
Forty Lessons **on** **Citizenship**

For years 7 – 13

For the Social Science learning area

In state, integrated and independent schools

Incorporating values and key competencies in the 2007
N.Z. Curriculum

By Gwen Francis

Forty Lessons

On

Citizenship

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FORTY LESSONS ON CITIZENSHIP

For use with the requirements for “Values” as set out in the 2007 Curriculum .

**Diversity – Community – Excellence – Inquiry – Integrity – Equity – Respect and Care –
Environmental sustainability**

Covering the key competencies –

**Managing self- relating to others – participating and contributing – thinking –
Using language, symbols and texts.**

For consistent ethical reasoning from level 1 to level 8

ABOUT THE DEVELOPER

**The author has had twenty years of experience teaching years 7 and 8 in this field.
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Post Graduate Diploma in Education, 2005. – papers taken -
Current issues in the teaching of Social Studies, Ethics in education, Curriculum design,
Environmental education**

Forty lessons on citizenship

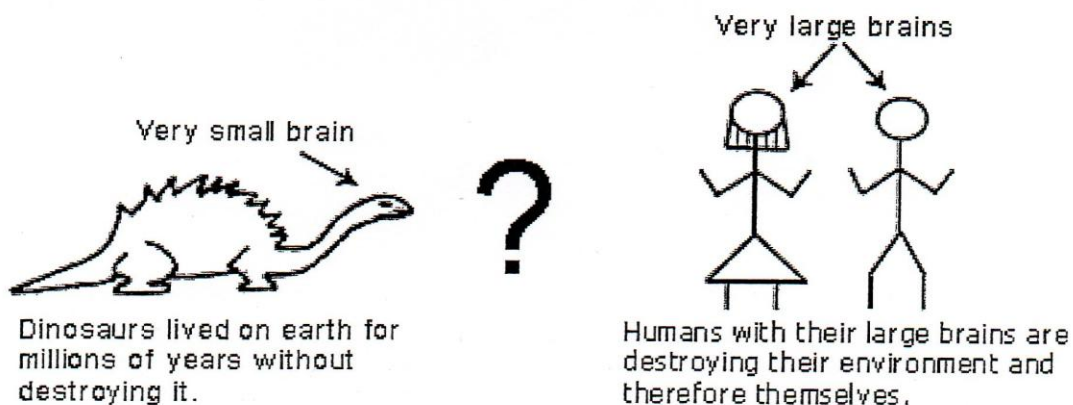
Related to Values and Key Competencies in the 2007 Curriculum

By

Gwen Francis

This resource is written by a teacher, for teachers of all kinds, and especially in the Social Sciences. It is aimed to give practical information and suggestions to those who are attempting to comply with the requirements for “Values” as stated in the 2007 Curriculum .

Using ethical principles for examining all values in a multi-cultural society allows consistency in “making ethical decisions.”



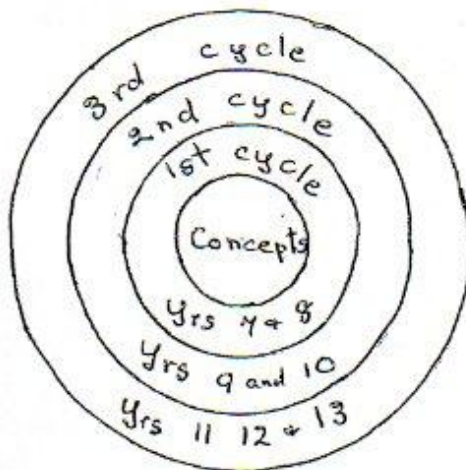
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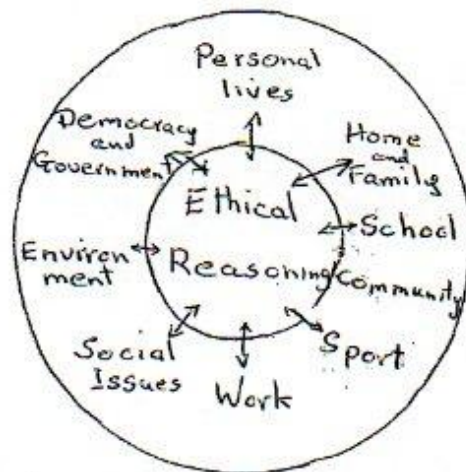
Values in the Curriculum



Key Competencies



Broadening of Concepts



Centrality of Ethical Principles

INTRODUCTION

The object of this book is to provide resource material for teachers – particularly of Social Studies – though many of the lessons included will link with other specified learning areas. As the curriculum itself states (p38) “The values, competencies, knowledge and skills that students will need for addressing real-life situations are rarely confined to one part of the curriculum.

Under “Effective Pedagogy,” (p 34) teachers are to ask, “What is important (and therefore worth spending time on,) given where my students are at?”

“Values,” according to the curriculum (P10), are deeply held beliefs about what is important or desirable. The “key competencies,”(P12) are the key to learning in every learning area. They are “capabilities for living and life-long learning.”

- **Values and key competencies are important and “worth spending time on”.**

Though the curriculum does not place them for closer examination in any specific learning area, values and key competencies do have a natural home in the Social Sciences, because that is where students are to learn, “how people can participate as critical, active, informed and responsible citizens.” (P30)

- **Lessons on citizenship are also important and “worth spending time on.”**

Ever since the subject of Social Studies was introduced to the N.Z. Curriculum to take the place of separate subjects of history, geography and civics it has been the cause of controversy. In her Preface to the book, “New Horizons for New Zealand Social Studies,”¹ Luanna Meyer, Pro Vice-Chancellor of Massey University College of Education, stated that, “More than for any other curriculum area, there is no acknowledged consensus of knowledge and understandings that could serve as a template for learner outcomes.” Later she asks, “How then are we to teach social studies in the face of all this confusion – if not downright deception, denial and overwhelming evidence of one bias or another? ---- Social Studies education must therefore develop and sharpen the critical thinking capacities of young people that will allow them to take on their adult roles and responsibilities.” Unless students develop the ability to actively engage in divergent thinking and problem solving, Luanna Meyer considered that future generations would be unable to carry out the ongoing scrutiny and evaluation of events and interpretations that will confront them.

Making Social Science matter –

Bent Flyvbjerg, in his book, “Making Social Science matter : why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again,”² argues that “the strength of the social sciences lies in their rich reflective analysis of values and power – so essential to the social and economic development of society.” He offers a concept of social science based on a modern interpretation of Aristotle’s “practical wisdom,” i.e. what is good or bad for man.³ Aristotle’s basic commitment was to common sense, and he “sought a theory that would at once allow a place for moral values and for scientific truths.”⁴ A common remark today, when a person offers a comment that appears to be an adverse reflection on contemporary moral or ethical standards, is that that person is “trying to occupy the moral high

¹ Benson,P.and Openshaw, R.(Eds) (1998). ERDC Press Massey University. Palmerston North.

² Flyvbjerg,B. (2001). Cambridge University Press.

³ Ibid p.2

⁴ Penguin *Dictionary of Philosophy*,(1999). (Ed. T.Mautner) p 41.

ground,” as though that were a bad thing. It would certainly be hypocritical if the person involved were intimating that he/she was looking down from a higher place on other fault-ridden mortals, but the lessons in this book are trying to show that there often is higher ground to which humans can aspire, and that their own actions will play a part in what is good or bad for themselves, their families, their communities, their nation and globally.

Excellence in living –

Excellence is one of the values promoted in the 2007 New Zealand Curriculum.

- **The ultimate aim of “citizenship” education is to promote excellence in living.**

Many philosophers in the past saw humans as social animals, and saw that excellence in living centred on participation in communal life and in communities. Happiness, most experts today seem to agree, is about contentment. It encompasses living a meaningful life, utilising your gifts and your time, living with thought and purpose – and it is maximised when you also feel part of a community. Nothing much about human contentment or flourishing has changed over two thousand years. Aristotle saw a good human being as a person of practical wisdom who would reason well about what was good for his life as a whole – and that involved participation in community life. He saw the “virtue” in an object as that quality that enabled it to accomplish its purpose well. For example the purpose of a knife is to cut, so the virtue in a knife is that it should be sharp so that it can cut well. It is fairly safe to say that virtue in a human being is that he/she should function well in a community with the purpose of making it a better and happier place.

- **Values, key competencies and citizenship education should contribute to excellence in living – and should be “worth spending time on.”**

The “purpose” of teaching and learning stated in the curriculum (p6) is that students will develop the competencies they need for study, work and lifelong learning, and go on to realise their potential. Through the social sciences, the curriculum states that students will develop the knowledge and skills to enable them to better understand, participate in, and contribute to the local, national and global communities in which they live and work. Flyvbjerg’s belief is that the social sciences are strongest where they contribute to the reflexive analysis and discussion of values and interests, which he sees as the prerequisite for an enlightened political, economic and cultural development in any society, and that this should be the core of social science today.⁵ That is the object of the lessons in this book.

Aristotle’s version of *phronesis*⁶ or practical common sense is reasoning based on value judgement and experience, and he believed that case study was crucial to understanding. A focus on values and reflection on values is an essential in such analysis, and Flyvbjerg claims “the point of departure for this type of research can be summarised in the following value-rational questions (p60) –

1. Where are we going?
2. Is this desirable?
3. What should be done?

And at a final level he adds the implications of power –

4. Who gains and who loses if we go down that path and by what mechanisms of power?

⁵ Flyvbjerg, (2001) *Making Social Science matter*. P3

⁶ *ibid* p58

Social Science that matters, he says, “will take up problems that matter to the local, national and global communities. --- Focus on issues of values and power like great social scientists from Aristotle to Bourdieu have done.”

Flyvbjerg was writing about social studies in general up to a high level, but these lessons are designed for years 7- 13. Senior levels with more knowledge of facts, more ability to debate rationally, and more ability (hopefully) to exclude emotion and bias, will be more qualified to discuss national and global matters, but lower levels first need to focus on their own actions in their everyday lives. They need to examine situations that are relevant to them, learn to reason ethically and consistently and learn to consider the consequences of actions. The habit of reasoning in this way can then continue into senior levels and into their adult lives. Teaching, Flyvbjerg believed, did not require advanced Post-Graduate learning, but teachers needed to be flexible with no particular ideologies.

These lessons were originally designed by a teacher with no high-level tertiary qualifications, but with a great deal of experience in the ordinary everyday life of a citizen of this country; experience over many years in teaching, business, farming, coaching sport, youth work and local body and national affairs. It was not until later and further tertiary education that the author realised how her own common-sense approach to matters, and an approach based on typical Colonial ethics, was very much in accord with the reasoning's of philosophers like Aristotle. Probably just because they worked then, and they worked now.

Originally these lessons were based on real situations that arose in a community. They were discussed in class with the definite aim, not merely to look at and understand the way people acted, but to come to general conclusions as to what actions would maximise the good and minimise the harm – not just, “What would they do?” but, “What should they do?”

They are presented here as the basis for discussion in the same way. They offer a point of view that can be the subject of examination and discussion. Some of the conclusions may be controversial because they may not conform to the general ethical standard expressed in, “Well, everybody does it.” Arguments are based on reason and not on any particular religion or ideology, but the information on the background of the author will also provide the possibility for discussion on whether this has influenced her reasoning. Hopefully the type of discussion recommended here, which involves the use of consistent ethical principles, will assist in fulfilling the final requirement of the values statement in the curriculum (p10) i.e. developing the skill of making ethical decisions and acting on them.

Flyvbjerg ends his book by saying that the aim of this form of social studies is “to contribute to society’s capacity for value- rational deliberation and action. ---- It can be dangerous for individuals, groups and societies when their capacity for value-rational deliberation is eroded.” (PP167-8) Put as a message for our schools and communities today –

- **“We must not graduate from our schools, young people who are brilliant but dishonest, who have great intellectual knowledge but don’t care about others, or who have highly creative minds, but are irresponsible.”⁷**

⁷ McDonnell, (1998) cited in the Foreword (pxii) to Bohlin and Ryan(1999), *building character in schools: Practical ways to bring moral instruction to life*. SanFrancisco:Jossey Bros. Publishers.

KEY COMPETENCIES, VALUES AND CITIZENSHIP

The key competencies identified in the curriculum are –

Managing self

Relating to others

Participating and contributing

Thinking

Using language, symbols and texts

For the learning area of Social Sciences these competencies are specified in more detail here as –

About themselves – Building character and self-respect. Dealing with temptation. Making choices. Peer pressure and support. Stress. New situations. Love and marriage.

About people in general - Virtues. Human failings. Apathy and initiative. Being responsible.

Leaders. Who to follow. The world of work. Business ethics. The media. Spirituality and religion.

About communities – How people contribute and what they receive. Rights. Freedom.

Multiculturalism. Race relations.

The Nation – Where we all came from. Laws and social covenants. Civic responsibilities.

Democracy. The Government. The use of power. The environment. The future.

VALUES

The values outlined in the curriculum are based on a 2004-5 survey and considered to be those that the New Zealand community supports because they enable us to live together and thrive in a diverse, democratic society in the twenty-first century.⁸

The specified values are -

Diversity

Respect and caring –

Integrity –

Inquiry/Curiosity –

Community

Equity/fairness

Environmental sustainability

Excellence

The Curriculum states that these values should be evident in the school's philosophy, structures, curriculum, classrooms, and relationships. However, merely being evident in this way is not enough. It is understandable that teachers do not want more in the curriculum, but students are exposed to as many "values" outside school as they are in it, and "a teacher's idea of values education is very sketchy if he/she relies on teaching by example rather than by discussion of what ethical decisions are, and by what important ethical principles we are guided when we make them."⁹

CITIZENSHIP

Our attitude to citizenship of a democracy depends on our values and what we consider valuable to our lives in a supposedly democratic country.

Our attitude to democracy depends on whether in making choices and decisions our priority is "What's in it for me or my group?" or whether our thinking goes beyond that to, "How is this going to affect other people, my community as a whole, the future of this country and the world we live in?"

⁸ ibid p10

⁹ Wringer, D. (1990). In *Philosophy and the teacher*. D.I. Lloyd (Ed.) p17.

In the past there has been the question of “Whose values? What values?” This problem can be overcome in “critical thinking” and “making ethical decisions” by requiring all values to be measured by ethical principles, because any value of any culture or ethnic group that has an effect on other people or the environment has an ethical content.

Our attitude to citizenship of a democracy also depends on the “Key competencies” listed in the Curriculum – particularly managing self, relating to others, participating and contributing and thinking. Do we think and make decisions ethically, or once again is it a matter of “What’s in it for me?” or at a slightly higher level, “Every body is doing it, so it’s O.K. for me.” At this level of ethical thinking, what “everybody does” becomes acceptable to society, and becomes seen as the norm regardless of whether, on closer examination, it can be seen to be unethical.

Kohlberg’s theory of moral reasoning

Back in the 1970s there was a drive for “moral education” in schools. At that time a professor at Harvard university, Lawrence Kohlberg, had been doing research into why some people during World War 2 had tried to help others, even though it had put their own lives in danger. After much research with children, with ordinary society and through to prisoners in penal institutions, he arrived at his “theory of moral reasoning,” i.e. there are stages of moral reasoning that are common to all cultures. At the first, and what he saw as the lowest stage, it is simply, “If it hurts me personally, it is better not to do it.” Even animals quickly learn not to touch an electric wire. At his highest stage of ethical reasoning, people have accepted principles that they believe work for the good of communities, and they try to live up to them. Kohlberg believed children could be taught to raise their level of ethical reasoning through interaction with other people who reasoned at a higher level. Recent research¹⁰ has shown that it is more difficult to change attitudes as children get older, so it is important to start practicing ethical reasoning at an early age.

More about Kohlberg’s stages later however. There was criticism of his work from various sources whose own interests conflicted with his theory, feminists because his research was only done with males, activists because his emphasis was on justice rather than activism, but a specific criticism was that his objective was not moral education, but to make good citizens of the United States.

In later years, the word “moral” became unpopular because of its seeming connection with ethical standards based on religion, so “values clarification” became the acceptable alternative. “Values clarification” however, is basically ethical relativity and will not help solve problems that arise in a newly multicultural society. Many new immigrants have come from countries where democracy is unknown, and even within our own previously bi-cultural society, arguments about democracy are beginning to emerge. Where once “Civics” was a specific subject in the curriculum, it has disappeared into the much wider field of Social Studies, so many of our young people take little interest in our political system and their responsibilities as citizens of a democracy.

Citizens of a democracy

When immigrants become New Zealand citizens, they are informed by the Department of Internal Affairs that their responsibilities are –

- 1 – To obey and promote the laws of New Zealand. (This includes registration as a voter and fulfilment of tax obligations.)
- 2 – Not to act in a way that is against the interests of New Zealand.

¹⁰ *Adolescent reputations and risk* (2009). Authors J.Hattie University of Auckland, A. Carroll, University of Queensland, K.Durkin, Strathclyde University, U.K. S.Houghton, University of Western Australia.

Then they are given a list of the privileges that come from being a citizen of this country. – A New Zealand passport. The right to come and go. The ability to get assistance from New Zealand diplomatic representatives overseas. Full economic rights. Full access to education and access to international sport.

Those of us who have been born here and who are automatically New Zealand citizens take these privileges for granted and give little thought to the fact that these privileges are given in return for the responsibilities. They are part of an agreement or covenant with all the other people in this country, and these other people also pay taxes to ensure that the privileges are available.

Our attitudes to the society around us are set within our homes in our early years, and it becomes more difficult to change them later. In the average reasonably happy family, we do not have rules and laws to cover every situation that might arise. Goodwill towards other family members, and willingness to see each other's point of view, means that what rules there are, can be elastic at times, providing for unforeseen circumstances. There is little need for emphasis on "rights," because the general principles of wisdom i.e. considering the probable consequences of our actions, fairness, truth and kindness will help solve most problems.

We make more and more laws, but we cannot make laws for every situation that is going to arise in a newly multi-cultural or multi-ethnic country. We can however, base our reasoning about such problems on these ethical principles. We are going to have to live together in a democratic society (and as yet no better system is on offer,) and values or customs of the past or of different societies may no longer work for good in our changing times.

Keep it simple

A system for ethical reasoning and ethical decision-making that will be understood and that will work in a multi-cultural society, and from young to adults must be simple. It must be simple enough for year 1 and speakers of English as a second language to understand, but it must also be able to expand in breadth of meaning so that it can be used to clarify more complex issues. The simple ethical principles used here are easy to understand and do not change.

- **Ethical capital is like cultural capital or financial capital.**

It is an existing foundation on which we can build, and it gives us an advantage over others who don't have as much. Not all students have the same ethical capital. Some start with very little. An elderly person learning to use a computer has less background knowledge than a child who has grown up playing computer games. Those who teach computer skills to older people often miss little vital details because they take it for granted that the older person has the same background experience as the child. The same applies to "making ethical decisions." Some families have more ethical capital than others. Each generation can be taken one step further away from the ethics that provided the background for early European settlers of this country. Senior teachers probably have more ethical capital than younger ones, because even though they may have glossed over some of the ethical teachings of their parents or grandparents, or even rejected them in their youth, they still remember them. Many children today have grown up surrounded by influences that were only just starting to become powerful in their parents' young days. We need to be able to see situations from the level of those with very low ethical capital and begin our programmes accordingly. Not with the ethics of stem-cell research, but with basic issues like, "Is cheating in sport or in an exam actually stealing?" "Is borrowing a book and not returning it stealing?" "Is a bully actually a coward?" "How would you feel if someone did that to you?"

For teachers who feel a little dubious about their qualifications to take lessons that involve making ethical decisions, it is safer to ask questions based on the simple principles given here. Then they

can be fairly sure they have covered every angle that needs to be covered, and have contributed to raising the level of their students' ethical reasoning.

Lessons based on “need to know.”

The lessons in this book are not based on any particular ideology, but on reason and “practical wisdom”. They arose out of the needs of the students I taught. Situations arose in the community and country over the twenty years I was teaching in this field, that made me think, “We need a lesson on this.” The lessons were always based on specific situations, thus making the issue a human thing before dealing with abstracts. Situations need to be relevant to the age group that is discussing them. Though “values and key competencies” are a natural part of social studies, at higher levels they are also a natural part of history, economics, science and environmental sustainability. They are involved anywhere that our actions affect other people. Half an hour a week spent in discussion and critical thinking about everyday situations would give practice in ethical reasoning until reasoning ethically became a habit. A programme of lessons such as these, consistent throughout the country, could help to make “good citizens of New Zealand.”

The ethical formula offered here is not claimed to be perfect, but it has been shown to be useful and acceptable and a formula worth teaching. The developmental psychologist Lev Vygotsky claimed that if a person is to understand any concept, it must first be reduced to its simplest form¹¹ and then the essence expanded with further questioning, asking thought provoking questions that help students construct new knowledge from what they already know. This is the method used throughout this programme. The emphasis is on critical thinking, and reasoned argument, with the aim being to raise the level of ethical reasoning of *all* the students – and possibly some teachers as well.

Educational theories.

The teaching method was the interactive method recommended by Print (p169) as an effective and efficient use of resources, providing immediate feedback, active learner participation and opportunities for remedial and extension work. The method used of asking questions in order to inspire children to reason for themselves was the type of questioning Socrates had used with his students, and which helps to develop the “critical thinking” skills required in the social studies curriculum. Each week we had a half hour slot to discuss a new problem and decide on the best choice of action our hypothetical family could make under the circumstances.

In a Massey University “Philosophy of Education” paper in 1999, I found that Professor Ivan Snook had written in 1973, “A substantial part of the moral education curriculum would be devoted to making people aware of the procedural rules for carrying on a moral argument, and for forming a moral code. They would not be taught that premarital sex is wrong (or right) but would learn the criteria by which a decision on this matter must be made if it is to be a moral decision.”¹² And also in another paper, “We must provide students with the tools for making enlightened decisions. These tools are moral principles, logical thought, empirical evidence and a readiness to do a lot of hard thinking, in place of emotional outbursts and slogans.”¹³

¹¹ Vygotsky, in J.Wink & L.Putney, (2002). *A vision of Vygotsky*. Pp20 & 86.

¹² Snook,I. (1973).Moral Education. In D’Cruz & Sheehan, (eds.) *Concepts of Education: Philosophical Studies*. Melbourne: Mercy Teacher’s College. Pp55-64. (p59)

¹³ Snook,I. (1973). Moral values and the New Zealand school. *Education* no.6, Dept of Education: Wellington pp11-14. (p14)

VALUES IN THE CURRICULUM

“ Through their learning experiences, students will learn about –
their own values and the values of others.

Different kinds of values, such as moral, social, cultural, aesthetic, and economic values.

The values on which New Zealand’s cultural and institutional traditions are based.

The values of other groups and cultures.”¹⁴

The values outlined in the curriculum are based on a 2004-5 survey and considered to be those that the New Zealand community supports because they enable us to live together and thrive in a diverse, democratic society in the twenty-first century.¹⁵

The specified values are -

| | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| Diversity | Community |
| Respect and caring – | Equity/fairness |
| Integrity – | Environmental sustainability |
| Inquiry/Curiosity – | Excellence |

Expected outcomes -

“Through their learning experiences, students will develop their ability to –

- express their own values
- explore with empathy the values of others
- critically analyse values and actions based on them.
- discuss disagreements that arise from differences in values and negotiate solutions.
- make ethical decisions and act on them.”

The objective of this book is –

To provide the tools that will be needed to achieve these specified outcomes by -

1 – Making these broad values relevant to teachers and students by narrowing them down and applying them to situations that are encountered in their everyday lives, or that they will encounter in their future lives as citizens of a democracy.

2 - Identifying and clarifying the underlying basic ethical principles of behaviour and by doing so, simplifying the way in which teachers can accomplish the specified outcomes.

3 - Showing how these ethical principles can be used –

In discussion - to analyse values and values based actions –

To provide an ethical dimension to critical thinking and throughout the social inquiry process to provide a consistent method for making ethical judgements, and hopefully provide motivation to act on them.

This resource has been designed to provide useful information and ideas for a wide range of readers – especially teachers faced with promoting these recommended values in the school environment and integrating them into school structures, policy and practices. It will also be of use to parents who wish to reinforce at home the values that are being promoted in schools, and to new immigrants who wish to understand the widely accepted values of their new country. Though it has been written for the New Zealand multi-cultural or multi-ethnic (most of us live ordinary westernised lives) society, the situations will be just as relevant to other similar societies. At first sight the specified values seem reasonable and adequate. It is only when we apply them to specific situations that we see that there are different interpretations possible, and that there could still be problems with meanings.

¹⁴ N.Z. Curriculum, 2007 p10

2 ibid p10

Ethical and non-ethical values

Values types in the essence statement are listed as aesthetic, moral, social, cultural and economic. There is an ethical content in most moral, social, cultural and economic values, but aesthetic values are normally a matter of personal preference. Taste in music for instance would be non-ethical, but it could become an ethical value if music was played at an inconvenient time or at a very loud volume.

- **Not all values are ethical values, but all values have an ethical content as soon as they affect other people.**

In a current university text-book on ethics¹⁶, it is stated, “It seems that no-one has produced a moral system that has commanded universal assent, and it seems unlikely that anyone will in the foreseeable future.” If this is the case, how is it possible to decide what, for example, “doing right,” as in the value of “integrity,” would mean to people of different cultures? It is “right” in some cultures to give preference to family members. In a democracy and where public money is concerned, giving preference to family members can be seen as nepotism. We are already having problems of this kind.

Critical analysis of values

Though the 2007 N.Z. Curriculum gives a list of the values that enjoy widespread support in this country, values are like virtues in that they can be seen from different angles, and what may be seen as a virtue or a value in some societies can be seen very differently in others. Virtues taken to extremes may also become vices. In a multi-cultural society values may clash. Traditional values of different groups may not fit into a new society.

Values clarification, exploring and examining values, have been the recommended methods of dealing with values in the past. Values exploration, discussion and negotiation may be adequate where non-ethical values are concerned, or for learning about different customs and traditions, but this is basically relativism, and “relativism fails at the intersection of different cultures.”¹⁷ On the other hand, reasoning based on common sense and ethical principles can “offer a counterweight to tendencies towards relativism and nihilism.”¹⁸

We are now a multicultural society with people from many different backgrounds, and there can be problems when we attempt to “examine other peoples’ values with empathy” as the curriculum statement requires.

For example - Tolerance and cultural safety are included in *Diversity* as desirable values, but just how tolerant should we be?

What if the values of a particular culture or ethnic group include cruelty to other humans or animals, or involve the gaining of great personal wealth at the expense of other people or the environment? Should we still respect their rights to hold those values and act on them?

Many immigrants come from countries where democracy is unknown, or bribery is accepted practice in dealing with government authorities. Some of our own standards of behaviour may not stand up to critical analysis either. The use of ethical principles to examine all values avoids the questions of “whose values” should be acceptable in this country, or what our core values are. Choosing specific values as core values could result in the values of the most dominant group being chosen, but the use of ethical principles to analyse values, judges all values by the same ethical standards and conforms to the broad value of equity as stated in the curriculum.

¹⁶ Hinman, L. (1998). *Ethics: A pluralistic approach to moral theory*. p37

¹⁷ ibid p56

¹⁸ Flyvbjerg, p 62.

Personal values –

There could be a considerable difference between the personal values of a child from a well-off family in a high decile school, and a child under the supervision of CYFS, who may have been passed from one bad situation to another. Nor does a student with a high IQ and parents with a high income, necessarily have a high level of ethical reasoning. The amount of white-collar crime amongst the well-educated indicates that point. Many of the year 7 and 8 students in a high decile school at which I taught some years ago, felt that the measure of right and wrong in sport was whether they could “get away with it.” Cheating was O.K. as long as the ref did not see. Research at a Christchurch College of Education School of Business (2002) found that 80% of students admitted cheating, including copying in tests or falsifying research results.¹⁹ Most of these students would have been through our education system. We could ask what would happen if everyone felt free to falsify research results.

Even democracy and the value of majority decisions are being questioned in some quarters today. Democracy as we know it may not be perfect, but is there any better system on offer? If there is, Aristotle’s common sense would require us to ask, “Would it be ethically practicable?”

Cultures evolve and change. They adapt to survive. Individual cultures may or may not survive, but as Webster writes in his interpretation of New Zealand values, groups that operated by egalitarian principles survived better than despotic groups²⁰, As citizens of a democracy, we need similar goals, and we need to understand that we are all on the path of a common evolving humanity, (p15) but we also need common ethical standards in our dealings with each other. In the values statement of the 2007 Curriculum, the required outcome of “encouraging, modelling and exploring” values, is that students will develop their ability to make ethical decisions and act on them. This objective cannot be achieved by values alone.

Practice in reasoning required –

The values listed in the curriculum are said to “enjoy widespread support because it is by holding these values and acting on them that we are able to live together and thrive.”²¹ Aristotle considered that a virtue was a “habit of the soul” that involved feeling and acting, and a vice was a weakness of character that impeded human thriving. We are not born virtuous. A habit is something we acquire through practice.

Values and citizenship education involves practice in reasoning about the effects of our actions on other people and our communities, with the aim of maximising the good and minimising the harm. The goal is not just personal and individual thriving or well-being, but for us to live fuller and happier lives within better communities, a better environment, better nations and a better world. The aim of developing “Key competencies” is the same, but unless values and “key competencies” have a sound ethical base, they could be just as useful to a career criminal. The perpetrators of white collar crime have appeared to be very competent in many fields. We need to start young in ensuring an ethical content is always added to thinking and reasoning.

Consistency across the country

It has been claimed recently that specific programmes in schools on drug and alcohol education do not lead to a long-term change in student behaviour, “Drug education in schools panned,” (N.Z.Herald, 22.5. ’09. A2). These programmes, it is claimed, could change short-term behaviour, but later on, in social situations, they cannot compete with peer pressure and temptation. U.S. research has also shown, that for any values and citizenship education programmes to be really successful, they would need to be consistent throughout all schools in a community, and ideally, because of

¹⁹ Daniels, C., (2002). High level of Tertiary cheating shocks researchers. *N.Z.Herald*, 23. 9. ’02. A5.

²⁰ Webster, A. (2001). *Spiral of Values: the flow from survival values to global consciousness in New Zealand*. p12

²¹ New Zealand Curriculum, (2007) p 10

itinerant school populations, throughout all schools in a country. Some may claim that a programme such as the one offered here, if it were to be introduced to all schools in the country would be indoctrination. Others may see it as something that could actually be done at the top of the cliff, until something better is offered.

Negotiation at community level

Values are to be fully discussed and negotiated at school and community level, but while there is room for community negotiation where non-ethical values are concerned, a successful society needs to have common ethical standards. Like rules of the road, these are necessary to prevent misunderstandings and accidents. Break the road rules and someone will be hurt. Ethical principles are as basic to a successful society as the basic principle for driving on our New Zealand roads – keep to the left hand side. The number of accidents caused by tourists who forget this rule is forcing our transport department to consider painting arrows on the highways “Keep left.” We need to imprint ethical principles on young minds so that they become a habit in reasoning.

Ethical principles –

If we think critically, creatively and reflectively about the ethical principles offered here, - as the curriculum requires under the value of innovation, inquiry and curiosity, we will find that these four simple principles will cover all the stated values, as well as the “key competencies.”

Wisdom - is acquired by thinking critically, creatively and reflectively about the causes and consequences of actions, aiming to maximise the good and minimise the harm..

Justice - is the principle behind the value of equity.

Truth – is the principle underlying integrity, being honest and basing reasoning on fact rather than emotion.

Love – covers respect for others, diversity and the welfare of the environment and future generations.

These principles are simple to learn and understand, for both pupils, and parents who may be speakers of English as a second language. They are a basis for making consistent ethical decisions, as well as motivation to act on them.

Rationale for use of ethical principles

Part one of the consultation group’s report to the Ministry on “Values in the New Zealand curriculum”²² makes as its final recommendation – “There will need to be strong resource and professional development support provided to assist schools and teachers to develop programmes and practices that will support community values.” There are few schools today that are not multi-cultural. What happens when values of different groups conflict? Schools and teachers have to deal with real situations involving students, parents and the wider community. Unless the principles that underlie these values are first made clear, it is doubtful that values on their own will ensure that the final aim of the values statement will be achieved – that is to be able to make ethical decisions and act on them.

Too much information and choice?

To understand any concept properly, it has to be traced back to its beginnings.²³

It is impossible for teachers of any kind to teach well, unless they first clearly understand the basics of their subjects so that they can emphasize what is relevant to individual learners, and what it may be more difficult for all or particular pupils to understand. Masses of information are available over

²² Keown, P. 17.8. '05. *C. Key findings and recommendations.*

²³ Wink and Putney, (2002). *A vision of Vygotsky*, p 8.

the internet, but little education will result if neither the teacher nor the student knows which facts are important and what principles are essential. Knowing a subject well enables a teacher to be sure the basic building blocks are in place before further construction begins.

A certain amount of background about the ethical principles themselves is therefore included here as a basis for social inquiry and critical analysis, for the following reasons –

- **The basic building blocks for values education and ethical decision-making are ethical principles.**

Without these there can be no consistency in ethical reasoning.

- **If abstract values are to be used in constructing understanding, they need to be applied to practical situations so their effects can be clearly seen.**

Background information needs to be provided for those who will be expected to use any different system.

In the book *Curriculum development and design*, (1993) Murray Print advises that for changes to curricula to be accepted and implemented they must be –

1. More advantageous to the user than existing practices.
2. Must enhance teaching and student learning.
3. Must be consistent with existing values, past experiences and present needs.
4. Must not demand substantial changes to behaviour by participants.
5. Should have been trialled first and feedback received.
6. The features should have been communicated effectively to those who will be required to use it.²⁴

This resource aims to comply with all of Print's requirements.

Finally – The report on values, commissioned by the Ministry, and which involved consultation throughout the country, produced a recommended statement for values in the curriculum. It begins with the same words as the values statement in the curriculum, but includes more detail in explanation. It continues – “Our values are based on our cultural, philosophic and spiritual traditions, and on current critical reflection, dialogue and debate.” -- “Throughout the curriculum students will gain knowledge of the values of the main cultural and institutional traditions of New Zealand.” (Part 2 page 1). The Curriculum has repeated these statements in the following words – “Through their learning experiences, students will learn about – the values on which New Zealand's cultural and institutional traditions are based, their own values and those of others --- --- ” (p10) but has omitted the reference to spiritual traditions that had been included in the report.

When New Zealand was mainly a bi-cultural country, Maori spiritual traditions were based on a mixture of Primal or animistic religion and Christianity, and varied with tribal tradition.²⁵ The spiritual and cultural traditions of the European settlers were based on Christianity, humanism and their associated values. Most of our institutional traditions are also based on British systems. Over recent years New Zealand has become a multi-cultural country, bringing the values of Pacific Island Christianity, and a variety of Eastern religions, the latest in any number being Islam. There will be references throughout this work from various religions and philosophies, but the values of *diversity*, *equity* and *respect* will mean that there should be no prejudice against, or favouritism towards any particular ideology, religion or culture. The same ethical principles will be used to examine all values regardless of gender, race, religion, spirituality or culture.

²⁴ Print, M., (1993) *Curriculum development and design*. Pp 242-245

²⁵ Donovan, P. (Ed.) (1996). in *Religions of New Zealanders*. (p11-15). Ch 1 *Aotearoa's spiritual heritage*. Te Pakaka Tawhai

OUTLINE

This resource is designed for use with years 7 – 13 in state, integrated and independent schools, though the basic ethical principles apply from level 1.

The purpose is to help students develop the skills required to critically analyse problems – to explore and analyse values, and at higher levels, to “critically analyse values and values based actions.” It also adds a consistent ethical element to “critical thinking,” in order to raise the level of reasoning from “What’s in it for me,” to “How will these actions affect other people?” It aims to “contribute to society’s capacity for value-rational deliberation and action,”²⁶ by developing the skill of making ethical decisions.

The only way to develop a skill is to have a clear idea of what you are trying to do, then practice, practice, practice.

For this purpose, a consistent method of reasoning can be based on four simple generally accepted ethical principles, starting from level 1 with -

Wisdom - We should be sensible. We should consider the possible consequences of actions.

Justice – We should be fair.

Truth – We should be honest

Love – We should be kind.

There are two checks on our reasoning -

The Golden Rule – How would I feel if I were to be treated that way?

The Goal –a better world – Is this going to make the world a better or happier place- at home – at school – in the community – in the environment – in our nation – globally?

This simple system can be the basis for all ethical reasoning and throughout the social inquiry process. It provides a consistent method for schools and teachers to achieve the specified outcomes, and it is simple enough for speakers of English as a second language to clearly understand. It could even become an acceptable global ethic.

The simple principles can be expanded to suit different levels and relevant situations –

Wisdom – Is this reasonable? Will it work in practice? What are the long-term consequences likely to be? On yourself? Your family? Other people? Your school? Your community? The environment? The whole country? – The world? Will it maximise the good and minimise the harm? What would happen if everyone did that?

Justice – Is any person or group being treated any better or any worse than any other? Yourself? Your family? Your religion? Your ethnic group? Can you justify any reason why allowances should be made? Would giving “justice” for one mean causing injustice for another? Is there a fair compromise? Who wins or loses if we go down that path?

Truth - Do we have all the evidence? Is it factual or is it opinion? Is it myth or is it based on recorded history? Who has supplied the evidence? What are their motives? Can we trust everyone to tell the truth? What is their past record? Is anyone trying to deceive anyone else? If so for what purpose? Is anyone pushing a particular ideology at the expense of the truth? Have you examined your own actions and motives? Is any person or group using power for their own ends?

Love – (aroha) Is everyone being treated with respect and caring? Is any person or group *using* any other person or group for their own ends? Do you think any person or group deserves special treatment? Should an exception be made for them?

The Golden Rule - How would you feel if you were on the receiving end? How do you think other people are feeling?

²⁶ Flyvbjerg, p 167.

The Goal – a better world. Is this action going to contribute to a better or happier world? At home? At school? In the community? In the work-place? In the environment? In our nation? Globally?

This method covers the broad values specified in the curriculum -

Respect and care are based on the principle of Love

Equity is based on the principle of Justice

Integrity is covered by the principle of Truth

Diversity and how we approach it involves the principles of Love, Justice, Truth and Wisdom, as well as the two final checks.

Community and the common good also depend on all the principles and checks.

Environmental sustainability comes into every situation when we ask the question – “Will this make a better world?” The other principles can also be involved to provide a global environmental ethic.

Inquiry is involved in every discussion, and in learning how to critically analyse values and values based actions.

Excellence and perseverance involve wisdom and truth and being honest with ourselves.

Teaching method – A specific incident is taken, clarified, and then the teacher leads the discussion asking questions based on the principles and checks given above, and clarifies the broader values that apply to the specific situation.

- **This interactive method is recommended by Print as an effective and efficient use of time and resources. It provides immediate feedback, active learner participation and opportunities for remedial and extension work.**²⁷

This method involves the type of Socratic questioning that leads to understanding – a place where the student says, “I see.” It is *not* questioning just for the sake of questioning. Aimless questioning can lead to confusion, uncertainty and lack of confidence for the students. In this interactive method of teaching and learning the student constructs his/her own understanding, but the teacher asks the questions that will enable the student to reason logically and ethically.

Wisdom - What would be the probable consequences of alternative courses of actions?

Justice - Is any person or group receiving preferential treatment?

Truth - Is all the evidence available and is it factual? What are the motives of those involved?

Love - Are all persons being treated with respect? Is any person or group using another person or group for their own ends?

After applying the two final checks, the best choice of action is then considered and again checked against the principles.

Open-ended discussion

The 2007 Curriculum requires students to be able to “make ethical judgements and decisions and act on them.”²⁸ The type of discussion that reaches no conclusion has been accepted practice with values “clarification,” but may not *educate* in values, or enable students to make *ethical* judgements. In real life we have to make decisions and often there is no perfect answer. We have to make choices and we have to consider consequences. It is recognised that considering consequences does

²⁷ Print, M. (1993). *Curriculum development and design*, p169.

²⁸ 2007 Curriculum p10

not rate highly with young people, but if, in critical analysis, constant emphasis is put on considering consequences, this could improve.

- **In real life we need to consider the effect of our actions on other people, and often we need to make compromises.**

If we are unwilling to make compromises occasionally, there is little chance of our being able to live peacefully and happily with other people for any length of time. There is often an opportunity for compromise in details that do not really matter, but not in the ethical principles on which we base our choices.

Practice in making wise choices and knowing when to compromise, is essential if students are to be prepared for life in the real world. There is little practical use in philosophy if it teaches students to think, but it does not help them to find answers. There is also little point in reasoning, if in the end, a person does not choose to act on this reasoning, so there also needs to be motivation to act. The final check is whether our decision will make for a better world – at home – at school – in the community – in the environment – the nation – and globally. Consideration then of what the consequences are likely to be if we choose *not* to act, or to act without thinking, aims to supply the motivation to act on our reasoning.

Three levels –

The concepts covered here are proposed to be used at three levels, years 7&8, 9&10 and 11-13, broadening the reasoning at each level, and using relevant examples for discussion with each age group. The basic principles remain the same.

It is important that at each level discussion is related to a particular incident – a story in the news – a TV programme – a popular song – an interesting story – so that they become a human thing before abstract reasoning begins. When they were used originally, they were often based on a series of plays – like a soap opera – that involved a particular family and their neighbours. In this way all students could take part in a discussion of the family's actions without appearing to be personally involved. Another popular opening was – “I'll tell you a story about a pupil at a school near here a few years ago who” – - - -

It is also important that students should not be expected to take part in activities such as lining up in order of preference for a particular opinion. This occupies precious education time and often gives a false answer because it is a brave child who will take an unpopular stance, even if he/she has reasoned more logically. There will always be a temptation to go along with a popular student, or to take the stand they think will be popular with the teacher.

In practice

When it was used over many years, this form of learning proved very popular with students and enjoyable for the teacher. **The simple cartoons were designed to be drawn quickly by the teacher on the blackboard. Students then drew their own version to illustrate the point of the lesson.**

There was little cost involved. no extra space required, little preparation for the teacher, and little assessment required.

Assessment - The broad value of “equity” required by the curriculum statement is translated in action here as “fairness.” It is better not to assess than to assess unfairly. Equality of outcome depends on the receiver as well as the giver. It is very easy for a student in class to say what he/she thinks the teacher, or another popular student, wants to hear, but once outside the school gates to have a completely different attitude. Only their later lives will prove whether their level of ethical

reasoning had been raised from “What’s in it for me at this present time?” to “How are my actions going to affect other people - and me – now and in the future?”

Finally –

This form of learning was approved by the Principal and Board of Trustees of the school where it was used, and by the parents of the students in the classes that were taken. Situations discussed were often related to themes that were being studied throughout the school at the time, and provided an ethical element to critical thinking. There were however always two introductory lessons at the beginning of each year with each class, so that the general principles and reason for the lessons were understood. The issues covered here were based on the students’ “need to know” and not on any particular ideology.

The order in which the concepts were used was generally flexible, depending on the situations that were relevant at the time, but it was aimed to cover them all over the course of two years.

The issues have been indexed here for use in the 2007 curriculum, under the stated broad values to which they relate, though each issue may be related to several of the values at the same time.

ANALYSIS OF PRINCIPLES USED

WISDOM

The principle of wisdom is based on the human ability to reason, but it goes much further than reason. Reason alone can promote self-interest. Much of our present moral relativism is based on self-interest. Reason alone can be cold and unfeeling.

Wisdom however, involves human psychology, knowledge of how people react in certain circumstances, and how people can be motivated to act. Wisdom has been respected throughout the ages in all religions and philosophies. The shamans and elders of primitive tribes understood human psychology. Wisdom includes knowledge of human weaknesses, and people's likely response to temptation.

Wisdom involves experience as well as academic learning. There is much knowledge that cannot be learned out of books. It is possible to have wisdom - Aristotle's "phronesis" – prudence or practical common sense - without having a university degree. It is possible to have a university degree without having wisdom.

Many young adults of the 70s judged their parents' values and found them wanting. They wanted freedom and the right to make their own choices. Now the results of their own values are under scrutiny, and another generation must use their reason to make further choices. They need to understand the difference between knowledge and wisdom in order to choose well. The advent of so much technology has not necessarily meant an increase in wisdom. Sitting for hours in front of a computer screen does not necessarily result in an increase in the skills of getting along with other people. Long- term consequences need to be considered as well as short term satisfaction. Logical reasoning and common sense are necessary for mature moral judgement.

In earlier times the elders of tribes were respected for their experience and the understanding of human nature that they had acquired in their lifetimes. Over the last fifty years, and with the rapid advance of technology, the respect for elders has declined.

The Johnson report(1979) stated as one of the values that would remain cornerstones of every community – "A recognition of the wisdom gained from life's experience, that is, a recognition of the wisdom of elders, the people who have lived through life."

Such a concept is not mentioned in the latest Health and Physical Education syllabus. That "Cornerstone of the community" has disappeared in just over twenty-five years.

It is understandable that the young who are brought up in an age of technology feel that their elders are inadequate because they are not so proficient in those fields. Science has given us the ability to do many things that would never have been imagined fifty years ago, and who knows what it will be able to do in the future? In today's world however, it is not enough to ask, "Can we do this?" The question the young will need to be able to answer is "Is it wise to do this?"

They need to be given the tools they will require to find the answers.

JUSTICE

“It’s not fair,” is one of the most common cries of childhood.

This common complaint does not change in the adult world.

The concept of justice used here is that we should not favour one person or group over another and that we should not treat any person or group worse than any other. If there is any justifiable reason why any person or group should receive special treatment, the principles of truth and love will add balance.

“Justice” does not mean that the outcomes of actions must be equal, but it does mean that people should be treated equally and no preference given to any particular person or group without justified reason.

Outcomes of actions often depend as much on the recipient as the perpetrator.

If we give each child in a group, a slice of chocolate cake, but one throws his slice on the floor because he does not like chocolate cake, justice will have been done. The outcome will not be equal, but it is not the giver’s fault if one child goes without cake. It would not be fair to others to provide one with something different. Perhaps others would rather have had something different, but had not behaved so badly. In that case the giver would have rewarded bad behaviour.

On the other hand, if the cake had been accidentally knocked out of a child’s hand, the principle of love would have to be added to the equation and another piece of cake found for him.

If outcomes are not equal, “truth” has to be added to the equation as we discover the reason for the boy’s having no cake.

Philosophers like Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-80) would say that people are responsible for what they make of themselves, no matter what the circumstances. Wisdom and common sense however, tell us that people have different capacities for reasoning. People have different levels of abilities in different fields.

People have different backgrounds that may or may not have inspired children to reason clearly. Children may have been taught that it is always someone else’s fault if they do not get what they want.

Children come from families with different cultural capital. Cultural capital is like financial capital in that it gives access to information, and opportunities that can lead to better jobs and better opportunities in life.

Ethical reasoning aims to teach students that they are responsible for their own lives, no matter what their background. We cannot change our past but we can influence our future. Students need to be inspired to aim for realistic goals, and then encouraged to aim higher.

Justice is another area where theorists like to argue and use complicated examples.

Modern Philosophers.

The philosopher John Rawls states that any moral principle,

1. Must apply to all persons.
2. Must ensure equal opportunities.
3. Must maximise liberty of all persons,
4. Must seek justice for all persons.

Carol Gilligan, another modern ethicist, sees a separate feminist ethic of care, and that women have a different moral voice from men. It is maintained here that there is no difference in the moral principles required from men and women. Many men can be just as caring as women, and women can be just as ruthless in business situations today as men.

Annette Baier, another modern moral philosopher, has argued that “trust” is the glue that holds society together. When we look at the basis for trust, we find that the reasons why we trust people are that we know they will not deceive us. We know they will treat us fairly and we know that they respect us and care about us.

There is no need for separate feminist theory because by using the four principles on which this programme is based, we cover the different problems that arise when there is only one particular principle or theory.

Another argument put forward by ethical theorists is that if we insist on impartiality we could have to choose between saving our mother or saving some important personality if they were both in a burning building. It is very unlikely that anyone would have to make this choice, and this is an example of the type of situation that should *not* be used when we are teaching beginners.

Impartiality is required, but wisdom shows there is a time and a place for everything. I would not give my neighbour’s child as expensive a Christmas present as I would give my own grandchild, but if they were playing together in my garden, I would give them an equal number of sweets. As for the burning building, there are few people who would not save their mother first and let the important person look after him/herself, and fewer still who would question the choice.

Social Justice

It has been argued that social justice should be at the heart of a “values” programme for schools, so what exactly *is* “social justice?” It can be claimed that teaching children to share at levels 1,2 and 3 is social justice. That is hardly controversial, unless one child has worked hard for some reward and is expected to share equally with another who has merely sat around watching.

The principle of Love would require that we would not allow another to suffer unduly, but wisdom tells us that there have to be consequences that actually hurt, or those reasoning at that level will never learn, or be motivated, to do their share also.

Social justice in this programme does not include equality of outcome for reasons that have already been shown. All society can be expected to do is to treat people fairly, help those who really need help, and respect the right of individuals to make their own choices – even if they are what we consider to be foolish ones. If we cannot persuade them to consider consequences, they may have to learn the painful way by experiencing consequences for themselves. The main aim here is to educate children in the skill of ethical reasoning so that they will consider the long-term consequences of their actions and acquire the self-discipline required to make reasoned choices.

Class discussion of social justice

An issue is controversial when there are at least two opposing points of view, each with valid arguments to support them. In our colonial society there was an unwritten law that politics and religion were not subjects to be discussed in the groups and clubs that had been formed. Common sense ordained that groups organized to bring a diverse mix of people together to promote a spirit of community were not the place for controversial argument, and so it is with the subject of social justice in schools. Unless it is desired to indoctrinate children with one particular point of view or ideology, the harm that could be done to relationships within the classroom, and the community, could outweigh any good that might result. If there needs to be debate of a relevant situation at any level it needs to be ethical debate.

Controversial issues can be discussed in senior forms as long as there is ethical debate. The use of power can affect the outcome of debate and Flyvbjerg has given requirements to ensure that justice prevails.

Requirements for ethical debate.²⁹

- 1. No party affected by what is being discussed should be excluded from the debate.**
- 2. All participants should have equal opportunity to present evidence and to question the validity of claims.**
- 3. Participants must be willing and able to empathize with each other's point of view.**
- 4. Existing power differences between participants should be neutralised.**
- 5. Participants must be open about their motives, goals and intentions.**

Where there are controversial issues between teachers, principals, Boards and parents they cannot be avoided. Decisions will have to be made, and hopefully all involved will be aiming to make ethical decisions, but this may not always be easy.

Ethical principles will help here. Debate and discussion can be based on them.

The object here is to raise the children's level of reasoning through their years in school, with concepts widening as they become more experienced in ethical reasoning and are able to access more information. It is reasonable to expect that by the time they reach years 12 and 13, and are facing the responsibility of casting their first vote, that they should be able to discuss controversial social and political matters in a reasoned manner. By then they should be able to investigate government policies and varying ideologies, and measure them by ethical principles. They should also be able to see whether their teachers are doing the same, or whether they are promoting ideologies of their own. Teachers need to develop students' competence for practical judgement, not to impose the teacher's own view of a new social order. As Kohlberg claimed, if people reason at a higher level, social justice should be the result anyway.

Schools should be aiming to produce people who can go out into society, taking with them the ability to reason well, the ability to put ethical principles into action in every part of their lives, and with the autonomy of thinking for themselves on specific matters of social justice.

Freedom and rights

Two of the fastest growing ethical concepts over the last fifty years have been "freedom" and "rights."

These also come under the principle of "Justice," so a short reference to each is required here.

Freedom has been deliberately *not* included as an ethical principle at junior level. Children interpret freedom as the ability to do as they choose, but unless we live on our own on a desert island we cannot have freedom to do exactly as we choose. At higher levels, the concept of "autonomy" can be brought into discussions, but not until students can appreciate the difference between "freedom" and "autonomy." At every level however, one person's freedom could interfere with another person's freedom. One person's rights could interfere with another person's rights. With freedom and rights there always has to be justice and respect for others.

Claims to freedom and rights should be examined to see whether they conform to the principles of wisdom, justice, truth and love.

Are they sensible? Are they fair? Are they based on the truth. What is the motive of the claimant? Is anyone going to be harmed by what is claimed?

