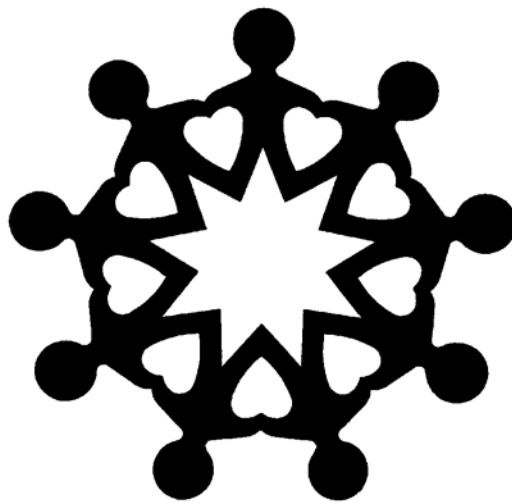


**CORE CURRICULUM
FOR
SPIRITUAL EDUCATION**

SPIRITUAL FOUNDATIONS FOR RACE UNITY



Your souls are as waves on the sea of the spirit; although each individual is a distinct wave, the ocean is one, all are united in God.
Every heart should radiate unity, so that the Light of the one Divine Source of all may shine forth bright and luminous.

‘Abdu’l-Bahá

PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK

**SPIRITUAL
FOUNDATIONS
FOR RACE
UNITY**

**PARTICIPANT
HANDBOOK**



**CORE
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- INTRODUCTION
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Environments for the Building
of Prejudice-Free
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- MODULE FOUR A New Design for Race Unity:
From Words to Action
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Journal

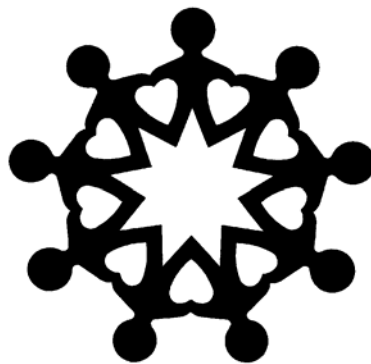
Journal

Journal

CORE CURRICULUM FOR SPIRITUAL EDUCATION

SPIRITUAL FOUNDATIONS FOR RACE UNITY

PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK



INTRODUCTION

Welcome, Devotions, and Introductions

Overview of the Core Curriculum

Overview of Spiritual Foundations for Race Unity

GETTING TO KNOW YOU SPIRITUALLY

- 1. Identify at least three virtues or spiritual qualities that you have worked to develop in your lifetime:**

1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	

- 2. Identify at least two spiritual qualities you would like to develop or improve in your character:**

1.	
2.	
3.	

- 3. How would developing these qualities improve your ability to relate to other people, at home, at work, in your community?**

- 4. Identify steps you can take to develop these virtues, starting here at this gathering and carrying forward into your life after this:**

Virtue #1	Virtue #2

Learning Framework

Strain every nerve to acquire both inner and outer perfections, for the fruit of the human tree hath ever been and will ever be perfections both within and without. It is not desirable that a man be left without knowledge or skills, for he is then but a barren tree. **Then, so much as capacity and capability allow, ye needs must deck the tree of being with fruits such as knowledge, wisdom, spiritual perception, and eloquent speech.**

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, *BAHÁ'Í EDUCATION*, #9



KNOWLEDGE

A keen awareness of information and facts. The remembering and recall of previously learned material.

WISDOM

True comprehension and insight. The discovery, through experience, of the meaning of information and facts. Wisdom is acquired through experience, consultation, reflection, inspiration and an evolving understanding of spiritual truth.

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION

Penetrating inner vision and the acquisition and utilization of a Bahá'í perspective. The discovery of purpose and meaning. The bringing to bear of Bahá'í spiritual values, principles and laws upon the individual's expanding consciousness of issues and problems. As such it includes the capacity to apply, analyze, and evaluate, using Bahá'í Law, principles and qualities as the standard for discernment.

ELOQUENT 'SPEECH'

The ability to articulate knowledge, understanding and beliefs in a clear and comprehensive way. For the purposes of the Core Curriculum the definition of eloquent 'speech' has been extended beyond articulated language to include the manifestation of all the behaviors that reflect the internalization of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

- Additional explanation of this learning framework is available in the booklet “Summary of the Core Curriculum for Spiritual Education,” pages 7-10, and in *Foundations for a Spiritual Education*, pages 99-142.

Overview of Spiritual Foundations for Race Unity



As to racial prejudice . . . it should be regarded as constituting the most vital and challenging issue confronting the Bahá'í community at the present stage of its evolution. .

..

SHOGHI EFFENDI, *ADVENT OF DIVINE JUSTICE*, PAGE 28

To discriminate against any race, on the ground of its being socially backward, politically immature, and numerically in a minority, is a flagrant violation of the spirit that animates the Faith of Bahá'u'lláh. . . .

SHOGHI EFFENDI, *ADVENT OF DIVINE JUSTICE*, PAGE 29

Freedom from racial prejudice, in any of its forms, should . . . be adopted as the watchword of the entire body of the American believers, in whichever state they reside, in whatever circles they move, whatever their age, traditions, tastes, and habits. It should be demonstrated in every phase of their activity and life, whether in the Bahá'í community or outside it, in public or in private, formally as well as informally, individually as well as in their official capacity as organized groups, committees and Assemblies.

It should be deliberately cultivated through the various and every-day opportunities, no matter how insignificant, that present themselves, whether in their homes, their business offices, their schools and colleges, their social parties and recreation grounds, their Bahá'í meetings, conferences, conventions, summer schools and Assemblies.

It should, above all else, become the keynote of the policy of that august body which, in its capacity as the national representative, and the director and coordinator of the affairs of the community, must set the example facilitate the application of such a vital principle to the lives and activities of those whose interests it safeguards and represents.

SHOGHI EFFENDI, *ADVENT OF DIVINE JUSTICE*, PAGE 30

A rectitude of conduct which . . . offers a striking contrast to the deceitfulness and corruption that characterize the political life of the nation and of the parties and factions that compose it; an inter-racial fellowship completely purged from the curse of racial prejudice which stigmatizes the vast majority of its people -- these are the weapons which the American believers can and must wield in their double crusade, first to regenerate the inward life of their own community, and next to assail the long-standing evils that have entrenched themselves in the life of their nation.

SHOGHI EFFENDI, *ADVENT OF DIVINE JUSTICE*, PAGE 34

Purpose of Spiritual Foundations for Race Unity



The purpose of this Spiritual Foundations for Race Unity is to gain insight into the application of the Bahá'í Writings to issues of race unity and apply our understanding to the implications for spiritual education. With this insight, we explore how to develop strategies for the structuring of environments that facilitate unity building and the creation of a prejudice-free community.

DISCUSSION GUIDELINES



1. Invite God's assistance.
2. Speak your own thoughts--with love, courtesy, care and moderation.
3. Welcome different opinions.
4. Maintain confidentiality.
5. Listen more than you talk. Share the time.
6. Look for the good in each other. Avoid criticism.

Objectives for Spiritual Foundations for Race Unity



Then so much as capacity and capability allow, ye needs must deck the tree of being with fruits such as knowledge, wisdom, spiritual perception and eloquent speech.

Knowledge: Read and deepen on the Bahá'í Writings on race unity and become empowered to further study and research.

Wisdom: Develop a heightened level of awareness and recognition of issues of race unity and an understanding of the necessary spiritual development/personal transformation necessary to become truly united.

Spiritual Perception Gain insight into the application of the Bahá'í Writings to issues of race unity and their implications for the spiritual education and training of humanity.

Eloquent 'Speech' Articulate the central importance of the application of the principles of Bahá'u'lláh and the Bahá'í Writings to the elimination of all prejudices and the achievement of race unity.
Develop strategies for the structuring of environments to enable individuals and communities to facilitate prejudice-free learning.
Identify strategies to systematically promote the principle of Race Unity in the Bahá'í community and in the community at large.

CORE CURRICULUM FOR SPIRITUAL EDUCATION

SPIRITUAL FOUNDATIONS FOR RACE UNITY

PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK



Module One

Themes

Spiritual Framework for the Race Unity Worker

Standards of the Race Unity Worker

Historical Legacy of the Race Unity Worker

The Spiritual Framework for Race Unity Work

Focus Topics

1. What is the relationship between the Covenant and race unity work?
2. What are the new patterns of personal behavior that individuals must acquire?
3. How has Bahá'u'lláh's Covenant helped in your personal transformation?



Say: O leaders of religion! Weigh not the book of God with such standards and sciences as are current amongst you, for the Book itself is the unerring Balance established amongst men. In this most perfect Balance whatsoever the peoples and kindreds of the earth possess must be weighed, while the measure of its weight should be tested according to its own standard, did ye but know it.

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, *THE KITÁB-I-AQDAS*, PG. 56, ¶ 99

Who is the man amongst you that can rival Me in vision or insight? Where is he to be found that dareth to claim to be My equal in utterance or wisdom?...We have decreed, O people, that the highest and last end of all learning be the recognition of Him Who is the Object of all knowledge...Him Who is the Dayspring of this Light, through Whom every hidden thing hath been revealed.

