



the center for **spiritual**  
and **ethical** education

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*CSEE helps schools create ethical and spiritual climates that match the rigor and effectiveness of their academic climates.*



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# CONNECTIONS

the center for **spiritual** and **ethical** education

## Defending Others

By Michael Schulman, Ph.D.

Parents with “good” kids often have to confront a difficult question: *Do I want my child to stand up for others who are the targets of bullies?* Standing up against bullies can be costly, even dangerous. The child who comes to the aid of a harassed schoolmate might then become the target of the harassers. It’s not easy to teach our children to take actions that will put them in harm’s way. Yet we honor those who have defended others. Jews, for example, honor “Righteous Christians”—those who risked their lives and often the lives of their family members to hide and protect Jews from Nazis.

It has been about 70 years since the Holocaust and we still struggle to understand it—to understand what made people pursue evil to such extremes, and why some had the heart and courage to risk their lives to rescue Jews. These are crucial questions for our own times too since the same evils so easily surface again, as we sadly see in current versions of racism, anti-Semitism, and inter-tribal and inter-ethnic conflicts in various parts of the globe.

When people take risks to help others in their own group—family members, friends, neighbors—we aren’t astonished. We expect people to help those they are close to, those they consider “us.” We can even draw upon evolutionary theory to explain such within-group risk-taking, noting that for our ancient ancestors, the survival of the individual depended heavily on the survival of the group. When one of us is in danger we are impelled emotionally to come to his or her aid. We also know we are supposed to help one of our own. Our families and cultures often explicitly teach us that we are supposed (to use a modern phrase) to *have each other’s backs*. But when someone helps a person who falls outside that circle of us, an explanation seems required. Psychologists and socio-biologists don’t find it quite so easy to explain *the kindness of strangers*.

Obviously, our interest in an explanation isn’t purely academic. We want to understand it so we can foster it. We want people to recognize and take a stand against evil regardless of who the victims are. It may be, though, that asking, *What makes people help those who are not part of their group, those who are not “us”?* is the wrong question. As I read and hear the stories of Christian rescuers, it appears that to them the Jews were not *other*—they too were *us*, part of the circle of those to whom aid must be given. And that may be the solution to the kindness-of-strangers dilemma. We help strangers in trouble because we don’t see them as alien; we recognize our common humanity and this obligates us to help them.

It is certainly an explicit part of Christian teaching, as in the parable of the Good Samaritan in which Jesus teaches about compassion for the stranger through the story of a Samaritan helping a Jewish stranger who had been beaten, bloodied, and robbed and left by others on the side of the road. The obligation to strangers is also found in the Old Testament, as in Deuteronomy 10:19, which states: “You shall love the stranger; for you were strangers in the land of Egypt.” One finds similar teachings in Hinduism and Buddhism. For example, the *Hitopadesa*, a Hindu religious text, teaches, “As one’s life is dear to oneself, so also are those of all beings. The good show compassion towards all living beings because of their resemblance to themselves.”

Here is an example of altruism toward an ostensible “alien” from a very different area of life. It describes an incident in which one man, to the surprise of many, saw another man who was being victimized as one of “us” and warranting his help. It took place, oddly enough, on a baseball field on May 13, 1947. Yet it too was a significant act of altruism, and, in its own way, it changed the world. Jackie Robinson, the first black man to play in major league baseball, was playing his first

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game at Crosley Field in Cincinnati. Opposing players in the dugout and fans in the stands were taunting Robinson with terms like “shoeshine boy” and “snowflake.” Robinson’s team was the Brooklyn Dodgers and the captain of the team was Pee Wee Reese, a highly respected player and, significantly, a Southerner from Louisville. As the taunting directed at Robinson escalated, Reese left his position at short stop and walked across the infield to Robinson—and placed his arm around the black man’s shoulders. Reese didn’t say a word but looked into the Cincinnati dugout and the grandstands beyond, and kept his arm around Robinson until he shamed the hecklers into silence.

