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AM Gurukula
146 Honness Ln
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Ananda Marga Gurukula

P. R. Sarkar, the founder of Ananda Marga Gurukula, strongly stated that all human beings have a right to education, medical care, clothing and shelter, but he also equally stressed that only all round development - physical, mental and spiritual - will bring prosperity and progress to human society.

The Gurukula system of education is the oldest on our planet, tracing its roots back 10,000 years to the time of ancient Indian Civilization and dedicated to the highest ideals of all-round human development - physical mental and spiritual. At the Gurukula, all the aspects of one’s personality are developed utilizing an integrated curriculum that empowers the student to know oneself and develop the confidence and empathy to utilize the knowledge for serving the society.

Gurukula encompasses intellectual cognitive abilities but extends it to include the development of intuition, aesthetics and a futuristic and ecological perspective based on universal outlook.

Today, Ananda Marga Gurukula is a revival of that ancient tradition, offering a blending of occidental analytical approach and oriental synthetic knowledge. Gurukula is an institution dedicated to human resource development.
Ananda Marga Gurukula Global Liaison Office

Ananda Marga Gurukula has its permanent global headquarters at Ananda Nagar in India from which every aspect of Ananda Marga Gurukula is overseen and managed. For the purposes of facilitating global communications, Ananda Marga Gurukula now has a Global Liaison Office in Cyberspace with a mailing address in New York Sector. The liaison office and all its functions is under the direct management and close supervision of Kulapati, Dada Shambhushivananda, who has access to all records and files, with the additional close supervision and assistance of Didi Ananda Rama, member of Cakradhuri of AM Gurukula. All other members of Cakradhuri (Steering Body) of AMGK will provide guidance as well. The functions and aims of this office are as follows:

Communications
Facilitate Communications between Ananda Marga Schools through:
- Gurukula Network
- NHE Forum

PR
Work on bringing awareness of Neo-Humanist Education to a broad audience:
- Manage and update the Gurukula and NHE Web Pages
- Encourage New Publications and their distribution
- Form an Editorial Board for reviewing new publications.

Global NHE Conferences and Seminars
- Assist in the organization of NHE Conferences around the world.

Teacher Training and Certification Programs
- Gather the input of NHE Educators around the world and facilitate the development of a Teacher’s Training Program including a process of certification.
- Locate one model school in each Sector and take the first steps towards a training program and center.

Syllabus, Curriculum and Licensing of Schools
- Gather input of NHE Educators around the world and facilitate the development of standards for schools, including minimum qualifications as well as ideal ones.
- Facilitate the development of guidelines for Curricula for all levels.

School Portfolios
- Prepare a folio on each of our schools around the world and work on accreditation and affiliating them to Ananda Marga Gurukula.

Library of Publications and Resources
- Compile a data base of resources and publications and make it available for distribution through publication secretaries, commerce secretaries, web page contact list, etc.
- Gather model samples of leaflets, prospectus, school newsletter, all kinds of school forms, reporting papers, etc. that we could supply to newly opening schools.

Incorporation
- Work on forming a global legal corporation for Ananda Marga Gurukula.

Develop Faculties
- Help in developing the various faculties of AMGK by assisting in finding interested and qualified individuals, both inside and outside of India, both margiis and wholetimers, to take up the positions that will make these faculties active.

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Bi-Annual Report of Ananda Marga Gurukula
on the occasion of New Years' DMS held at

Dear members of Gurukula, Brothers, and Sisters,

I feel a great pleasure to present the progress report on the holy occasion of the New millenium DMS at Ananda Nagar in the August presence of respected Purodha Pramukh Dada. The Gurukula has made commendable progress in various areas during the last six months.

Chakradhuri Complex

To begin with, I have the pleasure to announce that the targets of the first phase of the construction of the Chakradhuri complex have been successfully achieved with the expenditure of rupees more than 8.5 lakhs. In this endeavor our Sachiv Ac Svarupanadna Avt, Mahasachiv, Ac Karunanda Avt under the inspiration of the Kulapati Ac Shambhuisvananda Avt and financial support of Shrii Pradip Anand, Bombay deserve special mention.

