

# **KEY COMPETENCIES VALUES AND CITIZENSHIP FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

## **Involving the values**

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

## **Covering the key competencies**

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

## **BASED ON THE ETHICAL PRINCIPLES**

**WISDOM ó We should be sensible - and consider consequences.**

**JUSTICE ó We should be fair**

**TRUTH ó We should be honest**

**LOVE ó We should be kind**

## **With CHECKS AND BALANCES**

**1 - THE GOLDEN RULE**

**2 – THE GOAL – A BETTER WORLD**

**For consistent ethical reasoning from level 1 up.**

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# **KEY COMPETENCIES VALUES AND CITIZENSHIP**

## **FOR PRIMARY SCHOOLS**

By

Gwen Francis

This resource is written by a teacher, for teachers of all kinds, and is aimed to give practical information and suggestions to those who are attempting to comply with the requirements for Key Competencies and "Values" as stated in the 2007 N.Z. Curriculum.

It is dedicated to Peter Walker, Principal of Buckland School ( just south of the Bombay Hills) from 1982 to 1997, without whose encouragement and support I would not have been able to have developed and used this programme with his Form 1 & 2 (years 7 and 8) classes over those years.

ISBN 978-1-877534-69-0

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### INTRODUCTION

Key competencies draw on knowledge, attitudes and values. Opportunities to develop the competencies occur in social contexts. People adopt and adapt practices that they see used and valued by those closest to them. Students need to be challenged and supported to develop them. These statements appear in the 2007 New Zealand Curriculum.<sup>1</sup> It is assumed that those around our students will use and value 'good' practices, but that is not the case for all of them. Peer pressure, family examples, T.V., films etc also show practices that young people can see as models. Our values determine what practices we accept as the models we wish to emulate. Recent research indicates that children make the decision in early primary school years (or even at preschool) to either follow rules or break them, and as rule-breaking children get older it becomes increasingly difficult to change the direction they have chosen.<sup>2</sup> Their attitude to the 'key competencies' of thinking, managing self, relating to others, and participating and contributing<sup>3</sup> is affected by their values and their ability to reason well. All children will have more ability to make 'good' or wise choices if we make an equally early start on teaching the skill of ethical reasoning - the aim being that all may achieve their potential as autonomous, responsible and happy members of their communities.

#### Excellence in living –

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

- **The ultimate aim of “values and citizenship” education is to promote excellence in living through these “key competencies.”**

Many philosophers in the past saw humans as social animals and that excellence in living centred on participation in communal life and in communities. It seems that the 'pursuit of happiness' has become a desperate one in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, with 4000 books being published on the subject in 2008 compared with 50 in 2000.<sup>4</sup> Happiness, most experts 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 it seems. 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. The values a person holds would need to be values that would enable him/her to do that.

#### Common Values?

Social science and philosophy have not yet identified criteria by which an ultimate interpretation and a final grounding of values can be made.<sup>5</sup> The 2007 N.Z. Curriculum gives a list of the values that enjoy widespread support in this country, but values are like virtues in

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<sup>1</sup> N.Z. Curriculum, *Key Competencies*, p12

<sup>2</sup> Woulfe, C. (2009, March 22). New book says old ways don't work. *Sunday Star Times*, A3. Citing J. Hattie et al from *Adolescent Reputations and Risk*.

<sup>3</sup> N.Z. Curriculum 2007, p12-13

<sup>4</sup> Flora, C. (2009). The pursuit of happiness. *N.Z. Herald*, Canvas, 7.2.09. p 10

<sup>5</sup> Flyvbjerg, B. (2001). *Making social science matter: Why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again*. U.K. : Cambridge University Press. p 131

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.

- **Not all values are ethical values, but all values have an ethical content as soon as they affect other people, so we need to be able to reason well about the effects of all values on other people in a newly multi-cultural environment.**

#### **Practice in reasoning required –**

The values listed in the curriculum enjoy widespread support because it is by holding these values and acting on them that we are able to live together and thrive.<sup>6</sup> Aristotle considered that a virtue was a habit of the soul that involved feeling and acting, and a vice as 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 the 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.

- **“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.”<sup>7</sup>**

Values and citizenship education is about raising our level of ethical reasoning from, “What is in it for me?” to “How are my actions going to affect other people and the environment?” Merely learning *about* values, though it is useful to understand the values of others, is not enough to enable us to make ethical decisions in a multi-cultural society.

There are simple ethical principles however that have been accepted by philosophers of many cultures for thousands of years, that will enable us to analyse all values and make ethical decisions where values conflict. Briefly they are -

- 1 WISDOM ó We should be sensible.
2. JUSTICE ó We should be fair.
3. TRUTH ó We should be honest.
4. LOVE - We should be kind.

If we think critically, creatively and reflectively about these principles, - 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.

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<sup>6</sup> New Zealand Curriculum, (2007) p 10

<sup>7</sup> McDonnell, (1998) Cited in the Foreword (pxii) to Bohlin and Ryan(1999), *Building character in schools: Practical ways to bring moral instruction to life*. San Francisco: Jossey Bros. Publishers.

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

**Love** ó 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.

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 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.

## CHAPTER 1

### KEY COMPETENCIES and VALUES

**Values are involved in the “key competencies.”**

**Thinking** ó how we think and reason about issues depends on our values and what we consider to be important.

**Using language, symbols and texts** – how well we apply ourselves to acquiring these skills depends on how much they are valued in our homes and ethnic groups.

**Managing self** ó how we manage ourselves depends on our values.

**Relating to others** ó how we relate to other people and how we treat them is determined by our values.

**Participating and contributing** ó the way we act within our communities is affected by our values.

- **As the Curriculum statement says, the competencies “draw on knowledge, attitudes and values in ways that lead to action. They are not stand-alone. They are the key to learning in every learning area.”**

When the Ministry of Education decided that “values” would be included in the school curriculum, it was made clear that values would not be taught as a subject, but would be made evident in the school’s philosophy, structures, curriculum, classrooms and relationships. Values would be modelled in a school’s activities, and would be integrated into lessons, rather than being a subject on its own. The 2007 curriculum however, in its wording on values (p10) has left options more open by saying that, “The specific ways in which these values find expression in an individual school will be guided by dialogue between the school and its community.” If an individual school desires to have a definite programme of teaching values, citizenship and key competencies it seems that is acceptable ó provided that it is acceptable to the community as well. This book has been written to provide a guide for those who have been made responsible for designing and starting such a programme. “Values and Citizenship” is not a separate or new subject in an already over-crowded curriculum. Its natural home is in social studies, but values also play a part in science, economics, technology, health and education ó wherever decisions are made that affect people or their environment.

- **The required outcome is to be able to make ethical decisions and act on them.**

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. The problem however in a multicultural society is that even the specified values could be interpreted in different ways by different cultures and individuals. There are arguments about the value of democracy and majority decisions. 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.<sup>8</sup> . One of the

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<sup>8</sup> Daniels, C., (2002). High level of Tertiary cheating shocks researchers. *N.Z.Herald*, 23. 9. 2002. A5.

questions that would be asked in the system of ethical reasoning offered here is "What would happen if everybody did that?" For example, "What would happen if all scientists felt free to falsify research results?"

Most of these students had been through our education system, but the values they were expressing were not those most of this country's schools or teachers would have modelled or promoted. They were competent enough to have reached tertiary level but still were not making ethical decisions.

### **How much empathy?**

The curriculum requires that students will develop their ability to explore with empathy the values of others, but does that mean that a teacher or other students, should not question or comment adversely on unethical values? The Curriculum requires that students will develop their ability to critically analyse values and actions based on them, therefore it seems that it should be possible to examine values and actions based on them, providing that it is done with sensitivity towards the feelings of those who hold different values from our own. This still however leaves the problem of how to make ethical decisions when values conflict.

Though teachers will be faced at times with dealing with controversial issues, it is not wise to require young pupils to reason in the abstract about issues that are beyond their reasoning abilities. We are now a multicultural country with immigrants from countries where democracy is unknown or where bribery is an accepted way of dealing with issues. There are countries where major political upheaval in the last century has meant that the ethical traditions of the past have been obliterated and no new ethical system has been supplied. Some cultures believe in giving preference to family members – even with public money. They would see that as an ethical value while others would see it as nepotism. Issues of this kind are already coming before our justice system.

- **The Curriculum states that students will learn about different kinds of values, such as - moral, social, cultural, aesthetic, and economic values.**

**Aesthetic values** are the simplest to deal with because although we may have very different ideas about what is artistic or beautiful, we can usually happily accept that everyone has a right to their own opinion on what pictures they may want to hang on their walls at home, or what music they want to hear – provided of course that they don't play it so loudly that it upsets other people.

**That is the whole essence of making ethical decisions – the effect of our actions on other people.**

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

### **Vocabulary**

- **The meanings of words need to be quite clear so there is no confusion for those to whom English is a second language.**

Speakers of English as a first language might say that playing music so loudly that it upsets other people is "unethical," but we would not normally, say that it is "immoral." This shows that there is a matter of vocabulary that needs to be attended to before we can go any further. There is a difference in meaning in common usage of the English language today, between the words "moral" and "ethical."

The word "moral" has become narrowed in meaning. In the curriculum, students are not required to learn to make "moral" decisions. They will develop their ability to make "ethical" decisions.



In the seventies of last century, there was a major move to introduce 'moral education' into our schools. 'Values education' is now the preferred term, but some quotations here from earlier writings will use the words 'moral education.' The word 'Moral' has traditional connotations of being involved with religion, and with beliefs as to what is 'good' that have been set by religions.

'Ethics' as a subject is defined as 'the conscious reflection on our moral beliefs with the aim of improving, extending or refining them in some way.'<sup>9</sup>

The word 'ethical' is now usually removed from religious connections, but it still has the connotation of requiring 'good' to come from an action.

- **If there is to be discussion on values or ethics in schools, teachers must be able to use words that students and parents will understand.**

Without a moral vocabulary, no form of moral education can even begin.'<sup>10</sup>

'**Good**' and '**right**' here can be used to describe, 'That which helps people and the environment.'

'**Bad**' and '**wrong**,' can be used to describe, 'That which harms people or the environment.'

'**Truth**' will mean, 'That which can be shown to be factual to any reasonable person who does not have a particular theory of his/her own to guard.' It is the opposite of 'deception,' any form of which is designed to make people believe something that is not true.

Of course it could be possible to argue that different groups could have different ideas about what helps or harms, but we need to use some common sense here. Even a dictionary has trouble using any one word to define 'good,' but it is quite clear that wherever it is used it is positive and not negative. It is beneficial or advantageous, admirable and efficient for a purpose, reliable, virtuous or righteous. That should be enough explanation for any reasonable person.

### **Rules, principles and customs –**

Some customs have become values to different ethnic groups. The difference between principles, rules and customs needs to be clear.

- **Customs** ó These are ways of doing things that have existed for so long in specific communities, that the original reason may have been forgotten, or may no longer be relevant. They have become traditional and are valued by the older generation, but may now be being questioned by younger people in a different environment.
- **Rules** ó These are made for specific places and circumstances. They are made by specific groups of people. We have rules in our homes. We have school rules. We have road rules, and we have the law of the land. Hopefully all these rules have been made by ethical people with ethical principles in mind.

Groups of people have come to this country for a better life, and in becoming New Zealand citizens, they have agreed to obey the law of the land. Sometimes the law of the land may conflict with their traditional customs.

This is a democracy where the majority of the people make the laws. Where the law conflicts with traditional customs, individuals are not free to do as they please and break the law. They are free to follow tradition as long as it does not adversely affect others, but they are not free to

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<sup>9</sup> Hinman, L. (1998). *Ethics: a pluralistic approach to moral theory*. p5

<sup>10</sup> Snook, I. (1973). *Moral Education*. In D'Cruz & Sheehan (Eds) *Concepts of Education: Philosophical Studies*. Melbourne: Mercy Teachers' College. (p 63)

break any law by saying, "This is my house. Here we do things the traditional way." If we do not like the law of the land, we are free to try to get it changed, or we are free to leave the country and live elsewhere, but as citizens, we have agreed to obey the laws, and the justice system is required to enforce them.

- **Principles** – These are much wider than rules and less specific. We can use ethical principles to decide whether rules or customs are good rules or customs for our present society. For instance the principle of justice requires that rules should be fair. The principle of love requires that all people should be treated with respect, but the principle of truth requires that we base decisions on fact and do not deceive ourselves or others to suit our own ends.

### **Diversity**

The Curriculum states that students will be encouraged to value **Diversity** as found in our different cultures, languages and heritages.

- **If we are to live peacefully together in a multi-cultural society, we can value diversity in many areas, but not in our standards of ethical behaviour.**

We deal with each other in our everyday lives, we live under the same government, laws and economic systems. To avoid conflict, we need to have common standards of right and wrong. The difference in ethical standards in some other countries is already showing up in our dealings with them. We need to be seen as a country that has "good" ethical standards, but in the end everything depends on the ethical standards of individuals – politicians, lawyers, police, teachers, business people etc. If we were to accept and teach consistent ethical standards right throughout our schools and communities, there would be hope in the future that the individuals in positions of power would be "upright" people who would use that power for the common good.

### **Ethical Relativism**

Ethical relativism has been an attractive doctrine because it seems to encourage tolerance and understanding. It affirms that people's values must be understood within their own cultural context, and should not be judged outside that culture. Ethical relativism however fails in a multicultural society. Sometimes tradition can be used as a weapon in a struggle for power, regardless of possible harmful effects on future societies. Rules and customs that became accepted by different ethnic groups in a different environment at a different time in history may no longer be relevant and may even be dangerous when transplanted into a different type of society. Older people in different ethnic groups understandably want to hold on to their traditions, but the next generation usually wants to fit into the new society and may reject customs, standards or values for which they see no justification. Unless their new society can offer them acceptable alternative standards, they find themselves in an ethical vacuum and may grasp at the worst that their new society has to offer, just because it is the easiest and most attractive at the time.

It has been argued that commonly accepted values are needed in a multi-cultural or multi-ethnic society. One of the problems in identifying "common values" is that there is a danger that the values of the majority culture could be seen as the values to be promoted, even though they might not be as ethical as some of the values of minority cultures. The values specified in the 2007 curriculum were based on research undertaken throughout this country from 2004-5 to

verify what these commonly accepted values actually are.<sup>11</sup> Students therefore will be encouraged to value excellence, inquiry, diversity, equity, community, ecological sustainability and integrity. They are to respect themselves, others and human rights. In the report that was produced, these values are stated to be 'broad over-arching values.' Each value is in essence a values cluster that has a range of values ideas and concepts within it.

Diagram 1 Values cluster



These values will be generally acceptable, but schools and teachers will also have to make ethical decisions. Such broad values with a range of ideas and concepts within them, may not be enough when making ethical decisions in specific cases which involve a conflict of differing values.

### The use of ethical principles in ethical decision making

The argument that 'values are caught not taught' is still correct, but by the end of the twentieth century the values of young people were being caught from sources beyond home and school. The advent of T.V., films, pop music, the lives of heroes of screen and sport, the internet, and the influence of advertising and the media, mean that undesirable values can also be caught and often appear more attractive. Even by the 1970s, an educationist was writing, 'A teacher's view of what moral education actually consists in, is very sketchy if he relies on teaching morality by example rather than by any discussion of what moral decisions are, and by what important moral principles we are guided when we make them.'<sup>12</sup>

Back in the 1970s, Ivan Snook, Emeritus Professor of Education at Massey University and still an authority in the field of moral education, wrote that moral education is not a matter of just handing on the existing values of society. Students would not be taught that a particular action is right or wrong but would learn the criteria by which a moral decision on such a matter could be made.<sup>13</sup> 'The tools for making enlightened decisions' he wrote, 'are moral principles,

<sup>11</sup> Keown, P. (2005). Report on Values for Ministry of Education. P 3.

<sup>12</sup> D.S.Wringe,(1976) The teacher's task. Chapter 1, p 17, in *Philosophy and the teacher*, ed D.I.Lloyd, Reprinted 1990, London: Routledge

<sup>13</sup> Snook,I., (1973). Moral Education , in DeCruz & Sheehan,(Eds) *Concepts of Education: Philosophical studies*, Melbourne: Mercy Teacher's College pp55-64.

logical thought, empirical evidence, and a readiness to do a lot of hard thinking in place of emotional outbursts and slogans.<sup>14</sup> - and that is what will be recommended here.

- **The stated broad values and their associated notions will not be enough to provide the means to achieve the desired outcome – i.e. that students will develop the ability to make ethical decisions. Ethical decisions need to be based on ethical principles and logical thinking.**

### **Inquiry**

Inquiry is one of the values specified in the curriculum. The value of inquiry is stated to involve creative, critical and reflective thinking.

- **Thinking is one of the key competencies.**

Values, like virtues, can be seen from different angles. What has been offered so far for values in the curriculum, is basically ethical relativity, i.e. there are values that are broadly acceptable and should be threaded through the whole curriculum, but on the other hand, schools and teachers must also respect the views, beliefs and cultures of others - and be tolerant of them. As has already been stated, ethical relativity fails at the intersection of cultures.<sup>15</sup> We can appreciate and encourage diversity in culture where non-ethical values, customs or beliefs are concerned, but not where these adversely affect other people or the environment. Generally accepted ethical principles however, can allow us to examine the values of all our cultures or ethnic groups with **equity** (another of the specified values,) and by the same consistent standards. They allow us to critically analyse values and make consistent ethical judgements. They are simple for students from level 1 up to understand, and for teachers to put into practice.

### **WISDOM – We should be sensible.**

We should consider the probable consequences of our actions and try to maximise the good and minimise the harm.

### **JUSTICE – We should be fair.**

We should not treat one person or group any better or worse than another.

### **TRUTH – We should be honest.**

We should base our opinions on factual evidence wherever possible and not emotion. We should consider motives, especially our own. We should not deliberately deceive people.

### **LOVE - We should be kind.**

We should treat all people with respect, care about them and not use anyone for our own ends.

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<sup>14</sup> Snook, I., (1973). *Moral values and the New Zealand School*. Education No6. Dept of Education Wellington.

<sup>15</sup> Hinman, L., (1998). *Ethics: A pluralistic approach to moral theory*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) USA: Harcourt Brice.

## CHAPTER 2

### USING ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

To understand any concept well it needs to be first reduced to its basic components or principles. The principles and the method of ethical reasoning provided here offer a consistent method for achieving the required outcome of developing the ability to make ethical decisions. Any coach knows that to develop a skill we need practice. If the same principles are used in ethical reasoning right throughout levels 1-8, then by the time students leave secondary school, they should have developed the habit of reasoning in an ethical manner even if they don't always act on their reasoning.

