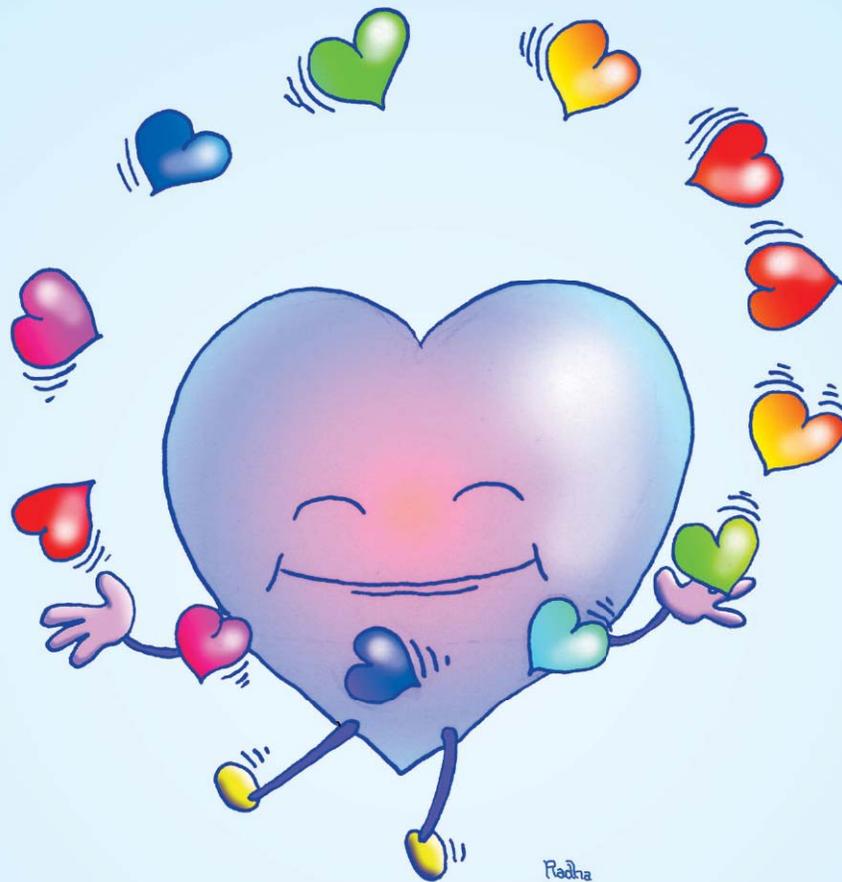


# Happiness Lessons



Every day there is only  
One thing to learn:  
How to be honestly happy.

-Sri Chinmoy

**Sri Chinmoy Centres International**

**Lessons for a Happy Life**

Adapted From

Self-Discovery Curriculum

by

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## INTRODUCTION

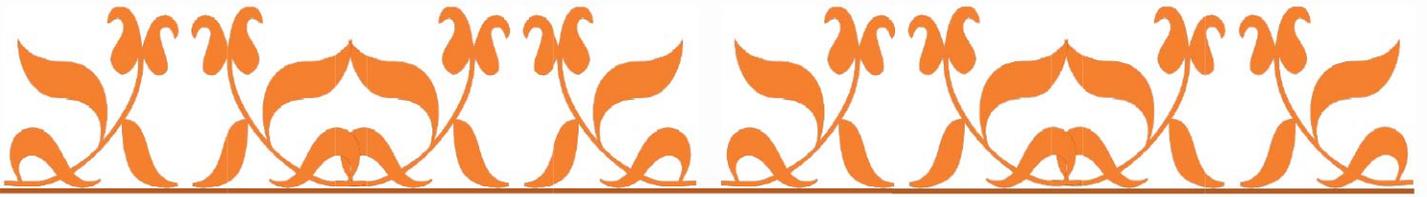
Inspired by the concept of Gross National Happiness (GNH) proposed by the Kingdom of Bhutan, an exchange project on the theme of happiness was born. “Kids to Kids International,” is a main project of the Oneness-Heart-Tears and Smiles Humanitarian Service, founded by Sri Chinmoy in 1991. Our Kids to Kids volunteers in the Sri Chinmoy Centre invited children from around the world to create artwork, as a gratitude-gift to the children of Bhutan. We then collected 300 of the paintings, and asked two of our educator-members, Prof. Harashita Sunaoshi (Japan) and Prof. Utsahi Neree St.-Armand (Canada) to deliver the drawings.

