

Sophie's Heart: A Heart-Mind Story

Produced by Heart-Mind Online & The Dalai Lama
Center For Peace and Education

Printable Edition

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Preface

Thank you for choosing Sophie’s Heart to learn about Heart-Mind well-being with the young people in your life.

This book serves as a roadmap for introducing Heart-Mind well-being to young school-aged children (K-3). Through the story of Sophie the robot – who is missing something really, very important – children learn the importance of nurturing the 5 parts of the heart in order to experience positive emotions and relationships.

Through inviting the reader into the story as an active participant, Sophie’s Heart employs problem-based learning for an impactful, personalized learning experience. The problem-based scenarios also provide an excellent opportunity for small group work and class-wide discussion. In addition, a range of BC’s New Curriculum core competencies are supported through use of this resource (see BC’s New Curriculum Integration Guide, p. 4)

Further resources and information on Heart-Mind well-being can be found on heartmindonline.org

Introducing Heart-Mind Well-Being

When we teach our children about Heart-Mind well-being, we are educating their *hearts*.

That is, we are helping them develop important social and emotional skills that allow them to grow and thrive as human beings. These skills are different from what is traditionally focused on in education – math, science, writing etc. – but are equally, if not more, important. This is because they form the foundation of healthy relationships to self and others.

Fundamental skills that are taught through the Heart-Mind Well-Being framework include:

- Self-awareness
- Emotional literacy
- Stress-management
- Self-regulation
- Empathy
- Interpersonal skills

The Dalai Lama Center for Peace and Education uses the evidence-informed framework of *The 5 Heart-Mind Positive Human Qualities* to describe the interrelated social and emotional skills that are required to educate and nurture children's hearts. These qualities are:

1. Secure and Calm
2. Gets Along With Others
3. Solves Problems Peacefully
4. Compassionate and Kind
5. Alert and Engaged

As an adult reading this book with a young person in your life, you are his or her Heart-Mind guide. While Heart-Mind well-being begins within primary caregiver relationships in infancy, middle childhood is also an incredibly important time to nurture the hearts of children. As Sophie the robot learns in *Sophie's Heart*, hearts cannot grow alone; that is, Heart-Mind well-being must be taught, modeled, explored, nurtured, and supported through relationships. Supporting age-appropriate skill development, building safe and nurturing environments, and modeling healthy self-care are additional components of your role as a Heart-Mind guide for young children. In choosing to share *Sophie's Heart*, you are taking a significant step into your role as Heart-Mind guide and teacher.

Thank you!

BC's New Curriculum Integration Guide

BC's New Curriculum supports teachers and parents in educating the hearts of children. In BC's New Curriculum, Heart-Mind well-being is closely linked to the *Personal and Social Core Competency*. In particular, Heart-Mind well-being is strongly aligned with the following aspects of the *Personal and Social Core Competency*:

- **Personal Awareness & Responsibility**
- **Social Responsibility**

According to the BC's New Curriculum Website,

“Competencies come into play when students are engaged in “doing” in any area of learning [... and] use thinking, collaboration, and communication to solve problems, address issues, or make decisions. The ultimate goal is for learners to employ the core competencies every day in school and in life.”

Teaching Heart-Mind well-being to your students is a powerful way to bring the Core Competencies into the classroom. *Sophie's Heart* is a simple and accessible teaching tool to support this aim.

Sophie's Heart explores and nurtures the following domains:

- **Personal Awareness & Responsibility:**
 - Self-Determination
 - Self-Regulation
 - Well-Being
- **Social Responsibility**
 - Contributing to community and caring for the environment
 - Solving problems in peaceful ways
 - Valuing Diversity
 - Building Relationships

Table 1: Quick reference - Using *Sophie's Heart* to teach BC's New Curriculum through Heart-Mind well-being

Competency	Heart-Mind Qualities	Sophie's Heart Learning Tool	Student Learning
Self-Determination	ALL	ALL	Showing a sense of accomplishment and joy; advocating for oneself; imagining and working towards change in oneself and the world
Self-Regulation	Secure & Calm; Alert & Engaged	Thoughtful Turtle; Busy Owl	Recognizing emotions; using strategies to manage emotions; taking ownership of behavior; persevering in the face of challenges
Well-Being	ALL	ALL	Taking responsibility for one's well-being; using strategies to find peace during times of stress; sustaining a healthy and balanced lifestyle
Contributing to community and caring for Environment	Compassionate & Kind; Gets Along With Others	Friendly Fish; Helpful Monkey	Being part of a group; taking part in activities that make the world a better place
Solving problems in peaceful ways	Solving Problems Peacefully	Playful Dolphin	Identifying problems; creating and evaluating problem-solving strategies
Valuing Diversity	ALL	ALL	Demonstrating respectful and inclusive behavior: advocating for others; taking action to support others
Building Relationships	Compassionate & Kind; Gets Along With Others	Friendly Fish; Helpful Monkey	Being kind to others; playing cooperatively; awareness of how others feel and taking action to support them

Chapter 1 - Meet Sophie the Robot

Once upon a time, there was a little robot who was really, very smart. She could count to one million in 30 seconds. She could spell any word forwards - and backwards - in the blink of an eye. She could name all of the planets, even ones far, far away from Earth.

