

ZEN PICTURE BOOK FOR CHILDREN

Introduction

Dear Parent,

This book has been written keeping your child in mind. With the passing of time, life for children is becoming more stressful and competitive. Children are supposed to grow quickly and learn all what they can quickly too. Our children are changing; with undue stress, they are turning violent, morose, depressed, self-centered, disrespectful, rude and selfish. In other word, they are turning different by the day.

This book will positively help the child change his attitude towards the world he lives in. Either you may read this story to the children while explaining it to them or ,if the children can read and understand English well, they may read this book independently.

This story is about a boy in Japan who was rude and stubborn. He lost his parents at an early age and was looked after by his grandparents while his neighbor, who was also his father's best friend, guides this little boy to understand the hidden secrets of nature and science, which this boy shares in this book with other children. At fifteen, today this boy has acquired knowledge which a person four times his age may be ignorant of. This book will definitely help even the parents understand some facts of life.

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I am Haruto Hayashi from Japan.



Hello friends,

Meet me, I am Haruto Hayashi from a small village called Nagaike, in district Yamashiro in Japan. I was born on the 25th December 2000. I am 15 year old now. I come from a family of

peasants and now live with my grandparents. I want to share my life's story with someone like you, will you hear me patiently? Please do so, maybe you will find it interesting too like other children.



My home in Nagaike , Japan

Even though I was born on the 25th December, on Christmas day, the day Lord Jesus was born. But as a boy I had never been good. I neither liked going to school nor respected my parent's feelings. I always went against their wishes and did all what they never wanted me to do. Everyone in my family loved me but they did not like my behavior; I was always very rude and stubborn. My teachers in the school always complained to my parents about me. My parents and grandparents were afraid; I would grow up to be a

vagabond, putting their heads down in this small village, where my grandparents are respected. In this small town of Nagaike everyone knows everyone. People here are so good; they find out who all are going hungry to bed; they come with meals for the hungry families, telling them to return the favor when they can afford to by feeding other hungry families. They never complain about my mischief to my parents; thinking, maybe it will embarrass them.

My life changed suddenly on 22nd March 2010, when I got the news of my parents who met with an accident and died on the spot. While coming back from school, I met my neighbor and my father's best friend, Mr. Takahashi, who asked me to reach home quickly as my grandparents were waiting for me with some news. He looked morose and his lips were dry and parched. His face gave an expression of worry, sadness and gloom. As a ten year old, it bothered me little about his feelings and problems. On reaching home and learning the unfortunate news, I realized the expression on Mr. Takahashi's face was not because of any of his problem or feelings but it was due to mine. He was sad to lose his neighbor and his best friend and worried for my future. The shock of my parents' death left me in a very puzzled state of mind. As a child it was very difficult to reconcile with the situation and I was unable to express myself to the world. Momentarily, I thought maybe

they will come back to life, maybe the news is incorrect. After the funeral was over and we returned home, I thought to myself, if only I could turn the clock; I would never trouble my parents or anyone again. The nights turned cold and lonely, as I was the only child of my parents. I missed the conversation between my parents just before going to sleep and their instructions to me for the next day. The glass of warm milk that in those cold nights, which my mother offered me while I was almost asleep. After I had fallen asleep, my mother would tuck me in with a blanket. Suddenly everything changed and I was doing almost everything all on my own. It was no fun; this is when I realized how much time and energy it takes for parents to bring up children. How much they loved me and in return I only troubled them.



My grandparents

Grandparents, even though loved me, could never take my parent's place ever. They were caring and loving but they were not

authoritative and as close to me as my parents. I missed being stubborn and rude. No one in this world will ever entertain my bad behavior, this I had to remember and follow for the rest of my life.



Funeral procession of my parents.

THE NEXT MORNING

Next morning I met and wished Mr. Takahashi who invited me to his home for a bowl of soup. Mr. Takahashi was not only our neighbor but also a very good friend of my father. He was a very quiet person, I never saw him getting angry ever. He was well behaved and kind to all. He led a simple life and believed in simplicity in all what he did. When I met him in the morning, I

found him to be a reflection of my father. In him I got solace and comfort. He called me to his side, putting his hand on my shoulder and holding me close to him, he said to me , “ Haruto, now onwards I am your dad and my wife your mom. I want you to spend one hour every evening with me so that we can talk and I can see your father in you, I miss him too”. Mr. Takahashi spoke little but his messages were always clear and to the point.....

When he saw me sad and lonely, missing my parents, he had a small piece of information for me which brought me a permanent comfort; words which I can never forget. He said.....

With birth and death this world has witnessed billions of births and deaths of man, plants and creatures alike. What you see today may be replaced with a new one tomorrow. There is no difference between you, me and the earth you see below- this is oneness of the universe called the universal truth. So feeling sad and missing your parents are all natural, the same way I am missing my best friend, your dad, but it is all in the mind.....

I never realized how Mr. Takahashi would change my life forever by spending one hour every day, gradually changing my thoughts, behavior and actions.

The first day I spent an hour with him, it started with a warm bowl of vegetable soup. While I sipped the soup slowly, as is the custom here, Mr. Takahashi calmly took stock of my studies and my home. He asked about what I ate today and how did the school go. Then he said something which, maybe, even older people never thought about. He asked me “ Haruto, you have seen the sky, the moon, the sun, water, land, trees, man and women, girls and boys, good and bad fruits and vegetables, animals and so many living and non-living things around in your little span of life but did you ever see any.....

“This leaves us to understand only one thing, believe in reality and help and love one another. We should find God within us and not outside, exactly the same way some people find Satan within themselves by committing sin of many grades and shades”, said Mr. Takahashi.....

