UBUNTU!

The Spirit of Humanity

" I Am Because We Are "

Rediscover the Art of
Living Together in Harmony

Creative activities for
teachers and trainers

Helen Sayers

Reviews and recommendations

This is the best presentation on how to teach humanity to the world, and I endorse it wholeheartedly.

What is interesting is that it can be used by anybody anywhere in the world who would like to run a workshop on Ubuntu. This is a book that would appeal to those who are involved in the promotion of human values activities, such as facilitators of workshops on values-based education, Ubuntu practitioners, like me, and organisations and institutions that are involved in the development of Ubuntu.

Mfuniselwa John Bhengu, former Member of Parliament, South Africa, renowned author on Ubuntu

I use some of the activities in my trainings and they touch people's hearts. They reflect the wisdom of native people, especially African people.

Sema Özsoy, life-skills trainer, Turkey

Simple, but effective way in which values work ... activities that enable people to embrace each other ... nothing artificial.

Great opportunity to be involved in a constructive self development process using Ubuntu as a medium.

Participants at an Ubuntu workshop facilitated by Ms Nina Buchanan, Youth & Family Mediator, London

This is indeed a well-thought out and well-written workshop guide which meets the objective of re-igniting the spirit of humanity. The modules include a wide range of activities based on multiple intelligences, such as kinesthetic, musical, spatial, intrapersonal and interpersonal. These activities make this book experiential and reflective.

Visualisation is used effectively to enhance creative and reflective thinking. We tried one of these visualisation exercises in our school during 'Peace Week'. Children drew their dream world of peace and described it with beautiful imagery.

I especially liked the way UBUNTU kindles collective consciousness and enables us to make connections with nature and the world around us.

This is a wonderful venture and I am sure it will help each one of us live the values we preach, thus bringing about congruence and balance in our thoughts, words and actions.

Mrs Lata Venkateswar, Supervisor of Grades 3 & 4, Our Own English High School, United Arab Emirates

Occasionally, I read a book that really does re-ignite the spirit of humanity. **'UBUNTU! The Spirit of Humanity'** is one of those wonderfully engaging books. There is an ever-increasing need for humanity to rediscover the art of living together in harmony. The ancient African tradition of Ubuntu is an inspiring model for all people, as it has a universal application in all cultures. I have no hesitation in recommending this outstanding book for both children and adults, as a tool for living life to the full, in peace and harmony with others.

Dr. Neil Hawkes, International Consultant for Values-based Education, UK

'UBUNTU! The Spirit of Humanity' contributes to fulfilling the need to find ways to bring the beauty of the past into the reality of the present in order to create a better future. The guide is appropriately dedicated to Nelson Mandela who provides the central theme: "Ubuntu…it is a universal truth; a universal way of life."

Aukram Burton, Multicultural Education Specialist, Department of Diversity, Equity and Poverty Programs, Jefferson County Public Schools, Louisville, Kentucky, USA

UBUNTU! The Spirit of Humanity

Rediscover the art of living together in harmony

A resource book with creative activities for teachers and

trainers working with children, young adults, parents and organisations,

and for anyone who is interested in knowing more about Ubuntu.

Interactive workshops and online presentations can be arranged by request.

Please contact helen.ubuntu@gmail.com

Dedicated to Nelson Mandela (1918 – 2013), former President of South Africa

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Third edition 2016
Fourth edition 2023

Available in French, Spanish, Arabic, Konkani, Portuguese

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This resource book and facilitators' guide has been developed in co-operation with a team of international trainers experienced in working in the field of values-based education. It is dedicated to the late **Nelson Mandela** and countless individuals throughout the world who keep alight the spirit of humanity in their daily life.

"Helen Sayers, has put together her vast experience of working and travelling in over 20 African countries, guided by the ancient wisdom of African ways of living, and recognising its parallels in other cultures.

Our Ubuntu Youth Retreat Workshop programme uses this highly recommendable resource manual to rekindle the spirit of humanity among young people in Eastern Ghana. They reflect, discuss, experience and embrace the essence of Ubuntu, and apply it in a creative practical way in their everyday life... "Rediscovering the subtle bonds that connect us with each other and with nature, we sense our common destiny and are ready to explore solutions to global problems."

Asare Kwame Adjoka, Executive director, Akwaaba Spiritual Liberation Pilgrimage, Ghana

> ‘Ubuntu…
> it is a universal truth; a universal way of life. ’
>
> Nelson Mandela, former President of South Africa

Welcome!

> ‘We are called to assist the Earth to heal her wounds and in the process heal our own – indeed, to embrace the whole creation in all its diversity, beauty and wonder. This will happen if we see the need to revive our sense of belonging to a larger family of life, with which we have shared our evolutionary process. In the course of history, there comes a time when humanity is called to shift to a new level of consciousness, to reach a higher moral ground. A time when we have to shed our fear and give hope to each other.
>
> That time is now. ’
>
> Wangari Maathai, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Kenya

CONTENTS

> *We are all bound together as human beings. If we remain indifferent to the suffering of others, we are only depriving ourselves of our own humanity. We need to act together as humanity for humanity*
>
> Dr Kofi Annan, former Secretary General, United Nations.

Workshop modules

Appendices

> *Ubuntu principles ... They are a reflection of humanity untainted. If Africa is credited for it, it is because humane living is still manifest on this continent. But I am afraid that the Ubuntu spirit is fast losing its ground in Africa – for this reason this project is interesting and timely.*
>
> Dr Walters Samah, United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti; Living Values Education, Cameroon

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

R ecognising the rich heritage of spiritual wisdom that exists at the core of every culture, this creative workshop seeks to draw on and revitalise the personal and social values that live in the heart and soul of each one of us – the universal values that are the foundation for living together in harmony.

Using Ubuntu as an example of a values-based way of living, workshop participants are encouraged to:

- explore and experience their personal and social values;

- understand the principles that are essential for living together in harmony;

- create a vision and action plan to apply these values and principles in daily life.

The workshop is not intended to be an academic study of the philosophy of Ubuntu. It is rather a shared journey of exploration of the spiritual wisdom and values that have long existed in traditional societies and that are relevant to today's world – using the concept of Ubuntu as a framework.

Teachers, facilitators, counsellors and trainers working in the fields of education, human resource development and community cohesion, are encouraged to adapt the activities in this guide according to their culture, situations and contexts.

'Ubuntu! The Spirit of Humanity is one of the most inspiring books I've read. Profound, creative and full of simplicity, the book presents a charming and spiritual outlook on the Ubuntu philosophy typical of African ethnic groups. At the same time it informs us about the beauty of the diversity of humanity, since it presents a broad and contextualized concept of Ubuntu, relating it to other cultures within a global landscape, establishing a multicultural dialogue. The book proposes models of inspiring activities for adults, students, teachers, etc. Many of these activities have been useful in my classrooms with much appreciation from the students. In fact, what the book offers is the practice of spirituality, showing that Ubuntu philosophy is peace, solidarity, love, cooperation, tolerance and compassion, valued and desired by all cultures and present in each of us as innate qualities.'

Paulo Barros, Educator, member of the Living Values Education Programme, Fortaleza, Brazil

Professionals from a variety of fields attend a residential workshop on Ubuntu, Italy, 2005

'I really appreciated discovering the deep meaning of Ubuntu during the workshop.

I found that this is a programme that stimulates simplicity; in this sense it is very valuable. We need simplicity. The whole world needs simplicity.

I'm very curious about this project because I strongly believe in its possibility to bring together the beliefs of different cultures, with all their positive values.'

Ines Caloisi, consultant in European projects and human rights, Italy

SETTING THE CONTEXT

One word ... a world of meaning!

What was it that touched my heart so deeply during the time I spent in Kenya and in Swaziland in the 80s?

Several years ago, I was preparing to take part in an international conference in South Africa on the theme of combating racism. Some colleagues and I were discussing how we could make a positive contribution to the debate. One of them was from Soweto, near Johannesburg, and knew, from first-hand experience of having lived under the apartheid regime, the misery and the horrors that racism can bring. "We could organise a workshop on the theme: ***Ubuntu – a force for living together,***" he suggested, and went on to define Ubuntu.

He explained that Ubuntu is an ancient code of ethics, referring to the 'humaneness' of the human spirit. It's about goodwill, generosity, dignity, reconciliation, a feeling of responsibility for each other's well-being, and solving problems together. It's a way of life that has held families and communities together for centuries. Ubuntu is not limited to Africa, he added – it is part of our common humanity.

The workshop was a huge success. The speakers spoke from their hearts about a way of life that is fast disappearing and that needs to be reawakened. At the end of the event, a colourful Native American gentleman got up from the audience and proudly told us about the values of his ancestors. He spoke of the same – Ubuntu – values.

Ubuntu is a profound yet natural way of being – it is about the essence of our humanity – of what it really means to be a 'human being'.

Words, however, can only touch the surface of something that is so deep. Ubuntu is not just a philosophy. Its meaning and significance can only really be understood by actually experiencing Ubuntu and sharing that experience with others. We then discover that it's something that we all have in us – a 'universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity' – and we find that Ubuntu exists at the heart of every culture and tradition.

This workshop has been developed to do just that. I hope that anyone who participates will experience, as I have been fortunate enough to experience, the joy and beauty of Ubuntu, and will join hands with me and many others to re-ignite the spirit of humanity!

Helen Sayers

> *We can draw inspiration from the African concept of Ubuntu, that ancient term which embraces humaneness, caring, sharing and being in harmony with all of the world.*
>
> *… Archbishop Desmond Tutu explained how the concept represents the opposite of being selfish and self-centred. Ubuntu empowers everyone to be valued, to reach their full potential while remaining in accord with everything and everyone around them. This spirit is reflected in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights when it speaks of "the inherent dignity and the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family."*

Mrs Mary Robinson, former President of Ireland,

> *Ubuntu is ingrained at a deep level within each individual – it is universal. To show the universality of this concept, many of us have looked for alternative words (such as goodness, wholeness, 'beingness' etc.) but have found that, although these words are close, they don't capture the concept in its totality. This workshop will bring out the emotional and spiritual intelligence underlying Ubuntu, and create a space for participants to experience their own Ubuntu, both during the workshop and afterwards in their daily life.*

Ms Khumo Lefuma Mokhethi,
Human Relations Specialist, South Africa

WHAT IS UBUNTU?

I am because we are

Today we hear of Ubuntu forums, Ubuntu villages, Ubuntu tents at development conferences, an Ubuntu university, an Ubuntu open-source operating system, and there is even an Ubuntu Day. Much has been written about Ubuntu.

So what exactly is Ubuntu?

Ubuntu is an ancient way of living which embodies the generosity, warmth, inclusiveness and solidarity that is still typical of many African communities today. Though the word Ubuntu has its origin in the local languages of Southern Africa, the values it encompasses are found across the entire continent and are at the origin of every culture and religious and spiritual tradition in the world. Words in different languages that express one or another aspect of Ubuntu include '**Harambee**' (Swahili, East Africa – Let's pull together!), '**Terranga**' (Wolof, West Africa – Hospitality), '**Insanya**' (Arabic – Humanity), '**Shalom**' (Hebrew – Peace, wholeness), '**Aloha**' (Hawai – Compassion and mercy), '**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**' (Sanskrit – Belonging to one human family), and perhaps a European equivalent might be '**One for all and all for one**'.

The Ubuntu theology guided Archbishop Desmond Tutu when he chaired the Truth and Reconciliation Commission – established in South Africa after the abolition of apartheid – helping to heal the wounds inflicted by this regime by implementing the values of compassion, forgiveness, personal accountability and dignity.

One key concept of Ubuntu derives from the Zulu/Xhosa (South African) saying: '*umuntu, ngumuntu, ngabantu*' which means 'a person is a person through other persons' – otherwise expressed as: 'I am because we are' or 'I exist because you exist'. It acknowledges the value of each individual or group, the acceptance and appreciation of our differences while recognising our common spirituality, our responsibility for the well-being of others, and a sense of belonging to one human family and being deeply connected with nature and with the universe. It promotes respect for all, especially elders, youth and women, and co-operation and trust between individuals, and among communities and nations. Above all, Ubuntu embodies the power of reconciliation, the potential for building bridges, creating unity between people and across cultures.