These two professors visited 3,000 Bhutanese students in schools representing primary grades to the university level. They delivered the artwork, and received in return drawings by Bhutanese children which were later offered to children in many other countries. The professors also participated in a number of related cultural activities, including large student assemblies, round-table discussions, art exhibits, and music and dance performances. As part of the larger pedagogical exchange, we also engaged in dialogues with a number of Bhutanese educators and policy-makers.

Our unique experience in Bhutan, as well as our understanding of some of the research on happiness<sup>1</sup> made us recognize the critical importance of integrating happiness into school curricula all over the world. As a result, the *Sri Chinmoy Centres International* convened a team of educators and researchers, who collaborated to develop the Happiness Lessons presented in this booklet, created to be used with grade school children, in conjunction with existing curricula.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research has shown that happiness contributes not only to the well-being of the individual, but also to improved job performance, productivity and creativity (Diener & Bishwas-Diener, 2008). One of our scholar-volunteers, Dr. Lunthita Duthely, has shown that practicing gratitude-meditation exercises significantly increased adolescent life-satisfaction and school engagement (Duthely, 2015, 2016, 2018). Thus individual happiness is good not only for its possessor but also for the society at large.

<sup>2</sup>For more details, please contact Ms. Kritagyata Nicholls, Director, The Oneness-Heart-Tears and Smiles Humanitarian Service and Kids to Kids International at: [kritagyata27@zoho.com](mailto:kritagyata27@zoho.com) or 1-646-752-1078

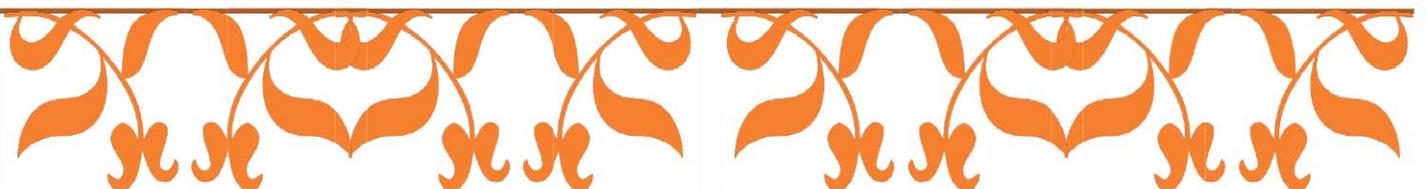


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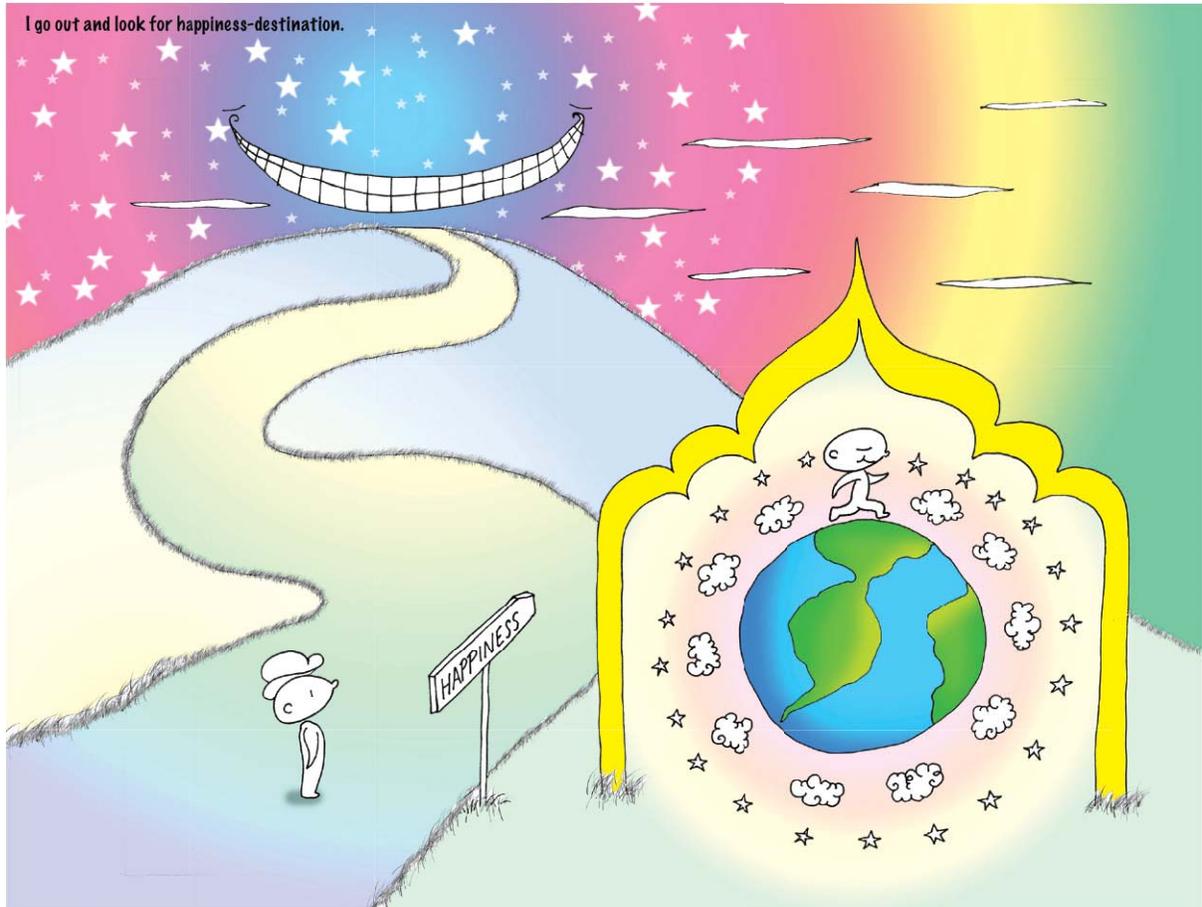
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Where is my happiness?  
It is inside my peace and nowhere else.

