

## SELF-IMAGE = THE BEGGING BOWL - HAND OUTS

Prepared for the participants of the School Council of Stanislaus' H. School.

### STORY:

Chandrakant was a wretched beggar, lonely, homeless, hungry, dirty and despised.

He spent his days begging for alms from passers-by.

With a begging bowl in hand, he dragged himself from door to door, from shop to shop and from street to street.

The only thing Chandrakant could call his own was his big, dirty, heavy begging bowl.

He used his begging bowl not only to ask for alms, but also to eat, to bathe and even to sleep using it as his pillow.

After all, his begging bowl was the only possession he had in this world.

Chandrakant thought of himself as a very destitute and poor man. He felt himself to be abject, vile and good for nothing. and inferior to the rest of men.

He used to say: "What a wretched man I am! I am useless and good for nothing. I am a parasite. Nobody likes me and no one will ever like me. There is nothing I can give to others... I am only fit for begging... I do not deserve to be alive..."

In his relationships with others, Chandrakant showed himself shy, withdrawn and insecure. He behaved mean. He was nasty to one and all... Whenever he saw others better than himself, he felt sad, depressed, jealous and resentful. He hated others for being rich and what was worse he hated himself for being poor...

One day, in one of his begging rounds, Chandrakant stopped at the door of a curio shop. He stretched forth his arms and put forward his begging bowl. "For God's sake, Bhai, a little bakshis, just for a morsel of bread", he said to the shop owner, "I am hungry. Have pity on me! Be kind to me."

The shopkeeper looked at Chandrakant with contempt... all of a sudden, he shopkeeper paid keen attention to his big, dirty, begging bowl. He kept staring at the bowl, finally with a touch of curiosity said: "Show me this stinking bowl of yours". Now, the shopkeeper took the bowl in his hands, and very attentively kept examining the bowl, while Chandrakant waited impatiently.

The shopkeeper touched and rubbed it and even scraped it... Finally, in surprise he exclaimed: "What sort of fake and funny beggar you are! You need not ask for alms! You are rich! You can even give alms to others!"

"What?", Chandrakant replied. "What are you talking about? Do not make fun of me, a poor and wretched beggar!"

"Wretched? Poor?", the shopkeeper replied, "Not at all! You are rich! Stop begging and begin enjoying life!"

**"This Big, Dirty, Heavy Bowl Of Yours Is Made Of Pure Gold!"**

**Questions for Reflection and & Discussion** (Answer these questions in writing on the back of this

1. What effects had the ignorance of his treasure on Chandrakant?
  - a. On the way he saw himself. (In his thinking?)
  - b. On the way he felt about himself. (In his feelings and emotions)
  - c. On the way he dealt with people. (On his behavior and relations with others?)
2. What is meant by self-image? How does it influence us in our thinking, feeling and behaving?
3. How is our self-image formed or built?
4. How can we discover our true self –our real value, our treasures?
5. In what way can we help others to improve their self-image?
6. Why did Chandrakant despise himself and why other despised him too?
7. Why others do not respect us as we deserve & we despise others also?
8. Can we make ourselves be respected and valued by others? How?
9. In the light of Chandrakant's story can you account for any sense of insecurity, touchiness, lack of respect for others, self dislike, resentments, anxieties, discouragements, aggressiveness, unsatisfactory personal relationships and the like you may feel within yourself?
10. Write down some of the treasures you can find in yourself. **Your abilities and good qualities**

11. Are there any questions you would like to make about any problems concerning your feelings and behavior both in school or at home? (You are welcome to meet your school counselor about them)