

# Tower Card



# Activities

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## INTRODUCTION

The Big City is a futuristic Installation Piece created by Joell Jones. It is her utopian city of the future.” As the administrative center of her visionary world, it stands as a microcosm of the larger sphere which it represents. It is to the earth as Washington DC is to the US, housing the global governing bodies which monitor and ensure the healthy functioning of the earth. The city is composed of twenty-six towers, each with its own special function, all of them inseparably linked and interwoven to form the city’s structure.

In light of the world’s current political climate, many people today find it difficult to envision a positive future for our planet. The goal of this project is to stimulate thoughts and dialogue with the hope of changing that mindset – to embolden people to influence the future in a positive way. It is an empowerment tool that reminds us that we can start making changes now to make the future brighter.

This booklet describes each card’s meaning and the functions of each tower, along with a list of questions

to consider in relation to each topic and a set of activities that connect the towers' themes to issues in the everyday world.

From its beginnings as a sculptural installation, the concept of the Big City has evolved into an interactive tool for empowerment, enlightenment, and enjoyment. These cards are filled with ideas, questions and activities to help you channel your creativity.

Have fun!

## INSTRUCTIONS

(follow these, or make up your own! )

1. Shuffle the deck and select a card that feels right to you.
  2. Look at the card you've chosen and notice what ideas come up for you.
  3. Locate the tower in the activity booklet and read about the tower's function.
  4. Reflect on the questions and form your own opinions.
  5. Pick an activity that appeals to you, and do it!
- Some activities encourage you to work with children or with your inner child. We can learn as much from children as they can learn from us.
  - Go as in-depth into the project as time and energy allow – integrate the concepts into your everyday life. The future begins now!
  - A blank card is included in the pack, which can be used to create a tower you might like to see added to the city.
  - When you have completed all 26 cards, contact our website at [www.joelljones.com](http://www.joelljones.com) to receive a Certificate of Citizenship for the Big City, to honor your contribution to a positive future.

# Institute of Understanding



Throughout history, religious mythology was a way of learning about the world around us—why lightning flashes and what made the rains come. Later, science joined religion in creating models for exploring and understanding the world. In the Big City, representatives from all scientific and spiritual disciplines come together at the Institute of Understanding for a continuous forum on new ideas and theories. The religions are united together to oppose religious intolerance.

Are you a spiritual person? Were you raised with strong religious values? Do you still hold the same views? Are you a skeptic or a believer? How does science inform your understanding of the world? How will religion and science shape the future?

## Basic Activities

- Read creation stories from different cultures, including indigenous peoples. Discover the many theories of the origins of the universe.
- Help children write and perform their own creation stories by acting or using puppets.
- In your opinion, how and why did the universe form? Why are we here? What will our future hold? Draw a picture of the creation of the world. Draw a picture of the world in the future.
- Why is the sky blue? Why do you see lightning before you hear thunder? Does water freeze faster than wine? Why?

## Advanced Activities

- Learn about the different religions that shape our world—Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism, Shintoism, Judaism, Rastafarianism and others. Look for the common threads that unite all of these philosophies.
- Go to a different church, synagogue, mosque, ashram or worship hall each week to listen and gain new insight from old religions.
- Create your own personal religion—complete with deities, rituals, holy days, religious art—everything but disciples!
- Look for the intersections of science and religion. How have they agreed and disagreed throughout the ages?
- Using the scientific method, test and prove a hypothesis. How can the scientific method be applied to solving real world problems?

# Textile Factory

Clothing in the Big City is about comfort more than brand names, personal expression over group unity. Anything goes here—the fashion police have been run out of town! Much of the clothing is functional, made with soft, flowing, natural fibers that allow for a full range of movement. Big City residents are encouraged to design and create their own garments and the Textile Factory is home to a huge bargain basement of recycled clothes.

What do you feel most comfortable in? How do you express yourself through what you wear? Do you prefer Hilfiger or hemp cloth? How will people dress in the future? Star Trek suits or saris and togas? Will women and men move beyond traditional gender expectations when choosing clothes? How will clothing be made?





## Basic Activities

- Close your eyes and feel different fabrics (denim, silk, linen, cotton, nylon, vinyl.) Touch the fabrics with your hands and feet. Rub the material on your cheek, ears and arms. Which ones feel best? Why? What textures do you like most?
- Help children make simple clothing for everyday use or costumes for a play.
- What fabric, designs and colors would you use to represent a certain emotion, person or animal?
- Draw or paint a picture of yourself in your favorite outfit.

## Advanced Activities

- Design male and female (or unisex) clothes for 1000 years in the future. Design an outfit you can wear now.
- Take textiles into your own hands and sign up for a sewing class. Make a copy of your favorite garment in another color or fabric.
- Be aware of brand names. Find out where the clothes you wear are made and who makes them. Consider how your buying choices may affect the workers who make your clothes.
- Look at fashion trends in history and create a gallery of silly styles. You can start with bustles, codpieces and corsets—then move on to hoop skirts, bell bottoms and parachute pants. What are people wearing now that may get laughs in the future?

# Mosque Creativity Center

*“Art is my religion, art gives me hope.” Joell Jones*

In the Big City, everyone is an artist! The image of the artist in a beret, dabbing a palette and painting a fruit bowl has expanded to include anyone engaged in the creative process—whether it’s cooking, ceramics, carpentry or chemistry. The artistic process is a connection to the divine within us and in the universe, so many people make pilgrimages to the Creativity Center to get inspiration.

