

Compassion

Virtue and Yoga pose of the week
Combining Emotional Intelligence with Yoga



Monica Batiste

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Combining Yoga with Emotional Intelligence



By Monica Batiste

Written and Illustrated by Monica Batiste:

1. *Yoga for Little Bears* (2014)
2. *Simply Yoga* (2011)
3. *Your Perfect Body* (2011)
4. *Yoga and Emotional Intelligence* (2015)
5. *EFT for children* (2015)
6. *Reducing bullying through Yoga and emotional intelligence* (2015)

Virtue and Yoga pose of the week

Acceptance	Discipline	Imagination	Reparation
Agility	Divergent-thinking	Integrity	Resilience
Ambition	Empathy	Initiative	Respect
Assertiveness	Energy	Idealism	Responsibility
Attention	Enthusiasm	Innocence	Reverence
Awareness	Ethics	Intuition	Self-Awareness
Balance	Eloquence	Joyful	Self-Care
Benevolence	Excellence	Justice	Self-Confidence
Bravery	Expand comfort-zone	Jovial	Self-Discipline
Caring	Faith	Kindness	Self-Esteem
Charity	Flexibility	Leadership	Self-love
Clarity	Focus	Letting-go	Self-Reliance
Cleanliness	Forgiveness	Logical	Self-Respect
Commitment	Friendliness a	Love	Self-Regulation
Compassion	Friendship	Loyalty	Service
Communication	Fun	Manners	Social-Skills
Confidence	Generosity	Meditation	Spiritual
Concentration	Gentleness	Mercy	Steadfastness
Considerate	Grace	Moderation	Strength
Consistent	Gratitude	Modesty	Sincerity
Co-operation	Grounded	Motivation	Tact
Courage	Happiness	Negotiation	Tenderness
Courtesy	Harmony	Open-Heart	Thankfulness
Creativity	Health	Optimism	Tolerance
Curiosity	Heroic	Orderliness	Trust
Dependability	Holistic	Patience	Truthfulness
Detachment	Helpfulness	Peacefulness	Unity
Determination	Honesty	Perseverance	Understanding
Dedication	Honor	Playful	Visionary
Decisiveness	Humility	Positive	Wisdom
Desire	Humor	Prayerfulness	Zealous
Discernment		Purposefulness	
Discretion		Reliability	

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For educators and children: educational; fitness; motivation; personal development. For ages 3 - 12

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This week's virtue of **compassion** is dedicated to Jane Watt, who is willing to bring in children who don't have a home. To befriend those in need. And to supply food and beverages to those who are hungry. I see your compassion Jane. Thank you.

Virtue and Yoga pose of the week

Virtue and Yoga pose of the week is an opportunity to grow self-esteem through yoga in a joyful and positive way.

Each week a yoga pose and a virtue will be selected for you to bring into your home or classroom. Soon your children will be able to acknowledge all of the virtues he or she sees in themselves and in others. This will grow self-esteem and empathy.

All yoga postures have benefits, and your children will soon begin to practise them spontaneously. Of course it's always great to do this with adults too. Adults are just big kids, really, and they love to be seen too.

Virtue activities and yoga postures fit into the Australian National Curriculum under PDHPE. And into Character Development and Physical Education for the USA.

This week's activities; growing compassion through meditation and mindfulness. Activities to extend on mindfulness. Yoga posture to grow compassion; partner work with *Dancer's pose*. Activities to support mindfulness; coloring in pages.

Printable activities, postures, cards and rewards are included in each week's feature.

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Virtue of the week Compassion

What is Compassion?

Compassion is when you show someone you care. People need compassion when they are hurt or unsure. When you show compassion you are being loving and helpful. You can be compassionate to another by finding out what they need and giving it to them. If they are sad they might need a hug. If they are lonely they might need a friend. If they are hurt they might need a Band-Aid or medical attention. You can be compassionate to yourself by listening to your needs then acting on them. You can be compassionate towards your friends by listening, helping and understanding. You can be compassionate towards strangers by helping a mother with her stroller, an elderly person do something they can't do for themselves, by opening a door, giving a smile, and by forgiving someone for making a mistake. Compassion lights your soul. Practise it daily.