Years later, Robinson said, “After Pee Wee came over like that I never felt alone on a baseball field again.” Reflecting on this incident, Reese said, “I thought of him as I would Duke Snider or Gil Hodges or anyone else. . . . We were just playing ball and having fun” (Snider and Hodges were two respected white players). In another interview, Reese said of Robinson, “I don’t know any other ball player who could

**“I was trying to make the world a little bit better. That’s what you’re supposed to do with your life, isn’t it?”**

have done what he did. To be able to hit with everybody yelling at him. He had to block all that out, block out everything but this ball that is coming in at a hundred miles an hour and he’s got a split second

to make up his mind if it’s in or out or down or coming at his head, a split second to swing. To do what he did has got to be the most tremendous thing I’ve ever seen in sports.”

Robinson, as any baseball fan knows, went on to become one of the greatest players of all time. And Reese, reflecting on his own altruistic act, acknowledged, “I was just trying to make the world a little bit better. That’s what you’re supposed to do with your life, isn’t it?”

From that hug on that afternoon in May 1947, Robinson’s life changed, and major league baseball changed, and American society changed. One might call it “the hug heard round the world.” Clearly, to Reese, Robinson was one of us and he was willing to show the world that that is what he believed and stood for. It is a story worth passing on to our children.

If you do want to encourage your child to defend others, be aware that different children will have their own motives for putting themselves on the line. Some youngsters will react with strong empathy and emotion over another’s suffering. Others will respond more out of a sense of injustice and moral principle. A third set will feel compelled to stand against cruelty because of their affiliations with good people and groups, such as the Scouts or their church or being members of a family where pitching in for others is standard fare.

One child might not have the skills, courage, or inclination to confront a bully directly, but he or she may be willing and able to write a persuasive anti-bullying letter to the school newspaper. Another youngster might be more suited to organizing a *peace-in-our-school* rally to try to bring to light how just a few bullies can spoil the entire school atmosphere. As parents and teachers it is important to recognize such individual differences in children and to try to support them in ways that fit their own “moral style.” ●

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*Michael Schulman, Ph.D., is the author of Bringing Up a Moral Child: A New Approach for Teaching Your Child to Be Kind, Just, and Responsible (1994) and The Passionate Mind: Bringing Up an Intelligent and Creative Child (1991), as well as the CSEE publication Building Moral Communities: A Guide for Educators (2006). He is currently chairman of the Columbia University Seminar on Ethics, Moral Education, and Society.*

## Alone Together: Why We Expect More from Technology and Less from Each Other

Sherry Turkle

Basic Books, 2011

Many ethicists have observed that moral rules are not truly mutable: the differences come in deciding where they apply. Widening of our universe of obligation to include people of color, women and children, foreigners, and other groups simply extends the Golden Rule or Jesus' "love thy neighbor as thyself" beyond a person's immediate circle.

If this is so, new moral dilemmas like the famous Trolley Problem, animal cruelty, or abortion can be considered in the light of such basic principles as the one and the many, coercion and self-determination, avoiding suffering, or the beginning of human life.

But in her latest book, Sherry Turkle describes a new realm of moral hazard that can hardly have been dreamt of four decades ago—except perhaps in the stories of the Golem and Frankenstein. In Turkle's view, which is based on extensive research, we are in danger of surrendering our humanity to our technological creations.

This danger comes in two forms. In the first, and more familiar, Turkle speaks with numerous individuals, especially adolescents, about their use of Internet technologies, and finds consistent problems: inability to tolerate being alone, collecting innumerable "friends" online instead of deepening connections with a lesser number "in the real," presenting invented selves in games and chat rooms to others whose selves may be just as invented, and becoming the servant of the tool itself.

There are some surprises as well. Contrary to adult intuition, many young people are complaining that their parents pay more attention to technology than to them, and wish mom and dad would put down the PDA or smart phone. Even more amazing to those of us who grew up with our home phone glued to our ears and our parents trying to pry it loose, today's teens are likely to be apprehensive about the immediacy of the phone and prefer a text to a human voice in almost any context. To them screens are superior because they provide time to "prepare a face to meet the faces that you meet," while phones—and live presence—require immediate, unfiltered reactions to a real person. One sixteen-year-old announces,

"Later in life I'm going to need to talk to people on the phone. But not now."

