Fostering Conscience and Moral Character Through Classroom Teaching

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Collaborative for Ethical Education
The Common-Morality Model of Integrative Ethical Education

*Top-down research-based guidelines*

Psychology of Character  Pedagogy: Expertise

Local Unique Implementation

Community Needs  Embedded Instruction

Local educators provide *Bottom-up (Specificity)*
Top-down Research-based Guidelines

- Psychology of character
- Pedagogy: Expertise development

Provided by the academic members of the team
What is *Character*?

Character is a set of skills or capacities or ethical know-how that can be cultivated to high levels of expertise.
What Should Character *Education* Look Like?

Character should be coached and practiced like any expertise or practical know how.
Character as Ethical Know-how or Ethical Expertise

- Ethical expertise is NOT
  - narrow technical competence
  - merely intellectual skill
- Ethical expertise is refined, deep understanding evident in practice and action
Expertise Has Gained Prominence

- Intellectual abilities as forms of expertise (Sternberg)
- Children develop along a continuum from novice to expert (Bransford et al., 1999)
- In each area of study
- Including moral character
How Are Experts Different from Novices?

- They have more and better organized knowledge
  - They have procedural & conditional knowledge:
    - What knowledge to access
    - Which procedures to apply
    - How to apply them
    - And when
- They perceive the world differently
  - They see underlying patterns
- They behave differently
  - Automatic and effortless behavior
How are *Ethical* Experts Different?
“A wise (or virtuous) person is one who knows what is good and spontaneously does it. Varela (1999, p. 4)

What does this mean psychologically?
Ethical Expertise involves individual capacities in

- Ethical Sensitivity
- Ethical Judgment
- Ethical Focus
- Ethical Action

Those with Ethical Expertise are:

- More Ethically Sensitive (*perceptive, imaginative, deeply feeling*)
- Better at Ethical Judgment (*reasoning, reflection*)
- More Ethically Focused (*attentive, motivated, personal identity*)
- Better at Completing Ethical Action (*effectivities, steadfastness*)
Integrate in academics

Ethical Process Skills to Embed in Classroom Instruction
Ethical Sensitivity Skills: NOTICE!

- Notice the need for ethical action
- Feel empathy
- Put yourself in the other person’s shoes
- Imagine possibilities
- Determine your role
Ethical Sensitivity Skills: NOTICE!

Understand Emotional Expression
Take the Perspectives of Others
Connect to Others
Respond to Diversity
Control Social Bias
Interpret Situations
Communicate well
Ethical Judgment Skills: THINK!

- Reason about what might be done
- Apply your code of ethics
- Judge which action is most ethical
Ethical Judgment Skills: THINK!

- **Reason** Generally
- **Reason Ethically**
- Understand **Ethical Problems**
- Use **Codes** & Identify Judgment Criteria
- Understand **Consequences**
- **Reflect** on the Process and Outcome
- **Coping** & Resiliency
Ethical Focus Skills: AIM!

- Make the ethical action a priority over other needs and goals
- Align ethical action with your identity
Ethical Focus Skills: AIM!

Respect Others
Cultivate Conscience
Act Responsibly
Be a Community Member
Find Meaning in Life
Develop Ethical Identity & Integrity
Ethical Action Skills: ACT!

- Implement the ethical action by:
  - Knowing what steps to take
  - Getting the help you need

- Persevere despite hardship
Ethical Action Skills: ACT!

Resolve Conflicts and Problems
Assert Respectfully
Take Initiative as a Leader
Planning to Implement Decisions
Cultivate Courage
Persevere
Work Hard
Moral Behavior

- Sensitivity
- Perception
- Judgment
- Implementation
- Focus
Success requires all processes!

Notice

Think

Aim

Act
How Can We Nurture Good Character as Youth Leaders and Educators?
First, Know Your Students

- Stressed
  - Undermines learning
- Undercare in early life
  - Insecure attachment
  - Poor behavior regulation
  - Stress reactive
Second, Know Their Brains

**Protoreptilian**
- **Survival**: anger, fear, panic (fight, flight, freeze, faint)
- **Morality is self-protective**

**Mammalian**
- **Social**: care, play
- **Morality is compassionate**

**Human**
- **Executive controls interact with** survival and prosocial systems
- **Moral imagination can build on either**

Stress
Know the Moral Power of Brain Systems

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Human
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**Engagement Ethic**

**Safety Ethic**

**Imagination Ethic**
Fostering Ethical Know How in Schools

Helping students answer: Who should I be?