How do we grow compassion?

Compassion grows through empathy. Empathy grows through experience. When children experience the act of caring for someone, they grow compassion. When children experience the imagination of being someone or something, they grow compassion. The meditation and mindfulness we are practising this week helps to grow compassion because meditation and mindfulness bring children into the present moment, where they can feel their feelings, observe what is happening right now, and connect to what is around them. Meditation and Mindfulness moves a child's brain out of stress and into the moment. EQ grows when children can feel feelings, and are present. Self-awareness of feelings grows compassion for others, for children can imagine how another is feeling.

Our yoga pose of the week is designed to help children experience caring for another, encouraging another child to succeed, and to congratulate them on their success. All yoga postures are considered correct; there is no right and wrong in yoga. Every posture gets congratulations, even the child who moves into the posture for a millisecond, and the child who has an injury or inability and imagines the posture instead of doing. They all get a 'Well done!' for this experience is about growing EQ and experiencing a positive reinforcement for moving in the direction of success. It all builds up. Next time, because a positive acknowledgement was offered, the child will be stronger and more focused.

How can we acknowledge compassion?

Virtues grow with acknowledgments. Every time you witness an act of compassion you acknowledge it by naming the act, naming the virtue, and using the person's name. This supports the growth of emotional intelligence, including self-esteem, self-awareness, self-love and self-belief.

Examples of virtues acknowledgments are;

'Thank for asking how I am feeling Dylan, that shows me your compassion.'

'Camille, I saw your compassion when you helped Teddy find his mummy.'

'That was compassionate of you when you hugged me better today. Thank you Marion.'

When you offer an acknowledgement, use eye contact (to support neural development), a smile (to show support), a kind voice (to promote positive attachment), and if appropriate, a soft touch on the shoulder (to help anchor the virtue).

Yoga supports the development of all virtues, as all postures bring out virtues, but some are more evident than others. For example, compassion could be grown through modifying postures to suit individuals. Ask the children how you would modify a posture for someone

in a wheelchair? Or on crutches? Or with a sore leg or arm? You can also ask them which postures would be most loving. Although all answers are correct, the postures that most demonstrate compassion for self are the restorative postures like resting butterfly, child's pose, wide legged child, and relaxation pose. To help grow compassion for each other, we are practising partner work this week. To support children in seeing themselves as a compassionate person, we are going to do a meditation on love.

Acknowledging Virtues

Every time a child or adult demonstrates an act of compassion, their name is written on a leaf, fruit or shape, along with their kind act, and pasted or tagged onto the Kindness tree (if you have created one from last weeks virtue.)

Acknowledging compassion is as simple as 'I see your compassion' or 'when you helped Molly from her fall, that was compassion.'

As we are encouraging children to see virtues in others, invite them to nominate family member or friends outside the classroom who demonstrate compassion.



Compassion Activities

Meditation

Meditation or deep relaxation is a valuable tool for a happy and productive life. Breathing deeply and relaxing the body helps calm the mind and allows inner peace. The benefits of meditation include slower breathing, slower heart rate, lower blood pressure, and an increase in oxygen and lung strength. Relaxation releases the happy hormones.

Meditation can be practised in *Peaceful Pose*, but it can also be useful in *Child's Pose* for a minute or two. Five to ten minutes of meditation every morning will go a long way in setting a more peaceful attitude for the day.

A meditation on love and compassion

Play soft and slow music. Lie or sit in a comfortable position.

You can read the following meditation with a slow and calm voice. Pause often, and make adjustments where needed. Take several deep breaths, relax and release tension. Focus on your breath and become aware of how it moves in and out of your body. As thoughts enter your mind, let them go and return to your breath. Take deep breaths, and with each exhale, release and relax every muscle.

As you feel your breath becoming quiet and slow, focus on your toes and consciously relax each one. Relax each muscle from the toes to the feet, to the ankles, breathing deeply; release your calves, shins, thighs and hamstrings. Let your body go, bring your awareness back to your breath. Focus on your breath as you breathe in and out. Relax your hips, abdomen and chest.