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, *THE KITÁB-I-AQDAS*, PGS. 56-57, ¶ 101-102

The differences among the religions of the world are due to the varying types of minds. So long as the powers of the mind are various, it is certain that men's judgements and opinions will differ one from another. If, however, one single, universal perceptive power be introduced – a power encompassing all the rest – those differing opinions will merge, and a spiritual harmony and oneness will become apparent.

SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS OF 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ, PG. 63

Naught but the celestial potency of the Word of God, which ruleth and transcendeth the realities of all things, is capable of harmonizing the divergent thoughts, sentiments, ideas, and convictions of the children of men. Verily, it is the penetrating power in all things, the mover of souls and the binder and regulator in the world of humanity.

SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS OF 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ, PG. 292

Nothing can be effected in the world, not even conceivably, without unity and agreement, and the perfect means for engendering fellowship and union is true religion...

With the advent of the Prophets of God, their power of creating a real union, one which is both external and of the heart, draws together malevolent peoples who have been thirsting for one another's blood, into the one shelter of the Word of God. Then a hundred thousand souls become as one soul, and unnumbered individuals emerge as one body.

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ, *THE SECRET OF DIVINE CIVILIZATION*, PGS. 73-74

...that which hath streamed forth from the Most Exalted Pen is conducive to the glory, the advancement and education of all the peoples and kindreds of the earth. Indeed, it is the sovereign remedy for every disease, could they but comprehend and perceive it.

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, *TABLETS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH*, P. 73

The power of the Covenant is as the heat of the sun which quickeneth and promoteth the development of all created things on earth. The light of the Covenant, in like manner, is the educator of the minds, the spirits, the hearts and souls of men.

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ, QUOTED IN *GOD PASSES BY*, P. 239

Firmness in the Covenant means obedience so that no one may say, 'this is my opinion,' nay rather he must obey that which proceeds from the Pen and Tongue of the Covenant.

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ, *THE POWER OF THE COVENANT*, PART II, P. 33

Know this for a certainty that today, the penetrative power in the arteries of the world of humanity is the power of the Covenant. The body of the world will not be moved through any power like unto this. This Spirit of the Covenant is the real Centre of love and is reflecting its rays to all parts of the globe, which are resuscitating and regenerating man and illuminating the path to the Kingdom.

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ, *THE POWER OF THE COVENANT*, VOL. II, INTRO.

The Covenant is the 'axis of the oneness of the world of humanity' because it preserves the unity and integrity of the Faith itself and protects it from being disrupted...."

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE, *THE COVENANT*, P. 18

Is it within human power...to effect in the constituent elements of any of the minute and indivisible particles of matter so complete a transformation as to transmute it into purest gold? Perplexing and difficult as this may appear, the still greater task of converting satanic strength into heavenly power is one that We have been empowered to accomplish....The Word of God, alone, can claim the distinction of being endowed with the capacity required for so great and far-reaching a change.

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, *GLEANINGS FROM THE WRITINGS OF BAHÁ'U'LLÁH*, P. 200

Can any power withstand the penetrative influence of the Word of God? Nay, by God! ...For these divine injunctions tame every ferocious beast, transform the creeping insect into a soaring bird, cause human souls to become angels of the Kingdom, and make the human world a focus for the qualities of mercy.

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ, *SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS OF 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ*, PG. 293

In the Days of the Guardian

A Talk by the Hand of the Cause of God Leroy Ioas
Transcribed from a recording made in Johannesburg, South Africa
October 31, 1958



“ . . . I want to say a few words now about the Guardianship. I’ve told you about the life of the Guardian, his guidance, his foreknowledge. Shoghi Effendi was a very remarkable young man, and of course, he just worshipped ‘Abdu’l-Bahá.

“ And when ‘Abdu’l-Bahá passed away, the whole world became dark for him. All light had gone out. And when he came to the Holy Land, he had in mind, from the things ‘Abdu’l-Bahá had said to him, and I am telling you what he said, that ‘I had in mind that ‘Abdu’l-Bahá would give me the honor of calling the great conclave . . . together . . . which would elect the Universal House of Justice. And I thought in His Will and Testament that that was probably what He was instructing be done.’

“ ‘But,’ he said, ‘instead of that, I found that I was appointed the Guardian of the Cause of God.’

He said, ‘ I didn’t want to be the Guardian of the Cause. In the first place, I didn’t think I was worthy. Next place, I didn’t want to face these responsibilities. . . .’

“ ‘I didn’t want to be the Guardian. I knew what it meant. I knew that my life as a human being was over. I didn’t want it, and I didn’t want to face it. So as you’ll remember, I left the Holy Land. And I went up into the mountains of Switzerland, and I fought with myself until I conquered myself. Then I came back and I turned myself over to God, and I was the Guardian.’

“ ‘Now,’ he said, ‘Every Bahá’í in the world, every person in the world, has to do exactly that same thing. Whether you’re a Hand of the Cause, whether you’re a Knight of Bahá’u’lláh, whether you’re a member of a national assembly, whether you’re a teacher, whether you’re a pioneer, whether you’re an administrator, regardless of what you are, with anything in the Cause, every Bahá’í must fight with himself and conquer himself. And when he has conquered himself, then he becomes a true instrument for the service of the Cause of God. And not until then! . . . This is what every Bahá’í in the world should know.’

“ And this is one of the main things I want you to get out of this talk tonight. The Guardian’s instructions that every individual must fight with himself, must conquer himself, must overcome his lower nature, must overcome his self, and turn himself over to God, so that the Holy Spirit can function through you. For when the Holy Spirit functions through you, then you will gain victory after victory. Because the Holy Spirit is the creative aspect of God and it cannot do other than win victories and make successes for the Cause.”

Qualities, Attributes and Responsibilities of the Race Unity Worker



Therefore, our duty lies in seeking to polish the mirrors of our hearts in order that we shall become reflectors of that light and recipients of the divine bounties which may be fully revealed through them.

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ, *PROMULGATION OF UNIVERSAL PEACE*, PG. 15

O ye loved ones of the Lord! This is the hour when ye must associate with all the earth's peoples in extreme kindness and love, and be to them the signs and tokens of God's great mercy. Ye must become the very soul of the world, the living spirit in the body of the children of men.

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ, *SOME ANSWERED QUESTIONS*, PG. 196

In this wondrous age...the commandments of God are not delimited, not restricted to any one group of people, rather have all the friends been commanded to show forth fellowship and love, consideration and generosity and loving-kindness to every community on earth.

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ, *SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ*, PGS. 20-21

Recite ye the verses of God every morn and eventide. Whoso faileth to recite them hath not been faithful to the Covenant of God and His Testament...

BAHÁ’U’LLÁH, *KITÁB-I-AQDÁS*, PG. 73

Rest ye assured that if a soul ariseth in the utmost perseverance and raiseth the Call of the Kingdom and resolutely promulgateth the Covenant, be he an insignificant ant he shall be enabled to drive away the formidable elephant from the arena, and if he be a feeble moth he shall cut to pieces the plumage of the rapacious vulture.

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ, *SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ*, PG. 209

For the attributes of the people of faith are justice and fair-mindedness; forbearance and compassion and generosity; consideration for others; candor, trustworthiness, and loyalty; love and loving-kindness; devotion and determination and humanity.

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ, *SECRET OF DIVINE CIVILIZATION*, PG. 55

Humanity, torn with dissension and burning with hate, is crying at this hour for a fuller measure of that love which is born of God, that love which in the last resort will prove the one solvent of its incalculable difficulties and problems. Is it not incumbent upon us, whose hearts are aglow with love for Him, to make still greater effort, to manifest that love in all its purity and power in our dealings with our fellow-men? May our love of our beloved Master, so ardent, so disinterested in all its aspects, find its true expression in love for our fellow-brethren and sisters in the faith as well as for all mankind. I assure you, dear friends, that progress in such matters as these is limitless and infinite, and that upon the extent of our achievements along this line will ultimately depend the success of our mission in life.

SHOGHI EFFENDI, *BAHÁ'Í ADMINISTRATION*, PG. 62

He hopes that especially in the Amity work you will be guided to do the very best, for that is the outstanding social problem of that country. If that issue remains and drags and the existing distrust among the colored and white be left to wax stronger, as the Master said, the streets will actually run with blood. From our point of view, this problem can only be tackled from a spiritual angle, for only by spiritual awakening can this misunderstanding and prejudice vanish. We are often apt to follow the modern attitude of mind and consider economic issues the common denominator of all our problems. With their spiritual approach, the Bahá'ís could achieve more than any other movement.

ON BEHALF OF SHOGHI EFFENDI, LETTER DATED 12/7/30 TO INDIVIDUAL BELIEVER
ATTACHED TO LETTER DATED 2/4/85 ON BEHALF OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE
TO NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES

Strive ye, therefore, with the help of God, with illumined minds and hearts and a strength born of heaven, to become a bestowal from God to man, and to call into being for all humankind, comfort and peace.

SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS OF 'ABDU'L-BAHÁ, PGS. 249-250

*If you be truly united,
if you agree to promote that which is the essential
purpose, and to show forth an all-unifying love,
I swear by Him who causeth the seed to split
and the breeze to waft, so great a light will shine forth
from your faces as to reach the highest heavens, the fame
of your glory will be noised abroad, the evidences of
your preeminence will spread throughout all regions,
your power will penetrate the realities of all things, your aims
and purposes will exert their influence upon
the great and mighty nations, your spirits will encompass
the whole world of being, and ye will discover yourselves
to be kings in the dominions of the kingdom,
and attired with the glorious crowns of the invisible realm,
and become the marshals of the army of peace,
and princes of the forces of light and
stars shining from the horizon of perfection,
and brilliant lamps shedding their radiance upon men.*

'Abdu'l-Bahá

True Spiritual Consultation

Excerpt from a talk by ‘Abdu’l-Bahá from
Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 72-73



“The most memorable instance of spiritual consultation was the meeting of the disciples of Jesus Christ upon the mount after His ascension. They said ‘His Holiness Jesus Christ has been crucified and we have no longer association and intercourse with Him in His physical body; therefore we must be loyal and faithful to Him, we must be grateful and appreciate Him, for He has raised us from the dead, He made us wise, He has given us eternal life. What shall we do to be faithful to Him?’ And so they held council. One of them said ‘We must detach ourselves from the chains and fetters of the world; otherwise we cannot be faithful.’ The others replied, ‘That is so.’ Another said ‘Either we must be married and faithful to our wives and children or serve our Lord free from these ties. We cannot be occupied with the care and provision for families and at the same time herald the kingdom in the wilderness. Therefore let those who are unmarried remain so, and those who have married provide means of sustenance and comfort for their families and then go forth to spread the message of glad-tidings.’ There were no dissenting voices; all agreed, saying, ‘That is right.’ A third disciple said, ‘To perform worthy deeds in the kingdom we must be further self-sacrificing. From now on we should forgo ease and bodily comfort, accept every difficulty, forget self and teach the Cause of God.’ This found acceptance and approval by all the others. Finally a fourth disciple said, ‘There is still another aspect to our faith and unity. For Jesus’ sake we shall be beaten, imprisoned and exiled. They may kill us. Let us receive this lesson now. Let us realize and resolve that though we are beaten, banished, cursed, spat upon and led forth to be killed, we shall accept all this joyfully, loving those who hate and wound us.’ All the disciples replied, ‘Surely we will – it is agreed; this is right.’ Then they descended from the summit of the mountain and each went forth in a different direction upon his divine mission.

“This was true consultation. This was spiritual consultation and not the mere voicing of personal views in parliamentary opposition and debate.”

U.S. and Bahá'í Activity to Eliminate Prejudice: A Comparison from 1900-1990s

	U.S.	Bahá'í
1900	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Early years of Jim Crow era • Lynching of Blacks • Atlanta Race Riots (1906) • Springfield, Illinois Riot (1908) • Founding of Niagara Movement (1905) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Louis G. Gregory learns of Bahá'í Faith in 1907 and becomes a Bahá'í in 1909 • Washington D.C. Bahá'í community “partially segregated”
1910	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founding of NAACP (1910) • Founding of the National Urban League (1911) • East St. Louis Riot (1917) • Garvey Movement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Abdu’l-Bahá visits America (1912) • Speaks to interracial audiences about racial unity and love. Warns about possibility of future race riots • Marries a white and black Bahá'í to demonstrate the Bahá'í principle of racial unity
1920	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NAACP steps up campaign against lynching of blacks • Garvey Movement rises and declines • Increased residential segregation in northern/southern cities • Racial discrimination in jobs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ‘Abdu’l-Bahá instructs Agnes Parsons to “arrange a convention in Washington for amity between the colored and the white” (1920) • Race amity era in Bahá'í community begins expanding contacts with black and white leaders in race relation field • Decline of interest in race amity (1924) • Sadie Oglesby, black Bahá'í, complains that Bahá'í community is losing black Bahá'ís (1927) • American Bahá'í community starts new stage of “progress toward racial unity” (1927)
1930	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Depression Era • Democratic coalition of blacks/ethnics/etc. • Interracial cooperation in labor movement • Radical Interracialism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “...large proportion of...active black Bahá'ís in the mid-1930s... recent entrants, from the era of emphasis on racial amity” • More race amity activities • Bahá'í interracial teams tour South (1931-33) • Ambivalence of the national community toward the active promotion of racial unity from 1926-39 • Publication of <i>The Advent of Divine Justice</i>, with emphasis on “the most challenging issues” (1939)
1940	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Phillip Randolph threatens to march on Washington to protest racial discrimination in defense industries • President Roosevelt issues executive order banning employment discrimination in defense industries • Detroit Race Riot (1943) • President Truman desegregates armed services (1948) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newly established Race Unity Committee begins mobilizing Bahá'í community around “most challenging issue” • <i>Bahá'í News</i> starts published articles on racial diversity to educate Bahá'í community • Committee publishes book, <i>Race and Man</i>, which includes Bahá'í and non-Bahá'í references on Race (1943) • RUC discontinues (1947)

U.S. and Bahá'í Activity to Eliminate Prejudice: A Comparison from 1900-1990s

	U.S.	Bahá'í
1950	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. troops in Korea “Battle Field Test in the making” (1950) • The Supreme Court Brown Decision • Alabama Bus Boycott (1956) • Governor Orval Faubus resists integration of Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas (1957) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death of Louis Gregory (1951) • Message to All-American Conference from Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith on racial issues (1953) • Appointment of Interracial Teaching Committee (1954) • IRTC reaching out to blacks and Native Americans (1957)
1960	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth of Civil Rights Movement • Civil Rights Act of 1964 • Voting Rights Act of 1965 • Riots in Detroit/Newark (1967) • Assassination of Martin Luther King (1968) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuation of Annual Race Amity Day observances • NAACP recognition of American Bahá'í community's work in race relations (1964) • Black Bahá'í voices concerns over racial issues within Bahá'í community
1970	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Black Power Movement gaining influence in black community • Increase of white flight • Rise of black political control of major cities • Increase of black poverty and social pathology in central cities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large numbers of rural southern blacks join Bahá'í Community • American Bahá'í Community increasing its racial and ethnic diversity, e.g. Asians • Increase in Iranian Bahá'ís due to persecution of Bahá'ís in Iran
1980	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the use of “Racial Politics” by Neo-Conservatives • Growing white resistance to affirmative action and other remedial efforts • Miami Riot (1981) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued influx of Iranian Bahá'ís • Race Unity Committee continues its work • <i>The American Bahá'í</i> continues to publish sections on racial unity and racial and ethnic populations in American Bahá'í communities
1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased racial segregation in metro areas • “Deepening despair of racial minorities” • Rodney King/L.A. Riot (1992) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Models of Racial Unity Conference in Atlanta (1990) • Local race unity programs and activity growing • Joint project “Models of Unity: Racial, Ethnic, and Religious” conducted by Human Relations Foundation of Chicago and American NSA (1991) • Publication of <i>Vision of Racial Unity: America's Most Challenging Issue</i> (1991) • The National Teaching Plan focuses on the twin principles of Race Unity and Gender Equality. • Widespread television broadcast of “The Power of Race Unity” as part of the National Teaching Plan.

My Personal Plan



CORE CURRICULUM FOR SPIRITUAL EDUCATION

SPIRITUAL FOUNDATIONS FOR RACE UNITY

PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK



Module Two

A New Race: The Human Race

Themes

Destiny of Children as a New Race

Standards and Attributes of a New Race

Transformation

**NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE
BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES**

536 SHERIDAN ROAD, WILMETTE, ILLINOIS 60091-2849 • EMAIL: SECRETARIAT@USBNC.ORG

November 17, 1993

To the Attendees of the Prejudice Free Forum

Dear Bahá'í Friends,

Our children are at risk. Daily they are victimized by the perverse and persistent belief that skin color is the measure of human value.

All children are our children. Therefore we cannot sit idly by while growing numbers of innocent ones are tortured by the violence, hunger, poverty and hopelessness which result from national subscription to the false doctrine of racial inequality.

Our charge is to educate a generation of children free of prejudice and firmly rooted in the principle of the oneness of the human family. These children will grow to become champions of racial equality and leaders of a spiritual and social revolution of values, ways of life, and social institutions which will change fundamentally the spirit of character of our nation. They will work tirelessly to restore justice and equity in every aspect of life. They will not tolerate discrimination on the basis of race, sex, culture, ethnicity, or religion.

We have not a moment to lose. This work is of the greatest urgency and highest priority. As you read this letter, be mindful that while racial prejudice is diminishing among older Americans, it is growing faster and more virulent than ever among youth.

Acceptance of Bahá'u'lláh, knowledge of His teachings and obedience to His laws are the only hope our nation and its children have. We must train and prepare heroic champions of the Heavenly Army of the Lord of Hosts. It is a task we are privileged to do.

Our love and prayers are with you every moment.

With warm regards,

Robert C. Henderson
Secretary-General

Attributes of the Prejudice-Free Person



I desire distinction for you. The Bahá'ís must be distinguished from others of humanity. But this distinction must not depend on wealth – that they should become more affluent than other people. I do not desire for you financial distinction. It is not an ordinary distinction I desire; not scientific, commercial, industrial distinction. For you I desire spiritual distinction – that is, you must become eminent and distinguished in morals. In the love of God you must become distinguished from all else. You must become distinguished for loving humanity, for unity and accord, for love and justice. In brief, you must become distinguished in all the virtues of the human world – for faithfulness and sincerity, for justice and fidelity, for firmness and steadfastness, for philanthropic deeds and service to the human world, for love toward every human being, for unity and accord with all people, for removing prejudices and promoting international peace. Finally, you must become distinguished for heavenly illumination and for acquiring the bestowals of God. I desire this distinction for you. This must be the point of distinction among you.