- **Starting at level 1**

This means discussion of relevant issues using basic ethical principles in a way that they can understand.

**Wisdom** – We should be sensible. We should think about whether we will make other people happy or sad by the things we do. Whether we will help or harm them.

**Justice** – We should be fair. We should share with others and do our share of work that needs to be done. We should not take advantage of people weaker than ourselves.

**Truth** – We should be honest. We should speak the truth. We should not take things that belong to other people.

**Love** – We should be kind. We should help other people and not do things that will make them unhappy.

There are also two checks and balances for our reasoning

**The Golden Rule** – How would I feel if someone did that to me?

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

This simple system can be the basis for all ethical reasoning in all learning areas, and right throughout the social inquiry process. It provides a consistent method for schools and teachers to achieve the specified outcomes.

- **For higher levels -**

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?

**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?

**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? (He Tangata-He Tangata He Tangata )What would happen if everyone did that?

**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?

The last ability that the 'values' statement in the curriculum requires, is that students should develop their ability to make ethical judgements and decisions and act on them

- **Open-ended discussion is not sufficient here.**

Where values conflict, all the relativist can do is to take sides according to ethnic preference or assert that each side has its own legitimate point of view.<sup>16</sup> In New Zealand we all live a relatively similar westernised style of life. We live under the same governmental and economic systems. In real life we interact with each other. We have to make decisions and act on them and most actions affect other people. Regular discussions of situations relevant to age and interests aim at making decisions as to the best course to follow or one that will maximise the good and minimise the harm. The aim is to make reasoning ethically a habit and a skill. These discussions, using ethical principles as the basis for consistent ethical reasoning provide the essential ingredient for developing any skill, i.e. practice, practice, practice.

- **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. 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 based on the Christian religion 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. The system may not be perfect, but as the ethicist Beauchamp stated, 'A theory is pragmatically justified if it gets you there more often than not,'<sup>17</sup> and that is what this method will do.

<sup>16</sup> Windschuttle, K., (1996). *The killing of history: How literary critics and social theorists are murdering our past*. San Francisco: Encounter books. P309.

<sup>17</sup> Beauchamp, T., (1991). *Philosophical ethics: An introduction to moral philosophy*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.) U.S.: Mc

## CHAPTER 3

### THE ROLE OF THE TEACHER

The teacher is the single most important resource influencing what children study in school. The next is the textbook. In the absence of an agreed textbook, programme developers decide what children are to study.<sup>18</sup> A good teacher can improve on a bad programme and a teacher who is not happy with a programme, or who is not a dedicated teacher can ruin a good one. It is easier for teachers to work from the outline of an acceptable programme, adapting the presentation to their own strengths, than for them to develop a programme from scratch.

The aim of this resource is to provide an outline of issues that were found over many years to belong on a 'need to know' list for young people - then to offer ideas, suggestions, background material and sample lesson plans. The aim of each lesson will be clear, but teachers will be able to choose the way of achieving the aim or the way that best suits their own strengths. Some may be more interested in music, art or drama, but since students also learn best in different ways, it is advisable at primary level to provide a variety of reinforcing activities with each lesson.

#### **Interactive teaching –**

Each lesson is introduced through discussion of a situation that is relevant to the particular age group and within their area of understanding. This is interactive teaching where thinking skills are enhanced.

- **“Interactive teaching incorporates effective and efficient use of resources, provision of immediate feedback, more active learner participation and more opportunities for remedial and extension work.”<sup>19</sup>**

Personal issues should rarely be discussed in class, though stories of the teacher's own indiscretions can be very effective. Relating a situation to an unknown person or place allows free discussion, though many in a class will find it relevant to themselves and will offer opinions. T.V. programmes, news items, videos, films, books all offer situations that can be discussed. A favourite with my classes began with, 'I'll tell you a little story about a boy who was at a school near here a few years ago ----

Depending on the ability of students to sight-read, plays are very effective. Role-playing is not recommended, unless it is something very clear and simple. Too much educational time can be wasted. Nor is lining up in order of preference for some opinion recommended. This can result in students going along with the opinion of some popular person, or being afraid to go against the opinion of another. The objective is to give students practice in ethical reasoning and to do that through Socratic questioning.

#### **Socratic questioning**

This is not questioning just for the sake of questioning. It is questioning that leads a student along a logical path to a point where he/she grasps a concept clearly and is able to say, 'Oh, I see!' A non-systematic approach is confusing to students. It can be irritating and influence the student to give up. Murray Print states there is a very real danger of 'pooled ignorance,' unless there is a system to the questioning.<sup>20</sup>

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*Graw Hill p89*

<sup>18</sup> Eisner, E. (1979) p134

<sup>19</sup> Print, M. (1988). *Curriculum development and Design*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) Australia: Allen and Unwin. p 169.

<sup>20</sup> Print, M. *Curriculum Development and Design* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). P 81

**Here is a simple example of Socratic questioning and logical reasoning in a first lesson on nutrition.**

It would be relevant to and within the understanding of all ethnic groups or cultures.

The aim of the lesson is for students to learn that milk is a valuable food. It contains substances needed to build flesh, bones, hair, finger and toenails and to give health and energy. At higher levels of understanding the substances involved i.e. protein, minerals, water, vitamins and carbohydrates can be identified..

- **Note that this lesson does not require young children to reason in the abstract, but it is about familiar issues that they can visualise. Abstract reasoning is only suitable for older students.**

Question ó How many of you have had new babies in your families.?

Question ó When they are born they are very small aren't they? What are they like three months later?

Question ó What parts of their bodies have grown?

Question - What can they do now that they couldn't do when they were very small?

Question ó What is the only food for most babies over this time?

Question ó So what must milk contain?

Of course there will be the occasional argument that, "Our baby is allergic to dairy products," which with further questioning can lead to the fact that even though the source is not milk, whatever alternative food is given will need to contain similar substances.

With this method of Socratic questioning, students could be said to discover or construct knowledge for themselves, but the teacher knows what it is that they are going to discover, and leads them towards understanding of an issue. Students do not go on an unguided voyage of discovery.

**Constructing understanding.**

Some theorists see direct instruction by the teacher as stifling the discovery process of learning. In this method of discussion, the teacher is not giving direct instruction, but he/she is acting as the guide who makes certain that students follow paths that lead to discovery- not to confusion. Students may lack the experience to make reasoned judgements. The aim here is for the student to be able to construct his/her own knowledge because he/she has been given the right building blocks in the right order to enable this to happen.

There is no point in talking about making good choices if a person does not choose to act. In real life, decisions have to be made. The aim of values and citizenship education is not merely to produce a few brilliant thinkers, but to help *all* children learn how to make reasoned choices, and motivate them to act on those choices. Discussion of this kind involves the values of *inquiry and curiosity* and requires students to *think critically and reflectively*.

Teachers who may have thought they had no skills in this area, may be surprised to find that they do have the required skills, especially if they have children of their own

The problems encountered in our daily lives are common to all and of interest to all, and these are the issues that are studied in values and citizenship education.

Dealing with them requires general knowledge and practical judgement.



### **The position of the teacher in discussions.**

The role of the teacher is to help students to think clearly, analytically and critically so that they can make rational decisions for themselves. If, after considering the probable consequences of a course of action, the majority of a class decides that one particular course of action would have better results than another, and that is the course that should be followed, that is not indoctrination. That is common sense and practical wisdom. The best defence against indoctrination is to teach students to reason well..

### **There are three positions a teacher can take in class discussions.**

- **Neutral** ó This means refusing to take any stance and allowing discussion to take place freely without making any comment apart from keeping order.

If a teacher is neutral the students are left unsatisfied. Forceful speakers may have dominated. Popular students or students who are likely to bully may have had their views unchallenged. Some may have said what they believed the teacher wanted to hear. The teacher may have had evidence that was not available to the students. At the very least the teacher would have had more experience of life. Worst of all, no conclusion has been reached or decision made. It is said that more trouble has often been caused by not making any decision than by making the wrong one. Frequently there will be no perfect answer, but as it is in real life, we have to make the best choice we can and cope with the consequences. Students need to learn this before they come up against real problems in their lives

- **2.6 Authoritarian** ó This is a form of indoctrination. What the teacher says is right simply because he/she says so.

In discussion where the aim is *education*, a teacher should not just impose his/her own views on the students. Even his/her own opinions should be justified by evidence and discussion.

- **3.– Impartial** – The teacher is not neutral. He/she leads the discussion but also takes a part in supervising the debate.

The purpose is to point out where argument is based on emotion rather than on reason; to insist that evidence must be factual and reasoning must be logical; to make sure a wide variety of views has been presented; to ask questions that will make students think deeply and feel for others. Finally to arrive at a conclusion as to the likely consequences of various courses of actions and reach a decision or a compromise on which course would have the best results overall. **The teacher must be prepared to give his/her own opinion if requested and to allow that opinion to be analysed in the same way as others.**

- **The emphasis should always be on the justification of ethical argument.**

### **Making choices**

In real life we have to make decisions and often there is no perfect answer. We have to make choices and we need to consider consequences. It is claimed that the pathways to the brain which confer wisdom, judgement and impulse control, are not fully mature until an average age of 19.<sup>21</sup>

- **This does not mean that young people are incapable of considering consequences before this age.**

Considering consequences does not have a high priority with young people unless they have been educated or required to do so. Peer pressure, however, is very powerful and if enough young people have been educated to consider consequences, they could influence others by leading them in better directions. In real life we need to consider consequences, and sometimes

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<sup>21</sup> Gluckman,P. (2009,March 20). *N.Z.Herald*, A13.

we need to compromise. If we are unwilling to compromise occasionally, we have little chance of living peacefully and happily with other people for any length of time. There is often a place for compromise in details that do not really matter, but not in the ethical principles on which we base our choices.

- **Practice in considering consequences, in making wise choices, and in knowing when to compromise is essential if children are to be prepared for life in the real world.**

### **Conclusion ó**

Those who want to strengthen the key competencies through values and citizenship education do not necessarily need special training, but they need to understand young people, and they need to be impartial. They should not see their own stage of reasoning as the norm for their pupils, though by years 12 and 13, many pupils may have arrived there or have even passed the teacher.

Teachers with children of their own have probably already developed skills in supervising discussions in their own homes and they will immediately enjoy these classes. Others will find their own skills developing quickly as they lead discussions based on consistent ethical principles.

It is important to remember that children do not usually have the ability to reason in the abstract until around the age of puberty so discussions in primary school need to be centered on practical situations that are relevant to the age group, and with which they are familiar.

- **Children are capable of reasoning about consequences and ethical principles if they are asked the right questions.**

## CHAPTER 4

### INTRODUCTION TO THE PROGRAMME

This programme is intended for teachers and schools wanting to start a definite programme of values and citizenship education at level 1 in state primary schools. It is designed for a multi-cultural society and a secular education system where there may be some objection from a proportion of parents and teachers to having 'values' education based in any way on religion. It is based on reason, and is also designed for use within integrated schools, or schools that are associated with specific religions or cultures, in which case teachers can add the extra religious perspective of their own beliefs. It should not be necessary to alter or delete anything in the programme itself because all religions and cultures or ethnic groups are treated with respect and presented alongside humanist views.

The core of any stable society is a shared set of values and goals, therefore no matter what percentage of ethnic or religious groups are present in schools, the aim and goals will be the same.

**The aim** – aim will be to teach students to reason logically, to think ethically, to motivate them to act ethically and to learn from the experience of others as well as their own.

**The goals** – 1. To produce students who will be able to meet every day situations with confidence, and clear and ethical judgement, and who will be able to participate in a changing society as informed, confident, and responsible citizens.

2. To inspire teachers, schools and their communities to participate fully by providing a programme that is 'teacher' friendly, and lessons with clear aims that will be understood and approved by the majority of parents in a multi-cultural society.

**The wider objective** – will be to make a better world, starting within our own homes and moving outward through schools to community and the nation.

In the process people are not to be judged or condemned, but we should be prepared to admit mistakes that have been made. We need to accept that all people make mistakes, some through carelessness, some unintentionally and some deliberately, but we have it within ourselves to learn from our mistakes and move onward and upwards.

- **The most important resource in education is the teacher.**

Teachers need to be appreciated, respected and trusted. In some cultures teaching is the most respected of all vocations. Most teachers enter the profession with high ideals, but some become disillusioned by the system and by the conditions under which they have to work. They need to feel that they are achieving something worthwhile, and though they will not be able to immediately assess the results of values and citizenship education they will see it later in the lives of children they have taught, loved and inspired.

They need the support of parents who can accept that a deliberately disruptive pupil is stealing time and attention from the rest of the class.

On the practical side they need resource material that is quick and easy to use, that gives them the relevant information they will need, and that they know will interest the students at the level they are teaching.

- **There are many good teachers available in most schools, who, with the help of a resource book and lesson plans could manage these lessons with no extra space or funding.**

### **The use of plays**

Though discussion can take place around news items, books, films or other current events, they were originally centred also around a series of plays that were used very successfully in the classroom with years 7 and 8. The plays worked like a T.V. serial, having a specific family at the centre, and various neighbours involved in the different situations each week. The students quickly identified with the characters and were able to discuss situations without being openly personally involved. The plays, on which the discussion was based were sight read by a group of pupils, with the rest of the class acting as friends in chorus.

It would be possible to make plays into videos to be used as a semi-permanent resource, and used in classes where sight- reading is not practicable.

(Fifty of these plays are available in script form in 'Plays for Class Discussion' by this author. A few are suitable for years 5 and 6, but most were written for years 7-8 and up.)

### **Will such a programme work?**

The measure of any programme is whether it can be put into action in the classroom. The curriculum authority Murray Print suggests that if a programme is to be adopted successfully in schools it should be seen to be better than the present system, it should be consistent with existing values, past experiences and present needs, and should not demand substantial changes to behaviour by participants.<sup>22</sup> It should not be unduly complex, and it should have been trialled in the same type of situation in which it is planned to be more widely used.

This programme originated in answer to needs and continues to do so. The objectives and outlines of suggested lessons are given, but individual teachers could probably improve on these with their own ideas and knowledge of the interests and abilities of their own classes. Many years of experience showed that more time had often been spent on deciding on the subject for next week's lesson, than in preparing the lesson once a decision had been made.

- **This programme has been designed by a teacher, and was successfully used in an ordinary classroom for many years, not as a specific trial, but because real situations arose that required some reflective thinking and discussion. There was no need for extra time, space or money. Hopefully, teachers who choose to use it will be able to look forward to these lessons with pleasure, and enjoy watching their students as they progress in their capacity to reason well.**

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<sup>22</sup> Print, M. (1993) 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. *Curriculum development and design*. Pp242-5.

## CHAPTER 5

### RESPONSIBILITY TO PARENTS

Parents expect to be able to trust schools with the education of their children.

It is important that teachers should be trusted, but we earn trust. It is not owed to us just because of our position.

Parents are more likely to give their support and encouragement to a programme if they see the point in what schools are trying to do, if they know what is being taught, and if they understand and approve of the content. This is especially true of values and citizenship education.

Parents should be made aware of the principles that will be used in discussion of everyday situations and in ethical reasoning at school. They will then be able to carry on discussions at home using the same principles. If parents and teachers work together, education is likely to be much more successful. Research has found that for any form of values and citizenship education to be really successful, there needs to be consistency throughout all schools in a community, and ideally throughout the country. If transient students find the same ethical principles being promoted as they move from place to place, there is more likelihood of such principles having an influence on their thinking.

#### **Controversial issues –**

An issue becomes controversial when there are genuine arguments on both sides. Since young people do not usually develop the ability to reason in the abstract until around puberty, it is not wise to discuss such issues before then. The early colonists often wrote into the constitutions of their groups that there was to be no discussion of politics or religion. They had come from different areas and different backgrounds and did not wish to bring arguments from the past into the new groups that were being formed. This was a requirement to which they voluntarily adhered, recognising that such arguments could damage relationships and do more harm than good. Younger students should not be required to discuss controversial issues that are beyond their reasoning or emotional abilities.

- **Controversial issues should not be discussed in class until senior years.**

It is possible however that controversial issues could arise between parents, teachers, school boards, or different ethnic groups, and there are general rules for ethical debate.

#### **Requirements for ethical debate.<sup>23</sup>**

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 such 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.**

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<sup>23</sup> Flyvbjerg, B., (2001) *Making social science matter: Why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again*. P 91

**Wisdom** – What are the long-term consequences of different courses of actions likely to be? The aim is to maximise the good and minimise the harm.

**Justice** - The requirements for ethical debate should be followed. There should be no bias in the way information is presented or not presented. Is any person or group being treated better or worse than any other? Opinions on social justice can differ. Does anyone genuinely deserve special treatment? Justice does not necessarily mean equality of outcome. Outcomes frequently depend on individual choices and actions or cultural priorities.

**Truth** - Where past events are concerned, or where they affect issues of the day, those events should be reported as factually as possible, so that a new group can reach its own conclusions, based on the source documents, the original events and the attitudes of the people of the time. Interpretations should be based on what actually happened on such a day, in such a place, in such circumstances.<sup>24</sup> Hearsay and interpretations have often been followed by newer interpretations, and still newer interpretations. A newer group considering a matter needs to be clear about what is fact, and what is opinion that may have been influenced by prejudice or emotion, or by a different political climate at a different point in time. Is anyone trying to deceive anyone else? Who wins and who loses by decisions that are made? What are the motives of those involved?

**Love** - The principle of Love covers caring and sharing right from level 1. Throughout all levels from students to communities, it means respect for other people and their opinions, but not at the expense of truth. Is everyone being treated with respect? Is any person or group using any one else for their own ends?

**The Golden Rule** or How would the different parties feel if their positions were reversed?

**The goal** or a better and happier world or What course of action is likely to make our school and our community a better and happier place? How will our decisions affect the future?

**The use of power** –

- **The researcher Flyvberg also found that the result of research and discussion could be negated by the power of pressure groups.**

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 system of principles and guidelines for ethical reasoning and ethical debate offered here is aimed at making a better future.

- **No-one should be deliberately criticised or blamed, but it is important that decisions should be based on the truth.**

The need for ethical principles in the use of power and in making ethical decisions is particularly important for people who are in a position to either use power for the common good or to abuse it for individual benefit - or the benefit of their own group.

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<sup>24</sup> Flyvberg, B.(2001) *Making social science matter: why social inquiry fails and how it can succeed again*.p134

- **It is important that there is consistency in making ethical decisions, and ethical principles provide that consistency.**

### **Resource material.**

Schools have more freedom today to choose or develop their own programmes, and much good work is being done. It is a dubious claim however, that all teachers want the 'freedom' to produce their own resource material. The extra time required in these areas and in the area of assessment adds a great deal of extra stress to teachers' lives. Material produced by experts in particular fields can be adapted to the individual teacher's own talents, and also made relevant and available to a school community.

