

## ABOUT CSEE

The Council for Spiritual and Ethical Education supports the moral and spiritual development of young people through offering resources and educational opportunities to elementary, middle, and secondary schools. See more about our work at [www.csee.org](http://www.csee.org)

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## A LESSON FROM CAITLIN

BY MARILYN WATSON, PH.D.

Our children are born with powerful dispositions to attach to us, and to imitate us, their primary caregivers. They are also born with an embryonic capacity for empathy. These dispositions lead them to want to cooperate and please us and to care about the welfare of others. Their momentary wants and self-interests can compete with their desire to please us or to respond empathically toward others. If left unchecked, their self-interest can result in disobedient and selfish behavior.

But being moral is not about being selfless, it is about knowing how to balance the needs and wants of the self

The best time to teach a skill is when it is needed. When, in response to our children's misbehaviors, we focus on teaching a skill that might have helped them behave better rather than punish or order them to stop misbehaving, the control we exercise is less about the assertion of power and more about helping them achieve success.

with the needs and wants of others. This learning takes time.

Developmental psychologists have documented many social, emotional, and moral skills and understandings that children need to learn as they mature and experience life.

Throughout their

childhood years, children are learning and relearning these skills. For example, they need to learn to trust us and to balance their need for independence with our need to teach and keep them safe. They need to learn to regulate and control their emotions, to accurately communicate their feelings and thoughts, to understand the feelings and situations of others, to negotiate and

compromise, and to set goals and monitor their own behavior. They also need to learn and to see the moral issues involved in common situations such as playground teasing and taking others' things.

There are a huge number of social, emotional, and moral skills and understandings that our children need to learn in order to succeed at doing the right thing. Often, whether our children are two or twelve, they fail to behave as we want them to because they lack one or more of these skills and understandings.

The best time to teach a skill is when it is needed. When, in response to our children's misbehaviors, we focus on teaching a skill that might have helped them behave better rather than punish or order them to stop misbehaving, the control we exercise is less about the assertion of power and more about helping them achieve success. What our children experience is not so much our control of their behavior (although we have exercised considerable control), but our help in their efforts to control their own behavior.

Let me illustrate this approach to discipline with a family story involving a temper tantrum. Several years ago, when Caitlin, our granddaughter, was two years old, my husband and I decided to take a picnic and visit a winery near our daughter's house. Since our daughter was home with Caitlin and a new baby, we decided to see if Caitlin would like to come with us on our picnic. Caitlin was very excited and did indeed want to go on a picnic with Grandma and Grandpa.

However, as I went to lift Caitlin into her car seat she began to scream, sob, and thrash about. I had no idea what I did to cause her upset, but there was no doubting that she was very upset. Our daughter, after

trying to calm her down while standing beside the car, eventually swooped Caitlin up and carried her inside. My husband and I sat in the car unsure of what to do. However, we believed that Caitlin really did want to come with us and that if we left she would be very unhappy. So, we sat and waited.

After a while our daughter came back outside with Caitlin in tow. Caitlin was now calm, a little subdued, but quite clear that she wanted to come with us. This time, I let my daughter put Caitlin in the car and off we went. At first Caitlin was quiet and we drove along in silence. However, after some minutes had passed, we

The idea that children are predominantly motivated by self-interest and thus must be controlled by appealing to that self-interest through rewards and punishments is unsupported by research. Psychologists have documented that children are motivated by their love for us, by a desire to be part of a community, and to learn and master the skills valued by that community, and by a desire to control their own behavior.

heard a very small voice saying, “You can tell people your sad feelings. You can tell them your happy feelings too.”

Let’s examine this story from the perspective of discipline focused on teaching needed skills. Caitlin, like many two-year-olds, had difficulty regulating her emotions, particularly her negative

emotions. Once she started crying and kicking she was powerless to stop on her own. By removing her to a less charged place, holding her close, and talking in a quiet, calm voice, our daughter was able to help Caitlin get control of her emotions and calm down. Although our daughter exercised considerable power in this incident, the power she used was power to help Caitlin gain control of her emotions. When children perceive their parents’ control as aimed at supporting or helping them, they are far less likely to resent the control.