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ, *THE PROMULGATION OF UNIVERSAL PEACE*, p. 190

From the tenderest childhood the children must be taught by their mothers the love of God and the love of humanity; not the love of the humanity of Asia, or the humanity of Europe, or the humanity of America, but the humanity of humankind.

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ, *STAR OF THE WEST*, v. IX, #7, PG. 87

The period of youth is characterized by strength and vigor and stands out as the choicest time in human life. Therefore you should strive day and night so that endowed with heavenly strength, inspired with brilliant motives and aided by His celestial power and heavenly grace and confirmation, you may become the ornaments of the world of humanity, and preeminent among those who are initiated into true learning and the love of God. You must be distinguished amidst men by your sanctity and detachment, loftiness of purpose, magnanimity, determination, noble-mindedness, tenacity, the elevation of your aims and your spiritual qualities; that you may become the means of exaltation and glory for the Cause of God and the dawning places of His heavenly bestowals...’Abdu’l-Bahá eagerly anticipates that each one of you may become even as a fearless lion moving in the pastures of human perfection and a musk-laden breeze wafting over the meads of virtue.

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ, QUOTED IN *UNRESTRAINED AS THE WIND*, PG. 36

Our greatest efforts must be directed towards detachment from the things of the world; we must strive to become more spiritual, more luminous, to follow the counsel of the Divine Teaching, to serve the cause of unity and true equality, to be merciful, to reflect the love of the Highest on all men, so that the light of the Spirit shall be apparent in all our deeds, to the end that all humanity shall be united, the stormy sea thereof calmed, and all rough waves disappear from off the surface of life’s ocean henceforth unruffled and peaceful.

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ, *PARIS TALKS*, PG. 87

A Bahá'í child must be trained according to the moral precepts of Bahá'u'lláh, he must be taught daily of the love of God; the history of the Movement must be read to him, the love of humanity must be inculcated into every fiber of his being and the universal principles be explained to him in as easy a manner as can be devised....Children must be brought under the control of the love of God and under spiritual influence from their earliest youth.

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ, *STAR OF THE WEST*, v. 7, NO. 15, 142

He urges you all to devote particular attention to the contact with racial minorities. In a country which has such a large element of prejudice against its colored citizens as the United States, it is of the greatest importance that the Bahá'ís – and more especially the youth – should demonstrate actively our complete lack of prejudice and, indeed, our prejudice in favor of minorities.

We cannot very well prosecute a teaching campaign successfully . . . if we do not in our home communities demonstrate to the fullest extent our love for the people who spring from the African population!

ON BEHALF OF SHOGHI EFFENDI, LETTER DATED 11/11/51 TO LOUHELEN BAHÁ'Í SCHOOL SENIOR YOUTH SESSION, U.S.A., IN *BAHÁ'Í YOUTH*, PG. 18

Let them call to mind, fearlessly and determinedly, the example and conduct of 'Abdu'l-Bahá while in their midst. Let them remember His courage, His genuine love, His informal and indiscriminating fellowship, His contempt for and impatience of criticism, tempered by His tact and wisdom. Let them revive and perpetuate the memory of those unforgettable and historic episodes and occasions on which He so strikingly demonstrated His keen sense of justice, His spontaneous sympathy for the down-trodden, His ever-abiding sense of the oneness of the human race, His overflowing love for its members, and His displeasure with those who dared to flout His wishes, to deride His methods, to challenge His principles, or to nullify His acts.

SHOGHI EFFENDI, *THE ADVENT OF DIVINE JUSTICE*, PG. 29

White and negro, high and low, young and old, whether newly converted to the Faith or not, all who stand identified with it must participate in, and lend their assistance, each according to his or her capacity, experience, and opportunities, to the common task of fulfilling the instructions, realizing the hopes, and following the example, of 'Abdu'l-Bahá.

SHOGHI EFFENDI, *THE ADVENT OF DIVINE JUSTICE*, PG. 28

The companions of God are, in this day, the lump that must leaven the peoples of the world. They must show forth such trustworthiness, such truthfulness and perseverance, such deeds and character that all mankind may profit by their example.

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, QUOTED BY SHOGHI EFFENDI IN *THE ADVENT OF DIVINE JUSTICE*, PG. 19

ONENESS IMPLIES AN ORGANIC CHANGE



“The principle of the Oneness of Mankind – the pivot round which all the teachings of Bahá’u’lláh revolve ...is not merely to be identified with a reawakening of the spirit of brotherhood and goodwill among men, nor does it aim solely at the fostering of harmonious cooperation among individual peoples and nations...Its message is applicable not only to the individual, but concerns itself primarily with the nature of those essential relationships that must bind all the states and nations as members of one human family...It implies an organic change in the structure of present-day society, a change such as the world has not yet experienced.”

SHOGHI EFFENDI, *WORLD ORDER OF BAHÁ’U’LLÁH*, PGS 42-43

“We belong to an organic unit and when one part of the organism suffers all the rest of the body will feel its consequence. This is in fact the reason why Bahá’u’lláh calls our attention to the unity of mankind.”

ON BEHALF OF SHOGHI EFFENDI, *BAHÁ’Í NEWS*, #64, 7/32, PG. 4

*“A race of men,
incomparable in character,
shall be raised up which,
with the feet of detachment,
will tread under all who are
in heaven and on earth,
and will cast the sleeve of holiness
over all that hath been created
from water and clay.”*

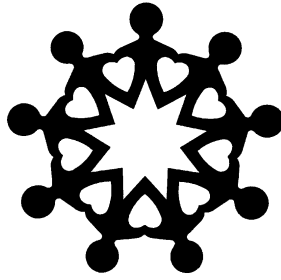
BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, QUOTED IN *THE ADVENT OF DIVINE JUSTICE*, PG. 31

- 1) Transformation of the Heart
- 2) Transformation of Family Life
- 3) Transformation of the Community

CORE CURRICULUM FOR SPIRITUAL EDUCATION

SPIRITUAL FOUNDATIONS FOR RACE UNITY

PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK



Module Three

Creating Racially Harmonious Environments for the Building of Prejudice-Free
Communities

Themes

A Shared Vision of Oneness

A Shared Participation by All

A Shared Approach: Love, Service, Prayer

A Shared Vision of Oneness The Vision of Race Unity

Statement of the National Spiritual Assembly

- a) Identify and re-state, in one or two sentences, the most important, principle idea(s) expressed in the section they reviewed.

- b) Develop a way in which this idea can be communicated to children simply and directly so that they can understand it and share it with others. Participants might use any medium they wish to communicate these ideas. Encourage them to be creative and provide any supplies they might need.

The Vision Of Race Unity

America's Most Challenging Issue

A Statement by the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States

Racism is the most challenging issue confronting America. A nation whose ancestry includes every people on earth, whose motto is *E pluribus unum*, whose ideals of freedom under law have inspired millions throughout the world, cannot continue to harbor prejudice against any racial or ethnic group without betraying itself. Racism is an affront to human dignity, a cause of hatred and division, a disease that devastates society.

Notwithstanding the efforts already expended for its elimination, racism continues to work its evil upon this nation. Progress toward tolerance, mutual respect, and unity has been painfully slow and marked with repeated setbacks. The recent resurgence of divisive racial attitudes, the increased number of racial incidents, and the deepening despair of minorities and the poor make the need for solutions ever more pressing and urgent. To ignore the problem is to expose the country to physical, moral and spiritual danger.

Aware of the magnitude and the urgency of the issue, we, the National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States, speaking for the entire U.S. Bahá'í community, appeal to all people of goodwill to arise without further delay to resolve the fundamental social problem of this country. We do so because of our feeling of shared responsibility, because of the global experience of the Bahá'í community in affecting racial harmony within itself, and because of the vision that the sacred scriptures of our Faith convey of the destiny of America.

I

The oneness of humanity is the pivot round which revolve all the teachings of the Bahá'í Faith. It is at once a statement of principle and an assertion of the ultimate goal of human experience on the planet. More than a century ago, Bahá'u'lláh, the Prophet-Founder of the Bahá'í Faith, wrote: *"The well-being of mankind, its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established."* It is a principle that issues naturally from the genesis and purpose of human existence. The Word of God as presented in the Bahá'í writings offers compelling insights as in the following examples:

"Veiled in My immemorial being and in the ancient eternity of My essence, I knew My love for thee; therefore I created thee, have engraved on thee Mine image and revealed to thee My beauty."

"Know ye not why We created you all from the same dust? That no one should exalt himself over the other. Ponder at all times in your hearts how ye were created. Since We have created you all from one same substance it is incumbent on you to be even as one soul, to walk with the same feet, eat with the same mouth and dwell in the same land, that from your inmost being, by your deeds and actions, the signs of oneness and the essence of detachment may be made manifest. Such is My counsel to you, O concourse of light! Heed ye this counsel that ye may obtain the fruit of holiness from the tree of wondrous glory."

"All men have been created to carry forward an ever-advancing civilization. The Almighty beareth Me witness: To act like the beasts of the field is unworthy of man. Those virtues that befit his dignity are forbearance, mercy, compassion and loving-kindness towards all the peoples and kindreds of the earth."

