

What is the 100th Monkey?

100th Monkey Mushroom Farm



The 100th monkey could be YOU! Really? Really.

Background:

What is the 100th Monkey? The 100th Monkey effect is a cultural legend about the process of widespread social change. Between 1952 and 1958 on the Japanese island of Koshima, researchers observed a significant phenomenon in the behavior of the long-studied *Macaca Fuscata* monkey. The first monkey learned to wash a newly introduced sweet potato to avoid eating the dirt, and she taught this practice to her mother and playmates. They, in turn, taught the other monkeys to wash their food. Soon the behavior spread.

From this research, the 100th monkey legend was born. The legend holds that once the "100th monkey" (referred to as the critical mass) adopted the new behavior, it spread not only to monkeys on the home island, but to monkeys on neighboring islands as well. The critical number of monkeys that was needed for this change to occur became referred to as the "100th monkey". Think of the 100th monkey as a tipping point.

The story about the "100th monkey" suggests we can all help to make a change happen. We just need to do our part to "be the change we want to see" and to spread the word.

Here is a true story of how one boy became the 100th monkey at his school. After Hurricane Katrina, which was a devastating hurricane that occurred many years ago, this little boy was very concerned about the survivors of the storm. He heard about another school that was raising money for the survivors. He talked to his friends about wanting to raise money at his school to donate to the survivors, too. Together, they brainstormed ideas about how to do this. They decided that the best way to raise money quickly was to put a large jug in each classroom and ask families to donate spare change (change they had laying around the house) and kids to donate money that they would have spent on desserts at lunch. They approached the principal with their idea, and she thought it was fantastic. After sharing their ideas with the other classrooms, the kids all over the school came up with new ideas on how to collect even more money for their jugs. They put posters up all around the school and sent notes home to parents. They even decided to have a contest to see which classroom collected the most money. After three weeks, the entire school raised over \$2,000! This one boy spread his idea to his friends, and they spread the idea to the principal and teachers, and they spread the idea to the other

students, and they spread the idea to their parents. A large change occurred because of this one little boy.

Materials Needed:

- Notebook
- Pencil
- Crayons

Activity:

How would you like to be the 100th Monkey? You can. You can make a change happen and we'll help you. Follow our steps to get started.

Step 1: Have you ever seen the 100th Monkey effect? If so, draw a picture and/or explain it in your notebook.

Step 2: Think about something that you are passionate about, something that you want to see done differently. Something you want to change. Draw a picture and/or write about it in your notebook.

Step 3: Brainstorm ideas about how you can make this change happen.

Step 4: Get more people on board. Talk to a parent or your friends to help you brainstorm ideas and choose the best idea. What is your goal? How will you know when you've achieved your goal?

Step 5: Whether with your friends, your parents or just yourself, implement your idea (make it happen).

Step 6: In your notebook, write down how it is going. What challenges are you facing? How are you overcoming them?

Step 7: Send your story to us at 100th Monkey Mushroom Farm! We want to post your story for everyone to read about the change that YOU are making happen!