²⁹ Flyvbjerg, B., (2001) *Making social science matter: Why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again*. P 91

Freedom –

John Stuart Mill (1806 – 73) is often quoted and used as an authority on freedom, but he is often quoted selectively, and there is another side to the picture. Mill believed that the individual should make his own decisions, and not be “unduly submissive to control by social customs,” but he went on to say that the individual should use reason in making decisions, and “place his desires and impulses under the government of a strong will.”³⁰ Though Mill believed that people should not be bound by custom, he did not reject custom altogether. He believed people could choose to follow social customs that they saw as beneficial.

He put limits on freedom, and added this comment to his remarks on autonomy, “This doctrine applies to human beings in the maturity of their faculties. It does not apply to children or young people below what the law may fix as manhood or womanhood – they must be protected against their own actions as well as against external injury.”³¹

Many experienced educationists believe that children should not have freedom where their own education is concerned. Like Mill they believe that children should be protected from themselves. Cleife in *Philosophy and the teacher* (1990)³² stated “It is impossible for them to discover for themselves all they need to know to become mature and rational human beings.” (p.135). In the same book, Berenson issued a warning about democracy in the classroom. “Democratic decisions can to a significant degree, be taken by the children themselves --- but what must be remembered is that the range of alternatives will be restricted because children will be ignorant of their full range, or will not be able to see the value of certain activities and will not choose them for themselves.” (p123) “A child does not have the breadth of knowledge which allows his choices to be informed, and thus we have no right to impose the enormous responsibility of choosing his education, his way of being educated, on the child. This would in fact be a gross interference with his freedom.” (p122)

For teachers, this means that throughout the entire social inquiry process, students should not be required to make judgements that are beyond their range of knowledge or their reasoning abilities. The choices that are to be made should be choices that they are qualified to make at each level and can broaden as their knowledge and ability to reason increase.

Rights –

John Locke’s work on human rights influenced the American Declaration of Independence. At the same time (1789), the French Declaration of the Rights of Man was produced.

Rights have no basis in antiquity. There was no word for rights in any European language before the 14th century.³³ A civilized society can choose to establish legal rights for its citizens, and those rights are seen to be a contract freely and rationally entered into by the members of the society. These are social contract rights, and have been passed by majority decision.

For thousands of years democracy has been based on majority decisions. Today it has become a fashion for those in a minority to claim their own rights and talk about “the tyranny of the majority.” This can lead in turn to a “tyranny of the minority.”

In an ethical society there would be no tyranny of any kind, but an educated and ethical majority would treat the minority view with respect and justice. A minority has the opportunity to try to change the views of the majority but not to impose its view on them.

³⁰ Beauchamp, T. (1991) *Philosophical ethics*. P 390

³¹ Mill, J. in Beauchamp, T. (1991) *Philosophical ethic: An introduction to moral philosophy*. (2nd ed) U.S.A.: McGraw Hill. p 394.

³² Cleife in Lloyd, D., (ed). (1976, reprinted 1990). *Philosophy and the teacher*.

³³ Hinman, L., p279.

Decisions have to be made however, and though democracy may not work perfectly, it has so far been accepted as the fairest way to do this.

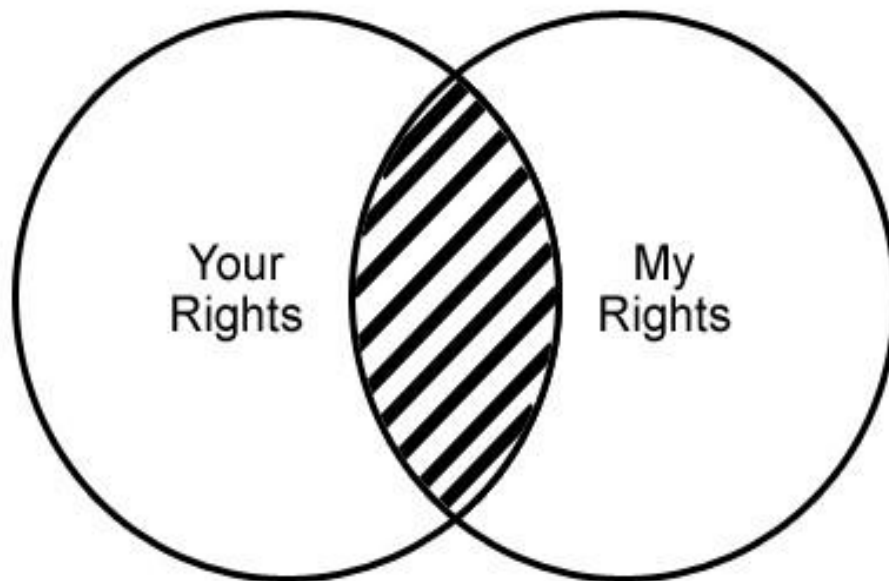
Rights can be seen as a minimum standard below which a fair and caring society should not go in its treatment of any individual, but *rights are not an ethical principle*. Some ethicists claim that “rights” are confrontational – that they stress individualism at the expense of community and that a focus on rights is out of place in caring relationships.

Where rights are accepted by the majority as a contract however, they should not be separated from responsibilities, because where there is a right taker there has to be a right giver who also has rights. Philosophers and educators have argued that “rights without obligations make for irresponsibility, just as obligations without rights make for servility.” Edmund Burke claimed that an absence of obligation means a diminution of humanity, because it signifies a condition of permanent immaturity.³⁴ We are not helping people to “grow up” if we do not expect responsibility in return for rights.

Some modern ethicists (e.g. Dworkin) claim that “rights” trump any other argument, and they are often being used in this way in many controversial issues today. The claim that “rights are trumps” is only a claim, and one that in itself should have to be justified. In class discussions, arguments cannot be based merely on claims to rights, unless those rights have been passed into law. In social inquiry, claims to rights should be measured by ethical principles and reasoned argument.

An example for discussion is - the right to protest versus the right of other people to go about their legitimate business. Is one right more important than another and if so, why?

Your rights and my rights



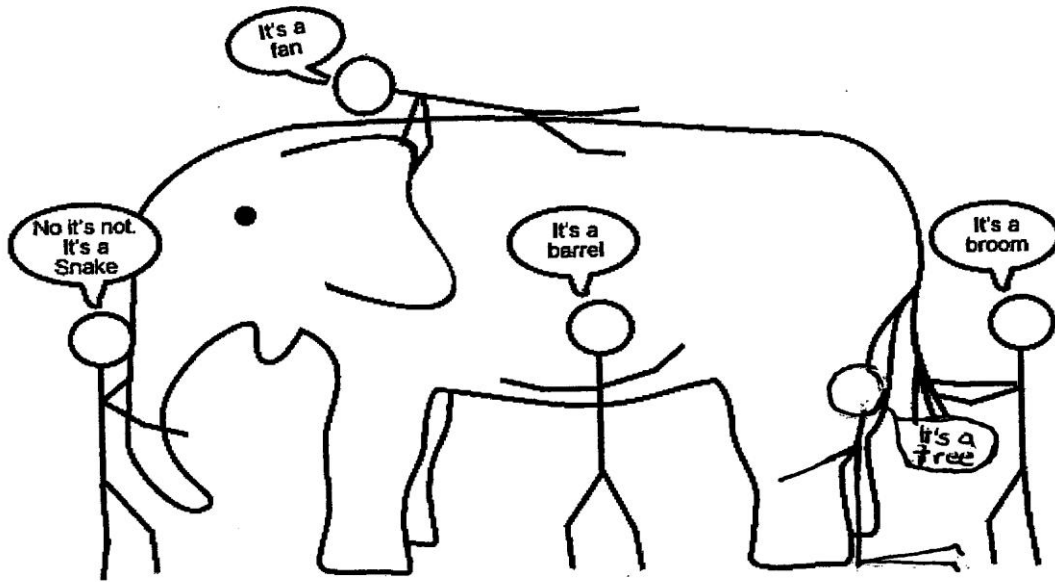
³⁴ Kristol, I. Moral and ethical development in a democratic society. Ch 23 in D. Purpel and K. Ryan, (eds) *Moral education : It comes with the territory*. p378

TRUTH

If it were possible to choose between the four principles and say any one was more important than the others, that one would have to be “truth.” All reasoning depends on having its foundations on truth. The broad value as stated in the curriculum is called “integrity,” and covers honesty, responsibility, accountability, and being ethical but the basic principle is truth.

Truth is emphasized by all ancient religions and philosophies. Plato stressed the difference between opinion and truth.

Opinion is what we believe to be true based on our own experience, but **truth** is based on wider experience and proven fact, even though it is possible that there is still more to learn. Buddha’s story of the blind men examining an elephant is relevant here. Each was quite certain he was right because he had hold of only part of the truth.



Until recently ethical argument has been based around the concept of “Demolish the other person’s argument,” rather than being a shared search for truth. Now a different approach to ethical argument is emerging³⁵ but it takes a long time for new convictions to make an impression on old ideologies. Socrates himself showed that the best debaters did not necessarily produce the truth. Asking searching questions that made people examine their own arguments, provided more opportunity of arriving there.

What is truth?

The definition of truth used here will be based on the theory offered by David Hume (1711-76) in relation to the word “good.”

“Good is roughly what every informed and impartial spectator would approve of --- when we rid ourselves of partiality and try to work out what is right.”

Truth for our purposes will be what any reasonable person who had no particular position to guard would consider to be the truth. He/she would have reached that decision after considering all the available evidence, its sources and the motives of those producing the evidence. Truth is like a photograph of a certain event at a certain moment in time. The event can be seen from different angles and different points of view, but a photo of a person standing beside a chair cannot truthfully

³⁵ Hinman, (1998). *Ethics : A pluralistic approach to moral theory*.p311

be shown as a person sitting in a chair. A mistake has been made, either unintentionally or deliberately. If deliberately, then there has been an attempt to deceive, and an examination of the motives of the person claiming the photo to be the truth may expose the reason. In junior classes we accept truth for what it is to most people. It is the absence of deception, and it is based on factual evidence. Integrity involves being honest about ourselves, not deceiving ourselves or others.

Deception –

People can deceive without telling lies.

They can deceive by not telling the whole truth – by concealing evidence.

They can deceive by bodily or facial expression.

They can deceive by emphasising one point of view and glossing over another.

The situations discussed at first should be simple so that students are not deceived by clever argument. Intricate or ambiguous situations should not be used with students at lower levels. Most students are not able to reason well in the abstract before years seven and eight. They start with basic principles, not Einstein's theories. They need practice in simple ethical reasoning before they move on to controversial issues. They need to learn to walk before they face the hurdle race of real life. Practice in simple ethical reasoning will equip them to make ethical decisions automatically later in life by using the same principles.

Reasoning can be as logical as mathematics, even if it is not quite so precise. Experience shows us that if we do (a) and then (b,) there is a very strong likelihood that the effect will be (c.) The maxim "As you sow, so shall you reap," appears in most philosophies and religions simply because it is usually true. There is a possibility that other unknown circumstances may alter the results at times, but truth is vital. Truth is vital to every ethical decision. Scientific laws work in the same way, but a mathematical calculation based on an incorrect measurement cannot give a correct answer. It is the same in ethical reasoning or examining and analysing values or perspectives. Reasoning must be based on fact or there will not be a valid answer.

Dishonesty –

We are trying to help students "see" why they should be honest. Telling lies and breaking promises are wrong because of their effects on other people. Dishonesty is wrong for the same reason and there are many forms of stealing in everyday life. "Perks" at work can be stealing if they are taken without permission. Borrowing a book and not returning it is stealing. Cheating in school or at sport is stealing because in all these cases we are taking something that belongs to some-one else, without their permission. Not paying accounts on the due date is stealing. Why? We can ask the question- what would happen if everyone was dishonest?

It is fairly safe to assume that a good proportion of adults in society would accept truth and honesty as a vital principle in a moral code, and would believe that most others felt the same way. We think that we are being honest but sometimes we are looking at events from a narrow point of view. When we look from different angles we may see a picture more clearly. Analysis of values and perspectives can identify what society sees as "being honest" and can examine some of the actions that we do without really thinking, and which, when examined by all ethical principles may be seen to be less ethical than we realised.

The first issue we have to face is "How willing are we to accept the truth about ourselves and our own motives?" Motives can have a considerable influence on whether an action is ethical or not.

Virtues and vices

No offence intended but –

It was pointed out to me recently that the user of this introductory phrase usually went on to make a point that may have been honest, but was also hurtful to the recipient, and very often unnecessary. The speaker used the virtues of “honesty” and “truthfulness” as an excuse to say something that could probably have been better left unsaid. Examining the motive behind the statement could show that the speaker was less than virtuous.

Teaching about virtues on their own is not adequate. Even virtues need to conform to ethical principles, and Aristotle recommended the middle way. Too much of a particular virtue can become a vice. An excess of compassion can be debilitating to the receiver. An excess of tolerance can lead to apathy, or “looking the other way” when harm is being done.

There has been a considerable emphasis on “virtues” in recent years in an attempt to offer useful teaching material in the “values” field, but it seems there are up to fifty or more recognised virtues. If students are to “critically analyse values and values based actions,” and “make ethical judgements and act on them,” it is much simpler to do this by using four ethical principles and two checks than by using fifty virtues. It is necessary to teach about virtues - but not in isolation from ethical principles – and it is necessary to teach about vices.

The first step towards ethical action is in accepting the truth about ourselves and therefore we cannot ignore vices – call them by whatever name is acceptable – even “human weaknesses.” These are also facts of life, and to ignore them allows them to grow without check. Selfishness, greed, envy, laziness, cruelty, dishonesty all lead to unhappiness. They are important because of their effects on other people, and finally in the longer term upon ourselves. Recent experiences of British head-teachers for example, has shown that a new breed of bully has been created by over-indulgent parents, who refuse to believe their spoilt child is capable of malice.³⁶ The parents are difficult to deal with because they do not see their children in situations where they are not the household rulers.

At levels 1,2 and 3,

Vices and virtues can be taught as good fruit and spoilt fruit, showing that what could have been beautiful fruit, have been spoilt by the ugly caterpillars of the vices. Examples can be given of situations relative to the age group, and showing the consequences at home and at school.

From level 4 upward

The same vices are related to relevant situations, and laziness includes apathy.

To physical laziness is added mental laziness. What are the long-term consequences of mental laziness? On ourselves? On others? What are the long term consequences of greed – in our personal lives – in the environment? What can be the consequences of envy?

At levels 7 and 8

Apathy also involves lack of interest in the democratic process that relies on an educated and interested public. Selfishness can be related to sexuality, and to a sustainable economic system, while envy of others plays a part in waste and misuse of resources in the environment.

Unless the truth about human weaknesses and their consequences are included along with virtues, pupils are receiving only part of the truth.

³⁶ N.Z.Herald, *Well-off child a new breed of school bully*. 15.5.'06. A 10. (from the Independent)

THE PRINCIPLE OF LOVE

Involving the value of respect

Love as caring and respect. –

This is the New Zealand concept of “aroha.” It means goodwill towards and concern for other individuals. It is shown in a slightly different way by the philosopher Emmanuel Kant in his maxim that people should be respected for their rationality and autonomy.

- **People should be seen as important in themselves and not as a means to an end.**

We may not like people because of the way they act, but we should be concerned for them and help them if they are in need. We should not use them in the pursuit of our own ends, or take advantage of those who are not as able as ourselves. We should respect them, be concerned about the effect of our actions on them, and treat them honestly and fairly.

E.g. We should not befriend people merely for what we can get out of them. We should not deliberately pressure them to do something for our benefit if it is going to add to their burdens. This means we should be concerned for the well-being of each individual and respect him/her as a human being

Respect - “The relevant general meaning of the word ‘respect’ is ‘esteeming, valuing or prizing so as to treat with consideration, deference or non-interference. The common meaning of respecting someone is that we look up to them or admire them, however morality does not require us to respect actions that are opposed to morality.’”³⁷ This would mean that we would need to ‘respect’ another person’s dignity and property, (and our own) but not necessarily that person’s actions or beliefs if they were not ethical, or if they harmed other people. In certain sections of our society ‘respect’ is demanded for such people. It is important for students to learn that true respect is earned and given for virtuous actions, not for harmful ones. We might not like people or respect people because of the way they choose to act, but we should be concerned for them and help them if they are in need. There is a difference in meaning between “respect” and “treat with respect.”

We should treat people with respect - that is - We should not use them in the pursuit of our own ends, or take advantage of those who are not as able as ourselves. We should be concerned about the effect of our actions on them, and treat them honestly, fairly and kindly. We can treat with respect in this way, the individual who is “staunch,” but we do not respect the staunchness that involves dishonesty, injustice or cruelty.

As for self-respect, this comes from knowing we have done our best, mentally, physically and ethically. No-one else may know what we have done, but we will know.

Respect and punishment – Kant has long been accepted as the authority on the ethics of respect. According to Kant we respect people for their autonomy – their ability to reason and make choices on the basis of relevant information. “In punishing people we treat them as responsible, as full-fledged moral agents. To do less is to show a lack of respect for them”³⁸ For Kant, it would be insulting and a mark of disrespect if we did not punish a criminal. We may not respect the place of punishment so much today, and may argue that it merely satisfies the desire for revenge on the part of the punisher, but there is no doubt that unless there are unpleasant consequences from bad

³⁷ Beauchamp, T. (1991) *Philosophical ethics: An introduction to moral philosophy*. P197

³⁸ Hinman, L. (1998). *Ethics: A pluralistic Approach to moral theory*. P 232

behaviour there may be little incentive to some to desist. Small criminal acts may grow to be large ones with worse consequences in the end.

- **Discipline without love is not enough – but love without discipline is not enough either.**

Love your neighbour –

The concept of “loving your neighbour” is a counsel of perfection.

Few ordinary mortals can *love* a neighbour if that neighbour is a constant aggravation. What the principle of love means is that, in spite of their faults, we should be concerned about our neighbours because they are fellow human beings, and to turn our backs on a fellow human being who needs our help makes us less than human ourselves. We should care about them as one day we could hope that others would care about us if we were in need.

What is caring love?

One of the most familiar descriptions of caring love is the one given in the New Testament of the Christian Bible, by the apostle Paul in his first letter to the people of the church at Corinth, and which is often read at weddings.³⁹ It can just as easily be applied to our relations with other human beings in friendships, sport, and working lives. His description covers the realities of life, the day to day living that decides whether relationships survive the ups and downs that no lives seem to escape. “Love is kind,” he said. “It does not envy others. It is not full of pride, is not violent, and is not selfish. It is good-tempered, does not easily take offence or bear grudges. It is not dishonest but rejoices in the truth. It is not complaining, it is loyal; it thinks the best of people and is always optimistic. There is no limit to its endurance. True love never fails.”

A few verses later he makes another statement that helps to explain the whole passage, “When I was a child I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child, but when I became a man, I put away childish things.”

Students need to understand that “growing up” means putting away childish things and facing responsibilities. Love means facing responsibilities, respecting the fact that other people also have rights and responsibilities, and that we should not add to other people’s burdens or “use” other people in the pursuit of our own ends.

There will always be temptations, but “growing up” means being responsible for our own actions, and not grabbing childishly for dangerous toys. Teenage years are for gathering knowledge of people, their actions and reactions towards each other, and for gaining an understanding of the likely consequences of those actions. If we treat other people with respect and they do the same for us, all our lives will be happier.

Heterosexual love –

This is the love between a man and a woman that leads to a commitment to a life partnership, sex, bringing children into the world, and a commitment to nurturing those children until they are able to leave and make lives of their own. Though the fact is disputed in some quarters, this is still the accepted way of life for the majority of people in this country. It is also usually the way of nature if the young of a species are too immature to survive by themselves. Though many human couples do not achieve this, it is an ideal to which the young can be pointed. If we do not have a goal at which to aim, we may lose our way. If we are afraid to point the young to the goal because we have failed ourselves, we need to accept the truth about our own actions. It takes two to tango, and marriages

³⁹ Corinthians 1. Ch 13.

can fail because one will not keep in step, often there are faults on both sides, but that does not mean that we should be afraid to talk about an ideal.

It is a fact that today marriages often fail, but the institution of marriage does not fail people. It is people who fail the institution, and they fail because too often the Principle of love is left out of the equation.

This does not mean that children do not survive broken marriages, or do not turn out well if they grow up in solo parent families. I am a child of a solo parent family. My father was in a mental hospital and later my mother was divorced, both major social stigma of the time, but my mother was the rock who provided stability in our lives. Later still I had a stepfather and more experience of life. I believe my own children had a much happier childhood with a mother and father who complemented each other in their abilities and personalities – even though neither of us was perfect. Children may be happier in a home with only one parent than in a home where two parents are constantly arguing, but they are much better off with two parents who love each other in the fullest sense of the word. The least that should be expected of “upright” parents is that they should treat each other with as much respect as they would treat their friends, and speak to each other with as much concern, restraint and self-control.

Infidelity

Once it used to be said that when the wolf arrives at the door, love flies out the window. This may still be true in many cases, but in today’s world, with many women working outside the home, men and women come into contact with others in a way they might not have done fifty years ago – and outside the home they can be on their best behaviour and present a nicer side of themselves than they bother to do at home. This is a controversial area, but it is included here because of the effect on other people, (especially children,) which makes it an ethical issue, and one that could be involved in sex education in schools at senior levels. Ethical principles allow us to examine “Having an affair” or “cheating” on a partner, in an objective way.

Wisdom – What are the consequences likely to be? Will it maximise the good and minimise the harm to all involved?

Justice – Is anyone being treated unfairly?

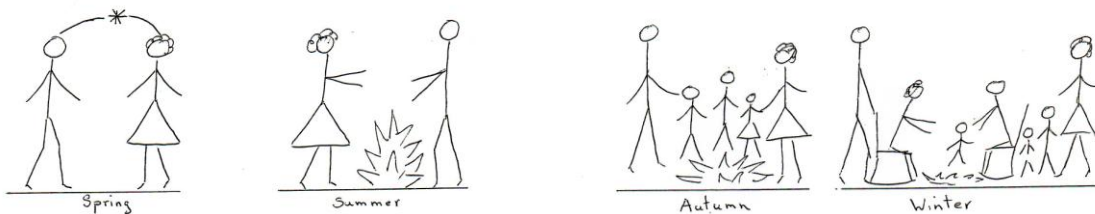
Truth – Is anyone being deceived? Are promises being broken?

Love – Is every person being treated with respect, or is any person using another for his/her own ends?

The Golden Rule – How would I feel if I were the one suffering the consequences?

A better world – Is this going to make the world a better place – at home? at work? In the community? – globally?

No-one should be personally criticized or condemned, and the issue should be handled sensitively, but we can’t change ethical principles when it does not suit us to accept the truth.



The Fire of Love

THE GOLDEN RULE

“Treat other people the way you would like them to treat you” is not just a Christian teaching. This precept is also found in the teachings of most religions and philosophies, including Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism, Islam and the teachings of Confucius and Socrates. Most humanists also consider it an acceptable standard in ethical reasoning.

In his book, “Making social science matter,” Bent Flyvbjerg quotes Jurgen Habermas as “the philosopher of morality based on consensus,” (p 88) and states that for Habermas, human social life is based upon processes for establishing reciprocal understanding.” These processes, he says, are universal because they are unavoidable.

It seems that all societies have recognised that if people are to live successfully together, they need to understand each others feelings.

Western ethicists who wished to offer the same concept as the Golden Rule, but without religious connotations, explained it in different ways.

Immanuel Kant offered his “Categorical Imperative” of “What is fair for one is fair for all.” I.e. “An action is morally correct if it can be willed as a universal law.”⁴⁰

Since this means that anyone and everyone could be on the receiving end of such an action, one would have to decide if one would personally like to be a receiver. Also, what would happen if everyone for instance decided to lie to everyone else – or to steal from everyone else?

John Rawls, a modern ethicist puts the same concept another way.

Laws should be made by people who are “behind a veil of ignorance” as to what position in society they were going to hold themselves.⁴¹ Not knowing what their own position would be, they would have to consider the effects on every person, not just themselves, because if a law was not fair, they might be the ones adversely affected.

Adding feeling to reason

The Golden Rule, used as a criteria to evaluate values positions, gives the opportunity to add feeling to reason. Reason on its own is not always enough to influence or motivate action, but asking students to imagine how they would feel if they were the ones involved, helps them to think about the feelings of other people. In a questionnaire on ethics, 97% of those questioned felt that a moral person shows genuine concern about the rights and welfare of others,⁴² so we need to give children the opportunity and encouragement to develop such concern.

John Stuart Mill, back in the nineteenth century, argued that all human beings have a basic moral sensitiveness to the needs of others, and a desire for unity and harmony with their fellow human beings.⁴³ He saw that the purpose of morality was to promote those natural sympathies. By imagining ourselves in the other person’s position we are doing that. It is argued by some ethicists that on its own, the Golden Rule is relatively powerless as a means for assessing desirable or appropriate behaviour. Most of us however have more of Aristotle’s practical common sense. Used in conjunction with the four principles, the Golden Rule is a good check as to whether our decisions and actions are ethical. It is a matter of what any reasonable person would think in the same circumstances.

⁴⁰ Hinman,L. (1998) p 210.

⁴¹ Hinman,L. p 368.

⁴² Purpel and Ryan, (1976). *Moral education: It comes with the territory*.P 405

⁴³ Beauchamp,T., (1991) p131

THE GOAL FOR HUMANKIND – A BETTER WORLD

Whether we believe that human beings were put on this earth by a Divine creator as many religions teach, or whether we believe that humans evolved accidentally as the result of an original “big bang,” we can agree that as individuals we have free will and contribute to our own destinies. In the same way, mankind as a whole also has the ability to choose a goal for itself and work towards it, but as autonomous human beings, we also need the ability to put our plans into action. If the individual chooses to make the world a better place just where he/she lives, starting at home and moving out into the community, he/she has the ability to do it, but motivation is required. It has become fashionable to scoff at Pollyanna who even in unpleasant situations, looked for something to be glad about, but Pollyanna showed an elderly bed-ridden woman who felt she could do nothing useful, that she could make those around her happier just by trying to be cheerful. If every individual makes his/her own environment a better place, the country and then the world can become better places for the next generations. “If we are not part of the solution we are part of the problem.”

Our little bit

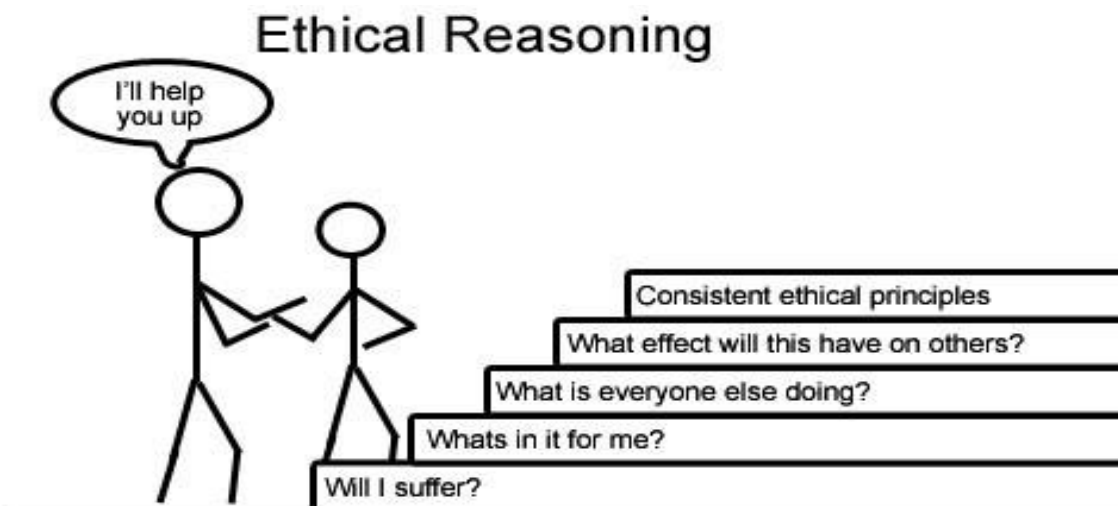
The philosopher Goethe, said that if every person swept in front of his own doorstep the whole world would be clean.

If teachers can encourage every pupil to act just a little bit more sensibly, a little bit more fairly, a little bit more honestly and a little bit more kindly in their everyday lives, they will be making life a great deal better for all those around them.

If every person decides to do a little bit better, their country will start to improve.

People may say, “Even if our own country improves, that will make no difference to the world,” but if many countries were to improve it would make a great difference to the world.

In the meantime, as individuals we can choose for ourselves. Nobody is perfect. Nobody *will* be perfect, but each person can make a difference. In the end it is a team game and the buck stops with each of us. The goal is a better world and as individuals we choose whether we do more good than harm in our lives – whether we make other people happier or whether we add to their burdens. We cannot just sit on the sidelines and watch. We are part of the game whether we want to accept the fact or not.



KOHLBERG'S THEORY OF MORAL REASONING

Lawrence Kohlberg was researching and writing in the 1960s and 70s at a time when many of the authoritative texts on “moral” education were being written. He identified his approach to moral reasoning as Cognitive-developmental.

Cognitive – because it recognises that moral education, like intellectual education, has its basis in stimulating the active thinking of the child.

Developmental – because it sees ethical reasoning as movement and advancement through stages.⁴⁴

Outline -

Kohlberg believed that at every stage there is a concern for justice, and that central to justice are the demands of *liberty*, *equality* and *reciprocity*.

Stage 1 The child understands punishment. Actions that bring pain or personal discomfort are to be avoided. (Also applies to adults at the lowest stage of reasoning.)

Stage 2-. The child is oriented towards seeking his/her own pleasure. What will produce rewards is good.

Stage 3. The child desires approval. “Good boy!” “ Good girl!” works, even though the child does not see any personal advantage, e.g. in sharing with others. An element of reciprocity has emerged. “You scratch my back, I’ll scratch yours.”⁴⁵ (not only children reason at this level.)

Stage 4. Accepting set standards and conforming to conventional norms of behaviour

Stage 5. The beginning of personal morality. It is recognized that rules and laws flow from justice, from a social contract between the governors and the governed. It is a contract which is designed to protect the equal rights of all.

Stage 6. The person develops a social conscience and personally chosen ethical principles based on justice. He/she acts on these by personal choice and for his/her own self-respect.

Conventional morality –

Stages 3 and 4 are considered to be “conventional morality.”

At the time Kohlberg was writing, Stage 4 was “a morality of law and order,” that is, “obeying authority and doing one’s duty is what is right.”

The conventional level today appears to be “doing what everyone else is doing,” and doing what is acceptable in the society in which one moves. For teenagers it is joining in with groups of peers and being accepted. For adults it is much the same. “Everyone does it so it is O.K. for me to do it.” All such behaviour is not necessarily ethical. It is merely accepting the status quo. and ethical relativity. To *educate* children (and adults) in this field it is necessary to raise their level of reasoning to the post-conventional level, where at Stage 5 they accept the morality of contracts, other people’s interests and democratic law, and at Stage 6 have ethical principles that they have chosen for their own self-respect.

Kohlberg accepted that many adults did not advance beyond Stages 3 and 4. He believed that the stages were the same in any culture regardless of different social norms. He also concluded that maturity of moral judgement is not highly correlated with I.Q. or verbal intelligence, which probably accounts for the amount of white-collar crime and successful criminals – or the bright student who uses intelligence to the detriment of others.

⁴⁴ Kohlberg, L., (1976). Moral education. In D. Purpel and K. Ryan (eds) *Moral education: It comes with the territory*. P 183.

⁴⁵ Hinman, p371

Criticisms – Kohlberg’s work was later criticised by feminists because only males were used in his research, and by social activists because he was concerned for justice rather than activism. Recent research however, into the consistency of data across numerous studies has indicated that there is still a good deal of substance in his theory.⁴⁶

Since then, there has been no real success in producing anything better, and forty years later we are still waiting for the perfect theory. In the meantime we can examine the criticisms and where they seem to have been justified we can find ways to improve on them.

Kohlberg’s argument about activism was that if the general level of reasoning were raised to the point where the majority of people recognised ethical principles and acted on them, social justice would be the result.

One criticism was that Kohlberg, like Piaget, is weak on the emotion side: that there is not enough concern for people, but emphasis on the principle of “Love” in the method of reasoning offered here should deal with that. Also the check of the Golden Rule. By asking the question “How would you feel if that was happening to you?” teachers can help children feel the emotions of other people, and what it would be like if they were in the same situation.

A further criticism was that Kohlberg believed morality must be based on justice, but that justice is not a universally held and admired concept today. Justice has always been one of the most admired and required concepts in any stable society. If justice does not hold that position in today’s society, it is a reflection on our society and its mores, not on justice itself. The whole point in teaching children to reason ethically is that they will be able to reason for themselves about such issues as whether justice should be an admired concept if people are going to live peacefully together.

A final criticism of Kohlberg’s work was that his emphasis was not so much on morality, as on making good citizens of the United States. Since the aim of social studies in New Zealand has always been to produce good citizens, then Kohlberg’s theory is very relevant and useful, and will be used throughout this resource.

The gap between moral reasoning and action

Though Kohlberg accepted that maturity of moral reasoning is only one factor in moral behaviour, he saw it as the single most influential factor – and the only moral factor. Situations, pressures, motives, emotions and strength of will all play a part in making choices and deciding action.⁴⁷

The beginning of self-control

Much emphasis has been placed on the value of praise in improving child behaviour. According to Kohlberg, this happens at stage 2 in his stages of ethical reasoning. For those who continue to reason at the lowest level, i.e. “Will I suffer? What’s in it for me?” praise on its own is not enough. This applies to adults as well as small children. If we ignore the negative, it does not necessarily go away. It often gets stronger. There need to be unpleasant consequences from negative behaviour – from being bad. Bad behaviour should not just be ignored, even though ignoring the child itself is an unpleasant consequence from which it will learn. It needs to be quite clear about why it is being ignored. Children need to start learning self-control. If the experience of consistent unpleasant consequences from bad behaviour is added to consistent praise for being good, learning can be more effective. There will be more motivation to learn.

⁴⁶ Berman, S. (1997). *Children’s social consciousness and the development of social responsibility*.

USA: State University of New York Press. (p83)

⁴⁷ Kohlberg, L., (1976) The cognitive-developmental approach to moral education. Ch 12 in Purpel and Ryan, *Moral education, it comes with the territory*. Pp 176-195. (p181)

THE USE OF POWER

In his book, “Making social science matter”⁴⁸ Bent Flyvbjerg, Professor of planning at Aalborg University, Denmark, claims that rationalization and the misuse of power are among the most important problems of our time. Reason alone without the addition of ethical principles can result in individualism, selfishness and self-interest. The misuse of power is usually covered up and not obvious on the surface, and so it will be given special recognition here on its own. With students however, this concept would not be discussed until levels 7 and 8 when they will be able to reason well and will be familiar with the backgrounds of political action and economics - areas where the ethical reasoning of some intelligent adults is still at stage 1 “What’s in it for me or my group?” - and where they have the opportunity to misuse power.

Democracy does not always produce democratic decisions. The justice system does not always produce a just result, often because one party or another may have had more power to influence what was seen as the truth, or to influence how people voted.

Theoretically, power is in the hands of those who make the rules and enforce them, but behind the scenes, power can be exercised by pressure groups whose effect on the democratic process makes the process much less than democratic. To counteract this power, we need an informed public who are contributing to the process of democracy themselves, and who are also aware of what may be happening behind the scenes to prevent the process working.

Where social inquiry is related to what is actually happening at the moment, or has happened in the past, the questions “Who gains and who loses? By what process do they gain and lose?”⁴⁹ will add important information to the social inquiry process. Where future decisions need to be made, then the questions “Who will gain and who will lose if we go down that path?” “How will they be able to exercise power?” “What can the ordinary individual do to see that a fair and honest result is arrived at?” should be added to the questions surrounding truth and justice, and to the social decision-making process.

When Flyvbjerg himself discovered that the result of his research was being negated by the power of a pressure group he decided that the decisive aspect of decision-making was not whether one interpretation of the research or another was more correct, but which party could put the greatest power behind their interpretation. (p152) To counteract that power he decided that if the decisions were not publicly justifiable, then he could also exercise power by bringing public attention to the results.(p156.) By doing this he -

1. Brought other groups into the dialogue.
2. Ensured that the information reached the relevant target groups.
3. Overcame apathy and drew attention, even if some was for and some against.
4. Had to be very sure that his own reasoning was correct, because it would also be under scrutiny of the public. (p158)

The method offered here, of principles and guideline for ethical reasoning and for critically analysing values, is more concerned about reasoning for the future, than criticizing people of the past, but it is necessary to understand what has happened in the past in order to do better in the future. The need for ethical principles in the use of power is particularly vital for those who have power now, for example in the education system it starts at the top with the Ministry of Education

⁴⁸ Flyvbjerg, B. (2001). *Making social science matter: Why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again*. U.K.: Cambridge University Press. P107.

⁴⁹ Flyvbjerg, B., (2001). *Making social science matter: Why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again*. Cambridge University Press. P145

and politicians - with Tertiary institutions such as Universities and Colleges of Education - with ERO, Qualifications Authorities, those who write reports, develop curricula and set standards. It is not confined to schools and classrooms and members of the school communities.

Misuse of power – “Passing the buck.”

The values specified on p 10 of the Curriculum are not merely for students. People in positions of power may sometimes pass the responsibility that goes with that power on to others, rather than accept it themselves, or be personally accountable for something that obviously should have been done. “Passing the buck” can result in no-one being responsible and nothing being done. If we want to clean a room we start at the top and work down. The value of *integrity* especially, which is stated on page 10 to involve honesty, accountability and responsibility is required at every level throughout the education system, or in any other system where many people are involved.

Recognition of the need for ethical principles in the use of power is essential knowledge for level 7 and 8 students (years 12 and 13,) who will be going on to enter professions where they will be in a position to either use power for the public good or to abuse it for individual benefit.

Bullying –

It is accepted today, that bullying can exist not only in schools, but also in the workplace. Superiors can bully those under them. Abuse of power in any situation is a form of bullying, whether it is in schools or in decisions made by governments or any higher authorities. Pressure groups can bully if they have enough power or if they can make other people feel guilty. Leaders of various ethnic groups can bully in the same way.

There is a considerable amount of material on bullying available for schools, and it is not proposed to expand on this here, but for those involved in the work situation or in community affairs, firstly it would be advisable to examine the situation by using ethical principles –

Wisdom – What are the consequences of this bullying likely to be? Is this maximising good and minimizing harm?

Justice – Is everyone being treated fairly?

Truth – Is bullying really happening or is it justified criticism? Do we have all the evidence? Is it based on fact? What are the motives of those involved? Have you looked at your own actions?

Love – Is respect being shown to all involved? Is any person or group using others for their own ends?

The Golden Rule – How would I feel if I were the one being bullied?

The goal – a better world – Is this going to lead to a better world for all concerned?

Then, when as Flyvbjerg said, the complainant is certain of his/her own reasoning, and that the actions complained of are not publicly justifiable, it is possible to exercise power in return by bringing public attention to the issue.

“VALUES” and CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION FOR ALL SCHOOLS

What resources are required?

The most important resource in education is the teacher. Most teachers, with the help of a resource book and lesson plans could manage discussions on these issues with few extra resources required. Time, space and money are the biggest problems for schools, and discussions which would place the specified values within a practical context, require no more than half an hour per week of teaching time, no extra space, and very little expense. Often the latest news provides a situation that a teacher could feel needs to be discussed in this way, i.e. applying the ethical principles and asking relevant questions. One of the most effective lessons I ever used was inspired by my receiving a traffic ticket for failing to stop completely at a “Stop” sign. A traffic officer followed me and signalled me to stop. I stopped and was given a ticket and a fine, but later that week a teenager had tried to speed away from the officer who had signalled him to stop. He crashed and was killed. This was an effective lesson in accepting responsibility and considering the possible consequences of our actions.

Information about the situations that we meet in everyday life follows, along with the main points that need to be brought out in discussion. Teachers can do more research if they wish, and use their own ideas for illustrations and examples according to the age, background and interests of their own classes. As a teacher myself, faced with a shortage of resource material, I appreciated material that gave information, set out main points and provided ideas which I could then adapt to my own strengths and weaknesses. Teachers do not have time to do extensive research, and many do not have the expertise to develop their own programmes. It is not necessarily true that they want to.

A labyrinth of knowledge

There can be much more educational value in half an hour of discussion than time spent on computers because we are trying to teach students to think for themselves.

In the world of modern technology and instant information through the internet, it is possible for students to “get lost in a labyrinth of instant knowledge.”⁵⁰ Much time can be spent chasing irrelevant information, and as the author of this article stated, “Google has turned my brain to mush. I used to store all the information I knew in one place - my brain. These days I’ve outsourced to the world-wide web. ----- You forget what you find because you move on to the next thing, and the next and so on.” Class discussion ensures that students use their brains in critical and (hopefully) ethical thinking, rather than looking for information that someone else has provided for them. Teachers need to have enough background knowledge of a subject to know what information is factual, relevant and useful.

Involvement of the school community –

Before any programme of this type begins there should be a report to and discussion with the school community. Though specific “points of focus” could be negotiable,⁵¹ the ethical principles with which to measure these points would not be. Parents should be able to examine a detailed programme, be familiar with resource material, and the majority need to agree with the principles. This cannot happen unless most of the adults are aware of the ethical principles that are to be used in reasoning and of what is going to be taught. A programme such as this can be examined and transported, and there can be consistency in ethical decision-making.

The “course to be run”

The word curriculum comes from the Latin word *currere* meaning “the course to be run.”⁵²

⁵⁰ Baker, G. (2009, Oct. 5). Heartfelt confessions of a Google addict. N.Z. Herald p A11.

⁵¹ Education Ministry curriculum manager in plan for new national curriculum in 2007. N.Z. Herald article 19.8’05. A5

The remainder of this book will describe the content of a proposed repeating cycle of issues which are intended for years 7 – 13 in all types of schools. Things all students “need to know,” and which adults also “need to know,” as they run the course of citizens of a democracy. It is claimed that citizen problem solvers in a democracy are best educated by the continuous inclusion in their schooling of real-life situations, and these issues will also give essential knowledge to new immigrants, especially to those from different cultures and where democracy is not a familiar concept.

The lessons can be used within integrated and independent schools, or schools that are associated with specific religions, in which case teachers may wish to add the extra religious perspective of their own beliefs. It should not be necessary to alter or delete anything in the concepts because all religions are treated with respect and presented alongside humanist views. As a product of the New Zealand state school system myself, my personal belief is that our state schools should be able to offer an education equal in quality to any private school. Segregation of any kind can encourage indoctrination into particular viewpoints, and deprive children of the experience they will need to live happily in a multi-cultural society. If schools continue to be segregated, at least there needs to be common knowledge and acceptance of common ethical principles, the responsibilities of citizenship and goals for the future.

It must be emphasised that at every level, subjects for discussion should be relevant to and within the reasoning abilities of the students involved. Contrived and difficult situations are not suitable for lower levels. We are teaching students basic ethical reasoning, not trying to confuse them, push a barrow of our own, or show how clever we are ourselves. If we teach them to reason well and give them a reasonable amount of valid background information, students will be free as they get older, and society changes and evolves, to do their own research and form their own opinions. We will not be teaching them what to think, but teaching them to add an ethical dimension to their thinking. Conditions around us are continually changing, but the ethical principles that help people live in harmony together do not change.

Finally

I am not claiming that this is the only way to teach in this field, but it has been used in the classroom, approved by school authorities and parents, and enjoyed by the pupils.

I do not claim that it is perfect, but as the ethicist Beauchamp (1991, p89) wrote –

“A theory is pragmatically justified if it gets you there more often than not,”⁵³ This method has been designed to be teacher friendly, parent friendly and pupil friendly and has proved well worth using

⁵² Eisner, E. (1979) *The educational imagination: On the design and evaluation of schooling*. p34

⁵³ Beauchamp, T., (1991). *Philosophical ethics : An introduction to moral philosophy*. (2nd ed) USA : McGraw Hill

A CORE OF HISTORY NEEDED

All New Zealanders need a core knowledge of factual history of this country.

This will involve the specified values of integrity, diversity, community, respect, inquiry and excellence in order to give every New Zealand citizen a basic accurate knowledge of our past. The innovators of social studies took a general knowledge of history for granted, but like cultural capital, we do not realize its importance until it is not there. We need for use in *all* our schools a core of accepted documented history of our past, compiled by our best historians, who will not manipulate facts in the interests of any pressure groups, or judge people of the past in the light of present day knowledge. We need historians who will provide the information and who will clearly identify what is documented evidence, what is tradition, myth or their own interpretation of events. As Flyvbjerg said, if we can get a succession of “better” interpretations, it reduces all interpretations to “merely interpretations.”(p131) The opinions of different ethnicities are important, but myth, tradition and opinion should be identified as such, so they cannot be embedded as history, and so that future generations can place their own interpretation on the events of the past.

Before the 1950s, an older generation learned New Zealand history. A section of educationalists claimed that the history they learned promoted nationalism and imperialism, but since the introduction of social studies in the 60s, there is a gap, where many of those educated since then, have learned very little history, unless it was taken as a subject for exams like School Certificate and University Entrance. This has provided fertile ground for those who have wished to promote their own particular viewpoint. There is reasonably common agreement amongst the contributors to the book “New Horizons for N.Z. Social Studies,”⁵⁴ that ever since its introduction as one subject to take the place of history geography and civics, social studies has been used to promote particular political and ideological points of view. Even at the time it was introduced, there was a fear that there was a danger of academic standards being lowered, that particular ethical views could be pushed, and that children would not have enough ordered information to form opinions of any value.⁵⁵ Some people today claim that there is no such thing as an objective view of history, and that orally transmitted myth has just as much validity as documented evidence, but there is a considerable amount of relativity in that viewpoint.

“Different people may ‘construct knowledge’ how they like, but their knowledge is not true just because it is ‘true for them.’ There are objective criteria by which we can decide whether a proposition is true or untrue (or more or less true) about the events or things it refers to.”⁵⁶ In his book, “The killing of history,” Keith Windschuttle gives a frightening insight into the influence of the relativist approach on cultural differences, and tribalism in thinking and politics. “It has produced the charnel-house politics of Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Central Africa, the Middle East and the Balkans. Relativism cannot help solve these issues, it can only take sides -- or assert that each side has a right to its own point of view.”⁵⁷ Before

⁵⁴ 1998, Benson,P. and Openshaw,R. (Eds), Palmerston North: E.R.D.C. Press

⁵⁵ 1963. R.C.J.Stone, senior lecturer at Auckland Teachers College, in the *N.Z. PPTA Journal*. Vol X No6 July pp 27-29

⁵⁶ Nash,R. (1990) In defence of a common curriculum and a universal pedagogy. In Morss,J. and Linzey,T. (eds) *Growing up. The politics of human learning*. Auckland:Longman Paul.

⁵⁷ K.Windschuttle, (1997). *The killing of history: how literary critics and social theorists are murdering our past*. Sydney: Macleay Press. Pp 308 - 9.

going any further down a path that can only lead to discord, we need historians who can be relied on to be unbiased and able to put us straight. We need to know their backgrounds and be able to have confidence in them so that we can accept their findings and move into the future together.

REPEATING CONCEPTS

In the series of topics that follows, the aim is to provide the relevant content and information required, as well as suggesting the main points that Socratic questioning would aim to reveal. Because teachers will be required to show how values are being promoted and integrated into school systems, the values involved will also be specified. Each lesson should start with a real situation. It cannot be emphasised too strongly that a topic has to be relevant and within the students' range of experience. It must be a real human thing before dealing with abstracts. Items in the news can be useful. The plays listed at the back of this book were very popular with my own classes.

As part of a series of regular discussions, there would be two introductory lessons with every different class, with the themes repeating every year to reach as many of a transitory school population as possible. The object is to explain the reasons for these discussions, and what the aims will be over the course of the years ahead. The emphasis is on things that they will need to know if they are going to reach their full potential and make the most of the talents that each one has. They also need to become useful citizens of a democracy so that they do not put extra burdens on other people.

Democracy will not work without an educated public - and a public that takes an interest in the democratic process.

“Democracy has within itself the seeds of its own destruction.”

In Benjamin Franklin's words, “ When the people consider only their own personal well-being, they can no longer be depended on to act in the best interests of their nation --- only a virtuous people are capable of freedom.”

STUDENTS WILL LEARN ABOUT THE VALUES ON WHICH NEW ZEALAND'S CULTURAL AND INSTITUTIONAL TRADITIONS ARE BASED

Values Statement N.Z. Curriculum p10

There are 36 discussions outlined in this resource, but other situations will arise. Note them down for future lessons. Ideas will come. Take the "Values on which New Zealand's cultural and institutional traditions are based." These show the values of earlier generations. There could be individual projects here. Four given here will make up our forty lessons.

1. **Good Citizens –**

Find an example of a good citizen, past or present from your district. This need not be a person who has shone academically or in sport or local politics, but someone who has had a good influence on the community or within their own families. They could be completely unknown outside their own particular circle of influence. The type of person who could be taken as a role model.

2. **Service organizations and clubs-**

Research has recently shown that a community that has many community groups and organisations has less crime. What service organizations are there in your community? What do they do? What clubs and groups are there? For adults? For young people? Why do people belong to groups? What differences and similarities are there between gangs and service organizations? Examine the history of the Boy Scout and Girl Guide Movements. What was the purpose of the founder?

3. **Proverbs and fables**

Do you know many? Find some examples. What was their purpose? Explain what each was trying to say? Is their message still relevant?

4. **The Ten Commandments**

To some teachers this could be seen as a "controversial subject" and should be left to senior classes where students are able to reason for themselves and should have sufficient background knowledge to do so. It could be left out altogether. The Commandments were however, the basis for the ethical standards of our colonial society, whether people went to Church, were agnostic or atheists, and as such, they influenced our traditional values, all our institutions and our history. Teachers can indoctrinate by with-holding information as well as by pushing a particular barrow. We can leave out the first three Commandments that relate to beliefs in a supernatural power, and concentrate on the ethical teaching of the rest of the commandments – Would the basic message involved in each one still be relevant in today's world?⁵⁸

Work six days a week and rest on one.

Respect your mother and father.

You shall not murder

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not lie

You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbour.

Why do you think they became less emphasised – even within the church congregations?

⁵⁸ The Bible. Book of Exodus Ch 20 vs8-17

Introductory lesson 1 – Multiculturalism

(Values involved – diversity, community, respect, integrity, inquiry)

In the past, when people lived in small groups and there were no cities or modern transport, young people took part in ceremonies to show them that their lives were now to change. (rites of passage.) Usually it meant separating them from their parents and families for a few days or weeks. Sometimes the ceremonies were frightening or painful, but the intention was to show young people that the time had come for them to put away their childhood and become useful members of the tribe. A person who did not accept his/her responsibilities, who did not become a useful member of the tribe, could be expelled or abandoned to look after him/herself in a very dangerous world. It was very rare therefore that the rules of the tribe would not be accepted. Each had to play his /her part if the tribe was to survive. The elders of the tribe had learned what was needed, and the rules of the tribe had been made accordingly. Though some cultures and religions still have such ceremonies (examples?) most young people today do not have a clear marking point at which they are expected to “grow up.”

Why are they here in school?

Basically, because they are sent. The government decided over a hundred years ago that all children should receive an education so that they could become useful citizens of the country. Laws were passed that said it was compulsory for parents to send their children to school when they turned five. Back in 1936, children were allowed to leave school when they were 12 and few boys in small country schools went on to Secondary School, though many girls did. Many boys left to work on farms and in trades, but many girls went on to secondary school to learn to work in offices or become teachers or nurses. Today children have to attend school until they are 16, and their parents can be prosecuted if they don't send them. So they are here to learn to become useful citizens.

As well as being useful citizens of the country, hopefully most are here because they want to learn as much as they can, because they realize they can develop their own talents much better if they do not limit their own options in life by being poorly educated.

The importance of being literate

Of all the things they need to learn in school, foremost is being able to read and write. The mark of when a primitive society became a civilized society was whether they had developed a written language. Some of the first things that were written down and meant to last were to do with counting. Business accounts, amounts of money owed, areas of land etc. and so your teachers will teach you mathematics in different forms. Simple mathematics are necessary for most jobs – even to see that you are being paid correctly. Teachers will help you to learn about science, arts, literature, health and all the things the educational authorities of the country believe you should know and experience. Whenever you leave school it is expected that you will attempt to support yourselves by getting jobs and earning your own living. Employers generally expect three main skills from a new employee. They want them to be able to read, so that they can read instructions. They want them to be able to write legibly so that they can communicate clearly with others, and they want them to be able to do basic maths – count, add, multiply and subtract so that they can at least fill in a time-sheet correctly and follow instructions about numbers. If you can read well, no matter when you leave school you will be able to continue your education through choosing to read for yourselves. At least one Prime Minister of this country left school at the age of twelve, but chose to go on learning. If you know that you cannot read, write or count well enough, you need to be honest about it now. It is not too late to catch up, help is available, but you must be willing to accept it and do the work.

