

Unitarian Universalist Principles: # 3 We are free to Learn Together

- **Activities on Sunday morning: Movement: Listening Games "Barnyard" and "Have You Ever?"**

+ **STORY: The Wise Teacher's Test** from: <http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/tales/session2/story1>

Here is a story from the Buddhist tradition about Courage & Heart...



Once upon a time on the outskirts of a big city in Japan there stood an old temple. From a young age boys who wanted to study Buddhism would come to live in the temple and to learn from the master teacher, a Buddhist monk.

One day the Buddhist monk who ran this small temple decided to teach his young students a lesson. He gathered them around him, and spoke, "My dear students, as you can see, I am growing old, and slow. I can no longer provide for the needs of the temple as I once did. I know I have not yet taught you to work for money, and so I can only think of one thing that can keep our school from closing." The students drew close with eyes wide.

"Our nearby city is full of wealthy people with more money in their purses than they could ever need. I want you to go into the city and follow those rich people as they walk through the crowded streets, or when they walk down the deserted alleyways. When no one is looking, and only when no one is looking, you must steal their purses from them. That way we will have enough money to keep our school alive."

"But Master," the boys chorused in disbelief, "you have taught us that it is wrong to take anything that does not belong to us." "Yes, indeed I have," the old monk replied. "It would be wrong to steal if it were not absolutely necessary. And remember, you must not be seen! If anyone can see you, you must not steal! Do you understand?" The boys looked nervously from one to the other. Had their beloved teacher gone mad? His eyes shone with intensity such as they had never seen before. "Yes, Master," they said quietly. "Good," he said. "Now go, and remember, you must not be seen!"

The boys got up and quietly began to file out of the temple building. The old monk rose slowly and watched them go. When he turned back inside, he saw that one student was still standing quietly in the corner of the room. "Why did you not go with the others?" he asked the boy. "Do you not want to help save our temple?"

"I do, Master," said the boy quietly. "But you said that we had to steal without being seen. I know that there is no place on Earth that I would not be seen, for I would always see myself."

"Excellent!" exclaimed the teacher. "That is just the lesson that I hoped my students would learn, but you were the only one to see it. Run and tell your friends to return to the temple before they get us into trouble."

The boy ran and got his friends who were nervously gathered just out of sight of the temple, trying to decide what to do. When they returned, the Master told them the words the boy had spoken and they all understood the lesson.

No matter what we do, we always have a part of ourselves that is quietly watching, and that knows right from wrong and can guide us if we listen.

TAKE IT HOME

- **"Sunshine"**(connection with nature and our bodies) Find a tree, lie down underneath and look up through the branches at the sky. What is the voice of the heart of the tree? What messages do you hear from your inner voice when you gaze at the sky through the branches?
- **Mindfulness Guided Meditation from Tapestry of Faith, Love Connects Us, Peace Inside**
<http://www.uua.org/re/tapestry/children/loveconnects/session10/161983.shtml>