



# Teaching Love

## in Schools

**Education for a New Humanity**

# **A Manifesto for Teaching Love in Schools**

## **Education for a New Humanity**

*"Education which leads to the acquisition of knowledge plus morality,  
makes for a peaceful world." - Shrii P.R. Sarkar*



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## Preface

*"[Love for the inner self] leads humanity towards subtlety and finally ensconces a person in the state of supreme bliss."  
P.R. Sarkar*

Throughout human history people have reported extraordinary experiences in relation to the inner self. For some these were described in religious terms, while for many these took on a universal feeling of bliss and elation that led to personal transformation and abundant compassion.



Modern researchers in psychology and religion now claim that these experiences are universal and occur in the lives of all people. Surveys show that while respondents differed in their descriptions of coming in touch with their deeper selves, the common denominator was the sense of immense compassion and love and a major transformation of their lives. Three quarters of those who participated in these surveys reported a greater purpose in life, felt the experience improved family relationships and said it enhanced their overall health.

P.R. Sarkar, the propounder of the Neohumanist philosophy and the inspiration of this work, stressed that human life only really unfolds in relation to the Self. While current education recognizes the external environment and inherited factors as the main factors that shape our lives, Sarkar proposes a third and 'dominant' factor, that of attraction of universal consciousness. His educational vision for a new humanity lies in incorporating honoring pure awareness into the school curriculum and making this the foundation for all other curricular activities.

Pure awareness comes naturally to most of us at some times of our lives and while many people experience glimpses of a reality beyond our normal consciousness, the difficulty lies in integrating these insights into daily life. To facilitate this process, P.R. Sarkar suggested an education for Neohumanism, educational practices and philosophy that honor and respect the inner subjective reality. In Sarkar's vision this will lead to a fuller human expression, and the chance for a society based on universal values.

Sarkar formulated educational practices that further inner growth and thus suggested a revolutionary and fundamental change in our education. He is not the first to say so, though P.R. Sarkar may be the first to practically initiate a global framework for this propagation under the banner of the Neohumanist Education movement.

The significance of this initiative can't be underestimated.

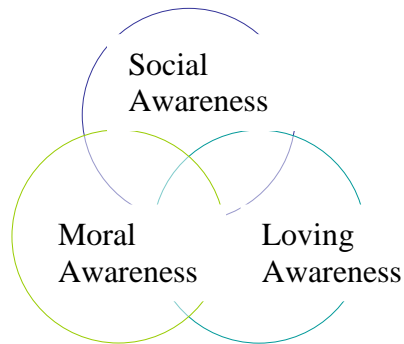
Every time one generation of adults in sufficiently large numbers furthers their children's emotional and mental development, history shows a tremendous improvement in subsequent 20 to 30 years with regards to compassionate values in the wider society. How we educate our children shapes our future.

The Neohumanist education movement stresses intuitive and psycho-spiritual connection are an inalienable part of the whole education process and fundamental to developing a universal perspective free from narrow group sentiments or superficial social divisions. It sees authenticity, personal initiative, self-expression, exploration, social maturity, personal insight and deepening awareness as subjective development whereas the objective part is outer reflection of that inner self. The idea of the NHE movement is that by reinforcing the inner sensitivity, the external development of skills, academic excellence and action will be more complete.

In the traditions it is said that the inner self is great and by coming in touch with it, we also become great. By being sensitized to the personal and deeper self, a more intuitive attuned adult can contribute more and with greater compassion to the welfare of others. P.R. Sarkar started therefore schools around the world with the dual aim of growing the inner person, and transforming society towards what he termed 'prama' or social balance.

While there is no Neohumanist school alike, as part of the process of self-discovery, all Neohumanist schools practice Quiet Time Exercises which gives the students time for daily contemplation and visualization of universal love. These simple practices have the effect of a neurological transformation that allows for the higher functioning of the mind and the experience of compassion.

Our culture has made a virtue of living as extroverts. We have learned to ignore the inner journey, the quest for our center. So, as a society, we have lost the center and have to find it again. Schools can play an important role in this rediscovery of the inner human nature.



In this introduction we want to suggest an educational vision that honors the deeper human compassionate nature in a socially realistic manner. Based on the Neohumanist model of education we address ways and means not just to make children smarter but to make them also more aware of their own emphatic capabilities. The greater purpose of this vision is to train more mature leaders who can take on the role of social transformation and the advancement of a peaceful society.

We see three components of Loving awareness, moral awareness and social awareness as the mainframe of Neohumanist schools.

As human beings we are limited. It is said that “We can do no great things – only small things with great love” We hope that through the simple act of teaching this great love may shine through.

R. Tamminga  
Taichung 2016

## Introduction – The Neohumanist Vision

*"Sensitiveness to life, is the highest product of education."*  
*Liberty Hyde Bailey,*

P.R. Sarkar was an optimist, deeply convinced of the potential goodness of people, who believed that the social, economic and ecological issues of the day are fundamentally problems that stem from ignoring the deepest human values.

At the same time he was a realist. The softer aspects of our human nature can not survive in an environment of 'structural violence', systematic ways in which social and cultural structures harm or otherwise disadvantage individuals. If we want to center our society on a more loving awareness, we have at the same time to create a social environment that is fair to all and offers protection from harmful dogmas and narrow sentiments that are hurtful and damaging. Only in a society where everybody has a chance, spirit values can thrive. This requires a social environment that encourages firm respect for ethics and the ability for clear and socially constructive thinking.

In his book *Neohumanism - The Liberation of Intellect*, P.R. Sarkar formulated a socio-cultural ideology to support these human values. The combination of a culture of universal love, neohumanist ethics and independent thinking are in his vision, the path towards a more harmonious and peaceful society. And though he did not use these terms, in this introduction we cover these three aspects under Loving Awareness, Moral Awareness and Social Awareness.

P.R. Sarkar believed that the human situation is improvable through intelligent innovation and saw schools as the key to introducing this new way of training of the new humanity. Under the banner of the Gurukul program, he started thousands of schools throughout the world, with the teacher as guide and Neohumanism at the center of the curriculum.

### Loving Awareness

Around the world, there are several societies where violence, poverty and discrimination are absent. Anthropologists have identified numerous communities where no murder or physical altercation has occurred *in living memory*. These societies are examples that peaceful coexistence is possible and that as a global community we can make peace too, if we commit to it. Common to these peaceful societies is a devotion and love for a transcendental ideal

P. R. Sarkar's plan for a more peaceful world starts with creating a culture that honors the development of deeper self-awareness through personal practices such as quiet time. In Neohumanist schools intuitive development and ethical education play a central role. The Neohumanist approach is a change from the inside out which starts by adopting universal compassionate awareness and is followed by exploring ways of integrating this different perspective in the way we teach our children. The growth of our emotional awareness and mental expansion will be reflected in our education and inspire the same in our children.

### **Moral Awareness**

The greatest challenges to the growth of a universal vision are the segmentation and tribalization of society. P.R. Sarkar classifies the source of these divisive drives as either 'socio-sentiments' or 'geo-sentiments'.

Socio-sentiments stand for a sense of superiority and privilege for certain groups based either on religion, race, gender, sexuality, status, tribal affiliation, gang culture and so on.

Geo-sentiments create a sense of exclusive ownership of a piece of land at the cost and exploitation of others and can be economic (as seen in colonialism), religious ('holy land') or social, (nationalism).

Geo-sentiments and socio-sentiments in a variety of expressions are the main source for all social tensions and conflicts in the world today. Fights over water, oil, people being degraded and smuggled to be sold, wars for religious ideals that exclude and demean others, we live in a global society where the culture of love is lacking.

The Neohumanist vision emphasizes the introduction of values of love, a morality that cultivates behavior and thinking that nurtures the well being of everyone. P.R. Sarkar calls this 'awakened conscience'. Social harmony is the direct result of a transformation in thinking and values, with a move away from self-centered thinking (*atma-sukha-tattva*) towards the principle of social equality (*sama-samaj-tattva*).



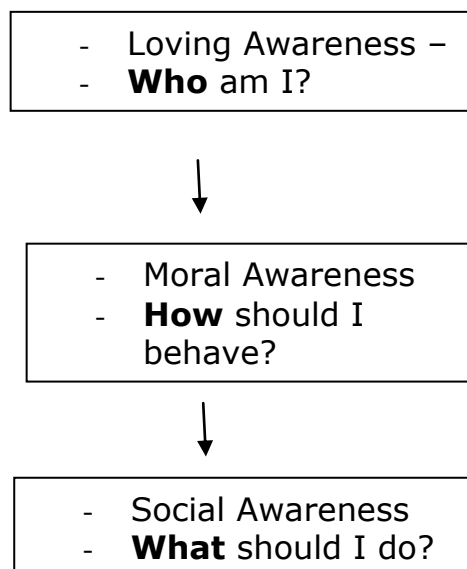
## Social Awareness

The role of schools has changed. While education in the past was for individual advancement, today we see it as the key to the survival not just of the individual, but of our humanity. And while universal love is pertinent to the Neohumanist vision and ethics define our attitudes and actions, the survival of our compassionate awareness depends on the protection of rational and critical thinking skills. In the past peaceful communities have been overrun and destroyed by societies that concentrated on nurturing warriors. The conflicts between Sparta and Athens are exemplary.

Our schools have to encourage a new intellectual thinking that consists of compassion balanced by opinionated thinkers who understand the contrast between the emptiness of an egoistic life and the fullness of an "other-regarding" one. We safeguard such greatness not through indoctrination, but an education that encourages a 'rationalistic mentality' based on:

1. Critical Thinking
2. Ideal Based Curriculum (systems thinking)
3. Experiential in Nature
4. Thinking for Social Transformation

Through Neohumanist education our students will develop their unique identity, role and purpose in life.



In P.R. Sarkar's words: "Education is perfect knowledge of what I am and what I should do."



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The call for more compassion and deeper self-reflection has been made time and again. In *'How the Non-killing Religions Spread'* the author, Marvin Harris explains how starting with Buddha and Zoroaster compassionate beliefs and religions emerged, in a confluence of brutal and costly wars, environmental depletion, population growth, widespread poverty and rigidified social distinctions. Though Harvis wrote about events two to three thousand years ago, this scenario very much resembles our own situation at this time.

But what we do next, how we further move ahead, today is not up to any religion, government, nor any global NGO. Love and compassion can not be implemented by the rule of law nor the intercession of priests. Today each individual has to take responsibility to transform and create a positive peace, an act of will that supports a more harmonious society by shifting our consciousness and priorities and making communities, economic and political systems that implement such a vision.

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# LOVING AWARENESS



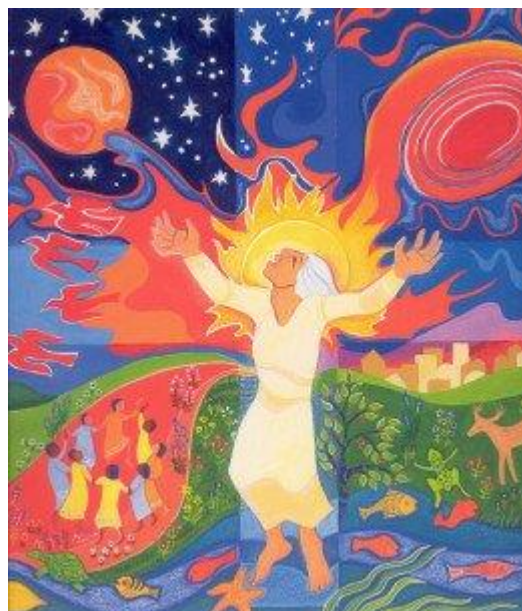
*Helping children grow in selfless love is essential  
to humanity's evolutionary leap forward. – Jo-Ann Triner*

## Education as Awakening to the Self

*"Education is just the remolding of the old structure of the mind and goading it unto the highest state of realization." – P.R. Sarkar*

While many teachers love to teach, few teach to love. We are good at making things faster, smaller, bigger or better or more powerful, today, at this point of history the most important need is, to make our lives more insightful and loving.

The exciting thing is that today we live in a time modern psychologists support and recognize that the human mind can be trained towards greater compassion. Principally this can be achieved through introversion. Andrew Newberg M.D. a leading neuroscientist specialized in noetic experiences, stresses the need for personal effort to do so as, "the brain does appear to be built to have these [deeper] experiences. There are examples of people reaching similar states, spontaneously, but for the most part, it takes work, dedication and practice."



