

CHAPTER SEVEN

DESMOND TUTU: EXPLORING OUR EMOTIONS

Chapter Overview: In this chapter, youth will learn about Nobel Peace Laureate Desmond Tutu and the struggles he encountered as a teenager growing up in South Africa. Youth will explore their own emotions and develop skills for transforming their anger into action.

Theme: Emotions

Peace & Leadership Skills: Transforming Anger

Service-Learning: Educating the Community

Curricular Extensions: apartheid, native vs. colonial ethnic groups, civil rights movements in South Africa and the United States, play writing, study of global diseases

Vocabulary: Youth will need a basic understanding of these terms for this chapter (*review them before or during the lessons as they come up*):

Apartheid
Archbishop
Liberation
Reconciliation
Accountable
Malaria
AIDS



Opener: Emotion Triggers

Have youth get in pairs. Have them share things that they get angry about with their partner. Then have them share things that they get excited about. After both partners have shared, as a whole group, make a list of the things that make them angry and excited with the adult facilitator writing their responses on the chalk/white board or on flip chart paper. Explain that these are called “triggers.” Triggers are things that spark our emotions. There are triggers that make us angry, sad, excited, happy, and frustrated.

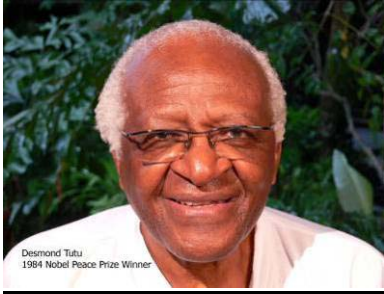
Debrief:

- What are some general categories that describe our anger triggers and our excited triggers? [help youth find the connections between the various triggers and put them into a few categories]
- What do you notice about these triggers?
- Why is it important to think about the things that trigger our anger?



Desmond Tutu’s Story & Discussion

As a group, read Desmond Tutu’s story.



Archbishop Desmond Tutu¹⁴

1984 Nobel Peace Laureate

"True reconciliation is a deeply personal matter. It can happen only between persons who assert their own personhood and who acknowledge and respect that of others.

-Desmond Tutu

Desmond Tutu was born in 1931 in Klerksdorp, a small gold mining town in South Africa. His father was a teacher and his mother was a cook. At the age of twelve his family moved to the large city of Johannesburg. Desmond's father was very strict and well educated. He was the principal of a primary school for black children. Desmond loved to spend time with his father riding bikes around the city or fishing together.

When Desmond was growing up, South Africa was a tough place for black people to live. Desmond and the other black children did not have the chance to go to good schools or to do other things that white children were allowed to do. White people owned most of the land, lived in clean, safe neighborhoods, and had plenty of good food. Black people were forced to live in shacks made of tin instead of houses. They did not have good water or electricity. Black people did not have enough food to feed their families and often could not get jobs because most jobs were for "whites only."

¹⁴ Adapted from PeaceJam interviews and speeches, unless otherwise noted.

"Like any other black child, we lived in a ghetto, and yet, it wasn't as if you went around feeling sorry for yourself. We knew, yes, we were deprived. It wasn't the same thing for white kids, but it was as full a life as you could make it. I mean, we made toys for ourselves with wires, making cars, and you really were exploding with joy! I also loved reading because my father allowed me to read comics, which most people said you shouldn't let your child read because they will spoil him. But that gave me an extraordinary hunger for reading."¹⁵

"My father used to send me to buy newspapers, and I would ride by bicycle. I was the only black kid in that whole area who had a bicycle. Along the way, I'd have three or four white boys taunting me. They called me, "Buk" "Buk." In African, that can mean a pick which is a tool that you can dig with, but it can also mean, "pitch" – the black stuff used on roads. So "Buk Swarte" is 'pitch black'. I didn't know this. I thought they were calling me a pick for digging holes, so when I was a safe distance from them, I used to shout back, "rough, rough!" which is the word for spade that you use for digging! It was only a long time after that I learned they were saying "you pitch, you pitch black. How silly I felt."