> '*It's not a mystery; it's something plain and simple. We are human beings and we should feel with each other and feel for each other. This is Ubuntu – that I must do to other people what I want other people to do to me…that I am a human being because of other human beings around me.*
>
> *… Ubuntu is nothing more or less than compassion brought into colourful practice.*'
>
> Vusamazulu Credo Mutwa, traditional healer and author, South Africa

The Reverend Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, describes Ubuntu in the following way:

> '*… UBUNTU. It is part of the gift that Africa will give the world. It speaks to the very essence of being human. When we want to give high praise to someone we say, 'Yu, u nobuntu': he or she has Ubuntu. This means that they are generous, hospitable, friendly, caring and compassionate. They share what they have and are able to go the extra mile for the sake of others.*
>
> *I am human because I belong, I participate, I share. A person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good; for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes with knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole.*
>
> *We believe that a person is a person through other persons, that my humanity is caught up, bound up, inextricably, with yours. The solitary human being is a contradiction in terms and therefore when I dehumanise you, I inexorably dehumanise myself.*'

GUIDELINES FOR FACILITATORS

T he workshops outlined in the following pages aim to develop an overall understanding and experience of the concept of Ubuntu and to explore its parallels in other cultures.
Ideally, the facilitator will have already attended an Ubuntu workshop as a participant.

Structure:

• a half-day up to three-day workshop consisting of up to nine modules

• modules build on each other to develop an understanding and experience of Ubuntu

• workshops can be tailor-made and activities adapted according to context and objectives

• modules can be used separately, or in a variety of combinations as a mini workshop.

Methods and techniques:

• reflection, visualisation, discussion, artistic expression, music and dance, and creative meditation

• activities and exercises – these are not prescriptive and should be selected according to the age and composition of the group, and integrated into the module at different points according to the dynamics of the session

• ice-breakers/energisers – these can be used at intervals during a workshop to maintain concentration and enthusiasm, and to highlight an aspect of Ubuntu. Please be creative!

Organisation:

• informal arrangement of room and groups, e.g. in a circle or 'horseshoe', according to preference

• discussions are allowed to develop spontaneously within a flexible agenda, according to the interests and dynamics of the group

• sharing of experiences, ideas, and stories (traditional means of transmitting values from one generation to the next) – in pairs, small groups or the whole group

• the composition of the small groups can be changed regularly so that participants meet and communicate with 'new friends'

• feedback is recommended at the end of each activity to help participants to process their experience and learn from others, and to enable the facilitator to determine if the objectives have been achieved. Examples of open questions: "How did you feel?" "What did you learn?" "Which values did you explore during this exercise/activity?"

Developing an understanding of the concept of Ubuntu:

• interpretations are given in each module, based on real life experiences of Ubuntu

• recommended publications and other resources are listed (see Resources and references)

• quotations have been selected from a wide variety of sources, to give a broad-based view of Ubuntu

• the facilitator may include his or her relevant personal experiences and draw on the experience of the group to develop and share concepts.

Use of music:

• quiet music can be used to create a relaxed atmosphere during reflective exercises

• lively, rhythmic music/song may accompany creative exercises or dancing

• several songs have been recommended that convey the meaning/feeling of Ubuntu (see Page 41).

Participants could be provided with a workbook or journal, containing the workshop agenda, a few selected key points of information, and plenty of 'white space' for personal notes, reflections, observations, drawings etc.

UBUNTU
and the practice of silent reflection

Throughout the workshop there will be times for silent reflection and visualisation, to enable participants to experience their innate values, to understand the full meaning of Ubuntu, and to appreciate the richness that it brings to daily living.

The use of reflection also ensures that our responses come from the 'heart' and not just from the 'head'.

During reflection exercises, the facilitator:

• creates an atmosphere conducive to relaxation and quiet contemplation

• plays background music, or encourages silence if preferred

• invites participants to take a few deep breaths, and relax

• introduces the reflection by asking participants to put aside all the worries of the day, problems in the world etc., and focus on peaceful thoughts

• may wish to ask the group to imagine being in a special quiet place – their own 'Mokgorong' (described on this page)

• may give a commentary

Suggested commentaries are provided to accompany reflection and visualisation, which can be modified according to the context (the facilitator may wish to create his or her own commentaries). It is recommended to include a pause of several seconds – longer if appropriate – between phrases in the commentaries (**...** indicates a pause), and to allow time for participants to note down their thoughts and observations. The facilitator encourages participants to express and share their ideas, feelings and experiences, in pairs, groups of four or five, or in the larger group.

Mokgorong

'In Ubuntu the way to self-empowerment is through silence.

Silence was a great part of the African communities in the past. There used to be places where people could go and be by themselves – with themselves. The space was highly respected, and believed to be deeply transformative, hence those in 'Mokgorong' would not be disturbed under any circumstances. These days, such places are only reserved for chiefs and kings. A king when angry would go and spend some time there, and when he came out he was expected to have calmed down – this was often the result.

Although there were no churches, mosques or temples, there was – and still is – an understanding that there is sacredness behind being by yourself and with yourself. At times you could all be together but still be by yourself – in Mokgorong.

Mokgorong is thus not just a physical place, it is also an internal space in which to see yourself and transform. This is the space where I think the transformation of Nelson Mandela arose from. It was as a result of how he used enforced aloneness / isolation in jail; and thus, out of many others, he became the embodiment of forgiveness. He went into Mokgorong and came out cleansed / purified.

When you go to Mokgorong, you often have to bend in a small space, symbolic of the humility required for transformation to happen and for you to receive the necessary guidance. It implies that in that space you do not seek but you receive and therefore you would be able to give when you came out of it.'

Ms Khumo Lefuma Mokhethi,
South Africa

WORKSHOP MODULES

MODULE 1
Introductions

In this module we are invited to experience the warmth, unity and hospitality of Ubuntu and begin a journey of exploration into the ancient wisdom and values of traditional societies, so that we can re-ignite the spirit of humanity in today's world.

- Participants are encouraged to meet and greet each other 'Ubuntu style'
- The aims and objectives of the workshop are briefly explained
- The concept of Ubuntu is introduced
- Activities may be selected to help create a friendly atmosphere, to get to know one another, and to acknowledge each other's qualities and values.

Greetings / getting to know each other

In many cultures the exchange of greetings is an important aspect of social bonding. Greetings may be long and complex (sometimes almost ritualistic, and often accompanied by gestures), expressing interest and concern about health, family, business etc. This indicates the importance given to sustaining good relationships, especially between strangers, and ensures that both sides feel at ease with one another before entering a discussion.

'**Sawubona**' is a greeting used by many in South Africa, meaning literally 'I see you'. It is a sincere, warm, respectful acknowledgement and appreciation of the other person.

Similarly, '**Namaste**' is used in parts of India and means 'I bow to the divinity in you', while '**Asalaam Alikum**' is Arabic fo 'Peace be upon you'.

The greetings below are from Zimbabwe and are spoken in the Shona language:

Morning greetings: "**Mangwani. Marara sei?**" (Good morning. Did you sleep well?)

Reply: "**Ndarara, kana mararawo.**" (I slept well, if you slept well.)

Mid-day greetings: "**Maswera sei?**" (How has your day been?)

Reply: "**Ndaswera, kana maswerawo.**" (My day has been good if your day has been good.)

This exchange indicates that we are so connected with each other that if you did not sleep well, or if you were not having a good day, how could I sleep well or have a good day?

Ms Barbara Nussbaum, author and coach, South Africa

If there are several nationalities within the audience, their different greetings could be identified, and participants could be invited to greet each other in various languages.

Introduction to Ubuntu, discussion

The concept of Ubuntu is introduced, referring to information given on earlier pages. The facilitator adds his or her knowledge and experience and encourages discussion.

A greeting is not reserved only for people you know, but for every person you meet. I live in a township and use taxis to get around. When people enter, they greet everyone inside, saying, "Molweni." (Xhosa for "Hello everyone!") Africans may feel insulted if someone does not greet them.

When Africans greet a person they are meeting for the first time, they often say, "I am so and so, from such and such a place." By introducing themselves by their family or clan name, and where they come from, they might find that they are connected to each other in some way. Ubuntu is about interconnectedness.

Ms Fatima Dike,
playwright and producer,
South Africa

Creative activities

The following activities enable participants to get to know each other in an informal way, through acknowledging the values and qualities of the other person. Please select and integrate the activity/activities into the module according to the composition, age and dynamics of the group.

⭐ 'Visiting cards'

This activity helps participants to recognise their own qualities and to observe and appreciate qualities in others. It generates an atmosphere of warmth, friendship and belonging.

Participants are given a piece of card, the size of a visiting card. They write their first name boldly in the middle, leaving space for words to be added.

They are invited to move around the room to music (this can be lively or gentle), in any direction, mixing at random and acknowledging each other through the eyes, from the heart, and with a smile. When the music stops, each one greets the person in front of them, while exchanging their 'visiting cards'.

The facilitator requests participants to "Notice one or two qualities in the other person, while you were talking, and write them down on their visiting card." Each one then reclaims his or her own card, and moves around the room again till the music stops.

They again meet and greet the person facing them and exchange their cards. This continues for five or six different encounters. When the music is finally turned off, everyone stops and looks at the list of qualities that their friends have given them.

The facilitator can then ask 3 or 4 participants to introduce themselves by reading out their qualities to the whole group, saying "My name is … and I am…(kind, cheerful, friendly, sincere etc.). "

Participants are finally asked for their feedback on the activity.

Individuals often comment that they are pleasantly surprised by the values that others have seen in them, and that it builds their confidence to relate their values to the group. All agree that this type of visiting card is much more interesting and says a lot more about a person than a card with a list of phone numbers, e-mails, addresses etc!

Variation
The activity is carried out in silence, participants observing each other's qualities from their face, eyes, smile etc.

Note: A similar activity is described in Module 9 ('Farewell and expression of appreciation').

Materials: Per person – blank card (size of business card), coloured felt-tip pen (optional).

Time: 15 – 20 minutes

Exchanging 'visiting cards'

'…We all share a common humanity. Ubuntu sits in each of our hearts and so I invite you to open your hearts and surface your Ubuntu and feel its power and the joy it brings as we acknowledge one another's presence.'

HE Nozipho January-Bardill, former Ambassador of South Africa to Switzerland

⭐ Visible and invisible friends

This activity encourages the values of caring, friendship and taking responsibility for another person's well-being.

Participants are asked to write their name on a small piece of paper and fold it up to hide the name. The facilitator collects the papers in a container, shuffles them, then asks everyone, in turn, to pull out a name. The person whose name is on the piece of paper that you pull out is your 'visible friend' (don't let them know!). Meanwhile someone else (you don't know who!) has pulled out your name – so he or she is your 'invisible friend', and you are his or her 'visible friend'! From now till the end of the workshop each person must take care of their visible friend in different ways (be imaginative!) but their friend should not be able to know that it is YOU who is looking after them!

At the end of the workshop (see Module 9), all invisible friends are revealed! Participants sit in a circle and the facilitator asks one person at random (A) to come into the middle of the circle and tell the group something positive that he or she has observed in his visible friend (B) – (meanwhile all are guessing who it can be!). A then goes to person B and shakes hands or gives a hug. B then comes into the middle of the circle, talks about a few qualities he or she has seen in his visible friend (C) and then reveals C's identity!

This continues till all friends have been revealed, with much joy and laughter!

Materials: Small pieces of paper, container.

Time: Beginning of workshop: 10 minutes. End: 30 minutes

⭐ Random acts of kindness

This activity develops the quality of unconditional love, and the joy of giving.

The facilitator could suggest: "During this workshop (or – "When you go home tonight), do something kind for someone else. It can be just a small thing – but the other person should not find out that it was you!"

The following day, participants share their experiences.

> *In our country, hotels are a fairly new concept. In the past, when travellers came to a village, they would be announced to the chief, given hospitality, and the next day the chief would call a 'pitso' (gathering) for the village to meet the strangers. We would celebrate with a special meal in their honour, and talk with them to find out about their lives. We would find many things that we have in common, and eventually the visitors would be considered to be part of the community.*

Pitso Montwedi, Chief Director, Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs, South African Department of Foreign Affairs

My 'visible friend'

> *The last thing I want, is that any of our descendents should look back in some years and despise us for not daring to act when we had so much capacity to act. We must dare to seek the how, the why and the what for of our agreements. We shall thus be able to join together to look for alternative solutions and new ways of managing the world's challenges. Being diverse is our richness, acting together will be our strength.*

Federico Mayor Zaragoza, President of UBUNTU World Forum of Civil Society Networks

MODULE 2

Ubuntu values – in me and in you !