This smarty-pants robot's name was Sophie.

Even though Sophie was really, very smart, she felt she was missing something really, very important.

It wasn't her control panel, her shiny metal helmet, or her night-vision goggles. It wasn't her springy legs, her bendy arms, or her super-computer brain, either. No, it was something much more important than that. It was Sophie's heart.

Now, robots don't need a heart to think, talk, run, jump, or fly. But robots - and humans too - do need a heart to love, feel, laugh, belong, and get along with others.

In addition to being a smart robot, Sophie was also a curious one. She often wondered why she felt she didn't have a heart. She thought and thought and thought some more, but she couldn't figure out why her heart was missing.

One night, after thinking all day about her missing heart, Sophie had an idea. In fairytales, the hero goes on a big adventure to find what he is missing. Maybe Sophie could go on an adventure to find her heart? In fairytales, the hero also usually has someone to help him on his adventure. A friend! Could you be Sophie's friend to help her find her heart?

Just then, Sophie looked up at the night sky, which was filled with hundreds of bright shining stars. She looked for the pictures that they form across the sky - and a vision appeared that she had never seen before. Sophie saw a turtle, fish, dolphin, monkey, and owl dancing in the stars.

Maybe this could be a sign? she thought to herself. In fairytales, heroes often receive a vision of where to begin their journey. This vision said that Sophie needed to find a turtle, fish, dolphin, monkey, and owl on her adventure. Maybe - just maybe - they would be able to help her find her heart.

Are you ready for your big adventure to help Sophie find her heart? Where in the world will you begin? The animals you are searching for live in the sand, underwater, and in the trees. If you get lucky, you might be able to find all of them at the **beach!**

Chapter 2 – The Thoughtful Turtle

The beach is beautiful. The warm waves tickle your toes and the sun's reflection glitters in the water as far as the eye can see. You look high and low, and spot some teeny-tiny footprints leading way up onto the sand. You and Sophie follow them to a small hole, with a teeny-tiny turtle sleeping inside.

With a snore-snort-snuff the turtle opens one eye and peeks his head out of his shiny green shell. He looks longingly at the ocean before tucking his head back inside his shell and shutting his eyes tight.

It looks like he wants to go swimming, you whisper to Sophie. What could be stopping him from going into the ocean?

Sophie thought, and thought, and thought.

And then Sophie had an idea: *maybe he **feels scared**. How can we help him?* She wondered.

With your heart to guide you, you quickly came up with a reply: *We can help him **feel safe**.*

Think about why the turtle feels scared to go swimming in the ocean. Then, draw, write, or talk about how you would help him feel safe.

You and Sophie put your plan into action to help the turtle. By helping the teeny-tiny turtle, you helped him **feel safe**.

Sophie felt her chest become warm and buzzy. She looked down at her chest panel and saw a bright green light glowing through.

It looked like a **green heart** was shining!

The part of her heart that needs to feel safe, secure, and calm was glowing - and growing!

Feeling safe helps our hearts grow! Helping others feel safe allows their hearts to grow too.

Lots of different emotions can be a part of feeling safe. An important part of feeling safe is being secure and calm.

When we feel secure, we are pretty sure that bad things won't happen to us. We feel calm when our bodies and minds are relaxed.

We most often feel secure and calm when we know that we can count on the people in our lives to help us when we need it, to care about how we are feeling, and to love us always. These people can be family, like our parents, siblings, or grandparents, close friends, or even teachers, coaches or neighbors. What's important is that we feel safe when we are with them because we know they are looking out for us. Because we feel safe when we are with them, we are able to feel secure and calm when we are apart, too! Being in places that are quiet, comfortable, and familiar can also help us feel secure and calm.

Chapter 3 – The Friendly Fish

You and Sophie snap on your scuba masks and dive into the clear blue water. You wave at the teeny-tiny turtle swimming by, and dive deep under the waves. The next animal to find on your adventure is a fish!

You swim past jiggly jellyfish and sleek sting-rays. Up ahead you spot a school of colorful fish in all shapes and sizes. There are big ones and little ones, striped ones and spotted ones. But which fish is the one you are meant to find?

Beside the school of fish you notice a white, purple, and orange striped fish, who is swimming all alone. The other fish play games like tag and hide and seek with each other, but stay far away from the white and orange striped fish. When the striped fish swims towards them, they swim away.

