

# The Story of Marty – A Journey on Planet Earth

*The Story of Marty – A Journey on Planet Earth* – aims at triggering an experiential learning process which unfolds at various levels as we move through it. The topics can be explored, step by step, with the support of the *Martyswatch!* worksheets, proposed to put the concepts into focus, facilitate the development of lesson plans and promote value-oriented activities.

As we become more conscious of the makeup of human nature, realizing the importance of sense control and positive thinking, or of character traits such as self-confidence, motivation and sense of purpose, we understand how guiding principles and values are like a compass, and instrumental for our life-journey.

When we offer our children similar signposts, we are helping them become more self-aware, and by encouraging them to tune into one's loving heart, or Conscience, - the fulcrum of our "compass" - they build a unity between their "thoughts, words and actions".

## Chapter 1: The Fall

Marty's fall to Earth opens his story. We see him, a funny egg-shaped cartoon character with Mickey gloves, sneakers, and three antennas on his head, slipping off from a rainbow, and landing flat on the planet. He turns around to get back onto the rainbow, but it has disappeared. He loses his sense of "self" and is scared. Luckily, he meets a new friend. His name is Plutarco, and he reflects Marty's image like a mirror. Plutarco asks Marty to tell him about "his story", to become conscious of what he is going through, encouraging him to trust his destiny, to explore and inquire and to embark on his new journey with confidence, so as not to miss the chance to have the experience that being on planet earth offers him. Before doing so Marty plants "his vision-his dream", his purest yearning and desire, in the "soil of the heart". His wish is to get back home. Now he is ready for his new adventures, he has confidence in the seed that he has planted and knows that one day it will flourish. Life opens for him.

## Chapter 2: Life is a game/the map

The "map" hints and highlights how "life is a game" with its rules and regulations. Though he landed as a "cartoon character", Marty is now a human being that finds himself on the stage of life. The disorientation of chapter 1 is restated, but Plutarco comes to his rescue again and gives him pawns, dice and a game board. This chapter introduces the importance of concentration and the concept of choice and stresses the need to watch our steps with care ("*look in the mirror... shhh... no distractions... you will discover a treasure in your very own actions*"). It also suggests considering the law of cause and effect, and the importance of having a goal to achieve, a task to pursue; in fact, it is the latter that helps us identify the steps to take. Qualities such as concentration, discipline, determination, sense of duty (seen also as "duty towards oneself and one's vision/mission"), will help him to make his way.

## Chapter 3: The Forest

Marty gets lost in a forest. His many highly advanced electronic devices stop working and he must rely on his own resources: the correct use of the 5 senses, his faculty of reason and discernment and the inner guidance of his loving heart. Positive traits such as courage and trust are starting to take hold. In this chapter Marty meets three characters: an elephant, a mouse and a monkey. The elephant gifts him with a watch, which

looks like a compass to Marty, and offers him some wise advice. The mouse and the monkey give him a key and a box of tools, both necessary for his journey.

#### **Chapter 4 – In the kitchen**

Marty enters a tavern where he participates in a culinary workshop. (The cook is a bear in the illustrated version – a French chef de cuisine in the novel version). During the course he hears about "Human Values" for the first time; they are presented in the form of fragrant herbs: these are the values that makes one's dishes tastier and more balanced. This chapter reiterates the importance of concentration and presence, seen as unity of "head, heart and hands". Balance and moderation are among the suggested topics. Marty understands what can happen when the triple attention of Heart, Head and Hand is missing: the chef, although starred, gets distracted and makes a wrong choice, uses the wrong ingredients and creates havoc in the kitchen. Mistakes can happen because life is a journey of continuous learning... but humility, the ability to apologize, to be able to improve and correct oneself, and find solutions are all signs of resilience and creativity. These are healing qualities that are exalted in this part of the tale.

#### **Chapter 5 – The Garden**

Having understood the importance of choosing the "right herbs (values) to best season life's dishes", Marty wishes to learn how to grow them. The Garden is where he learns about the art of "heart-culture", from the ultimate farmer: Sai, the knowledgeable gnome who loves nature and knows it's every secret. In this chapter "seed and sowing", the five elements (air, water, fire, earth and ether), but also the importance of effort, constancy and perseverance, are in the foreground. Earth and nature appear in all their beauty as well, together with values such as order, discipline, respect, reverence, generosity, joy, love. The chapter surprises us with an unexpected ending, a powerful uproar. Is it the repercussion of the cook's mistakes made in the previous chapter that echoes throughout the garden? Or is it the consequence of other individuals, who – like the cook- are careless enough to lose unity between what "one thinks, says and does"? What is certain is that the garden is upset: the stability and harmony it had have suddenly vanished. The gist of the matter? Our thoughts, words and actions create.

#### **Chapter 6 – The Key (The mind of man)**

The previous chapter leads Marty to ask himself a series of questions. "How is it possible that such a beautiful garden has been ruined? Who did it? Why do people keep making mistakes? What can we do to avoid repeating the same mistakes?" These reflections bring forth an understanding as to the coexistence in the human being of "good and evil", of positive and negative. On the one hand we have the qualities and virtues of human values, on the other the vices and negative emotions; the "enemies of man", which lurk in one's own mind. Selfishness, envy, jealousy, anger, pride, etc., represent useless and harmful burdens; these enemies need to be "caught in time", uprooted, and/or balanced and transformed. In this chapter Marty grasps the true meaning of his watch (W.A.T.C.H., from the English "watch" but also "observe" – which refers to the maxim "*Watch your words, actions, thoughts character and heart*" – Sathya Sai). He is now aware that, just as seeds bear flowers and fruits, thoughts create consequences because they give life to intentions, words and actions. And it is for this reason that he is advised to retain only the positive ones and to free himself from those that bind him and do not allow him to be who he "truly is".

Marty begins to understand that his thoughts will not help him find his way home, on the contrary, they tend to twist and turn, confuse and even imprison him! He must elevate and illuminate them, and this is possible when he turns his mind within, towards the inner light of his heart. This is where human values reside, and

from here they can move forward and manifest. How? By practicing them. As he builds the habit of self-observation (W.A.T.C.H), Marty will refine his character and become a "self-leader", and the Master of his destiny.

### **Chapter 7 – The Rainbow**

Marty is exhausted – he has come a long way and has worked hard on himself to release the weight of his burdens (his bad thoughts and behavior patterns). This chapter rewards him with lightness. He grasps the meaning of the acronym "S.A.I.": See Always inside: i.e.: look within, connect to your True Self. Marty is thunderstruck. Everything he was looking for, the very way back home, was, from the beginning, right there. Mother Nature envelops him in her infinite embrace of unconditional love, and he feels one with the universe. A few steps left to go, and Marty will be back home, but he suddenly stops. He still needs to look at the invisible inscription on his key. It is a revelation for him: the sense of his journey, of his stay on earth, reaches out to its most sublime significance, revealing the true nature of his being: a spark of divinity. He knows what he must do: tell the earth children that this destiny – and destination – is also theirs. As he descends back to Earth, he is greeted by a group of youngsters who have followed his adventures. They are holding the tools: "the key, the 5Ds, and the watch", ready to pursue and fulfill their mission, both individually and collectively. They are eager to live together and grow together, working for a common purpose: to cultivate human values and nurture an environment in which unity in diversity and harmony can flourish; they will co-create a happy world together.