In this module the facilitator guides participants through a series of reflections and activities to help us to explore our innate personal values, recognise values in others, and discover how our values help to build harmonious relationships with others.

'Guidelines for Facilitators' gives ideas on conducting reflections.

a) Recognising Ubuntu values in me!

Mfuniseni John Bhengu describes Ubuntu in one word: VIRTUE (see References and resources).
When we are aware of the Ubuntu in each of us, we recognise our divinity and dignity and the potential for being a truly virtuous, noble person.

Reflection

The facilitator creates a quiet reflective atmosphere and gives a short commentary on the themes given below (please adapt/change these to suit the group). After each commentary, participants are given time to write down their reflections in a few words.

1. A special moment:

"Reflect on a special moment in your life – when you discovered something very good in yourself ... not an external achievement such as passing an exam, but a quality that you feel proud of ... What were the circumstances? ... How did you feel?...

Please write down the qualities or values that you felt."

2. How others see me:

"Remember a time when someone said something very good about you – about your strengths and values ... What did they say?… How did they describe you? ...

Write down these values. (Please don't be shy!)"

3. My favourite music:

"Think of some music or a song that you love ... Imagine that you can hear it in your mind … Why is this music so special to you?... What are the feelings it brings to you?... What are the values that it reminds you of? …

Write down these values."

4. My core values:

"Consider the values you have noted in the previous reflections ... these are some of your key personal values that guide your thoughts, attitudes and actions ...

Design a symbol representing you at your very best."

After allowing adequate time, the facilitator invites participants to share their feelings and the values they have observed, with the person next to them.

Whole group feedback could follow.

Sharing ideas ...

Creative activities

The following activities may be used to help participants to explore, experience and express their personal values. Please select and integrate into the module according to the dynamics of the group.

⭐ Ubuntu Tree: sharing our values with the world

This activity creates unity and develops co-operation, creativity and sharing.

A large bare tree is either painted on a canvas / flipchart / the wall (to create a mural) or constructed out of wire (participants may like to suggest other ideas).

Colourful leaves have been previously cut out of thick paper.

Participants are asked to reflect on a value that they would like to give the world – remember, we can only give what we already have! The following commentary may be used:

My gift to the world:

"Look for the special qualities that make you unique ... These qualities live in a quiet place in our heart … Imagine being in that quiet place … Notice that, by being in touch with your inner beauty, you are also sharing a gift with the world ...

Choose one value that you would like to give to the world."

Each person writes his or her value boldly on a leaf, which is then glued / pinned to the tree. Soon, the bare tree becomes alive, bright and vibrant as more and more values are added.

Materials: Flip chart paper / canvas / wall etc. Coloured card, marker pens.

Time: Flexible, according to the design and materials.

⭐ Ubuntu Values: 'Brain-storming'

(This activity may be used in any module.)
The group meditates for 10 – 15 minutes to background music, reflecting on values explored in the module. Through the course of the meditation, participants may wish to get up and write a word or symbol on a flipchart or whiteboard, spontaneously, as and when moved to do so.

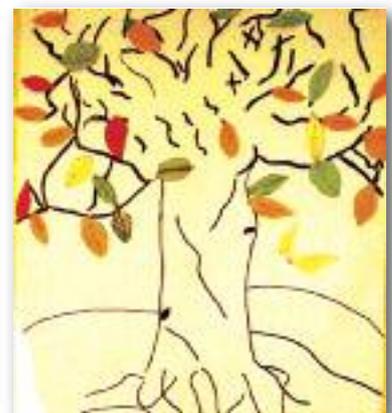Rich discussion and a deeper exploration of certain selected 'Ubuntu values' could follow this exercise.

Christmas tree

Wire tree, paper leaves

Tree on canvas

Tree on flipchart paper

Collage tree

⭐ Tree of my Life: reflection and 'mobile exhibition'

This activity encourages creative thinking, positivity, self-confidence and self-empowerment. It enables us to appreciate our personal values, to see the interconnectedness of the various aspects of our personal life, and to recognise the important role that our values play in determining the quality of our relationships and our achievements in life.

Please note that a similar activity is found in Module 6 to explore the values of a family or group.

Using the tree as a symbol that represents uniqueness, dignity and beauty, along with interdependence (with the elements and with other life forms) and unconditional giving (of oxygen, shelter, food, shade, perfume etc.), participants are guided through a 'journey of discovery' of their personal and social values.

To quiet music, the facilitator asks the participants to think about how a tree might represent their life. They are asked to draw an outline of a tree on a piece of paper (size: at least A5), to include a few roots, a trunk and 4 or 5 branches, and to consider the functions of each of these parts (e.g. roots = anchor, trunk = support, branches = growth, balance).

A commentary could be as follows:

*"Think of the **roots** of a tree – they go deep and create the foundation for the tree to grow – they are its anchor … Which value is the foundation of your life? … providing an anchor for your growth and development …(it could be hope, for example).*

Please write that value among the roots of your tree …

*Now think about the **trunk** – it supports the whole tree and lifts the leaves towards the sky … Which of your values supports you and gives you strength in your life? …*
Please write that value along the trunk …(some may choose determination, others – courage or love, etc. …).

*The **branches** spread in different directions. They represent the important areas of your life … please reflect on what these might be … for example, your family and friends, your work, health, religion, interests, hobbies, projects etc. …*
Write each important area along a branch …

*Imagine the **leaves** on your tree … think of all the things leaves do and give… (produce oxygen, give food, shelter, shade …). Think about a quality or value of yours … something that you 'give' to others … draw an outline of the leaves of the tree, and add that value …*

***Flowers** make the tree unique and attractive … what is your special value? … Draw a flower ... add this value, that makes you unique.*
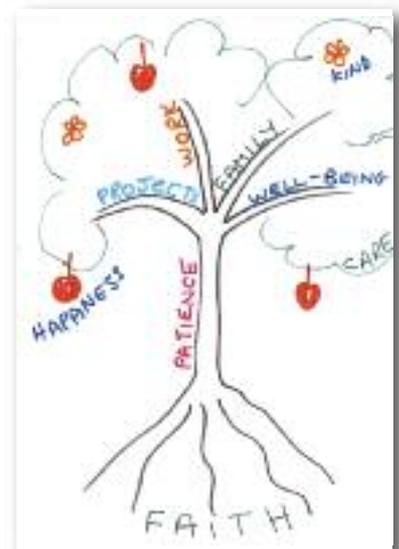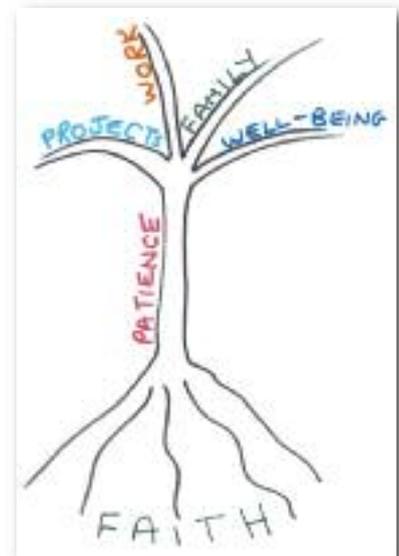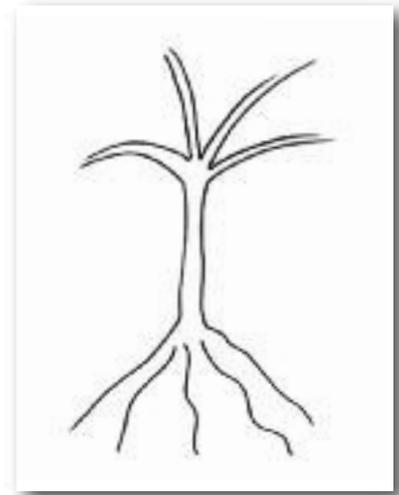
*Add a few **fruits** … these are your achievements and successes ... Which of your values enable you to do well in what you do? …*
Write this next to a fruit …

*Think about how a tree is nourished … with **sunshine** and **rain** …What is the sunshine of your life (!) …*
Draw the sun, with this value next to it …

What value does the rain represent for you? … Please add this…"

The facilitator adapts the level of complexity of the symbols according to the group. For older age groups the facilitator could continue as follows:

*"There are some hungry **insects** near your tree, ready to eat the leaves, flowers and fruits … think about what this might mean to you … what are the 'insects' in your life…the things that prevent you from growing and flourishing to your full potential? …(it could be something external, but it could also be a negative attitude or habit …). Add this insect, and the attitude you associate with it, next to your tree … (be honest!).*

*Luckily, there is some **insecticide** available! … What can you do, or what value can you use to destroy that insect? …"* (someone might choose 'enthusiasm' to eliminate 'laziness'; another may decide to 'take out some extra time for myself' in order to reduce 'stress', and so on …)

After the trees have been completed, participants are asked to look at their 'tree of life' and to reflect on how their life and personality is determined by their values.

Mobile exhibition
The facilitator then arranges a 'mobile exhibition': participants sit in a circle, each one passes their 'tree' to the person on their right, all pause for a few seconds to appreciate, then pass the trees on again, and again, till everyone has viewed everyone else's tree. The exhibition works well in silence to soft music.

Please adapt this activity, according to the needs of the group (very young children may need to be given a simple outline tree at the start).
Please be creative!

Time: 20 – 30 minutes depending on the size of the group.

Painting: Patrick Nereus, Cameroon

Teachers reflecting on The Tree of my Life,
ORT/SEN Hann Village Kindergarten, Senegal

Drawing: Miss Sampada Vijay Shelar
(13 years), Indian, living in Oman

b) Appreciating values in others

The facilitator may wish to mention well known personalities, past and present, who demonstrate the spirit of Ubuntu and its underlying values.

The following people, for example, will always be remembered for their compassion and for their conviction in their endeavours to remove barriers of colour, caste and religion:

Nelson Mandela, former President of South Africa, despite serving 27 years in prison for his role as a freedom fighter against apartheid, never lost his dignity and courage, nor did he forget his culture of respect, forgiveness and reconciliation.

Mother Teresa, an Albanian Catholic nun, dedicated her life to help the poor, sick, orphaned and dying in India. Awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her humanitarian work, she is admired for her commitment, mercy and unconditional love.

His Holiness the Dalai Lama a tireless supporter of human rights, a messenger of peace, and an advocate of values education. "If we start and make an effort to educate those who are young now in inner values, they will see a different, peaceful, more compassionate world in the future...Basic human nature is compassionate and this is our source of hope."

Wangari Maathai, from Kenya, founded the Green Belt Movement, which focused on the planting of trees, environmental conservation and women's rights. In 2004 she became the first African woman, and the first environmentalist, to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.

Mahatma Gandhi led a nationwide campaign in India to reduce poverty and build religious and ethnic harmony. He used non-violence and peaceful resistance as his 'weapons' to achieve unity and reconciliation. He is remembered for his courage, simplicity and determination.

Her Majesty Queen Noor of Jordan, whose name means 'light' in Arabic, tirelessly supports humanitarian causes such as poverty, conflict prevention and recovery, disarmament, refugees, and Arab-Western relations. Queen Noor and Nelson Mandela, as President and Honorary President of the United World Colleges, united to foster peace and international understanding.
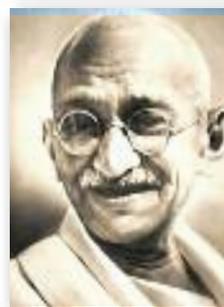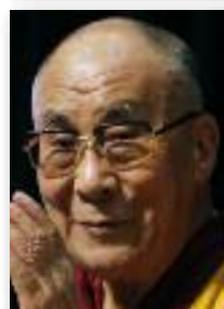
Reflection: People who inspire us

The following reflection will help participants to appreciate the values that guided these and other role models, and to experience some of those same values in themselves.