You and Sophie move towards the striped fish to see what is the matter. *It looks like she wants to play with the other fish*, you whisper to Sophie. *Why do you think she isn't playing with them?*

Sophie thought, and thought, and thought. And then Sophie had an idea: *maybe she feels **left out***. *How can we help her?* She wondered.

With your heart to guide you, you quickly came up with a reply: *We can help her **feel accepted***.

Think about why the fish feels left out from playing with the other fish. Then, draw, write, or talk about how you would help her feel accepted.

You and Sophie put your plan into action to help the striped fish. By helping the striped fish, you made her feel accepted.

Sophie felt her chest become warm and buzzy. She looked down at her chest panel and saw a bright purple light glowing through.

It looked like a **purple heart** was shining!

The part of her heart that needs to feel accepted and able to get along with others was glowing - and growing!

Feeling accepted helps our hearts grow! Helping others feel accepted allows their hearts to grow too.

Lots of different emotions can be a part of feeling accepted. An important part of feeling accepted is being able to get along with others.

We are able to get along with others when we take care of our own feelings and play with others in a way that honors their feelings too.

We most often feel able to get along with others when we know how to name what we are feeling and how to take care of it when it gets big and overwhelming. This might mean taking deep breaths when we feel angry, or taking some quiet time alone when we feel anxious. We also feel able to get along with others when we do things like take turns, share, or talk about a problem with a friend instead of pushing or shoving them. Doing these things honors the fact that our friends have feelings too.

Chapter 4 – The Playful Dolphin

You and Sophie wave good-bye to the striped fish, who plays happily with the others. In order to find a dolphin – the next animal you’d like to find on your adventure - you and Sophie must swim out even farther, past the coral reef and into the open ocean. Before long, you and Sophie see a pointy grey fin moving towards you across the surface of the water. Is it a shark? Or could it be the dolphin you have been looking for?

In the blink of an eye, the fin jets into the air – followed by the slippery body of a very playful dolphin! The dolphin swims over and smiles at you and Sophie with all of her teeth! Then she dives back under the water, and you follow her.

The dolphin swoops down towards an underwater cave. She pokes her pointy nose into the cave and pulls out a pink and purple piece of seaweed that she wraps around her neck like a necklace. As the dolphin starts to swim away, a smaller dolphin pokes her nose out of the underwater cave and takes the pink and purple seaweed back! The two dolphins begin squeaking and squealing at each other as they pull the seaweed back and forth like a tug of war.

It looks like they are fighting, you whisper to Sophie. Why won’t they stop?

Sophie thought, and thought, and thought. And then Sophie had an idea: *maybe they **feel angry**. How can we help them?* She wondered.

With your heart to guide you, you quickly came up with a reply: *We can help them **feel peaceful**.*

Think about why the dolphins feel angry about sharing the piece of seaweed. Then, draw, write, or talk about how you would help them feel peaceful.

You and Sophie put your plan into action to help the playful dolphins. By helping the dolphins, you made them feel peaceful.

Sophie felt her chest become warm and buzzy. She looked down at her chest panel and saw a bright blue light glowing through.

It looked like a **blue heart** was shining!

The part of her heart that needs to feel peaceful and able to solve problems peacefully was glowing - and growing!

Feeling peaceful helps our hearts grow! Helping others feel peaceful allows their hearts to grow too.

Lots of different emotions can be a part of feeling peaceful. An important part of feeling peaceful is being able to solve problems peacefully.

We are able to solve problems peacefully when we create solutions that are fair and don't hurt others or ourselves.

We most often feel able to solve problems peacefully when we can see other peoples' points of view, even when they are different from our own. We are also able to solve problems peacefully when we understand how our words and actions make other people feel. When we do both of these things, we are more likely to come up with solutions that are fair and don't hurt anyone.

Chapter 5 – The Helpful Monkey

You and Sophie wave goodbye to the dolphins who are sharing the seaweed, and swim back towards the shore. When you reach the beach, you pull off your scuba masks and lay down beside each other under some coconut trees. You and Sophie are so tired from all the swimming that you begin to fall asleep. You are almost asleep when you hear a little voice screeching *ahhh ahh ooh ooh ooh*. Then you hear the pitter-patter of feet running and jumping on the sand. You open your eyes and see a baby monkey running towards you!

The monkey is running along the shore, picking up coconuts and trying to carry them back towards the trees, where his mama monkey is waiting. You notice that his mama monkey only has one arm. The baby monkey tries to scoop up two or three coconuts at a time, but they keep slipping out of his little monkey hands! He drops all of the coconuts on the sand and runs back to his mama, snuggling into her furry chest.