Turkle's second concern, however, is even more alarming, especially to those who may not know it is occurring. This is the fast-growing field of robots not as tools, but as substitute pets, friends, family members, and even lovers. Throughout the world, machines are being built as companions for children or the elderly, and even people with real human resources available to them are beginning to prefer confiding in a robot to trying to build or sustain an interpersonal relationship. One thrice-divorced man looks forward to the possibility of having "a robot that would be the perfect mate—less needs—and a real woman." Some individuals have even held "weddings" in which their Second Life avatar marries another, without the two players ever having had an unmasked conversation.

These trends are tied to a resurgence of those twin bugbears of the mid-twentieth century, behaviorism and reductionism. From the idea that a computer that could convincingly talk to a person was conscious, we have moved to the idea that a robot that can feign feelings persuasively has feelings. In the most chilling case, Turkle reports, "Roboticians insist that robotic emotions are made up of the same ultimate particles as human ones, because mind is ultimately made of matter."

Turkle does not shy away from challenging the deepest implications of such trends. A psychologist by training, she draws on resources as varied as Freud, Thoreau, Emmanuel Levinas, J. K. Rowling, and Sophocles. Her new moral law might be restated as "Thou shalt treat all persons as persons, and thou shalt not build false persons to replace them." Any educator, and any course, considering the ethical implications of science and technology should consider *Alone Together* required reading. ●

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*Having recently edited Charlie's Prep, a book about his high school and its iconic teacher, Richard Barbieri is at work on a memoir about four decades in independent schools. He can be reached at [richarde.barbieri@gmail.com](mailto:richarde.barbieri@gmail.com).*



# Upcoming Events

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**Advisory Systems: Building and Fine-Tuning Your Program**  
November 4-5, 2011  
Pingry School  
Martinsville, New Jersey

Presenters Barb Ackerman and Joan Mudge share ideas, resources, and their experience in running successful advisory programs.

**Lower School Character Education Symposium**  
November 11-12, 2011  
Isidore Newman School  
New Orleans, Louisiana

Three schools present on their model lower-school character education programs and share best practices.

**Secondary School Religion Teachers at American Academy of Religion**  
November 18, 2011  
Moscone Center  
San Francisco, California

Our annual meeting of secondary-school teachers, to make contacts and hear recent research by nationally recognized scholars in the fields of ethics and religion. This year's presenters: Christopher Key Chapple, Ph.D. (Southeast Asian religions), Susan Abraham, Ph.D. (women and contemporary communities of faith), Michael Legaspi, Ph.D. (near eastern studies and Biblical interpretation), and Melissa Fainman (activities for the world religion classroom).

**Assessing Character Education in Schools**  
January 20-21, 2012  
University of San Diego  
San Diego, California

Presenters Ed DeRoche, Ph.D., and David Streight will address ways to evaluate school character education efforts, and provide steps to improve programs.

**Honor Systems: Codes & Councils**  
February 10-12, 2012  
Ransom Everglades School  
Miami, Florida

Facilitated by John Roberts, Ph.D., co-author of CSEE's *A Handbook for Developing and Sustaining Honor Systems*. Designed for school teams or individuals.

**Community Service and 21st Century Learning**  
April 13-14, 2012  
St. John's School  
Houston, Texas

Join service consultant Mary Pashley and other service directors from independent schools across North America to explore best practices, project ideas, and resources for directing a top-notch service learning program.

**Spiritual Development**  
April 20-21, 2012  
Marymount School  
Los Angeles, California

Creative teachers Bill Ghord and Matthew Geiger will discuss and offer activities for spiritual development in schools.

**Fifth Annual Symposium on Developing Student Leadership**  
April 27-28, 2012  
The Westminster Schools  
Atlanta, Georgia

Three schools present on their model student leadership programs, and participants explore the key ingredients for a successful program.

**Summer Institute on Teaching the World's Religions**  
Date TBA  
Westtown School  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Five days of study and resource sharing for the world religion classroom. This year's main focus will be on Hinduism, with Arti Dhand, Ph.D.