Having gone through the stages of infancy and turbulent adolescence, humanity is now approaching maturity, a stage that will witness *"the reconstruction and demilitarization of the whole civilized world—a world organically unified in all the essential aspects of its life."* In no other country is the promise of organic unity more immediately demonstrable than in the United States because this country is a microcosm of the diverse populations of the earth. Yet this promise remains largely unrealized even here because of the endemic racism that, like a cancer, is corroding the vitals of the nation.

For too much of its history and in so many places the human race has squandered its energy and resources in futile efforts to prove the unprovable: that one portion of itself, because of separation by geography, a difference in skin color, or the diversity of cultural expression, is intrinsically distinct from another portion. The ignorance and prejudice on which such efforts are founded have led to endless conflicts in the name of the sanctity of tribe, race, class, nation, and religion.

Paradoxical as it may seem, in the consistency of these negative efforts across the spectrum of the race, humanity has proved the exact opposite: it has affirmed its oneness. The proof is in the fact that, given the same circumstances, all people, regardless of ethnic or cultural variety, behave essentially the same way. In the futility of its efforts to classify and separate its diverse elements, humanity has become disoriented and confused. Unaided by the divine influence of religion, people are incapable of achieving a proper orientation to their innermost reality and purpose and are thus unable to achieve a coherent vision of their destiny. It is in this respect that the Bahá'ís find relevancy, direction, and fulfillment in the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh, the Founder of their Faith.

The oneness of humanity is a spiritual truth abundantly confirmed by science. Recognition of this truth compels the abandonment of all prejudices of race, color, creed, nation, and class—of *“everything which enables people to consider themselves superior to others.”* The principle of the oneness of humankind *“is no mere outburst of ignorant emotionalism or an expression of vague and pious hope.... It does not constitute merely the enunciation of an ideal.... It implies an organic change in the structure of present-day society, a change such as the world has not yet experienced.”*

II

The application of the spiritual principle of the oneness of humanity to the life of the nation would necessitate and make possible vast changes in the economic status of the non-white segments of the population. Although poverty afflicts members of all races its victims tend to be largely people of color. Prejudice and discrimination have created a disparity in the standards of living, providing some with excessive economic advantage while denying others the bare necessities for leading healthy and dignified lives. Poor housing, deficient diet, inadequate health care, insufficient education are consequences of poverty that afflict African Americans, American Indians, and Hispanic Americans more than they afflict the rest of the population. The cost to society at large is heavy.

Evidence of the negative effect of racial and ethnic conflict on the economy has prompted a number of businesses and corporations to institute educational programs that teach conflict resolution and are designed to eliminate racial and ethnic tensions from the workplace. These are

important steps and should be encouraged. If, however, they are intended primarily to save the economy, no enduring solution will be found to the disastrous consequences of racism. For it cannot suffice to offer academic education and jobs to people while at the same time shutting them out because of racial prejudice from normal social intercourse based on brotherly love and mutual respect. The fundamental solution—the one that will reduce violence, regenerate and focus the intellectual and moral energy of minorities, and make them partners in the construction of a progressive society—rests ultimately on the common recognition of the oneness of humankind.

It is entirely human to fail if that which is the most important to people's self-perception is denied them—namely, the dignity they derive from a genuine regard by others for their stature as human beings. No educational, economic, or political plan can take the place of this essential human need; it is not a need that businesses and schools, or even governments, can provide in isolation from the supportive attitude of society as a whole. Such an attitude needs to be grounded in a spiritual and moral truth that all acknowledge and accept as their own and that, like the oxygen that serves all equally, breathes life into their common effort to live in unity and peace. Absence of the genuine regard for others fostered by such truth causes hopelessness in those discriminated against; and in a state of hopelessness, people lose the coherent moral powers to realize their potential. This vitalizing truth, we are convinced, is summarized in the phrase: the oneness of humankind.

So essential is the principle of the oneness of humanity to the efficacy of educational programs that it cannot be overemphasized. Without its broad influence such programs will not contribute significantly to the development of society. The very fact that businesses are themselves implementing educational programs is indicative of the glaring deficiency of the entire educational system. As we have already said, beyond the mechanisms of education lies the essential prerequisite of a proper attitude on the part of those dispensing curricula and, even more important, on the part of society as a whole. On this basis, education is not only the shortest route out of poverty; it is the shortest route out of prejudice as well. A national program of education, emphasizing the values of tolerance, brotherhood, appreciation for cultures other than

one's own, and respect for differences would be a most important step toward the elimination of racism and, as a consequence, the bolstering of the economy.

III

The persistent neglect by the governing bodies and the masses of the American people of the ravages of racism jeopardizes both the internal order and the national security of the country.

From the day it was born the United States embraced a set of contradictory values. The founding fathers proclaimed their devotion to the highest principles of equality and justice yet enshrined slavery in the Constitution. Slavery poisoned the mind and heart of the nation and would not be abolished without a bloody civil war that nearly destroyed the young republic. The evil consequences of slavery are still visible in this land. They continue to affect the behavior of both Black and White Americans and prevent the healing of old wounds.

Healing the wounds and building a society in which people of diverse backgrounds live as members of one family are the most pressing issues confronting America today. Her peace, her prosperity, and even her standing in the international community depend to a great extent on the resolution of this issue.

That the virulence of the race issue in America attracts the attention of the entire world should spur this country to an unprecedented effort to eliminate every vestige of prejudice and discrimination from her midst. America's example could not fail to have a profound influence on world society nor could it fail to assist the establishment of universal peace. *"For the accomplishment of unity between the colored and white,"* the Bahá'í writings proclaim, *"will be a cause of the world's peace."*

The responsibility for the achievement of racial peace and unity in the United States rests upon both Black and White Americans. To build a society in which the rights of all its members are respected and guaranteed, both races must be animated with the spirit of optimism and faith in the eventual realization of their highest aspirations. Neither Black nor White Americans should assume that the responsibility for the elimination of prejudice and of its effects belongs exclusively to the other. Both must recognize that unity is essential for their common survival. Both

must recognize that there is only one human species. Both must recognize that a harmoniously functioning society that permits the full expression of the potential of all persons can resolve the social and economic problems now confounding a society wracked with disunity.

It is evident that both Black and White Americans in large numbers are feeling deeply disappointed and frustrated by what each group perceives to be a failure of the efforts in recent decades at effecting progress in the relations between the races. To rationalize this failure, both have been reacting by retreating to the more familiar ground of racial separation. As the problems with crime and drug addiction mount, the tendency is to use the seeming intractability of these problems as a measure of the failure of years of struggle on the part of both to overcome the barriers of centuries. Formidable as is the challenge yet to be met, can it fairly be said that no significant progress has taken place since the days of the sit-ins at lunch counters across the South?

Similarly, the victims of a protracted and entrenched racial discrimination seek relief in the notion that Black Americans, White Americans, American Indians, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans are so distinctly different from one another that all of them must stake out their own cultural and social territories and stay within them. Would this be sensible? Would it not be a retreat from the reality of our common humanity? Would it not be a formula for the total breakdown of civilization? Those who raise the call for separation preach a grim doctrine indeed. If the nation is seriously to submit to such a view, where exactly will either the Black or the White Americans divide their cultural heritage, one from the other?

Racism runs deep. It infects the hearts of both White and Black Americans. Since without conscious, deliberate, and sustained effort, no one can remain unaffected by its corrosive influence, both groups must realize that such a problem can neither easily nor immediately be resolved. "Let neither think that anything short of genuine love, extreme patience, true humility, consummate tact, sound initiative, mature wisdom, and deliberate, persistent, and prayerful effort can succeed in blotting out the stain which this patent evil has left on the fair name of their common country."

Both groups must understand that no real change will come about without close association, fellowship, and friendship among diverse people.

Diversity of color, nationality, and culture enhances the human experience and should never be made a barrier to harmonious relationships, to friendship, or to marriage. “O well-beloved ones!” Bahá’u’lláh wrote, “*The tabernacle of unity has been raised; regard ye not one another as strangers. Ye are the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch.*”

IV

Our appeal is addressed primarily to the individual American, because the transformation of a whole nation ultimately depends on the initiative and change of character of the individuals who compose it. No great idea or plan of action by the government or other interested organizations can hope to succeed if the individual neglects to respond in his or her own way as personal circumstances and opportunities permit. And so we respectfully and urgently call upon our fellow Americans of whatever background to look at the racial situation with new eyes and with a new determination to lend effective support to the resolution of a problem that hinders the advance of this great republic toward the full realization of its glorious destiny.

We mention the experience of the Bahá’í community not from any feeling of pride and ultimate victory, because that which we have accomplished still falls short of that to which we aspire; nonetheless, the results to date are most encouraging, and it is as a means of encouragement that we call attention to them.

