

# Seeing the Good in Everyone

..... source unknown (adapted and modified by Amy Fox)

Once upon a time there was a king who knew he would be dying soon. He wondered, *Which of my two sons should I leave in charge of this kingdom?* He wanted to find out which son would be a noble, benevolent and a loving caretaker of his people.

The king called in his first-born son and said, "Search throughout the kingdom and find one good person and bring him to me."

So this son went throughout the kingdom in search of a good person. For over a year he searched out all the kinds of people who he thought might be good. He extensively talked to teachers, doctors, nurses, farmers, students, yogis, holy men, old people and children. But with each person, he found some defect in their character, personality or behavior.

Finally, he came home to his father and said, "I have been throughout this whole kingdom. I have talked to every kind of person you would expect to be good. Yet I could not find a single truly good person to bring to you."

The king then called his second son and said, "My dear son, please search throughout my kingdom and find me a truly bad person."

So this son left to fulfill his father's request. First, he went to all the places where you'd expect to find a bad person— from the gambling and drug dens to the prisons that held the most violent people. He went everywhere and interviewed people who, at first, seemed bad to the core. But the more he talked to each person, the more he saw that beneath the faults, bad habits and flaws, he saw something good in each person— albeit very small.

After a year of searching, the second son gave up and returned home to report to the king.

"My dear father," he said, "I am very sorry, but I have failed. I have been unable to find a truly bad person."

His father embraced him, saying, "My dear son, you are worthy of being king."

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & PROMPTS

### OPENING CLASS

Notice your mental body. What thoughts are occupying your mind and taking up space? Which ones are you choosing?

The mind is the seat of many thoughts and thoughts are always forming. While we cannot prevent the flow of thoughts, we can choose where our focus goes.

Start to deepen your breath. Begin to hear the sound of your breath in the back your throat. Let this sound wash over you and hold your attention, beginning to soften your thoughts...

### DURING CLASS

#### *After Telling the Story*

According to the great yoga spiritual masters and texts, the more we cultivate the goodness within our own hearts through yoga, meditation and lifestyle, the more we are able to recognize the good in others. But if we fail to cultivate the goodness within ourselves, we will, unfortunately, not be able to see the good in others. Rather, we will always be searching out their faults and flaws.

### CLOSING CLASS

In life, how we see others depends on the quality of our mind and heart.

Let us not be too quick to judge others, especially if our perspective of life is clouded by anger, jealousy, negativity or unfulfilled desires.

Where this week can you shift your mind around something in your life? Where can you see a situation differently?

### EXTRAS

*All That We Share* is a powerful and moving video that illustrates how connected we all are and how we share more in common than we think.

While it isn't the best medium to share with your class in the sense that they would "watch" the video, you can simulate this during your class by having everyone hold a plank pose and then tell them that you are going to read a series of statements out loud and if the statement applies to them, for them to take one push-up before retuning to plank. You can ask basic statements like, "Take one push-up if you like push-ups; if you don't like push-ups; if you're the oldest sibling; if you're an only child; etc." and then move to more vulnerable ones like "if you've ever been bullied; if you were the bully; if you or someone you know has experienced depression, etc."

The goal of the exercise is for your students to open their hearts, get a little vulnerable and recognize that when we get to the core of who we are as humans, we're really more alike than we are different.