Why are we having these particular lessons?

We need to learn different things at different ages.

Years 7 & 8 will not be taught how to drive a car, even though most adults can drive. Why is that? What do you need to know before you are allowed to drive a car? Why? You have to learn the rules and to be sensible enough before you drive a car because there has to be some order on the roads. Without rules there would be chaos, and a lot of people would be hurt.

There are principles about driving and in this country one of the principles is that we drive on the left hand side of the road. There are lots of rules as well, but above all we need to remember to keep to the left- hand side of the road. In other countries, people drive on the right-hand side, and many accidents are caused here if we don't all use the same principle of keeping to the left.

There are principles in life too, that in general keep people safe if they and other people as well abide by them. That is why you have these lessons - to teach you about principles that will help you and other people live safe, useful and happy lives. Bad things like health problems, earthquakes and tornadoes can happen to any person, but most of the bad things that happen to people in the course of their everyday lives are like traffic accidents. They have been caused by other people, and they could have been avoided if people had kept to the rules.

The rules for living, just like the rules of the road, are there to enable people to survive and travel together peacefully and profitably.

The lessons we will be doing together will show you what type of rules are required to enable modern societies to survive together, and surprisingly maybe to you, not a great deal has changed. People have the same types of strengths, weaknesses, temptations and family problems. There are principles of behaviour that have been recognized for thousands of years as being necessary if people are going to live peacefully together in communities.

Where we all came from

Way back, thousands or millions of years ago there were very few people in the whole world. Archaeologists are still debating about where people actually started out from, and when, but some believe Africa and some believe China. They started in small groups or tribes and they hunted animals for food and gathered grass seeds, roots and fruit to eat. Everyone had to do a share of work so that they could all eat. As the numbers grew, the tribes had to split up so that they could spread out to hunt and gather over a wider area. At first they would get together again at a certain place maybe once a year or every few years, so that young men and women could find wives and husbands from a wider choice, and so that they could exchange information about other areas or new ideas and skills.

As the numbers grew larger and larger, the groups spread out all over more of the world and couldn't get back together again, so they went on developing in their own way and making rules that were relevant to the way in which they were now living. As their numbers increased they fought each other over desirable pieces of land. Once they would have had a common language, but their languages now evolved and it became difficult for them to understand other people. People who study languages can trace certain words in different languages and find they had a common origin.

Depending on what type of climate they lived in, their skins adapted to the sun's rays and some became dark skinned, while those who lived in cold climates with little sun became fair skinned. Even fair skinned people become brown in the sun. It is now believed that special genes also had an effect on colour.

Because people have a very large brain in comparison to creatures like dinosaurs, they kept thinking up newer and better ways of doing things, but different groups had different needs and the groups gradually became quite different in their colour, language, traditions, customs, clothing and their beliefs about where human beings had originally come from and how the world began. That is how we have ended up at this point with what we call different cultures and ethnic groups, but looking back far enough, we all had the same origins.

Today's multicultural world

Today people travel all over the world and settle in different countries that have different customs and beliefs, but we still have a need for common rules of behaviour so that we can all live peacefully together. That is the main reason we are all here in this class.

New Zealand is special. Our land was formed after a lot of the rest of the world was settled. It was too far away across sea for people to move here easily. There is still argument about how and when the first people came here, probably not much more than a thousand years ago, but Maori people were here when the first Europeans came, and since then people of many other cultures have come to make their homes here. One thing we all have in common is that our ancestors were brave and enterprising people to leave their original over-crowded homelands in search of a better way of life.

New Zealand today

Statistics show that New Zealand is now a multi-cultural country and cultures are still evolving. Because most ethnic groups in this country live the same type of westernised and industrialized lives, and we all live under the same laws and economic systems, we are now told that people can be more correctly identified by ethnicity than by culture. How many ethnic groups are represented in this room today? Many of us are from a mixture of races. I have a great-grandson who is half Indian and half of European descent. Many of my nieces and nephews are a mixture of European and Maori. We all live in much the same way with the same sorts of problems to deal with. My great-grandson's female Indian relations wear saris at times and have some different customs in their food and home lives, but we speak a common language, and the children go to the same schools and universities and do well there. Most families who have been in New Zealand for any length of time have relations of mixed race.

Hybrid vigour

In nature and in agriculture, crops are specially bred to combine the best characteristics of each parent and thus obtain a stronger, better plant. Nobody sets out to breed people in this way, but people of different ethnic groups intermarry by choice, and their children, now of mixed race, are very special because they have the potential to combine the best of each race, they have also had to find ways of combining two cultures so that a family can live happily together, and they understand two traditions instead of only one. They can also have greater problems than other families if one parent wants them to choose between two different traditions. Groups can hold on to the worst from their various cultures, just because it is *their tradition*, or they can choose to leave behind parts of their cultures that are no longer relevant in a multicultural world. New Zealand can become a wonderful place to live where all ethnic groups have contributed the best from their cultures, or we can end up like some other parts of the world, fighting and destroying each other because of our different beliefs, our refusal to integrate with others, and our insistence that our own particular group is the only one that is right. You have your roots in New Zealand soil now and hopefully will help in making this a happy and peaceful country, with people of wonderful hybrid vigour who will build bridges between people of different races.

Main points to make

They are here at school because the government of the country says they have to learn to be useful citizens.

Hopefully they will realize that it is an advantage to themselves to be well educated.

There are certain things they need to know if they are going to have useful and happy lives.

We need to know the rules before we can drive safely on the road.

There are rules for living that make life safer and better for everyone.

In a primitive society they would have undergone initiation ceremonies that showed them they were now expected to take an adult place in the tribe and contribute to its welfare.

Tribes and nationalities began as small groups with common languages but as numbers grew the spread out over the world and their languages, customs and skin colours became different

Now we are mixing up again we need to understand the principles for human behaviour that will enable us to live peacefully together.

Hybrids are plants or animals with parents of different strains. They are special because of their hybrid vigour.

New Zealanders are becoming hybrids, and have the ability to choose the best from all the ethnic groups that live here now.

We need to discard those ideas or customs from our various pasts that will cause friction or are no longer relevant.

Older people often want to hold on to their own cultures as they are, and don't want to change, but the young people can choose the best from all cultures and make this a wonderful country.

Introductory lesson 2.

Rules, customs and principles.

Values – Diversity, community, respect, equity, inquiry, excellence, integrity.

Revision –

Points made from previous lesson.

All New Zealanders. All ancestors brave to come here. Common origins though cultures and languages changed over thousands of years. Hybrid vigour from mixing of races.

We need to find principles like rules of the road that will enable all cultures to live peacefully together.

New Learning

We need to be sure we are speaking the same language so that when we use a word it means the same thing to all of us. For example if I use the word “ball,” the pictures we see in our minds could be very different. Give me some examples.

The word “bomb” to people who come from countries where there is war means what? It is not so long ago in this country that the word “bomb” to many boys meant? Yes, An old heap of a car. There are three particular words that we need to be sure we understand to-day. These are *principles, rules and customs.*

Rules – That is an easy one. What are some of your school rules?

Now what are some of the rules you may have at home? They are not necessarily the same are they? Rules are made for specific places and circumstances. They are usually made by people in authority, but often with input from those who will have to keep the rules. They are usually made for a particular reason and they can be changed or removed as circumstances change.

Customs – These are not discussed and decided on like rules. They are ways of doing things that have been done for so long, often over many generations, that we just do them without really thinking about it. They continue because of tradition, though in the beginning there may have been a very good reason why they became a custom. Certain ethnic groups wear different types of clothes because it is their custom.

Can you think of any customs different ethnic groups may have?

The thing that is important to realize about customs is that families can keep their own customs as long as they don't affect or offend anyone else, or break the rules of the country. Some customs however are difficult to keep up when people come to live in a new country, and they may have to decide if it is wise to keep them.

Principles – These are much wider than rules, and we can use them to decide whether rules or customs are good rules or good customs for today. For instance there is a principle of justice that means that everyone should be treated fairly, but there could be many rules that apply to lots of different situations to say exactly what must be done to treat people fairly in those situations. Can you give examples of times when you felt you were not treated fairly? You see we all feel that justice is an important principle and we all resent it if we feel we are not being treated fairly.

Justice – We should be fair. The principle of justice has been important in many cultures for thousands of years. In countries like ours, our laws and our governmental systems have been based on the principle of justice. Under the principle of justice, no-one should be treated any better or any worse than anyone else. That does not mean that we will all have equal incomes and live in the same sized houses, because much depends on our own efforts and whether we choose to use the offer of education that is there for us all. It does mean that if a rich or powerful person

breaks a law, they should not be treated differently from an ordinary person who breaks the same law.

Wisdom – We should be sensible. Wisdom has also been important for thousands of years. Wisdom was handed down from the old to the young. Wisdom includes reason, but wisdom is more than reason. Wisdom was based on experience of life, and knowledge of how people usually behaved in certain circumstances, and what the consequences of certain types of actions were likely to be. We might reason for instance that the quickest way down from a fourth story window would be to jump, but what would wisdom tell us? Scientists may use knowledge and reason to invent new products and new ways of doing things, but we need wisdom to decide what the consequences may be and whether new ways are going to be better than the old. Whether they will lead to a better world. Wisdom means that we will try to maximise the good and minimize the harm that will result from our actions

Truth – We should be honest. If someone lies to you will you trust what they say in the future? If someone steals from you will you trust them again with your property? If you do a maths problem and you are a bit careless and write down a wrong figure will you get a correct answer? It may not matter too much in school if you get a wrong answer, but if you were repairing an aeroplane engine and were asked if you had tightened all the bolts and you said “Yes” though you hadn’t had time to finish the work, what could the result be? Being honest means more than not telling lies. It means not deliberately deceiving people in any way. It means not intentionally letting them or helping them to believe something that is not the truth. We may be mistaken about things at times. Everyone makes mistakes, but being dishonest means that we intend to deceive in some way. Truth is another principle of human behaviour that has been considered important for thousands of years.

Love – We should be kind

Love is our fourth principle, but the love we are talking about here is more like caring about people and what happens to them. More like the concept of “*aroha*.” We can’t always *love* our neighbours – some can really aggravate us at times, but we can care about them as human beings and help them if they are in trouble. We should treat our fellow human beings with respect and not use them for our own ends. Do you know what it means to use other people for our own ends? Suppose you wanted to go to a show and didn’t have transport, but you knew another person who had a car, you could pretend to be friendly with them so they would take you where you wanted to go, but just drop them when you had got what you wanted. Some so-called friends are like that. There are no rules or laws to cover such things but the principle of love shows us that it is wrong to use other people in such a way.

Even when we have weighed up our actions against the principles, there can still be a little doubt about the choices we make in our lives, so as well as our principles we have two checks and balances to make sure we are on the right track.

The Golden Rule – How would I feel if I was on the receiving end of this action? By putting ourselves in the other person’s place we can see if we are really being fair or honest or kind. The golden rule appears in most religions and philosophies and has also been around for thousands of years.

The goal – A better world. Will this action help to make the world a better or happier place? – At home? At school? In my community? In our environment? In our nation? In the world?

These are the principles that have worked for communities in the past, and on which many of our laws are based. With our two checks, this is the formula we will use in these lessons to decide whether our actions and choices are right or wrong.

Main points

We must be sure of the meaning of the words we use.

Rules – are set by some authority for specific situations.

Customs – have evolved in different communities, for good reasons at first, but may not be relevant or necessary now.

Principles – are unchanging. They are wider than rules and give guidance to evaluate rules and customs. These are the principles for human behaviour that we will use in these lessons.

Wisdom – we should be sensible

Justice – We should be fair

Truth – We should be honest

Love – We should be kind

Even when we have weighed up our actions against the principles, there can still be a little doubt if we have made the best decision, so we use the two checks to confirm it.

The golden rule - How would I feel if I were involved?

Will this make a better world?

“He tangata, he tangata, he tangata.”

“It is people that matter.”

Have you ever thrown a stone in a pond and seen how the ripples move outward, each one affecting another, and how wide they spread? We are like that. All our lives we affect and are affected by other people. From the time a baby is born, it starts to affect the lives of those around it. Though at first it doesn't know much about the world into which it has been born, it soon realizes that by its actions it can produce responses from other people. If it cries loudly and long enough, someone will pick it up, feed it and attend to its needs. It doesn't reason about how much inconvenience it is causing to other people by its crying. It is only its own comfort that matters, and for the first few years of its life that is all that matters. It doesn't think about the comfort of other people at all.

A man named Lawrence Kohlberg studied young people over many years and decided that they all seemed to go through the same stages in how they reasoned about what they should do and what they should not do. He identified definite stages in our ethical reasoning.

Stage 1 - A very young child only stops doing something it wants to do if it finds that it is painful – like an animal and an electric fence.

Stage 2 - A few years later it normally reaches a stage where it desires the approval of other people, and it will often act in ways that it knows will be approved, because it enjoys approval. Its actions however are more motivated by the praise of “good boy” or “good girl” than any desire to be especially concerned about the well-being of others. He/she will share things, not because he wants to share but because of the praise it brings. It is still his/her own comfort that is the motivating force.

Stage 3 - Even at the next level where the child realizes that actions can be reciprocal, i.e. “If I am nice to you, you should be nice to me,” there is still the element of “What's in it for me?”

Stage 4 – Lawrence Kohlberg, writing in the 1970s about these stages in ethical reasoning, saw the fourth stage as the level at which conventional rules are important, i.e. Doing what society sees as the right thing. Today there is a certain twist to that thinking in that it is less likely to be what society in general thinks is right, but rather what is the general behaviour in the particular society in which that person moves. Peer pressure for example, or “everybody in our group does it.” It is not until a person's ethical reasoning rises above this level that concern for the effect of our actions on other people becomes more important than the personal gain to be had. Kohlberg saw that some adults never rise above Stages three and four in their ethical reasoning - or even Stage two, “What's in it for me?”

Such people still don't think about how their actions affect other people. It is still only their own comfort they are interested in.

Stages 5 and 6 – At these stages we use consistent ethical principles in dealing with other people. We have to learn to think about other people, and good parents teach their children to do this.

They raise their children's level of reasoning from only thinking about themselves to considering the effect of their actions on other people. Good parents and teachers show their children how to share, to be kind and considerate, and not to do things to others that they would not like others to do to them. That rule is a fairly good measure of whether our actions are right or wrong.

Intentionally or unintentionally, everything we do affects other people, and unless we live on our own on a desert island, nothing can change that. We may say, “It's my life. I can do as I please,” but we still affect other people by our actions, and it is up to us to see that our actions have good effects on others and not harmful effects. When we reach these stages we accept that we have responsibilities to others and we use consistent ethical principles in dealing with them.

Rights

People talk a lot today about “rights.” This is a fairly modern concept which has escalated during the second half of the 20th century. There was no mention of rights in ancient Greek society. Aristotle does not talk about rights, nor does Confucius. There was no word for rights in any classical European language until the fourteenth century (Hinman p 279). Within loving relationships they rarely cause problems because the parties involved are concerned for each other’s welfare. The emphasis on rights shows an individualistic attitude to life rather than one where people consider the interests of the community as a whole. One person’s claim to “rights” usually affects other people who also have “rights.” Where they overlap, people cannot demand their own way. If people say they have a right to something, they should also have to explain and justify why this is so.

People claim “rights” to all sorts of things today, but they do not become legal rights that everyone else is compelled to observe unless they are passed into law by the government of the day.

Since the government in a democratic country like ours is supposed to represent the wishes of the people, that should mean that the majority of the people have agreed that certain people are entitled to certain rights. If they are passed into law they become “social contract rights” because the rest of the people have agreed to them.

When rights are claimed, we can examine them by our ethical principles.

Wisdom – What will be the consequences if these rights are passed into law? Will there be more good than harm?

Justice – Will making them legal rights be fair to everyone? Will giving one group what they claim to be their rights, be unfair to another group?

Truth – Are the claims based on the truth about the situation?

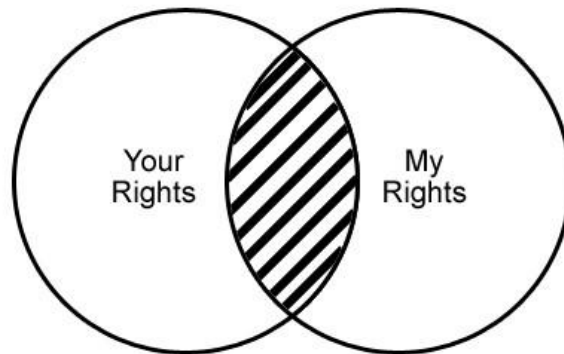
Love – Are we showing concern for all the people involved or is anyone going to be hurt?

The Golden Rule – How would we feel if we were the ones affected?

A better world – Is this going to make for a better and happier future?

Diagram –

If we are going to live peacefully together, we have to learn to consider the rights of other people alongside our own and be prepared to reach a compromise that will be fair.

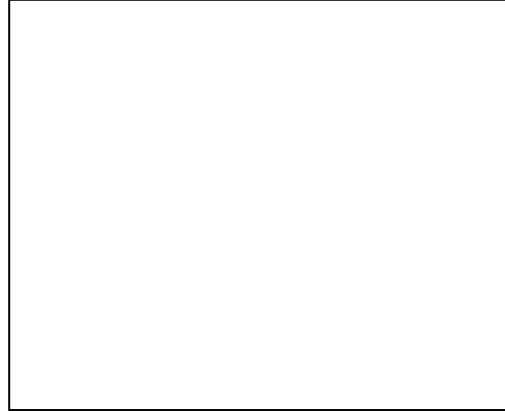


Claiming rights for ourselves means that we have to accept that we also have responsibilities to see that other people’s rights are respected. Rights are never a one-way street, and most of our legal rights only exist because a democratic society has decided that they should. Authoritarian governments are rarely concerned about the rights of ordinary people.

Spheres of influence

We start within our own homes and our influence moves out through schools, communities, countries and the world. Within these spheres there are always other people who are affected by our actions. Do we help make our homes happy places?

Do we do our share of the work
that has to be done? Are we
cheerful or bad-tempered?
Do we help carry other people's
burdens or do we add to the weight
they already have to carry?
Students affect other people at school.
Being disruptive in class affects
other students' ability to learn, and a
teacher's ability to teach well. If you are
one of the strong you can encourage the weak
to see that they accept their responsibilities.



Main points –

Many of our actions affect other people
Who is affected by our actions? At home? At school? At work? In the community?
When we are very young we only think of ourselves and what we want.
We need to “grow up” in our thinking.
We cannot go through our lives doing exactly as we please
What would happen if everyone did that?
We cannot have rights ourselves without considering the rights of others.
Examine some situations where rights conflict. Find fair solutions.
We cannot have rights ourselves without considering our responsibility to others.
We need to consider the consequences of our actions and how they affect other people
If everybody considered the effects of their actions on other people, home, school, work and
community would all be happier.

Suggested questionnaire for use with Discussion 4 on Peer Support

IF ONE OF YOUR FRIENDS TOLD YOU THEY WERE GOING TO DO SOMETHING THAT WOULD GET THEM INTO TROUBLE, AND THEY WANTED YOU TO JOIN THEM, WOULD YOU –

- a. ----- Go along for the kicks?
- b. ----- Try to talk them out of it?
- c. ----- Tell your parents what they were doing and ask for their help?
- d. ----- Tell a teacher what they were doing and ask for help?
- e. ----- Go to the police?
- f. ----- Ask another friend what he or she thought?
- g. ----- Talk it over with an older friend or neighbour?
- h. ----- Refuse. Keep quiet about it, and hope they wouldn't ask you again?

Your answers should be what you think you would actually do, not what you think you ought to do.

When this questionnaire was used originally, it was given at the end of the previous week's lesson. Each student was given a copy to fill in privately before they left, nominating their first and second choices. The teacher collected the papers and the results were brought back for discussion on peer support the next week.

A play "The first puff," was also used for discussion.

PEER PRESSURE AND SUPPORT

Values involved – Community, respect, equity, integrity, inquiry, excellence.

Peer pressure is usually seen as a negative influence, but it can also be used in a very positive way.

This is one of the most important areas where children are influenced by others in their behaviour. At times no amount of reasoning by adults seems to have any effect on children who have previously been happy and co-operative members of a family. They are afraid that if they do not go along with their crowd they will have no friends, and, torn between what their friends want them to do and what they know their parents would want them to do, they can become very unhappy and difficult to live with. True friends however do not have a negative influence, but can support, reason with, and encourage those weaker than themselves.

When we speak of peer pressure we usually see a picture of a group of children pressurizing an unwilling child to take part in some dangerous, foolish or even criminal activity. We know that in such a situation, it will be a very brave child who will refuse to go along with whatever the group decides to do. Peer support gives courage and confidence to make good choices, and the time for making serious choices has now begun. Choices made in adolescence may affect a whole future life.

Peer-dependence.

Recent research has shown that children who spend a great deal of time, from a young age, in day care centres, relate to others of their own age rather than to adults. Their friends are more important to them than their family. They become peer-dependent. The factor that is needed to raise their level of ethical reasoning – i.e. exposure to the influence of another person who is reasoning at a higher level, is missing. What is missing is the heavy dose of reasoning and explanations as to why certain behaviour is unacceptable – mainly because of its consequences on other people - that can be expected from parents who reason at a higher level and who set examples in their own lives of respect and consideration for others.⁵⁹ This influence which can be missing in the lives of many children from all socio-economic groups, may however be accepted more readily from other students whom they may look up to in their schools.

Good influences.

For the average student it is encouraging to know that maturity of ethical judgement is not highly co-related with high I.Q. or verbal intelligence. The smart fast- talker who uses his/her quick wit to put others down, is not necessarily the one to admire or emulate. The cleverest student in the class could decide that it is in his/her own immediate interest to lie, or to manipulate others to further his/her own interests. It is also in his/her interest to ensure that followers see anyone who may disagree with their actions as nerds or whatever the current expression for that concept might be. An average student who is committed to ethical principles in dealing with others, would be unlikely to be a follower, but could be made to pay dearly for not following.

Courage - The courage that is needed to stand up for ethical principles may not be exactly the same as the courage needed for more physical undertakings, but it is equally as real. Though will or courage is an important factor in ethical behaviour, the strong willed or physically courageous are not necessarily ethical, or a good influence on others. A courageous and strong willed person could decide to rob a bank rather than to stick at the hard work involved in making a living by

⁵⁹ Sheldon Berman in *Children's social consciousness and the development of social responsibility.* (p88)

less exciting means. A courageous and strong willed young person who is also committed to ethical principles has the possibility of becoming a great leader and an inspiration to others in school.

Role Models

Role models are particularly important in young people's lives, and for those whose own parents or family do not provide good models, it is important that they find these in their time at school. Sports people with strong ethical principles, can have a lasting effect on the thinking of those who see them as their heroes. Teachers and leaders of youth groups of all kinds can have the same influence. Some sports heroes however, may never "grow up." Some fellow students may reason at a higher level than many of the adults in other students' lives, and these are the students who can provide role models in school and become those who can offer real peer support. Those who are reasoning at a higher level are usually those who are exposed to plenty of reasoning at home, and to the examples of parents who practice caring ethical principles in their everyday lives. These are the students who can exert positive peer pressure on their contemporaries as long as they have the courage to enable them to speak up for what they believe is right and against what they believe is wrong. It is not easy to go against the crowd, or speak out against the opinion of some other student who may be older, more clever, more assertive or more popular, but most people with ethical principles can have the courage to set an example.

Example

"Example" said Albert Schweitzer, "is not the main way to influence people. It is the *only way*." Example encourages others to act, when they see that someone else believes and feels the same way as they do. We cannot influence people for good if we are not consistent in our own beliefs and behaviour. Example shows that we are not hypocrites who say one thing, but do something else when the pressure is on, or when it is convenient. Senior pupils who are genuine in their desire to help younger students, or who see themselves as potential leaders need to be very honest with themselves. We set examples all day long. What kind of example are you unconsciously setting, and how much real support are you to those who really need it?

Peer support in action

Peer support in school is not just the warm fuzzies to be obtained from helping year nines through their first days at college. It is not the ego-enhancing counselling sessions where a senior student points out to juniors the evil of their ways. Throughout every hour of every school day, and outside school as well, our real characters are on display. We show them by how we behave towards all the people with whom we come in contact, from teachers to third formers, from parents and siblings to best friends and other students whose names we may not even know. We show our true characters by the little things we do, or more often the things we do not do that could have made life easier for someone else. We show them by how we speak to people, whether we treat them with respect. If we really want to offer peer support, that support will not be kept just as a show for special occasions or when it will be noticed by other people. If we are honestly concerned for the well being of others, we do not look the other way when someone needs help. We need always to imagine ourselves in the other person's shoes – imagine how we would be feeling if we were in their place – and then do something about it.

For those who do not have the courage to speak out, it is still possible to show disapproval of foolish, unkind or unfair behaviour by a refusal to join in or to be an audience for such behaviour. Those who behave badly just to "show off" require an audience. Those who act as an audience are also guilty because they are supporting bad behaviour.

Leaders and followers

Some people seem to be born leaders and some, who have less confidence are more likely to follow. If you are a follower you need to be sure that the person you are following is going the way you want to go. Choices made in adolescent years may affect our whole lives, and a real peer supporter encourages the weaker characters to make an effort to make good choices. Life as a teenager is not always easy. Some students may be depressed about events in their private lives, or may be lonely or self-conscious and find it hard to make friends. They may make bad choices or in desperation turn to people who will lead them in unfortunate directions. The person who is a real peer support will go out of his/her way to include such people in a group or in the conversation, and will encourage them to share their problems, or to just feel that they are not alone in an unkind world.

In a society where many parents have to work long hours, and many children have little opportunity to receive the guidance and support they should normally have from their parents, peers are often the greatest influence in many children's lives. It is important that that support is positive and not the pressure that can lead to choices that will destroy lives.

In your community, many other people can be affected by the actions of a few. Graffiti and vandalism lower the appearance of a neighbourhood and affect property prices. Other people have often put a great deal of effort into making the town a pleasant place to live in, but the actions of a few can harm a whole community. Privileges and services can be withdrawn or destroyed. Gatecrashers at parties can ruin evenings for others. The list is endless. (Examples)

Using other people

One of the most influential philosophers of modern times was a man called Immanuel Kant, and one of his maxims (i.e. a general rule) was that no-one should use another person for his/her own ends. Some people are so selfish that they do not even consider there is anything wrong in **using** other people and to profit from them. Maybe they deliberately make friends with people who can do things for them. Strangely enough it is often those who are clever who use other people. It is not always the smartest child in the class who is the most honest, most fair or kindest. Con-men in business deals take advantage of people who do not understand the small print. Credit cards were not introduced just for the convenience of customers. The profit is in the high interest rates charged to those who are tempted by the cards to overspend. Young people may use others who look up to them. Some people are not able to think as quickly as others, but to take advantage of other people weaker than ourselves in any way, makes us less of a human being ourselves. The way we treat other people is a measure of our worth as a human being. We are here to make the world a better place, not a worse one.

Little things lead to big things – the first puff. Let's look at smoking and taking drugs. It can seem like a small thing to take the first puff, or try out a drug, but what are the big things that can eventuate from that first little try? Apart from the final effect on health, what about the financial cost? How much does a packet of cigarettes cost? If you smoked a packet a day, how much would that cost? Where would you get the money? What could the temptations be? What would be the likely consequences?

Why would you take the first puff? To look big in the eyes of those around you? What sort of people will admire you for getting hooked on something that will ruin your health and cost you money you can't afford?

So what if they call you "Chicken" or whatever? It can take more courage to say "No" than "Yes," but it is easier to say "No" if you have real peer support. Be that kind of peer-support for

your friends. A little old proverb to remind you, “If you’re looking for advice, stay away from fools.”

As adults we also influence the people around us for good or bad. Right through our lives this is going to happen, and most of us would rather be remembered by our descendants for the trail of good we left behind than the trail of harm.

Main Points

Peer support is not just “warm fuzzies” for the giver.

Peer support means setting an example.

It means going out of our way to be concerned about and to help other people.

It means that whatever we do, all day long, we need to act with concern and respect for other people.

It takes courage and will power to make choices that are going to be an influence for good.

Those who have the advantage of being able to reason at a higher ethical level, have the ability to raise the level of reasoning of their fellow students.

Senior students are role models, whether they intend to be or not.

Role models who have ethical principles can be a good influence.

Not all sporting heroes or pop stars are good role models.

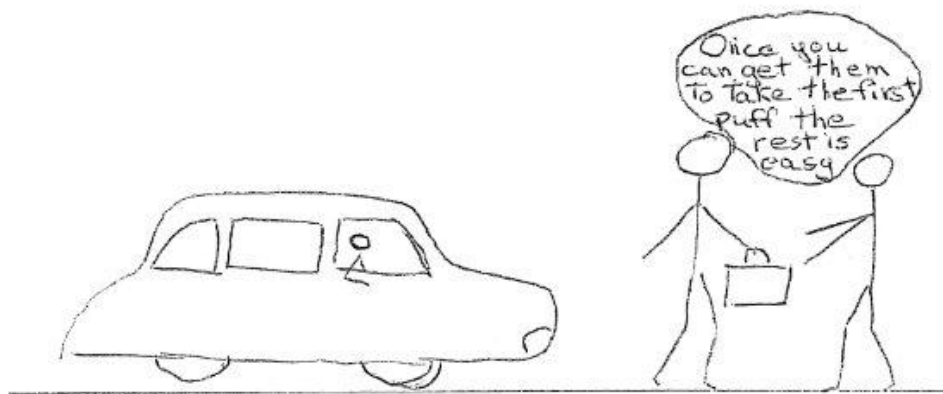
Some people are easily led. They are natural followers, but they need to be sure those they follow are going in a direction they really want to go themselves. Some choices can affect their whole lives.

Try not to provide an audience for those who want to “show off” by behaving badly.

A good peer supporter will notice those who need help or encouragement, and will make an effort to include them in a group.

Little things lead to big things. Stay away from the first puff.

Our influence on other people will continue throughout our lives. Leave a trail of good behind rather than a trail of harm.



Discussion 5

BUILDING CHARACTER AND SELF-RESPECT

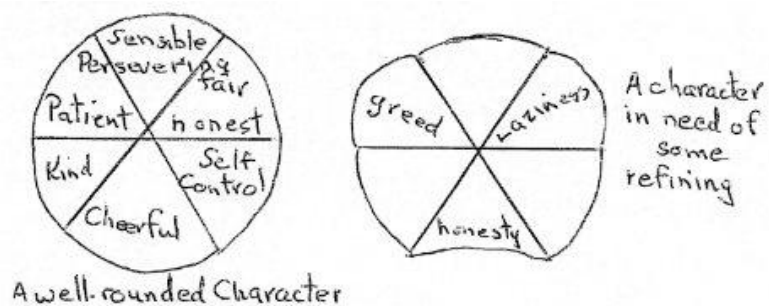
Values involved – Respect, integrity, excellence

The objective of this cycle of lessons is to show that we are responsible for our own lives. We start off from the platform of the family and the environment into which we have been born, but from the time we reach the age at which we start to be able to reason in an abstract manner – which is around 10 – 12, we can begin to think for ourselves about the choices we make. We should be able to think about the consequences of our actions, but we need to start thinking about the long-term consequences, not just immediate gratification. How would we feel if our actions were to be brought out into the view of the public as often happens with the media today? At this age you might want to bunk school – to dodge doing your homework – but what are the long-term consequences likely to be? At fifteen someone might decide they would like to drive a car and steal one to take for a drive. It might feel good for a while, but they could be chased by police and be faced by the choice – stop or drive faster. What are the consequences likely to be?

Our lives depend on the choices we make

Every day we are faced with making choices, and very often we blame other people when things go wrong. We should look at ourselves first. Did anyone actually force us to make that choice or did we do it of our own free will? Blaming other people will not help us improve our lives. No matter how we start out in the world, sooner or later we are able to make our own choices. We can build our own characters and it isn't even guesswork. Throughout history societies have found that there are qualities of character that help make a good life for ourselves and others around us, and these are the building blocks we need to make something good of our lives. A well- rounded character would have a good proportion of honesty, fairness, patience, cheerfulness, self-control, and kindness. A character in need of improvement could have bumps of laziness, selfishness, carelessness, dishonesty, cruelty, envy and greed. If we look carefully at ourselves,

we may find that we are lacking in a few areas , or have a few bulges of selfishness, laziness, or pride that we could well do without.



Self-esteem

We all need a certain amount of self-esteem. This means that we should realize that each one of us is important in the jigsaw of society, and has a part to play, no matter how small it may appear to us. Each one of us has an effect on the lives of those around us, and it is within our own power to see that we make that effect as beneficial as possible. We are not all created equal in our abilities and our talents, but we do have the power to make the best of ourselves and the talents we have. We can respect ourselves for having done our best, but we also need to be honest with ourselves and admit that often we could do better.

Self-esteem and pride

There is a fine line between self-esteem and pride. Too much self-esteem can be dangerous at times. A young person who is learning to drive a car needs to learn the rules of the road and how to control a car before we boost their self-esteem. It is the same with the road rules we need for

life. Usually, when something is our own fault, we don't want to admit it, and so we look around for someone else to blame. We don't want to face the fact that we have slipped up, and if we can convince ourselves that it is someone else's fault we won't even have to try to do better next time. "Guilt" is not a dirty word. It is only an excess of guilt that is harmful. An honest admission of guilt does no harm and may prompt us to try to improve in the future.

If we have too much self-esteem, we can become big-headed and arrogant – and blind to our own faults so that we do nothing to alter them. We have to *earn* the respect of other people, and we do that by working on our characters so that we deserve respect.

Be honest with ourselves.

We need to be honest with ourselves. We may not have the academic ability to study to be a brain surgeon, but every worker in a hospital has an important part to play in the final result. If a cleaner does not do a good job of the work he/she has to do, an infection could spread and ruin the work the surgeon has done. What is important is that each person should do the best they can even if the work is not exciting or dramatic. The cleaner can take pride in having done the best job he/she could, just as much as anyone else in the chain of orderlies, clerical staff, nurses, doctors and surgeons. Each one is necessary. It is a waste of time to envy other people because of the talents they have. We all have our own individual talents and must just make sure we make the best of them, no matter what they are.

Developing character

A football coach told the boys in a team he was coaching that whatever they did at practice they would do during the pressure of a game. If they passed the ball carelessly during practice, they would do the same when the game was serious. They needed to practice good habits, so that the correct method became automatic. It is like that with character. We need to practice the things that don't come easily. Research is now claiming that teenagers do not naturally reason about consequences. Possibly that is because they have not been taught to reason about consequences. Whenever we are tempted to take the easy way, we need to think about the long-term effects of our actions. Most of us are not naturally patient, persevering and cheerful. It is easier to be lazy, impatient and bad-tempered, than to think about how our actions are going to affect other people. We have to practice self-control so that we don't just do what we feel like doing at that particular moment, but, like any ball-game, the more we practice a skill, the easier it becomes. If we are prepared to accept that certain segments of our character could be improved, then just like in any sport we can work to improve them.

Who am I?

It is a very strange or unfortunate person who doesn't know who he/she is. Don't waste time running around looking for yourself either. You don't just "find yourself" in this life. You make something of yourself by your own efforts. You choose whether you use good building blocks for your own life or whether you take the easy choice each time, regardless of the consequences. It is very rarely that anything worth having comes easily. The solid building blocks are heavier and more difficult to set in place, but if you always choose the easy way, you will never grow stronger, and the quality of your life will eventually suffer. We can look at other people and say they're lucky in what they have achieved, but luck rarely enters the equation. Like the old saying, it has probably been 10% inspiration, and 90% perspiration. No matter what talents we are born with, we need to work at them to make the most of them. I like to tell the story of a boy who was a very slow learner at school, but who made a success of his life and kept a responsible job for many years, because he was taught and could be relied on, to always make a good job of the simple work he had to do. If you have always done your best at whatever your talents enable you to do, you will have self-respect, and other people will respect you as well.

Main Points –

As we become adults we are responsible for our own lives.

We cannot change our family backgrounds, but we make our own choices.

Our future lives depend on the choices we make.

Too much self-esteem can be dangerous. It becomes pride that blinds us to our faults.

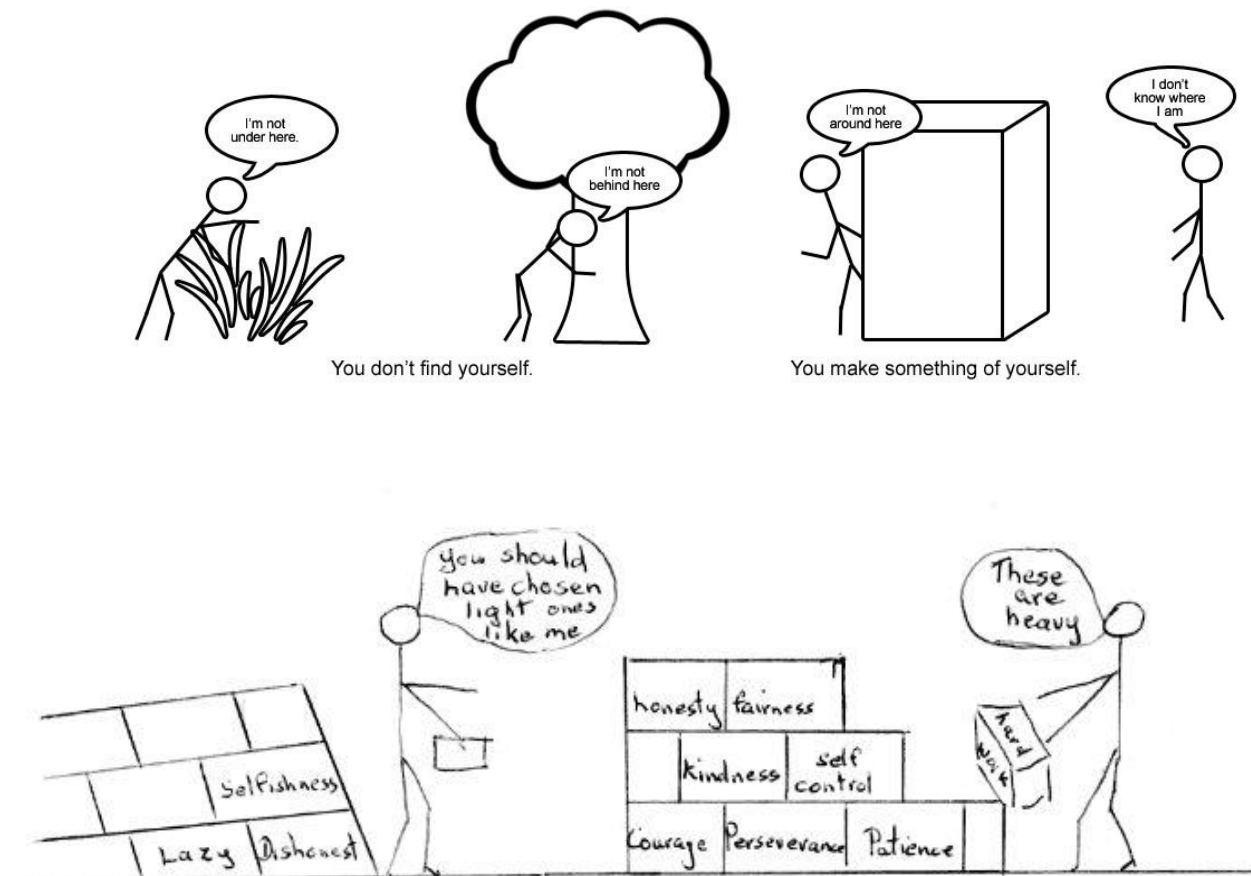
We need to be honest with ourselves. We have different abilities.

Whatever work we do, we should do it well.

We should make the most of the talents we have by always doing the best we can.

We can work to improve our characters and gain the respect of others.

Don't waste time looking for yourself. Make something of yourself by hard work and practice.



We make something of ourselves by choosing sound building blocks

Discussion 6

THE “UPRIGHT” MAN AND WOMAN

Values involved – integrity, respect, excellence

Most of the great philosophical traditions and religions have a concept of a virtuous or an “upright” man. A person of integrity.

Two and a half thousand years B.C. the chief official of Egypt wrote instructing his son in the basic virtues required for successful human relations. Honesty and justice were recommended as the best policies, along with self-control, kindness, truthfulness, discretion, humility and generosity.

The God of the ancient prophets of the Jewish religion, and through them Christianity and Islam, required righteousness from His people.

The Heroes of the ancient sacred Indian epics were role models of virtuous behaviour with emphasis on justice and truth.

Confucius, the great philosopher of ancient China, taught that in all things a man should be a “Chuntzu.” This did not depend on birth or wealth. A “Chuntzu” would be an honest man who always kept his promises, and was scrupulously fair and self-controlled. A “Chuntzu” would take as much trouble to find out what was right as other men would take to find out what would pay. Aristotle, the great Greek philosopher, was primarily concerned with developing the individual character, and examining the vices and virtues that affected character. Aristotle’s “upright” man was a man of practical wisdom who functioned with reason and ethics. The sensible man would choose the middle way between extremes. He would do what was ethically practical.

What about the “upright” woman?

The women of the past had their own place in the scheme of things. Few figured largely in history because the course of nature meant that women’s priority was usually the care of children. Though less likely to be written into history, the mothers and wives of famous men had considerable influence. An article describing an “excellent wife,” dating from between the tenth and sixth century B.C., appears in the book of Proverbs in the Bible, and shows that the capable woman of the day bought and sold land, engaged in business, ran her household efficiently and was generous to the needy. She spoke with wisdom. Her husband loved and trusted her and her children “rose up and called her blessed.” She sounds very much like the “super woman” of today.

The concept of an honourable man, a straight person, a man who accepted his responsibilities and whose word was his bond, was still around last century. With consistent use of ethical principles in ethical reasoning and social decision making throughout the school curricula, the aim could be to produce the “upright” men and “upright” women who will be needed to lead this country into a changing world.

Main Points –

Most civilisations have had the concept of an “upright” man.

The “upright” man was a person of integrity.

He was honest- fair – self-controlled – generous – kind and humble.

He had self-respect because he lived up to his principles.

Women did not figure so largely in the philosophical writings of early times, but an “upright” woman is just as necessary to society as an “upright” man.

Discussion 7 The Upright Person contd.

IT WASN'T MY FAULT

Values involved - integrity, community, respect, equity, inquiry, excellence.

The truth about ourselves is one of the hardest things to acknowledge.

If anything goes wrong we can usually find someone or something else to blame.

“It wasn’t my fault. If he hadn’t done that, I wouldn’t have been forced to do what I did.”

“Anyway, it’s not my responsibility to see that something is done.”

“If something goes wrong, I’ll be blamed so I won’t do anything, and I’ll pass it on to someone else.”

“If we have unprotected sex, and she gets pregnant, there’s always the DPB – or abortion - or I can take off to Australia.” Someone else will pay.

It is what is generally called “Passing the buck,” either before or after an event.

It happens from the individual, to the community, to the nation and beyond, but a great deal of the problems we face in our own lives or in our communities, will never be solved until people are prepared to be honest with themselves and others, and admit that at least part of the responsibility for things that go wrong within our own lives and our various groups, or in our country, is our own.

“We have done things we ought not to have done and we have left undone many things that we ought to have done,” is usually a fair account of matters. We cannot undo the things we have done, but we can usually do something to mitigate their consequences, and about the things that we should have done, but have not. It is rarely too late to improve matters.

A student who cannot get a good job because he/she does not have enough qualifications can do something about that.

A person who has fallen out with a friend or his/her family, or has started taking drugs, can try to do something about that.

Parents can accept the responsibility of providing for the children they have brought into the world, and not leave it to others who have their own responsibilities.

We can admit our mistakes, say “I’m sorry,” to others involved, and prove it by always trying to make amends for the things we have done wrong, and that have harmed other people as well as ourselves.

The first thing we have to do in any such situation is to ask ourselves – “How much of this is my own fault?”

Sometimes genuine disasters overtake us, and we really are not responsible, but a person who chooses to build a house on a flood plain, or on the edge of a cliff that is prone to slipping, cannot really say that none of the subsequent disaster is his/her own fault.

If we deliberately break rules or take chances, or avoid making decisions that are our responsibility to make, and there are unpleasant consequences for ourselves or others, we are at least partly responsible. We cannot set things right until we admit this to ourselves.

The “upright” person does not attempt to avoid taking responsibility for his/her own actions and their consequences.

Main Points –

An “upright” person will be honest about his/her own actions and motives.

An “upright” person accepts responsibility for the consequences of his/her own actions.

An “upright” person does not try to avoid responsibility, by passing a problem on to someone else.

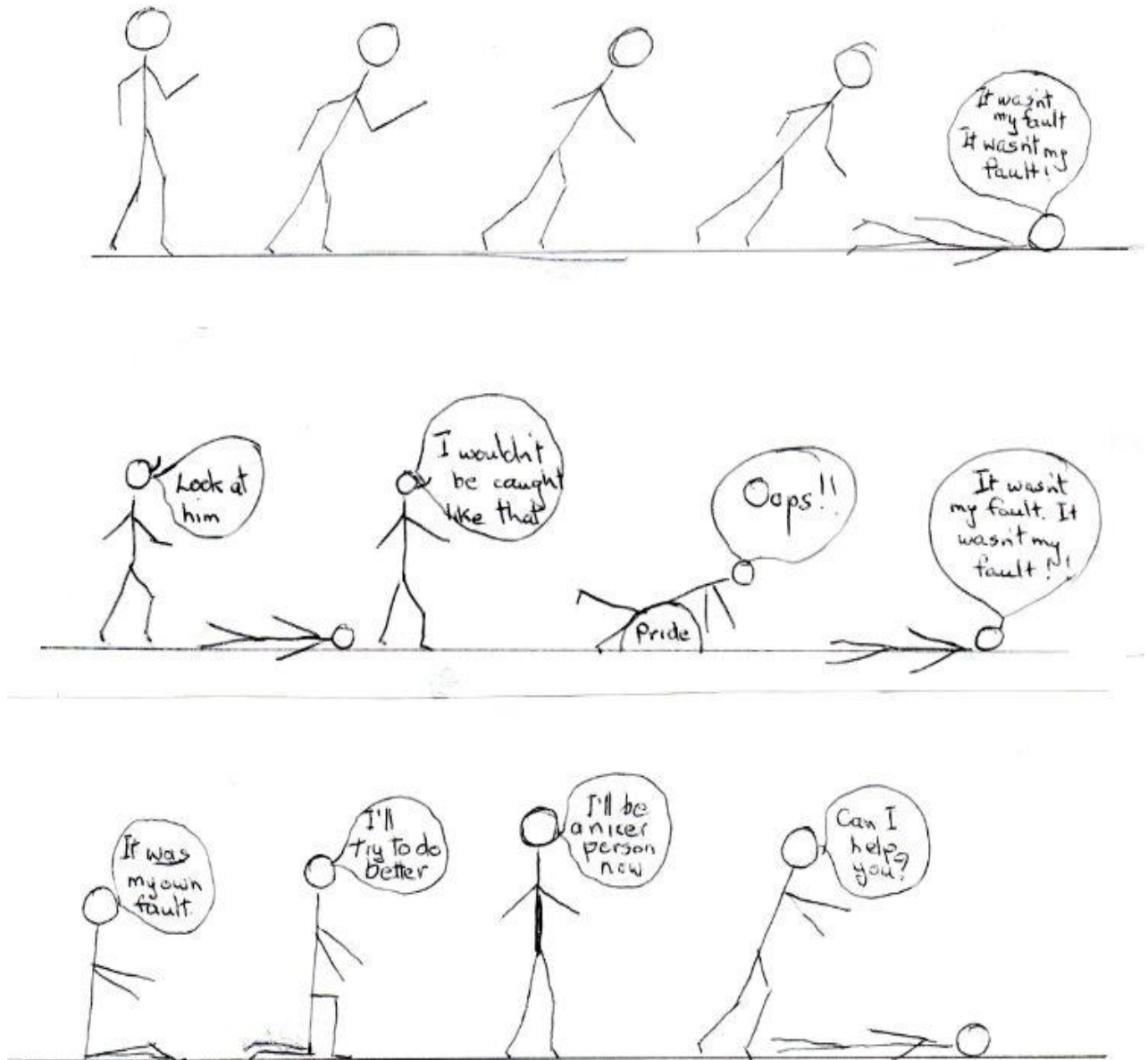
An “upright” person does not “pass the buck.”

Sometimes we will not listen to good advice and have to learn the hard way.

Admitting our mistakes and trying to do better makes us better people.

We are then not so full of pride, and we have more feeling for other people.

Each dishonest, selfish or unkind action makes us a little less upright, until we may fall flat on our faces claiming, “It wasn’t my fault! It wasn’t my fault!”



Discussion 8

SELF CONTROL

Values involved – Respect, integrity, community, excellence

It is good for people to express their feelings – to let other people know how they feel – not to bottle things up – but it is necessary to communicate and let off steam without allowing the pressure to build until there is a mighty explosion. Unfortunately, there can be side effects to expressing feelings if there is not a certain amount of self-control. It is a case of the middle way. Let's look at the people who express anger over every little thing that irritates them. What are the consequences? It may make the angry individual feel better for the moment, but what about the others around them? How will they regard such individuals? They will lose respect for such people and prefer not to work alongside them. In what is supposed to be a loving relationship, love will be the first casualty. It is difficult to love a person you cannot respect or trust. An employer may prefer not to employ a person who cannot control his/her temper and may take out frustration on tools, workmates or customers. Do we really admire sports players who express bad temper by smashing tennis racquets or golf clubs? Are they good role models?

It is natural to be angry when people are irresponsible, dishonest or unfair, but it is what we do about our feelings that matters. It is all a case of moderation, and moderation comes as a result of self-control. We may think it is difficult to have too much of such feelings as love and sympathy, but even too much love can be damaging to the recipient if it is not controlled. We have to be honest as well. Young people also, can be very unhappy about events in their lives – even contemplate suicide as a way out of problems. Thinking about such things and stoking the fire under our boilers with resentful or unhappy thoughts will make matters seem worse than they really are.

It is important for a person under stress of any kind to communicate and let off steam, but the person with whom he/she communicates should not fuel the fire by adding to the pile of angry thoughts or depression that is already stoking the boiler. It is possible to be both sympathetic and reasonable, while allowing the other person to let off steam by communicating. I liked to tell my classes about my own daughter who was so depressed about failing her U.E. for the second time that she wrote on the board in her room, "Suicide is the only way out." Two years later she was engaged to a very nice young man and off on a trip round the world. She has had a very exciting and successful career, but suicide is very final.



The middle way

Aristotle recommended the middle way in human behaviour. Avoid the extremes of excess and deficiency. Too much compassion can produce the “bleeding heart” individual – the “do-gooder” who makes excuses for the wrong-doer in every situation, but lack of compassion leads to a callousness which is equally harmful to society. The self-control that leads to moderation in our actions needs to be learned in childhood. It is learned from role models, and it is learned from experiencing the consequences of our actions. It is not true that children who have been harshly treated themselves will necessarily treat their own children in this way. Much depends on the other role models to whom they are exposed. Children who have grown up in a family where one parent is violent or is a compulsive gambler or drinker, and have experienced the consequences of such actions, will usually look for something better in their own lives *provided they know that something better is obtainable*. Such children have often learned self-control the hard way, and find it easier than a child who has been indulged at every turn.

The “spoilt” child

A story I often told my classes was about a teen-age girl who came to live in our small rural community. She was extremely attractive, and the local boys at first were all competing for her company. It wasn't long however before it was discovered that at the slightest inconvenience, she would lose her temper, create a scene, and the nearest person would receive the full force of the unpleasantness. As we grew older, she had no close friends, no one wanted to partner her in sport, and the locals would laugh and say that she would have to marry someone who hadn't known her long enough to have experienced that side of her character. Sure enough she did, but how long it lasted we never knew because they did not settle in our district, and no-one cared to keep in touch with her.

Unacceptable behaviour can be defined as that which has harmful effects on the child itself, on other people or the environment. It can be argued that uncontrolled behaviour of children can bring about a loss of control by an adult who has finally been pushed beyond his/her limit of endurance. The middle way, with good behaviour being rewarded and unacceptable behaviour being punished in some way, helps a child to learn the self-control that will be needed in adult life. They need to start learning at an early age that actions have consequences that do not always work for their own pleasure.