Acupuncture College and Clinic

About the progress of Gurukula Institutions, the acupuncture unit at Ananda Nagar has made strides. The recently started Acupuncture College, affiliated to the open University of Alternative Medicine in Calcutta is running well with regular theoretical and practical classes. Presently, there are 12 students in the college, 7 hostels and 4 teachers. Ac Omkareshvarananda Avt, the Principal, is making efforts to increase enrollment. In this respect, Dr. Ciranjiiva, a devoted margi and acupuncturist from the USA deserves appreciation for his academic guidance and financial support. Our acupuncture clinic, named "Community Acupuncture Clinic" and run by a team of three doctors headed by Dr. Devanshu Dev, has given a record treatment of 6491 patients and has gained popularity far and wide.

The Institute of Veterinary Science and Animal Husbandry

The Veterinary Institute has also gained popularity through the dedicated and low cost veterinary treatment in the rural areas of different states and efficient theoretical and practical classes at the Institute. Forty-eight students have sought admissions to the two year diploma course since July, 99 and thus the present enrollment has become 106. Fifty students stay in the general hostel and 7 in Rarh hostel in Chakradhuri compound. Thirty -seven students have passed during the last period. The institute has produced a total number of 181 trained workers up to date. 1452 animals were treated at the hospital of Ananda Nagar Institute. The A1 program run by the Institute at Ananda Nagar is becoming popular in the surrounding villages and 40 animals which includes cows, buffaloes and goats, were inseminated with positive results.

Rural Composite Medical College

With an increase of 49 new students, the present number has swelled to 112 students in the college. There are 6 teachers. Twenty-three students reside in the hostel. Twenty-five students have passed during the last period. The college has trained 190 health workers so far. The construction of the boundary wall on 11.5 acres of land for the Composite Medical College at Gopal Ananda Nagar is also in process.

Tantra Vidyapeeth (TVP) and Neo-Humanist Research Institute (NERI)

A two day seminar on "Tantra, education and Values" was organized by TVP and NERI on August 15 and 16th at Ananda Nagar. Shrii Shrvan from the USA, Ac. Raghunathi, Ac. Bhaskarananda Avt, Ac Shambhushivananda Avt, and Ac. Vivekananda Avt. expressed their views on the topic. Nearly 30 participants comprising teachers, students and scholars attended the conference. Apart from this a new forum called Neo-Humanist Forum (NHE-Forum) has been formed under the supervision of Kulapati, Ac. Shambhushivananda Avt. It is an e-mail discussion group for the development of NHE and is coordinated by Avtk Ananda Rama.
Cooperative Training College

The construction work of the Cooperative Training College is nearing completion and the classes will begin according to the syllabus of the training course prepared by Ac Samanvayananda Avt.

College of Agriculture

The College of Agriculture has developed the field in Gurdih Chakradhuri and Central Ananda Nagar for the demonstration on crop production technology. The transplantation of winter rice (Boro) has been done in the present Saora Sakan Gurukula compound near Dadhichi hill.

College of Fine Arts and Music

There has been 100% result in the 1998-99 session with 8 distinctions. There are 32 students in the college of Fine Arts (painting) and 21 students in music (vocal and instrumental).

NATAC

The biannual issues of Arogya Ratna are being regularly published with valuable health articles in Hindi and English. The magazine is becoming popular. Ac Bhudeveananda Avt is developing the infrastructure for a naturopathic and ayurvedic center at Gopal Ananda Nagar.

Textile Institute

The Textile Institute has made headway towards self-sufficiency. Our Weaving Center has produced bedsheets, gamachhas, sarees, lungies and other orange clothes worth Rs. 15,525/-. The Institute will shift to its original site near Bali in Bhavani Ananda Nagar in the new year.

Bio-Psychology Institute

The Institute of Bio-psychology at Ananda Parvita Master Unit in Tatui, Sao Paulo Brazil is holding a one year course in Bio-psychology attended by doctors, psychologists, educators and other health workers and professionals and is rapidly spreading Tantra philosophy and practices among the educated people in Brazil. There is also a Neo-humanist kindergarten operating at Ananda Parvita Master Unit with 20 children.