What is your art? What activities make you feel creative? How do you define art? Do you consider yourself an artist? Who are your favorite artists? What will be the role of artists in the future? What is the ultimate source of creativity? Is creativity a spiritual process for you?



## Basic Activities

- Provide children with art supplies and turn them loose! Watch them inspire each other.
- Go to an art museum and look at different types of artwork. What are your favorites? Do you like abstracts, portraits, sculptures? What color combinations most appeal to you?
- Close your eyes, find a quiet space in your mind and imagine the art you want to create. Let the inspiration find you, don't analyze or censor.

## Advanced Activities

- Tune into your creative outlet and channel the creative impulse. Ditch the distractions and get into the zone. Turn off your inner critic and enjoy being an artist!
- Get together with friends and collaborate on a creative project—have a musical jam on pots and pans, design and build a treehouse, paint vibrant colors on an old table, sew a quilt of favorite t-shirts or design a computer game. Build off each other and let the creative energy flow.
- Look for ways to broaden your artistic experience—check out some experimental theater or a local college art show.
- Combine art forms. Paint a picture of a song. Write a short story about a sculpture.



# Lichen Tower

As humans spread out across the globe, we destroyed the habitats of many creatures, demolishing their homes and wiping out their food sources. The Lichen Tower was created to oversee the rebirth of these habitats. It connects people in the Big City with plants and animals, and is dedicated to preventing the extinction of any more species.

The Lichen Tower also contains a nature preserve designed to nurture and protect endangered species, with the goal of eventually returning them to nature. A variety of ecosystems exist inside the Lichen Tower, so lemurs from the rainforests and geckos from the Gobi desert feel at home.

What kind of animal do you most identify with? Do you think humans and animals can co-exist in the future? How do you feel about zoos? What about wildlife

preserves? Will we ever recreate species that are already extinct? Is extinction a natural part of evolution? Will humans ever be on the extinct species list?

## Basic Activities

- Look at pictures of domestic and exotic animals. What does each one need to survive—habitat, food, companionship?
- Imitate the sounds and movements of various animals. Are they large and lumbering? Are they sleek and stealthy? What noises do they make to communicate with each other?
- View pictures or films about tropical rainforests. Discover the unique plants and animals that live there.

## Advanced Activities

- Learn about some extinct animals (like the Dodo Bird and Tasmanian Tiger) and discover what led to their extinction. What animals were almost wiped out and what was done to prevent their extinction?
- Find out which animals are on the endangered species list and what you can do to help them.
- Draw, sculpt, or paint an endangered animal.
- Write about the destruction of the rainforest from the point of view of an animal.
- Learn about what is being done to preserve the rainforests. How many acres of rainforest are lost every day? Can indigenous animals survive outside this habitat? How might the destruction of the rainforest affect human life?

# Tree

The Tree Horticultural Center teaches permaculture (permanent agriculture)—a process combining sustainability and ecologically sound food production. The tower is home to exotic research gardens and native plant sanctuaries. The Tree Center monitors garden projects in the countryside, teaching new techniques and ensuring that food production is organic and humane. Even though robots could handle the work load, most gardening is still done by hand—to keep in touch with nature. The Tree Center also works to rehabilitate land tainted by pollution in the past.

Do you like to garden? Is your thumb green, or black? Were any of your ancestors farmers? How do the food production methods of large “agribusiness” firms differ from those of the small farmer? How will food be grown in the future? Will humans still manually grow plants?



## Basic Activities

- Plant a garden with children. Harvest and eat veggies for an outdoor picnic. Help young folks develop an appreciation for freshly picked, garden-grown produce.
- Create representations of your favorite fruits and vegetables. Mold them out of clay, whittle them from wood or carve them from soap.
- Sing a song about plants and gardening. Or write different words to a popular melody to celebrate fruits and vegetables.

## Advanced Activities

- Learn more about permaculture and plant a sustainable vegetable garden. Research alternative pest control—like introducing predator insects such as ladybugs and the praying mantis.
- Practice companion planting by pairing vegetables with flowers that naturally discourage pests.
- Learn what plants are native to your area and grow some native plants in your yard.
- Visit a botanical garden. Bring a sketchbook to draw your favorite foliage and flowers.
- Become a guerrilla gardener and sprinkle sunflower seeds (low maintenance) on patches of grass in urban areas.
- Research current methods of cleaning land and water that has been polluted with toxic chemicals.

# Cowry Tower

Cowry shells, a symbol of fertility, were the first universal currency. The Cowry Tower is the world bank that oversees the global economy of the future. It monitors the practice of fair trade around the planet, exchanging goods without exploiting people or resources. Wages more reflect a person's contribution to society, i.e. finally teachers get paid as much as pro-athletes! Everyone has something to contribute and no one lives in poverty. The Cowry Tower also keeps an eye on the world stock markets and maintains stability.

What role does money play in your life? How are we dealing with poverty in our society? In the future, will we have such a gap in between the rich and the poor? Or will wages reflect public service? What are the pros and cons

of bartering, hard currency and electronic money?





## Basic Activities

- Have children make something to share, barter, sell or trade.
- Design a currency for the future. Would it be paper, coin, electronic, natural?
- Cowry shell currency originated on the African coast, but soon spread throughout the world. Look around your environment and find a natural currency.

