I would quickly have cut your throat as well." Now the robber began to tremble. (after a poem by Goethe)

The End of Dueling

During medieval times, it was a sign of honor and courage for men to challenge a rival to a duel by sword, typically someone who was in love with the same woman. The outcome was seldom fatal, as soon as one received the first stab, he had lost. But with the invention of handguns, duels almost always were fatal, sometimes for both, and dueling soon went out of fashion. Nuclear weapons, which would leave no winner in war, have now made war equally obsolete.

The Origins of European Unification

After World War II, the French economist and diplomat Jean Monnet thought that the best way to end the century old hostility between Germany and France was to tie the two countries together in some mutually beneficial economic venture. He studied several sectors and found that free trade in coal and steel would bring quick and clearly visible savings to each participating country. He wrote a paper with estimates how much each country would benefit from joining a European Coal and Steel Community, and sent it to every politician he could think of, including the French Foreign Minister Robert Schumann, whom he knew. Schumann carried Monnet's report in his briefcase, planning to read it as soon as he found time, but he was always too busy, running from meeting to meeting. One day he barely missed a train and had to wait three hours for the next train. So he sat down and began to read Monnet's paper. It struck him that this was exactly the kind of initiative needed at this point to

help heal the wounds of the war. Together with Monnet, he drew up the "Schumann Plan for a European Coal and Steel Community." In 1951, it was established with the signing of the Treaty of Paris by six member countries--France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxembourg. The European Coal and Steel Community has gradually added more members and developed closer cooperation, becoming the European Union of today. This has indeed made another war between Germany and France almost unthinkable. When Robert Schumann was a teenager in the Alsace, he loved to go on bicycle trips on weekends, but was annoyed that he was frequently stopped by border guards and had to show his passport. He vowed that when he grew up, he wanted to do something to abolish borders in Europe. Indeed he has. The Schengen region has abolished internal border controls in Europe. Former UN Undersecretary General Robert Muller, also from the Alsace, urges us, "Never give up your childhood dreams, no matter how big they are. You may be able to realize them!"

Lucky Coincidence

Kenneth Boulding once said, "History is like a pinball machine. A slight change in initial conditions can bring vastly different outcomes." Johan Galtung gave an illustration of this that he had heard from André Fontaine, the editor of *Le Monde*, on a flight from Seoul, where they had attended a conference together, to Paris. A French businessman, Monsieur Poulenc, traded with the Soviet Union, like Armand Hammer from the United States, during the years of the Cold

War. Whenever he visited the Kremlin, he was wined and dined. When a Soviet delegation came to Paris, he wanted to return the favor and invited them to his private castle near Bordeaux, which made a famous wine. They said, "We want such a castle making this wine in the Soviet Union!" Poulenc argued, "This is impossible. It requires a very special soil, the right amount of sunshine and rain, and there is no other place in the world just like this." The members of the delegation said, "Oh, but the Soviet Union is very big. We will find a place like this." They sent scientists to test the soil and climate in many areas throughout the Soviet Union, and found the closest similarities in Stavropol. So they sent the local Communist Party Secretary--the young Mikhail Gorbachev--to France to learn the secrets how to make that wine. But Gorbachev had other interests. Gorbachev asked M. Poulenc, "Could I have a car with a driver and a French and Italian interpreter for two weeks?" Poulenc said, "No problem." So Mikhail and Raisa Gorbachev toured France and Italy for two weeks, studying the public library system and sewage treatment in every town they visited. He was interested in promoting free access to information in the Soviet Union, and sewage treatment was a perennial problem there. (Samir Amin once joked that there seemed to be a contradiction between socialism and plumbing). Shortly later, when there was an opening in the 300-member Central Committee, Gorbachev was chosen as a "specialist on Western Europe" because of his trip to France and Italy. Later, there was a vacancy in the 7-member Politburo, and again Gorbachev was selected because of his knowledge of Western Europe, at a still young age for Soviet standards. In 1985, after

Chernenko died, he became Soviet Secretary General, on the recommendation of Georgy Arbatov, defeating the hardline party boss of Leningrad, Romanov, in a 4 to 3 vote. The rest is history. If the soil conditions in Stavropol had not resembled those in the Bordeaux region, the end of the Cold War might have been delayed.

Alexander Yakovlev

In 1958, Alexander Yakovlev was among the first thirty Soviet students who received a Fulbright scholarship to study a year in the United States. In 1985, he became Gorbachev's key adviser for perestroika, glasnost and democratization. That scholarship probably contributed more to ending the cold war than billions the United States spent for weapons, which only aggravated tensions.

Costa Rica Prospers Without a Military

In 1948, Costa Rica experienced a brief civil war, in which the army played an unwelcome role. One year later, President José ("Don Pepe") Figueres took the lead in changing Costa Rica's constitution to abolish its military. At the same time, reforms were undertaken to prevent any future coup d'etat: The police is not under a single command, but divided into ministries for rural and urban security. In this way, no police chief can exert monopoly control and seize state power by force. A Central Comptroller's Office oversees all public expenditures to prevent corruption. An election tribunal has

the task of preventing electoral fraud. Autonomous institutions, in which opposition parties are represented, are responsible for electricity, water, telecommunication and banking. Political power is widely dispersed, to make it difficult for any small group to seize illegitimate power. Finally, Costa Rica relies on the collective security mechanisms of the United Nations and the Organization of American States. Other countries can benefit from its experience. While other Central American countries have long suffered from war and military coups and squandered much of their resources on the military, Costa Rica has enjoyed peace, stable democracy, and comparative prosperity. Its per capita income is double that of its Central American neighbors.

Offering Help

A New Friendship

Al was walking home from school. Suddenly he saw that the boy in front of him had fallen and dropped a large pile of books and other things that he was carrying. Al bent down and helped him pick up the scattered items. Since they were going the same way, he helped carry part of the burden. As they walked, Al found out that the boy's name was Ben, that he loved baseball, video games and history, but had difficulty with other subjects. Ben revealed that his girlfriend had just broken up with him, which made him depressed. They arrived at Ben's home first, and he invited Al to come in and play with him. He stayed for an hour, and they talked and laughed.

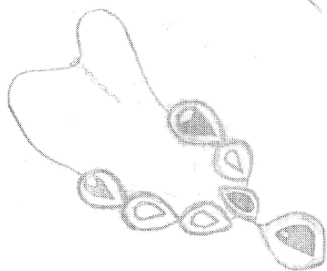
They continued to see each other around school, became best friends, and often visited each other. Six years later, at high school graduation, when they were going to college in different towns, Ben asked Al, "Were you ever wondering why I carried so many things the day we first met? You see, I emptied my locker, because I did not want to leave a mess for anyone else to have to clean up. I had saved some sleeping pills from my mother and was going to swallow them to kill myself. But after we spent some time together talking and laughing, I realized that if I had committed suicide, I would have missed that time and so many others that might follow. When you helped me, you did not only pick up my books, you saved my life."Never underestimate the power of your actions. With one small gesture you can change a person's life--for better or for worse.

Jack

(after Wayne Dyer)

A fifth grade teacher began her first day with a new class. All the students were neat and well-behaved, except for Jack, a boy in the front row, who was slumped in his chair and seemed to need a bath. She felt annoyed by his lack of effort, and delighted in marking his papers all over with her red pen, giving him a big 'F', failure. But teachers in her school were required to read all their students' reports from earlier years. The first grade teacher wrote, "Jack is a smart and happy boy, full of promise." The second grade teacher wrote, "Jack seems worried about his mother's terminal illness." The third and fourth grade teachers wrote "Jack seems depressed about the loss of his

mother." Now she understood. From that day on she was more patient with Jack, focusing on what he did well instead of his shortcomings. She volunteered to tutor him after classes. For Christmas, all the children brought neatly wrapped gifts. Jack brought something wrapped clumsily in brown paper from a shopping bag. She opened it while the other children frowned and found a necklace with some missing gem stones, and half a bottle of perfume. She wore the necklace and put on some of the perfume. After school, Jack told her with a bright smile, "Today you smell just like my Mom." At the end of the year, Jack told her, "You were the best teacher I ever had." About every four years, she received a letter from Jack, saying what he was doing and adding, "You are still the best teacher I ever had." He became a medical doctor, and for his wedding, he asked his fifth grade teacher to take the place of his deceased mother. She wore the necklace and put on the perfume Jack had given her. Jack told her, "Thank you for being so patient and encouraging, without you I would never have made it." She said, "No, I must thank you, because you taught me how to teach." A Chinese proverb says, "Don't curse the darkness, light a candle."



The Art of Listening

Dr. Bernard Lown (born 1921 in Lithuania), Professor of Cardiology emeritus at the Harvard School of Public Health and co-recipient with Yevgeniy Chazov of the 1985 Nobel Peace Prize as Chairman of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, toured a hospital as a young intern, with a group of other interns who were observing their professor. At that time, the cure for a heart attack was six weeks of bed rest, an inhuman procedure no longer applied today. It was two weeks before Thanksgiving, the one time each year in the United States when all relatives, including children and grandchildren, get together. An elderly patient, who had had a heart attack and been in the hospital already for a month, looked at the doctor and asked full of hope, "Will I be home for Thanksgiving?" The doctor exclaimed, "Thanksgiving? You are lucky if you will be home by New Year!" Right then and there, the patient had another heart attack and died. This shocked Dr. Lown and left a deep impression on him what devastating effect a single word can have. Many years later, an elderly man who suffered from irregular heart beats (arrhythmia) came to see Dr. Lown. He asked the man to tell him about his grandchildren. The man looked down. Dr. Lown waited a while and asked again, "How many grandchildren do you have?" The man hesitated, then said, four. Dr. Lown asked him why he had hesitated. It turned out that his son, who had two children, had had a disagreement with the man ten years ago over some business deal and told his father, "You will never see your grandchildren again for

the rest of your life!" So he was not sure if he should count them or not. A week later, the patient came again to Dr. Lown, beaming, and said, "You cured me!" Dr. Lown asked, "How is that possible, I have not even examined you yet?" The patient said, "But you listened to me!" It turned out that all he needed was to be able to tell someone about his real heartache, and his arrhythmia disappeared. Dr. Lown said, "Words can be a doctor's most powerful medicine."

Respect Can Heal

A young woman suffered from cancer. Her doctor asked her what she enjoyed most in life. She said that she liked to write poetry, but that her family did not take it seriously. He spoke with her family members, and persuaded them to show interest in her poetry, to read it and give her some encouraging comments. This had the effect that her tumor began to shrink.

Sunshine

Love is like sunshine. If you turn towards it and accept it, you can feel its warmth. If you turn away from it, you feel cold and abandoned.

Accept Help

My father was a doctor in a rural area and made many home visits. He sometimes observed patients smoking in the bed. Since most of them were farmers, he was able to persuade

many of them to stop smoking by telling them the following story. "Imagine your neighbor's cart got stuck in the mud, and he calls you for help to pull him out. You span your cart with your horses to pull him out, but he fastens the break on his cart to make it impossible for you to pull him out of the mud. That is what you are doing to me. You are deep in mud with your health, and I am trying to pull you out, but if you smoke, I cannot succeed."

Improving Rural Health

Drs. Rajanikant and Mabelle Arole, a husband and wife team of physicians, founded the Comprehensive Rural Health Project in Jamkhed, India, about 8 hours bus ride east of Mumbai. They first worked in a hospital, but soon realized that despite seeing hundreds of patients every day and working tirelessly, they were reaching only a small fraction of the sick people in their area. They then went from village to village, giving demonstrations and lectures about hygiene, balanced nutrition, and preventive health care. But to their disappointment, when they returned a year later to the same villages, they found that people had reverted to their old superstitious beliefs and little had changed. For example, based on false beliefs, pregnant women were not allowed to eat certain foods which they needed to have a healthy baby. So they tried a new approach, which worked. They invited villages whose council of elders agreed to participate in their program to send a representative, usually a young illiterate low-caste woman, to spend a year at their clinic and observe with her own eyes the consequences of various approaches.

Instead of simply telling people what to do, they help them make informed decisions about their own welfare and share this with others. When they returned to their own villages, their teachings were accepted by the villagers, because these health workers spoke their own dialect, not a strange different dialect that distracted from the message, and knew all the local myths and stories that they could weave in with the new knowledge they had acquired so that it made sense to people. They also had a certain status, because they had been selected by their own village council, usually consisting of elder men. They involved the village council so that the men did not feel passed over and ignored. With this approach, the Aroles saw infant mortality drop from 176 per 1000 to just 19 per 1000 over a decade. The Aroles published a book in 1994 entitled "Jamkhed: A Comprehensive Rural Health Project" and now people from many developing countries come to work and study at their clinic to learn about their Community-based Primary Health Care Approach.

Words Can Save Lives

(A Sufi story by an unknown author)

A group of frogs were walking through a forest. Suddenly, two of them fell into a hole. All the other frogs gathered around the hole and looked down over the edge. When they saw how deep it was, they told the unfortunate frogs, "You will never get out of here alive. Don't even try. Just give up and die." One of the frogs tried a few times in vain to jump out, then gave up and lay on the ground, waiting to die. The other frog kept trying again and again, jumping as hard as he

could. The crowd of frogs shouted to him, "Stop it! End the pain. You have no hope, you are as good as dead!" He jumped even harder and finally jumped out. When he got out, the other frogs asked him, "Why did you continue jumping? Didn't you hear that we told you to stop?" The frog explained, "No, I am hard of hearing. I thought you were encouraging me the whole time!" A tongue is not a bone, but it can break bones. It has power over life and death. An encouraging word to those who are in trouble can help save them, whereas a destructive word can take away their hope and make them give up. Let us be careful in what we say and not discourage someone in difficult times. Let us take the time to encourage each other.

Mother's Love

When I was in third grade, I once used some dirty words at school. A girl went straight to our teacher and repeated to her what I had said. She felt obliged to inform my mother so that she could set me straight. Instead of punishing or scolding me, my mother took me to my room and told me that what she heard I had said at school had made her very sad. But she loved me no less, and as a sign of her love, she wanted to give me something that was very dear to her. She gave me a picture from a calendar with golden leaves of a birch tree in the fall, shimmering in bright sunlight, against a background of a deep blue sky. She said it reminded her of her happy childhood with her parents in Hungary (before they both died when my mother was 6 years old and my mother came to Switzerland), and that it was one of the most precious

things she had. She said she was hoping that I would not say such things again from now on. I was moved by her love, and made an effort not to disappoint her again.

A Glass of Milk

A poor student, Howard Kelly, supported himself by selling magazine subscriptions from door to door. It did not go very well. One day, he was very hungry, but found that he had only a few cents left in his pocket. He decided to ask for a glass of milk at the next house. But when he saw who came to the door, a lovely young woman, he lost his courage, and instead asked for a glass of water. She said, "You look hungry to me, I will bring you a glass of milk." He drank it with great pleasure and then asked, "How much do I owe you for the milk?" She said, "You don't owe me anything! My parents taught me never to accept money for a kindness." He said, "Then I thank you from my heart." As he left that house, he not only felt stronger, but also encouraged that there were good people in the world. He had already thought that he might have to give up his studies and get a job to support himself, but that experience persuaded him not to give up. Many years later that same young woman became seriously ill. The local doctors tried everything they knew, but could not help her. So she was taken by ambulance to the big city hospital. Dr. Howard Kelly, now department head, immediately recognized her. He took personal care of her. After a long struggle, she was completely cured. On the day she was released from the hospital, she received the bill, and was afraid to open it. She was sure that she would have to pay for the rest of her life for this long and expensive

treatment. But when she saw the bill, the big amount was crossed out, and underneath was written, "Paid in full with a glass of milk." (Signed) Dr. Howard Kelly.

Kindness Rewarded

Around the year 1900, an elderly couple from New York entered a hotel in Philadelphia late at night during a heavy storm, asking if they could get a room. The young clerk at the desk explained that there were currently three conventions in town, and all the rooms had been booked weeks in advance. "But I cannot send a nice couple like you out into the rain again past midnight," the clerk added. "Why don't you stay in my room, if you don't mind, and don't worry about me, I can stay with a friend." The people were very grateful and the husband said, "We need people like you who are imaginative and helpful. You should be the manager of this hotel. One day, I will build a hotel for you and make you its manager." The young man thought this was a good joke and laughed heartily. Two years later, he received a letter from that man, inviting him to come to New York on a given train. When he arrived, the couple met him and walked with him to the corner of Fifth Avenue and 34th Street. The old man pointed to a great new building of red stone and said, "This is the hotel I have just built and I want to make you its manager." The older man was William Waldorf Astor, and the hotel was the original Waldorf-Astoria Hotel. The young clerk who became its first manager was George C. Boldt. He had never foreseen the turn of events that would lead him to become the manager of one of the world's most famous hotels.