Gurukula Rural Service Center

Another interesting service project namely Gurukula Rural Service Center (GRSC) has been undertaken at Gopal Ananda Nagar under the guidance and financial support of brothers A’tman and Parthasarathi from Iceland. One acre of land has been registered at Gopal for this purpose. The center will take up various activities like Naturopathy and Ayurvedic research, educational programs for village children, etc.

Publications

The two Fall and Spring issues of Gurukula Network, the newsletter and journal for the Association of Neo-humanist Schools, are being regularly received by more than 400 members all over the world.

A documentary on Neo-Humanist Education by Avtk Ananda Rama Ac containing 43 articles and 130 pictures will be available soon.

Two new books, "Teach Me to Fly" (on education) and "Head in the Stars, Feet on the Ground" (on bio-psychology) by Didi Ananda Nivedita have been published by Gurukula Publications in Calcutta and are on sale now.

Kulapati Tours

I am happy to report that the visit of honorable Kulapati Ac Shambhushivananda Avt to Kyoti, Japan, Australia and Africa have been very fruitful in creating a positive inclination and keen interest amongst the intelligentsia and scholars toward the emerging AM and Gurukula Neo-Humanist Education, as a ray of hope for peace in the world. Our Kulapati introduced the ideal of Ananda Marga Gurukula at the Parliament of World Religions, held in Cape
Town, South Africa and received a positive response from many dignitaries from around the world.

In the end, I would like to say that we are at the threshold of the third millennium. We should not be complacent with what meager we have achieved. We have a long way to go in propagating, promoting and implementing the high ideals of Gurukula through NHE as enunciated in the philosophy of Neo-humanism propounded by our beloved Baba, the founder of Gurukula. Ananda Marga Gurukula is the agency which can revive the oldest Gurukula system of education in ancient India by offering a superb blending of Occidental analytical approach and Oriental synthetic knowledge. The Gurukula is determined and dedicated to all round human development with its integrated curriculum.

The teachers have a pivotal role to play in educating and building the character of the young ones. I am delighted to announce that Ac. Shantananda Avt, a trained teacher, has come forward with deep insight and keen interest towards this end. Dada is also completing his MA from Annamalai University. The Education training camp held at Jamshedpur was a memorable one and imparted meaningful techniques for improving the standard of our teachers.

Before I close, I thank all the Gurukula members, central workers, especially E-I, for his cooperative attitude. We also anticipate and welcome the active participation of brothers and sisters in building the Gurukula and in achieving a big milestone of 1.5 crores project of Chakraduri complex under construction. I am grateful to honorable Kulapati Ac Shambhushivananda Avt and Mahasachiv Ac Karunanananda Avt for mobilizing the resources for Gurukula. I am also thankful to Ac Samanvayananda Avt for his association, especially with Tantra Vidyapeeth (research wing on Microvita). I am obliged to Dada Svarupananda for his association with Chakradhuri construction work. We are indebted to our respected Purodha Pramukh Dada for his guidance and inspiration.

**Future Targets**

1. Complete Phase 2 of Chakradhuri Complex
2. Hold Seminars and Workshops. In this context I am glad to announce that there will be a Renaissance Workshops immediately after this new Millennium DMS, sponsored by Ananda Marga Gurukula on January 2 and 3, 2000.
3. Increase the number of students in our Institutions
4. Secure internal legal status of AMGK, both in USA and India.
5. Improve the academic and moral standard of all our students enrolled in AMGK throughout the world.

*News Update*
Ac.Rudrayamalanandaji has joined AMGK as K. Sachiv of AMGK Mahasamiti and as Vice Principal of the Agricultural College.

**Visit Our Web Pages**
Gurukula
www.gurukul.edu

Neo-Humanist Education
www.gurukul.edu/nhe

Two more schools have been added to the Schools Page
Yesterday I said something about history. I said that modern history usually deals with certain very common events such as when a certain king succeeded to the throne, or plundered a neighboring country, or perpetrated atrocities on his subjects, or died, and so on. What benefit could common people possibly derive from studying such useless information? This is why they have no interest to study this sort of history at all. True history should be a faithful record of the entire human life.