**2012 Institute for Ethical Education Leaders**  
June, 2012  
New York, New York

This 5-day workshop will prepare participants to be guides for ethical/character education initiatives in their schools. Sessions will be highly interactive and information will be based on research findings and expert-recommended practices. Each participant will leave with a unique, detailed plan to implement at school. ●

# Educating for Character

## Schools of the Future: Ethical Excellence, Part II

### *Roadmap to Success: Start Where You Can, Do As Much As You Can*

In the first installment of this set of three, we began a progressive “roadmap” for a process of ethical education at schools. The purpose was to outline a set of steps that a school can take, with the thought that the school can gauge where to enter the map. Part one dealt with administrative support, setting goals, and getting buy-in from as many constituents at the school as possible. Here, we continue.

#### **Articulate goals**

Unfortunately just setting goals is not enough. Establishing core values, though an important step, is not enough. Let’s take “integrity” as an example. If we want to nurture integrity in our school culture, we need a common understanding of what “integrity” is. Some equate the term with honesty or with the ability to be trusted not to plagiarize or otherwise cheat. (The university-based Center for Academic Integrity clearly focuses on this aspect of integrity.) In independent schools, however, we sometimes hear language like integrity relating to the concept that “you’re the same person, no matter who is watching.” Some see integrity as a constellation of virtues that includes courage: the ability to stand up for what is right, regardless of countervailing pressures.

The point is that students will have a better chance of developing the character goals we want to nurture in them if we have a sense of what these goals are. It behooves us to articulate, for our sake as well as theirs, what our goals are. It’s not a question of unanimity, of dictionary-ready definitions, but there should be strong consensus on what integrity, or respect, or empathy means.

#### **Students must be aware of goals**

Once we (adults) know the goals and have consensus on what they entail, let’s remember to share them with students, let students know what they are. Students are, after all, the ones we hope will internalize—and then behave according to—our goals for respect and responsibility, for empathy and acting on behalf of others. Will they not have a better chance of learning something if we let them know what it is we want them to learn?

#### **Students should be able to articulate goals**

Let’s take the point above one step further. Help knowledge be active rather than just passive. If our students cannot tell us what the school’s character goals are, do they really know them? Do we really know something if it cannot be articulated?

Just articulating the goals is not insurance of their being internalized, of course. But it is a good beginning step. The transfer of a goal from the “head” to the “heart” and the “hand”—where it can be acted upon in the right spirit and in the right circumstances—is far easier if it is correctly lodged in the head.

Want to take a step even further, a step that increasingly helps students get a sense of what we are talking about? Come up with a list of examples, positive and negative, for each goal. Tell students “Here are some examples of how respect might be shown in our school.” And “Here are a few examples that clearly are not examples of respect.” Examples are especially helpful for young students.

#### **Formulate a plan**

How do you intend to get from goals to implementation of goals? The plan should be as detailed as possible, but even a few sketchy details are better than no details at all. Who can contribute to teaching about respect, or about integrity? Can language arts or literature classes occasionally engage students in looking at a good piece of literature that happens to deal with our school’s goals? Can the coaches address the issue? What about the drama teacher or debate coach? How can each of these people contribute? What can the vice-principal or dean of students do? What about the guidance counselor? Is it possible to set a general time line, a time frame by which we hope to see at least some progress?

#### **Integrate goals into the curriculum**

This is one of the most powerful steps along the way. And it is a “must” for top programs. The more we can integrate

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# Community Service

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## 2011 Community Service Honorable Mention

The May 2011 issue of *Connections* included brief descriptions of two schools, both from New Jersey, recognized for excellence in community service. The theme for the year was environmental sustainability. The Willow School (Gladstone, NJ) was recognized as first place winner for a variety of ways that children from kindergarten through the fifth grade worked on a variety of projects—from water purity to landfill—both local and international. Far Hills Country Day School (Far Hills, NJ) showed how the school was living up to its mission for “responsible citizenship” through community gardening, recycling, and a student-driven Energy Task Force.

Space did not allow us to describe our Honorable Mention winner in May. We salute the Lovett School here.