How Sarvodaya Was Founded

Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne (called "Ari" by his friends) was a high school physics teacher in Sri Lanka. But he felt that what he had to teach within the prescribed curriculum had little relevance for students' lives. So he founded a movement of volunteers to address the serious problems ordinary people were facing. In 1958, he chose one of the poorest villages and assembled all the villagers in a public meeting. He asked them what their greatest problem was. They told him that at the beginning of each planting season, a money lender would come to their village and lend them some money to buy seeds and fertilizer. At harvest time, he would come back, and with the accumulated high interest, almost the entire harvest belonged to him and they could hardly feed their families. Then he would again lend them a smaller sum so that they could buy seeds and fertilizer for the next crop. Ari asked them: "How much money would you need to become independent?" They said, "We would need 400,000 rupees (about US\$ 8,000) to buy what we need at the beginning of the planting season." He said, "If you save 50,000 rupees, I will arrange a bank loan at a reasonable interest rate for you for the remaining 350,000 rupees." They told him, "We are too poor, we cannot save anything." He said, "Alright, then you remain poor" and began slowly to walk out of the room. They ran after him and said, "We will try to save something." They saved the 50,000 rupees and he helped them borrow the remaining 350,000 from a bank at a low interest rate. They worked very hard, knowing that for the first time in their lives the entire harvest would be theirs. They had a good harvest, and could pay back the entire bank loan within one season. He

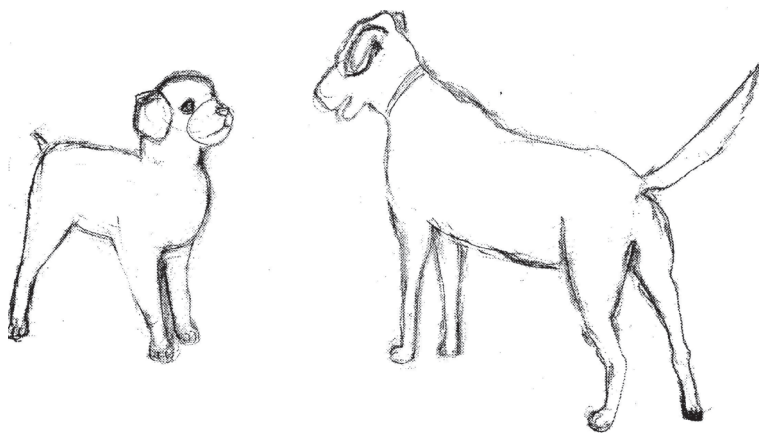
met with the villagers again and asked them what they would like to do as their next project. To increase their harvest, they wished to rebuild the irrigation dams that had been destroyed in war during the 19th century. They calculated how many days of work would be needed, and figured out that the people from their own village could provide half of the needed labor. Ari organized a group of volunteers from neighboring villages to donate the remaining labor. After that, they built a new school, a health clinic, and were well on the path to development. A year later, two villages participated in this self-help movement. Two years later four villages. The number of participating communities doubled nearly every year. In the year 2000, 55% of all villages in Sri Lanka had Sarvodaya projects, and the movement had two and a half million members. This shows how far a good idea and persistence in pursuing it can lead.

A Big and a Small Dog

(by Dr. A.T. Ariyaratne, founder of Sri Lanka's Sarvodaya movement)

A house was burglarized every night. Finally, the homeowner had enough. He went to an animal shop and said, "I want to buy the biggest dog you have." The shop owner showed him his biggest dog, and he bought it and went home with it. He fed it very well, and was sure that this strong dog would scare off any burglar. But the next night, a burglar came again, and the dog slept right through and did not notice anything. The homeowner was furious. He took the dog back to the pet shop and said, "I want to return this dog. It is no use. It slept right through

while my house was burglarized." The shop owner said, "Why did you not tell me that you want a dog to scare away a burglar? For that you need a small dog, which will wake up easily and bark loudly. But you also need the big dog. If a burglar sees only the small dog, he will not be scared. But the small dog will wake up the big dog, and then the big dog will chase the burglar away." The homeowner bought both dogs, and indeed, his house was never burglarized again. The big dog is like the government: it has a lot of resources, but it does not pay much attention to people's problems. The small dog is like the non-governmental organizations, the NGOs: they have few resources, but they are aware of people's needs and can raise their voices to mobilize the government to help solve the people's problems. We need both.



Rufus Jones

Rufus Jones (1863-1948), an American Quaker, who helped found the American Friends Service Committee in 1917, went to England after World War I to help with the reconstruction. He noticed that there were large areas of public land around many cities, which remained uncultivated. He persuaded city governments to divide this land into small parcels and lend them to unemployed people so that they could grow vegetables to feed their own families and earn a modest income from selling what they could spare. One unemployed man was daunted by the task, but worked hard all summer, clearing the land from shrubs and thorns, fertilizing the soil, planting various vegetables, watering them regularly and removing weeds. He earned a rich crop in the fall. Rufus Jones said to him, "Is it not marvelous what God and you have done here together?" The man said, "Well, yes, but you should have seen it when God had it all to himself." Unless we do good work, it is not going to happen by itself!

Clean Water

An eight year old Canadian boy saw on television that there are people in the world who die from thirst, or because their water is contaminated. He was so concerned that he founded an organization he called "WaterCan", a pun where the meaning of "Can" may be like in "beer can", or in "Canada", or in "you can do it." By sending out emails to everyone he knew, asking for contributions, and asking people to forward the request to those they know,

he raised 12 million Canadian dollars. He made those funds available for drilling water wells in areas without safe drinking water, saving many lives. If a young boy can do this, what can we accomplish?

Making Health Care Available to All

after Giovanni Andrea Cornia

The Dutch government supported an experiment in pre-natal care in the state of Kerala, India. It funded 40 village health clinics where expecting mothers could come on a regular basis to make sure they and their unborn baby were in good health, learn about hygiene and good nutrition, and then come back periodically after they gave birth to show the baby to make sure it developed normally. In 20 villages, these free clinics were announced with posters and radio advertisements. In 20 other villages, the same publicity was used, but in addition, every household in the village was visited by a nurse every two months, to ask people how they were doing and inform them about the free health service available. In the first group, only the well-educated and richer people made use of the service provided. But in those villages where a nurse visited every household, even low-caste and poor people dared to make use of the services provided. This shows the importance of reaching out personally to people with low self-esteem.

Compassion

Mother Teresa was bandaging an old man with an advanced stage of leprosy. A journalist observed her and remarked, "I would not do this for a million dollars!" Mother Teresa retorted, "I would not do it for a million dollars either." What motivated her, and millions of idealistic people like her, is not the profit motive, but compassion.

The Joy of Volunteering

In kindergarten, our teacher once asked us if we would like to help our janitor carry a pile of firewood into the basement of our school building, where she needed it to heat the building early every winter morning. We all enthusiastically agreed. We stood in line, waiting for our turn, and each one said, "Please give me more, I am strong." Then we carried the bunch on our arms into the basement, and ran back as quickly as possible to get more. When we finished, the janitor, a little elderly lady, thanked us, and we were happy and proud, feeling good that we had been able to help her. Children see work that they are able to do as a pleasure. Only later, the thought is instilled in them that they should refuse to work unless they are paid for it. The Inuits of Alaska used to help each other freely and with joy whenever someone needed help with building or repairing something. Then came the Exxon Valdez oil spill, and Exxon hired Inuits at \$16 per hour to help clean up the oil spill on the shore. After that, if someone needed help, they asked, "How much are you going to pay me?"

The Lion and the Mouse

A lion caught a little mouse and was about to eat it. The mouse begged, "Dear lion, please, let me live, then I promise that one day I will help you!" The lion laughed and said, "How could you tiny little mouse help such a big, strong lion like me? But you gave me a good laugh, and so I will let you run away." A few days later, the lion was caught in a hunter's net. He roared loudly and tried with all his force to break the net open and escape, but could not. The mouse heard the lion's cries for help, came running and nibbled and nibbled with her sharp little teeth on the string that had closed the net until it broke, and freed the lion, saving his life.

The Mouse Trap

A mouse peeked with his eye through a crack in the wall and saw the peasant and his wife open a package. "Interesting to see what food is in the package," thought the mouse to himself, but he began to shake upon seeing the pair taking out a mousetrap. The mouse went out in the yard and began to cry out, "There's a mousetrap in the house, a mousetrap!!" The hen clucked and, raising her head, said, "Respected mouse, I know that it is an unfortunate situation for you, but for me it's really not that important." The mouse headed straight for the pig in the yard, who appeared sympathetic, and who said, "I'm so sorry, mouse, but I can't do anything except pray for you." The mouse headed for the cow, but she received him in scorn: "I believe you are in danger, but what can I do?"

Sad and frightened, the mouse returned to the house to deal with the mousetrap on his own. At night he heard a click, such as when a mousetrap closes. The wife of the peasant jumped from bed to see what was caught in the trap. In the dark she didn't see that it was the tail of a poisonous snake that was caught in the device. The snake bit her, and she was transported to the hospital. She was treated and returned home with a high temperature. We all know that in the case of a high temperature the best treatment is soup made with a fresh hen. The peasant took the hen, slaughtered her, and made the soup. Neighbors and friends visited the sick and took turns in staying with her. In order to feed them, the peasant had to slaughter the pig. The woman was near death, and after not much time she died. Many acquaintances came, and for the meal after the funeral the peasant had to slaughter the cow. Moral: Next time you hear that someone has a problem and it appears that it does not touch you, remember that when the weakest is threatened, we are all in danger!

Mango Trees

A very old man was planting mango trees. Someone asked him, "Do you really expect to eat fruit from those trees?" "No, I am much too old for that, but I realized that all my life I ate mangos from trees planted by others, and this is my sign of gratitude to them."

100 Pigs

In many tribes, the young men who are most admired and have the best prospect of getting married are those who have been able to steal cattle from neighboring tribes, or proven themselves in battle. The opposite is true in Papua New Guinea. The most admired young men are those who can organize the biggest party, for an entire village, or even inviting the people from neighboring villages. The most enterprising young men scheme for years to raise pigs and organize a series of smaller parties with a few roasted pigs to which they invite neighbors or members from neighboring villages. The unwritten rule is that when they need those pigs, they can claim the same number back. After several years, they have accumulated enough good will so that they can organize a party with 100 roasted pigs, to which they invite people from the entire region. Whoever can achieve such a feat is widely admired and celebrated, and is the most attractive bachelor. This as a far more beneficial form of competition than violent fights.

Dedication

(after Pierre Brunner)

When the Buddha was still alive, many people came to visit him in his temple and brought him gifts to show him their gratitude and admiration. One elderly woman desperately wanted to bring him a small gift, but she was too poor to buy anything. So she sat for many days in front of his temple begging. Most people ignored her, but she did not give up. After a long time, she had finally collected a few coins and

went to an oil merchant to buy some oil for a lamp. She did not have enough money, but when the merchant saw how dedicated she was, he had mercy and gave her the remainder of the oil she needed for free. She went back to the temple with her light and brought it to the Buddha, who was very touched and thanked her. Every evening, the Buddha's disciple used to blow out all the lights for the night. When he came to the poor woman's oil lamp that evening, he blew and blew, but the flame refused to go out. He danced around the light and blew from all sides, without success. He fetched a towel and tried to quench the light, but in vain. The Buddha said to him, "You will never be able to extinguish this light, not with a storm, not with a river, not with all the waters of the ocean, because it was brought with dedication."

A Lake Without Fish

Two people in a water plane flew over a lake and saw two people in a boat down in the lake fishing. But from above, they also saw that there were no fish in the lake. They touched down on the water, moved closer to the boat and shouted over to them, "Hey, there are no fish in this lake!" The two in the boat were not pleased. They had nothing else to do that Sunday afternoon, and continued fishing, only with more frustration and fanaticism. If instead the two on the plane could have told them, "Hey, there are no fish here, but we just flew over a lake a mile downstream that is full of fish," those in the boat would have welcomed that information. Similarly, if we simply tell people, "nuclear weapons are dangerous," without offering them alternative security policies, they will not give up nuclear

weapons. Criticism alone is not enough. We must offer better alternatives, and examples of how conflicts have been transformed successfully without violence. (William Sloane Coffin)

The "Greedy" Monk

A Buddhist monk had a great talent as a painter, but he always demanded a downpayment before he began to paint, and charged high prices. So he was known as the greedy monk. Once a geisha sent for him to paint for her. When he arrived, she was with a customer. He asked his usual question, "What will you pay?" She said, "Any amount you name, but you have to paint right here and now." So he mentioned the highest sum he had ever received for a painting. She agreed, he painted a beautiful flower arrangement and collected the money. The geisha said to her customer, "He has talent, but how can you display the painting of such a greedy, ugly man. It is just good enough for my underwear." With that, she threw one of her underrobes towards him and asked him to paint on it. He did, and again collected a handsome amount. Later, people found out why this monk had been apparently so greedy. The poor people in his home province suffered from hunger, and the rich refused to help them. So he used the money he earned by painting to build granaries, bought grain, and filled them to distribute grain to the poor in times of famine. Nobody in his province ever knew who was the benefactor. People tend to see in others what their prejudices tell them.

Misunderstanding

A family with children enjoyed a day at the beach, splashing in the water and building sand castles. Suddenly they saw what looked like an old beggar woman, walking along the beach looking for refuse and putting items in her bag. The parents called the children back and told them not to go near her. She smiled at them, but they looked away and did not return her greeting. Later they heard that this woman picks up shards from the beach every day so that children don't hurt their feet. Attribution theory in psychology has discovered that most people have a tendency to ascribe good motives to themselves and bad motives to others. Let's avoid that trap.

Gandhi's Shoes

As Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948) was boarding a train, he lost a shoe. The train was already moving, and he could not go back to pick it up. He quickly took off his other shoe and threw it back near where he had lost the first one. A passenger asked, "Why did you do that?" Gandhi said, "So that the poor man who finds my shoe will have a pair."

Danilo Dolci

Danilo Dolci (1924-1997), a teacher from Northern Italy, went to live with peasants in Mafia-controlled Sicily. He found that the peasants were isolated from each other, and totally dependent on the local Mafia boss. The mafia

bought their produce at very low prices, took it to the market and sold it at high prices. Dolci organized the peasants to build a road from their village to the nearby market town, so that they could load what they produced onto their carts and take it directly to the market, and sell it at a much better price. He also helped them build small hydroelectric dams and electrify their homes. He coined the term "reverse strike" for such endeavors: rather than refusing to do things they were ordered to do, they undertook to do something on their own initiative without waiting for the government or the Mafia to order them to do it. They felt greatly empowered and elated that they could take their fate into their own hands by working together. Dolci once spoke at a Brazilian University during military rule, and explained how the Mafia operated in Sicily, and how a democratic society, where contacts and connections among people were direct and crisscrossed society, differed from an autocratic society, where people had to pass through the boss in the center in order to contact anyone else. After he spoke, some students went to see him and said in a hushed voice, "You were very smart to pretend that you spoke about Sicily. We knew exactly that you were describing Brazil."

Corals

A guide took a group of tourists by boat to the great barrier reef north of Australia. One tourist noticed that on the ocean side the corals were colorful, strong, full of life and growing, while on the lagoon side they were pale and dying. He asked why this was so. The guide explained that

the corals on the lagoon side were in still water, while those on the ocean side were constantly being tossed by the waves, they faced difficulties and challenges, and had to adapt to them and thus grew strong. When we face difficulties and challenges in life, let us remember that they help us grow.

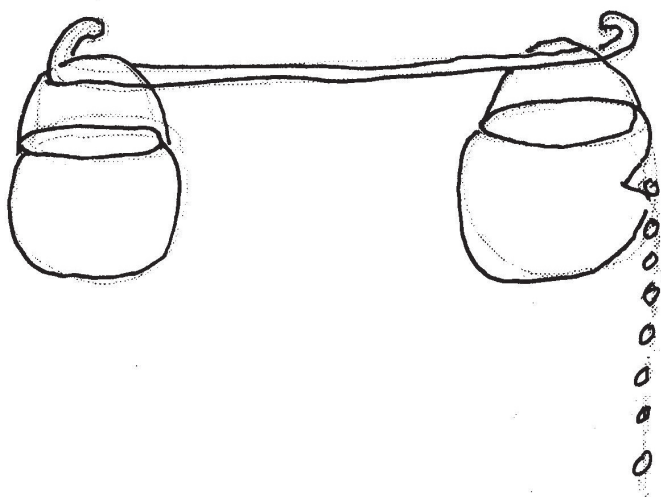
A Butterfly

One day a small opening appeared on a cocoon. A man sat and watched the butterfly for several hours as it struggled to force its body through that little hole. Then it seemed to stop making any progress. It appeared as if it had gotten as far as it could, and it could go no further. So the man decided to help the butterfly. He took scissors and snipped off the remaining bit of cocoon. The butterfly then emerged easily. But it had a swollen body and small, shriveled wings. The man continued to watch the butterfly because he expected that, at any moment, the wings would enlarge and expand to be able to support the body, which would contract in time. Neither happened! In fact, the butterfly spent the rest of its life crawling around with a swollen body and shriveled wings. It never was able to fly. What the man, in his kindness and haste, did not understand, was that the restricting cocoon and the struggle required for the butterfly to get through the tiny opening was nature's way of forcing fluid from the body of the butterfly into its wings so that it would be ready for flight once it achieved its freedom from the cocoon. Sometimes, struggles are exactly what we need in our life. If we never faced any obstacles, it would cripple us. We would not be as strong as what we could have been.