Let yourself become soft. Let go of your shoulders, arms and hands. Soften your upper back, middle back, lower back and gluteus. Feel your breath. Relax your scalp, jaw, eyes and eyebrows. Stay focused on your breath, let go. Let thoughts go, let tension go, let expectations go. You are now calm and relaxed.

Bring your awareness to your heart. Imagine your heart is glowing with a beautiful and brilliant white light. This light is filled with love and peace. Feel this love. Feel this love for yourself and wrap yourself in a warm blanket of love. Breathe in (5 or 6 counts)..... breathe out.....(5 or 6 counts)

Visualise this brilliant white loving light glowing so brightly that it expands out of your body and into the room, sending love to all people around you, (breathing in..... breathing out.....) let this loving light grow until it fill the school the community, and soon the whole world (breathing in.... breathing out.....). Imagine the whole world being healed by this beautiful, brilliant, loving white light that begins in your own heart.

(breathing in.... breathing out.....) Can you feel it?

Can you feel the peace that you are?

Can you feel the peace that you are creating?

(breathing in..... breathing out.....)

With your next breath, gently move your fingers and toes. Gently move your body. Raise arms above head and stretch whole body. With a big sigh, release breath and body. Roll onto your right side and slowly sit up in a comfortable cross-legged position.

Continue to breathe for another minute. As you feel your love and compassion for others grow within you, know that you can take this love with you as you go about your daily life.

Breathe love into your life, softly open your eyes, and intend to have a wonderful day.



Mindfulness meditation to grow compassion for self

Mindfulness is another form of meditation. It's the act of being in the moment; of being present; and being here and now. Once the mind has bought itself to this very moment, it naturally releases resistance and is open for positive benefits.

When supporting children on being mindful, it's of benefit to go for a walk through nature and observe the surroundings. Mindfulness is about tuning in to our 6 senses. What can you hear? See? Feel? Taste? Touch? Intuit?

You can also practise mindfulness whilst eating a piece of fruit.

Mindfulness helps children grow caring, compassion, love and kindness towards themselves, and others; because mindfulness builds self-awareness. Mindfulness is about being present, right here, right now. Being present switches off stress, and increases calming hormones. Being present means tuning into what is around you and experiencing the world with all senses.

Being present allows you to let go of stress and breathe in peace.

When you or the children are feeling agitated, this is the perfect opportunity to become present.

Activities and lesson plans follow

How to be Mindful

Feel

What does it feel like when your feet touch the earth?

How do your clothes feel on your skin?

What does the texture feel like?

What does the sun/wind/rain feel like?

Can you feel your heart beating?

Is your body still? Or moving?



Taste

What does food taste like?

What does air taste like?

Sense

What does emotion feel like? What does the moon/sun/wind/air/clouds feel like right now? Describe.

Hear

What can you hear?

How many sounds are around you?

What do you tune into?

What do you tune out?

What does sound look like?



See

What can you see?

What do you see that feels good?

What colours do you see?

When practising mindfulness, begin wherever you are, and what ever is around you. Presence allows the brain to relax and release or lower stress hormones. Presence raises awareness and improves the ability to absorb information.

After a mindfulness experience, expand the experience through divergent or creative thinking to help open the mind and build pathways. The following exercise is based on using right and left brain. Divergent thinking helps children expand their ability to find creative solutions to problems. In divergent activities – all answers are correct; for the experience is the answer.

Divergent (creative) thinking

Name _____

Write or draw about an experience you had.

How did you feel?

What did you see?

What did you hear?

What colours did you see?

What sounds did you hear?

What colour is a lion's roar? Can you draw it?

What sound does the colour blue make? Can you describe it?

What colour is a whales happiness? Can you draw it?

If taste had a colour, what colour is the taste of an apple?

If colours had a sound, what would yellow sound like?

If Orange were a person, what would their name be?

If you could hear the sunset, what the sunset sound like?

If you could see music, what colour would it be? Can you draw or paint it?

If you could taste happiness, what would it taste like?

What song does the fruit sing when it's on the branch?

What song does fruit sing, when it falls to the earth?

What does red say?

What is blue's favourite sport?

Can black feel happy as well as sad?

Where does white go for a holiday?

