

Radiant Hearts

Fostering Development of Spiritual Qualities



Produced by:





Radiant Hearts

Radiant Hearts is an online multimedia program aimed at helping families memorize Baha'i prayers and quotations, and learn about spiritual qualities together. In each lesson, prayers and quotations have been set to music for people of all ages to memorize and simple activities consist of games, role plays, and creative arts appropriate for children four and under. All Radiant Hearts materials and lessons can be downloaded from:

www.enablemetogrow.com

“Let the flame of the love of God burn brightly within your radiant hearts.”

(Baha'u'llah, Gleanings from the Writings of Baha'u'llah, p. 325)

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19 Lessons in Radiant Hearts:

Cleanliness	Generosity	Love	Service
Courage	Gentleness	Obedience	Thankfulness
Courtesy	Helpfulness	Patience	Truthfulness
Forgiveness	Joyfulness	Peacefulness	Unity
Friendliness	Kindness	Responsibility	





What is Radiant Hearts?

Radiant Hearts is a program comprised of 19 lessons, one for each Baha'i month. Each lesson consists of text, music, photographs, and videos which are available to see and download online. It was designed to assist families with young children to memorize Baha'i prayers and quotations of Baha'u'llah, and learn about spiritual qualities (also referred to as virtues) in an organized and consistent manner. The mission of Radiant Hearts is to help families incorporate spiritual education into their daily, weekly and/or monthly routines. The materials can be adapted in many ways to suit different families.

Two guiding quotations for the program are:

“Teach ye your children the verses that have been divinely revealed, that they may recite them in most melodious voices. This is what hath been set down in His mighty Book.” (Baha'u'llah, From a Tablet - translated from the Arabic)

“As to thy question regarding the education of children: it behoveth thee to nurture them at the breast of the love of God, and urge them onward to the things of the spirit, that they may turn their faces unto God; that their ways may conform to the rules of good conduct and their character be second to none; that they make their own all the graces and praiseworthy qualities of humankind; acquire a sound knowledge of the various branches of learning, so that from the very beginning of life they may become spiritual beings, dwellers in the Kingdom, enamoured of the sweet breaths of holiness, and may receive an education religious, spiritual, and of the Heavenly Realm. Verily will I call upon God to grant them a happy outcome in this.” (Abdu'l-Baha, Selections from the Writings of Abdu'l-Baha, p. 141)

Radiant Hearts builds on the idea that many families might like to gather together daily for prayers and reading of the Holy Writings. The program helps families create a routine of learning a new prayer and quotation every Baha'i month, and offers materials to expand this time to incorporate a short hands-on lesson about a spiritual quality as well.

Structure of the Program

There are 19 spiritual qualities covered in Radiant Hearts (each referred to as a “lesson”), one per Baha'i month. Lessons are not specifically linked to any Baha'i month in particular and therefore can be used any time of the year and in any order. Some families may choose to study certain virtues according to various events in the year (for example, “Service” prior to Ayyam-i-Ha or “Obedience” during the month of Fasting).

The aim of the program is for families:

- To learn Baha'i prayers
- To learn quotations of Baha'u'llah
- To learn about spiritual qualities through songs and simple activities
- To have materials available if they would like to offer other acts of service

In regards to the last objective, Radiant Hearts was designed to pave the way for three specific acts of service: teaching, hosting a Devotional Program, and sharing Radiant Hearts with other children. More details can be found on the Radiant Hearts main page.





Each lesson has three main components which will be described in detail on the following pages:

1. *Online Lesson*: Each Online Lesson contains the two documents to download plus music and pictures to aid families in implementing the program.
2. *Basic Lesson*: The Basic Lesson is a 4-page document which can be downloaded from the Online Lesson. It begins with a page for parents to prepare themselves to teach about the spiritual quality. Next is a Baha'i prayer and short quotation from Baha'u'llah, a brief introduction to the spiritual quality, lyrics for two songs, and 19 Daily Activities.
3. *Printables*: The Printables is a 6+ page document which can be downloaded from the Online Lesson as well. It contains print-outs for the various activities outlined in the Daily Activities from the Basic Lesson, plus a short Devotional Program based on the virtue.