The Leaking Pot

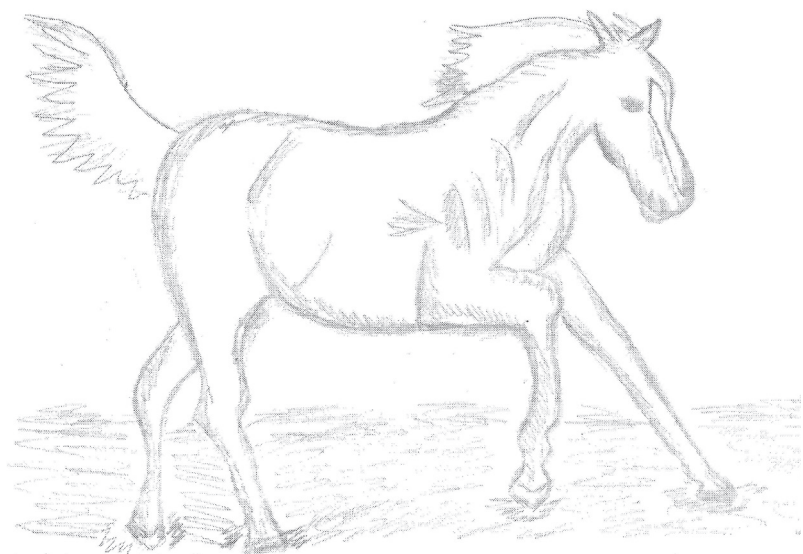
A water bearer in India had two large pots, each hung on one end of a pole which he carried across his neck. One of the pots had a hole in it, while the other pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water. At the end of the long walk from the stream to the house, the leaking pot arrived only half full. For a full two years this went on daily, with the bearer delivering only one and a half pots full of water to his house. Of course, the perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments. But the poor leaking pot was ashamed of its imperfection, and miserable that it was able to accomplish only half of what it had been made to do. After two years of what it perceived to be a bitter failure, it spoke to the water bearer one day by the stream. "I am ashamed of myself, and I want you to throw me away and replace me. I have been able to deliver only half my load because this hole in my side causes water to leak out all the way back to your house. Because of my flaw, you have to do all of this work, and you don't get full value from your efforts." The bearer said to the pot, "Did you notice that there were flowers only on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? That is because I have always known about your flaw, and I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walk back, you have watered them. For two years I have been able to pick some of these beautiful flowers to decorate our table, and many passersby have enjoyed them, too. Without you being just the way you are, there would not be any of these beautiful flowers." We all have our own unique flaws, but it is these flaws that make our

lives together so very interesting and rewarding. We simply ought to take each person for who and what they are, and look for the good in them. And we can take pride and pleasure in doing what we can without self-recrimination, because even leaking pots may serve a useful purpose such as nourishing beauty.



The Stolen Horse

Calif Al-Mamoun of Baghdad (813-833) had a beautiful horse. His cousin Oman wanted his horse and offered him many camels for it, but the Calif, who was very fond of his horse, refused. Oman was upset and decided to use a trick to get the horse. He disguised himself as a poor sick beggar and sat on a street through which he knew Al-Mamoun rode every morning. Al-Mamoun was compassionate, and when he saw the beggar, he offered to bring him to an asylum. The beggar in disguise thanked him but said, "I have not eaten for several days, I am too weak to climb on your horse." So Al-Mamoun got off his horse and lifted the beggar onto the horse and was going to sit behind him. But Oman quickly galloped away. Al-Mamoun ran after him and asked him to stop. When Oman had reached a safe distance, he stopped and looked back. Al-Mamoun shouted, "You have stolen my horse, and I have a wish." Oman asked, "What is your wish?" Al-Mamoun said, "That you never tell anybody how you got my horse." Oman wanted to know why. "Because some day there may be a real sick beggar sitting by the roadside, and if your deceit is known, nobody will stop to help him."



True Help

by Evaristo Chungu Banza

A mother gave her six year old son some money to go and buy eggs in the market. He was so happy and excited at the prospect of eating eggs that he ran all the way home, but he fell, and the eggs broke. He sat on the floor in despair. A first passerby said, "Your mother will scold you!" and the boy cried. A second passerby said, "Your mother will beat you!" and the boy cried even harder. A third passerby asked, "How much did those eggs cost?" and gave the boy the amount of money to buy the same number of eggs once more. Now the boy's tears dried and he smiled full of happiness.

Comfort

A neighbor's wife had died, and he was very sad. A four year-old boy seemed to be able to comfort him. His parents asked, "What did you tell him?" "Nothing", said the boy, "I simply helped him cry?"

The Fishbowl

A fourth grade class was working on solving math problems that the teacher was writing on the board. Suddenly Alex noticed a wet spot on the front of his pants and a puddle growing on the floor between his legs. He was terribly embarrassed. He wished he could have disappeared into a mouse hole. He was afraid that if the boys noticed, they would never stop teasing him, and

worse, no girl would ever want to talk with him. His face got all red. The other children and the teacher would notice what happened any moment. What could he do? He saw Beth carrying the goldfish bowl through the classroom. Why would she do that? When she was near him, she stumbled and spilled some water on his pants. Alex pretended to be upset, but inside he was immensely grateful. Now everybody looked at them. The other children came to clean up the puddle on the floor. Beth apologized profusely and offered to help. The others said, "You already created enough of a mess, better go and refill the fish bowl to save the goldfish." Instead of Alex, Beth was now the target of ridicule. The teacher sent Alex to the gym locker to wear his gym pants and gave him a plastic bag to take his wet pants home. When school was over, Alex saw Beth waiting at the bus stop. He whispered to her, "Did you do this on purpose to save me from embarrassment?" She whispered back, "Yes, I know how you must have felt, I also once wet my pants." Alex expressed to Beth his deepest gratitude. With empathy and creativity, we can solve problems and help people in difficulties.



How a Town Fought Hate

Early on a Sunday morning in December 1996, someone broke the living room window at the home of a Jewish family living in a Catholic neighborhood in Newtown, Pennsylvania, and destroyed an electric menorah that they had displayed in celebration of Hanukkah. All the families in the neighborhood then went out to buy menorahs and displayed them in their windows. Many vowed to do so each year from now on. "No one should be intimidated from showing their faith, whatever it is, and wherever they may live," said one of the Jewish family's neighbors.



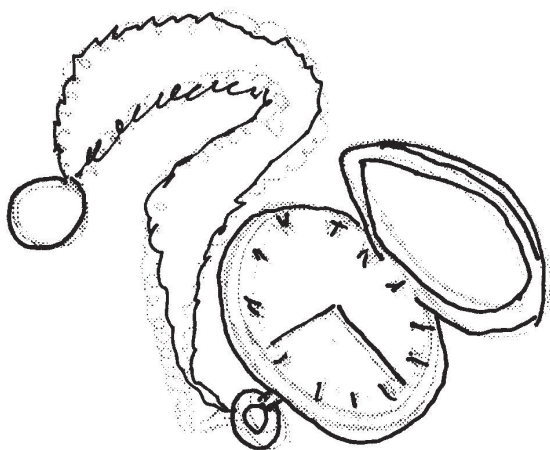
What Really Counts

Nine physically and mentally disabled contestants at the Special Olympics assembled at the starting line for the 100-meter dash. As they heard the gunshot, they all began to move as rapidly as they could, not really in a dash, but with joy to try to be the first to reach the finish line and win. But one boy stumbled, fell down and began to cry. The others heard him, slowed down and stopped. Then they all turned back. One girl with Down's syndrome bent down, kissed the boy and said, "This will make it better." Then all nine linked arms and walked together to the finish line. Everyone in the stadium stood up and cheered for ten minutes.

Daniel Jeanrichard

Daniel Jeanrichard (1665 - 1741) was a descendant of French Protestant refugees (the Huguenots) who came to Switzerland during the Huguenot Wars of 1562-1598. When he was a young apprentice with a blacksmith, he met a British tourist whose chain watch was broken. The tourist had unsuccessfully tried to get it repaired at many places. Jeanrichard begged to try if he could repair it, and since the tourist had been unable to get anyone else to repair it, he agreed to leave his precious gold watch with the young apprentice. He took it carefully apart, studying each part and its function, and found the part that was bent and was able to repair the watch. At the same time, he made drawings of each part and how they fit together. He then began to design and manufacture watches by

himself. He also recognized the value of mechanization to cut parts, and of specialization to have several workers produce different parts of watches that could be assembled. Together with his sons, he perfected the watch making industry in Switzerland. Many apprentices learnt in his manufacture, becoming independent later, and training other apprentices themselves. In this way, Jeanrichard, a descendant of refugee immigrants, made an enormous contribution to Swiss industry, creating hundreds of thousands of jobs for Swiss citizens, and precision watches for people throughout the world. Three centuries later, watches are still one of Switzerland's main exports. Countries would do well by being more generous in opening their borders to refugees, because refugees and their descendants can make major contributions to science, culture and industry.



Making Globalization Work for All

A village in the Peruvian Andes had a tradition of weaving wool carpets. Hard economic times forced all the able-bodied men to take jobs in a coal mine. An internet specialist came to the village and signed up one of the artists to sell carpets directly to customers worldwide via <www.navaco.com>, cutting out the middlemen and lowering prices for customer, while increasing the income of the artists. The artist earned enough to gradually hire all the villagers back again to weave carpets, and to save their traditional skill, which could have died out with them otherwise.

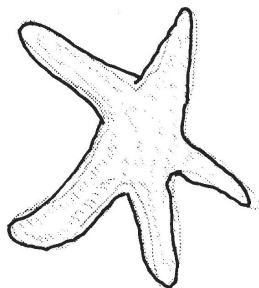
Global Cooperation

The first advanced civilizations emerged about 6,000 years ago in the Nile, Euphrates and Yellow River valleys when farmers faced problems that they could not solve alone. To prevent recurrent floods and droughts, it was necessary to build dams to control the flow of those rivers, requiring the organized cooperation of thousands of individuals. This gave rise to the first states, the development of written language, the codification of laws, and a flourishing of science and the arts. Today we face some problems that not even a superpower can solve by itself, like preventing the spread of nuclear weapons or global climate change. Hopefully, this will lead to greater world-wide cooperation before it is too late. Many governments are still reluctant to join a global authority to deal with global problems out of fear that they would lose part of their national sovereignty. But that fear is mistaken. No country today, for example, has sovereign

control over the ozone layer. By joining a global authority that can allocate and enforce emission quotas, we do not give up control over our destiny. On the contrary, we gain added control that we do not now possess and could never achieve at the national level.

Starfish

A boy walked along the beach and picked up starfish in the sand and threw them back into the sea. A wise old man watched him for a while, and then asked him, "What are you doing?" The boy said, "I am saving the starfish." The wise old man laughed and said, "My dear boy, there are millions of starfish, you can never save them all." The boy replied, "I know I cannot save all of them, but it surely makes a difference for this one, and that one. They feel much better in the water. If they stay here on the beach, they will dry out and die." The old man agreed and began to help pick up starfish and throw them into the water. Other people saw them, and began to help. This way, enough starfish were saved to assure their survival. Alone we can do little, but by working together we can accomplish a lot. If a problem looks too big for us to make a difference, let's nevertheless do what we can, and hope we can inspire others to join us.



The Appetite Clinic

Mark Twain suffered from lack of appetite. He saw an ad from an "appetite clinic," located in a nice resort, and went there. He was imagining all the delicious meals that they would prepare to bring back his appetite. He arrived for lunch, and the first meal consisted of raw hacked beef. Since he was not particularly hungry, he decided to skip it and wait for the next meal. For dinner, they served "half-hatched baby chicks fresh from their eggs." He had no desire to taste them, and went to bed without eating. The next morning, he was quite hungry and was looking forward to a hearty breakfast. The menu said, "toast covered with butter and shoe wax." He had enough. He called the owner of the clinic and complained, "I came here to regain my appetite, and all you do is to serve these awful meals that totally spoil my appetite. I want my money back!" The owner said, "Just be patient. I guarantee you that I can restore your appetite by the end of the week." This went on for several more days, and finally he was so hungry that he was ready to eat anything. The owner of the clinic congratulated him and said, "I am happy to inform you that you are now cured, you have regained your appetite." Indeed he had, and happily went home again.

Stamps

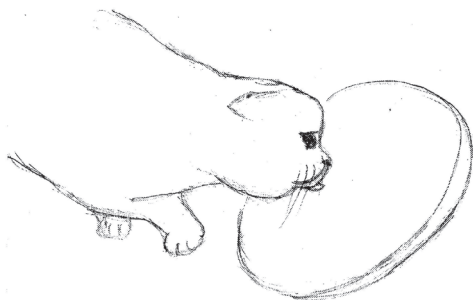
My father brought me three stamps. I started collecting stamps. My father brought me three-hundred stamps. I stopped collecting stamps.

Emil and the Kitten

(based on a children's story by Emil Ernst Ronner, Switzerland)

Emil could no longer stay at home because his father had lost his job and could no longer feed his children. A kind old lady took Emil to her home and made sure he had enough to eat. A year later his father found work again, and Emil could return home. But his family still could not afford milk. Every morning on the way to school, Emil could pass by the house of the old lady, and she brought him a glass of milk. One day the lady told Emil, "You are now a big boy, and I want you to learn how to be polite. From now on when you come to my house in the morning, say 'Please can I have some milk,' not only 'My milk!'" Emil thought this was strange. Why should he say so many words when he could simply say "My milk." He refused to say "Please." The lady was very sorry, but she felt she had to teach him how to say "Please." She said she would be happy to give him some milk, but he had to learn to say "Please." When Emil saw that without saying "please" he did not get any milk, he did not wait at the lady's house anymore. He only shouted "My milk!" when he passed by her house and ran off to school. One day Emil found a young kitten on the way to school. It had lost its mother, and seemed hungry. It meowed and rubbed its fur against his legs. He picked up some grass and tried to feed it to the kitten, but the kitten did not eat it. Then he remembered that kitten's stomach is like people's, they cannot eat grass like cows. Suddenly he had an idea. Kittens can drink milk! He picked up the kitten, took it to

the old lady's house and said politely, "Please can I have some milk?" The lady was very moved. She quickly brought some milk, with tears of joy in her eyes. Emil said, "Actually, it is not for me, it is for this kitten." The lady said, "You can have this glass of milk, I will bring another plate with milk for the kitten." The kitten happily licked it up. The lady said to Emil, "You can leave the kitten here, and everyday on your way to school you can come here and play with it." This is how Emil learned to say "Please." Sometimes we are too shy or proud to ask for something for ourselves, but if it is for others whom we can help, we need to overcome our inhibitions.



Two Brothers

Two brothers inherited their parents' farm. They decided to cultivate it together and to share the harvest equally. One night, the older brother woke up and thought, "My younger brother has a wife and five children to take care of, and I am single. His needs are much greater than mine." He got up, got dressed, secretly carried a sack full of grain from his barn to his brother's barn, and then went

back to sleep. Another night, his younger brother woke up and thought, "I have a wife and five children who will look after me when I am old. My poor brother has nobody to take care of him, he needs some savings for his old age." So he got up and quietly carried a sack full of grain from his barn to his brother's barn. This went on for several years. One night, the two woke up at the same time. They encountered each other under the moonlight in the field, and were surprised that they both had brought grain to each other for a long time. They embraced each other in tears.

An Angel

Father was sitting in his armchair reading the newspaper. Mother called him, "Honey, please make your daughter eat her rice curd." Their ten year old daughter Sheila detested rice curd, but her mother was convinced that it was good for her and would give her beautiful skin and hair. Father tried a soft approach. "Sheila, if you take two spoons of rice curd, I promise you a gift." Sheila asked, "Are you sure? If I eat the whole bowl, can make a wish?" Father said, "Sure. But it cannot be something expensive, like a computer, we don't have the money for that." Sheila promised it would not be expensive. She forced herself to eat the entire bowl of rice curd, then said, "I want my hair shaved off." Mother exclaimed, "Absolutely not! It is incredible what a bad influence this skinhead culture has on our youth. A girl without hair looks so ugly!" Father asked, "Sheila, can you make some other wish? You see how much it upsets your mom." Sheila had tears in her

eyes: "But you promised!" Father was in dilemma. He now tried to convince his wife, "I think it is important that we keep our promise, otherwise we lose our credibility and Sheila's respect." Mother was very upset but gave in. So father cut Sheila's hair short and then shaved her head. The next day, when he brought her to school, the mother of a classmate greeted them and thanked Sheila, "You are such an angel! My son had leukemia, and from the radiation treatment, he lost all his hair. This is his first day back in school. He was afraid that his classmates would tease him, but Sheila promised she will take care of the teasing. Your daughter has such a good heart."

Two Lizards

To renovate his house, a Japanese broke open a wall. Japanese houses normally have a hollow space between two thin wooden walls. He found a lizard stuck in there because a nail from outside was hammered into one of its feet. He felt pity, and was also curious, because when he checked the nail, he found that it had been nailed 10 years ago when the house was first built. How could a lizard survive in such a position, in a dark wall partition for 10 years without moving? He stopped his work and observed the lizard. After a while, another lizard appeared, with food in its mouth. It had been feeding its mate for the past 10 years, without giving up hope!

Self-Sacrifice

After a forest fire in Yellowstone National Park, the forest rangers walked up a mountain slope to assess the damage. One ranger found a bird petrified in ashes at the base of a tree and knocked it over with a stick. When he gently struck it, three tiny chicks scurried from under their dead mother's wings. The loving mother, keenly aware of impending disaster, had carried her offspring to the base of the tree and had gathered them under her wings, instinctively knowing that the toxic smoke would rise. She could have flown to safety but had refused to abandon her babies. Then the blaze had arrived and the heat had scorched her small body. The mother had remained steadfast. She had been willing to die, so those under the cover of her wings would live.

