



A CURRICULUM OF
HOPE FOR A PEACEFUL
WORLD

A Curriculum of Hope for a Peaceful World Newsletter

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SUMMER 2020

Editor's Message

*Dear Readers,
As our editorial board
deliberated the theme
of this issue we quickly
recognized that our
usual content and
format just didn't seem
quite right.*

*We decided our readers
and all of our selves
needed support and
encouragement as we
navigate daily changing
challenges during this
Covid 19 pandemic.
This issue brings you
messages of hope from
some of our Curriculum
of Hope committee
members and some
ideas for taking care of
ourselves during these
difficult times.*

*Jeanne Morascini
Founder*



Here we are, over five months into an event like no other, one that has created physical, emotional, financial, social, and political trauma and drastically altered our normal— perhaps forever. Here in Connecticut we have come through a dark time. Yet during this unnerving part of our life journey, we learned some very important lessons about ourselves and about humanity. The fact that we cannot control the unexpected has never held more truth. We do have control, however, over how we respond. If our eyes and hearts have been open, we have seen a shift in the behavior of humanity around us, and this gives us hope.

Hope grows as we witness the increase of a culture of kindness. Grateful hearts are radiating everywhere, seemingly in a race to outspread and hopefully outlast Covid-19. Our strength flourishes as we watch individuals and communities show appreciation through acts of compassion and generosity. We feel the interconnectedness and there is a comfort in knowing that we are not alone... even when we are.

Hope grows as we ensure that we protect society's fragile and vulnerable by wearing masks and staying apart, even when it breaks our hearts that we cannot visit family and friends. We know we each need to do our part to stop the spread and keep everyone safe.

Hope flourishes as people across the world stand together against injustice. We are committing or recommitting to the value of every life and we're recognizing that we need to do our part to dismantle racism and keep conversations open. We have another chance to get it right and we need to take it.

Social and emotional health has become critical for all of us, not just children. Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) has been previously touted as a means to improve achievement by creating a safe, nurturing and caring classroom culture. We know that SEL will be critical as we return to schooling in the fall. But we also need to apply these self-care strategies to ourselves, giving hope to all of us and especially to those who have suffered from anxiety, depression, and loneliness during the pandemic.

This edition brings you messages of hope from some of our Curriculum of Hope committee members, some ideas for self-care and resources for Social-Emotional Learning. We've figured out that we are so much tougher than we ever knew. We've made peace with unruly hair. We are thankful for having electricity and the internet to connect us. We are strong and we will get through this by having hope.

Janice McKusick
Editor

**“In the midst of winter,
I found there was, within me,
an invincible summer.”**

Albert Camus

WHAT IS HOPE?

What is hope? It is a word used casually every day – “hope you are well,” “hope it will be a nice day tomorrow.” But the word has a more serious meaning, namely —to have a cherished and strong desire or wish that one expects, and depends on, to be fulfilled. Hope is what humans cling to in times of crisis and chaos.

There are so many signs in the awakening of nature that fill us with the hope of renewal. There are more sunny, warmer days; brown stems and grasses opening to incredible beauty; birds chirping and creating new lives. How can we not feel hope in these signs?

Young children and teens are suffering the isolation and lack of physical contact of school mates and teachers, friends and family members. Yet hope comes from the creative ways that learning with loving and caring teachers is being made possible and from the unusual celebration of graduations in 2020 that will never be forgotten.

The elderly are missing the touch of children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, as well as the hugs of friends and neighbors. They are missing visitors and have limited access to the outside world. They are celebrating milestone birthdays, with little or no celebration. But, their hopes are being raised by visitors outside their windows or balconies, along with signs posted by family that allow neighbors and strangers to offer their good wishes, to know that they are not forgotten.

What also brings hope is witnessing the goodness and sacrifices that so many are making to keep others healthy and safe: the distribution of food in neighborhoods, strangers helping strangers. The joy and pleasure of hearing from long time acquaintances and friends, pleasant surprises, a new activity or a resurrected hobby and something newly learned all give us hope.

