**Lesson 15: Game that Illustrates the Virtue of CONTENTMENT**

**Quest for Contentment**

**Virtue:** Contentment

**Activity Level:** Highly Active, can be played indoors or outdoors

**Number of players:** 3 or more

**Materials:**

1. 'Contentment' strips

*Indoor version:* Purchase plastic strips the size of a standard bookmark with lovely designs (sometimes found at arts and crafts stores), or any pretty rectangular shape will do, as long as it is more sturdy than just paper. Cut the strips 3 inches x 1/2 inch wide. On the non-patterned side write (in gold metallic ink) the word "Contentment". On the other side place a strip of removable correction tape that does not cover the entire side, but is framed by the pretty pattern. Rectangular white stickers would also work.

*Outdoor version:* Lime-green card stock, 1/2 or 1/4 page.

2. One small, pretty, cloth sack to hold all the "contentment" strips, also partly filled with fine

iridescent glitter

3. Monster mask for the adult/teacher.

**Sacred verse about contentment:**

Put away all covetousness and seek contentment; for the covetous hath ever been deprived, and the contented hath ever been love and praised.

~ Bahá'u'lláh, *Persian Hidden Words*, #50

**Introduction / Explanation**

Discuss the meanings of the words covetousness, covetous, and contentment. Have the players look them up in a dictionary, and share the following explanation.

Covetousness: "To wish for enviously, or desire what belongs to another."

Give, then ask players to give, examples of enviously coveting -- thinking negatively of someone because they have something you don't and which you crave.

Covetous: "A strong craving or desire for wealth and possessions, or another's wealth and possessions."

Contentment: "Feeling satisfied and happy with what you have or with your situation."

Ask players who is more pleasant to be around -- a contented person or a covetous person? Point out covetousness is the source of greed, which is a mighty destructive force on our planet -- environmentally, spiritually and socially

Goal: Players will find strips of contentment before the monster freezes them.

**Instructions:**

Ask the players to think of some thing or an activity that brings them contentment. As each players shares what it is, that player then reaches into a small pretty cloth sack containing the blank strips and some fine iridescent glitter, and pulls out one of the strips. The strips will sparkle from the glitter to emphasize that contentment is beautiful. Then the player writes their name on the tape in metallic ink with an apostrophe. So, for example, a strip would say *Anna's* on one side and *Contentment* on the other, thereby representing Anna's contentment.

Explain to the players that the teacher will wear her typical monster mask, and that she will be representing the Creature of.....? (the children are expected to say "Covetousness")

Explain the goal is to find their source of contentment -- the strip -- before the monster poisons and freezes them with covetousness. When playing indoors, explain that although the players stay in one room with the door shut, the teacher will hide their contentment strips in the living room, dining room or play room. The strips will be in plain view, not behind, under, or inside anything, so there is no need to look in drawers, cabinets or closets.

**The rules are as follows:** Players try and find their own source of contentment (the strip with their name on it) as quickly as possible and hold onto it. This emphasizes the message that each of us must individually seek and find what brings contentment, and that is our responsibility -- not our parents' or our friends'. The monster could freeze any player who did not have his own strip. Players would only be immune if they had their own, and they could not even touch anybody's else's. Players could unfreeze another soul frozen with covetousness only if they had their own contentment strip. Players should work together to inform each other where they saw another player's strip. The monster will give them a head-start by counting to ten slowly. Exhort them to not run each other over in their attempts to avoid the monster, but to always think of each other's well-being.

The game was really fun and made for some suspenseful moments when a player was informed of the location of his/her strip and the monster knew it and they had to make a dash for it with the monster hot on their heels. Others who already had their strips were there to help if the seeker got caught. They loved rescuing and informing each other. They quickly realized that it is in their own best interest to inform others of their contentment locations because then that person could liberate them if they got frozen.

If playing *outdoors*, use larger "contentment strips", bright lime-green cardstock. Each player can write their name and the one thing that makes them feel contented in large lettering on this piece of paper/cardstock. This was just about the right color not to be too easily seen but not too camouflaged either. While the players are inside the classroom with the door closed so they cannot see outside, hide these sheets of paper all over the playing field / play area/ They should be in plain view, but behind trees, tucked into flower beds, etc, so players have to look carefully to see them. Rules are the same as the indoor version.