Saving Lives

In April 1940, a German warship with 4000 soldiers entered a Norwegian Fjord to occupy the country. One of two torpedoes left over from World War I hit the ship, it burst into flames and began to sink. Many German soldiers were able to swim ashore, but had burns in their nose and bronchia from inhaling smoke. Johan Galtung's father, an ear-nose-throat surgeon, operated feverishly day and night to save the lives of as many of those soldiers as possible. Later, Johan, then ten years old, asked his father, "Were you not sometimes tempted to let your scalpel slip a little? His father answered, "Absolutely not! A physician's first duty is to save lives, without any distinction." This left a deep impression on Johan, who later became the founder of peace studies.

Happiness

The Happy Hermit

A Chinese emperor suffered from deep depression. His team of doctors tried everything they knew, but nothing helped. Finally, they concluded that the only way he could become healthy again was if he would wear the shirt of a totally happy man. Immediately, the emperor sent his messengers to search throughout the country for a totally happy man. After some months, they finally found one, a hermit who lived in a mountain cave. But he had no shirt.

Fishing

An American tourist in Spain watched a local man on a bridge, leaning against the rail and holding a fishing rod. After watching him for a while, he asked him, "What are you doing?" "I am fishing." "You should be working!" "Why should I work?" "To earn money!" "Why should I earn money?" "To get rich!" "Why should I be rich?" "To enjoy your life!" "How do you enjoy your life?" "Well, you can go fishing."

Home is Heaven

A farmer went to the rabbi and complained, "I cannot stand it at home. I have five little children who constantly cry or fight, and my wife nags me all day. It is so narrow in our home, what can I do?" The rabbi said, "Take your

chicken inside your home." The farmer did as told, but the next day he went to the rabbi and told him, "It is even worse. The chicken are so dirty and fly around our narrow home, what shall I do?" The rabbi said, "Take your sheep inside your home." The farmer did as told. The next day he went to the rabbi again and told him, "It is even worse. The sheep blokes all night long and I cannot sleep, and everywhere it leaves its hair. What shall I do?" The rabbi said, "Take your goat inside your home." The farmer did as told, and the next day he said to the rabbi, "It is still worse. The goat smells terribly and fights with the sheep, what shall I do?" The rabbi said, "Take your chicken, sheep and goat out of the house again." The farmer did as told and the next day he gratefully came to the rabbi and said, "Home is heaven!"

The Satchel

A poor man was walking down the street, lamenting, "This little satchel on my back holds all my possessions. I am so poor!" Nasruddin snatched his satchel, ran ahead of him and disappeared around a curve. The poor man felt devastated. "What shall I do now, I have nothing left on this earth that belongs to me!" But when he came around the curve, he found his satchel again. Nasruddin had deposited it in the middle of the road, and then hid behind a bush. The man exclaimed, full of joy, "I found my satchel again!" Nasruddin thought to himself, "Today I have made a poor man happy." Be grateful for what you have, and you will be happy. Focus on the donut, not on the hole.

How Much Land Do We Need?

(freely after Leo Tolstoy)

A farmer on the upper reaches of the Volga River was barely able to feed his family. He had a small plot of dry earth and worked very hard to dig it up, plant vegetable, water the plants, weed the ground, and collect a modest harvest with which he could just feed his wife and four children, and have a small side-income from selling vegetables on the market. One day, a man who bought some of his vegetables told him, "Why do you work so hard for so little income. I know a place downstream where you can get more land for the same money for which you can sell your meager plot here." The farmer thought, "Why not try?" He sold his land, took his family by boat farther down the Volga to the place that had been recommended to him. A man was waiting for him, took him to a larger plot than he had had before, and sold it to him for his money. The farmer was happy, and though still rather poor, his family no longer felt hungry at any time through the year. The next year, someone visited him. The face looked vaguely familiar, but he could not figure out who it was. This man offered to buy his plot for a good price, and said if he moved downstream, he could get a plot of equal size with more fertile land, good for growing wheat and corn, which fetched a good price on the market. The farmer was willing to take a risk, sold his land, and found a better farm for the same price a few hundred kilometers downstream. He could now afford to send his children to school, and was quite happy. Some years passed. Again a man came and told him, "There is a

place farther down the Volga where a silver mine has just been discovered. Everyone wants to work in the mine, and people are eager to sell their farms. Prices are very low at this time, but it will not last long. If you make a quick move, you can buy a farm twice the size of what you have now for the same price for which you can sell your farm here." The farmer hesitated, because he was quite satisfied with what he had, but getting twice as much land seemed an offer that he could not refuse. So he sold his farm, moved downstream, and indeed was able to get a farm more than twice the size of what he had before. He was now in a position to employ landless laborers to help him cultivate his big plot, and he made a handsome profit. He could afford to build a nice mansion, and buy some cows that grazed on part of his land. He had become a wealthy man, and was happy that he had made all those moves and left his small plot and the days of poverty. This lasted a couple of years. Then again a stranger approached him, and said, "They have drained the Volga Delta, and huge amounts of fertile land are for sale. The earth is black, and yields bumper crops. If you follow me, you will not regret it. You can live in great luxury." The face looked strangely familiar, and he wondered if this stranger could be the same person who had previously given him all that good advice. So he sold his farm and mansion for a good price, ten-thousand rubles, and followed the stranger he trusted. When they arrived at the Volga Delta, the man brought him to a place where they sold land. "What is the price of land here?" the farmer asked. The stranger said, "Ten-thousand rubles for a day." "What kind of measure

of land is that?" the farmer asked curiously. The stranger explained, "The amount of land around which you can walk in one day, from sunrise to sunset. You keep putting these sticks in the earth where you pass by about every ten minutes to mark the plot that belongs to you. But you must return to where you started by sunset, otherwise you lose your money and get no land." The farmer was impressed. He knew that the amount of land around which he could walk in one day was an enormous area. He gladly agreed to the deal. Early the next morning, before sunrise, he returned to the agreed starting point, and exactly as the first sunbeams shone from the East, he began to walk in a big circle, but not bigger than he was confident he could complete in one day of walking at a reasonable pace. As he walked, he saw some very fertile plot, with moist black earth, good for growing cabbage, a profitable crop. He thought, "I can include that plot and still make it back by evening. I just walk a little faster." As he continued, he passed near a small lake in which the fish were jumping. He thought, "How could I leave out that lake?" and thought of all the delicious meals those fish would make, and how many of them he could sell on the market. So he made another detour, determined to return to the point of origin by running if necessary. As the afternoon progressed, he realized that sunset was only little more than an hour away, and he was still far from where he had started at sunrise. He now gave up the idea of completing a circle, and headed straight towards the point of origin. As the sun was slowly sinking towards the horizon, he knew he had to run as fast as he could to make it back in

time. He ran and ran, nearly exhausted, but the sun set faster than he could reach his starting point. From a short distance, he could see the triumphant smile of the stranger. His face now looked like the one of the man who had recommended him to move repeatedly. He ran as fast as he could, but collapsed and died shortly before reaching his goal, just as the last rays of the sun disappeared under the horizon. How much land and wealth do we really need?

A Broken Piece of China

While mother was away, I found a wooden box tucked away in her dresser between clothes. In it, I found a pair of ruby earrings, a golden broach, and a chipped piece of china. Why did mother keep this shard? The next evening our neighbor came to visit. She saw that the good china was on the table and said, "Oh, I see, you have guests tonight, I will come back some other time." Mother said, "Please come in, we don't have any guests." The neighbor said, "But you have the good china on your table." Mother said, "We use this not only for guests, but also for our family, every day." The neighbor asked, "Aren't you afraid that the children might break it?" My mother said, "I am not worried. In fact, every broken piece of china represents part of our family history." "For example, this plate here broke the day I came home from the hospital with my youngest daughter. Our six year old son wanted to help and brought his plate to the kitchen. He dropped it, and it broke into three pieces. The others were very worried and upset, but I did not scold him, because I appreciated his good intention to help. And it was fun to

glue the plate back together." "This plate here has a piece missing. When I was seventeen, My elder brother brought his friend for dinner. When he seated him next to me, I was very shy and nervous. When he asked me for another helping and passed me his plate, my hands trembled, and I hit the plate against the pot, and a piece broke off. When the friend left, he pressed that broken piece of China into my hand. I have saved it ever since as a precious memory of our first meeting. And one year later, we got married." Mother and father have been happily married for 46 years. When mother was away, I took that piece of China in her jewelry box, and it fit the missing corner in the plate she showed us. One of my two elder sisters already asked mother if she could one day have the ruby earrings, and the other wanted the golden brooch. But I will ask her for her most precious piece of jewelry: the chipped piece of china.



The Beggar

A heavy rain storm washed away the only bridge connecting two parts of poor farming village. The local people had no money to build a new bridge. So they sent one of their men to go to ask the emperor for money to build a new bridge. When he arrived at the palace, the emperor was praying. The farmer waited until the emperor had finished his prayer. Then he asked, "What did you pray for?" The emperor replied, "I prayed for great wealth, good health and a long life." So the farmer left and returned home. His fellow villagers asked him, "Did he grant our wish?" The farmer replied, "No, I did not ask him." "Why!?" the villagers asked. The farmer replied, "I expected to find an emperor, but he was only a beggar like the rest of us."

A Wild Flower

Johan Wolfgang Goethe (1749-1832) walked through a forest and saw a beautiful flower. He was going to break it to take it home, but realized that it would soon die. So he dug it up with its roots, planted it in his garden, and nurtured and watered it. It bloomed season after season. If we truly love someone, we should not be possessive, but nurturing, protective and supportive.

Whom to Help?

During a heavy rainstorm, you come with your car to a bus stop where three people are waiting: a sick old lady who needs to go to the hospital as soon as possible, an old friend who once saved your life, and the person of your dreams. If you don't speak with him/her now, you may never meet again. Your car has only two seats, for the driver and one passenger. What can you do? -- Ask your friend to drive the old lady to the hospital, and wait with the person of your dreams!

Diogenes

The Greek Philosopher Diogenes stood at a street corner laughing. A passerby asked him why he laughed. "I have stood here all morning, and saw already ten people stumbling over that rock on the street, and not one of them turned back to remove it for others."

The Happy Shepherd

(after Anthony de Mello)

A group of young people were hiking through the mountains and encountered a shepherd. They asked him, "What will the weather be like tomorrow?" He replied, "It will be my favorite weather." They asked him in surprise, "How do you know this?" He replied, "Over many years, I have learnt that the weather did not always turn out the way I had hoped, so I simply decided to enjoy whatever weather there is."

Cheer Up

A man woke up in good mood, got dressed, and went singing out the door to buy the daily paper. The man at the newsstand was very gruff and unfriendly. This upset him, and for the rest of the day, he was in a bad mood. The next morning, he decided to try a new approach. He greeted the newspaperman with a friendly smile and asked, "How are you today? It must be hard to be out here in the cold all day, in every weather, rain, snow and wind." The newspaperman was surprised that someone would care about him. He replied, "Yes, it is not easy, and thank you for asking. But it could be worse, at least I have a job." That day, both of them felt happy.

Forgiving

The Raft

A wanderer arrived at a river that was too deep to wade through. Since he could not swim, he built a raft and crossed the river on it. He was impressed how useful this raft had been, and was sure he would need it again some day. So he carried it on his shoulders for the rest of his life, but never had an opportunity to use it again. We often carry burdens from the past in our mind, like feelings of anger or sadness, which we no longer need and better let go.

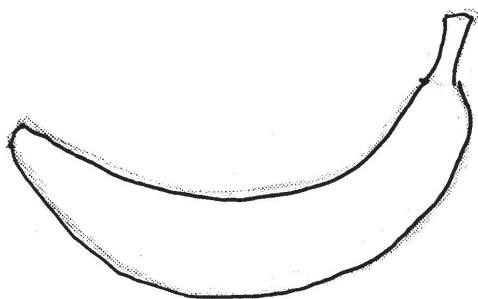
A Birthday Gift

One morning, President Jimmy Carter woke up and realized with panic that it was his wife Rosalyn's birthday, but he had forgotten to buy her a gift. All the stores were closed, because it was a Sunday. He thought hard what he could do, and suddenly he had a great idea. He remembered that he had often criticized her for being late. So he wrote her a note, promising that he would never again nag her. He said this was the best gift he could ever give, not only to his wife, but also to himself, because he no longer needed to feel responsible for his wife, and she was moved and made an effort not to keep him waiting anymore.

Catching Monkeys

In some regions of India, more and more jungle has been cleared to make room to build new villages for the growing population. Most animals that used to live there have withdrawn deeper into the forest or disappeared, except the monkeys. They stay behind, and instead of picking fruits from trees, they eat food from people's kitchen. They are smart, hiding behind a bush until people have gone to work in the field, then they enter the kitchen and help themselves. If the door is locked, they simply break a window and ransack the kitchen to look for food. Because the people in those areas believe in reincarnation, they do not want to hurt those animals, because they believe that a monkey could be a deceased relative. But they do not like monkeys to burglarize their homes either.

So someone came up with a brilliant, humane way to catch those monkeys. They make metal vases with a wide body and a narrow opening at the top, screw them onto a window sill, and drop a banana inside. A monkey can smell the banana, sees it, puts his hand into the vase and grabs it, trying to pull it out. But the clenched fist with the fruit is too wide to come out through the narrow neck of the vase. And those monkeys are stubborn, they never let go of a fruit once they have found it. So they are stuck there for hours, with their hand inside the vase. Twice a day, an animal control officer patrols the village, and when he sees a monkey, covers its face with a burlap bag. The monkey is surprised and lets go, is fed the banana, and all the monkeys caught that day are brought by truck deep into a forest from where they don't return to the village. Sometimes we find it hard to let go of a grudge, fear, worry or angry feeling, but if we remember the fate of those monkeys, we will let go and forgive, and feel free and happy. Albert Schweitzer said, "Happiness is good health and a bad memory."



Criticism

Why Criticism Fails

Numerous psychological studies have found that criticism does not work. It does not help the people who are criticized for a poorly performed task do it better, they rather avoid that task altogether in the future, because it is associated with unpleasant feelings. Praising them for what they do well, and helping them improve where they need improvement, is far more effective (Robert Goleman). If you want to avoid an earthquake, don't dwell on faults.

Monuments for the Criticised

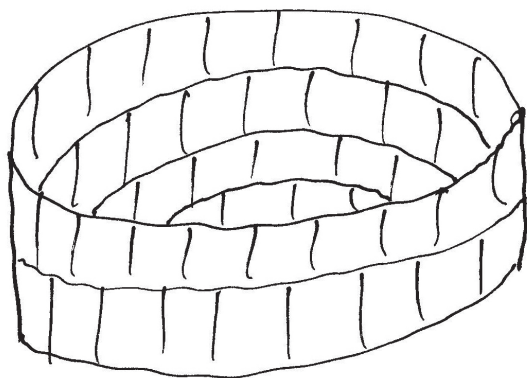
Critics tell us what our friends do not dare to say. But we must not be discouraged by criticism. Monuments are erected for those who are criticized, not for the critics.

Self-reliance

The Donkey in the Well

A farmer had an old donkey, and a dry well on his farm. One day the donkey was not careful and fell down into the well. The farmer looked down into the deep well and tried to figure out how to lift the donkey out again, but he could not think of a way. Finally, he decided the donkey was already old and could not work much longer, and the well

needed to be filled in anyway someday, so why not now. He called all his neighbors to come with shovels and help him fill the well. They all began to throw dirt into the well. At first, the donkey cried horribly, fearing that he was going to be buried alive. Then, to everyone's surprise, he suddenly stopped crying. When the farmer looked down into the well, he saw something amazing: each time a shovel of dirt fell on the donkey's back, he shook it off and took a step up. Soon, the donkey stepped up over the edge of the well and happily trotted away. If life throws dirt on us--and it will, all kinds of dirt--the trick to getting out of the well is to shake it off and take a step up. Each of our troubles is a steppingstone. We can get out of the deepest well just by not stopping, never giving up! Shake it off and take a step up.



Father, Son and Donkey

A father and his son were bringing a donkey to the market. The father was riding on the donkey, and the son walked alongside. A passerby criticized the father, "How could you let your son walk while you are sitting comfortably on the donkey?" The father got down and let his son ride on the donkey. Soon another passerby said to the son, "You are young and strong, how could you sit on the donkey while your father is walking?" So the son got down, and they both walked with the donkey. Another passerby ridiculed them and said, "How silly for you to walk, you could ride on your donkey." So they both sat on the donkey. Soon someone exclaimed, "That poor animal, carrying two strong men!" So the father and son got down and carried the donkey to the market. It is a good idea to listen to advice, but we must decide ourselves whether it is useful.

Be Yourself

US President Calvin Coolidge invited a representative group of citizens from his hometown in Kansas to the White House. They were thrilled to be invited to the White House in Washington, but also a little afraid, because they were not sure what were good table manners. After some discussion on the long train ride, they decided simply to do everything exactly as The President did himself, that should be OK. so each time he picked up a fork, they all picked up a fork. If he took the red wine glass, they all drank from the red wine glass, etc. That worked fine until

coffee was served. Coolidge added sugar and milk, and they all did. Then Coolidge poured his coffee into the saucer, and they all followed his example. But then Coolidge put the saucer onto the floor for his cat. At that moment, they decided not to imitate his example.