## Advanced Activities

- Learn the difference between “free” and “fair” trade. Are the two types of commerce mutually exclusive? What are the impacts of each?
- Compare and contrast different economic systems (socialism, capitalism, communism). What are the pros and cons of each? What are the principles? How have these systems been applied?
- In your opinion, which jobs deserve the highest pay? List 10-20 professions and how you would financially compensate workers. What criteria did you use to make your decisions?
- Take an economics class and learn about the stock market. Compare the Dutch Tulipmania of the 1700s to the Great Depression and the recent dot com boom/bust.
- What makes something a valuable commodity? If enough people agree on its worth? Explore the transient value of Mardi Gras beads, Cabbage Patch Kids, Furbies or trading cards.

# Cultural History Building

Over the centuries, globalization has blurred racial lines and cultures have become intertwined. Racism decreased as a result, but the desire to preserve cultural identity gave rise to the need for the Cultural History Building. It houses all personal and cultural records for the Big City in a massive archive. Personal objects like journals, books, mementos and home movies are on file to help people connect with their ancestors and research genealogy. Cultural records survive intact with recipes, folklore, dances, rites and rituals, art and music. People called Torchbearers represent each culture to pass on the ways and traditions, by immersing visitors in historically accurate settings and experiences.

Do you celebrate any holidays from your ancestral culture? Do you think the world is becoming a melting pot and we will evolve to one race? Or will cultures retain their uniqueness? How will we celebrate our cultural heritage in the future?



## Basic Activities

- What does someone need to live? Explore the way different cultures meet these needs—nourishment, clothing, shelter, companionship. Gather pictures of clothing, dwellings and artifacts from many cultures.
- Translate phrases and songs into different languages. Learn to say the same thing in a variety of different ways. Sing *Happy Birthday* in several languages.

## Advanced Activities

- Research your ancestral heritage. Ask your parents or grandparents to tell you about their cultures of origin.
- Celebrate a holiday from your country of origin. Celebrate a holiday from another culture.
- Write an account of your life and times and preserve it for future generations. What major events (personal and global) affected you? How would you relate modern culture to someone from the future?
- Have a Cultural Cuisine party and taste dishes from all around the world. Have guests bring traditional dishes from a different culture. Or pick a theme ingredient (like rice) and prepare it many ways (i.e. Spanish Rice, Cajun-style, sushi and risotto.)
- Trace the cultural origins of modern music to find the roots. Follow rap to jazz, blues, slave spirituals and indigenous drum beats. Trace modern country music to bluegrass and European folk ballads.



# Nelson Mandela Pagoda

After millennia of political, religious, racial and gender-based oppression, global consciousness shifted to realize that “no one is truly free when others are oppressed!” The goal of the Nelson Mandela Pagoda is to ensure every individual has a voice and make sure human rights are not being violated. All genders, cultures, races, religions and abilities are treated with honor and respect. Achieving universal tolerance is closer than ever before in history.

What organizations exist today to protect human rights? Will people ever learn to see through their superficial differences and recognize their common humanity?

Were you raised in an environment that discouraged or encouraged tolerance? Have you ever experienced racism/sexism/discrimination? What prejudices might you hold?

## Basic Activities

- Demonstrate and foster tolerance and respect in children. Encourage sharing and listening skills.
- Read biographies of famous civil-rights leaders—Martin Luther King, Ghandi, Susan B. Anthony. Make posters or collages on the theme of tolerance.
- Find a pen pal (or email buddy) in another region or country. Correspond about your daily lives, families and friends.

## Advanced Activities

- Learn about human rights movements in the past—civil rights in the 60s, the fight for women's suffrage, child labor activists, abolitionists and gay rights advocates.
- Find out more about human rights movements today. What are the philosophies of the NAACP, NOW, ACLU and Amnesty International?
- Get involved on a grassroots level. Find out what's being done locally to promote diversity.
- Find scientific information that explains why races and cultures have different skin tones and features.
- Get together with a diverse group of folk and discuss ways women, gays and people of color are viewed in popular culture and the media. How are they being represented? Have views changed over the decades?
- Compare the industrial nations of the northern hemisphere to the mostly undeveloped countries in the southern hemisphere. What forces maintain this disparity?

# World Watch Tower

In the early days of the Big City, the Earth was swarming with people. As the population exploded, so did social and environmental

problems like pollution, deforestation, poverty and violence. As the earth strained to provide for all the people, the Big City came up with a new plan for population control—Conscious Conception. Now it takes a conscious act of will from both parties to conceive. When a couple is mentally and emotionally prepared for the challenge of raising children they can choose to become fertile. Accidents don't just happen anymore! The World Watch Tower makes sure that all of the people on the planet are being provided for and no one goes hungry.

What are some other problems that are affected by over-population? What are some methods in use today to control population? How did you receive your sexual education? At what age is sex ed. appropriate? How old do you think someone should be before they become a parent? What skills do you need to raise a child? Can you envision a world that could support three times the current population?



## Basic Activities

- Find out the current world population. What was it 100 years ago? 50 years ago? What is it expected to be 50 years from now?
- Volunteer at a soup kitchen, or donate canned goods.

## Advanced Activities

- What countries have the highest populations? How do the most heavily populated areas cope? What is daily life for people in the most densely populated countries? How is the problem of over-crowding addressed? How available is birth control?
- Make your own sex education book. Pick your target audience (children, teens, adults) and include what information you find most important. Be as appropriate or irreverent as you like.
- Take a course in human sexuality. Notice if you become more comfortable with issues relating to sex? How do you feel about the sexual side of yourself?
- Research various methods of contraception. Which are safest? Easiest to use? What belief systems interfere with contraception education?

# University

The B.C.U. (Big City University) is free to all residents and utilizes a creative and experimental approach in every subject. People of all ages attend classes—since we never stop learning and new innovations arise all the time. Students meet with counselors to design their own personalized curriculums. The focus is on a holistic education, not on a singular, specific degree. The philosophy of the B.C. University is that each one of us is both a student and a teacher, We always have something to offer and something to learn.