- Sri Chinmoy



# What Does It Mean to Be Happy?



Wherever you go,  
Carry happiness with you.

– Sri Chinmoy

## **Lesson 1: What does it mean to be happy?**

**Objective:** To help children gain an awareness of the concept of happiness and to begin to learn how to cultivate happiness in themselves.

### **Materials:**

Pencils  
Crayons or Colored pencils  
Watercolor paint and Brushes  
Art Paper

### **Introduction:**

*Children sit down in a circle for a lesson.*

This afternoon we are going to do an art project. The art project is going to be about happiness. Let's talk about things that make us happy.

For example these things might make you happy:

Eating ice cream.  
Holding a puppy.  
Hugging your mom or your dad.  
Playing with a friend.  
Doing your favorite sport.  
Collecting shells at the beach.  
Lying in the soft grass watching the clouds go by,  
feeling the warm sun on your face , the gentle breeze on your skin.

### **Discussion:**

*Let the children share after each of the following questions:*

What kinds of things might make you happy?  
What kinds of people make you happy?  
What kinds of animals make you happy?  
What kinds of places make you happy?  
What kinds of activities make you happy?  
Are you happy when you do something nice for someone?  
What about when you achieve something new or transcend yourself?

I would like to teach you a song:

I am happy when I love my friends.  
I am fulfilled when I serve my friends.  
- Sri Chinmoy

So these are all good examples of the kinds of things that make us happy. These are examples of happiness. Where do you think you feel happiness? In what part of you do you feel happiness? Even though we can feel happiness all over, we feel happiness mainly in our hearts. Would you like to see if you could feel happiness right now? Let's do an activity.

### **Activity 1**

Let's sit comfortably and make our bodies still. Just relax and take three mindful breaths. Gently close your eyes. Pay attention to your breath going in and out. Feel how calm that makes you feel. Now put your hand over your heart and imagine a warm happy feeling inside you. If you want, you can remember one thing that makes you the happiest. You can even let a smile spread on your face if you wish.

Pay attention to what this happiness feeling is like and just try to keep it in your heart for a few moments.

Now open your eyes. I am going to read you a little poem:

"Wake up, look around  
And see the blossoming  
Of a totally new world."  
-Sri Chinmoy

When we are happy it is like a whole new world is blossoming. Would anyone like to share about his or her feelings of happiness?

*Teacher leads a ten-minute discussion about what happiness feels like.*

## Activity 2

Now we are going to do an art activity about happiness. You are going to be drawing and coloring / painting your own picture of happiness. It can be a picture of one of the things you shared earlier that makes you the happiest, or you can make a picture of yourself just sitting and feeling happy.

Let me read you a few excerpts from poems by Sri Chinmoy that might give you some ideas for things you might like to draw:

*"Simply sing a melodious song."*

Draw a picture of yourself singing a song by yourself or with some of your friends.

*"Simply imagine you are in a fragrant rose garden."*

Draw a picture of yourself in a beautiful flower garden, vegetable garden, Park or Nature Center.

*"Simply imagine that you are eating the most delicious fruit."*

Draw a picture of yourself eating your favorite fruit.

*"Simply look at a dog frolicking with its master."*

Draw a picture of yourself playing with your pet, or draw a picture of an animal playing with babies.

*"Simply feel the rays of warm sunlight on your face."*

Draw a picture of yourself lying in the soft grass feeling the warm sunlight on your face.