Helplessness

Circus Elephants

after Gavin de Becker

To train circus elephants, they are attached at a young age by heavy chains to large stakes driven deep into the ground. They pull and struggle, but the chain is too strong and the stake too firmly rooted. One day they give up, having learned that they cannot pull free. From that day on they can be "chained" with a slender rope. When this giant animal feels any resistance, though it has the strength to pull the whole circus tent down, it stops trying. Because it believes it cannot, it cannot. Children who are told repeatedly, "You'll never amount to anything"; "You're not smart enough"; "You should have more realistic goals" etc. reach a point where they believe they cannot pull free. From that point, they cannot, until something changes their view. Unless they grasp that they are tied with a thread, that the chain is an illusion, such children are not likely to show society their good nature and talents as adults.

Learned Helplessness

A psychologist put some rats into a cage with a metal floor, and an escape to another cage without a metal floor. Then he let an electric current flow through the metal floor, which gave the rats some pain. The rats searched the wall of the cage for an exit, found the door to the other cage, and moved to safety. Next he put another group of rats into the same cage, but locked the exit door. When he administered an electric current, the rats first searched for an exit, but when they found none, they lay helplessly on the metal floor, suffering the pain. So far, there is nothing remarkable, but now comes the interesting result. When he put the group of rats who found an exit the first time into a cage without an exit and administered an electric current, they kept searching for an exit, and if the exit was unlocked later, they found it again. But those rats who the first time found no exit, never searched again, even if the exit door was later unlocked! They lay helplessly on the floor and suffered the pain. Voltaire said, "Freedom is used up if it is not used." People who have suffered from oppression since childhood often fail to exercise freedoms if they become available to them later, but those who initially enjoyed freedom will always search for it again.

Fear Can Kill

A driver of a refrigerated truck stopped on a lonely highway in the US midwest, went inside the refrigeration compartment and accidentally locked himself inside. He had no food and no warm clothes, and with a pen he wrote

a diary on the wall, describing his ordeal how he slowly froze to death over several days. When someone found and opened the truck, they found him dead inside and read his diary. But an investigation showed that the refrigeration system had been turned off the whole time. The temperature inside the truck was not freezing, and the truck driver could easily have survived if he had been aware of this. He was killed by his fear of the cold, not the cold itself.

Persistence

The Black Belt

A doctor came to a karate teacher and said, "All my life it has been my dream to earn a black belt in karate. How long does it take?" The teacher told him, "You will have to practice one hour every day for the next four years." The doctor said, "Well, I guess I don't want to earn a black belt that badly." Shortly later a teenager with a physical deformity came to the karate teacher and asked how long it would take for him to earn a black belt. Given his problem, the teacher told him he would have to practice two hours every day for the next five years. The boy said, "Then I want to start right-away." Today he has a black belt and can defeat his own teacher. What we achieve depends a great deal on how badly we want it.

A Marriage Sealed in Heaven

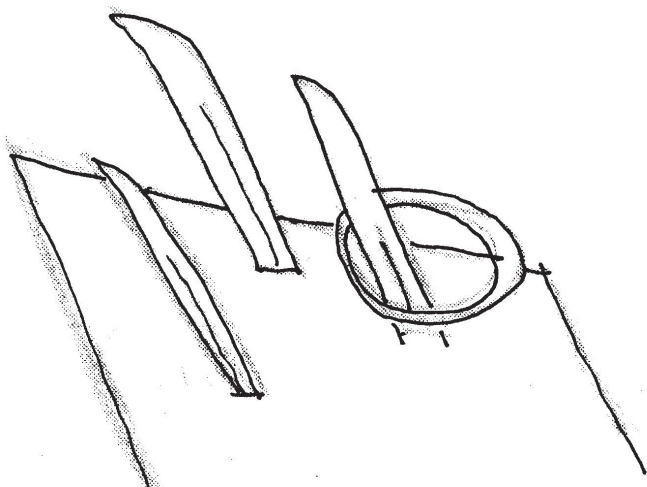
The German Jewish philosopher Moses Mendelssohn (1729-1786), the grandfather of the composers Felix (1809-1847) and Fanny Mendelssohn (1805-1847), was born with a hunchback. While traveling, he met a beautiful girl and fell in love with her. He begged her repeatedly to marry him, but she could not bear the thought of marrying a hunchback and refused. The night before he had to leave town, he went to see her one last time and said to her, "Do you believe that our fate is sealed in heaven? I had a dream that before I was born, God told me, 'Your future wife will have a hunchback.' I begged God, 'Dear God, please let it be me who has the hunchback, not my wife! I cannot stand the idea that my beautiful wife would have a hunchback.'" She was moved and agreed to marry him.

Persistence

A young man went from stall to stall at a fair and found a stall where people were throwing rings at knives sticking out from the wall. If the ring stuck on a knife, they got five times their money back, otherwise they lost it. Many people tried, but few were able to make the rings stick, because the knives were long and flexible, and the rings rather small. He tried a few times, but was not able to place a single ring on one of the knives. Then he noticed that the owner of the stall had a beautiful daughter. He smiled at her, and she smiled back. They exchanged a few words. Every day, as long as the fair was in town, he

came back to that stall to admire the beautiful daughter and to catch a short conversation with her. When the day came that all the shops packed up and the fair moved on to another town, he took all his courage and asked the father for his daughter's hand. The father looked at him and said, "You are too poor, you could not take good care of my daughter. You cannot marry her." The young man looked sadly how the daughter and her parents packed their wagon, and moved on to the next town, and then another one, and would not return to his home town again for a full year. But he made a plan. He bought some knives and rings, and practiced every evening after work to throw rings at the knife blades, first from very close up, and gradually from farther and farther away. At first he rarely succeeded in making a ring stick on a knife blade, but with practice, he became ever more skillful. After a year had gone by, he was a master. Finally, the time of the annual fair approached. He counted the days. On the first day that the fair opened, he went to the stall with the knives, greeted the daughter and her father, and bet three coins to throw three rings. The daughter was worried that he would lose all his money and begged him not to play. But he insisted. Two rings missed, but the third one stuck, and he got five coins back. He bet a larger sum to try again, and won again. This went on, while the father stood there in disbelief and gradually had to hand over all his savings. In the end he could not pay any more, and owed all his possessions to the young man. The young man said, "I do not want your money or your possessions, all I wish is to marry your daughter." The father realized how devoted a

husband he would be, and how happy it would make his daughter. He finally agreed to let them marry. There is a saying, "All is possible to patience and firm persistence."



Play With the Hand You Got

We must make the best out of the situation we are facing. In the card game called life, we have to play the hand we got as best as we can. Those who want to play the hand they believe they are entitled to, not the one they got, are failures. We are not being asked whether we want to play or not. There is no choice, we have to play, the question is how.

Reaching the Top

If you want to reach a mountain top, you better enjoy every step along the way, not only the view from the peak, otherwise you may never reach the top.

Sidney Poitier

Sidney Poitier, born 1924, grew up in the Bahamas and was sent to stay with his brother in Miami at age 15. At 18 he went to New York and supported himself as a dishwasher. Every morning he would check the help wanted ads in the newspaper to find work as a dishwasher in some restaurant. One day, there were no ads for dishwashers, but he saw an ad, "Actors wanted." He thought he had nothing to lose and went to try. The theater director gave him the text of a dialogue and asked him to read one role, while the director would read the other role. He asked Sidney to read the text over and tell him when he was ready. After a while, the director asked, "Are you ready?" Sidney said yes. The director read his sentence and waited for Sidney to respond. Sidney could barely

read and slowly deciphered word for word. The director was furious. He shouted, "Get out of here! You better work as a dishwasher or something like that." Sidney left, embarrassed. He thought, "So this is what he thinks who I am. I am going to prove him wrong." He began to study hard and became one of the greatest actors of all times.

Economic Principles

Quality

Lloyd Dobyns and Clare Crawford-Mason wrote in their book "Quality or Else: Revolution in World Business" (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1991) that the secret of quality production is to keep asking what the users want and constantly to adjust production to that goal. They mention a joint venture between Toyota and General Motors, who agreed to produce the same model of a car, under the same name. When they checked statistics of returns under warranty, they found that 95 percent of the problems had occurred with cars made in Detroit. They checked a large sample and found that everything had been produced to specifications, the deviations from the ideal dimensions of the motor were within the specified level of error tolerance. Then they measured a sample of motors produced in Japan, and thought at first the measurement instrument was broken, because it indicated exactly the same dimensions each time. But they checked again, and found that indeed the Japanese motors had been manufactured with much greater precision. While the

workers in Detroit adjusted the machinery until it produced motors that met the minimum specifications, the Japanese workers kept adjusting and readjusting their machinery until it produced motors as closely to the ideal dimensions as humanly possible. Obviously those motors had fewer problems. A similar principle also helped in police work. When a police department began to ask citizens about their greatest concerns, they found that giving tickets to illegally parked cars was not their top priority, they were more concerned about shootouts between rival gangs of drug dealers, which endangered passersby, including children on their way to school. So the police created a system where citizens could report suspected drug dealers, and the police came to investigate and make arrests if justified. This helped reduce the crime rate, even with fewer policemen and a lower budget.

The Good in Short Supply

The Reichmann's were a well-to-do family in Austria before World War II. When Hitler came to power, some died in concentration camps, others could flee to Tangier, Morocco, leaving their possessions behind. From there they helped victims of the holocaust and traded in currency. After the war, they moved to Canada and imported tiles from Europe. Later they founded the Olympia and York Construction Company, which they developed into the world's largest property development and management firm, creating thousands of jobs in Canada and other countries. Within a generation, they had again become one of Canada's richest families. A reporter

asked Mr. Reichmann, "How did you accomplish that?" He said, "I always looked for the good in short supply, and supplied it." If we try to find out what others want and need, and help them get it, we do them a good service, and also help ourselves.

Price Controls

During the 30-year war, the city of Antwerp was besieged by Belgian troops. But every night, smugglers made their way into the city with food. The citizens of Antwerp were rather wealthy, and the city could have held out almost indefinitely. That is, until the city fathers, in their wisdom, decided that those smugglers were charging outrageous prices. They imposed price controls on smuggled food, and so the smuggling stopped. That is how the city of Antwerp fell. Simply imposing price controls, without offering adequate supply at that price, may do more harm than good. (William J. Baumol)

Paprika

After the fall of communism in Hungary, people had a great urge to be free from oppressive, intrusive government regulations, and the role of government was constrained to what was considered the bare essentials. After some time, there was a shortage of ground red paprika powder on the market. In Hungary, this is quite serious, because ground paprika is an essential ingredient in almost every dish. An enterprising spirit came up with the idea of painting flour red and selling it as ground paprika. Unsuspecting customers bought and used it. But

the color used was poisonous lead-based paint, and many people got sick, some died. There was a clamor for the government to act. People finally realized that it is unreasonable to expect each consumer to buy a small sample of a new product, send it to a lab to be analyzed whether it is safe to eat, and then buy more. We need something like the U.S. Food and Drug Administration that tests new products on behalf of every consumer and guarantees that the food on the market is safe for consumption. Such information is a typical example of a "public good", which has two properties: First, costs are independent of the number of users, and second, non-payers cannot be excluded from the benefits. A typical example is a clock on a tower. Its costs are independent of the number of people who read the time, and non-payers cannot be prevented from glancing at the clock. Private merchants cannot make a profit from providing such goods, therefore government must provide them out of tax revenue, or they will not be provided at all, even if their benefits far outweigh the costs. There is some important role for government after all.

Rewarding Innovation

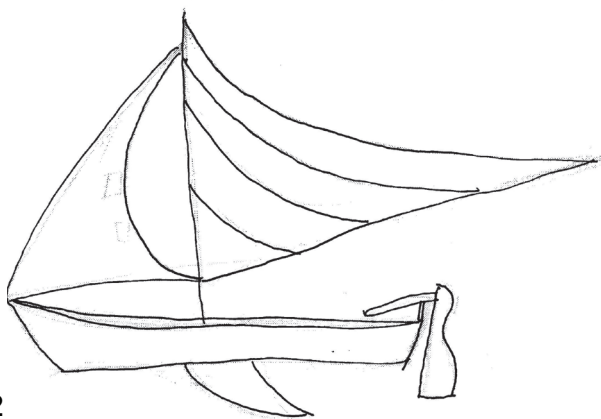
An Israeli economist studied the rate of introducing technical innovations on Kibbutzim and privately owned farms. He found that Kibbutzim adopted new labor-saving technologies faster than private farms. He offered the following plausible explanation. If an employee on a private farm sees a way to replace his work with a machine, he will be afraid to tell this to the owner, for fear

of losing his job. But if a member of a Kibbutz, a cooperative farm village, sees that her work can be replaced with a machine, she will inform everyone, because this way all can produce more with less work, and all benefit, not only a single owner of the farm. Sharing benefits facilitates desirable change.

Sail and Rudder

by Wassily Leontief

If you want a boat to move where you want it, it needs a sail to move, and a rudder to steer it. A purely free market economy moves at a rapid rate, but it lacks a steering mechanism to move it where we want, where all people's basic needs are satisfied. It resembles a boat with a sail but no rudder. A purely planned economy can be steered exactly where we want it, if it would only move. It resembles a boat with a rudder but no sail. We need both a rudder and a sail, both some planning and some market mechanisms that can move an economy forward.



Vilfredo Pareto

Towards the end of the 19th century, there were two competing schools of economics, the mathematical school and the historical school. The mathematical school of thought maintained that there were general laws in economics that could be described by mathematical formulas. The historical school argued that human behavior was unpredictable and there were no general laws, like in physics, which could describe people's individual decisions. At an international economic congress, Vilfredo Pareto (1848-1923), the main theorist of the mathematical school, and Gustav Schmoller (1838-1917), the main exponent of the historical school, had a big debate, with the audience taking sides, and without reaching any agreement. When it was time to break for lunch, Pareto approached Muller and proposed, "Let's go and have lunch together. Let's eat in a restaurant that serves us a free lunch." Muller protested, "There is no such thing, no restaurant will serve a free lunch!" Pareto smiled and said, "So after all you do believe in some universal laws in economics."

China's Glory Project

Wang Junyao (1966-2004) was a member of the China Society for the Promotion of the Guangcai ("glory") Project. This project was founded in 1994 by a group of ten concerned, dedicated and brilliant young Chinese entrepreneurs. Some had studied in their own fields - physics, chemistry, engineering, agriculture, business, etc

- both in China and in the West. When the laws were changed in China in 1994 under Deng Xiaoping to encourage private enterprises, they knew they would become very successful, because they had good business plans and opportunities were wide open. But they realized that if they did not share their success, they would arouse the envy of the public and local officials. For this reason, and also because they wanted to help their fellow citizens to benefit from the new opportunities, they aimed at creating a multitude of small and medium enterprises to help create jobs and income. Ten years later, 14,000 Chinese private enterprises participate in the Guangcai project and together they have created and fostered the creation of over 10,000 new companies in the poorest areas of China. The total investment in these companies today is around US \$6.5 billion and they so far provide employment and a better life for about 2.5 million Chinese. One of these enterprises is an ingenious scheme devised by Wang Junyao. He heard at a government seminar that many elderly Chinese suffer from osteoporosis, a softening of the bones that increases the risk of fractures, caused by calcium deficiency in the diet. The Chinese milk consumption at that time was only a few liters per year per person, compared with several hundred liters in the West. At another seminar, Wang Junyao heard of China's goal to increase farm income. There is clearly a demand for more milk, but most Chinese farmers with small plots are too poor to buy a cow. So he came up with the idea that farmers could acquire one or more cows and pay it back over time with half of the income they made

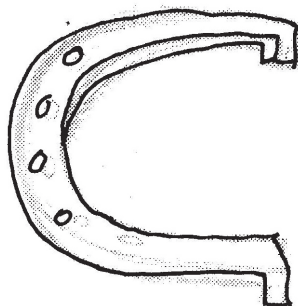
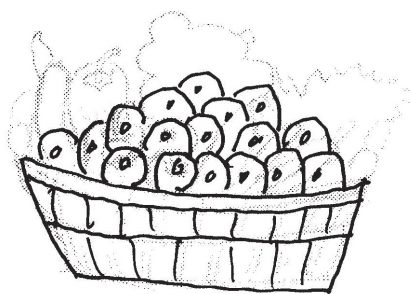
from selling milk. Another problem to be overcome was that milk used to require refrigeration, and only a few rich people could afford refrigerators. By cooperating with an international partner company to produce and package long-life milk that does not require refrigeration, he set up milk packing plants near groups of small dairy farms, and thus made milk practically available and affordable to the average citizen in China. It is often said that the Chinese are lactose intolerant. But that happens only if they do not consume milk for many years after infancy. If children are fed milk, their bodies adjust and they are able to digest it. Wang Junyao also saw to it that there are veterinarians within reach of small dairy farmers, and experts who can answer questions if they arise. A farmer who has half a dozen or fewer cows cannot invest the time to become an expert in dairy farming. At the time of Wang's early death from cancer, his scheme has so far enabled tens of thousands of Chinese small farmers to keep cows and gain additional income, while meeting a nutritional need of the Chinese population. Under Mr. Wang Junyao, the Junyao Group became one of the first privately owned Chinese companies to engage in the Global Compact, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan's initiative to promote the greater involvement of business in creatively working to meet the needs of the disadvantaged and requirements of future generations. A case study on the Junyao Group project can be found at www.unglobalcompact.org.