Commentary:

"Bring to mind a person who has influenced your life because of his or her qualities … someone you admire deeply … It could be a famous person – living or past – or it could even be an ordinary person in your life ... Imagine that this person is in front of you ... Reflect on their special qualities or values that inspire you … Write down two or three of those values."

Participants discuss their reflections in pairs, then feedback to the group.

Creative activities

The following activities help us to recognise and appreciate values in others, and to use our own values to develop harmonious relationships.

⭐ Value cards, posters, skits

This activity encourages creativity, resourcefulness and appreciation, and deepens our understanding of different values.

Following the reflection on the previous page, the participants are asked to choose one value that they admire most in others, and to reflect on that value for a minute, then look for that quality in themselves.

The facilitator then asks each person to create a card based on their experience and understanding of that value (it could include a definition, a blessing, a logo or symbol).

As each person completes their card, they quietly get up and give the card to someone they don't know very well.

Alternatively a small group could design a poster or collage to illustrate a chosen value.

Other variations: write some prose / a story / a song, or compose a skit / sketch / mime to illustrate that value. Please feel free to be creative!

Materials: card, coloured pens, miscellaneous materials

Time: from 10 minutes to 30 minutes

Respect
You look for the good in everyone and honour their unique role in life.

FORGIVING is.....
... feeling and showing understanding and compassion in my relationships — especially with people who are not so nice to me.

Unity
I create unity by bringing out the best in myself and others.

TEACH SHARING
PRACTICE KINDNESS
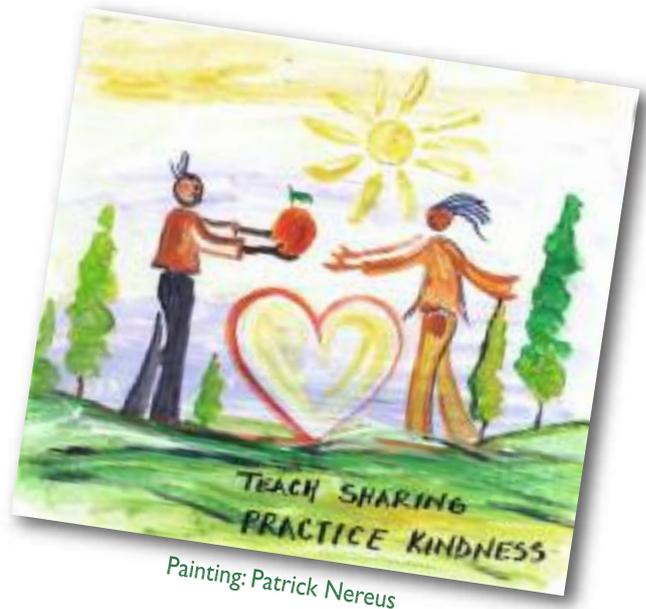
Painting: Patrick Nereus

Creative ways to express the values of happiness, love and unity

⭐ Puppets

This activity helps to develop trust, understanding, intuition, confidence, care, concentration, humour and non-verbal communication.

Working in pairs, participants imagine that one is a puppet and the other is the puppeteer. The puppeteer gently moves the hands, arms, head and feet of the puppet, by pulling on imaginary strings attached to those parts. The puppet responds to the guiding movements of the puppeteer, while the puppeteer is sensitive to the response of the puppet and does not force any movement. After a few minutes they change roles.

Once trust and understanding are established between the two, they can be more 'adventurous' in their movements!

When working with very young children or with traumatised or timid youngsters, this can be an effective way to communicate and to encourage the child to exchange his or her feelings, while giving support and empathy. It is also an intuitive way to recognise and acknowledge the other person's qualities and values.

Participants give their feedback after the activity.

Time: 10 minutes

Puppets and puppeteers

Street boys develop trust and concentration

⭐ Research project

A group of eminent global leaders, led initially by founder, the late Nelson Mandela, known as **'The Elders'**, joined hands in solidarity to 'promote the shared interests of humanity'. Their idea was a simple one. In an increasingly interdependent world – a global village – could a small, dedicated group of independent elders help to resolve global problems and ease human suffering? For inspiration, they looked to traditional societies, where elders often help to share wisdom and resolve disputes within communities (see Resources and references).

Participants may be asked to share the knowledge they already have about these eminent leaders. Interesting discussion may follow (it may be wise to recommend that discussions focus on values and achievements for the good of humanity while avoiding political debate!).

Where participants are students, the facilitator could ask them to carry out a personal research project on the work and values illustrated by these or other role models of their choice.

Her Majesty Queen Rania of Jordan, for example, is committed to reconciling people of different faiths and cultures by encouraging cross-cultural dialogue, particularly among young people. A UNICEF Ambassador, she promotes compassion, mutual respect and tolerance among nations, and works tirelessly to help the underprivileged. Queen Rania makes good use of the Internet to exchange ideas with her global network.

We are at the beginning of a new age of discovery, an era that sees us connecting openly and rediscovering ourselves and our neighbours.

Her Majesty Queen Rania of Jordan

MODULE 3
Ubuntu and the community

Using examples that illustrate Ubuntu values in action in the community, this module aims to:

- deepen our feeling of belonging to a community

- understand how the community can help the individual

- recognise our personal contribution and responsibility to the community.

Ubuntu is derived from the Zulu/Xhosa word, 'Umuntu' – a human being. It embraces the values of hospitality, generosity and respect for others. To have Ubuntu means to recognise the value of each individual, to acknowledge the divinity in me and you – our shared divinity – that which is sacred in every human being. It is the realisation, conscious or sub-conscious, that we are spiritual beings and we belong to one family.

When we recognise the sacredness of our own existence and the intrinsic good in each of us, then we will have a positive influence on our families, friends, colleagues, and on the communities in which we live. Ubuntu is rooted in recognising the value of my own existence to others and to my community.

a) The value of my existence to others and the value of the community to me

In South Africa there is a tradition called 'ukusisa'. A family in a rural village would 'lend' a cow and a bull to a newly married couple recently arriving in a village, and wait until a calf was produced and reared for a while before taking back the original cow and bull. The offspring would stay with the newcomers, leaving them with their own 'seed capital' and their dignity. This mutually beneficial transaction is based on kindness, but also with the idea of reciprocity, sharing wealth in the interests of building the community as a whole.

Reflection: Unconditional giving

Commentary:

"Recall an experience of having done something special for someone – without seeking any return … What was the outcome? … How did you feel? … How do you think the other person felt? … Now recall a time when you received unconditional generosity … How did you feel? ...

Please write down your thoughts."

Participants then share their experiences in small groups.

'*We say it's a concept that's present in Africa. I believe it is present in all human beings if it is allowed to thrive and prosper. It is the spirit of sharing.*'

Mrs. Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, former Deputy Minister of Health, South Africa

'*Respect is very important in South Africa because it creates appropriate boundaries between the old and the young. When it comes to working together, there is respect for the task master, the task, the people who are involved in the task, and for yourself. Self respect overrides egos, that might otherwise undermine the task and goes hand-in-hand with co-operation.*'

Ms Fatima Dike, South Africa

Creative activities

The following activities aim to help the participants to identify and appreciate the values that already exist in their communities, and to find ways to add their own contribution.

⭐ **Reflection and artistic expression:**
The values of my community / country / culture

Commentary:

"Reflect on the proverbs, stories or songs about your culture / country / community … Think about some of the great people of your nation, past and present ...

Make a list of values that you cherish and that make you proud to belong to your country."

The facilitator requests participants to call out the values they have identified, and writes them on a flipchart so that the group can appreciate the wide range of values related to their community or country.

Then, in small groups, they are given just 10 minutes to design a new flag, compose a national song or create a poster that illustrates the values of their country.

Each group then presents their result to the whole group.

Values of Cameroon!

Proverbs and words of wisdom from around the world

Takipar bich che meloljinge ma: It is easy to defeat those who do not kindle the fire (a community is strong that gathers together - round the fire - to discuss and resolve conflicts).   **Tugen, Kenya**

Mikono mingi kazi haba: Your co-operation inspires others to work collaboratively.   **Swahili, East Africa**

Nalukolekejaga sonda walola lwala: I pointed to the stars and all you saw was my finger. **Sukuma, Tanzania**

Generosity is not giving me that which I need more than you do, but it is giving me that which you need more than I do. **Kahlil Gibran, Lebanon**

The first day you meet, you are friends. The next day you meet, you are brothers. **Afghanistan**

Don't judge any man until you have walked two moons in his moccasins. **India**

Having two ears and one tongue, we should listen twice as much as we speak. **Turkey**

Do not protect yourself with a fence, but rather by your friends. **Czech Republic**

Three helping one another will do as much as six men singly. **Spain**

Better be kind at home than burn incense in a far place. **China**

Am I not destroying my enemies when I make friends of them? **Abraham Lincoln, USA**

Our technology has exceeded our humanity. **Albert Einstein, Germany**

Do not do unto others that which you would not wish them to do to you. **Confucius**

⭐ **Reflection: What makes up a good community?**

Commentary:

"Imagine your village / neighbourhood / social group ... What are the values that keep it together? ... Which values would you like to contribute so as to bring some improvements to your community? ...
Please write these down."

Participants then share their ideas and inspirations in small groups.

b) Community life: developing cohesion and responsibility

There is a saying: 'It takes a village to raise a child'. In the past (and in some instances in the present) everyone – not only aunts, uncles and other relatives – felt responsible for the upbringing of each child and had the right to encourage or correct others' children. The roles of mother and father were not directed only towards their own children. A hungry child was always given a meal and, if an orphan arrived at the door, it was one's duty to take that child into the family as one's own. There were no homes for the elderly, or orphanages, nor was there the phenomenon of street children. The idea of 'owning' land or property did not exist; it was God-given, for the use of the whole community.

"In the past, the whole community would celebrate and mourn together. You didn't wait to be invited to a wedding – you just turned up. Likewise if there had been a death in the village, everyone would come to mourn together in sympathy with the relatives of the deceased, making sure that they were not left alone until they felt comforted.

... Letsema has always been part of our society. If I need my field to be ploughed, everyone in my village will come and help – I just provide food and drink and make sure everyone is happy. And then a few days later, someone else needs their field to be ploughed, and so he calls for a 'letsema' and we all go there to help. In this way all the work of the village gets done."

Mr Pitso Montwedi, South Africa

"A community-based garden project to develop cohesion: In London, antisocial behaviour had become a problem in a certain suburb. To solve the problem, the community developed a garden in a concreted area where gangs of bored and potentially violent youngsters hung out. The municipality provided massive bags of soil and plant tubs, and the community came together to decide on what to grow and who would take responsibility for which action – including some of the gang members! The community spirit grew stronger and the gangs stopped hanging out in the area that had now become a garden. Neighbours started talking to each other, and understanding and friendship began to happen. It was Ubuntu in action, although they didn't know it!"

Mrs Shelagh Moore, UK

Reflection and discussion

The facilitator invites participants to reflect on and discuss the above examples and to relate their own experiences of community life.

It would be interesting to share ideas on the advantages / disadvantages of Internet communities, e.g. 'Facebook', 'Twitter' and other social networks.

'*Co-operation and exchange of benefits and interests among nations in an atmosphere of harmony and peace is a vital issue that we should all relentlessly pursue with diligence and dedication for the sake of the welfare of humanity.*'

His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said, Sultan of Oman

Source: Oman Electronic Network, Ministry of Information, Sultanate of Oman

'*It is indeed unique that the great leader of the Sultanate of Oman, His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said, travels extensively across the nation to meet his people every year. His Majesty visits each village to finds out about the people's conditions and problems, along with his ministers and officials, taking decisions on the spot to solve their problems. Also, wherever His Majesty goes, the area is developed further. His Majesty is a great head of state, who has devoted his life for the betterment of the people and the country.*'

Wasin Ahmed Khan, contributer, Readers' Forum, Times of Oman, from Pakistan, living in Oman since 1974

Creative activity

⭐ 'Paper Towers'

This activity encourages teamwork, resourcefulness, unity, appreciation, responsibility and many other 'Ubuntu values'. It favours co-operation instead of competition.

In groups of four or five, participants are given 20 minutes to construct a building out of just 10 pieces of A4 paper and half a metre (—no more!—) of scotch tape / Sellotape, without any tools or other materials! The facilitator tells the participants that their buildings will be judged on a number of factors, e.g. height, stability, design, beauty, teamwork etc.

