Rhythm Sounds (Prerequisite of the Peace Ambassador Movement)

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Abstract

Rhythm Sounds, a proven artistic initiative works with diverse populations from age eight to adult with its primary focus being middle school students. Involving theater and leadership training, this initiative utilizes language (poetry) and peace as effective catalysts for developing cognitive, emotional, and social skills by innovatively stirring the inner voice of participants garnering artistic awakening and cultural inclusion, with the opportunity for piloting a new paradigm of leading. By establishing a universally responsive design for learning, which works instinctively as a foundation, participant’s results typically surpass their expectations. Inclusiveness initiates successful program implementation and is easily replicated by other Artists. Rhythm Sounds is a prerequisite for participating in the Peace Ambassador Movement.
Communication

“One of the hardest things in life is having words in your heart that you can’t utter.”

James Earl Jones

There are too many young leaders who are ready to shine, who are anxiously waiting the opportunity to be cultivated to create a new paradigm that is inclusive of peace. Rhythm Sounds is an artistic initiative available to assist young seekers with being successful. Utilizing poetry, peace, and literacy as the foundation, Rhythm Sounds empowers youth to express their peace through writing original peace poetry and fine-tuning it through classroom presentations. Everyone can relate to being younger and not being heard. Possibly it was having a soft voice at a gathering; not being noticed in a crowd, or maybe even being told not to speak during adult conversations. Knowing you had something of value to say the only desire within was to be heard. Remembering, allow yourself to relate. Some need to speak to release pain; others may have a specific something to talk about. Whatever the case may be, guidance is key to assisting our youth with recognizing their internal dialog and developing their ability to achieve this inner expressions optimal release. Without judgment, with a theme as a guide and encouragement to empower, youth speak their peace, while simultaneously achieving release of their inner voice.

When looking at leaders and their accomplishments, it is fairly easy to recognize the steps taken which lead from one point to another. Their past provides information of pivotal points in their lives, which designated periods of opened pathways. At crossroads leaders choose the progressive path. Somehow this choice is the initiating catalyst for affecting change. This ability to ignite fire of desire, where does it begin? It
would seem some are born adults; the way children are being treated. Childhood, is it a
time of long ago memories? So long ago that it is almost an abstract experience in
some of our minds? With schools closing, teachers being fired, the no child left behind
experiment, and who knows what else; are we expecting leaders to emerge from the
crop? We forget that life is set up for us to grow into awareness of our desires from the
experiences of when we are young. Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., and Mother
Theresa, were all children once. Imagine if there had been a platform available for them
to speak during their younger years. Would they have affected the world earlier?

Art power

“The expressive arts encourage students to learn and create from a position of
personal power.” Alice Lovelace

Frustration can manifest from pent up feelings, an experience which can occur from not
speaking from the heart. The key to passion is speaking or acting upon that which
touches inside fervently; relentlessly demanding resolution, for Martin Luther King Jr.
and Gandhi it was peace, for Hitler it was war or domination. No matter the direction,
the key to igniting the motivation is passion. Youth take in the world from an innocent
perspective deciding along the way what steps to take. Listening to guidance, observing
others actions and trusting their intuition, they learn. There are small portions that know
early on in life what they are born to do. Most people figure it out along the way. This
process experienced through childhood on, is what is seeking cultivation.

Children have at numerous times been used as solders of war. It is easy when
the wonder of life sits beckoning youth into its fold. Wonder and excitement go hand and
hand, the ability to discern does not take precedence over adventure. Uninterested in
discerning when excitement looms in the midst, youth become easy prey for coercing if a solid foundation of loving, positive guidance had not yet occurred. Ideas do at times come overnight. Even then it would be surprising to find there was not some sort of childhood influence that acted as a catalyst. Especially when it comes to movements or passions of the heart. Gandhi’s great grandson, Tushar would like to see a film that includes Gandhi’s childhood. (Kher, Jan 2010).

Art is struggling to stay alive in the education system. Apparently some leaders do not believe in its value. The funny thing is all leaders no matter their background, where they live, or how long they have lived on this planet; were once children. And they had ideas. These creative ideas worked for them, opening doorways allowing them to become our leaders.

**The process**

Rhythm Sounds provides an arena for pent up emotions to be released. Original peace poetry is written, students recite in front of the class. Each peace is discussed with feedback from their classmates and one on one with the instructor. When the poems are close to being polished, body language and articulation become part of the process. This inclusive endeavor emphasizes the importance of peace on the planet becoming a reality and the opportunity for everyone to play a part in the manifestation of this vision. Allowing the soft spoken, the bragger, the sneak and the leader to share the same space, express their selves and communicate in a safe environment, while working on a project together, allows the ability to see another in a new light. The Rhythm Sounds process uses the art of expression, collaboration, cultivation, and basic leadership training from the perspective of peace as forms of letting go and to
move forward positively. Rhythm Sounds is a project of The Creators Gift 137, (CG137) whose research has shown that even the resistant will willingly write on peace if guided to do so properly. In one particular fieldwork experience a sub group of five students rebelled against participation in the Rhythm Sounds process, seeing no value in it. After hearing a live professional performance and seeing the interest of the rest of the class, (along with permission to write humorously), all participated except for one.