In "The Heart of Religion" the authors Lee, Poloma and Post cite their research funded by The John Templeton Foundation, that shows that out of ten people, eight had experienced in some form overwhelming compassion, which had led them to greater benevolent behavior. The direct experience of Infinite love, these authors claim, is often unrelated to their religious upbringing, and is direct, personal and affectively intense. As Dr. Newberg, they too believe that our human neurological set up facilitates these altered states of consciousness,

Dr. Newberg also stresses the tremendous benefits of deepening personal insight for family life, health and personal well-being. He contrasts this with the apathy we see in students around the world. An estimated 75% of school graduates have no sense of what they want to do with their lives.

In "*Liberation of Intellect*" P.R. Sarkar compares an overly extroversal education with a palm seed. *"The sprout grows fast externally, but inside there is emptiness. First the kernel becomes porous, then the whole seed begins to fall apart bit by bit and finally loses its existence.*



*At present in most countries of the world cynicism is becoming rampant."*

In Neohumanist schools with a focus on self-discovery and contemplation, we see development in line with the inner goal. Its academic programs are balanced by the cultivation of the intrapersonal bond and the cultivation of compassion and its graduates sense direction and purpose in their lives.

Every time the start of new Neohumanist schools was reported to P.R. Sarkar, his first enquiry was, "And is the teacher a *sadhaka*?" meaning, if the teacher aims for the elevation of the mind through introversion or not.



Neohumanist education stresses that parents and teachers need to be personally committed to exploring deeper awareness. A child reared in an environment that honors the cultivation of compassion through introversion will have a greater ability to heal emotional hurts and trauma. This education will help arise in the child a sense of positivity and resilience that will shine through into adulthood.

Most human beings come out of childhood with residues of insecurity, fear and possibly loneliness irrespective of the amount of parental support and care. To consistently and positively nurture children and meet their needs a large reservoir of psychological energy is required and it is doubtful any parent or let alone teacher exists who can

adequately achieve this. Rather than an educational failure, this is essentially part of the human condition.

Where we as humans fall short, the inner connection helps meet our children's needs for a sense of safety with its subsequent psychological benefits. The teacher's personal effort towards this helps children nurture their own inner lives with greater love.

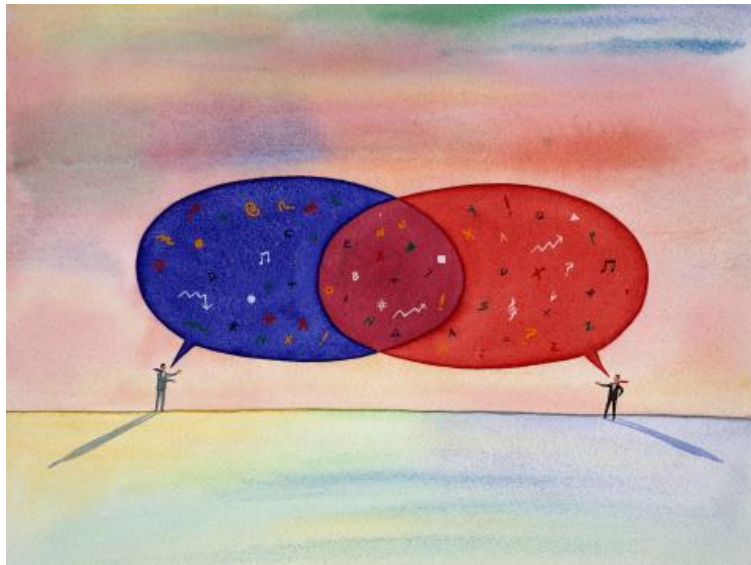
Neohumanism aims to extend this intuitive and loving connection to the entire universe and when we talk about love, it is seen as universal and all encompassing. Rather than being bound by a particular object, this love is the reflection of a subtler state of mind and therefore it would be more appropriate to call it 'Loving Awareness'.

*"The supreme purpose and goal for human life...  
is to cultivate love."* *Shri Ramakrishna*



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## Introverts vs. Extroverts



Since the days of Carl Yung's analysis of human traits, the terms 'introvert' and 'extrovert' have been applied in most personality assessments and applied in simplified ways to describe individuals.

While extroverts are most conspicuous in entertainment, politics and business

management, introverts consistently are credited with greater academic achievement, invention. Introversion and extroversion are cultural qualities that are socially transferred.

A group of American children, when offered a challenging puzzle, on average spent 9 minutes before giving up. Asian children did not stop for fifteen minutes. Introverts did not only better on the cognitive side, but also excelled in the area of endurance.

On the other hand, introversion as a personality trait is generally associated with shyness, insecurity, lack of assertion and social awkwardness, qualities that affect the effectiveness of the 'soft power of quiet'.

Here, when we speak about introversion we look at accessing not the emotional psychic qualities but the deeper mental resources which are positive and compassionate. In this sense we develop the positive qualities, of greater concentration, analysis and persistence, without the negative behavioral elements and anxiety of public interaction.

***"Sooner or later, all the peoples of the world will have to discover a way to live together in peace, .... If this is to be achieved, man must evolve for all human conflict a method which rejects revenge, aggression, and retaliation. The foundation of such a method is love"***

***Martin Luther King***

## Loving Awareness – not what you think

*Love is reckless; not reason.*

*Reason seeks a profit.*

*Love comes on strong,  
consuming herself, unabashed.*

- Rumi – On Love

At a recent seminar on mindfulness, a child psychologist asked the audience what they expected to be the youngest age for depression in children. While the attendees guessed eight to ten, he said that the youngest he had met was five and had been on the waiting list to see him for over one year, so should have been around four when depression was first diagnosed. The feeling of being lost, worthless, sad, anxious and irritable arises when the inner connection is gone.



*Loving awareness is the subtler state of mind that is within us all and can be perceived through withdrawing attention from the external environment and drawing the concentrated mind within.*

In brainwave analysis this state is recognized with gamma and delta wave lengths. These are the brainwave patterns babies and young children enjoy most of the time. It is a totally different way of being compared to common awareness which is usually described as alpha and beta waves.

Psychologically this state of mind also differs. While reason is for gain, Love as the force of the Soul is transformative and if we follow it in life, will take us along the adventurous path to growth and self-discovery. Love is often called 'blind' but we would rather say that this Loving Awareness really makes us see.

Bio-chemically, the feeling of devotion and respect for inner self is similar to the act of giving to others, which doles out several different happiness chemicals," Stephen G. Post says, "including dopamine, endorphins that give people a sense of euphoria and oxytocin, which is associated with tranquility, serenity or inner peace."



Those who have experienced the deeper aspects of the human mind describe it in different often dramatic ways:

*"I experienced a deeper presence and have come to know that that presence was not other than myself."*

*"I felt a great unconceivable energy full of power, love and clarity. There is nothing superior to this in my entire life."*

*"I felt an openness, positive feeling, unconditional regard for all things and people. These feelings or instances of awareness were intuitive and implicit – that is they seemed to come without actual thoughts or words."*

When compared to the writings of the mystics of thousands of years ago, there seems to be a great consistency in these descriptions which reinforce the conception that the experiences of the inner self have remained largely unchanged.

While these experiences are overwhelmingly positive, for most of us, they are the result of conscious choice and effort. In some cultures, people use drugs to induce these states of mind. Experts in nearly every field of psychology believe that drug induced experiences of the deeper self do little to create a holistic foundation from which to live one's life.

Quiet Time exercises on the other hand enhance cognition, memory and the ability to concentrate on specific tasks, without any health risks to our brains. Embedded in an educational setting it offers the opportunity for shaping our next generation's lives in exceptionally positive ways. Only human beings can think themselves into happiness and despair. The more we engage in educational practices that cultivate the positive values within, the more control we gain over our body, mind and fate.

P.R. Sarkar writes that mere humanism, which is not motivated by any perennial source of inspiration is bound to become a formality only, devoid of real sincerity. It may die out any moment, like a river which ends in the desert sands."

To move forward with this Neohumanist concept that all human beings have the natural ability to go beyond the intellectual field of realization, we have to learn to humbly let go of the old vestiges of our social and superficial identity and embrace the intuitive self within. This is a

personal journey, a fundamentally human and personal choice. Schools should offer the environment to practice so in appropriate ways. In P.R. Sarkar's words:

**If you want to attain the bliss of higher consciousness, you must offer your own self. If you want to have the Great "I", you must give away your own little "I". .... You must completely surrender. To attain that Infinite One with the help of your mental concentration and strength, you have to surrender yourselves (*Vibration, Form and Color*)**

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## **Breathing develops inner sensitivity!**



Loving Awareness can be cultivated by transforming our nervous system, freeing it from stress and opening it up to deeper awareness. One way to experience greater compassion into daily life is through simple breathing practices.

### **Breathing is central to the stabilization of the mind and the**

**entire brain function.** The brain and breath are directly linked. Alternate nostril breathing integrates left and right brain functions. Slowed down breathing also improves cognitive functions and concentration. When there is a rapid pulsation of the breath, it is more difficult to focus and intake sensory perceptions. By slowing down the breath, the mind is stabilized.

You can look upon the inhalation and exhalation as the driving of a car. Stepping on the car's accelerator and breaks rapidly make for a bumpy ride. A jerky breathing pattern is the same to the mind. Slowing the breathing process means a smooth mental flow and a balanced body.

- Healthy breathing cleanses the body: Seventy percent of the body's metabolic waste is eliminated through the lungs. Most people only use twenty percent of their lung capacity.
- Complete breathing supports optimum brain use: While incomplete breathing results in tension, low muscle tone and lung disease, it also causes under utilization of the brain.
- Complete, aerobic breathing can do the same as what exercise

does, but without putting the additional pressure on the joints and muscles.

- Slow breathing increases intuitive awareness and promotes the function of the pituitary.
- Deep breathing lowers stress levels: Stress reduces depth of breathing, and lowers the long term ability to concentrate. The body's capacity to absorb oxygen reduces with age, starting from the age of thirty onwards at a rate of on average 1% a year. Poor posture also prevents healthy breathing.

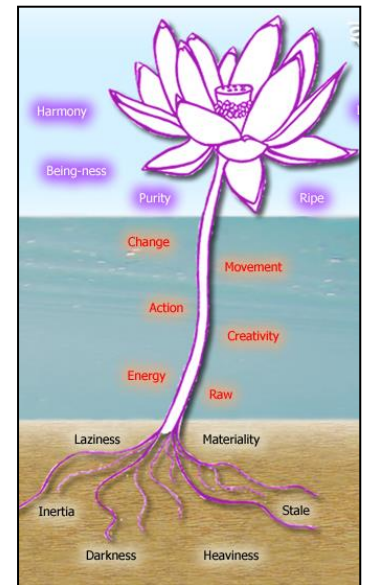


### How breathing increases brain function

Breath control affects the cerebral blood circulation. We have already seen that breathing through the left nostril only, activates the right side of the brain (spatial cognitive skills), while breathing through the right nostril only, activates the left side of the brain (speech). Alternate nostril breathing with breath retention affects the reticular activating system (RAS), that part of the brain believed to be the center of arousal and motivation in mammals.

### Breathing and Autism

The functioning of the RAS, the cerebral center for consciousness process, has been observed to deteriorate in patients with Alzheimer and autism. When testing brain function in groups of practitioners and non-practitioners of breath control, it was demonstrated that those who had done regular breathing practices had developed better problem solving skills.



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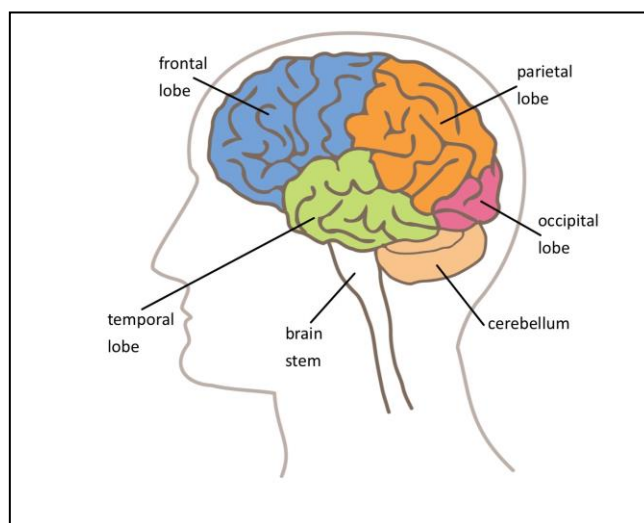
## Cultivating Intuitive Awareness and the Brain

***“Children are great imitators. So give them something great to imitate.”  
~ Dr Benjamin Spock***

In the debate on human development, we usually refer to nature and nurture as the two primary influences that determine growth. P.R. Sarkar introduces a third and dominant element, that of attraction of the most subtle awareness. By helping our children be more attuned to this subtler feeling within, our children will evolve in better and more harmonious ways. The sentience of honoring loving awareness in education can help children explore these properties better.