When the time is up, the buildings are all placed on an 'exhibition table' and a 'judge' is requested to announce the results. The judge has previously been asked to find something special in each construction – so that every reasonable attempt is given an 'award' – e.g. for being the highest, most stable, best designed, most original, most creative, most beautiful, best teamwork etc. A small 'prize', such as a sweet, is also given to each member of every group, along with a 'certificate' (e.g. a value card). In this way, the judge acknowledges and values each group and every person's unique contribution, demonstrating that competition is not always necessary nor desirable in some cases.

Each person is encouraged to do their personal best while working together to bring good results from their group. In this way everyone is a winner!

Variations:

- Groups could be requested to create their buildings in silence!
- Groups are asked to build a 'house designed to keep cool in the desert'.
- In schools / colleges the activity can be adapted for use in a technical session in a subject dealing with construction, materials, stability etc...

Please be creative!

Materials: Exhibition table
Per group of 4/5 people**:** 10 sheets of A4 paper (can be old/used), one metre strip of Sellotape
Per person: 'certificate' (e.g. value card) and 'prize' (e.g. a sweet)

Time: Approximately 40 minutes,

Activity adapted from 'Making things together - White Towers' activity in '*Visions of a Better World*' (see References and resources).

Kuwait towers

Team work in Cameroon

Indian children create a colourful rocket

Certificates awarded

Scouts in Oman share ideas
... and create a house to beat the heat

MODULE 4

Ubuntu and the interconnectedness of life

In this module, the facilitator encourages participants to explore and experience a sense of being in harmony with oneself and with others; of being connected to the natural world and with the entire human family; and the feeling of belonging to an even greater whole.

In my view Ubuntu is spirituality in action. It enables us to see our level of 'beingness'. Our interaction with people – and in ancient times, with nature – reflects back to us our true nature. It is the mirror for our soul, just as we have a mirror for our external selves. To this extent, the highest form of compliment in South Africa / Lesotho is, 'pelo ya hao e tshweu', translated as: 'you have a white heart'. This is regarded as the highest form of goodness / beingness, describing purity and cleanliness of heart in interaction with others and with nature. The result is when people can see a being-to-being interaction.

Ms Khumo Lefuma Mokhethi, South Africa

Reflections

a) Feeling connected with nature:

"Imagine that you are in a beautiful place, somewhere where you love to be ... where you feel comfortable to be alone … for example, you may be sitting under a tree or beside a lake ... standing on top of a mountain, or watching a sunrise or sunset … Describe the scene to yourself … Allow yourself to feel connected with the environment, a sense of being an integral part of your surroundings … How do you feel? ...”

b) Feeling connected with others:

"Recall a time or a moment in your life when you felt a deep sense of belonging: within your family, with your friends, the community or the whole of humanity … You feel at one with yourself and yet totally connected with others … you belong to everyone and everyone belongs to you … Where were you? … What were the circumstances? … What were your thoughts and feelings? … Which special quality or value were you in touch with, that added to this sense of harmony and interdependence?...”

After reflections a) and b), participants discuss their experiences and ideas in pairs or in small groups. They may also create a symbol / logo / drawing to express their feelings.

When we dissect the isiZulu word, uBuntu points to humans (as part of the Greater Cosmos) that are in a continuous process of becoming. Ubu = to become. Ntu = African root word for Highest Being. To know and to live uBuntu is a life-long endeavour of 'waking up, growing up and cleaning up'; of becoming our Highest Being.
Personal sovereignty and freedom must never be sacrificed for any concept of 'We' that turns community into communism or globalism. The 'I' in 'I am because We are' is the very foundation of uBuntu.

Anna-Mari Pieterse, author and founder of the uBuntu Civics Academy.
South Africa

Ubuntu speaks particularly about the fact that you can't exist as a human being in isolation. It speaks about our interconnectedness. You can't be human all by yourself, and when you have this quality – Ubuntu – you are known for your generosity. We think of ourselves far too frequently as just individuals, separated from one another, whereas you are connected and what you do affects the whole world. When you do well, it spreads out; it is for the whole of humanity.

The Reverend Desmond Tutu, South Africa

Creative activities

These activities help us to experience our interconnectedness with each other and with nature.

⭐ Ubuntu dancing / singing

Singing and dancing creates togetherness, harmony, happiness and a sense of well-being. (This activity can be adapted according to the culture.)

Participants are invited to dance to music with an easy rhythm (e.g. 'One Love' by Bob Marley) or someone may suggest a traditional or popular song that everyone can sing together. Each one dances in their own way but as they move around and meet each other in turn, they synchronise / 'tune in' to the other person's movements, bringing unity and joy.

Alternatively, everyone dances in a line, hands on the shoulders of the person in front ('conga' dance). Each one's movements are unique yet contribute to the overall rhythm of the group.


Values educators dance the conga

⭐ Silent walk: connecting with nature

This activity encourages personal reflection, and a balance of independence together with inter-dependence. It also develops the values of self-confidence, dignity and appreciation.

Depending on the composition and dynamics of the group, the participants are invited to go for a silent walk either alone or with a friend who agrees to stay in silence … in the garden, a nearby park or, if it's not possible to go outdoors, to spend some time on a balcony or at a window. The facilitator encourages them to connect in their own way with the natural world (and to disconnect from distractions such as mobile phone, reading materials, etc.), and to reflect on their connection with the world and with 'something greater' or 'a greater whole'. If it is dark, a starry sky presents a perfect backdrop for this exercise!
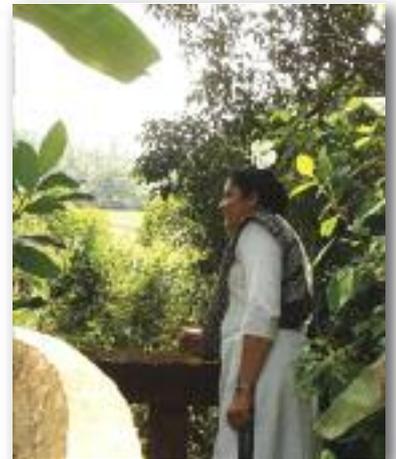
This activity could be fitted into any part of the workshop, when a reflective break from information and activity seems needed.

Silent walk, Goa

⭐ Values balloons

This activity is energising and creates a sense of interconnectedness.

Participants sit in a circle. The facilitator gives everyone a balloon and a marker pen and asks them to reflect for a minute or two (to music) on a value or quality they would like to give to others. Participants blow up their balloon and write that value clearly on the surface. Then, to music, they stand up, toss their balloons into the air and everyone tries to keep all the balloons moving, without letting them fall onto the floor ("we should never drop our values!").

After two or three minutes, the music stops and each one catches or picks up the balloon nearest to them. They read the value on the balloon, and the facilitator explains that this value is a gift for you from a special friend.

All are asked to sit for a few moments to reflect on the value they have received, and why it is of importance / significance to them.

Materials: Balloons, marker pens

Time: 10 – 15 minutes

Values balloons

MODULE 5

Ubuntu and conflict prevention and resolution

In this module, participants explore how Ubuntu values, especially forgiveness, tolerance, openness and understanding – and principles such as the use of consensus in problem solving, and listening while reserving judgment – can contribute to preventing and resolving conflict.

Discussion

According to his or her knowledge and experience, the facilitator may wish to describe traditional courts such as the 'Ndaba' or 'Lekgotla' in South Africa, and the 'Gacaca' courts of Rwanda, where conflicts are resolved by bringing together opposing parties and encouraging mutual understanding, forgiveness and reconciliation; or to discuss the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of South Africa which aimed to heal the wounds caused by apartheid.

The group may wish to discuss other methods of conflict resolution and / or prevention, based on similar principles to Ubuntu, found in other cultures.

Below are some suggested themes for discussion which aim to draw out Ubuntu principles and values. (Please note: some of the stories and discussions that arise may evoke emotional responses from participants. Empathy and sensitive handling may be required.)

- 'I exist because you exist', therefore your joy is my joy, your pain is my pain, your crime is our crime (it is a wound on the community that needs to be healed with the help of all concerned)

- reconciliation through the values of empathy, compassion and forgiveness

- restorative justice (a term used during the TRC) versus punitive justice

- pardon versus punishment; tolerance rather than revenge

- cooperation versus competition

- covenant (win–win) versus contract / conditional outcome

- the concept of amnesty but without impunity

- the importance of consensus in decision making

- values-based discipline: can respect and honour replace punishment?

- the qualities of a good leader and his or her role in conflict prevention / resolution.

> ❛ The skills of traditional chiefs or other good community or corporate leaders include the sensitivity to inclusiveness, transparency and tolerance of the other.
> … a good chief listens to the group and finds the point of consensus. He would play a low key role, listen to all viewpoints, facilitate debate and, in the end, summarize and make a decision which is just, preserves dignity and reflects the consensus of the group. ❜
>
> Ms Barbara Nussbaum,
> South Africa

Creative activities

These activities help develop social skills needed to avoid or resolve conflict.

⭐ Role play: Forgiveness

Participants stand face to face with a partner, holding hands. Facilitator asks everyone to imagine that they have done something very hurtful to the other, and to feel regret, remorse and compassion. Both look at each other and say in turn, clearly and with feeling: "Please forgive me – I hurt you. I'm sorry. I ask you from my heart to forgive me."

Next, each one imagines that the other one has done something wrong to you – has really hurt you. Feel the pain / the resentment … Then from the bottom of your heart, forgive the other person. Both look at each other and say clearly: "It's OK, I forgive you."

Then they shake hands or, if culturally appropriate, they give each other a big hug (if not, give yourself a hug)!

"I forgive you"

⭐ Role play: Reconciliation

After reading or listening to the traditional peacemaking process found in Ubuntu societies (see Page 29), participants are asked to express their understanding of the process through role play. In groups of 6 to 8, in circles, they imagine a situation where one person in the group has done wrong to another, and find ways together to resolve the situation through encouraging forgiveness and reconciliation between the two.

Resolving problems through reconciliation

Holding on to the fact that someone has betrayed or deceived us makes us hostage to the anger inside. In fact, we should also help the ones who have deceived us to forget that they have done this to us. When we see the opportunity for forgiveness, we have to help them reduce their pain and suffering, which is the consequence of the earlier actions they took. This is why we need to have forgiveness, love, mercy and compassion. To help someone forget their own misdeeds is the highest form of charity.

Dadi Janki, Administrative Head,
Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University

In Ubuntu societies, reconciliation often follows forgiveness through a gesture that shows willingness to 'fix the damage'. Thus, if you played in my garden and ruined my plants, then, after admitting it, asking for and receiving forgiveness, you would offer to come and work in my garden and put it right.

Ms Fatima Dike,
South Africa

⭐ Active listening skills: the foundation for conflict prevention

This activity enables participants to identify some of the attitudes, values and skills that are required to be a 'good listener' and can be used as a starting point to explore the art of effective communication.

Participants sit in two rows facing each other. Each person is opposite a partner. The facilitator gives a name to each row, e.g. the 'diamonds' and the 'stars'. The diamonds are asked to think about and then talk for one minute on a certain topic (e.g. 'all you know about diamonds') while the stars listen. The facilitator meanwhile conveys a secret message – that only the stars can see – to 'Ignore' their partner. The word 'IGNORE' is written boldly on a piece of A4 paper and shown only to the stars (from behind the diamonds' backs).

Next, the stars are asked to think about and talk for a minute to their diamond partners on another topic (e.g. 'all you know about stars'). This time the facilitator shows a secret message to the diamonds – 'INTERRUPT'. The process continues, with other subjects of discussion and different negative messages such as 'CRITICISE' or 'GIVE TOO MUCH ADVICE'. The final step consists of both rows having a longer discussion on a mutually interesting topic, e.g. 'create a new and inspiring project', and the secret message, this time to **both** sides, is 'LISTEN AND DISCUSS WITH RESPECT'.

Participants then get together with the pair next to them (to make groups of four) and share their experiences ... How did it feel to be ignored, interrupted, criticised, given too much advice? And finally ... to be listened to with respect?

Feedback and further discussion in the whole group brings out the importance of understanding other people's feelings, of 'putting oneself in their shoes', and being able to empathise and offer appropriate support. It can also initiate dialogue about how to change one's own negative attitudes and how to respond to – and not to be influenced by – the negative attitudes of others.