What were the most important things you learned in school? What classes did you like? Which ones drove you nuts? What qualities make someone a good teacher? What role should a teacher play in a classroom? Instructor? Facilitator? Referee? How do you learn best? In what environment? What subjects (science, the Simpsons, 70's culture) are you an expert in?





## Basic Activities

- Encourage older children to share what they know with younger children. The mentoring process will empower them both.
- Ask a child to teach you some simple tasks, like tying shoelaces, brushing teeth or putting together a puzzle. Ask questions and give them time to explain the process to you. Thank them for having shown you how to do something.

## Advanced Activities

- Put yourself in the position to teach or be taught. Take a yoga class, writing workshop, carpentry or sculpting. Learn something new, pass something on.
- Get together with friends and organize a teach-in. Have people talk about their hobbies, interests and areas of expertise. Informalize the learning process by sharing your knowledge of a subject with others.
- Go visit a local college and sit in on a class, check out an art exhibit or just loiter in the student union.
- Imagine you are the dean of a college in the future, how would you design the curriculum? What classes would be mandatory? Elective? What skills do you find most important in developing a well-rounded individual?



## Farmer's Market

Love fresh squeezed juices and homegrown tomatoes? In the Big City, organic farmers sell fresh fruits and vegetables at the Farmer's Market. International growers bring seasonal specialties from around the globe, so there is always something new to try. Wild fish from healthy streams and free-range chickens and eggs are available. Holistic nutritionists help design individualized meal plans since eating habits have a huge impact on health and longevity. Another function of the Market is to provide food for the needy, and ensure that everyone is nourished.

What are your favorite foods? What makes up a balanced diet for you?

Have you ever grown any veggies at home? What do you consider to be the pros and cons of organic food? What do you know about hydroponics? How will farming be different in the future?

## Basic Activities

- Visit a local farmers market and revel in the sensory experience. Look at all of the rich colors of the ripe fruit. Touch and taste berries. Inhale the mixed aroma of fresh produce.
- Buy a variety of different kinds of apples. Slice the apples up and judge them in a tasting contest. Make up voting categories like color and sweetness, shine and crunch.
- Paint or draw you favorite fruits or veggies.

## Advanced Activities

- Volunteer a few hours at a community garden. Find out how to create informal gardens and how you can grow large amounts of food in any space.
- Plant some vegetables in your yard or some herbs in a pot. Whether you have a country cottage or an urban apartment, you can spice up your life with plants.
- Research the pros and cons on genetically modified foods.
- Find out what makes a farm “certified organic.” What techniques do they use? How does it compare to conventional methods? What percentage of food grown in the US is organic?
- Keep track of what you eat and how you feel. What do you notice about your well being? Make a chart.

# Media Building

The Media Building houses the Big City's digital library, an archive of radio, television and news footage and a massive idea bank. Major news networks are a thing of the past. The Big City promotes equal representation of different views, more dialogue about important issues, and interactive programming. Sensationalism is not considered news, and instead of being bombarded by advertisements, viewers have the option to tune into marketing channels and learn the latest products and services. To encourage individual expression, the public has free access to broadcast equipment and time slots.

How do you get your news—TV, newspapers, online? Do you think you are getting unbiased reports, or do you feel like you are being spoon fed sound bites? How was information exchanged in the past? How will news be delivered in the future? What would your TV show be about?



## Basic Activities

- Get together with family and friends and videotape your own news hour. Did Mr. Whiskers have kittens? Amy make the team? Termites in the basement? That's news! Have fun and encourage everyone to contribute a news story.
- Videotape children interviewing each other. Have them pose questions to one another. Get creative and pretend to be famous people or cartoon characters.

## Advanced Activities

- Find a fresh source for news—look at alternative media sites online or read a periodical that has a philosophy different from your own.
- Find out about public access television in your area. Check out what your fellow citizens have to offer, or put your own opinions out there.
- Write a letter to the editor or call a radio station to make your voice heard.
- Make your own Zine or website expressing your views. Read a variety of Zine and Weblogs for ideas.
- Write a satirical news report on a current issue. Look to *The Onion* or Jonathan Swift for inspiration.
- When you read a national periodical, look for bias-loaded words and phrases, manipulative photos and layouts. Notice that it's not just what is being said, but how it's being said that affects perception.

# Tourist Center

When you first arrive in the Big City, you will want to visit the Tourist Center for general information, local arts, crafts and cuisine. It is also the place Big City residents go to when they want to travel—all roads lead here! For people in a hurry, Instatrip gets you there in a flash, but for those to whom the journey is as important as the destination, train cars and sail boats are still available. With Virtual Vacations you can follow Sherpas up Mt. Everest, trek the Oregon Trail and still be home in time for dinner.

How do you most like to travel—planes, trains, automobiles or on foot? What inspires the desire to travel? Curiosity? Escape? Gaining a new perspective? What are your favorite places that you've visited? Where would you like to go next? How will we travel in the future? Do you think interplanetary travel will be possible?



## Basic Activities

- Help children plan a local trip. Hold a meeting to plan activities, make phone calls and arrangements. Ask children what they will need to bring with them and help them pack. Go on the trip and help them record experiences with words and pictures.
- Next time you take a trip, bring a travel journal and write down all of your memories while they are fresh. Paste in mementos—photos, receipts, menus and sketches.