Honorable Mention  
The Lovett School  
Atlanta, Georgia

Lovett School's sustainability work is led by The Green Team, an upper school group of students that have developed and supported numerous activities and initiatives on campus. Some of these green activities include a community garden, a school-wide terracycling program, composting on campus, monitoring food waste, and drives to deal responsibly with electronic waste. Lovett's transportation subcommittee has staged walk-to-school days and carpool days, involving 1,122 students and faculty! The subcommittee has also activated Carpool Finder software on the Lovett website, and instructed parents on how to use the system. Community Service Coordinator Angela Morris-Long noted, “Lovett's Strategic Plan calls for the school to pursue environmental sustainability....Lovett students are learning from their surroundings, practicing sustainability, and making respect for the environment second nature.” ●

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## CSEE's 2012 Community Service Award

In 2012, CSEE's Community Service Award will recognize schools that have developed extraordinary relationships with agencies. A number of schools have continued to work with the same agency over a period of years, either because the arrangement was mutually beneficial or because one partner in the arrangement needed assistance and the other was willing to collaborate. Other relationships might be shorter lived, but extraordinary because of the way they came about, or because of the tremendous amount of good they have done, or for some other fortunate reason. Some programs are outstanding for their longevity, some for their impact, or for their innovative nature. We want to hear about these arrangements this year. In many cases, getting the word out can be beneficial to other schools.

Applications will be due by February 6, 2012, and announcements will be made in May. Further information and application details are available at <http://csee.org/posts/39>. ●

## Roadmap

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our moral education goals into the fabric of school life (the academic curriculum is the essence of school life) the more successful we will be in having students understand them.

### **Integrate goals into extracurriculars**

The more extracurricular pieces of the school that can help implement goals, the better. Coaches are important teachers and mentors, but art teachers and music teachers and bus drivers and a host of others—who these others are varies greatly from school to school—frequently play important roles in the lives of kids at school. To what extent can goals be woven into the assembly program, into community service, into the advisory program, into the chapel or the outdoor education programs? Even a little help here and there can make a huge difference in terms of knowledge of and experience in a school's ethical education goals. ●

*(Roadmap will conclude in the next issue)*

## Siblings

I grew up in a large family and we all went to the same schools, had the same teachers, and sometimes the same friends. There are good things about this, but one of the challenges for me was living up to the expectations people had for me—or that I had perceived them to have. Now, out of a family of seven children there was no question that we each had different weaknesses and talents, as my parents were quick to emphasize. It depends on how competitive you might be, but I felt I had to measure up to everyone else. I also thought I had to be just as good as my older siblings, even when there was little chance of my accomplishing this.

I have one vivid memory of teasing my younger sister, who was carrying a basket of laundry from the clothesline. I opened the door, then shut it, as she reached toward the house. When she tripped and put her elbow through the glass door, I knew in my ten-year-old heart that I was bad to the core and would never be forgiven. She was the most good-natured child ever born (and is one of the happiest adults I've ever known), so she teased me and laughed about the accident later. It still took me a long time to forgive myself for what I had done. Sometimes, as children, we expect more of ourselves, and we are harder on ourselves than our parents might be. I think that my mother was much more concerned about the stitches that my sister needed than she was about how the accident happened.

What really brought this idea home for me was a conversation that I had with my articulate, well-behaved, six-year-old granddaughter. We were watching her other grandparents putting Christmas gifts into her parents' car. She heaved a great sigh of relief. "Oh good!" she said. "There's a present for everyone in the family. Israel [her four-year-old brother] has been having trouble being a good boy and I was afraid Santa Claus might not bring him anything. Now I know there will be at least one gift under the tree for him."

Of course I told her that her little brother was not bad at all, but was acting exactly like a four-year-old boy should, but the brief conversation made me realize what goes on in a child's head today is not that different from decades ago. It has also made me realize (and I don't forget this for a day)

that the little boy whose sister thought he was hopelessly "bad" must, on occasion, feel just plain bad about himself.

One day, when he was three or four, he charged at me from across the room with a plastic toy. When he jabbed my arm, I cried out in alarm and pain. Even though his parents were right there, I was quicker than they were to tell him not to ever poke someone like that again. He quickly dissolved into tears, and I felt like a terrible grandmother. He collapsed into his mother's lap sobbing, and then said, "But I said I was sorry with tears in my eyes!"