The educationist Eisner, suggests that teachers would welcome such materials, developed by experts with funds and access to nationally known scholars, and that could provide teachers with a higher quality of materials than teachers could create on their own.<sup>25</sup>

- \* **The physical existence of a written and detailed programme means that it can be transported, examined and used in different classrooms and different schools.**

Parents can see exactly what the programme covers. Parents and administrators can discuss its content, strengths and weaknesses, whereas where a teacher plans in process, though it may be excellent, it can neither be shifted about, inspected, nor shared with others. According to the curriculum expert Murray Print, the disadvantages of schools developing their own curricula far outweigh the advantages.<sup>26</sup> The time required, the lack of expertise in the process, the lack of support structures for administrators and teachers, and the movement of teachers and pupils between schools outweigh the possible advantages.

The programme offered here was developed over many years on the basis of what students 'needed to know.' It is not the result of any particular ideology, but evolved from real situations that arose in the school and community. It was developed with the approval and co-operation of the principal, whose years 7 and 8 classes were taught by the developer of this programme for half an hour each week. It was examined and approved by members of the Board of Trustees who were able to see for themselves what was being discussed and taught. Any school deciding to use a programme such as this could provide parents at the very least, with a list of the topics to be covered, and for those parents particularly interested, an outline of the lessons themselves.

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<sup>25</sup> Eisner, E. (1979). *The educational imagination: On the design and evaluation of schooling*. P5. New York: Macmillan

<sup>26</sup> Print M. (1993) *Curriculum development and design*. Pp 21-2

## CHAPTER 6

### THE “UPRIGHT” MAN AND WOMAN

One of the main concepts that it could be useful to revive and emphasise is that of the *ōuprightō* person.

- **Most of the great philosophical traditions and religions have a concept of a virtuous or an “upright” man – a man of “good” values.**

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 *ōChuntzu.ō* This word, translated into western idiom closely relates to a *ōgentleman,ō* or more closely to an *ōuprightō* man, because it did not depend on birth or wealth. A *ōChuntzuō* 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.**

He has self-esteem, but not too much because it might become *ōhubrisō* false pride.

He has self-respect because he always does his best, physically, mentally and ethically.

Aristotle, the great Greek philosopher, was primarily concerned with developing the individual character, and examining the vices and virtues that affected character. Aristotle's *ōuprightō* man was a man of practical wisdom or common sense.<sup>27</sup> The sensible man would choose the middle way between extremes. He would do what was ethically practical. For example in the matter of telling the truth, it would not be just a matter of telling the truth or lying *ō* it would also be a matter of how the truth is told (with care and respect or cruelly), when it is told and to whom it is told.<sup>28</sup> Buddha's noble eightfold path consists of right thinking, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration.

#### **What about the “upright” woman?**

Women need to be just as upright as men *ō* possibly even more so, because in spite of claims for equality, more women than men are being responsible for bringing up children. Though only a few women figured largely in history, they had their own important place in the scheme of things. The course of nature meant that women's priority was usually the care of children, but many mothers and wives of famous men had considerable influence on them. The programme for ethical reasoning offered here applies just as much to women as to men, and the aim is to produce *ōuprightō* men and *ōuprightō* women, who together will make a better world. 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. The addition of the principle of love to ethical reasoning should ensure that our modern *ōuprightō* person is also a kind and caring person. With consistent use of ethical principles in ethical reasoning and social decision making throughout school programmes, the aim would be to produce the *ōuprightō* men and *ōuprightō* women who will be needed as leaders in a changing world.

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<sup>27</sup> Hinman, L. (1998). *Ethics: A pluralistic approach to moral theory*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed). P 355.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid *ō* p358



## CHAPTER 7

### KOHLBERG'S THEORY OF MORAL REASONING

It is useful for those who are undertaking a programme of values and citizenship education in schools to become acquainted with Kohlberg's theory of moral reasoning. He was a professor at Harvard University. He first became interested in stages of moral reasoning after World War 2 when he wondered why some people would put their own lives at risk for the sake of others.

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 the aims of moral education as movement through moral stages.<sup>29</sup>

The theory that our moral reasoning develops through stages relates to the work of Dewey and Piaget who saw that each new step in learning was based on previous experience and the assistance of others at a more advanced stage.

#### Outline -

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

**Stage 1** - That which brings pain or personal discomfort is not good and is to be avoided. (Also applies to adults who remain at this stage of reasoning.)

**Stage 2** -. The child is oriented towards seeking his/her own pleasure. What will produce rewards is good. There is an element of reciprocity, "You scratch my back I'll scratch yours."<sup>30</sup> (adults?)

**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.

**Stage 4** - .Conventional morality. Before the 1970s, Kohlberg saw that conventional rules of law and order were important to most citizens. Forty years on, conventional morality is often a case of doing what one's own group sees as acceptable. The child ( and adult,) wishes to conform to his own society's rules. "What everybody else is doing," is the measure. For teenagers it is joining in with groups of peers and being accepted. For adults it is much the same.

**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 governed which is designed to protect the equal rights of all.

**Stage 6** . - The person develops a conscience and personally chosen moral principles based on justice. He/she acts on these by personal choice and for his/her 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, smart disruptive students in class, and the 80% of students who admitted cheating or falsifying research, but particularly those who did not see anything wrong with this. (see p 4)

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<sup>29</sup> Kohlberg, L. (1976). Moral education. In D. Purpel and K. Ryan (eds) *Moral education: It comes with the territory*. P 183.

<sup>30</sup> Hinman, p371

### Conventional morality

Usually conventional morality has meant staying within the law, and as values have changed, laws have been changed to suit the standards and demands of society.

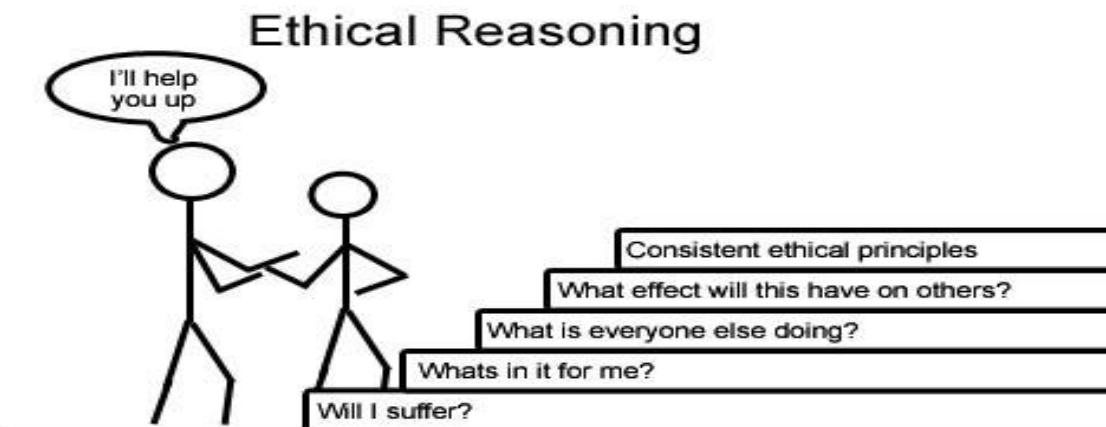
All behaviour that is within the law, or is commonly accepted, is not necessarily ethical, and so getting reasoning only to the level of 'everybody does it' is not values education. Using 'But everybody does it,' as a standard is merely accepting the status quo. and ethical relativity.

To educate children (and adults) in this field we need 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 individual principles and a conscience that involves self-respect.

Teachers need to understand the theory, and to understand that discussion in school, though it is the way to achieve the desired end, is not an end in itself.

- 'Discussion is a means towards the gaining of rationally held beliefs.'<sup>31</sup>

'What really counts is reflecting on experience.'<sup>32</sup> The way to do this effectively is by asking questions and requiring the students to think about their answers. As Ivan Snook said back in the 1970s, 'A programme of moral education in schools would consist largely in Kohlbergian endeavours to improve the quality of children's moral thinking.'<sup>33</sup>



### The beginning of self-control

Much emphasis has been placed on the value of praise in improving child behaviour and according to Kohlberg, this happens at stages 2-3 in his stages of ethical reasoning. It works for many, but for those who reason at the lowest level, i.e. 'Will I suffer,' praise on its own may not be enough. This applies to adults as well as small children. If we ignore the negative, it does not necessarily go away. It merely gets stronger. There need to be unpleasant consequences from negative behaviour – from being 'bad.' Bad behaviour should not just be ignored, 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. If there are consistent unpleasant consequences from a certain form of bad behaviour, then the child (or adult) has to make a choice and learn to exercise self-control. Will the pleasure it receives from the bad behaviour outweigh the unpleasant consequences that are certain to follow? Children can start learning self-control from a young age. Experiencing consistent unpleasant consequences from bad behaviour as well, can be more effective for some than just praise for being good. **Even elephants learn to respect an electric fence.**

<sup>31</sup> Codd. (1980) Values education and the neutrality of the teacher. Pp376-7

<sup>32</sup> McGeorge. (1992) The moral curriculum: Forming the Kiwi character. P12

<sup>33</sup> Snook, I. (1973) Moral Education. P64

## Criticisms

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. Since then, there has been criticism of Kohlberg's work but no real success in producing anything better.

Forty years later we are still waiting for the perfect theory and recent research has shown that a child's attitude to law and order is set at an early age. While we wait for the perfect theory, we can examine the criticisms of Kohlberg's work, and where they seem to have been justified we can find ways to improve on them.

One criticism is that Kohlberg, like Piaget, is weak on the emotion side: that there is not enough concern for people.

Emphasis on the principle of "Love" in the programme offered here should deal with that. Also the check of the Golden Rule. By asking the question "How would you feel if that were 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. They have to think about what they would like to happen if it were happening to them personally.

Another criticism is 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.

Criticism also questions the belief that a higher stage of reasoning is better morally than lower stage reasoning and therefore, whether there is any point in helping children to move up through the stages. It suggests that it is better to concentrate on getting most children to stage 4, (i.e. - what is generally acceptable) than to worry about getting some children to a higher level. The aim of this programme is to get *all* children to reason at a higher level. The work done by Berman in synthesizing the major research in the field of children's social consciousness done over the last half century, showed that most of the criticism of Kohlberg had come from theorists with ideologies of their own to push.

- **The consistency across numerous studies leads me to believe ---there is still a good deal of substance in Kohlberg's theory." (Berman p83)**

Teachers do not have to be experts in recognising stages of reasoning. They probably see it for themselves without building a theory around it. They are probably already trying to teach children to think beyond benefits to themselves, and to consider the wider implications of their actions. In the process they will have found that some children respond more readily to the idea that they need to consider others, and these are the children whose parents have already been teaching them the same concepts.

A final criticism of Kohlberg's theory is that unrealistic demands are placed on teachers when they do engage students in ethical discussions: that many teachers may reason at lower levels and not be capable of moving students up through the stages.

Though it may be true that some, mainly younger, teachers still reason at a lower level themselves, most experienced teachers of my acquaintance, especially if they have children of their own, are well able to guide a discussion. Teachers, who may be at a lower level of

reasoning, should soon move their own reasoning up, as well as that of their students, especially if they are given the right questions to ask. Asking the right questions encourages children to reason, as Socrates knew 2000 years ago. However Socrates became very unpopular with those whose young people began to question the beliefs of their elders and to produce logical arguments as their evidence.

### **We all make mistakes**

This brings us to an important problem for this type of education today. When young people begin to reason ethically they may question the actions, attitudes and customs of teachers, parents and others in society around them. We are not in the 'blame game' here. People are products of their environment and of their own experiences. Who knows how we would have behaved ourselves with different backgrounds and different experiences.

- **Values and citizenship education should not produce children who will sit in judgement on others.**

One important objective is to show them that nobody is perfect and that all people make mistakes. They will make mistakes themselves. They need to see that even though we make mistakes we can pick ourselves up and go on again. We should learn from our mistakes. **The main point is that we must be prepared to admit that we have made mistakes, or there will be no hope of progress.**

If the majority of the individuals within a society genuinely wish to try to make a better world, they will think more carefully about the consequences of their actions, and they will make fewer mistakes as time goes by.

- **Teachers must keep this to the forefront of all their lessons. Nobody should be intentionally criticized or condemned, but the search for reason and truth in evidence is a major part of values education, and the truth needs to be accepted when the evidence reveals it.**

### **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 deciding action.<sup>34</sup> These will be discussed later, under the heading of 'temptation'.

### **The importance of moral reasoning –**

Amongst the children we teach in our schools today are the leaders of the future. In the twenty-first century crucial decisions may have to be made. Problems of which we have no conception today may have to be faced. A re-examination of the ethical values of today may enable us to produce the leaders who will be needed then. Our aim should be to get as many children as possible to the level where they are reasoning ethically and making decisions based on principles they have freely accepted for themselves. We need to start early so that reasoning ethically becomes a habit through years of practice. An added incentive is the claim that there is a push towards the privatisation of education. If private schools have something to offer that state schools do not, it is up to citizens of a democracy to make sure that state schools can offer what is needed. It is important for the common good that the quality of education in the state school system is such that all children can achieve their potential. As Eisner said, 'Time in

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<sup>34</sup> 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)

school is limited All children should study the very best material that humans have written and created<sup>35</sup>

Finally ó Some of the critics of Kohlberg's work considered that his theory on moral reasoning was not really òmoralö education, but was aimed at making good citizens of the United States. Most people today would probably consider that making good citizens of a democratic society was a sufficiently worthy aim, and it is certainly the goal of a values and citizenship programme.

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<sup>35</sup> Eisner, E., (1979). 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. *The educational imagination: On the design and evaluation of school programmes*. P63.

## CHAPTER 8

### MAKING CHOICES - TEMPTATION

**“Through their learning experiences, students will develop their ability to make ethical decisions and act on them.”** N.Z. Curriculum 2007, p10

Through the use of ethical principles, we can make ethical decisions, but iff we have reasoned what would be the right thing to do, why do we not always do it?

The answer of course is temptation. That little voice in our heads that says, “Yes, O.K., I know I should go and get some exercise, but there’s a good programme on the box that I want to see.” Or “Yes, I know I need to save money, but there’s a new CD I really want.”

“Yes, I really should stop and help that person, but I want to get to the football match. Someone else is sure to stop.”

- **The challenge of temptation is that it makes present rewards sound much more attractive than long-term rewards or consequences.**

Young people particularly are not inclined to consider long-term consequences when there is excitement in the present on offer. Hopefully, with consistent practice in ethical decision-making, consideration of consequences will become a habit.

#### **Making choices –**

**Real life requires us to make choices. This is the next step in the gap between knowledge and action.**

How can we be sure that we have made the right choice? We have considered all the consequences. We have examined the situation by our ethical principles. Are we being fair? Are we being honest about our motives? Is anyone going to be harmed by our choice of action? We have tried to make the best choice we can under the circumstances. We have tried to maximise the good and minimise the harm. We have acted on our decision and done our best as we saw it at the time.

But what if, in the end, it turns out that owing to some unexpected or unforeseen circumstance, a different choice might have had better results? We should not allow ourselves to be weighed down by guilt. If we did the best we could at the time, that is all that matters. Perhaps we have learned a bit more by experience, but we should not wallow in regrets. If we go through our lives doing the best we can, in the end we will have done more good than harm, and we will have made the world a better place for our having lived in it.

**We will however, if we are honest with ourselves, know if we have really done our best, or whether there was something we could have done differently.**

**Guilt** – Isn’t guilt an unacceptable word in today’s world? Some religions may have gone to excess in this area, but once again, Aristotle seems to have had it right - the middle way between extremes. Excess guilt is harmful, but if we never feel a little guilt about things we have done that harmed other people, either intentionally or unintentionally, or if we have turned the other way when we could have done more good, for other people or for our environment, we may never try to do better, or to put things right.

- **Young criminals who do not feel guilt about the effect on others of their actions have little chance of changing. Feeling a little bit of guilt, though uncomfortable, is probably good for us.**

## CHAPTER 9

### WISDOM

Involving all the stated values and the key competencies.

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. Reason alone can be cold and unfeeling.**

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

- **Wisdom involves experience as much as academic learning.**

There is much knowledge that cannot be learned out of books. It is possible to have wisdom - Aristotle's *phronesis* - or 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 and choices are under scrutiny, and another generation must use their reason to make further choices. They will need 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 key competencies 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 into education (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 was not mentioned in the latest Health and Physical Education syllabus. That "Cornerstone of the community" had disappeared within thirty 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.

## CHAPTER 10

### JUSTICE

Involving the value of equity

“It’s not fair,” is one of the most common cries of childhood. We know what it means. The complainant considers someone else has been treated better than he/she has. Sometimes there is a reason why this has been done, and if so the reason will need to be justified by the other principles.

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 child with something different without justified reason e.g. an allergy to chocolate. 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. Justice for one should not result in injustice to another.**

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 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 them to reason clearly. Cultural traditions may have emphasised different values that work against young people in a different society. Children may have been taught that it is always someone else’s fault if they do not get what they want.

- **Ethical reasoning aims to teach students that they are responsible for their own future 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.

### 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 argued 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 *ötrustö* 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 in making ethical decisions, we cover the different problems that arise when there is only one particular principle or theory used.

An argument put forward by ethical theorists is that if we insist on impartiality we could for example, 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.

If we are to treat people fairly, common sense is required. Impartiality is required, but 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.

## CHAPTER 11

### SOCIAL JUSTICE

In the 2007 N.Z. Curriculum, it is stated that equity is to be achieved through fairness and social justice, 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 as Kohlberg found, there have to be consequences that actually hurt, or those reasoning at the lowest level will never learn to do their share also.

The principle of truth would require that the reasons for unequal outcomes should be examined carefully and impartially. In a multi-cultural society, it is possible that some of the reasons for unequal outcomes relate to cultural traditions. Justice would require that truth of this should also be included in this form of pluralistic ethical reasoning, in order to avoid resentment or accusations of injustice from other ethnic or cultural groups who may be succeeding in spite of their own different handicaps.

Social justice in this programme does not include equality of outcome for the reasons that have already been shown. All schools and teachers can be expected to do is to treat students fairly, to help those who really need help and who will accept it. To spend a greater amount of time on students who are determined not to learn can mean injustice to those who do want to learn. The principle of love would require the government and education system to find a way to help genuinely disadvantaged students, but it should not be through injustice to others. Individuals make their own choices. If we cannot persuade students or their families to consider consequences, they may have to learn the painful way by experiencing consequences.