Let us remember that a positive attitude is the hidden secret behind successfully enduring all manner of trials, and maintaining the hope that one day the world might be a place of peaceful gatherings and sharing.

Anita Satriano
Former Chair
Curriculum of Hope



Staying Connected

We know that to keep ourselves and others healthy and safe we need to maintain physical distancing, but not social distancing. In fact experts warn that we need to be careful not to socially isolate, which can lead to increased stress, depression, anxiety, and even other physical illnesses. So how do we socially interact while maintaining physical distancing?

Many have figured out that the internet can be a lifeline. Not only can you stay in touch via email, you can FaceTime and have Zoom meetings with friends and relatives. There are virtual religious services you can attend. You can sign up for Facebook, which is another great way to connect. It is all free. If you have been hesitant, now is the time. Ask for help if you need it and you will be so glad you did!

What do you do if you have friends who don't use the computer? Start a daily phone tree. Reach out and check in with at least two other people each day.

And don't forget to say hello from behind your mask. Make eye contact, wave, nod, or just say hi!

<https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/wired-love/202004/social-vs-physical-distancing-why-it-matters>

Sound of Hope

A Song of Hope: Musicians from around the globe perform to raise hope during COVID-19. (control + click) Thank you Susan Salesses!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkbDJda24xI&feature=share&fbclid=IwAR2LVPolvgOOaBQZ4H8qT4Egv8rfseQomWpn6vx2lWLIHqbavgh_B7JgZw

**“It's all about hope,
kindness
and a connection
with one another.”
Elizabeth Taylor**

Message of Hope

I am a person of hope. I hope that one of the many scientists that are working on a vaccine for Covid19 will be successful. I hope that law makers, police departments, and other politicians will make changes that will treat all people fairly. And of course, I hope that the world will see peace and all people will be able to live in peace. We all try to do something to keep hope alive and thriving.

During this pandemic, as a member of the world community, I am trying to follow precautions to help slow the virus. We need to have courage to follow the necessary guidelines for staying healthy and keeping those around us healthy. I am not able to contribute to the scientific community that is combating this virus; but hope in the future will pull us through this.

As a person of white skin, I cannot begin to truly understand the racial prejudice that exists in this country. I believe that as a country we can change our mindset to overcome the racial divide that is present. I have hope that we can say and do something when we see injustice without fearing the color of a person's skin. Just as we are being asked to behave differently to slow the virus we must also think and feel differently to overcome the inequities in our society. I am hearing and reading in the news about how cities, towns, and even national politicians are looking at ways to change the operations of their police departments. I have hope that this effort along with education, experience, and sensitivity are steps in the right direction.

In my classroom, I always felt that I worked to promote a peaceful mindset in my students. And as they grew up to be world citizens, I hoped that my students would live the lessons learned in school. I am trying as a member of the Curriculum of Hope Committee to continue to spread the word of hope for peace with workshops, curriculum, and events. There will be a time that we can hold more events for large groups of children where they can interact and discuss their futures.

We are going through such unusual times. I believe we need to keep hopeful that the good of humanity will prevail. Having hope means that as individuals we have courage to always look to the future and always see the best in people. I cannot function without hope in my life. It keeps me positive with my family, friends, and my community. It helps me see the bright side of our world and hopeful that the future will be better.

Pat O'Connell Buckley

Curriculum of Hope, Founding Member

“I will not allow my life's light to be determined by the darkness around me.”

Sojourner Truth

**Gifts You Can Give to Yourself/Self-Care Ideas**

Practice gratitude—Go for a walk—Appreciate your free time—Journal—Declutter—Get rid of 3 things you never use—Clean up your email—Take deep breaths—Stretch often—Listen to a podcast—Help others—Get enough sleep—Limit your news time—Do puzzles—Create a routine—Teach yourself to draw with a YouTube video—Get dressed every day—Learn a new language—Remember this won't last forever.

