

Intended for Grades: 4-12 **Estimated Time:** 30-60 minutes

Lesson Title: BOWL OF LIGHT

Lesson Purpose: Students will:

- Develop a deeper understanding of self and inner strength
- Participate in group problem solving that encourages positive solutions

Materials & Preparation:

- *Bowl of Light* Story handout (see below)
- A bowl - any one that will fit your stones
- A light to put in the bowl that shines upward (i.e.: book, stick-on, headband light, or electric candle)
- Stones that will fit in bowl - at least one per person (*Write on grey paper that can be wadded up if rocks are unavailable*)
- Blank paper and pencils/pens for each person
- Optional: Book entitled *Tales from the Night Rainbow* by Koko Willis and Pali Jae Lee
- *Preparation:* Before class, set up a central place where you can put your bowl, light, and stones; darken classroom if possible. Set up chairs in a circle facing or circling the bowl.

Background Information:

The *Bowl of Light* is a family story from Moloka'i, offered in the book *Tales from the Night Rainbow* by Koko Willis and Pali Jae Lee. In days past, children learned different stories and parables as teachings and reminders. This story helps the listener understand more about them self and their relationships with others.

Hawaiians of old practiced *Ho'oponopono* with their families to solve problems, to prevent illness, and to address concerns disturbing the *lōkahi* (harmony) within their society and environment. Hawaiian 'ohana (families) taught their children about letting go of anger, jealousy, and hate to keep them *pono* (doing the right thing). If problems occurred, they used *Ho'oponopono* in the 'ohana only, and because every Hawaiian family practiced this, the problems in their society were not great. (*Note: Ho'oponopono is a Hawaiian problem solving process usually led by a trained facilitator.*) Understanding *mana*, energy or spiritual power, is an important part of Hawaiian beliefs, as reflected in the following quote from the *Bowl of Light*.

"All time is now, and we are each creators of our life's conditions. We create ourselves and everything that becomes a part of our lives. Any situation in which we might find ourselves is brought about by learning the many pathways of life. When we wish to change our circumstances, all we have to do is release our present condition. It will be gone. On the other hand, if we find it useful to continue, we can hang on to the problem and not let it go." -Bowl of Light, page 19

Steps:

1. Write LIGHT on the board. Ask participants to share what comes to mind when they see this word. Chart the various ideas shared. (*Est. 3-5 min.*)
2. Reiterate that light represents various things to different people and cultures. Share more examples if needed (i.e., light bulb means bright thought; sun designs represent joyfulness; and that indigenous cultures have traditions and stories around the sun.)

3. Introduce a short story from Hawaiian culture that involves light and is printed in the following book:

Tales from the Night Rainbow

An oral history written by Pali Jae Lee and Koko Willis

4. Have volunteers read the *Bowl of Light* story. (Est. 3-5 minutes)
5. Review the story, using a bowl with a light inside and some stones to illustrate the concept.
6. Pass out pieces of paper and pens; ask participants to write down one challenge or problem that is relevant to their own life or lives of others... something that is not *pono*, not in harmony and balanced. Remind participants - No names, keep it brief, and write something okay to share with others. Collect the papers and put them into the Bowl. (est. 5-7 min. Note: The paper can be crumpled up to represent a stone, or it can be wrapped around a rock and held with a rubber band.)
7. Discuss what they see as stones go in the bowl (i.e., light dims, feel heavy, can't perceive well, etc.).
8. Ask students what the author might have meant by the statement: "If he continues to put stones into the Bowl of Light, the light will go out and he will become a stone."
9. Read through problems people wrote down and brainstorm ideas how each concern might be addressed. Work as a whole group or break into partners or small groups to discuss problems and then report back to the whole. (Est. 10-15 min.)
10. Debrief after removing stones; talk about how it feels to have your light shine bright.
11. Revisit this concept periodically to help students remember ways they can deal with daily challenges and keep their inner light shining brightly.
12. Lesson Extension: Have students create their own bowl, symbolic of the *Bowl of Light*. They can weave coconut leaves, fold an origami bowl, use a half shell coconut or kukui shell, draw an illustration that represents this story, or any creative way the group discovers.

Reflection Questions:

- What is something you learned about personal *mana* and your "Bowl of Light"?
- How can the *Bowl of Light* story help strengthen our ability to stay *pono* during challenging situations?

Resources:

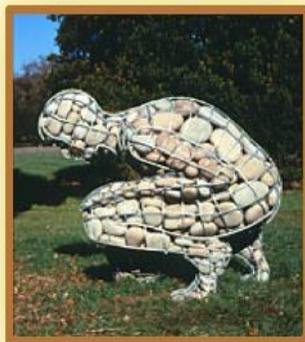
- *Tales from the Night Rainbow*-An oral history, written by Pali Jae Lee and Koko Willis
- Auntie Betty Jenkins talking about Bowl of Light:
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bKcbH7f1qwQ> (Teacher resource)
- Google "Paper Origami Bowl" for a variety of video and written instructions



BOWL of LIGHT

Adapted from: Tales from the Night Rainbow by Koko Willis and Pali Jae Lee

“Each child born has, at birth, a Bowl of perfect Light. If he/she tends to his/her light, it will grow in strength and he/she can do all things... swim with the shark, fly with the birds, know and understand all things.”



“If the person becomes envious or jealous, he or she drops a stone into his or her Bowl of Light and some of the light goes out. Light and the stone cannot hold the same space. If he or she continues to put stones in their Bowl of Light, the Light will go out and this person will become a stone. A stone does not grow, nor does it move.”

“If at any time he or she tires of being a stone, all that is needed is to turn the Bowl upside down and the stones will fall away and the light will grow once more.”

