



The Freddie Stories

Created by Paul Vincent Cable

Illustrated by Carla George

Edited by Ken and Visakha Kawasaki

Teacher's Manual

Tales of Loving-kindness

May you be happy!

May you be safe!

Introduction

Dear Teachers and Parents,

These stories sprang out of a wonderful visit to Oasis Kindergarten School in Kibera, Nairobi, Kenya. This fantastic school has around 60 children in it, ranging from the age of 3 to 6. I was especially struck by the devotion of the staff to the children, led by their charismatic headmistress Ms Winnie. During my visit, we talked about developing a strong foundation of wisdom and compassion in the children, even at their tender age.

The challenge for me in helping them do that was that I was due to fly back to London the next day and was not due back in Kenya for several months. We hit upon the idea of Skype lessons and began a few days later – me on my smart phone in London and the 60 children arrayed in front of the sole computer at the school in Nairobi. Although by this point, I had spent over a decade helping develop programmes for wise and compassionate living for young people, I hadn't taught this age group before. I didn't know what would work and what would not, beyond an intuitive sense that stories would be a powerful medium. So I sat that first day on our sofa at home waiting for the call, with the elements of a story in my mind and a simple Loving-kindness exercise figured out. But I had a feeling something was missing. How would these young children, watching me tell a story on a blurry screen, with an uncertain internet connection, and listening in English (their second or third language), really feel involved in the stories?

Just as we were about to begin the call, my wife, Agi, hit upon a brilliant idea. She handed me her soft toy frog to show the children. As we started the call, I held up the frog and said "Hello children, my name is Freddie the Frog. Would you like to hear a story about me and my friends?" The children grinned, and I knew straight away that we had something. "Mr. Paul and Freddie" talked on Skype with the children once a week for a whole academic year, with a new story each week, with Ms Winnie translating into Swahili any words the children didn't understand. After each story, it felt natural to go into a Loving-kindness practice, with the children wishing themselves, their friends, all children in the world, their mums and dads, their teachers, all grownups, and all the animals, "May you be happy! May you be safe!"

The teachers reported that, even after a handful of sessions, the children were noticeably kinder to each other in the playground and at meal times. Towards the end of the year, the parents reported that the lessons were making a big difference to the family at home, with the children becoming spontaneously generous with their toys and food, and wishing their parents and siblings, "May you be happy! May you be safe!" whenever they could see that someone was upset. One parent touchingly said, "Freddie has changed all our lives." Such is the power of Loving-

kindness and the other beautiful qualities of heart that the friends encourage in each other – generosity, awareness, and the courage to do the right thing.

There are 21 stories. Each story is followed by a round of Loving-kindness. I wish you and your students much joy with the stories as you bring Freddie, Donnie, Robbie, Leoni, and Jennie into your lives.

May you be Happy! May you be Safe!

Paul Vincent Cable

Part One

General Activities

For us educators, the key to maximising the impact of Freddie on our students is to continually reinforce the central messages, which are to do with loving-kindness, generosity, resilience, integrity, and mindfulness. In particular, it's very powerful to help the students know the *Anchor Phrases* extremely well:

- May you be happy! May you be safe!
- Sharing is caring!
- We are strong, and we don't give up!
- Think! Think! Think!
- Tell the truth with your Lion's Heart.
- The traffic light (Red - STOP! Yellow- BREATHE! Green - GO!)

If, by the end of the course, the students know these *Anchor Phrases* thoroughly and actively use them in their daily lives at school and at home, then Freddie has been wonderfully successful!

It is empowering for the children to create a wall in the classroom dedicated to Freddie and to helping them remember the Anchor Phrases. For example, on this wall, they can put their drawings and colouring pages (see Follow-up Activities below).

It is also useful to put reminders of the specific Anchor Phrases on the wall e.g., a large picture of a Traffic Light!

Pre-session Activities

For Anchor Phrases that have been covered by that point, ask the children:

- What can we say to ourselves or other people when they're worried or upset?
(Ans - May you be happy! May you be safe!)
- What can we say to ourselves when we have food or toys, and other people are with us?
(Ans - Sharing is caring!)

- What can we say to ourselves when something we are trying to do is hard?
(Ans - We are strong, and we don't give up!)
- What can we say to ourselves when we need to fix a problem?
(Ans - Think! Think! Think!)
- What can we say to ourselves when we have done something that we shouldn't have done?
(Ans - Tell the truth with your Lion's Heart!)
- What can we do when we are angry?
(Ans - The traffic light!)