## Advanced Activities

- Plan your dream vacation, even if you haven't the time/money/spaceship to take it. Would you like to go to Montana, Madagascar, Mars? What draws you to this place? Where would you stay and what would you do?
- Write a brochure telling people why they should (or shouldn't) visit your hometown. What can you say about where you live that will make people want to go there?
- Read about the history of transportation—from the invention of the wheel, to the horse and buggy, steam engine, and supersonic jet. What new modes of travel are being developed now?
- Design a futuristic form of transportation. Sketch it out on paper or make a model. Be as realistic or as imaginative as you like.



# Ministry of Global Ethics

The Ministry of Global Ethics works with the Nelson Mandela Pagoda to prevent human rights violations. The citizens who form the Ministry are randomly selected to represent the populations they serve, working together towards global harmony. The representatives listen to complaints and concerns of the people, addressing each issue fairly and with respect. The Ministry of Global Ethics is also the punitive body of the Big City and anyone who violates the set codes are offered counseling at the Psychology Dome and perform community service in the appropriate capacity.

What are the foundations of your moral standpoints? Do you apply the same moral code to yourself that you apply to others? What is going on in the world that you find morally repugnant? Should government legislate morality? How do you feel about capital punishment? How could prisoners be rehabilitated?



## Basic Activities

- Let your actions speak for your ethical standard. Remember the Golden Rule and treat others how you want to be treated.
- Facilitate conflict resolution in children by teaching them that relationships are based on mutual respect. Explain how one child's behavior affects the other. Let them take turns expressing their version of events and listen patiently. Have both children make a peace offering (a drink of water or Bandaid) to heal the hurt.

## Advanced Activities

- Assess your feeling about the world and take direct action to change something you feel is morally wrong. Practice what you preach—volunteer! Get your hands dirty for a cause you believe in.
- Write a letter to your representative commending them or condemning them for a recent decision.
- Since morals are often shaped by one's cultural experience, look at other countries and try to understand how they came by their ethical codes. Something that may seem morally wrong in one culture (i.e. eating cattle) may be totally accepted in another. What are some other examples?
- What should we do with law breakers in the future? Devise a strategy you think would work.

# Gaia Ecology Center

Named for Gaia, the Greek Goddess of the Earth, the Ecology Center exists to ensure that the planet is being treated with love and care. Having finally recovered from the ravages of global warming, the earth's environment has returned to its natural balance. Since so many creatures share the world, humans are now careful not to drain the planet's resources. The Big City is committed to sustainability through recycling waste, protecting the environment and using renewable sources of energy.

What are ways you can help the earth? Why do you think humans pollute the planet and degrade the environment? How would you feel if there were no more parks, lakes or trees? What do you think is the cause of global warming? In the future, will we be better conservationists, or worse? Are we capable of destroying the planet, or would we just make it uninhabitable for human life?



## Basic Activities

- Go on a nature walk and enjoy the sensory experience of being outdoors. Walk barefoot through the grass. Collect fallen leaves, acorns, seed pods or small stones to remind you of the gifts of nature.
- Paint or draw a picture of “Gaia’s garden.” Or make found art from driftwood or other natural debris.

## Advanced Activities

- Make your world a nicer place! Get a group together to clean up a park or a stream in your area.
- Learn more about composting, solar energy and recycling. Research other sustainable sources of energy. Design a sustainable house for the future.
- Spend the day walking in a forest and enjoy the rejuvenating effects of nature. When you get home, you may want to write a letter to your representative in support of the environment.
- Check out the latest technology in hybrid cars. How many options are on the market? How fuel-efficient are they compared to regular automobiles? What is in the works for the future?
- Research James Lovelock’s “Gaia Theory;” that the earth is a self-regulating system that strives to ensure conditions suitable for life. Write an essay about your reactions.

# Fantasy Cone



In the Big City, people love to have fun! Laughter really is the best medicine and people of the future know the value of relaxing and having a good time. Adults and kids alike go to the Fantasy Cone to enjoy themselves and escape to an amusement park that is free from miles of lines and outrageously expensive sodas. At the Fantasy Cone you are limited only by the bounds of your imagination. You can design (and ride) your own virtual coasters, hang glide, windsurf or take a ride on a flying carpet. The Imagination Interpreter allows people to enact personalized fantasies in a safe environment. If you can dream it, you can be it!

How do you like to escape? What are your favorite amusement park rides? Do you like to spin out of control, ride the ups and downs of a roller coaster, the spooky chills of a haunted house? What kind of amusement park rides do you see in the future? Flying space-coasters, virtual snowboarding? How will people escape in the future? Will we have more or less free time?

## Basic Activities

- Visit a hands-on children's museum or activity center. Bring kids, if you have them, or get into the exploring yourself.
- Escape your daily routine. If amusement parks aren't your thing, escape to a peaceful retreat in nature or a city where you won't run into anyone you know.
- Make a collage of "Great Escapes" by cutting out relaxing or de-stressing images from magazines. Hang the collage in your office, locker or wherever you might need a quick mental vacation.

## Advanced Activities

- Design your own theme park with rides, games and animals in costume. Draw it out on a poster board or make a small model.
- Next time you feel stressed, relax into a comfy spot and take several deep breaths. Visualize a place of calm—a hammock with a view, a cool pool under a waterfall—escape to your own Fantasy Island!
- The International Labor Organization determined that Americans work longer hours, with less vacation time than any other industrialized nation. Find out the average work week for European workers. What about workers in Asia and Africa?
- What is the ideal balance between work and relaxation for you? Research and determine if you can make it happen.