Benefits of mindfulness

Presence improves self-love and self-care because it supports safety and security. When children are afraid –they move out of the moment and into a fearful space. Bringing children back to the present moment helps them learn how to self-regulate their emotions and gives them a tool to move out of anxiety and into security. Mindfulness grows compassion because compassion is an extension of self-love. When children care for themselves, they care for another. When children feel cared for, they naturally extend this care to others. When children care for another, they develop empathy and intuition.

Benefits of divergent thinking

Divergent thinking allows children to think of a hundred solutions to every problem. Even though some won't work – many will. Divergent thinking helps creativity and logic work together.

Virtues Developed

Peacefulness, mindfulness, focus, compassion, self-regulation, creativity.



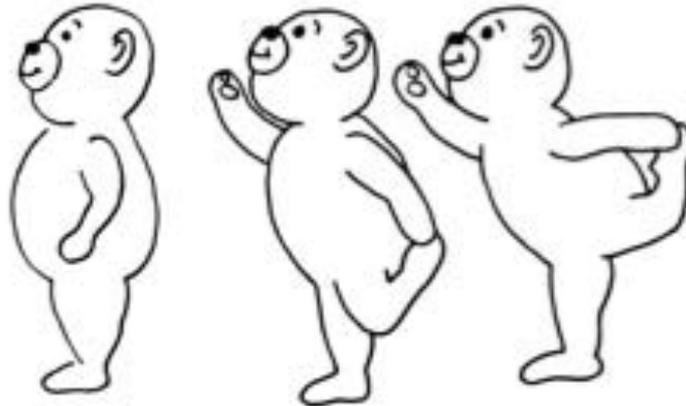
Yoga and Compassion

This week we are doing Dancer's pose as partner work, to grow compassion for others by learning how to support, acknowledge and congratulate each other.

Partner work can be taken in many postures, and you can use your imagination to find more ways to do partner work during yoga.

We will begin with learning how to do dancer's pose, and then they will partner. You can do this over several sessions; one day you might do dancer's pose, and the next day partner work. You can also do partner work each day, changing partners each time. Allowing children to connect with more children in their environment.

Yoga pose of the week *Dancer's pose*



Mountain pose

Small Tree pose

Dancer's pose

How to do Dancer's pose

Start in *Mountain Pose*, breathe in and step right foot forward, hold left foot in left hand (small *Tree Pose*) and stay here for option one. For option two, press foot into hand and lift foot to sky. Reach right hand forward. Press body down, but lift head and heart. Lift leg higher, stay focused and hold for up to thirty seconds, using your breath to stay focused. Look at one spot to help you balance. Return to *Mountain Pose* and change sides.

Benefits of Dancer's pose

Core support, balance, strength through thighs and arms.

Virtues Developed

Grace, confidence, balance, focus, concentration.

Partner work with *Dancer's pose*

One child supports the other and helps bring foot to hand, to hold child's hand whilst they balance, and then gently release. When the child doing the pose has finished, the supporting partner is to say 'Well done (Name), I saw your (virtue).'

For example

'Well done Fred, I saw your concentration.'

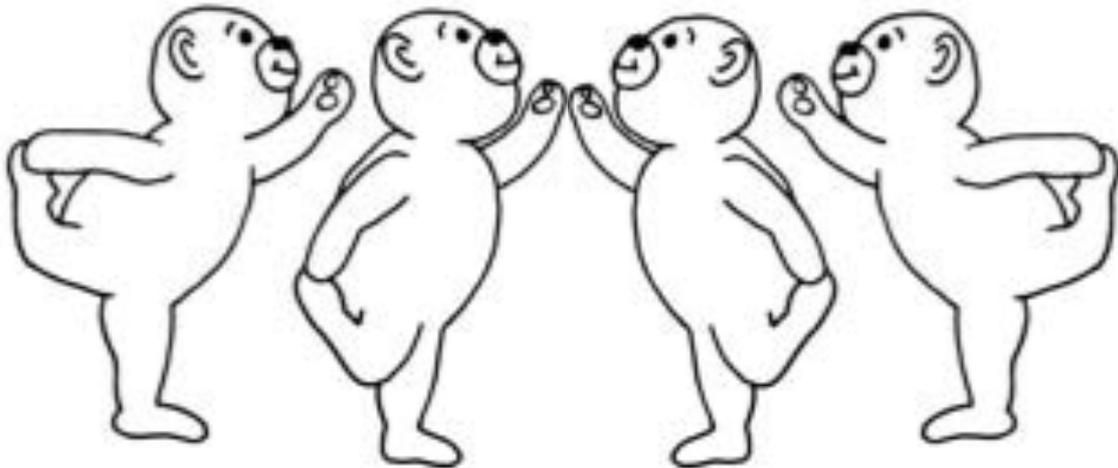
'That was great Pharan, I saw your balance.'