Once Caitlin was calm, her mother continued with more “instruction” in social and emotional skills and

understandings. She helped Caitlin see that if she was unhappy with something someone did she could just tell the person. This was the first of many lessons Caitlin would receive about communicating feelings with words and trusting that others will hear you and respond with care. And even though Caitlin would need many more such lessons, it’s clear that she had heard this initial instruction and was working on understanding it.

I chose to describe this small, almost insignificant incident with Caitlin because it so clearly demonstrates the striving to learn that is in all our children. It also suggests what could have gone wrong if we had used our adult power to force Caitlin into the car without giving her time with her mother.

Contrary to such folk wisdom as “give them an inch and they’ll take a yard,” our children love us and want to please us. As annoying as they can seem sometimes, our children want to be good. Of course they are motivated by strong self-interests—we all are—but self-interest is neither the only nor the most prominent of their motivations.

The idea that children are predominantly motivated by self-interest and thus must be controlled by appealing to that self-interest through rewards and punishments is unsupported by research. Social and developmental psychologists have documented that children are motivated by their love for us, by a desire to be part of a community, and to learn and master the skills valued by that community, and by a desire to control their own behavior. When they fail to do the right thing it is more likely because they lack needed social and emotional skills, or don’t fully understand the situation. ✨

*This article is an excerpt from Marilyn Watson’s chapter in CSEE’s booklet Parenting for Character: Five Experts, Five Issues, published this fall. Watson is the author of Discipline for Moral Growth (CSEE 2007) and Learning to Trust: Transforming Difficult Elementary Classrooms through Developmental Discipline (Wiley 2003)*

## PETER, PAUL, AND MARY MAGDALENE: THE FOLLOWERS OF JESUS IN HISTORY AND LEGEND

*Bart D. Ehrman*

NEW YORK: OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2006

BY JOHN ROBERTS

When Edward Gibbon presented the second volume of *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* to the Duke of Gloucester, His Royal Highness famously said, “Another damn’d thick, square book! Always, scribble, scribble, scribble! Eh, Mr. Gibbon?”

Bart Ehrman’s readers must occasionally experience the same reaction. Our book, for example, was one of three that appeared in rapid-fire succession, including *Misquoting Jesus* (reviewed by Richard Barbieri in September 2006) and *The Lost Gospel of Judas Iscariot*.

The newest offering suffers from extensive repetition of ideas and phrasing, which is probably inevitable given that Ehrman has now authored or edited nearly a score of books, including such significant titles as *The Orthodox Corruption of Scripture*, *Jesus: Apocalyptic Prophet of the New Millennium*, and *Lost Christianities*.

And yet, even at his most redundant, Ehrman is such a trenchant logician that it is hard to cavil. The book is rich in models of clear thinking, as when Ehrman questions Luke’s claims that Paul was from Tarsus or studied under Gamaliel or when he explains the real reason Paul was distraught over the Corinthians’ denial of a physical resurrection: “The fact that God will be raising the body from the dead shows that, to God, the body matters. God is the creator of this world and of the human body, and he will be the redeemer of this world and the body....But if the body doesn’t matter, some people have argued (and did argue in Corinth) that it doesn’t matter what you do with your body” (135-36).

And Ehrman is an admirable wordsmith, one of those rare academicians (Carl Sagan and Stephen Jay Gould also spring to mind) who can translate the arcana of scholarship into easily accessible terms for the laity.

In that respect, one of Ehrman’s strengths has always been his gift for cleverness—like clarity, a characteristic not often found among pedants. In this latest book, his wit sometimes shades into the smart-aleck vein, as in the sly allusion of the title or his defense of the Pharisees (“agreeing to commit hypocrisy was not an entrance requirement for the Pharisaic party. There was no hypocritical oath,” 106) or his constant punning on Peter’s name (for instance, since diverse Christians all claimed to be Petrine, “in some ways Peter was a rock collection,” 80). Now that Ehrman seems to be embarking on the transition from closeted scholar to media personality—for example, appearing on Jon Stewart’s *The Daily Show*—we might expect to have rather more of this facile side of him than we could wish. In general, popularity does not become intellectuals.