From its inception in 1863 the Bahá’í community was dedicated to the principle of the unity of humankind. Bahá’ís rely upon faith in God, daily prayer, meditation, and study of sacred texts to effect the transformation of character necessary for personal growth and maturity; however, their aim is to create a world civilization that will in turn react upon the character of the individual. Thus the concept of personal salvation is linked to the salvation, security, and happiness of all the inhabitants of the earth and stems from the Bahá’í belief that “*the world of humanity is a composite body*” and that “*when one part of the organism suffers all the rest of the body will feel its consequence.*”

Guided and inspired by such principles, the Bahá’í community has accumulated more than a century of experience in creating models of unity that transcend race, culture, nationality, class, and the differences of sex and religion, providing empirical evidence that humanity in all its diversity can live as a unified global society. Bahá’ís see

unity as the law of life; consequently, all prejudices are perceived as diseases that threaten life. Rather than considering that the unity of humankind can be established only after other problems afflicting it have been solved, Bahá’ís believe that both spiritual and material development are dependent upon love and unity. Therefore, the Bahá’ís offer the teachings of their Faith and the example of their community for examination, convinced that these can make a contribution toward the eradication of racism endemic in American society. We do so with firm faith in the assistance of our Creator, Who, out of His infinite love, brought forth all humanity from the same stock and intended that all belong to the same household. We believe, moreover, that the day of the unification of the entire human race has come and that “*the potentialities inherent in the station of man, the innate excellence of his reality, must all be manifested in this promised Day of God.*”

ADDENDUM

The National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of the United States is the national administrative body for the Bahá'ís of the United States. The Assembly, has nine members and is elected annually by delegates from the forty eight contiguous states. It directs, coordinates, and stimulates the activities of local Bahá'í administrative bodies and of the 110,000 Bahá'ís in the United States.

The Bahá'í Faith is an independent world religion with adherents in virtually every country. The worldwide Bahá'í community, numbering more than five million, includes almost all nationalities and classes. More than 2,100 ethnic groups and tribes are represented. There are 155 National Spiritual Assemblies.

Bahá'u'lláh was the Prophet-Founder of the Bahá'í Faith. The central principles of His religion are the oneness of God, the oneness of religion, and the oneness of humanity. His religion “proclaims the necessity and the inevitability of the unification of mankind.... It, moreover, enjoins upon its followers the primary duty of an unfettered search after truth, condemns all manner of prejudice and superstition, declares the purpose of religion to be the promotion of amity and concord, proclaims its essential harmony with science, and recognizes it as the foremost agency for the pacification and the orderly progress of human society. It unequivocally maintains the principle of equal rights, opportunities and privileges for men and women, insists on compulsory education, eliminates extremes of poverty and wealth, abolishes the institution of priesthood, prohibits slavery, asceticism, mendicancy and monasticism, prescribes monogamy, discourages divorce, emphasizes the necessity of strict obedience to one's government, exalts any work performed in the spirit of service to the level of worship, urges either the creation or the adoption of an auxiliary international language, and delineates the outlines of those institutions that must establish and perpetuate the general peace of mankind.”

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proofread and corrected Jan 1999

A Shared Participation by All: Diverse Contributions



I hope you will continue in unity and fellowship. How beautiful to see blacks and whites together! I hope, God willing, the day may come when I shall see the red men, the Indians, with you, also Japanese and others. Then there will be white roses, yellow roses, red roses, and a very wonderful rose garden will appear in the world.

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ, THE PROMULGATION OF UNIVERSAL PEACE, PGS 427-428

Praise be to God, today the splendor of the Word of God hath illumined every horizon, and from all sects, races, tribes nations, and communities souls have come together in the light of the Word, assembled, united, and agreed in perfect harmony. Oh! What a great number of meetings are held adorned with souls from various races and diverse sects! Anyone attending these will be struck with amazement, and might suppose that these souls are all of one land, one nationality, one community, one thought, one belief and one opinion; whereas, in fact, one is an American, the other an African, one cometh from Asia and another from Europe, one is a native of India, another is from Turkestan, one is an Arab, another a Tajik, another a Persian and yet another a Greek. Notwithstanding such diversity they associate in perfect harmony and unity, love and freedom; they have one voice on thought and one purpose.

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ, SELECTIONS FROM THE WRITINGS OF ‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ, PG. 292

Supporting Each Other



Let the whites make a supreme effort in their resolve to contribute their share to the solution of this problem, to abandon once for all their usually inherent and at times subconscious sense of superiority, to correct their tendency towards revealing a patronizing attitude towards the members of the other race, to persuade them through their intimate, spontaneous and informal association with them of the genuineness of their friendship and the sincerity of their intentions, and to master their impatience of any lack of responsiveness on the part of a people who have received, for so long a period, such grievous and slow-healing wounds. Let the Negroes, through a corresponding effort on their part, show by every means in their power the warmth of their response, their readiness to forget the past, and their ability to wipe out every trace of suspicion that may still linger in their hearts and minds. Let neither think that the solution of so vast a problem is a matter that exclusively concerns the other. Let neither think that such a problem can either easily or immediately be resolved. Let neither think that they can wait confidently for the solution of this problem until the initiative has been taken, and the favorable circumstances created, by agencies that stand outside the orbit of their Faith. Let neither think that anything short of genuine love, extreme patience, true humility, consummate tact, sound initiative, mature wisdom, and deliberate, persistent, and prayerful effort, can succeed in blotting out the stain which this patent evil has left on the fair name of their common country. Let them rather believe, and be firmly convinced, that on their mutual understanding, their amity, and sustained cooperation, must depend, more than on any other force or organization operating outside the circle of their Faith, the deflection of that dangerous course so greatly feared by 'Abdu'l-Bahá, and the materialization of the hopes He cherished for their joint contribution to the fulfillment of that country's glorious destiny.

SHOGHI EFFENDI, *THE ADVENT OF DIVINE JUSTICE*, PG. 3

PERSONAL ACTIONS, GOALS AND STEPS



In *The Advent of Divine Justice*, Shoghi Effendi prescribes actions that American Whites must take, actions that Blacks must take and actions that we must all take as part of our "joint contribution to the fulfillment of that country's glorious destiny."

1. List the actions Shoghi Effendi has prescribed for you.

2. Based on this prescription, identify some of your personal goals.

3. List concrete steps you can take to fulfill your goals.

Unity in Diversity: A New Model



Every laborer in those fields, whether as traveling teacher or settler, should, I feel, make it his chief and constant concern to mix, in a friendly manner, with all sections of the population, irrespective of class, creed, nationality, or color, to familiarize himself with their ideas, tastes, and habits, to study the approach best suited to them, to concentrate, patiently and tactfully, on a few who have shown marked capacity and receptivity, and to endeavor, with extreme kindness, to implant such love, zeal, and devotion in their hearts as to enable them to become in turn self-sufficient and independent promoters of the Faith in their respective localities.

SHOGHI EFFENDI, *THE ADVENT OF DIVINE JUSTICE*, PG. 65

Core Curriculum for Spiritual Education

SPIRITUAL FOUNDATIONS FOR RACE UNITY

PARTICIPANT HANDBOOK



Module Four

A New Design for Race Unity: From Words to Actions

Themes

A Learning Framework

Designing the Race Unity Project

Manifesting Diversity in the Community

LEARNING FRAMEWORK

Strain every nerve to acquire both inner and outer perfections, for the fruit of the human tree hath ever been and will ever be perfections both within and without. It is not desirable that a man be left without knowledge or skills, for he is then but a barren tree. **Then, so much as capacity and capability allow, ye needs must deck the tree of being with fruits such as knowledge, wisdom, spiritual perception, and eloquent speech.**

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, BE #9

KNOWLEDGE

A keen awareness of information and facts. The remembering and recall of previously learned material.

WISDOM

True comprehension and insight. The discovery, through experience, of the meaning of information and facts. Wisdom is acquired through experience, consultation, reflection, inspiration and an evolving understanding of spiritual truth.

SPIRITUAL PERCEPTION

Penetrating inner vision and the acquisition and utilization of a Bahá'í perspective. The discovery of purpose and meaning. The bringing to bear of Bahá'í spiritual values, principles and laws upon the individual's expanding consciousness of issues and problems. As such it includes the capacity to apply, analyze, and evaluate, using Bahá'í Law, principles and qualities as the standard for discernment.

ELOQUENT 'SPEECH'

The ability to articulate knowledge, understanding and beliefs in a clear and comprehensive way . For the purposes of the Core Curriculum the definition of eloquent 'speech' has been extended beyond articulated language to include the manifestation of all the behaviors that reflect the internalization of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

Learning Framework



Knowledge

A keen awareness of information and facts.

The remembering and recall of previously learned material.

As a race unity worker, what knowledge must the prejudice-free individual possess?

List:

Learning Framework



Wisdom

True comprehension and insight. The discovery, through experience, of the meaning of information and facts. Wisdom is acquired through experience, consultation, reflection, inspiration and an evolving understanding of spiritual truth.

As a race unity worker, what wisdom must the prejudice-free individual attain?

List:

Learning Framework



Spiritual Perception

Penetrating inner vision and the acquisition and utilization of a Bahá'í perspective. The discovery of purpose and meaning. The bringing to bear of Bahá'í spiritual values, principles and laws upon the individual's expanding consciousness of issues and problems.

As such it includes the capacity to apply, analyze, and evaluate, using Bahá'í Law, principles and qualities as the standard for discernment.

As a race unity worker, what spiritual perception must the prejudice-free individual acquire?