FIVE INTENTIONAL STEPS
5 steps for fostering ethical know how

1. Establish a Caring Relationship
2. Provide a Sustaining Climate
3. Foster Ethical Skills through Apprenticeship
4. Encourage Self-Authorship
5. Restore the village

= Citizenship

+ Joy
Step 1: Establish a Caring Relationship with Each Child

"You cannot teach a child whom you do not love. You cannot teach a child whom you do not respect. You cannot teach a child whom you do not understand. You cannot teach a child whom you are afraid of. You cannot teach a child if your political baggage (i.e., sexism and racism) is brought into the classroom. You cannot teach a child without bonding first, which results from love, respect, and understanding."

(p. 32, Countering the conspiracy to destroy black boys, Vol. II, by J. Kunjufu, Chicago: African American Images, 1985.)
A Caring Relationship

- Engages the **emotions**
  - Fundamental to learning

- Fosters a **secure attachment**
  - Builds the bridge for instruction
    - Secures the child’s attention
    - Establishes a line of influence
  - Physiological orientation toward engagement ethic (oxytocin, opioids)
  - May take longer with some students

- Recall that a good relationship with one adult **outside** of family (for at least a year) is PROTECTIVE
**Step 2. Set Up Sustaining Environments:**

*Establish a Caring Classroom Community*

- Adults help kids meet their basic needs
- The five basic human motives are (Fiske, 2004):
  1. Sense of control (choices)
  2. Understanding (meaning)
  3. Belonging (connectedness)
  4. Enhancing Self (competence)
  5. Trust (community support)

*Good leaders/teachers help ensure members needs are met.*
Provide a Supportive Climate

- Encourage ethical skill development in everyday practices
- Keep Safety Ethic calm
- Support and practice Engagement and Communal Imagination ethics
- Emphasize positive purpose
  - Enhancement of human potential
  - Not impositional
  - Global awareness
Well-Structured Social Environments Provide

- **CHOICE**: Student autonomy, self-direction, & influence
- **VOICE**: Student interaction, collaboration, & participation in open discussion
- **PRESENCE**: Teacher warmth, acceptance, support, & modeling
- **SKILLS**: Provide training in social skills
- **HELPING**: Provide opportunities for helping others
- **DISCIPLINE AS CITIZENSHIP**: Foster discipline through a sense of citizenship to school

(From Solomon et al, 2002)
Step 3a. Teach for Ethical Expertise

- Nurture ethical character skills in
  - Ethical Sensitivity
  - Ethical Judgment
  - Ethical Focus
  - Ethical Action
How Do Experts Become Experts?

Experts-in-training engage in practice that is

- Focused
- Extensive
- Coached

In other words, *apprenticeship*
Step 3b: Teach Through Apprenticeship

- How does apprenticeship look?
  - Modeling by someone more “expert”
  - Model thinks aloud while solving problems
  - Instructor uses Zone of Proximal Development
  - Instructor scaffolds and fades
  - Theoretical explanation (reasoning, meaning) at the same time as authentic experience
Instruction can be Model-centered or Learner-centered

1. Model-Centered Instruction
   - First, teacher models the appropriate behavior
   - Throughout learning, teacher coaches students:
     - Guiding students in completing small tasks they can successfully complete
     - Explaining why, providing meaning

2. Learner-Centered Instruction
   - Help students construct a coherent understanding
   - Provide opportunities for extensive, focused practice
Combine Model- and Learner-Centered Instruction

- Cultivate character through four levels of expertise development
  1. Immersion in examples and opportunities
  2. Attention to facts and skills
  3. Practice procedures
  4. Integrate across contexts
Expertise Level 1: Immersion in Examples & Opportunities

- Attend to the **big picture**
- Learn to recognize **basic patterns**

The teacher *plunges* students into multiple, engaging activities. Students learn to recognize broad patterns in the domain (Identification Knowledge). Students develop gradual awareness and recognition of elements in the domain.
Expertise Level 2: Attention to Facts and Skills

- Focus on detail and prototypical examples
- Build knowledge

The teacher focuses the student’s attention on the elemental concepts in the domain in order to build elaboration knowledge. Skills are gradually acquired through motivated, focused attention.
Expertise Level 3: Practice Procedures

- Set goals
- Plan steps of problem solving
- Practice skills

The teacher coaches the student and allows the student to try out many skills and ideas throughout the domain to build an understanding of how these relate and how best to solve problems in the domain (planning knowledge). Skills are developed through practice and exploration.
Expertise Level 4: Integrate Knowledge & Procedures

- Execute plans
- Solve real-life problems
- Solve problems in multiple contexts

The student finds numerous mentors and/or seeks out information to continue building concepts and skills. There is a gradual systematic integration and application of skills across many situations. The student learns how to take the steps in solving complex domain problems (execution knowledge).
Why? Moral Exemplary Action

- Moral exemplars exhibit at the same time
  - higher affiliation with others (communion and compassion)
  - higher self efficacy or agency (Walker & Frimer, 2008; 2009)

- Monroe (2001), study of WWII:
  - Rescuers: “What else could I do? —They were human beings like you and me. ”
  - Non-Rescuers: “What could I do? —I was one person alone against the Nazis.”
Working with the Levels of Expertise

- Select levels appropriate for your students
- Use more than one expertise level to catch all students
- Teach more than one process at a time
- So students learn that the skills are not static
- Modify activity for your context
Skill: Conscience
Subskill: Self-Command

- Level 1: Teacher provides examples of self-command in multiple formats, demonstrating its helpfulness in different situations.

