Personal Responsibility workshop 1: *a creative workshop*

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

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Aim: to engage people in a reflective process to deepen their feelings of personal responsibility for the Earth and generate optimism and hope about the future.
Duration: three hours including a 15 min break

Step one: Introduction of the concept of responsibility

'*I must do something' always solves more problems than 'Something must be done'.* ~Author Unknown
A man sooner or later discovers that he is the master-gardener of his soul, the director of his life. ~James Allen

Step two: Personal reflection on Question 1
   (a) Read the following sentence slowly allowing time for people to reflect and write (5 min)

     Stay still for a moment and remember a moment when you created something beautiful whether a meal or a party atmosphere or any other thing… Remember all details, the day, the company, the impact it had … What kind of inner position, outlook or feelings does it take to create that kind of initiative?

   (b) Conduct three rounds of Global Café (ask people to sit in groups of 4 or 5 and share their memories and answers to this question in groups of three or four (depending on the total number in the group). Allow 10 min for each round (30 min)

Step three: Personal reflection on Question 2
   (c) Read the following question slowly allowing time for people to reflect and write (5 min)
     What does it take to take responsibility to create and influence the environment around me?
     How do other people feel when we take the initiative and make a difference?

   (d) Conduct two rounds of Global Café (20 min), then
   (e) Whole group sits in the round for open sharing and discussion of the ideas from the Global Café with 20 mins discussions.

Step four: Whole group discussion on Question 3 (20 min)
   (f) Read this question slowly allowing time for people to reflect and write (5 min)
     What preparations do we each need to make now in order to fulfill our personal responsibilities?

   (g) While each participant shares Facilitator or note taker captures the *Personal Responsibility* ideas on a flipchart.

Step five: Motivating and empowering ourselves to ACT (20 min)
   (h) Short presentation on:
     Spiritual motivation and empowerment by sharing how we have a positive impact on ourselves and others when we feel good.
     On how by paying attention to thinking beautiful ideas we make a difference for ourselves, others and the atmosphere around us.
     Example of Dr. Emoto's work. Open discussion Short presentation of meditation as the primary method to access our personal power (with meditation commentary)

Final Step:
   (i) Farewell

Personal Responsibility Workshop 2: *A creative workshop*

EXACTLY WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?
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Aim: to engage people in a reflective process to deepen their feelings of personal responsibility for the Earth and create optimism and hope about the future.
Duration: three hours including a break

Step One: Introduction (suggested ideas only)   (10 min)

(a) Read out Jayanti bhen's text as part of the introduction:
Sometimes we are overwhelmed by all the things that are happening in the world, and we feel a little helpless and wonder what contribution can we make in the face of something as big as the Tsunami's, erupting volcanoes, and earthquakes that are shaking and causing movement in the planet's strata. However, everything begins with one individual. When one individual sows seeds then the tree is able to bear fruit that can sustain generations. When one individual commits an act of violence that has an impact not only on their immediate surroundings, it actually has an impact on life itself. If I cut down a tree instead of planting a tree, I can notice the impact. Earlier we were unaware of all of these things, now we are able to see, beyond any doubt at all, the interconnectedness of the individual and the actions we perform in terms of the whole, and particularly for climate change. Let me begin with myself, there is no way I can make other people change. It will take a lifetime and I will still not be able to make the other one change. But I can change my understanding of what is happening around in the world within a moment, and in that one moment of realization, I can start creating instead of destroying. Another aspect of personal responsibility is: How much am I personally taking from the resources that nature is offering, and what is it that I am giving back to the world? – Source: Jayanti Kripalani, Brahma Kumaris

Extracts on Poverty and responsibility

Poverty is the state for the majority of the world's people and nations. Why is this? Is it enough to blame poor people for their own predicament? Have they been lazy, made poor decisions, and been solely responsible for their plight? What about their governments? Have they pursued policies that actually harm successful development? Such causes of poverty and inequality are no doubt real. But deeper and more global causes of poverty are often less discussed.

