



Together We Are Greater

By Pam Morris, Early Learning Center director

The wise words of Aristotle - "The whole is greater than the sum of its parts," are quite poignant when it comes to teamwork. Forging a team relies on each team member bringing their own skills into the melting pot of abilities, that is combined into an unstoppable force of nature.

Imagine a world in which each person is looking out for each other, supporting an individual's growth and rooting for her success. Imagine a place where you succeed and you are doing everything in your power to make sure that person next to you does as well. This, I believe, is an integral part of creating an excellent team.

In a recent Exchange Every Day post, the following was highlighted, "Cooperation among educators, fostered through positive conflict resolution, sets a powerful example for children. It teaches them teamwork, listening, and valuing diverse perspectives."

I take this message to heart and try to practice it in my daily life. Be great at what you do and take the extra time, when you can, to make sure that your neighbor, co-worker, teaching partner, life partner can also be great in his or her own way. I don't believe that it is a competition between individuals. I believe that it really is a race to see who else can join me when we reach the top.

Now, since we are on this journey of imagination, where each of us roots for another's success, indulge me just a little bit more. Turn back the clocks to 1948 when Great Britain gave up rule in the British Mandate of Palestine (now Israel) before the Jewish people were given their country back. The following excerpts are from Historyskills.com:



Following the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in World War I, the League of Nations granted Britain the mandate to administer the territory of Palestine.

The foundation for British involvement in Palestine was laid with the Balfour Declaration of 1917.

In this declaration, Arthur James Balfour, the British Foreign Secretary, expressed the British government's support for "the establishment in Palestine of a national home for the Jewish people."

From the outset, the British faced challenges in balancing the aspirations of the Jewish and Arab communities. The aftermath of World War II and the revelations of the Holocaust had intensified global sympathy for the Jewish people.

Simultaneously, the Arab majority in Palestine, along with neighboring Arab states, opposed the establishment of a Jewish state.

Given the complexities and the escalating tensions, Britain decided to refer the issue to the United Nations in 1947.

In response, the UN formed a Special Committee on Palestine (UNSCOP) to investigate the situation and recommend a solution.

And so, the UN took the tiny part of land and drew up boundaries to establish a Jewish state as well as an Arab state in the area now known as Israel. And if you were to see how it was divided, almost 50/50, you would be appalled by what was offered to the Jewish people. But almost immediately, the Jewish people said yes, we will take what you are offering and the Arab communities, almost as quickly, said no.

It was more emphatic than that based on the fact that the day after Israel was created as a Jewish state (remember, after the Arabs rejected having their own!!), the Arabs attacked, starting the War of Independence; it was fought by



the new country of Israel and a coalition of Arab countries that didn't want the Jewish state to exist.

Now what if the Arab countries had said, "We will split the land with you. You can be successful in your section and we can be successful in ours."

Just imagine.

Cigdem Unal, Director of the Office of Campus Child Care and Family Resources at University of Wisconsin, says, "Let's face conflicts courageously, engage in growth-oriented conversations, and foster cooperation daily. Together, we cultivate and contribute to a kinder world, one child and educator at a time."

Imagine if the Arab countries had seen it this way.

No Oct. 7. No hostages. No Gaza residents suffering under Hamas rule. Just people working together and rooting for each other's success.

Shabbat Shalom.