

# Respect Workshop

## Background

Respect is one of the most important values for human beings and is essential in all its forms. Self-respect comes first because when people don't respect themselves they don't know how to respect anything around them, whether it is other people, nature or any other form of life or relationship.

Practising the value of respect takes personal commitment and requires the individual to reflect deeply and develop a personal desire to be respectful.

The following workshops are designed to create a safe space for individuals to think about themselves regarding their attitude towards a) respect for themselves as well as b) respect for the environment.

## Food for Thought:

- *When you are content to be simply yourself and don't compare or compete, everybody will respect you*  
— Lao Tzu
- *When we show our respect for other living things, they respond with respect for us*  
— Native American Proverb / Arapaho

## Workshop 1: (75 mins duration)

1. With background music playing, slowly read these two quotes to the participants and ask them to reflect on them. Ask them to remember circumstances or stories in their lives where they had that experience. Introduce themselves to each other and share with neighbours (10 mins).

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2. With background music playing, slowly ask participants to remember an experience where they felt respectful towards their own self, a moment when their self-esteem was really strong and reflect on the kind of attitude and behaviour it produced in them. Then ask participants to share what they remembered with a different group member. (15 mins)
3. Ask the participants to stay where they are and remember a moment in their lives when they had genuine feelings of respect for others. Then share what they remembered with another neighbour. (15 mins)
4. Ask the participants to stay where they are and remember a moment in their lives when they had this genuine feeling of being respected by others. Remember these circumstances and share with the group the circumstances and feelings it produced. (15 mins)
5. The facilitator could conclude by discussing the role played by respect in one's life and in a community or a family. Illustrating how respect is what everyone craves for and how much relationships improve when one learns the art of genuinely giving respect. (10 mins)
6. Finalise by conducting a visualization (see following sample) where you encourage people to imagine the response of people and nature if we were always respectful as individuals and as a human family. (10 mins)

## Workshop 2: (150 mins duration)

### Exercise 1: (35 mins)

1. Welcome (5 mins)
2. Ask the participants to close their eyes for a few minutes and then visualize a natural environment conducive to calm and well-being e.g. on a river side, or at the seashore. Then ask them look at our blue planet from space 'at a distance' and enjoy its beauty (5 mins).  
For English speaking audience you can play song track "[From A Distance](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bXOgn8-aEaA)"

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Then ask them: *What are the 3 main qualities of our planet Earth?*

Think of 1–2 examples to illustrate your ideas. (5 mins)

3. Share your vision with your neighbour. (10 mins)
4. Appoint someone could write these qualities on a board. Share the different qualities in the plenary. (10 mins)

### Exercise 2: (45 mins)

1. Play background ambient music and take the participants back to the experience of visualizing our planet and tell them: *If the Earth, or climate could talk, they probably would have quite a bit to communicate to human beings.* (5 mins)
2. Ask participants to write a letter imagining that the Earth or an element (fire, water, wind, air etc) is writing to human beings. Each one should try to 'feel' the message and wisdom that the Earth would want to share with us.
3. Play some ambient music whilst participants are writing. (10 mins)
4. Ask participants to read their letter in groups of three. (15 mins)
5. Then ask participants to come back to the plenary and share the essence of what they have experienced. (15 mins)

### Exercise 3: (70 mins)

1. Now that each participant has 'linked' with the wisdom of our Universe, the facilitator can ask them to question their own attitudes towards the environment. In a peaceful atmosphere, with music, speak out loud *"Now I am looking at myself in my everyday life and watch my attitudes, behaviour and efforts to help and protect the environment"*. (5 mins)
2. Ask participants to identify (and write down) three habits they have which contribute to the protection of environment and ask them to write them down. (10 mins)
3. Then identify (and write down) three habits they have which are not environmentally-friendly and could be improved quite easily. (10 mins)
4. Organize the participants in groups of four. Firstly, ask them to share the three habits that they will improve. Then, each group has to create a chart for the protection of environment that each member of the group will commit himself/herself to put into practice in daily life. (20 mins)
5. Each group can read their own chart out loud in the plenary session. (15 mins)
6. One volunteer per group to email (or post) a copy of the groups' notes to all group members within 3-4 days so as to remind them of what they committed themselves to change. (This activity could also be something that was sent to the BKs who had registered people's commitments and entered into a database).

7. Conclusions (10 mins)

**Visualisation about Respect**

The facilitator can ask the participants to seat in a relaxed manner and play gentle ambient music and start speaking in a soft (but audible) voice.

*...“I sit peacefully and allow my mind to rest and send also to my body cool and soft vibrations. By doing so, I am giving myself the energy of respect. Respect is soothing, caring, and healing energy that restores higher self-esteem and ensures positive and good relationships with others. Everyone needs and wants to be respected. I can remember in my childhood, youth and adulthood how much I have needed to be respected by others. In this peaceful solitude, I bestow respect on myself with a generous and big heart. Each one of us possesses an amazing potential and the more we give respect to these capacities, to the virtues in ourselves, the more we allow them to develop and be useful to us in our life. From this inner state, I can see in others the same capacities and potential that await to express themselves and I extend towards the people that accompany me in my life whether at home, at work in a family or a community of a whole wide world, this soothing and loving energy and outlook. I can visualize the darkness of lack of self-esteem and criticism and fear dissolving in the rays of these vibrations allowing the people to stand in their beauty and dignity. Like an elegant rose...*