Our normal presence consists of three states: sleeping, dreaming, and normal active awareness. When we talk about loving awareness we talk about a fourth state that is inborn and naturally present, but has to be cultivated through introversion to more deeply affect our daily lives. Loving Awareness is a condition of the higher mind, one that creates peacefulness and compassion and in which the sentient energies are dominant.

From a neurological point of view, this cultivation of the inner identity through quiet time practices changes the balance of the brain as it shifts activity from the limbic system (with fear and anxiety as its primary emotions) towards the left prefrontal lobes (compassion). Brain scans on meditators also show a reduced activity in the parietal lobes, which indicate a loss of self and a sense of merging with whatever feeling we identify ourselves: compassion, peacefulness, infinity.



Contemplative practices also stimulate activity in the prefrontal lobes, which furthers our ability for empathy. In fact, thinking of any form of love, appears to strengthen the neurological circuits that allow us to feel compassion towards others. (Focusing on fear on the other hand may create symptoms similar to post traumatic stress disorders and aggression towards others as we observe in people who suffer from depression)

In Neohumanist thought the cultivation of the inner softness of the heart is the key source that makes all things “sweet and blissful, unifying individual life with collective life.”



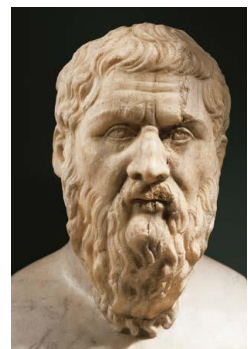
How does this precious feeling spread? Its presence has to be nurtured, affirmed and reinforced by the children’s parental and educational environment. By honoring this quality from early on, possibly pre-natal, through our own personal practice, we offer our children an extra source of resilience to overcome the difficulties and challenges ahead

and live a life with greater grace and wisdom.

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Reconnecting with Loving Awareness has been compared to rediscovering the second innocence and requires the letting go of some of the habits of life. Plato therefore calls Love the child of ‘emptiness and fulfillment’, something that arises by giving up our old selves and helps rise in us a new awareness of complete satisfaction. The journey of rediscovering our human roots, lies in prioritizing our needs and wishes. And thus we learn to reconnect to the inner recesses of peace.







### **Love as Transformer**

*Jung calls Love 'the transcendent function.' Love has one foot in this world and one in infinity and pulls us from one into the other. By committing with all of the heart, we give up the dictates of our bondages and narrow identity, and come out in a different and new way.*

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**Teaching Love**  
in Schools

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## Loving Awareness Meditation

Sit comfortably in a place where you won't be disturbed. Take three to five quiet breaths. Gently close your eyes.

Imagine the horizon spanning through your chest with a radiant sun rising in your innermost center—your heart. As though being melted by the solar warmth, release tension in your shoulders and across your throat. Soften your forehead and rest your attention inward on the light deep within. Take seven to 10 smooth, even breaths.

As you inhale, invite the glow from your heart to expand toward the inner surface of the body. With each exhale, let the light recede. Take another seven to 10 peaceful breaths. Inhaling, invite the light to touch the parts of you that interact with the world—your eyes and ears, the voice center in your throat, the palms of your hands, the soles of your feet. Exhaling, feel your light shine more clearly. As you continue to inhale and exhale, silently say: "I radiate friendliness for those who are happy, compassion for those who are unhappy, equanimity toward all." Continue until your attention wavers. Then, sit quietly for several minutes.

When you feel complete, place your palms together in front of your heart and bow your head. Release the backs of your hands to your thighs and lift your head. Gently open your eyes to return to the horizon of the world.

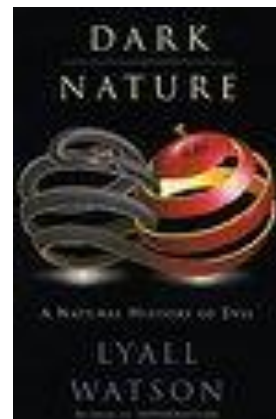
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## Is Loving Awareness an inborn quality?

*The movement of the inner life of humanity is entirely an personal affair, a matter of love ...." P.R. Sarkar*

Ideating on Love does not come naturally to everybody. In the matter centered environment, its value is often overlooked. Lyall Watson, a biologist, states that destruction and violence have their fundamental genetic purpose. In his book "*Dark Nature*" he offers countless examples from the animal kingdom of fratricide and infanticide. He believes that this shows that human beings are inherently violent ironically for the survival of the species.



Though Watson's conclusion is that violence can be controlled, there is something to say for violence being a hereditary feature that differs from person to person. Those born with what is called the 'warrior gene' are more inclined to aggressive behavior than others. Their genetic make up affects their body's bio-psychological balance and causes a lack of serotonin receptors which makes them more prone to aggressive and impulsive behavior.

For the majority of children a blissful self should be the standard experience of childhood. If the mother before conception and during pregnancy is attuned to the universal self, this may even further be enhanced.

Unfortunately high levels of testosterone in the mother during pregnancy (due to stress, medication, food – especially hormone tainted meat) may affect the level of empathy in their offspring and make childhood difficult. In this case, boys will be more prone to aggression and girls will show more tomboyish behavior.

While a pregnancy under stress may result in a newborn with stronger aggressive impulses, research also shows that irrespective of the genetic condition, anybody can learn to love and feel compassion. Lisa Miller, an American psychologist put numbers on this. She cites twin studies that suggest that the strength of a child's inner awareness for one third depends on broad genetic heritability. The rest is up to family and social environment. This means that through a proper cultural and educational environment we can nurture loving qualities of any human being, irrespective of their family situation. Violence is therefore an aberration, the result of defective education and rearing practices, not a default option.



In Ladakh, one of the most northern regions of India, bordering Pakistan, live a community of over 117,000 people who have not seen violence in living memory. Some scholars argue that Ladakhi peacefulness rests primarily on inner resources and calmness, personal characteristics that are fostered by their Buddhist beliefs. Others see this peaceful behavior as the result of strong social codes and effective consensus based conflict resolution.

Irrespective of the source of this peaceful behavior, Ladakhis are known for their patience, tolerance, honesty, and truthfulness with one another. They similarly tend to deal with outsiders in a straightforward, peaceful manner. And with children, the Ladakhi are infinitely patient.

In an anthropological study of forty or so peaceful and non-violent communities around the world several common elements were found:

- one of a strong sense of community, with self-centered thinking often much less pronounced than the over riding urge for collective welfare.
- Aggression was abhorred and anger laughed at or as in one case, considered 'a disease'.
- But most of all, there was a deep awareness amongst these people of a transcendental entity, for some the forest, which was seen as Mother, the source of peace, for others the sea, the sky or infinite compassion.

Children in these societies learned these values and their way of thinking through the model of the parents and thus molded their identities on the traditions. The issue of teaching children love, and to fall in love with love itself, is an all over powering influence. If children are to learn Loving Awareness, it is really a matter of the elders to practice it and that way affect the interests and priorities of the children.

*"Without an education of the heart, we have no humanity at all."  
-Erasmus*



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## **Yoga Movement and the development of Loving Awareness - the Relaxation Cascade**

Research on the benefits of Yoga programs has shown that over a twelve week period, the stretches, postures and movements along with quiet time, reduce the functioning of the amygdala, which is the key organ in the limbic system that generates fear, aggression and anxiety. When the limbic system sees lowered activity, it allows for the frontal lobes to increase their influence over the thought processes, which result in greater equanimity and compassion.

What we practically observe in **using Yoga and massage along with meditation and breathing exercises, is that the chemistry of the body finds a natural balance** through a complex process of neurological and endocrine activities. We call this the Relaxation Cascade. This transformation to a peaceful nature is beginning to be recognized by modern science. A simple example:

- Yoga practice increases the production of oxytocin,
- Cholinesterase levels increase too.

Oxytocin is the hormone that induces peacefulness and calmness and is produced in the body through loving touch. Cholinesterase is the enzyme that plays a role in producing acetyl choline (an important neurotransmitter). The combined effect with children who **practice yoga and get massage is calmness as well as concentration**. While the bio-chemical processes in the body are complex, the practices that produce these effects are not.

Another example:

- Yoga increases GABA levels by up to 27%

GABA is a neurotransmitter that creates calmness and relaxes the muscles. This benefits children diagnosed with ADHD, as well as children with spasmodic GABA deficiency induced forms of Cerebral Palsy.

**Very often it is anxiety and stress that prevents the body from dealing with its own imbalances.** The breathing and slow stretches along with the massage, help the child relax and invigorate itself. These psychotropic effects of Yoga create enormous possibilities like **changing the structural use of our brains**. This also applies to children with learning difficulties:

- Left nostril breathing for half an hour increases spatial cognitive functioning, important for those lacking proprioceptive awareness.
- Right nostril breathing increased verbal skills in those who lack the ability to talk.

By letting your child lie on one side, the nostril on the opposite side will naturally become more dominant and activate the child's specific cognitive skills in the side of the brain closest to the floor.

The RAS controls awareness and self-image and is often weakened in children with autistic spectrum and patients with Alzheimer disease. Alternate nostril breathing has shown promising results in helping reverse the deterioration of the RAS in Alzheimer's and is considered an option for autism too.

These data are results of clinical testing in Universities from all around the world. The United States National Institute of Health lists over 1000 medical papers on Yoga research. More medical data on the benefits of Yoga appear almost every day, covering cancer, asthma, weight loss, strengthening the neurological system, dyspnoea, disease prevention, menstrual and fertility problems, epilepsy, etc.

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## Love and the Philosophers

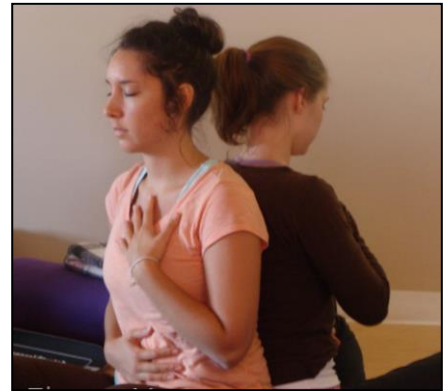
*Look inside  
And find where a person loves from.  
That's the reality,  
not what they say.*

*Hippocrates*

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*"That person indeed is the real mother,  
That person indeed is the real father,  
That person indeed is the real relative,  
That person indeed is the real well-wisher,  
Who right from infancy and childhood  
Manages to impart to the child a love  
For the infinite self."*

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The idea of making awakening to the self the center of our culture is not new. In fact, the concept of compassion may well be an evolutionary advancement as some anthropologists claim that the Neanderthals who were less socially adaptive, lost out to the *homo sapiens* due to the latter's superior skills for communication and cooperation. While survival of the fittest may lead to short-term gain, research clearly shows it is survival of the kindest that leads to the long-term survival of a species.

### **Personal Emotions in Education**

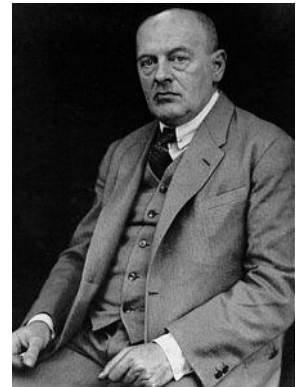
Notwithstanding the benefits that compassion brought to our species, there has been a constant push back against higher values in the realms of science and philosophy. Some see this as the natural reflection of the complexity of our brains, with some thinkers more influenced by the limbic systems (which fuels a more authoritarian approach) while others thoughts originate more in the prefrontal lobes.

So we see that the softer qualities of the human heart were looked upon as an 'affliction' well since the days of Plato and early Christianity. For millennia, many philosophers and scientists have regarded emotions as the fount of irrationality, baseness, and sin. The Age of Enlightenment was a basic continuation of classical thought, giving predominance to the intellect. Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), the central figure of modern philosophy, saw compassion as a weak and

misguided sentiment: "Such benevolence is called soft-heartedness and should not occur at all among human beings," Some even called Love a case of "mental starvation". Thomas Willis, often called the father of modern neurology, listed love in the section on mental problems.

### **Beyond the Intellect**

While intellectuality was seen as the *summum bonum* of human consciousness, some philosophers like Blaise Pascal, who in the second part of his life had a mystical experience of the 'Fire of Divine Love' challenged the dominance of rationality. He believed that love comes first and everything else second. He supported St. Augustine's concept that life is *ordo amoris*, a ranking order created with love at its pinnacle.



Max Scheler was another scientist-philosopher who many years later under influence of Buddhist philosophy saw the qualities of Loving Awareness as the prime motivator in our life's decisions.

