



Assemblies for the UN International Day of Peace 21 September



ASSEMBLY 2: THE TWO WOLVES



<http://ntccpasadenatx.org/blogs2/2011/11/the-two-wolves-or-grandfather-tells/>

This assembly celebrates a story from the Cherokee nation, and the UN International Day of Peace.

1. Read out the following story:

A Grandfather from the Cherokee nation, a Native American tribe, was talking with his grandson, after he came to him about a friend who had done him an injustice. "Let me tell you a story", he said to his grandson. "I too, at times, have felt a great hate for those that have taken so much, with no sorrow for what they do. But hate wears you down, and does not hurt your enemy. It is like taking poison yourself and hoping your enemy will die. I have struggled with these feelings many times. It is as if a great fight is going on inside me. It's a terrible fight between two wolves."

The young grandson listened intently.

"One wolf is good and does no harm, continued this grandfather. He lives in harmony with all around him, and does not take offence when no offence was intended. He will only fight when it is right to do so, and in the right way. But the other wolf, ah! He is full of envy, greed, selfishness and sorrow, regret, guilt, resentment and arrogance. The littlest thing will set him into a fit of temper. He fights everyone, all the time, for no reason. He cannot think because his anger and hate are so great. It is helpless anger, for his anger will change nothing. He spreads lies and fear.

Sometimes, it is hard to live with these two wolves inside me, for both of them try to dominate my spirit. The same fight is going on inside you, and inside all human beings."

The grandson paused in deep reflection and recognition of what his grandfather had just said. He looked intently into his Grandfather's eyes and asked, "Which wolf will win, Grandfather?"

2. **Ask the students which wolf they think wins.** Explain to the students that the Grandfather in the story smiles quietly says to his grandson, "The one I feed, that wolf will surely win!"
3. **What does the grandfather mean in this story?** He has said that hate wears you down. Can you think of a time when you have felt hurt or angry because of something someone has said to you, or an argument you have had with someone? Did you keep going over it in your head? What effect did this have on the other person? Did it wear you down?

We can't always help how we feel about things that happen to us, but we do have a choice about how to respond. Anger and conflict are natural and can be a force for good, depending on how they are handled. Recognising the conflicts that we have inside us and taking time to calm down before we do anything can help us *choose* how to respond, rather than simply react. We can then choose which wolf we want to feed.

I'm telling this story today (21 September) because it is the UN International Day of Peace. Special activities and celebrations will take place over the weekend, including festivals, concerts and a moment of silence at mid-day in every time zone. Peace Day marks our personal and global progress toward peace. It has grown to include millions of people in all parts of the world. Anyone anywhere can celebrate Peace Day. It can be as simple as lighting a candle at mid-day, or sitting in silent meditation.

4. **International Day of Peace is also a Day of Ceasefire**— personal and political. It is an opportunity to make peace in your own relationships – at home and in school - as well as a plea for those fighting in larger conflicts to stop the violence. Of course, one day of ceasefire is only the beginning. The goal is to create lasting peace on all levels – personal, local and global. By showing that 24 hours of non-violence is within our reach, we set an important example. Peace is possible.
5. **If you take one thought away with you from this assembly, think about which wolf in your heart you want to feed.** What one think you can do to make your family, friends, class or the wider world a more peaceful place?

For more information on the UN International day of Peace see:

<http://peaceoneday.org>

<http://www.internationaldayofpeace.org>

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