Accepting the invitation to join the group, meant agreeance to the rules. Joining the group meant socializing with other classmates in a cordial, respectable manner and participating in the process fully to garner acceptable results. The prize at the end? Speaking freely with the only guideline being for it to be connected to peace.

**What is peace?**

On the Internet the word peace is often connected to the opposite of war. In many cases that concept is true. Albert Einstein stated, "I would teach peace rather than war, love rather than hate.” He did not say I would teach peace to get rid of war or love to get rid of hate. Meditation, the art of reaching within, is one way to access the silence within, or inner peace, Rhythm Sounds is another. The silence is our core essence. When the clutter is moved aside, peace resides. To teach peace, to teach love, is to teach the discovery of what lies within us naturally. Speaking, letting go of what is held inside is to clear the clutter and access the inner peace waiting to be called to the consciousness.

A child can play with others, get angry, and in the next second want to play again, their emotions are not held in. They can fall down, get hurt, cry, and while all this is going on, they remember the desire for a hug. If the right friend comes by, or the ice
cream truck song is heard, the pain is forgotten. A child can look in your eyes and instantly fill you with love. They do not hold emotions in; they let their insides flow. As time moves forward, children are exposed to various types of behavior or recognize the attention they receive if they get hurt or the attention received from anger. Perspectives begin to change. In a daycare center, CG137 was working with preschoolers having to reprimand one particular student excessively more than others everyday, in front of the class. One day three of the most obedient students in the class gave it a try and acted out to receive attention. It was a wake up call on the confusion of love and to properly it.

Fine-tuning

These experiences depending upon how they are cultivated manifest as builders or as inhibitors. To teach peace with discussion is to inhibit the escalation of violence before it has a chance to take full hold. In some countries children are not allowed to have a childhood. “Children formed over 70% of combatants in Liberia during the war” (Jones, 05). Children are empty vessels waiting to be filled with what they are exposed to. Learning by interaction, observation, and participation, proper guidance is imperative for a child to be molded into a progressively productive participant of society.

Rhythm Sounds; by teaching the peace poetry process, provides exposure to a thought method varying from the accepted social media of the world. To express peace, one must think of peace. To think of peace one must decide what peace is to them. To decide peace one must get to know peace. Getting to know peace is getting to know one’s core self. This decision by youth on the value of peace in their lives is where the molding begins. Teaching peace is not telling: of a thing, how to be, or what to do, it is a guide to the uncovering of what resides within. It is knowing there is an aspect of self
that is peace within. This process can awaken a sense of self and global responsibility, as when one feels their value, they know they matter; knowing they matter, there is now an existing guide of what mattering feels like. Making it easier to recognize others matter also. If others matter, awareness that others deserve to be respected too emerges into one’s consciousness. Value recognition opens the doorway for a collaborative perspective to seep into realization. Appreciation develops from recognition, which can be a sedge way for appreciation to connect with other emotions, allowing eyes to see in a new light. Similar to how a newborn brings a family together, or the near loss of someone dear brings the undeniable importance of their existence into view. All avenues are actually allowing growth. For with emotional awakening a foundation begins to take hold. The foundation comes into existence with the releasing of clutter, which allows the peace within to be consciously felt. This foundation becomes the core for guidance when making decisions. Once a core is designated, if influences from other directions come into the arena, it is compared upon the core value developed from within, first. The power of choice now has something to go by. A standard has been set and persuasion is not so easily effective.

**The movement**

The Creators Gift 137 is not presenting a new idea; it is a fine tuned concept that fits into the train of thoughts of others who also care about our youth. The Institute for Community Leadership offers a Leadership-Poetry Workshop to provide tools to “engage students in a vision setting process designed to create a photo in the mind’s eye of how the world--and nation, community and school-- ought to be. Students then develop the capacity to change themselves and change others to bring about that
vision.” CG137 studies have revealed that once a child is exposed to peace thinking in an expressive manner and realize it is something they can do, they appear to be happier and more motivated to be positive thinkers knowing their voices are heard by someone.

**The beauty of children**

"*If we do not teach our children peace, someone else will teach them violence.*"

Coleman McCarthy

If there are a group of people in a room and they are instructed to think of war; every one will think of a war. Not the same war, but a war nonetheless will definitely come to mind. Take the same set of people, this time they are instructed to think of peace. Do this yourself with a group and see what comes to mind. There will probably not be a general consensus of what peace is. Just like the aforementioned group, instructed to think of peace, who knows what they will think of? Will they think of peace of mind, no war, sitting by a stream, meditation, who knows? We know what war is, peace is an abstract idea. There does not appear to be an agreed upon definition of the word peace. How can we manifest something if we are unclear of what it is?