- **The main aim here is to educate all 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.**

Hopefully then, there will be less students who choose to waste their lives, and more leaders of their own groups who will also reason well and inspire the young to choose well.

#### **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.**

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 11, 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, but not at primary school. At this age they will be more likely to parrot their parents' point of view and less able to understand the views of others. Harm can be done to relationships. Topics should be suitable for the different age groups.

- **At primary school social justice should be related to matters that each level is competent to discuss.**

About class and school rules for instance and what they see as fair. Political policies and varying ideologies can be left to senior classes in secondary schools when students can measure them by ethical principles and will 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.

The groundwork can be laid at primary school, and even before that in early childhood education, but our education system as a whole should be aiming to produce young people who can go out into society, taking with them the ability to reason well, and to put ethical principles into action in every part of their lives. These mature people should be allowed the autonomy of thinking for themselves on specific matters of social justice.

- **As Kohlberg claimed, if most people reason at a higher level, social justice should be the result anyway.**

#### **Hidden curriculum –**

In our efforts to promote social justice in general, and self-esteem in the individual, we should not overlook the way in which the things we do as teachers, or the things we do not do, can teach more than was intended. Take the value of 'equity' as stated in the 2007 Curriculum. This is to be achieved through fairness and social justice. Suppose that in a group activity such as a team project, a few students do most of the work, while others, though they have had equal opportunity and have equal ability, choose to do very little. Is it fair that everyone in the group should receive an equal reward? Would the hard-working students have been treated unfairly if the others had been given the same reward? Perhaps not, but even though it was not the intent of the exercise, what would the students have actually learned from this? Should social justice mean equal rewards for unequal work? How could justice have been done, and seen by all to have been done? Ethical principles can help provide answers to these questions.

## CHAPTER 12

### 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. Most younger children would interpret “freedom” as the ability to do as they choose, but unless we live on our own, and not in a community of some kind, we cannot have freedom to do exactly as we choose – unless of course we choose to obey the rules of the community. 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. Along 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?

#### **Freedom –**

John Stuart Mill (1806 – 73) is often quoted and used as an authority on freedom. 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.”<sup>36</sup> 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.”<sup>37</sup>

Many experienced educationists believe that children should not have complete freedom where their own education is concerned. Like Mill they believe that children should be protected from themselves. Cleife in *Philosophy and the teacher*<sup>38</sup> 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).

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<sup>36</sup> Beauchamp, *Philosophical ethics*. p390

<sup>37</sup> Mill, J. in Beauchamp, T. (1991) *Philosophical ethic: An introduction to moral philosophy*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed) U.S.A.: McGraw Hill. p 394.

<sup>38</sup> Cleife in Lloyd, D., (ed). (1976, reprinted 1990). *Philosophy and the teacher*.

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 they are required to make should be choices that they are qualified to make at each level, and can broaden as their knowledge and ability to reason increase.

### **Rights –**

Rights have no basis in antiquity. There was no word for rights in any European language before the 14<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>39</sup>

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.

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. A minority should have the opportunity to try to change the views of the majority but not to impose its view on them. In the end, decisions have to be made, and democracy has so far been accepted as the fairest and most practical way to do this.

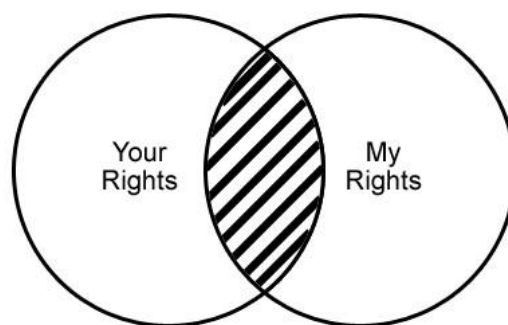
Rights can be seen as a minimum standard below which a fair and caring society should not go in its treatment of any individual, but ***rights are not an ethical principle***. Some ethicists claim that 'rights' are confrontational – that they stress individualism at the expense of community and that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

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 should not 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. The rights of one person or group should always be considered in relation to the rights of any others who are affected. The right to protest does not give protesters the right to inconvenience others. Justice for one should not result in injustice to others.

- **In the area where claims to rights overlap, ethical principles can be used to negotiate, reconcile, and work for justice and the common good.**



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<sup>39</sup> Hinman.L., p279.

## CHAPTER 13

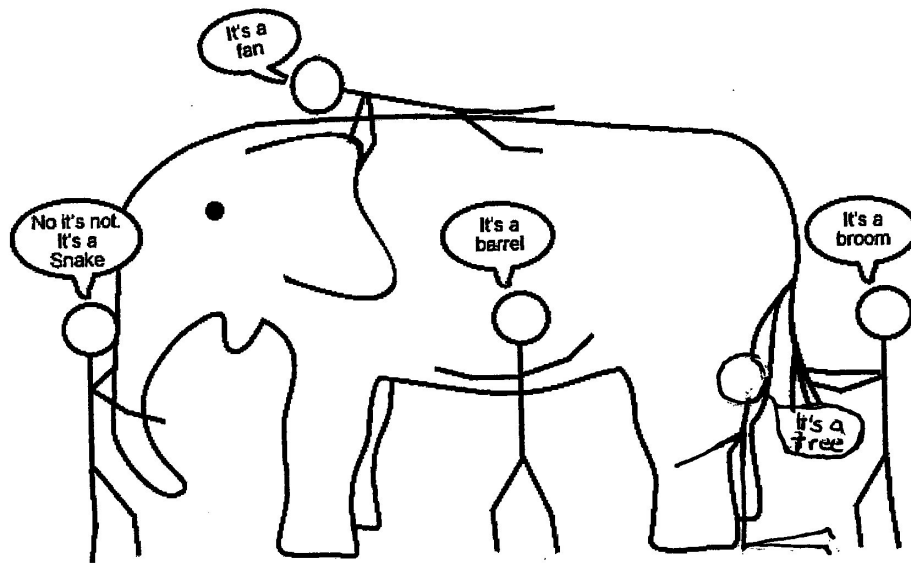
### TRUTH

Involving the value of integrity

If it were possible to choose between the four principles and say one was more important than the others, that one would have to be "truth." All reasoning depends on having its foundations on 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. 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.



Socrates 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 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.

### **Deception –**

#### **People can deceive by lying.**

People can also deceive without telling lies.

They can deceive by not telling the whole truth.

They can deceive by bodily or facial expression.

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

Truth is vital to every ethical decision. Reasoning can be as logical as mathematics, even if it is not quite so precise. 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 –**

I heard a young person on talk-back recently, talking about her career in crime. It had been very profitable and she appeared to have no concern for her victims. I also heard an anecdote from a teacher about a parent who deliberately lied and encouraged her child to lie - to save the parent's own face, and to lay the blame for a situation on the school.

We are trying to help students *“see”* why they should be honest. This will raise difficulties for children from homes where the existing ethical capital is low, but fortunately this is not the majority of homes. If they can see that there is a better way, at least some of the children from these homes may choose to follow it. Usually people tell lies to turn a situation to their own advantage or to keep out of trouble.

**Telling lies and breaking promises are wrong** because of their effects on other people.

**Dishonesty is wrong for the same reason**, but there are many forms of stealing in everyday life.

**Cheating in school or at sport is stealing** because it means we are taking something that belongs to some-one else, without their permission. Even adults steal without really thinking.

**“Perks” at work can be stealing** if they are taken without permission.

**Borrowing a book and not returning it is stealing.**

**Telling lies about someone is stealing.**

**Bullying is a form of stealing.**

**Protest that interferes with the rights of others can be stealing.**

**Shop-lifting is obviously stealing**, but as well as stealing from the shop-keeper, it is also stealing from other customers because the shop-keeper has to increase prices to everyone to cover his losses.

We think that we are reasonably honest but 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 however 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.**

**No offence intended but –**

A primary school teacher told me recently that some children were beginning to use this phrase to make a point that may have been honest, but was also hurtful to the recipient and unnecessary. The speakers used the virtues of honesty and truthfulness as an excuse to say something that could have been better left unsaid. Teaching about virtues such as honesty, 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.



## CHAPTER 14

### LOVE

Involving the value of respect

#### **Love as caring and respect. ó**

This is basically an extended version of the New Zealand concept of *ōaroaha*.ö 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**

In other words, we should not *ōuseö* people for our own ends. 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** - *ōThe relevant general meaning of the word *respect* is *esteeming, valuing or prizing so as to treat with consideration, deference or non-interference, however morality does not require us to respect actions that are opposed to morality.ö*<sup>40</sup> 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 children 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*.ö*

**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 *ōstaunch,ö* 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** ó Kant has long been accepted as the authority on the ethics of respect. According to Kant we respect people for their autonomy ó their ability to reason and make choices on the basis of relevant information. öIn punishing people we treat them as responsible, as full-fledged moral agents. To do less is to show a lack of respect for them<sup>41</sup> 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 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 *ōloving your neighbourö* is a counsel of perfection.

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<sup>40</sup> Beauchamp, T. (1991) *Philosophical ethics: An introduction to moral philosophy*. P197

<sup>41</sup> Hinman, L. (1998). *Ethics: A pluralistic Approach to moral theory*. P 232

Few of us ordinary mortals can love a neighbour if that neighbour is a constant aggravation to us. What the principle of love means is that, in spite of his/her faults, we should not turn our backs on him if he is in need. We should be concerned about him because he is a fellow human being, and to turn our backs on a fellow human being who needs our help makes us less than human ourselves. We should care about him as one day we could hope that others would care about us if we were in need.

### **What is caring love?**

At primary school the simplest concept of caring love is 'being kind.' We should do what we can to help other people and not do things that will harm them. Even the youngest children have experienced being happy or unhappy. Questions to them would revolve around these feelings. What makes you happy? What makes your friends happy? What makes them unhappy? It is not good for us to do things that make us happy if they are going to make other people unhappy. Would it make them happy or unhappy if you did ---? Why?

Years 5 and 6 will mostly be able to understand 'using other people for their own ends.' About friends 'Do they treat them with respect? Are they fair, honest and kind to them, or do they just use them when it suits them?'

The issue of bullying is relevant here, and there are many programmes on bullying.

Doing their share - at home and in school projects - do they expect others to do the hard work and do they only want to do the nice bits? The principles of justice and love are involved here.

- **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' them in any way. 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.

- **Stress - If we look closely at the stress that is becoming such a part of our lives today, we will see that most of it is caused by the actions of other people.**

Selfishness, laziness, carelessness, dishonesty or lack of consideration 'all these things add stress to the lives of other people. If we care about other people and treat them with respect, and they do the same for us all our lives will be happier.

### **Sex and sexuality education –**

If there is to be sex or sexuality education at Primary school, ethical principles should play a major part.

The key competencies of 'managing self' and 'relating to others' should always involve ethical principles. They should be required to reason about -

**Wisdom** 'the probable consequences of actions'

**Justice** 'treating people fairly and not bullying'

**Truth** 'factual evidence. Honesty about motives, myths and unpleasant facts.'

**Love** 'treating other people with respect, and not using them for our own ends.'

**The Golden Rule** - Questions on how they would feel themselves if they were the ones to be affected by unethical behaviour, require them to think about and feel for others.

**The Goal – a better world** - Will their actions make a better or happier world 'at home 'at school 'in the community 'for the nation?'

## CHAPTER 15

### THE GOLDEN RULE

Though the 'Golden Rule' comes directly from the teaching of Jesus Christ, most humanists also consider it an acceptable standard in ethical reasoning.

'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.**

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.'<sup>42</sup>

In ethical reasoning it helps to see this more clearly if we ask, 'What would happen if everyone did that?' For example, what would happen if everyone decided to lie to 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.<sup>43</sup> 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.

- **The Golden Rule adds feeling to reason.**

The Golden Rule, used as a criteria to evaluate values positions and the key competencies of thinking, relating to others, managing self and participating and contributing, gives the opportunity to add feeling to reason. Reason on its own is not always enough to influence or motivate action, but asking children 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,<sup>44</sup> so we need to give children the opportunity and encouragement to develop such concern.

- **Many of our young criminals have little concern for the effect of their actions on other people because they have never been taught to do so.**

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. Using a bit of Aristotle's common sense however, most of us can recognise what is likely to harm or upset other people. There will be problems in a newly multi-cultural society unless there is education about different religious beliefs and customs, but even there, the aim will be to treat all people with respect. 'How would you feel if someone did that to you?' should be an important question asked of any child who has done something to harm another? 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.

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<sup>42</sup> Hinman, L. (1998) p 210.

<sup>43</sup> Hinman, L. p 368.

<sup>44</sup> Purpel and Ryan, (1976). *Moral education: It comes with the territory*. P 405

## Sample lesson Plan for years 1 and 2

The majority of children at this age do not reason in the abstract, but some will have a background of ethical standards that have been taught to them by their parents or pre-school experiences. Some will not. Cultural capital of the ethical kind may have been non-existent in their background. Some of the worst of our young criminals are those who have no feeling for the suffering of others. We need to start young in developing the ability to feel. One of the basic ethical principles is kindness and this needs to be shown by teachers themselves, so class lessons of this kind should be not be based on individual actions, though they could be used in private conversations between teacher and a pupil.

**Objective** ó To develop the level of ethical reasoning of the students, and at this stage, the ability to feel for some-one else.

**Motivation** - I'll tell you a story about a little boy at a school near here. Their class had all worked hard to produce pictures to take home to parents or care-givers, but this little boy had deliberately scribbled all over the work of another. No-one in this class would do a thing like that would they?

### New learning based on ethical principles -

**Wisdom** ó Previous experience for some children may have been 'the survival of the fittest', and possibly, the expectation that there would be no consequences from adults because no-one particularly cared unless it affected them personally. Any consequences would probably have been of an 'eye for an eye' kind. All children need to begin to think about the consequences to others and feel for them.

**Question** ó How do you think Johnny felt when his picture was spoiled? Would he feel happy or sad?

If you had done a very nice picture, would you feel happy or sad if someone had scribbled on it?

**Justice** - Johnny did not have a nice picture to take home, but the other little boy still had his. Would you think it would be fair then if the teacher let Johnny spoil the other boy's picture? (there could be an interesting discussion here, even at this level, but it is important to help them see that two wrongs don't make a right. We are trying to raise the level of ethical reasoning. An eye for an eye means more people will be unhappy. We are trying to maximise the good and minimise the harm)

**Truth** ó Why do you think the boy scribbled on Johnny's picture? Did he think it was better than his own? Did he want to make him unhappy? Just for fun? Was it funny to everyone? Jokes should be funny to everyone. They should not make anyone unhappy.

**Love** ó We want school to be a happy place. We care about all our children here and we don't want to see anyone unhappy. The teacher at that school didn't want to make anyone unhappy either, so she would not let anyone spoil his picture, but he needed to learn to be kind to other people. What do you think they could all do to make Johnny feel better? What do you think the boy who scribbled on the picture should do?

Most experienced infant teachers are probably already teaching young ones to reason in this way.

## CHAPTER 16

### VIRTUES AND VICES

There has been a considerable emphasis on 'virtues' in recent years in an attempt to offer useful teaching material in the 'values' field. There is quite an amount of valuable resource material available already for lessons about virtues, 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.

- **Aristotle saw a virtue as the middle ground between extremes.**

Courage, for instance is the middle ground between cowardice and foolhardiness.

Compassion is the middle ground between callousness and pity.

Respect is the middle ground between exploitation and deference.

Self-respect is the middle ground between conceit and self-depreciation.<sup>45</sup>

Too much perseverance can end up as pig-headedness. Too much tolerance can become apathy.

- **“ Acts may be wrong even though they exhibit a virtue. A person can exhibit a single virtue while performing unspeakably evil actions. History reveals thousands of misguided individuals whose loyalty to evil leaders was flawless.”<sup>46</sup>**

Even Hitler had values. When teaching about virtues, it is important to remember that taken on their own, few virtues can cover every angle of a situation.

In Aristotle's theory, the person of practical wisdom must know both what constitutes proper ends and also how to achieve them. He would have approved of the Prayer of Serenity. 'God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.'<sup>47</sup>

Aristotle considered that virtues lead to human 'flourishing' and that vices are human weaknesses that prevent it.

It is necessary to learn about vices or call them by whatever name is acceptable or even 'human weaknesses.' These are also facts of life, and to ignore them allows them to grow without check. Envy and greed are behind a great deal of crime (especially white-collar crime).

Selfishness, laziness, cruelty, and drunkenness are behind a great deal of domestic violence.

Vices are important because of their effects on other people, and finally in the longer term upon ourselves.

#### **At years 1,2 and 3,**

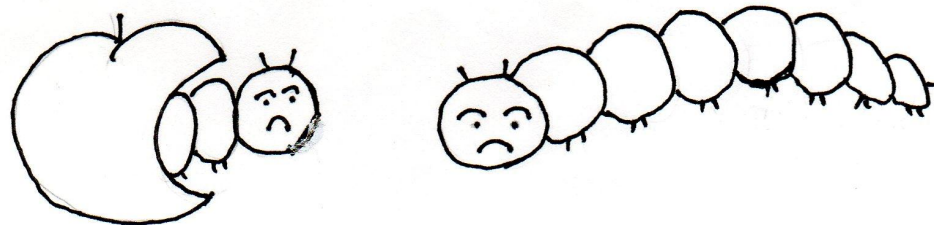
Vices and virtues can be taught as good fruit and spoilt fruit, showing that what could have been beautiful fruit, have been spoilt by the ugly caterpillars of the vices. Examples can be given of situations relative to the age group, and showing the consequences at home and at school. Children can draw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

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<sup>45</sup> Hinman, L. (1998). *Ethics: A pluralistic approach to moral theory*. P335

<sup>46</sup> Beauchamp, T., (1991). *Philosophical ethics :An introduction to moral philosophy*. (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). USA: McGraw- Hill Inc. p249

<sup>47</sup> Reinhold Niebuhr. Died 1971



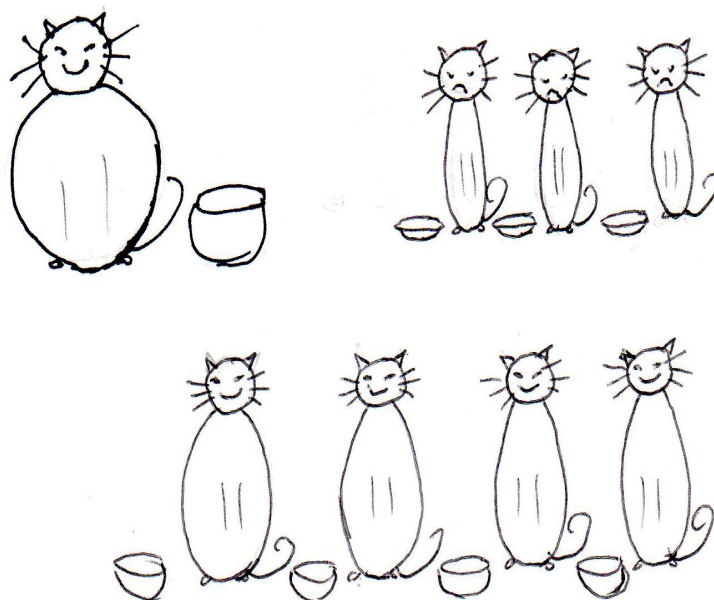
### Years 4-8

The same vices are related to relevant situations. Laziness includes apathy.