But at his best, Ehrman combines solid erudition, incisive intelligence, and easy readability. These are the virtues that have made a standard of his textbook on the New Testament, now in its third edition. While evangelicals might be more attracted to the textbooks by, say, Gundry or by Carson, Moo, and Morris, or Roman Catholics to Raymond Brown or Luke Timothy Johnson, Ehrman is simply the default choice in the genre. When I mentioned to my Greek professor at Columbia Seminary that I selected Ehrman as the supplemental text in my senior New Testament survey, Charles Cousar shrugged and said, “Oh, we use Ehrman, too. Everyone uses Ehrman.”

Gibbon is still famous if no longer read. It would be a far better fate if in future generations Ehrman is still read if not famous. ✪

*John Roberts teaches Biblical Studies and English at The Westminster Schools in Atlanta, Georgia.*

In March 2006, The Curriculum Initiative (TCI) piloted a three-night service-learning trip to New Orleans for high school students. The trip combined several key educational elements, from direct service to learning about the cultural and political context behind the service, and learning about the New Orleans Jewish community and its perspective on social justice. The idea emerged out of a leadership club at the Kew-Forest School, and included Fieldston and Trinity Schools in New York as partners.

TCI's mission commits us to strengthening the identity of independent schools' Jewish students, and to nurturing school communities' appreciation for Jewish culture and tradition. The trip, like all TCI programs, was open to students of any religion. Two trip leaders traveled with 45 students and six teachers. In December, a second trip brought 72 students and nine teachers from seven schools from both coasts.

One challenge in such trips entails how to provide a quality, safe experience in an unfamiliar city after a natural disaster. Without local partners, we could not plan a successful program. Tulane University's Office of Community Service involved us in a project to paint and refurbish public schools the first year. Tulane arranged housing and food, and put us in touch with a bus company. Unfortunately, as one of the central, surviving, large institutions in the city, Tulane juggled too many responsibilities to meet all logistical needs of our "outside" group; with more experience the following year, we contacted local vendors directly.

The greatest challenge in bringing high school students to New Orleans is to find community organizations able to accommodate large groups. Small groups are preferable, but they tend to raise the cost of the trip for students. One further challenge is that most organizations will not accommodate students under age 16. Those that do, require a small student/teacher ratio for proper supervision. We opted to work with Habitat for Humanity and were glad to have many adults in the group. Even though the Habitat staff is safety conscious, few had the training

or natural skill to work with teenagers. Some of TCI's expectations were stricter than the site rules.

Another logistical challenge was how to house and feed a large group for several days. Ultimately, we found an inexpensive hotel within walking distance of the French Quarter that could accommodate four students to a room and provide breakfast and a meeting space. Lunches came from a local deli, and small chaperoned groups ate dinner in the French Quarter.

The guiding educational philosophy of the trip was *service learning* that integrated community service with teaching and reflection. Service learning emphasizes that the local community has the right to define its own needs and priorities. Service learning also asserts that there is a context to service, and that community needs are often the result of intersecting structural inequalities such as poverty, racism, and sexism.

Finally, service learning asserts that reflection is critical. We all need the opportunity to process our experiences, to reflect on our privileges, and to make sense of the new worlds that we experience through service. As a Jewish organization, TCI wants Jewish students to recognize that their culture has something to say about social justice and their non-Jewish peers to learn about this aspect of Jewish identity. Thus when we discussed our role as witnesses to the tragedy of Hurricane Katrina and the inadequate government response to the communities of New Orleans, we talked about the Jewish assertion that witnesses to tragedy have a responsibility to act on behalf of both the departed and the survivors.