The whole group then compiles a list on a flipchart of 'DOs' and 'DON'Ts' for good listening and communication, based on their observations and experiences of being on the receiving end of a number of positive and negative attitudes and behaviours! A typical list might include:

Active listening

Instructions in Turkish - 'Ignore'

Instruction - 'Listen with respect'

Practising communication skills

DO
- Show genuine interest, be attentive
- use body language (e.g. nodding, leaning forwards)
- smile, encourage
- good eye contact (according to culture)
- empathise (don't pity)
- validate the person's comments

DON'T
- Ignore
- interrupt
- change the subject
- give TOO much advice
- frown, criticise, judge
- finish the other person's sentence
- speak loudly

Note: participants usually find it empowering that they have produced the list of 'Do's' and 'Don'ts' themselves (instead of being given a ready-made hand-out).

Materials: 5 sheets of A4 paper displaying clearly-written 'secret' instructions

Time: 30 – 40 minutes

The Ubuntu approach to conflict resolution and reconciliation

The article below is adapted from Practical Peacemaking Wisdom from Africa: Reflections on 'Ubuntu', by Tim Murithi (see Resources and references).

Ubuntu societies place a high value on communal life, and maintaining positive relations within the society is a collective task in which everyone is involved.

… In the context of the Ubuntu societies found in southern Africa, particularly among the Xhosa, disputes would be resolved through an institution known as the inkundla / lekgotla which served as a group mediation and reconciliation forum. This inkundla / lekgotla forum was communal in character in the sense that the entire society was involved at various levels in trying to find a solution to a problem which was viewed as threatening the social cohesion of the community. In principle the proceedings would be led by a Council of Elders and the Chief or, if the disputes were larger, by the King himself. The process of ascertaining wrong-doing and finding a resolution included family members related to the victims and perpetrators, including women and the young.

The mechanism therefore allowed members of the public to share their views and to generally make their opinions known. The larger community could thus be involved in the process of conflict resolution. In particular, members of the society had the right to put questions to the victims, perpetrators and witnesses as well as to put suggestions to the Council of Elders on possible ways forward. The Council of Elders, in its capacity as an intermediary, had an investigative function and it also played an advisory role to the Chief. By listening to the views of the members of the society, the Council of Elders could advise on solutions which would promote reconciliation between the aggrieved parties and thus maintain the overall objective of sustaining the unity and cohesion of the community.

When we trace the values and principles that uBuntu is based upon back to Ancient Africa (Egypt), we find Ma'at, the African Goddess of Truth, Law, Order and Justice. Ma'at represents our innate knowing about that which serves the Greater Good. And although we may escape human laws, we never escape the laws of our own nature which at the very core is Love. With Love at the core of Ma'at, we can say that Love is also the core of uBuntu, and that uBuntu is the expression of our Godliness.

Anna-Mari Pieterse, author and founder of the uBuntu Civics Academy.

South Africa

Life will not be a pyramid with the apex sustained by the bottom. But it will be an oceanic circle whose centre will be the individual always ready to perish for the village, the latter ready to perish for the circle of villages till at last the whole becomes one life composed of individuals, never aggressive in their arrogance, but ever humble, sharing the majesty of the oceanic circle of which they are integral units. Therefore, the outermost circumference will not wield power to crush the inner circle, but will give strength to all within and will derive its own strength from it.

**Mahatma Gandhi
India**

The actual process involved five key stages:

- firstly, after a fact-finding process where the views of victims, perpetrators and witnesses were heard, the perpetrators – if considered to have done wrong – would be encouraged, both by the Council and other community members in the inkundl lekgotla forum, to acknowledge responsibility or guilt.

- secondly, perpetrators would be encouraged to demonstrate genuine remorse or to repent.

- thirdly, perpetrators would be encouraged to ask for forgiveness and victims in their turn would be encouraged to show mercy.

- fourthly, where possible and at the suggestion of the Council of Elders, perpetrators would be required to pay an appropriate compensation or reparation for the wrong done. (This was often more symbolic than a repayment in kind, with the primary function of reinforcing the remorse of the perpetrators.) Amnesty could thus be granted, but not with impunity.

- the fifth stage would seek to consolidate the whole process by encouraging the parties to commit themselves to reconciliation. This process of reconciliation tended to include the victim and his or her family members and friends, as well as the perpetrator and his or her family members and friends. Both groups would be encouraged to embrace co-existence and to work towards healing the relationship between them and thus contribute towards restoring harmony within the community, which was vital in ensuring the integrity and viability of the society. The act of reconciliation was vital in that it symbolised the willingness of the parties to move beyond the psychological bitterness that had prevailed in the minds of the parties during the conflict situation.

... The wisdom of this process lies in the recognition that it is not possible to build a healthy community at peace with itself unless past wrongs are acknowledged and brought out into the open, so that the truth of what happened can be determined and social trust renewed through a process of forgiveness and reconciliation. A community in which there is no trust is ultimately not viable and gradually begins to tear itself apart. With reference to the notion of 'I am because we are' and that of a person being a person through other people, the above process emphasises drawing upon these Ubuntu values when faced with the difficult challenge of acknowledging responsibility and showing remorse, or of granting forgiveness.

Because of its emphasis on our common humanity and the ethical call to embody our communal responsiveness in the world, Ubuntu offers an alternative way to re-create a world that works for all.

… Simply put, people, businesses and countries would re-learn how to live together with respect, compassion, dignity and justice and to re-organise resources accordingly.

Source: Wikipedia

' *I don't think that in moving forward into the modern world we should leave behind those values that were critical to our existence.* '

Mrs Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, South Africa

MODULE 6
Ubuntu in a better world

In this module participants are guided – through a visualisation exercise – to imagine a better world and to reflect on the values that would exist there – to consider what it would be like to belong to a greater whole, where helping each other is natural and spontaneous.

This process of visualisation enables us to step beyond norms and limitations, to see possibilities and create higher goals.

Creating a vision for the future

The facilitator introduces the benefits of creating a vision, explaining that the greatest achievements in the world begin with a dream or a powerful thought. For example: Martin Luther King had a dream of freedom in America; Mother Teresa envisaged dignity for the dying; while Mahatma Gandhi kept alive the hope for independence in India. The Sultan of Oman, Sultan Qaboos bin Said, led the transformation of his undeveloped country into a well-developed peaceful nation in just four decades, by constantly focusing on developing human potential alongside material development.

Commentary:

"Imagine that, while we are here together, time is accelerated … our problems are left behind … and we find ourselves in the future world of our dreams … Look around you … Describe this future world …
What is the environment like? … What do the buildings look like? …
What are the people like? … How do they interact with each other? … with you? … How do you feel? … What are the values that you bring to this world?

Write down your observations and feelings."

Participants are asked to express their vision in a creative way, through poetry, images or symbols, then to share these with the group.

Relationships in a better world

> *'In these United Nations buildings, there is a lot of talk, perhaps too much, but what must be understood is that beyond the words, beyond the good intentions, and beyond the flags of the nations, there is a duty of the heart, the duty of UBUNTU and SHALOM, a duty to build peace every day in a spirit of solidarity and recognition of the other.'*

The late Professor Jean Halpérin, Chairperson, Centre for Jewish Studies, University of Geneva

Reflecting on the future

Creative activities

⭐ The Family Tree

This activity is adapted from the 'Tree of my Life' in Module 2, and can be used as a group exercise for a school class, family or an organisation.

- It develops creative thinking, self-empowerment and group motivation.

- Participants work together to build consensus, and identify common values and goals.

- It illustrates how values determine a group or a company's progress and its members' well-being.

The image of a tree is used as a symbol or metaphor to represent the future of the group / class / school / organisation / community etc. The facilitator may wish to divide the group into a number of 'companies' of 5 or 6 people. Participants choose the type of company they wish to create, and decide jointly what the different parts of the tree symbolise - e.g. the roots could represent the core values that give the company a solid base, while the trunk might be the values behind the company's vision, the branches stand for the different aspects of its mission, the fruits are its common goals etc.

If the group needs guidance, the facilitator could give a commentary, perhaps to quiet music. He or she might begin by inviting participants to think about how their group or company might be represented by a tree. They are asked to draw an outline of a tree on a large piece of paper, to include a few roots, a trunk and 4 or 5 branches, and to consider the functions of each of these parts (e.g. roots = anchor, trunk = support, branches = growth).

Commentary (facilitator may wish to refer back to Module 2):

*"Think of the **roots** of a tree – they go deep and create the foundation or anchor for the tree to grow … Which value is the foundation of your company's growth and development? (it could be unity, for example)*

*Now think about the **trunk** – it supports the whole tree and lifts the leaves towards the sky … Which value(s) supports and gives strength to your company? … (some may choose co-operation, others courage, trust etc.)*

*The **branches** represent important areas in your company's mission … please reflect on what these might be … for example, staff development, quality of service, social responsibility …*

*Imagine the **leaves** on your tree … think of some of the things leaves do and give … for example, they produce oxygen, give food, shelter, shade… This symbolises the service your company gives to the community (or your school or family's gift to the community) … What are the values that influence the service your company provides?...*

***Flowers** make the tree attractive … what is the special value that YOU bring to the company ...*
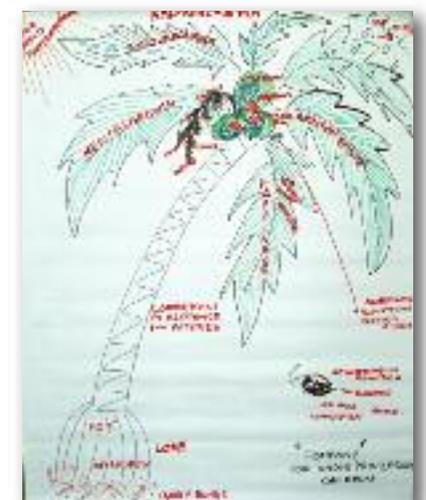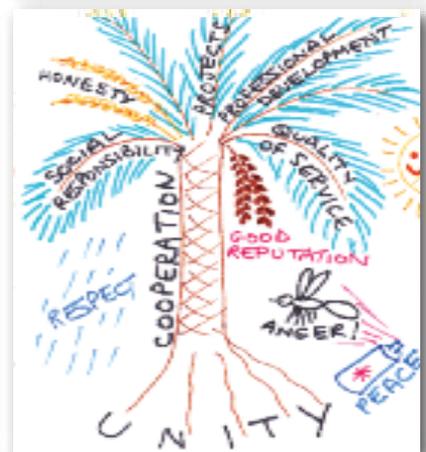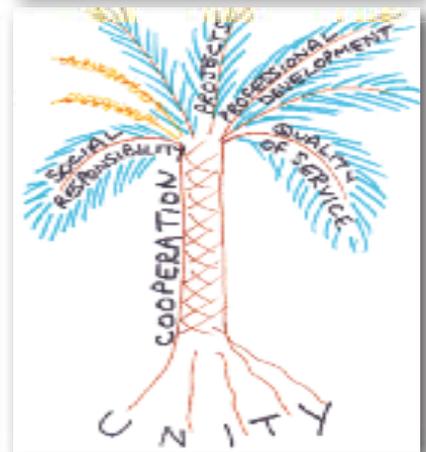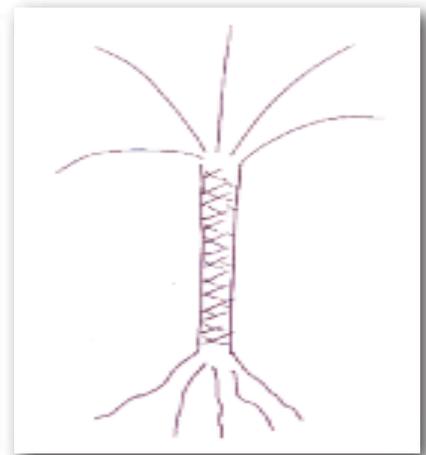
Fruits symbolise the company's goals or achievements... Which values will help bring success to your company? (examples: integrity, determination, positivity, cooperation)

*Think about what a tree receives … energy from the **sun** and **rain** … What is the energy that drives your company forward?…*
What values does the rain represent? …

*Watch out! There are **insects** near your tree, ready to eat the leaves, flowers and fruits … What are the 'insects' that might prevent your company from achieving its aims? … it could be something external, but it could also be negative attitudes or habits of its members ... Be honest!*

*Luckily, some **insecticide** is available! … What can you do as a team, or what value can you use to destroy the insects? …"*
(Someone might choose 'enthusiasm' or 'appreciation' to eliminate 'laziness'; another may decide to 'take out some extra time' in order to reduce 'stress' etc.)