'Great work Amanda, I saw your focus.'

Use the list of virtues to help children choose what they saw, and how they saw it.

Then change over so the other child now does the yoga pose. If you choose to do partner work each day this week, it may be of benefit to change partners each time, so children experience a variety of support and acknowledgments.

If you have a Kindness garden (from Kindness week activities), you can write the virtues and children's names on fruit, leaves or shapes and paste them into the garden.



When to use yoga

Anytime you feel stuck on what to do, create a yoga posture or do one-minute of mindfulness.

Deep breathing is useful when feelings are tense.

Acknowledgments build self-awareness and resilience. Acknowledgments can be offered at any time. A short acknowledgment would be 'that was compassionate.' If there is more time, tell the child how you saw compassion, this helps the child grow the awareness of how their actions impact self and others. This helps build empathy and compassion.

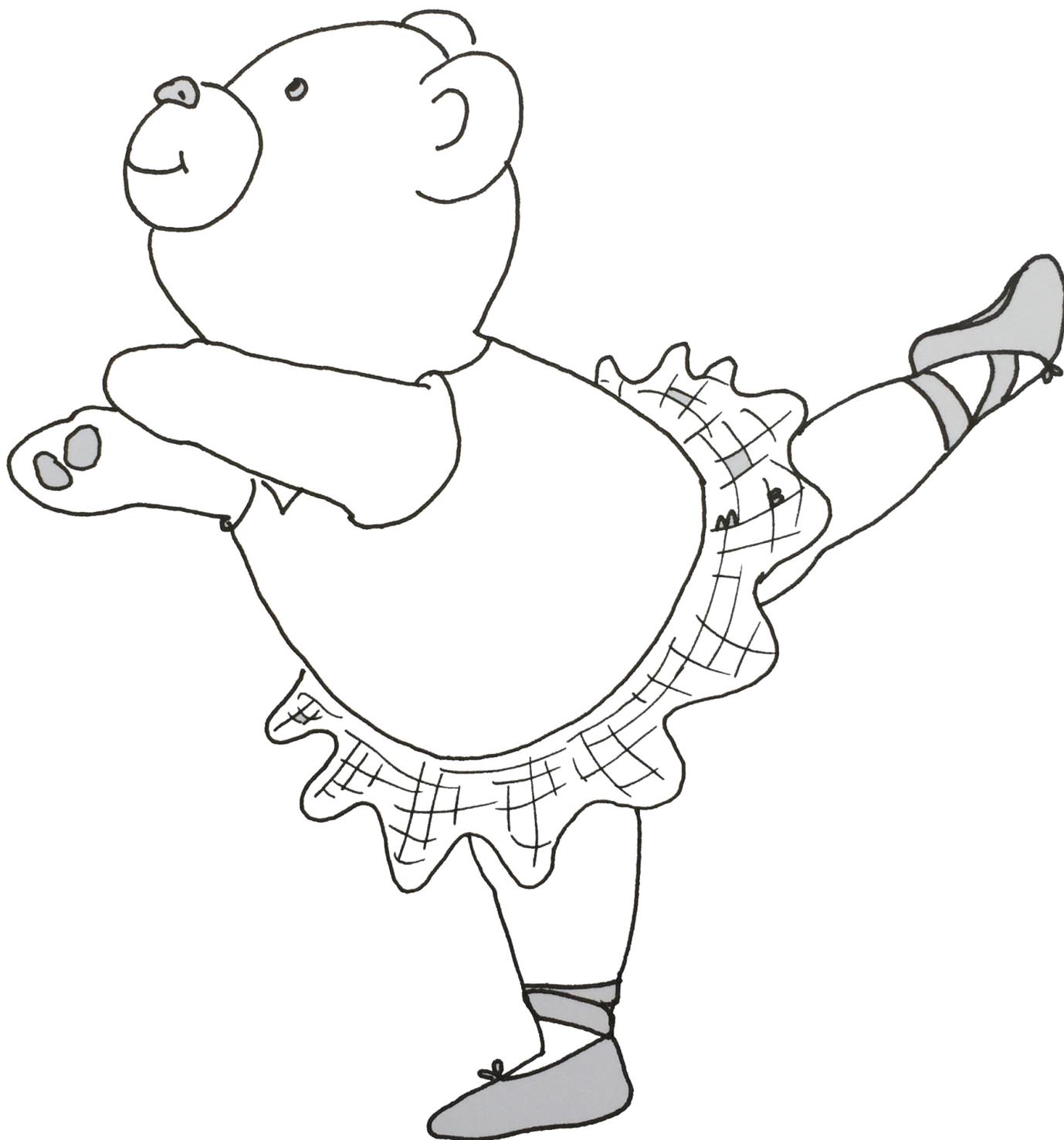
Print out the COMPASSION card and paste it on your wall to show everyone that enters your room that Compassion is the virtue of the week.