During Session Activities

1. The Empathy Game

Ask the students how the character might feel when something happens, e. g., when Robbie kept dropping his pencil. Ask what it's like when you feel sad or anxious.

2. The Memory Game

(Assuming the students are able to see the pictures while the story is being told), pause the story and cover the pictures. Ask them questions about the pictures:

For example, in Story 1:

What was Robbie wearing?

How many trees are there in the playground?

Who is not sitting down in the playground?

What is the colour of Ms Winnie's pencil?

3. The Problem Solving Game

At a key story moment e. g., when Robbie falls in the hole and the friends are trying to figure out a way to get him out, pause the story and ask the students what they think the friends could do.

4. Anchor Phrases Game

At points in the story, just before where one of the friends uses an Anchor Phrase, pause the story and ask the students what they could be about to say.

Follow-up activities

1. Retell the Story

A student – or several together – retell one of the stories from memory to their classmates (or their families).

2. Drawing

Draw someone from the story. Draw an event from the story. Make a cartoon from the story. Together or individually.

3. Colouring

The Supplementary Section contains selected scenes from each story for the children to colour.

4. Acting

Act out an event from a story.

The children might make props, e. g., rabbit ears for Robbie.

They might make finger puppets or glove puppets.

They might draw each of the characters and cut them out.

5. Favourites

Ask several students what they like best in a story, and why.

Favourite character

Favourite phrase

Favourite part of the story

Favourite picture

6. Guess the Phrase Game

Put the words of the Anchor Phrases in a mug or bowl. A student picks a phrase and writes it with a finger on another's back. The second student has to guess the phrase.

Part Two

Activities for Each Lesson

Each lesson has 3 parts:

- A. The Story**
- B. The Loving-kindness Practice**
- C. The Activity**

1

Robbie Doesn't Know How to Write

In this story, the core message is learning the beauty of friendship and that friends take care of each other.

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice

(This Loving-kindness exercise should be presented as if Freddie himself is speaking to the children. The directions should be given in a gentle, slow way, with a heart and voice full of Loving-kindness. It should take about 5 minutes.)

Find yourself a nice comfortable position, sitting on a chair or on the floor. Keep your back nice and straight and head nicely balanced on your neck. If your eyes aren't already closed, just gently let them close.

Wonderful.

Now Freddie says, "Bring a picture of yourself into your heart, and just imagine how beautiful it feels to be happy, with no bad things happening any more, with anything bad all gone. Imagine what it would be like to be completely safe. Nothing can harm you."

Very good.

Now let's repeat after Freddie:

"May I be happy! May I be safe!"

(The children repeat together).

Fantastic.

Now Freddie says, “Bring your friends into your heart, because you want the same thing for them as you want for yourself.”

“May you be happy! May you be safe!”

(They repeat)

Really great.

Now Freddie says, “We’re going to bring into our hearts all the children and all the babies in the whole world, in all the schools and all the houses, because they’re all the same as us. They want to be happy and safe, too.”

“May you be happy! May you be safe!”

(They repeat)

Fantastic, you’re doing really well.

Now Freddie says, “Bring into your heart your mummies and daddies and all the people who look after you, because life can be hard for them, too. They work hard to take care of you, look after the house, cook food, and do many other things.”

“May you be happy! May you be safe!”

(They repeat)

Lovely.

Now Freddie says, “Let’s bring into our hearts all the teachers in the world, all the people who are trying hard to help the children in their classes learn.”

“May you be happy! May you be safe!”

(They repeat)

Wonderful.

Now Freddie says “Let’s bring into our hearts all the other grown ups in the whole world, the young and old people, the sick and healthy people, the people in every country, everywhere.”

“May you be happy! May you be safe!”

(They repeat)

That’s really great.

Now Freddie says “Let’s bring into our hearts all the animals – which are even more than all the people. All the animals that walk on the ground – the lions like Leoni , the dogs like Donnie, the rabbits like Robbie. And all the birds and bats and insects that fly in the sky. All the frogs like me, Freddie, and all the fish and the whales and other animals that swim in the sea and the lakes and rivers. And all the animals that live under the ground, like worms and moles.”

And we remember that all of them, just like us, don’t want bad things to happen to them. They don’t want to feel pain. They don’t want to be hungry or thirsty, even though they often are.

