CHARACTER EDUCATION

by

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ABSTRACT

Character education is the foundation of all education. It is the means for individual and collective advancement. Human development and progress are based upon the spiritual capacities of knowing and loving. Schools must provide the moral training and character education necessary for well-being. Religion plays an indispensable role in the development of character. Moral and character training should be realized through service to humanity. Character education involves excellence in all things, including intellectual and physical development. Schools must develop the means for character education to advance and consultative bodies should be formed to develop a consensus of common and important moral values. Educators have the responsibility of giving students the capacity to independently investigate truth and develop their moral and spiritual natures. The earlier character education is begun, the more effective it is.

The foundational principle of schooling is character education. All other education is related to and depends on this foundation. For instance, if a child is well-trained in knowledge, but lacks character, that knowledge will prove only harmful, not only to the person, but also to society. Character education involves moral training and discipline. Students must be taught correct conduct and behavior.

THE NEED FOR CHARACTER EDUCATION

A number of leading thinkers and social commentators who have become concerned about character development has increased dramatically during the last decade. This concern has been prompted by the increase in the signs of moral breakdown in our society. Statistics regarding crime, suicide, substance abuse, illegitimate births, and other social problems, having increased dramatically over the past few decades. A response to these problems has been an urging to teach more traditional values and to teach character. This concern was voiced by the recent Secretary of Education, Bennett, in his three Cs: content, character, and choice.

This push for character education has not been without its opponents. Leading among these opponents are those concerned about the separation...
modeling and interaction with others. The values of the young are acquired by their exposure to external sources. Thus the new moral standards and their own moral character. This thinking is superficial in that morals and character are not self-chosen individual rights, has yet to learn the need its the balance with social responsibility. We are paying, and will continue to another fear is that character and moral education will infringe on the rights of the individual or.

Changes will need to be made by schools to engender cooperation and service. As a society we must move away for the extensive focus on individualism and move towards an acceptance of community. Schools have special responsibilities to help students develop their moral and character frameworks. This can be done through the day-to-day practices within the school. Moral lessons in character development are to be found throughout the school and the school day. Teachers must seize these opportunities and take advantage of the growth potential they offer. Students need to be exposed to the villains in our society has some merit in helping students understand how people can make poor decisions and how important character right.

need not only to be places of effectiveness but need to be places of goodness. Students need to be encouraged to acquire the virtues that are acceptable to students weed out those weaknesses that are inherent to all. Not only should we seek and promote academic, athletic, and artistic excellence, but also see and promote moral and character excellence.

The families and schools are retreating from the responsibility of teaching students citizenship, morals, and values, leaving a vacuum in our society. The results of these vacuums have been documented by a number of social scientists, most notably Edward Wynne.

The founders of our country were influenced by philosophers in literature, and religion to make similar recommendations for the role of virtue in our society. School four virtues seem to transcend culture and time, and might be used as a foundation for a moral education program. The constitution and our laws are based upon the values of truth and justice. Literature, philosophy, history, and religion also offer a great wellspring of values, morals, and character models that could be drawn upon to develop an intelligible core of values.

Students are bright but have no moral framework, they are potentially dangerous, not only to themselves but to society. We must strive for students to be intelligent and good. If we have to choose between the two, let us choose goodness.

We must move away for the extensive focus on individualism and move towards an acceptance of community. Schools have special responsibilities for developing this sense of community and cooperation. Currently, our schools favor an individualistic approach that deemphasizes and service.