His remorse was genuine; his instincts as a toddler were genuine too. He was playing "hunter" and I was the prey, but there wasn't time to process the consequences of his actions before he made the charge. I'm sure, before he made the first step it seemed like a really fun game and he thought I'd roll over dead and be a good sport.

Let's face it, we can't all be good all the time. We can't all excel, even when it's really important. And every child is different. A six-year-old girl, at her best, can probably maintain more self-control than any four-year-old boy. "Good" is a relative term.

If you are the second, third, or, in my case, fourth child in the family order, how can you ever expect to do everything as well as your siblings? I couldn't compete. Some days I couldn't even be good, just like Israel. And when I wasn't good I didn't feel very happy with myself. We grow up and sort these things out, but in the meantime I think it's important to remind those younger siblings that they have special skills and talents, that they are good and loved, even if they can't hit the ball, play the piano, mix a cake without spilling, or remember not to tease the dog, not to hit their grandmother, not to hurt their little sisters. ●

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*Professional writer Frances Chamberlain has penned a number of articles in past years, both for CSEE parents and for Connections.*

# Religious Holidays & Observances

## November 2011

S	M	T	W	Th	F	Sa
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

See additional details, including holidays for the month of September, at [www.csee.org](http://www.csee.org)

### November 1 All Saints Day Christianity

All Saints Day recognizes all martyrs and saints, both known and unknown. Around 730 C.E., Pope Gregory III designated the first day in November to celebrate those who have a reputation for living great lives of devotion and holiness.

### November 2 All Souls Day/Day of the Dead Roman Catholicism

All Souls Day is devoted to prayer and remembrance for loved ones who have died. This day originated as an ancient Pagan festival, in which the souls of the dead were believed to return to their families to share a meal. Unlike All Saints Day, All Souls Day observes those who linger in Purgatory. It is believed that the prayers of the faithful help cleanse the souls of the dead and enable them reach heaven.

### November 4-7 Hajj Islam

Hajj is the pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, occurring on the seventh-twelfth days of the month of Dhu al-Hijja in the Islamic calendar. This is the largest annual pilgrimage in the world. Several rituals are performed during this pilgrimage, including drinking from the Zamzam well and walking counter-clockwise seven times around the Kaaba, a cube-shaped building representing the Muslim center of prayer.

### November 5 Waqf al Arafa, Hajj Day Islam

Waqf al Arafa is the Islamic observance day during Hajj on which pilgrims pray for forgiveness and mercy. Pilgrims stay awake at night to pray on the hill of Arafat, the site where Muhammad is said to have delivered his last sermon.

### November 6 Eid al-Adha Islam

Eid al-Adha is the Feast of Sacrifice, and the most important feast of Islam. It recalls Abraham's willingness to sacrifice his son, Ismail, in obedience to God, and commemorates God's forgiveness. All are expected to dress in their finest clothing and perform Eid prayer in a mosque, and those who can afford it sacrifice their best domestic animal, such as a sheep or cow, as a symbol of Abraham's sacrifice.

### November 10 Birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Sahib Sikhism

Present day Sikhism is based on the teachings of Guru Nanak—the first Guru—and the nine Gurus who followed him. Every year, he is celebrated with a reading of the Sikh holy scriptures, the *Guru Granth Sahib*, continuously from beginning to end. This reading occupies more than 48 hours, and thus begins two days prior to Guru Nanak's birthday.

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**November 12**  
**Birth of Baha'u'llah**  
**Baha'i**

This day celebrates the birth of Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i religion. Born to an affluent family in Persia in 1817 C.E., Baha'u'llah spent many of his later years as a prisoner and in exile for his work in the Babi movement. It was in his prison cell that he had his new religious revelation.

**November 20**  
**Christ the King**  
**Christianity**

Christ the King is a title for Jesus based on several passages of Scripture. On this day, Christians celebrate the exaltation of Jesus over all earthly authorities. The Feast of Christ the King falls on the last Sunday of the liturgical year; a new year begins with the First Sunday of Advent.

**November 24**  
**Thanksgiving**  
**Interfaith, U.S.A.**

Thanksgiving is a harvest festival, dating as far back perhaps as 1565 C.E., often celebrated with large meals that incorporate traditional foods. In 1863 C.E., President Lincoln declared this national holiday to take place in November.