*"Simply imagine that you are flying a kite on a bright summer's day."*

Draw a picture of yourself flying a kite in the breeze in a big open space.

*"Simply imagine you are in front of a waterfall."*

Draw a picture of yourself sitting on a rock next to a waterfall feeling the gentle spray from the waterfall on your skin.

*"Simply listen to the happy chirping of the birds."*

Draw a picture of yourself under a tree listening to the spring birds sing.

*"Simply look at the fullness of the blossoming moon."*

Draw a picture of a moonlit sky shining down on Mother Earth.

*(Taken from Sri Chinmoy's quotes on happiness)*

While you are drawing we are going to listen to some quiet and inspiring music. In order for you to really focus on your happiness drawing and put lots of feeling into it, please be silent while you are working on your drawing. Later, if you wish, there will be a time for sharing your drawings, and then we will put your happiness drawings on the bulletin board.

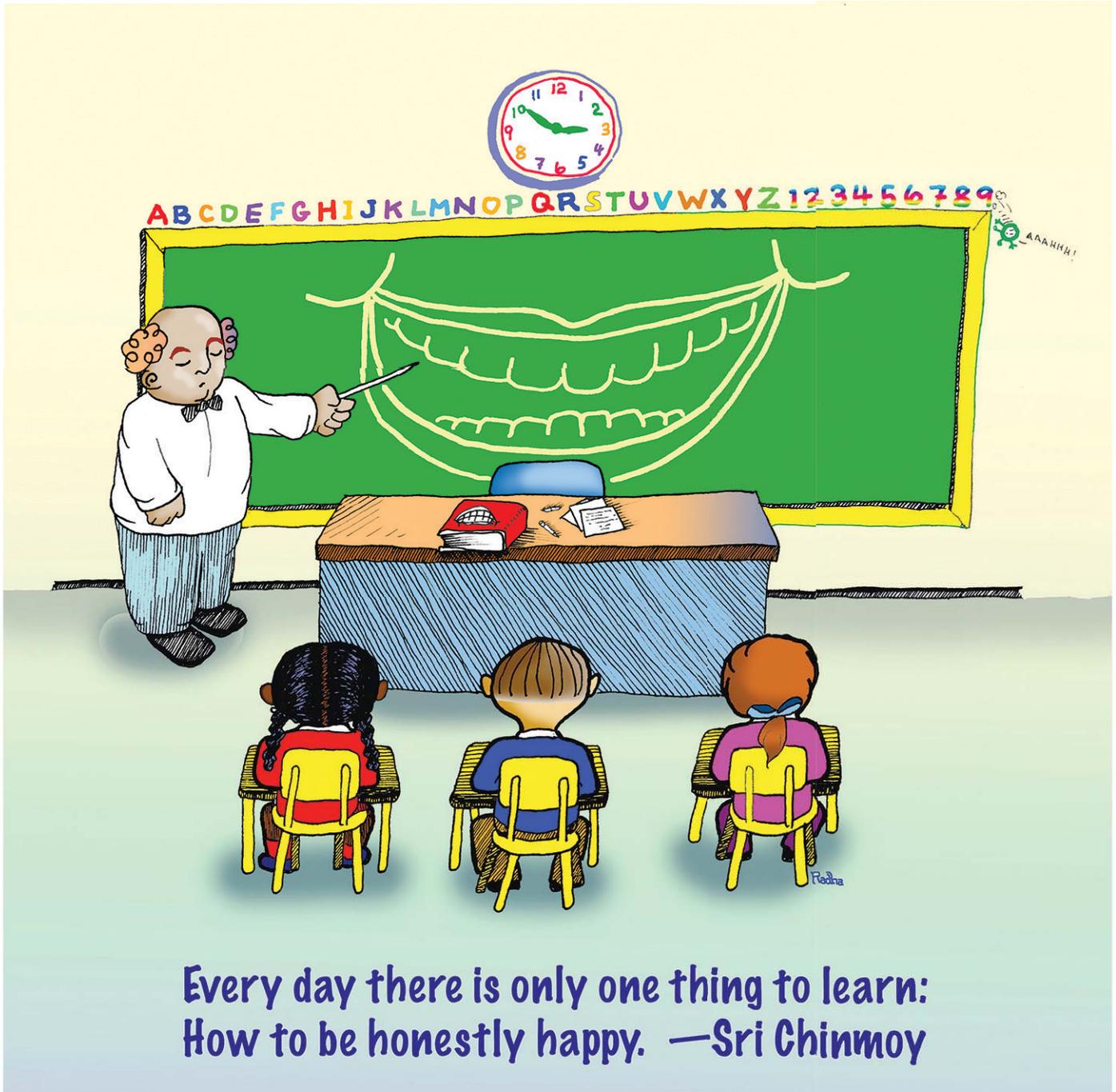
*Teacher invites the children to talk about their drawings and to share why they chose to draw what they did and describe the picture of happiness that they made. The children should only share if they choose to.*