OF CHARACTER EDUCATION

will need to be made by schools to engender an approach that will significantly contribute to character education. There are certain fears that will need to be made by schools to engender an approach that will significantly contribute to character education. There are certain fears that will need to be made by schools to engage a new approach that will significantly contribute to character education. There are certain fears that will need to be made by schools to engage a new approach that will significantly contribute to character education. There are certain fears that will need to be made by schools to engage a new approach that will significantly contribute to character education. There are certain fears that will need to be made by schools to engage a new approach that will significantly contribute to character education. There are certain fears that will need to be made by schools to engage a new approach that will significantly contribute to character education. There are certain fears that will need to be made by schools to engage a new approach that will significantly contribute to character education. There are certain fears that will need to be made by schools to engage a new approach that will significantly contribute to character education. There are certain fears that will need to be made by schools to engage a new approach that will significantly contribute to character education. There are certain fears that will need to be made by schools to engage a new approach that will significantly contribute to character education. There are certain fears that will need to be made by schools to engage a new approach that will significantly contribute to character education. There are certain fears that will need to be made by schools to engage a new approach that will significantly contribute to character education. There are certain fears that will need to be made by schools to engage a new approach that will significantly contribute to character education. There are certain fears that will need to be made by schools to engage a new approach that will significantly contribute to character education. There are certain fears that will need to be made by schools to engage a new approach that will significantly contribute to character education.
tion and character development is very apparent.

Our recent history has encouraged this individualism and created mistrust in the social institutions. The sixties were influential in undermining our trust in ourselves and authority. The value of the individual was vaulted over that of the society and such things as socialization and character education were vicious. Character education and moral training were seen as indoctrination and an infringement on individual rights. The sixties saw the birth of moral education and the influence of Kohlberg's theory of moral education. Our nation, based on individual philosophies, has taken those philosophies to an extreme degree. If some balance is not found between the rights of the individual and the responsibilities of the individual to society, we will continue to have many social and individual problems.

indicated that morals and virtue were habits and dispositions that had to be ingrained in young people through training and repetition so that the tendency towards these virtues in their later years. This is sound advice for today's educators who need to establish some habit of moral behavior in children. Behavior is character. It causes one to do right and to avoid what is wrong. Aristotle also tried to address the concerns that are currently related to the formation of morals. Aristotle's answer to how we know virtue was to consult wise men and to have statesmen decide on these questions. He also indicated that virtue should lead toward happiness and, therefore, it would be a matter of testing these virtues to see if in the end they contributed to happiness or had effect.

I use these same standards in judging which moral or virtues should be taught to our students in order to develop their characters. By consulting the sixties, I could look to the social sciences to see which virtues result in beneficial behaviors and well being. We can consult with the leaders in our institution to determine which virtues are needed to help our society progress and we can also empirically test through various means, the value of certain virtues. Through these means, we should be able to determine with some assurance to a list of virtues which can be agreed upon as valuable to our children and our society. We can consult societies throughout the world to see which ones have progressed and which ones have not and to identify the common elements or virtues in these societies. Such an exploration should reveal that truthfulness and justice are foundational principles for the individual and collective well-being.

fear is that these schools will not be able to teach the correct moral values and moral character. This fear results from lack of trust in schools and the fear of not knowing which virtues the school would attempt to engender in our children. Whether we like it or not, our schools do teach virtues, all be it in an indirect and unconscious way. Schools and teachers can accomplish this through modeling character, allowing students to practice, exposing students to examples in history, literature, and society that highlight moral virtues and character and creating an environment within the classroom that manifests the virtues we wish our students to develop. As children grow older and have these moral principles established, then we can further develop their morals and character through discussions and involvement in school and community affairs. Such helping activities as peer tutoring, fund raising, and service to the class, school, and community are useful ways to help students develop character. Encouraging volunteerism and excellence are two ways to help students to develop character. Encouraging students to strive and persevere in the face of hardship, to be honest, to be caring with one another is important. The discipline code in the teacher-student and student-student relationship are indicators of moral and character within a school. Schools should recognize, not only excellence in academic achievement, but also in moral development.

Ignorance should be encouraged by the community and the parents. For any character development program to be successful, some cooperation among schools and, therefore, it would be a matter of testing these virtues to see if in the end they contributed to happiness or had effect.

lem in our society does not appear to be basically a lack knowing what is right to do, but a lack of desire or will to do the right thing. This desire is a result of character and this character develops over years and much practice. Character education must go beyond the moral dilemmas that are common in our education. Such moral reasoning does not necessarily lead to moral behavior or the development of moral principles.

**AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION**

Education must be holistic, it must draw out the full spiritual, psychological, and physical potential of each person. Moral training and character development are central to the holistic development of the individual. Not only will spiritual capacities be deficient without this training and development, but mental and physical will be adversely affected. It is essential that moral and character development begin as early in the child's life as possible. These early years or as the child grows older, moral training and development will become increasingly difficult. Each individual is a gem which must be polished through character development to bring out its full potential value. We also may be viewed as mines from which the gems of our worth are to be found.
Character education should develop self-discipline and eliminate many character traits that would have to be practiced, rather than learned. Character habits in the student’s mind are put to good use. With the development of character, vocational training is used in the spirit of the service to humanity and is of benefit to both the individual and to others.

Character education lies at the foundation of the restructuring and revitalization of education. Character education offers a holistic approach towards the problems facing our society today. In this rapidly changing world of new challenges and collapsing social institutions, moral values and character traits are increasingly more important. The moral or spiritual dimension of humanity has been a central influence in the advancement of civilization. With the loss of this spiritual and moral dimension, civilizations have declined and vanished. The development of this moral aspect becomes ever more important at the evolutionary stage of the human process.

Character education should be carried out in a social context involving the individuals development of volition and will through practical application of skills. This requires intellectual and physical training to accomplish these goals. Intellectual training and investigative skills are necessary so that individuals may make good choices as to proper actions. Having a sound body allows one to carry out the actions required. Education should be construed for the general good rather than for selfish and individualistic motives only.

Character education has the capacity to transform both individual lives and social organizations. Character education allows one to use his knowledge and skills are necessary so that individuals may make good choices as to proper actions. Having a sound body allows one to carry out the actions required. Education should be construed for the general good rather than for selfish and individualistic motives only.

Character education has the capacity to transform both individual lives and social organizations. Character education allows one to use his knowledge and skills to their own growth and the well-being of the community. It is therefore very important that mothers-to-be receive training in development of character. These mothers, as not only educators, but more importantly as role models, will set the pattern of behavior and values.

Character education should be based upon approved materials, methods, and trained teachers. Most of these character traits would have to be practiced, rather than learned. Character habits in the student’s mind are put to good use. With the development of character, vocational training is used in the spirit of the service to humanity and is of benefit to both the individual and to others.

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This is where religion plays a key role. In this age when religion has been discounted and science vaulted as the primary means of truth, it is important to an happiness is to be founded upon spiritual behavior. The training that schools should give in religion should be presented in such a way that we

**TEACHER EDUCATION**

and loving are the two basic human capacities. These capacities can only be realized by actualizing them through action. Knowing and loving a ble to the cognitive and affective domains, but they transcend these definitions. Educators must develop their own knowing and loving capacities their student to realize their knowing and loving capacities. Knowing and loving manifested through action are the necessary components for the shment of any objective. The knowing, loving, and behaving are the components of character education. Loving is an essential element of ch and has been sadly neglected in current educational practice. Teacher education institutions should adopt a view of the teacher as an enabler of knowing and loving capacities. This should be an organizing principle or theme of teacher education programs and all schools.

The role of the teacher is to create a just and caring environment. Goodlad (1990) and Goodlad and his associates perceive education and teacher education as a moral endeavor. If teachers are to be maximizers of their students' knowing and loving capacities, they themselves must be maximizers of their own knowing and loving capacities and must have achieved a certain level of knowledge, loving and sent before they can adequately carry out their responsibilities and meet their moral obligations as educators.

If and organizing theme forms a foundation of a knowledge base for teacher education and can guide curricular and instructional decision of a t program. One aspect that is missing in most teacher education programs and in most schools is the focus on character education. This npt to address some of the major themes and principles that are relevant to character education, identify a number of possible program attributes, types of activities that might enable students to develop proficiency in character education. These aspects, along with the attribute of a profess phy, constitute the five attributes of a teacher education knowledge base identified by Galluzzo and Pankratz (1990).

