

JUST A DWARF

Moral and Spiritual Maturity Demands ‘Control’ over Feelings, Passions and Basic Human Drives.

Intent of this Exercise:

- ✓ *To alert us to possible moral and spiritual dangers in our life.*
- ✓ *To encourage people to share their problems with counselors and close friends.*
- ✓ *To enable others to ventilate questions that bother them.*
- ✓ *To realize that problems we call ‘personal’ are ‘common’ problems faced by one and all. .*

Uses of these notes:

- ✓ *Personal examination of one’s growth and maturity.*
- ✓ *Talks and sermons.*
- ✓ *Catechism and Moral Instruction classes.*
- ✓ *Self improvement and self awareness sessions..*
- ✓ *Recollections*
- ✓ *Group sharing and discussion on feelings, passions and human drives.*

Target Audience:

- ✓ *Primarily for youngsters and youth*
- ✓ *With adaptations to all audiences*

Introduction

Quiet down. Breathing and /or relaxation exercises will help.
Prayer for help.
Singing of hymns or bhajans.

Starter

THE STORY

King: Rajesh, my dear Preceptor, I trust you completely! I brought my little son, Prince Ashok to you. Kindly, look after him. I want you to make him a fine king. Teach him to be upright, kind, courageous and loyal!

Rajesh: Yes, you’re Majesty, I will!

Narrator: Rajesh being a skilful and experienced master took good care of Prince Ashok. He taught him to love God and man, to care for his country and to fight against its enemies. One day, Rajesh said to Ashok:

Rajesh: Ashok, it's time for you to learn how to fight! Some day, somewhere, you will have to defend your motherland and keep its enemies away. Look, I give you this little sword. From now on, keep it always with you. This sword will become your best companion and friend.

Narrator: From that day on, little Ashok spent hours on end practicing with his sword. Though, small in age and stature, he became an expert swordsman. One day, his master warned him:

Rajesh: Today when you go to the forest, make sure that you take your sword. As you will walk along, a dwarf will show from somewhere. He will brandish a little sword like yours. He will try to kill you. Don't be afraid! By now, you are an expert in wielding your sword. Run to him, fight him **and kill him. Don't spare him.**

Narrator: True enough, as Ashok was strolling in the forest, the dwarf appeared. He ran to Ashok and yelled:

Dwarf: I'll kill you! I hate you! Come on, coward. I'll finish you up.

Narrator: Quickly, Ashok ran to him and fought him. There was a clinking of swords, showers of abuses, shouts and yells. Soon, it was all over. Ashok proved his skill and courage. The Dwarf lay on the ground flat on his back, disarmed and vanquished. Ashok put his foot on his chest ready to kill him. But when he was about to thrust his sword into his heart, Ashok told to himself:

Ashok: Why should I kill him? He is so small! He cannot harm me. I am strong!

Narrator: Then, he told the Dwarf:

Ashok: "Get up; go away as fast as can from my sight before I tear you to pieces."

Narrator: As Ashok returned home, Rajesh asked:

Rajesh: "Ashok, did you meet the Dwarf in the forest? Did you fight him?"

Ashok: "Yes, I did!"

Rajesh: "Did you defeat him?"

Ashok: "Yes, easily I did it"

Rajesh: "Did you kill him?"

Ashok: "No! Why should I kill him?"

Rajesh: “I assure you; a day will come when you will be sorry for not having killed him”.

Ashok: “But he was so small! What harm can he do to me?”

Rajesh: “Just wait and see”.

Narrator: Ashok shrugged his shoulders in disbelief. Many, many weeks and months rolled by. Then, one day, when Ashok went to the forest, a monstrous giant appeared from nowhere. The Giant rushed towards Ashok brandishing an enormous sword. He was screaming and spouting abuses. Ashok looked at him in terror. In the face of the giant he could easily read the features of the former little dwarf! The Giant sneered at him:

Giant: Today, I’ll kill you! Be sure. I’ll finish you! I’ll take my revenge. You defeated me once, now is my turn!”

Narrator: With that, the Giant charged at him savagely. Ashok had no other go but fight. And he fought, fought and fought. There was a loud clinking of swords, shouts, yells and heavy breathing. Ashok fought like a little lion. He dodged and dodged the mighty blows of the giant. The chase and skirmishes went on and on. At last the mighty monster panting and gasping, sat down for a little rest.

Only then, could Ashok get the better of him. Like lightning, Ashok lunged forward with his sword and pierced the giant’s heart.

Then, Ashok full of bruises and cuts, limp with exhaustion, dragged himself home. He was bleeding all over, covered with dust and bathed in sweat. On the way he kept muttering to himself.

Ashok: “Today, I nearly died. I never thought I would be able to make it home”. O, that I would have killed the Giant when he was still a Dwarf!”

Narrator: When Ashok reached home, more dead than alive, Rajesh asked:

Rajesh: “Ashok, what did happen today in the forest?”

Narrator: In shame, and limp with exhaustion Ashok replied:

Ashok: “Today, it was a giant I had to fight, not a dwarf!”

Narrator: Rajesh remarked:

Rajesh: “Kill your Dwarfs, my dear; else you will have to fight with Giants!”