A very young child cannot reason in the abstract and at first only responds to consequences that are painful to themselves – not necessarily physical consequences. An older child will begin to recognise praise and will respond to approval of its actions. Lack of consistency is confusing to young children, especially if unacceptable behaviour at certain times and in certain places, brings the attention and rewards that better behaviour does not.

Harmful or anti-social acts need to be discouraged for the child's sake, and for the sake of others, but to be discouraged, the consequences of a deliberately anti-social act need to be consistent and more unpleasant than the pleasure gained from performing it. Unpleasant consequences however should always be followed by a loving embrace.

As a child becomes more capable of reasoning, a warning should always precede punishment of any kind, so that the child has the autonomy of choosing its action, and the opportunity to learn self-control.

Main Points

We should not bottle up our feelings until we explode, because people will be hurt.

We should communicate and relieve the pressure.

Those with whom we communicate should be careful not to fuel the fire, but to be sympathetic and reasonable and act as peacemakers.

It is difficult for others to love or respect people who cannot control their tempers.

It is not “cool” to display a lack of self-control, in sport or personal relationships.

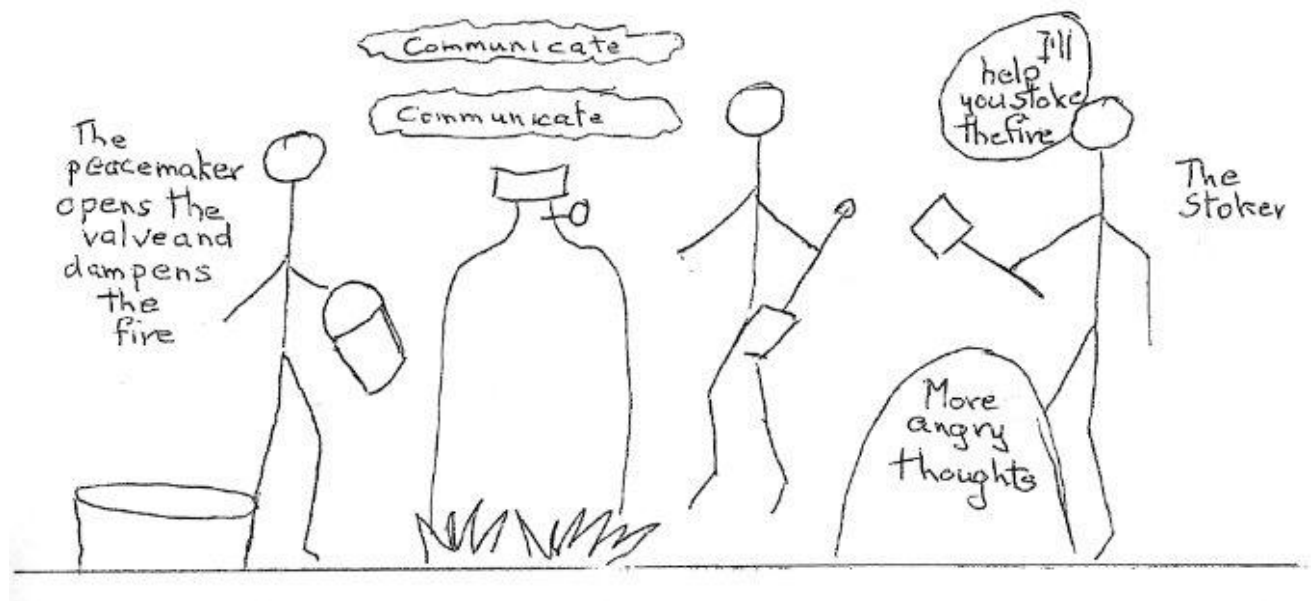
Children can be “spoilt” by over-indulgence or inconsistency on the parents’ part.

We must start to learn self-control from an early age.

Self-control can be learned from good role models and by experiencing the consequences of actions.

Unacceptable behaviour needs to have unpleasant consequences of some kind, and good behaviour should be praised and rewarded.

Children always need to be shown that they are loved.



Discussion 9

APATHY AND INITIATIVE

There can be many examples of how apathy or laziness means that others have to do more than their share. Choose some to suit the age of students.

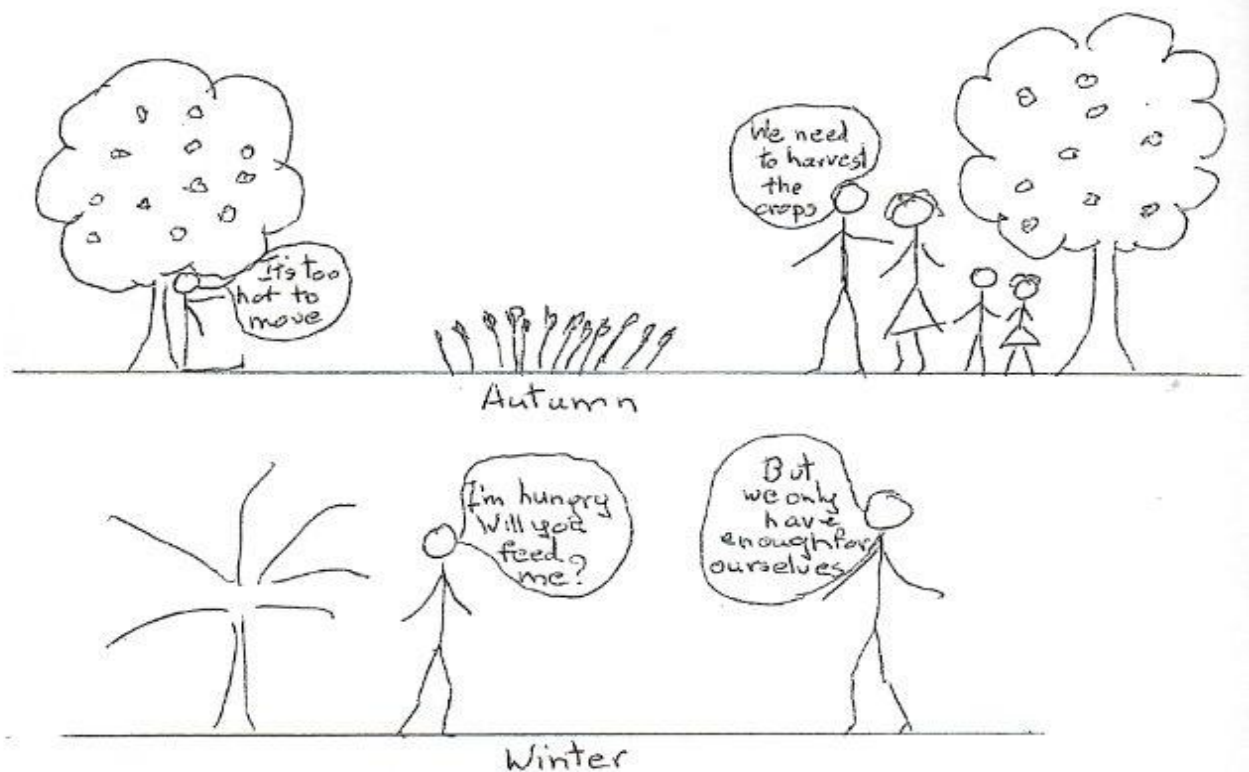
One exercise is for students to list all the jobs that have to be done at home in the evening or morning – the people who are there - and make a check list of who does what. If one person does not do their share, who does more – or does it mean that the work does not get done. It does not matter who does what, but it does matter if one person is doing more than they should just because others are not doing their share.

Does the extra work usually fall on the same person? Who?

Failing to do a small job, or putting it off, may mean large consequences. Examples?

In some ethnic groups children are not expected to do work around the home, but are expected to spend more time in study.

It should be made clear that this is family tradition. It is not apathy or laziness if they are usefully employed in this way, but it would be dishonest and lazy on their part if they were playing video games in their room and not studying.



Self-motivation

An accompaniment to self-control is self-motivation.

Students always liked to hear the true story of the year 11 boy who came to school very sunburnt after a family outing. "My mother didn't make me put my shirt back on," was his explanation.

Once again there is a middle way between being blindly independent, or at the other extreme, relying on other people to make decisions for you and force you into action. Self-motivation requires that a person should think about the possible consequences of actions, or more often the

lack of action, and act upon that reasoning, even if it requires considerable mental effort to make a move. Old sayings spoke truths. "Procrastination is the thief of time."

"Never put off till tomorrow something that should be done today." Another old rhyme that sticks in the head and has motivated me to action many times is my grandmother's maxim, -

"If you have a job to do, do it now. If it's one you wish were through, do it now."

Doing the work that *has* to be done before doing the things you would like to do, is a policy that enables a person to accomplish a good balance of work and pleasure. "All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy," is a warning against an excess of motivation towards work. Many of the old sayings or maxims that have been criticized as clichés and out of date, contain truths that the modern world ignores at its peril. Once forgotten or ignored, their truths have to be learned again by another generation through suffering the consequences for themselves.

Laziness –

In the early Christian church, sloth, or laziness was considered to be one of the seven worst sins. In any communal society people were expected to do their share of the work that had to be done or they had not earned their food. The work ethic of the early colonial settlers came from their Christian backgrounds and the firm belief that "by the sweat of their brow they would earn their bread." Laziness can be harmful to ourselves because we will not reach the potential that we could have done. Laziness or dodging work has always meant that someone else has had to do more than their share, but it can also mean that a great deal of harm can be caused if one person is too lazy to do a job properly. A good exercise is to look at the work that gets done within our own families, and see if every person is doing a fair share. It does not matter who does what work, but it does matter if some people are doing more than their share while others are doing less. It is not only physical laziness that causes harm. People can also be mentally lazy and prefer not to think about any issue that does not seem to affect them personally or immediately. This is called apathy.

Apathy

As well as affecting the individual in day-to-day life, apathy has a profound effect on a community. It has often been recognized, especially when modern communities were smaller, that some members could be relied on to do more than their share of the work that needed to be done, but few people would turn their backs completely on community projects. They knew that they would be generally condemned if they did less than their share. More and more though, as communities have grown larger and people have been able to be more anonymous, the complaint has been that "The same people usually have to do all the work." Now however there seem to be less and less people who are prepared to give their time to running organizations that benefit the community, and yet recent research has shown that in societies where there are good social groups and organisations, there is less crime and other social problems.

Apathy about the environment may not produce major problems for present generations, but may affect generations of the future. Someone always pays. Perhaps we have come to accept the privileges, rights and freedoms that surround us today and are ignorant or uncaring about the struggles of previous generations that have shaped today's democracy and provided many of our amenities. Uncaring too about the future. Hundreds of years ago writers were warning that, "The price of liberty is eternal vigilance." (Curran 1790). John Donne (1571-1631) wrote, "No man is an island, entire of itself," and "Never send to know for whom the bell tolls. It tolls for thee." Another well-known truth was written by Edmund Burke, "All that it takes for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing."

Apathy is an insidious evil that we tend to take lightly, but which can allow a great deal of harm to occur. Apathy allows us to tell ourselves, "Someone else will do it." The apathetic person just

drifts along with the tide without being concerned about where it is going. Apathy is leaving decisions to other people. Apathy allows a vocal minority to have more power than a silent majority. Apathy is thinking the little you can do has no effect, and so it becomes an excuse for doing nothing. Apathy is one of the main enemies of mankind. If we pass by on the other side of the street, or look the other way and pretend not to see when something is wrong or someone needs help, some day we, or future generations will pay for our unwillingness to be involved. If it is any consolation to those who find themselves unable to turn their backs, then consider that you are the “salt of the earth” and have added an essential ingredient to the well-being of your community, now and for the future.

Apathy about politics

Today many young people say they are not interested in politics, but democracy depends on the people taking an educated interest in the government that is supposed to represent the will of the people. The people have the right to decide what laws the government makes and how the government spends the money the people pay in taxes. As was written in a New Zealand school Civics text-book in the 1920s, not many years after every citizen had been given the right to vote, “If the people, through ignorance or carelessness, lose their control, they will only have themselves to blame.”(N.Coad p65) Governments and bureaucrats could be happy to have a population that is apathetic and politically illiterate, but more about democracy later.

Initiative

In the early days of this country, when European settlers came from their own homelands, they had come from countries where people had lived for thousands of years. They came to a country which had no roads, no schools, no churches or public halls and few of the amenities they had been used to at home. As the small communities of settlers grew, usually the first public building to be built was a school and then a church. Public meetings were held in schools, and from these meetings the local people went on to plan and build other public amenities such as playing fields, bowling greens, tennis courts and local halls. Few people had money to spare, but people had initiative and energy and were prepared to work for what they believed their community needed. How many of you know now what a Working Bee is?

A Working Bee meant that all the people in a small community came together to work on a project for the good of all. Many of our public halls, sports facilities, and school swimming pools came into existence this way. All around us in our communities, we can see the results of their efforts, but what was gained by the initiative of one generation can be lost by the apathy of another. People don't want to get involved because there are other things they'd rather be doing for themselves, but we need people with initiative who see the things that need to be done, and will make an effort to get something started or changed. Even though we may feel that the little bit we can do will make no difference, by doing it we are setting an example to others, and others may follow until there are enough to make a very large difference.

Today, the cry is often “The Government should do this,” or “The Council should do that,” but we should not expect our different forms of government to do things for us that we could be doing for ourselves. Our governments and our local bodies are only as good as the people we elect. The money they have to spend is our money, raised from our taxes, but if the people are too apathetic to take an interest, or if the people who have ability don't want to get involved on behalf of others with less ability, that money will not be spent wisely, and the country as a whole will suffer. On the other hand there is a reward to be had. Good communities are built through people working together for a common cause. (Examples I have used for this lesson were how a community lost its tennis courts because of apathy, but later got a dirt-track because of initiative.)

Reasons for doing our best

There are three main reasons why we should always do our best.

1. For our own satisfaction. At least we will know that we have done all we could.
2. Because there is a prize. A useful and rewarding life. In many ways we will have made our own lives and those around us happier than they would have been.
3. Because we will be punished if we don't. Someone always pays, and if it is not us, it will be following generations who will have to live with the results of our apathy and carelessness. Can we really look the other way when we know what the results of such things as rising crime, pollution and waste of natural resources will be on future generations. Do we want them to look back on us and say, "How could they not have cared?" If we do not do our share of work that has to be done, we are adding to the burdens of those who cannot turn their backs on the consequences.

Main Points

Physical laziness means someone else has to do more than their share of work.

Laziness can be as bad as being destructive because it harms ourselves and other people.

We need to be able to motivate ourselves to make an effort.

Do not put off till tomorrow something that could have been done today.

Do the work that *has* to be done, before doing the things you might like to do.

Apathy is mental laziness and one of the main enemies of mankind.

Apathy means drifting along with the tide without being concerned where it is going.

"All that is needed for evil to triumph is for good people to do nothing"

We need people of initiative who will see what is needed, and will get started.

If we look the other way and pretend not to see when something is wrong, someone will pay, if not now then in the future.

We should not let future generations suffer because of our apathy today.



Discussion 10

BEING RESPONSIBLE AND RELIABLE

Always choose examples that are relevant and interesting to the age group involved.

What can their particular age group be expected to be responsible for?

Many examples will concentrate on the ethical principle of Wisdom- i.e. What are the consequences likely to be? What will be the most sensible thing to do, but the other principles of Justice , Truth and Love should not be ignored if they are relevant also.

The KEY COMPETENCIES involved here and in many of these discussions are-
Thinking, Managing self. Relating to others. Participating and contributing

Values involved – community, integrity, excellence, respect.

Another aspect of self-control is the ability to be responsible and reliable.

Being responsible is a little more than being reliable. If we say a person is reliable, we usually mean that we know we can trust them to do the things they have said they will do, or that they know are expected of them in their jobs or social lives. Being responsible however involves more than doing an agreed amount or keeping one's word.

- **Being responsible means being able to make reasoned decisions and act upon them when there is a need, even though no-one is supervising us and we have the opportunity to ignore a problem or situation.**

“Nobody would have known,” is countered in our minds by “But *I* would have known.” It is a case of being accountable to ourselves, even though we may not be officially accountable to any one else. A responsible person does not justify his/her own behaviour by comparison with that of others and say “Everyone else is doing it.” Responsible people justify their behaviour by the standards they have accepted for themselves. Ethical principles they have set for themselves act as a censor on their own actions.

“This above all, to thine own self be true and it will follow as the night the day, thou canst not then be false to any man.” (Shakespeare in “Hamlet” was not so conscious of sexist language as we are today, and like many quotes, to alter “man” to “person” spoils the rhythm.)

Self-set standards

“Responsibility” presumes that a person has set standards for her/himself, and would be unhappy not to live up to those standards. For young people it is a matter of how they act when they are not under supervision. It is a matter of “growing up,” although there are many adults who never grow up. It is the opposite of the “She’ll be right,” attitude that leaves a job half-done and does not worry about the consequences. Results of being irresponsible can be catastrophic - car accidents through nuts not being properly tightened - fires caused by heaters being left on or in dangerous positions - aeroplane accidents through negligence in maintenance checks. There was a morality poem that used to be taught in schools many years ago about how a kingdom was lost, “all for the want of a horse-shoe nail.” Though such teaching aids have been considered out of date over the last half-century, the truths that were learned in this way stuck in the mind and have not been forgotten. They are just as relevant today.

Little things matter

Doing a job properly matters. One horse-shoe nail mattered when a boy did not finish a job properly.

“For the want of a nail a shoe was lost.

For the want of a shoe a horse was lost.
For the want of a horse a message was lost.
For the want of a message a battle was lost.
For the want of a battle a kingdom was lost, and all for the want of a horse-shoe nail.”

We are not all born with the same academic ability, or the same talents in other directions, but being responsible and reliable are qualities we develop for ourselves and are within everyone’s abilities. They are very valuable qualities as we live in communities and work with other people.

Two thousand years ago a wise man wrote, “Show me a man who does a good job, and I will show you a man who is better than most, and worthy of the company of kings.” (Proverbs 22v29).

This means that whatever job we do in life, on a rubbish truck or in an operating theatre in a hospital, whether we are responsible and reliable makes a difference in the lives of others. We improve them or we add to their stress.

Making promises –

Over the course of our lives we make many promises. A new immigrant promises to obey the laws of the country. Young people make promises in Scouts, Girl Guides and Brownies. When people marry they make promises to each other. Some promises are in the form of legal documents, e.g. we sign agreements to buy or sell property and such promises are legally binding. When we borrow money and agree to pay it back in a certain time we know that there will be legal consequences if we do not keep to our agreement. Most of the promises we make however are not legally binding and do not have financial penalties. “I will pick up the dry-cleaning after work.” “I will have your car ready by five o’clock,” are promises that can have a cost if the promise is not kept. Other people will be hurt or inconvenienced. We should not make promises lightly without counting the cost. Once we have committed ourselves, by saying we will do something, then an “upright” person will make every effort to keep his/her word. As well as affecting other peoples’ lives, there are also effects on our own lives.

Effects on ourselves

It may be asked, “Why not ignore our obligations and commitments if it suits us personally, and we can get away with it?” The answer to this question lies in the effect this attitude has on other people, and the long-term consequences it has on ourselves and the communities in which we live.

Apart from the major disasters that can happen to large numbers of other people if someone or group is not responsible, there are effects on our own lives if people cannot rely on us. A boy was allowed to borrow his father’s car as long as he delivered a message to the local cricket team that their game for the next day had been cancelled. He was so interested in his own reasons for having the car that he forgot to deliver the message. Can you think how many people were affected by this? But what effect did his carelessness have on the boy himself? It was a very long time before he was trusted with the car again, and he had lost the respect of many other people who had been affected. If we show that we are unreliable, people will not trust us. We may lose privileges we have, and we will not be given more important work to do. Another boy who was very popular with his mates stood for election as cricket club captain, and couldn’t understand why he didn’t win a position he really wanted. Finally a friend explained that though they liked him and he was fun to be with, they knew they couldn’t rely on him to be responsible enough to organize all the little details that needed to be done. (Play – The Election.) If we cannot be trusted in small things, it is certain that we will not be trusted with larger ones. A late night bus service from the city was cancelled because of the bad behaviour of a particular group, meaning that

other young people could no longer go up to a show. It takes self-discipline to be reliable and responsible and, just like doing our best at whatever we do, there are valid reasons why we should make the effort-

1. For our own self-respect
2. There are rewards for ourselves, and we make the lives of those around us happier.
3. We will be punished in various ways if we cannot be trusted.
4. Others will suffer if we are not reliable and responsible.

If we look beyond our own personal convenience, and move up a level in our stage of reasoning, we will take into consideration the effect our actions have on other people. Whenever we show ourselves to be unreliable, we should be able to see that other people are caused extra stress and inconvenience.

If we fail to do our share of whatever needs to be done someone else will have to do extra. Is this what we really want or is it just that we do not think about how our actions affect other people.

Main points

A reliable person can be trusted to do what is expected of them.

A responsible person will go beyond that and will act for good, even though no-one is watching.

A responsible person has set standards for his/her own behaviour and endeavours to live up to them.

If we do not keep our word, it can affect many other people.

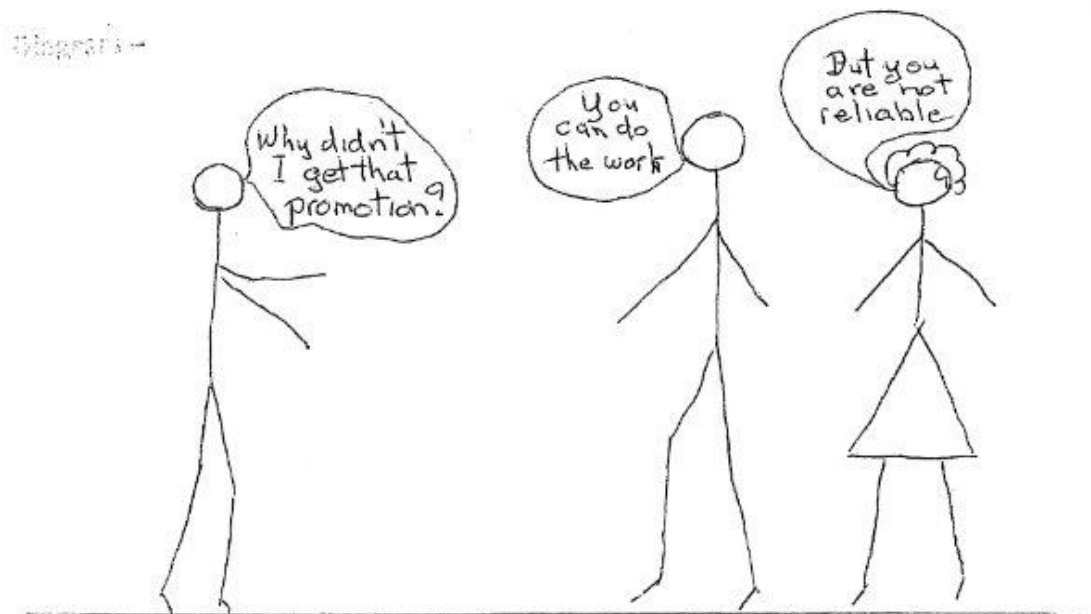
If we do not keep our word, other people will not trust us again.

Little things matter. A job not done properly can lead to disaster.

If we cannot be trusted with small things we will not be put in charge of larger ones.

Our being reliable and responsible lessens the stress on others around us.

We should always do our best – 1. For our own self-respect. 2. Because it benefits others as well. 3. Because someone will suffer if we do not.



Discussion 11

LOYALTY

Values involved – respect, integrity, community, excellence

Loyalty is considered to be a virtue, but some issues can involve a conflict of loyalties. Though loyalty to friends is a part of being reliable, and is usually seen as being praiseworthy, it is possible that, when judged by the principles of ethical behaviour on which we have relied throughout these lessons, sometimes this loyalty can be misplaced. The question is whether we should be loyal to someone who is dishonest, unfair or is using other people for his/her own ends. This is a problem that often faces young people for example, when they know a friend has done or intends to do something cruel or dishonest. “To tell or not to tell,” when other people are being harmed by a friend’s actions. “To lie or not to lie,” when questioned directly about something that may get a friend into trouble.

It is common when questioned, for students to say that they would not tell on a friend, or that they would lie to protect a friend, but is the person who would place others in such a position, being a friend to them, or are other people just being used – possibly by letting suspicion fall onto them to keep him/herself out of trouble? An example of this is where a whole class is punished because one person does not own up, or privileges removed from a whole group because of the actions of one person. The meaning has changed considerably now, but years ago the word “pimp” was used amongst children to condemn someone who had told tales on someone else. It was really a form of emotional blackmail. Nobody wanted to be called a “pimp.” The tradition has continued. To tell tales on a friend is still regarded as a contemptible thing to do. However, it still involves emotional blackmail if a so-called friend expects someone else to lie to protect him/her. A little unemotional thought on the subject, could show us clearly that a true friend would tell the truth rather than put others in the difficult situation of having to choose between what they see as loyalty to a friend, and telling the truth themselves.

Motives come into ethical reasoning here. There is a difference between “telling tales” simply because you might want to get someone else into trouble, and admitting to the truth because you have been asked directly about the facts of a case. To tell tales for a spiteful reason is different from a case where harm to others is likely, or others are being blamed unfairly. It is a case for common sense.

Common sense will also ask us, “How will we feel if this whole situation is brought out into the light of day, or into the glare of the media?” What seemed to be just a small adjustment to the truth – nothing that really mattered – can become a major incident with major consequences when brought out for all to see. A good rule for our actions is never to do anything, or say anything that we would not like to have exposed in public. Hardly a virtuous way of reasoning, but since we are not perfect, at least we can allow this self-interest to guide us when common sense tells us we should. After all, if the situation turned out to involve a criminal action, we could even be involved as an accessory if we had given false evidence.

Friendship is reciprocal, or it is not true friendship. “Owning up” is the ideal solution to the problem, because it raises the ethical standards of the one at fault, and also earns them the respect of other people. The one at fault is really a winner in the end. Failing that, the simplest answer for the friends is to fall back on the overall reasoning, that our actions should “maximise the good and minimize the harm.” When we ask a few relevant questions it is possible to see that there are valid reasons for telling the truth, even though we may feel uncomfortable about the whole situation in which we have found ourselves.

1. If a friend is not stopped at a reasonably small misdemeanour, possibly he/she could go on to worse offending. It would be better to get back on track now even if it might be painful.
2. How many people are being harmed or could be harmed by this action, compared to the one who committed it?
3. What is the extent of the harm and what further consequences are likely?
4. What are the possible consequences if this whole situation is brought out into the public eye?
5. What is the best solution overall if the person concerned is not prepared to own up?
6. Will I be accused of “telling tales” and ostracized by other friends?
1. The response to the last question is to ask, “Who *are* your real friends then?”

Main Points-

It is praiseworthy to be loyal to a friend when they are in genuine need of help.

It is different if other people are being harmed, or likely to be harmed.

Friendship is reciprocal and genuine friends would not expect others to lie for them.

Consider what would happen if the whole situation were brought out in public.

It could be better for a friend to take the consequences of a small misdemeanour, than to “get away with it,” and go on to worse things.

Consider the possible harm, and try to maximise the good.

Discussion 12

LEADERS

Values involved – integrity, community, excellence, respect.

When you look around your community and see the amenities that are there – local hall, bowling green, swimming pool, tennis courts - do you ever stop to think about how they came to exist? Think back a hundred and fifty years and none of these things were here. When European settlers came, they began to clear patches of the bush, drain the swamps, and build cottages for their families to live in. When the groups decided they needed a school, they would have talked about it for a while until finally a leader emerged who said, “Let’s get on with it and do it. This is where we start.” He may not have wanted the responsibility of organizing the building, and we may not know who each leader was, but we do know that in all communities certain people have emerged as leaders and much has been accomplished that may never have been started without someone who “had a dream,” and set out to achieve it.

Why do people become leaders?

Some people are pushed into positions of leadership by others who recognise their qualities.

Though some people are natural leaders, they don’t set out to become important – often they don’t like publicity. Often they have been persuaded against their will, but they have known someone needed to get things started, so they have stepped in and soon found others following and being inspired by them. These people see a task as important, and will not easily give up until it is finished.

There are other people who want to be leaders for their own glory. They do things for their community because there is “something in it for them.” They are always in front of the camera or talking to reporters – ready to take the credit, but doing little of the real work. If things become difficult or there is nothing in it for them, they will disappear from the scene to look for some other way of making themselves seem important. If we are going to choose someone to follow, we need to understand his/her motives for leading. No-one can become a leader unless there are others who will follow.

Desperate situations

In desperate situations, someone usually emerges as a leader. “Cometh the hour, cometh the man.” Winston Churchill emerged to lead the allies against Hitler, but Hitler himself had rallied the German people by his own powers of oratory. Without Churchill, history might have had a different tale to tell. Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela emerged to lead their people to equality. There were great woman leaders also. In 61 A.D. Queen Boadicea led the Britons against the Roman invasion. Many centuries later, Joan of Arc led the French against the English. These women died for their causes as have many other historical figures,

but in history the true leaders in battle led from the front, by example – never expecting their followers to do anything they would not do, or go anywhere they would not go.

Can students think of other such examples? The leader who emerges in such a situation can inspire and encourage others to achieve things they would never have expected or believed possible. They praise their followers for their efforts, and can inspire courage and determination in the face of enormous difficulties, but will never expect their followers to do more than they would be prepared to do themselves. People who believe in a cause do not give up easily, but good leaders care about their followers and value them as individuals. They do not *use* them carelessly for the glory of the leader or the cause.

Propaganda and personal ambition

In today's world of T.V., technology and telecommunication, "leaders" can use their own propaganda, plus spin doctors to build their images and push their policies, while remaining in safety themselves behind a T.V. screen. Public meetings where would-be leaders have to face the people in person are rare. Propaganda is a powerful weapon in any struggle, especially when the people are unable to question the leader, as in today's political world of T.V. appearances instead of public meetings. Propaganda is a deliberate systematic effort to manipulate the beliefs of other people, and though it is often promoted as education, it is deliberately selective and biased in the material it presents. During World War 2, Dr Goebbels in Hitler's Reich managed the propaganda machine that produced and censored the news for the people of Germany, and he tried through the medium of radio news to affect the morale of the Allies. In the 21st Century, money and the media are used in many ways to influence the thinking of the public. The leaders of some countries can surround themselves by personal body-guards and armies, and use fear and force to achieve their purposes. They have no respect or concern for the people they are using to achieve their own ends. They can ask followers to do impossible tasks, then blame them for everything that goes wrong, rather than examining their own actions - and when the people they have used in this way, finally realize what is happening and rebel against such tyranny, such leaders will disappear to some place where they have stored enough money to allow them to spend the rest of their lives in comfort. Leaders who only lead for their own glory will often give up if the going gets tough, or they are not getting the publicity or power they want - then find some other comfortable situation and leave others to face any unpleasant consequences of the leader's actions.

Martyrs for a cause

Some leaders may encourage their followers to become martyrs for a cause, i.e. to voluntarily give up their lives in futile gestures that do little for the cause except gain publicity. It is noticeable however that the leaders have not practiced what they have preached or led by example. With such encouragement, and following the example of others, some, usually young dedicated people will choose for themselves to become martyrs. It could be of more use to the world however to live and work for a good cause and for a better world, than to die in such a way. Young people who become suicide bombers for example, might have lived to achieve more good by working for peace. Life is precious and should be lived to the full. Even though the present may look bleak, we can achieve more good in the long term by living than by dying. Death is very final.

It is not only in such ways as suicide that people can be encouraged to become martyrs to a cause.

Protestors on various issues can be encouraged by leaders to put their futures on the line, by breaking laws and by violent actions that destroy property or harm other individuals. Once a person has a criminal record it may affect that person's ability to travel to other countries or to take up some career that is important to him/her. The leader has gained temporary publicity for the cause, but at the cost of some young person's future, and has used other people for his/her own ends.

Our own lives

We learn in history about leaders of nations and other famous people, but few of us will ever rise to such heights. In our everyday lives however, we come in contact with leaders all the time. We see leaders of governments and political parties on our T.V. screens nearly every night. In our local papers we see our local body councillors, and other people from our communities who have had good ideas and get things done. In our schools the Principals set the tone for the way things are done. There are school house-captains, prefects, captains of sports teams etc. The senior

students, without thinking, set the examples to younger students on how to behave towards other people – on school buses, on the sports-fields, in the streets. They may not think of themselves as leaders, but younger pupils see how they behave and copy them. When young people leave school and start work they will find in the work-force those who will set them a good example and those who may lead them the wrong way. They will have to choose whom to follow. (Plays – Follow me. There was a crooked man. The Working Bee.)

Even at school there are some who emerge naturally as leaders, or some whom others in the school have decided to vote in as leaders. There are also those who promote themselves as leaders, and others who deliberately set out to lead. These are often the instigators of bad or unethical behaviour. Having other people go along with them makes them feel important for the moment, and they rarely consider the long-term consequences of their actions. Most students are more likely to be followers than leaders, but followers should not follow blindly without thinking of the consequences. Are the people you are prepared to follow going to lead you the way you want to go or are they going to lead you away from your real goals? Think about this – if you have the courage *not* to follow such leaders and you walk away, you may find you have inspired others who will follow *your* example and you will have become a leader yourself without even trying to – and you will be leading in a better direction.

Who will you choose to follow?

In your school lives look carefully at those you may follow. Are they using you to boost their own ego? (See play, “Follow me” at end.)

What are the consequences likely to be? Is that what you really want?

Do they want you to put your neck on the line while they remain in safety? Some years ago a group of university students invaded a lecture room and caused a riot for which they were duly punished. The instigator however had remained outside, encouraging the others from a position of safety. Where will your leaders be when the going gets tough?

Is the cause a good one? Will it make the world a better place? Are you harming anyone in the process?

Are your leaders telling you the whole truth? Have you checked the evidence? Are you being influenced by a propaganda machine? Is your information being manipulated in any way in order to influence your decisions or your support for particular leaders? Is there any difference between a “spin doctor” and a propaganda machine?

In a democratic country there is only one way to democratically control propaganda. The majority of the public need to be reasonably well educated, and have large amounts of dependable and relevant information available to them. In any situation where choices have to be made, in school or out in the world of work, in politics, it is your own responsibility to ensure that you are not influenced by propaganda. Do your homework!

Leading by example.

Dr. Albert Schweitzer (1875 – 1965) was a famous German doctor, theologian, philosopher, musician and humanitarian, who in 1952, was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts on behalf of “The Brotherhood of Nations.” When the news of his award came he was working at a hospital in Africa, where he had been for many years in very difficult conditions, and did not wish to waste time travelling back to Europe for the award ceremony. His personal philosophy was “reverence for all life.” He believed that this ethical principle involving all living things, was essential for the survival of civilization. One of the statements he made was, “Example is not the *main* way to influence people. It is the *only* way.”

Once a spider set an example to the leader of a country. Robert the Bruce of Scotland had lost many battles against the English. After the last disaster he was hiding in a cave and watching a spider trying to spin a web from one wall to another. The spider jumped and fell, jumped and fell

many times, until at last he jumped and reached the other side. Robert the Bruce was inspired by that spider to lead his army into battle one more time and this time he defeated the English at the battle of Bannockburn in 1314. A.D.

Heroes today

There are heroes like this to be found today, people who are disabled and achieve great things, or who persevere against great odds. In some ways today, life for teenagers is like the battles of old. We need leaders who will lead, not for their own egos, but who, having a dream, will lead towards making a better world. They will be those who will lead from the front, setting a good example, staking themselves out to accept criticism and discouragement, encouraging those who will follow, and never giving up till the battle is won. They may not have set out to be leaders, but they will become leaders if enough people choose to follow them. On the other hand those who want to lead for their own egos or their own profit, may find that no-one can lead if no-one else will follow, so choose carefully who you will follow. Just by doing this, each individual can make a difference in the world. No leader is going to be perfect. Small mistakes may be made at times, but a leader who sticks to the principles and leads in the right overall direction is worth following.

Main points

Some people are pushed into leading by others who recognise their qualities.

Some see things that need to be done, make a start, then find that others follow them.

Some people set out to be leaders for their own glory, and use other people for their own ends.

In desperate situations, someone usually emerges as a leader.

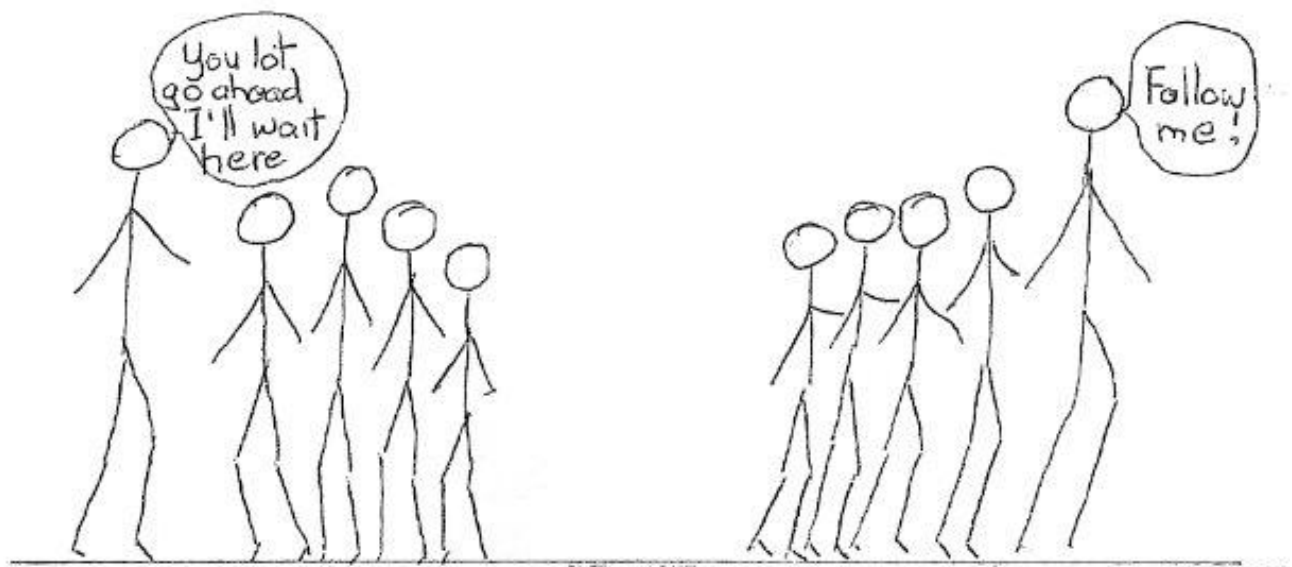
Leaders have traditionally led from the front and by setting an example.

Today, propaganda machines can promote people as leaders, and influence the public perception of their personalities and abilities.

Some leaders may encourage others to be martyrs while staying in safety themselves.

If you choose to follow someone, make sure first that they are going the way you want to go.

Make sure you are not being used for someone else's ends.



Discussion 13

VIRTUES

Values involved – community, integrity, respect, excellence, diversity.

Wise people over thousands of years have seen what aspects of human character bring good results in life – for ourselves and for our communities. These qualities of character have been given the name “virtues,” and they can be seen as habits of thinking and acting for good.

Aristotle’s virtues

Aristotle (384-322B.C.) made a list of virtues for his own day and his basic philosophical commitment was to common sense. He searched for theories that would allow a place for moral values as well as scientific truths. Most religions and many philosophers have agreed on much the same virtues and vices, vices being the opposite of virtues in that they cause harm instead of good.. Aristotle saw a virtue as a middle way of behaviour, rationally determined as a person of practical wisdom (or common sense) would determine it. His list of moral virtues included courage, self-control, generosity, self-respect, self-control or good-temper, truthfulness, justice, friendliness, and a nameless virtue of having some ambition, though not to excess, which we could consider to be “initiative” or “making the most of our talents.” All his “virtues” were the middle way between extremes e.g. truthfulness about oneself was the middle way between boastfulness and self- deprecation. Courage was the middle way between being fool-hardy and being a coward. Courage is seen as overcoming justified fears, knowing the difficulties that lie ahead and facing them.

The Fruit of the Spirit

In the New Testament of the Christian Bible, the apostle Paul listed the following desirable qualities in his letter to the people of Galatia. Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, tolerance and self-control, and pointed out that no law exists against any of these things.⁶⁰ He also listed the “vices” or “fruits of evil” which included such undesirable qualities as greed, selfishness, envy, laziness, apathy and intolerance. Most people of common sense, regardless of religion or philosophy can agree on the logic that lay behind these lists. The virtues need little explaining. Most of us have a fair idea of how they affect our lives and those of others around us. There is plenty of good teaching material on virtues.

Cheerfulness

Cheerful people look on the bright side and encourage those with whom they come in contact to do the same, but as Aristotle recommends, it is the middle way between extremes that is the common sense way. Too much cheerfulness can be irritating at times, but scientists have recently found a direct link between the brain’s emotional state and the body’s immune defences, verifying the old adage that “laughter is the best medicine.” Some people actually seem to enjoy being miserable, but nobody else enjoys the company of the perennial pessimist. When young people were brought up on stories with a message, “Pollyanna” stories, (E.H.Porter 1920s) must have influenced thousands and thousands of young lives. Pollyanna’s father had taught her that whatever bad things happened to her in life, she could always find something to be glad about. Jean-Paul Sartre (1905 –80) the French philosopher, had much the same message for society – people are responsible for what they make of themselves, no matter what situation they may be in. More young people were probably influenced by Pollyanna than by Sartre however. Role models from the books we read or films and T.V. we watch when we are young have a lasting influence on our lives, but it has been fashionable of recent years to denigrate obvious “moralising.

⁶⁰ Galatians Ch5 verse 22

Patience

Patience – or long-suffering – or “putting up with things,” is not the apathy that does not care or can’t be bothered to do anything. Patience again confirms Aristotle’s practical wisdom in looking for the middle way between extremes. We need to be able to wait patiently in situations where there is nothing we can do about the result, or where being impatient may have negative results. Too much patience, however, may mean that we never use our initiative to effect change where change for the better is possible. It may also have an element of laziness or cowardice in that we choose not to make an effort, because it is easier to maintain the status quo. The well-known “Prayer of Serenity” puts it all in a nutshell. **“Give me the serenity to endure those things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can change, and the wisdom to know the difference.”**

Tolerance

Tolerance is akin to patience in the respect that it requires practical wisdom. Yes, we need to be tolerant of other people’s beliefs and customs, especially as we become a multi-cultural country, but just how tolerant? One extreme is the bigot who is intolerant of anything or anyone who is different. The other extreme is the ethical relativist who accepts any kind of behaviour or values, by claiming that each group’s beliefs are right for those within that group or culture, and that it is impossible to validly judge another culture’s values from the outside. Though we may be able to understand why particular values have developed within particular cultures, that does not mean that some of those customs or values are suitable or acceptable when they are transplanted into a westernised multicultural society. Nor are some of the customs or values that are accepted by a westernised society today, just because “everybody does it,” better than some of the values that other groups have to offer. The whole purpose of these lessons is to offer a set of principles by which we can judge our own and other cultures’ values, so that we can choose the best and live in harmony together. Common sense, justice, honesty and respect for every individual are not necessarily a component of all the cultures with which we now come in contact. Should we be tolerant of cruelty, injustice, or dishonesty simply because it is acceptable in another culture, or because “everybody does it,” within our own? During the rise of Hitler, Ogden Nash wrote a nice little poem about tolerance and asked whether in fact being very tolerant was not rather a case of having a rubber spine.

Too much tolerance can have serious ethical consequences. It can also be linked to laziness or cowardice as it provides us with an excuse for doing nothing, when we should be acting. **“All it takes for evil to triumph is for good people to do nothing.” (Edmund Burke.)**

Self-control

Self-control has already been discussed, but once again it is excess at either extreme that is harmful. We need to have sufficient self-control so that we do not lose the respect of other people, but too much may give the impression that we are cold and lack feeling. Suppressing the outward expression of feelings may result in a major explosion when the pressure builds to a dangerous level. We need the safety valve of communication with others – talking to friends or people who can understand our problems so that we can keep them in perspective and maintain a balance in our behaviour. Otherwise we may be inclined to go over and over our problems in our minds, fuelling the fire – seeing only our own side of a question, until we say or do something that we may later have cause to regret. People who easily lose self-control can be very uncomfortable companions. They can cause a great deal of embarrassment to others – and when they have calmed down later, also to themselves.

Perseverance

Sticking at things often means the difference between success and failure. Perseverance has the components of courage and self-control because often it would be easier to give up than to keep on when the going gets tough. It has been found that often B.Grade students achieve more in life than students who find it easy to get As. The A.Grade student may have found that he/she can pass exams easily by a burst of study just before an exam, while a B.Grade student has had to work hard and consistently to achieve a good result. Out in the world of work the person who is prepared to persevere at what may sometimes be rather boring activities, may be the one who achieves the scientific breakthrough in the end. The A. student may flit from job to job – because the jobs are not sufficiently interesting, or are beneath his/her estimate of how much the student is worth, while the B. student climbs the ladder to success by persevering in one field. No employer wants an employee who gives up on a job and throws it in a corner if it gets too difficult – or puts it in the “too hard” basket and leaves it for someone else. **“Where there is a will there is a way,”** is another old saying often brought out to children in response to the claim “I can’t do it. It’s too hard.” **“If at first you don’t succeed, try, try, try again.”** It is the will that makes the difference. Like all virtues, it is excess that causes problems, and excess at one end here means that a person gives up at the least difficulty. At the other extreme, common sense has to prevail. **As Aristotle said, the middle way is rationally determined by people with practical wisdom.** Perseverance does not mean being “pig-headed” and stubborn in the face of a common sense assessment of a situation. Common sense will determine if something is impossible at the present time, or if the cost of success would outweigh the benefits.

Love, peace, kindness and generosity.

All of these virtues can be summed up in “respect and concern for other people.” The philosopher Kant, in his maxim that no-one should use another person for his/her own ends, only goes part of the way. These virtues are telling us what we should do, as well as the negative aspect of what we should not do. Most of us have fallen short here, not because of the amount of harm we have done in our lifetimes, but because we have not done all the good we could have done. “We have left undone those things that we ought to have done,” is more likely to refer to our lives than “We have done those things that we ought not to have done.” Aristotle included generosity and friendliness in his list, and many religions include these virtues in their teachings. The fact that many people who profess such religions do not exercise these virtues to the full, is the result of human weakness, and the temptation to indulge in those weaknesses.

Main Points

Virtues are qualities of character that result in good for ourselves and others.

Virtues are habits of thinking and acting that are acquired through practice.

Aristotle saw virtues as the middle way between extremes, and determined by common sense.

Most religions and philosophers agree on the same virtues.

It is not possible to pass laws to make people virtuous.

Extremes of virtue can be harmful, e.g. tolerance. We need to use ethical principles to judge just what or how much should be tolerated.

Perseverance is often the deciding factor between success and failure, but common sense is needed to decide what is justified perseverance and what is foolishness.

Most of us do not set out to harm other people, but we just neglect to do the good we could have done.

Discussion 14

HUMAN WEAKNESSES or VICES

Values involved – Integrity, community, respect, equity.

Though there is a considerable amount of good resource material available on virtues, little attention has been given to vices. Emphasising the positive is not enough because if we ignore the negative we give it the opportunity to grow unchecked. Vices should not be ignored because they are actions or habits that result in harm to ourselves, to others or to the environment. There are plenty of relevant examples of the vices to be seen around us every day and many would be suitable for discussion, especially with senior forms. Taking an honest look at our own actions can make us feel uncomfortable and perhaps that is why words like “sin” and “guilt” have become unpopular. The use of the words “good” and “bad,” “right” and “wrong” may also be questioned, but “without a moral vocabulary, no form of moral education can even begin.” (Snook 1973)⁶¹

For our purposes here, and in discussion at junior levels, “good” and “right” can be used in relation to those actions that help people and their environment. “Bad” and “wrong” can be used in relation to actions that harm people and their environment. They are words that young people understand. More complex situations and reasoning can be used at senior levels, but the basic principle remains the same. It is not good or right to harm people or the environment.

The Christian Church of the Middle Ages identified “seven deadly sins” – a “sin” being seen as the breaking of a religious principle or law. These sins were sloth, avarice, pride, drunkenness, gluttony, hypocrisy and slander.⁶² Some philosophers have spoken out against the influence of religion on ethics. In the 19th century, for example Nietzsche and Marx saw religion as a means of keeping people confined to their existing social and economic positions. In the 20th century Jean-Paul Sartre saw God as the ultimate threat to human freedom, and Bertrand Russell also saw belief in God as a pernicious fiction that could rob humans of their freedom. Other philosophers like the 18th century Hegel claim that religion and reason are simply saying the same thing in different languages and are quite compatible with one another.

Kant’s Categorical Imperative

The philosopher Immanuel Kant believed that reason alone can tell us what we should do, and that reason is the same for God and human beings alike. His basic moral principle was what he called the “categorical imperative.” - that is **“We should always act in such a way that we can will that the maxim behind our action could be willed as a universal law.”** Put simply, that **“we should always act in such a way that what we choose to do is something that we could wish everyone should do,”** and therefore as a test we can ask, **“What would happen if everyone did that?”** As we look here at the human weaknesses that are condemned by religion, it is quite possible to see that reason alone would also condemn them, and we can ask ourselves, (and our students) if we would like to live in a society where everyone acted like that..

Sloth of course is laziness. This is a simple one. The colonial settlers who came to this country in the 19th century brought with them what was called the Christian work ethic. “By the sweat of your brow you shall earn your bread.” Every primitive community had the same type of ethic – no “bludgers” allowed. Everyone had to do their part if the community was to survive. In

⁶¹ See notes on p78

⁶² Notes on this and following philosophers on p 78

nomadic tribes old people who could no longer keep up with the rest of the tribe and became a burden, would be abandoned for the survival of the community as a whole. It was accepted as part of their life. Compassion may have been felt by close family, but it could not interfere with the survival of the rest. Compassion for the young, the old and those physically unable to support themselves, became a part of many religions, but there was no place for sloth. When a certain amount of work has to be done, laziness on the part of one or more means that an unfair burden is placed on others.

Drunkenness – also a simple one. Drunkenness used to mean being intoxicated with alcohol to the extent of the drunken one losing control over normal functions. In to-day's world, that could be extended to taking drugs. It is the condition of losing control over normal brain and physical functions that is the "sin," not the drinking of a glass of wine or beer – or even two or three. Drugs of course, in any quantity affect the control of normal brain functions. Reason suggests that just like driving a car, it is safer for the individual and every one else around them for the driver to remain strictly in control. Reason would also question why it is necessary to lose control over one's normal brain functions in order to "have a good time." Logic would suggest that losing control over normal brain and physical functions would make a person a ridiculous, or violent, or pathetic figure, rather than an admirable one. It is also difficult to understand how intelligent young people like university students, can have so little respect for themselves that they choose to be seen as a ridiculous figure. The principle of truth would suggest that they are not really the admirable figures they believe they are. A favourite proverb of mine from two thousand years ago, to pass on to young women today, says, "A beautiful woman without discretion and modesty is like a fine gold ring in a pig's snout."⁶³ With alcohol, Aristotle's middle way is the way of common sense. With drugs, reason tells us that, since even one dose can be addictive, and may lead to psychiatric problems later in life, the common sense action is to refuse the first offering. (Play The First Puff. Also relates to smoking and Peer Pressure.)

Slander, of course is telling lies about other people in a way that will harm them. A spoken statement can be slander, but a written statement, where defamatory matter is published in a permanent form is seen as libel, and we have laws to cover this. Gossip or rumour which can be slanderous is difficult to legislate against because it is difficult to pin down exactly who said what, and who said it first. It can be more harmful than libel because it is more difficult to counter, and it often grows with repetition. One related activity which has come into existence with text-messaging and e-mail is individuals or groups sending unpleasant messages to another student or acquaintance. In its extreme, suicides are caused by this. It is a form of bullying, but it could also be slander or libel, which would be subject to legal proceedings. Those who see this type of activity as a "bit of fun" should ask themselves how they would feel if they were the victim of such "fun." If they do not have the ability to feel for other people, they could reason that there could be unpleasant consequences for themselves if such messages were brought out into the public arena and considered to be slander.