List:

Learning Framework



Eloquent Speech

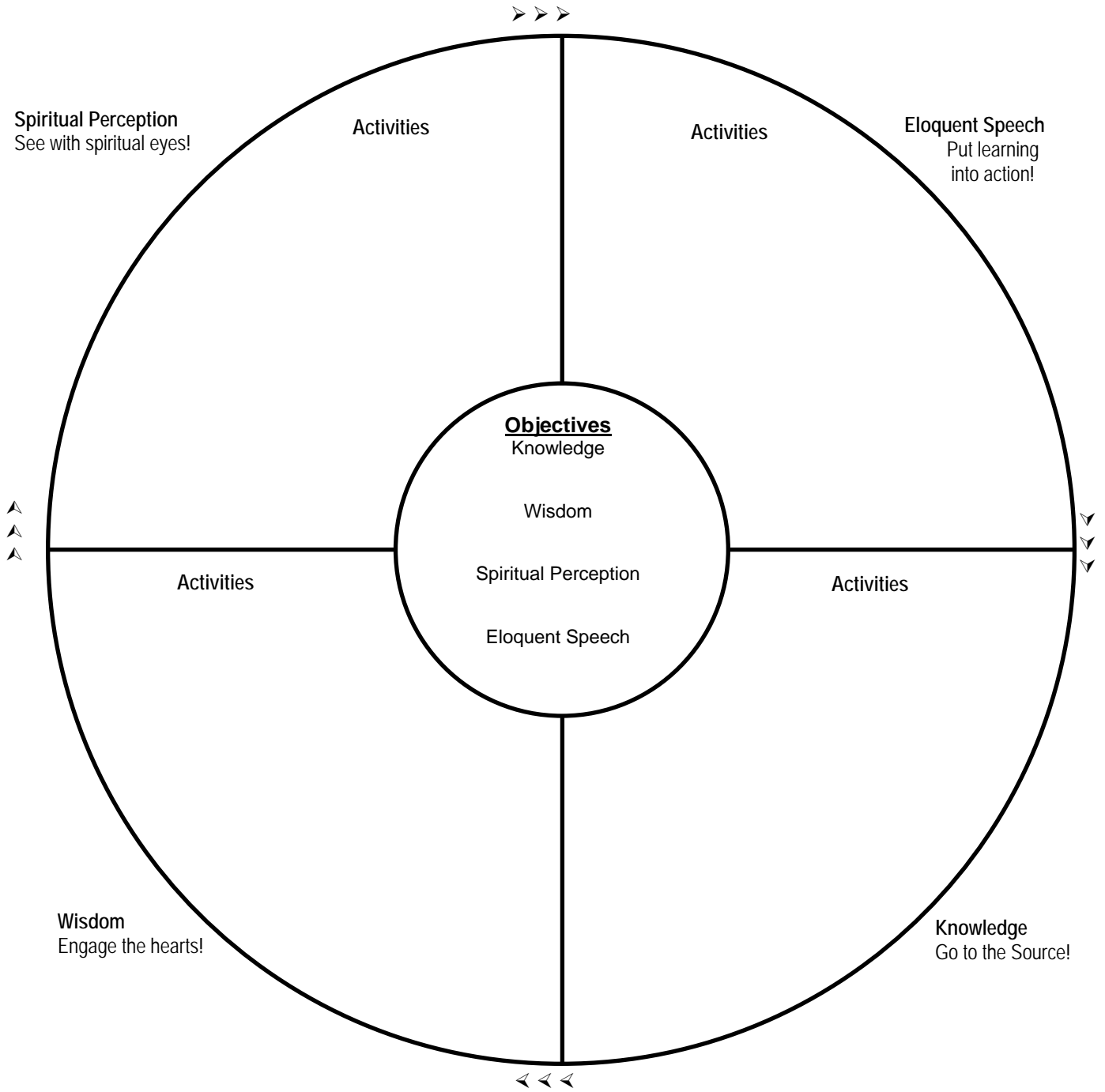
The ability to articulate knowledge, understanding and beliefs in a clear and comprehensive way . For the purposes of the Core Curriculum the definition of eloquent 'speech' has been extended beyond articulated language to include the manifestation of all the behaviors that reflect the internalization of the teachings of Bahá'u'lláh.

As a race unity worker, what eloquent “speech” must the prejudice-free individual exhibit?

List:

CORE CURRICULUM FRAMEWORK PLANNING TOOL

Goal:



Core Curriculum Instructional Methods & Learning Tools

taken from *Foundations for a Spiritual Education*, pp. 152-168

Establish a Loving Environment

Be thou a teacher of love in a school of unity. 'Abdu'l-Bahá , *Baha'i Education*, p. 24

Direct Use of the Baha'i Sacred Writings

Train these children with divine exhortations. 'Abdu'l-Bahá , *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 53

Education Directed Toward the Recognition of God

We have decreed, O people, that the highest and last end of all learning be the recognition of Him Who is the Object of all knowledge.... Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 129

Involve Service to Humanity

The honor and distinction of the individual consist in this, that he among all the world's multitudes should become a source of social good. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Secret of Divine Civilization*, pp 2-3

To assist Me is to teach My Cause. Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 196

Engage the Mind and Heart

The principles of the Teachings of Bahá'u'lláh should be carefully studied, one by one, until they are realized and understood by mind and heart – so will you become strong followers of the light.... 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, p. 22

Private Study of the Writings

...Stimulate the students to proceed in their studies privately once they return home... on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, *Centers of Baha'i Learning*, p. 8

Establish Bonds of Unity and Friendship

Let them seek but love and faithfulness.... 'Abdu'l-Bahá , *Selections from the Writings of 'Abdu'l-Bahá*, p. 257

Use of Consultation

Take ye counsel together in all matters, inasmuch as consultation is the lamp of guidance which leadeth the way, and is the bestower of understanding. Bahá'u'lláh, in *Consultation: A Compilation*, p. 3, no. 1

Use of Questioning and Peer Teaching

Oral questions must be asked and answers must be given orally. They must discuss with each other in this manner. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Babá'i World*, vol. IX, p. 543

Independent Investigation and Using the Power of Reasoning

Therefore, depend upon your own reason and judgment and adhere to the outcome of your own investigation... 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*, p. 293

Use of Memorization and Reflection

It is...highly praiseworthy to memorize the Tablets, divine verses and sacred traditions. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, in *Bahá'i Education*, p. 30, no. 77

Teach...the words that have been sent down from god, that they may recite...

Bahá'u'lláh in *Bahá'í Education*, p. 6, no. 23

Use of Meditation and Reflection

Meditation is the key for opening the doors of mysteries. 'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Paris Talks*, pp. 174-175

The source of craft, sciences and arts is the power of reflection.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Tablets of Bahá'u'lláh*, p. 72

Use of Parables and Stories

Divine things are too deep to be expressed by common words. The heavenly teachings are expressed in parables in order to be understood and preserved for ages to come.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, quoted in *'Abdu'l-Bahá in London*, p. 80

...stories regarding the life of different Prophets together with Their sayings will also be useful to better understand the literature of the Cause... on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, *Bahá'í Education*, p. 53, no. 130

Use of Music

Music is an important means to the education and development of humanity...

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'í Writings on Music*, p. 8

Use of Drama

The drama is of the utmost importance. It has been a great educational power of the past; it will be so again.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, quoted in *'Abdu'l-Bahá in London*, p. 93

Employ Creativity and the Arts

Art can better awaken such noble sentiments than cold rationalizing, especially among the masses of people.

Shoghi Effendi, quoted in "In Its Full Splendor", *Bahá'í News*, no. 73 (May 1973), p. 7

Engage in Science and in the Investigation of the World of Nature

Arts, crafts and sciences uplift the world of being, and are conducive to its exaltation.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Epistle to the Son of the Wolf*, p. 26

And whatever time I contemplate the mountains, I am led to discover the ensigns of Thy victory and the standards of Thine omnipotence.

Bahá'u'lláh, *Prayers and Meditations*, p. 272

Play and Use of Manipulatives

They should be taught, in play, some letter and words...--as is done in certain countries where they fashion letters and words out of sweets...

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *Bahá'í Education*, p. 30, no. 78

Use of Travel

If a man should live his entire life in one city, he cannot gain a knowledge of the whole world. To become perfectly informed he must visit other cities, see the mountains and valleys, cross the rivers and traverse the plains...

p. 295

'Abdu'l-Bahá, *The Promulgation of Universal Peace*,

Use of Recreation

A wise schoolmaster should send his scholars out to play...so that their minds and bodies may be refreshed, and during the hour of the lesson they may learn it better.

'Abdu'l-Bahá, in "Bahá'í Methods of Education," *Star of the West*, vol. 9, no. 8, p. 91

From Words to Actions



Let your actions cry aloud to the world that you are indeed Bahá'ís, for it is actions that speak to the world and are the cause of the progress of humanity.

If we are true Bahá'ís speech is not needed. Our actions will help on the world, will spread civilization, will help the progress of science, and cause the arts to develop. Without action nothing in the material world can be accomplished, neither can words unaided advance a man in the spiritual Kingdom. It is not through lip-service only that the elect of God have attained to holiness, but by patient lives of active service they have brought light into the world.

Therefore strive that your actions day by day may be beautiful prayers. Turn towards God, and seek always to do that which is right and noble. Enrich the poor, raise the fallen, comfort the sorrowful, bring healing to the sick, reassure the fearful, rescue the oppressed, bring hope to the hopeless, shelter the destitute!

