

"Am i the best?"

Bye, bye pride

Aim

To learn how to recognize and love one's own qualities as well as one's limitations. To become aware that personal capacities must be developed not in order to do better than others do but to put these at their service.

Preparing for the meeting

POINT OF REFLECTION
FOR THE ANIMATORS
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Pride

The urge to compete with others is a natural tendency of the human spirit. It is present at different levels in persons and has a role in society. It is not fun to play with somebody who does not want to win or who is convinced they will lose!

Competition is a push to act with the possibility of winning or losing in a contest with another. It makes us exert effort in a competition, and accept when others are better than we are at something.

We must avoid the risk of giving general evaluations of ourselves or of others. Our own behavior or that of others must be distinguished from the person himself/herself. Hence, it is wrong to think that a stupid action has been done by a stupid person or that a single act of kindness is because that person is always kind in everything.

If we think like this, in the first case, we will behave in ways that are hostile or rejecting of the person and in the second case, our behavior could be excessive "adulation." If these attitudes refer to ourselves, they determine lack of self-esteem and discouragement or a sense of superiority. To have a good level of self-

esteem, hence a positive self-appraisal and self-value, is the basis of relationships that allow us to recognize the value of others.

It is important that, at every stage of life, we practice how to recognize our strengths and weaknesses, as well as that of others. If I feel more competent than others do because I am diligent and studious and hardworking in school, which gives me higher grades, then accepting the fact that perhaps I am less good at establishing pleasing or satisfactory relationships than another companion; or that I am less good at sports does not lessen my personal worth. On the contrary, it enables me to see the positive that others can give me.

References

- Liotti G. (2005), The interpersonal dimension of conscience, Carocci: Roma.
lanes D. (2007), Educating in affectivity, Trento: Erikson.

DISCOVER THE BEAUTY within you

GROUP LEADER GUIDE



Inside the image

Then we suggest an activity to discover, together with the youth, the message of the allegorical design for PRIDE.

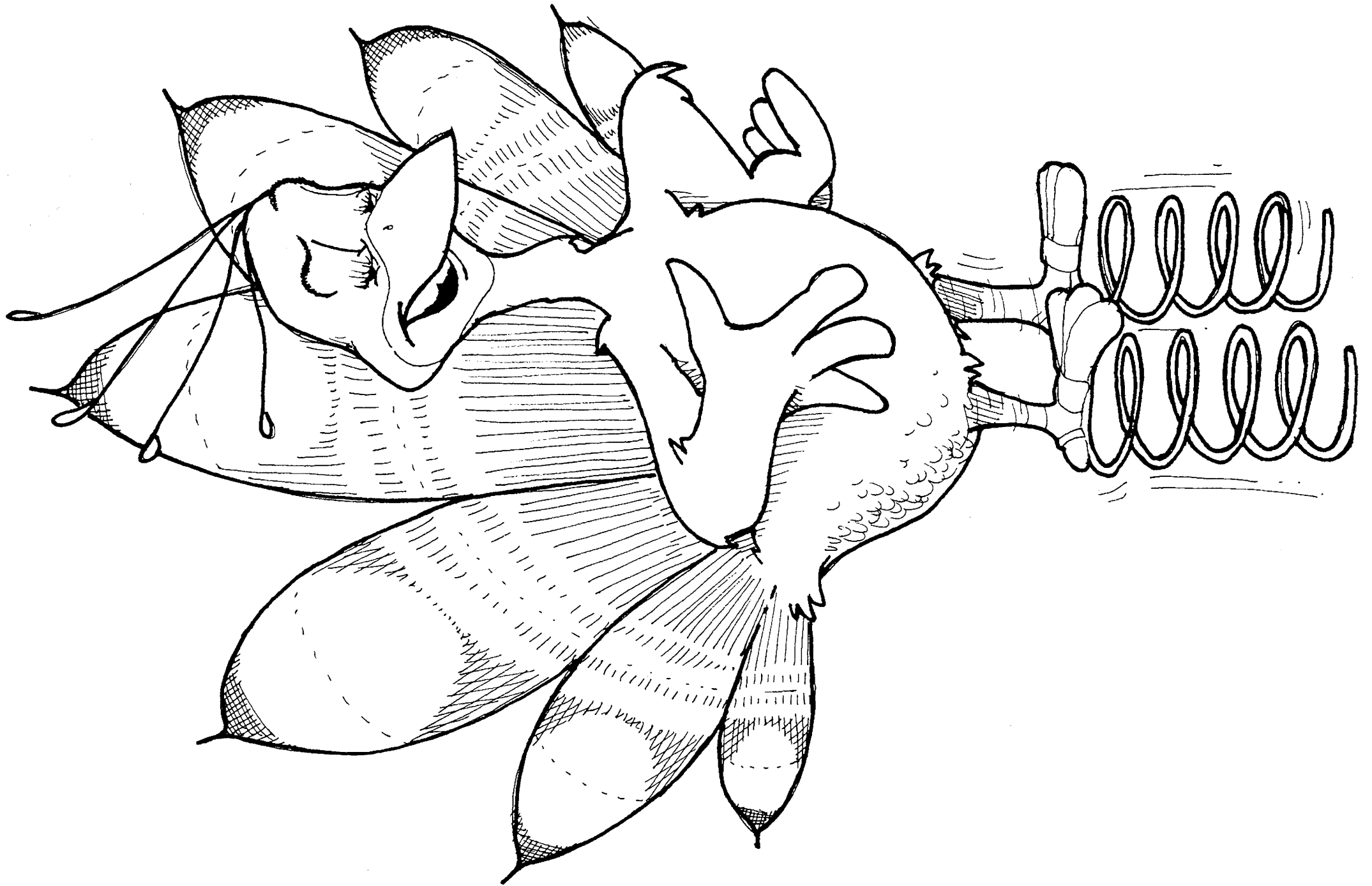
REQUIRED MATERIALS: big copy of the allegorical design (attached is the PDF file for printing), equipment needed to play musica.