- Almost half the world — over 3 billion people — live on less than $2.50 a day.
- The GDP (Gross Domestic Product) of the 41 heavily Indebted Poor Countries (567 million people) is less than the wealth of the world's seven richest people combined.
- Nearly a billion people entered the 21st century unable to read a book or sign their names.
- Less than one per cent of what the world spent every year on weapons was needed to put every child into school by the year 2000 and yet it didn't happen.
- 1 billion children live in poverty (1 in 2 children in the world). 640 million live without adequate shelter, 400 million have no access to safe water, 270 million have no access to health services. 10.6 million died in 2003 before they reached the age of 5 (or roughly 29,000 children per day).*Source: Anup Shah www.globalissues.org*

Personal Reflection 1   (30 min)
*What is 'personal responsibility' in the context of oneself (what am I responsible for?)
What stops us accepting and taking responsibility for ourselves?*

(b) Share in pairs to see if they have anything in common

(c) Open sharing as facilitator writes input on a flipchart

Personal reflection 2   (15 min)
What is our personal responsibility in the context of our relationships with other people (what am I responsible for)? What stops us accepting and taking that responsibility?

   (d) Open sharing and input written on a flipchart

Personal reflection 3 (15 min)
What is our personal responsibility in the context of our relationship with the environment?
What stops accepting and taking that responsibility?

   (e) Open sharing and capturing input on the flipchart

Personal reflection and exercise   (30 min)
You have been asked to make a contribution to a book entitled *Our Personal Responsibilities in Relationship to the Environment.* Write down what you would like to be published in your name (min 50 words –150 words max).

   (f) Whole group sharing as each one reads out what they would like to see published in their name.

Summation (20 min)
Read out quotes from 2–3 well-known people in the environmental movement or feel free to use the following ideas

*"**Social responsibility** is an ethical ideology or theory that an entity, be it an <u>organization</u> or <u>individual</u>, has an obligation to act to benefit society at large. Social responsibility is a duty every individual or organization has to perform so as to maintain a balance between the economy and the ecosystem. A trade-off always exists between economic development, in the material sense, and the welfare of the society and environment. Social responsibility means sustaining the equilibrium between the two. It pertains not only to business organizations but also to everyone whose any action impacts the environment.[1] This responsibility can be passive, by avoiding engaging in socially harmful acts, or active, by performing activities that directly advance social goal."* Source: Social Responsibility Shopping association , http://www.srsassociation.org/library

Problems—Individual or Institutional?

The actions performed by individuals, as consumers and citizens, have aggregate negative consequences for the environment. The question asked in this paper is to what extent it is reasonable to hold individuals and institutions responsible for environmental problems. A distinction is made between backward-looking and forward-looking responsibility. Previously, individuals were not seen as being responsible for environmental problems, but an idea that is now sometimes implicitly or explicitly
embraced in the public debate on environmental problems is that individuals are appropriate targets for blame when they perform actions that are harmful to the environment. This idea is criticized in this paper. It is argued that instead of blaming individuals for performing actions that are not environmentally friendly we should ascribe forward-looking attitudes.
Responsibility to individuals is a notion that focuses more on capacity and resources than causation and blameworthiness. Furthermore, it is important to emphasize that the greater share of forward-looking responsibility should also be ascribed to institutional agents, primarily, governments and corporations.
Source: Nihlén Fahlquist, Jessica. Journal of Agricultural Environmental Ethics DOI 10.1007/s10806-008-9134-5. This article is published with open access at www.springerlink.com. Retrieved 10/11- 2012, www.ethicsandtechnology.eu/images/uploads/jes.pdf)

   (g) **Introduce meditation…** a way to empower yourself to bring your inspirations to life and to subtly ommunicate your inspirations to others.

   (h) Meditation commentary (based on peoples writings)

   (i) Farewell

   Brahma Kumaris' workshop resources are open source materials that can be used freely for non-commercial purposes. We invite your feedback so we can incorporate your experiences into our material. Examples of workshops are available at **www.environment.brahmakumaris.org.**