TCI recently made the decision to suspend New Orleans trips for the coming year for logistical reasons, but we look forward to partnering with schools on local service projects in our four regions: New England, metropolitan New York, the San Francisco Bay Area, and the Mid-Atlantic. For more information, please contact us at [www.tcionline.org](http://www.tcionline.org). ✨

*Adam Gaynor is Deputy Director of TCI, a non-profit organization that partners with independent high schools to support Jewish student life and cultural programs.*

A WRINKLE IN TIME

In his essay “The American Scholar,” Ralph Waldo Emerson writes: “This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it.” I was reminded of that sage advice this past summer when I found myself flipped over in a kayak in the middle of a New Hampshire lake with my eight-year-old son. Lifejackets strapped around our chests, bobbing in the water: panic, float, or swim for shore? The response to change comes down to perspective, a little common sense, and a healthy dose of faith. Inevitably, the question looms large: how did I get myself here and for what purpose? Why am I here, and, now that I see where I am, what will I do? *We may be flipped, but the water feels good...*

The question of why we are here is one of our central life questions. This central question implies the question of our past: whence have we come? It suggests the question of our future: to where will we go? It is asked from the present: why are we here now? It is a question into which we live an answer reconciling past, present, and future as best we can. Sinking into the question may cause anxiety, but it also reminds us that we are fully alive. Our schools are places where students can safely sink into the big questions: what will I believe? How will I love? How will I live? What do I believe is right? Education affords the opportunity to be philosophers, to think about the big picture. Eventually, you do need to sink or swim. *The kayak is filling with water...*

We are here not only for ourselves, but more importantly for others. We should first strive to do things well, and secondly strive to do them for others. What’s the point of everything if it all ends with us? Self-realization is merely the first step. The second step is self-transcendence. This does not mean escaping the world, but merely rethinking how we relate to it. We are not the end of the story. In fact, the story has been playing out long before we were born and will continue long after we are dead. Hegel recognized this. For him, human beings make history, and so they have significance beyond their time and place. Moments of transition are opportunities to move history forward towards its goal. We are part of something far larger than ourselves, and we contribute to the whole. For Hegel, history moved forward only in moments of transition, and moments of transition were character-

ized by conflict and struggle. It was this struggle that moved history in a dialectical process: human beings may possess, articulate, and fight for their ideas no matter how deep the water, or how far away the shore. There are risks either way. Why are we here? *Tighten your lifejacket...*

In the Greek myth, Sisyphus rolls the boulder uphill only to see that his efforts were in vain as the boulder rolled back down, and he had to begin again. The challenges and change of the twenty-first century require new thinking, a new model of leadership that jettisons individual authoritarianism in favor of collaborative engagement. What we do now and in the future, we must do together in global community. Schools can be places where dialectic is taken seriously and where in many ways students and teachers quest together in asking the central and essential question of why we are here. Ideally schools can be places that not only reflect culture, but create culture as well. The same can be said of nations and people. But this advancement and creativity all depend on our willingness as individuals, as institutions, as nations, to embrace the possibilities of change. What we do, we must do together. *Start swimming...*

Alex Haley said, “When you clench your fist, no one can put anything into your hand.” What is unexpectedly given is just as precious as what we hold on to. Our hands need to be open. When we think that we alone know the answers, when we refuse to allow self-transcendence to occur, we hinder the dialectic. To face transition takes courage. Entering the dialectic means living with passion and openness. How can our communities be places where the dialectic of differing ideas is welcome and encouraged? “This time, like all times, is a very good one, if we but know what to do with it.”

*Keep swimming... ✨*

*The Rev. Michael E. C. Spencer, an Episcopal priest, is Dean of Chapel at St. Paul’s School in Concord, New Hampshire, where he also teaches Humanities and coaches crew.*

## MISSION, MOTTO, VALUES: PRACTICE WHAT YOU PREACH

BY SCOTT GARTLAN, ADRIANA MURPHY, AND ANNIE WARNER

A school's mission statement can be a good starting point for character education initiatives. Mission statements are sets of ideals that inform and guide policy development, decision-making, and curriculum implementation in all areas of the school—leadership, culture, and parent partnerships. A motto, on the other hand, is a touchstone for members of the community. Mottos express the essence of the school's mission.