To physical laziness is added mental laziness. Why is homework sometimes not done? Do we sometimes not try if a task is a bit hard? Why do we train for sport? So that we can jump higher or run faster. It is the same with learning anything. If we say 'it's too hard' and give up, we won't learn to read or do maths. Why do we need to learn these things? 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 or in the environment? Globally? A cartoon drawing to illustrate greed could show one large very fat cat eating a large bowl of food while three starving cats look on. Four smaller portions would have resulted in four healthy cats. (Teachers need to be sensitive here. We want to make a point in a way that is understandable, but don't want to embarrass any overweight children in the class.) Greed for attention or admiration can result in 'showing off', or being a constant nuisance in the classroom. Envy of others can lead to dishonesty, or unhappiness through lack of appreciation of the good things one has. 'The grass over the fence is always greener' for some people.

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



## CHAPTER 17

### THE FIRST STEPS IN INTRODUCING A PROGRAMME

The size of the school and individual staff preferences will probably determine how a programme of values and citizenship education will be carried out.

Realistically, a great deal of preparation time would be saved if one teacher were to undertake responsibility for the programme for the whole school. This teacher could take a half hour lesson with each class every week, credited to the social studies time allowance for that class, and fitted into the overall timetable. The same theme could be used, with examples and activities relevant to each level.

On the other hand each class teacher could use the same theme, but choose their own examples and activities and fit the time into the class timetable as part of social studies.

In this way each class teacher would also benefit from practice in ethical reasoning.

- **Dialogue - No programme of values and citizenship education is going to be successful unless the principles are consistent throughout the school and understood and accepted by staff, parents and community,**

**Firstly** - Make it clear to the rest of the staff that these are the generally accepted ethical principles that are proposed to be used throughout all school activities and decision-making. They are simple enough to be used right throughout the school from year 1 up, but can be broadened at each level of understanding. Are they agreeable to the principles?

#### **Do the same in a newsletter to parents.**

Spell it out as below.

1. Wisdom ó common sense ó We will consider the probable consequences of our actions and their effects on other people and the environment, then try to maximise the good and minimise the harm.
2. Justice ó We will try to be fair in all we do, and not favour one person or group above others.
3. Truth - We will try to be honest. We will try to base decisions on factual evidence and not emotion. We will not deliberately deceive anyone.
4. Love ó We will try to be kind. We will respect everyone as individuals, treat them with respect, and not use anyone for our own ends.
5. When making decisions that affect other people, we will try to imagine how we would feel if we were in their place.
6. Our immediate goal is a better and happier school for everyone, and looking outwards, happier homes and a happier community.

#### **For one itinerant teacher –**

The itinerant teacher, (i.e. going round from class to class over all levels,) needs to prepare one basic lesson each week that can be broadened at each level. Presuming that you, the teacher, will be moving from room to room so will be taking your material with you, it needs to be easily transportable. Can each pupil be provided with an exercise book suitable for their level with alternate blank and lined pages? You don't want to have to carry those. It is useful to have pictures or diagrams that can be rolled up to carry and then hung up unrolled. Not so bulky to manage. You can carry words for songs in the same way. A portable C.D. player for music is also useful.

**For class teachers –**

You won't have to carry material from room to room, but you will have a specific lesson to prepare each week, in addition to usual class work. Not too difficult if you concentrate on discussing a relevant situation that will interest the class, and asking questions based on ethical principles. You are trying to give students practice in ethical reasoning, and like in any sport, to become good at it, the learner is first shown the right way of making a shot, and then it is practice, practice, practice, until it becomes a habit to play the shot the correct way in this case reasoning ethically.

**The first weeks**

The first lesson plans are set out in detail here. This is the method that was used very successfully for many years. The lesson plans were filed in a ring binder for each year, and the outlines and objective repeated in subsequent years with different classes. Sometimes different situations were particularly relevant, but the objectives remained the same in order to cover the programme of what it seemed they needed to know. The order of lessons was sometimes changed to fit around specific themes or events.

The rest of the lessons are not given in such detail, but the objectives are given and the main questions to be asked and points to be made. Teachers will be able to fill in the details in their own lesson plans and design reinforcing activities that they consider suitable for the classes they are teaching.

When this programme was originally developed, much time and worry was spent in deciding on the topic for the following week. Something always cropped up however, and once the objective had been determined, the rest was relatively easy. It was much easier in following years once the framework was in place.



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## 19 OUTLINE OF LESSONS

### Lesson 1 ó

#### Introduction

An itinerant teacher will need to introduce him/herself and explain a little about the reason for these lessons.

**Objective** – To show that we need rules in life so that people don't get hurt. We are using the word 'rules' at first because young children do not understand 'principles'

#### Motivation –

Pictures or drawings of a large crowd, and a road with a lot of things on it ó people, animals, bikes, cars, trucks, buses, tractors, etc.

#### Discussion with new learning -

Life is a journey along a road with a lot of other people on it. Have you ever been in a really big crowd? What is it like in a big crowd? Is it easier if all the people going one way stay on one side of the road? Why do we have a white line down the middle of our roads? What happens if cars don't stay on their own side of the road or the drivers don't keep to the rules of the road? Life is like that. We need rules so that we don't hurt other people. Young students don't understand 'principles' so you will need to talk about rules. Do they have rules at home? What are some home rules? What are some school rules? Why do we have that rule? What would happen if this boy in the picture did not keep to the rule of using a pedestrian crossing? What would happen if this car did not keep to the rule of stopping at the pedestrian crossing? Why do we have rules?

The required outcome of this lesson is that they should all understand why it is necessary to have rules.

#### Reinforcing activities –

These need to be relevant and interesting for each age group. As an activity they could draw their own road with people and vehicles on their blank page and write on the other page something like 'We need rules in life so that people don't get hurt.'

I always used stick figures for diagrams and cartoons because they were quick and easy to draw on a board. You could now be using much better technology.

A game with groups going in different directions is fun but noisy.

**Personal evaluation** – Did most of the class understand the need for rules? Could the lesson have been improved in any way?

-----

### LESSON 2 ó

#### Wisdom ó considering consequences

Here we would start learning about the principles ó or 'rules' to those at lower levels.

**Objective** ó The principle of wisdom. To show that actions have consequences and that before we act we should think about whether the consequences are likely to be good or bad. Being helpful makes other people happy.

**Motivation** - Bring pictures of various familiar situations ó e.g. a swimming pool with a gate and fence. A house with a gate onto a road. Signs òPlease shut the gateö Road signs. Railway crossing signs etc. Environmental sustainability can also be brought into this lesson.

### **Discussion with new learning -**

Ask questions about the pictures. Why is there a sign, òPlease shut the gate?ö  
What do you think would happen if this person did such and such a thing? E.g. What do you think would happen if someone didn't shut the gate on to the road or swimming pool and a little child got through?  
You need a vocabulary that they will understand so you need to be able to use the words good and bad, right and wrong.  
Do you think it would be a good thing or a bad thing to leave a gate open when the rule is that it should be shut?  
Why would it be a good thing or a bad thing?  
When do people say to you, òGood boy or good girl?ö Ask them for examples of when people would say that to them.  
Help them to see that it is actions that are good or bad because of their effects on other people. We have to be careful not to say that individual people are good or bad. Would someone have done a good thing or bad thing by leaving the gate open? They need to understand that actions are generally considered to be good if they help people or the environment, and bad if they harm people or the environment. With older age groups you can show them that actions are like ripples in a pond, moving outwards and affecting more and more other people as they go.

**Reinforcing activities** - You would need different activities to suit different levels.  
Worksheets with pictures of, or sentences about children being helpful or not being helpful.  
Smiley faces or sad faces for consequences.  
Write different sentences at different levels ó  
òBeing helpful makes other people happy.ö  
òHelping is doing what needs to be done when it needs to be done.ö  
Make a helping coupon to give to someone saying what they will do to help.  
Draw pictures of someone helping someone else ó

**Personal evaluation-** Did most of the children understand that their actions have consequences on other people? (and the environment) could the lesson have been improved in any way?

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## **LESSON 3**

**Justice** – Being fair

**Objective** – To show that òBeing fairö means treating people equally. Not giving some more or less than others.

**Motivation** - Bring a bag of small objects e.g. blocks, marbles, sweets. Explain that you are going to share them out. Give most the same number e.g. 2, but a few get 3 and a few get 1.

### **New Learning –**

How do you think those with only one are feeling? Have I been fair? Will I be fair if I take one from some of the people with two to give to those with one? What will happen then?

We need to be careful that in trying to be fair to some, we are not unfair to others. How should I have been fair to everyone?

What do you think the ones with three could do now to make things fair?

Do you know what a lolly scramble is? Would everyone get an equal share of lollies? Who do you think would get the most? Would it be fair if the biggest and strongest always got the most? How would you feel if you were one of the smallest?

Being fair means giving and doing as well as getting. It means doing our share of work that needs to be done.

For senior pupils the questions can be deeper, e.g.

If you had worked hard all spring and summer to grow food for the winter, and another person had spent their time lazing around, sitting in the shade, going to the beach - would it be fair if I made you give half your crop to the other person so he/she wouldn't starve?

Suppose you were fit and strong, but the other person was ill and hadn't been able to work, how would you feel then?

We need to care about all people, because we don't know what has made them like they are, and maybe we could be sick ourselves some day and unable to work, so

What do you think would be the best thing to do

a. about the lazy person? Remember Kohlberg and that there need to be some unpleasant consequences from bad behaviour, but also the principle of love that we care about all people, and Aristotle - the middle way that too much compassion is not good either.

b. about the person who hadn't been able to work?

### **Reinforcing activities –**

These will depend on the abilities and interests of the classes, but they should reinforce the need to be fair, but also to be caring of others less strong than themselves. Work sheets with pictures. Is this person being fair? etc. puzzles. Senior students can draw cartoons illustrating the points made.

### **Evaluation-**

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## **LESSON 46**

**Truth** - Being honest. Looking for the truth

**Objective** – To learn that “Honesty is the best policy.” 1. There are many ways of being dishonest. 2. People will not trust us if we have shown we are dishonest.

Two lessons may be needed to cover this.

Motivation that A story of some kind about the consequences of being dishonest.

I used to tell my classes about my own childhood. If my mother asked me for instance, “Did you break that flower vase?” and I admitted I had done it, she would growl at me a bit for having been so careless, and I would have to make up for it in some way.

If I had done it, but I lied about it and said, “No, it wasn't me,” she was sure to find out in the end, and I would be severely punished, not for breaking the vase, but why do you think? Yes, for lying about it, so I soon learned that telling the truth was important in my family and also that it paid to tell the truth. The consequences of telling the truth were less painful than the consequences of lying. Obviously I was reasoning then at Kohlberg's Stage 1, “Will I suffer?”

### **New Learning -**

The teacher can ask here, "Why are we often tempted to lie about things like that?" and the reason is usually because we are afraid of being punished for what we have done - and we think we might get away with it. Some will have learned that they will be punished severely anyway and we need to show empathy with them.

Unfortunately, some of these children will not have parents who reasoned like mine that the consequences of being dishonest should be less gratifying than the consequences of being honest. Some will have learned that being dishonest is profitable.

Teachers will know how deeply they can go into reasoning about honesty at their class levels. Being honest is important for more reasons than not being punished, and we are trying to raise the level of ethical reasoning above the lowest level of avoiding unpleasant consequences to oneself. We are concerned about the effect of our actions on other people.

Dishonesty is not just about not telling lies.

What are some ways in which people can be dishonest? Not telling all the truth, facial expressions, anything meant to deceive.

Stealing means taking something that belongs to someone else without their permission. What are some ways in which we can steal from others?

E.g. honesty boxes, cheating in class or at sport, not doing our share of work, wasting the teacher's time in class, being unfair. Other examples? What is being stolen in each case and from whom?

**People will not trust us if we have shown ourselves to be dishonest.**

Would an employer be happy to give a job to someone who had proved himself to be a thief? Why not?

What sort of society would it be if everyone felt free to lie to each other or steal from each other?

Has anyone experienced a burglary? How did you feel? How do you all think you would feel if someone stole your precious things?

Do you think it would be a happier world if everyone was honest and there was no crime?

**Reinforcing activities** for juniors suitable worksheets. For senior classes there could be activities centred around incorrect weights and measures. In ancient times sellers could be severely punished for cheating in this way. It is still illegal, but we have better systems to prevent it. A small difference in a basic measure can make a large difference when it is multiplied many times.

We cannot get a correct answer to any problem if our reasoning is not based on a correct measure or factual evidence.

## **LESSON 5**

**Love** – Being kind. Respecting people

**Objective** – to show that every person is important and that we should always be kind to others and never deliberately hurt anyone.

**Motivation** Story about a child's first day at a big new school and how one girl was really kind to her, showed her where to go and sat with her for lunch. Some schools have "buddy" schemes.

**New Learning** - Questions about times when they have experienced kindness or unkindness.  
 How do they feel when people are kind to them?  
 How can children be unkind to each other? How do they feel if someone is unkind to them?  
 How can others help them when they are unhappy?  
 Sometimes we don't really like people because they do unkind things to others, but does that mean that we should also do unkind things to them?  
 Maybe they are like they are because people have always been unkind to them and they need to be shown there is a better way.  
 Would it be a very happy world if everyone went around being unkind to each other?  
 Would it be a happier world if everyone was kind to each other?  
 We should try to make the world a happier place, not an unhappier place.  
 We should always help other people if they need it because we never know when we may need help ourselves.  
 For seniors ó Respecting people. Tell a story about **using** other people. Being friends with someone only because of what they can do for them. Dropping them if they are no longer useful to them.

### **Reinforcing activities**

Juniors - Worksheets with pictures of people being kind or unkind to others. Happy or sad faces.  
 List of suggestions of how they could be kind to different people ó sister, brother, mother, father, grandparents, neighbours, teachers, friends  
 Seniors ó More discussion about using people for one's own ends. Showing respect for people. Keeping promises. Telling the truth

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## **LESSON 6 ó The Golden Rule**

**Objective** ó To encourage children to feel for others. To show that there is a very simple way of seeing whether we are respecting people ó or being unfair or unkind to others. We ask ourselves, "How would I feel if someone did that to me?"

**Motivation** ó We have been learning about some rules that help people get along with each other and make a happier world for everyone, but today we are going to learn about a special rule that covers all the others.

Bring a sign with black letters on a gold background. "Treat other people the way you would like them to treat you."

**New Learning** - Explain that this is called the golden rule because it is so valuable. Wise people from many places for thousands of years have agreed that this is a good way to decide whether what we want to do is right or wrong.

It is not always easy to see clearly about some things until we think about whether we would like them to happen to us.

"How would you like it if someone did that to you?" is a really good question to ask about anything we plan to do that will affect other people.

For seniors explain that a modern wise man (philosopher Rawls) has said that it would be a good idea if laws could be made by people who did not know what position in society they would hold. Then they would have to think how they would feel about such laws, if for instance they did not know whether they were going to be rich or poor, employer or employee, strong and healthy or disabled.

Why did he think it would be a good thing if laws were to be made in that way?

Let me tell you a little story about a brother and sister who were always arguing about sharing things and who had got the most. A neighbour had sent over a piece of birthday cake for them to share and their mother knew that if she cut the cake in two, one would have to have the first pick, or one or the other was sure to complain about having the smallest piece, so she tried a new idea. She said the oldest one could cut the cake in half and the younger one would have first pick. Why do you think the older child was very careful to see that the cut was right down the middle?

**Reinforcing activities** ó A project to help others in need. How would they feel if they were in that situation?

Work-sheets showing children being left out of a game or left behind on an outing. Being bullied ó being helped. How would they feel? Happy and sad faces

For seniors ó Write answers to questions about such situations.

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## LESSON 7 –

**The goal – a better and happier world**, - starting at home, then school, then the community etc.

**Objective** ó To show that each of us can help make the world a better place just where we are. The little bit each person can do adds up to a big difference.

**Motivation** – Bring a picture of a school room with books and rubbish all over the tables, or a park after a big event with rubbish everywhere.

**New Learning** - If the teacher asked one child to clean up the untidy room on its own how do you think the child would feel? How long would it take?

If the teacher asked each child to tidy up its own mess how would they feel? How long would it take?

Have you ever seen a stadium after a big event? Could one person be expected to clean it up on their own?

How could the stadium have been left clean when the people went home?

For seniors ó A wise man once said, “If everyone swept in front of their own doorstep, the whole world would be clean.” (Goethe) That might not be completely possible but he was painting a picture with words. What did he mean and do you think he was right?

For all - What are some of the things you could do to make your home a happier place?

Your school? Your community?

**Reinforcing activities** ó Draw the diagram with each in the centre, then school, then community, then our country, then the world.

At home I could -

At school I could ó

In my community I could ó

Have a project for school or community.

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## LESSON 8 –

**Other People** - òHe tangata, he tangata, he tangata,ö It is people that matter.

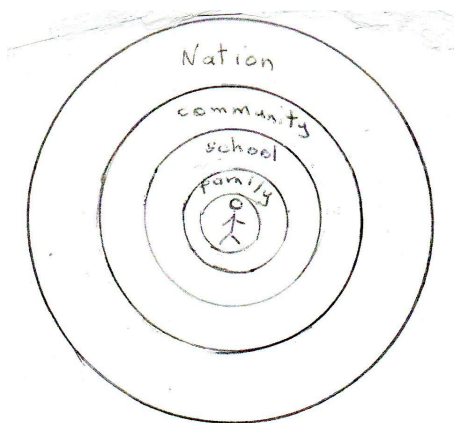
**Objective** – To reinforce the fact that usually our actions affect other people, so we need to think whether they will have good effects, or whether other people will be harmed by them. For seniors this will include environmental sustainability and future generations.

**Points to make** ó Right from the time we are born our actions affect other people. What happens to other people when a baby cries? Babies are only concerned about their own comfort, but as we grow older we should start thinking about how our actions are affecting other people. We need to ògrow upö and stop acting like babies.

If we were all concerned about how our actions would affect other people, we would all be happier.

