

The extension of this personal intention into community has resulted in the creation of these workshops focusing on our underlying unity while honouring individual differences. The mandala presents a means of using conflict resolution in a non-violent atmosphere.

FULL CIRCLE MANDALA PROJECT

Proposal

When we examine a situation that works well, it is safe to say that it is usually one that works on all levels, is inclusive and brings aspects of ourselves, or different people together in a positive way. The word health and holiness all have their root in wholeness. This is where the mandala comes in.

Here are some of the issues I would like to address;

The pyramidal structure inherent in the one principal- lots of say- some teachers, some say, and many students- not much say.

This structure poses its problems in that the students, and sometimes teachers, often feel disempowered. The principal (and the board!) is overburdened with decision making processes without direct input. Whenever in history we have an imbalance of power, there is war to offset this. When the students try to set this balance right, it is punished and all sides are understandably upset. When the teachers or others try to give the students more power- they are not used to it and chaos breaks out. Unfortunately- this conflict is never resolved- and hence the power struggle in the classroom. Peace happens when all sides are taken into consideration, and no one feels left out or disempowered. The mandala addresses this issue by having all aspects included.

Here is how the mandala project can address this:

Beginning by meeting with students -where they are given questionnaires and asked to discuss what they think would make their classroom more peaceful, more functional for them. This will be given to all the teachers and the principal, with no names attached unless voluntarily given. This gives them a voice that can safely be heard without repercussions.

Teachers and principals will be given similar questionnaires - on what they need for peace in their environment, and the results will be given to the students and each other. Then a communal meeting could be held to see how everyone's needs could be addressed collectively. This entire process must be done voluntarily- the teachers and principal could have this proposed first to see if they are interested. This two sections are optional- but lead to long- term solutions, especially if followed regularly.

The mandala would be created. The mandala is created with fabric crayons on paper and is ironed onto a sheet afterwards, creating a large banner. This can be done as a workshop in the morning from 9-12, depending on age and level of productivity. Some children might need to stay a bit longer to finish up...the afternoon can be spent ironing the mandala on , either with teachers or older students or parents, who can attend the workshop if they would like to participate. This involves the whole community. The principals and teachers can be asked if they would like to participate-: by creating a personal mandala that is added to the kids, by a separate teacher mandala, or by joining the kids to get to know them better on an equal basis, or by a

method of their own choosing. This can be discussed.

Possible follow-up for deciding where the mandala will be sent to, and writing notes of compassion and peace to the people to whom they are sending this to. There is also the possibility that we decide beforehand, so that the kids can do research on this country and it's situation before sending it there. Teachers could build this into their program.