The thoughts of these individuals couldn't counter balance the more materialist school of thought of the leading thinkers of the past three hundred years of modern education system. Kant's ideas still shape education today. And it is a matter of fact that positive emotions, which Sigmund Freud called 'the corner stone of humanness' in this age of systems and logic, science and technology, are not cultivated more systematically.



*Thomas Willis' encyclopedia of diseases of the brain included "love sickness" as a neurological disease.*

### **Loving Awareness and Islam**

Islamic culture flourished at a time when Europe was stuck in the so called dark times of the Middle Ages. In later centuries the liberal environment that nurtured Islamic growth became more and more authoritarian and intolerant, thus stifling the free thinking that had been the force behind its cultural growth and success.

The Iranian Jamaluddin Afghani and the Egyptian Mohammed Abduh, were agitating for a liberalization of Islam as far back as the nineteenth century. They based their claims on a compassionate interpretation of Islam. According to Amira Wadud, Islamic Studies Professor, original Islam did not allow violence to women and girls, guaranteed women's rights to inheritance and divorce. Subsequent jurists from the Abassid period designed the Sharia laws that practically degraded women and punishments such as stoning and honor killings. A recent conference on child abuse in Pakistan found high rates of infanticide, abandonment and violent physical abuse, child labor of nearly 10% and high illiteracy rates especially amongst females. Again, the more liberal humanist vision lost out.

### **Asia and Loving Awareness**

While in the Western philosophical traditions, the search for loving awareness failed to be integrated in common thought, a similar event occurred in China. Mohism, inspired by the thoughts of Mo-zi, a slave turned philosopher, advocated that society be based on universal love (jian-ai) and rationality. This vision lost out to Confucian thought with its stress on social conventions and obligations. Confucius' concepts of a rigid social order and a divine emperor became the dominant way of thinking while Mohism with its stress on individuality and merit all but lost its social influence.



### **Love and Awakening the Wisdom of the Heart**

As humanity faces new challenges for survival, there is a growing belief that we have to expand our naturally gifted ability for compassion and aim to prepare a new generation equipped with the skills and state of mind to be able to break the cycle of violence and social inequality in which our society is stuck today.

In modern educational trends, self-insight does get increased attention: know your strengths, find out your real interests, develop a passion for something are catch words that are heard more and more in schools.



There is a growing realization that without first exploring one self, our children won't find themselves in this noise laden world. Kids need to spend quiet time with themselves for really developing self-insight.

Or in Max Scheler's words, "Only by temporarily suspending impulsion would one be able to achieve pure intuitions of an unadulterated consciousness"

*"We can generally agree that the conscious cultivation of unlimited love constitutes the greatest imaginable leap forward in human consciousness and behavior." - Stephen Post*

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## **Loving Awareness – Towards a New Ecology**



The shift in awareness from a self-centered mindset to one based on universal love is fundamental to discovering our appropriate place in the universe.

At present our position is one of basically anti-nature: the way we grow our food is 'anti-nature', how we plan our cities, our houses, is fundamentally anti-nature. Even how we train our children to be scared of spiders and walking barefoot on grass, is alienating our offspring from relating to the wider universe.

Only when we human beings understand where we stand as creatures in the large scale of things, and learn to be less focused on our own little selves and more respectful to plants and animals and all that lives and even that does not live, we can develop a balanced society. And this society includes animals, plants, oceans, mountains and rivers. Training our society to honor the cultivation of loving awareness above all else will lead to the real possibility of a new ecology.



**Teaching Love**  
in Schools

## Love and Quiet Time – Embracing the Self

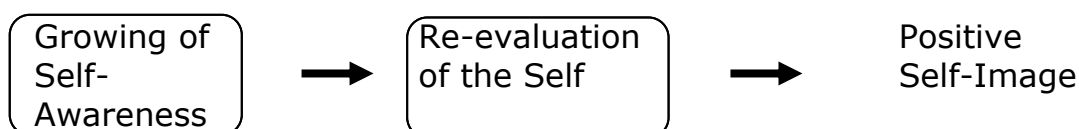
*The mind isn't going to stop thinking and the goal of quiet time isn't to suppress thinking, but to surpass it.*

As Love is a quality of the subtler aspects of our mind, it requires we withdraw attention from the extroverted self and look within in order to access these qualities.

Through the daily practice of quiet time we can grow compassion in the same way as playing a musical instrument or being proficient in a sport. Cultivating compassion and kindness through meditation affects brain regions that can make a person more empathetic to other peoples' mental states. Education plays an important role in this process, as it helps children feel safe, respected and responsible.

In quiet time we loosen the bonds of our personal history, our social identity. After developing a fair assessment and self-acceptance, the logical next step is the discovery of the compassionate self.

Schematically this natural flow can be compared to a three step process:



Quiet Time, helps to correct negative self-images and develop a new vision of the self based on inner qualities. P.R. Sarkar talks of the 'awakened conscience' which helps us deal with the pain from self-abuse and imposed complexes. It also stops us on focusing on others to understand ourselves. Once we define ourselves in terms of others we lose the freedom to shape our own lives. Meditation helps us refocus our own concept of self.

This entire process is the natural result of any form of quiet time exercises and inner work focused on love within, without anyone really directing or steering it. It is an inner unfolding that happens naturally when the mind is directed towards the inner self. Gerald G. May calls this "the Power of Slowing." That is the unique benefit of individual practice of silence. Saint





Augustine worded this process as follows, “Man, though he feels lonely, is always in encounter with himself. The more he presses this dialogue with the self, the more he presses the self itself. Sooner or later he discovers the Totally Other in the self.”

### **Quiet time helps develop empathy**

A group of regular meditators of different traditions and non-meditators were confronted with a person in trouble. Among the non-meditating participants, only about 15 percent of people acted to help. But among the participants who were in the meditation sessions “we were able to boost that up to 50 percent,” said DeSteno. This result was true for both meditation groups thereby showing the effect to be consistent across different forms of meditation.

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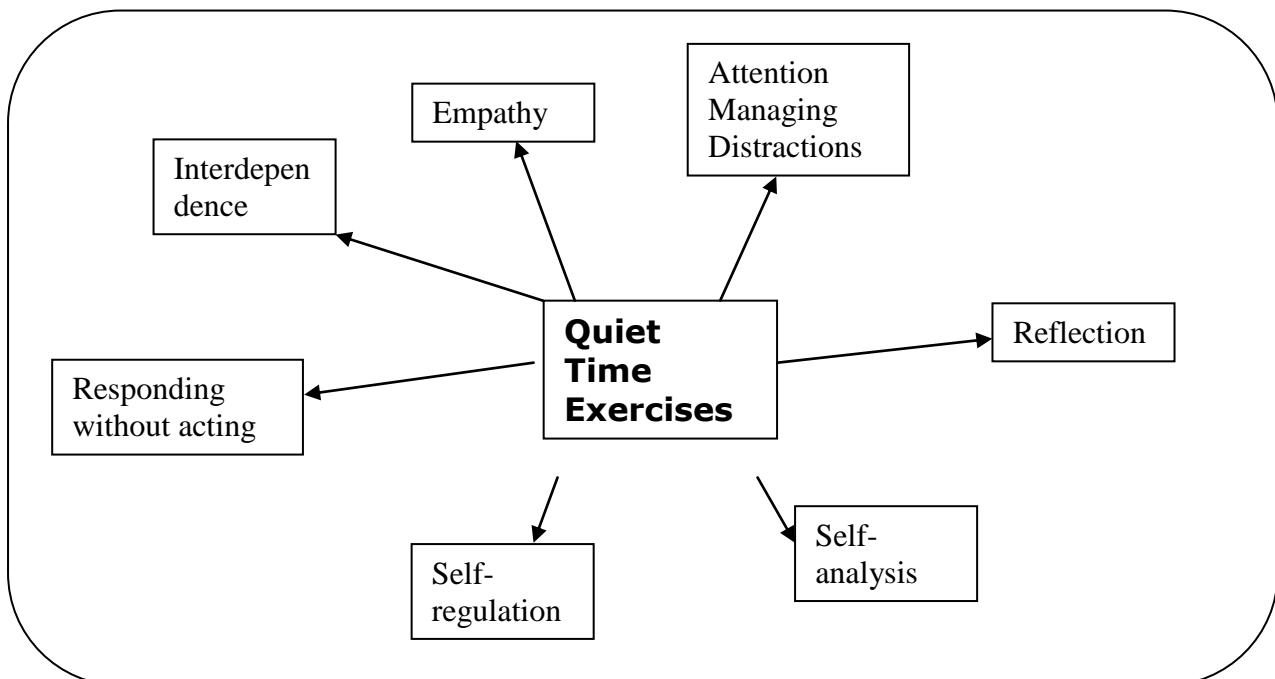
“The truly surprising aspect of this finding is that quiet time made people willing to act virtuous – to help another who was suffering – even in the face of a norm not to do so,” DeSteno said, “The fact that the other actors were ignoring the pain creates a ‘bystander-effect’ that normally tends to reduce helping. People often wonder ‘Why should I help someone if no one else is?’”

These results appear to prove what has long been believed—that quiet time and self-reflection lead you to experience more compassion and

love for all beings. The findings offer scientific proof for quiet time techniques to alter the calculus of the moral mind.

### Love and Self-regulation

An inner based positive self-image creates self-respect, dignity and appreciation of others, which in turn brings about healthy relationships and improved work situation. The *Holistic Education Review* states that we only 'become fully human when inner directed and dehumanize when we obey the dictates of the external conditions.'



The researchers identified several cognitive functions that are active in the brain during quiet time self-awareness, self-regulation, and self-transcendence (S-ART) which make up the transformative framework for the meditation process and as we have discussed earlier, are important factors for compassion to arise.

"Through continued practice, the person can develop a psychological distance from any negative thoughts and can inhibit natural impulses that constantly fuel bad habits," says David Vago. Continued practice can also increase empathy and eliminate our attachments to things we like and aversions to things we don't like. The ability to 'see into the soul' allows for the ability to redirect oneself.

**Inspiration comes from inside. [Sometimes] we need inspiration from outside; but that inspiration is not lasting. It is momentary. But in order to inspire yourself you have got to know yourself; by knowing yourself you are inspired always. Inspiration**

from inside will stand for all time; it will inspire you for all time. That alone is going to help you. And by inspiring yourself you are inspiring others.” ( *Dharma Sadhana* )

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### **The fruits of introversion**

Richard Davidson lists some of the benefits of contemplation in our lives:

- Emotional Resilience  
Describes the ability to recover from setbacks
- Bright Outlook  
One’s dominant emotional flow
- Social Intuition  
The ability to grasp people’s inner going-ons
- Emotional Awareness  
The level of self-awareness: your thoughts, physical condition and feelings
- Understanding emotional Context and origins  
The ability to sense appropriateness of emotions according to context
- The ability to maintain focus.

**“Self-realization is the only knowledge. All other types of knowledge are simply the umbra and penumbra of knowledge, because they do not contribute to any real understanding of objects.” – P.R. Sarkar**

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*“... while science provides a lot of important information about the world, spiritual experiences can also provide important information about the world; and unless we find a way of linking it together, we will never truly be able to see what is really real ....”*

*Andrew Newberg*

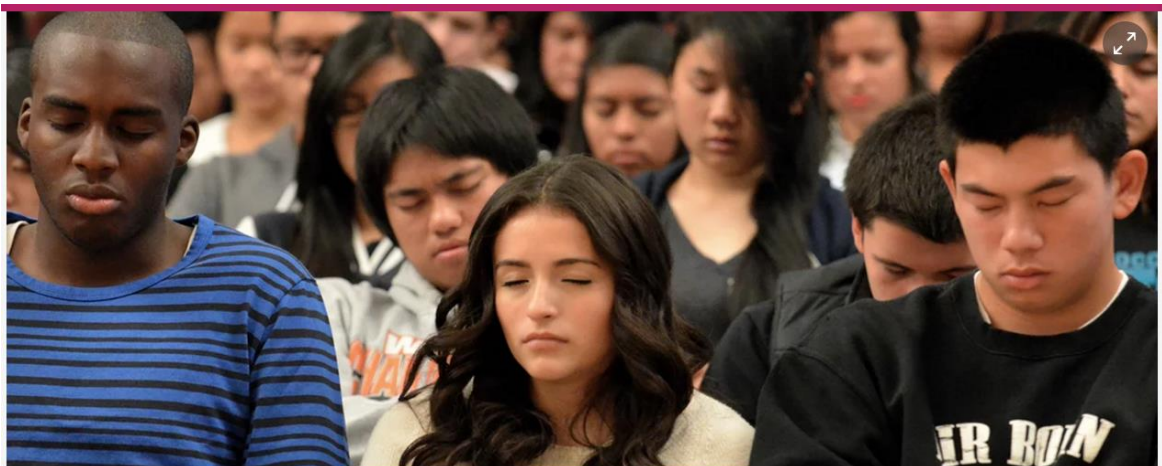


## Loving Awareness and the Teacher

*"Teaching empathy is experiential. There is no flash card for empathy, it does not develop like that. - Mary Gordon*

A teacher gives knowledge, a Neohumanist teacher gives him (or her)self. The real teachings are not the words, but what remains unspoken. The Neohumanist teacher is an inspirer who infuses us with his or her own spirit and values.