### **Follow Up Activity**

*As a follow up activity teachers and children can make a beautiful display of the pictures on a classroom wall or hallway bulletin board.*

*"To be really free,  
We must make others happy."  
--Sri Chinmoy*

## How Can We Help Others to Be Happy?



Every day there is only one thing to learn:  
How to be honestly happy. —Sri Chinmoy

## **Lesson Two: How can we help others to be happy?**

**Objective:** To bring awareness to the child that happiness spreads from one person to the next and that there are specific things that we can do to help others find their happiness.

**Materials:** Drama props and costumes are optional  
Poster board  
Markers

### **Introduction**

*Teachers will make the following presentation to the class:*

Today we will be learning about the many ways that we can help others. After we share some ideas we will break into small groups.

Then you will have a chance to create some short drama skits about helping other people. Each skit will be very short, about two to three minutes long. As a class we will discuss each skit when it is finished. Other students will have a chance to ask questions or give comments about your skit, if they wish. When all the skits are finished we will make a poster for the class that lists all the ways that we can help others.

### **Discussion**

In what ways can we help others to be happy?

*Have the children share their ideas and then acknowledge them for sharing all the ways we can help each other.*

Now we are going to break into small groups and create some skits about the ways we can help others. Each skit will be three minutes, so I will time each group before you make your presentation to the class. Before you break into your groups, I am going to read you some excerpts from [Sri Chinmoy's poetry](#) to give you some specific ideas of what your skits can be about.

*"Simply let go of all your sadness."*

Create and act out a skit of yourself being really happy or doing your favorite thing. If you want to you can act out one showing when you are sad and the other one showing when you are happy.

*"Simply imagine there is no problem you cannot solve."*

Create and act out a skit showing how you are helping someone solve a problem.

*"Simply offer good thoughts to others."*

Create and act out a skit showing how you are encouraging someone or cheering someone up who might be feeling down.

*"Simply feel the brightness of another person's smile."*

Create and act out a skit showing someone else encouraging you or cheering you up when you are feeling down.

### **Activity 1**

Let's sit comfortably and make our bodies still. Just relax and take three mindful breaths. Gently close your eyes. Pay attention to your breath going in and out. Feel how calm that makes you feel.

As we did last time put your hand over your heart and imagine a warm happy feeling inside you. You can remember one thing that makes you the happiest. You can even let a smile spread on your face if you wish.

Now imagine that you are helping someone in one of the ways we talked about. Who is the person you are helping and in what way are you helping him/her. Now imagine how this other person is feeling when you help her/him.

Now take a breath and relax. Now imagine someone special helping you to feel happier. What is it that they are doing to make you feel happy and how does it make you feel?

*Invite the children to gently open their eyes and to share what they envisioned if they wish. After the sharing is complete then begin the activity below.*

## **Activity 2**

*Break the class into small groups. The groups prepare and practice their skits. Each group presents its skits to the class. After each skit the teacher invites the class to ask questions of the presenters or to make comments about what they liked or observed. After the comments the class makes, the teacher writes down the main point of each skit so that in the end the teacher has a list of all the main points.*

## **Follow Up Activity**

*As a follow-up activity teachers and children can make a poster using the list of positive ways we can help others. The poster can be decorated with colorful designs and can be placed in the classroom or in the hallway as a permanent reminder of today's lesson. In the days and weeks following this lesson, the teacher can refer to this poster and check in with the children to review what acts of kindness they have made that make other people happy.*

## What Would the World Look Like if Everyone Were Happy?



Wherever you go, carry happiness with you.

—Sri Chinmoy

**Lesson Three:** What would the world look like if everyone were happy?

**Objective:** To help the child be able to envision a world of happiness and to be able to understand the simple steps we can take to build that world.

**Materials:** Paper  
Pencils  
Poster boards  
Colored pencils  
Crayons  
Markers  
Colored paper  
Colored construction paper  
Colored tissue paper

**Introduction**

Who remembers the lessons we did on how to make yourself happy and how to make others happy? Today we are going to talk about what it would be like if the whole world were happy. We will have a discussion and share some ideas and then we are going to do a fun creative activity to make a recipe for a happy world.

**Discussion**

So let's start by asking the question, "What would the world look like if everyone were happy? Does anyone have any ideas?"