Using the Program

Radiant Hearts is very simple to use. All the activities require only basic materials which most families probably already have at home. Crafts, for example, might require drawing utensils, colored paper, recyclables, scissors, glue, or magazine/newspaper pictures. The activities can also be adjusted to become more intricate if desired.

The only additional material beyond the Online Lesson you will need (if you would like to follow the whole program) is the *Virtues in Us* CD for preschoolers by Nabil Huening. This CD can be downloaded online using details from the Radiant Hearts main page. The CD contains a song for 18 of the 19 virtues covered in Radiant Hearts (the only virtue not covered is "Forgiveness").

There are many different ways to use Radiant Hearts. You may wish to use all of the materials or only a small portion. Keep in mind that the program can be used year after year, so your family can increase participation as your children grow. Some examples of the material in action, based on the ages of children in a family, are described on page 10.

Planning Worksheets to help you successfully implement the program in your home are available on the Radiant Hearts main page under "Other Helpful Documents."

Online Lesson

The Online Lesson includes several MP3s so parents can learn the tunes for the quotation, the prayer, and the second song from the lesson (the one not on the *Virtues in Us* CD). The Online Lesson also showcases pictures of several of the activities from the Basic Lesson and has a link to the lesson's corresponding Virtue Library (explained on page 6). Each lesson's documents (the Basic Lesson and the Printables) are available to download as PDFs from the Online Lesson.

Parents are encouraged to share their own photos, ideas for activities, books and song recommendations, and make general comments on each Online Lesson for other families to benefit from.



Basic Lesson

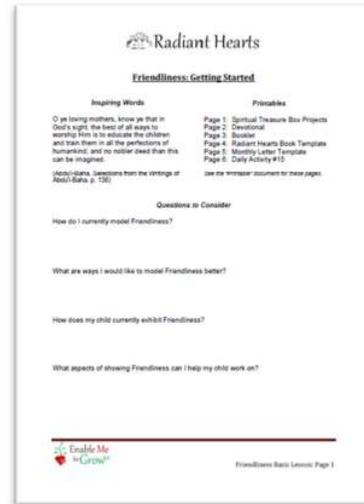
The Basic Lesson document for each spiritual quality is available to download from the Online Lesson. A description of the four pages included in each Basic Lesson follows.

Getting Started

The first page in the Basic Lesson is titled “Getting Started” and is meant to prepare you to teach the spiritual quality of the month. It begins with an inspirational quotation which you might like to reflect on and refer to throughout the month, as you engage in the important work of teaching your children spiritual qualities and developing them in your own self.

On this page there is also a list of the materials in the Printables file. They generally follow this order:

- Page 1: Spiritual Treasure Box Projects
- Page 2: Devotional
- Page 3: Booklet
- Page 4: Radiant Hearts Book Template
- Page 5: Monthly Letter Template



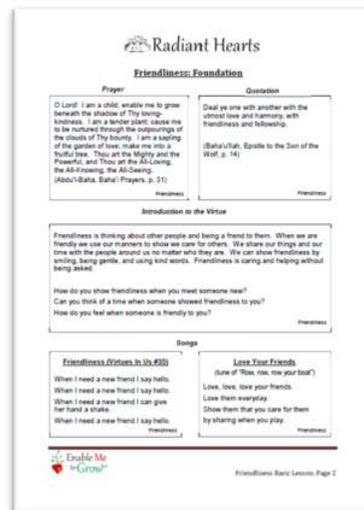
Extra pages correspond to additional materials required for the Daily Activities, if required.

The second half of the “Getting Started” page contains some questions to help you think about how you and your children currently model the spiritual quality of the month, and ways you would like to work on showing the spiritual quality in new ways or more fully.

Foundation

The second page of the Basic Lesson is titled “Foundation” and consists of the prayer, quotation, introduction to the quality, and two simple songs.

All the prayers and quotations in Radiant Hearts have been set to simple tunes so children can learn and sing them well, without any accompanying music or instruments unless desired. The songs have been recorded in two different formats to suit various needs: voice with guitar and guitar only. You can download the songs as MP3s or listen to the two voices and guitar version via streaming from the Online Lesson. The guitar chords are also available from the Online Lesson should parents or older children wish to learn them.



After the prayer and quotation there is a brief “Introduction to the Virtue” as well as three discussion questions to help you gauge your child’s understanding about the spiritual quality and also trigger discussion about what it looks like in daily life.