Reflections on the Story of The Dwarf

Alone by yourself or together with the group - in case you conduct a group session -reflect on the following points:

1. Who do Ashok, Rajesh and the Dwarf of the story represent in real life?
2. Are there sort of dwarfs in our hearts? What could they be? Name some of them.
3. How should we deal with them?
4. Why did Ashok neglect Rajesh's instructions to kill the Dwarf?
5. What were the consequences of his neglect?
6. If we allow our Dwarfs grow in our hearts, what may happen to us? Give examples.
7. Can you find some other applications of the story for real life?

Short Input in Preparation to Fill the Reflection Form:

- All of us like Ashok, sooner or later, will face some dwarfs in life: For instance:
 - Dangerous passions: Anger, lust, sloth, greed, pride, gluttony, and envy.
 - Negative feelings: Sadness, discouragement, revengefulness, spite, etc.
 - Budding bad habits: Drinking to excess, smoke, gambling, drug addiction, cheating, misuse of sex, etc.
 - Evil inclinations: Grumbling, moodiness, selfishness, gossiping etc.
 - Temptations: Bad companions, bad readings, bad movies, over eating, excessive T.V. Watching, pornography, etc.
- When our dwarfs are small, I mean, at the beginning when they start worrying us, they are manageable.. We can easily control them, even kill them.
- If we allow them grow within us, they become giants. They will catch hold of us and ruin us!
- That's what happened to drug addicts, murderers, robbers, lazy bums, drunkards, sex maniacs, etc. They were not born like that! By allowing their Dwarfs to grow in their hearts, unfortunately, they became like that.
- We have to keep a continuous watch to discover our budding dwarfs within us, and destroy them no sooner they appear. .
- Do not say, "Oh, but they are so small! Why to bother about trifles? After all, my mistakes, my lapses are small!"

Notice: You will be given a form in which many such 'dwarfs' are mentioned. Think and reflect and check whether some of the dwarfs mentioned in the form have already appeared into your life and what happened to you because of them.

Distribute copies of the Reflection form to all Participants

Explain to them how to fill the form..

Give the participants about 20 to 30 minutes completing their work.

REFLECTION FORM.
'MY DWARFS'

(A) Tick off only the “Dwarfs” you feel that have already entered into your heart, those that worry you most.

Anger	Disobedience	Bad thoughts	Bad books. Movies, Internet
Laziness	Bad talks	Stealing	Missing Sunday Mass
Bad words.	Pride	Gambling	Not studying
Lying	Unforgiveness	Drugs	Cheating
Fighting	Drinking	Moodiness	Bad actions
Bad companies	Smoking	Not praying	Playing too much
Teasing	No confessing	Selfishness	Distrust in God
Overeating	Grumbling	Discouragement	Criticizing
Selfishness	Pornography	Too much T V.	Gossiping

(B) From among the dwarfs you ticked off, pick the three most troublesome ones? Name them. Be honest.

One-----

Two-----

Three-----

(C) What makes you say so? Explain why. Give reasons.

(D) What has happened to you because of them? Reflect. Learn from your past experiences.

(E) What did you do in the past to control them and with what success?

(F) These things I would like to discuss today about the ‘dwarfs’ that trouble me most. You may ask any questions you would like to clarify about the problems besetting youth today and you in particular.

- I. -----
- II. -----
- III. -----
- IV. -----

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Instructions on

HOW TO PROCESS “THE DWARFS’ QUESTIONNAIRE FORMS”

Fisrst Option: INDIVIDUAL WORK.

1. If you do the exercise alone by yourself, fill the form and without more ado, dwell on your own findings and do your own reflections.
2. Ideally, check your findings with a Confessor, a councilor or a good friend.

Second Option: GROUP SHARING AND DISCUSSION.

If you conduct the Dwarfs’ Session as a group exercise, follow this procedure

1. After they complete their work, collect all the forms and shuffle them so that the identity of the authors may not be disclosed.
2. Go straight away to Para. (B) of all the forms: “The Three most troublesome Dwarfs”
3. Read all Paras (B) aloud and write their summary on the board. (*Or get someone to write them*).
4. After the writing on the board is over, find out which are the three dwarfs that carried more points. `
5. Next, starting with the Dwarf that carried most points, read paras (C) and (D) of the forms, namely, “What makes you say so?” and “What has happened to you because of them?”
6. Finally, lead a discussion with the entire group on the most common Dwarfs, their dangers, consequences and the strategies on how best to fight them. .
7. If there is time left, take some other “Dwarfs” most relevant to the group.

Closing Prayer

- ✓ Request the participants to pray for one another.
- ✓ Start by anyone in the group, those on his right and left will pray for him, aloud and spontaneously.

- ✓ After his right and left partners finished praying for him, any group member or members will be most welcome to pray for that person.
- ✓ The same procedure will flow for the next and next

APPENDIX

Group Activities for Small Groups

If there would be time available, the participants, in small groups, may prepare some activities to exemplify any of the points that emerged during the Dwarfs sessions. Afternoon time is the best time for activities.

Preparation of Activities:

Give sufficient time to the groups for preparation.

- Groups could choose any of the following activities:
 - ✓ A roleplay
 - ✓ A collage
 - ✓ A photo Story
 - ✓ A mime
 - ✓ A poster
 - ✓ A symbolic representation
- On any of the day's topics, for instance: bad company, anger, laziness, dishonesty, selfishness, unforgiveness, etc.

Presentation of the Activities.

The groups will present their activities to the house.

Each presentation will be followed by a short analysis, evaluation and discussion.