Respect

I once asked Fred Dubee, an adviser to the UN Global Compact, who has visited many companies around the world, "What is the main difference between successful and failing enterprises?" He said, "One can say it in one word: respect. Respect for its employees, customers, suppliers, the community and the environment. If you exploit workers, cheat customers, squeeze suppliers, ignore the needs of the local community and the environment, you may be able to earn some short term profit, but it will not last, because you do not earn loyalty, which is essential for long term survival."

Cherries

When Jesus was preaching in the Holy Land, he walked with his disciples from one town to the next through the desert. It was very hot and dry. He spotted a horseshoe on the path and asked St. Peter to pick it up. St. Peter was tired and pretended not to hear it. Jesus picked it up behind him and hid it in his gown. In the next town, after he had preached in the market, he sold the horseshoe to a blacksmith, and with the money he received he bought a bag full of cherries. As he was walking with his disciples to the next town through the desert, he dropped a cherry from time to time. St. Peter, being very thirsty, kept bending down to pick up the cherries and eat them. Had he bent down once when Jesus asked him to do so, he would not have had to bend so many times later. A small investment early on can yield handsome rewards later, according to the proverb, "A stitch in time saves nine."



Education

Education as Key to Development

John Lewis, Professor of Economics Emeritus at Princeton University, was sent by the World Bank to Korea as an economic adviser after the Korean War in 1953. Korean government economists told him that they wanted to spend 50 percent of the government budget for education, for building schools and paying teachers' salaries. He said that education was indeed important, but 50 percent was far too much. They should not neglect building roads, electrification and other needs. But the Koreans insisted that they wanted to spend 50 percent for education, and they did. The results have proven them right. Korea has been an economic miracle, increasing its annual per capita income over the last 50 years from less than \$100 per year to more than \$10,000, becoming a member of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) with countries from Western Europe, the USA, Canada and Japan. John Kenneth Galbraith stressed that no country with a high literacy rate is poor, and all countries with high illiteracy are very poor. General education is a key to economic and social development.

Louis Pasteur

When the French doctor Louis Pasteur looked through a microscope and discovered microbes that make us ill with typhus, dysentery and cholera, he began a campaign to

educate people how to avoid illnesses through personal hygiene, washing hands before eating, and boiling perishable food to kill bacteria. We don't even wait until children can speak before we teach them not to pick up something dirty from the street and put it in their mouth, because it could make them sick. They get so used to this that it become like second nature. In a discussion about drug abuse, William Bennett, the US "drug czar" under President Reagan, once said, "I don't believe in education. People who take drugs know exactly that it is bad for them, and they do it anyway. Only more police and more jails can help address that problem." By "education" he probably was thinking of a 1-hour movie about the drug problem shown in high school. If we waited until high school before telling children to wash their hands before meals, that would have little effect. Since violent conflicts are as deadly as infectious diseases, it is time to teach children also a form of "conflict hygiene," which helps them cope with differences without loss of life and limb. To be effective, it is equally important to start at a very early age, like teaching personal hygiene.

Carl Friedrich Gauss

The great German mathematician Carl Friedrich Gauss (1777-1855) went to first grade in a rural school where grades 1-4 were in a single classroom with one teacher. The teacher was constantly busy to give different assignments and coaching to different grade levels. One time he felt exhausted and told the whole class, "Take your chalk tablets and add the numbers from 1 to 100."

He expected that would keep them all busy for at least 20 minutes. Two minutes later, the youngest in the class, Carl, came in front and showed him the correct answer on his board, 5050. The teacher was surprised and asked, "How did you add those numbers so quickly?" Carl explained, "I added $1+100$, which is 101. $2+99$ is also 101, and so is $3+98$, etc, all the way to $50+51$, so the sum is 50 times 101."

Insights Emerge From Dialogues

Albert Einstein rode on a street car in Bern, Switzerland, and tried to imagine how the world would look like if the speed of light were as slow as the speed of the street car. This question fascinated him, and ultimately led him to develop first the special theory of relativity in 1905, and later the general theory of relativity in 1916. Among many other things, the general relativity predicts that light beams are bent by the force of gravity. Nobody believed him, but when a team of scientists in 1919 measured the positions of stars during a total solar eclipse, they discovered that indeed the light of stars that passed near the sun was slightly bent on its way to earth, by the amount that Einstein had predicted. This astonishing news made headlines all over the world, and Einstein became famous over night. In the early days in Bern, when he developed his revolutionary ideas about physics, he held weekly seminars with two friends, in each other's homes during evenings after work, where he explained his new ideas to them. They did not understand as much as Einstein did, but were good listeners. Sometimes he had

thought that some line of reasoning was perfectly clear, but when he found that his friends did not understand it, he realized that there were some logical gaps. So he went back and worked it out with more clarity, sometimes discovering a mistake that he corrected. Explaining an idea to others BEFORE we have fully understood it ourselves can help us gain more clarity, from insights that people who listen can give us, or at least from good questions.

Learning Early

Donald L. Livingston went with the U.S. Peace Corps to Guatemala for two years. He showed the mayor of a small village improved farming methods. The mayor's six year old son came with them to the fields, playing and watching what they were doing. Twenty-five years later, Don returned for the first time to Guatemala, and visited the village where he had been in the Peace Corps. The old mayor had retired, and his son was now the mayor and working in the fields. He used all the new farming methods that Don had showed to his father. Don said, "That is wonderful, did your father teach this to you?" The son said, "My father!? He never changed anything. But I saw what you showed to him." Grownups often have a more difficult time to learn something new than children, because the most difficult part is to unlearn what they already believe to know.

Building a Fire

Good education can be compared with building a strong fire. We begin with light, easily flammable materials like straw, and proceed to twigs, branches and finally bigger logs. If we drop a heavy log on a small new fire, it will quench it. But if we feed a fire only with straw, it will quickly burn out and get extinct. Similarly, to teach it is best to begin with easy problems, to give students confidence that they are able to solve them. If they are given too difficult assignments too early, they become discouraged, and their thirst for learning is killed. On the other hand, if they have gained confidence that they are able to learn and if their curiosity has been awakened and nurtured by giving them interesting insights, they should be challenged with gradually harder problems, otherwise they become bored and stop learning.

Letting a Flower Bloom

To let a flower bloom, we can expose it to warmth and sunshine, water it, and give it good nutrients in the soil. But we must have patience and wit until it opens by itself. If we try to open it with our fingers too early, it will wither and die. Similarly, to help a child grow mentally and psychologically, we can offer good examples, tell stories, answer questions, but we cannot force mature behavior before a child is ready. We must give it time to grow, and allow it to learn from its own experience.

If I Had My Children to Raise Over Again

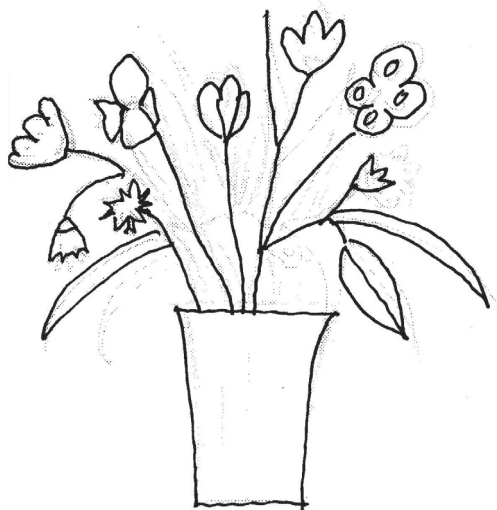
by Diane Loomans

If I had my children to raise all over again, I'd build self-esteem first, and the house later. I'd finger-paint more, and point the finger less. I would do less correcting and more connecting. I'd take my eyes off my watch, and watch with my eyes. I would care to know less and know to care more. I'd take more hikes and fly more kites. I'd stop playing serious, and seriously play. I would run through more fields and gaze at more stars. I'd do more hugging and less tugging. I'd see the oak tree in the acorn more often. I would be firm less often, and affirm much more. I'd model less about the love of power, and more about the power of love.

Family

While walking home from work, a young mother accidentally bumped into a stranger. She apologized profusely and said, "I am sorry I did not watch out for you." The stranger also apologized. They were very polite, and said good-bye. That same evening, when she cooked dinner, she did not notice that her young son had come home and stood quietly beside her. She nearly knocked him over. "Move out of the way," she yelled with a frown. He walked away, his little heart broken. In the middle of the night, she woke up, feeling thirsty. She went to the kitchen to drink a glass of water. Next to the door, she saw a bouquet of wild flowers standing in a glass on the floor. She realized that her son must have picked them for

her. He had come next to her quietly so as not to spoil the surprise. She felt very bad that she had scolded him. It dawned on her how differently she had treated the stranger on the street that day, and her own son. She went to her son's bedside and asked him whether he had brought her those beautiful flowers. He said with a smile that he found them in the garden, and had picked them for her because they were pretty like his mother. She was very moved. She said, "I am very sorry about the way I acted today. I should not have yelled at you." He said, "Mother, I love you anyway." She said, "I love you too, and thank you for bringing me those beautiful flowers." "If we died tomorrow, the company we work for would soon replace us, but our family may feel the loss for years. And yet we often treat our colleagues at work and strangers we meet better than our own family members. Let us also treat our family well."



Reading

Imagine you are hungry, and can choose from a buffet with many delicious, exotic dishes. This is a pleasure, as long as you can pick and choose only what you like. But if someone were to stand next to the table with a whip, saying "In 15 minutes all of this has to be eaten up or else..." this could spoil our appetite. Many schools use that approach with reading assignments. We all have a natural curiosity to learn about new ideas and other people's thinking, but under pressure, the fun disappears.

Leadership

Leadership

Robert C. Tucker, in his book "On Leadership", says that good leadership involves three skills: analysis, prescription and persuasion. Analysis means to understand a problem and its source. Prescriptions means to offer a solution. Persuasion means to convince and motivate other people to help implement the proposed solution. Tucker distinguishes between constituted leaders (elected public officials) and non-constituted leaders, ordinary citizens with a vision that can inspire others to follow them. He gave several examples of non-constituted leaders. One was Dr. Francis E. Townsend, a dentist, who observed that many elderly people suffered from cold and hunger, while the country had enough resources. In a letter to editor in 1933, he outlined what became known as the Townsend Plan for a social security system, in which the government

would pay a pension to all the elderly, and all those with jobs would pay a small contribution to support the fund. His idea found widespread support, many cities formed Townsend clubs to promote that idea, and it led to legislation for social security that is still in place today. A second example of a non-constituted leader is Rachel Carson, a perceptive biologist and gifted writer. In 1962 she published "Silent Spring" in which she described the manifold effects of environmental pollution, including the disappearance of songbirds. This book sparked the worldwide environmental movement. A third example is "Uncle Tom's Cabin" by Harriet Beecher Stowe (1852), in which she vividly described the suffering of slaves, and made a significant contribution to the abolition of slavery. Anyone can become a non-constituted leader by studying a problem, conceiving of a solution, and inspiring others to help realize their dream.

The Seed

A king was growing old and knew that he could not govern much longer, that it was time to choose his successor. But instead of choosing one of his own children, as was customary, he instead invited one hundred randomly selected young people from throughout his kingdom to his court and told them, "It is soon time for me to step down and choose the next king. I have decided to choose one of you." The youngsters were shocked, but the king continued, "I am going to give each one of you a seed today - one very special seed. I want you to plant the seed, water it, and come back here one

year from today with what you have grown from this seed. I will then judge the plants that you bring, and the one I choose will be the next king."

One of the boys, named Liang, went home and excitedly told his mother the story. She helped him get a pot filled with soil, and he planted the seed and watered it carefully. Every day, he would water it and watch to see if it had grown. After about three weeks, some of the other youths began to talk about their seeds and the marvelous trees or flowers that were beginning to grow. Liang kept checking his seed, but nothing ever grew. Three weeks, four weeks, five weeks went by, still nothing. By now, others were talking about their plants, but Liang didn't have a plant and he felt like a failure. Six months went by -- still nothing in Liang's pot.

He knew his seed had died. A year finally went by and it was time to show what had grown. Liang felt ashamed that he had failed, and told his mother that he did not want to return to the king's court with his empty pot. But his mother told him that he had promised to return, and that he needed to keep his promise. Liang felt very uncomfortable, but he knew his mother was usually right. He took his empty pot to the palace. He was amazed at the variety of plants grown by the other youths. They were beautiful -- in all shapes and sizes. Liang put his empty pot on the floor and many of the other children laughed at him.

When the king arrived, he surveyed the room and greeted the young people. Liang tried to hide in the back. "My, what great plants, trees, and flowers you have grown," said the king. "Today one of you will be appointed the next king!"

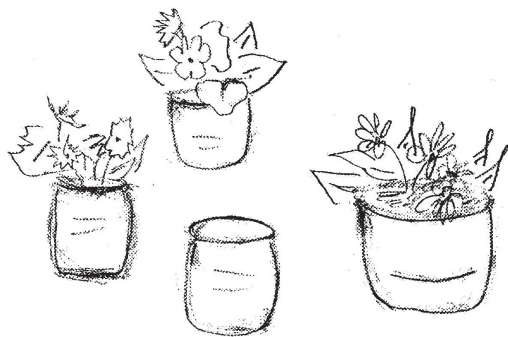
Suddenly the king spotted Liang at the back of the room with his empty pot. He ordered his guards to bring him to the front. Liang was scared to death, fearing he would now be punished for having failed.

When Liang got to the front, the king asked his name. "My name is Liang," he replied. All the kids were laughing and making fun of him. The king asked everyone to quiet down. He looked at Liang, and then announced to the crowd, "The name of your new king is Liang!"

Liang couldn't believe it. He couldn't even grow his seed, how could he be the new king?

Then the king explained, "One year ago today, I gave everyone here a seed. I told you to take the seed, plant it, water it, and bring it back to me today. But I gave you all boiled seeds that I knew would not grow. All of you, except Liang, have brought me trees and plants and flowers. When you found that the seed would not grow, you substituted another seed for the one I gave you. Liang was the only one with the courage and honesty to bring me a pot with my seed in it. I trust him and will make him the new king!"

If you plant honesty, you will reap trust.



Rosa Parks

Rosa Parks (1913-2005) was an African American civil rights activist in Montgomery, Alabama, USA. Clifford Durr, a white lawyer, and his wife Virginia, who were activists in the Civil Rights Movement, hired Rosa Parks as a seamstress, became her friends and sponsored her to attend the Highlander Folk School, an education center for workers' rights and racial equality in Monteagle, Tennessee, in the summer of 1955.

In 1900, Montgomery had passed a city ordinance for the purpose of segregating passengers by race. Conductors were given the power to assign seats for that purpose; however, no passengers would be required to move or give up their seat and stand if the bus was crowded and no other seats were available. Yet over time and by custom, Montgomery bus drivers had adopted the practice of requiring black riders to move farther to the back of the bus whenever there were no white only seats left, or to stand if no seats were left, or, if there was no standing room, to leave the bus.

On 1 December 1955, Parks refused to obey bus driver James Blake's order that she give up her seat in the back of the bus to make room for a white passenger. Blake called the police to arrest Parks. Clifford Durr bailed her out. Alabama State College professor Jo Ann Robinson, a member of the Women's Political Council, stayed up all night mimeographing over 35,000 handbills announcing a bus boycott. On Sunday, 4 December 1955, plans for the Montgomery Bus Boycott were announced at black churches in the area, and a front-page article in The Montgomery

Advertiser helped spread the word. At a church rally that night, attendees unanimously agreed to continue the boycott until they were treated with the level of courtesy they expected, until black drivers were hired, and until seating in the middle of the bus was handled on a first-come basis.

Four days later, Parks was tried on charges of disorderly conduct and violating a local ordinance. The trial lasted 30 minutes. Parks was found guilty and fined \$10, plus \$4 in court costs. Parks appealed her conviction and formally challenged the legality of racial segregation. She said in a 1992 interview, "The more we gave in, the more we complied with that kind of treatment, the more oppressive it became."

A new organization, the Montgomery Improvement Association was formed to lead the boycott. Its members elected as their president a relative newcomer to Montgomery, a young and mostly unknown Baptist minister, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968). Through her role in sparking the boycott, Rosa Parks played an important part in internationalizing the awareness of the plight of African Americans and the civil rights struggle.

Some of the 40,000 black commuters formed car pools, but most walked, some as far as 30 km. The boycott lasted 381 days. Dozens of public buses stood idle for months, damaging the bus transit company's finances, until the law requiring segregation on public buses was lifted.

Some segregationists retaliated with terrorism. Black churches were burned or dynamited. Martin Luther King's home was bombed in the early morning hours of 30 January 1956. Despite of these attacks, the black community's bus boycott marked one of the largest and most successful mass

movements against racial segregation. It propelled King to the forefront of the Civil Rights Movement. It also inspired many other protests, including the 1957 bus boycott in Alexandria, South Africa, one of the key events in the radicalization of the black majority under the leadership of the African National Congress.

On 13 November 1956, the United States Supreme Court outlawed racial segregation on buses, deeming it unconstitutional.

In 1990, Rosa Parks was part of a group welcoming Nelson Mandela, who had just been released from prison in South Africa. Upon spotting her in the reception line, Mandela called out her name and, hugging her, said, "You sustained me while I was in prison all those years."

On 9 September 1996, President Bill Clinton presented Parks with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest honor given by the U.S. executive branch.

At the right moment, the courageous act by one individual can change the course of history.

