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Chasing Possibilities

by Joongbin Oh



A 16 year-old's record of a journey embracing all people; a journey of creating and sharing; a journey of miracles...

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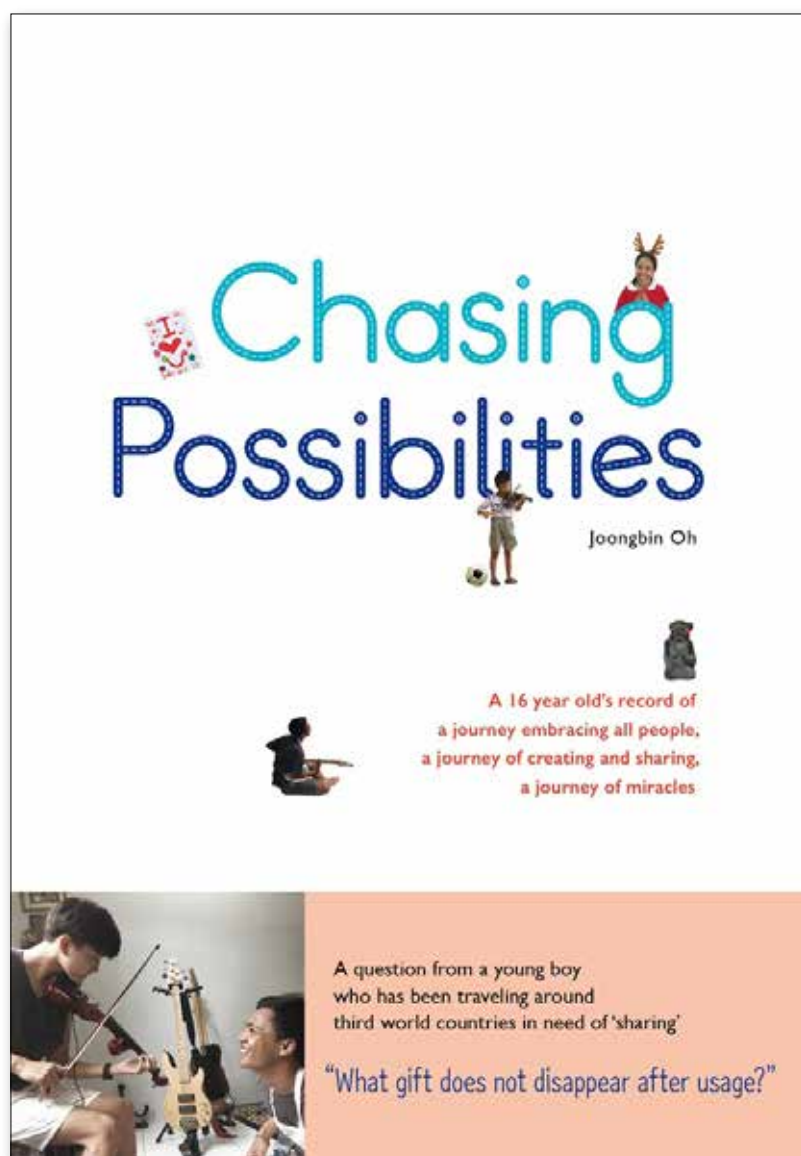
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This is a story which is bound to inspire teenagers around their world, irrespective of background, race or creed; a story whose underlying message is simple: whatever small skills or knowledge you may possess – be it a foreign language, playing a musical instrument or an instinctive understanding of maths – sharing it with those less fortunate can change their lives forever and offer them a brighter future: one they can pass down the generations.

This book is the story of an amazingly enterprising young traveller who goes out into some of the poorest countries in the third world from a very young age and learns to live a meaningful life revolving around local people, with only a soccer ball and a violin in his hands. Joongbin Oh has recorded his experiences in his own words in this inspiring book, starting with a backpacking trip to Turkey with his mother (a famous essayist in Korea) when he was only 3 years old. Since then, he has journeyed to numerous third world countries, not least to Myanmar, Syria and Uganda, building an experience of life to rival that of anyone many times his age.

When he turned 12 years old, he became involved helping at an Indonesian orphanage called Permata Hati and –remarkably for one of his few years– he organised a programme for volunteers that he called *Voluntraveling*, aimed at those like himself who wanted to both travel to exotic locations, but also help make a difference there and make improvements which can be sustainable. After he began trying to publicise his project at home in Korea, so far over 300 Koreans have joined the effort to help share their own knowledge and skills with Permata Hati's children to help them grow and offer them the opportunities for a better life. Permata Hati's children have created a music band which has won prizes and acclaim. The children there have learned a wide range of skills from volunteers, such as English and Korean languages, making books, computer literacy, mathematical skills and much more. Because others shared, Permata Hati's children have grown up to be both self-confident and optimistic.

If just a few of us are willing to share the small skills and knowledge we possess with those with little, then a miracle can happen – one that will last generations.



Starting with a backpacking trip to Turkey with his mother when he was only 3, **JOONGBIN OH** has travelled to numerous thirdworld countries, including Myanmar, Laos, Syria, and Uganda, amassing a travel record to match any adult's. Until the age of 6 he always carried around a soccer ball, and always played soccer with the local children of the places he went to.

From age 7 he started travelling with a violin. For his friends who had never seen a violin in their lives, he would put on small but harmonious little concerts anywhere from in the front yard of guesthouse to under palm trees. He also sometimes became a street musician

and got to spread his music even farther.

During the year when he turned 12, he came across an orphanage called 'Permata Hati' in Ubud, Indonesia. As he came to be a part of Permata Hati, he organised a volunteering programme called *Voluntraveling*, which enabled tourists to volunteer and donate. It was in this process he learned of the miraculous way in which people could grow when the value of 'sharing' comes together with 'sustainability'.

Up until now he has been to over 30 third world countries. And from that experience, he knows how to make friends with anyone at anytime and anywhere. After graduating, he would like to work at an international organisation and help make children's elementary education policy.



PART 1 Beginning

- Becoming a backpacker at only 3
- The fundamentals of traveling
- Replacing Inconsideration
- What present will not disappear after use?
- The two irreplaceable tools

PART 2 Discovery

- The destined encounter, 'Permata Hati'
- Closer through music
- Ayu's first letter
- The return. The start of magic
- Ayu's second letter
- Help recognizes each other and unites
- A happy farmer of a fertile land
- The script of "Brahma's other world"
- Ayu's third letter
- Expanding the realm of possibility
- Ayu's fourth letter
- Everybody, every instrument
- Ayu's other letters
- Now, time to unite with more

PART 3 A challenge: The birth of Voluntraveling

- Beginning 'Voluntraveling'
- A bigger response than expected
- Happy and Merry Voluntraveling
- A certain promise on my part
- Recalling some of the memorable classes
- Not even the beginning of the end, but perhaps the end of the beginning
- Ms. So Young's Voluntraveling review
- Voluntraveling: even children can easily do it
- The meaning of donating money – The Yoo Chan fund
- Ending the first Voluntraveling

PART 4 Continuing: A report on the second Voluntraveling

- The second Voluntraveling
- Recalling some of the memorable classes
- A rare experience enjoyed: A water park day trip
- The last dentist treatment, and goodbye
- Ms. Ga Young's Voluntraveling review
- The bond with Ms. Lee Hyuna
- Ms. Lee Hyuna's Voluntraveling review
- The miracle created by small supports
- The children all get to have their own book
- The following third Voluntraveling, children, fly high!

Epilogue