The recognized definition of history is, "Iti hasati ityarthi itihasa." That is, history is a resplendent reflection of collective life whose study will be of immense inspiration for future generations. "Iti hasati" literally means, "glowing example of glorious human dignity."

Human beings should not be compared to individual flowers, but to an entire flower garden. A flower garden is made up of innumerable varieties of flowers, each with its own fragrance and colors. Human history is like this: the beauty of history lies in its kaleidoscopic variations in spatial, temporal and personal factors. We cannot afford to spoil its characteristics, nor can we forcibly impose a particular type of history on a certain community.

Every individual or community will advance by virtue of its own inner vitality and assist in the collective fulfillment of the entire humanity. This is the true spirit of history. While writing history we will have to consider the various spheres of human life and ensure that proper directions are given for the development of each sphere. For instance, history should focus upon the prevalent educational system, cultural standards, thoughts and ideas, dress, the social condition of women, the role of women in the social and economic spheres, and the socioeconomic conditions of the weak and backward communities of the society of a particular age. If any of these aspects are omitted while writing history, it will be incomplete.

There is yet another popular definition of history:

Dharma'rtha ka'na moks'a'rtham Niiti va'kya samanvitam' Pura'vrta katha'yuktam'itiha'sah pracaks'ate

That is, that treatise alone which increases human beings’ arena of spiritual awareness and thus renders the intellect more subtle, which enhances the knowledge of various branches of art and science - such as literature, fine art, pure science, technology, social science, etc - and which places human beings on a firm foundation, deserves to be called genuine history. Let us see how people write history or get it written. In most cases history is written in the interest of a particular vested interest group. History books are selected in order to establish the glory of a particular era. For example, the heroic tales of the chivalry of the Ks'attriya era, their war strategies, etc, form the main basis for the writing of history of the Ks'attriya era - history books are filled with eulogies of the bravery and chivalry of the Ks'attriyan rulers. Similarly, the history of the Vipra era is full of praises for the glorious deeds of the Vipra leaders, and the history of the Vaeshya era contains an abundance of stories about the glories of the Vaeshyas. While studying such biased history, the readers lose both interest and patience. Besides that, the study of this sort of so-called history injects some kind of dogma in the readers mind, and consequently, the development of a spontaneous human intellect is choked.

There should be proper arrangements for the study of history. But that history must be real history, not the history of a particular class, king or minister.

Unfortunately, the biased history is always written according to the dictates of the ruling class of different countries. The study of this biased history is detrimental to society. It should not occur.

You people of today are more enlightened. Your intellectual capacity is no less than anyone else’s. That is why you should write a new history of the human race by your collective endeavour. The history that you are going to write in future must unequivocally reflect such important factors as how human society has evolved through trials and tribulations; what difficulties were confronted and how human beings overcame them and moved towards their goal with firm steps, and how even today they are advancing by solving numerous problems.

Patna 28 February 1980 A Few Problems Solved, Part 4
Getting Started With Stu-vol
by John Crowe

We live in a world where globalisation is an increasing reality, a world where individuals, communities and nations find it increasingly difficult to isolate themselves from problems occurring in geographically distant places. One of the most significant human realizations over recent years has been that everything is interconnected and interdependent. No being exists in isolation.

Along with this realization has come the recognition of the need for a new kind of citizenship - one based on Neo-Humanism, the philosophy of love that embraces and cherishes the uniqueness and interdependence of all living beings. In Neo-Humanist citizenship, the individual no longer views herself or himself as a citizen of a particular town, state or nation but rather of the cosmos. The Neo-humanist citizen shows qualities of open-mindedness, lack of dogma, universal outlook, thirst for knowledge, morality, ecological awareness, idealism, empathy, active habits, service mindedness and a commitment to the practice of spirituality in their own lives.

In Neo-Humanist schools, Stu-Vol, short for Student Volunteers was introduced by P.R.Sarkar, the founder of Gurukul, as a program for developing this kind of citizenship. The Student Volunteers of today's Neo-Humanist schools will be the new citizens of tomorrow, with the Earth as their neighbourhood and the universe as their ‘native land’.