"Everything was segregated – white schools were over here and black schools were over there. One of the things that hit me very hard was going to town and I'd see black kids scavenging through the garbage cans of the white schools. And picking out fruit, because you see the government of South Africa gave food to the white schools but not the black schools."

When he was a teenager, Desmond became very sick with a disease called tuberculosis. His lungs were filled with bacteria and he almost died. He had to be in the hospital for almost

¹⁵ <http://www.achievement.org/autodoc/page/tut0int-1>

two years. While Desmond was in the hospital, a man named Trevor Huddleston came to visit him often. Trevor was a white priest who often visited children in the hospital to offer them comfort and keep them company. Trevor would bring Desmond books to read, would play checkers with him, and even tutored him in school subjects so that he didn't fall behind when he was sick. Desmond was black and no white person had ever cared about him or treated him with respect. Desmond grew very fond of Trevor and enjoyed his visits.

After Desmond got better, he went back to school. Desmond wanted to become a doctor and find a cure for tuberculosis. Though his grades were good in high school, he was not able to afford to go to medical school and decided to become a teacher just like his father.

"I was very fortunate; I had very good teachers. One teacher in particular I remember was a man who was teaching us English Literature in what we call matricula, the last 2 years of high school. He really was quite extraordinary. When he spoke of a Shakespearean play, you almost thought that he grew up with Shakespeare!"

After becoming a teacher Desmond discovered that he did not agree with the education that black youth received. It was called "Bantu education," and it was not as good as the education that white youth received. This made Desmond very angry and he decided that he could not continue being a teacher as long as white youth were receiving better educations than black youth. Most of the time black youth only went to school for three hours per day and were taught to be servants to white people.

"I just felt I couldn't be a part of this... I said to myself, sorry, I'm not going to be a **collaborator** in this scheme. Then I asked myself, "What can I do?"

He remembered his good friend Trevor Huddleston and thought that maybe he should become a priest and help people the way Trevor did. Desmond left his teaching job and became a priest. Eventually he became the first black South African to hold the post of **Archbishop** in Cape Town.

South Africa had a government policy called "Apartheid" that upheld a system of unequal laws for people depending on their skin color and background. People were divided into four main groups— White, Indian, Coloured, and Black. Non-whites had a far inferior educational system, inadequate medical care, and substandard public services. The goal of Apartheid was for the 4 million whites to keep control over the 23 million blacks. Black people also had to carry a "pass" with them at all times. This pass was a little booklet that had their fingerprints and their picture in it. Black people also had a curfew. If they were caught without the pass or were caught out past curfew, they were arrested and put in jail or tortured and killed. The white people did not have to carry a pass and could go wherever they wanted at any time. Black people were also not allowed to vote.

"In the land of my birth I could not vote, but a young person of eighteen years of age could vote just because they had white skin..."

It made Desmond Tutu and the other black people in South Africa very angry to have to live with all of these unfair rules. He refused to carry a pass. Instead of using violence to solve the problem, Desmond Tutu decided that the way to make things better in South Africa was to show the world the horrible things that were happening in his country.

"For goodness sake, will they hear, will white people hear what we are trying to say? Please, all we are asking you to do is to recognize that we are humans, too."

He worked with local churches to speak out against the Apartheid government. He led peaceful marches that called for **economic sanctions** against South Africa. He hoped that if countries around the world stopped buying goods from South Africa the government would pay attention and create laws that protected all people – not just whites.

In 1984, Archbishop Desmond Tutu was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his nonviolent work to end Apartheid and bring equality for black people in South Africa. In 1994, Apartheid did end in South Africa. Desmond Tutu and all other black people were allowed to vote for the first time on April 27, 1994. People waited in line for hours and sometimes all day to cast their votes.

“We were on cloud 9. It was like falling in love...it was the day of **liberation** for all of us, black and white together.”

Nelson Mandela was elected as the first black president of South Africa. When Apartheid ended, Desmond helped to create the Truth and **Reconciliation** Commission which worked at healing the pain caused by Apartheid. It allowed the victim to face the people who carried out the unfair laws or took violent action, holding them **accountable** for what they did. He continues to be a world leader in the struggle for human rights and is currently working to help the world understand the seriousness of the spread of diseases such as **malaria** and **AIDS**.