*Teacher lets the children share their ideas about a happy world.*

Those are all excellent ideas. We are now going to take all of those excellent ideas and turn them into a recipe for a happy world. Who can tell us what a recipe is?

*Teacher listens to the answers.*

Once we gather all of our ingredients we are going to do a collaborative art project. So before we go further let's review all of our ingredients for a happy world.

*Teacher reviews the following with the children.*

1. A world of happiness is a world without pollution. That means a world where the water, land, and air are clean and pure.
2. A world of happiness is a world where everyone is sharing and preserving the world's resources. That means that people everywhere are reducing, reusing, and recycling things like paper, glass, metals, and building materials.
3. A world of happiness is a world where people are creating new sources of energy and creating more efficient ways to use energy. This means people would be making things like solar panels, windmills, and biofuels, which are fuels from plants that do not harm the environment (earth, air, and water) when used. This also means that new sources of energy would not create carbon emissions, which affect the earth's atmosphere and create global warming.
4. A world of happiness is a world where everyone has enough nutritious food. This means that everyone in the world has enough healthy food to eat every day.
5. A world of happiness is a world where everyone has the medicine they need to be healthy. That means that people all over the world are getting the medicines they need to prevent diseases. That means that scientists are creating new medicines that are more natural and do not have side effects. It also means that people across the globe are practicing physical fitness.
6. A world of happiness is a world where farmers across the globe are using biological instead of chemical pesticides and fertilizers. That means all farmers are using natural products to prevent insects and to enrich the soil; products that are not harmful to the earth, animals or humans. This is called organic or eco friendly agriculture.
7. A world of happiness is a world where everyone is celebrating and respecting all of our differences. That means people of every race, culture and religion are appreciating and honoring people of other races, cultures and religions.

8. A world of happiness is a world where people everywhere are creating beautiful works of art. This means that people are making the world more beautiful through their artistic, musical, dramatic and literary creations.

9. A world of happiness is a world where people are cooperating and collaborating at work and at play. This means that people are working together to create projects and build things. It also means that people are valuing the ideals of teamwork and sportsmanship.

10. A world of happiness is a world where people everywhere practice silent reflection everyday so they may open their hearts and free their imaginations. This means that people are sincerely trying to become more aware of their inner selves and their connection with the rest of the world.

11. A world of happiness is a world of fair and freely elected governments. This means that people everywhere get to choose their leaders and representatives and are respectful of each others' political choices and votes.

### **Activity 1**

Let's sit comfortably and make our bodies still. Just relax and take three mindful breaths. Gently close your eyes. Pay attention to your breath going in and out. Feel how calm that makes you feel. Now put your hand over your heart and imagine a warm happy feeling inside you. If you want, you can remember one thing that makes you the happiest. You can even let a smile spread on your face if you wish. Now remember one thing you did to make someone else happy and try to remember how this made him or her feel. Now pause for a few breaths and relax and imagine that the whole world is celebrating in happiness. If you wish you can imagine one of the specific things that we just talked about, which were the ingredients of a happy world.

*Invite the children to gently open their eyes and to share what they envisioned if they wish. After the sharing is complete then begin the activity below.*

## **Activity 2**

We have had an excellent discussion about what the world of happiness would look like. Now we are going to do a cooperative art activity to show in pictures a world of happiness.

We are going to work together in teams of two to make a recipe for a happy world. Each team will focus on one essential ingredient that is necessary to make a happy world. The essential ingredients are made from the list of things we just discussed. I have written the ingredients on pieces of paper and have put them into this container.

Each team will pick out one ingredient. Using a poster board and art materials, each team will make a creative display of the ingredient you have picked.

For example if you have picked the ingredient of organic farming you can make a picture of people growing beautiful fresh flowers and healthy vegetables.

The materials we will be using are colored pencils, crayons, markers, colored tissue paper, colored construction paper and white paper. You may also make your display 3-D by making origami or pop-up pictures.

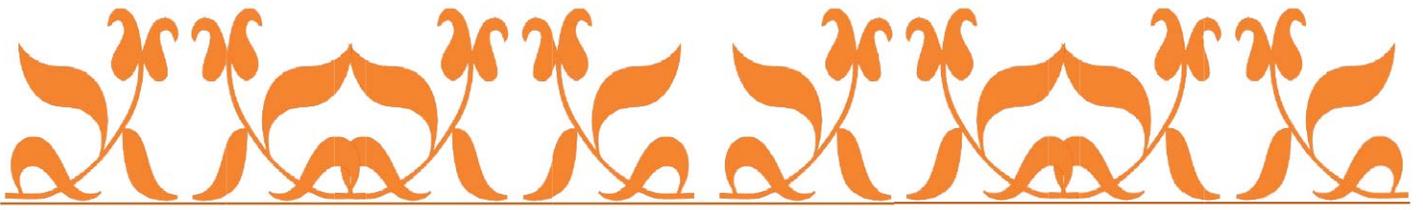
When all the teams are done with their displays we will put them all together and make one huge display on our bulletin board. Altogether our big display will be a recipe for a world of happiness.

