

Text boxes to accompany

Peace Literacy Curriculum: Laying the Foundations

The Landscape of Our Human Needs An Allegory and Pictorial

The Ground of Self-Worth:

Think of the feeling of sturdy ground beneath your feet. This ground symbolizes a strong and stable foundation of self-worth. You feel grounded, secure, and confident.

The Orchard of Belonging:

Imagine being surrounded by trees, feeling protected, and having shade from the heat. This symbolizes belonging to a strong community. You are not alone.

The Fruit of Nurturing Relationships:

We can receive sweet and nourishing fruit from the Orchard of Belonging. We can also become a source of sweet and nourishing fruit for others. This fruit represents trust, empathy, and other forms of nurturing.

The River of Expression:

Our human need to express our emotions and thoughts is like the current of a river, which can vary in intensity depending on how we feel. Our river of expression can provide fresh water that nourishes the ground of self-worth in others and our relationships in the orchard of belonging. Our river of expression can also cause destruction through flooding and the spreading of pollution.

The Wind of Inspiration:

Healthy forms of inspiration are like a cool breeze, refreshing us during the hottest and muggiest days, helping us move forward during times of adversity. Like the Santa Ana winds in California that can spread fire, the wind of inspiration can also assume dangerous forms that spread destructive behavior. When the role models we look up to for inspiration promote harmful behavior that we emulate, this is like wind that spreads pollution, which we can inhale and internalize without even realizing it.

The Cliff of Challenge:

We cannot become stronger physically or psychologically unless we are challenged. Challenge allows us to climb toward our highest human potential.

The Peak of Purpose and Meaning:

When we ascend the peak of purpose and meaning, life becomes worth living. A purpose involves us, while a *higher* purpose not only involves us but also goes beyond us. When we stand atop a high peak of purpose and meaning, we can see the other features of the landscape from a new and more fulfilling perspective.

The Observatory of Explanations:

We start craving explanations during early childhood when we begin asking questions. Our human need for explanations is so powerful that if people do not have accurate explanations, they will come up with inaccurate explanations. These explanations form our worldview. Unlike observatories in our outer world that mostly observe our outer reality, the Observatory of Explanations in our inner world uses what it sees to help *create* our inner reality. Our explanations help create our inner reality by shaping our worldview and every feature in the landscape of our inner world.

The Sky of Transcendence:

Human beings have a need for *transcendence*, which means to transcend our sense of time, to feel a sense of timelessness, to touch and taste the eternal. Transcendence can occur when we lose our sense of time, when we are lost in the moment. There are healthy and unhealthy ways to transcend our sense of time, and transcendence can be experienced at varying depths. When we live according to our highest human ideals, this can help us transcend time in deep and healthy ways.