- Level 2: Students gather read historical or literary accounts, and/or gather personal stories from elders about their own successes or challenges in maintaining self control.
Level 3: Students research techniques people use to help control their impulses and select one to practice.

Level 4: Teacher asks students to identify areas where they need to practice self command.

- Students practice these techniques over a week or a month, perhaps working with a mentor, reflecting on the experience along the way.
Step 4: Teach for Self-Regulation and Self-Authorship

- Virtuous individuals must be autonomous enough to monitor their behavior and choices.
- Once developed, virtues must be maintained through the selection of appropriate friends, activities and environments (Aristotle, 1988).
Self-Authorship of Right Brain

- Self-awareness activities
  - Journal
  - Pay attention to likes and dislikes
  - Spend more time doing things that bring joy
  - Art. music, play
    - Playful activity is a good way to learn to stay in the present.
Self-regulation

- Individuals can be coached in self-efficacy and self-regulation in specific domains (Zimmerman, Bonner, & Kovach, 2002).

- How good we feel about ourselves is affected by how well we can self-regulate (Zimmerman, 2000).
Self-Monitoring of Ethical Skill Development

- Students are at the center of determining “who should I be” and “how am I doing?”

  **Self-command example**

- Students can evaluate themselves pre-post on self evaluative statements like:
  - “I take charge of my own feelings and don’t blame them on others”
  - “I know what to do to cheer myself up when I am down.”
STEP 5: RESTORE THE VILLAGE

Foster Strong Links to the Local Community

Build Collaborative, Democratic Citizenship
The purpose of ethical behavior is to live a good life *in the community*.

Each individual lives within an active ecological context (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) in which, ideally, the entire community builds ethical skills together.

Together community members work out basic questions such as:

- How should we get along in our community?
- How do we build up our community?
- How do we help one another flourish?
Restore the “Village” of Support for the Engagement Ethic

- **Community immersion**
  - Active, full body experiences with others
- **Find pleasure from social relationships**
  - Embodied, positive sense of community
    - singing, playing, dancing, laughing
The ancient Greek understanding of ethics as still relevant today

Ethics is the practical and moral wisdom or expertise cultivated in the context of individual and community flourishing.
Mindful Morality Uses Our Fullest Moral Capacities

- **ENGAGEMENT**: Full presence in the moment (*right brain*)
  - Intersubjectivity
  - Resonance with the Other

- **COMMUNAL IMAGINATION**: Uses abstraction capabilities to solve moral problems (*left brain*)
  - Self-regulatory capacities
  - Ethical know-how
The Common-Morality Model of Integrative Ethical Education

*Top-down research-based guidelines*

**Psychology of Character**  **Pedagogy: Expertise**

**Local Unique Implementation**

**Community Needs**  **Embedded Instruction**

*Bottom-up (Specificity)*

Local educators provide
The Minnesota Community Voices and Character Education Project

A common-morality partnership between educators, academics and the state department of education

(funded by US Department of Education #R215V980001)
Project Colleagues

- Collaborators
  - Tonia Bock (University of St Thomas)
  - Leilani Endicott (Walden University)
  - Jim Lies (University of Stony Brook)
- MN Dept of Education:
  Connie Anderson

[Image of Tonia Bock, Leilani Endicott, and Connie Anderson]
MN Community Voices and Character Education Project

- Collaborative model building over 3 years
- Volunteer educator teams at schools from around the state
- Research team offered character framework and novice-to-expert pedagogy
- Each local team integrated ethical skill development into academic-driven instruction, based on local needs and circumstances
Final Year Evaluation

- **Comparison of student effects at**
  - 2 high-implementing schools (n=88)
    - Advisory/homeroom, Curricular infusion, School-wide projects
    - Most if not all teachers involved
  - 2 low-implementing schools (n=168)
    - Only one or two types of implementation
    - Half or fewer teachers involved
  - 1 control school (n=125)
Measures of Comparison

- **MANOVA with Climate measure composite as covariate**
  - student connectedness to school, perception of teacher connectedness to student, perceptions of teacher attitudes, perceptions of teacher behavior

- **Students compared on Gain Scores**
  (Post Test – Pre-Test)
Student Gain Score Measures

- **Ethical Sensitivity**
  - Concern for Others (‘When I see someone having a problem, I want to help’)

- **Ethical Focus/Motivation**
  - Ethical Identity (‘Being a good person at school is important to me.’)
  - Community Bonding (‘People in my city care about me’)
  - Citizenship (‘It is important to support those who are following the rules.’)