## **Follow up activity**

*Teacher gathers all of the children in the hallway and reviews all of the ingredients on the bulletin board with them. The children can be invited to share what they like or what they observe about any of the ingredients or about the display as a whole. They can also be invited to share how it makes them feel when they look at their recipe for a happy world.*



**The inner happiness never depends  
on outer happenings. —Sri Chinmoy**



## A Selection of Happiness Poems

Do you want to be always happy?  
Then give up fighting  
For negativity  
And learn the beautiful art  
Of self-encouragement.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(*Ten Thousand Flower-Flames*, #1,120)

Happiness is my name,  
For the desire to appear right  
Has been replaced  
By the desire to be right.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(*Ten Thousand Flower-Flames*, #857)

Every day there is only  
One thing to learn:  
How to be honestly happy.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(*Ten Thousand Flower-Flames*, #6,947)

Don't act like a fool.  
Be sincere in your thoughts,  
Be pure in your feelings.  
You will not have to run after happiness.  
Happiness will run after you.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(*Ten Thousand Flower-Flames*, #1,048)

There is only one duty,  
And that duty is to live happily.  
To live happily  
What we need is a child's heart  
And a saint's life.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(*Ten Thousand Flower-Flames*, #1,081)

Where  
Is my happiness?  
It is inside my peace  
And nowhere else.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(*Twenty-Seven Thousand Aspiration-Plants*, #6,439)

You follow  
Your heart's love.  
Your life's happiness  
Will follow you.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(*Twenty-Seven Thousand Aspiration-Plants*, #8,300)

Spread happiness  
Wherever you go.  
Become fullness  
Wherever you are.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(*Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees*, #20,007)

Do not allow circumstances  
To frighten you.  
Do not allow situations  
To torture you.  
Look beyond the appearances.  
Yours will be  
The unmistakable happiness.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(*Ten Thousand Flower-Flames*, #1,880)

Your own sincere search  
For yourself  
Will become a synonym  
For perfection-happiness.

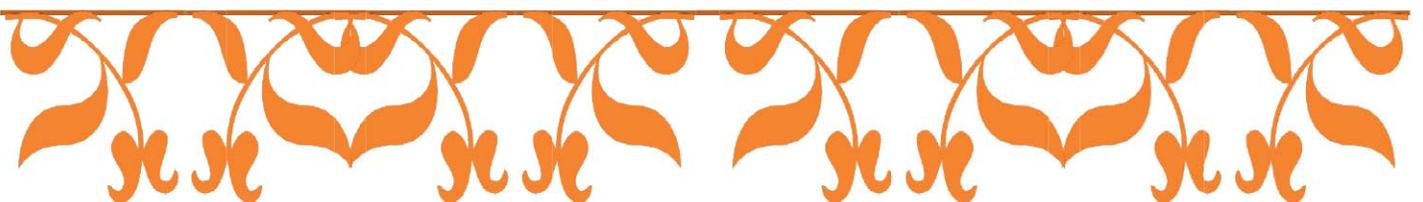
— Sri Chinmoy  
(*Twenty-Seven Thousand Aspiration-Plants*, #784)

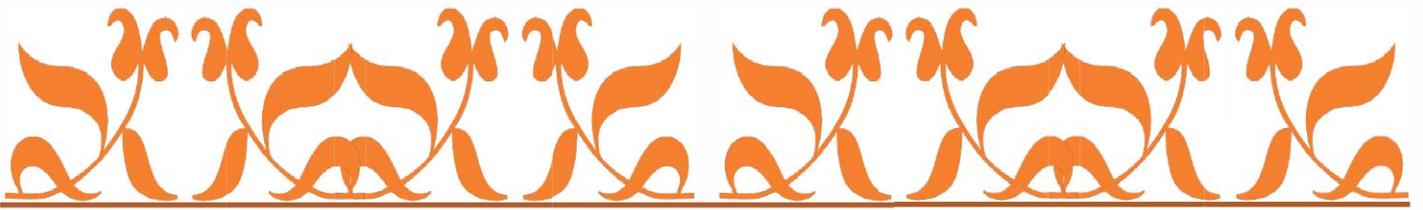
Happiness  
Is of supreme importance.  
When I am really happy,  
I have no time  
To find fault with others.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(*Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees*, #12,081)

Perfect happiness is  
Enthusiasm minus  
Expectation.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(*The God of the Mind*, #22)





Enjoy your happiness-moments  
And do not advertise  
Your troubles.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees, #20,454)

Happiness shared  
Is  
Maximised.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees, #21,863)

Happiness  
Is the beginning  
Of self-confidence.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees, #22,021)

To be happy,  
Do not try to understand  
The world.  
But try to be useful  
To the world.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees, #21,339)

There is only one time  
To be happy,  
And that time  
Is now!

