

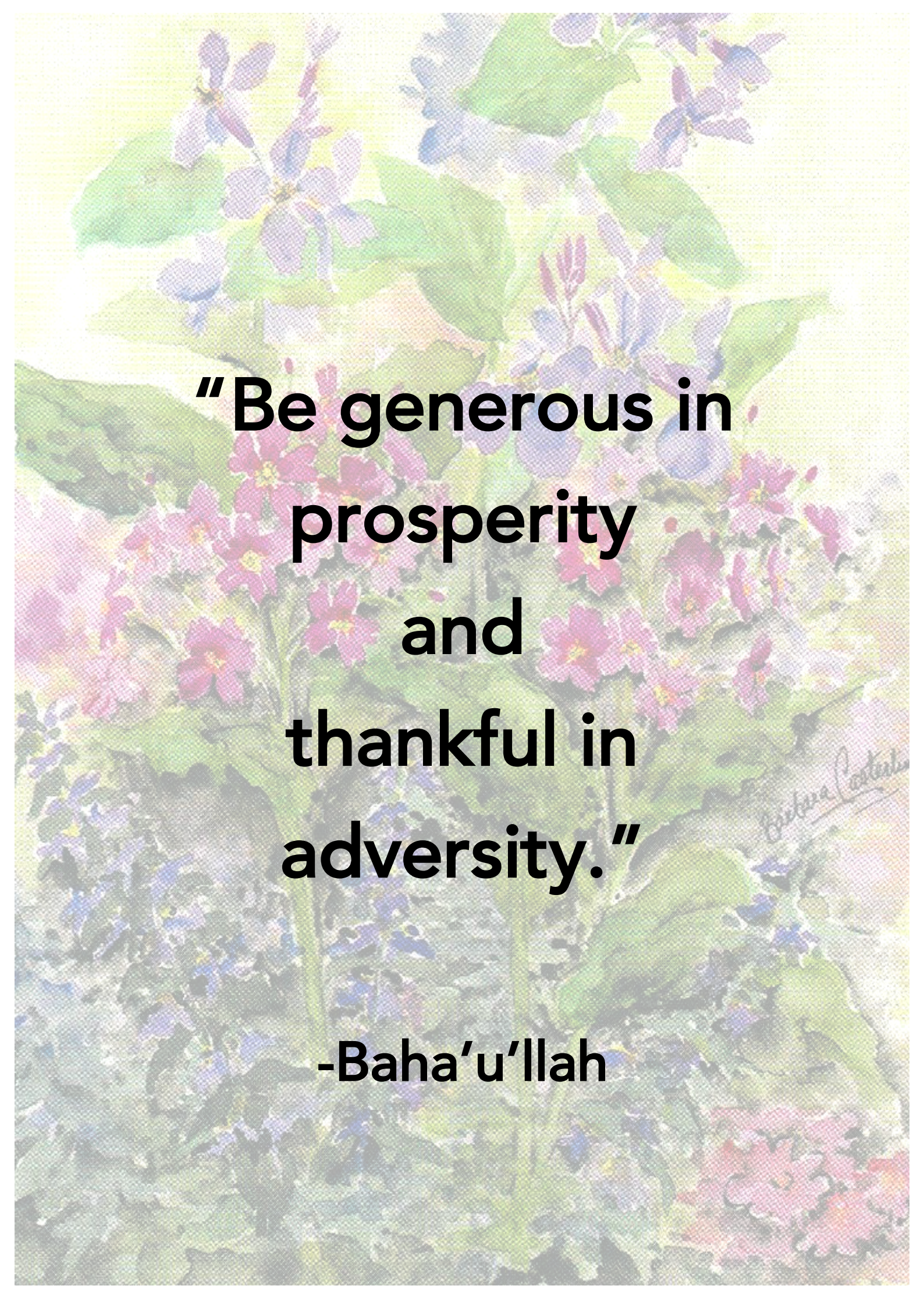


Hiru no Hoshi

No. 266

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**"Be generous in
prosperity
and
thankful in
adversity."**

-Baha'u'llah



It was spring break in Okinawa, and the five little children had just come in from playing soccer. Little Anisa came in last

carrying a bag of chips she was crunching on.