Next, there are lyrics for two songs. One of these songs is generally from the *Virtues in Us* CD discussed on page 2. The second song can be heard and downloaded as a MP3 from the Online Lesson. These songs were chosen for their simple words and easy tunes. You may wish to recommend other related songs by contributing a comment to the Online Lesson.

Daily Activities

The last two pages in the Basic Lesson contain 19 Daily Activities which will help your child learn about the spiritual quality. Your family may complete one activity each day of the Baha'i month if you wish to follow the complete program. Otherwise you can pick and choose which activities are most appropriate for your child, should you decide to organize a few throughout the month at your own pace.

The activities are separated into three groups. The first group is activities included in every lesson:

- Spiritual Treasure Box Project (prayer)
- Spiritual Treasure Box Project (quotation)
- Assemble a booklet
- Make a page for the Radiant Hearts Book
- Make a Monthly Letter
- Add a jewel to the Crown of Virtues (see page 9 for details).

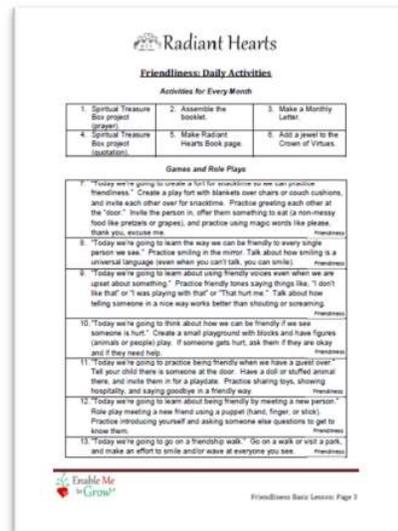
The Radiant Hearts Book and Monthly Letter are probably best to complete at the end of the month after your child has learned a bit more about the spiritual quality. Otherwise the Daily Activities do not need to be completed in any specific order.

The second group of Daily Activities is games and role plays.

The third group of Daily Activities is creative arts (such as making a craft, creating a fingerplay, or preparing a snack).

All Daily Activities are simple and require only basic household materials. The crafts typically call for minimal art supplies, but they can also be modified to be as intricate as you wish. Furthermore, you can use the list of activities simply as a starting point to brainstorm your own original activities which may suit your child better. Photograph examples of several activities are included in each Online Lesson to stimulate creativity.

At the end of each Online Lesson there is a public gallery where you can upload your own photographs and add your own comments. You are encouraged to share your family's experiences and variations on the activities, as these may be useful to other families using the Radiant Hearts materials.



Printables

The Printables document for each lesson can also be downloaded from the Online Lesson. The sheets in the Printable document are not labeled but you can ascertain what activity each page is for by checking the list on the first page (“Getting Started”) of the Basic Lesson.

A description of uses for each of the activities/pages follows.

Spiritual Treasure Box Projects

For each lesson there is an idea for creating a card or other visual reminder for both the prayer and quotation in the lesson. The words for each selection is printed in slightly larger font which can be cut out and added to the projects. These projects can aid in memorization, and can also be used during recitation of the prayer/quotation if this works for your family.

You may like to keep these projects in a Spiritual Treasure Box. By creating a Spiritual Treasure Box, you will have a respectable place to keep the words to the prayers and quotations you are memorizing, and the projects will stay in one place so you can find them later. You can also store other Radiant Hearts materials (such as the booklet or other small crafts from the Daily Activities) in the box.



A Spiritual Treasure Box can be made by decorating a shoe box or purchasing a gift box. There is a sheet available for you to download (titled “Spiritual Treasure Box Décor”) from the Radiant Hearts main page with a title and some images you may wish to decorate your box with. The pictures on this sheet are based on the sun since the sun is often used as a metaphor to describe God’s love for us, and also shows other objects that appear in the Writings (trees, flowers, clouds).

Devotional

The Devotional page contains six short selections about the virtue of the month which are appropriate to read with young children. The selections are in slightly larger font and have extra spacing between them, in case you wish to cut them out to distribute to readers.

Your family may wish to host a Devotional using these selections, either privately with your own family or for a larger audience. You could do this once a week, once a month, or several times throughout the year. Find posts about hosting devotionals with children linked at the Radiant Hearts main page.