Hypocrisy is the practice of professing to believe in a set of rules or standards and judging other people by them – but not living up to those standards personally. Hypocrisy is a form of deception, made worse when those who are in a position of power cannot be trusted to keep within the rules they have made, or claim to believe in. The flower-power movement of the 1960s and 70s was partly the result of a generation deciding that the previous generation had not lived up to the ethical standards they had preached. The young people decided that their elders were

⁶³ Proverbs, Chapter 11:verse 22

hypocrites, and that they themselves were not going to live by the rules that had been set. Strangely enough many of those “angry young men” joined the establishment in their later years, proving perhaps that it isn’t wise to be too sure about how you would act yourself given different times and different circumstances.

Pride goes before a fall as the old saying goes. One of the worst of “vices” is pride, i.e. judging oneself to be worth more than other people, or having an exaggerated idea of our own importance. The Christian religion tells us that we are all equally valuable to God, but if a person has been given extra talents, then extra will be expected from that person – not for their own benefit, but for humanity in general.

Humanism also expects the individual to make the most of him/herself, and includes the assumption that the choices an individual makes should make a real difference in the progress of mankind. Religions can provide a basis for self-esteem, but without religion of some kind, we have to find some other basis for self-esteem. Do we really have value as individuals? All children are important because of their value to those who love them, and because of their potential for the future. As adults though, logically, why should any one of us be important in the scheme of things, unless we earn that place because of the contribution we make to our families and society? Self-respect is probably the middle way between Pride and self-deprecation, (or lack of self-esteem) – and self-respect comes from knowing that we do our best. An excess of self-esteem can become Pride, and if we are not prepared to look honestly at ourselves to judge whether we actually *deserve* esteem, we may see any criticism, no matter how justified, as a personal attack on ourselves or our race.

The ancient Greeks had a word for unjustified self-esteem. They called it “hubris,” a form of arrogance, which in the end, in Greek tragedy, ultimately caused the ruin of the one who had deceived him/herself in this way. Unless they have proved themselves to be so, by the contribution they make to society, it is not justified for any person or group to consider themselves any more important than any other.

Pride portrayed as a virtue

“Pride” is sometimes portrayed as a virtue today in such fields as sport. Teams are hyped up before a game and told, “You’re the best. You can win. You’re playing for Pride.” But what happens to them and their self-esteem if they lose? It is far better to begin a game with respect for the opposition, and a determination to do our best. Only half a century ago, young sportspeople used to be told, “If you win don’t skite. If you lose don’t moan. Always play fair.” No matter what the score, players can maintain their self-respect if they know they have played fair, and played their best right to the end, even if they didn’t win. They will be disappointed to lose, but it will not be a Greek tragedy. Once upon a time games of sport began with the comment from the umpire, “May the best team win,” - and if all involved keep to the rules, it usually does.

Gluttony usually refers to eating to excess, though it could equally apply to self-indulgence in many other ways. Most of the human functions are necessary for the survival of the species, but once again, excess is where the trouble lies. Too much food will cause overweight and accompanying medical or physical problems. Reason tells us that, if we wish to live healthy and active lives, it is better to moderate our intake of food. Gluttony of course in a situation where there is a shortage of food means that others will get less than they need to survive. Gluttony can also manifest itself in sexual appetites with equally adverse effects. Addiction to pornography is a form of gluttony. Once a person has tasted it and gained an appetite for it, the desire increases, and normal sexual relationships become impossible.

Avarice – is defined as an extreme greed for riches, which are often obtained by the exploitation of other people. The “vice” or danger of greed will be examined more extensively under its own heading as there are many situations in which greed can be destructive.

Aristotle saw a virtue as a habit that worked for human well-being and a vice as a habit that worked against it. Each vice needs to be exposed and recognised as such because of the harm vices cause to individuals and other people. We do not have to be so tolerant that vices that harm people or the environment are tolerated as normal and acceptable human behaviour.

Main Points-

Words such as “guilt,” “sin” and “vice” have become unpopular because they have traditionally been associated with religion. They are aspects of human behaviour that are harmful to others as well as the perpetrator.

Selfishness, laziness and greed can also harm the environment.

Drunkenness can be responsible for much of the family violence that occurs.

We need to be able to identify them and talk about them..

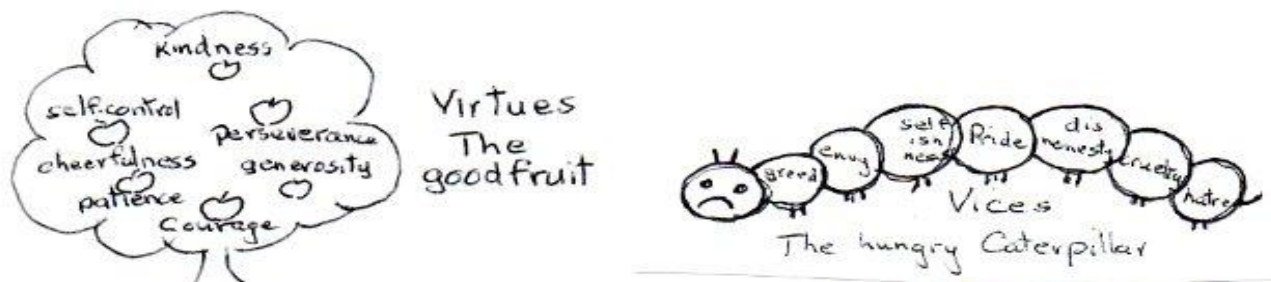
If they are not clearly identified, they can be overlooked.

We need to be honest, and recognise them for what they are.

Pride is not necessarily a virtue. Too much self-esteem can be harmful, especially if it is unjustified.

We should not be so tolerant that harm to people or the environment, is accepted without opposition.

We need to be able to use such words as right and wrong, good and bad.



Notes –

Professor Ivan Snook of Massey University has written a great number of articles about moral education. This comment is from Moral Education, (1973) In D'Cruz & Sheehan, (eds) *Concepts of Education: Philosophical Studies*. Melbourne: Mercy Teachers College. P63.

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900) German philosopher and critic of the Western tradition with its belief in truth, morality and God.

Karl Marx (1818 – 83), known chiefly as the author of “The Communist Manifesto.” Born in Germany, then moved to Paris and finally lived in London.

Jean-Paul Sartre (1905 – 80) French philosopher and social critic.

Bertrand Russell (1872 – 1970) British academic, pacifist and philosopher. Nobel Prize winner in 1950.

George Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770- 1831) German philosopher who had logic at the centre of his philosophical system, and claimed to have integrated all systems. (Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy).

Immanuel Kant (1742 – 1804) emphasized the importance of duty. His “categorical imperative” is quoted from Hinman, *Ethics: A pluralistic approach to moral theory*, p 218

Discussion 15

SELFISHNESS

Values involved – respect, integrity, community, equity,

A young man once said to me, “What’s wrong with being selfish?” He was a very intelligent young man embarking on a career in medicine. He felt at the time that he had logic on his side, and that it would be difficult for anyone to prove that he was wrong. Because so many people today put so much emphasis on individualism rather than the common good, and because the arguments for individualism are so attractive at first sight, more space will be given here to the three “vices,” that can make themselves appear to be less harmful than they really are. Those three are selfishness, envy and greed, all of them vices that are encouraged by individualism.

Individualism

Though there is no doubt that people need initiative and self-confidence to make the most of the talents they have, too much individualism can become selfishness. Concentrating on one’s own well-being usually means a lack of interest in the well-being of others. It can also mean using other people for one’s own ends. Society needs people with courage and initiative, but these virtues need to be qualified by the ethical principles of fairness, honesty and concern for others. Every individual is important in the scheme of things, but the welfare of the society in which a person lives is also important because it affects every individual. Once again it is a matter of the middle way. The recent claims of “rights” of all kinds can emphasize individualism at the expense of community. Communities where individuals need to fence themselves off from their neighbours behind high walls with broken glass on top, will not be happy communities. On the other hand, political systems like Communism and Naziism saw the individual as merely a possession of the state and expendable for the good of the system. (Hinman p143).

Selfishness

An excess of individualism can become selfishness, and selfishness can lead to loneliness. Ayn Rand has been a popular writer of the late 20th century. In “Atlas Shrugged,” her character argues that “to help a person on the grounds of his suffering or his needs is to put a mortgage of zero on your own values.”⁶⁴ The theory of “ethical egoism” maintains that people *should* always act in their own self-interest, and “psychological egoism” claims that people always *do* act in their own self-interest – that even people like Mother Teresa worked for the poor, primarily because it made *her* feel good, so her work was actually in her own self-interest.⁶⁵ These theorists find it difficult to believe that people often *do* act unselfishly, and for the good of others before themselves – even at times against their own self-interest, such as the people who hid Jews and helped them escape during Hitler’s regime.

The British philosopher Thomas Hobbes (1588 – 1679) developed a moral and political theory based on egoism. He disagreed with Aristotle in the thinking that the natural situation of mankind is to desire the good. For Hobbes, the natural life of man is “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short,” and the “right of nature” is a matter of individuals judging for themselves how best to get what they want for themselves.

John Stuart Mill on the other hand, though being a champion of liberty, believed that human beings have a natural though limited basic moral sensitiveness to the needs of others.⁶⁶ This sensitivity can be encouraged in class discussions by emphasis on the Golden Rule – How would you feel if you were in that position?

⁶⁴ Hinman, p120 see notes on p81

⁶⁵ Hinman, p122

⁶⁶ Beauchamp, T., (1991) *Philosophical Ethics*, p131

Applying reason – the principle of Wisdom

If we apply reason to answer the question, “What’s wrong with being selfish?” it is easy to see that the short-term results of being selfish could be very satisfying to the individual, but not to the people around them.

Ayn Rand’s character, who maintained that genuine morality consists precisely in trying not to give in to temptations such as compassion, sounds reasonable as he put it in his own circumstances. He could ignore the consequences to others, and could achieve his success at the expense of others. If we apply Kant’s maxim however, “What would happen if everybody did the same?” reason tells us that such a person could only succeed in an ethical society where others did *not* do the same. Used as a universal law, such egoism would be a case of survival of the fittest – the law of the jungle – and if our character found himself in trouble, or was one of the less powerful in the struggle to get what each person wanted, he would soon see the weakness in the theory. If he says, “It’s all right for *me* to do what is best for me, but I don’t want everybody else to be so selfish,” that is hypocrisy, so he has added one “vice” to another. In the long term, selfishness rebounds on the person who has been selfish, and the selfish person may find that it could have been in his/her own self-interest to have been unselfish. A truly successful society would be one in which every citizen put the interests of others before his/her own, because while he/she was looking after the well-being of the others, the others would be doing the same for him/her.

A fable about the selfish man

Simon was a selfish young man. He could see nothing wrong with being selfish – to always do what he wanted to do, and never to put himself out for anyone else. He hadn’t been a particularly unpleasant young man, but gradually things began to happen to him, though he couldn’t see it for himself because everywhere he looked he could only see his own reflection and his own desires. He couldn’t see when his neighbour was in trouble, he could only see his own needs and so he became very short-sighted and almost blind.

He couldn’t see that his wife and his children needed some of his time, so they went on to build their lives without him.

When danger threatened anyone, he turned and ran because all he could think of was his own safety, so he became a coward.

He didn’t want to hear his neighbour’s cry for help, so he allowed himself to become deaf.

He couldn’t make real friends because friendship is reciprocal, and he was always so busy doing his own thing that he didn’t have time for theirs.

He couldn’t see how exciting the world could be for a man who could see and hear and had courage.

He couldn’t look up and see the stars - because everywhere he looked there was his own face reflected back at him.

Then one day he fell into trouble himself, and he wanted to see – to see if there was anyone around who could help.

He wanted to hear – to hear if anyone was answering his calls.

He wanted courage – to get himself back on his feet again.

He realized that perhaps he had been wrong.

So he looked again – and he could see clearly, – and he saw that he was surrounded by people who couldn’t see him because their own faces were in the way.

He listened – and he could hear.

He could hear them all talking so loudly about their own affairs that they couldn’t hear his cries for help – and he lay there and cried.

He cried for himself and all the things that were missing in his life - and he cried for them, because he knew that some day all of these selfish people would probably find themselves in his place, and at last he knew how it would be if the whole world was full of selfish people.

Main points –

Aristotle's "Middle way" is the aim.

Individualism can become selfishness.

Individualism has been made to appear as a virtue, but an excess of some virtues can become a vice.

It can appear to be very satisfying in the short term to be selfish.

The long term consequences can be harmful to the individual and those around him/her.

We need individuals with courage and enterprise as leaders for a better society - as long as other people are not harmed in the process, and individualism does not become selfishness.

Could we wish for a society where everyone is equally selfish?

Selfishness leads to loneliness.

Notes –

Hinman - p 120. Hinman quotes from pp984 and 993 of "Atlas Shrugged" Speech from the character John Galt.

Hinman's notes on Ayn Rand state that much contemporary work about ethical egoism is inspired by Libertarianism, and that her novels provide a powerful literary expression of the ethical egoist's standpoint. (p161)

Rand, A. (1964) *The virtue of selfishness*. New York: Signet. Novels - *Atlas Shrugged*. *The Fountainhead*.

Discussion 16

GREED

Values involved – respect, community, integrity, environmental sustainability.

There are so many things we can be greedy about. As small children we can be greedy about food and want the largest piece of cake. We can be greedy about toys and want more and more. We won't share, even though we aren't playing with them. As adults we can be greedy for money and possessions, and no matter how much we have it is never enough.

Some countries or generations of people can be greedy about the world's resources, using far more than they need without regard for generations to come. It is not only material things that can prompt greed.

Greed for admiration

With teenagers we call it "showing off." It can be "showing off" in the way a car is driven – or how much alcohol can be drunk – by smoking cigarettes – or experimenting with drugs or other dangerous behaviour. Adults who have not "grown up" in their ability to reason, also show off in this way. It could be by the size of a house or a boat – or an investment portfolio – or a particular make of car – or a wardrobe of clothes. These things are symbols that show that the owner should be admired. Those who are greedy for money and possessions never seem to be able to get enough of them. There is always something else they could add to their "pile." They become bloated to the point where they cannot see straight any more and they feel they cannot miss out on a chance to accumulate more of what they desire. Greed inevitably distorts a person's vision and reasoning. Not being able or willing to see straight, a person may begin to be a little careless about such things as honesty and how they make their pile, and the "pile" starts to get a bit of a lean on. Greed for high interest rates can lead to investing in very dubious propositions. Greed inevitably leads to destruction of some kind – a little more dishonesty in the accumulation of wealth and the whole pile may collapse on top of the greedy one, harming many other people in the process. White-collar crime is a typical example of this.

Greed for power or position

Greed for power or positions of importance, works in the same way. World wars in the past have been caused because the leaders of countries have been greedy for power. Power in their own country is not enough. Not satisfied to be leaders in their own countries, some leaders have set out to take over surrounding countries and extend their power over them. Reason is abandoned and greed takes over. The effects on their own country are ignored, and the fact that thousands of people may die does not count in such a leader's greed for power. Once headed down that path, the final result can only be destruction of some kind. In the corporate world, greed for promotion can destroy friendships and marriages. Greed for power, money and possessions can lead to the dishonesty that causes the collapse of major institutions. The first steps down that path may only be a matter of cutting corners, getting around regulations, and influencing decisions, but dishonesty escalates, and steps that once the person would not have considered, become easier to take until there is a point of no return. The greed for possessions and position has made us a consumer society, and is helping us damage and possibly destroy our environment .

Ambition

An excess of ambition can lead to greed for power or money or position. Aristotle's unnamed virtue recognized that people need to have some initiative and not be lazy or apathetic, but also recognized the danger in having too much of this quality. An excess of ambition can distort a

person's vision of what is important in life. Is it position and money, or is the cost of acquiring these things going to be too great in the long term?

Time

One area today in our everyday lives that can have very negative effects on ourselves and the others around us is our use of time. It is difficult to be specific about the reason for this, but greed is certainly involved.

Once in this country, there was a forty-hour working week for most wage-earners, that had been fought for and finally achieved. People who worked on their own account could work much longer hours if they chose, and expected to profit from the extra work, but the forty-hour week allowed most families time to relax together at week-ends. Then we were told there was a demand by the people for shops to be open over the week-end – then demands from employers that staff should work the hours that were needed to answer the demand for all week shopping. Women were able to get part time work to fit in with the routine of their families, and somehow along the line people within many families have come to pass like ships in the night, rushing from job, to school, to gym, to after school activities, to after work activities, with little leisure time to spend together. Stress levels rise. The precious spare time each one has, is committed to his/her own personal interests, or given up for others, while large depersonalised institutions in their competition for profits, demand more and more time from their employees, who in turn have less and less time to spend on families or community activities. The technology that was supposed to make life easier and provide more spare time does not seem to have achieved that end.

Main points -

It is not only food about which we can be greedy.

Identify things that different age groups can be greedy about.

Adults, as well as teenagers can be greedy for admiration. With teenagers we call it “showing off,” and it can lead to dangerous behaviour.

Adults can also “show off” by living beyond their means and running up debt that they may not be able to pay.

Greed can lead to carelessness and dishonesty in business practices.

People can be greedy about their time. They may want it all to themselves and have none to share for family or community.

The greed of a present generation can lead to misuse of the world's resources, and future generations will suffer.

Greed leads to destruction.



Discussion 17

ENVY

Values involved – respect, community, integrity

There is probably no-one who can honestly say that they have never envied someone else for owning or achieving something we would have liked to have owned or achieved ourselves. A little bit of envy is not a bad thing if it prompts us to make an effort to achieve for ourselves, but once again it is excess that causes problems. The envy that is damaging is the type of feeling that involves a grudging discontent about the possessions or achievements of others, but does not take into account the work that has often had to be done to achieve those things. Two people at school may have had the same amount of talent, but one may have worked long hours to improve to the point that their talent is recognised and rewarded, while the other may have sat on the sidelines, contented to watch and perhaps criticize, and finally to say, “John was lucky to get what he’s got.” Few people achieve their goals by talent alone. The question is whether we would be willing to pay the price to perfect our own talents.

The freedom that was so precious to the colonists of the new world has recently been seen as responsible for the amount of stress in their descendants’ lives today. Because freedom allows individuals to achieve financial success, others envy the possessions and positions they have acquired, and endeavour to “keep up with the Jones.” Where status is measured by possessions, and many people have climbed that ladder from a standing start, others feel themselves to be failures if they have not done the same.

What are we likely to envy?

As small children it is likely to be a toy or food of some kind. “Waaaah!!! I want his balloon.” The child cries, and an envious child is likely to create a considerable fuss until he/she is pacified in some way.

Teenagers have a different system. They do not create a fuss in front of their friends – only at home. They put the pressure on their parents and make things difficult there. “I want -- whatever the fashionable brand of whatever it is at the moment ---. Everybody else has them.”

“I want to go to that concert next week. Mary’s parents are letting her go.”

“Why do we never have an overseas holiday? Jo’s parents are taking her to Australia these holidays.”

Adults can be just as envious as children, they merely want different things.

The grass over the fence

When people are always desiring something that someone else has, they are very likely to overlook the good things they have themselves. They can make their own lives and the lives of others around them miserable because the only things they really see are those that are out of their reach. “The grass over the fence is always greener,” only in their case it is more likely to be the car, the clothes, the boat, the house or the job that pays better. They miss the fact that they can have a great deal of fun on a camping holiday, or in a small tin boat, and that a car is really a means of getting from A. to B. Envious people can go right through life never really enjoying the things they have because they are constantly telling themselves, “If only I had ---I’d be happy,” but by the time they have got --- there’s always something else that is just out of their reach. The person who thinks in this way is only harming him/herself and those near them, but this type of envy can be carried further and a great many other people can be harmed.

- **Envy can lead to stealing and dishonesty**

Most people acquire their possessions over the years by hard work and saving, but envy can cause others to look for easier ways. Stealing can seem an easier way to acquire what other people have worked hard and waited for. White-collar crime is often the result of envy, and corporate crime is worse in its way than common theft. Wanting the biggest corporation or higher profits can lead to takeover bids, or schemes that can result in the loss of money for small shareholders. Those responsible are usually people with high I.Qs who already have a high standard of living compared with others who may shop-lift through envy of those whose clothes have the latest brand names.

It is understandable that children who do not have possessions that others have, can be tempted to steal. It is hard for children to see others with things that they know their parents cannot or will not provide for them, but it is the responsibility of all the adults around them, not only to help them to understand that life is not going to treat everyone equally, but also to try to make things a bit more equal for them. Young people need to be able to see that if they steal to get the things they want, the consequences overall will be unpleasant. The consequences of the first time a young person is caught stealing should be very unpleasant for them, because their level of reasoning only goes as far as their own feelings. Their level of reasoning needs to be raised until they reach the place where they can see and feel for the results of their actions on their victims, but unless there is some form of unpleasant consequence to themselves, there is no motivation for them to *want* to see any further, or to reason at a higher level. The type of envy that leads to stealing affects a whole community, and it is not confined to children, or those who are poor.

An antidote for children

Some children today grow up surrounded by people who are prepared to acquire possessions dishonestly, and who, by their example show their children that this is how life is to be lived. They need other role models and other teachers who can help them see that there are other ways of looking at life. Compassion is needed, but not the excess of compassion that encourages them to blame all their problems on other people. They need to see that they can make choices for themselves. If they do their best at school and at work, in time they will be able to acquire their possessions honestly, and will earn self-respect and the respect of other people for doing so. In the meantime they should enjoy the things that are within their reach and make the most of the opportunities that are available to them. The richest people in the world are not necessarily the happiest.

Main Points –

A little bit of envy may prompt us to make more effort in our lives.

An excess of envy can lead to a wasted life.

All through life, there are going to be situations where we could envy others.

We need to understand what is important in life, and what we have the ability to achieve.

We need to appreciate the things we have and make the most of them.

Envy can lead to stealing.

White-collar crime is worse than simple theft, because the perpetrators are not usually poor.

There should be unpleasant consequences for young people the first time they are caught stealing, because otherwise they may have no motivation to want to change.

Children need role-models who can show them a better way.

They do not need an excess of compassion that allows them to blame all their problems on others.

TEMPTATION AND MAKING CHOICES

Values involved – respect, integrity, community, excellence

Stage three in Kohlberg's levels of moral reasoning was the stage at which a child desires approval and will do things that will win the desired, "Good girl!" or "Good boy!" responses. We may say we don't care what others think about us, but if we are honest with ourselves, most of us would rather win the approval of others than their disapproval. We also have a fair idea of the kind of behaviour that is generally approved and that which is not. Our problem is that temptation often steps in between what we feel we ought to do and our actually doing it. Most of us are reasonably kind and reasonably law-abiding, and most of our failures are in the field of leaving undone those things that we ought to have done, or that we know we could have done to make other people's lives a bit easier. Our problem is that temptation steps in between our knowing what we should or could do and our actually doing it. E.g. "I know I should stop to help that person, but I don't want to miss that T.V. programme. Someone else is sure to stop."

"I know I accepted that invitation to J---'s birthday party, but a better offer has come up."

"I know I shouldn't spend the money on that new C.D., but I'd really like to have it."

"I know I promised Dad I'd mow the lawn, but my mate wants me to come over to his place."

The power of temptation

Temptation makes short-term rewards look highly attractive and it dims our reasoning about the probable long-term consequences of our actions if we give in to it. If we start to reason, we find ourselves quickly distracted by the brightness of those short-term gains. The future is a long way off at the moment. It is now that counts. Look at the above examples, think of others.

If we do not feel like stopping to help someone in trouble, what would happen if everyone felt the same way? Why should anyone stop when we are in trouble ourselves? Do we want to live in a world like that?

If we give our word, but do not keep our promises, why should anyone trust us in the future?

People can find more trust-worthy friends or withdraw privileges, and we will be the losers in the long run.

If we use money for pleasure that is actually needed for rent or food or other necessities, we will soon find ourselves in financial trouble. Selling our second hand C.Ds may not solve our problems.

Different ages have different temptations.

What are the things that tempt teenagers? Some may remain the same through many stages of our lives but some are particularly relevant now. It could be very tempting to do many other things instead of doing your school homework, but will that lead you away from your long-term goals? There is a long life ahead of you. If you want a good job that pays well it will not pay to give in to temptation now. If you want the things money can buy, but you don't want to put in the hard work that gets you there, you could become a thief, but the long-term consequences of that sort of career are not particularly attractive. The temptation to steal or take drugs can be strong, but drugs can have a long-term effect on your brain and health, and getting a criminal record can prevent you from travelling to certain countries or taking up specific careers.

No matter how great the temptation, it is easier to resist trying drugs for the first time, than it is to give up once you are hooked. The first puff is the most dangerous. As you get older the things that tempt you may change, but short-term gain will always be easier and seemingly more attractive than the way that will lead you to the much greater long-term gain.

Courage and self-control

Temptation will always try to prevent us from thinking about the possible long-term consequences of our actions. Courage and self-control are needed to resist it, and it will not be easy. Like all accomplishments, the more we practice, the better we become until it becomes easier and almost becomes automatic. When tempted we need to think about the consequences of our actions on other people and upon ourselves. It is claimed by some psychologists that teenagers rarely consider the long-term consequences of their actions, but many adults do not do this either. It is more likely a result of the level of ethical reasoning of the individual, and whether he/she has been taught from childhood to think about consequences. Even then, not all have the courage and self-control to make wise choices.

Making choices

When faced with decisions that involve temptation of some kind, that small voice of reason in our heads says, “You should really do ----,” but temptation speaks louder and says, “But wouldn’t it be much more gratifying to do -----.” Then we choose.

We can choose not to listen any further to the little voice that could advance quite a few more arguments as to why it would be wiser *not* to do what seems so immediately attractive.

We can choose to listen a bit more to the small voice and take a bit longer to decide what to do. It is up to us. We have free will. No-one *makes* us choose one way or the other unless we are physically or psychologically threatened and we do not have the courage to resist. It will always take courage to choose what may not be a course popular with family or friends or the group within which we move.

Conscience

It used to be said that the little voice that speaks to us reminding us of what we should do or should not do was our conscience, and people of various religions could see it as the voice of their God. It was then argued by others who were anti-religion, that a conscience produced feelings of guilt and was used by religion as a means of controlling people. The conscience of religious people it was argued, was no more than a reflection of what their religions taught them. Whatever we believe about a conscience, most people have the ability to reason, and reasoning about the possible long-term consequences of our actions is the best way of dealing with temptation, regardless of whether our choice of action will meet with the approval of our immediate group. We will be affecting our own lives and those of many around us and we make our own choices.

Temptation at any age

Becoming an adult does not reduce temptation, but if we have practiced courage and self-control it will make it easier to make wise choices. The temptations of laziness, money, sex, possessions – self-gratification of any kind - are always waiting for us. Whether we listen to the voice of reason will always be our own choice and we cannot blame others for the choices we make.

Note - Through the different age groups in schools many different examples of temptation will be relevant and should be discussed. Years 9 and 10 will not have all the same temptations as year 13 but the principles remain the same. The students themselves will be able to suggest what the main temptations are for their age groups.

Main Points –

Temptation steps into the gap between our knowing what we ought to do, and our actually doing it.

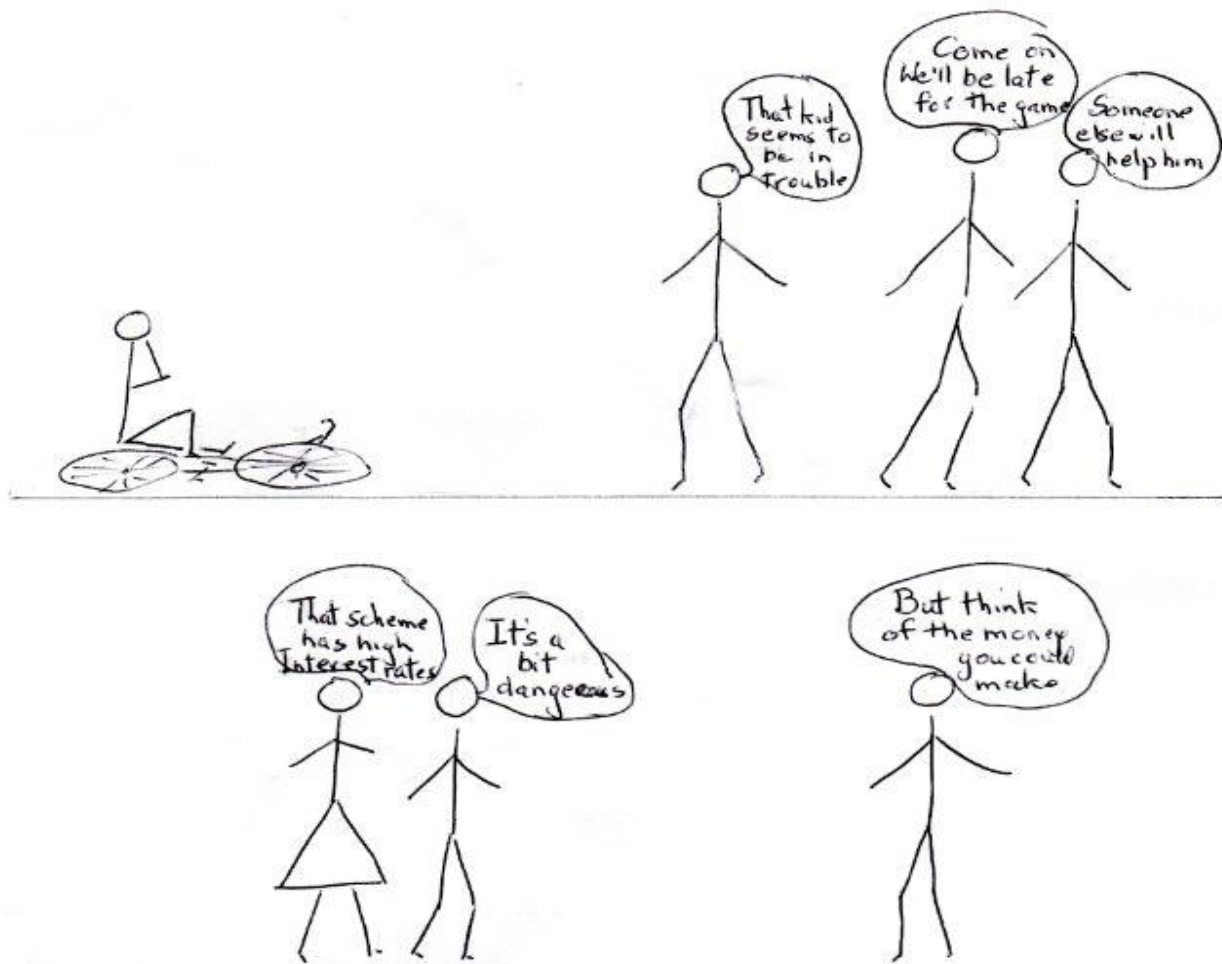
Our conscience could be seen as the voice of reason or the voice of God – or both.

Temptation makes short-term rewards look highly attractive, and overshadows long-term consequences

Different ages have different temptations, and we are never free of them.

We have free will. We are free to choose.

Wisdom, courage and self-control are needed if we are to make wise choices



Discussion 19

STRESS

Values involved – respect, integrity, community.

Doctors tell us that stress is one of the fastest increasing problems for people today and that stress-related illnesses are on the rise.

Some stress such as that caused by illness is often due to natural causes, and as such has always been around. There has always been a certain amount of stress for people who worry about losing or getting a job. During the Great Depression of the 1930s a good proportion of the population of most industrialized countries faced such stress. Doctors, lawyers, teachers, professional people of all kinds were not immune and there was very little in the way of social welfare. Families were split up while fathers were sent to work camps and mothers struggled to feed their children.

Wartime brought another period of great stress. Today we live in a reasonably affluent society, where social welfare and unemployment benefits are a part of life, and though we talk about child poverty, few people here experience the poverty that is all too common in third world countries. So why should stress be on the rise, especially amongst those of society who are comparatively financially comfortable?

The answer seems to be that a great deal of stress is caused by the actions of other people and is preventable. Annette Baier, a feminist philosopher, has said that trust is the glue that holds society together. To understand why this would be so, we have to look beyond the word “trust” and examine the reasons *why* we trust people and the answer is simply that we can rely on them. They will keep their word. They will treat us fairly and not try to cheat or deceive us. They will not lie to us. They will be concerned about our well-being and will not use us in pursuit of their own ends. In short, they will stick to our ethical principles. If in turn, they can trust the rest of us to act in the same way, then we *do* have a glue that will hold society together and we will lessen stress for everyone.

The home

Stress in the home is usually caused by basic human weaknesses. Selfishness or greed on the part of individual members of the family. Lack of concern for other people’s problems. Simple things like not phoning if an arrangement has to be changed, or not fulfilling a commitment to do something, which can also cause a whole chain of stressful events. A teenager saying in the morning, “Oh! Sorry Mum, I didn’t put petrol in the car last night like you asked me to,” can be the last straw for a busy mother who has to get the children to school and then go to work herself. Greed and envy can cause a great deal of financial stress. The attitude that everything we want can be bought on credit causes enormous stress when the accounts come in, and we have to face the truth about our spending. What are other things that can add stress at home?

At school

Discussions on this subject can start by identifying the different stresses pupils and teachers face. Communicate. Examine the situation using ethical principles What do teachers do that add stress to students’ lives?

What do students do that add stress to teachers’ lives?

Is anyone being treated unfairly? What are the effects on the others around them?

The overall aim of education is for students to be enabled to achieve their individual potential and to become useful and happy citizens of this country, but teachers also need to be able to teach to their full potential. The same human virtues and weaknesses can help or prevent the achievement of these aims. Most teachers start out on their teaching career full of enthusiasm and ideals, and with a genuine desire to help every one of their pupils to make a success of their lives. They *want*

to teach well. Unfortunately some pupils make life difficult for teachers and other pupils. Ethical reasoning is not a habit with them. They do not have the wisdom to see that education is valuable. They are not fair to the teacher or other pupils who want to learn. They are not honest in accepting the fact that it is often their own fault when things go wrong for them, and they do not care enough for other people to treat them with respect.

Confronted every day with the stress unwilling and unco-operative students add to their lives and the lives of other students, teachers can become disillusioned, and find it difficult to teach to the best of their ability. Teachers are not perfect either, and an unwise, unfair teacher will soon lose the respect and co-operation of pupils.

The workplace

Stress in the workplace is caused by the usual human weaknesses. Greed for profit on the part of management. Actions of other workers who are greedy for promotion at any cost. Selfishness or lack of concern for other peoples' problems, whereas a little give and take could lessen the burdens of all involved. Envy of others and the nastiness or bullying that can result from envy. Lack of self-control and lack of willingness to see humour in a situation. Above all, lack of reliability. In the workplace a whole chain of stressful events can result from one person who has been unreliable or careless.

The community

Stress in the community can be caused by the same weaknesses.

What are some of the things that neighbours do to add stress to the lives of others?

How could they avoid this?

Inconsiderate neighbours who keep noisy parties going to all hours; who borrow things and do not return them, or return them in a damaged condition; who park cars over other people's driveways; burn rubbish and fill neighbours' houses with smoke; who don't do their share of child-minding or community work. The list is endless.

Lack of communication is a major cause of stress

We should never just *assume* that someone will do something. There may have been a misunderstanding. Someone may not have heard an instruction. Communicate, check and recheck. Much stress can be caused by misinformation or the lack of information, i.e. getting at the truth as to why people acted in a certain way. If the teenager who didn't put petrol in the car had been prevented by some unforeseeable crisis, and explains that immediately, then stress levels don't rise, but if there is no valid reason, then the parents' stress levels rise higher and higher adding fuel to the fire. "Why didn't you tell me? We could have filled it last night. Now I'll be late for work. You won't have the car again for a fortnight. Why do you always have to add to my load?" With communication at the right time, such problems can usually be amicably settled, and everyone's stress levels can be lowered. A compromise can usually be found that will share the load fairly. Suggestions as to what should be done? Perhaps the teenager could offer to get up early to help in some way. Concern and respect for other people helps to lessen the stress level for everyone.

An effect of individualism

People who think no further than the action that is convenient for themselves can cause a great deal of inconvenience and stress to others. The promotion of individualism and self-esteem as important aspects of human character does little for the common good of society unless they are accompanied by the ethical principles and guidelines that are needed to help them raise their level of reasoning from a concern for their own advantage to a concern for other people. Choice has also been seen as important, but now psychologists are beginning to think that too much choice

also causes stress and can lead to regrets about making the wrong choice. When people have little choice about what action they should take, they are more likely to make the best of the situation they find themselves in and gain satisfaction from doing their best at it.

The technological age

Technology has brought instant communication. It is available day and night – even if the phone is off, the message will be there in the morning, but excess causes stress. Children are suffering from lack of sleep because their mates send messages at all hours of the night. Even the answering machine, though it is a useful tool for people who have to be absent from their base, can be abused by those who use it as a tool for their own selfish ends, i.e. to avoid interruption while they continue their own work. A business that has a genuine interest in its customers would not add to their stress levels, but would employ extra help to be sure that their customers can communicate with a human being. Like all the virtues – excess can make a good thing into a bad one. There was a lot to be said for religion and a Sabbath Day. As an antidote to stress, perhaps we could all turn those phones off for one day of the week, or go back to having one day of the week for family recreation with all the shops shut. With all our technological “organisers” we ought to be able to organise that. New laws to avoid stress in the workplace are not going to eliminate stress in the lives of people who are running to catch up with home and work pressures 24 hours a day and seven days a week. Nor can we pass laws or invent machines to make people more considerate of others.

Main Points –

Much stress is caused by other people and is preventable.

A whole chain of stressful events can be caused by one person being careless or inconsiderate. The vices of selfishness, laziness, greed and lack of self-control are prime causes of stress to others.

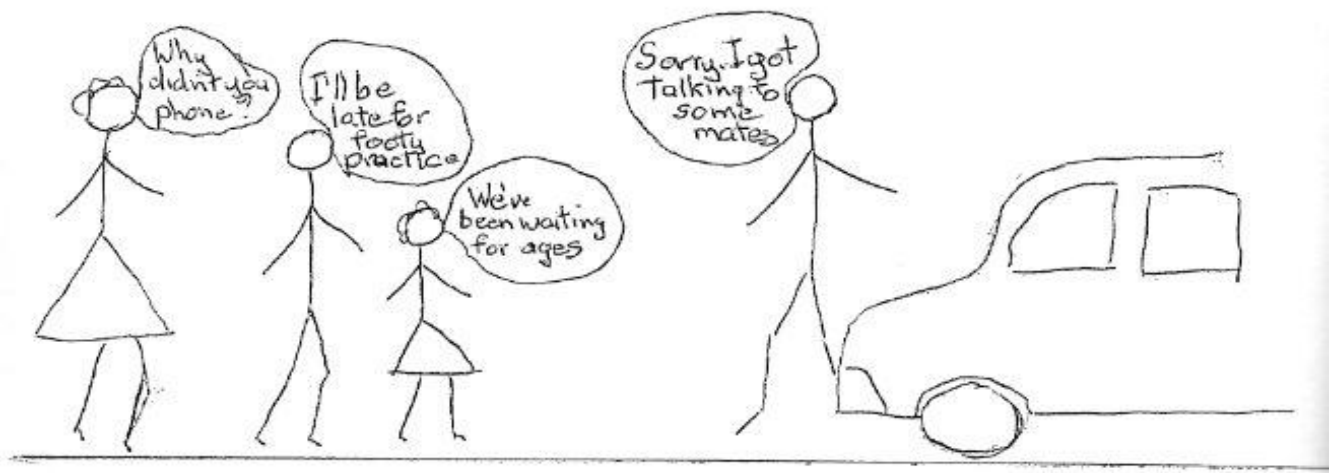
Stress in the home, school workplace and wider community have the same type of cause.

Stress can be minimised by other people who exercise the virtues of fairness, kindness, honesty and cheerfulness.

Bullying at school or in the workplace has its roots in the vices.

An excess of individualism can raise the stress levels of others.

Much stress can be caused by lack of communication that leads to misunderstanding.



Discussion 20

NEW SITUATIONS

Values involved – Community, respect, integrity, equity, excellence.

We all face new situations at some time, and few of us are so confident that we are not concerned about how we should act, or what will be expected of us. We need to realize that we are not alone in finding this frightening, and that it takes courage to enter a new environment.

We could say, “I am too self-conscious to do that,” or “I am too shy to go into that situation.” It can be true that we are self-conscious or shy and that it will be hard for us, but what are our options? We can either stay within our own comfort zones and our present situations, or we can face up to the difficulties ahead of us and step bravely into the unfamiliar, knowing that all through our lives, we will be faced with such choices. Each time we conquer our fears however we will be stronger to face the next hurdle. Just like an athlete training for a race we will find that our fitness increases. If we look at the hurdle and say, “It’s going to be hard. I’m not going to try,” that will be the end of what could have been a promising career.

New Zealanders

All of us who live in New Zealand have either taken that step into the unfamiliar ourselves, or are the descendants of people who did. Our early settlers of whatever race faced months of journeying in small vessels to an unknown land, to face more difficulties than most of us will ever be called upon to face. They came of their own free will from countries that were over-populated, to make a better life for themselves and their children. This is who we are. We are descendants of free people who chose to make a journey into the unknown. There are common situations that we all have to face. Children move to new schools and leave friends behind. Students leave college and go to tertiary institutions. Students leave the education system and go into the work-force. Workers move from one position to another and have to learn new skills. Couples get married and instead of being individuals, responsible only to themselves, they become partners in a life-long enterprise, and responsible for the lives of others.

Immigrants –

As our country becomes multicultural, more of us face unfamiliar situations, and even more problems. As immigrants settle into a new country, they need even more courage than those who are here already. As they enter new situations like new schools and new homes for children, new workplaces for adults, new communities and new languages and different customs, the basic principles that help us make ethical decisions can help. Whether you are a New Zealander moving to a different job and a different district, or a new immigrant to whom practically everything is new, the principles are the same.

Wisdom

Find out as much as you can about the situation you will be going into. Ask for advice from those who have already done it. Accept that customs may be different and be prepared to adapt wherever necessary. Think about the long-term consequences of the change. What effect is your presence going to have on other people? Remember why you came here.

Justice

Be fair to everyone with whom you are associated. Do not expect other people to “carry” you when you should be able to stand on your own feet. Others have managed it. Why shouldn’t you? Do your share in making an effort to settle in and don’t just feel sorry for yourself. Meet other people half way, or go the extra mile yourself. Other people have burdens of their own to carry. Try not to add to them.

Truth

Be honest with yourself. Yes, it is going to be hard. It will be especially hard for new immigrants coming to live in a different land, but face the truth about why you came. Face the truth about your new land. If you are a refugee, you may not have specifically chosen to come to New Zealand, but there is a reason why you are here and not in your original homeland. What are your alternatives? Are you doing the best you can or are you blaming other people for your shortcomings and constantly looking backwards?

Love

Successful integration into a new situation depends most of all on the attitude of the people who are already settled in the situation a stranger is coming into. How do you act towards people who are coming into your “patch?” If it is at school, do you welcome new students and help them feel more comfortable? Do you show them around, or do you add to their fears by making fun of them or ignoring them? In a new job do you help a new worker, show them around, explain anything unusual, warn them about potential dangers and problems – ask them to sit with you at lunch? In a community do you welcome new people who have come to live near you, offer information that may be needed and help until they get settled?

The Golden Rule

The Golden Rule covers most problems that could arise. Ask yourself how you would feel in a new situation and what you would like in the way of help – then see that you do the same for others. The same applies to new immigrants. Ask yourself how you would feel if you were happily living in your own country with your own customs, and then large numbers of people arrived expecting you to change to accommodate their customs. Try to see the other person’s point of view. Put yourself in their place. This way you will be making the world a better place for yourself and for people who may not begin with the knowledge you have, but who may be able to contribute a great deal in the future.

We may not always be able to return the help we have received, to the same people who have given us help, but by helping someone else who needs it we will be passing it on to those who need it more. One thing is for sure, if everyone does the same, you will never be lacking help if you should ever become the one in need.

Main Points –

It takes courage to enter a new environment or to tackle new things.

Each time we conquer fear, we become stronger.

New Zealanders are all descendants of people who took a step into the unknown.

Be prepared to learn and change if necessary.

Don’t blame other people for your own shortcomings.

Always be prepared to welcome and help other people who come into a new environment.

Think how you would feel in the circumstances, and how you would like other people to treat you.

Discussion 21

THE WORLD OF WORK

Values involved – Community, integrity, respect, excellence, environmental sustainability.

One of the new situations most of us encounter will be going to work for the first time. The original settlers and the new colonists of this land had a very strong work ethic – and they needed it. If they didn't work, they didn't eat. At first, most new arrivals settled on the land and set out to grow enough food to feed their families. Later, others provided the services that new settlements needed, and often labour was exchanged and goods were bartered as the settlements struggled to survive. Nobody except the very young and the very infirm were excused from work. Children and the aged were given work that was suitable to their abilities, and amongst colonists, practical skills were every bit as valued as academic ability. In fact, new settlers without the practical skills that were needed to build houses and grow crops were often looked down on by others to whom they would have considered themselves superior back "home." Most new settlers set out to learn and do their share. Those who were not prepared to learn and work left for lives elsewhere. Without easy access to the materials and services that had been available in their homes of origin, New Zealanders became the original "Do it your-selves," who could fix practically anything with a piece of number 8 wire, and this tradition continues. (For the benefit of those further removed from the land today, number 8 wire is thick, strong, but also pliable. Modern high tensile wire is thin and strong, but not pliable.)

The work ethic is not quite so clear today. In the past, in bad economic times when there was not enough paying work to provide jobs for all, the people of this country, through their government and their taxes, provided work, food and a small wage for men without jobs. During the Great Depression of the 1930s, men from all walks of life were sent to plant the huge forests that were to be harvested many years later, and to break the stones that made the metal roads. In a communal way of life such as primitive societies and colonial settlements, laziness or dodging work and responsibilities was not acceptable, but people who really needed help would be cared for. The work and responsibility for married women was generally centred round caring for the home and children, and men were expected to provide for, and help care for the children they had fathered. A common standard for judging a man was that he should be "a good provider." Though our conditions of living have changed, the ethical principles are unchanging. If we do not do our fair share, we place an extra burden on others.

Children were always expected to do their share. In early colonial days, as they grew older and communities flourished, work became available, and often necessary, outside the small block of land originally settled. Young people had to "go to work," and since they could leave school at twelve, many went to work instead of to further education. Just like today, young people who wanted someone to pay them for their work, had to have something to barter in return. When a young person has no skills to offer and there are a lot of other unskilled people looking for work, the law of supply and demand operates. Unskilled work will not pay as well as skilled work. Going into the workforce therefore, means that if we want to receive good pay, we must have something to offer that an employer will pay good money for.

So what qualities and abilities do you have that you can sell to an employer?

First an employer will look for the skills that he needs so that he can make a profit from an employee's work, but there are qualities beyond skills that are valuable, and one of the most valuable is reliability. An unreliable employee is a liability rather than an asset, because the

results can affect many other people. The best advertisement for a business is a satisfied customer, but a customer who has been let down or offended becomes a very bad advertisement. An employer also values an employee who can be trusted – to be honest – to be fair – to treat customers and other workers with respect. These qualities or lack of them can often only be discovered after a person has been employed for a while, but such qualities will lead to the employee being given more responsibility and therefore more pay. Young people entering the world of work will meet different people who will provide different examples for them to follow. Be careful whom you choose to follow. Taking “perks” without permission is stealing and a good rule is not to be a party to anything you would not like to have exposed in public. An employee who deliberately wastes material, his own time, or other workers’ time is also stealing from his employer, but an employer who does not pay a fair day’s pay for a fair day’s work is stealing from his employee.

“Rights” have produced much discussion and conflict in the workplace over the last fifty years, but “rights” are confrontational and should also be reciprocal. An employee is not the only person to have “rights,” and it has always been the case that, “He who pays the piper calls the tune.” If an employee claims that he/she has a right to dress or look as individual as he/she pleases, it would also have to be conceded that an employer has a right to employ whom he pleases, and if the employer feels that because of the way an employee dresses or acts, he/she is not a good advertisement for the business, then the best solution could be a parting of the ways, rather than to claim that one person’s rights take precedence over another’s. A workplace will be a happier place if employers and employees respect each other, communicate with each other, and try to understand each other’s point of view, rather than being confrontational, because in the end, they need each other.

Profit and principles

Because we have been a young and developing country, many people who started their working lives by working for other people, took the opportunity to start businesses of their own. This required courage and perseverance, because they had to give up a regular wage, and take on the responsibility of obtaining enough work and remuneration for themselves and their families to live on, and to pay the bills that would have to be paid. ***Profit is not a dirty word. It is excess profit, made at the expense of other people or the environment that causes harm.*** Without making a profit a business would not survive and be able to offer employment to other people. If it does not make a profit, a business will fail, affecting many other people to whom money is owed for services and materials.

Business ethics are dealt with in more detail later, but the same ethical principles are required from employers and employees.

Wisdom - We should be sensible.

Justice - We should be fair.

Truth – We should be honest.

Love - We should be kind. Treat others as we would like to be treated ourselves if we were in the same position..

Finally, the work we choose to do should be work that will contribute to a better world, and not harm ourselves, other people or the environment.

Main points -

From primitive times, people who lived in communities have always been expected to do their share of work that needs to be done for the community to eat and survive.

In more recent times, if there has not been enough paid employment available, governments have provided paying work so that people will not starve.

Laziness or dodging work has never been acceptable because it places more burdens on others.
A person starting work must have something to sell that an employer will pay for.
Skilled work will usually command more pay than unskilled work.
Qualities of character are also valued by employers.
Young people will need to choose what examples they will follow.
“Rights” are confrontational and should be reciprocal, not one-sided.
Employers as well as employees should be fair, honest and not use others for their own ends.
They need each other.
The work we do should help make a better world, and not harm people or the environment.

Diagram – Are you a worker or a leaner?



Too many leaners make a heap.

Discussion 22

BUDGETING

Values involved – Excellence, integrity, respect, equity.

One of the skills we need to learn as we move into the work-force is budgeting.

When we looked at the world of work we realized that today we use money as a substitute for goods that once people bartered between each other. People who work for wages are actually bartering their work for money with which to buy something else they need. The more in the way of skill they have to offer to an employer, the more money they will receive. A manufacturer barter the product he/she manufactures in the same way. When we lived by this system it was easy to understand that if we only had a certain amount of e.g. vegetables, to exchange with a person who had cattle, we would only get an equivalent amount in value of meat in return. If there were other things we needed we would not exchange all of our vegetables for meat, but would decide what we needed and divide our produce into piles – so much for meat – so much for clothing etc. All very simple really when no money was involved. Even when money was accepted as a medium of exchange it was still simple as long as we dealt in coins. One little pile of coins for food – one little pile of coins for clothing – one little pile of coins for shelter etc. With the advent of banks, cheques and credit cards however, we don't have in front of us a pile of coins that we can conveniently divide up so that we can get enough of what we need *before* we use the coins for things we do not especially need.

Budgeting

We can however use a pencil and paper and make a list of the things we *have* to pay for and how much money that will take. Then if we are lucky, or if we have been able to sell our skills to an employer for a reasonable price there will be a little money left over - on the credit side – that we can use for things we don't *have* to have. We call that money “discretionary income.” We can use that for entertainment, special treats, holidays – whatever we feel we would like. At some stages of our lives there is very little “discretionary income” left over after we have set aside everything that *has* to be paid for. We may in fact not have enough to pay for all the things we believe we *have* to have. If we go ahead and get them anyway – something we could not have done under a barter system or a system where money had to be handed over in exchange for goods – we will find ourselves in debt to whoever we owe money to.

Interest

When we are using credit cards, we are actually making use of some one else's money and they will charge us for it. This charge is called interest, and it is charged at a rate of so much per month or so much per year. Family members or friends who lend us money will probably not charge a very high rate of interest, but banks and credit card systems make their profit this way. They convince you the customer, how very convenient it is for you to use this kind of service, but you should not imagine they are providing the service for *your* benefit.

Banks and credit card systems make a great deal of their money out of their debtors by charging very high rates of interest. No one with any sense pays such high rates of interest if they can help it. They would be stealing from themselves. That interest is wasted money with nothing concrete to show for it. People who are sensible and can control their spending however, can make use of the bank's money at little cost to themselves by paying their card accounts before the due date and paying no interest.

If you have no self-control, you should not have a credit-card either.