“Oh, I want some!” said Shahla.

“Me too! Where did you get that!” said Riaz, as all four of them gathered around Anisa.

“No! Mine!” shouted Anisa. “Chihiro’s mom gave them to me when we were watching you guys play!”

“Come on SHARE!” “Please!” “We are hungry too!”, “ANISA!” grumbled the four other children as they followed Anisa to where Mother sat at the kitchen table.

Mother saw them and laughed! “I have five starving baby birds!”

“Mom! Make Anisa share!” shouted Riaz.

“If I make her, it is not sharing, it is taking.” explained Mother. “Should we take from those who have, because we don’t have?”

“Well Robin Hood took from the rich and gave to the poor! You could be Robin Hood and give to us poor!” suggested Asma with a smile.



“But Baha’u’llah did say, *‘They... will refuse, though they be dying of hunger, to stretch their hands and seize unlawfully the property of their neighbor, however vile and worthless they may be.’*” Mona reminded them. “But Anisa you should really learn how to share! Baha’u’llah also said, *‘Be generous in prosperity and thankful in adversity...’*” that means if you have a lot, SHARE!” Mona added, and the other three children nodded in agreement.

“Ok, why should we learn how to share?” asked Mother.

The children all looked at each other, then at Mother.

“Well, God created us, and shared with us the whole world, the whole universe, so that we could grow and learn from it...like a school room. And having created each of us and breathed life into us, God loves us more than we can imagine, more than we could ever love anyone. God does not love any one on the earth more than YOU! And God doesn’t love you, more than anyone on the earth. It makes me so sad if any of you children are hurt or sad, especially if one of my other children caused that pain. In the same way, if any one of all God’s billions of children are sad or hungry, or hurt, just



think how God must feel. So we need to try very hard to make every one of God's children happy, even the ones we don't know."

"Mom, how do you know what God thinks or feels?" asked practical Mona.

"Good question Mona! We only know about God through the Manifestations of God. And They all tell us that God loves us, and wants us to take care of each other and to be spiritual beings not material, like the animals."

Asma put in "*Man is in reality, a spiritual being and only when he lives in the spirit can he be truly happy.*" We learned that in Children's Class."

"Very Good, Asma." praised Mother.

"So, everything we have in this world, our homes, our food, our clothes our family, our life, came from God. Nothing on this earth is really ours; we are just borrowing these material things while we are here. The only things that are really ours are the virtues that we learn while we are here. Those are the only things we take with us to the next world."

"I know what you mean now," said Riaz, "it is like when someone at Feast passes around a plate of cookies, you are meant to take one and pass it on, not keep the whole plateful of cookies!"

"Very good analogy Riaz!" praised Mother. "That is exactly right. So everything we have is meant to be shared with God's many children."

"It is hard to share though!" says Anisa, hugging the bag of chips. "I want to eat them all!"

"To share, we need to be strong in quite a few virtues, can you think of the virtues one needs to learn to be able to share?" asked Mother.

The children all thought for a moment.

"Love." suggested Mona.

"Absolutely, Mona," agreed Mother. "It is hard to share if you don't have love."

"Compassion." said Asma. "To feel what another person is feeling."

"Forgiveness." said Riaz. "You have to forgive that I teased you before, so you can share with me now." Riaz said smiling his biggest smile.

"Trust." suggested Shahla, "You have to trust that we will take care and share with you too."

"And even if we don't, God will take care of you." added Asma, wisely.

“Very good! All of you!” praised Mother. “And the more of these virtues you get, the easier it is to share. Also the more of these virtues we get, the more spiritual we become, the closer to God we get, and the happier we become.”

“Oh, yeah, now I remember what Baha’u’llah said. *“To give and be generous our attributes of Mine...”*” said Anisa looking sadly down at her chips. “We learned that at Children’s Class.”

“Also, being generous protects us from becoming materialistic. If we see something at the store, or anywhere else, that we like, we don’t have to OWN it, we can be happy thinking that someone else will enjoy it.” added Mona.