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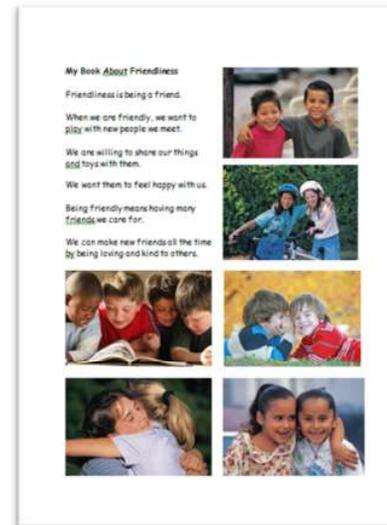
Booklet

Each lesson includes words and pictures to make a simple booklet about the spiritual quality. You can match up the pictures and words as you wish.

You may wish to prepare the book ahead of time or make it with your child. Booklets can be made in many ways, and part of the fun will be creating a new and different booklet each month. You can experiment with page shapes, colors, and styles. Attach your pages to thick scrap book paper or laminate them if you wish to increase durability.

Here are some ideas for styles of booklets:

- Cut out all the words and pictures and have your child match them
- Staple pages, tie with ribbon or yarn, or tape pages together
- Use patterned paper, paper your child has scribbled or painted on, or poster board
- Make a lift the flap book (put the words on top of the flap, have the picture under it)
- Make a story board (use a folder or poster board to paste the words and pictures on)
- Make a fold-out book (attach pages in a zig zag which can stand on its own)
- Make flash cards (attach words and pictures to smaller sheets of paper which can be lined up in any order)
- Have your child illustrate instead of using the pictures, or write their own story instead of using the words
- Ask older children to copy the words in handwriting versus using the typed words



If you are planning to use this program for several years in a row, consider several different options. You may wish to make less durable booklets while children are young (for example, one year old) so they can help create the booklets again when they are older (for example, three years old). On the other hand, you may wish to make very durable booklets the first year so that you can re-use them again and again. Or you may wish to do a combination of the two options.

Note: All the Online Lessons have a link to the Virtue Library which contains several book titles that are recommended to teach each spiritual quality of the month, in case families wish to check out additional books from the library or purchase them to help reinforce the spiritual quality of the month. You are encouraged to contribute your own favorite titles and book reviews to the Virtue Library by contributing to the comments at the bottom of the page.



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Radiant Hearts Book Template

The next page in the Printables simply states the spiritual quality of the month and the lesson's quotation. On the rest of the paper you can help your child illustrate a story about the spiritual quality. Your family can use these pages to compile a book about the spiritual qualities you have learned about over the course of the year.

Some ideas for creating stories for this activity are:

- Telling a story about a situation when someone in your family exhibited the spiritual quality
- Making up a story with toys then writing it down
- Creating a story with characters your child is familiar with (from other stories they've heard)
- Imagining a whole new story with entirely new characters

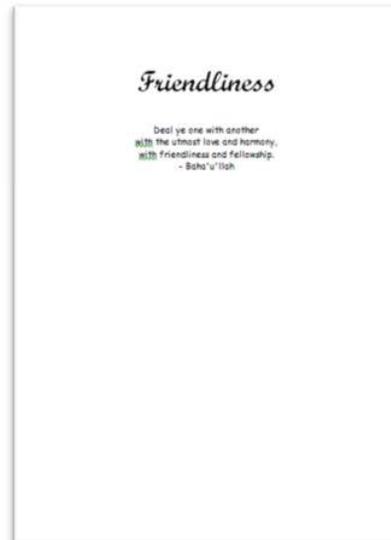
The aim of this activity is to help your child remember examples of how people might display the spiritual quality, as well as to develop creativity and practice storytelling skills.

Throughout the year, the pages can be inserted into plastic sleeves and placed in a folder, or simply stapled together. There is a cover page you may wish to use for your Radiant Hearts Book, available to download from the Radiant Hearts main page called "Radiant Hearts Book Cover Page." Your family may like to create a routine to look through this book together on the first or last day of each month, or at the end of the year. This will help you to review what spiritual qualities you have been working on together.

Monthly Letter Template

The next activity in the Printables is a one-page template with the statement "This week our family is learning about the spiritual quality..." and the quotation of the month. At the end you may add the date.