Mortgages

The one big debt that has been seen as acceptable in peoples' lives has been the debt attached to buying a house, because shelter is one of the things that we *have* to have all our lives. The loan we raise from some institution to pay for buying a house is called a mortgage. Over recent years not so many people have chosen to buy a house, but have chosen to rent instead. When a government encourages the citizens to buy a house for themselves, it usually puts schemes in place whereby people do not have to pay extreme rates of interest, and they are given a set number of years in which they can repay the capital (i.e. the money they borrowed to build or buy the house) plus the interest that has to be paid.

In the 1950s, twenty five years was a commonly accepted length of time allowed, and the interest rate was set at the beginning so that people had the security of knowing exactly how much they would be paying and could budget accordingly. In these years after World War Two, the people elected governments who would operate such schemes, but the government also put limits on the amount of money it would lend, so that people would have to build a house they could afford and not have too large a mortgage to repay. Many people at that time chose to do this instead of paying rent, though the regular payments were much like rent. The difference however was that at the end of twenty-five or thirty years, if people kept up their payments, they would own their own home.

Recent research has shown that owning a home, mortgage free, is one of the key factors in deciding whether retirement is reasonably comfortable or a constant struggle. The argument in recent years has often been that it is cheaper to rent than buy, but this doesn't take into account what will be done with the money that is saved. *Will* it be saved, or will it be used up as discretionary spending?

- **Money spent buying a house and paying off a mortgage can be a form of compulsory saving.**

Saving

If we budget our incomes we can also decide to have one pile as savings in order to use at a later date for something we may especially want. We can decide that there is something we particularly want at some time in the future even though we may not have enough money at the moment. Saving is wise at any age though the things we may save for will be different. What could people of different ages decide to save for? If we want something badly enough we can set aside a part of our discretionary spending in a separate account, add to it each week and watch the pile grow. We can even get interest ourselves, by letting a bank or other institution borrow our money – though they will never pay us as much for *our* money as they will charge for theirs. If we are really serious about saving we can examine the amounts we have set aside for the things we *have* to have. We need food but we don't *need* luxury items. We need to eat, but it can be cheaper to eat at home than to eat out. We need clothing but we don't *need* named brands. We can shop around for bargains. If we make a list and see where the money is going, we can also often see where savings can be made. Aristotle's middle way is also common sense where saving is concerned. Saving too much makes life miserable, but not saving at all can make the future even more miserable.

Small amounts make a difference

Mr Micawber, a character in the book *David Copperfield* by Charles Dickens, lived in a time when people were thrown into prison for being in debt. They didn't get out until the debt was paid by some kind friend or relative. Experiencing debtor's prison for himself, Mr Micawber philosophised that if a person had an income of twenty shillings, but only spent nineteen shillings and sixpence the result would be happiness. If however a person had an income of twenty

shillings and spent twenty shillings and sixpence the result would be misery. Only a small amount could make a very large difference. Budgeting gives us the ability to make the difference between happiness and misery. The main difficulty is the self-control that is needed to see that necessities are paid for before discretionary spending starts – and that discretionary spending is kept within limits.

Main Points –

Under a barter system we could only receive equal value for what we had to offer.

When we only used coins it was easy to see how much we were spending.

Now with credit cards it is very easy to spend more than our weekly income.

Budgeting is making a list of what *has* to be spent before discretionary spending can begin.

Banks make much of their profit from interest that people have to pay when they use some-one else's money, on loans or credit cards..

Wise people use credit cards for their own benefit, not the benefit of a bank.

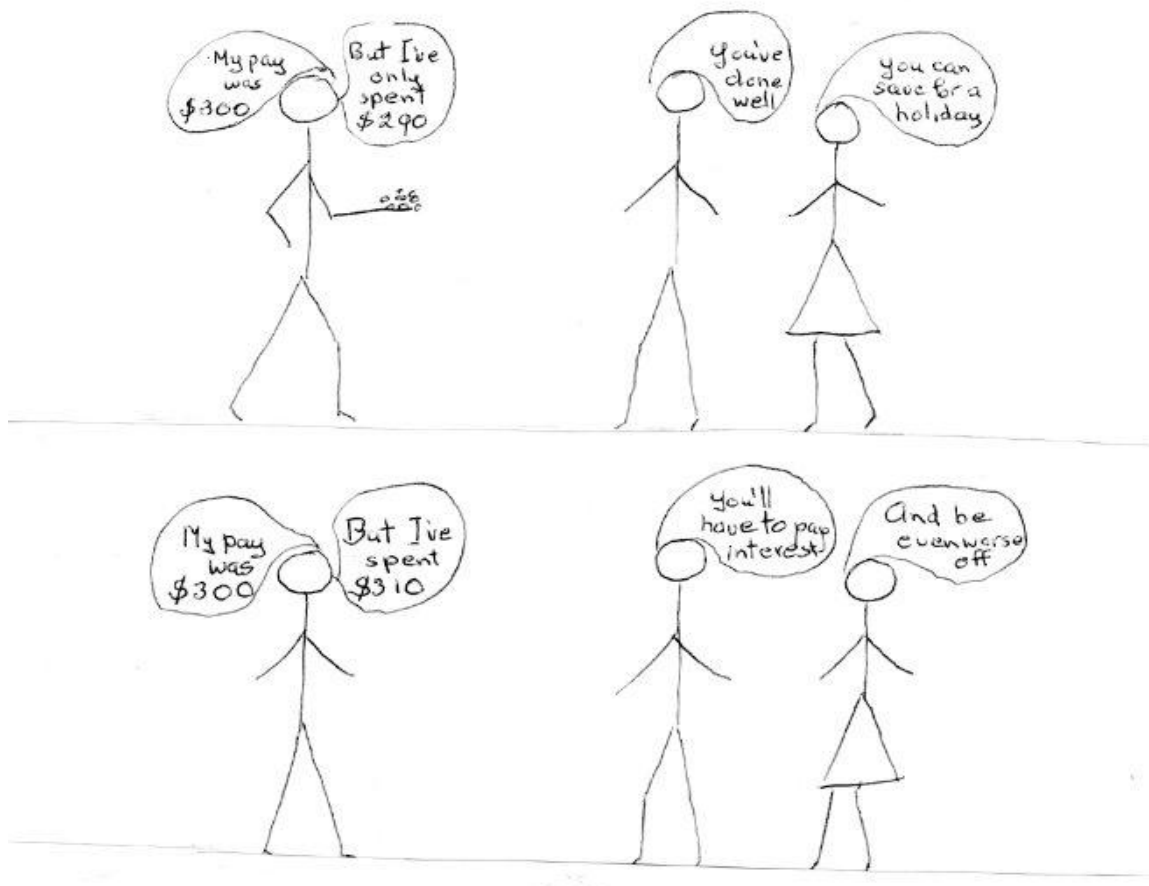
If you have no self-control over your spending, do not use credit cards.

We should spend a little less than our weekly income and save the rest for emergencies.

There are many ways in which we can save money. Name some.

Borrowing money to buy a house and paying interest on a mortgage can be a form of compulsory saving.

Just a small amount can make the difference between happiness and misery.



Discussion 23

GOVERNMENT SPENDING

Values involved – Community, integrity, respect, excellence.

Just as ordinary people need to balance their household budgets, so a government has to balance the budget of the country as a whole. Most responsible governments of a democratic country produce an annual budget to explain to the people where money will be spent.

The government has no money of its own and must get it from the people through taxes of some kind.

One of the main reasons for the rebellion of the colonists of the United States of America against British rule was the question of taxation imposed on them without the colonists having any say in the matter. “No taxation without representation,” was the principle for which they fought.

The money a government intends to spend is taken from the people by direct and indirect taxes.

Direct taxes are like our income tax, PAYE and ACC levies that are charged directly on income.

Indirect taxes are taxes that are included in the price of things we buy like petrol, tobacco, and the GST that is included in the price of other goods and services. Theoretically, the people, through their representatives in parliament, have agreed to this, and must be prepared to pay it.

Into the pot

It is as though all this money goes into one big pot as it is taken from the people, and then, with a big ladle the government takes it out again and decides who gets how much. Unlike the ordinary person on wages who is usually limited in his spending by the amount his employer pays him, if a government finds it does not have enough in the pot to fill all the plates that are waiting to be filled it has choices.

1. It can take more money in taxes from the ordinary people.
2. It can decide that some of the waiting plates are only going to be half-filled, or –
3. It can take another look at where the money is going, see if any is being wasted, and do something about it.

If there is not enough money to go around, health services and education might not get the amount they need. People elect governments and should be able to decide what laws are to be made. Earlier last century the people decided that it was important for them to be able to buy their own homes and for young people to have cheap access to tertiary education, and so the governments made the appropriate laws. If people are apathetic and do not hold their political parties to account for their actions, a political party may allow its desire for votes, or its own particular ideologies, to affect the way in which it collects the money that goes into the pot, as well as how and to whom, it ladles out the contents of the pot.

We can make a difference

Apart from electing politicians to make the laws we want them to make, we, the people, have a certain amount of influence as to how much goes into the pot and how much comes out – and whether there is enough to fill all the bowls.

We could put a little more in and take a little less out.

If everyone was completely honest and fair there might be enough for all our needs. Most people try to pay as little tax as they can while remaining within the law. Some devise schemes for getting around the law, or taking their profits out of the country by some means or another. (Usually people with high IQs and low levels of ethical reasoning)

On the other hand, those who are holding out their plates are often trying to get as much as they can out of the pot. People or organizations who develop schemes to avoid paying income tax are just as guilty as people who for instance, avoid paying maintenance for their children, or get

benefits or ACC payments to which they are not really entitled. If every person and every organization paid their fair share in, and only took out what was an honest need, there would probably be enough in the pot to finance our schools, hospitals and roads according to their needs. There might even be some left over for discretionary spending or savings for the future.

Main Points –

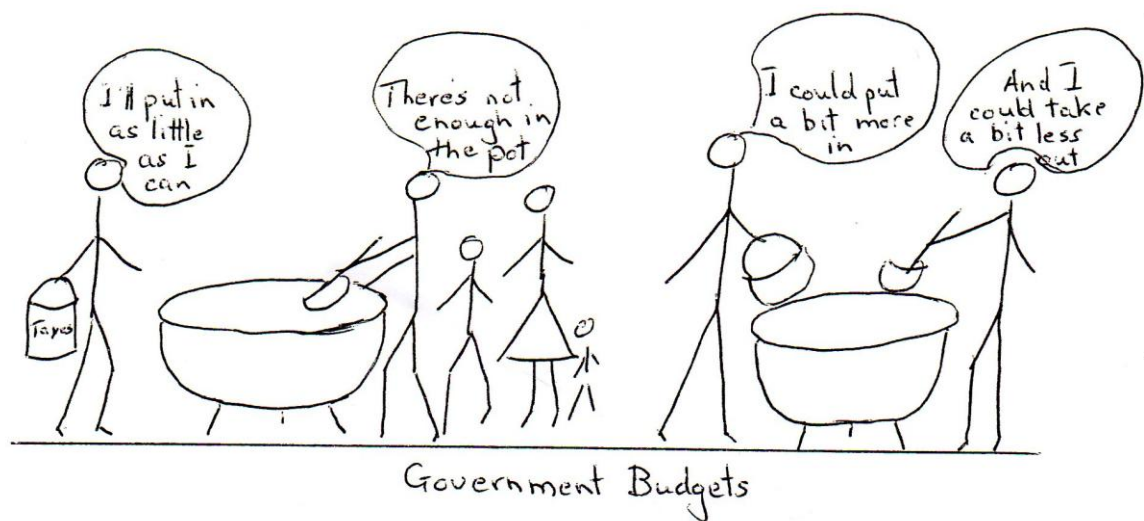
Governments need to budget the spending of the taxes they collect from the people.

Governments have no money of their own, so when we expect “The government” to pay for something, we are expecting the rest of the people in the country to pay for it.

People resent paying large taxes when they see others getting benefits unfairly, and so they try to put in less than they should.

People who are on the receiving end often ask for more than they are actually entitled to.

If everyone puts their fair share into the government’s pot and takes out no more than they really need, there should be enough for the important things like health and education, and to take care of those who can no longer work.



Discussion 24

BUSINESS ETHICS

Values involved – integrity, community, respect.

During a visit to China in 1989, it was surprising to read in an English language newspaper, (China Daily, 13.5. '89, p3), that various shop-keepers had been severely fined for making much more profit than they were allowed on the merchandise they were selling. They were required to make a public apology to the consumers, and return the money they had unlawfully taken from them. The Communist Government was beginning to allow capitalism and private profits in order to increase production. In a time of famine they had had to admit that farmers worked harder and produced more if they were allowed some benefit for themselves. Production rose when the workers were allowed to sell for themselves, the food they had produced beyond the quota they had been set. In the towns rows of little stalls had sprung up. These were only open in the evenings after the working day was over, and most of the locals bought their produce direct from the farmers at these stalls. Some of the shopping areas were meant for the locals only, and here prices were controlled and local money was used. We visited factories where goods for export were manufactured, observing the skills of the workers and the conditions under which they worked. When we returned to New Zealand we were amazed to realize the difference between prices that were asked for the same goods that had been imported here, compared with the prices on the local market in China, and even more on the prices that importers would have paid for the goods direct from the factories. Even allowing for the cost of transport, importers must have been making an enormous profit on the work and working conditions of their own people.

Profit

If we work very long hours, or we have spent years acquiring skills that are in short supply, it is fair that we should profit from the extra work we have done. Business ethics are not all about profit, but mostly about excess profits - profits that are made at the expense of justice, fair treatment of other people or the environment. Without profit, businesses would not exist, but ethical principles deal with how people are treated in obtaining a profit. Are we *using* other people in pursuit of our own ends and are those ends *excess* profits. Are our methods having a harmful effect on the environment? A reasonable return on investment has been considered to be around 10%, though in many cases, we will not receive 10%, especially from banks, which lend out *our* saved money at a profit. Are workers being paid a fair wage, or are wages and conditions low in order to provide excess profits for other people? Are we harming the environment in our desire to cut costs and increase profits? Those who produce unnecessary waste could fairly be expected to pay for its disposal, but if permitted, they may add such costs to the price of their product in order to keep up their profits. Competition or buyer resistance however could force them to keep their costs down by using less packaging, or they could accept less profit. In a democracy, the people, through the government, have the power to influence such decisions.

Checks and balances

Business ethics are also about our checks and balances. How would we feel if we were treated like that? Are our actions going to make the world a better place? Much business and industrialisation today has an adverse effect on the environment. Piles of unnecessary packaging go into landfills. Chemicals go into waterways, polluting lakes and rivers. Large companies can blackmail governments into allowing them to follow practices that will lower their costs, but will have an adverse effect on our environment. E.g. "If you make us accept these conditions, it will be too expensive for us to manufacture here. We will not be able to make enough profit. Either relax your rules or we will take our factory to another country where labour is cheap and environmental requirements are not so strict." A government then is forced to make a choice

between losing employment for hundreds of workers or allowing a large company the conditions they demand. Business needs profit to survive, but not excess profit at the expense of other people or the environment.

Small businesses

For a small business, there is often a fine line between making a profit and not making a profit. If a business does not make a profit there will be no jobs for the staff so it is in the interest of all involved to see that the business makes enough profit to be viable. Most small businesses begin as family affairs and have owner managers who treat their staff well and fairly because they have usually started from the bottom themselves. Their business ethics are a reflection of their own ethics as a person. Their own virtues and vices are reflected in their dealings with the public. Their best advertisement is a satisfied customer, and if they are not honest about their product or service they can be held personally responsible.

The majority of workers in New Zealand are employed in small businesses, and therefore conditions or demands that may be valid within a large company are not necessarily relevant or helpful in a small business. It may be better for a town to have several small businesses solvent and competing, than to have one large monopoly. Larger chains of businesses can have the power and the financial backing to undercut the prices small businesses have to charge. They can keep their prices low until the small businesses are forced to close and a monopoly exists. Then prices will rise again through lack of competition, and working conditions may be lowered.

Large companies

Large companies can be very different from small businesses. The CEO of a large company may only be with that particular firm for a few years. In that time he/she generally endeavours to make as much profit for the company as possible, so that directors and shareholders are happy. The more profit that a CEO can make for a firm, the more likelihood there is that he/she will be offered another position at a higher salary. Such people do not usually have to face customers personally, or to worry about the long-term consequences of their operation, on the community or environment in which they live.

Shareholders are not personally involved in the day to day running of a company, but they are very interested in the amount of profit they make on their shares, and the dividend they are paid. All these factors work together to put pressure on the ethics of those running the company. If workers the shareholders do not see, work in conditions the shareholders do not want to know about, in a country where the shareholders do not live, it is easier to concentrate on the bottom line of profit. Even in large companies however the business ethics of the company depends on the personal ethics of those running it. Some large firms are leaders in setting ethical and environmental standards. Today there is talk of a triple bottom line that includes environmental effects. In less particular enterprises however, staff members who have strong ethical principles find it difficult to compete with those who are not so particular. In the race to the top, principles can be a handicap, but an ethical person who is concerned for his own self-respect knows that in the end, "a good name is more to be desired than great riches."

Young people

Young people entering the work force may be working in a shop or a business where there is temptation all around them. They will be in contact with a variety of people who have a variety of ethical standards. Older people may also try to influence them in one way or another, possibly by

persuading them that it is all rights to take “perks” from their place of employment. Older people do not always set good examples and the results of dishonest actions of this kind can be disastrous. Young people should take time to understand what type of person is the best role model in the long term. They should try to keep to their own standards and not allow themselves to be flattered or persuaded into actions that they might regret. Short-term gain always looks brighter and more attractive, but once you have lost a good name it is very difficult to regain it. A good reference from a previous employer is a valuable asset in the world of work.

Adam Smith and the Free Market

Adam Smith (1723-1790) was a professor of moral philosophy at the University of Glasgow. He taught the elements of economics against a philosophical and historical background. He saw his theory of the free market operating in a just society, and by men of principle. In the race for wealth and honours, a man could run as fast as he was able, and strain every nerve and muscle to outstrip his competitors, but there was to be no violation of fair play. Adam Smith recognised the need for principles and conscience, for general rules of morality, and standards by which actions could be judged. He would have considered the teaching of economics to be incomplete without a background of ethics.

Ethical principles

There are so many different fields within business where there are ethical questions to be answered that it is simplest to examine each individual case by our ethical principles to clarify exactly what is happening, and to see how ethical or unethical some business dealings really are.

Wisdom – Is this a sensible thing to do under the circumstances? What are the long-term consequences likely to be? Are undue risks being taken, particularly with other people’s money?

Justice – Is everyone – boss, worker, customer being treated fairly? Is any person or group facing more or less risk or benefit than any other? Are investors risking more than directors? Are those causing the problems e.g. pollution, the ones who are paying to fix them? In a limited liability company are the creditors taking more risks than the directors or shareholders?

Truth – Do we have all the facts here? Is anyone lying, or cheating anyone else. Not paying accounts on time is a form of stealing, and so also is charging exorbitant interest rates. In a limited liability company that fails, has an owner or director been deliberately channelling funds or assets to another family member or close associate in order to deprive creditors of what they are owed. Advertising is an area where the temptation to deceive customers is very strong, but it is possible to defraud without telling outright lies. It is possible to deceive by information that is known but not supplied to the customer. Are people accepting responsibility for their actions?

Love – It has often been said that there is no love in business, but love here refers to caring and respect for other people. Is anyone being *used* by anyone else in the pursuit of profits or promotion? Is anyone taking advantage of someone weaker than themselves in the pursuit of their own ends?

The Golden Rule – How would I feel if I were on the receiving end of this transaction? Would I consider that I had been treated fairly and honestly?

A better world – how is this transaction going to affect the future of other people and the environment? Is it going to make our homes, our workplaces our communities, better places in which to live?

Benjamin Franklin (1706-90) Businessman, statesman, one of the signatories of the American Declaration of Independence, and one of those who drew up the American Constitution was responsible for the saying “honesty is the best policy.” He argued that this was true, purely on practical grounds, because the consequences of *not* being honest were usually much worse in the long run. He believed that this was so in business, in politics and in private life. In a world where being rich may seem to be more important than having a good name for being honest, there may be some who would disagree. Recent disasters and disgraces in high places however suggest that there is still a great deal of truth in the saying.

Main points –

Business ethics are mainly about profit and how it is made.

Adam Smith saw the free market operating in an ethical society, by men of principle.

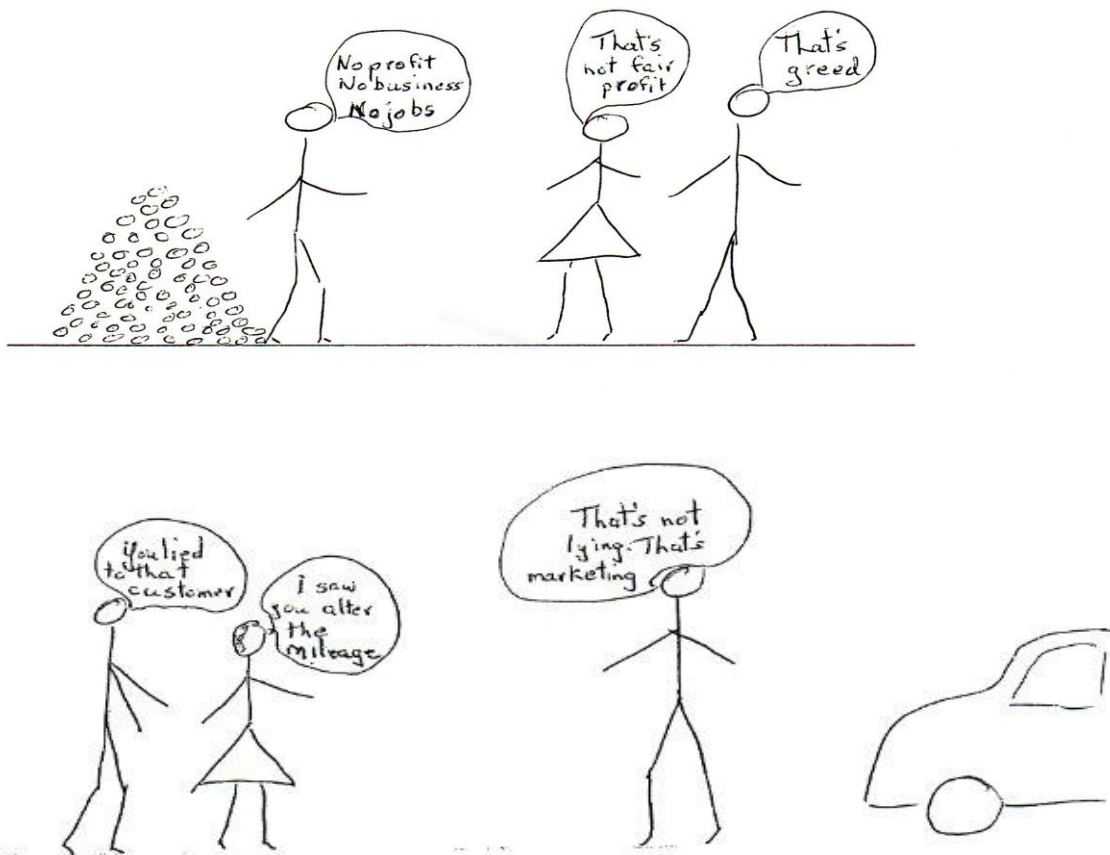
Excess profit can be made by exploiting other people or the environment.

Large companies enable the individuals concerned in making decisions to be anonymous.

Ethical principles can be seen as a handicap in the race for profit or position.

Honesty is the best policy, in business as well as social life. The consequences of not being honest are often worse in the long run.

“A good name is more to be desired than great riches,”



DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT

Values involved – community, equity, integrity, respect, excellence.

From the time people came to live together in groups, they have seen the need for rules of some kind if they are to live together peacefully. Someone had to set the rules and in time systems arose for doing this. Rules would be set by tradition, by religion, or by a small group of the elders of a tribe.

Tribes or groups could have one ruler as a chief, or a larger area could have a king and several chiefs. These positions could be hereditary, or the most powerful person could take the position of supreme ruler with or without the consent of the people.

A dictatorship is a system where one person makes the rules and enforces them, usually by the use of his/her own military forces. In this country we live in what is called a democracy where theoretically the people themselves have the power to make the laws and see they are enforced.

Evolution of our system of government

The settlers who came to New Zealand from Britain brought with them a democratic system that had evolved over 2000 years. After the Romans who had invaded Britain in 55B.C., had left to defend their own land, Britain was again invaded, this time by the Jutes, Angles and Saxons from Denmark and Germany, who brought their own system of government. (The word “England” comes from the word “Angle-land.”) Under their system, all freemen in the small villages met to make rules and settle disputes. As the population expanded, the chief men of villages met to make wider laws and levy taxes, and to decide in their parliament, the Witenagemote, who should be the ruler of England.

When the Normans invaded Britain in 1066, William the Conqueror granted large areas of English land to his own followers. The “freemen” living on such land became the property of the landowners, and so they lost their freedom and no longer had a share in government. This was the beginning of the “class” system. The Normans however instituted the beginnings of our jury system where twelve men from an accused’s own district were called to witness to the truth before a judge.

The Magna Carta

The king had supreme power until 1215 when the barons, the church, and the people united to force King John to sign an agreement called the Magna Carta (Great Charter). This document gave supreme power back to the parliament of the people, and expressed four principles which have been handed down to us.

1. No taxation without the consent of parliament.
2. No freeman to be punished without trial in accordance with the law.
3. Trial by jury.
4. No individual, no matter how rich or important, to be above the law. Even Queen Elizabeth 1 (1558-1603) had to give way to Parliament over her attempts to gain money by granting monopolies to traders.

The Stuart kings who followed Elizabeth clashed with Parliament. They claimed that their right to rule was a Divine right given by God, and therefore they were set above parliament. Right from Anglo-Saxon times however, Parliament had always claimed the right of electing or deposing the king. A civil war followed, and in 1649 Parliament deposed King Charles 1 by beheading him. After a period of austerity and basically dictatorship by Oliver Cromwell who had led the opposition forces, Parliament invited Charles 2 to resume the monarchy, provided he accepted that Parliament had supreme power.

Universal Franchise

In the 1860s, when many settlers were coming to New Zealand from Britain, only ratepayers and large rent-payers there had the right to vote, but by 1884 practically all adult men had been given a vote. In New Zealand in the 1880s, property owners had extra votes as well as their citizenship vote, but in 1889 Parliament in New Zealand brought in the system of “one man- one vote,” giving equal voting power to all adult men. Though adult women gained the vote in New Zealand in 1893, in Britain it was not until 1918 that women over 30 were given the vote, and not until 1928 that the vote was given to women of 21. Knowing the long fight there had been to obtain the vote for all adult citizens, it is understandable that in the first half of the 20th century, people valued their right to vote and took a considerable interest in politics. Politicians had to face the people in public meetings and explain why the people should vote for them – to declare what they would do if they were elected – and then be answerable to the people again in person in another three years. T.V. has now put a protective barrier around most politicians, few of whom hold meetings open to the public, while journalists and “spin doctors” decide what information will be handed on to the public.

Democracy

Our form of democracy goes back to Athens and ancient Greece where all the citizens gathered in one place to discuss laws and make decisions, and where each citizen had one vote. Each had a right to speak and try to influence the group, then a vote would be taken and the majority won. The philosopher Plato saw the weakness in that system when clever orators were able to persuade a majority of citizens to condemn the teacher Socrates to die by voluntarily drinking the poison hemlock. Plato felt that only those who were well educated were fit to make decisions in this way. He claimed well-educated men would not be swayed by propaganda or by clever and forceful speakers. They would recognize what we would now call P.R. spin. They would demand verifiable evidence and would reason ethically for themselves.

Though democracy is not perfect and depends on the ethical standards of those involved, it is still the best and fairest system of government available today. It has been fought for and died for, but its weakness remains. **For democracy to work as it should, the people need to be reasonably educated. They need to take an interest in their process of government, and they need to recognize common ethical principles. “Democracy has within itself the seeds of its own destruction.”** The writings of the founders of the constitution of the United States are filled with warnings that the new republic must make education a high priority, because the form of government they were adopting was essentially a moral compact among people⁶⁷. In Benjamin Franklin’s words, **“When the people consider only their own personal well-being, they can no longer be depended upon to act in the best interests of their nation.---only a virtuous people are capable of freedom.”** People are free to take an interest in politics and demand that politicians represent the wishes of the people, or they are free to be apathetic and gullible and hand over their power to what then becomes a form of dictatorship. As Secondary School students in New Zealand were taught in their Civics lessons in the 1930s, “If the people, through ignorance or apathy lose their control, they have nobody to blame but themselves.”⁶⁸

The representative system

In Athens the auditorium had enough space for every citizen to attend and cast his own vote, but as populations expanded all the citizens could not fit into one place and vote in person. Most democratic countries then chose to divide themselves into areas of roughly equal numbers of

⁶⁷ Ryan,K. and Bohlin,K. (1999) *Building character in schools* p 20 and Preface p x.

⁶⁸ Coad,N., (circa 1930). *The Dominion Civics*, (2nd ed.), New Zealand, London : Whitcombe & Tombs. P65

voters and vote for one person to go to Parliament to represent the people of that area. New Zealand has a “House of Representatives.” **The representative is elected to express the opinion of the people in his/her electorate. He/she is not elected to make decisions on their behalf without their agreement.** Ours is not meant to be a “delegative” democracy, where representatives do not have to abide by the wishes of the people, or find out what the people actually want. As an example, when there is a conscience vote in Parliament, an M.P. who understands and accepts representative democracy will vote according to the wishes of the majority in his/her electorate, which may not necessarily be the M.P.’s own. There would also be referenda on controversial issues. It is arrogant of politicians to underestimate the intelligence of the ordinary citizen. With sufficient factual information, the reasonably educated and ethical citizen should be just as capable as any M.P. of making sensible decisions. Government departments should be responsible enough to provide the unbiased information that is required. **For a democracy to function as it should, our members of parliament and the bureaucracy that surrounds them should be people of ethical principles, who are concerned for the well-being of the country as a whole, not just for members of the political party that is in power.**

The tyranny of the majority –

This is a fairly new catch-cry that has emerged with the growth of individualism and self-interest, and is used when a minority knows that the majority opinion is against it. **For thousands of years there has been general acceptance of the fact that in democratic communities, majority decisions are the best way to settle issues that need to be decided. Success of the system depends on free speech, and on the majority of the people being well-informed and adhering to ethical principles.** In a democracy a minority is able to try to persuade the majority that their argument is better, or to present a side that has not already been heard. If they fail, then for the time being, for the sake of a peaceful society, they should be prepared to accept a majority decision. The tyranny of a minority that forces its will on the majority can only lead to disruption of the community, while an ethical majority will take into consideration the just needs of the minority and aim to maximise the good and minimise the harm.

Party politics.

Though party politics have come to be accepted as the norm in many democracies, they can act to remove the power from the people. People who think alike on a number of matters find they have more power if they act as a group, and so they join together to form a political party that is given a name or logo. The people come to believe that a particular party stands for a particular way of thinking, and therefore many vote at an election for a particular party, and not necessarily because they think the candidate is the best. Under the M.M.P. system that we have in New Zealand now, where each person has two votes, it is possible to vote for a preferred party, but also for a preferred candidate. Within parliament however, most parties expect their M.P.s to vote according to the party’s wishes, and these are not necessarily the majority wish in the electorate they represent. **A measure can then pass through parliament and become law even though it might not have overall majority support of the people.**

The New Zealand Constitution, which set out our form of government in 1852, provided for two “Houses” – the “House of Representatives” and the “Legislative Council.” Proposed new legislation had to be passed by a majority in both Houses before it became law, and so the people were protected from hasty, or ill-considered legislation. The Legislative Council was abolished in 1950, the party in power arguing that there could never be circumstances where the will of an elected house of Representatives should be thwarted.⁶⁹ Both main political parties agreed. Since then, the House of Representatives has examined proposed legislation itself, and it is possible for

⁶⁹ King, M., (2003). *Penguin history of New Zealand*. P421.

a party in power to pass controversial legislation by very undemocratic means. For example, policy can be decided by a slim majority within a party, and then because all members of that party are compelled to vote for that policy in parliament, it can be passed by a small majority there, and become law though more than 50% of the people and their representatives might actually be against it.

The responsibilities of a Government

The functions of a government are traditionally to make laws and to see that they are carried out. This is done through Parliament, through government departments of various kinds and through the Judiciary. A government has the responsibility of providing necessary services to enable the country to function, to protect and defend the country, to protect life and property and to provide public health care and education. The money to provide these services comes from the people in various forms of taxes. When people say, "The Government should pay," they are actually saying that the people of the country should pay. People who are apathetic about politics should consider that it is their money that is being spent, and that it is their own responsibility to see that it is spent wisely. The media have a responsibility to provide the public with accurate and unbiased information on which to base their reasoning and cast their votes. If the people are content to accept a few snippets of T.V. news on which to base their reasoning, and to accept a delegative democracy, where they cast their votes, then leave it all to the politicians and hope for the best, they are accepting a form of dictatorship, and as Coad said, they will have nobody to blame but themselves for giving away their control.

Main points –

We live in a democracy where the people are supposed to have the power to make the laws that all will be required to obey.

Our democratic system of government came with the British settlers and from a system that had evolved over 2000 years.

It began with the Anglo-Saxon invasion of Britain, and their system where all freemen of the villages met to make the laws and choose a leader or king.

Some leaders wanted supreme power for themselves, but in 1215, the people forced the king to sign the Magna Carta, setting out the principles of government that we still live by.

Our method of democracy goes back to ancient Greece where all citizens had one vote and gathered in one place to make the laws.

There are too many of us now to do that, so each electorate chooses one person to go to parliament to speak for the will of the people in that area.

A conscience vote should be the conscience of the electorate, not just that of the M.P.

Party politics do not always represent the will of the majority of the people in the country, but rather the majority amongst the party members.

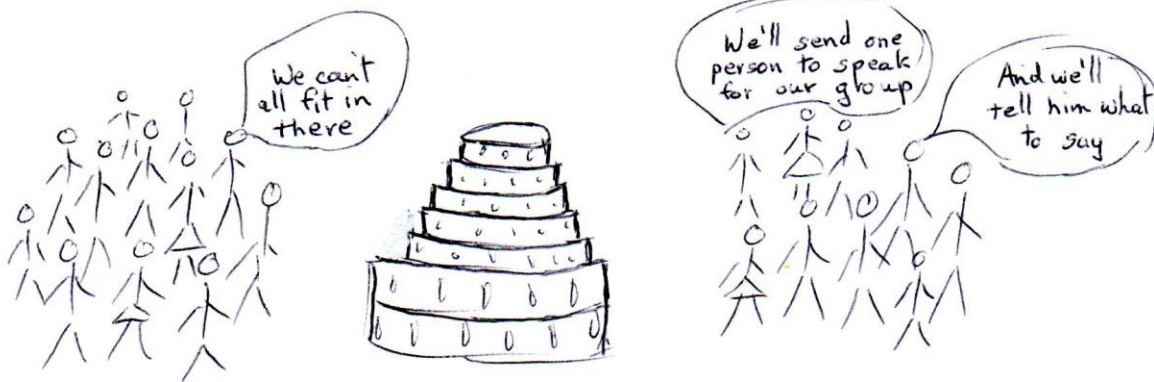
The government has no money of its own. Government money has been taken from the people in the form of direct and indirect taxes.

For a democracy to work as it should we need politicians and voters to be educated and ethical.

If the people, through apathy, lose their control, they will only have themselves to blame.

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THE USE OF POWER

Values involved, community, integrity, respect, equity.

This concept is most suitable for levels 7 and 8 who will be going on to enter professions where they will be in a position to either use power for the public good, or to abuse it for individual benefit.

In his book, “Making social science matter”⁷⁰ Bent Flyvbjerg, Professor of planning at Aalborg University, Denmark, quotes Michel Foucault and Jurgen Habermas as philosophers with opposing solutions, but agreeing that rationalization and the misuse of power are among the most important problems of our time. Reason alone without the addition of ethical principles can result in individualism, selfishness and self-interest. Self-interest and the use of power would normally be dealt with by applying the principles of wisdom, justice, truth and love in the usual way, but since the misuse of power is usually covered up and not obvious on the surface, it will be given special recognition on its own. By levels 7 and 8 students should be able to reason well and be familiar with the backgrounds of political action and economics where the ethical reasoning of some intelligent adults is still at stage 1 “What’s in it for me or my group?” - and where self-interest and misuse of power often occurs.

The question of power is now added to the usual questions that come under the headings of truth and justice. Democracy does not always produce democratic decisions. The justice system does not always produce a just result because one party or another may have had more power to influence what was seen as the truth, or to influence how people voted.

Theoretically, power is in the hands of those who make the rules and enforce them, but behind the scenes, power can be exercised by pressure groups whose effect on the democratic process makes the process less than democratic. To counteract this power, we need an informed public who are not apathetic, but who are contributing to the process of democracy themselves, and who are also aware of what may be happening behind the scenes to prevent the process working.

Where social inquiry is related to what is actually happening at the moment, or has happened in the past, the questions “Who gains and who loses? By what process do they gain and lose?”⁷¹ will add important information to the social inquiry process. Where future decisions need to be made, then the questions “Who will gain and who will lose if we go down that path?” “How will they be able to exercise power?” “What can the ordinary individual do to see that a fair and honest result is arrived at?” should be added to the questions surrounding truth and justice, and to the social decision-making process.

When Flyvbjerg himself discovered that the result of his research was being negated by the power of a pressure group he decided that the decisive aspect of decision-making was not whether one interpretation of the research or another was more correct, but which party could put the greatest power behind their interpretation. (p152) To counteract that power he decided that if the decisions were not publicly justifiable, then he could also exercise power by bringing public attention to the results.(p156.) By doing this he -

- Brought other groups into the dialogue.
- Ensured that the information reached the relevant target groups.

⁷⁰ Flyvbjerg, B. (2001). *Making social science matter: Why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again*. U.K.: Cambridge University Press. P107.

⁷¹ Flyvbjerg, B., (2001). *Making social science matter: Why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again*. Cambridge University Press. P145

- Overcame apathy and drew attention, even if some was for and some against.
- Had to be very sure that his own reasoning was correct, because it would also be under scrutiny of the public. (p158)

Though the system of principles and guidelines for ethical reasoning offered here is more concerned about reasoning for the future, than criticizing people of the past, it is necessary to understand what has happened in the past in order to do better in the future. Students who have reached levels 7 and 8 and who will be going on to enter professions will often in the future be in a position to either use power for the public good or to abuse it for the benefit of themselves or their groups. It is hoped that by motivating them to use ethical principles in their reasoning they will work for the common good.

Understanding the use of power, and what the private individual can do, may help prevent the misuse of power.

Main Points –

People or groups in positions of power can influence –

What is seen to be reasonable.

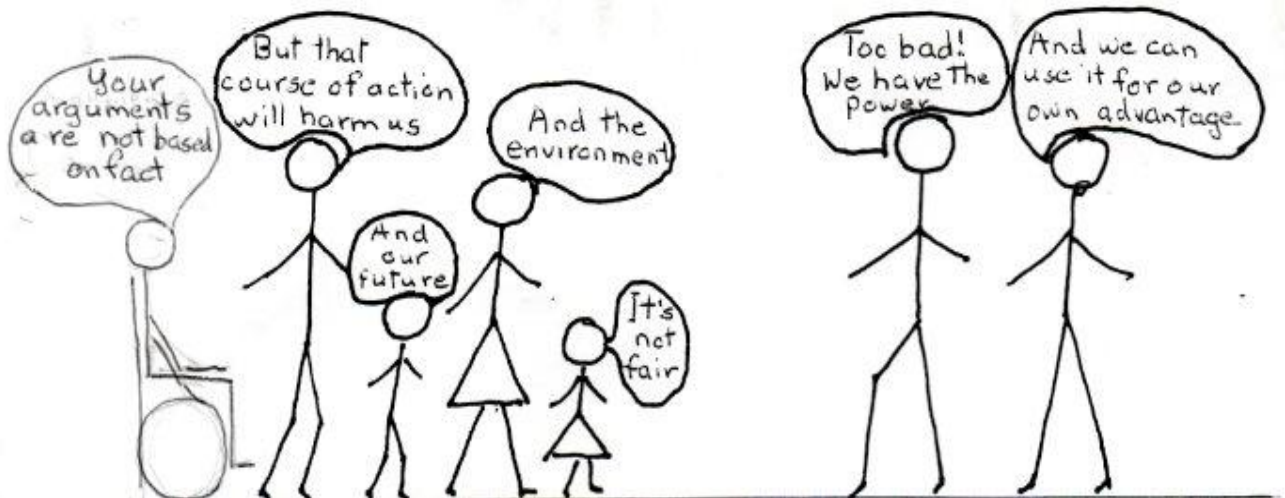
What is seen to be justice.

What is seen to be factual evidence.

Who gains and who loses.

They can bully the less powerful by the forces they can bring to bear in making decisions.

The individual can try to counteract misuse of power by bringing public attention to the issue.



Discussion 27

LAWS AND SOCIAL COVENANTS

Values involved – community, integrity, equity, excellence.

A covenant is an agreement between two or more parties, entered into freely, and lasting until those parties agree that it is no longer required. Laws are made by the government of a country, and, in a democracy such as ours is supposed to be, should be made by a decision of the majority of the people through their representatives. Laws can be changed if enough people decide they are no longer required, or are no longer suitable in a changing situation, but they should be changed by a majority decision of the people. Socrates, in Plato's *Crito*, has been said to have given us one of the finest statements ever of the theory of government which is the basis of most Western political theory. Some sort of social agreement or compact, he claimed, is at the foundation of any political system. By living under the protection and privileges of the law, the citizen has entered an agreement to live within the law. He felt so strongly about this that when condemned to death, by a majority of the citizens of Athens, he did not try to escape, but willingly took the poison that was his sentence. Even though the voters had been swayed by smooth talkers into making an unfair judgement, his belief was that the law had to be obeyed. The ideal would be that citizens and the representatives they send to speak for them, should be sufficiently well educated and ethically responsible, that they would make good decisions that would work for the well-being of all citizens. Without these factors, democracy as a system of government can be abused.

Citizenship

The word “idiot” comes from the notion of citizenship originally formulated by Aristotle who suggested that those who lacked political knowledge should be labelled as “idions.” (Phillips 1995, p20). To avoid being considered as idiots therefore, we should all have a clear idea of what citizenship means in a democracy.

Babies born in a particular country, to parents who are citizens of that country are required to be registered, and are normally accepted as citizens also. When immigrants apply to become citizens of a new country, they make an agreement with the government, which is the representative of the rest of the people in the country, that they will obey the laws of their new country. If they break the laws they have broken the covenant they have freely entered into. People who have been born and registered here do not have to sign a special agreement, but because they are citizens, they are automatically subject to all the laws that have been made on their behalf.

A citizen of a country has rights and privileges that non-citizens do not have, and is entitled to the protection and the services that the government provides. When we travel overseas we have passports to show which country we belong to, and in most overseas countries there is an office or a representative of some kind to whom we can go if we have problems. We can expect our government, through that office, to provide us with information or help. One of the duties of the government of a country is the protection of its citizens.

Our covenant

As well as having rights and privileges however, a citizen also has responsibilities, and the foremost is to obey the laws that the majority of the citizens have decided upon. That is the covenant into which we have been born as citizens, or have accepted as immigrants. By accepting the rights and privileges we also accept the responsibilities. This covenant is made with the rest of the people in the country. If people accept any form of money, service or protection from the government (that is acting on behalf of all the people in the country) they have shown that they are willing parties to the covenant, whether they signed it personally or not. The people have provided, in the form of taxes, the money that is used to provide protection and services,

therefore to keep our side of the agreement we must obey the law as it is. If enough people think that the law is not wise or fair, they should, in a democracy, be able to change it.

Criticism of the social contract theory

There has been criticism of the theory that society is a voluntary association of independent agents. Rousseau's account of the social contract has been one of the most influential in history, but has been criticised for gender bias – that the virtues he proposed for men were different from the virtues he proposed for women, (Hinman p368) but Rousseau was representative of the society of his time. The modern philosopher John Rawls suggests that ideally, laws should be made from behind a “veil of ignorance” so that those who make the laws would not know what position in society they would have themselves, and therefore would be very careful to be fair. For instance, would people have been in favour of slavery if they had not known whether they were going to be master or slave? An argument against Rawls is that the need for such a contract is created by imagining oneself stripped of all individual identity, but most people would see the justice involved in Rawls' thinking⁷² and his critics do not seem to have produced a better theory. Annette Baier, a modern feminist philosopher, argues that it is trust, not contracts that holds society together, but since trust depends in the main on whether people keep their contracts or not, that argument is hardly adequate.

Civil disobedience

The social contract basis to our system of democracy is very relevant in today's world. If we agree with the argument that when we accept the rights and privileges of citizenship, we must also obey the laws, then disobedience to force a government to agree to our demands can never be right. The right to protest should not over-ride the right of other people to go about their lawful business. It cannot be morally justifiable for a group of people to be able to persuade a government to change a law, simply by breaking it in order to get their own way. Using force, defying the legitimate agents of the law, and inconveniencing other citizens, does not appear to be a reasonable part of our contract, no matter how strong our views. This would be setting ourselves above the law. It would seem that a government in a democracy should obey the will of the majority of the people, not be swayed by a particular group using unlawful methods. A minority has the right to try to persuade the majority, but not the right to force its will on them. The government, through the police force and the legal system, has the contractual responsibility to enforce the law until the law is changed by majority decision. In an efficient democracy, where the majority of the people take an interest in their political system, obey ethical principles, and elect politicians who put ethical principles before political expediency, just laws should be passed. There should then be no excuse for civil disobedience.

The government's part.

In the interest of justice, any agreement between the government (as representative of all the citizens,) and individual citizens, should treat all citizens fairly. An example is where what is decided to be a public good, affects the rights of individuals, or where private property is taken, or restrictions put on private property for the public good. It is accepted that private property should not be taken for the public good without compensation, but it is doubtful if any compensation would be sufficient in some cases. A currently relevant example would be that of a person who has been told that for the good of the majority of the people who live in the city, a power pylon must be placed on his/her property. The ethical questions to be answered are whether the people who will use the power should find other sources of power supply even if

⁷² Rawls *theory of Justice* is said to have influenced Kohlberg in his stages of moral reasoning.

they have to pay extra. Should only one group suffer so that others will not? Should *anyone* have to suffer, or could there be a better and fairer way? Political parties may make decisions on the basis of the number of votes that are going to be affected, rather than on justice to all involved. Minority groups could appeal to the rest of the citizens on compassionate grounds for special treatment, but the result would depend on the quality of their argument, and once again on the ethical principles of the majority of the citizens. Is it wise and fair to do this? Is any group using any other person or group for their own ends? Are the arguments based on the truth? How would I like it if I were the one affected? What solution would maximise the good and minimise the harm to all concerned? What would make for a better world?

Main points –

Aristotle suggested that a person who lacked political knowledge was an idiot.

Citizens have privileges non-citizens do not.

By living under the protection and privileges of the law, the citizen has entered an agreement to live within the law.

Immigrants agree to obey the laws of their new country.

Citizens have a responsibility to obey the laws that should have been made by a majority of the citizens.

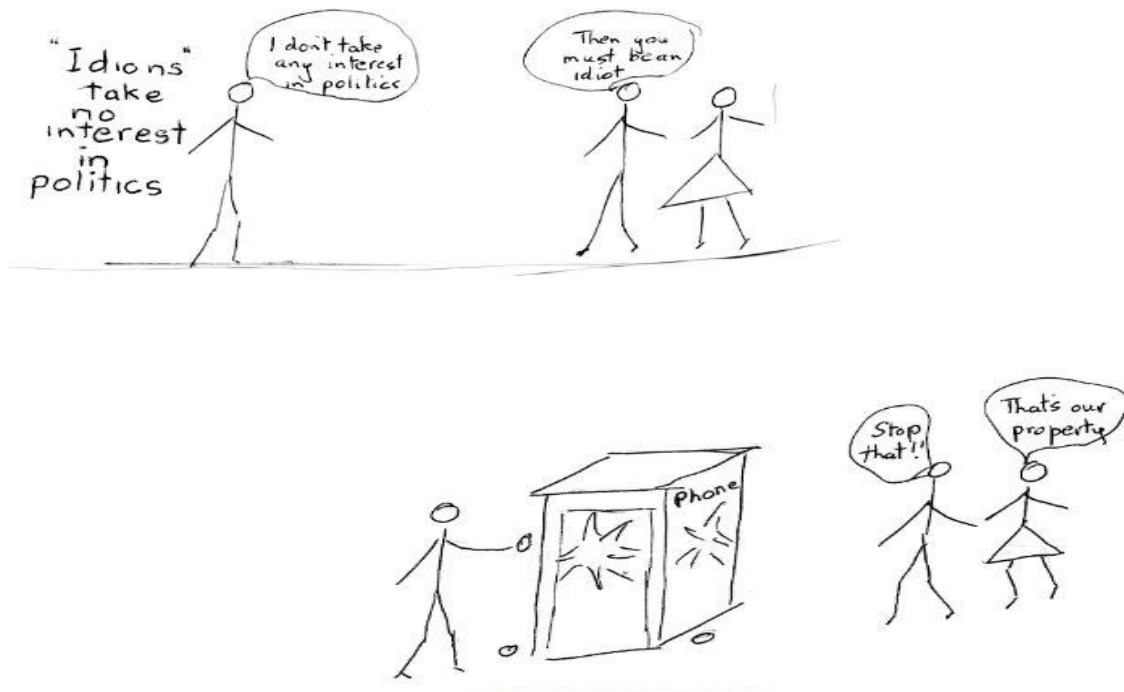
Educated and virtuous citizens should make laws that are fair to all and favour none

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Discussion 28

CIVIC RESPONSIBILITIES

Values involved – Community, equity, integrity, environmental sustainability.

By accepting the rights and privileges of being a citizen of a country, it is claimed that we have become party to a covenant with the government, which is the representative of the rest of the people in the country. We have agreed to obey the laws and accept the responsibilities that go with citizenship.

When early European settlers came to this country there were no roads, railways, schools, hospitals, libraries, electric power, town water supplies or mail systems. Forms of central and local government were organized, money had to be raised through taxes or borrowing, and the people set to work to provide all the services that we have today.

Before long, services were operating, and small communities were preparing and building the schools, churches, sports fields, local halls, tennis courts, swimming pools and libraries that the people of these communities felt they needed. Money was raised locally, and voluntary work saw whole communities working together to provide these amenities. After World War 1, many communities erected the War Memorials that we attend on Anzac Day. After World War 2 the same communities built larger War Memorial halls for the use of the community in future and in memory of the young men from the community who had died hoping that future generations could be free. Lists of the names of those men are usually on plaques at the memorials. We take all these things for granted today because they have been there most of our lives, and we do not often think about who paid for them and who owns them. Before the 1980s, the answer would have been that the people paid for most of these amenities with their work or taxes and the people own them. We all had a stake in most of our public services and amenities.

Privatisation

New political ideas emerging in the 1980s saw both major political parties in various governments, selling to private enterprise, many of these assets that belonged to all the people. The argument was that it cost a great deal of money for a government to run services like the railways, and that private companies would do it better. The free market was the theory behind these changes, but it should not be forgotten that Adam Smith saw the free market working in an ethical society, where business was operated by people of ethical principles. Arguments still abound that there was a mistake in thinking in the 80s, because while a private enterprise could dismiss a large number of people in order to make a profit, the unemployed still had to receive an income from the rest of the people, and so the overall effect was that private enterprise received the profit, but the country as a whole paid for the unemployment. Whether the theory was right or not is open to argument. The people however still own public buildings like Town Halls and libraries, police stations, courts, playing fields etc. that have not been sold off.

Who pays?

The people pay for the upkeep of the property they own through their rates that are paid to local bodies, like City or County Councils, or Regional Authorities, and through the taxes they pay to the central government. If the buildings or facilities that belong to the public are damaged, destroyed or abused in any way, the rest of the people in a town will have to pay for the repairs. This means that a person who damages public property in any way is actually stealing from the rest of the people in the town because they will have to pay for the repairs. Money that could have been used in a better way has been wasted.

