



Our dream

the dreamfly.org is a global initiative that strives to create human connections across communities in conflict through education, exposure, and empowerment for a better, unified future.

our dream is to work with communities in conflict to come together and co-invest in a better, unified future for each other. With the help of the citizens of the world that share our dream, by involving local communities, by adopting and pursuing causes that further education, exposure, and empowerment of a generation to craft a new future, we hope to create a human connection that's inviolable by culture, religion, or politics.

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Courageous Creativity recently published an article by our very own Nicole Peterson titled "In Audacity," where Nicole shared what dreamfly's mission means to her and how through the lens of dreamfly, she found herself giving her own life and priorities a closer examination. In this month's newsletter, we wanted to share Nicole's story with you and let you be moved and inspired by her poignant perspectives as were we.

Umaimah

In Audacity

It was dreamfly's ambitious mission to improve global communities by educating their children that initially drew me to the organization. Soon enough, through the lens of dreamfly's goals, I found myself giving my own life and priorities a closer examination. Being raised in the United States, it is difficult not to be keenly aware of the amazing amount of privilege afforded to me, particularly as a white woman from a middle class family. I was raised with the knowledge that the only limits I would face were self-imposed; everything that I desired was attainable through hard work and dedication. In some respects, I took the notion of endless possibility for granted in my earlier years. While I had a strong sense of global justice, I didn't consider just how wide the gap was between the haves and the have-nots. Nor did I necessarily explore ways in which I could contribute. Sure, I would gladly donate money when asked or buy books or handicrafts that supported noble causes, but when it came to actually giving something important of myself, or sacrificing some of my comfort or time for the sake of someone else's benefit, I didn't pursue those opportunities.

I was first introduced to dreamfly in 2010, at a point in my life, when I was feeling very disheartened by the state of the world. I can go a bit overboard with my passion for global politics, and certainly the state of affairs in the Middle East loomed front and center. It is difficult to put into words how helpless I felt watching whole communities literally blown from the earth. And the blatant xenophobia felt like it was too much to handle.

When watching the news, I found myself feeling a deep sense of pain for the women attempting to raise their children amidst such violence, for the soldiers who were too immature to truly process all that was happening around them, and for the people who lived in paralyzing fear for their daily survival. It was all too easy to watch the footage, especially from the comfort of my flannel sheets and quiet neighborhood, and think that nothing will ever get better.

Like a flash of light in that darkness, dreamfly gave me a glimmer of hope. I could not help but be infused with optimism by an organization with a goal to improve the lives of the world's children by honoring and growing their dreams. When I first read dreamfly's mission statement, I thought, how beautifully audacious! Of course these children had dreams of a better life – not just for the obvious reasons, but because that's what children do. They find the opportunities when everyone else has accepted that there are none. It was this hope in the face of blatant hopelessness that inspired me to get involved.

When I look today at all that this organization has accomplished – building a school that is sustaining several grade levels of kids each year and creating programs to teach women and help them support their families through a living wage – it is absolutely awe-inspiring. Perhaps even more critical than its many accomplishments, is the way that dreamfly fosters a culture of hope for all who come into contact with it. When you hear about children dreaming of being doctors, when just four short years before they did not even have access to a school, it makes you realize how strong the human spirit truly is. How could I claim to be too busy or too stressed to work towards improving their lives when they find a reason every day to envision something greater?

This work helps me keep my perspective and makes me want to share all that I have, to ensure that our little dreamers will be able to grow. In a sense, I have adopted a child's heart in considering the possibilities for these communities. I believe today that through the support of their young population, we can help them find a path towards a peaceful and open-hearted future.

So bring on the astronauts, the farmers, the scientists and the authors. Let me be tireless in my efforts to support their visions, to ensure they have access to whatever resources they need, and to provide them with any opportunity to make the impossible possible.

Learn more about *Courageous Creativity* at flyingchickadee.com/zine. Nicole's story appeared in the April 2011 issue.