“Wow, Mona! How insightful! Can YOU do that?” asked Asma.

“I didn’t say I could do it, I said if we learn how to be more generous, it would be easier to think like that.” answered Mona.

“Ok,” sighed Anisa, “I will share my chips with you guys! I want to have virtues and be spiritual...not like an animal.” said Anisa holding out her bag of chips.

“Yahhh!” The children yelled.

The children happily started munching on the chips. Mother meanwhile brought out some healthy treats she had made the children that afternoon, expecting them to come home hungry. As they all gathered around the table merrily eating, Mother asked, “Can you remember any stories about how generous ‘Abdu’l-Baha’ was?”

The children thought a minute, then Riaz said, “I remember hearing about when ‘Abdu’l-Baha’ gave a poor man the trousers He was wearing.”

“Oh, yeah, I remember that story!” agreed Asma. “I think it was in Europe, ‘Abdu’l-Baha’ was walking around the garden of where He was staying when He saw a homeless man whose clothes were all old and falling apart.” Riaz jumped in to finish the tale. “He went behind a bush and took off His own trousers, pulled His robe around Himself, and gave the man His trousers!”



Asma finished, “Then He went into the house, I guess to get another pair of pants!” Shahla said, “Wow, can you imagine giving someone the clothes your wearing right then!”

“There is another story where ‘Abdu’l-Baha’ gave away something most people would think was necessary!” said Mona. “Remember the story of when ‘Abdu’l-Baha’ and His family were just starting to eat dinner, and someone came in to tell ‘Abdu’l-Baha’ about a family in the neighborhood that didn’t have anything to eat?”

“Yeah!” agreed Shahla, “He gathered up all the dinner before His family could eat it, and said something like ‘we can eat tomorrow, but this is all that family has.’ then ‘Abdu’l-Baha’ gave the whole dinner away to them!”

Anisa, shaking her head said, “I guess I have a lot to learn about sharing!”

“Hah! We all do Anisa!” laughed Riaz.

“You did pretty well for a little kid!” Mona said, patting Anisa on the head.

Shahla jumped up and said, “Anisa I have an idea! I learned how to make a cute bunny stuffed animal out of little socks. Because you were generous and shared with us, I will teach you how to make one!”

“Yah! Thank you Shally!”

“Since we are learning about getting virtues so we can be generous,” added Mona, “how about if we write down some virtues on pieces of paper, then put them into the bunny before we finish it, so she can be a generous bunny!”

“That is a wonderful idea!” said Mother. “I have a pair of baby socks that Anisa outgrew.”

“Yeah, I will help you write out some virtues, how about little pieces of construction paper? I will go get that!” suggested Riaz.

“I know where the cotton fluff is that we can stuff it with, I will go get it.” says Mona.

The children and Mother all scatter to go get the materials.

They brought them all back to the table and they started to work.

“What shall we write Anisa?” asked Riaz, Teasingly he said, “Angry? Sassy? Mean?”

“No! My bunny is going to have Love, Kindness, Generosity and all good things!” shouted Anisa.

The boys laughed as all the children began the project.

The boys began writing the virtues while the girls started gathering the stuffing and choosing the eyes, nose mouth, tail and ribbon for it.

“I made Love, Trust, and Forgiveness.” says Riaz.

“I have Compassion, Kindness, and the hard one.... Generosity!”

As they put the cotton fluff into the sock, the children put the small pieces of construction paper into the bunny. Mother handed Anisa a little glitter to put on top of the cotton fluff, to make it magical, and then they tied the threads to make the neck and top of the head, put a pretty ribbon around the neck, then, cut the top into two halves to make the ears. They put on the eyes, nose, mouth, and finally the fluffy cotton tail.

“The Virtue Bunny is done!” Mona announced.

“Wow!” said Mother proudly, “such cooperation, I am impressed!”

“Oh, we forgot to write the virtue of Cooperation, you need that to be able to share!” said Shahla.

Everyone laughed.

“It’s OK, she will be our Cooperation Virtue Bunny!” Anisa said proudly.

