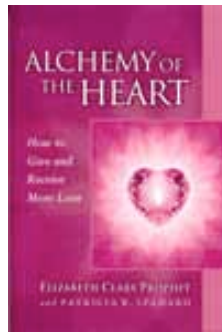


Book Study Groups
Children's Lessons
Based on
Alchemy of the Heart

By Elizabeth Clare Prophet and Patricia R. Spadaro

Alchemy of the Heart offers powerful insights and tools for wholeness based on a deep understanding of the heart. It draws from the wisdom of the world's spiritual traditions to show you how you can nurture your soul through developing heart qualities of love and mercy.



Lesson Two (Based on pages 16 to 32)
Stretching the Muscles of the Heart
For Children ages 3 to 6

Parent/Teacher Preparation: This lesson is taken from chapter one, section three, “*Stretching the Muscles of the Heart.*”

Review the section before you begin.

Review the lesson, including the activities. Please note that the text of what you can say to your child is in *italics*.

Gather the following materials you will need:

- CD and music (optional)
- Pink index cards (the ones used in lesson 1 and enough extras to make duplicate cards)
- Crayons and colored pencils

Note: There are a number of sections in these lessons that include discussion with your child. Discussion is a time for reflection. There are no right answers or wrong answers. The purpose of discussion is to provoke thought and gently lead your child into more practical and spiritual ways of thinking about life.

Set Your Environment:

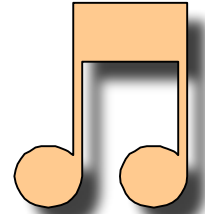
Select a time when both you and your child are rested and happy.

Many parents like to use music to assist in creating a meditative atmosphere in the home. Harp music is associated with the heart. If you have a CD player and harp music, play it as you are preparing yourself and when you and your child begin. You may also wish to play it during brief meditations.

Suggested Music:

Harp music, such as:

Bridget Cruise/Jon O'Connor/George Brabazon
Celtic Treasure: The Legacy of Turlough O'Carolan, Narada
Collection Series.



Overview of the lesson

- You can learn to love more
- Love more by opening your heart
- When someone needs help, do something

How Saint Francis learned to love more



Saint Francis, who lived nearly 800 years ago, is known and loved by millions around the world for his loving heart. He loved all of God's creation so much that birds and animals came around him as he sang to them and gave them food.

Long ago, when Saint Francis lived, there was a terrible disease called leprosy. Leprosy causes the skin to become very sick, turning white and sometimes coming off in patches. It is not pleasant to look at and it is contagious so people with leprosy were usually kept separate from the rest of the people in their town. People with leprosy were called lepers.

Saint Francis, born the son of a wealthy man, was terrified of lepers. One day as he rode his horse along a path, he saw a leper. He wanted to turn his horse and ride away as fast as he could. But he could not. He had learned to love God very much and he suddenly realized he could not say he loved God and turn his back on any part of God's creation.

So he stopped his horse and overcame his desire to run away. He gave the man some money and then he gave the man a hug and a kiss on the cheek. You can imagine the man must have felt so grateful since most people turned away and would not even look at him.

Francis wrote about that day later in his life. He said it was



a turning point in his life and after that, things that had seemed impossible to overcome became easy and even pleasant for him. He had learned to love more than he ever believed possible and it gave him great joy inside.

Maybe there is someone in your life who is like Randy or the leper, someone who needs you and your loving kindness. Have the courage to open your heart.

Activity 1: Opening your heart



Think of someone in your life that might need a little extra kindness. Think of something nice you can do for that person.

Activity 2: How to love more

Draw a picture or act out a scene of someone opening their heart and being kind to someone everyone else is ignoring.

Don't just think about it, do it!

Have you ever been on the playground when someone fell and hurt themselves? They don't need you to ask them if you can do anything for them. They need you to help them up or get a wet paper towel to wipe their cut.

It is the same is someone is feeling sad. They may or may not want to talk about it. Maybe they just need you to go give them a big smile or a hug or tell them a joke.