Children can use this page to create a visual representation of what they have been learning about and give this artwork to someone outside the immediate family (make a "letter"). You can post it, deliver it by hand, scan it, take a picture of it and email it, or post the photo on a blog (and keep the original for your Radiant Hearts Book!). Sharing these letters is a great way to include extended family, friends, and neighbors in a family's virtue learning, and also gives the recipients something meaningful to talk to your children about when they next see each other.





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There are many different ways to use the Monthly Letter template and you can try various ideas, depending on your child's interests and their age. Possibilities include:

- Decorating with stickers, glitter glue, shapes, and drawing (especially for young ones)
- Cutting out pictures from magazines or printing pictures from websites that show people exhibiting the spiritual quality
- Asking your child to tell you ways people show the spiritual quality which you could draw or write about together
- Taking a picture of your child exhibiting the spiritual quality and pasting it onto the page with a short description in their own words
- Listing ways family members have exhibited the spiritual quality in different colors
- Asking older children to draw pictures of a way they can show the spiritual quality or a way in which they have seen someone else show the spiritual quality

You may wish to include a note with the "letter" to explain that your family is learning about a spiritual quality each month and this is something they can talk to your child about. There is an example note (copied four times on a page) which you may wish to print out to attach to your Monthly Letters called "Monthly Letter Explanations," available to download from the Radiant Hearts main page. It says:

To:

Our family learns about a new spiritual quality each month. We talk about what the quality means and do various activities to learn more about it. At the end of the month we create a Monthly Letter to show some of the things we learned. Each month we choose a person to send this letter to, and this month you were chosen!

We hope you enjoy this letter. Feel free to talk to us about it next time we are in touch.

"The betterment of the world can be accomplished through pure and goodly deeds, through commendable and seemly conduct."

- Bahá'u'lláh

From:

Additional Items

If one of the Daily Activities requires additional materials, these will be made available on the last page(s) of the Printables document. The materials will be labeled according to number of the corresponding Daily Activity at the end of the list of pages in the Printables (located on page one of the Basic Lesson entitled "Getting Started").



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More Ways to Use Radiant Hearts

Here are a few more ideas that can accompany the Radiant Hearts program. Find more in the “Related Posts” section of the Radiant Hearts main page.

Create a Crown of Virtues.

One of the Daily Activities for each month is adding a jewel to the Crown of Virtues. Create a crown out of colored paper. Each month add a jewel with the spiritual quality of the month printed on it. At the end of the year, the crown will have 19 jewels and will be an attractive way to represent the family’s learning. You may like to keep this crown near the dinner table so the family can use it as a reminder to talk about how everyone displayed the spiritual qualities during the day.

Keep a calendar of your Radiant Hearts activities or record how you practiced the virtues.

Each month there is a simple calendar available to download which you may like to use to keep track of your Radiant Hearts activities and/or keep up with the various events you are participating in throughout the Baha’i month. Holy Days are included so you can plan accordingly.



If you have an older child (for example, three or four years old) and you are using Radiant Hearts every day, you may like to use this sheet as a way to record how they have practiced the spiritual quality each day. You can write down examples of how they have recently exhibited the spiritual quality and/or fill in the space with a sticker or a hand-drawn smiley face. At the end of the month they will enjoy seeing that they have practiced the spiritual quality many times and in many ways, and will be encouraged to continue practicing it. You can keep this page in your Radiant Hearts Book or hang it up for your child to see during the month.

Display the spiritual quality and quotation of the month in your home.

Hang a chalk board or white board in your child’s play space and write up the spiritual quality of the month and quotation so everyone can refer to it often. Let your child decorate the board at the beginning of each month. You may like to add the name of the Baha’i month in English and Arabic as well.

Use your family’s Radiant Hearts materials for other events.

Sing the songs from Radiant Hearts at Feasts or other community events your family hosts. Ask your child if they wish to give one of their crafts to a neighbor or friend.

Check the Radiant Hearts main page for other activities that can arise from Radiant Hearts.



Radiant Hearts in Action

Here are a few examples of how families may wish to use Radiant Hearts based on different aged children. These are simply ideas of what Radiant Hearts might look like in action and not specific suggestions (for example, your family may gather in the evening instead of the morning).