Message of Hope

I continue to have hope, always trying to see the glass half-full. The recent incidents of police brutality such as the killing of George Floyd have unmasked not only white privilege, but the inequities in health care, education, and housing for people of color. Yes, black lives matter. We will keep reliving the past unless we become uncomfortable, and have difficult conversations about the 400 year's legacy of slavery that continues today. I am hopeful we can learn to embrace our diversity of mind, body, and spirit to draw us closer together.



Remaining hopeful,
Karen Dibala
Curriculum of Hope

Treasure Hunt

I am a beach person. I have been collecting shells and beach stones for as long as I can remember. Throughout my house are jars, bowls and little piles of ocean treasures that I just had to bring home with me. Of course, I always thought I would remember exactly when and where I discovered these little gems, but now I have forgotten.



In one of these tiny heaps of shells, that are on my bathroom windowsill, sits a fortune cookie message. This is the only fortune I recall saving. Again, I can't remember when or where it came from. It says, "Hope is the most precious treasure to a person." Thinking of hope as a precious treasure resonated with me enough to keep this slip of paper for a very long time. More than ever, in the year of 2020, we must hold on to hope.

Hope is optimistic and filled with expectation. Human beings are born with hope. Think about a newborn baby. He or she is looking out into the world for the first time, eager to connect with the people surrounding him/her. How many times have you eagerly approached a baby and made positive loving gestures toward that little one?? We are born with hope, just like we are born with intelligence and a zest for life. Hope is in us; you really can't take it away from someone.

According to the dictionary, despair is the complete loss or absence of hope. I believe that hope is much stronger and present in our world than despair, even in a time like this. You just might have to dig for it, like a treasure.

This is an extreme time of fear and apprehension. The pandemic has us fearing for our lives and racism continues to make many of us fear for our lives and fearful of each other. The civil unrest that is occurring and continually broadcast by the media can easily bring us into the pit of despair. Stay out of that pit.

What is happening to each and every one of us is LIFE. There are hurts, disappointments and harmful events that occur. These tend to accumulate and often bury some of that hope. We can help each other get rid of those layers of hurt and regain our natural optimistic selves.

We can listen to each other. During this time of pandemic, we cannot share the hugs and physical closeness that we desire, but we can still listen. We need to listen to our brothers and sisters of the global majority who have such important stories and messages to tell. Acknowledge one another's fears and concerns. This is a scary time! Ask the question, "When were you scared before?" Listen to the stories. Realize that there are similarities between the past and now, but this is now. We are not little ones; we have knowledge and abilities that we didn't have then. We are not alone, we have each other. Reach out to someone daily. Aren't you thrilled to hear from a friend or relative that you haven't spoken to for ages? Take a risk and connect to people who are different than you. This can be done.

Digging for that hope might take a little more effort than we'd like, but it is so worth it. Think about the wonderful advances in medicine that our society has developed. We will figure this out. We have been together with people from across the world, via Zoom, Skype and other media, whom we might have never met before. There are so many opportunities. There are webinars galore to watch and participate that can assist us in changing our mindset and reconcile some of these hurts of racism that we carry. There are social justice groups, faith groups and community organizations that are still active even during this pandemic. We have a voice. We are no longer little ones. Speak out, write letters, be heard.

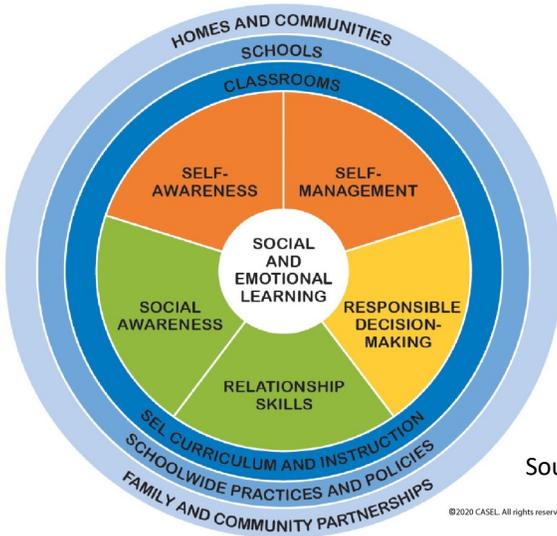
Think about the quality time families have enjoyed with one another. During walks around the neighborhood, I have spoken with many new people. I continually ponder the wonders of nature. No matter what is happening, the sun rises and sets. The moon and stars appear. The spring flowers bloomed, and the woods are full of entertaining wildlife. The waves of the ocean never stop.

