



The Virtues Project

Everywhere our youth are killing themselves and each other. They don't know why they are here and what they can be doing. When children who murder other children are asked; why? They say, "I don't know. Why not? I'm bored." This means that they have no meaning in their lives. Their lives are not carved out with a passion, a commitment to create something good here.

The Virtues Project was born out of a desire to do something about the rising violence in and around families. Three people Linda Popov, a psychotherapist and spiritual director for hospice, Dan Popov, a child psycholo-

gist and researcher of sacred texts, and John Kavelin, her brother, a Disney art director, all met in the Princess Hotel one rainy afternoon. Her brother agreed to quit his job, sell his house and move to Saltspring Island, British Columbia with Dan and Linda. This project began with Dan's search in the world's sacred text. It soon became evident that the virtues were the thread of unity throughout all religions. They began compiling all the virtues and related information and came up with over three hundred.

They decided to start with fifty-two that were clearly universal to all religions.

Each of these was then carefully and simply defined beginning with a quote from one of the sacred texts and ending with an affirmation. This became the basis for the book called The Family Virtues Guide, Simple Ways to Bring Out the Best in Children. They then took the best strategies from psychology regarding parenting and communication combined this with the virtues to create a simple, straight forward, dynamic training.

The Virtues are gifts within, the content of our character, they are the stuff from which self-esteem is created. When we are responsible, loving, honest,

persistent, joyful, etc., we have a solid foundation for self-esteem. This unique Project has become so successful that people are applying it to all matter situations. The Popov's have traveled throughout the world bringing awareness of the power of the virtues to people of many cultures, from a multi-faith, multicultural perspective. They have seen transformation in the lives of individuals, cor-

porations, families and communities.

The Virtues Project trainings are packed with inspirational knowledge and skill practice. Participants learn to remind themselves to continually honor one another by giving virtue's acknowledgement; they come away with a new understanding of boundaries and the skill of using virtues to establish good boundaries. And best of all they learn to

encourage moral decision making by using deep listening, asking "cup emptying" questions and acknowledging virtues helping others find their own truth in the context of virtues.

The next training will be given by Barbara Waldron LCSW, Virtues Project Facilitator, on Saturday, January 30 and Sunday, January 3, from 9-4 at the Teacher's Space. Call Barbara at 503/285-4663.

The Do Something Kindness and Justice Challenge

By MARTIN LUTHER KING III

On behalf of the King family, I want to invite teachers and students across the nation to participate in the 1999 Do Something Kindness & Justice Challenge, an innovative school-based leadership program that encourages students to perform Acts of Kindness (helping others) and Justice (standing up for what is right) for the two weeks following the Martin Luther King, Jr. National Holiday (January 18-29, 1999).

The Kindness & Justice Challenge is being sponsored by the national non-profit organization Do Something, which has developed an engaging classroom curriculum to teach young people the important values of responsibility, compassion, generosity, respect, tolerance, honesty and moral courage while encouraging students to put these lessons into practice by

performing Acts of Kindness and Justice in the real world.

Last year, students from more than 14,000 schools in all fifty states performed more than 500,000 acts of kindness and justice. Kariel, age 9, stopped a fight between two of her classmates. Carla, age 10, visited a senior citizens center and sang songs to the residents who live there. Khadijah, age 12, stood up for a friend who was being teased by others.

Every school in the nation - kindergarten through high school - can participate in the Do Something Kindness & Justice Challenge. Students simply write down the Acts of Kindness and Justice they perform and each school will post their acts on the Internet. After the challenge, students and schools that have done the most Acts in each state and in the nation will receive recognition.

Teachers can register for the 1999 Kindness & Justice Challenge on the

Internet at www.dosomething.org or by writing or calling Do Something at 423 West 55th Street, 8th Floor, New York, New York 10019 (Attention: Kindness & Justice Challenge) 212/523-1175. Each teacher who registers will receive a free Educator Guide with an age-appropriate curriculum, instructions for keeping track of students' Acts of Kindness and Justice and incentives to encourage student participation.

If students can commit to one day of kindness and justice, they can commit to a week a kindness and justice - a week becomes a year, a year a lifetime.

Like my father, I believe in the power of young people to change the world. Through the Do Something Kindness & Justice Challenge, young people can put into practice the ideals to which my father devoted his life. Together, we will keep his dream of equality and justice alive.

"Education in our time should aim at nothing less than the renewal of wisdom, the rebirth of gratitude, and the recovery of a sense of beauty large enough to embrace both esthetics and justice."

- David Opp

GREGORY P. OLIVEROS

"When evil men shout ugly words of hatred, good men must commit themselves to the glories of love. Where evil men would seek to perpetuate an unjust status quo, good men must seek to bring into being a real order of justice."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

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The Portland Observer Honors This Special Day of The Year!

Happy Birthday Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



"I have a dream..."

He had the **power** of a vision.

We honor the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The dreams of courageous people have endured through generations.

Now it is our turn to make a difference for the future of our community.

Experience your power in the new millennium.

THE POWER OF
2000
KATU PORTLAND