To help our children on the journey of self-discovery, we have to readjust our own values and priorities. One way is to celebrate different learning outcomes, such as improved social integration and personal skills, a sense of purpose of life, in addition to academic performance. But the main way is to become travelers ourselves thirsting for the more introverted life. Only a teacher who awakens the heart's wisdom can awaken the same in the students.



*'There can be no significant innovation in education that does not have at its center the attitudes of teachers and it is an illusion to think otherwise'*      *-Postman, Wheingartner*

Any quiet time program in school must start with the teachers. Former teacher Claire Kelly is operations director for the Mindfulness in Schools project which offers training and resources for teachers. She says it is vital the teacher embodies the practice if the students are to follow suit.

"If you are not living the loving awareness principles yourself, the kids will know, they will be very cynical and you will probably put them off," she says. "Likewise, if you teach them a lovely mindfulness lesson and then go out and kick the photocopier in the corridor, they will notice."

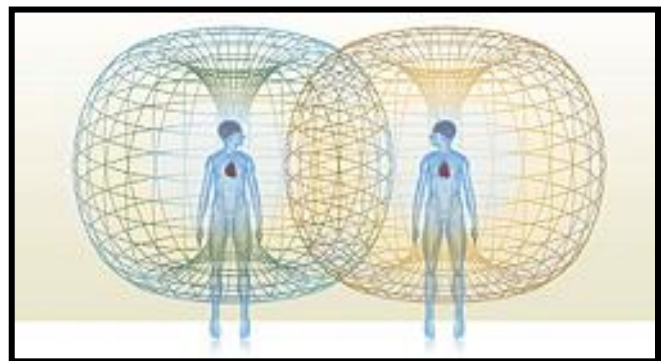
*"When considering the spiritual development of children, the spiritual preparation of the adult is an integral part of the equation" ( B. Hyde, Beyond Logic)*

We may rely on competence to cover our inner deficiency, but as a leader, says Parker Palmer, a teacher "must take special responsibility for what's going on inside him or herself, inside his or her consciousness, lest the act of leadership creates more harm than good." Children don't copy schools. .... Students reflect if not copy the values and expectations of the teachers and therefore it is the mind shift of the teacher that will affirm the child's innate spirituality.

### **Unconditional Teaching**

While most teachers offer love as a reward for certain behavior and thus train their students to assume certain socially rewarding roles, a teacher inspired by the vision of awakening the Heart's wisdom will aim for the liberation of the student by awakening universal love. Alfie Kohn speaks of "unconditional teaching": in order to awaken total awareness, a student has to be in the presence of a person who moves towards total love.

Does the unselfish mind of one contribute to the happiness, health and resilience of others? The Institute for *Research on Unlimited Love* funded a study on how human thought affects the living world around us. Conducted by renowned scientists, they did experiments on the effect of being stared at. It was found that under many types of circumstances, the electrical signaling in the brains of people gets synchronized.



Grynberg Zylberbaum's research showed that the level of synchronization becomes increased between two people who have shared some quiet time before any of these experiments.

What Grynberg also found was that the participant with the most cohesive quantum wave pattern sometimes set the tempo and tended to influence the other. This means that the most ordered brain pattern prevailed.

The idea that introversion by the teacher connects one with others seems paradoxical. John Makranski explains, "Pure perception doesn't just view others in their basic goodness, it reflects their goodness back at them, helping them become newly conscious of it." Children see themselves through our eyes. In that way self insight is not a passive action, but through its arising in ourselves, it also activates unconditional love in others.

A teacher can awaken the student to his true nature. Like the lion, brought up amongst sheep is brought to the water and sees his own reflection and recognizes himself, a child comes to see the whole self through looking at others. John Makranski writes that a teacher who is connected to his or her personal inner being, also can communicate with the inner mind of the student. He writes, "Those who embody an all-inclusive, wise love that doesn't believe in all the world's [fixed] maps are profoundly liberating figures in the world."



*"One who would become a teacher ... must examine himself and rid his heart of pride and anger." - Maria Montessori*

And you don't need to be a great master to play this inspiring role. There is the story of an old Rabbi who on his death bed called his closest students and told of his impending demise. The students were obviously sad and then asked who of them should take the lead in continuing his work and guiding the congregation. The Rabbi called a young boy and said, "You will be the new Teacher." The young man was shocked. "But Rabbi," he cried, "I don't know the Truth. How can I lead others?" The Rabbi sighed, "You fool! You don't need to know the Truth to teach it. The Truth will teach itself!"

*"The first and paramount responsibility of anyone who purports to lead or manage is to manage the self:.... " Dee Hock*



## 2. Moral Awareness



*What will our children do in the morning if they do not see us fly?  
-Mevlana Rumi*

## Value Education

The power of loving awareness comes not so much from its feelings but practicing its values and how to bring these qualities into each and every aspect of life. Love and compassion can't stand without clear values.

Our physical evolution shows that we are meant to think from heart. As an embryo, the physical heart starts to beat before the brain begins to function. As the brain begins to evolve it continues its dependence on the heart. It's not just the physical heart that dominates. The energetic heart, according to P.R. Sarkar, has the capacity to let "all the nerves flow in the pattern in which it itself is flowing". By allowing children to feel and go with their interests and dreams along with self-reflection and explore the values of love, academic learning will be personal and meaningful and lasts for a life.



### Love and achievement

While the heart is dominant, there is an apparent conflict between intellect as a Type A way of thinking - assertive, fast, short term - and the intuitive way of perception of the heart (Type B) which is contemplative, reflective, long term oriented. As we live in a Type A world, which demands assertiveness our schools have come to look upon values as supportive of an output-facts-based education.

In Neohumanist schools the approach is the opposite and stresses the subjective/introversive, with objective/extroversive adjustment. Thinking from the pure heart is open and inclusive and naturally accommodates the alert and rational intellect. Neohumanist Schools nurture logic and rationality supportive of inner awareness. Though apparently contradictory, intellect and intuition can work together harmoniously if deeper awareness is the dominant factor.

As teachers and parents we have to show children how to live the values of love for them to be able to believe in our own humanity and create our own practices and family based or school based ceremonies to honor these values that reflect our compassion.

Good value education also is the foundation for better mental health. A curriculum based on values and exploring their application shapes human character for a life time.

In education circles there is the discussion whether to teach these values implicitly or explicitly. Implicit teaching would mean, students work their frame of reference on their own through observation and study. The explicit approach applies a more direct way of teaching and lists the values and teaches through stories and songs which are then explained.

In Neohumanist schools the consensus is that both approaches are complimentary and both are necessary. We need to make clear and explicit choices and explanations, as well as let the children observe and analyze on their own so that they can have the independence to make value based choices. In the following pages we will discuss:

1. Values of Love and Peace – the explicit way
2. Values and Behavior – the Implicit way
3. Ethics of Love and Mental Health
4. Family Values

## Values of Love and Peace

*“Psycho-physical parallelism is very easy, while psycho-spiritual parallelism requires repeated mental efforts.... This is the only way by which one can prevent one’s mind from being crudified due to constant psycho-physical parallelism.” – P.R. Sarkar*



Choosing for a society of peace is a collective choice of values. The Zapotec in the state of Oaxaca, in southern Mexico are an example of a group of communities that can be divided into violent and non-violent groups, living side by side. Those which consciously embrace a culture of non-violent values and methods of conflict resolution live with respect for individuality, responsibility in mutual support and collaboration for the social welfare. In these communities there is no crime and interpersonal disharmonies are dealt with in the bud through counseling and education. In other Zapotec communities (in the same area) that don't embrace these values, violence is 'relatively common'.

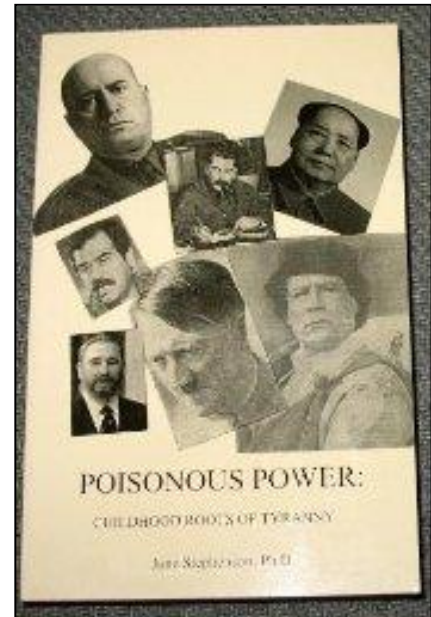
The psychic environment one grows up in has a tremendous impact on the human mind. A culture that does not honor the heart will have a reduced awareness of humanist values. P.R. Sarkar calls such environment 'pseudo culture', one that is often not only violent but also commercialized, narcissist and homogenized, supplanting the authentic local traditions and is estranged from the exploration of the self.

While we may tolerate these environments in the name of freedom of speech and choice, laxity in the defense of humanist values may lead to great horror. J. Stephanson in his book *"Poisonous Power, childhood roots of tyranny"* describes the early lives of some of the world's most tyrannical leaders. Hitler's generation, was brought up with the at that time popular pedagogy of Daniel Gotlieb Moritz Schreber, who advocated spanking, regulated feeding times for infants and the ignoring of crying. Mao Zedong was similarly dehumanized by corporal punishment and was regularly whipped by his father in the name of

discipline. Mao Zedong went on to become China's leader who during the four years of The Great Leap Forward 'killed 45 million in four years'.

Sadam Hussein was the unwanted child of a mother who first tried to abort him, then abandoned him, and left him to a childhood of abuse and bullying. Deprived of love, Sadam Hussein became one of history's greatest bullies himself.

Ceausescu, the later leader of Romania, was reared in a home of a violent and alcoholic father who regularly beat his children and often humiliated them. The list of terrible leaders is endless, but the culture these leaders emerge from is one forged dehumanized values.



We have to wake up to the horrible nature of our global society and its problems with violence.

- The WHO reports that 14% of the male world population dies violence related deaths. Eighteen percent of those die in wars. The other 72% percent of men die due to social violence and aggression.
- One in three women in the West experiences domestic violence.
- Over 500 women are raped a day in the UK. In India these figures are even more alarming with a rape every two minutes.
- The issue of violence in society is of such importance that in the year 2000 the Surgeon General of the USA declared it the main issue to be dealt with in the government's efforts to improve the health and well-being of the people.
- The WHO has consistently declared violence one of the leading global public health problems in the world.

Though love is an inborn quality, it has to be cultivated through our environment. In the Neohumanist vision we embrace Ethics of Love. "Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defense of peace must be constructed." (preamble to the UNESCO Charter). Cultivating Loving Awareness and its values is the first step towards peace.

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## Values and Loving Awareness

In Neohumanist Schools these values are:

1. Don't hurt others
2. Speak good words
3. Don't steal
4. See goodness in all
5. Simple Life
6. Keep clean
7. Be thankful
8. Help others
9. Keep learning
10. Grow love

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In the traditional schools from before the beginning of the industrial revolution learning to look within and develop wisdom and clarity of mind was considered very important. Students would live with a monk, a saddhu or medicine man and learn the values of compassion.



This training usually started at the age of eleven or twelve. The desire of self-exploration, was considered something that naturally surges in adolescence, as young people start to ask fundamental questions of themselves. Self-inquiry in adolescence is nature's way of responding to this normal crisis. Only a culture that leads one to look within can respond to this call.

And while the more contemplative traditions of the world have advocated such a culture for centuries P.R. Sarkar's unique concept is that only by redirecting the human mind and aiming for full human consciousness, can we expect to bring social transformation. The two are totally and inseparably interconnected.

**“If you want to be real human beings, you must continue your spiritual practice in your inner life and with equal effort you must see to it that no irrational, undesirable or detrimental theory is propagated in the external world.” (P.R. Sarkar)**

By regularly freeing the mind of the shackles of our narrow identity, and connecting to the unconscious, clear perception arises. And this

perception connects the self to the world, with precious skills of intuition, healing, insight, compassion and peace. If in our youth we learn this path of self-awareness, our lives will be smooth and harmonious.