- **Ethical Action:** Ethical Assertiveness (‘When friends ask me to do something wrong, I say no.’)
School Group: Type of Implementation

Student Variable
- Concern for Others
- Community Bonding
- Citizenship
- Ethical Identity
- Assertiveness

Mean

Control  Low  High

School Group: Type of Implementation
Analyses

MANOVA with 3 School Groups

- For Climate (covariate): Wilk’s lambda = .68
  \[ F(5,374) = 35.75, \ p < .001, \ \eta^2 = .32 \]

- For School Group (factor): Wilk’s lambda = .89
  \[ F(10,748) = 4.35, \ p < .001, \ \eta^2 = .06 \]
Univariate Analyses-1

For Climate:

- Concern for Others $F(1, 378) = .007, p < .93, \eta^2 = .00$
- Community Bonding $F(1, 378) = 113.42, p < .001, \eta^2 = .23$
- Citizenship: $F(1, 378) = 118.79, p < .001, \eta^2 = .24$
- Ethical Identity: $F(1, 378) = 45.33, p < .001, \eta^2 = .11$
- Assertiveness: $F(1, 378) = 21.38, p < .001, \eta^2 = .05$
Univariate Analyses-2

For School Group:

- **Concern for Others F (2, 378) =14.80, p<.001, η²=.07**
- **Community Bonding F (2, 378) =3.68, p<.03, η²=.02**
- **Citizenship: F (2, 378) =2.82, p<.06, η²=.02**
- **Ethical Identity: F (2, 378) =3.39, p<.03, η²=.02**
- **Assertiveness: F (2, 378) =3.38, p<.03, η²=.02**
Evaluation Summary

- **Climate** positively influenced the development of student Ethical Focus skills (each p<.001)
  - Community Bonding, Citizenship, Ethical Goodness

- **High Implementation positively** influenced the development of
  - Ethical Focus (each p<.03): Community Bonding, Ethical Goodness
  - Ethical Sensitivity (p <.001): Concern for Others
    - The two high-implementing schools worked on ethical sensitivity specifically
Deep and broad implementation of ethical skill instruction had positive significant effects on students whereas minimal implementation had little positive effect.
Overall Framework

Caring Relationships (Context) & Supportive Community (Process) & Ethical Skill Development (Content) results in Citizenship

through Mentoring Apprenticeship & Self-Regulation (Methods)

Common Good Character Community Flourishing (Outcome)
Collaboration for Ethical Education

Curriculum

Online Curricula

- Community Voices and Character Education
- Final Report for Community Voices and Character Education

Books ($15 each or 4 for $50)
Curriculum

Community Voices and Character Education

Framework

- Overview (pdf)
- Introduction Booklet (pdf)

Classroom Application Booklets

- Activity Booklet 1: Ethical Sensitivity (pdf)
- Activity Booklet 2: Ethical Judgment (pdf)
- Activity Booklet 3: Ethical Motivation (pdf)
- Activity Booklet 4: Ethical Action (pdf)
Lesson Planning

- Lesson Planning Guide (pdf)
- Linking to the Community Worksheet (pdf)

Sample Lesson Plans

- Caring By Connecting to Others Around the World (pdf)
- Examining Bias in Media and Everyday Situations (pdf)
- Analyzing Ethical Problems in Technology Plagiarism (pdf)
- Developing General Reasoning in Current Event Analysis (pdf)
- Values and Ethical Identity in Music (pdf)
- Helping Others Using Accounting and Research (pdf)
- Setting Reachable Goals (pdf)
- Overcoming Obstacles in Nature Conservation (pdf)

Project Presentation Resources
Project Presentation Resources

- Overview (pdf)
- Getting Started (pdf)

Project Posters

- Composite Poster (40MB tiff file) (jpg file)
- Sensitivity Poster (40MB tiff file) (jpg file)
- Judgement Poster (40MB tiff file) (jpg file)
- Motivation Poster (40MB tiff file) (jpg file)
- Action Poster (40MB tiff file) (jpg file)

Project Bookmarks

- Bookmarkers (32MB tiff file) (jpg file)
Remember the Principles of the “Integrative Ethical Education” Approach

- Focus on skills
- Develop student expertise
- Embed in regular instruction
- Adapt to specific needs
- Integrate local community

Using the Teacher Guidebooks
For more information and papers

- Darcia Narváez, University of Notre Dame
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- Webpage (download papers):
  http://www.nd.edu/~dnarvaez/

- My blog at Psychology Today: Moral Landscapes
  http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/moral-landscapes