The Abolition of Slavery

In 1835, Lloyd Garrison, the publisher of the anti-slavery gazette "The Liberator", spoke on the Boston Commons against slavery. He was arrested by the police--to protect his life-- because an angry mob was ready to lynch him. He was secretly moved out of the city at night in an enclosed horse coach. But he continued to fight against slavery, and 30 years later, it was indeed abolished in the United States by President Lincoln. The Quakers played a leading role in the movement to abolish slavery. Groups of Quakers traveled from town to

town in the United States to preach against slavery, and they did not leave a town until at least one person had converted to their cause. In the end, their patience paid off. When we see the billions spent for weapons today and the pittance available to work for peace, it is easy to despair. But the people who fought for the abolition of slavery in the 19th century did not even have any foundations to apply to. They made personal sacrifices and took risks, while the slave traders and slave owners accumulated huge fortunes. Yet the anti-slavery movement prevailed in the end, because it had a just cause. For the same reason, the global peace movement will one day prevail over those who profit from war.

The Nevada-Semipalatinsk Anti-Nuclear Movement

Olzhas Suleimeniyev from Almaty, the leading poet of Kazakhstan and a Soviet Deputy in Moscow at the time, was to read from his poetry on Kazakh national television. It was shortly after one of the latest nuclear explosions at the Soviet nuclear test site near Semipalatinsk in Kazakhstan. Instead of reading from his poetry, Olzhas put down his book and spoke about the dangers of nuclear testing, how it caused leukemia and other illnesses. At the end he announced that if anyone was interested to discuss these issues further, he would meet with them in front of the TV studio the next morning at 10 am. He expected that few people would come, a few dozen at most. The next morning, 3,000 people had assembled on the square in front of the TV studio. This was the birth of the

Nevada-Semipalatinsk Anti-Nuclear Movement. Its members publicized information about the higher incidence of birth defects and cancer caused by exposure to the radiation from the nuclear test site. Eventually, they persuaded the Soviet government to close the test site, and still later the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty closed also the U.S. nuclear test site in Nevada, and all other nuclear test sites around the world.

Teaching Leadership for Peace

The people who would need to learn how to make peace most urgently are the heads of states. But they are also the most difficult to reach. They believe they know everything they need to. If you go to a President and say, "I would like to teach you how to make peace," you are quickly shown the door. Hossain Danesh, Founder and President of Education for Peace International, came up with an ingenious strategy. He approaches schools in a country and offers to train their teachers, students, and parents in peace education. As more and more schools become interested, he then approaches the president or prime minister of the country and says, "Your children are learning about peace, and as the leader of your country, maybe you wish to know what your children are learning." This is usually something even a busy head of state wishes to know. So they schedule a weekend where he shows to the political leadership what "the children" in his country are learning. But in presenting it, the head of state learns it, too. But officially he is not being taught anything, he is just being shown what children are learning!

Nelson Mandela

In 1998, President Nelson Mandela of South Africa invited the local top executive of British Petroleum for a breakfast meeting at his home. When the executive arrived, Mandela went to greet him at the door and asked if he had come alone. He said yes. Mandela asked, "Didn't you come with a driver?" The executive said that the driver was waiting outside in the car. Mandela asked him to bring the driver inside, he had prepared breakfast for three. He considered the driver a human being, worth of the same respect as the president and top executive. This simple gesture deeply touched the BP executive. He became one of Mandela's closest friends. When Mandela later opened a foundation for children, that executive became one of the main contributors.

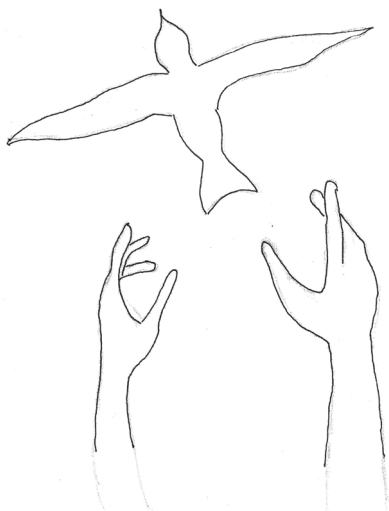
The King of Birds

The birds decided to find out which of them was able to fly highest, to become their king. All of them started at the same time, and one by one they dropped out, until only the Eagle was left. He continued his upward flight higher and higher until he was totally exhausted, and when he was at his maximum, he exclaimed: "See, I have reached the highest point, leaving everyone else behind!" At that moment a tiny bird, which had been riding on his back, leapt off his wing and flew even higher, because he had conserved his strength. Since then, this bird is called the king bird. Isaac Newton (1642-1727), the great physicist and discoverer of differential calculus, once said, "The only reason why I may have seen farther than others was that I was a dwarf standing on the

shoulders of giants."In thinking new thoughts and discovering truth, we have a great debt to those who came before us.

Our Fate Is in Our Hands

Among a Native American tribe, there lived a malicious young man with the name Evil Spirit. He kept doing harm to others like opening gates to let their horses run away, hiding tools, stealing eggs, and so on. Each time he was caught and brought before the Wise Old Man to be reprimanded. He hated the Wise Old Man and one day decided to trick him. He found a small bird who had just left his nest, picked it up, hid it inside both of his hands so that only the tail was sticking out, took it to the Wise Old Man and asked him, "Is this bird dead or alive?" He had decided that if the Wise Old Man were to say, "It is alive," he would crush it before showing it and prove him wrong. If the Wise Old Man were to say, "It is dead," he would let it fly away and prove him wrong again. But the Wise Old Man said, "The fate of this bird is in your hands." He realized his responsibility and let the bird fly away. So it is with what we have learnt. We can forget it and let it die, or we can nurture it, share it with others, and keep it alive. Our fate is in our hands.



Wisdom and Stupidity

Pay Attention

after Farai Maguwu

A man bought a horse from a preacher. The preacher warned him, "This horse understands only two words. If you say 'hallelujah' it moves, and if you say 'amen' it stops. It understands nothing else." A week later the man went for a ride through the countryside. The horse was galloping nicely, but suddenly he saw that they were approaching a cliff. He desperately tried to remember how to make the horse stop. He only knew it had something to do with the bible. He said "bible!" but the horse kept going. He tried "God!" and still the horse ran towards the cliff. He tried "Jesus!" and finally "Mary!" but nothing seemed to help. He was sure he would be dead in a few seconds. He murmured one last short prayer and said "amen". Suddenly, the horse stood still, directly at the edge of the cliff. He was so happy to be alive that he shouted, "hallelujah!" Moral: If someone explains to you something important, pay careful attention.

Repetition

Students told a professor, "Don't repeat yourself, we are not stupid." He asked, "What did I repeat?" they said, "We forgot."

Getting Rid of a Nightmare

A man had frequent nightmares that someone was hiding under his bed, waking up sweating and trembling every night. He called a psychotherapist who had been recommended to him if he could help him. The psychotherapist said, "I believe I can help you, but how many sessions it will take until you are cured depends on you, and each session will cost \$200." A week later, the man met the psychotherapist on the street and told him, "I have found a solution to my problem for only \$20." The psychotherapist asked how he had gotten rid of his fears. The man explained, "I hired a carpenter for \$20 to saw off the legs of my bed."

The Model Inmate

The queen of England visited a mental asylum. The staff showed her the model inmate, who tended a beautiful garden and explained to her every plant and its special needs. At the end he whispered to her, "There has really been a terrible mistake made. I should not be in here. Can you please do something to get me out of here?" The queen promised to do what she could. She visited several more inmates, and then proceeded to the exit. As she was about to leave, she was hit in the back of her head with a brick, and when she turned around, the model inmate yelled at her, "Don't forget your promise!"

Rehabilitating Prisoners

There was a prison with an exceptionally low rate of recidivism (rearrests after being released from prison). The government set up a study commission to find out the method that the director of the prison, Mr. Niedermeyer, applied to have such a high success rate in rehabilitating prisoners into becoming honest and hardworking citizens. After six months of study, the commission reported, "The method of Mr. Niedermeyer is Mr. Niedermeyer himself." He showed concern about each prisoner, spoke with them and listened to them. That had a deep impact.

Family Tradition

A daughter observed her mother prepare a Christmas ham. Before she put it in a pot in the oven, she cut off a piece on the left and right and threw them into the garbage. The daughter asked her mother why she did this. "My mother has always done it that way," was her reply. They were curious and went to see Grandma and asked her why she always cut off a piece of ham on the left and right before putting it in the oven. Her reply was the same, "Because my mother has always done it that way." Great-Grandma, over 90, was still alive in a retirement home. They visited her and asked her, "Why did you always cut off a piece of ham on the left and right before putting it in the oven?" She explained, "Because my pot was too small!" We often follow traditions, even if they are no longer appropriate, having forgotten why.

Solomon's Judgment

Two young women who lived in the same house and who both had an infant son came to Solomon for a judgement. One of the women claimed that the other, after accidentally crushing her own son while sleeping, had exchanged the two children to make it appear that the living child was hers. The other woman denied this and so both women claimed to be the mother of the living son and said that the dead boy belonged to the other. After some deliberation, King Solomon called for a sword to be brought before him. He declared that there is only one fair solution: the live son must be split in two, each woman receiving half of the child. Upon hearing this terrible verdict, the boy's true mother cried out, "Please, My Lord, give her the live child--do not kill him!" However, the liar, in her bitter jealousy, exclaimed, "It shall be neither mine nor yours--divide it!" Solomon instantly gave the live baby to the real mother, realizing that the true mother's instincts were to protect her child, while the liar revealed that she did not truly love the child.

Be Like a Pencil

by Natarajan Ravendhran

A pencil writes, but in fact it is the hand that guides it, and the mind that guides the hand. Similarly, in whatever we do, we are guided by something greater than ourselves, by our parents and teachers, and by the intellectual and cultural heritage of humanity. A pencil needs to be sharpened from time to time. Similarly, we must

periodically sharpen our skills .A pencil has an eraser, to correct mistakes. Similarly, we must correct our mistakes. The essential part of a pencil is not the colorful wooden hull that surrounds it, but the lead core in the center. Similarly, what matters in people is not their exterior appearance, but what is inside them.

Changing Perceptions on Homosexuality

Until the mid-1970s, Swedish law defined homosexuality as a disease. One day, many homosexuals called in sick and stayed home from work. Then some reporters also began to call their office, "Today I feel somewhat homosexual, so I cannot come to work." Soon that law was abolished.

Oppression Breeds Secrecy

The erroneous biological theories of Lyssenko, who maintained that acquired properties of plants and animals are passed on by inheritance, were promoted by Stalin, and were also the official doctrine in China in the 1950s. A Chinese peasant who wanted to breed better crops needed information about the Mendelian laws of inheritance, which were frowned upon by official ideologues. He found a scientific article about it in a Western biology journal. But the only way he could smuggle the journal out of the library to read it secretly at home was by hiding it inside a big volume of the collected works of Marx and Engels. -- Blaming the farmer for dishonesty misses the point. The blame belongs entirely to the

oppressive officialdom which did not allow people to read what they wanted.

Majority Rule

A Frenchman arrives on a South Sea island. A Native welcomes him, invites him to his home, shares his food with him, and offers that he is welcome stay with him as long as he wishes. Sometime later, the Frenchman asks, "Can I bring my friend, too?" The host graciously says, "Of course, my home is your home." Again sometime later, the two Frenchmen tell the Native, "We have decided that you should move out, this home is too small for three people." The Native protests, "But this is my home!" The two Frenchmen say, "No, we practice democracy, we are in the majority!!" This story shows persuasively that denying the Hawai'ians independence because a majority of today's inhabitants, most of whom immigrated from the mainland of the United States, prefer to remain a U.S. State, is equally unjustified. (after Johan Galtung)

Leprosy

Leprosy is primarily a disease of the nervous system, which has the effect that patients no longer feel pain. Therefore, they do not notice when they have open wounds on their limbs, but continue to use them, until they suffer greater and greater damage. Eventually they lose their limbs. The feeling of pain is an essential feedback mechanism that persuades us to give our body time to heal, and helps keep us alive. Similarly, if in a society the channels for people to inform the government of their suffering are blocked by censorship, or if the

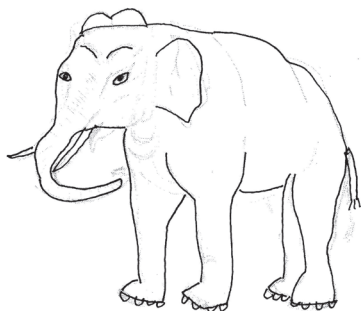
government does not care about people's fate, because it does not face elections, there is no limit to how much people may suffer. Dictatorship is a disease of society similar to leprosy in the human body. It is no coincidence that some of the worst cases of industrial pollution were found in Eastern Europe after the fall of communism, because the press had been censored and could not report about cases of pollution, and criticism of the government was severely punished. Dictatorships are notorious for all kinds of abuses of power, including imprisonment, torture and sometimes execution of dissidents, corruption, lack of freedom to move, even hunger. Amartya Sen has found that famines do not occur in democracies, because a government that would let some of its people starve to death would not be reelected. A free press that reports without fear or favor about cases of abuse of power, and democratic institutions that allow people to replace government officials who abuse their positions, serve a function in society analogous to that of the immune system in the human body, where white blood cells constantly search for germs of disease and eliminate them before they can multiply and spread throughout the body. If the immune system is weakened, as in AIDS patients, they suffer from a host of diseases without defense against them and eventually die. If the immune system stops functioning altogether, at the time of death, the body is consumed by rapidly multiplying microbes and rots. The immune system is essential to keep us alive, and democratic institutions, including a free press, are necessary to keep a society healthy and at peace.

Dogs as Teachers

If dogs were our teachers, we would learn: When loved ones come home, always run to greet them. Avoid biting when a simple growl will do. No matter how often you are scolded, don't buy into the guilt thing and pout, run right back and make friends. Delight in the simple joy of a long walk. If what you want lies buried, dig until you find it.

Seven Men and an Elephant

Seven men were in a dark room touching an elephant. One touched his leg and said, "An elephant is like a tree trunk." Another touched his belly and said, "No, an elephant is like a wall." Another touched his trunk and said, "No, an elephant is like a snake." Another touched his ear and said, "No an elephant is like a cabbage leaf." Another touched his tusk and said, "No, an elephant is like a branch." Another held his tail and said, "No, an elephant is like a paint brush." Still another sat on top and said, "No, an elephant is like a mountain." Then someone came in and switched the light on. All seven closed their eyes and shouted, "That fool should leave!" We all possess a piece of the truth, but nobody possesses the whole and only truth. Many cling to their narrow views and refuse to see a larger truth. Through dialogue, we can all learn from one another.



The Whole Truth

Someone was walking alongside the devil. The person in front of them bent down and picked something up. "What did he find?" he asked. "A piece of the truth," the devil answered. "Doesn't that upset you?" he asked. "Not at all," the devil replied, "soon I will make him believe that he has found the whole truth." "Seek the company of those who are searching for the truth, but avoid those who have found it." -- Vaclav Havel

Framing Questions

The psychologists Amos and Tversky developed the theory of "framing" by demonstrating that people give different answers depending on how a question is asked. The following are two examples. If you ask people, "You stand in line for a movie which costs \$10 admission and discover that you just lost a \$10 bill. Would you still buy the movie ticket?" Most people say yes. If they are asked, "You stand in line for a movie AND discover that you just lost the \$10 movie ticket. Would you buy another one?" Now most people say no. The two situations are identical, but in the first case, the \$10 bill is associated in people's mind with their general account, which is independent of the movie. In the second case, they associate the ticket with the movie and decide that they are not going to pay \$20 to see the movie. Another case is the following. If people are told, "You are asked for advice to save a village with 600 inhabitants from an avalanche. If you select course A, you can save 400 people for sure, and 200 will die. If you select course B, you may be able to save all 600 with a two

third chance, but there is a one third chance that all of them die." Most people will choose course A. If they are told, "If you select course A, 200 people will die for sure, and 400 will be saved. If you select course B, you may be able to save all 600 with a two third chance, but there is a one third chance that all of them die." Now most people prefer option B. We have a natural tendency to cling to certainty if it is positive, and to avoid something negative that seems certain. In fact, both formulations describe exactly the same two choices. The art of framing questions has been skillfully used by pollsters to elicit the answers their sponsors want to hear.

Cultural Differences

During World War II, some British and Albanian troops had a joint campaign. When they met, the British asked the Albanians, "Would you like to eat some lunch?" The Albanians, said, "No, no, thank you, we are not hungry." So the British threw the food left from their lunch into the garbage. But in fact, the Albanians had been walking for three days without eating and were terribly hungry and near exhaustion. In Albanian culture, it is an absolute tabu to accept food the first time it is offered, that would be greedy and impolite. Decent behavior requires to refuse an offer of food twice before it is accepted, with apparent reluctance. The British did not know that, and the Albanians did not know that British culture is different. Being aware of cultural differences is important to avoid unfortunate misunderstandings.

Different Customs

A Chinese man put a bowl of rice on his deceased wife's grave every day. An American teased him and asked, "When will your wife be able to eat that rice?" The Chinese said, "When your dead wife can smell the flowers you put on her grave every day." We tend to consider normal what we do, and strange what others do.

Lost in Translation

During the Iranian hostage crisis, UN Secretary General Kurt Waldheim flew to Teheran and announced at a news conference at the airport, "I have come here to mediate a compromise." As he was driven downtown in a limousine, angry crowds in the street pointed their fists at him and threw stones at his limousine. He could not understand what had upset the people so much. Someone explained to him that in Farsi "to mediate" means to meddle into someone else's affairs that are none of your business. "Compromise" means to give up sacred principles, as in "a virgin compromised her virtue."