MY REGULAR VISITS



This visit, each evening to Mr. Takahashi's home became interesting and I began to learn many hidden secrets of nature and science at a very early age. I may have lost my parents and I miss them every minute of my life, but the words and knowledge of Mr. Takahashi was gradually strengthening my inner self and I felt like a different person altogether. Most of what he taught me every evening could neither be found in any book nor known to most people. When I narrated some of the teachings of Mr. Takahashi to my school teachers, they stood spellbound and asked me where I learnt these hidden facts of life.....

He taught me the secrets of a successful life which I am going to share with you in this book.

Once he said “Everyone wants their children to become Doctors, Engineers and what not. Every parent wants their children to earn lots of money and become a learned person, this would make them proud. What the parents forget is, with knowledge in any branch of profession one should also learn to be a successful human being. Let me give an example, if only becoming successful professionally was everything then why do even doctors, engineers and attorneys go to their physicians for treatment? Why do these people even have enemies, divorces and court cases? All these, only because they are good and successful in their profession but not good and successful as human beings” The secret to a successful life is simple and easy to find provided you have the will to achieve it.....

HIDDEN SECRETS TO SUCCESS

As humans, the first and foremost duty for us is to understand that we are all living creatures like other creatures with a physical body. Birth, growth, suffering and happiness are common to all of us with death and decay as our ultimate goal.

Words, which we use every day to express, explain and describe our feelings, things and instructions are limited and an inferior form of communication. Therefore, we need to sharpen our inner intuition and the ability to understand other living beings and creatures better. We need to use fewer words in our sentences to express or instruct ourselves. We need to also use many small sentences. This will keep our message clear with lesser grammatical mistakes. Before we talk, we should quickly form a correct sentence in our mind and check it before we utter it. This way we will speak slowly but correctly.....

FOCUS YOUR MIND IN WHATEVER YOU DO.

Focus, is what you need, the moment you learn to read your alphabets. Some may focus early some later. With focus in whatever you do, you will find good results in school, society and in your profession. Our mind is a non-stop working machine, until the day we die. We have endless information stored in the mind. Information, which we never knew we know are also stored in our mind and one fine day we realize we knew something which we

never thought we knew. Mind is a marvel machine and we need to respect and maintain it. The best way to maintain our mind is to empty it once a day. This is not difficult for any one; it is only how much control we have over our minds. When we learn to control our minds we will learn to empty it and think nothing at that moment.....

A STRONG MIND IS A SUCCESSFUL MIND

Mind, said Mr. Takahashi, should be strong and humble at the same time. Mind should be able to bear adversities as well as stay calm and composed when at its peak achievements, like being in power, authority and wealth. This is a true mind. We should not get disturbed at trifles nor lose our mind at small things in life. Remember, if we do not control our mind, our mind will control us; meaning, our emotions, sentiment and activities will be guided by what our mind thinks and see, which may not be correct or true.....

Most of us usually categorize people as good or bad, friendly or unfriendly. This is not true. We are neither good nor bad. Our good and bad qualities are based upon our interaction with that person. We may find him bad; others may find him to be a good person. In the same way, food that we may detest and never ever think of having may be a delicatessen for people of another land and region. So we cannot certify someone to be a good or a bad person, it is just that we are all different, but our source of existence is one- the earth.....



Children loving their pets.

SIMPLE AND CONTROLLED ACTIVITES.

As we grow, we perform tasks each day and do innumerable activities too. All the tasks and all the activities may never be correct 100% always, thus, leaving room for any backlash or bad effect of our deeds. This, in due course of time, accumulates and the results are damaging and worrisome. To maintain a peaceful and quality life, we must either check each and every activity we perform each day, which is difficult, or maintain a simple lifestyle with simple food, thoughts, actions and behavior.....

LEARN TO SEE YOUR OWN NATURE.

We always observe others and create our opinion of other people. We never stop to study and look into our own nature. Once we learn to observe our own mind, behavior and activities, we learn

to correct ourselves and eliminate our weaknesses gradually. This self-observation will eventually lead us to a very high stage of knowledge called “Enlightenment” meaning, knowing the truth of our existence.....



We must learn to see our own nature.

We are weak and our minds are weak when we show anger. When we are unable to justify a cause, reason any argument or lose a fight, we generally get angry. This anger is the cause of our illness. Anger mostly stems from our within, our mind; weakness being the cause.....



These people have lost their minds as well as their souls.

RESPECT LIVES,

The bad effect of killing living being is showing on the society by the day. Violence and crime was always there since the early days; today it has become a household name. Terrorism, war, senseless shooting of innocent women and children, undue war, crime of various types, murder, violence of grave nature and disrespect to other people are all the curse of living on dead animals. Saints like Jesus Christ, Buddha, and most others and philosophers like Confucius, Aristotle, Plato, and others were all vehemently against killing.....

The greatest religion is the religion of humanity where we have, within us, love, compassion, mercy, care, charity and hope for all other living beings.



FINDING HAPPINESS IN OUR LIVES.

Since time immemorial we human beings have been trying to find the true meaning of and also find happiness in our lives and the lives of our loved ones. It is estimated that happiness is the most sought after commodity in this world, followed by wealth and power. Unfortunately, we have not been able to find the true meaning of happiness in our lives in spite of many Saints in the past explaining ways to the road to happiness. What we mistake for happiness is our possessions of material things in this world which does not give us happiness but comfort. With comfort comes an easier life, with easier life comes relief; relief brings smile on our faces. This is not happiness; it is only a temporary phenomenon of relief and comfort which should never be mistaken for happiness.

ELIMINATE SUFFERING FROM YOUR LIFE FOREVER.

Once Mr. Takahashi made me write and learn some basic and noble truth of life and also the path to pure living. I would like to share those with you.....

People go to different lands in search of peace, it is foolishness; peace comes from within and not outside.

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