“Yeah, we can nickname her SEEVEE (C. V.!)” shouted Riaz.

And all the children clapped their hands in agreement.

When Father came home, Anisa showed Father little Seevee, and explained to him carefully, “No Angry. No Sassy. No Mean....She has Love, Trust, Compassion, Forgiveness, Kindness and Generosity!”

“What an amazing Bunny! She must be trying to act just like ‘Abdu’l-Baha’!” said Father with a smile. The children all laughed with him.



Little Seevee stayed a favorite with the children and was kept in a place of honor in the prayer room. And every time someone new would come, Anisa would show it to them and explain again...”No Sassy, No Angry, No Mean, only Love, Compassion, Trust Kindness, Forgiveness and GENEROSITY!”



Quiz

1. What had the children just finished doing when the story began?

2. What did Anisa have that the other children wanted?

3. Is it OK to take something from someone if they have a lot and won't share? Why not? _____

4. What are some of the virtues necessary to want to share?

5. Does Anisa finally share her chips?

6. Who did 'Abdu'l-Baha' give His trousers to?

7. Why did 'Abdu'l-Baha' and His family give their dinner away?

8. What do the children decide to make?

9. What does the bunny have inside of her besides cotton fluff ?

10. What virtues should we have inside of us?

How did you do? Did you get them all right? The answers are on the Parents' Page.





Virtue Bunny

Materials:

- *Baby sock (or very small sock)
- *Pipe Cleaners
- *Cotton stuffing
- *Pink felt (for ears, nose and mouth)
- *Glue, and scissors
- *Googly eyes, or black felt, or costume gems (for eyes)
- *Squares of paper and pen for writing virtues
- *Glitter to make the words look magical.

Method:

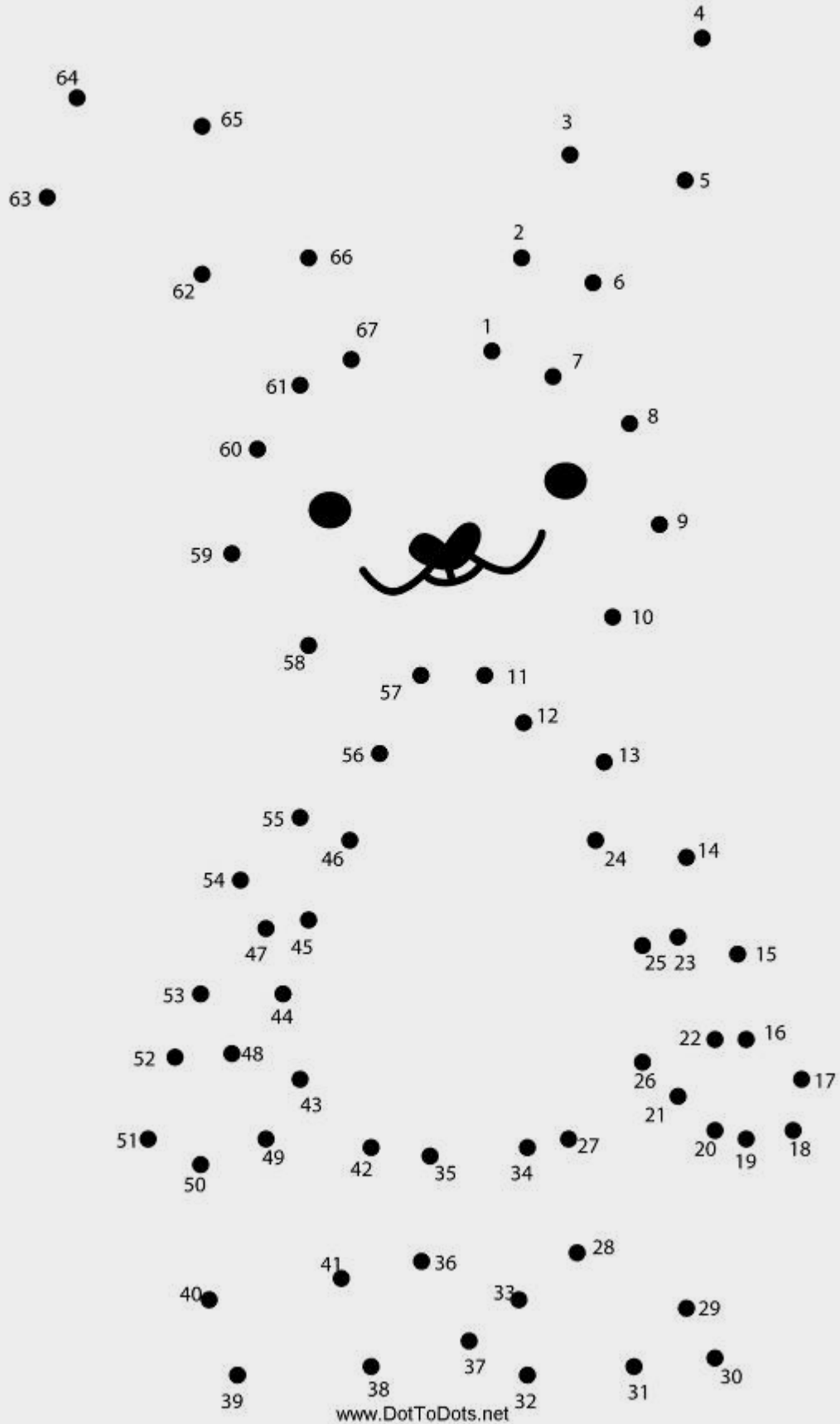
- *Write four or five virtues on separate pieces of paper and decorate them with glitter.
- *Put the cotton stuffing into the sock, add the virtues little by little.
- *When the body is big enough, (leave enough room for the head and ears) wind a colorful pipe cleaner around for the neck.
- *Stuff the head with cotton and tie off with a small white pipe cleaner.
- *Cut from the top of the sock down to the head, for the ears.
- *Cut to shape the ears into points.
- *Glue on pink felt for the inner ears, the eyes, nose and mouth.
- *Get a piece of cotton, or white felt for the bunny tail.

