**Joyfulness Lesson 7- Part 1**

**Slightly modified from Ruhi Book 3**

**Prayers**

**Sharing of memorization and review of prayer that they are learning:**

**O Thou kind Lord!  I am a little child, exalt me by admitting me to the kingdom.  I am earthly, make me heavenly; I am of the world below, let me belong to the realm above; gloomy, suffer me to become radiant; material, make me spiritual, and grant that I may manifest Thine infinite bounties.**

**Thou art the Powerful, the All-Loving.**

**(Do with SONG- Tim Urbonya)**

**INTRO TO VIRTUE OF JOYFULNESS:**

Did you know that Abdu’l- Baha tells us that happiness helps our spiritual progress- our spiritual growth, and that joy gives us wings? When we are joyful, we are stronger and when we are happy we are able to more quickly understand things?

Joyfulness is one of the spiritual qualities that God has put in our hearts. A heart full of joy attracts the blessings of God. We need to try to be happy and joyful under all conditions. We are joyful when we trust that God is guiding us and we look for the gifts He sends us in each day.

Deep feelings of joy come from things that last- like the feeling of joy in serving others, the love our parents have for us, and knowing right from wrong and choosing to do the right thing. We must try to be like brilliant lamps shedding joy everywhere!

Joyfulness was very important to Abdu’l Baha. He would often ask, **“Are you happy?**” and would **encourage people to be happy**. In New York Abdu’l Baha said, “May everyone point to you and ask, ‘Why are these people so happy?’ I want to be happy…to laugh, to smile, and rejoice in order that others may be made happy by you.’”

**SONGS:**

* I want you to be happy… and may this boundless love… (see video on www.supportingthecoreactivities.org)
* Joy Gives Us Wings
* Bluebird of Happiness

**QUOTE:** (O Son of Man!) **Rejoice in the gladness of thine heart, that thou mayest be worthy to meet me and to mirror forth My beauty.**

REJOICE:

-Jasmine lived far away from her grandparents. When she heard that she would be visiting them during the school holidays, she became very happy! Her heart rejoiced!

-John had studied hard in school. His heart rejoiced when he saw the results from the test he took.

WORTHY:

-Sjona studied very hard and received excellent grades. The teacher praised her for her hard work. Sjona was worthy of her teacher’s praise.

-David always took good care of his brothers and sisters. His parents knew that they could trust him with the children. David was worthy of his parents’ trust.

**What does it mean to you when it says to mirror forth His beauty? Whose beauty? How can we do this?**

GAMES:

**The Ha Game:**

One student lies down on the floor. The next student puts their head on the first one’s stomach. A third student lies down and puts their head on the second student’s stomach. This continues in a zig zag pattern until all students are in place. Then the first student says “Ha”. The second student says “Ha ha”. The third says “Ha ha ha”. This continues until the end or until someone laughs and then you have to start over.

**Dragon’s Tail-** Begin by asking the children to stand in a row, placing their hands on the shoulders of the one in front of them. The first child in the row is the dragon’s head. The last in the row is the dragon’s tail, eager to lash to the right and left in order to escape the head. Until the signal “go” is given, the dragon must be a straight line. One child counts “one, two, three, go!”. On the signal “go”, the head runs around toward the tail and tries to catch it. The whole body must move with the head and remain unbroken. If the head succeeds in touching the tail, the child in the front can continue to the head. If the body breaks before he or she catches the tail, the head becomes the tail, and the next in line becomes the head. The game continues in this way until every child has had a chance to be the head and the tail at least once.

**If have extra time, can play cooperative tag or do parachute: Cooperative Tag-** Each child partners up with another child and links arms, one group is chosen to separate and one becomes the person who is chasing the other person, the person that is it then has to run and link arms on one side with another group and the person on the end of that group then becomes it and has to run (to be safe you have to link arms with someone and the other person that was on the other side of the person that was linking arms with the one that just received the new person has to run and link arms with someone new without getting caught!)

**STORY OF ABDU’L-BAHA:**

Leroy Ioas was an outstanding Bahai who lived a life of service to others. In 1912 when Abdu’l-Baha visited America, he was a young boy. Can you imagine the excitement of this spiritual child at having the opportunity to be meet Abdu’l-Baha?

One day, in Chicago, when he and his father were on their way to the hotel where Abdu’l-Baha was staying, Leroy had an idea: He decided that he wanted to take Abdu’l-Baha some flowers. With the little money he had, he managed to buy a beautiful bouquet of white carnations. But, by the time they reached the hotel, he had changed his mind.

He decided that he did not want to give anything MATERIAL to Abdul-Baha, not even beautiful flowers. He would offer Him his heart. That was the most important thing he had to offer. So, Leroy’s father presented the flowers to Abdul-Baha without mentioning who had brought them.

Abdu’l-Baha then gave a talk to all the friend who had gathered at the hotel to meet Him. During His talk, Leroy sat quietly at His feet and listened to His wise and loving words. Afterwards, Abdul-Baha stood up and shook hands with the guests, giving each one a white carnation as a token of His love.

 Leroy was now standing behind Abdu’l-Baha. **“Oh! I wish He would turn around and give me one of those flowers,**” thought the young boy. Maybe, secretly in his heart, he wanted the Master to know who had really brought Him the beautiful flowers. But, one by one, the white carnations were being given to other people, and it seemed unlikely that Leroy was going to get one.

Then, suddenly , Abdu’l-Baha turned around and fixed His gaze on Leroy Ioas**. His face radiated love and His eyes were full of kindness.**  *And did He hand him a white carnation?* No. Abdu’l-Baha gave Leroy something even more precious. He was wearing a beautiful red rose on His coat. He pulled it off and presented it to the young boy**. Leroy’s heart leaped with joy!** Abdul-Baha DID know who had brought Him the white carnations after all!

God knows what is in our hearts, and when we feel that God is guiding us, and we see that He is working in our lives in special ways, helping us to grow and serve and love, we are happy!

**CRAFT:**

Coloring sheet with carnations and quote from Ruhi material

Make blue birds of joy with “Joy gives us wings!” pasted on to them.

**Closing Prayers**