This is the work of a true Bahá'í, and this is what is expected of him. If we strive to do all this, then are we true Bahá'ís, but if we neglect it, we are not followers of the Light, and we have no right to the name.

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ, *PARIS TALKS*, PGS. 80-81

The Nineteen Day Feast: Promoter of Unity



As to the Nineteen Day Feast, ye must give this your most careful attention, and firmly establish it. For this Feast bringeth bliss and unity and love to the lovers of God.

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ, STAR OF THE WEST, v. IX, #7, PG. 87

Ye have written of the Nineteen Day festivities. This Feast is a bringer of joy. It is the groundwork of agreement and unity. It is the key to affection and fellowship. It diffuseth the oneness of mankind.

‘ABDU’L-BAHÁ, COMPILATION OF COMPILATIONS, VOL. I, PG. 426

Regarding the question you asked him about the Bahá’í sacred writings: These should be regarded as the writings of the Báb, Bahá’u’lláh and ‘Abdu’l-Bahá, and only these should be read during the purely devotional part of the Feast.

ON BEHALF OF SHOGHI EFFENDI, COMPILATION OF COMPILATIONS, VOL. I, PG. 449

During the devotional part of the Nineteen Day Feast any part of the writings of the Báb, Bahá’u’lláh and the Master can be read, also from the Bible and Qur’án, as these are all sacred scriptures.

ON BEHALF OF SHOGHI EFFENDI, COMPILATION OF COMPILATIONS, VOL. I, PG. 449

...songs whose words are the primary Writings of the Báb, Bahá’u’lláh or ‘Abdu’l-Bahá are all quite fitting for the devotional portion of the Feast.

ON BEHALF OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE, COMPILATION OF COMPILATIONS, VOL. I, PG. 457

Dignity and reverence befitting the occasion should obviously characterize observances of Bahá’í Holy Days by the friends, but this does not mean that cultural traditions which do not contravene Bahá’í principles may not, and cannot, find expression in the local observances and meetings of the friends.

ON BEHALF OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE, COMPILATION OF COMPILATIONS, VOL. I, PG. 457

The institutions of the Faith should be careful not to press the friends to arbitrarily discard those local traditions which are harmless and often colourful characteristics of particular peoples and tribes. Were a new Bahá’í suddenly to cease following the customs of his people, it is possible that they might misunderstand the true nature of the Bahá’í Faith, and the Bahá’ís could be regarded as having turned against the traditions of the land...

ON BEHALF OF THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE, COMPILATION OF COMPILATIONS, VOL. I, PG. 458

The chief opportunity which the friends have for discussion on administrative questions is during the Nineteen Day Feasts, at which time the members of the Assembly can meet with the body of the believers and discuss in common the affairs of the Cause, and suggest new policies and methods. But even then no reference to individuals should be made.

ON BEHALF OF SHOGHI EFFENDI, COMPILATION OF COMPILATIONS, VOL. I, PG. 452

A Spiritual Gathering

It behoveth the friends in whatever land they be, to gather together in meetings, and therein to speak wisely and with eloquence, and to read the verses of God; for it is God's Words that kindle love's fire and set it ablaze.

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, *BAHÁ'Í MEETINGS AND THE NINETEEN DAY FEAST*, p. 3

Hold meetings and read and chant the heavenly teachings, so that city may be illumined with the light of reality and that country become a veritable paradise by the strength of the Holy Spirit, for this cycle is the cycle of the Glorious Lord and the melody of oneness and solidarity of the world of mankind must reach the ears of the East and West.

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ, *BAHÁ'Í MEETINGS AND THE NINETEEN DAY FEAST*, p. 5

Every meeting which is organized for the purpose of unity and concord will be conducive to changing strangers into friends, enemies into associates . . .

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ, *BAHÁ'Í MEETINGS AND THE NINETEEN DAY FEAST*, p. 5

These spiritual gatherings must be held with the utmost purity and consecration, so that from the site itself, and its earth and the air about it, one will inhale the fragrant breathings of the Holy Spirit.

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ, *BAHÁ'Í MEETINGS AND THE NINETEEN DAY FEAST*, p. 7

What a good gathering this is, worthy of thanksgiving; for a meeting of this kind is peerless. Every gathering is brought about through some material interest; it is either based upon political motives or commercial interests, or the dissemination of education, or the execution of some order or system; but this gathering of ours is for no other purpose save the Kingdom of God – hence it is matchless and peerless. The hearts have turned to God; the spirits are exalted through the glad tidings of God; the attentions are directed to God. What better meeting could be imagined than this?

. . . all the individual members thereof must be in the utmost of love and fellowship, the utmost of humility and submissiveness, and the utmost state of attentiveness toward the Kingdom of God – thus may our meeting be an example of the meetings in the Supreme Kingdom.

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ, *BAHÁ'Í MEETINGS AND THE NINETEEN DAY FEAST*, p. 10-11

The art of music is divine and effective. It is the food of the soul and spirit. Through the power and charm of music the spirit of man is uplifted.

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ, *THE PROMULGATION OF UNIVERSAL PEACE*, p. 52

The drama is of the utmost importance. It has been a great educational power in the past; it will be so again.

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ, *'ABDU'L-BAHÁ IN LONDON*, p. 93

The day will come when the Cause will spread like wildfire when its spirit and teachings will be presented on the stage or in art and literature as a whole. Art can better awaken such noble sentiments than cold rationalizing, especially among the mass of the people.

'ABDU'L-BAHÁ, *THE COMPILATION OF COMPILATIONS*, VOL. 1, p. 7

Arts, crafts and sciences uplift the world of being, and are conducive to its exaltation.

BAHÁ'U'LLÁH, *EPISTLE TO THE SON OF THE WOLF*, p. 26

Core Curriculum for Spiritual Education

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This opportunity to work with you has truly been a pleasure. Please candidly share your feelings and reactions. This information will be invaluable to us in planning future workshops.

The presenters were organized and clear in their presentation.

The purpose of the training and the individual modules was made clear.

The materials were supportive of the presentations.

Adequate time was provided for reflection upon and recording of your observations.

The training demonstrated the use of different teaching methods, teaching tools and modalities of learning.

The Sacred Writings were sufficiently utilized to elevate the spirit of the participants and lay the foundation for the work before them?

The expectations and directions for your role as a teacher was made clear and seems sufficient?

	Exceptional	Very good	Fair	Poor

Please take time to expand on any of the items listed above, particularly if any ate rated fair or poor so that we might improve the delivery of the training.

What was most helpful to you?

What was least helpful to you?

What would you recommend for future workshops?

Farewell Address of 'Abdu'l-Bahá to the American Friends

This is my last interview with you, and now I am on this ship to sail away. ... My last exhortation to you is this:

I have repeatedly spoken to you, and I have invited you to the Unity of the world of humanity. I have told you that all mankind are servants of the same God; that God is the Creator of all; He is the Provider of all; He is the Life-giver of all; he is affectionate to all; that before God all are as servants of one God; and God is compassionate towards them all. Therefore, we must act in the utmost kindness and affection towards all the nations of the world. We must set aside all fanaticism and religious prejudices. We must forget all native prejudices.

This earth is one sphere, one nativity, one home, and all mankind are the descendants of one Father. All are created by God, and God is compassionate unto all. Therefore, if any one offends another, he offends God. God wishes that all the hearts be rejoiced; that all be in the utmost happiness; that every individual member of human society shall live in the utmost felicity and joy. But that which prevents mankind from being happy together is racial prejudice, sectional and sectarian prejudice, the struggle for existence, and unkindness towards one another.

As to you who are present here: Your eyes have been illumined; your ears have been made hearing; your hearts are knowing. You must be free from every kind of prejudice and fanaticism; you must see no difference among the races; you must see no difference among the religions. You must look to God. For God is the real Shepherd, and all men are His sheep...

As to you: Your efforts must be made lofty. Exert yourselves with your heart and soul, so that perchance through your efforts the Light of Universal Peace may shine, and this darkness of estrangement and enmity may be dispelled from amongst men; so that all men may become as one family and be kind unto one another...

Your eyes are illumined! Your ears are made hearing! You must therefore look towards each other, and then towards all mankind, with the utmost love and kindness; for you have no excuse to bring before God if you do not live this way, for you are informed of that which constitutes the good pleasure of God. You have heard His commandments. You have harkened unto His Words of Advice. You must, therefore, be kind to all men; you must even be kind to your enemies as your friends. You must even consider your evil-wishers as your well-wishers. You must consider as agreeable, those who are not agreeable towards you; - so that, perchance, this darkness of conflict may disappear from amongst men and the Light of the Divine may shine forth... Until man reaches this high station, the world of humanity shall not find rest and the eternal felicity shall not be attained by men! But if man lives up to these Divine Commandments, this world of earth shall be transformed into the world of heaven, and this material sphere shall be converted into a Paradise of Glory. It is my hope that you shall be rendered successful therein, so that you may cast light upon the world of humanity like unto lamps, and quicken and stir the body of existence like unto a spirit. This is Eternal Glory! This is Everlasting Felicity! This is Immortal Life! This is Heavenly Loftiness! This is being created in the image and likeness of GOD, and unto this I call you, and I pray to God to strengthen and bless you!

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