Ask for examples of how their actions affect other people - at home, at school, in the community?

**Reinforcing activity** ó Draw series of circles with self in middle showing how other people are affected like ripples in a pond.



## LESSON 9 –

### Peer pressure and support

**Objective** - To show that children can help each other produce good consequences from their actions or they can encourage them to do things that have harmful consequences.

**Motivation – Story or example** - E.g.- juniors - minor stealing. Seniors ósmoking -drugs. The play òThe First Puffö could be used here. See pages 73-76.

**New Learning** - Ask questions based on ethical principles ó

**Wisdom** ó Likely consequences

**Justice** - Being fair

**Truth** – Why do young people do this?

**Love** - How can we help these people?

**Golden Rule** – How would they feel if they were a victim?

**A better world** – will what we decide to do make a better world?

**Points to make** - Sensible children can help others ògrow upö by encouraging them to consider the consequences of their actions and whether they will be helping or harming others. They can set good examples. It can take courage to stand up for what they believe is right and good. Little things can lead to big things. òThe first puff,ö on a cigarette, or the first try of a drug can lead to very big consequences. Why do children often do very foolish things? They are trying to òshow off.ö If their friends are not impressed it will help to discourage them. Senior students are role models whether they intend to be or not.



## VIRTUES 6

A series of lessons on virtues should now follow. A few examples of the most important are given here, but since there are about 50 recognised virtues it will be up to teachers to decide which need specific lessons. A first lesson would be on virtues themselves as habits of thinking and behaving. Habits are acquired by practice and the aim of this programme is to give enough practice in ethical reasoning so that it becomes a habit in itself. Each lesson should be introduced by a story or example relevant to the age group for ethical discussion so that it becomes a human issue rather than abstract thinking .

### LESSON 10 –

#### **Virtues – Ways we act that help ourselves, other people and our communities**

**Objective** – To show that virtues are habits of behaviour that are helpful to ourselves and our communities. Like all habits they are gained through practice. They are the middle way between extremes. We need to practice virtues until they become habits and we act in a helpful way without even thinking.

#### **Points to make –**

What is a habit? It is something we have got so used to doing that we do it without thinking about it. Habit at home 6 cleaning your teeth? Habit at school 6 hanging your bag in a certain place? Cleaning your teeth involves the virtue of cleanliness. Hanging up your bag involves the virtue of tidiness.

Why is it helpful that these things should become habits?

What is a virtue? A virtue is a quality in an object that makes it good for its purpose. It is easier to understand if we look at objects rather than people.

The purpose of a knife is to cut, so virtue in a knife is that it should be sharp. Not so sharp all over that it is dangerous and not too blunt to cut well. A virtue is the middle way between extremes.

The purpose of a lemon is to give flavour. Virtue in a lemon is that it should have a strong sharp flavour. A purpose for any person's life could be to make a better world wherever they are.

We have been learning about four rules or principles of behaviour that will make us helpful members of a community. Revise principles.

There are at least fifty recognised virtues and they all involve those principles.

See how many virtues we can name, why they are virtues and how we can acquire them.

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### LESSON 11 –

#### **Being responsible and reliable**

A reliable person can be trusted to do what is promised or expected of him/her.

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

**Objective** - To show that we should always do our best to be reliable and responsible 6 because of the effects on other people and ultimately on ourselves.

**Motivation** – Story or example of someone being unreliable.

**New Learning** 6 Questions based on ethical principles 6 e.g. not doing what we have said we will do. E.g. Not delivering a message. Not closing a gate.

**Wisdom** 6 Likely consequences. On others? On ourselves?

**Justice** 6 Being fair to others

**Truth** - Why did we not fulfil our responsibility?

**Love** – How did we hurt others?

**Golden Rule** – How would we have felt if we had been the victim?

**A better world** – Did our actions make a better or worse world?

**Points to make – We should try to be reliable** - 1. For our own self-respect. We know when we have not done our best.

2. Because other people will suffer if we are not reliable. Little things matter. A job not done properly can lead to disaster.

3. Because we will not be trusted again if we have shown we are unreliable. If we prove we can be trusted we will be given more important things to do.

**Little things lead to big things** ó a poem that was used to illustrate this point was ó  
õAll for the want of a horse shoe nail.õ In olden days messages had to be carried by men on horses. A young messenger noticed a shoe was loose on one of his horse's feet and said to himself, õI can't be bothered fixing that now. It only needs one nail. I'll do it tomorrow,õ but in the night another messenger arrived in a great hurry wanting a message to be carried on to the king who was about to fight a battle with his enemies. The young messenger had to go right away without time to put a nail in the horse-shoe, and the poem goes like this ó

õFor the want of a nail a shoe was lost.

For the want of a shoe the 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 that battle a kingdom was lost,

And all for the want of a horse-shoe nail.

Many children today will not have seen a horse shoe, but some child involved with horses might be able to bring one to school

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## LESSON 12

### Passing the buck – It wasn't my fault – It wasn't my job

**Revision of previous lesson.** When we fail to do what we should have done ó when we are careless or lazy or dishonest and something bad happens, we often try to find excuses to exonerate ourselves.

**Objective** – To show that we should accept responsibility for the things we have done or have not done, the consequences of which could be harmful.

**Motivation** ó Story e.g. about a young person whose mother was going to be late home from work and had asked him/her to take a message to a neighbour, but he wanted to watch a programme on TV and told a younger sibling to do it. The younger sibling forgot to deliver the message and a great deal of inconvenience was caused to other people. He said õIt wasn't my fault, I asked my sister to do it. It was her fault.õ And ó or -  
e.g. story about a young person who was caught shop-lifting and said õIt wasn't my fault. They dared me to do it.õ

### New Learning – Questions based on ethical principles

**Wisdom** – Do we often say, õIt wasn't my fault,õ in order to get ourselves out of trouble? Do you think the young people involved in the story thought about the possible consequences of doing or not doing these things?  
Was it wise to expect a younger sibling to do something he/she didn't want to do himself?

**Justice** - Was it fair to the person who asked him to deliver the message to pass the responsibility on to someone else? Was it fair to ask a younger child to do the job? Was it fair to the shop-keeper to steal from him/her? Shop-keepers have to put up prices to allow for shop-lifting. Then other people have to pay more. Is it fair for honest people to have to pay more because dishonest people steal? Was it fair to try to put all the blame on others?

**Truth** ó Was it true that it wasn't his fault? Was some of it his fault? How much of it was his fault? Why did he pass the job on to his sister ó or ó why did he shop- lift just because he was dared?

**Love** ó Was he being kind to the other people involved ó his sister? Mother? Neighbour? Shop-keeper? Other customers?

Was he using his younger sister to save himself some effort and then trying to put the blame on her?

**The Golden rule** - How would he have felt if he had been any of the other people involved?

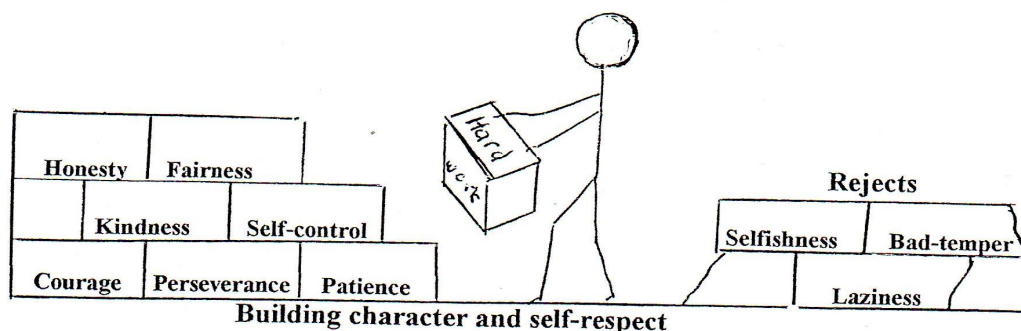
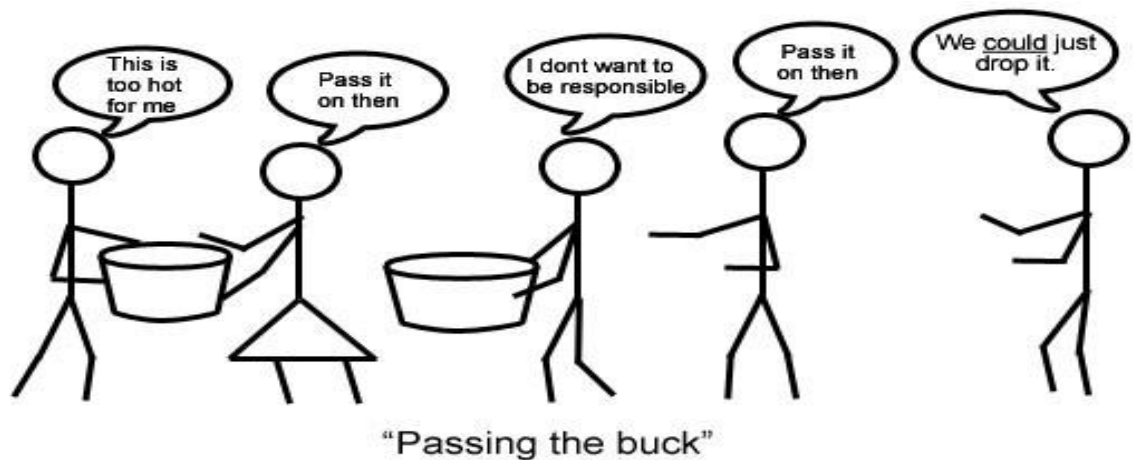
**A better world** - Did he make the world a better or happier place for the other people involved?

**Point to make** – We can never improve our own effect on those around us, if we refuse to accept the truth about our own actions and take responsibility for them.

When we make mistakes, the only way to improve things is to admit them and try not to make the same mistake again.

Next time he is asked to deliver a message, what should he do?

If others dare him again to do something dishonest what should he do?



## LESSON 13 ó

### Cheerfulness

**Objective** – To show that being cheerful and optimistic makes our own and other people's lives happier and healthier.

**Motivation**- Story or example of someone being cheerful in facing difficulties.

**New Learning** ó Questions and discussion based on ethical principles.

#### Points to make –

The virtue of cheerfulness lies not in ignoring serious problems or being completely depressed by them, but by meeting them practically, with courage and optimism.

Medical science has now proved that laughter is good for our bodies.

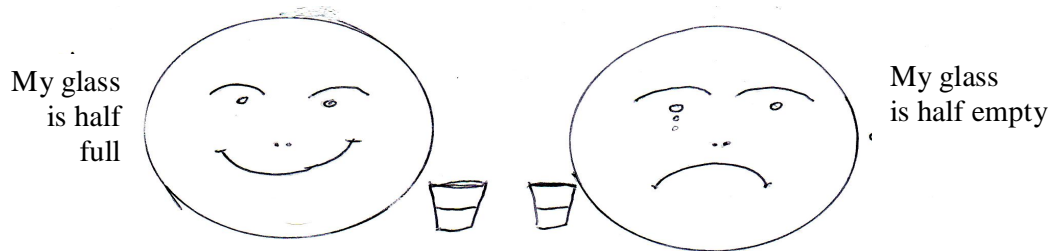
Optimists and pessimists. Being cheerful or being miserable is catching. People around us are affected also.

Bad things happen to most of us in time, but how we face them is important.

Story of Pollyanna (or other) who was taught that no matter what bad things happened to her, if she looked hard enough, she could always find something she could be glad about.

Seeing a glass half full ó not half empty.

Laughter is important, but not laughter that hurts other people. The principle of love requires that we laugh with people, but not at people.



## LESSON 14 –

### Perseverance

Perseverance means sticking at difficult things until you can do them. Where there is a will, there is a way. If at first you don't succeed, try, try, try again.

**Objective** – To show that persevering in the face of difficulties takes courage, but usually nothing worth having comes very easily.

**Motivation**- Relevant story or example.

**New Learning** ó Questions and discussion based on ethical principles.

**Points to make** – Stories from history of people who tried and failed, again and again, but because they didn't give up they finally succeeded e.g. Robert the Bruce who was inspired by the efforts of a spider.

Every time you get up and try again you get stronger. Training for sport. Practicing goals.

Persevering with school work. Learning a new skill that seems too hard at first.

Suppose you want to do something special in your life, it would be wise to find out what skills you would need and start practicing now. E.g. In some jobs you might need to be good at maths. If you are not good at maths now, you can become better in time if you persevere.

Maybe not good enough to be a teacher, but good enough to do what is needed in most jobs.

## LESSON 15 –

### Patience and self-control

Success is 90% perspiration and 10% inspiration. If we lose our tempers when things start to go wrong, we will do ourselves more harm than good.

**Objective** - To learn that emotions can affect our reasoning and our actions. It is important that we try to make reason control our actions, otherwise we may do things that harm ourselves or other people.

**Motivation** - Relevant story or example- e.g. sports player smashing a tennis racquet. A young person losing temper and saying unkind things to a friend. Waiting and working for something special.

**New Learning** - Questions and discussion based on ethical principles.

**Points to make** –

Anger may tempt us to do or say things we may later regret. Examples? Like toothpaste in a tube, we cannot take back things we have said, or things we have done, and even though we may apologise and want to make amends for what we have done, it is not easy for other people to forget.

We can lose good friends, or good jobs through a lack of self-control.

It is quite normal to feel anger. Different people feel anger about different things. Examples?

We need to practice self-control from a young age.

A child begins to learn self-control when it considers the consequences of different courses of action and then decides whether it will follow the one that offers instant gratification of the senses or whether other consequences that are sure to follow that course of action will result in personal suffering of some kind. E.g. A boy might be so angry with a younger sibling that he would like to smash its favourite toy, but considers the consequences that he would suffer himself when his parents found out, so controls his actions and decides not to smash anything. That does not mean that he is not still angry, but it means that he will think more reasonably about what he should do and not do anything destructive.

Communicate, communicate, communicate. When we are angry we are like a boiler under pressure. We need to let off steam gradually so that we don't explode, and we do this by talking to others. Who do you think he should talk to in this case?

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## **LESSON 16 –**

**Courage –**

This lesson is suitable for use with Anzac Day

Courage to face difficulties in life ó to face new situations

Motivation ó The soldiers who fought in battles in the past were very brave. Talk about situations when people need to be brave today. Newspaper article of someone being very brave and helping people out of a burning house or car.

New Learning ó If this lesson is used in conjunction with Anzac Day it is relevant to use Pearl Harbour and Hiroshima as examples of people making choices that resulted in many people being killed. If the Japanese had not chosen to bomb Pearl Harbour, then Hiroshima would probably never have happened.

This can be related to young people choosing to drive cars too fast and killing their friends, or drinking and driving with the same result.

Choices we make when we are young can affect our whole lives and those of the people around us.

They will probably never have to show courage in battle, but it takes courage to say "No" when friends want them to do something foolish or harmful. They can fight against things that harm people and the environment. Real courage is not just for exciting times and dangerous situations. For most of us we need courage to do what is right in our everyday lives. That can be hard. Are they helpful and co-operative at home or do they make their homes unhappy places? Do they exercise self-control when things go wrong or are they bad-tempered and blame everyone else? Each time there was a big war the men who came home had wanted to make a

better world. They can help make a better world in their own homes and communities by showing courage in the choices they make.

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## VICES

Like virtues, these are habits acquired by practice. We don't usually have to consciously practice vices because they are easier and more tempting than virtues, and the consequences are more immediately gratifying to the senses. Most people make a mistake and do something foolish or unkind now and again, but they usually accept when they have made a mistake or done something harmful, and try not to do it again.

Such things become vices when the perpetrator either doesn't care about the consequences, or doesn't even think about them, and allows the vice to become his/her normal way or habit of acting. They should not be overemphasised at primary level, but they should not be ignored because ignoring them allows them to grow unhindered until they become habits. In the same way as virtues, teachers can choose to take specific lessons on individual vices. Some affect young people just as harmfully as adults. Bullying is an example of cruelty and greed for power or admiration.

### LESSON 17 –

#### Vices ó

Human weaknesses ? Ways we act that harm other people and our communities. If there is time more than one lesson could be spent on vices. Greed could be a whole lesson on its own. Laziness needs to be a lesson on its own.

**Objective** – To show that while virtues are habits of behaviour that have been recognised for thousands of years as being helpful, there are also habits of behaviour that have been recognised as being harmful to ourselves and other people.

**Motivation** – Revise virtues. These are good habits that help people and your communities, but not all habits, or things we do without thinking are helpful. Many years ago, wise men made lists of habits they thought were harmful. Show a list including greed, laziness, selfishness, envy, pride etc.

**New Learning** ó Discuss each one briefly giving examples and whether they are still relevant and what harm they can cause.

**Points to make** - There are lots of laws meant to prevent people from harming others, but it is not possible to pass laws to cover some of the vices, even though they cause a great deal of harm at times.

We have not even used the word 'vices' much over the last fifty years, because we have felt people should be free to make up their own minds about their actions as long as they didn't harm other people. Now we are finding that vices are harming more and more people, and maybe we shouldn't ignore them after all.

Selfishness can lead to loneliness. What can children be selfish about? Do other people want to play with them, or want them in their teams?

Adults can be selfish too, especially with time and money, but this would be a controversial subject for discussion in primary school as it could reflect too obviously on some parents.

Greed for consumer goods can lead to waste and ill-health in rich countries. Greed for money or power can lead to dishonesty. With young people greed for admiration can lead to 'showing off' and dangerous behaviour like taking drugs or driving recklessly. Consumerism and waste in rich countries can be using up the world's resources faster than they can be renewed. This involves selfishness as well as greed.

Envy can lead to crime and dishonesty, as well as wanting more consumer goods to ðkeep up with the Jones.ð.

Drunkenness can lead to a lot of the violence that occurs in homes and accidents on the roads. It is not clever to drink to get drunk. It is greedy, foolish and wasteful.

## LESSON18 –

### Laziness - apathy

**Objective** ó To show that laziness of body or mind can cause a great deal of harm and can prevent us from achieving our potential. Apathy appears harmless at first sight, but ðall that is required for evil to triumph, is for good people to do nothing.ð

**Motivation** ó Story or example of laziness or apathy and its consequences.

#### New Learning -

Discussion based on ethical principles

**Wisdom** ó What were the consequences? A major amount of trouble can be caused by a small amount of laziness.

**Justice** ó Was anyone treated unfairly?

**Truth** - Could all the trouble have been avoided? How?

**Love** - Was anyone harmed, used, or treated with disrespect?

**Golden rule** – How would you have felt if you had been a victim?

**A better world** ó Did that incident of laziness (apathy) contribute to a better or happier world ?

#### Points to make –

Physical laziness prevents our bodies from achieving their potential

If we do not do our share of the work that needs to be done, others will have to do more.