Discussion

After the above reflection, members of each group discuss a common vision and goals for their company / family / class, and combine their ideas into one tree.

Each company presents their tree to the main group.

Variation: The House of Ubuntu

This activity can be used instead of the 'Family Tree', especially if the 'Tree of my Life' activity has already been done in Module 2.

The facilitator simply substitutes the components of a house for the parts of a tree in the above activity. For example, for roots, substitute the foundation of the house; for trunk, substitute walls: for branches – the different rooms; leaves – the garden; flowers – the windows, and so on (please be imaginative!). And don't forget the central heating or air-conditioning, which could symbolise a good working environment, and the attitudes and values needed to create such an atmosphere.

Instead of 'insects', 'pollution' or 'a storm' could be used to represent the negative attitudes that spoil group cohesion, and for which some sort of 'protection' – or positive values – is needed!

⭐ The Tree of Humanity: a research project

In many stories, beliefs and legends, a tree is used to symbolise the human family, its branches representing different religions or cultures – separate yet united at the base. Participants (especially if students) could be encouraged to do some research on the tree as a symbol of unity in diversity, focusing on the universal values that unite humanity.

'In Africa we have this concept of Ubuntu, which is 'humanness'. It means that I'm not human without your being present – and my allowing you to be present. I'm human because you are human. Out of that concept we see that we have a shared experience, and we can find one another and create peaceful co-existence.'

Mrs Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, former Deputy Minister of Health, South Africa

MODULE 7
Ubuntu in today's world

I n this module the facilitator encourages participants to consider to what extent Ubuntu exists in today's world. They are asked to think of ways to re-ignite and keep the spirit of Ubuntu alive. The module begins with a revision of the meaning of Ubuntu.

Reflection: the meaning of Ubuntu

Ubuntu has been defined as 'the belief in a universal bond of sharing that connects all humanity' or 'the essence of our humanity'.   In short: '**I exist because you exist**' or **'I am because we are'.**

Commentary:
 "After considering the ideas and concepts that have arisen in this workshop, as well as your own reflections, what does Ubuntu mean to you? … How would you define the word Ubuntu? ...
Please write down your personal definition."
Participants share and discuss their definitions.

Questions for reflection, discussion or debate

• To what extent does the spirit of Ubuntu still exist in today's world? Give examples of where it exists and where it may have been lost, referring not only to Africa but the world in general.

• What could be some of the obstacles that make it difficult to keep Ubuntu alive in our hearts and in our communities?

• Suggest some solutions – ways to re-ignite the spirit of Ubuntu (note: This is taken up in more depth in Module 8).

Meditation / reflection accompanied by music

The facilitator chooses a song with words related to the theme: 'Ubuntu in today's world'. Recommended songs are given in Annex 3. The facilitator may prefer to select an appropriate song from the local culture.

Participants are invited to relax, listen carefully to the words of the song, capture the feelings and reflect on the messages.

In pairs, participants share their experience and understanding of the message within the song, adding their own ideas if they wish.

> '*If you are coming to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you are coming because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.*'
>
> Australian aboriginal woman

> '*We must all learn to live together as brothers or we will all perish together as fools. We are tied together in the single garment of destiny, caught in an inescapable network of mutuality. And whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. For some strange reason I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. And you can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be. This is the way God's universe is made; this is the way it is structured.*'
>
> Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., USA

> '*We have entered the third millennium through a gate of fire. If today, after the horror of September 11, we see better and we see further, we will realise that humanity is indivisible.*'
>
> Dr Kofi Annan, Ghana

Creative activity

⭐ Ubuntu cake

This activity helps us to reflect on the non-material needs of the world, and to think about how we can contribute to making it a better place.

It develops the values of care, compassion, consideration, co-operation and unity; and skills such as planning, consensus building, sharing of tasks, artistic expression and presentation skills.

The facilitator asks the whole group to brainstorm some of the current problems in the world (discussion may lead to the conclusion that the majority of problems stem from a lack of values at some level).

Participants are then requested to consider the attitudes and values that are needed in order to help the planet.

"If we were to give a gift to the world in the form of a cake and the ingredients were values, what ingredients would you use? … And in what proportions? … How you would make your cake? …"

In groups of up to five, participants decide on the ingredients and quantities, they invent a recipe, and design and create their cake. A selection of miscellaneous items (see below) is made available to everyone.

They are given 20 minutes to complete their cake.

When the time is up, a 'spokesperson' for each group presents the cake and reads out the recipe (see example opposite).

If time permits, 'prizes' and / or 'certificates' may be awarded to each group and every participant, e.g. prizes for the 'best-decorated' / 'most compassionate' / 'most creative' cake, 'most co-operative cooks', 'best recipe'… be imaginative! (Please refer to the 'Paper Towers' activity, Module 3.)

Materials: Coloured paper and card, marker pens, scissors, stapler, glue, Sellotape, used decorations, e.g. bits of tinsel, ribbons, etc.

Time: Approx. 45 minutes

This activity is adapted from 'The Peace Cake' in Living Values Activities for Children Ages 8 – 14 (see Resources and references).

> *The original idea for this activity was born on a pavement cafe in Hamburg with my friend Dietrich von Horn in 1985. We were working with a group of students from both countries trying to find a way to help make our world a better place in a simple way that all could contribute in their own language.*
>
> Peter Williams, Principal, Kuwait American School

Children prepare ...

... and present their cake

... a prize for everyone!

Recipe
Ingredients:
4 cups of peace
2 cups of tolerance
3 spoons of generosity
2 spoons of friendship
large drop of forgiveness

Method:
Stir with happiness, bake with love, ice the cake with sweetness and a sprinkling of joy.
Add a thousand candles of contentment and set them alight with the spirit of unity!

A cake with a difference!

MODULE 8
Implementing Ubuntu in daily life

In this module the facilitator helps participants to reflect together on ways to apply Ubuntu values and principles in their everyday lives. They create an action plan – both individual and collective.

Ubuntu is about interdependence, inclusiveness, collective effort, giving people confidence in themselves and confidence to help others. Our success is not only about how we succeed, but how we help others succeed.

Reflection and visualisation:
From vision to reality, from thoughts to actions

Commentary: (please allow plenty of time during the pauses)

"Imagine something special that you could do to help make the vision you created (in Module 6) become a reality … not only for yourself but for others too … It could be something you do in your personal life, with friends or family, or in the workplace … Visualise the results or outcome … Reflect on the steps that you will need to take … Which values will you use to help you accomplish your task? …

Please write down your ideas."

Discussion

Participants share their ideas, then discuss how they could work together to help each other to realise their individual aims. If time permits, the group may wish to create an action plan for a joint project and discuss how this would be implemented and sustained.

Ubuntu workshop, Oman

We cannot all do great things, but we can do small things with great love, and together we can do something wonderful.

Mother Teresa

Our prime purpose in this life is to help others. And if you can't help them, at least don't hurt them.

Dalai Lama XIV

We say it's a concept that's present in Africa. I believe it is present in all human beings if it is allowed to thrive and prosper.
It is the spirit of sharing.

Mrs. Nozizwe Madlala-Routledge, former Deputy Minister of Health, South Africa

My life belongs to the whole community and as long as I live it is my privilege to do for it whatever I can. For the harder I work the more I live. I rejoice in life for its own sake. Life is no brief candle to me. It's a sort of splendid torch which I have got to hold up for the moment and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.

Mfuniselwa John Bhengu, author, South Africa
(from *Ubuntu: The Global Philosophy for Humankind*, 2007: p293)

Creative activities

These activities help us to focus on and explore our values, put them into practice in daily life, and reflect on the results.

⭐ **Ubuntu calendar**

This activity encourages personal responsibility as well as unity.

The changes we see in ourselves help us realise that we shape our destiny according to how we live our values!

Each participant can create their own personal calendar, or the whole group can make a joint calendar.

The facilitator creates a reflective atmosphere and invites the participants to design a calendar to focus on their 'Ubuntu' values during the year, starting from the current month (for example, if this activity is held in August, then the first value selected is for the month of August).

Each person is asked to pick their 'value of the month' at random from a pack of values cards. (A set of cards is provided at the back of this booklet, or you can easily create your own, containing at least 20 cards, with an 'Ubuntu' value written on each card, such as: reconciliation, caring, generosity, acceptance, forgiveness, unity, solidarity, hospitality, respect, harmony, empathy, tolerance, compassion, sharing, dignity etc.).

"Bring that value onto your awareness every day in your prayers, meditation or contemplation. Think about it, feel it, use it in your actions and experience the changes in your life. Notice the positive effect on people close to you and on your community when YOU change. In this small way, your life will bring hope and inspiration to many others, and together we can create a better world."

Participants write the value on their calendar, next to the current month. They then return the value card to the pack and pick another different value for following month.

This activity is excellent for groups, e.g. school classes, the whole school, or other organisations. Each month, one person picks a value for the whole group, so that 12 key values for the year are selected (opposite is an example of a calendar that has been completed, with a value for each month of the year). Everyone then practises the same value and can exchange experiences and inspirations during and at the end of that month.

Materials: Pack of values cards (see back of book)

Time: 20 – 30 minutes

⭐ **Ubuntu cards**

The values cards (Pages 43, 44) are placed in a dish or spread out in the facilitator's hand, and participants are invited to pick a card at random. The value they have selected represents 'your special quality', or 'a compass to guide your actions during the day', etc. (... be innovative!)

These cards can be used in a variety of ways in the classroom, at the workplace, on a journey and at home. Enjoy!

Ubuntu calendar

> *❛ I had the opportunity to participate at an Ubuntu International gathering with several Ubuntu enthusiasts in France in 2019. It was fantastic to interact with people from different cultural backgrounds and engage in values activities in a friendly environment. How beautiful it is when people come together and cherish the common values of love, unity, sharing and cooperation, among others. Surely, the world in which we live today requires us to focus more on developing values that bring people together and build a sustainable shared future for humanity. I am using the tools I was introduced to at the event for my personal development and to support other people in my work.❜*
>
> Dr Gladson Chikwa, Educational Developer in Higher Education, UK, Zimbabwe

MODULE 9
Ubuntu goodbyes

Saying goodbye to friends, family or colleagues is a time to express appreciation for one another. Opposite is a letter of goodbye from an Omani engineer as he leaves the company where he has been working. and below is an account of an emotional farewell in Kenya.

"Sala kahle!"

In South Africa, 'Hamba kahle' means 'Go well'. The reply, 'Sala kahle', means 'Stay well'.

I had been teaching at an international school in Kenya, and finally the day of departure had arrived. I'd said goodbye to my colleagues and friends, and was packing the last of my belongings when there was a gentle knock at the door. I wasn't expecting anyone. I opened the door and there in front of me was a queue of people who had come to say goodbye. There was the old lady from the local market who used to keep the best mangos aside for me; there was Philip who had helped in the house; then the young girl to whom I used to pass down my old clothes; and the two little boys who loved to climb the tree in the garden; there was the dear old Masai gentleman whom I would wave to every day on my way to school; Alice the school cleaner who had helped me to learn Swahili; and several more. I'd assumed that I would never see these people again. Each one in turn held my hand in theirs, looked at me with moist eyes and said, "May you always be happy," "May God go with you," "May your life be blessed." I was speechless, a lump in my throat, and tears in my eyes, as I recognised and accepted their true, unconditional and heartfelt friendship.

Whether they still remember me or not, I shall never forget the invisible gift they gave me.