I do not mean to overlook the enormous grief, loss of income, hardships and sacrifices that so many people have endured and will continue to for a while to come. This is unprecedented in our lifetime. We need to mourn, grieve and be realistic in our fears. We do not need to sink to despair. We can be mournful and fearful and still have hope.

Remember, hope is always there to lift us up. I believe that hope has been given to us by a Higher Power. It may be buried at times, but that treasure is so precious, it is always there. Take a shovel, dig deep if you must, and find it.



Sue Moon, Chairperson
Curriculum of Hope



Social-Emotional Learning

While it is not new, if you are not in the classroom, you may not have heard of the focus on SEL (Social-Emotional Learning). Since the pandemic however, Social emotional learning (SEL) has become a priority. SEL is critical in the development of children and their growth into adulthood. CASEL, the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning has free resources for educators, parents and caregivers to address SEL. <https://casel.org/covid-resources/>. There are also weekly webinars that you can access. The current webinar is a five-part series: *SEL as a Lever for Equity and Social Justice*. <https://casel.org/weekly-webinars/>

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Hope, Faith and Love

Hope. I am not able to separate hope from her sisters, faith and love. Faith allows me to hold onto hope for a better outcome and love is the basis of human rights and the reason we are so in need of hope today.

“So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love.” 1Corinthians 13:13

In my nearly seven decades of life, I have always been the Pollyanna who sees the bright side of every situation. But during the past nearly four years, I have despaired watching everything that I value being stripped from the fabric of our government. But even now, my Pollyanna nature keeps me focused on hope.

Fast forward to 2020 - In five short months the world has come crashing down around us. The pandemic has killed over 100,000 (and counting) of our beloved citizens – mostly our most vulnerable, due to age or poverty related health issues. The ensuing personal restrictions, loss of employment and closing of schools, churches, restaurants, retail stores, sports events, etc., have created hardships and challenges for citizens. Yet my hope level has remained high as we all have been awed by our health workers’ ability to care for the thousands of sick and hospitalized patients, and by the essential workers who go to work every day to provide everything we need. All of these angels selflessly put their lives and those of their families in jeopardy.

Hopefully, the straw that will break the camel’s back is the peaceful protest against the mistreatment of Black persons by police officers. Years of oppression have reached a boiling point – not only for citizens of color but also white citizens – too often of privilege. I have such hope in our children’s generation. They live Martin Luther King’s creed that it is not the color of your skin but the quality of your character that matters. Even though we are now a deeply wounded divided nation, I have faith that we are aware and uniting, and there is hope. Just as a church is not the building but the community who worship there, our nation is the people who live here – all people.

Our government must support those in need and help them to realize the American Dream with all of their basic needs met, an excellent education, health insurance, a job which will support the family, a comfortable home with a feeling of peace and security. Policies need to be developed for police to collaborate with their residents to make communities loving and safe. We need to reinstate our leadership role and collaboration among other nations and repair the broken relationships with other world leaders. We need to open our borders to asylum seekers and again welcome refugees to join our diverse population. Finally, we need to help Mother Nature, who has shown us in the last few months that a change in our habits can heal our planet and her climate.

Ann Cavanaugh Grosjean
Curriculum of Hope



**“Hope is being able to see that there is light
despite all of the darkness.”**

Desmund Tutu

PEACE I LOOK FOR IT IN SMALL THINGS AND SMALL PLACES

This is from one of the founders of A Curriculum of Hope for a Peaceful World and at 83 years young and with the ongoing request that 'old folks' should stay home, I look for peace here at home.