Laziness can cause as much harm as being deliberately destructive. Just one screw missing in a vital place can cause disaster to a whole aeroplane. Failing to go back and shut a gate could cause the death of a child on the road.

Do not put off until tomorrow something that could have been done to-day.

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

Mental laziness prevents our minds from achieving their potential.

It is easy to say, ðThat's too hard,ð ðWhat's the use of trying. I won't be able to do it.ð ðThe education system doesn't suit me,ð ðIt's the teacher's fault,ð Look for the truth. Is it that we are too lazy to make the effort?

Apathy means just going along with the others without being concerned about where you are being taken.

If we look the other way and pretend we didn't see what is happening, someone is sure to suffer, if not now, then in the future

Ecological sustainability ó We should not let future generations pay because of our apathy today.

## LESSON 19 ó

### Temptation - making choices

**Objective** – to learn why, even when we reason well, and know what we ought to do, we do not always do it.

**Motivation** – Story or examples of an incident where someone had to make a choice. e.g. someone in trouble, or something that needed to be done, but doing it would have meant missing something else more attractive and more tempting.

**New Learning** – Discussion based on ethical principles.

**Wisdom** - What were the likely consequences of stopping to help or not stopping?

**Justice** ó There may not have been a major issue of justice involved here, but it is always wise to check for injustice. Not every situation will involve every principle, though this should be checked.

**Love** – What would have been the kind thing to do?

**Golden Rule** - How would you have felt if you had been the one needing help?

**A better world** – What choice would have helped to make a better world?

**Points to make** -

We need to consider the probable consequences of our choices and how we can maximise the good and minimise the harm that we do.

Take some relevant situations as examples and show how temptation makes the easy way look more attractive at first sight. The little voice in our head says, “Yes, I know I should save money for the school trip, but there is a new CD I would really like.

Yes, I know I should stop and help that person in trouble, but I don’t want to miss the game and anyway someone else is sure to stop.

We should always consider the long-term consequences of our decisions.

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## LESSON 20 –

### Building character and self-respect

**Objective** – To show that we don’t just “find ourselves.” We make something of ourselves by building our characters and using good building blocks. Virtues not vices.

**Motivation** ó Story or example of a person who made a success of a life in spite of handicaps and difficulties. Often such an example will be reported in a newspaper ó especially of sportspeople, but there are many unsung heroes who have done amazing things with the help of the virtues of courage, perseverance, patience and cheerfulness etc.

**Points to make** –

When we face difficulties, we have to make choices.

We are responsible for our own lives and the choices we make.

It is not what happens to us that is most important, but how we deal with our difficulties.

We develop our characters by practicing virtues until they become habits.

A well-rounded character would have a good proportion of honesty, fairness, kindness, cheerfulness, perseverance and self-control.

A character in need of improvement might have bumps of selfishness, laziness, carelessness or dishonesty.

We start off from the platform of our family and the environment into which we have been born, but we make choices that will affect our whole lives.

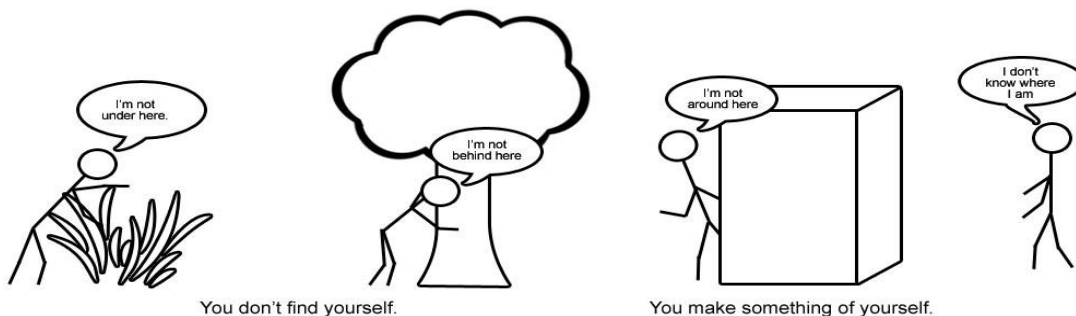
We can choose to be lazy or we can choose to work hard for something worth having.

We can choose to be honest or dishonest.

We can face difficulties as challenges to be overcome, or obstacles that are too hard to tackle.

We gain self-respect when we know we have done our best.

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## LESSON 21 –

### Leaders – who to follow

**Objective** - To show that if we are going to follow some-one, we need to be sure that we can trust them, and that they are not going to take us somewhere we don't want to go.

**Motivation** – Talk about the game, 'follow the leader.' Do you still play that in school?

**New Learning** ó Discuss the game and what the followers are trying to do.

Is it easy? You can be trying so hard to keep up that you are not really thinking about where the leader is taking you.

There are different kinds of leaders.

Some want to 'show off' and make things so difficult that a lot of the followers can be hurt or drop out.

Some think about the followers and don't set them tasks that are too difficult for them.

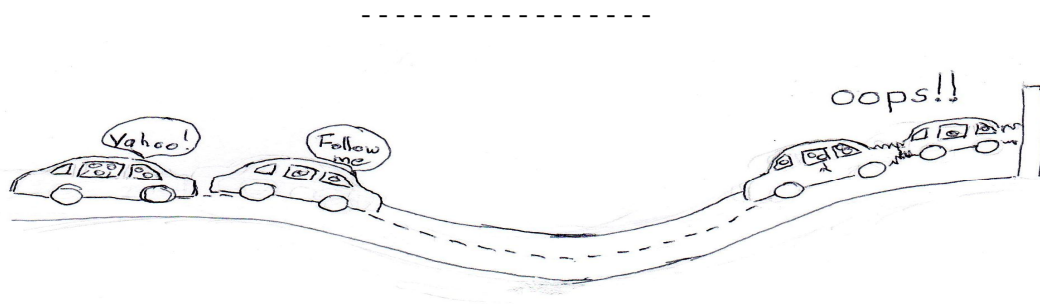
Some are not very concerned about where they are going and lead their followers into trouble.

Who do you think are your leaders at school?

Senior students need to set a good example to younger ones or the whole school suffers.

School is where you lay the foundation for your future lives. Don't be a blind follower of people who are going to lead you away from a good useful life. Things we do when we are young can affect our whole lives.

This lesson can be related to many different situations that different age groups may face. E.g. truancy, shop lifting, bullying, smoking, drugs. Long term consequences of following other people should be considered.



## LESSON 22 –

### New Situations

**Objective** - To show that we need courage and wisdom when we are going into new situations.

**Motivation - Discussion** on facing new situations. We all face new situations from time to time. What are some of the new situations you have all faced? Going to school? Moving to a new school? New Country? New Language?

**New Learning** - How did you feel? Did anyone help you? How?

New baby in the family? New family or new house?

Sometimes our parents have to shift to find suitable work and we have to leave friends behind. Is that easy? Is it easy to make new friends?

What can we do ourselves to make it easier? What can other people do?

We can try to make it easier for people in new situations. Examples?

We need courage to accept situations we cannot change.

We can try to find something good about our new situation and be cheerful, not make others miserable.

Every time we face difficulties with courage we gain more strength to face the difficulties that life can bring.

## LESSON 23 6

**Stress – this lesson could include bullying, but that is a subject on its own.**

**Objective** – To show that most of the unnecessary stress in people's lives is caused by other people. We could each make an effort to lessen that stress.

**Motivation** - Story - e.g. of how one person caused a great deal of stress to a lot of others by failing to pass on a simple message.

### **New Learning - Points to make –**

What sorts of things do young people worry about?

Can they do anything about it themselves? How?

What could other people do about it?

Other people can cause us stress by being unfair or unkind to us.

We can cause stress to other people by being lazy, not doing our share, not keeping our word.

How do you think you can cause stress to your parents?

How do you think you can cause stress to your teachers or your classmates?

Who could you talk to if you had a problem that was causing you stress?

This lesson is a good opportunity to make known where children can go for help if they really need it. In questionnaires I ran with my classes, very few would go to a parent, teacher or counsellor. Most would talk to a friend, but after class discussion they could see that another adult they could trust, would know more than a friend their own age.

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## LESSON 24 -

### **Budgeting and saving**

**Objective** – To show that it is wiser to budget our income and save some of it for a special objective than to spend it without thinking.

### **Motivation – Discussion about pocket money or pay for work at home. –**

Most of you will get pocket money. Do you have to do anything in return?

What might happen if you don't do the work you have agreed to do?

What are some of the things you spend pocket money on? Make a list.

**New Learning 6** Do a practical exercise in deciding how much money to allow for each purchase or activity is useful. Put the coins in piles.

Have you allowed any for saving?

Suppose you wanted something big that you couldn't afford from a week's pocket money or you didn't want to spend a week's money on, you could save for it.

Suppose you got five dollars a week and you wanted a special (?) C.D. ? that was going to cost \$20, if you saved the whole five dollars, how many weeks would it take before you had the twenty dollars?

Suppose you didn't want to save the whole five dollars, but thought you could put aside one dollar a week, how many weeks would it take before you had the twenty dollars?

Of course by the time you had saved the twenty dollars you might decide that you didn't want that C.D. anyway, and there was something better you wanted to do with the money.

Senior students can go into credit cards and interest.

Suppose you decided you couldn't do without the C.D. and you wanted it right now, you might be able to borrow the money from an adult, say an older brother. Like a bank, or any money-

lender, he would want you to pay so much a week for using his money so he would charge interest of say \$1 per week for lending you the money. Suppose it was twenty weeks before you could repay his \$20, how much would the C.D. have cost you?

It is better to pay off a credit card when it is due than to pay interest. The story of Micawber is useful here. It is better to spend just under your income than just over.

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## LESSON 25 6

**The world of work** - this could be two lessons

**Objective** – To show that we all need to work so that we can eat. We look after the young and the old and anyone who is not able to work for themselves, but it is unfair to others if we do not do our share of the work that needs to be done. **2.** We sell our labour and skills to earn money so that we can barter money for food and shelter. The more skills we have, the more money we can sell it for and so we need to acquire skills that other people will be willing to pay for. As well as having skills we need to show that we can be trusted.

### Points to make –

A long time ago before there were so many people in the world, no one lived in cities or big towns like they do now. They lived in open country and they got their food by hunting and gathering. Everyone did their share, even the children.

Where does most of our food come from now? Not many people even have vegetable gardens. Your parents work to obtain money, but children can still do their share of the work that needs to be done around home.

Now we use money to pay for the food we need, but we still have to get the money in some way and most of us get it by working for someone else.

Discuss ÷bartering÷ We barter our work for money and then barter money for other things we need. What else do we need today? Shelter, transport, health care, clothing. We also want holidays, entertainment etc. but there is a difference between needing and wanting.

Room for discussion here and the fact that the amount for which we can sell our labour usually determines how much we can spend on ÷wants÷.

One of the reasons we get sent to school is so that we can learn the skills that employers are prepared to pay for.

There are some skills most employers need.

They need an employee to be able to read and write so that they can communicate clearly, so you need to learn to read and write.

They need an employee to be able to count and measure and fill in time sheets, so you need to learn basic mathematics.

They need an employee to be honest, reliable and able to get along with other workers and customers, so a good character is a valuable asset.

Are you a worker or a leaner?



Too many people leaning on others and the whole system will collapse.

## LESSON 26 – Democratic government

**Objective** ó To show how our laws are made and who makes them. In a democracy each adult is supposed to have an equal say in making our laws, so they all need to take an interest in the democratic process.

### Points to make -

We have rules at home and rules in our school. Who makes them? Why?

We have rules about driving cars on the road . Why? Who makes them?

We have laws that say people must not steal from others. Why? Who makes those laws?

The Government makes the laws, but do you know that all the adults in the country are supposed to decide on those laws.

Our democratic system of government came to N.Z. with British settlers and goes back to ancient Greece where all the citizens of the city came together to decide on the laws and they all had one vote.

Has anyone been to Wellington and seen the buildings where our government meets.

All the people in the country couldn't get into those buildings, could they, so each district or electorate chooses one person to go there to speak for the rest of the people in that area. They represent us, and the Government is called the House of Representatives.

- **Relate this to the class choosing one person to represent them at a school council.** Suppose most of you in the class said, "We're not interested in who speaks for us. He/she can do what he likes." Do you think the person who is supposed to represent you would worry about you, or would he be more likely to make laws to suit himself and his special friends? It would depend wouldn't it on the character of the person you sent.

When you have a vote, (how old?) you will need to understand the democratic process and use your votes wisely so that good and fair laws are made. In the mean-time you can encourage older members of your families to vote and help make the laws.

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## LESSON 27 – Civic responsibilities – laws and social covenants

**Objective** – To help them understand that the government has no money of its own. It gets money from the taxes people pay. By accepting the rights and privileges of being a citizen of a country, we have entered an agreement with the rest of the people in the country to obey the laws and accept the responsibilities that go with citizenship.

**Motivation** – Talk about the school, who owns it , who pays the teachers. The local hall, the swimming pool, the library, the health services. Local roads. If you had worked hard to make and pay for a toy of some kind and someone else wanted to use it, how would you feel if they damaged it?

**New Learning** ó Our public buildings, and other facilities have been paid for and are maintained with the money that older people have to pay the government out of the money they earn.

**Wisdom** ó What are the consequences when things like public swimming pools or toilets are damaged or school buildings? Other people suffer because they have to be closed for a while.

People can lose their own property when schools are burned. People have to pay more taxes to repair the damage. Sometimes facilities are closed altogether because thoughtless people keep damaging them and then a whole community suffers. A late-night bus service from the city was stopped because of bad behaviour. What are the consequences when people carelessly throw rubbish out of car windows?

**Justice** ó Do you think it is fair that other people should have to pay again and again to repair damage? What do you think would be fair?

**Truth** ó People who like to see their houses looking tidy and like their community to look nice, do not like to have graffiti painted on their clean fences or walls, and do not like to have to pay again and again to repaint them. Why do you think some people damage property that others have to pay for? Why do you think they don't just graffiti their own places?

**Love** ó Are you being kind to people if you keep damaging something they have worked for, paid for and care about?

**The Golden Rule** – Treat other people the way you would like them to treat you. How would you feel if people kept damaging your belongings?

**Reinforcing activities** – A project to help the community

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## **LESSON 28** ó

### **Environmental sustainability**

Many schools already have environmental projects aimed to interest young children in nature and their environment and preventing waste.

Wherever it is relevant, the final check of 'Will this make a better and happier world?' should include the effect of our actions on the environment.

In the end, environmental sustainability is a matter of making ethical decisions.

**Wisdom** ó Is it wise to do this? What are the long-term consequences likely to be?

**Justice** ó Is it fair to do this? Is this going to benefit or harm one group of people more than another ó e.g. future generations?

**Truth** ó Do we have all the evidence? Is it based on fact or emotion? What are the motives of those making the decisions?

**Love** ó Are we showing respect for all those involved, or are we using anyone for our own ends?

**The Golden Rule** ó how would we feel if we were the ones to be affected by this decision?

A better world ó Is this going to help or harm the environment?

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## **LESSON 29** ó

### **Multiculturalism**

**Objective** – To show that we or our families have all come from countries across the sea from New Zealand. Some of our families have been here longer than others but if we are now New Zealand citizens by birth or because we have been accepted as citizens, we are now New Zealanders. Our ancestors were all very brave people to leave their original homes and cross the sea to a new land. Different groups have different good things to offer. We should take the good things and reject the harmful ones.

**Motivation** – How many different countries have we come from? Can we point to them on a map of the world? New Zealand is only a little spot down at the bottom, but we are lucky there are so many different places that have brought us so many good things

### New Learning -

Many of us have parents and grandparents who were born in N.Z., but the ancestors of all of us came from some other country.

One thing they had in common was that they were all very brave people to leave their homes and come to a new country.

We are all New Zealanders now and we want to live happily together. Some things are important to all of us and some things are specially important to people whose families have come from different places.

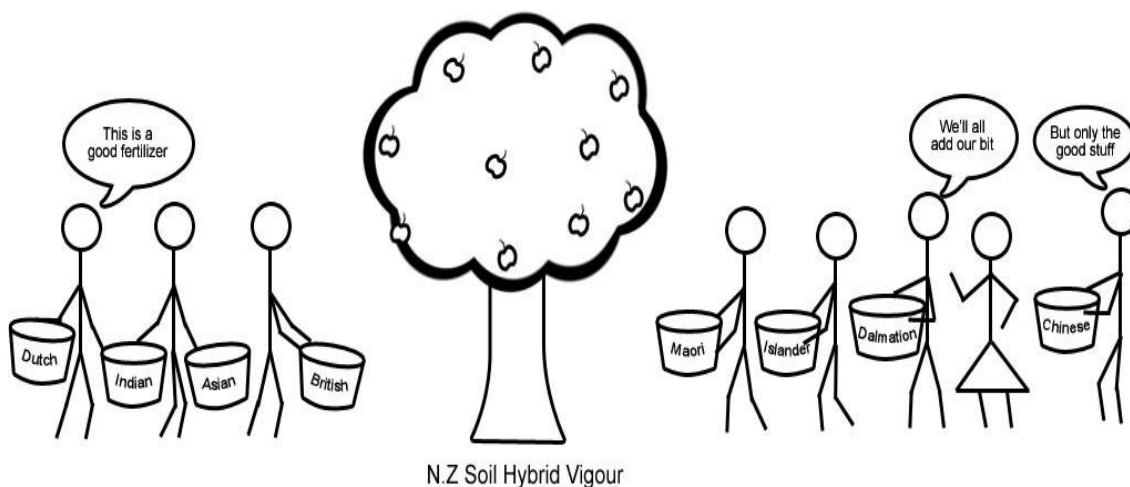
What things are important to everyone ó family, friends, food, work, etc.

What are some things that can be different ó festivals, religions, some kinds of food, music, dance etc.

Would anyone want to live in a country where people are always fighting or hurting each other?

So what else is important to us? Peace, justice etc. Democracy to older students.

Younger children can learn about celebrations, birthdays, religious festivals etc. Older ones can discuss rites of passage, family rules and aspirations. Make subject matter relevant to age group but emphasise fact that we can be proud of the countries we came from, but we are now New Zealanders and need to keep this a good place to live.



### LESSON 30 –

**The “upright” man and woman.** This concept is probably not suitable for younger children, but it is well within the grasp of years 5-6 and up.

**Objective** ó To offer a concept of an òuprightò person who is honest, fair, caring, and respects all people and the environment.