Helen Sayers

*Dear all,
As I move on, I would like to take a moment to remember and cherish our times together. It's been great interacting and knowing each one of you. Everyone on this earth has been real source of inspiration to me. I have learned from each of you, which has helped me achieve new horizons in my life. I feel pangs of pain when I think of leaving; however I am taking along with me lifelong relationships with best friends, greatest colleagues, and ideal mentors. Finally, perhaps mistakenly, I may have made some people angry or unhappy. Please accept my earnest and sincere apologies. For those who wronged me I extend my unconditional forgiveness.
I need all your prayers and forgiveness to give me peace of mind and happiness in my new life. This is not a goodbye, only "Ila Liqa" or "see you later".
Please keep in touch.*

Yahya Sulieman Al-Yaarubi,
Engineer, Oman

Young artists with René Alemawo, 'Values through Art' trainer dedicated to helping children from all backgrounds to regain their dignity, creativity and happiness. Gorée Island, Senegal

"Hamba kahle!"

Creative activities

These activites can be used to bring the workshop to a close, cementing friendships, creating feelings of unity, joy, and good wishes for each other.

⭐ Feedback & Evaluation

The facilitator asks participants to sit in a circle, reflect back on the whole workshop, and bring to mind a word or short phrase that summarises their experiences. After a minute's reflection, in silence or to music, each person in turn, or at random, shares their feedback.

⭐ Visible and invisible friends revealed!

The activity described in Module 1 can be completed here.

Participants sit in a circle and the facilitator asks one person at random (A) to come into the middle of the circle and tell the group something positive that he or she has observed in his visible friend (B) – meanwhile all are guessing who it can be! A then goes to person B and shakes hands or gives a hug. B then comes into the middle of the circle, talks about a few qualities he or she has seen in his visible friend (C) and then reveals C's identity.

This continues till all friends have been revealed, with much fun and laughter!

⭐ Farewell and expression of appreciation

The facilitator invites participants to say goodbye to each other without speaking. They move around to music, mixing with each other at random, stopping from time to time to 'say goodbye' to the person in front of them – through the eyes and from the heart – acknowledging that person's special qualities.

Variations:
- Continuing the exercise above, participants could be asked to give silent 'blessings' or 'good wishes' to each other, transmitting their sincere feelings for one another. At the end, everyone shares how they felt, and what they 'received' from the others.

- Participants create 'farewell cards' (see 'visiting cards', Module 1).

⭐ Closing ceremony: Congratulations!

Participants stand in two rows with an 'aisle' or 'corridor' between them. The facilitator, and a special guest who has been invited to present certificates of attendance, stand at one end.

A person's name is called. That person goes to the other end of the rows and walks slowly down the aisle. Each participant whispers a brief message or blessing in the person's ear as he or she passes (it can be a value the participant has seen in him, or a good wish for the future). When the person reaches the end of the aisle, he or she is presented with a certificate!

This activity is very effective when done in silence – except for the whispered messages!

APPENDICES

Songs with an Ubuntu message

Lucinda Drayton: War no More

Walk in my shoes,
and I'll walk in yours.
Drink from my cup,
and I'll share from yours.
See through my eyes,
and I'll look through yours.
Feel with my skin,
I'll let you in,
and no more we'll war, no more.
No more we'll war.
Know through my heart,
all that I am.
Peel back the layers
of woman and man.
Walk with my God,
the same one as yours.
Feel with my skin,
I'll let you in,
and no more we'll war, no more.
No more we'll war.
Care for my child
and I'll cherish yours.
Acknowledge my history,
and I'll honour yours.
Know that my hopes and dreams
are just like your own.
Feel with my skin,
I'll let you in,
and no more we'll war, no more.
No more we'll war.

The Hollies: He ain't Heavy

The road is long
With many a winding turn
That leads us to who knows where
Who knows where
But I'm strong
Strong enough to carry him
He ain't heavy, he's my brother
So on we go
His welfare is of my concern
No burden is he to bear
We'll get there
For I know
He would not encumber me
He ain't heavy, he's my brother
If I'm laden at all
I'm laden with sadness
That everyone's heart
Isn't filled with the gladness
Of love for one another
It's a long, long road
From which there is no return
While we're on the way to there
Why not share
And the load
Doesn't weigh me down at all
He ain't heavy he's my brother
He's my brother
He ain't heavy, he's my brother.

Michael Jackson: Heal the World

There's a place in your heart
And I know that it is love
And this place could be much
Brighter than tomorrow.
And if you really try
You'll find there's no need to cry
In this place you'll feel
There's no hurt or sorrow.
There are ways to get there
If you care enough for the living
Make a little space, make a better place.
Chorus:
Heal the world
Make it a better place
For you and for me and the entire human race
There are people dying
If you care enough for the living
Make a better place for
You and for me.
If you want to know why
There's a love that cannot lie
Love is strong
It only cares for joyful giving.
If we try we shall see
In this bliss we cannot feel
Fear or dread
We stop existing and start living
Then it feels that always
Love's enough for us growing
Make a better world, make a better world.
Chorus: Heal the world etc.
And the dream we would conceived in
Will reveal a joyful face
And the world we once believed in
Will shine again in grace
Then why do we keep strangling life
Wound this earth, crucify its soul
Though it's plain to see, this world is heavenly
Be God's glow.
We could fly so high
Let our spirits never die
In my heart I feel
You are all my brothers
Create a world with no fear
Together we'll cry happy tears
See the nations turn
Their swords into plowshares
We could really get there
If you cared enough for the living
Make a little space to make a better place.
Chorus: Heal the world etc.

UBUNTU **41**

Ubuntu Toolkit
Tools to repair, restore & empower our Ubuntu values and virtues

Activity

The facilitator presents each tool, giving examples (from personal experience or from Ubuntu stories). Participants are invited to reflect on how these tools can be used in their lives, then discuss / share ideas in small groups. The chart on the following page can be copied for participants to record personal notes either during the reflection or later. A PowerPoint presentation is available on request.

Tool 1. THE TORTOISE

When things get tough, it can retreat into its shell. A useful tool for times when we need to stand back / detach / observe / take a deep breath / reflect …

Result: We feel more centred and peaceful. We respond instead of reacting. We are able to see things from a new perspective

Tool 2. THE SUITCASE

To travel lightly, we take only the essential itemsand leave the rest behind. A useful tool for times when we need to let go / pack up / apply the brakes to unnecessary thoughts of the past and future.

Result: Less clutter in the mind / we live in the moment / reduced anxiety, guilt & negative emotions / free to be our positive selves.

Tool 3. THE FRUIT TREE

The child throws a stone to get some fruit. If the tree holds on to its fruit it gets damaged and bruised. If it lets its fruit drop, both the child and the tree are happy. A tool to be used when 'stones' come in the form of other people's behaviour or tough situations.

Result: We are able to tolerate and accept. We can offer our 'fruits' - understanding, unconditional love, compassion and patience - instead of irritation, anger or feeling upset / insulted!

Tool 4. THE RIVER

A river meanders on its journey to the sea. If there is a rock in its path, it flows around, and when it looks back the rock seems much smaller! A useful tool when obstacles come in front of us.

Result: We are able to be flexible / go with the flow / adapt / adjust / reconcile / accommodate. We become the master of the situation not its slave!

Tool 5. THE JEWELLER'S LENS

Fake jewellery can look real. A jeweller can tell the difference, with the use of a special lens. A useful tool when objects, people or situations are not what they appear to be …

Result: We are able to discern real from fake / recognise the difference between what is true and what is false / know right from wrong / distinguish between good and bad … We see the diamond under the dust - in others and in ourselves!
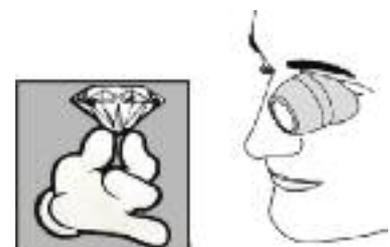
Tool 6. THE SCALES

Symbol of justice and wisdom, of balance. A useful tool for making decisions

Result: We are able to weigh one thing against another / decide what to do based on past experience including our mistakes / judge the consequences of our actions / listen to our conscience/ use our intellect with clarity and precision.

Tool 7. THE LION

Known and respected for its courage. A useful tool when we need to confront a situation or person, or our own weaknesses.

Result: We are able to face challenges when they arise. No longer running away from the problem / procrastinating / finding excuses / exaggerating the situation. Instead, we find our inner strength and turn a mountain into a molehill.

Tool 8. THE ANT

Tiny ants can carry objects bigger than themselves. A useful tool for any task, this tool requires harmonising our differences, valuing the special qualities and talents of others, sometimes sacrificing 'mine' for 'ours'.

Result: Working in cooperation, with a common goal, we can collaborate to achieve great things … United we stand!
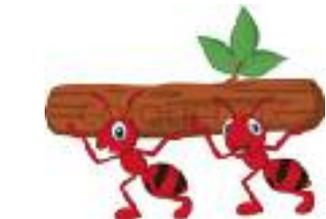
Ubuntu Toolkit – chart for personal comments and reflections

UBUNTU CARDS

(these may be copied onto thick paper to make a set of cards)

OPENNESS	HARMONY	SHARING
COMPASSIONATE	RECONCILIATION	CO-OPERATIVE
APPRECIATIVE	COURAGEOUS	DIGNIFIED
SOLIDARITY	GENEROUS	ACCEPTANCE
GENTLE	FORGIVING	HAPPY

RESPONSIBLE

HEALING

SENSE OF HUMOUR

HONEST

FRIENDLY

LOVING

INTEGRITY

UNITY

INTUITIVE

CARING

PURE-HEARTED

PATIENT

RESOURCEFUL

PEACEFUL

POSITIVE

Feedback from workshop at a higher education college, Oman

Staff

"I think we need to work on the human side as a part of professional development, and this workshop does the job. Building healthy relationships within the workplace is as important as the work we do."

"The workshop was awesome, because it touched us emotionally and it was like a reminder that teaching values is a great part of our career, not only delivering information to our students."

"It was an interesting and refreshing session. It was light and friendly where all the teachers were together in a comfortable gathering. . . . What made it interesting was that it was more practical than theoretical."

"… a very interesting workshop that took us to the deep understanding of social relationships."

" … a fruitful experience of self-discovery. I felt that the workshop was a reminder of what we already know from our religious teachings."

"Interactive. Inspirational."

Students

"I've learned more about myself, others, and how to use my being positively. I've cherished a sense of humanity, unity, happiness, etc. "

"The workshop made me feel like I knew the people who were with me from a long time and it made me feel like I can tell them whatever comes to my mind. Now I can talk with people more than I would before and I get to know them better. I felt Ubuntu in the air when I got in to the room. And there wasn't a specific time during the workshop I don't think that anyone didn't feel Ubuntu."

"Thank you. The workshop is super good discovery about I & myself, I & others, I & the world."

"I felt wonderful during the workshop. It taught me and reminded me of lots of things that I should do in my daily routine.

"I feel that I was open-minded, skeptical, ambitious and I feel that there was community spirit.

It helps me to change negative thinking and to be more confident and to connect with different people from different cultures."

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22. UBUNTU World Forum of Civil Society Networks: a 'network of networks' that aims to unite efforts to build bridges of dialogue among national and international institutions which are focused on promoting peace, dignity and human rights. www.ubuntu.upc.edu

> *I was fortunate enough to attend an Ubuntu retreat in France in 2019 with Helen Sayers and delegates from around the world. It was the most enthralling experience that I have ever had – one that will stay with me forever. I have subsequently used the activities in this book for the retreats, workshops and seminars that I organize and conduct in Egypt, Ghana, USA and UK. They are invariably received with enthusiasm and appreciation. My best wishes to anyone who has the opportunity to share the many gems within this amazing piece of art.*

Cicely Greaves, Principal CEO, Regard 4 VIRTUES, USA

"UBUNTU ...

it is a universal truth; a universal way of life"

Nelson Mandela

" ... UBUNTU. It is part of the gift that Africa will give the world. It speaks to the very essence of being human. When we want to give high praise to someone we say, 'Yu, u nobuntu': he or she has Ubuntu. This means that they are generous, hospitable, friendly, caring and compassionate. They share what they have and are able to go the extra mile for the sake of others.

I am human because I belong, I participate, I share. A person with Ubuntu is open and available to others, affirming of others, does not feel threatened that others are able and good; for he or she has a proper self-assurance that comes with knowing that he or she belongs in a greater whole.

We believe that a person is a person through other persons, that my humanity is caught up, bound up, inextricably, with yours. The solitary human being is a contradiction in terms and therefore when I dehumanize you, I inexorably dehumanize myself."

Reverend Desmond Tutu, Nobel Peace Laureate