The ideals embodied in the mission statement usually represent the community's core values. A committee looking at those values should be able to define a set of observable behaviors. The behaviors then provide guides for everyday teaching practice and student conduct. Purpose is linked to conduct.

Ideally, of course, the school's mission statement reflects the development of the whole child; character education runs alongside other markers of child development. As Marvin Berkowitz, Professor of Character Education at the University of Missouri, St. Louis, likes to say, "Character education is not another subject to be added to the plate. Character education *is* the plate."

The mission to the school community is what character is to life. And a touchstone/motto is the essence of the school—it brings the mission to life.

Here are some possible ways to use the mission and values to enhance character education in a school:

1. Establish a Representative Committee to Review Mission Statement.

- Does the mission statement contain explicit references to character?
- Through which channels are students developing character?
- How can the school ensure that students are developing character through all channels?
- In what ways is the mission made visible and brought to life?

2. After reviewing the mission statement, three to five core values that reflect the guiding principles of the mission should be identified. Then three to five observ-

able behaviors related to each of the core values can be articulated. For example, what does courage look like? Possible behaviors could include "assuming a leadership position in a club, class, or activity" or "telling the truth."

3. From the mission statement and values, a touchstone or motto that embodies character in action can be drawn. The touchstone/motto should be unique to the school. It should answer the question: "What is the purpose of this school?"

4. Focus groups should be conducted with all stakeholders (parents, students, faculty, board, staff, alumni, grandparents, friends). Several months, perhaps three or four, should be set aside to look at some essential questions:

- What is purpose of the school?
- What is the meaning, or "big idea," of education?
- What existing mottos can serve as springboards?
- Why does someone send a child to this school?
- What is the biggest challenge in developing a motto?

In addition to their overt value, activities like the above help bring individuals at the school together to form a strong Professional Ethical Learning Committee, which Thomas Lickona and Matthew Davidson refer to at length in their 2005 publication *Smart and Good High Schools*. The school climate that such communities develop makes everyone a winner. By engaging the community in a long-term, systematic review of purpose and meaning, the school can develop a motto, which can then be approved by the board of trustees and marketed by the development office. However, although the school ends with a motto, it is really asking the singular question: "Why are we here?" ❄

*Scott Gartlan is Character Education Coordinator and Counselor in the Upper School at the Cannon School, Concord, North Carolina. Adriana Murphy teaches eighth-grade ethics and is the Community Service Coordinator at Green Acres School, Rockville, Maryland. Annie Warner is Assistant Director at CSEE. The three are members of CSEE's Moral Development Team.*

# RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS & OBSERVANCES

NOVEMBER 2007

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



FOUNDED IN 1898

## November 1

### All Saints Day (Christianity)

In the Christian church, days were specified to commemorate important martyrs and saints. But after certain persecution periods, the number to be remembered was so great that a special day could not be named for each. Pope Gregory III set November 1 as the day to remember all saints. Different Christian sects celebrate the day in different ways. Roman Catholics and Orthodox Christians, and many Anglicans, pray to the saints for help of various kinds. Lutherans tend to think about the saints on this day, and to thank God for making sainthood possible for them.

## November 2

### All Souls Day/Day of the Dead (Roman Catholicism)

Since on November 1 the saints are remembered, the following day is set to remember those who are still being “purged” or “purified” in purgatory before they reach heaven. On the Pagan “Festival of the Dead,” a precursor to All Souls Day, it was believed that souls would come back and share a meal with their families. In some places it was traditional for the children to go to people’s houses and ask for food. The food was, symbolically, to feed the dead who returned. The day is frequently observed by attending Mass and then visiting the graves of the deceased. Under Aztec influence, elaborate and colorful customs have developed in Central America, including candles, mementos, food, and the occasionally humorous *calaveras*, like obituaries, but written about people still alive.