In modern education this element of self exploration has been ignored. We have rationalized and intellectualized our lives abandoning the cultivation our introversive selves.

No education system will be perfect, no culture will protect the mind from distraction. But while our education system is good at training the ego and how to function in the economic set up, neohumanist education aims to complement and temper these qualities by also teaching the values and culture that encourage us to draw within and connect with the self and cultivate loving awareness. P.R. Sarkar writes:

**“Educational institutions where only [worldly] knowledge is imparted are not sufficient. Side by side the controlling [intuitional] knowledge must be taught. In fact the intuitional knowledge should have precedence over the worldly knowledge.”**



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## Cultivation of Sentience through Diet



The way we eat reflects our values and therefore food and ethics are often put together with regard to how it is produced. Here we want to highlight another aspect: Our food affects our sensitivity to the self. The Spartans trained their children to be soldiers and the Athenians (who lived less than 50 km away) reared their children to be philosophers. The Spartans trained their children through a “starvation diet” to be lean and supple. The 2nd–3rd century author [Aelian](#) claims that Spartan cooks were prohibited from cooking anything other than meat. Athenians ate more vegetables and fruits, with occasional meals with meat reserved for holidays. Our diet shapes our values, how we act and think.

In yogic thought food is divided into three categories: sentient, mutative and static. Each category of food affects the energetic system in corresponding ways. Static foods stimulate emotions of lethargy, mutative foods help arise emotions of restlessness and emotion, while sentient foods inspire balance and kindness. For growing intuitive awareness it is recommended to provide children with sentient foods.

Quality of food	Examples
Sentient	Whole grains, fruits, milk products.
Mutative	Coffee, chocolate, tea, most medicines, soda drinks.
Static	Onion, garlic, meat, mushrooms, excess in-take of tea, coffee and chocolate, durian, fish, poultry.





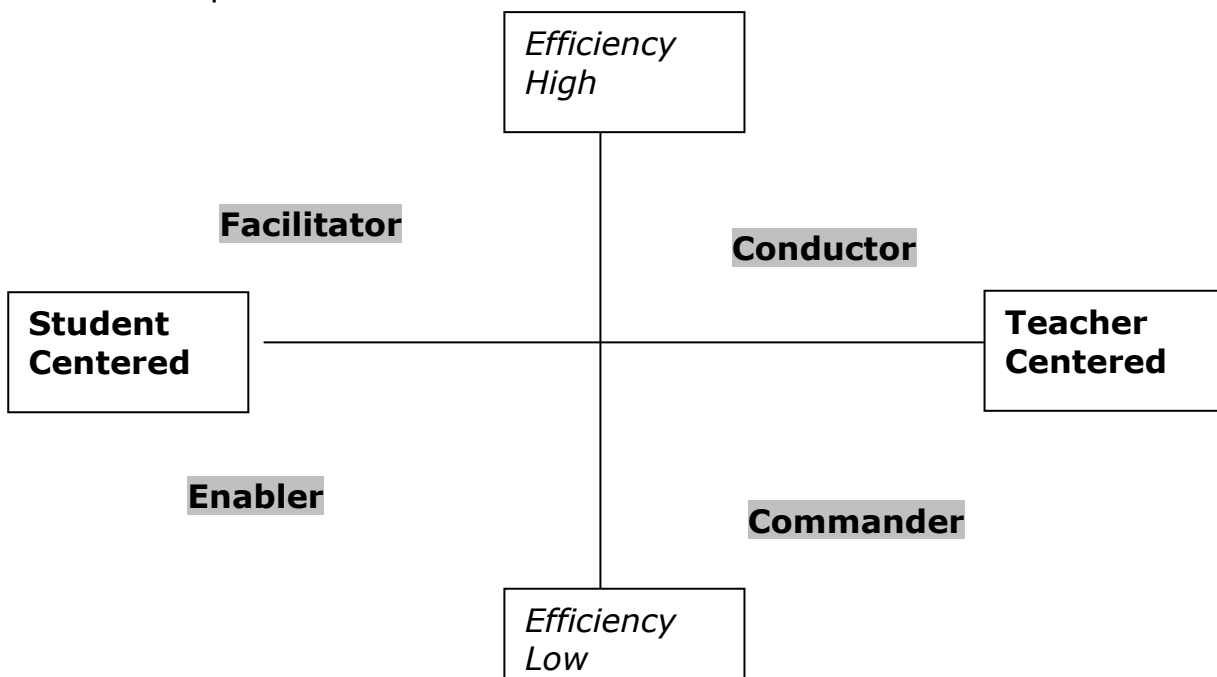
## Values & Behavior

The way we interact with our children, our colleagues and manage our schools represents our values. Socrates' way of teaching was not confined to any syllabus. And yet his way of teaching, stimulating of independent thinking and respect for independent thought reflected his values.

Most of our present schools' approach is very different from Socrates. For many teachers passive acceptance is more desirable than active criticism. Through our top down teaching also creates an attitude towards learning that actually shows that discovering knowledge is beyond the power of students. Through our testing we train children that recall is the highest form of intellectual achievement and that the collection of 'facts' are the goal of education. The voice of authority is to be trusted more than independent judgment.

In Neohumanist schools we want to change the values we want to impart, through our approach. In schools that promote introversion we see a change in the power balance between teacher and students. This power shift gives autonomy and respect to each and every student, without fear for being wrong allows them to explore new answers. This is fundamental to any greater social role we aim for our students.

Usually we see the teacher – student relation in form of a carefully crafted equilibrium.

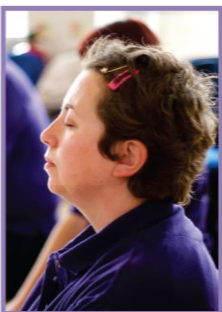
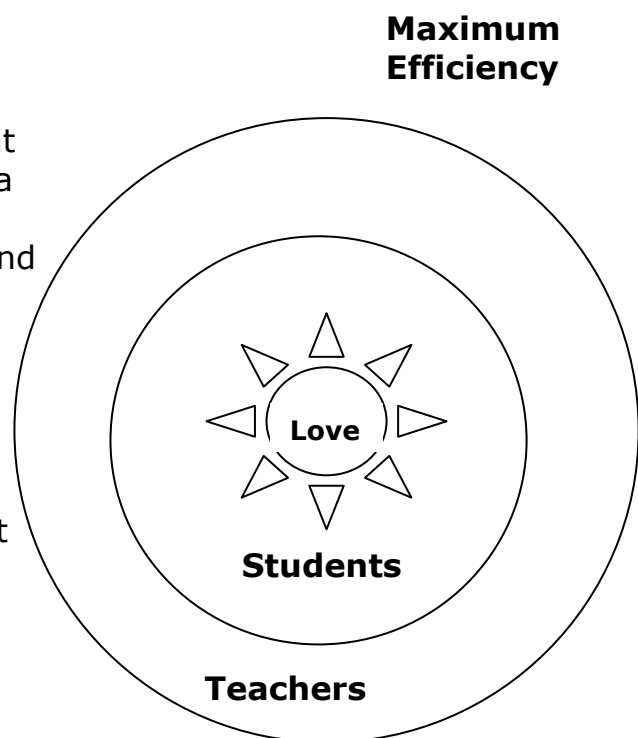


Most teachers like to see themselves as 'conductors', operating a dynamic teaching style with high student participation. The drill sergeant type of teacher follows a teacher centered strategy as well. However, students aren't creatively involved and thus their learning efficiency is low.

On the other hand of the spectrum is a highly student centered learning whereby the students make many of their own decisions and the teacher is a facilitator in the process, directing the students' independent actions from behind. A final model is a teacher who functions as an 'Enabler' where learning becomes accidental.

Whatever model of the teacher-student relation one follows, the classroom dynamics will be changed totally when we add the daily practices of self-discovery to the equilibrium. By starting our classes with quiet time and the cultivation of the heart's wisdom we change the power dynamics of the class. While negative emotions attract more negativity, positive feelings arouse cooperation and greater harmony.

Loving Awareness brings a different dimension to everything we do as a teacher in the classroom as it puts our own collective humanity first and removes the tension that arises in the struggle for power in the student-teacher relationship. Instead students can feel safe and protected. Learning therefore becomes efficient and joyful. Students develop a different social image if themselves.



More fulfilled teachers deal with tense situations in better and healthier manner. Happy teachers make for happy schools! Empathy and Love are the best and deepest way to connect with others. P.R. Sarkar writes that teachers **“ must bear in mind that their students are all just children of different ages; and that they themselves are children like their students.”**

As we connect with others and establish a feeling “of mutual affection”, the students will learn our values and behave differently. We will get more cooperation and smoother interactions.



*"Every teacher has to blaze with the spirit of sacred love."*

*Uno Cygnaeus<sup>16</sup>*



## Ethics of Love and Mental Health

Globally, one third of the children have experienced more than four adverse childhood experiences (ACE), meaning they have been exposed to serious traumatic situations, such as violence or abuse. This applies to countries such as the USA or the UK as well as places such as India and China. Research shows this means that one third of these children are more likely to end up with serious mental problems, addictive behavior and tendencies towards self-harming.

This one third of society that due to lack of secure attachment experiences lacks behind in brain development and therefore academic and career advancement, is one key reason we have to integrate empathy and love programs in a more comprehensive manner in to the academic curriculum, not as a separate subject, but as its core.

Lisa Miller states that in families with a propensity for depression, the incidence of depression in children is reduced by up to 80 percent when the child shares a spiritual outlook with the mother or another elder. When teenagers have harsh or judgmental parents, the effects of that kind of parenting are mitigated by as much as 70 percent if the teen can call on some kind of direct, personal relationship with the deeper self.

Not that we can give everybody an ideal childhood but as Vaillant puts it, "What goes right is often more important than what goes wrong." The positive effect of one loving relative, mentor or friend can overwhelm the negative effects of the bad things that happen.

Healing these traumas should be a part of an enlightened education. Seligman, one of the originators of Positive Psychology, writes "there are human buffers that act against mental illnesses: courage, future mindedness, optimism," and so on. Schools that reinforce concepts of this positive psychology are able to reverse slides in grades and ensure a better academic performance.

In their book *Shadow Syndromes* the authors state that adolescence is the period schizophrenia starts to express itself. Similarly depression is often traced back to adolescence. Could schools create the healthy thinking patterns that could prevent these mental problems arise?

In therapy many people complain about life being meaningless, without values, while they yearn for fulfillment and spirituality, all signs of the absence of Love. Our schools don't deal with these problems by

focusing on academics, and not helping their students connect to their inner world. This leads to a depressing society where some people go to therapy, but most people go on with their lives fighting their demons in silent suffering. Depression has been called the "common cold of emotional illness".

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Depression is the leading cause of disability. An education that overtly focuses on cognitive skills creates imbalanced students. "You will find psychic diseases, insanity mostly, among ... so-called learned and intellectual people. Devotees however, "never suffer from these issues. They are free from all psychic diseases." says P.R. Sarkar.

The Progressive School of Long Island (PSOLI) which runs a Neohumanist education program up to ninth grade lists several 'intangibles' as the qualities their graduates carry with them when they leave school, some of which include a desire to do voluntary service, zest for learning, self knowledge, leadership, universal outlook, integrity, calm rationality and the 'Joy factor', a positive outlook on self and life in general. These qualities were identified after fifteen years of studying the graduates' specialties. Teaching Loving Awareness and the values of Love leads to better lives for our students.

Positive Psychologists show that preventive efforts with ten year olds halved the occurrence of depression in these children as they grew up. Through introversion, "all psychic distortions" are resolved (P.R. Sarkar).

**Shift awareness,  
grow new minds  
make the world shine....**

**Neohumanist philosophy emphasizes:**

- ❖ education is given a high priority, with the aim of personal growth, not just professional training;
- ❖ children become informed, critical and articulate citizens;
- ❖ local nonviolent cultural traits are kept into account (religion, art, relationship with nature);
- ❖ pluralism of ideas is maintained
- ❖ identity is based on the heart



## Love and Family Values

*Love is like a flower  
In the sun and rain  
Plant it in your heart  
And it will grow again and again  
And when you let it grow  
Inside you  
It will surely grow in others too!*

*From: Songs of Values of Love<sup>6</sup>*

A landmark study of altruism by Pearl and Samuel Oliner found that children who have compassionate parents tend to be more altruistic. In the Oliners' study on Germans who helped rescue Jews during the Nazi Holocaust, one of the strongest predictors of this inspiring behavior was the individual's memory of growing up in a family that prioritized compassion and altruism. If we want our children to develop empathy, we have to practice selflessness ourselves.