Please enjoy our printouts and cards to share with your children.

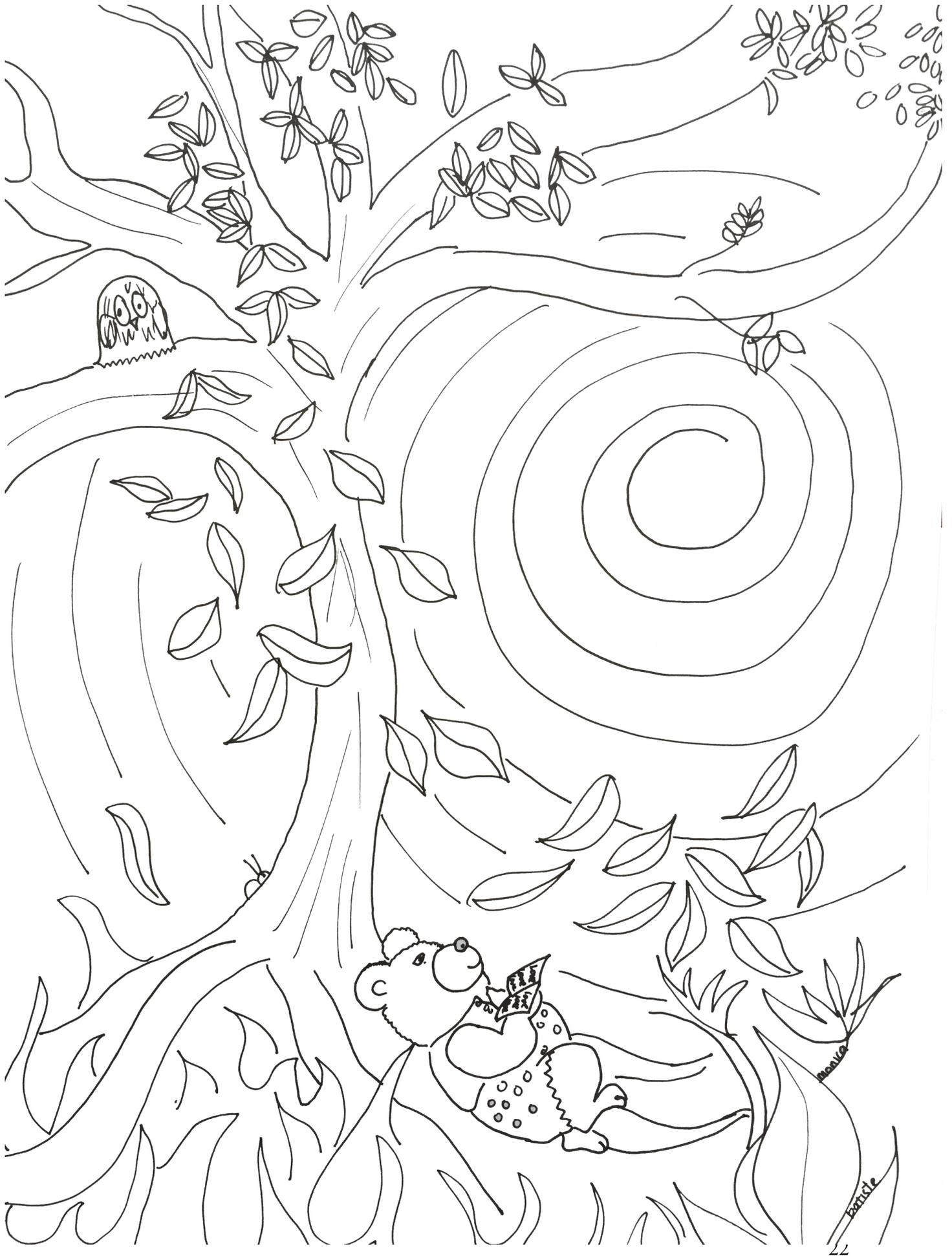
Virtue of the week

Compassion

Coloring in pages. Use mindfulness to colour in and help you tune into the present moment.







Thank you for your compassion. Your actions create a ripple across the universe and make the world a better place.

Monica

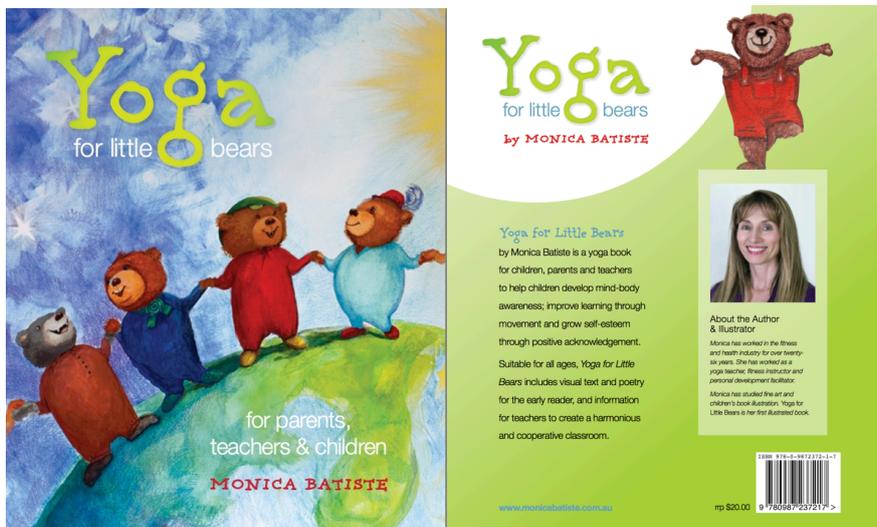
About Monica Batiste



Monica Batiste is the author and illustrator of *Yoga for Little Bears* (2014) *Simply Yoga* (2011) and *Your Perfect Body* (2011). *Yoga for Little Bears* was shortlisted for the Moreton Bay Innovation awards for its unique combination of Yoga and Emotional Intelligence. Monica has worked in the health industry for over 30 years and teaches yoga with a focus on self-esteem and personal development. Her books have received positive reviews by teachers, parents and health care providers from around the world.

Monica studied Creative Writing at Sunshine Coast University, Fine Art with Atelier in Brisbane, and Children's book illustration and design at Balmoral Art College.

She lives in North Brisbane with her lovely husband Andreas, and between them they have four beautiful daughters, and seven awesome grandchildren.



Yoga for Little Bears is a fun and easy way for children to develop their brain, body and confidence. The yoga postures designed for children's development include balance postures for focus and neuroplasticity; peaceful postures for reducing stress and increasing calm; friendship postures to reduce bullying and increase empathy. The beautiful illustrations of *Yoga Bears* in the Australian climate inspire a multi-dimensional learning opportunity to grow naturalistic intelligences.

Children from around the world have enjoyed *Yoga Bear* with testimonials from parents, teachers and psychologists on how *Yoga Bear* has supported their child's emotional and physical development.

Yoga for Little Bears can be purchased from TpT, the authors website www.monicabatiste.com.au or from Amazon.com

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