## November 9

### Diwali (Hinduism, Sikhism)

In Hinduism, Diwali is the five-day festival of lights, when lamps are lit both inside and outside houses. People clean their homes and cleanse themselves so they can worship the goddess of wealth, Lakshmi. In addi-

tion to the lighting of lamps, doors and windows are opened to welcome Lakshmi, and gifts are frequently exchanged. Light, a symbol of knowledge, is an invitation to reflect and gain wisdom.

## November 12

### Birth of Baha’u’llah (Baha’i)

The world’s five million Baha’is have basic principles that include belief in the oneness of the human race, the unity of religions, equality of the sexes, and universal peace. Baha’is are followers of Baha’u’llah, who was born in Persia in 1817. His birthday is one of nine holy days in the year. Baha’is do not work on their holy days; for many it is considered a sacrifice not to work. Holy day celebrations are generally quiet observances. Baha’u’llah’s birthday may be celebrated by a picnic, or a gathering at which prayers are said, or songs are sung from Baha’u’llah’s writings. There is no special ritual or ceremony for the occasion.

## November 15

### Nativity Fast begins—ends December 24 (Orthodox Christianity)

The Nativity Fast continues through December 24. The rules that govern this period generally place limits on the consumption of fish with backbones, and on wine, oil, and fowl. Fasting reminds adherents of sacrificing and foregoing certain pleasures during, or in anticipation of, holy days. The Nativity Fast is meant to prepare Christians spiritually for the birth of Jesus.

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November 24

## Guru Tegh Bahadur's Martyrdom (Sikhism)

The Muslim emperor of Kashmir was attempting to convert Hindus to Islam by force. Guru Tegh Bahadur scolded the emperor for the blindness of his faith; he was imprisoned, and ultimately beheaded. This may be the only time in history that the leader of one religion sacrificed his life for the freedom of another. Sikh holy days are frequently observed with recitations of hymns, lectures about the religion, processions with the Sikh flag (Nishan Sahibs,) and free sweets for the public.

November 24

## Birthday of Guru Nanak (Sikhism)

Nanak is the founder of the Sikh religion, which blends many of the important beliefs of Hinduism and Islam. Nanak stressed that the One, True, Creator God resides both in the world and in the human heart. The day is frequently remembered with hymns, recitations, and processions.

November 25

## Christ the King (Christianity)

This is a day when Christians acknowledge Christ's preeminence over all earthly authorities. Jesus said that his kingdom was not of this world. He came to establish a kingdom of truth for the intellect, a kingdom of justice and holiness for the will, and a kingdom of love and peace for the heart. Christians usually celebrate the Feast of Christ the King with prayers and liturgy.

November 26

## Day of the Covenant (Baha'i)

This day commemorates both the life of 'Abdu'l-Baha, the son of Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i tradition, and a promise Baha'u'llah made to his followers. If adherents obey Baha'u'llah's command that 'Abdu'l-Baha be named his successor, then their unity will be ensured and Baha'u'llah will establish the Kingdom of

God on Earth. 'Abdu'l-Baha is considered the center of the covenant. Following 'Abdu'l-Baha's passing, Baha'u'llah's great-grandson, Shoghi Effendi, was named the "guardian" of the faith. From 1963 to the present, authority for interpretation and guidance rests with a nine-member council known as the Universal House of Justice.

November 28

## The Ascension of 'Abdu'l-Baha (Baha'i)

This day commemorates the death of the second leader in the Baha'i tradition. 'Abdu'l-Baha passed on November 28, 1921, at the age of 77. Baha'is around the world reflect on 'Abdu'l-Baha's life of service and rededicate themselves to Baha'i tenets and to emulating of 'Abdu'l-Baha's life. ✨

## CSEE NEWS

### 2008 Community Service Award

Application materials are now available for CSEE's 2008 Community Service Award program. This year the theme is "connecting ages." Applications are sought from schools whose programs are exemplary in they way they link students up with younger children, or with the elderly. Applications are available at [www.csee.org](http://www.csee.org). ✨

## IN THE WEB

[www.ackland.org](http://www.ackland.org)