The National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS), in answering the questions of what teachers should know and be able to do, has pointe of areas dealing with character education (1987). The NBPTS does not seem like a likely place to find items related to character education. Most ons, items, and standards deal mainly with teacher's knowledge and skills, focusing primarily on the cognitive domain. Their five propositions: 1) are committed to students and their learning; 2) teacher know the subjects they teach and how to teach those subjects to their students; 3) teacher ube for managing and monitoring student learning; 4) teachers think systematically about their practice and learn from experience; and 5) teacher of learning communities; are seeking to set professional standards for elementary and secondary school teaching. Persons who receive board ion are expected to possess a standard of commitment and competence in the profession of teaching. The Board acknowledges that the proponent of skills conceal the complexities and dilemmas of the teaching profession. They recognize that teaching requires judgement, improvisation, along with a professional commitment toward excellence. NBPTS speaks to various elements related to character education such as addi mental needs of the students based upon their different backgrounds, abilities, interests, and circumstances. Not only do they speak about students' capacity in respect to learning, but they address the need to foster students' self-esteem, motivation, character, civic responsibility, and respect for differences. Board certified teachers are to be able to help students develop critical and analytical capacities, deal with their preconceptions and ill problems. They can ensure a disciplined learning environment, set norms for social interaction, motivate students, and help students to achieve ard certified teachers are to be models of education, exemplifying the virtues they seek to inspire in their students. These virtues include curiosity, honesty, fairness, respect for diversity and appreciation of cultural differences.

The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) has established an education task force that has developed guidelines for basi ry education program (September, 1989). These guidelines and indicators are based upon a number of beliefs. One of these beliefs states that tea sh should be able to influence and improve the education of elementary school students. They also state that elementary school teachers have milities, such as student's general socialization, adjustment to the school environment, and academic instruction.

**ROLE OF RELIGION**

The problems facing educators in schools who wish to undertake moral training within their classrooms is the lack of agreement as to what that tra A beginning solution to this problem is to have a balance of science and religion. In other words, there should be scientific approach to the religious approach to science. The scientific methods offer a way of investigating religions that can eliminate the superstitions and imitations that h them and the religions offer the correct attitude to the approach of science. Proper character education will encourage students to be excellent in s of their life. It will encourage children to be clean, healthy, and to have high aspirations into intellectual accomplishment.

Here religion plays a key role. In this age when religion has been discounted and science vaulted as the primary means of truth, it is important to an happiness is to be founded upon spiritual behavior. The training that schools should give in religion should be presented in such a way that w
not eliminate, fanaticism and bigotry. The value of teaching religion is shown in the results of high moral character, which is essential for the ion and practice of a multicultural and global society. Without this foundation of character, knowledge that one acquires will not be useful.

plays in indispensable and vital role in the development individual and societal charactio. Religion has not only been one of the greatest forces g civilization onward, but also has been one of the most common causes of war, bloodshed, and hatred in the world. This is sad in light of the f world religions teach love, brotherhood, and unity, and have been established for the promotion of justice and human welfare. Indeed, if a religi ote harmony and love, it would be better to be void of religion.

cause of disunity among the religions is that each religion has seen itself as better than the other religions and, has in the name of God, waged se who are nonbelievers. If those religious leaders could have seen the truth of their religion as relative, not absolute, and as part of many succes the evolution of civilization, they would not have felt compelled to act in such a forceful, violent, and destructive fashion. The essential meaning of each of the religions have been one in the same. Their teachings have revealed an ever advancing truth. Their functions have served complim different societies at different times. In fact, when one looks at the essential spiritual aspects of each of their teachings, one finds a great deal of ality. Differences exist primarily in nonessential, secondary aspects of their doctrines, many of which were introduced long after the prophet fou has died.