# Center for Wellness

Healers in the Big City are trained in a variety of multicultural traditions—curanderas and chiropractors, shamans and surgeons. The focus is holistic, to heal the entire person and not just to slap a Bandaid on the symptoms.

Regular visits and preventative care give people tune ups before they break down. People are encouraged to take an active role in their spiritual, emotional and physical healing.

Do you pop an aspirin at the first sign of a headache, or are you the sort who won't call the doctor unless a limb turns up missing? Do you like high-tech medical assistance or are you into natural and alternative healing? Do you feel in-tune with your body? Do you view illness as purely physical, or does it encompass the mind-body-spirit connection? How will we be healed/heal ourselves in the future?



## Basic Activities

- Help children to learn about their bodies through anatomy (structure) and physiology (function.) Teach them the steps to building a healthy body and show them some fun ways to exercise and eat well.
- Notice and react to your rising stress levels and give yourself an immunity boost during periods of high impact. Eat leafy greens, drink fruit smoothies, take lots of Vitamin C and get ample rest.
- Give yourself a treat by making time for a massage, de-stressing with yoga or trying some acupuncture.

## Advanced Activities

- There have been new modifications to the food pyramid. Read up on the latest in nutritional health and keep your diet balanced.
- Compare Eastern and Western healing practices. What types of illness/injury would be best treated by each? What are some treatment options?
- Bring out the healer in yourself and give a massage to someone else. Learn some acupressure points to relieve tension, treat a headache or soothe tired feet.
- Look beneath the surface of physical illness and find root causes in the emotional/spiritual aspect of yourself.
- Art has healing powers. Identify an area in your body that is problematic and paint it or give it form. What colors did you use? What do you notice about your creation?

# Entertainment Tower



Head to the Entertainment Tower for a night on the town! Whether you're into performance art, opera, DJs, the circus, contemporary art or the latest movies—(both traditional 2-D productions and total-immersion, holographic experiences,) you can find it all under one roof! The Entertainment Tower is teeming with activities to amuse and inspire.

You can even sign up for a class in juggling, improv, sound mixing, spoken word, etc. and get in on the act yourself.

What do you do for entertainment? What is your ultimate night/week-end on the town? How much time do you allot for entertainment? What forms of entertainment did folks enjoy 100 years ago? 1000 years ago? What will entertain us in the future? Does entertainment inspire you to be more creative?



## Basic Activities

- Put on a play with children. Adapt a commonly known fairy tale or write your own script. Make simple scenery, props and costumes. Perform for friends and family.
- Take in some culture this week by going to see a play, an art exhibit or check out an “open mic night” at a local watering hole.

## Advanced Activities

- Get together with friends and family for a cabaret night and entertain each other with songs, magic tricks and comedy sketches.
- Learn to laugh at yourself! Satirize yourself or have friends spoof one another. Keep it light and let the laughs roll.
- Form your own jam band by gathering a group of people, a variety of instruments (or anything that might make noise) and start rocking. How do maracas, a sitar, a harmonica, a cast-iron skillet and a kettle drum sound together?
- Uncover the history of fun. How has entertainment changed over the centuries? Taking the whole family to a stoning was once considered a good time. How do we get our kicks these days? What is fun now that might seem bizarre or silly to future generations?
- Theorize how the cinema experience will evolve in the future. Design a movie theater for a hundred years from now.

# Consciousness Center

Residents of the Big City live in the Consciousness Center. Individual family groups have private suites on the outer perimeter and common spaces are shared by the larger community. In the future, the definition of family is all-inclusive. At an early age, children are given the tools to find peace within themselves, as inner peace leads to global peace. In the center of the tower are large meditation arenas where the people come together to collectively raise consciousness. People are aware that interaction occurs on many levels (verbal, physical, psychic) and this promotes greater understanding and allows communities to unite towards a common goal.

How do you achieve inner peace? Gardening? Meditating? Painting? What kind of family unit did you grow up in? How is your family structured now? How have ideas of family and living changed in the last 1000 years? How will people live in the future? Will humans be more isolated? Or will we return to more communal ways of life? What will futuristic dwellings look like?



## Basic Activities

- Talk to children about the different types of families that make up the world. Ask them about their family- parents, siblings, extended family.
- Write a short story about daily home life far in the future. Envision the family dynamic, the routine activities and the type of structure they live in.

## Advanced Activities

- Design the type of dwellings you think people will call home in 3003. Using wood, clay, or some other building material construct a futuristic home.
- Families in America often consist of parents and children living in a house together, while in other countries multiple generations live under the same roof. Find out what is considered a family in other cultures.
- Next time there is a family dispute, don't slam the door on communication. Calm your emotions and look inward for solutions. Share your thoughts and be receptive to others. Try role reversal and imagine what others are experiencing.
- Learn to meditate. Find a form that works for you. Take a class in transcendental meditation, yoga or hypnotherapy. It will serve you a lifetime.

# World Council

Long before the Big City was built, war nearly destroyed the planet and the Earth suffered serious damage from bombs and chemical agents.

Finally the people of the world realized they had become a danger to themselves.

The focus of the World Council is to prevent future wars by settling disputes peacefully between nations. Each country sends delegates to the Council and together they work towards consensus and compromise instead of conflict. The representatives on the World Council also serve as interplanetary liaisons.

What are your feelings about war? Do you think we should avoid it at all costs, or do you think there is sometimes justification? How else could we resolve disputes between nations? Are humans capable of achieving lasting global peace? Will the human race survive another 1000 years without destroying itself? Are we learning from our mistakes?