TADAAAA! Virtue Bunny!!!

Be sure to remember all the virtues that your little bunny has!!



Dot to Dot







Parents Page

Below are some quotations from the writings on Generosity.

"They who are possessed of riches must have the utmost regard for the poor... Great is the blessedness awaiting the poor that endure patiently and conceal their sufferings, and well is it with the rich who bestow their riches on the needy and prefer them before themselves."

(Baha'u'llah, Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, p. 202)

"We know that to help the poor and to be merciful is good and pleases God, but knowledge alone does not feed the starving man, nor can the poor be warmed by knowledge or words in the bitter winter; we must give the practical help of loving-kindness."

(`Abdu'l-Baha, `Abdu'l-Baha in London, p. 60)

"Never is it the wish of `Abdu'l-Baha to see any being hurt, nor will He make anyone to grieve; for man can receive no greater gift than this, that he rejoice another's heart." (Abdu'l-Baha)

"Forget thou entirely the ease, tranquility, composure and living of this transitory world and occupy thyself with the well-being and service of the human world and conduct thyself in accord with the advices and exhortations of God."

(`Abdu'l-Baha, Tablets of `Abdu'l-Baha, Vol.3, p. 658)

"I desire that your hearts may be directed to the Kingdom of God, that your intentions may be pure and sincere, your purposes turned toward altruistic accomplishment unmindful of your own welfare; nay, rather, may all your intentions center in the welfare of humanity, and may you seek to sacrifice yourselves in the pathway of devotion to mankind."

(`Abdu'l-Baha, The Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 54)

Answers to the Quiz: (1) Playing soccer. 2) Chips. 3) No. Taking is wrong, whether someone has a lot or not. 4) Love, Kindness, Forgiveness, Trust, Cooperation Compassion, etc. 5) Yes. 6) A homeless man. 7) The neighbor family had nothing to eat. 8) A virtue bunny. 9) virtues and (magic) glitter. 10) Love, Kindness, Forgiveness, Trust, Cooperation, Compassion, Generosity, etc.



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