Family with a baby (Setting the foundation)

At the beginning of the month choose a spiritual quality to study. Each morning sing the prayer and Writing to your baby. Practice using the language of virtues with your baby, saying things such as “Let’s be gentle to kitty,” “That was a friendly smile!” or “You are being very patient waiting for our dinner to cook.”

Family with a one or two-year-old (Starting out small)

At the beginning of the month choose a spiritual quality to study. Make the booklet ahead of time. Each morning, sit down to sing the monthly prayer and quotation. Choose one day a week (for example, Saturdays when the whole family is at home) to read the booklet, sing a song, and do an activity.

Family with a three-year old (Adding more elements)

At the beginning of the month choose a spiritual quality to study. You may wish to check out one of the books from the Virtue Library. Create a Crown of Virtues to add a jewel to for each month. Each morning, sing the prayer, quotation, and a song. Choose two days of the week (for example, Wednesdays and Saturdays) to read (or tell) a related story, and do one or two of the Daily Activities. At dinner, discuss how your child exhibited the quality of the month. Your family may like to offer an “Act of Service” (look on the Radiant Hearts main page for more details).

Family with a four-year old (Following the whole program)

At the beginning of the month choose a spiritual quality to study. Add a jewel to the Crown of Virtues at the end of each month. Each morning sing the prayer, quotation, two songs, and read a book or make up a story together. Follow the Daily Activities to complete one each day of the month. (Therefore make a Radiant Hearts Book and send Monthly Letters.) At dinner, discuss as a family how each of you exhibited the virtue of the month. Your family may like to offer an “Act of Service” (look on the Radiant Hearts main page for more details).

Giving Radiant Hearts to Other Caregivers

Print out the Basic Lesson to give to other caregivers (such as nannies, babysitters, or grandparents) so they can sing the songs and do the daily activities with your child. The link to the Online Lesson is on the last page of the Basic Lesson, so caregivers can easily log on to learn the songs and see photos for guidance.

Use a lesson for a children’s program during Feast, Holy Days, or other community events.



Closing

We hope you enjoy using Radiant Hearts and that it gives you a helpful resource to aid your family in memorizing prayers and quotations, and learning about spiritual qualities together. Radiant Hearts has been put together in a “learning mode” and we welcome any feedback and suggestions for its further development. Be sure to check out the “Other Helpful Documents” available on the Radiant Hearts main page. There are two planning pages to help especially in the initial stages of using this program in your home, plus other resources that you may find useful.

One of the beautiful parts of this program is that it is designed for parents and children to learn alongside each other. Use the “Getting Started” page in the Basic Lesson to make sure you are working to develop your own spiritual qualities, as well. Share your experiences with your children and give examples of how you see yourself, and them, exemplifying the glorious virtues and spiritual capacities God has bestowed on all of us.

Furthermore what will make this program even better is if families offer their own contributions by commenting and uploading photos of their own Radiant Hearts activities to the Online Lessons. Each month we hope you will share what you and your children liked about the lesson, what you chose to do a bit differently, and books or songs that you used in addition to the Radiant Hearts materials. If we all share, everyone will benefit.

We’d like to thank everyone who has helped and inspired us in the process of putting this program together, especially our husbands and two “field test moms” Sonja and Elham who offered valuable suggestions throughout the creation of the program. A full list of acknowledgements is on the Radiant Hearts main page.

We hope you enjoy sharing Radiant Hearts with your families as much as we do,

Chelsea and Penina

Wondering about the Radiant Hearts Logo?

A crown decorated with beautiful jewels is a lovely way to describe spiritual qualities to children. God has endowed each human with numerous gems which we call spiritual qualities. By learning about these qualities and practicing them, we polish these gems in order to reflect the Divine Attributes of God.

A crown also reminds us of our own nobility as human beings. Spiritual qualities are not something we can “give” to our children nor should we use learning about them as an ego booster. By teaching our children the Sacred Words and working with them to develop virtuous conduct, we are endeavoring to help them recognize what behavior is fitting for themselves as noble beings and appreciate the spiritual beauty which God has given to each and every one of us.

Our logo is inspired by many quotations from the Baha’i Writings referring to crowns. Find a selection of these quotations on the Radiant Hearts main page.