“May you be happy! May you be safe!”

(They repeat)

Wonderful, really well done.

And remember that you can do this for yourselves as often as you like, even every day if you can, and it will make you happy and will help you not feel sad or upset.

Now, Freddie says, “Gently open your eyes.”

C: Activity

(Assigning the children an activity is a tremendously powerful way of “activating” the learning from the story. As always, the direction comes as if Freddie himself is telling them.)

Freddie asks the children to think about the friends in the four corners of the playground. All of them are too worried to talk with each other. Freddie urges them, if they are ever in this situation, to introduce themselves and to say, “Let’s be friends!” This is especially important with someone who looks like they may be lonely.

(As a possible further step: Ask the children if there is someone they can see at school who needs help learning something. If there is, ask the children to think about how can they can help them.)

2

Who Will Win?

This story is based on upon an Ubuntu tale. Ubuntu, an African philosophy, has the sense of common humanity, oneness, you and me both.

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice

(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

Freddie tasks the children to find ways for their games to be ones in which nobody has to lose and everyone can participate and win together!

3

Leoni's Lost School Book

This story builds on the Loving-kindness developed in the previous story, with the friends actively helping each other. By now, the children have been developing the Loving-kindness words after two stories, and they have learned them well.

This story has some quite intensive learning because two new anchors are introduced: creative problem-solving and resilience. As always, when a new anchor is introduced, it is most effective for Freddie (of course, via the teacher/parent reading) to prompt the children to repeat it after him, sometimes several times, until they have completely assimilated it.

In deepening the Loving-kindness anchor and in introducing two new ones—resilience and creativity—this story is the beginning of linking together several beautiful heart states, so that they work synergistically together.

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice

(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

This activity builds particularly on the Loving-kindness foundation as Freddie tasks the children to say the Loving-kindness words to another child who seems upset—or at any time—simply as a lovely gesture.

4**It's Really Raining**

A sub-message of the previous story was peer-to-peer learning, i.e., introducing the idea to the children that they can learn from each other. In this story, that idea is taken to a higher level.

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice

(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

This activity is based on the children's helping each other learn. Freddie tasks them to ask themselves, "What can I teach that would help other children?" There are lots of possible ideas! It might be something school-related (e.g., counting or writing), practical (e.g., tying laces or folding a pullover), or play-related, (e.g., how to play a particular game). As a child finds something that he or she can teach, that child can show it to another child or to the whole class.

5**Robbie Falls in a Hole!**

The stories so far have introduced Loving-kindness, resilience, and creative problem solving. This story directly introduces the protective power of Loving-kindness and being able to say it for oneself in times of anxiety and fear, in order to deal with those emotions.

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice
(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

Freddie suggests that, whenever the children feel anxious and when they go to bed each night, they say the words of Loving-kindness for themselves, as well as for others. Loving-kindness will help them sleep more deeply and calmly and wake up refreshed.

This story takes problem solving to a new level. Freddie asks the class directly what they would do to get Robbie out of the hole. This activity is intended to build the children’s problem-solving ability, as well as the courage of heart to stand up and speak to the whole class. It is remarkable how creative and thoughtful children can be! Some of them may come up with even better ideas than those which Freddie and his friends came up with in the story.

6 A New Pupil

A: The Story
Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice
(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

The activity develops awareness of people with disabilities, diseases, or injuries, and acting with Loving-kindness toward them. Freddie tasks the children to think of people they know or have seen who are disabled, diseased, injured, for example, their elderly grandparents who can’t walk well or without a cane, someone who is blind or deaf, someone who has a disfigurement, someone who is without an arm or leg, someone who needs a wheelchair, someone who lives with a lot of pain, or someone who has trembling hands. It may be helpful to write on the board as many examples as the children can think of and to add others they don’t know. This might include injuries, such as, a sprained ankle, a broken limb, and a cut on the hand. Then Freddie urges the children to “put” all these people in the world in their hearts to wish them Loving-kindness by saying together “May you be Happy! May you be Safe!”

Discuss the opportunities the children might have for helping any of these people they know or know of. This can include things like helping them by sweeping the floor, washing clothes, or sharing food. There are plenty of possibilities!

7

Stuck in a Tree

This story brings together a number of qualities of heart – Loving-kindness (for ourselves and others); creative problem solving (Think! Think! Think!); and resilience in the face of difficulties (“We are strong, and we don’t give up!”).