We at CSEE are regularly approached by teachers of religion and other disciplines who seek resources, art, and visual calendars relating to the topic of religious traditions. Such items often bring the textual material to life. For these matters, we recommend the Web site for the Ackland Museum. Associated with the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the Ackland Museum offers excellent resources for students, teachers, and practitioners of the world's religions. The Web site is extensive, yet easy to navigate. Comprised of links to religious art, calendars, books, and more, the site provides a visual approach to the study of religious traditions. ✿

## CSEE NEWS

### Cash Awards for Character

CSEE is offering \$75,000 in cash incentive awards to schools, for designing or fine-tuning character education programs. Two schools will win the awards; \$50,000 will be awarded to a school with 500 or more students, and \$25,000 to a school with fewer than 500 students.

Schools that apply must include a parent component in their programs. Research shows that when parents are involved in school-based character education programs, the level of success is increased.

The purpose of these awards, which come through the generosity of the Weekley Foundation, is to create an impressive new wave in the development of ethical leaders in independent schools. Additional information and resources are available on the CSEE Web site, as are application materials. ✿

## CSEE CURRICULUM SPOTLIGHT

### A Handbook for Developing and Sustaining Honor Systems

*Revised edition*

*Written by David B.L. Gould and John Roberts*

*Copyright 2007 by CSEE*

*Member Schools: \$32*

*Others: \$42*

**A** *Handbook for Developing and Sustaining Honor Systems* has been a strong seller at CSEE since it was first published in 1999. At over 100 pages, the handbook was a good start-to-finish how-to guide for schools wanting to institute or rejuvenate an honor code or council.

The handbook has just gone through a thorough revision by the CSEE Honor System Consultant and workshop presenter. Dr. John Roberts has combined the best of the original volume with insights and experiences gleaned from many schools in the years since the publication of the original edition.

The revision begins with a philosophical overview of honor codes, followed by individual chapters on the honor code, the honor council, the honor case, the honor education program, step-by-step guidelines for instituting an honor code, and selected resources.

The original eight appendices have been increased to thirteen, including an extensive sampling of honor codes, honor pledges, and handbook explanations from more than a score of independent schools around the nation. Other appendices range from checklists for tracking the progress of an honor case and lists of tips for teachers generated by student members of honor councils to model honor constitutions and handouts for teachers reporting violations and for advocates preparing to attend hearings.

The handbook is the primary resource for CSEE's upcoming honor conference, which will be held at Woodward Academy in Atlanta, Georgia, Oct. 26-28, 2007. Participants will receive a free copy of the book. For more information, visit [www.csee.org](http://www.csee.org). ✿

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### UPCOMING CONFERENCES

#### NOVEMBER 2007

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11	12	13	14	15	16	17
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#### Honor Codes and Honor Councils

(For teams of faculty and students working to create, or to fine-tune, these important aspects of school life)

With John Roberts, Ph.D.  
Woodward Academy  
Atlanta, Georgia  
October 26-28, 2007

#### DECEMBER 2007

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

#### Classroom Climate and Discipline for Moral Growth

(The first of our offerings in the "Working with the Best" series for this year, for pre-school through middle-school teachers, administrators, staff members)

With Marilyn Watson, Ph.D.  
Oakland, California  
October 20-21, 2007

#### JANUARY 2008

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#### Effective Character Programs

(Three one-day regional workshops to outline what research tells us are the most effective components of character education programs that work, with time for questions and answers regarding the Character Education Awards to be granted in the spring)

With CSEE Moral Development Team  
Specific locations and October/November dates available on the CSEE Web site

#### FEBRUARY 2008

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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#### New England Independent School Spiritual Council

(Co-sponsored by NEISSC and CSEE, this event will focus on spirituality and the environment)

With Chet Raymo, Mary Evelyn Tucker, Ph.D., and others  
November 2-3, 2007  
Southborough, Massachusetts

