

A Sack Full of Troubles

A story is told about the tribal elder who grew tired of hearing the villagers tell him that their problems were so much worse than their neighbors'. So one day he announced to the entire village that he had a plan to help them with their problems. He asked everyone to bring their sorrows and troubles to a village meeting. "Bring them in a bag with your name on it, then hang your bag from a low branch on a tree in the village circle. Everyone will be allowed to examine the troubles of everyone else and exchange their troubles for someone else's, so you can leave your troubles behind and go home with the troubles of your neighbor." The villagers were excited, believing that their lives would be so much easier from that day forward. On the day chosen for the exchange, the villagers rushed into the village circle grabbing at the bags and looking into each one. After a lengthy and exhausting search, everyone claimed their own bag and walked home feeling a bit foolish and a lot wiser. After seeing their neighbors' sorrows and troubles, as they really were, they saw their own troubles in a new light and chose to keep them.