1. Being alive and waking up each morning in my own home is a blessing.
2. A peaceful sleep and a day with what is familiar is high on the peaceful list.
3. People who have adopted me, making sure I have groceries and are willing to do things I can no longer do for myself.
4. Friends who call to make sure I am okay. Good conversation is always a must and keeps me with an active mind.
5. My pets that give me joy and even when I am having a bad day seek me out and let me know that I am loved.
6. Especially my new puppy Louie who makes me laugh and showers me with doggie kisses.
7. My Church family and my wonderful neighbors that keep me centered and let know I am still needed and valued.

I am grateful to be alive and be a part of the many changes that we are experiencing. The world seems alive for change. Our younger people have kept their promises that change is necessary to our survival and are demanding that our world needs to make significant changes so that everyone can experience justice in order that ALL may experience PEACE.

My prayer is that those of us who have had a long life here on this earth will support youth as they demonstrate peacefully and offer new approaches to solve old problems. They are sincere, they are hopeful and they are smart.

From where I sit today I think of these past several months with the virus, problems welcoming immigrants and looking on with horror as young black men are being killed. These and many other issues that shock us may feel like hopelessness, BUT instead I am inclined to see these problems as a time for cleansing and rethinking how we see ourselves. That is why we must have Justice for all so that we may have PEACE for all. What an opportunity we have to actually experience JUSTICE AND PEACE.

Jackie Abbott

Curriculum of Hope



**"We don't accomplish anything in this world alone...
and whatever happens is the result of the whole tapestry of one's life
and all the weavings of individual threads from one to another
that creates something."**

Sandra Day O'Connor

**Box Breathing**

Box breathing is a mindfulness technique that allows you to become present and more in touch with what goes on inside you. It can reduce stress and anxiety, improve blood circulation, help with digestion and increase lung capacity. You can practice box breathing by inhaling slowly to a count of four. At the end of your inhale, hold your breath for a count of four. Then start to breathe out slowly to the same count. Hold your breath at the end of your exhale for a count of four. Repeat this for a few minutes to help relieve the symptoms of anxiety and calm your mind. It should feel easy and relaxed. Box breathing is also known as the Navy SEAL breathing technique, or tactical breathing, it's a surprisingly easy and effective way to help regain calm and control of your thoughts when under stress. Check this out. <https://quietkit.com/box-breathing/#:~:text=Here%20are%20the%20directions%20%3A%201%20Inhale%20for,4%20seconds%20%28as%20the%20circle%20is%20contracted%29%20>

A Poem of Hope

Hopefulness
Optimism
Possibilities
Expectations

Carol Kraus
Curriculum of
Hope Member



Hope for our Earth

The most important reason for my feelings of great hope for the future are the Sustainable Development Goals, that will continue to guide the world on a path to a sustainable life for all. We have the hope to leave this tumultuous time and to improve life for the people of our planet and achieve worldwide partnership, prosperity and peace. The United Nations introduced the Sustainable Development Goals, also referred to as the SDGs or the Global Goals in 2015. The hope is to achieve these seventeen goals by 2030.

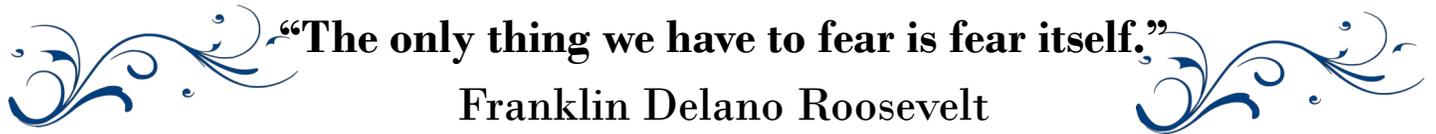
Let's take a deep dive into SDG # 13, Climate Action and a lesson we learned during Covid 19. While the Coronavirus led to the unprecedented tragic loss of lives and jobs, the shelter-in-place orders to attempt to slow the spread of the virus did significantly reduce the amount of CO2 and NO2 in our atmosphere. Satellite data from NASA showed a significant 30 percent drop in air pollution over the northeastern United States – the lowest since 2005. Further study will determine whether the changes were created by weather patterns and if the effects will last as we return to normal. Importantly it did show us that humankind can make a huge difference in our atmosphere in a short period of time whether by individual choice or government mandate and that it is possible to save our planet!