It looks he is trying to give the coconuts to his mama, you whisper to Sophie. Maybe she can't get them herself because she only has one arm. Why did he give up?

Sophie thought, and thought, and thought. And then Sophie had an idea: *I think he **feels sad**. How can we help him?*

With your heart to guide you, you quickly came up with a reply: *I think he feels caring towards his mama, and is sad that he can't help her. We can help him **care for** his mama.*

Think about why baby monkey feels sad about not being able to bring the coconuts to his mama. Then, draw, write, or talk about how you would help him care for her.

You and Sophie put your plan into action to help the baby monkey care for his mama. By helping the baby monkey, you helped him feel caring.

Sophie felt her chest become warm and buzzy. She looked down at her chest panel and saw a bright orange light glowing through.

It looked like an **orange heart** was shining!

The part of her heart that needs to feel caring, compassionate, and kind was glowing - and growing!

Feeling caring helps our hearts grow! Helping others feel caring allows their hearts to grow too.

Lots of different emotions can be a part of feeling caring. An important part of feeling caring is being compassionate and kind. We are compassionate when we feel for others who are suffering and want to help them. We are kind when we are friendly, giving, and thoughtful towards others.

Suffering means feeling bad or having a hard time. Someone who is suffering might feel sad or afraid, have pain in his body or heart, or experience hard things like being sick or poor.

We most often feel compassionate and kind when we notice how we feel when we see other people suffering, and use that feeling to do something nice for them – that is compassion. We can be compassionate towards ourselves too! We feel kind when we do nice things for others even when they are not suffering. We can also be kind towards ourselves!

Chapter 6 – The Busy Owl

You and Sophie wave goodbye to the baby monkey, who drinks from the delicious coconuts with his mama. The sun is beginning to set, and bright purple, pink, and orange streak across the sky. You and Sophie decide to explore the jungle in the last few minutes before it gets dark. You still need to find one last animal on your adventure— an owl!

You wander past slender palm trees, sweet-smelling flowers, and long scraggly branches that reach out from tree trunks like outstretched hands. With a swoop and a flutter, a small brown owl lands on a branch above you. She sits on the branch and watches you and Sophie through big chocolate-brown eyes.

With a whoosh, the owl takes off into the trees. She soon returns with a small twig. She takes off again and returns with a piece of straw. She does this again and again, returning with a piece of twine, a vine, and some coconut husk. The busy owl begins to place the pieces together. It looks like she is building a nest!

But something on the jungle floor catches her eye, so she swoops off to investigate. This happens again and again – every time she starts to build her nest, she notices a bug to eat, a mouse to chase, or a feather to groom.

It looks like she is having trouble building her nest, you whisper to Sophie. Why do you think she keeps stopping?

Sophie thought, and thought, and thought. And then Sophie had an idea: *I think she **feels distracted**. How can we help her?*

With your heart to guide you, you quickly came up with a reply: *We can help her **feel focused**.*

Think about why the owl feels distracted. Then, draw, write, or talk about how you would help her feel focused.

You and Sophie put your plan into action to help the busy owl. By helping the busy owl, you helped her feel focused.

Sophie felt her chest become warm and buzzy. She looked down at her chest panel and saw a bright red light glowing through.

It looked like a **red heart** was shining!

The part of her heart that needs to feel focused, alert and engaged was glowing - and growing!

Feeling focused helps our hearts grow! Helping others feel focused allows their hearts to grow too. Lots of different emotions can be a part of feeling focused. An important part of feeling focused is being alert and engaged.

We are alert when we notice what is going on here and now, in the present moment. We are engaged when we can direct our attention, feelings, and actions in the way we would like to.

We most often feel alert and engaged when we respond to our feelings, wants, and needs wisely. This might mean waiting for something we want, staying on the soccer field (instead of marching off) when we miss a chance to score, or sharing with a friend even when an adult isn't watching. To be able to do these things, we need to be able to understand how what we do now will affect others and ourselves later on. This is why being in the present moment is an important part of being alert and engaged.

Chapter 7 - Sophie's Heart

You and Sophie found her heart! It was inside her all along, she just couldn't feel it and didn't know how to make it grow! That's because robots don't have family, friends, teachers, or coaches who can help them grow their hearts. We need each other's help and encouragement to grow our hearts. We can't do it alone!

During your adventure, the animals you met helped you and Sophie:

1. Learn about what a heart needs to grow: **to feel safe, accepted, peaceful, caring, and focused.**
2. Practice doing things that help a heart grow by **feeling safe, accepted, peaceful, caring, and focused.**

*Wait, wait! You say. But what about **LOVE?! Doesn't a heart need love too?***

It does indeed. **And by doing the things that grow our hearts, we can grow our feeling of being loved as well as the love that we can share with others.**

- THE END -