d see and could teach children that all the great religions of the world are divine in nature, and that their essential spiritual principles are in harr l eliminate one of the most destructive prejudices existing in the world, and would release a flood of spirit and good will that would greatly aid g civilization to its next stage of evolution. That stage is the stage talked about in all of the great religions, as the age of ages, the time of the end phil be beaten into plow shares and the kingdom of God will be established, and peace will reign on the planet. We are living at that critical junct the threshold of the next stage of humanity -- adulthood. By respecting and learning about the beliefs of the great religions and the essential un the unity of His messengers, the oneness and wholeness of the human race becomes much more apparent and achievable. We live in an age whe ly Books of all the religions are available to the generality of human kind, and where most of the peoples have the ability to learn first hand abo i of the various world religions. The necessity of understanding and appreciating the unity, and the essential oneness of the various religions is tit for the unification of the world, and the peace that will result from the recognition and appreciation of our multicultural, multi-religious vil.

ndividuals and as educators could begin the process of investigating the truths of the great religions, freed from our former prejudices and supergnize and practice the unity and love that is preached in each of these religions, we would be well on the way to establishing the harmony necsec vement of humanity to the adult stage of human development. We must educate our students so that they can investigate these truths and religio es. This might be best achieved by exposing the students to the literature of the great religions. It will also require an understanding of the histor of these religions so as to be able to discriminate what has over the centuries gradually crept into each of these belief systems and destroyed muc d vitality they contained in their original and unsullied form.

we must be able to study these religions using the scientific method, and not to accept that which cannot be substantiated by either logic or histori Recognizing that religion has been a primary force for the progress of human development will be useful in better understanding the history of nd. It will also be useful to see how this force of religion has also, when used incorrectly, been a cause of destruction of civilization and advance nce, religion can be used for both good and evil. It is only when we can bring the tools of intellect and investigation that are common to science on of religion that we will achieve the advances and understanding necessary to guide us to this rectification of the disunity between the worlds'l

g with the understanding that religious truth, like scientific truth, or any other truth for that matter, is relative and not absolute will help us in our e sane view of religion and its role in education and our multicultural and global societies. We must realize that the more deeply we study the w, the more we can learn from them and their truths, the more we can appreciate how they are but facets of one great, larger truth, each contributig with the other. Only when religion shorn of its superstitions and its outworn shibboleths achieves its rightful place in education and society wi ung power inherent in religion be used for the good of humanity. Indeed this principle probably more than any other principle is the bedrock up t world will be established.

ony and cooperation that must characterize our multicultural and global society can only be founded on the strict adherence to the principle of tl of human kind. This principle is a principle that permeates the teachings of all the great religions and is necessary for this stage in human growth must cast off the decades and centuries of entrenched patterns of conflict between the religions and develop a new attitude of love and unity anc everyone as members of one human family, as children of one father, as creatures of one creator, and as cells of one body.

such an ecumenical movement are apparent throughout the world, and seem to be growing yearly. Schools must become places that serve the ca
and religion, as one of the key elements to establishing and promoting the morality, is needed to guide the world in its future development.

The teaching of religion cannot be divorced from any effective program of any moral and character development. The inclusion of religion must be done with care if fanaticism and bigotry are to be avoided. Students of education should be familiar with the various religions and the basic underlying truths. They should be familiar with the influence of religion in the various aspects of literature, art, culture, and history. These spiritual principles should be infused throughout their curriculum.

**CONCLUSION**

One of the important moral values to be taught is the tolerance for and acceptance of others points of view, other cultures, and other religions. A holistic education should give children the abilities and desire to seek truth. This ability and desire will be based upon a solid moral and intellectual training in the educational institutions can play an important role in developing a common, moral framework for society and establish a foundation for unity with character education should develop an appreciation for the oneness of humanity as well as the need for unity in diversity. Character education should free us from the prejudices and fanaticism that have hampered our development.

must schools train students in morality and service but teacher education institutions must also train the teacher in the field of morality and service accomplished, the teachers in the teacher training institution must be dedicated to morality and service also.

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