Global Call to Action

In 2006, at PeaceJam’s 10th Anniversary Conference, Desmond and nine other Nobel Peace Laureates issued the Global Call to Action– a ten year campaign that invites youth to work side by side with the Laureates to address core problems facing the world today. Desmond urges youth to specifically focus on “the spread of global disease.” He believes that the spread of global disease is a problem for us

all. If we work together as one human family to tackle these diseases, the world will be a more secure place.

Discussion Questions:

- How did the Truth and Reconciliation Commission help Black People to transform their anger?
- Why did Desmond Tutu and many others decide to not to fight back with guns and tanks? What do you think would have happened if they had?
- Desmond has spent a lot of his life working to tackle HIV/AIDS and other diseases. Why is this important?



Skill Builder: Understanding & Transforming Anger


“We know what triggered Desmond Tutu’s anger and earlier we talked about what triggers our anger. Can you remember what some of those triggers were?” [have youth share a few or read from the sheet created earlier].

Part A: Understanding Anger: Have a group discussion about anger:

- Is anger good or bad? Why? [Anger is not good or bad. It is a natural human emotion like any other.]
- Does anger serve a purpose? If so, what? [It is a survival mechanism. It allows us to defend ourselves in certain situations – like the “fight or flight” reaction to danger.]
- What do you think the world would be like if people NEVER got angry?

Part B: Transforming Anger: “Anger is a natural and necessary human emotion, **but violence is not**. Anger can be such a strong emotion that it can lead to violence if people do not know how to calm themselves or transform their anger into positive action.”

- What are some ways you can calm yourself when you are angry? We could try counting to ten, taking three deep breaths, getting away from the situation, finding something pleasant or calming to think about, etc.
- What are some ways you can “transform” anger –use it to do something positive or helpful? The first step is to identify the specific problem that is causing the anger and try to do something about it — even if the problem does not have a quick solution. We also might try “talking it out” because when we are angry we tend to act without thinking. We can slow down and think carefully about what we want to say and listen carefully to what the other person is saying.

 **Part C: Transformer Boxes:** “Desmond’s father belonged to the Xhosa tribe, who were known for their warring ways – and yet his son grew up to win the Nobel Peace Prize for his non-violent ways. We all have a choice about how we respond to our anger.” Have youth complete the Anger Transformer Machine activity in their PeaceJam Journals.

Debrief:

- What are your anger triggers?
- What are the reasons that these triggers make you angry?
- What are two ways you can calm yourself when you are angry?
- What are two ways you can transform your anger into something positive?

“Without forgiveness there can be no future for a relationship between individuals or within and between nations.”
~Desmond Tutu



Journal/Reflection:

After Apartheid ended in South Africa, Desmond Tutu worked hard to help the black people and the white people “reconcile” or resolve what had happened. A big part of this was giving people a chance to say they were sorry and giving others a chance to forgive them. Think about a time when you had to say you were sorry for something you did or said. What was hard about it and what did you learn? Now think of a time when you forgave someone for doing something mean to you. Was it easy or hard to forgive them and why?



Action/Service: **Educating the Community**

“Desmond Tutu and the other leaders in South Africa started a movement that led to positive changes in South Africa. We are going to do the same thing with our Global Call to Action project – we are going to go out and get the community excited about the issue we are working on by giving a community presentation.” Have youth turn to Chapter 7 in their PeaceJam Journals and locate the Community Presentation Activity.

Community Presentation: Have youth prepare a community presentation about their Global Call to Action project and the issue it addresses. Have them decide who to present it to and what they hope will happen after they have educated their community. They can answer these questions in their PeaceJam Journals.

- Who will we present to and why?
- When and where will we present about our issue and project?
- What do we want to say? What is our message?
- How will we present our issue and describe our project (e.g., PowerPoint, skit, poster board)?
- What do we want people to do after they see our presentation? What action do we want them to take?