Vandalism

Young people benefit from many of the amenities that their parents pay for through their rates and taxes. Schools, sporting facilities, public transport, health systems, public phone booths

and public toilets are often targets for vandalism. Many adults do voluntary work to provide facilities and keep them running. Some spend hours cleaning off graffiti that makes a town look untidy, and they do this because they take a pride in their town and they want it to look well. A tidy, well-kept town also adds value to every resident's property. If residents wish to sell a property, buyers will pay more if they can see that the people who live there are responsible citizens who care about the town. Young people also can take a pride in their town, but they need to understand that by their actions they can harm themselves as well as others. In one small town, behaviour on the late night bus from the city was so bad that the bus service was cancelled and so many other young people were prevented from going to films and events in the city. The Saturday night disco dances in the local hall were cancelled, because the bad behaviour of a few, discouraged adults from making the effort to organize social events. Life works like that. Someone always pays.

Voluntary work

Just as the early settlers worked for no pay to provide many of the amenities that are used in your towns today, there are still people who give their work freely to keep these amenities available to the public. Eventually most young people will become taxpayers and it will be their turn to provide the money and work that is needed to maintain public property. Public property belongs to the people, not to some political party in a distant government. It is never too early for young people to start thinking about what they can personally do to make a contribution to their community – to be a valuable part of it and not a burden on it. In some places, projects are specially run by schools to provide new amenities or clean up rubbish. Because young people use the facilities of their towns, they have a responsibility to help protect and maintain them.

Responsibility

Think about this situation. If you knew a group of young people were damaging public property, would it be your responsibility to report them and have it stopped? We are sometimes faced with choices like this and we need to think about the long-term consequences of our actions. The decisions we make, and the reasons why we make them reflect on the society in which we live. If you chose not to report them, would it be because you do not want to be a “snitch,” or whatever the appropriate word is for a person who tells tales. Would it be because you would be frightened the culprits would damage you or your property in return? Would it be because you think it is none of your business? Who is your responsibility to – those who are damaging public property or to the other people in your town?

Main points-

In accepting the privileges of citizenship, we must accept responsibilities in return.

This is a relatively new country and all public amenities have had to be built or paid for by the people themselves.

The maintenance of all public amenities is paid for by the people through their taxes.

Anyone who damages public property is stealing from the rest of the people.

All citizens should take an interest in and protect the public property they own.

THE MEDIA

Values involved – Community, integrity, respect.

In the early years of last century the news reached the people slowly. Before radio and general access to telephones, the latest news would be written out and pinned up on notice-boards in a prominent place in communities, e.g. Post Offices and local halls. Earlier than that, many towns in the older countries had Town Criers who would walk through the towns, ringing a bell and shouting the latest news. In small rural communities in New Zealand, the news would be put up on a notice-board at the Dairy Factory where the farmers congregated every morning to deliver their milk or cream.

Today we receive our news by daily newspapers, radio, T.V. and weekly newspapers. People have less and less time to read through newspapers, and so the use of daily newspapers is declining. By the time people get home from work, the morning news is not fresh any more so they watch the T.V. news and form their opinions from that. For a democracy to work the way it should, the people need to have an educated understanding of current issues so that they can vote wisely. Forming opinions on the basis of T.V. news is not sufficient because the news is censored several times before it reaches the screens, and much depends on the ethical principles of the people through whose hands it passes.

Firstly it is censored by the reporter and camera-person who decide what to film and what to leave out. Secondly, it is censored by the editors of the T.V. news, who decide what remaining bits will be shown to the public. Finally, the presenters can add their own bias by facial expression, body language and comments that were not in the script.

We need to understand how the system works. Those who control the finances of a T.V. channel or a newspaper ultimately decide what information the public will receive. They need to attract viewers or readers, and so they aim to interest and entertain, and are not primarily motivated to educate. There are constant attacks on our money and our minds. Someone has to pay for the production of T.V. and newspapers, and much of the money required comes from advertising. People who are paying for the advertising are doing so in order to sell more of their product, services or ideas, and consequently to make more profit, therefore they will advertise in a media that reaches the largest number of people.

In order to attract a large number of people, the different forms of media have to offer headlines or a product that will attract attention. The ordinary person going about an ordinary life - doing good things and living within the law - is not sensational, and will not attract attention, sell papers, or be worth showing on T.V., and so the media concentrates on the extremes of human behaviour. Much of the extreme behaviour reported in the media is negative rather than uplifting. It is inclined to depress rather than to cheer. If the negative and depressing is considered to be what people are more willing to pay for, rather than the cheerful and uplifting, that is a reflection on society as well as on the media.

Often a newspaper or T.V. will claim that it is in the public interest to publish a certain story, although the motive may really be that the public will be interested in another person's downfall or embarrassment, and will be willing to pay to read about it. The freedom of the press to keep the public informed can be personal interest, and little to do with the public's "need to know."

The British Code of Ethics for newspapers considers the "public interest" to include 1. Detecting or exposing crime or a serious misdemeanour. 2. Protecting public health and safety, and 3. Preventing the public being misled by some statement of an individual or organisation, and the Code is expected "to be honoured, not only to the letter, but in the full spirit."

A Code of ethics is not a law passed by a government, and is only as effective as the ethical standards of the people involved allow it to be. In New Zealand, there is not yet a general code of ethics for newspapers, and so in many newspapers the only ethic is said to be, "Could they sue us if we publish this?" On Kohlberg's scale, this level of ethical reasoning would seem to be the lowest, i.e. Stage one, where a young child or unthinking adult only responds to punishment that hurts. The tone of a newspaper is set by those who own the paper and pay the journalists, so a great deal depends on their ethical principles and political leanings, but in large newspapers these people are at a distance from the public and usually unknown to them personally.

The journalists and editors of newspapers in smaller towns are less likely to reason at the lowest level as they are known personally to many people in the community. They are more likely to be influenced by the need for the approval of their readers, and therefore they will work at the levels of Stages 2 and 3, i.e. what makes life more pleasant for themselves, and the "Good boy, Good girl" of approval of their good works. If the local paper however, is owned by a distant consortium of owners, the editor is responsible to them for his position, and this may compete with his ethical responsibilities to his/her readers.

Information Technology has reached another milestone with the Internet. It is fast becoming a quick source of news, but there is little accountability for the material that can be found on web-sites. At a "media ethics" seminar in 1998 it was said that, "Material could be put out by adolescent skin-heads full of hate," with the result that "The lunatic fringe" can use it and believe it.

In our dealings with all the media sources today, we do not want to be part of the "lunatic fringe." We need to understand the system and we cannot afford to be apathetic. Those working within the media, and those accepting their product as a source of information, should use ethical principles in making decisions on what to produce and what to consume. Wisdom – What are the consequences of this action likely to be?

Justice – Am I being fair to all those involved?

Truth – Do I have all the facts, and have they been verified? What are the motives of the people supplying the information?

Love – Is anyone going to be hurt or harmed by this? Is everyone being treated with respect?

Golden Rule – How would I feel if I were personally involved?

A better world? – Is this going to have negative or positive results?

Main Points –

News reaches us very quickly nowadays.

For a democracy to succeed the public need to have accurate unbiased information on which to base their opinions.

Forming opinions on the basis of T.V. news alone is not sufficient.

The media need to attract readers and viewers so that the advertisers will pay for advertising space.

Extremes of behaviour are more likely to attract attention than the average, but this does not give a balanced picture of current issues.

The media may claim that an article is in the public interest, but it may be purely in their own interest to publish something sensational that will sell papers or advertising.

Ultimately the public influence what is published or shown, unless, through apathy, they show they do not mind what is put before them.

The public as well as those who work in the media need to have ethical principles.

LOVE AND MARRIAGE

Values involved – Respect, integrity, excellence, community.

Some people believe that humans are just another of the living species that inhabit the earth. Others believe that humans were especially designed and developed to be a species that would be responsible for the earth and other living creatures; a species that would themselves possess a spirit that would be part of, or would communicate with, a spiritual force beyond themselves. Whatever our beliefs, there is no doubt that we reproduce and multiply just as most other living species do.

From the simplest forms that divide themselves to multiply, through to more complex forms of animal life, the basic instinct or need is the survival of the species. The young of some species are born ready to survive without the help of their parents, but in the main, those males and females who get together to produce offspring assume the responsibility of feeding and nurturing their young until they are mature enough to survive without assistance. Most birds and animals accept this without question and just get on with it – feeding, protecting and teaching their young by being role models for them until they understand their own role in life.

Strange creatures

Strangely enough, human beings who are supposed to be some of the most intelligent and highly developed creatures, sometimes find it difficult to accept the role ordained for them by nature. Some human parents who have brought young into the world, and who in the animal kingdom would have without question accepted responsibility for their survival, opt out, and leave that responsibility to others who are obliged to accept it, whether they want to or not. As examples – there are men who father children, then leave them for the rest of the people in the country to support by means of social welfare. There are women who go on having children without being sure that a father will also be around to help take responsibility for them and be a good role model for them. Responsible parents who have families of their own to support, are forced to pay extra tax in order to support children whose parents are irresponsible. The Domestic Purposes Benefit was introduced by a compassionate government to ensure that women and children in need were not without support. It is very strange and a reflection on the ethical standards of society, that in reasonably prosperous times there are so many more, as a proportion of the population, who require such support from others. **We should never forget that the government does not have money of its own. Money that it hands out as benefits has to come directly or indirectly from the rest of the people in the country.**

Legal contracts

Thousands of years ago in far more primitive societies, legal or religious frameworks were set up to ensure that males and females formed a stable relationship in which to bring up the children of their union. Marriage is such a form of legal arrangement, recognized by religion and by civil authorities. Though a couple today may make their covenant with each other in any place they like – in a garden, on a beach, or jumping out of an aeroplane for instance, they are required to sign official forms if a marriage is to be legally recognized.

The purpose of marriage

Most major religions have their own traditional forms of marriage, and most have the same intent. The words of the Christian marriage service spell out these traditional purposes, though few people today use it in its old form,

Firstly, it was ordained for the procreation and nurture of children.

Secondly, it was ordained so that people would have a legitimate means of sexual satisfaction.

Thirdly, it was ordained for the mutual company, help and comfort that each should have of the other, both in prosperity and adversity throughout their lives.

The couple then promised faithfulness and support for each other, to love, comfort, honour and keep each other – for richer or poorer, in sickness or in health - as long as they both should live.

In the eyes of modern women there was one failing in these promises. In addition to the mutual promises of love and comfort, women promised to obey and serve their husbands. Some today still keep to the traditional form of contract, but few women in a modern world are prepared to promise to obey. The man however as he placed the ring on the woman's finger was obliged to say, "With this ring I thee wed. With my body I thee worship, and with all my worldly goods I thee endow." Possibly at a time when many women did not go outside the home to work, it was considered a fair exchange. The majority of the early colonial couples who came to this country to settle would have made these vows or similar ones. For better or for worse they went together into the unknown.

The vows that were made were meant to be permanent and most of them were. Divorce was possible, but was frowned upon socially and by the Christian church. Even by the 1930s when my own mother divorced because my father was permanently in a mental institution, she was not able to remarry in church. From the middle of the twentieth century however ideas changed. The fact that some marriages previously had not been happy - even though the couples stayed together, was used as an argument against the necessity for legalising cohabitation.

Feminist Literature

It should be remembered today that feminist descriptions of the lives of women before the 1960s are interpretations based on a particular ideology, but they have had a lasting effect on society. Read stories of the lives of real colonial women. Also Note 1 p 129.

The feminist movement argued that many women used marriage merely as a meal ticket and for the perks that were involved. Remove the privileges that went with heterosexual marriage, and there would be no need for women to become the property of men. University Women's Studies papers (1995) argued that, "the dominance of heterosexuality is maintained by granting or denying women certain heterosexual privileges (e.g. social and family acceptance, economic security, male legitimacy and legal and physical protection)" and that anyway, "heterosexuality is a social process—something we learn to be and not a natural predisposition." (Note 2, p129).

A generation of the brightest of our young women was exposed to these ideas. Contraception had become freely available, and so today we have a society in which heterosexual marriage and any privileges in law which go with such marriage are seen by some to be no more important than other forms of partnership. Recent statistics show however that a majority of households in which there are children, also include a mother and father.

The way of nature is hard to resist

To ensure the survival of the species, nature had invented a process for reproduction that would be practically impossible to resist. Couples "fall in love," and are sexually attracted to each other. Get too close and in our natural state the male and female are drawn together by a power like that of a magnet. Humans however thought they had outsmarted nature by the invention of contraceptives, so they now could enjoy the sexual process without the previously almost inevitable consequence of pregnancy. Recent scientific research however has identified another of nature's provisions for the survival of the species. The level of the chemicals in the body that contribute to the first strength of the magnetism lessens after several years of sexual activity. The magnetism is no longer so strong. It is as though nature is saying, "You should now have produced young. Now all your energies should go into rearing

them, ensuring their survival and training them to take their place in the long chain that stretches into the future. - but some go looking for another “fix” of the magnetism.

According to New Zealand statistics, young people in their twenties have the highest divorce rates of all age groups. Waning chemistry, and unreasonable expectations of marriage mean that when the excitement and fantasy have gone, there may be nothing to take their place. What is missing is the caring love between two people that is necessary for a happy marriage and the upbringing of children. There can be sexual attraction without love, but sexual attraction can be merely lust that will quickly burn out. Sexual attraction may be considered a good enough reason for casual sex, but it is not a good enough basis on its own for a lasting marriage and for the reproduction of children. Children need a home where there is love and respect between parents, but many couples who have entered a relationship purely for the sake of sexual gratification, produce children. If the caring love that is needed for long-term relationships is not involved, there can be disastrous effects for all concerned, especially the children.

Love for a lifetime

Love begins as a spark of attraction between two people. During our teen-age years we can be attracted in this way, to a succession of different people at different times, but our teen-age years are our learning years. We are basically serving an apprenticeship for the life that is to follow, and we need to learn about people. We need to understand the type of person we could live with happily, and could rely on to be a good parent for the children we might have. In the past, most social rules discouraged sexual activity until an age where couples could play a responsible part in caring for the children that were produced. It is hard work being a parent and being responsible, twenty-four hours a day, for someone else as well as yourself.

The spark of attraction will soon die out if we discover we do not really like the kind of person that is beneath an often good-looking exterior. It can also die out if it is discovered that the other person involved is only interested in sexual gratification, and merely wants to use us for his/her own ends. Why would otherwise intelligent young people allow their bodies to be “used,” in a way they might not really enjoy, and why would they allow themselves to become used to a form of sex that is far less than nature planned it to be? **If we find that we do like the character and ways of thinking of the person to whom we have been attracted, the spark can grow into a flame of true love that can last a lifetime.**

If sex is not involved while two people spend time with each other, learning to love each other for the kind of people they are, the flame of love will become much stronger and can burn brightly over the difficult but rewarding years that are spent bringing up children and providing for them. **The love for the children who belong to two partners who like and respect each other, will help keep the fire burning, and in old age the embers of the fire will still glow, and the love of their children and grandchildren will warm two people who have spent a lifetime together in good times and bad.**

Perhaps that is why there are so many golden weddings today among couples who married around the middle of the last century. Because contraceptives were not freely available until after marriage, couples usually got to know each other well before they indulged in sex. Yes, statistics prove that often first babies were conceived before marriage. This does not prove that casual sex was generally available. It proves that couples who had come to love each other and trust each other and were engaged to marry, sometimes got so close to each other that the magnetic power of nature took over in spite of their best intentions. The fact that they were to marry soon was the factor that allowed them to relax their self-control. A common word amongst the young men of the time was that once they were engaged, they had a license to “proceed with caution.” Respectable young women however were supposed to discourage them.

Temptation

There are few areas where temptation is so strong. From early teenage years there is temptation to experiment with sex. There is temptation to want everything now without being prepared to pay the cost. **Careless sex costs. Someone always pays.** Nature is strong, but bringing a child into the world means being responsible for it. True love is responsible and cares about the well-being of the other person and any children they both may have. No contraception is 100% reliable. Even with contraception there is the danger of sexually transmitted diseases. Some sexually transmitted diseases are not prevented by contraception. The surest way to keep safe is to have one partner only. The easiest way to resist temptation is not to get so close that the magnetic power of nature takes over, but it is not easy today. T.V., films, words of songs and entertainers bombard young people with temptation. Even some sexual education in schools may increase temptation, by arousing interest and making it easier for young people to discuss sexual matters inside and outside of school. Young people need to know more about sex than some (mainly city) young people knew in the past, but in many forms of the media today sex has become merely a spectator sport. Such interpretations of love and sex provide instant temptation, the impression that an evening out and physical attraction should inevitably end with a night in bed. These are false interpretations of the way true love and marriage can be. Young people are being robbed if they are in such a hurry for sex that they lose out on the intense and lasting love that can come with waiting. They can also be very disappointed and disillusioned with sex that is not based on romance, unselfishness, mutual desire and mutual pleasure.

Main points –

The human race, like any other species has a strong instinct for survival.

The process of reproduction therefore is very hard to resist. There are few areas where temptation is so strong.

From early times frameworks have been set up in society to ensure the care of the children involved.

The purpose of marriage has traditionally been, first for the nurture of children, secondly for a legitimate means of sexual satisfaction, and thirdly for lifelong companionship.

The introduction of contraception changed the way of nature.

The introduction of the Domestic Purposes Benefit gave unethical fathers the ability to escape their responsibilities.

It also gave women the ability to be irresponsible about the consequences of sex.

Sexual attraction does not necessarily involve a caring and lasting love.

Wise young people will make sure they like the character of the person they are attracted to before becoming sexually involved with them.

Wise young people will ensure that they are not just “used” by others, and “upright” young people will not “use” others for their own ends.

Waiting for sex allows the flame of love to become a fire that will last a lifetime.

Magazines, T.V. shows, etc. often give a false picture of how true love should be.

Notes –

1. A different interpretation of these earlier New Zealand women, by the author of “Forty Lessons,” was published in the N.Z.Herald (10.1.2000) under the title, “Women of the past too often patronised with easy platitudes.)
2. Quotations from Book 1, extramural study notes of paper 87.205 (1996), Massey University Palmerston North, New Zealand. pp179-180. Authors Anne-Marie O’Neill and Marian Court. A selection of Lesbian writings was also included which supported this thinking.

References –

The Book of Common Prayer ---- according to The Church of England (Circa 1901), London: Ward, Lock and Co.

Discussion 31

SPIRITUALITY AND RELIGION

Values involved – diversity, respect, integrity. Community.

“To understand human history and human life it is necessary to understand religion, and in the contemporary world one must understand other nations’ ideologies and faith in order to grasp the meaning of life as seen from perspectives often very different from our own.” When Ninian Smart wrote these words around 1967 he could probably not have imagined how much more relevant they would be in another 40 years. In his book, “The Religious Experience of Mankind,” Smart includes Humanism and Marxism, which he also considered to be religions in that they are a set of beliefs that influence the thinking and actions of a large number of people. To understand new immigrants in a multicultural country, and for them to understand the background to the culture in which they now find themselves, it is necessary to understand religions, and how religions affect their ability to integrate into a new country. Experience in Europe has shown that this is best done through the education system and in many European countries Religious Education is a compulsory part of the curriculum. In Britain, for instance, a local committee of various religious groups decides what is to be taught, and teachers may be Christians, humanists or members of other faiths.

Teaching *about* religion

The purpose of teaching *about* religion is not an attempt to convert students, but an attempt to give them an understanding of how their own and other people’s cultures have tried to find answers to questions that science has not been able to answer. Learning about celebrations, ceremonies, buildings, traditions, rites of passage, customs and ethics will aid understanding and tolerance. It is ignorance that causes misunderstandings. We indoctrinate in schools by what we do not teach students as well as by what we do. By eliminating main-stream religions from any mention in the school curriculum, even though myth, magic and fantasy are acceptable, we are intimating that the major religions are not worth spending time on.

Religion in schools

In public schools in New Zealand little is taught about religion because ours is a secular education system. The “Bible in School” teaching of the Christian religion actually takes place outside official school hours, but it is an acknowledgement that those who decided our system would be secular, were not against religion as such. They had come from areas of Britain where one or the other Christian denominations were in the majority, e.g. Catholics from Ireland, Presbyterians from Scotland, Anglicans from England, and now they were finding in a new country where these groups were thrown together, that there was argument about funding for different schools, many of which had been started by churches. In the interests of unity they decided that our new public school system should be secular. Different denominations decided to keep or start schools of their own so that they could keep their own religious teaching, with the result that today we have public schools with no teaching about religion, Christian and integrated schools that integrate the Christian religion into their teaching, Maori spirituality, and now the possibility of Islamic schools that will include their own religion in the curriculum. Unless our public schools and the other types of schools include a knowledge of other religions alongside their own teaching there is a strong possibility that a lack of tolerance and understanding of other beliefs will cause problems in the future.

The curriculum

The 2007 Curriculum proposes that students must still learn about societies and communities and how they function, about diverse cultures of people within communities and the impact of culture and heritage on society. They are required to understand about the past, the present and possible future, but there is no specific mention of religion. Possibly this is because we have a secular education system, therefore some believe religion should be excluded. Possibly

it is because curriculum developers believed knowledge *about* religions is irrelevant, but to deliberately exclude relevant information is a form of indoctrination. Possibly it is because they wished to avoid controversy and have intentionally left it to teachers to decide whether to include an understanding of religions in social studies. (Passing the buck?) It is hardly possible to teach about and understand the beliefs and events that have shaped our world without knowing exactly what those beliefs are. A knowledge and understanding of those beliefs are necessary to our understanding of others in an evolving multicultural country, so it seems that knowledge *about* religions should be a part of the general curriculum and not just an optional extra.

The place of religion

By obtaining a general knowledge of the main religions and their teachings, students are able to consider for themselves the answers religion offers to the ethical and spiritual questions they may want to ask. It is unscientific to refuse to examine evidence even if we do not believe in a particular proposition. “From Albert Einstein downwards, intellectuals have warned that unless the wisdom of religion can be reborn for the age of science, the possibility of misusing science on a grand scale will remain.”⁷³ Wisdom and science “need to be placed alongside each other.” That this is possible, is shown by such religious believers as Einstein and Albert Schweitzer who were also scientists.

The place of nature

There is a move today towards the placing of nature or Gaia, the Earth Mother, at the centre of spirituality in place of the God who is known through the major religions. Nature however, does not see human beings as any more important than any other species. Nature can be cruel to the individual. The survival of the species is what is important, and even a species can be expendable if conditions change. Without the concept of a Father God who cares about each individual, and requires ethical standards of righteousness, even the human species could be considered to be expendable. For Gaia, it is a case of survival of the fittest, and if humans pollute their environment to the point at which they can no longer survive, Gaia will go on without them, just as free competition in work, business or war, where there are no ethical standards, will result in the survival of the strongest and most ruthless.

A purpose to life

Without the guiding hand of a spiritual force, “no human life is significant except for its contribution to the progress of the species in a vast time scale.” (Edwards p255) People are left lost and uncertain by major changes to their cultural or political environment. They need a belief in some unchanging force or symbol to give stability and continuity to their lives. City dwellers have been separated from the land which has been humans’ natural environment, and have become troglodytes in urban caves. Immigrants have been uprooted and transplanted. A modern Chinese author, Gao Xingjian, writes of the major political changes of the last century that forced changes of culture in China, to the point where he considers his people are now “a race of people who have lost their souls.” He considers that the greed of people today is greater than among the ancients, which “casts doubt on Thomas Huxley’s theory of evolution.”⁷⁴ Hopefully this slide backwards is only a blip in mankind’s progress upwards. It is possible that if the guidance of a spiritual force for good is added to the process of evolution, each individual could see a purpose to his/her life that would not be there otherwise. That purpose is to protect nature in order to ensure the survival of the human

⁷³ Edwards, D. *Religion and change* p257

⁷⁴ The extract from the book *Soul Mountain* is included by Alan Webster in the Preface to *Spiral of Values* p11 Edwards also comments on Huxley’s theory p 252. Huxley and Darwin believed that the evolutionary process would include ethical behaviour.

environment, and to do as much good as possible to fellow human beings, i.e. to make the world a better place. Animistic religions based on nature worship rarely include concern for the individual. In these religions individuals are usually dispensable, and can be used as human sacrifices to appease the gods of nature.

Religion abused and misused

Religion has been and still is being used as an excuse for power struggles in places like Ireland and the Middle East. Catholic and Protestant Christians, Israelis and Palestinians, Hindus and Muslims in India and Pakistan, all fight, not really because of the teachings of their religions, which in the main are against killing, but because of the desire for power on the part of their leaders. Shi'ite and Sunni Muslims fight each other in Iraq in spite of the fact that Islam teaches that brother should not fight against brother. Their leaders *use* religion to encourage people to fight. They maintain and inflame centuries-old grievances in order to obtain power for themselves in the present, regardless of how many of their own people are killed or injured in the process. Marx called religion, "The opiate of the people" because it encouraged them to accept their place in life and *not* fight their oppressors. A change to the "religion" of Communism, however, proved that the ordinary people could still be oppressed, and by the very people who had claimed to want their freedom. The power of the party replaced the power of the church. There have been more people killed through communist leadership than through Christianity.

There is justified criticism of religion, especially where the institutions that have grown up around the original teachings have made themselves so important that the original teachings have been obscured. Overall, however, it is reasonable to claim that religion has done more good in the world than harm. Religion has been a powerful force for good. It has given people strength and hope in their darkest hours. It has inspired some of the world's greatest art and literature. It has provided ethical codes that have been the basis for stable communities and many of our laws. By inventing weapons like swords, gunpowder, and now nuclear weapons and modern methods of mass destruction, science has aided in the destruction of far more people than religion ever has. Even where religion is being used as an excuse for power struggles, it is the weapons devised by scientific minds that have such hideous effects on innocent people.

Similarities, rather than differences.

Truth is one of the basic ethical principles of most religions, but atheists generally claim that most religions lead their followers to believe things that are not true. Christianity, Hinduism, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Confucianism all place truth as an ethical obligation so it would seem that the writers of these religions wrote the truth as they saw it at the time. We have more understanding today of religious writings and their origins. We have a responsibility to respect other people and their beliefs, even if we personally do not believe that the beliefs are based on historical truth. Our children have a right to know *about* religion, but we do not have a right to indoctrinate them.

- **People who understand more about religions are less likely to be led into fighting over them.**

Our enemies are not other religions. Our enemies are ignorance, bigotry, and minds that are closed to anything except their own religions and their own ideologies. Children who attend religious schools of any kind should also have knowledge of other religions included in their curricula. Teaching *about* religions and their beliefs, showing their similarities of thought rather than their differences, should increase tolerance and understanding. In junior classes, students can learn about the origins of religions, their ceremonies, festivals, rites of passage, buildings, traditions, customs and ethics. They can visit buildings and be visited by people who can explain their own beliefs. In the most senior forms, students can go more deeply into the teachings and beliefs of various religions, but in public schools, under a secular system,

beliefs should never be taught as facts, no matter what the teacher may personally believe.
“Christians believe,” – “Moslems believe” – “Humanists believe” is the way to go.

Main Points –

A religion is a set of beliefs that has a major influence on the thinking and actions of a large number of people.

To understand human history and life it is necessary to have an understanding of religion.

Religion has inspired some of the world’s greatest art and literature, and deeds of great courage, as well as wars.

Leaders have used religion as an excuse in their own power struggles.

It is possible to teach *about* religions without trying to indoctrinate into any one religion.

We can learn about their beliefs, celebrations etc. and the reasons for them.

Most religions have similar ethical teachings, even if they are not always carried out.

Religion has given people strength and hope in difficult times.

Ignorance and bigotry need to be overcome by education and understanding.

We should look for the similarities between religions, rather than concentrate on differences.

Notes –

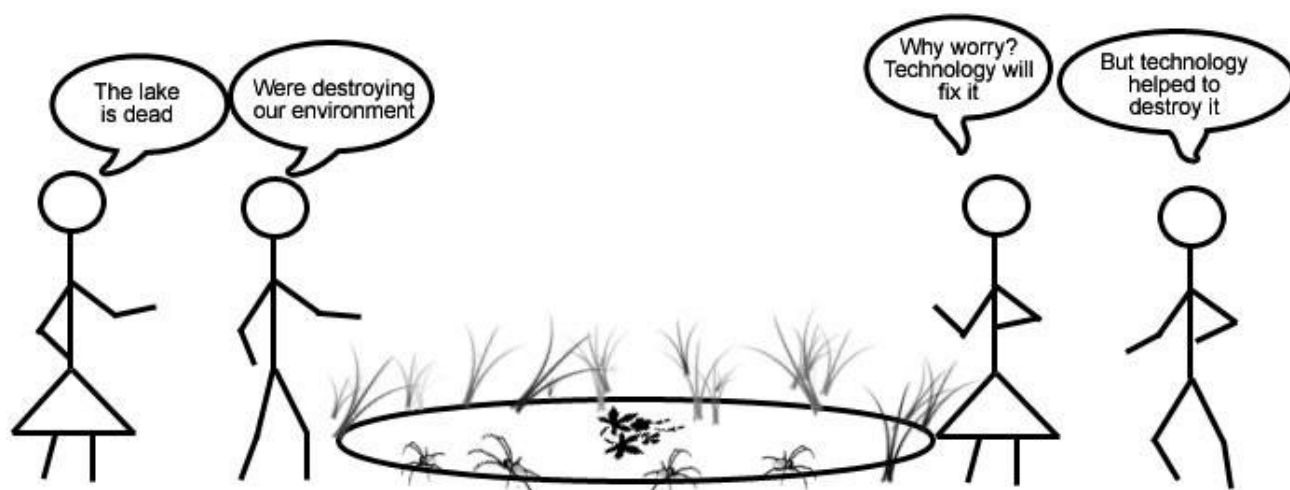
1. The book, *Soul Mountain*, by Gao Xingjian is quoted by Alan Webster in his *Spiral of values*.(p11) It was sent to Webster by a former student who had come from the People’s Republic of China.

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Edwards,D., (1969). *Religion and change*, London: Hodder and Staughton.

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ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

Values involved – Community, integrity, respect, excellence, inquiry.

All through the situations we have examined in this series of concepts, the final check on our ethical reasoning has been, “Will this help to make a better world?” Our ethical principles begin within our homes and move out to encompass the near environment and the global situation. Perhaps so many people are so separated from nature today in the way their lives are lived, that they fail to recognize how closely the future of humanity is bound up with the well-being of our natural environment. Other living species, without the ability to reason, appear to have more sense than the human species. Perhaps because they act on the instinct with which nature provides them, few birds or animals - unless they are forced to do so by the conditions in which humans keep them – would willingly pollute their own environment. Individually most of us are quite protective of our immediate surroundings and the NIMBY (Not in my backyard) syndrome is strong when it comes to decisions that will affect it. We are not so concerned, however, about the overall effect of our consumer lifestyles, the resources consumed and the waste produced. As long as the rubbish truck turns up on the expected day, all is well with our world.

Everything is *not* well with our world however. International conferences have agreed that there are key issues of concern that should be addressed globally. These are 1.Global population explosion. 2.Food and agriculture. 3. Tropical deforestation. 4. Extinction of biological species. 5. Desertification and drought. 6. Fresh water. 7. Degradation of marine resources. 8. Energy. 9. Atmosphere and climate. 10. Managing waste. 11. Management of hazardous materials. 12. Global security. 13. Unsustainable development and the limit to the ability of nature to recover after use.

“She’ll be right.”

Because of the technological age in which we live, it appears that the majority of people have faith that technology will be able to solve future problems. We feel that we should probably do our bit with regard to recycling, a few wind farms here and there should solve energy problems without adding to global warming, and we should buy environmentally friendly consumer goods when we can. Apart from that, we have done our bit, and anyway, Greenies are impractical extremists who want everybody to go out and hug trees and therefore do not need to be taken too seriously. This extreme image is unfortunate because there is a great deal of truth that we all need to accept. In spite of the variety of ecological movements, ranging from dark green to pale green, there are points on which most scientists also agree.

- 1. There is a limit to the capacity of nature to produce essentials such as clean air, clean water and good food.**
- 2. There is a limit to the ability of nature to assimilate wastes and pollutants and rebound from abuse.**
- 3. We should not allow consumer demand alone to decide environmental value and policy.⁷⁵**

We have been warned. Success in life from now on should not be judged by the amount of consumer goods we are able to acquire, or the size of our houses or cars.

Sustainable economics –

This term has emerged recently as an alternative to market economics, and takes into account the current and future environmental realities. The basic issues are these –

⁷⁵ Des Jardins, *Environmental Ethics*. P250-251.

1. A large proportion of the world's population today lives in poverty, while one quarter of the population lives in industrialized countries and consumes 80% of the world's goods.
2. The world's population is likely to double over the next fifty years to about 11 billion people.
3. The only source for our needs is the natural resources of the earth itself.

Following the logic of the mathematical equations done at school – QED – we need to create an economic system that can provide for the world's population without destroying the environment in the process. It would not be possible to raise the level of consumption of the majority of the world's population to the level of the other quarter of the population without overtaxing and destroying our natural resources, so the logical conclusion is that those who today consume far more than their share of the world's resources should reduce their consumption. We in the industrialised part of the world need to change from being a consumer society to being a “conservator” society. We need to reduce our consumption and waste of the world's resources. We should no longer see status and success in terms of material possessions, but this would require a radical change in our attitude to life.

Sustainability

This means that we only use our resources at a rate that can be sustained over the long term. This means that we use renewable resources, e.g. forestry, only at the rate at which the resources could be replenished. The use of non-renewable resources would be limited to the rate at which alternatives could be developed. The waste and pollution involved would not be governed by the ability of an industry to pay, but by the capacity of nature to assimilate them.⁷⁶ Sustainability is the key word and its success will depend on the willingness of people to think and act ethically about our present environment and the future.

Lesson Plan - The example of cell phones.

A good example of the problem we face is shown here in relation to new models of cellphones. Here is an example in the form of a lesson plan, of how this situation can be examined by ethical reasoning.

A recent newspaper item stated that an international convention in Geneva will try to tackle the latest toxic waste crisis – caused by mobile phones. In this country the article states, 2.8 million people have mobile phones and update them once every eighteen months or two years. In Europe, 105 million handsets are discarded each year, showing the size of the problem world-wide. The cadmium in a single battery from an old phone could seriously contaminate 600,000 litres of water, enough to fill one third of an Olympic sized swimming pool. Lead used in the solder for wiring can damage immune and nervous systems and cause serious damage to growing brains. Many old phones are exported to third world countries for use or for recycling in rudimentary conditions. If we ask a few questions based on ethical principles it helps us to reason about our own updating of cellphones.

Wisdom – What are the consequences of updating our phones so often? Is it wise to produce this amount of toxic waste?

Justice – Is it fair that richer countries should use poorer countries to dispose of their dangerous waste?

Truth – Does this information come from a reliable source? What will influence you most in your decision to update your cell phone? What do you think we *should* do?

Love – Are we showing concern for the people of poorer countries or are we using them for our own ends? Are we showing concern for future generations?

The Golden Rule – How would we feel if we were on the receiving end of this waste?

⁷⁶ Des Jardins, J., (1997). *Environmental Ethics : An introduction to environmental philosophy*. (2nd ed.) U.S.A. : Wadsworth Publishing Co. p 59

A better world – What decisions should we make if we want to improve our environment, personally and globally?

When we ask such questions it is very easy to see what we *should* do, but what we will really do is another matter.

The final question to ask is, what will it take to motivate us if we are not moved by reason and logic?

Survival –

Should we be worried about glaciers melting and climate change? One species of nature has tripled in number over the last forty years and so has their waste and the use and pollution of water. Nature is concerned with survival. If humans use up their resources and pollute their environment to the point where the human species is unable to survive, nature will still survive and see the emergence of species and plants that can survive in an environment that is hostile for humans. If conditions become too bad, nature itself may not survive, and the world may become just another burnt out planet, moving endlessly through the universe. If our own instinct for survival is strong enough, it may be able to motivate us to change in time.

What's wrong with being a peasant?

The constant race to work more and more hours, to acquire more and more consumer goods, produces more and more waste, and produces more and more stress. It leaves us less and less time to sit and enjoy the scenery and spend time with friends and family, and we look forward to the short time each year when we are able to live like peasants, in the countryside or at beaches. We need to find some other way to judge success in life than the status gained by having the largest house and car and the latest in technology. Excess consumption is producing a stressed out people and a stressed out planet. Perhaps there are other planets out in the universe that once had a population like us who left it too late to change their ways. Perhaps there are other planets evolving whose people one day will look at the Earth and say, “people must have lived there once.” The first leaves are falling from the trees - we still have time to choose and change – but not much..

Main points –

There is a limit to the capacity of nature to produce clean air, clean water and food.

There is a limit to the ability of nature to assimilate waste and rebound from abuse.

One quarter of the world's population uses 80% of the world's resources and wastes a considerable proportion of that amount.

Three quarters of the world lives in comparative poverty.

For a long- term solution, we, the one quarter, need to reduce consumption of resources and become a conserver society.

We must not use up renewing resources faster than they can be replaced.

We must not use up non-renewing resources faster than replacements can be discovered.

We should not be apathetic and rely on technology to find answers.

We should not use non-renewing resources faster than we can produce alternatives.

The waste and pollution that an industry is permitted to produce should not be measured just by their ability to pay.

In the race for more and more consumer goods, we are producing stressed out people and a stressed out planet.

SPORT

Values involved – integrity, equity, respect, community, excellence.

No commentary on the use of ethical principles in everyday life, would be complete for New Zealanders without reference to sport.

New Zealanders of the past have always worked hard and played hard. After the colonial pioneers had built their schools and their churches, the next community efforts were grounds for organized sports. At first it was in a farmer's paddock, but later, such areas were given to, or obtained by communities, specifically for sports' purposes. Hunting, fishing, boating and the skills of battle had always been a necessary part of human lives in the battle for survival. The Olympic games began as competitive sports that involved the skills required in such battles. Various games involving hand and eye co-ordination helped pass the time and develop such skills. The familiar sports of today however, like tennis, rugby, soccer, bowls, croquet and netball required special facilities, and also served a social purpose in bringing together the widespread rural communities. In the years before World War 2, even the local store closed for the weekend. Sunday was for church and family gatherings, but Saturday afternoon was for sport. At the beginning of the twentieth century, people had been reprimanded by their local community for pulling weeds out of their crop while passing on the way to church on Sunday, but there were few people in a community who had not given their time to developing their local sports facilities, and who did not take part in some form of sport on Saturday.

If "values" are considered to be deeply held beliefs about what is important or desirable,⁷⁷ then New Zealanders of all races have always valued sport, and in sport we can include dancing, rhythm and music, all recreational and often competitive activities that provide the human body with exercise.

Maori had their own games and rhythmic activities, but took to most European team games immediately. Indian immigrants have been more closely connected with cricket and hockey. Chinese have had a traditional association with table-tennis. Pacific Islanders, like Maori, excel at rugby and also have their own form of cricket. Times are changing however, and as the population and technology increase, sport for adults becomes more a professional activity, and often, the social side becomes more sedentary as people gather to watch rather than play. Sport is still important, but it may be necessary now to remind newer generations that ethical principles once played a major part in sport.

A good sport –

"He or she is a good sport," did not mean that the person was exceptionally good at a particular game. It meant that the person could be relied on to play fairly, and win or lose graciously.

"If you win, don't skite. If you lose, don't moan. Always play fair," was the traditional teaching given to young players. If a player knew that he/she had fairly lost a point, even if the umpire or referee had been unsighted, an "upright" person would be expected to signal the loss. A "gentleman" would not accept a point he knew to have been unfairly won. A "gentleman" cricketer would "walk" if he knew himself to be fairly out. An "upright" person would not win by cheating. It was not a case of "Anything's O.K. if the ref doesn't see." For "upright" players, it was a matter of principle, so let us look at the use of ethical principles in sport.

WISDOM - What are the consequences likely to be? How do we maximise the good and minimise the harm?

⁷⁷ Values. Draft Curriculum. P10

Why play a physical sport? Because it is good for our bodies to use them in an enjoyable way that provides fresh air and exercise. Sitting in front of a T.V. screen and watching other people play sport is not a good alternative. Belonging to a group of people who come together to play a sport is a good way of mixing socially, meeting and getting to know other people. It is possible to see how another person interacts with others in normal situations, without being committed to them in any way. Anyone can be nice in a social situation, or send nice messages over the internet. In sporting situations a bad loser can show his/her real character.

JUSTICE – Always play fair. Players, referees and spectators should endeavour to see that no person or group is favoured over another, or treated worse than any other. Keep to the rules. A win by cheating is not really a win. Unless your level of ethical reasoning is the lowest where your own win is all that counts, you will know if you did not deserve to win – and so will other people.

TRUTH – Be honest with others and also with yourself. Referees used to start a game by saying, “And may the best team win.” An odd lucky bounce can influence a result, but in general, if the rules are kept, the best team does win. If you lose, ask yourself, “ Could we have done better? Did we practice enough? Did everyone do their best. Did the other team play better? Were they fitter?” If your team loses it is bad sportsmanship to be always blaming the referee, the conditions, or the other players. Look to yourselves first.

LOVE- Respect for all involved. Deliberately harming or upsetting opposing players in some way, in an attempt to gain an advantage, appears to be a tactic that is creeping into various sports – especially professional sport – though there could be a question of whether an activity that is done for money, remains a sport in the traditional form. Spectators as well as players can be involved here, for example booing while an opposing player takes a kick at goal, not something to be accepted even fifty years ago. Good sportsmanship involves respecting the skills of opposing players by allowing them to win or lose fairly.

THE GOLDEN RULE - How would I feel if I were treated in that way? The excuse “But everybody does it,” shows a low level of ethical reasoning. We need to think about the feelings of others and the best way to do this is to imagine ourselves in their place.

THE GOAL- A BETTER WORLD – Are our actions doing good or harm to other people or the environment? Now or in the future? Most sports are of physical and social benefit to the people who take part in them, but what about future generations and the environment? Are there any sports, which if indulged in selfishly, could actually harm people or the environment, or deprive future generations of activities or pleasures that we enjoy today?

Main points –

New Zealanders of all races have always valued sports of many kinds.

There are many physical and social benefits from taking part in sports.

A “good sport” is a person who plays fairly and wins or loses graciously.

A person’s real character can be shown in the way they play sport.

An “upright” person keeps to the rules and does not cheat or harm others.

The sports we indulge in should not have harmful effects on other people, future generations, or the environment.

DISCUSSION 34

MULTICULTURALISM

Values involved – diversity, equity, respect, community.

Today people are moving around the world in greater numbers than ever before, some, by choice to find a better life, and some, by necessity, as refugees from strife in their own lands. Wherever they settle they are changed and they bring changes. We have a short history compared with other countries. We have no indigenous people, but all of us here have one thing in common, all those who came here were courageous people who braved long sea voyages, a different environment and an uncertain future. Thirty years ago a Maori elder said, “When a young tree is transplanted from its own environment into a different one, it will need a stake to support it for a while. It is a weak tree that never learns to stand on its own, but a strong tree that grows beyond a need for support may go on to become the mightiest tree in the forest.” For thousands of years cultures have been changing and evolving through the process of invasions and intermarriages, assimilations and integrations. The strong have adapted to different circumstances, survived, changed and multiplied. The only way to preserve a culture in its present or recent past state would be to isolate it in a theme park or a museum - dead like the Dodo.

The background of the Colonists

There is little documented evidence of the origin of Maori, but in their “Short History of New Zealand (5th ed. 1935) Condliffe and Airey state that Maori are of mixed racial origins. “In their voyages they intermarried with the peoples of Asia and the Malay Archipelago. Both their physical characteristics and their customs bear traces of this intermixture.”⁷⁸ “It is generally believed now that ---- the first home of this race was probably in some part of Asia.”(p5) The most recent suggestion in 2005 is Taiwan.

Michael King’s Penguin history of New Zealand (2003) questions the “Great New Zealand Myth” of Kupe and the Great Migration, but states that there is no doubt the major source of Polynesian immigration to New Zealand was the islands of East Polynesia.⁷⁹

The British colonists who came to this country in the 19th and 20th centuries had also evolved through similar processes over a period of 2000 years. The record of the waves of invasions of their island home began with the Romans in 55B.C. The Roman legions left when their own homeland was under threat of invasion, but the invasions of Britain continued 500 years later, with the Jutes, Angles and Saxons from Northern Europe, by which time there were several different races in Britain - Scots and Picts in Scotland, Gaels in southern Ireland, Britons (or Welsh) in Wales, and Angles and Saxons in England.

Finally in 1066 the Normans invaded from France. The Normans themselves were a mixture of cultures. They were a blend of the north-men of Europe who had settled in France and absorbed French civilization. Each time there had been a blending of cultures as a result of invasion the result had been the hybrid vigour that is better recognized in the cross-breeding of animals and plants than it is in humans.

The fierce sea-rovers of the north had combined with the civilization of the French, and then, fighting on horse-back, they had become the most famous knights in Europe. They brought scholars and builders and ideas of chivalry and courtesy to a comparatively primitive Britain where freemen had lived in mainly rural communities. The Anglo-Saxon freemen had owned their own land, but they had also owed allegiance to the leader who protected them. Under the Normans the freemen became the property of the new owners of the land and had to work on it. If the land was sold they were sold with the land, and so the class system began.

The fierce spirit of the north-men now came from two different sources, and the tradition of freemen owning their own land and fighting for it, remained throughout the next centuries -

⁷⁸ Condliffe, J. & Airey, W., (!935) 5th ed. Whitcombe and Tombs Ltd. Auckland Sydney London.

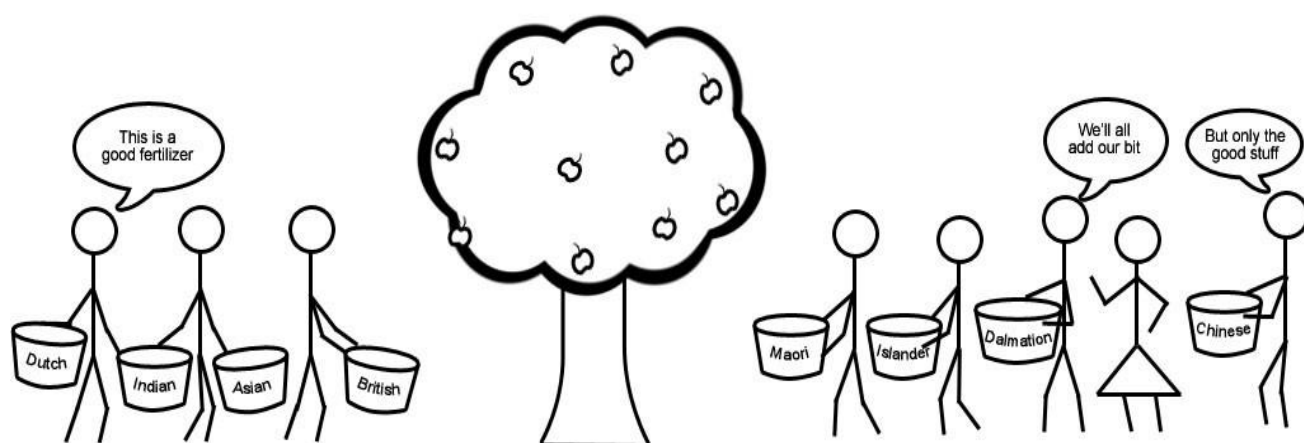
⁷⁹ King, M. (2003) *the Penguin History of New Zealand*, Penguin Books New Zealand Ltd. P49.

through the signing of the Magna Carta in 1215 which limited the power of kings, and repelling invaders from the Spanish Armada in 1588, to the Nazis in 1939.

Hybrid vigour

The Anglo-Saxon tradition of leaders being answerable to the people through democratic forms of government were part of the heritage that colonists took with them to new lands, as was the Christian religion and its ethical teaching. The colonists who went from Britain to America also took their hybrid vigour with them, and fought for their own independence from a Britain whose government levied taxes on them without their being represented in that government. In the new lands where they settled it was a case of survival of the fittest. Indigenous people resented invasion, just as the forebears of the colonists themselves had resented the invasion of their own lands, but just as a thousand years before, the invaders had been more powerful and imposed their culture, so the culture of the colonists became in time the majority culture in the new lands.

The effects of invasions by different cultures do not change, and though today we are more aware of the effects on minority cultures, and more prepared to respect them, still no-one can hold back the tide of change. We all have roots and we need to know and remember them, but cultures evolve. Current moves to remove the “Union Jack” from the New Zealand flag appear to be based on a desire to eliminate Britain and our colonial background. The “Union Jack” however, though it is the national flag of the United Kingdom, is made up of the crosses of England, Scotland and Ireland, and therefore represents the roots of most of the colonial settlers. The antecedents of all New Zealanders came from other countries, and all needed courage to move to a new land. Ethnic groups integrate or are assimilated. Each adds to the melting pot those of its own characteristics that are of value to new situations, and intermarriage between races can bring the hybrid vigour that is so valuable in harsh conditions. The most important point about breeding hybrids is that the best characteristics of both strains should be retained and not the worst. People of mixed race are the ones who can act as a bridge between races, helping them to understand each other. They can also choose – or they can be forced by their elders to choose, one side or the other, and use their hybrid vigour to divide, rather than to unite.



We cannot stop the tide

We cannot remain in a time-warp unless we want our own culture to become an exhibit in a museum, an exhibition piece for tourists to come and stare at. A culture that is living and breathing will change according to the conditions around it. Nature takes its course. Some teachers will remember from their history days the story of the Danish King Canute of Britain whose followers believed he was so powerful he could stop the tide if he gave the order. They were determined to prove this so he gave the order – but they all got their feet wet. The effect on a whole country if all groups are not prepared to accept change can be worse than getting a few feet wet. The integration of new groups means that there will always be a need for the majority to accept a certain amount of change. Diversity can add colour. Provided we are prepared to get to know and understand the ideas and customs of other ethnic groups, those ideas and customs that are of benefit to an evolving society can be taken up and used, but this process takes time and cannot be forced. Change is more likely to be accepted if people have chosen it for themselves, rather than having it forced on them. Recent historical research has shown that groups that operated by egalitarian principles, survived better than groups that were ruled by despots.⁸⁰

Communication -

The most important factor in successful integration is communication between the parties. Our schools are the places where this communication and understanding of other cultures can best take place. Children learn to speak a new language very quickly and can explain to adults who do not mix so easily. Unless new immigrants come in such numbers that they flood the existing culture, or they settle into whole communities of their own, where their children attend schools with a majority of their own culture, children will be the main link with the new culture. The whole family will gradually integrate into the existing society, which will itself change in some ways as it is influenced by new attitudes and ideas. The older generation will find it difficult, but the next generation will be New Zealanders. No race is born superior to others though some of the ways they have learned in a different environment may be better than those existing in their new country.

Much in common -

There are many values and principles that different ethnic groups have in common. Differences are usually in customs that have developed over hundreds or thousands of years, in a different environment from that in which people now live. Most families face common situations – work, children, education, and health. In this country we live under the same economic conditions and the same government. Most of us live under the same laws. We need common qualities of character to help us cope with our daily problems, and we need to know that other people have the same ethical standards as our own. For example, if we do not permit bribery as a means of getting around the law, this may come as a surprise to people who come from a country where bribery is a way of life. If we see favouring one's family ahead of others to be "Nepotism" others may see it as a duty. Most new immigrants want to fit in, but they first need to know what is acceptable. It is harder for new immigrants themselves, or people transplanted into a new environment to cope with changing conditions, but by the next generation most of their children have become completely integrated. The major problems for the children then, come from the fact that the parents may not have adapted with them, and may want to cling to customs and beliefs that the younger generation do not see as relevant any more.

Need for common ethical values –

Alan Webster in his book *Spiral of values*, writes of how New Zealand cultures are evolving and changing, and how there is a perceived need for New Zealanders to find what we can all

⁸⁰ Webster, A. (2001) *Spiral of Values*, p12

agree on as “core values.” (p15) Webster suggests that the values on which we differ are more likely to be customs – that is ways of doing things, traditions. They can be the result of individualism – or the desire for material goods or power. Using ethical principles to *examine* values avoids the problem of whose values are best, and so these principles are used here with regard to the customs of new immigrants, and also to the values and customs of the existing society.

Wisdom – What are the likely consequences to us as a nation, of a large number of people holding these particular values or customs? Would you like everyone to hold this value?

Justice – Do these values or customs mean that every person is being treated fairly, or are some individuals or groups claiming or being given advantages at the expense of others?

Truth – Is everyone being honest here? Do we have all the evidence? Is the evidence based on fact or is it hearsay, interpretation or myth? What are the motives of those involved?

Love – Is everyone being treated with respect? Are their arguments being listened to? Is anyone using any other person or group to further their own ends? Does anyone need special treatment for any particular reason?