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice

(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

In this activity, Freddie challenges the children to think of as many solutions as they can (ideally 5 ideas or more) to a problem. The problem can be anything. As a suggestion, imagine that there is a packet of biscuits on a high shelf, out of reach, and the children would like to offer a biscuit to their friend. How many ways can they think of to reach the biscuits, so that they can realize their generous intention?

8

Donnie and Her Grandma’s Favourite Mug

This story introduces the amazing power of telling the truth, even when it’s hard, by using the bravery of your Lion’s Heart.

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice

(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

Freddie urges the class to think of situations in which telling someone (for example, a parent, a teacher, or a friend) the truth would be difficult, for fear of upsetting them or making them angry. Freddie would like everyone in the class to commit to “Tell the Truth with my Lion’s Heart” for at least one week, even if it’s

really hard. At the end of the week, they can congratulate each other if they have been able to do it.

9

The Missing Dress

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice

(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

It is often very hard for someone to fix a problem by himself or herself. When we help each other, everything in life gets much easier! Freddie urges the class to think about problems that someone—a friend, a teacher, a parent, a brother, or a sister—might have that they can help with, and what they might do to help.

10

Robbie's Amazing Gift

This story introduces the concept of generosity. Indeed, the concept of “kingly giving” is the centre of the story. Kingly giving here is one of three types of giving – miserly, friendly, and kingly (or queenly for a female giver). Miserly is giving something which we don't like or need and are happy to get rid of. Friendly giving is giving something which we feel is fairly valuable and which we feel moderately attached to. Kingly giving is giving something that we feel very attached to and perceive as very valuable. In this story, we find the generosity anchor of “Sharing is caring!”

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice

(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

Freddie asks the the children to open their hearts to ideas about what they can share with others, such as food, toys, and books. He would like the children to make a special effort to share something special and to feel the happiness of sharing!

11

A Very Important Visitor

Now that the children have gone through the preliminary stages of internalizing Loving-kindness, this story brings home the enormous family and communal value of being kind to one another.

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice

(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

This week, Freddie asks the children to watch other people, especially fellow pupils, and to notice acts of kindness. Whenever someone does something kind, we should acknowledge it with “Thank you for being kind.”

12

The Football Match

This story focuses on resilience and the need to come up with new ideas and new solutions, no matter what life throws our way. The story suggests that we can be happy in any situation, It is up to us to choose to be empowered, rather than a victim of circumstance.

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice

(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

Freddie asks the children to work on “Think! Think! Think!” by being inventive and coming up with alternative ideas to games they usually play.

13

Robbie Gets Stuck

A lot of ground has been covered so far. The core anchors of Loving-kindness, resilience, and creative problem solving are now well established, and generosity and integrity have been introduced. This story further develops integrity, particularly the aspect of keeping one’s word.

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice

(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

Freddie asks the children to think about what happens when they make a promise. When you give someone your word, it’s important to keep it, If you think about breaking it, you should remember, “Tell the truth with your Lion’s Heart!”

14

Donnie Gets Angry – Again!

This story presents the most advanced lesson so far. It introduces mindfulness, which is not an easy concept for very young children to grasp. By this time, the children’s minds are fairly well established in beneficial states of heart and mind, and they have built up a level of concentration through the repeated Loving-kindness practice. The ground is now fertile for them to understand the traffic light anchor and how it applies to anger management.

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice
(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

Freddie suggests that the children try to be more aware of their feelings and emotions, that is, to be mindful. Freddie says to the class, “Every time you feel angry, remember ‘Red Light!’ That means STOP, and don’t say anything. If we say things when we are angry, we can hurt people! Then, think about ‘Yellow Light!’ and take a deep breath and just let the angry feelings go. When you feel better, think about ‘Green Light!’ Then you can carry on and talk, remembering to speak with a kind heart that wishes everyone, ‘May you be Happy! May you be Safe!’

Later, on the same day, and for a few more days, it might be helpful to ask the children how well they are doing in using the traffic lights to manage their emotions. Some of them might like to share their experiences with the other children.

15

Donnie and the Packet of Biscuits

This story reinforces generosity anchor and the principle “Sharing is Caring.”

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice
(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

Freddie asks the children to think again about the things that they can share. It could be a biscuit, a smile, or even a hug!