After youth do their community presentation have them reflect on how it went and what they will do differently for their next presentation. Also have them think about what next steps they need to take to continue educating their community about what they are doing (e.g., set up a booth, visit classrooms).



Curricular Extensions

Content Area	Activity
<p>Writing <i>Use writing process elements to communicate for a variety of purposes and to a variety of audiences</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Cartoon Strip</u>: have youth create a cartoon strip that summarizes their life stories. Have them create themselves as a character and be creative about how they write out the storyline – it can be completely fictional or loosely based on their real lives. 2. <u>Play Writes</u>: have youth work together in small groups to write a short play about Desmond Tutu, dealing with anger or forgiveness and reconciliation. 3. <u>Anger Around Us</u>: have youth write an essay on the impacts of anger in their lives and in their community. 4. <u>Additional Journal or Essay prompts</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Can you imagine what it would be like to have to stay in the hospital for two years like Desmond had to do? What would you miss the most?
<p>Reading <i>Read for perspective and multicultural understanding</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>PeaceJam Book</u>: have youth read Chapter 5 of the <u>PeaceJam Book</u> which highlights Tutu’s work and words about finding a path to non-violence. 2. <u>Civil Rights Reading</u>: have youth read accounts of civil rights struggles in their country or other countries around the world such as <u>Through My Eyes</u> by Ruby Bridges, the first black child to attend an all white school in the USA’s divided south and <u>Two Dogs and Freedom</u> by The Open School children in South Africa.
<p>Communication <i>Demonstrate effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Act it Out</u>: have youth rehearse and act out the plays that they wrote (see Writing Section). Have them decide who to perform for (e.g., younger children, peers, senior citizens) and what message they would like to send. 2. <u>Anger into Action</u>: have youth do a presentation for their school or community about ways to turn anger into action.
<p>Geography <i>Understand how to use maps and other geographic tools</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Study of Africa</u>: have youth explore the geographical diversity of Africa, comparing and contrasting South Africa to other countries in the continent. 2. <u>Horn of South Africa</u>: have youth study the horn of Africa and how being at the tip of Africa has impacted South Africa’s history.
<p>Civics & History <i>Identify historical, geographic, social, and economic factors that have shaped society</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Civil Rights Movements</u>: have youth compare and contrast the civil rights movements in the United States with the civil rights movement in South Africa. 2. <u>Rainbow Nation</u>: Desmond Tutu calls South Africa the Rainbow Nation because of the many ethnic and tribal groups that live there. Have youth study the history and relationships among various tribes and colonial groups that make up the population of South Africa. 3. <u>AIDS</u>: have youth study the AIDS epidemic and its impact in South Africa and around the world.
<p>Research <i>Use a variety of technological and</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <u>Internet Search</u>: have youth search for information on the diseases that impact the children of Africa including statistics, stories, and possible

information resources to gather, synthesize, and share information

- solutions.
2. **Analysis:** have youth analyze how the issues facing South Africa connect to their Global Call to Action project and the Global Call to Action.

Resources

Books:

Rochman, Hazel. Somehow Tenderness Survives: Stories of Southern Africa. HarperTrophy, 1990.

These 10 stories by South African writers of various races vividly describe the disturbing and far-reaching consequences of growing up under apartheid. Ages 12 and up.

Sisulu, Elinor. The Day Gogo Went to Vote. Little Brown, 1999.

A young girl accompanies her hundred-year-old great-grandmother to the polling place in the first election in which black South Africans are allowed to vote. [Picture book]

The Open School in Soweta. Two Dogs and Freedom. Foxrock Books, 1998.

Drawings and observations about life in South Africa by black South African children.

Internet Sites

www.tutu.org The Desmond Tutu Peace Foundation.

<http://www.un.org/av/photo/subjects/apartheid.htm>. Historical images of Apartheid in South Africa.

http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1984/index.html. Desmond Tutu's biography and Nobel Prize acceptance speech.

Videos & DVDs

Witness to Apartheid. Dir. Kevin Harris, Sharon Sopher. DVD. 1986.