Developmental psychologists have also been interested in comparing two specific parenting styles.

- Parents who rely on induction engage their children in reasoning when they have done harm, prompting their child to think about the consequences of their actions and how these actions have harmed others.
- Parents who rely on power assertion simply declare what is right and wrong, and resort more often to physical punishment or strong emotional responses of anger. Nancy Eisenberg,

Richard Fabes, and Martin Hoffman have found that parents who use induction and reasoning raise children who are better adjusted and more likely to help their peers. This style of parenting seems to nurture the basic tools of compassion: an appreciation of others' suffering and a desire to remedy that suffering.

Research on intention shows that one person thinks of something, and creates a mood, that same mood is adapted by the receiver. Not only that. Every major physiological system in your body is mirrored in the body of the recipient. "Two bodies become one, says Lynne McTaggart. The effect is now labeled as DMILS – Direct Mental Interaction with Living Systems.



In *A General Theory of Love*, the authors describe this sculpting effect as the result of the limbic systems directly impacting each other. Intellect, the neo-cortex reasons and collects information quickly. The limbic brain, often seen as the seat of our deepest emotions, does not. Intellectual knowing is rejected by the limbic brain. However another person's positive limbic activity affects our own, i.e. one of us can reconstruct the limbic brain of another.

John Makransky, puts this same experience in different words, "What you shine on others, shines back on you". It is the 'reflection principle'. And if a child is to keep alive his inborn sense of wonder, he needs the companionship of at least one adult who can share it, rediscovering with him the joy, excitement, and mystery of the world we live in.

Nurturing Loving Awareness happens on the unconscious level. By focusing and redirecting our own minds towards deeper layers of the self, we help those around us become aware of their own deeper selves as well.



### 3. Love and Social Awareness



*"Love leads people to respond to the needs of the world."*

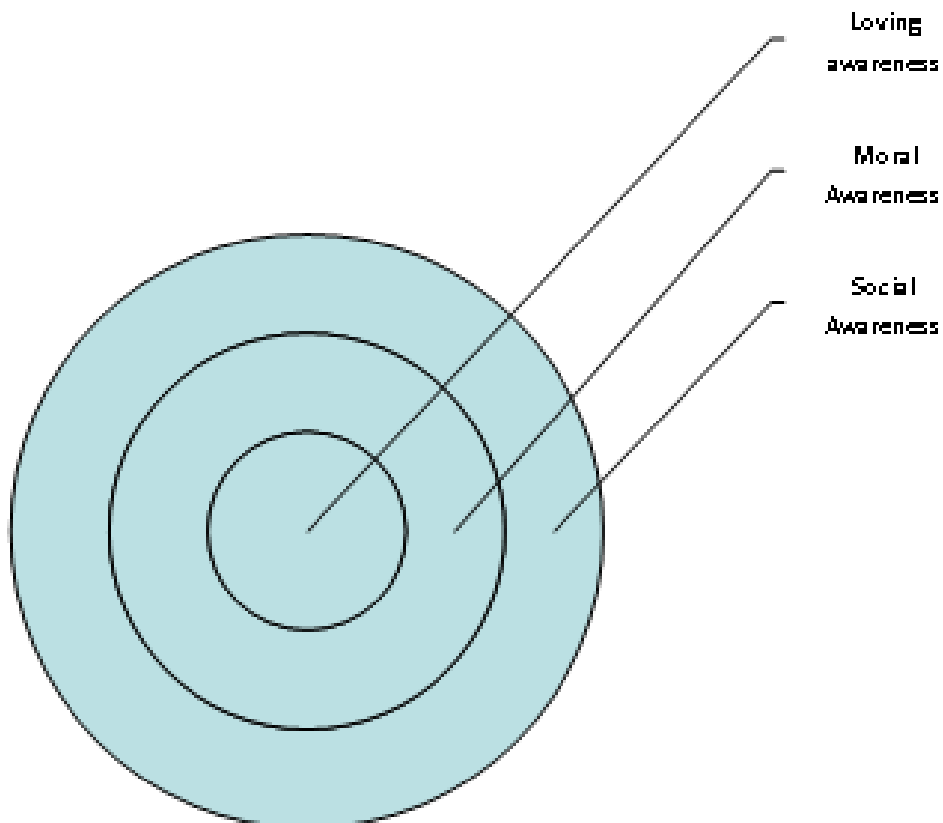
Robert A. Emmons, Editor-in-Chief of  
*The Journal of Positive Psychology*



## Love and Social Awareness

In the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Alfred Rosenberg continuously plugged the ideas of racist supremacy of the Germanic people and the need to exterminate the Jews. Without this man, Hitler could never have become the evil dictator he turned in to. We should not delude ourselves that the Nazi experience was a one time off. Evil, sectarian ideologies arise all the time, hoodwinking disadvantaged into becoming devoted followers.

While Loving awareness helps us deepen our concept of *who* we are and moral values help us find our ways in *how* we should act, social awareness helps us discover *what* we can do. A big part of social awareness training involves the ability to find out what is wrong in our society and find ways how we can correct these issues. This is the basis for the 'ever-regenerating' society. At the basis of this lies the nurturing of critical thinking that stimulates questioning and is inspired by social ideals.





Ernest Hemmingway called this critical thinking 'a built in, shockproof crap detector'. A more humanist education has to deal with issues of prejudice, discrimination and assumptions which are so embedded in our language and behavior. To move on we have to start to integrate elements of inquisitive and conceptual education. By exploring questions, social issues that are age appropriate, we can inspire a new social awareness that helps children find what they should do in society.



To reflect this primary Neohumanist ideal we will focus on the following areas focusing related pedagogy:

1. Critical Thinking
2. Ideal Based curriculum
3. Experiential in nature
4. Thinking for social awareness

We will see that independent minds, steeped in compassion and guided by morality are better contributors to collective peace and social development.

**“You must create opportunities for all people to judge everything in the light of truth. Liberate the intellect of each and every person. ..let people enjoy the sweet taste of intellectual freedom.” P.R. Sarkar**



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## **Love and Academics**



*The point is not to abandon scholarship, but to ground it, personalize it, and balance it with the fundamentals of mind training, especially the practice of sitting meditation, so that inner development and outer knowledge go hand in hand."*

*~Judy Lief, trustee and former Naropa president*

Aristotle didn't think much of the brain. He thought that consciousness resided in the heart. The Egyptians before him also considered the brain useless and carefully petered it out through the nose when mummifying the dead, while carefully storing other organs of the body in nicely decorated jars besides the body. And yet no one would deny that Aristotle nor the Egyptians before him were great philosophers.

Similarly schools that apply consciousness based education concepts, excel academically. Rather than being contrasts, love and achievements are complimentary and mutually supportive. In Neohumanist thought loving awareness is seen as feeding intellectual development. A child well connected within makes better choices, is more creative and steady in work. P.R. Sarkar says that 'Pure Awareness is the real Educator.'" In the same way discovering the ways to the cultivation of inner wisdom is the real education.

## 1. Questioning builds Peace

*Critical thinking is a desire to seek, patience to doubt, fondness to meditate, slowness to assert, readiness to consider, carefulness to dispose and set in order; and hatred for every kind of imposture.*

~ Francis Bacon (1605)

Literacy and the chance to study are often credited with being one of the reasons that today we see a relative reduction in the levels of violence in the past hundred years. In those areas of the world with higher levels of literacy, the rates of violence are lower. Literacy in general does improve peacefulness. In the USA research shows that a child who can read by the third grade is unlikely ever to be involved with the criminal justice system.

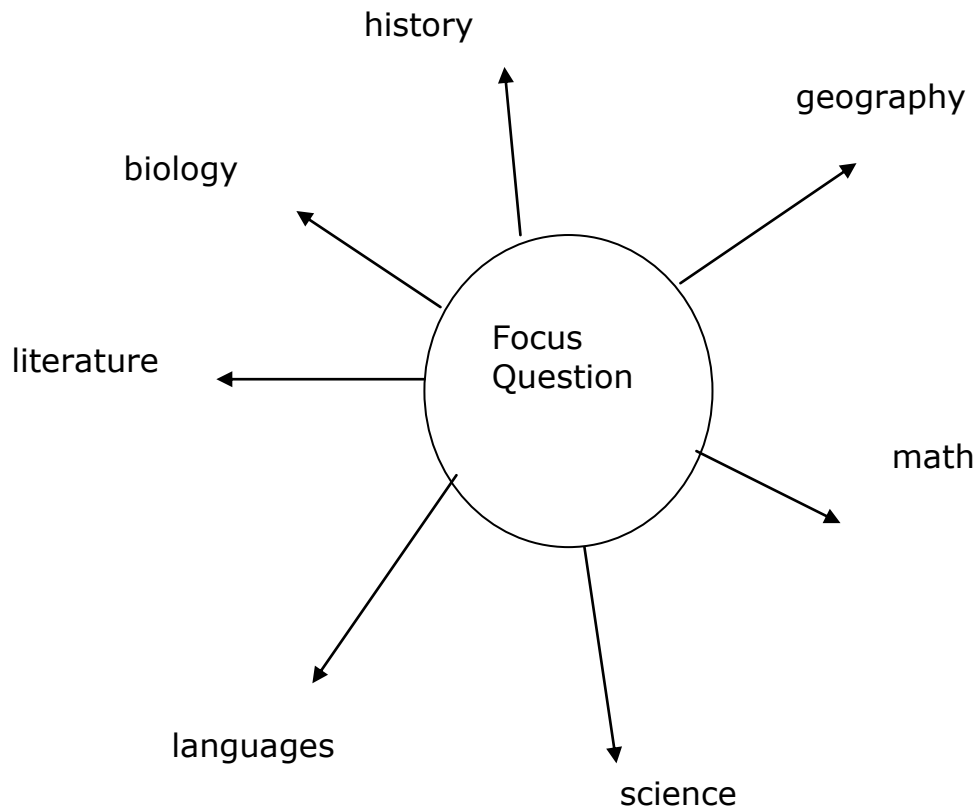
### **Critical Thinking breaks Social Dogmas ...**

One of the reasons that literacy works towards peacefulness is that reading and study support curiosity, wonder and understanding, which lead to appreciation and respect. It is not so easy to manipulate and mislead a well-educated person.

In Neohumanist schools the innate curiosity and sense of exploration are cultivated. Through the process of learning, Neohumanist schools encourage critical thinking, the ability to ask questions, wonder and see through complex issues and make decisions that are considerate and respectful.

Critical thinking does not demand what you study, but how you explore what you learn. At its root lies exploration and questioning.

Ed Clark in "*An Integrated Curriculum*" starts lesson planning with a 'focus question', around which he explores with the students a wide variety of areas, such as its historical context, ecological connections, social aspects and personal element. In this process, students learn to ask and formulate questions they care about and find the answers and in the process learn.



The idea that by starting with questions that arise from their own curiosity and passion, children will be more motivated and learn better and subsequently their grades will improve, is plain common sense. And this should be reflected in assessment as well. We aim to help children improve themselves, not work towards certain test grades. By formulating their own questions, doing concept mapping, and making their own conclusions, children are not just memorizing but actually living their knowledge.

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## 2. Systems thinking – ideal based curriculum

*"One big idea, is worth more than a thousand facts." -Chinese proverb*

A second aspect of critical thinking is to offer a 'concept or organizing framework' within which students explore information. By taking on a 'big idea' students can organize the smaller issues and concepts while maintaining the larger framework. In Peace Education this approach is called 'systems thinking' and can be practiced from KG to universities. In Neohumanist schools children often study ideal based curricula, with topics related to gender, poverty, a multi-cultural world (Children Just like Me), self-discovery, ecology (The Earth Lovers Family), and so on.

By relating to the big issues children develop a comprehensive vision within which they can easily organize the smaller bits of information that come along. Concepts provide structure, support easier memorization of information, and as it is multi-disciplinary makes learning versatile and a lifelong enterprise.

Theodore Roszak observes that facts are not 'building blocks for knowledge.' He says that 'Ideas come first, which he calls 'Master Ideas' which are not derived from some body of information but rather created by imagination and experience.

These 'master ideas' become the organizing principles that shape a culture. The Neohumanist vision of growing Love offers such a wide framework by creating a structure from where to analyze a wide variety of social, historical and cultural issues.