The Golden Rule –How would I feel if I were in the place of those who see themselves as disadvantaged?

A better world. – Is this going to work to improve our society and our environment?

Our own tradition -

The difference between immigrants from other countries and their descendants who were born here is not always appreciated. Historian James Belich saw a hierarchy of classes in colonial New Zealand, but this hierarchy, which may be visible to modern historians, was not the attitude of most of the new generation of colonials. New immigrants who came here direct from a class-conscious background in Britain attached such labels at first, and often settled in the growing cities, but the true colonials – those early New Zealanders who were born here, accepted no hierarchy of class.

Their parents in the main had come here to get away from such attitudes. To the true colonials, “Jack was as good as his master.” Before 1940 the majority of New Zealanders lived in rural areas and small rural towns where a tradesman or a labourer was usually more valuable to society than an intellectual or an aristocrat. In fact such people who may have arrived here with a view of themselves as “upper class,” were often regarded with a slight contempt for not being able to “pull their weight” in difficult times. In the cities there were those new immigrants who tried to maintain their place in society, and saw themselves as “genteel,” but in rural areas where people worked together to establish communities, people were respected for their own qualities and abilities, not because of any particular class they may have belonged to in their country of origin.

This attitude even became reflected in the education system that evolved. By the early 1900s, Technical High Schools had become established alongside the traditional Grammar Schools. In most of these secondary schools, students could choose between academic courses with external exams that led on to university, or courses that specialised in technical skills and led on to apprenticeships in trades or office work. A typical rural Technical High School of those times had academic, agriculture, woodworking, engineering, commercial and dressmaking streams. In cities most Technical High Schools were separate from Grammar schools, a fact that ultimately led to their demise. In the late 1930s and 40s, immigrants without the colonial background, who came to power with the Labour governments of those times, saw these Technical High Schools as promoting the class distinction that had operated back in the countries they had recently come from. The education system had to be changed to a more egalitarian one where there was no obvious distinction between those who were going into trades and those who were going into professions, and so our present system was born.

Whether it caters for the needs of all students as well as the previous system is a question that, in a democratic society, should be able to be decided by the citizens themselves.

We still however maintain many of the attitudes of our colonial forebears, and hopefully, that is how it will be as new immigrants today settle in here. Given time, it will not be their race by which they will be judged, but by their own efforts. A particular race may already have labels attached to it because of the actions of many of the individuals that belong to that race. It is hard to live down such labels once they have been attached, but in a new country, those of a new generation have the opportunity to create their own traditions. People who come here with a genuine desire to integrate and make a better life for their children, contributing to society and asking no favours will be welcomed. People who come merely to *use* this country while it suits them will be less welcome. The fighting spirit and the egalitarian beliefs of those who made the voyage here to start a new life for themselves and their descendants are still a part of our evolving culture. **We do our share of the work. We give people a fair go. We help those who are in genuine need, but we do not take kindly to being *used*.**

Main Points –

Cultures change and evolve through invasion, intermarriage and integration.

Even the majority culture changes through the influence of new immigrants.

A blending of the best of two cultures gives “Hybrid vigour.”

People of mixed race can act as a bridge between different cultures.

British colonists came from a country that had been invaded and colonised many times.

They had the hybrid vigour of the various races that had combined and survived over 2000 years.

They wanted to leave behind class distinctions, and judged people by their ability to contribute in a new environment.

Integration mainly takes place through the influence of children and schools.

Customs and values need to be examined by ethical principles to see if they will act for the best in a new environment.

Diversity adds colour to society, but we need common ethical values.

We need to be able to communicate in a common language.

We have inherited a fighting spirit and egalitarianism. “Jack is as good as his master.”

It is difficult for all new immigrants, but also for those who have to accept change.

We do our share, we give people a fair go, we help those who genuinely need help, but we do not take kindly to being *used*.

References –

Webster, A.,(2001). *Spiral of values: the flow from survival values to global consciousness in New Zealand*. New Zealand : Alpha Publications.

RACISM

Values involved – equity, diversity, integrity, respect.

We have to accept the fact that multiculturalism is here to stay. People are moving from country to country. Many of the older generation are trying to move into new cultures without making changes to their own attitudes or customs. Most of the younger generation want to fit in with the culture of their new land. Those who have been here for generations want to hold on to what they have had, and some resent new arrivals who want to hold on to their own past. If one criticizes another it is easier to think or cry “racist” than to examine the criticism for its validity. No-one likes to be called a “red neck” and so untruths or injustices may go unquestioned, building up problems for later generations. We need to face these issues now before they escalate.

What is racism?

It is not simply a matter of blind prejudice. The origins of racism are both scientific and religious.⁸¹ The word “race” was originally used in the sense of “category.” Linnaeus, the Swedish scientist who organized the known species of plants into categories (1751) used it as a term to classify broad sub-species of human beings.

Earlier in the 15th century there had been arguments for the justification of slavery on the grounds that people who were not Christians were like beasts. Conquest and slavery could save their souls. The hierarchy of human beings was established and at the top were Christians who lived civilized European lives.

Darwin’s theory of evolution caused a major upsurge of interest in the human race.

Darwin’s theory claimed that humans were not a special creation of God, but had evolved by natural selection, and superior races had survived. Interbreeding would cause the “higher more advanced races” to be threatened with degeneration.

The word “eugenics” emerged as the study of methods of improving the quality of the human race, especially by selective breeding and preventing cross-racial breeding.

Darwinism and eugenics seemed to offer proof that conquered races were inferior, and since most conquered races were dark-skinned, white races were obviously superior.

Even the Caucasian race of Europeans was divided into a series of sub-species, and the idea of the Aryan race as superior was generated. Hitler was able to use the idea of Germans as the master race in his conquests of Europe and his treatment of the Jews.

Racism as we know it today has emerged from the concepts created by both religion and science. It was constructed by intellectuals and accepted by colonists who used these ideas to justify their treatment of indigenous people who were mainly dark skinned.

Aboriginals in Australia were seen as “living fossils.” Since only the fittest races would survive, natural law would prevail and aboriginals were seen as a dying race.

However there was a problem in the case of children of mixed race. Because they were half of the superior race there was a possibility that they were half human and could be educated.

These children of half white blood could not be left to perish with a dying race. The people who removed these children from their families and put them in institutions where they could learn to speak English and possibly be educated, did so with the best of intentions as they saw it then.

Religion and science share the responsibility, but the Christian religion believed that by being converted to Christianity dark skinned people could become equally human. For the scientists at that time, there was no question but that in the case of “the survival of the fittest,” it was the white races that would survive.

⁸¹ Moore, B. (1991). Religion education: Issues and methods in curriculum design. Pp 138-141.

An examination of the origins of racism suggests that no race is inherently superior to another. The limiting factor for individuals are their own attitudes to life as it has evolved and what they want from it, the restrictions placed on them by the expectations of those of their own ethnicity, and the prejudice of others in the society in which they now live.

Cultural capital is a limiting factor at first, but since racial prejudice is now frowned upon socially and legally in most countries, the limiting factors will become more and more an individual and family thing. The individual will have to make choices and they will not be easy choices. The number of suicides among young people of minority cultures could indicate that a great deal of the pressure comes from being torn between two sets of beliefs and customs. On one side, the beliefs and customs of their elders who for their own sake, want to see their traditions perpetuated, and on the other, those of the multi-cultural society in which the young people have to live. Teachers need to be sensitive to the problems faced by students of mixed race or children of new immigrants. They need to encourage them to see themselves as valuable individuals who have power to contribute a great deal to understanding between different cultures, responsible for their own futures, without at the same time, denigrating the cultures of their parents.

Values and citizenship education should be able to set young people free to examine their various backgrounds with respect, love and sympathy. They should then be able to choose for themselves what beliefs and customs they think are worth holding if they are to live peacefully in a democratic society. If the beliefs and customs of their ancestors measure up to the principles by which they are examined, their families have nothing to fear. If they do not, some customs or beliefs may need to be discarded if we are to reach our goal of a better world. The cultural differences seen here today, are the results of the different experiences along the different pathways that have brought us to this place. If we now have different needs and have had new experiences, together we can evolve into a new culture – the New Zealander of the twenty first century.

Main points –

The origins of racism are both scientific and religious

The word “race” was originally used in the sense of “category” by Linnaeus, who had organized plants into categories. (1751)

In the 15th century, slavery had been justified on such grounds

Darwin’s theory of evolution seemed to show that “superior” races would survive and interbreeding was a step backwards.

Hitler used the theory of Germans as the master race, to justify his persecution of the Jews.

In Australia it was believed aborigines were a “dying” race and that children of mixed race should be rescued from their environment.

Since this theory with regards to humans is now disproved, the main limiting factor for anyone of a different or mixed race, is their own and their family’s attitude to their present situation.

Children of mixed race may be torn between two cultures, but they have a great deal to contribute to the future in a multi-cultural society - as long as they do not choose, or are not pressured to choose, one side only.

They bring hybrid vigour and they can see both sides of a question.

THE FUTURE

Values involved – community, equity, diversity, integrity, excellence

One of the reasons why we learn about the past is so that we will not make the same mistakes in the future. Sir Thomas Huxley, a champion of Darwin's theory of evolution, claimed that though humans may have emerged from the same source as animal life, a human being alone possesses intelligible and rational speech, and remembers and learns from the past. Though that is not completely true, (e.g. animals remember the shock they receive from an electric fence) it is true that humans learned to read and write and have access to the written evidence of the past. Huxley claimed that the fact that humans had come so far from lowly origins, was the "best evidence of the splendour" of human capacities and gave ground for faith in an even nobler future.⁸² Darwin himself had the same views and also had hope for the future. "Looking to future generations, there is no cause to fear that the social instincts will grow weaker, and we may expect that virtuous habits will grow stronger, becoming perhaps fixed by inheritance."⁸³ Huxley insisted that human society gave rise to moral insights that conflict with the "survival of the fittest," and that ethical principles and social activities should be encouraged.

Certainly so far, there is no evidence that virtuous habits have become fixed by inheritance, though they can be instilled by example and by teaching children from a young age. As individuals, we all make mistakes in our lives, but we are not usually so foolish that we make the same mistake over and over again. A great deal depends on whether we have suffered personally from making the mistake and know that we will suffer again. Kohlberg considered it to be the lowest stage of moral reasoning when people only refrained from doing certain things because they knew they would personally suffer from the action. Young children and animals reason this way, but Kohlberg believed that by moral education, most people could move to higher levels of reasoning. **Huxley's belief that human ethical reasoning would also evolve naturally is now questionable.** With the extra knowledge and extra information available by now, with opportunities for travel and multicultural communities, mankind should really have reached the heights of its ethical reasoning also. If each new generation ignores the experience of the past, it seems that no progress will take place. The same mistakes will be made again and again until it is too late.

Survival of the fittest?

We are part of nature and the primitive instinct born in us is survival. **Ancient mankind soon discovered that to survive, a community needed rules and co-operation. We are not born wise. We have to learn to reason ethically.** The theory of evolution was based on the survival of the fittest, but do we really want humanity to become a species without ethics where the strongest trample on the weak and devour them. Individualism can lead in that direction but it is excess that causes problems. Individualism needs to be motivated towards the common good, not just its own. We need individuals with courage and initiative who will become the leaders in our struggle to reverse any downward trend, but individualism needs to be tempered with strong ethical principles and a strong sense of community. Then such leaders, instead of working for themselves, can choose to work for the benefit of their homes, their communities, their countries and the world. In the process, they will find rewards that they did not set out to receive, and though they may not be monetary rewards, they will last much longer. People like Mahatma Gandhi, Albert Schweitzer and Mother Teresa will be remembered long after those on the rich list have been

⁸² From Huxley's *Man's place in nature*, (1863) in *Critical issues in modern religion*. (2nd ed) P 69

⁸³ From Darwin's *Descent of man*, (1871) in *Critical issues in modern religion*. (2nd ed) P73.

forgotten, and some of those on the rich list may only be remembered for the harm they caused as they trampled over others on their way to the top.

Vices and virtues

New inventions over the last hundred years have been scientifically astounding. To an older generation, technology like computers and cell-phones never cease to amaze. How can anything so small do so much? But young people take such technology for granted. In the future there will be technology out there that no-one has discovered yet, but we should never forget the lessons of the past. Human weaknesses remain the same, and human weaknesses left unchecked could lead to disaster for the whole human race. Greed leads to destruction. Dishonesty leads to lack of trust. Envy and selfishness can also lead to disaster and destruction. Laziness can lead to carelessness, missed opportunities, and the possibility that accidents may happen that did not need to happen. Pride goes before a fall as the old saying goes, and pride in high places can lead to the fall of many other people as well. Over thousands of years of human experience, honesty, patience, perseverance, kindness, self-control, generosity and cheerfulness have led to happier lives for individuals and communities. “Vices” and “virtues” are not out of date, though they may be considered to be so by those who do not want to examine their own standards very closely.

Academic knowledge plus wisdom

In the academic world, people are usually experts in a particular field. We need these people who have in-depth knowledge of their own subjects, but we also need people who have a broader knowledge of the world, and who can visualise the overall effects of the various ideologies that are presented to us. We do not need any more “leaky building syndromes.” We need to hear all sides of any story. We need people with Aristotle’s “practical wisdom,” or common sense. We need people who can say, “The theory is fine, but it won’t work in practice,” or, “Yes, there would be some good consequences, but the bad results could far outweigh the good.”

Elliott Eisner, one of the leading educationists of recent years, stated that we should never underestimate the intellectual ability of the ordinary man and woman.

The ordinary man and woman however, need to take an interest. Apathy is our worst enemy.

In a newly multicultural country, it is not a case of whose values are most important, but whether values are ethical values that will work for good in the future. We need to have generally accepted ethical principles. We need to raise the level of ethical reasoning so that the probable effect of our actions on other people and our environment will be the deciding factor in the decisions we make. Children need to learn to reason ethically and accept *why* we need to “maximise the good and minimise the harm” that we do in our everyday lives, and to consider the consequences of their actions on other people and the environment. If we can raise generations of “upright” men and “upright” women, who hold to ethical principles in whatever they do in their lives, there will be hope for the future.

Which way now?

Whatever each one of us does makes a difference. We may not be perfect, but if we are all on the right side of the ledger in our lifetimes, humanity may have a chance to achieve the potential that both religion and scientists like Darwin, saw for us. Starting in our own homes, moving out through our schools, our work, our communities and our nation, we could become an example for the whole world. It is easier to let a ball roll downhill than to push it uphill, but few of our forebears chose the easy way when they decided to cross oceans to settle in an unknown land. It is time now to make a choice before it is too late. Nothing unites people like a common cause and particularly a common enemy. The vices of selfishness, dishonesty, injustice, envy, greed and apathy – these are our common enemies. To protect our own environment and to relieve pressure on others, we need to become a conserver society, rather than a consumer society. We must give children hope for the future so that they will at least

try. With a combined will and with a great deal of effort we could make a start and inspire future generations of upright people to make the kind of world their children will *want* to live in.

Main Points –

Darwin and Huxley believed that the virtuous habits of humans would also evolve. They would grow stronger and perhaps become fixed by inheritance.

Huxley insisted that moral insights of human society conflicted with “survival of the fittest,” and ethical principles should be encouraged.

Kohlberg considered it to be the lowest stage of moral reasoning if we were merely governed by the question of, “Will this hurt me personally?”

He believed that by moral education, most people could move to higher stages of reasoning.

We need in leaders, the kind of individualism and courage that is tempered by strong ethical principles and a strong sense of community.

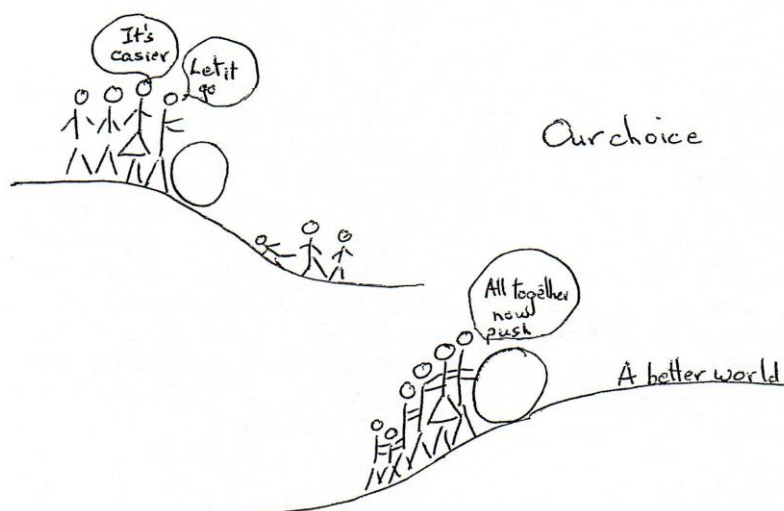
We need to understand vices as well as virtues.

We need people of practical wisdom.

In any society, but especially a newly multicultural one, we need generally accepted ethical principles.

Our education system needs to produce “upright” young men and women.

Whatever each one of us does in our lives makes a difference.



TREATY ISSUES

There was originally no intention of including specific references to the Treaty of Waitangi as a concept in a repeating cycle of discussions for students. It would naturally be covered in a compulsory core of history. There were complaints however that the 2006 Draft curriculum did not put enough emphasis on the Treaty, and other complaints that teachers have been confused about how the issue should be handled. It is added here now as a suggestion for teachers to show how, with the use of ethical principles, the intent of the Treaty can be included within the 2007 curriculum.

Background information for teachers -

Treaty issues today belong to the “controversial” category, i.e. there are genuine arguments on different sides, and as such, they are better suited for critical analysis in senior forms, when students are more experienced in logical reasoning, have adequate factual knowledge, and can try to keep emotion out of the discussion. This is especially true in our evolving multi-ethnic society. Students from different backgrounds need to receive a true picture of the events that have shaped, and are still shaping, our present society. Our colonial forefathers realised the necessity to avoid the controversial issues of religion and politics in the social groups that were formed and that brought immigrants from different backgrounds together into communities. They were trying to build a better nation, away from the class and religious divisions in the countries from which they had come. We should be equally wise. In schools, discussions of controversial issues, before students have adequate historical knowledge, reasoning skills and self-control can do more harm than good. There is plenty of scope for critical thinking in other every day issues.

The influence of ideologies in Social Studies –

The subject of social studies has always been influenced by pressure groups and differing ideologies. In the Preface to *New Horizons for New Zealand Social Studies* (1998),⁸⁴ Professor Luanna Meyer questioned how we can teach Social Studies in the face of confusion, denial and overwhelming evidence of one bias or another. Her answer is that social studies education must sharpen the critical thinking capacities of young people. They must know facts, and they must also have the ability to evaluate interpretations of events (pp ii-iii). Nowhere in social studies in New Zealand schools today, is this more important than in issues surrounding the Treaty of Waitangi. The contributors to the above book show how fixed and opposing some ideologies are. Ideologies can only divide, but generally accepted ethical principles can help bring us together as a nation. By raising the level of ethical reasoning from “What’s in it for me or my group?” to “How are our actions going to affect other people and future generations?” Treaty issues can be made to unite, not divide.

JUNIOR LEVELS 1-4

At junior levels, it is possible to apply ethical principles to all that is done in the classroom, and to all references to, or implications of the Treaty. It is possible to learn *about* the Treaty without making judgements about the actions of the people involved at the time or who are involved now. It is possible to learn *about* any principles that were expressed in the Treaty without involving the interpretations later generations and pressure groups have placed on it. In all discussions and activities related to this issue teachers should keep ethical principles in mind.

Wisdom - We should be sensible. The basic aim here is to maximise the good and minimise the harm. Be very careful that resources used are not biased in any way that could cause

⁸⁴ Benson, P. and Openshaw, R., (1997) . Palmerston Nth. New Zealand E.R.D.C. Press.

offence to students or parents who have conflicting opinions. Choose those that are within the reasoning ability of the age group, remembering that children do not learn to reason in the abstract until around puberty.

Justice - We should be fair. Is any person or group being given preference over any others? In class activities is importance being given to the traditions and customs of both races involved at the time? Are you showing bias to one race or another in the questions that are asked? How are you dealing with children of mixed race? Are they being required to take sides in any way? Are new immigrants being shown that all New Zealanders originated in other countries, and that though they, as newcomers, have not been here so long, they are equally important to the future?

Truth – We should be honest. As a teacher, are you basing your perspective towards this subject on the original documents and their meaning to the people of the time or on later interpretations? According to Bent Flyvbjerg, research should focus on practical activity and should focus on what actually happened, on such a day, in such a place, in such circumstances.⁸⁵ Would it be more accurate to base opinions about the Treaty on its actual words, and evidence of what people thought at the time, or on later opinions and interpretations? Who has supplied the material you are using? Is it based on factual evidence or on later opinion or interpretation? If on later opinions, what was the political climate at the time the interpretation was published? What were the motives of the authors? Is anyone pushing a particular ideology at the expense of the truth? Have you examined your own motives and actions?

Love – We should be kind. All students of all races and mixed races should be treated with respect. No matter what his/her opinions, no one should be intentionally hurt. New immigrants should not be made to feel inadequate in any way, but encouraged to see how they are also an important part of this country. The intent of the treaty applies to them as well, because everyone was intended to have equal rights and responsibilities.

The Golden rule – Everyone should be encouraged to look at issues from the point of view of others. How would you have felt at the time if you had been the other person? At this level it is not wise to question feelings on current political issues as children may only repeat parental feelings or bias. More suitable questions are – How do people feel going into new situations? How do new immigrants feel? How do children feel going to a new school? How can you help them feel more at home?

The goal – a better world. – Everyone who came here was very brave. They came to get away from a part of the world where it was very crowded, there was not enough room for people and not enough food. They wanted to make a better place to live. The intent of the treaty was to bring law and order, so that people could live peacefully together. Students should be encouraged to think what they could do to make a better world – at home – at school – in their communities and in their country.

SENIOR LEVELS 5-7

Learning outcomes would be in accordance with those specified in the relevant curriculum statements. Adding ethical principles to the inquiry process however, could result in some changes in interpretation of events, emphasis on events and attitudes towards the future. As Luanna Meyer said, students must develop the critical thinking capacity that will allow them to evaluate other interpretations, not just accept interpretations and opinions as the final word. Fact, documented evidence, myth, opinion and tradition should be clearly identified as such.

⁸⁵ Flyvbjerg, B. *Making social science matter*. p 134

Research done during the inquiry process would need to specify exactly where the information had come from and when. Remember that Flyvbjerg said, (p131) if we can get a succession of “better” interpretations it reduces all interpretations to *merely* interpretations.

In discussions, it is the responsibility of the teacher, acting as an impartial chairman, to require that statements are based on acceptable evidence, and that reasoning is based on logic, not emotion. The teacher should ensure that a wide range of views has been presented and that all students have had the opportunity to speak. As chairman, he/she should ask questions that will make students think deeply and feel for others. It is also the responsibility of the teacher to produce relevant evidence if he/she knows of it, whether it favours his/her own private leanings or not. To withhold information is indoctrination and dishonesty. The inclusion of these ethical principles and guidelines in all aspects of social inquiry and social decision making, will mean that there is a definite aim to unite and not divide, and to start a move away from emphasis on a bicultural past, preparing students for the multicultural future in which they will be the leaders and the law-makers.

Wisdom – The main requirement of this principle is to maximise the good and minimise the harm, to consider the long-term consequences for the population as a whole of going down different paths. Questions asked should consider the best options for the future. Nothing in the past can be changed, but we can influence the future. Each individual of whatever ethnic group, has it within him/herself to choose the path of their own footsteps into the future. In a democracy a majority has the power to change laws – provided they are not too apathetic to do so. Flyvbjerg considers that in a democratic society, power and citizenship would be defined in terms of taking part in public debate.⁸⁶ Politicians react to public opinion if there are votes in it. Do the students take an interest in political issues? If not, why not?

Justice - Were all people involved at the time treated equally? Using the wording of an authorised translation of the Maori version of the Treaty,⁸⁷ (A translation by Sir Hugh Kawharu was published for 1990 celebrations) was justice intended for everyone? Equal opportunity does not always result in equal outcome. For example, students in this class will not all achieve equal NCEA results. What can influence outcomes? What influenced outcomes for Maori then? What can influence outcomes today? Sometimes providing justice for one group can mean injustice to others. Examples? Should a compromise be reached, if so, how?

Truth - Can we accept that Sir Hugh Kawharu would have given an accurate translation of the Maori version and that his translation can be used as a basis for discussion? What do the words actually say? What did the people at the time believe it meant? As an example, a petition had been sent to the King of England in 1837 asking for the protection of British law because of the danger of annexation by the French, and because of the general lawlessness and crime.

The petition stated that it had previously been considered that the Confederate tribes of New Zealand were competent to enact laws for the proper government of the land ----- but experience had shown this could not be accomplished. ---- It was acknowledged by the chiefs themselves to be impractical,⁸⁸ and it would be a considerable time before the chiefs would be capable of exercising the duties of an independent government.

⁸⁶ Flyvbjerg, B., p 91.

⁸⁷ This was the version that was signed by over 500 chiefs at approximately 50 meetings. With the exception of 39 Waikato chiefs, all signed the Maori version.

⁸⁸ The wording of the petition and signatures of the 191 people who signed it are given in a Government publication, 25th July 1961. NZ 12279 NZ 9956, N5 pp 42-46. Some signed with a cross.

Would the petitioners have given a correct version of the situation as they saw it? What difficulties would have prevented the chiefs forming a government and enacting laws? Later events should be examined in the same way, searching for relevant material, investigating its origin and authenticity, and particularly the background of the times in which they occurred, so that they will not be judged from the perspective of the present. For example, the following is an extract from an article in a rural newspaper in the 1980s

*According to Waiuku Museum Society's newsletter, in 1868 the Rev. Vicesimus Lush, as vicar of Thames, was present at a Christmas dinner attended by nearly 400 "natives." He wrote, "Old Shortland Taipari, the host's father began to address the guests, of course in Maori. The substance of this speech was that New Zealand formed one country and the inhabitants living therein ought to be one united people. 'Formerly the Maori had divided this country into a great number of separate states, each at war with one another. It was like a house under one roof being divided into separate and hostile rooms, causing disquiet, confusion and murder. Now I hope a time is coming when there will be peace on earth and goodwill towards all men'."*⁸⁹

Charles Darwin's letters and accounts of his visit to New Zealand in 1835 give interesting and relevant information about conditions and customs of the time. These were recently compiled into a N.Z. Herald article. (26.12.'09)⁹⁰

John Logan Campbell's book, *Poenamo*⁹¹, gives an account of the founding of Auckland and describes the Maori of the time, but 40 years later he considered they had changed. All cultures change over time as they come into contact with others. The descendants of early settlers are not the same as previous generations. Their backgrounds are different. Different influences and ideologies at different times influenced different interpretations of events, and attitudes changed. Facts about the past should be verified, so that new generations can make their own broader interpretations and make wiser decisions for the future.

Love – In the wording of the treaty, was it the intention to treat all those involved with respect? Is this happening today? Is there room for improvement, if so, where?

In general, Maori were friendly to the newcomers, and ever since there has been a great deal of intermarriage. Many New Zealanders are of mixed race. How would they feel if they had to make choices between one side of their family or another? Now statistics show that we have become a multi-ethnic country. Are we a caring society? Do we treat newcomers with respect and make them welcome?

The Golden Rule - The inclusion of feelings and the requirement to consider how various individuals and groups would have felt in the situations that are discussed helps students understand the events of the past. Understanding the feelings of various groups today helps in the willingness to compromise in controversial situations. Try looking at issues, e.g. Taranaki, from the point of view of different sides, i.e. Maori who had not wanted to sell land, and the European settlers who had bought land believing it had been sold by the rightful owners.

The goal – a better world. Did the wording of the treaty as it was understood at the time, have the possibility of making a better world for all the inhabitants of the new colony? Sir Keith Sinclair, a noted New Zealand historian, wrote an essay for the 1990 celebrations entitled "Waitangi: good intentions that went wrong."⁹² If mistakes were made in the past how can we go forward now to make a better country? Instead of emphasis on power and conflict, emphasis could be on the original intent of the Treaty, and how future generations,

⁸⁹ This report came from a newsletter put out by the Waiuku Museum society and published in the Franklin Times.(circa 1980s) Further research would be needed to find the original.

⁹⁰ Cumming, G. N.Z.Herald article (26.12.2009) - *Darwin in New Zealand*. B1 - 4.

⁹¹ *Poenamo*, by John Logan Campbell. First published in 1881. Republished 1973. Reprinted 1980 by Golden Press Pty Ltd Auckland. ISBN 0 85558 277 4

⁹² Published in the N.Z. Herald (circa Feb. 1990)

starting with themselves and moving out through their homes, their schools, their communities and their power as citizens of a democracy, can make a united nation, not “a house divided into many hostile rooms.”

Level 8

The use of power

The ethical reasoning set out above for senior levels remains the same, but at level 8 it is possible to add the consideration of the use of power. According to Flyvbjerg, the fundamental weakness of modern democracy is that power behind the scenes acts to define what gets to be seen as knowledge.⁹³ Over the years, interpretation can be followed by a “better” interpretation, and then a still “better” interpretation, and the group that can place most power behind their argument will determine what interpretation will be accepted as knowledge for the general public. In his own experience, the power relations involved were of a pre-modern kind that could not be defended publicly by standards of modern democracy, but their participation was distorting the outcomes of representative democracy.⁹⁴ Is this happening here?

By level 8, students and teachers of all ethnic groups should be able to conduct a reasonable debate without involving or relying on emotion. The consideration of the use of power is going to be uncomfortable, but necessary for the future well-being of this country. How power was used in the past and how power is being used today. Who used it, how, and who benefited? Who is using it today, how, and who benefits?

In most situations where power is used to benefit specific people or groups, the losers are usually the other citizens. It is up to them to take an interest. As students were told in school civics books early last century, “If the people through ignorance or apathy, lose their control, they will have no-one to blame but themselves.”⁹⁵

Add questions based on ethical principles -

Wisdom – What could be the long-term consequences? How can we use power to maximise the good and minimize the harm?

Justice – Is any one group being treated any better than any other? Does any one group have more power than another?

Truth – Is our evidence factual? Do we have all the evidence? Did everyone have the same power to have their evidence considered?

Love – Is everyone’s view being treated with respect?

The Golden Rule? – How would you feel if you were in the other person’s place? Would you feel that you had as much power as the other side? In 1840? In 2006?

Our Goal, a better future – How should we go forward now? How could we use our power as citizens of a democracy?

Conclusion -

Much of the material that is offered as teaching resources in this field concentrates on the mistakes and grievances of the past and emphasises the concept of separate identities going into the future. Cultures change and evolve. Alan Webster in *Spiral of values*⁹⁶ (2001) shows how even within the same ethnic groups in New Zealand, there can be a wide variety of values. To speak as though there were only two cultural groups among New Zealanders, he said, is an assumption that needs to be examined. (p23) Global indicators, warn of turbulent times ahead (p20).

⁹³ Flyvbjerg, B. (2001) p 155

⁹⁴ Flyvbjerg, B. p148

⁹⁵ Coad, N., *The Dominion Civics*. Whitcombe & Tombs Ltd. P65

⁹⁶ Webster, A., (2001)

We need to concentrate on the third article of the treaty that gives all the ordinary people of New Zealand the same rights, privileges and duties of citizenship. We should be seeing all ethnic groups as “we” rather than “them and us.” Dialogue with respect for other parties and a willingness to listen is a prerequisite for informed democratic decision-making.⁹⁷ No ethnic group should be expected to forget their roots, and we can all hold on to customs that we value, that are relevant today and that work for the general good, but wisdom tells us that it is the future that is important now.

A written Constitution? – There are frequent calls now for a written Constitution for this country. The men who wrote the constitution for the United States of America were mainly “upright” men who were dedicated to democracy and the rights of the ordinary man – even though many saw slaves as “private property,” rather than as human beings in their own right. The philosopher Habermas sees constitutions as the main device for uniting citizens and regulating power.⁹⁸

Who would we trust to write a constitution for this country? While we have no written constitution, the people have the opportunity at each election to vote out of power a government of which they do not approve.

If at any time in the future it is decided to have a written constitution, the people will need to ensure it is written by “upright” people who have the good of the whole country at heart – people who will use ethical principles in their reasoning –

Wisdom – To consider the consequences of going down different paths. To endeavour to maximise the good and minimise the harm.

Justice – To see that no person or group is favoured over others or treated worse than others. Is anyone using power for their own ends? Who gains and who loses if we go down that particular path, and through what kind of use of power?

Truth – To base their reasoning on the truth as far as it can be discovered.

Love – To be concerned for the welfare of all citizens.

The Golden Rule – To consider in their reasoning how they would feel if they were in other peoples’ shoes

To have as their goal, - a better nation and life for all citizens.

⁹⁷ Flyvbjerg, P 159

⁹⁸ Ibid (92)

THE USE OF PLAYS

The play and lesson plan that follow are an example of how these plays were used in a half hour lesson. Revision of the last week's lesson, was followed by the play. Stops were made at relevant points for discussion as to the way the characters were acting, but there was always an outcome, consequences, and decisions that were made. Few children like stories that have no ending. In lower forms, there were always reinforcing activities to add variety and to cater to those who learn in different ways, or who have different talents. A song relevant to the message. Drawing a cartoon that illustrated the message. In senior forms discussion could occupy the full time.

Role playing is often suggested for lessons like this, but I soon found that role playing gave too much opportunity for the class clown to show his/her talents, much learning time was wasted, and the real message of the lesson often did not emerge because students did not reason at the necessary level, or the time ran out. The aim is always to raise the level of ethical reasoning of the whole class, not just to accept their present level. This is philosophy for children in action, and children enjoy this once they are old enough to reason in the abstract, but it is not the kind of philosophy that teaches people to think without coming to any decision or action. Whether the characters in the plays made ethical or unethical decisions was judged by referring to the ethical principles involved. Often some of the characters made what was considered to be the wrong decision, and the play next week went on to discover the consequences and how other people were affected.

The system that was used for the plays was that students took turns each week to read the major parts. One of the class kept record of the number of turns each had. At that time most were keen to read the major parts and most of years 7 and 8 were able to sight-read adequately.

The rest of the class were "Chorus," joining in where the script suggested it. Each major part was underlined in a different colour for ease of keeping their place. "Chorus" was also underlined, and whenever necessary, each student had a script.

Today of course, schools with the right facilities could make videos to be used over again with different classes, and this would be better for those whose sight-reading ability is not high. It would also be better, because the same characters could be played by the same people throughout the series in the form of a T.V. serial.

AS A WRITTEN EXERCISE

Plays can be used as a written exercise in class or as homework.

Each student would receive a copy of the script and give written answers to the questions. There would still need to be class discussion later to make sure that students were required to reason at an ethical level, and to ensure that those at lower levels of ethical reasoning were exposed to reasoning at a higher level.

SAMPLE LESSON PLAN

For half hour lesson for years 9 and 10

Revision - of previous lesson.

Objective - To understand the possible consequences of following different types of leaders.
If you are going to follow someone, be sure they are going in the right direction.

Motivation – Do play “Follow me,” stopping at different points to ask questions.

New Learning - Questioning to make sure the class understands what is happening and the possible consequences of different courses of action.

Suggested questions – Involving ethical principles-

Wisdom –

Some of the students appeared to be easily led. Which ones?

Why would they follow if they didn't really want to do what the others wanted?

Who were the leaders, and in what way were they trying to influence the others.

What effect could their actions have had on the rest of their lives.?

Justice – Were Jenny and Jason being fair in the way they planned to treat a new teacher?

Do you think Paul made a fair comment on “old Patterson?”

Truth -- Why did Tony change his mind about going along with Jason and Jenny?

Would you consider yourself to be a leader or a follower? .

When you are making a choice of action do you think about the long- term results, or do you follow the path that seems most attractive at the moment?

What do you think was the main point to come out of that situation?

Love – Were all the students treating other people with respect?

Do teachers deserve respect as much as students?

Would Jenny be respecting other students if she pressurised them into doing what she wanted?

The Golden Rule – When you leave school you will go into jobs yourselves. Some will probably be teachers. You will want to do the best you can for your students. How do you think you would feel if some students were deliberately wasting class time and preventing you from teaching well?

Some students in the class wanted to learn because they could see it was important for them.

How do you think they would feel about others wasting class time?

A better world – Were the long-term consequences of what Jenny and Jason planned to do, going to make a better and happier world for all those around them? How many people would have been affected by their actions and for better or worse?

Reinforcing activity –

Do you know of any great leaders in history or sport who inspired their followers?

Draw cartoon

Evaluation – for teacher

Did most students take part in the discussion?

Did they grasp the main point that they need to consider long term consequences of following different people, not just immediate gratification?

EXAMPLE OF PLAYS FOR DISCUSSION

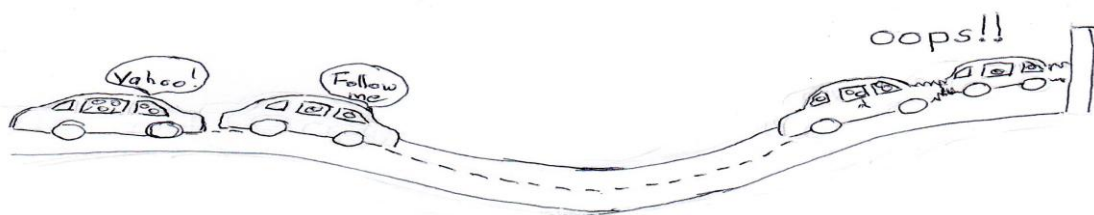
FOLLOW ME

Half hour lesson for Forms 3 and 4 (years 9 and 10)
Values involved – excellence, respect, integrity, inquiry.

Characters - Richard, Tony, Rebecca, David, Jason. Paul, Lisa, Gayle, Jenny, Reader.

- Reader – A group of pupils fromCollege are having lunch under the trees.
- Lisa -- What do we have first period after lunch? I can never remember the timetable for Tuesday.
- Richard – It's maths with Miss Peters
- Gayle – If you did your homework every night, you'd know what was on the time-table for the next day.
- Jenny – Lisa doesn't do homework, do you Lisa?
- Lisa – Not if I can help it. I can usually think of a good excuse for not having done it.
- Paul – Don't your parents ask about your homework?
- Lisa – They both work, and when they ask, I say I did it after school. Jenny gave me that idea, didn't you Jenny?
- Jenny – It's always worked for me. What they don't know won't hurt them.
- Rebecca – It might hurt you though Jenny. I always do mine straight after school. Then I can watch the TV afterwards.
- Jenny – You would, Rebecca. You're too good to be true. You never get into trouble do you?
- Rebecca – Well, I don't like getting into trouble.
- Jenny – You're soft. That's what you are. I like having a bit of fun with the teachers. What say we give Miss Peters the works after lunch?
- Jason – Great idea. She's new to the job, I think. We should be able to get her pretty uptight.
- Tony – Yes. That way we won't have to do any maths and I haven't done my homework either.
- Gayle – I thought you wanted to go into the air-force when you leave College. You won't get in without a reasonable pass in maths.
- Tony – Oh, I'll worry about that later. It will be fun to upset Miss Peters.
- Rebecca – I think you're rotten to her. She's really nice to us.
- David – Not like old Patterson. Blink your eyes in his class and you're on detention.
- Paul – At least we get some work done in his class, without you lot wasting our time. I want to get a good pass in English. I want to be a reporter for a newspaper or TV.
- Richard – It had better be on a newspaper. With your looks, I don't think you'd make it to the TV screen.
- Paul – Very funny, but I still want to do well at English
- Jenny – English is so boring. I want to have a bit of fun at school.
- Lisa – But even you behave yourself in Mr Patterson's classes.
- Jenny – Well, I don't want to be kept in, do I? There are too many other things I want to do after school. Any idea what we could do to Miss Peters Jason?
- Jason – I've got an idea, but it will need everyone if it's going to work.
- Richard – Count me out. I like Miss Peters. I think she really cares about us. I suppose old Patterson does too in a way.
- Jason - You're another soft one.! They don't care about us. They only want to have an easy life for themselves.

- David – I don't believe that. Old Patterson will always help you at lunch-time or after school, if you really want to learn.
- Rebecca – And Miss Peters is just the same. She looked after *you* Jenny, last week when you hurt your ankle. Even took you home in her car – and after you'd been so awful to her.
- Jenny – So what? She offered to do it. I suppose she was trying to butter me up.
- Richard – You've got a real chip on your shoulder Jenny! You can't see any good in anyone. I think we should scrap your idea and see if we can't have a peaceful maths lesson. Be decent for a change.
- Paul – And I agree.!
- Gayle – And so do I!
- Lisa – Well it would be good to be able to concentrate. I certainly need to in maths.
- Tony – I suppose it wouldn't hurt me to concentrate on my maths for a change, especially since I'm going to need it for the Air-force. I'd be really disappointed if I didn't get in.
- Jason – You're a great bunch of friends, you are. Jenny and I will have to think of something for ourselves
- David – Do it in your own time then and not in our maths class. I want to work.
- Richard – It looks like you two are in the minority then. Most of us want to work and we won't be happy if you waste our time as well as your own.
- Reader – The bell rings. They pack up and walk back to school. Jason and Jenny are behind the others.
- Lisa – I'm glad you and David were with us Richard, or Jenny might have made us do what she wanted.
- Richard – You shouldn't let her make you do anything Lisa. You should make your own decisions.
- Rebecca – It isn't easy to say "no" to Jenny when she wants you to do something.
- Gayle – And it's usually something that is going to get us into trouble.
- Tony – Jason's the same. He's a good mate really, but he doesn't seem to care about anything – and I do really want to get into the Air-force.
- Richard – I don't think they'll cause any trouble in class to-day, not now they know how we all feel about it.
- Lisa – I might even enjoy maths today. Miss Peters can make maths really fun when she's not worrying about how we're behaving.
- Paul – You never know. Even Paul and Jenny might enjoy maths today.
- David – They'd certainly surprise Miss Peters if they got to like maths.
- Rebecca – That might be too much to hope for. I'll be happy just so long as they don't stop us from learning.
- Others – And so will we.!!!



SAMPLE LESSON PLAN ON STEM-CELL RESEARCH

For years 11-13.

“Stem-cell research” has been suggested as a suitable topic for values “examination.” The “values” statement in the 2007 curriculum however, requires students to develop their ability to discuss disagreements, negotiate solutions, and make ethical decisions. The exercise described here is to be an individual project, with students doing their own research, and with a set list of questions based on ethical principles.

Objective - To reach a reasoned conclusion as to whether the benefits (if any,) that might accrue from stem-cell research, would outweigh the disadvantages (if any). The aim of ethical reasoning is to maximise the good and minimise the harm.

Motivation - Discussion of a case in the newspaper where a group are protesting against stem-cell research. The class are asked to imagine that a close relative has a hereditary condition that will result in a poor quality of life and an early death.

New Learning –

1. Investigate stem-cell research and find out from authoritative sources what it actually entails, and what could be the outcome if it were successful. Then answer these questions based on ethical principles.
 - a. - **Wisdom** - What are the long-term consequences of such research likely to be if it is successful? If it is not? Who would gain and who would lose?
 - b. - **Justice** – Would anyone be unjustly treated during the process? If so, is there any way in which this could be minimised? Are any of those involved in the controversy using positions of power for their own ends?
 - c. - **Truth** – Do you have all the evidence? Is it from a reputable source? What are the motives of those producing the evidence? Do you have any personal involvement or motive that could affect your own reasoning?
 - d. - **Love** – Are all those who are involved with this research being treated with respect? Is anyone using anyone else for his/her own ends? Should anyone have special treatment for any good reason?
2. **The Golden Rule** - Having answered these questions, then consider –
 - (a) how you would feel if you were one of those whose quality of life might depend on the outcome of such research. Answer – “I would feel ---.”
 - (b) how you would feel if you were any person or other creature who could be adversely affected by such research. Answer - “If I were ---- I would feel -----.”
3. **The goal – A better world** – at home – in the community nationally, globally. Keeping this goal in mind, make a decision as to the best way forward. I.e. the way that would maximise the good and minimise any harm. E.g. Stop the research? Allow it to go forward with government funding - remembering that government funding comes from the tax-payer? Any conditions that should be put on research? Any other?

Class discussion - of the outcome of the exercise and the majority viewpoint.

Reinforcing activity – If time and finance were available, visits to hospitals or research centres to see at first hand the results of diseases, or the methods of research, would be desirable. Visits to the class by people involved would also be useful.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

In his book “The Curriculum Process : Curriculum development and design.” (1987), Murray Print states that those who develop a programme should have their own backgrounds examined. It should be known what forces, philosophical and sociological conceptions have shaped their thinking, and what specific directions they have in mind for a programme. This is not done when curricula are contracted out to specific academic groups. Nor is the influence of political and pressure groups acknowledged.

For me, there was originally no intention to develop a values programme. It grew from the needs of the children I taught. It is my own upbringing, education and life experience that have influenced my thinking, and these have shown me that the most important issue in values and citizenship is the effect of our actions on other people. We do not have to worry about involved theories or our own ethical development, because if we get the principles of dealing with other people right we will become ethical people anyway.

The first European member of our family to become a New Zealander settled here in 1833. The family is now a truly multicultural one with children of mixed race, from the original settlers here, through British and European colonists to more recent immigrants from the Netherlands and India.

I was brought up in a solo parent family, on a farm during the Depression of the 1930s. My father had been placed in a mental home when I was an infant, but when I was aged 10 my mother divorced, married again and I experienced life with a step-father. I entered the Academic stream at the co-ed Pukekohe Technical High School, and finished my secondary education as Dux of the school.

I trained as a Home Economics teacher, and on marriage, left teaching for farming and to bring up three daughters who have all been involved in teaching, at primary, secondary and tertiary level. Grandchildren are now graduating from Universities.

After several years farming, my husband worked for an employer in the local town, and I experienced life with three children, as the wife of a wage-earner in a one income household. After ten years my husband started his own business and became an employer himself, while I did his office work. In the twenty- five years he ran his business we employed and trained many apprentices. At the same time, we worked a (26 hectare) block of land which I had inherited and which I managed, buying, fattening and selling stock, and where we still live and have wetland conservation blocks.

We were always very involved in local sport and community affairs. I was a rep. Table tennis player, and a qualified New Zealand umpire in this sport, also coaching juniors in the sport for thirty years. We are still involved with the local community centre.

I have toured widely. – I was in Beijing during the 1989 student riots.

I did “Lifeline” training and counselling for several years in the 1980s, but gave it up to concentrate on teaching.

In 1976 I was asked to take the Form 1 & 2 (years 7&8) class at the local school for “Bible in School” time. With the approval of the principal and members of the School Committee I developed a programme of situation ethics relevant to this age group, concentrating on the “wisdom” literature and ethical teachings of the Bible.

In 1989 I was made Returning Officer for the school for the first Board of Trustees election.

In 1993, Suffrage Centennial year, I was awarded a Merit Certificate by the Royal Agricultural Society for services to the rural community and I am still involved in local body affairs, particularly with regards to the environment.

With the growth of multiculturalism and a certain opposition to ethics based on religions, I believed there would be a need for some form of “values education” in the multi-cultural country we were becoming, but I also believed I would need higher educational qualifications than my Home Economics Teacher’s Certificate if my work was to be accepted. I then finished teaching and went back to the academic world to complete the B.A. I had started many years before.

Since finishing the B.A. degree extramurally from Massey University from 1995 to 2000, (majoring in world religions,) I have completed a Graduate Diploma in Subject Studies for Teachers (Christian Education,) and a Post Graduate Diploma in Education (2005) concentrating on social studies and on subjects with a high values content. “Current issues in the teaching of social studies,” “Ethics in Education,” “Environmental Education,” and “Curriculum Design.”

I believe I am a feminist in that I have worked in a field that was not common to women at the time. To me marriage should be a partnership of equals who have complementary attributes. In rural areas where I have lived most of my life, men and women have always worked together in farming, business and marriage. I see no reason why women should not have careers as well as children, but I do not see it as wise to try to do everything at once. Someone always pays and I have found that there is plenty of time in life for both. I believe that to experience the best that life has to offer, men and women need each other as partners, and their children need homes with parents of opposite sexes who respect and care for each other, and provide role models for their children. I am practical enough to know that it takes two people to make a marriage work, and have experienced for myself as a child, that the next best thing for children is to have at least one parent who is utterly reliable. My interest has always been in the well-being and happiness of children, but I believe that no matter how much we prize independence, liberty and self-esteem, students should also learn responsibility, consideration for other people and for the “common good.”

A report put out in Australia in 1995- *Civics and Citizenship Education (ACSA Teaching resource No8,*) recommended a compulsory course in citizenship education at year 9 or 10, but accepted that there was a serious shortage of academic literature to guide and inform those interested in such education, and a lack of teachers with the necessary expertise. The final comment was that “Given the research reported here it is clear that an important context for developing the required principles will be to work with teachers, experienced not only in class-rooms, but also in the arena of active citizenship itself,” and that is what I believe I have to offer that career academics often do not.

For the sake of our children, future generations and our environment, I believe that it is time to take a fresh look at the whole value system of our society and rethink our priorities about what constitutes “success” in life. The ideas offered here do not expect perfection of anyone, but we need a goal or ideal at which we can aim so we can keep moving in the right direction.

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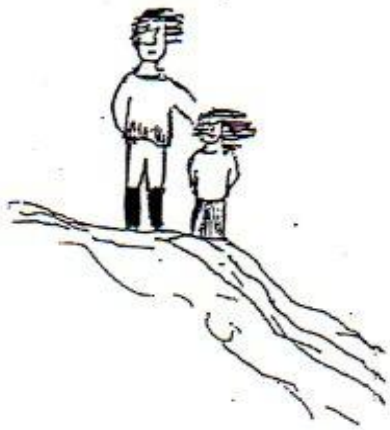
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The sacred writings of the major religions have also been used for reference and information.
Also Ministry of Education curriculum statements.

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The translation of the Maori version of the Treaty into English by the late Professor Sir Hugh Kawharu was produced for the 1990 celebration of 150 years since the signing. An obituary for Sir Hugh, published in the New Zealand Herald (20.9.'06, A4), described him as a man of wisdom and knowledge in both the Maori and Pakeha world. He was Chairman of the Ngati Whatua o Orakei Trust Board. He had degrees from Auckland University, and also a M.Litt and Ph D from Oxford University. From 1985 – 1993 he was Professor of Maori Studies and head of the Dept of Anthropology at Auckland University.



SOUNDS OF A NEW ZEALAND SUMMER

Come with me to the top of the hill
Sit by my side on the soft green grass
And we'll talk a while
And we'll dram a while
Of scenes that are new and the days that have passed.

Hear the sounds that were made through the thousands
of years
Before any human set foot on this place.
They're still echoing here
And remaining so clear
Even though people ventured here, race after race.

The water still flows through the ferns and rapu
As it has through the years since this land was begun.
The birds sing their song,
Breezes flutter along,
Disturbing the leaves that hang limp in the sun.

The willow tree weeping by cabbage tree tall
Does not weep for her home in a faraway clime.
An alien tree,
She brings harmony,
A rhythm of shape like the oak and the pine.

The colours of autumn, the new green of spring,
The bare branches too as their patterns unfold
show that we can be
Like the alien tree,
And bring to our country the purple and gold.

for the seed when it finds fertile soil to its taste
Grows and flourishes well and produces its crop.
It does not care
If a label there
suggests it should only live in one spot.

No race is all good, no race is all bad.
To suggest such a thing is a crime against man,
Against nature's ways
That have fashioned our days.
See the colours around giving life to the land.



The years that have passed, some were bad some were good
No age was so right we'd repeat it unchanged.
So though we dream
Of days we've seen
Let's remember the past, but move on when we should.

The love, songs, the lullabies, the crack of the gun
Are the sounds that are heard wherever men go,
But a cruel word
Too often heard
Is a sound that can turn a good friend into foe.

May the sound that we hear in the years still to come
Be not whining, nor wailing nor beating of drum,
Let birds still sing
Let water still spring
Pure and clear from the land where we've all made our home.

As our country goes on with its grief and its song,
May the races all learn how to make harmony,
So the music we make
With the steps that we take
Will ring into a future both ordered and free.

Where the children of brown and of yellow and white
Will dance hand in hand down the path of the years
Bringing revelation
That this, our nation,
Is the one that can fashion ploughshare from its spears.

Poem by Gwen Francis

Illustrated by
Catherine Chapman, aged 13
Pupil at Buckland School
1989-1991