Unwelcome Help

A scout master asked three little scouts what good deed they had done today. The first one replied, "I helped an old lady cross the street." "Very good," the scout master said. Turning to the second boy he asked, "and what did you do?" "I also helped that old lady cross the street." "I see, try to be a little more imaginative next time and don't

simply imitate your friend." Turning to the third boy, he asked, "and what did you do?" "I also helped that old lady cross the street." "Why did it take all three of you?" the scout master asked. They replied in unison, "Because she did not want to."

The Twenty-Ninth Day

A farmer had a fish pond, on which some water lilies grew. The part of the pond covered by vegetation doubled every day. At this rate of growth, the entire pond was going to be covered in thirty days. The farmer thought, "The problem is still small, I can wait do deal with it. I will remove the water lilies when half the pond is covered." How long did the farmer wait? Until the twenty-ninth day! We often postpone dealing with an approaching problem until it is too late.

The Dull Ax

A lumber jack worked long hours every day to exhaustion, wasting a lot of time and energy cutting trees with a dull ax. Someone asked him, "Why don't you sharpen your ax?" He replied, "I don't have time!"

Big Rocks

An expert on time management addressed a class of students in business administration. He filled a mason jar with a dozen fist-sized rocks, until no more would fit. He asked the students, "Is this jar full?" and all shouted

"Yes!" Then he took some gravel that was hidden under the desk to fill the empty spaces between the rocks and asked again, "Is it full now?" Some said, "probably not." He filled the space between the gravel with sand, and finally poured water into the jar to the brim. "What is the lesson of this?" he asked. A smart student answered, "No matter how full your daily schedule is, if you try really hard, you can always fit one more little thing into it." The speaker replied, "No, the main lesson is that unless you put the big rocks in first, you will never find room for them at all." People typically achieve 80% of what is most important in their lives in 20% of their time. What are the big rocks in our life?



Improve Yourself

In ancient times, a king walked barefoot, as it was customary at the time, to visit a neighboring town. He hurt his foot on a sharp stone. So he ordered that all the roads in his kingdom be covered with leather. His adviser suggested, "Why don't you simply cover your feet with leather?" This is how shoes are supposed to have been invented." We all would like to improve the world, and can easily do so, if we start with ourselves." -- Karl Heinrich Waggerl

True Skill

The yogi Raman was a true master of the art of archery. One morning, he invited his favorite disciple to watch a display of his skill. The disciple had seen this more than a hundred times before, but he nevertheless obeyed his teacher. They went into the wood beside the monastery and when they reached a magnificent oak tree, Raman took a flower which he had tucked in his collar and placed it on one of the branches. He then opened his bag and took out three objects: his splendid bow made of precious wood, an arrow and a white handkerchief embroidered with lilacs. The yogi positioned himself one hundred paces from the spot where he had placed the flower. Facing his target, he asked his disciple to blindfold him with the embroidered handkerchief. The disciple did as his teacher requested. "How often have you seen me practise the noble and ancient sport of archery?" Raman asked him. "Every day," replied his disciple. "And you have always

managed to hit the rose from three hundred paces away.” With his eyes covered by the handkerchief, the yogi Raman placed his feet firmly on the ground, drew back the bowstring with all his might - aiming at the rose placed on one of the branches of the oak tree - and then released the arrow. The arrow whistled through the air, but it did not even hit the tree, missing the target by an embarrassingly wide margin. “Did I hit it?” asked Raman, removing the handkerchief from his eyes. “No, you missed completely,” replied the disciple. “I thought you were going to demonstrate to me the power of thought and your ability to perform magic.” “I have just taught you the most important lesson about the power of thought,” replied Raman. “When you want something, concentrate only on that: no one will ever hit a target they cannot see.”

Flying Lessons

A flock of birds who could not fly met in a nice hotel on top of a cliff overlooking the sea for a training workshop in flying. They were well-fed, with a buffet three times a day, and had lessons in the morning and afternoon. They received a stack of papers explaining step by step how to fly, read them, and then practiced. After some initial short trial flights, they soared up into the air, flew over the edge of the cliff and over the sea, and then landed safely on the ground near the hotel. They enjoyed it tremendously. At the end of the conference, they took their papers under their wing and went home, and never flew again. It is important to apply what we learn.

Honesty

An Indian Guru realized that he was getting old and could not teach much longer. So he told his students, "I have to stop teaching soon, and to be able to continue to support myself, I need some savings. Please go to any busy intersection, and when nobody is looking, snatch a purse and bring it to me." His students were puzzled, but they did not dare to question their guru. All went out to try to snatch purses, except one. The guru asked him, "Why are you not doing what I told you?" The boy explained, "You said we should snatch a purse when nobody is looking. But that is impossible, because I will always be looking." The guru told him, "You are the only one who understood my message. I want you to become my successor."

Bureaucracy

(after Mikhail Bulgakov)

A young couple in Moscow fell in love. They went to register to get married. On the wall of the marriage registration office was a big poster showing enlarged germs with the words "kissing spreads disease". After a lengthy wait, it was their turn, but they were told that because one of them was born in Leningrad, they would have to travel there to get permission to marry. They spent their combined savings to buy two train tickets to Leningrad. Due to a delay in traffic on the day of their departure, they arrived a few minutes late and missed the train they had reserved. They begged the station master for permission to take the next train, but were told that

their ticket was valid only for the train they had reserved. They had no money left to buy another train ticket. So they could never get married. This is a typical illustration of the horrors of bureaucracy.

Love Me, You Scoundrel!

Prussian King Friedrich Wilhelm liked to walk the streets of Berlin, and when he found someone whom he disliked, which was not rare, he did not hesitate to try out his cane.

So gradually people went out of his way when they saw the king approaching. One man noticed him too late, and when the king was only a few steps away, he tried to flee to the nearest entrance, but the king saw him before he could enter. The king asked him, "Where are you going?"

"Into this house." "Is this your house?" "No." "Then why do you enter it?" The man was afraid of being suspected as a thief, so he told the king the truth: "To hide from you." "Why do you want to hide from me?" "Because I am afraid of you." Upon hearing this, the king hit him with his cane and shouted, "I am your king, you should not be afraid of me, you should love me, you scoundrel!"

Greed

An antique dealer used to visit farms in his area to try to find valuable old furniture, and buy it cheap. One day, he discovered in an old barn a commode from the early 20th century, covered with a thick layer of dust, hidden under many worthless pieces of trash. It was a very rare model,

sought by collectors, maybe worth nearly a million dollars. But to pay as little as possible, he told the farmer that the commode was of little value, at most usable as firewood, and negotiated a very cheap price. The next day, he came back with his pickup truck to retrieve the commode. To his horror, the farmer had cut it up into small pieces of firewood and neatly bundled them, to do the dealer a favor.

An Immodest Wish

A wealthy maharajah was so delighted with the game of chess that he offered the inventor of the game anything in his realm that he might wish. The inventor said, "I wish one grain of rice on the first square of the chessboard, two grains on the second square, four grains on the third, eight grains on the fourth, and so on, until the last square." The maharajah exclaimed, "Why such a modest wish?! Don't you wish my daughter's hand, or one of my palaces, or one of the provinces I rule?" "No thank you," the inventor said, "all I want is the amount of rice that I explained to you." The maharajah had his treasurer calculate how much rice this would amount to. Soon he began to realize that even if the maharajah sold his entire realm with all his palaces and vast amounts of land, he would never be able to buy so much rice. This only reinforced his admiration for the inventor, and he rewarded him handsomely, but with far less than he had suggested.

The Olive Jar

A merchant in 8th century Baghdad went on a long trip to the orient. He sold his property, filled an earthen jar with gold coins, and covered it with olives. He asked his best friend to save this jar of olives for him until he would return from his trip, and the friend agreed. When the merchant did not return after three years, his friend's wife said, "Let's see what is inside this jar, your friend may never return." They removed the top layer of olives and found underneath the gold coins. They used the gold and spent it, living well. After seven years, the merchant returned from his journey, went to his best friend, and asked him to return the olive jar. His friend promised to return the jar by tomorrow. He went to the market, bought olives, and filled the jar to the top. Then he returned it. When the merchant was looking for his gold and found only olives instead, he felt betrayed, and went to the Calif, Harun al-Rashid. The Calif listened to the story of the merchant, and then to his friend, but did not know whom to believe, or how to prove who was right. The Calif regularly disguised himself as a common man at night and roamed the city to see if everything was in good order and to listen to what people might think about him and his government. That night he passed by a group of young boys who played out that dispute about which they had heard. The boy who played the Calif listened to the two disputants. Then he asked his aide to fetch an olive merchant. "Taste the olives from this jar, and tell me from what harvest they are." The olive merchant tasted several olives and said, "These olives are from last year's

harvest." "Could they be seven years old?" the boy playing the Calif asked. "Impossible! They can only be from last year's harvest," the boy playing the olive merchant said. So the boy playing the Calif ordered the merchant's friend to fill the jar with gold coins and return them to the merchant. The real Calif was impressed with the boy's wisdom, and invited him to become his top adviser at his court. I have used this story to try to convince teachers that when they ask their students to do role plays of negotiations at the United Nations, they should not insist that they simply try to imitate present governments, in a "realistic" way, but should encourage them to try to be smarter and come up with better, more imaginative solutions than present governments do.



Forgiven and Forgotten

A woman asked her husband, "Why do you keep talking about my past mistakes? I thought you had forgiven and forgotten them." He said, "Yes, I have, but I want you to remember what I have forgiven and forgotten." We must throw our bad memories into a big pond with a sign, "No fishing allowed."

Hidden Gems

after Terri Main

A diver was exploring caves along the seashore. In one of them he found an ancient leather bag. Curious to see what treasure might be hidden inside, he quickly opened it, but was disappointed to find nothing but a bunch of hardened clay balls. It looked as if someone had rolled some pieces of clay in his hands, baked them in the sun, and left them in the bag. They didn't look like much. Still, out of curiosity, he took the bag out of the cave with him. As he strolled along the beach, to pass the time, he threw the clay balls one by one out into the ocean to see how far he could throw them. When only a few of the balls were left, one of them accidentally dropped and cracked open on a rock. Inside was a beautiful, precious stone. Excited, the man started breaking open the remaining few clay balls. Each contained a similar treasure. He felt very sorry to have thrown away so many precious jewels without knowing it. Apparently, someone had hidden a bag full of gems in that cave to retrieve it later, but never got a chance to do so. Over a long time, the gems became covered with layer after layer of mud and clay, because they were repeatedly

submerged by the tide. Sometimes we treat people the same way. We look at someone, maybe even ourselves, and we see the external layer of clay. It doesn't look like much from the outside. It isn't always beautiful or sparkling, so we discount it, we see that person as less important than someone more beautiful or well known or wealthy. But we have not taken the time to find the treasure hidden inside that person. There is a treasure in each of us. If we take the time to get to know that person, the clay begins to peel away and the brilliant gem begins to shine forth. Let us not throw away a fortune in friendships because the gems were hidden underneath a layer of clay.



How a Seemingly Bad Luck Can Turn Out to Be a Good Luck

A Farmer and His Horse

This is a Chinese story which illustrates the "yin-yang" principle that in every bad thing is a good thing, and in every good thing a bad thing: A farmer had a mare. One day she escaped. His neighbors expressed their sympathy, "What a bad luck you have had, to lose your horse." He said, "Who knows whether this is a good thing or a bad thing." A few days later, the mare came back with a stallion. She became pregnant and had a colt. The neighbors congratulated the farmer and said, "How lucky you are. Now you have three horses!" He said, "Who knows whether this is a good thing or a bad thing." A year later, the farmer's young son tried to ride on the colt, but fell down, hurt his back and became crippled. The neighbors expressed their deep sorrow to the farmer. He said, "Who knows whether this is a good thing or a bad thing." Several years later, there was a war, and the government recruited all the able-bodied young men in the province to join the army, and most of them died. The farmer's son was spared. It is often hard to predict the long term consequences of an event. Someone asked Chou En-Lai, "Was the French revolution a good thing or a bad thing?" He replied, "It is too early to tell."

All Is to the Best

A king went hunting with his adviser. Through an accident, the king lost his thumb. His adviser told him, "It is all to the best." The king was furious, and as soon as they arrived at home, he put his adviser in jail. A month later, the king went hunting alone and moved deeper and deeper into the forest. Suddenly, he was surrounded by a group of men from a primitive tribe who seized him and wanted to sacrifice him to their god. But when they saw that his thumb was missing, they let him go, because they did not want to sacrifice an imperfect man, fearing the god would be angry. So the king was able to return home to his palace. He immediately freed his adviser and told him that he had been right after all. He profusely apologized, saying, "I should never have thrown you in jail." The adviser said, "It was all to the best." "How come?", the king asked. The adviser explained, "Because otherwise they would have sacrificed me!"

How a Loss Can Turn Into a Gain

Peter Achten was a student of history in Basel, Switzerland, and worked on his doctoral dissertation for seven years, writing many chapters and collecting a large number of documents and references. One day he went to a meeting and parked his car in front of the building. His laptop computer with his dissertation was locked in the trunk of his car. When he left the building two hours later, his car was stolen, including his laptop and--most importantly--his dissertation. There was no way he could

spend another seven years to do all that research over again. So he never achieved his life goal, to become a professor of history. Instead, he found a job as radio reporter, then as television correspondent, and became the chief correspondent of the Swiss national television network in Washington, and later in Beijing. This way, he reached nearly a million people almost daily, instead of only a few dozen in a class room once a week. What looks like a total disaster at first can sometimes turn out to be a lucky coincidence.

A Best Selling Author

Sylvia Nasar was a brilliant economics student at New York University and one of four assistants of Wassily Leontief, who had won the 1973 Nobel Prize in Economic Science for his invention of input-output analysis. Leontief asked another assistant to prepare some questions for a final exam in his course. He prepared three questions, two counting 25 percent each, and a harder one counting 50 percent. Sylvia made a little miscalculation, and got the answer to the third question wrong, which meant that she got only a score of 50%, and a poor grade in that course. The exam questions were very unfair, but this one little mistake had the consequence that she dropped out of her Ph.D. program in economics. She found a job as economics reporter for the New York Times. One of her assignments was to interview John F. Nash, the mathematician who had won the 1994 Economics Nobel Prize for his contributions to game theory, and write an article about him. She found Nash fascinating, since he

was a brilliant mathematician at a young age, then began to suffer from schizophrenia, but was largely able to control his disease through sheer intellectual strength and willpower. She wrote a book about him, "A Beautiful Mind." It became the number one bestseller and was made into a film, which won the Oscar Prize as the best film of the year 2001. Life takes unexpected twists and turns, and sometimes a sad experience may turn out for the best. If Sylvia had not made a mistake on her exam, she might never have achieved such fame.

Alfred Nobel

A newspaper editor confused Alfred Nobel with his older brother, and when his brother died, it printed an obituary, saying essentially, "It is good that Alfred Nobel has finally left this earth. By inventing dynamite, he has contributed enormously to the destructiveness of war, and has the blood of thousands of people on his hands." When Alfred Nobel read this about himself, he decided that he had to do something to improve his image. He established the Nobel Prize, which now for over a century has recognized and rewarded remarkable individuals who have contributed to a better world. Sometimes, mistakes, even lies, can have a serendipitous effect.

Smoke Signal

The only survivor of a shipwreck was washed up on a small, uninhabited island. Every day he scanned the horizon for help, but none seemed forthcoming.

Exhausted, he eventually managed to build a little hut out of driftwood to protect him from the elements, and to store his few possessions. But then one day, after scavenging for food, he arrived home to find his little hut in flames, the smoke rolling up to the sky. The worst had happened; everything was lost. Early the next day, however, he was awakened by the sound of a ship that was approaching the island. It had come to rescue him. "How did you know I was here?" asked the weary man of his rescuers. "We saw your smoke signal," they replied.

Thrust Into Freedom

A husband and wife in the city of Medellin, Colombia, had a cow on a small plot of grass land in front of their house, and they barely subsisted by feeding some of her milk to their children and selling the rest. Then the city council decided to ban farm animals within city limits, and the family was forced to sell the cow. The parents were devastated and worried how they could feed their children. They had to look for jobs, and both mother and father found well-paying jobs, and they were much better off than before, able to send their children to school. Sometimes we cling to what is familiar, and don't realize that we enjoy more freedom than we believe. Some people act like a drunk man who stood outside the city park, shaking the fence and calling, "Let me out, please let me out!"

Dare to Change

A bird barely survived in a nest on a lonely tree on a vast deserted plain. One day a storm uprooted the tree, forcing the bird to seek a new home. It flew far, and found a forest full of trees laden with fruit. Hardships can guide us to a better place.

The Oak Tree and the Reed

A mighty oak tree ridiculed the soft thin reed grass bending back and forth in the lake. "Look how strong and thick my trunk is, I don't bend in the wind, I stand my ground, while you give in to the slightest pressure." The reed grass did not respond, but knew better inside. Then came a mighty storm, and the rigid oak tree fell crashing down. But the reed grass bent down, and when the storm was over, it stood up again. There is a Chinese proverb, "In strength, there is weakness, and in weakness strength." And "Being strong does not mean that you never fall down, but that each time you fall down, you stand up again."

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