While the concept of growing compassion is personally transformative, by making education relate to the wider society, in some way it is activist. Knowledge is never neutral. P.R. Sarkar says that "Life is an ideological flow." Every choice, every form of information reflects our vision. Modern science is compartmentalized, and analytical, while systems thinking is inclusive, bringing opposites together, assumes a dynamic universe, values ecological thinking and recognizes we live in a participatory universe.

To achieve prama or social balance, Neohumanism stresses the honoring of Loving Awareness and puts self-enhancing values (atmasukha tattva) secondary to sama-samaj tattva (principle of social equality). Knowledge either serves the collective welfare, or is a means for personal aggrandizing. In the study of peaceful societies such as the Ifaluk, Mbuti,



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he Ladakhis and others it was found that in many of these communities, the word 'I' was hardly used, and most talked about 'we'. All people, every individual counted and in this more or less egalitarian world, the collective welfare came first. Discrimination, exclusion or expulsion was unknown. As Mother Teresa said, 'if we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other.'

The principle of social equality is first and foremost.

Our curriculum is based on ideals and promotes academics from the perspective of ideas for collective welfare.

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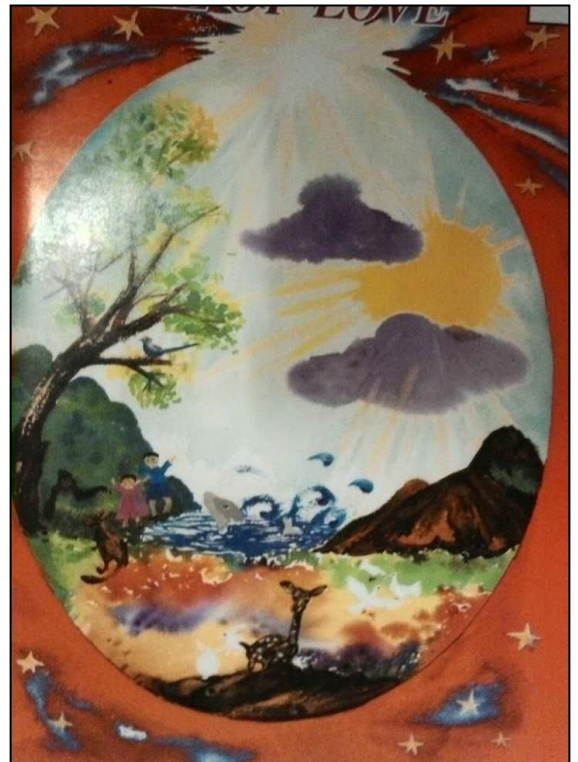
## Circle of Love

An example of curriculum design based on systems thinking is the Circle of Love curriculum, which aims at helping children find their place in the universe.

The "Circle of Love" program is a holistic curriculum to foster the children's spiritual worldview. It presents to the child the circular evolution of the universe, from the infinite consciousness, the creation of space and air, fire and stars, water and earth, plants and animals to the appearance of human beings. Instead of being divided into many specialized and separate subjects, it is taught in one main subject with the other subjects as branches.

Each part of this curriculum is taught through stories, art and song, with science experiments which give children direct experiential knowledge. If the book provides the curriculum in book form, children will draw, color and when ready write to make the book personal and uniquely their own.

The combination of different types of activities arouses a joy of learning and thirst for knowledge which will remain with them throughout their lives.



### 3. Learning is experiential

Luigi Galvani one day observed his assistant using a scalpel on a nerve in a frog's leg; when a nearby electric generator created a spark, the frog's leg twitched, prompting Galvani to develop his famous experiments on bio-electricity. Subsequently he spent years testing his hypothesis—that electricity can enter a nerve and force a contraction—with a variety of metals.

Learning is often considered an independent brain activity. Most learning actually happens when doing things, feeling, sharing and being actively involved. Real learning is integrative.

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### Cooperative and Interactive learning programs

Cooperation and interdependence can be default learning methods, where students explore in groups, rather than on their own and in a competitive setting.

Singing games may be suitable for the younger ones, project activities where students work as teams are better for higher grades.

Research shows that compared with competitive and individualistic efforts, cooperative learning typically results in (a) higher achievement and greater productivity, (b) more caring, supportive, and committed relationships, and (c) greater psychological, health, social competence, and self-esteem.



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P.R. Sarkar's definition of somebody who is educated is 'someone who has learned much, remembered it and made use of it in life.' For this reason, learning is not just child centered, it also has to be active, allowing the child to find things out by themselves, and apply the things learned into practice. For example in a class on light, children discuss blindness, make cookies or bake bread to give to the children in blind schools. During a study of the second world war and the massacring of the six million Jews, the students wanted to understand what the number 'six million' actually would mean. So they started to collect paper clips, a symbol of resistance used by Norwegians and did get support from around the world for their project. Through this project they understood the immensity of the slaughter of the Jews, they also learned about the donors of the paper clips, who sent them packages

from around the world, and learned their stories and explored their contexts.



In India a group of students go door to door to remind people to fix leaking water taps, as they have learned that each leaking tap costs the country thousands of liters of water a month. Apparently this is a social service project, but it extends into math, literature (writing pamphlets) management, geology, history, science and most of all touches their hearts for a life time.

By making learning experiential, it will be remembered and it will inspire solutions not thought of if only studying with books.

***"Teaching should be such that what is offered is perceived as a valuable gift and not as a hard duty." -***

***Albert Einstein***



Teaching Love  
in Schools

#### 4. Thinking for Social Transformation

In Neohumanist schools we aim to teach a love that encompasses all, the moral framework to express that love and the intellectual ability to see through twisted thinking, superstitions and sectarian ideas. This education creates independent leaders who understand they can make a contribution to all living creatures on this planet. Neohumanists also have to be aware how to protect their treasure and build a better future for all.

Most people are trained by comparing the present with the past. McLuhan calls this the 'rearview mirror syndrome'. When the locomotive was invented it was called 'the iron horse'. The electric light was called 'a power candle', the radio 'a thundering megaphone'.

History shows that as we evolve as a human society, we constantly undergo changes, technologically, socially and psychologically. These shifts can be managed better when those who have personal insight know how to move forward. This 'rear view mirror mentality can not take us far. We need to train visionaries. P.R. Sarkar calls these people 'sadvipras'. A society has to be ideologically aware so as to protect it from evil ideologues such as Hitler's Rosenberg.

At the same time, our education has to create visionaries, who can contemplate new futures and understand their role in transformation. Many historians and observers say we have entered a major shift in awareness. Rifkin in *Emphatic Civilization* explains the current social transformation as follows:

<b>Means of energy production &amp; communication</b>	<b>Dominant way of thinking</b>	<b>Social organization</b>
Hunters and gatherers	mythological	Tribal
River civilizations	theological	Religious affiliation
Steel-coal-rail Printing press	ideological	Nation state
Electricity – oil - phone	psychological	Affiliation based on Ideology
Internet – open source – green energy	Collaborative – decentralized,	Bio-sphere/ global consciousness



We are currently in a transition phase: moving out of the old thinking into a new era, the civilization where our consciousness is not confined to group, caste, religion or a nation, but to the bio-sphere (universal).



In traditional schools, the focus may be on training engineers or accountants, carpenters or cooks to serve passively. In Neohumanist schools we aim to make carpenters and cooks, accountants and engineers connected to the issues of the planet allowing each of them to apply their skills and knowledge for the welfare of all. In a Neohumanist society we will not remain stuck in the current social and economic model, but explore new ways of cooperation and development fearlessly.

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Research shows there is a clear link between a material-free-for-all lifestyle with no clear boundaries and mental issues such as schizophrenia, bi-polar and depression. By emphasizing individuality in a secular and material environment, western society has greatly reduced the importance of transcendental forces in human life and thereby disconnected the individual from the healing powers of the human essence.

P.R. Sarkar speaks for that reason not only of cultural change but also a transformation of the economic system towards cooperatives and sustainable development. He called his vision PROUT (Progressive Utilization Theory).

## Independent thinking and discipline

Applying an education that incorporates debate, challenges and inevitable disagreements may seem a challenge to some educators. In Asian education the teachers require high levels of compliance from their students and aim for strict control over their students.

In contrast experience shows that critical and independent thinking is the foundation for harmonious classrooms. In schools that teach holistically, children develop personally inspired insight in challenges placed before them and have the maturity to express and debate the issues in a proper manner.

The psychologist Lawrence Kohlberg adapted Jean Piaget's concept of stages of development applied to moral growth, which he basically saw as an interpretation of justice. Here we simplify his more detailed model for practical purpose to four stages:

Motivation for Discipline	Level of Critical thought
1. Obedience and punishment orientation	Blind egotism
2. Self-interest orientation	Instrumental egotism
3. Interpersonal accord and conformity	Social relationships perspective
4. Universal ethical principles	Self-respect and independent thought

Each stage corresponds to a different level of self-awareness. Whereas in stages one and two the individual is self-centered, and either doesn't care or needs something in return to care, in stage three the individual is ready to work with the teacher out of a sense of love and desire to be loved. In stage four, the individual is totally balanced and self-aware and motivated by intrinsic joy.

In a classroom we encounter children at different stages of moral self-awareness. Discipline training therefore should be attuned accordingly. What Kohlberg's model shows is that a reward based way of teaching is counter-productive in the long run as it keeps moral growth remain stagnant at level two.

This model also shows that by encouraging loving awareness and independent thinking in children, we can move children up on the moral development scale and produce a more cooperative and positive learning environment.



This gives children positive feedback, but also inspires the teachers. Schools run with programs that connect to the heart and develop independent thinking, have much happier teachers. This at a time that teacher burnout is almost epidemic around the world. In Europe the annual teacher turnover is 17%. In the UK the suicide rate for head teachers is above the national average. Scientists have found that teachers suffer burnout from the negative emotions and inefficacy they feel around the challenges of managing their students. Transforming our schools into helping children grow independent minds is the way forward for all of us.

*"As one becomes a lover, duties change to inspirations and practices become a dance."*

*Colin Barks*



*When children develop a healthy relation with others and their world, they will find a healthy relation to the self.*



**Teaching Love**  
in Schools

## Epilogue



*"Blessedness lies in the unfolding of intuition." – P.R. Sarkar*

It is not uncommon in the history of the human group for a simple idea to change the entire direction of life in a society. The idea that the earth revolves around the sun changed our self-understanding. The concept of evolution similarly transformed how people thought about themselves. So did the idea of democracy. Today we may be in a similar time bringing introversion and honoring the deeper self to the center of society.

The Neohumanist Education movement aims for the emancipation of our humanity. A teacher balanced in the heart, will know how to inspire his or her students for the same. There will be no waste of human potential.

The Neohumanist movement's proposal is simple and practical: deepen the dimension of self-discovery and explore ways to further develop the heart's wisdom. This is the only one point, one focus, one practice – the growing of Love through introversion. The other steps will evolve naturally and *"be a perennial source for inspiration for the onward movement of society."*(P.R. Sarkar)

In the traditions there is a saying that "If you know One, you will know All". This single focus will open the doors to everything else. Once Loving Awareness is awakened, the curriculum, the methodology, the pedagogical techniques, all will emerge from this.



Whatever educational practices you evolve, they will fall within the framework of the three directions mentioned here: loving awareness, moral awareness and social awareness. We believe these three elements offer the teacher who aspires to practice the Neohumanist vision sufficient means to guide the children in new ways. As you start to apply these concepts, remember that there is not one 'right' way to do so. The education we offer depends on time, place and person. The inspiration though is only one.

P.R. Sarkar promoted his educational vision through the 'Gurukul' movement - an institution which leads students to the total

emancipation of the individual and society at large. The concept of the Gurukul is the oldest on our planet, tracing its roots back 7,000+ years.

Whereas the traditional gurukul was often associated with the hindu religion, P.R. Sarkar's Gurukul promotes the "cultivation of love for all created beings of this universe."

Though the Gurukul system has a long history, we believe that this concept is most relevant for solving the problems of the day!

*'We can easily forgive a child whom is frightened of the dark;  
the real tragedy of life is when men are afraid of the light.'*

*- Plato*

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## Practices Common to Neohumanist Schools

To reinforce personal connection, communication and cooperation, Neohumanist schools have a wide variety of practices. These usually include:

- Teacher formation
- Regular practice of quiet time for teachers, parents and children
- Yoga based movement for physical and emotional balance
- Breathing exercises
- Importance of Character education and the Values of Love
- Vegetarian diet
- Cooperative games and study activities
- Service and community outreach programs
- Low student to teacher ratio for maximum adult and child interaction
- Ideal based curriculum
- Teacher training
- Parental participation in school is encouraged
- Local culture is honored
- Learning with nature
- Music dance and the other arts are encouraged
- Curricula are taught through stories