— Sri Chinmoy  
(Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees, #21,963)

Do not compare  
If you want to be happy  
Do not blame  
If you want to be happy!

— Sri Chinmoy  
(Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees, #21,305)

The time to be really happy  
Is now,  
Here at the very place  
Where you are.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees, #21,811)

Friendship is the soil  
Where happiness proudly  
Grows.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(excerpt from Friendship)

A heart of compassion  
Is the real possessor  
Of happiness.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees, #27,174)

When I share  
My happiness,  
I multiply it.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees, #29,109)

The inner happiness  
Never depends on  
Outer happenings.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees, #28,515)

Happiness grows  
In the fertile soil  
Of love.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees, #28,669)

A happiness-heart  
Knows how to blend  
And how to bend  
At any time.

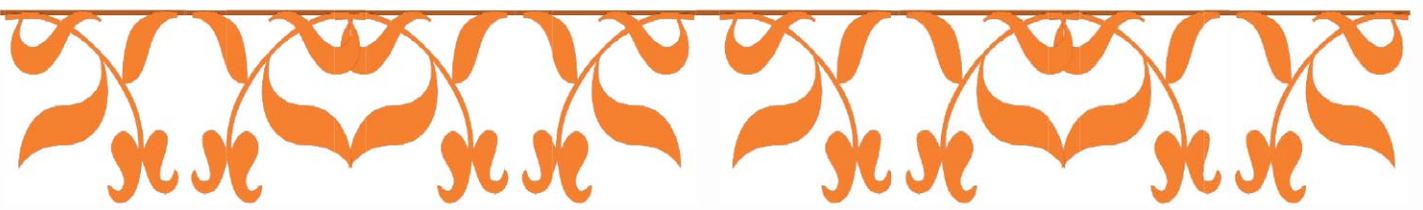
— Sri Chinmoy  
(Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees, #29,507)

A heart of sympathy  
Is a life of happiness,  
Indeed.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees, #32,457)

The power of happiness  
Knows no bounds.

— Sri Chinmoy  
(Seventy-Seven Thousand Service-Trees, #33,739)



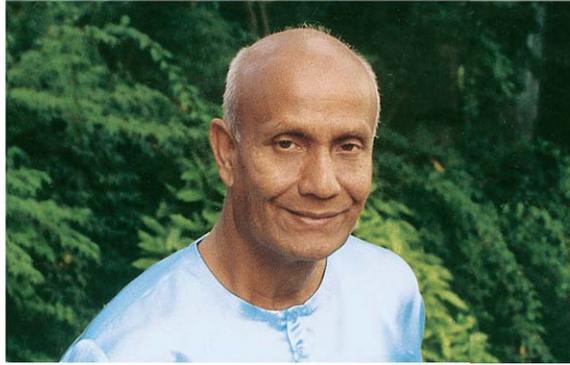


PHOTO BY RANJANA

Sri Chinmoy, Poet and Author

### **Sri Chinmoy** – Biographical Note

SRI CHINMOY (1931-2007), author of *A Child's Heart and a Child's Dream*, *The Jewels of Happiness: Inspiration and Wisdom to Guide Your Life-Journey*, and hundreds of other books, was born in Bengal, [British Commonwealth] India. From 1944-1964 he lived in the French pocket of Pondicherry, studying various disciplines, and in 1964 made his home in New York City. Sri Chinmoy travelled the world extensively and lectured at hundreds of universities, including Harvard, Cambridge, Princeton, Yale, Stanford, Columbia, Oxford, Tokyo and Brown.

Interwoven throughout the tapestry of his creative life has always been a profound appreciation and reverence for world-unity, expressed through his poetry, prose and music, and his millions of peace-bird drawings. Sri Chinmoy's hope was to inspire oneness, harmony, and happiness for each individual, so that they, themselves, would be inspired to spread these ideals to the world at large. These themes are recurrent throughout all of his creative endeavours, be it through art, poetry, music, lecture, cultural performance, or sponsoring sporting events.

Respectfully yours,

Ranjana K. Ghose  
Sri Chinmoy Centres International