## Basic Activities

*An eye for an eye leaves the whole world blind.*

- Model appropriate anger management for children and teach them to break the cycle of retaliation.
- Teach children about conflict resolution. Create a peaceful area, with chairs facing each other. Let one child hold an object (seashell, flower) and speak their mind, then pass the object to the other child until the situation is resolved.

## Advanced Activities

- Look at the history of the UN and its effectiveness at settling disputes.
- Trace the root causes of the major wars of the last century. What were the catalysts that started WWI, WWII, Vietnam ? Did the initial dispute justify the end results? Could creative conflict resolution have settled the situation without violence?
- Write a short story where you step into a pivotal moment in history and offer a peaceful solution. Change the world for the better, if only on paper.
- Read about the lives of the world's peacemakers. How did Mohandas Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Bertha von Suttner (the woman who inspired the creation of the Nobel Peace Prize and in 1905 received the award), affect change in the world?

# Psychology Dome

After the Psychology Dome was created, there was an immediate shift away from violent crimes, suicide and domestic disputes. Residents of the Big City go to the Psychology Dome to learn about themselves and their relationships with others. Each citizen has a mentor who's been with them since birth and can help them along life's pathways. Human sexuality courses facilitate healthy relationships, resulting in a society that views sexuality with openness and honor. Also, groups of all ages meet together here to discuss common problems and share experiences. New holodeck-like technology allows people to explore their dreams, rework difficult events, by using role reversal and other techniques.

What is your experience with psychology? Have you ever studied it, or been to a therapist? Do you think counseling might be a good idea for most people or useful only as a treatment for mental illness? Has a dream ever changed your outlook? How will psychology evolve in the future?



## Basic Activities

- Talk about feelings with children. Show pictures of people expressing different emotions. Have children act out feelings like joy, surprise, sadness and anger. Why do we have feelings? What scares us? What makes us happy?
- Practice effective listening skills to better counsel others. Try to remain present while someone is talking. Ask open-ended questions to encourage talking. Avoid cutting someone off or passing judgement.

## Advanced Activities

- Try to gain self-awareness through journaling, book reading and art therapy (drawing or painting to express emotions or events.)
- Start keeping a dream journal. Keep a notebook near the bed and record your dreams while they are fresh. Look for patterns, themes and insights.
- Read about the psychologists whose theories helped shape our modern views. Who were Jung, Freud, Horney and Pavlov? What philosophies do you find insightful? Which seem like malarkey?
- Research the treatment of mental illness in the past. What were the common treatments and diagnoses? Who were the reformers? How has our perception of mental illness changed over the years?



## Birth Place

The Big City Birth Place respects pregnancy and childbirth as a normal, natural rite of passage in a woman's life.

The BCBP offers support to women throughout pregnancy, labor and during the post-partum months. Instead of using narcotics to remove all pain and discomfort from the birth process, midwives and labor assistants called doulas minimize the fear and anxiety that can make birth more painful. There are many options available to a laboring woman that help her cope with the pain while still maintaining control of her birth experience. If a true medical emergency should occur, highly skilled doctors are on hand to help, but the vast majority of births require no interventions—just the hearts and hands of caring people.

What do you know about your birth? Were you born in a hospital? At home? If you or your partner have given birth, what was your experience? Do you think birth in the future will be more or less medically focused? Should birth be painless? Can pain be a biofeedback mechanism? How do you envision pregnancy and birth 100 years from now?



## Basic Activities

- Ask your parents to tell you about your birth. Or if you are a parent, tell your child about the day they were born.
- Help children to understand where they come from. Give them age-appropriate information regarding conception, fetal development and birth.
- Draw a picture of your birth experience. Be as abstract or realistic as you like.
- This year, on your birthday, send your mother a card and thank her for all the work she did the day you were born.

## Advanced Activities

- Look at the many ways different cultures regard childbirth. Is the birth a sacred space for women only? Does the partner participate as well? Is there a birth ceremony where the larger community welcomes the new arrival?
- How has the father's role during birth changed? Look at the evolving levels of paternal participation—from pacing the waiting room to cutting the cord. What are some ways to get men more involved in childbirth?
- The rate of Cesarean Delivery in the US has more than doubled in the last decades. What factors contribute to the use of this procedure? What are the Cesarean rates of other industrialized nations? What are the pros and cons of this type of surgery?

# Human Cycle Temple

People in all phases of life visit the Human Cycle Temple to celebrate the transitions we all undergo. Young girls and boys are honored during puberty to mark the passage from childhood to maturity. In the Big City, aging and death are not taboo subjects, but a respected part of the human experience. Elder members of the community come here to give talks, pass on wisdom and record personal histories for future generations. A funeral in the Big City is not a mournful, depressing affair, but a celebration of a life spent on earth and a fond farewell into the next stage of being.

What are the major milestones of life? Are they the same in all cultures? What is your philosophy regarding death and the hereafter? How do you think aging and death are treated in American society? How will death be treated in the future? Do humans have the right to choose the time and manner of our deaths? Would you behave differently if you knew you only had one day to live?



## Basic Activities

- Demonstrate lifecycles for children by raising silk moths. Watch the caterpillar spin a cocoon, transform into a butterfly, lay eggs and die. Bury the moths in the garden to help the plants grow.
- Learn more about your ancestors by asking your oldest living relatives to tell you about their parents and grandparents. Look at pictures and artifacts from your family's past. Make a collage from the photographs.

