

Letting Go Story for All Ages

"The Forever Trap"

One morning, as Owl was returning from a long night of work that owl's do in the quiet of the night, he saw Hunter sneaking to the base of the banyan tree. Owl watched as Hunter tied a glass bottle to the root that stuck out from the base of the banyan tree. Owl thought that was strange. The glass bottle wasn't going to run away. After Hunter tied up the glass bottle, he took some things out of his pocket; he put them into the bottle, and crept off into the tall grass. After Hunter left, Owl took a nap

Suddenly Owl awoke to hear, "Oh goodness, this bottle has me trapped and I'll be trapped forever. I want to get loose right now!" As Owl looked down to the base of the tree, he saw Monkey jumping up and down with his hand stuck inside the glass bottle that was tied to the banyan tree.

Owl quickly flew down to get a closer look, and as he looked through the clear sides of the glass bottle, he could see what was causing Monkey to have his hand stuck. Monkey's hand was wrapped around three nuts, which was why Monkey could not pull his hand back through the small opening at the top of the bottle.

"You have your hand filled with nuts," said Owl to Monkey.

And Monkey said back, "I found them, they're my nuts, and I want to eat them right now!"

"But you have your hand stuck in the bottle," said Owl to Monkey.

And Monkey said back, "Oh my! this bottle has me trapped. I'll be trapped forever EEEK! I want to get loose right now!"

"Well, let loose of the nuts and you can take your hand out of the bottle." said Owl to Monkey.

And Monkey said back, "I found them, they're my nuts, and I want to eat them right now!"

Owl told Monkey, "If you drop the nuts they will still be in the glass bottle; then you will be able to get your hand out of the bottle and the nuts are still safe in the bottle which you will still be holding."

Slowly Monkey opened his hand and dropped the nuts and withdrew his hand from the bottle. When his hand was free Monkey shouting joyfully, "I'm free! Thank you, Owl. I don't know how to thank you enough."

With those words Monkey went running up the banyan tree to get the end of the rope, which was tied to the bottle. The rope snapped tight, and it pulled Monkey off balance; and he fell to the ground with a thump.

Monkey started yelling at Owl, "You tricked me. They're my nuts, and I want them right now!" Owl waited until Monkey calmed down and then told him, "If you turn the bottle upside down, the nuts will fall out and you will have enough to eat and to take with you."

So Monkey slowly turned the glass bottle upside down and out flowed more nuts than any monkey could eat at any one sitting. Monkey was so happy that he started to jump up and down shouting joyfully, "My nuts, thank you Owl. I don't know how to thank you enough."

"Well," said Owl, "those nuts look awfully good, and there are more than you can eat. Maybe you will share a few of those nuts with me?" And Monkey said back. "They're my nuts, I found them, they're mine, and I want all of them right now!"

And he tried to pick up all the nuts but there were more nuts than any monkey could carry. The more nuts Monkey tried to pick up, the more nuts he dropped until out of frustration Monkey stopped and asked. "Oh Owl, what am I going to do?"

Well Owl cocked his head to one side and he cocked his head to the other side and he looked at Monkey some more.

Then Owl said Monkey, "If you put all the nuts back in the bottle there will not be any left on the ground." Monkey grabbed at the nuts and quickly put them all back in the bottle And then Owl said, "Those nuts look good enough to eat!"

Monkey said, "I want to eat them right now!" Monkey reached his hand into the bottle and wrapped his greedy little fingers around three nuts. When he couldn't pull his hand back out of the bottle he said, "Oh my, this bottle has me trapped and I'll be trapped forever!"

Owl just looked at Monkey said. "Monkey, that bottle is not what will keep you trapped forever." Then Owl unfolded his wings and flew off to his home, to get a good day's sleep.

Story Comprehension and Questions:

Why did the Hunter tie a bottle to the banyan tree?

How did Monkey's hand get stuck? How did he get free?

Was Owl trying to help Monkey? Did that change at the end of the story? Why?

What did Owl mean when he said, "that bottle is not what will keep you trapped."

This story is a fable written to teach people to make good decisions. What does this story teach us?

Letting Go of Stuff

It is important to model the behaviors we would like for our children to develop, like generosity and charity, but it is also necessary to give children the time and space to experience these behaviors for themselves.

- Ask your children to find toys that they don't play with any longer, clean them, find all of the pieces, and then pass them along for another child to enjoy.
- Bag up clothes, shoes and coats that are too small.
- Gather Bikes, riding toys, and sports equipment that has been outgrown.
- Take your children with you when you donate belongs to area agencies like Emergency Infant Service, Family and Children's Services, Day Center for the Homeless, or Domestic Violence Intervention Services.
- Tell your children whenever you are making charitable donations and ask if they would like to participate.
- Encourage your children to add a quarter or more to the offering basket each week when they attend church.

ASK Workshops this month will include:

Letting Go of Control: using trust exercises to help children know that they can rely on one another

Letting Go of Expectations: creating art without a product in mind using exercises developed for process art.

Letting Go of Fear: discussing our fears (how they can be useful at times, but also hold us back).

Letting Go of Grief: using the book "Tear Soup" we will guide our children through the difficult but necessary process of grieving loss.