**November 24**  
**Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur**  
**Sikhism**

Guru Tegh Bahadur was the ninth Sikh Guru, executed in 1675 C.E. for refusing to convert to Islam. This day commemorates his martyrdom.

**November 26**  
**Day of the Covenant**  
**Baha'i**

In his last will and testament, Baha'u'llah, the leader of the Baha'i faith, appointed his oldest son 'Abdul-Baha, to be his

successor and the Center of the Covenant. He was identified as the authorized interpreter of Baha'u'llah's writings and a model for all Baha'is to emulate.

**November 26**  
**Muslim New Year**  
**Islam**

This is the first day of Muharram, the first month in the Islamic calendar. Muharram is the month that Muhammad and his followers emigrated from Mecca to Medina (the Hijra) in 622 C.E.

**November 27**  
**First Sunday of Advent**  
**Christianity**

The period from November 30 through December 24 marks the four weeks of Advent. This is a Christian time of preparation leading up to the birth of Jesus. Advent is often observed with the candles, wreaths and special ceremonies, and calendars with small boxes or pegs affixed that contain gifts to open on each day leading up to Christmas.

**November 28**  
**Ascension of 'Abdul-Baha**  
**Baha'i**

'Abdul-Baha died on November 28, 1921 C.E. This day commemorates his death, celebrates the rising of his spirit, and reminds Baha'is to rededicate themselves to following his example as a man of faith and peace.

**November 30**  
**Saint Andrew's Day**  
**Christianity**

St. Andrew is the patron saint of Greece, Romania, Russia, and Scotland, where this day is a national holiday. In Greece, a special ceremony is held in St. Andrew's Basilica in Patras, which houses St. Andrew's relics and is built over the location where he is said to have been martyred. St. Andrew asked to be killed on a cross in the shape of an X, as he did not feel worthy to die on a cross similar to that of Jesus. This X, known as St. Andrew's cross, is famously portrayed on the Scottish flag. ●

# Publication Spotlight

## The Art and Science of Moral Education CSEE Video Series

*Part 1 (29 minutes) & Part 2 (28 minutes): Developing Morality and Related Social Concepts (a two-part introduction)*

*CSEE Member Price (Parts 1 & 2): \$25*

*Non-Member Price (Parts 1 & 2): \$150*

*Part 3 (38 minutes): Moral Education, Elementary Grades*

*CSEE Member Price (includes introduction listed above): \$35*

*Non-Member Price (includes introduction listed above) \$200*

*Part 4 (38 minutes): Moral Education, Middle and High School*

*CSEE Member Price (includes introduction listed above): \$35*

*Non-Member Price (includes introduction listed above): \$200*

*Entire Video*

*CSEE Member Price (Parts 1, 2, 3, & 4): \$45*

*Non-Member Price (Parts 1, 2, 3, & 4): \$250*

**W**hy is this video series important?

Most ethical/moral education initiatives focus on identifying core values that a school wishes to instill in students through a variety of activities in and outside the curriculum. What such programs frequently do not provide are the critical thinking skills involved in moral reasoning. Not providing such skills may even entail “immoral education,” as Larry Nucci suggests in this video series.

Schools have the responsibility to teach young people about morality as well as to help them develop the courage to stand up for moral issues in a host of different situations.

Where we confuse children, however, is in not helping them distinguish between what are moral issues—issues of justice, fairness, and human welfare (these tend to be stable from one culture to another, or from one century to another)—and issues of convention (generally agreed-upon rules that societies create to help social institutions run smoothly). The rightness or wrongness of moral issues comes from deep inside us. The latter category (which includes issues like how we dress, how we speak with one another, and how we interact with one another in a host of social situations) are rule-based: there is nothing inherently

wrong with men wearing spaghetti straps and high heels, social rules are just not ready to see it happen.

A domain that is separate from both the above entails what is personal. Most adults feel as though no one should dictate who our friends are, or what our favorite colors are. The personal domain expands as children get older. Adults do dictate what kinds of movies their children see and who their friends are when the children are young, but as children grow older, parents tend to cede control over such issues, as well as over others like hair style, ways to dress, or whether to get a tattoo.