## Advanced Activities

- Look at the rites and rituals surrounding puberty in other cultures. When do girls and boys become women and men? How are they treated differently after puberty? Do we neglect adolescents in the US? What was your experience with puberty?
- Some cultures incorporate deceased ancestors in all aspects of daily life. Shrines and spirit houses can be found in homes in Asia, Africa and the British Isles. Find out more information about ancestor shrines, or build one in your home.
- In Mexico, Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) is celebrated each November by preparing meals for dead loved ones, cleaning the cemetery and building altars. Find out if there are any Day of the Dead celebrations in your area, or build your own altar on November first.
- Write or paint about an important ritual in your life.

# Technology Center

In the years before the Big City was built, technology advanced blindly, without regard to unintentional consequences. In the Big City Technology Center, the drive to innovate is now balanced by concern for the greater good of humanity. New technology in medicine, transportation and communication have increased the overall quality of life for people across the globe. Advancements in chaotic control theory have made it possible to convert large earthquakes into smaller, manageable ones, turn a drought into a deluge and diffuse a hurricane.

In what ways do you use technology as part of your work? Your recreation? What technological advances have made the most impact on society? Has technology come at a cost? Is your view of the future tech-oriented, or do you think society will rely on it less in years to come? What do you think is the future of robotics? What would be the role of humans if robots take over the labor force?



## Basic Activities

- In your opinion, what are the most important advancements in technology? Which ones have done the most good for humankind? What technological advancements have had the most detrimental impact on our world?
- Technology has become integrated into almost every line of work, from medicine to mechanics and massage therapy. Learn to use the latest technology in your field.
- Technology can be viewed as an extension of the human body. Consider how cars and bikes enhance our legs, telephones amplify our voices and bombs extend the reach of our fists. Make a list of other technologies that are extensions of our natural abilities.

## Advanced Activities

- Think about what technologies you depend on as part of your daily life. List the modern innovations you have come to expect (i.e. hot, running water, the fridge, the internet.) Which ones could you live without? What is necessary to your survival?
- Try living without the modern conveniences of the last century for a day (or even an hour or two). How long can you last by lamplight? How many cold showers before you break? What innovations are the hardest to do without? What don't you miss?
- Tired of doing dishes? Homework got you down? Design a robot to do your dirty work. Draft your ideas on paper or build a model using whatever materials you can find.

# Gymnasium

Named to honor evolutionary movement teacher, Jane Brown, the Big City Gymnasium is the place to go to get your pulse pounding, stimulate your chi and energize your body. With dance studios, quiet yoga retreats, huge playing fields and martial arts arenas- there's always something going on. The Jane Brown Gym is not just for athletes and prima ballerinas—evolutionary movement benefits people of all ages and physical ability. The emphasis is not solely on physical performance but the body-mind-spirit connection.

What is your relationship to exercise/physical activity? Were you picked first or last in gym? What role does movement play in your health and well-being? What sports/games do you enjoy playing? Watching? Do you prefer non-competitive or competitive sports? How will people exercise in the future? What sort of games/sports will be popular?



## Basic Activities

- Act out the life cycles of a butterfly. Crawl and squirm like a caterpillar, ball into a tight cocoon, and then emerge winged and ready and take flight! Act out the cycle of a seed-sprouting, growing, wilting and returning to the earth.
- Create a new sport to be played 1000 years from now? How do you play? What are the rules? What kind of uniform/equipment will you need?
- Revive a childhood game for the afternoon—play four square, hop scotch, kick ball or freeze tag—make up the rules as you go along!

## Advanced Activities

- Get physical! Spend several hours this week engaging in recreational sports. Try something new. Notice how this affects your sense of well-being.
- Sit in on a martial arts training and discover the distinction between Kuk Sool, Karate and Tai Kwan Do. Learn the Eagle Claw, the Hammer Fist and the Tornado Kick!
- Research and revisit your evolutionary past through movement. Begin as an earthworm, grow legs and become an amphibian, walk on all fours as a mammal and finally evolve from primate to human.
- Evolve your relationship with gravity. Use gravity to your advantage—think about resting down, letting go, relaxing. Breathe out and lean into the earth to be sent into motion.

# Children's House

All of the young people in the Big City attend the Children's House and learn the building blocks to be a healthy, functioning member of the community. Children are encouraged to learn at their own pace and there are no IQ or SAT scores to label them. Students and parents work with instructors to design the curriculum and everyone takes an active role in the learning process. Teaching styles are tailored to the diverse learning styles of the individual and the different types of intelligence (analytical, emotional, kinetic, technical, etc.) are equally valued.

Did you really learn everything you needed to know in kindergarten? Were you encouraged to ask questions? How do you best absorb learning—from words, pictures, activities? Do test scores accurately reflect intelligence? What are the most important skills children need to become functioning adults? What types of intelligence are most valued in our society? How will primary education be different in the future?





## Basic Activities

- Since human beings are naturally inquisitive, create a stimulating environment that fosters our innate curiosity. Include beautiful objects found in nature, musical instruments and cultural artifacts.
- Take children on a field trip to the beach and collect samples to display back at home. Help them research their finds and understand their functions. Was this seashell home to a sea creature? What type of sand is on this beach? Why is this rock smooth?

## Advanced Activities

- Research styles of primary education in the US and in other countries. How are grade levels arranged? What is considered “school-age”? What tests are given? What is the next step after primary education?
- Write a short story about a memory of your school days. Try writing from the point of view of your child-self instead of as a memoir.
- Interview people with a variety of school experiences—public, private, Montessori, military, religious. How was learning approached? What lessons were stressed? Was the overall experience a positive one?
- Design your utopian school of the future or the school you wish you could have attended.