Improved video-conferencing enabled us to work successfully from home. Although far from the ideal of in-person learning in schools, teachers and parents were able to educate our children using distance learning. We made only the necessary trip to the grocery store once every week or two instead of stopping every day on the way home. We enjoyed cooking at home and sharing quality mealtime with the family and then enjoyed that occasional take-out to support our local restaurants. We attended church on Zoom. With our two cars parked in the garage and tens of thousands of planes grounded and commuter trains reduced to a 5 percent schedule, we were able to clean our air. As we return to normal, what are we willing to change to maintain this monumental feat? The United Nations predicts that as soon as we return to normal, emissions will return if not increase. UN Secretary General Antonio Gauderis has proposed a six-point climate positive plan for governments as they reopen their economies to build back better.

The question is where will we go from here? Will we elect a new president who will proudly rejoin the Paris Agreement and make climate change a national priority? (SDG # 13 Climate Action) Will we defund the fossil fuel subsidies and reinvest in green energy? (SDG # 7 Affordable and Clean Energy) Will we reinstate the nearly 100 federal regulations designed to protect our citizens, animals and environment from harmful land, water and air pollution? (SDG #6 Clean Water & Sanitation, #14 Life Below Water and #15 Life on the Land) Will we rejoin WHO (World Health Organization) and reinstate our federal Pandemic Health Preparedness Committee and provide health care for all? (SDG # 3 Good Health & Well Being) Will we provide jobs programs (SDG # 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth) to enable our poor (SDG #1 – No Poverty), food insecure (SDG#2 – Zero Hunger) and unemployed to support their families? Will we financially support education at all levels – especially in compromised communities? (SDG #4) Will we provide equal rights, opportunities and pay to all genders, races, the disabled, LGBT, indigenous, and nationalities? (SDGs # 5 Gender Equalities and #10 Reduced Inequalities) Will we support our farmers and essential workers as they grow, produce and deliver what we need with at least an increased minimum wage? (SDG # 12 Responsible Consumption and Production) Will we invest in our infrastructure and cities and communities to promote a sustainable and green lifestyle? (SDG # 9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure and # 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities) Finally, will we partner with our global family (SDG # 17 Partnerships for the Goals) to achieve justice and peace in our great nation and throughout the world? (SDG # 16 Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions)

Ann Cavanaugh Grosjean
Curriculum of Hope





Founder's Message

Who ever dreamed that our entire planet could be effectively shut down by a viral pandemic? A virus so deadly it has invaded over 10 million world citizens in six months and currently has an unknown future. Naturally living through this devastating, scary time keeps us anxious, on edge, stressed out and especially fearful! As a 91 year old I have unquestionable faith and unshakable hope in the future of our world because I have lived through the WWII years-1941-1945 which impacted people around the world, just as the Corvid-19 virus has in 2020. Throughout the War years, all citizens in each country, from the youngest children to our eldest adults, were involved together in a total commitment that required individual sacrifices as well as all efforts necessary that led our Allied Forces to victory. Now in 2020 we must have that same total commitment to protect ourselves, each other and our world. Everyone bears responsibility to do the right thing for all of us.

Our personal conscious choices now concerning the pandemic, social justice, voting rights, environmental issues, and more will determine the future for us all.

Please choose to join me in having unshakable hope as we all work toward a more healthy, stable, peaceful world.

Jeanne Morascini, Founder



We send warm wishes for happy healing to Jeanne, who broke her leg in June. She doing well and recovering at home.

If you would like to receive a color PDF version by email, please contact **Linda Shea**, Subscription Manager hshea@snet.net

Our newsletter can be found online at: [HTTP://dkgct.weebly.com](http://dkgct.weebly.com)

Curriculum of Hope is a Standing Committee of Connecticut State Organization.

Our intent is to promulgate resources and information, not to endorse products.

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