In the first two segments of this video series, educational researcher and moral educator Nucci outlines the basics of these three domains of social reasoning. He points out how they differ from one another, and how they develop as children mature.

Nucci points out not only that conventions change, but that some conventions run counter to morality, offering examples from the mid-20th century when a woman’s “place” was in the home and individuals of different races were expected to use different doorways and drinking fountains. It is our duty as educators, he asserts, 1) to give young people the skills to discern what is immoral even if it is conventional, and 2) to help them develop the skills to stimulate change when societal conventions run counter to the dictates of moral justice, fairness, or human welfare.

Segments three (for elementary grades) and four (middle and high schools) address specifics: classroom strategies for establishing the kind of school culture where moral growth can best flourish, and a number of actual classroom lessons to illustrate how moral reasoning can be nurtured.

All segments are professionally filmed in high-definition video, and make great offerings for professional development discussions at school.

Larry Nucci, Ph.D., is Emeritus Professor of Educational Psychology at the University of Illinois in Chicago, and Adjunct Professor of Education and Human Development at the University of California at Berkeley. Professor Nucci is the author of *Education in the Moral Domain* (Cambridge, 2002) and *Nice is Not Enough* (Pearson, 2001). He is on CSEE’s National Advisory Board in Moral Education. ●

## Articulating a School's Core Values

It's an interesting question: Do your kids know why they're there? Why they are in your school, that is? Granted, up to about grade 5 it may not be an important question, but somewhere around middle school ages, and certainly by high school grades, my question is a logical one—a compelling one, even.

CSEE has been doing a lot of work with mission statements this past year, looking especially carefully at what school missions say about ethics, character, the spirit, or values. Our observation is that about 96% of independent schools have mission statements that address not only academic excellence, but also some kind of character and or spiritual development issue. For example, the Hetten School prepares students of promise for a life of intellectual fulfillment and responsible global citizenship. Or, the Hetten School is an academically rigorous institution that prepares students for college and for life in an environment that instills solid ethical and spiritual virtues.

Our mission statements tell the world what our goals are, what kinds of young people we plan to send out into the world.

One axiom of learning is that we learn more quickly when we know what we are supposed to learn. In other words, we will have a better chance of reaching our goals for students if they know what our goals are. If our mission statement tells the public that we prepare students to be "compassionate leaders for the world of tomorrow," we will be more successful (and ethically more accountable) if we let our students know that we are going to do everything we can to help them develop both compassion and the skills of leadership (and that we expect them to develop the skills of compassionate leadership).

Curiously, there are schools where students do not know what the expectations are. I sometimes tell about the school that had five character traits they wanted to define the community, but even the character education coordinator did not know what they were. Little surprise that, in a discussion with 20 juniors and seniors, they could come up with only one of their school's five traits in a guessing game.

A certain number of those students will certainly emerge from the school with great skills in empathy and with a full willingness to accept responsibilities, but what is the point of setting such goals if the faculty forget them and the students hear about them only on page six of the student handbook?

Compare that school—which, by the way, has taken steps that are both amazing and admirable to remedy the situation since my first visit—with the school visited three weeks earlier. This school, also, had identified values to define the community. As far as I could tell, about 80% of the juniors and seniors could name all the school's core values; the rest could usually name four of the five. Or compare with the school with three core values (respect, responsibility, honor) and where every single conversation regarding a disciplinary *faux pas* was filtered through the school's core values: "So tell me, when Mrs. Smith sent you out of her class, which of our school's core values—the values we want you most to develop in your time here—was in question?"

If the concept here is novel, so much the better. The cause is worthy. Look at what your school wants most of your students. Make sure those characteristics enter into the everyday language of the school; that is, make sure the faculty (especially the faculty, but not only the faculty) know. Then, make sure the students learn the language, too. It's a good first step toward really accomplishing what our mission statements say we accomplish, what we want to accomplish, and what—in all probability—our world deeply needs us to accomplish.

The job is far from done when faculty and students know what our core values are. But incorporating the core values is so much easier when they are part of the common language of the school. ●