16

The Sandcastle

This story reinforces several of the principles, notably mindfulness, resilience, creative problem solving, and Loving-kindness. Before reading the story, let Freddie remind the children about “Red Light” (Stop!), “Yellow Light (Breathe!), and “Green Light” (Go!). Remind them how much better Donnie felt when she learned not to shout and not to speak angrily when she was upset, and how impressed everyone was when she managed it.

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice

(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

Mindfulness bears a tremendous amount of repetition and practice. Freddie urges the children to continue practicing mindfulness by remembering “Red Light” (Stop!), “Yellow Light (Breathe!), and “Green Light” (Go!) whenever they feel upset. Of course, he encourages them not give up if they forget!

17

Donnie’s Birthday Surprise

This story reinforces the principles of generosity, kindness, and creative problem-solving.

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice

(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

Freddie wonders, if the children were in the same position, what they might have done after all the balloons broke. Discuss other solutions to the problem.

18

Jennie's Baby Sister

This story introduces a new concept—respect for the elderly.

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice

(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

Freddie wants the children to see that helping the elderly is a way of extending acts of Loving-kindness toward them. The children should pay particular attention and try to notice whether an old person needs help. Whenever they see an opportunity, they should think about how they can help and then offer to help. The children should remember that, whenever they have a problem, they should ask an adult for advice!

19

Leoni's Flower Heart

Sickness is a pervasive issue for all beings. This story is about Jennie's stay in a hospital. It returns to the themes of generosity and Loving-kindness as tools to bring happiness to others and to oneself. It emphasizes their vital importance as glue for family and communal harmony.

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice

(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

Freddie wants the children to be aware of sickness. He asks them to think about how they can help someone they know who is sick. It could simply be to close their eyes and say, "May you be Happy! May you be Safe!" Freddie wants the children to know that even mental acts of Loving-kindness can be deeply worthwhile.

20

Robbie and the Football Book

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice

(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

The children are tasked to think of any promises they may have made but didn't keep. Freddie encourages them to think about and discuss how to make amends for a broken promise.

21

Jennie Leaves

This is the last lesson, and, for our friends, it is the end of the academic year. At this time, in every school, some children will change schools. This is a time of both sadness (as friends say goodbye to each other) and happiness (as they make a new beginning and new friends).

This story addresses this issue directly. In particular, it takes its lead from the practice of reflecting on one's good deeds, especially those inspired by generosity, kindness, and integrity. In this story, our friends recall the good times they have had with the person who is leaving—in this case, Jennie—and remind her of all the wonderful things she did for them.

A: The Story

Read the story aloud and show the illustrations, one by one.

B: The Loving-kindness Practice

(Repeat the exercise from the first story.)

C: Activity

For this class, it may not be the end of the academic year, but Freddie asks the children to recall some of the good things that particular friends have done for them and to thank them for those acts of kindness. Then, they should recall some of the things they did together when they were very happy.

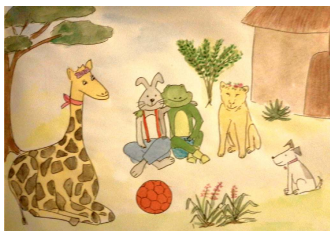
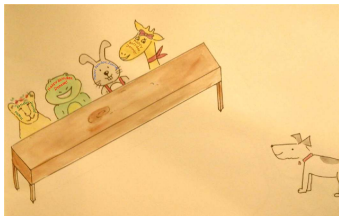
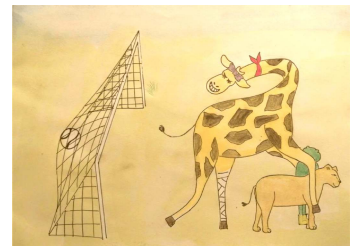
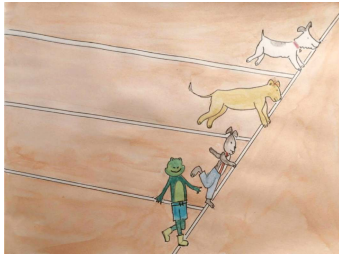
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Twenty-one delightful stories for children of all ages. The five animals--Freddie, Robbie, Donnie, Leoni, and Jennie--are classmates in a school in Africa. Each story relates an inspiring experience of cooperation, loving-kindness, and compassion.

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