#### Annual Meeting of Secondary School Teachers of Religion at AAR

(Co-sponsored by CSEE, RSiSS, and the Program in Religion and Secondary Education at Harvard Divinity School; this year's focus is on Religious Literacy)

San Diego, California  
November 16, 2007

#### Active Advising: Activities for Meaningful Participation

With Barbara Ackerman (author of CSEE's *Need a Hand with Advising? Here's a Handbook!*)  
Nashville, Tennessee  
October 26-27, 2007

#### Crisis and Community: Ministering for Empowerment and Hope

(Conference, resource sharing, and an opportunity to learn, from students who have "been there," how we can best use our strengths when times get rough. For chaplains, religion teachers, and spiritual directors of all faiths; co-sponsored with NAES)

With Rev. Daniel Heischman, David Streight, and New Orleans student leaders rebuilding their city  
February 8-10, 2007  
New Orleans, Louisiana

#### Experienced Teachers Workshop: Teachers of World Religions

(This event is by application only)  
New York, New York  
Date TBA

#### Teaching Ethics and Social Justice

With Roger Gottlieb, Ph.D.  
Boston, Massachusetts  
March 29-30, 2007

#### Community Service/Service Learning

With Mary Pashley and Ann Saylor  
April 4-5, 2007  
New Orleans, Louisiana

#### Moral Development and the Ethics of Care

(The second of our 2007-08 offerings in the "Working with the Best" series, for school administrators, teachers, and other staff members, all grades)

With Nel Noddings, Ph.D.  
April 18-19, 2007  
Lawrenceville, New Jersey ☘

## HOW DO YOU PLAN TO HELP PEOPLE WHEN YOU GROW UP?

### Fine Tuning the Questions We Ask

One of our CSEE spiritual development team members is head of school at a very centered and creative Muslim school. One day after a team meeting she commented on the fact that she avoided asking her elementary school students what they wanted to be when they grew up. Her preferred query was “How do you plan to help people when you grow up?”

The question was a whack-on-the-side-of-the-head experience for me, because it touched on so many of the character development issues CSEE has been working on since I began my tenure as executive director.

We frequently note that our schools are teaching character, whether they are intentional about it or not. Schools that have no explicit character agendas are transmitting something to their students by virtue of the fact that they are doing nothing explicit; and, at the same time, they are offering character lessons via all the human interactions—perhaps even environmental interactions—that take place at school.

“What do you want to be when you grow up?” or sometimes “What do you plan to be...” focuses a child on the future. Thinking about the future is an important thing to do. When I ask the question, however, it usually means “What are your present interests?” since I know that even university undergraduates change their minds over the course of their time in college. And I offer that the personal interests might be anywhere on the egocentric-altruistic continuum.

“How do you plan to help people when you grow up?” is a quintessential character question, however. It has that future focus; it offers, even invites, reflection on one’s future career. It also adds a community to a child’s life. It says “I care about you enough to ask you about your future. I want to listen to you. My hope for you is that you will be a healer of the world.” It

says “I hope you, like the Prophet, will be a community builder,” because we adults need more people out there helping people.

“How do you plan to help people when you grow up?” invites the child both to autonomy (the decision is yours, and I support you in making it) and to belongingness (you belong to a wide community, and you are responsible for helping it to be a positive community).

The question is a quintessential character question because what it touches on are exactly the issues that Marilyn Watson treats in her lead article for this issue of *Connections*, in her past writings for CSEE, and indeed in all the work she and her colleagues have done at the Child Development Project. Three key needs we can help fill in children’s lives are the need for belonging, the need for autonomy, and the need to become, and to feel, competent.

“What do you plan to do when you grow up?” certainly focuses on autonomy; but we do run the risk, as we hope our students can grow up to be whatever they set their minds on, of leaving out the “belongingness” part of the equation.

What other relatively simple questions, comments, or statements can I fine tune in the same way? And what questions can I ask myself? That is where I am led by this school head’s anecdote.

The greatest, of course, is how I plan to help people when I grow up. On a wider scale, “How do I plan to help CSEE help schools...?” ❁

David Streight