PROCEDURE: After showing the design, allow the participants to experience what their body feels while thinking of the allegorical figure. Highlight the spring for jumping, the head's position with the eyes closed and the chin up, swelling chest, showing off. For about 1 minute, let them imitate every gesture of the allegorical animal. Background music may be used. Some examples:

- **Springs for jumping:** ask the participants to take turns in jumping in order to look at their companions "from above"
- **Head with eyes closed, eyebrows raised, chin up:** form pairs (a boy and a girl), one tries to repeat these gestures, also moving the hands and arms in unison, while the other observes. After 1 minute, they exchange roles.
- **Swelling chest:** inhale as much air as possible to make the chest swell, shoulders behind, hands on waist, try to walk in this attitude.
- **Showing off:** the group makes a circle, taking turns, each one goes to the center and repeats the gestures in the previous 3 steps.

REFLECTION: Through some questions, allow the youth to express their thoughts and motivations linked to these gestures.

- How do you feel imitating the animal? What thoughts did you have for each gesture?
- How did you feel watching somebody imitate this figure?
- For what reasons, according to you, would somebody behave this way?
- Do you think that a person can be superior to others in everything? Try to explain your answer.



We live this way

My parish priest asked me if I could play the organ in church on Sundays. I willingly accepted the proposal but inside me, I thought: everyone will admire me! In fact, that day I got many compliments. At first, I felt happy and satisfied, but soon I felt empty and suffered much because I realized that I did not love Jesus but myself. I asked his forgiveness and told him: "Let me play only for You". The next time I did not play well but I was happy because I played for Him.

D. [Croatia]



My mother always scolded me because I am very disorderly. Yesterday, coming back from school, I thought of doing everything well. I put my room in order, prepared lunch, and washed all the cups in the kitchen. I was happy and satisfied with what I did! However, when my mother arrived, she

saw other things that I could have done. I felt disgusted, and I wanted to show her and tell her all that I did. Then I thought that I must not love her only once but always. So, I continued to put things in order.

M.C. [Argentina]

PRIDE

What is the characteristic of pride?

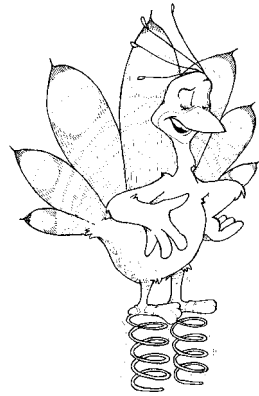
It is full of itself. Look, can you see those crops that hang down under the throat and the eyes on its feathers that want only to show itself off?

In fact, the proud person is full of him or her self. Moreover, under its feet there are two springs to jump up higher and become bigger than the others.

Chiara

Chiara Lubich,
Gen 3 Congress, 1973, Rocca di Papa, "NO TO
VICES, YES TO VIRTUES"

The video in Italian-English-Spanish and
the international version of the powerpoint
presentation is available at the website
<http://assistentigen3.focolare.org>



Points for the dialogue

- In your opinion, among your friends, in what area are you better (school, sports, games, etc.) than others? And in what area are the others better than you?
- Have you ever taken care of somebody smaller or weaker than you (a schoolmate, a friend in difficulty, a younger brother)? How did you feel when you did it?
- Have you ever asked help from somebody when you realized that you failed in doing something? Try to share it ... How did this person help you? How did you feel? How did you show your gratitude?

OUR EGO, if it is not held in check, is like a balloon ever ready to float up to a position of superiority over others. Instead, Jesus says: *«Let the greatest among you be as the youngest, and the leader as the servant»* (Lk 22,26).

We need to forget ourselves, to put ourselves aside **in order to notice the other person**, to make ourselves one with all our neighbors to the point of reaching them where they are at and lifting them up, to help them overcome their fears and worries, sufferings, complexes and disabilities, or simply in order to help them come out of themselves and go towards God and reach out to their brothers and sisters.

By doing so we will find together the fullness of life and true happiness.

From the moment we get up in the morning until we

go to bed at night, at home, in the office, at school and in our neighborhoods, **we can always find opportunities to serve and to be grateful** when we are served by others.

Let's do everything for Jesus in our brothers and sisters, without neglecting anyone, but always taking the initiative in loving. Let's serve everyone! **It's only then that we are "great."**

Chiara

Chiara Lubich,
Word of Life, April 2004

We will try

Let us practice in the next session and
“Let’s give space to others”

MATERIALS:
post-it, cards
or A4 sheets,
colored pens
or pencils

Ask each one to draw on a card or A4 sheet the image of somebody he/she loves. It can be someone from the family, a friend or an image of Jesus.

Then cover the card with many small post-it in order to hide the drawing completely. Each one will bring home his/her design covered by post-it.



Explain to the youth that pride makes us “cover” the others, not giving space to the beauty that is in each one.

Therefore, the aim of the next meeting will be to “free” the person in the drawing from all the post-it that imprisons it.

How? By our small acts of humility. Every time we are able to say sorry, to say “thank you,” to give space to others, not ignore whoever is weaker than us but helping instead, and not being pushy, we can remove a post-it from the card. Every time will be like putting a bit of ourselves aside to give space to love for others.