### Motivation-

Talk about things that have made people unhappy. Has anyone had their house broken into and things stolen? Has anyone been promised something and then a promise been deliberately broken? (Sometimes things happen that are beyond our control)

Has anyone deliberately been treated unfairly? How did you feel about the people who did that? (Do not allow details that might embarrass another pupil)

## New Learning 6

Draw a cartoon on the board starting with an upright figure, then talk about some little dishonest thing that they will understand e.g. not putting money in an honesty box ó Then maybe borrowing a library book deciding to keep it and lying about it - draw another figure leaning a little, then another unfair or dishonest thing ó maybe shop-lifting and the figure leans a bit further until finally it falls flat on its face. It has been caught!!!

Our figure is now lying on its face, kicking its heels and saying what we often say when we get into trouble ó what is that? öIt wasn't my fault!ö öIt wasn't my fault!!!ö

We can usually find excuses for doing things we know we shouldn't have done. What are some of them? E.G. shop-lifting ó Johnny dared me to do it ó made me do it etc.

(In some cases it may be true that a child was more frightened of a person telling him to steal than he is of the consequences of being caught, so a teacher needs to be sensitive if this is known.)

Explain that we want to get our person back upright again, but the only way we can do that is if he will accept that some of the problem is his own fault. He is now sitting up.

And that he will try to do better in future. He is almost up.

In fact, he has decided he will help other people who may have been tempted like he was and try to keep them upright too.

Talk about wise people (philosophers) from many different cultures who had the idea of an öuprightö man. Interesting that even the Greek philosopher Aristotle who talked a lot about virtues only listed the ömanlyö virtues of his day, and Confucius, the great Chinese philosopher did the same. Hindu epics presented men and women as role models of virtue. Women need to be just as öuprightö as men, so we will talk about the öuprightö person. (this could be a whole discussion in itself as to why the philosophers did not talk about women and why it is probably even more important for women to be öupright.ö Women as solo parents, as teachers.

### Reinforcing activities –

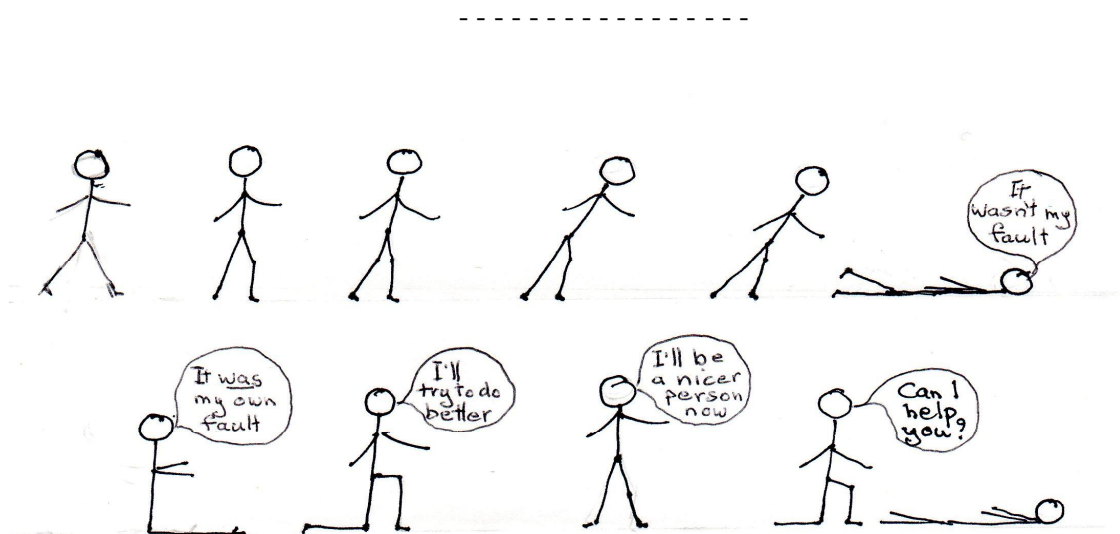
Draw cartoon ó

Write -

The upright person is honest ó fair ó kind and generous

The upright person has self control.

The upright person has self-respect because he/she always tries to do his/her best.



## LESSON 31 –

### The future - It's up to you

**Objective** - To inspire pupils to think about the future of themselves and this country and what sort of a place they would like it to be, so that in the decisions they make, they consider much more than 'What's in it for me right now?'

**Motivation** Who likes reading fantasy books? Harry Potter? Do you think it would really be possible to perform magic and make all the bad things disappear just by waving a wand? Do you know it is really people like you who will be responsible for the good or bad things that happen in the future.

### New Learning –

Draw a small circle with a figure in the middle. That is you.

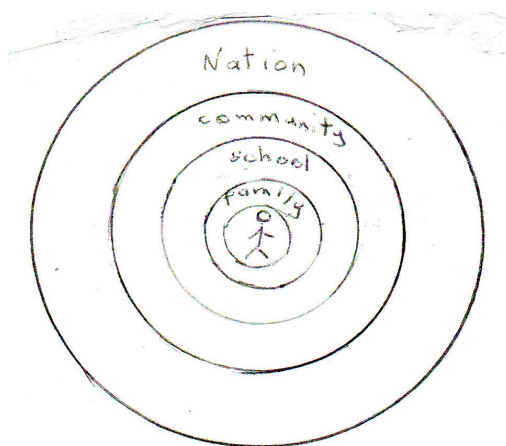
Draw another around it with figures in it – that is your family.

Draw a larger one to represent your school.

Then your community.

Then your country.

Then the world.

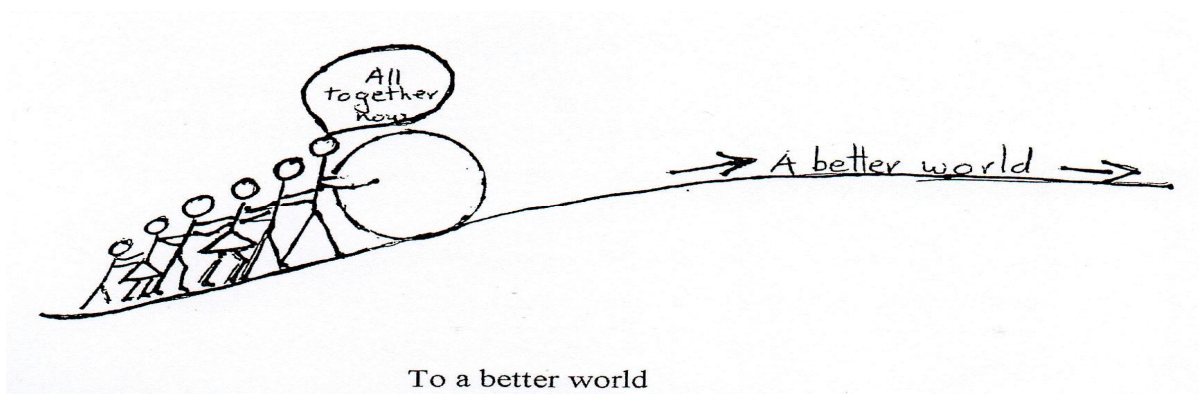


Which other people do your actions affect now?

When you are older you will be able to act in ways and make decisions that will affect your whole country – M.Ps etc. Maybe the world – United Nations.

That is a long way away, but right now you can make your homes, your school and communities better places by the way you act. Examples.

If everyone went on doing that throughout their lives, the world would become a better place – not by magic, but by people just like you.



To a better world



## USING PLAYS FOR DISCUSSION

The lesson plan that follows is 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. With younger children, there were always reinforcing activities to add variety and to cater to those who learn in different ways, or who have different talents.

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. The aim is always to raise the level of ethical reasoning of the whole class, not just to accept their present level.

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 a record of the number of turns each had. At that time most were keen to read the major parts and most years 7-8 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. The words for the Chorus can also be printed on a piece of cardboard and held up at the appropriate time for the chorus to join in. The chorus can also 'ad lib' in suitable places.

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.

Teachers with connections to local theatrical groups and a video camera could enlist their help to film a series of plays at one time at no cost to the school.

The play that follows has been set out so that it can be photocopied ready for use. If the name of each character is underlined in a different colour and their part underlined in the same colour, reasonable readers will have no trouble in following the script, even if they are sight-reading. The characters in this play are year 9s, but as we are frequently discovering, juvenile crime is starting younger and younger. The names of schools can be changed to make them relevant to the students.

## THE NEW CAR

- Characters - William, Peter, Mark, Glen, Brian, John, Angus, Others, Reader
- Reader –** It is lunch-time at Pukekohe College and a group of boys from Buckland are standing around talking.
- Mark –** Did you hear Peter's Dad has bought him a car?
- William –** Yes, I heard. I believe it's a Honda Accord. They can really go!
- Glen –** Well, he promised he would buy Peter a car if he got his NCEA qualifications.
- John –** He won't have it long then, the way I saw him driving down the road last night.
- Brian –** Is that so? His father told Dad that Peter has promised not to more than 90k, while he was still at College.
- John –** Some promise then! He was doing 110 at least when I saw him, and he reckons he can get up to 130 on that straight out towards Tuakau.
- Mark –** He must be mad.
- John –** No, he just thinks he's smart. Having the car has gone to his head I think.
- Angus –** He said he'd take us out with him on Sunday afternoon. He said we could go up to Auckland and he'd show us what it can do.
- John –** I'm not going anywhere with that lunatic. He could kill us all!
- Other Boys (together) –** Chicken! Chicken!
- John –** I'd rather be a live chicken than a dead show-off.
- Glen –** Or a crippled show-off would be even worse.
- Brian –** Here he comes now. Let's see what he has to say.
- Reader –** Peter comes up to the group.
- Peter –** Hello you guys. Heard about my new car?
- All Boys –** Yes – we've heard!
- Peter –** I had her up to 130 coming out from Pukekohe last night.
- Brian –** I thought you promised your father you wouldn't do over 90k while you were still at College.
- Peter –** Oh well, that will keep him happy. What he doesn't see won't worry him.
- Angus –** It will jolly well worry him if you smash the car and yourself with it!
- Peter –** No chance man, I'm too good a driver for that.
- Glen –** But you only got your license two months ago.

**Peter** – So what? Some people have got it, and some haven't. I'm just a natural. See you later then, I'm off to the cafe.

**Reader** – Peter walks off towards the cafeteria.

**William** – What a big head! He'd make you sick!

**Angus** – He used to be all right till he got that car. His father should never have bought it for him.

**John** – Perhaps if we let him see we aren't impressed by his showing off, he'll get the message and see sense.

**Brian** – Yes, and if we won't go anywhere with him, he won't have anyone to show off to.

**Angus** – And he won't have the chance to kill any of us.

**Glen** – He's sure to find someone who will go with him.

**Brian** – Too bad for them then, but we have to make up our own minds.

**John** – He always enjoyed being with our gang, and doing things together. Perhaps he'll see reason.

**Brian** – We could say we won't go with him unless he keeps his promise to his father.

**William** – He'd rather have us with him anyway than have to make new friends.

**Mark** – Here he comes again.

**Reader** – Peter enters carrying his lunch

**Peter** – Well you guys. Are you coming with me on Sunday, or do I look for some other passengers.

**John** – Look Peter, we'd really like to come with you. We've always had a good time together, but if we do, we want you to keep your promise to your father.

**Brian** – We've got a lot of living to do, and there's a lot of things I want to do with my life. Ending up in a wheelchair or the cemetery is not one of them. We don't want to take any stupid risks.

**Angus** – Now, be honest with yourself. You haven't got the experience to handle a car at high speeds yet, and we don't want you practicing on us.

**Peter** – Oh, O.K. I guess you're right. I wouldn't want Dad to find out I'd broken my promise. He gets pretty serious about things like that.

**John** – Great! We'll come then, and in a few years time, if you still fancy yourself as a driver you can take up motor-racing.

**Other boys** – ON YOUR OWN!!!!

## POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

- What was the main cause of Peter's trouble?  
PRIDE – He had such a swelled head over the new car he couldn't see straight!
- How important is it to keep a promise?
- What are the results if you show you can't be trusted? Better not to make a promise than to make one you don't intend to keep.
- Should Peter be punished if his father found out what he was doing, and what would be a fair punishment?
- Would it be hard to admit to your friends that you were scared to do something because of what the consequences might be?
- Would it be possible that they might be feeling the same way?
- If even only one person spoke the truth as they saw it, what might the others do then?
- PEER PRESSURE? What is it? It can be applied for good purposes as well as bad.

How could friends help -

A friend being tempted to try drugs?

To prevent bullying?

People who lack confidence in themselves?

Any other suggestions?

# THE FIRST PUFF

**Characters –** Kathy, Beth, John, Chris, Dan, Mark, Paul, Chairman, Mrs Brent,  
Mr Sim, Mr James  
Reader

**Reader –** A group of girls and boys from Buckland have met up during the weekend.

**Kathy –** I wish there was something more exciting to do around here. I'm bored.

**Dan –** Look, I've got a packet of fags here. I'm going to have a smoke.

**Beth –** Where did you get those? Your father would be mad if he knew you'd spent your pocket money on smokes.

**Dan –** Well, he doesn't know, and I'll spend my money how I choose. Come on John. Have one of these.

**John –** No thanks. It's not very sensible to smoke. People get lung cancer from that.

**Mark –** Don't be stupid! That's only old people isn't it? Anyway, I've had plenty of smokes and it hasn't harmed me. Don't be chicken!

**Kathy –** I'll have one. I reckon it makes a girl look grown up.

**Dan –** It'd take a lot to make you look grown up, but O.K., here you are. You can share it with Beth, unless she's too chicken too.

**Beth –** If Kathy has a smoke, I'll have one too.

**Paul –** You can call me chicken if you like, but I promised Dad I wouldn't start, so I'm not going to.

**Chris –** What's the harm in one?

**Paul –** I might not be able to stop at one.

**Dan –** You're soft. Come on John. You're not going to be like him are you? Have a puff at this.

**John –** Oh, O.K. I suppose one won't hurt.

**Reader –** It is three years later. NCEA is behind them. The scene now is the office of a local firm and the Directors are having a meeting.

**Chairman –** Now, as you all know, this meeting has been called to select a new Clerk for our front office. There are five applicants. You have read their qualifications.

**Mrs Brent –** They are all suitable as far as I can see, but John Barker has the highest NCEA qualifications by far. I suggest we choose him.

**Mr Sim** – I think you could be making a mistake there. It's a responsible job. He'd have to handle a lot of money.

**Mrs Brent** – What have you got against John Barker? He seems a bright keen boy.

**Mr Sim** – He hasn't got a very good name, you know. Don't you remember what happened a couple of years ago at Kay's factory?

**Mr James** – Oh! Was that the boy? I remember! His father worked at Kay's and he reckoned someone was stealing money out of his wallet.

**Mr Sim** – That's right. He kicked up a terrible row about it, accused his mates of doing it and they had the Police in interviewing everyone!

**Chairman** – What did that have to do with this boy?

**Mr Sim** – Well it finally came out that it wasn't the chaps at the factory at all. That boy had been doing it.

**Mrs Brent** – Why would he do a thing like that? He must have known he'd get caught sooner or later. Fancy stealing from his own father too!

**Mr Sim** – It seems that he'd started smoking on the sly, and you know how dear cigarettes are! Once he got a taste for them his pocket money wasn't enough to keep him supplied, and that's what he did.

**Chairman** – I don't think we could risk putting a boy like that in charge of money. We'd better choose the next one on the list.

**Reader** – It is a few days later and John and his friends are at the Post Office waiting for the mail.

**Beth** – You're in a hurry for the mail this morning. What are you waiting for?

**John** – I applied for that job at James Plumbing Supplies, and they said they'd let me know by today.

**Chris** – So did I!

**Dan** – I did too. It sounded like a really good job.

**Mark** – I'd have liked that job too, but you'd get it for sure John.

**Chris** – Yes. Your results were higher than any of ours.

**John** – I hope so. I need that job. It pays really well.

**Reader** – A girl comes in with the mail and hands it out to them. They open their letters.

**Chris** – Well I expected it. The job's not mine.

**Dan** – No luck for me either. You must have got it all right John.

**Reader** – John is looking at his letter in disbelief.

**John** – No! I didn't get it after all. I was sure I would though!

**Chris** – I'm really sorry about you John, but I'm afraid the job's mine.

**John** – Congratulations Chris, but I wonder why? I had so much the best marks. Do you know, Paul? Your father's on the board at James. Please tell me if you do. I want to know.

**Paul** – I'm sorry John, but if you really want to know, it seems you haven't got a very good name around the place. You remember after all that trouble a couple of years ago.

**John** – That's not fair! That was two years ago!

**Paul** – I thought that too, but Dad said once you'd lost a good name, it's very hard to get it back.

**John** – I needed that job. It costs me a fortune to smoke. A packet a day is \$--- every week.

**Dan** – It costs me \$18.

**Kathy** – Well it costs me \$20.

**Mark** – If only I'd stopped at the first puff.

**John** – If only I hadn't got to like it so much that I can't stop now. I wish I could, but I can't.

**Chris** – Why don't you talk to your Uncle Jack about it?

**John** – What good would that do? He smokes too.

**Chris** – Yes, but you know he wants to stop. He's always saying so. Perhaps you could try together.

**John** – That's a good idea. It's worth a try. Uncle Jack's a good sort. He won't sling off at me, and we could see who can cut down the most each week.

**Dan** – And a prize for the one who's the first to stop altogether.

**Mark** – You could get something really good with all the money you'd save.

**Chris** – You could buy me a present for suggesting it.

**John** – No. It'd be a great new paint job on the car Dad's going to get me when I get my first job. I'm sure someone will give me a chance before long.

**Dan** – Good luck to you then John.

**Other Boys** – Yes, good luck!!!

ENDS

## POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

This play was originally written for years 7 and 8 but may be relevant to even younger students. Some of the dialogue in this play and the points for discussion can be altered to relate to drugs.

The main point is the same. It is the first puff that is important. Once a dealer or friend can tempt them to take the first puff they can be hooked.

- Why do young people start to smoke? To look important? To look older? Because they get to like it? Other reasons?
- Is it difficult to say "No" when others are pressing you to say "Yes"? Is it "soft" to say "No"?
- Where do children get cigarettes or money for cigarettes?
- If they spend their money on cigarettes what might they have to do without?
- Would there be temptation to steal?
- One small choice led to a big consequence in John's life. What was the result of his taking the first puff?
- Was it fair that the employers should have held that against John?
- Do you think that is what happens in real life?
- Why did John feel he could talk to Uncle Jack?
- Do you think the reasons people start smoking are the same reasons they start on other drugs or alcohol?
- What might the small decision "I'll just try one," lead to?
- Do you have an adult you can talk to about problems?

Where are some of the places in the community someone with a problem can go for help?



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