**Do we know?**

There is a movie and a book called the Secret. Both are based on Rhonda Byrne’s discovery of a law that prophets, and healers have used for centuries. The foundation of this law is that what is focused on is manifested. For instance in the winter when commercials come on speaking of the flu season, a lot of people get the flu. The news shows all the crimes of the day. War is practically an everyday occurrence somewhere on the planet. Death is another, always allowed to grace our presence
through the media. Exposure to these thought patterns on a daily basis cannot help but affect one perspective into a fear based mode. The Secret expresses the ability to manifest what is desired and what is not desired, all due to focus. This may sound odd or improbable until taking time to question. Why are we bombarded with so much negativity? When will peace be addressed as a possibility by mainstream media? It is in many conversations throughout the world and we do want it. At least some of us do.

Questions. Questions. The trick is to be able to think of things without giving them an emotional charge, to put one’s emotional charge on the thoughts of manifesting peace. For instance how many people know of the group Transcendental Meditation which occurred in Washington, D. C. in 1993 that resulted in a documented reduce in crime, where they were? (Hagelin). These paths are in collaboration with the process of Rhythm Sounds.

**Assisting the shift**

Now imagine youth spread out in various areas with a concise understanding of peace. Imaging them sharing their knowledge with every opportunity. Imagine other people getting it and peace starting to emerge comfortably in the media, in random conversations everyday. Eventually peace will be out in the open as much as war is. And possibly, maybe we will see a consciousness shift from war to peace. Maybe just as the U.S. has made presidential history, perhaps the world will have peace history.

The beauty of youth is incomparable. They know not and still move forward. When youth are instructed to speak on peace, what will come next is unpredictable. One child reluctant initially started his poem with ‘Life ain’t funny, it really ain’t funny....” His piece was so engaging the whole class memorized it without effort. Cultivation is assisting him
with recognition of that persuasive power innately residing. When the understanding that the ability they are reaching for is within them already, confidence exudes from their pores. Our reward, their eyes sparkle and a sense of value is undeniably felt from their presence. The degrees of ownership of these feelings differ from participant to participant. The displaying factors are usually subtle; CG137 has seen evidence varying from taking pride in their attire, to being so involved that excitingly they had to share their creative abilities with others, which prior to weren’t mentioned to anyone else. In the song by Whitney Houston are the words “I believe the children are our future, teach them well and let them lead the way.” In these times of - Nationally, suicide is the 3rd leading cause of death among young people 15 to 24 years of age, taking more than 12 of every 100,000 American young people. (National Institute of Mental Health) -mentally stimulating activities engage youth and awaken a desire to think, do more, and communicate with others.

**Technological future**

Technology is moving at an amazing rate. Few realize the computers we know today have only been around for a little over ten years. Interesting information, and in that short period, we have online learning on the university level and hybrid (online and traditional) learning for K-12. Technologically we excel while peace is still elusive. Rhythm Sounds is easily adaptable to the evolving speed of technology. Being poetry based, it is a process where no matter the platform one must still reach within and tap their creative juices to write a poem. When guidelines are attached to the writing process, along with originality, the challenge is defined and responsibility is taken on. Add a timeline to the equation and the creative game becomes more intense. Students
using online courses rose to more than a million students according to the Sloan Consortium. It appears online learning is here to stay.

**Adaptation**

“Study reveals less literacy exposure results in a decline in students reading scores, which also affects math and science skills.” (Rich, 07)

Reading is fundamental, without it no other subject can be approached on a serious basis. Without reading skills, comprehensions skills lack development. Limited literacy development leads to an inability to express what truly lies within in relation to how it is felt. In other words expressing properly painted passion can be a frustrating experience if one is not capable of finding the terminology lingering, waiting to be set free. Sadly, unnecessarily, inhibition can lead to frustration, which can lead to anger. School shootings, suicides, murders, wouldn’t it be interesting to notice youth violence diminishing and that it stems from a peace poetry project?

More interesting would be seeing the top participants being invited to continue on to participate in Peace Ambassador Movement training. This invite would be for youth to actively become leaders and represent The Creators Gift 137, as Peace Ambassadors, available to provide presentations on peace. Once completing and graduating from the training occurs, the graduate would receive a certificate serving as proof of the their position. At that point working for a stipend, representing peace, youth would assist with making peace an everyday presence in the lives of those exposed to them. This has been stated so perfectly, there is no need to attempt to say it better: And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we
are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.” Marianne Williamson

**Conclusion**

There is much turmoil occurring on the planet. War, our youth, the economy, etc. are part of our everyday existence, either physically or in our minds. It is time for change. Adults aren’t as readily received as youth are. Rhythm Sounds is an opportunity for youth to become more in tune with their selves and release limitations, allowing their inner voice a chance to be free. The opportunity is available for our youth to step to the platform and to begin training of preparing to walk their path as leaders, to be peacefully powerful and assist with bringing peace to the planet.

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