Properly integrated into the school curriculum, Stu-Vol promotes an ethos of what P. R. Sarkar calls Prana Dharma, “a spiritual expression of eternal truths based on morality, righteousness and reverence but bound by time place and person.” Such an ethos allows the development of the school community as a microcosm of the qualities, attitudes and habits that we wish students to take with them into the adult world.

With these aspirations in mind, Stu-Vol needs to hold a unique place among school programs. It needs to excite, enthuse and challenge students to the extent that the ethos it cultivates will overflow beyond the periphery of school experience into their everyday lives. To achieve this, two essential elements are important. The first is a structure that is responsive to the psychology of adventure and heroism that is dominant in the primary school mind and the second is a stimulating, relevant and practical program content.

The mind of the seven to fourteen-year old is filled with an attraction towards heroes and adventure. They thrive on clubs, secret passwords, codes and peer group culture.

Stu-Vol taps into this psychology by adopting a club structure. Each club can have its own clubhouse, flag, code of conduct, oath and so on. A uniform with rank and achievement badges adds to the culture of adventure and heroism.

The program content needs to be broad, activity oriented, challenging and stage based. Children need to be challenged to do their best without fearing failure if they don't succeed. Rather lack of success should be used to build determination and a sense of learning from what has gone before.

Each Stu-Vol club will have its emphasis on program content depending on local conditions and culture, resources and
personnel. The six broad content areas below were developed at the Ananda Palli School in Queensland, Australia.

- Service skills and projects.
- Emergency service training.
- Skills for independent living.
- Knowledge for citizenship.
- Study of great personalities.
- D.E.S.M.E.P. (Discipline, etiquette, smartness, morality, English and pronunciation).
- Spiritual culture.

The club might offer achievement badges in each area. A student's progress could be measured firstly by an assessment of skill level and secondly by the ability to apply that skill level in practical situations.

For example in the first curriculum area, ‘Service Skills and Projects’, achievement badges might be offered in the following skills:

- Care of the sick and elderly;
- Care of animals;
- Care of plants;
- Care of the environment;
- Helping others in crisis;
- Fund-raising;
- Setting up a relief store;
- Networking;
- Basic service skills: knowing what, how much and when to offer.

Projects for putting these skills to practical use could include building an animal shelter for injured bush animals, making a nature trail, singing for the elderly, making a club relief store, fund raising and making a school garden.

At the Ananda Palli School, the Stu-Vol program was conducted one afternoon a week with camps and other extra-curricular activities being offered on weekends. It was very much a whole-school program with strong involvement and support from parents and community sympathisers.

The fact that the school was located in a rural area with natural bushland all around significantly influenced the activities and highlights of the program.

Each Stu-Vol team had soon constructed its own cubby-house in the surrounding bush and achievement badges in Making Shelters, First-aid, Knots and Lashings, and Bushcraft and Camping were among the first achieved by many volunteers.

P.R. Sarkar has written:

“The flame of a lamp lights up countless lamps. The touch of a great personality wakes up innumerable sleeping hearts.”

Stu-Vol is a program that offers the opportunity for children to feel the awakening of the Neo-Humanistic lamp within their own hearts and gain a sense of their own ability to help light up the lamps of others. It is a program that utilises the skills, expertise and dedication of those in the immediate community for the development of young minds and the building of a Neo-Humanistic future.
Can I Play With You
by Didi Ananda Nivedita

"Human civilization is like a bouquet of flowers
from many different gardens
And the bouquet of these varied flowers is more beautiful
Than the individual flowers themselves."
Sarkar

Neo-humanism attributes to ethics the importance of being the anchor for social progress. Ethics and social skills give a future gauge of success, more than do academic subjects. For instance, upon maturity children may be bright but without good ethics and socialization skills, they may not have as much success or happiness. Neo-humanists educators regard role modeling as one of the critical ways children learn ethics and good social skills. The adult’s role is paramount for children to observe.

Social growth as an extension of moral development refers to the following ethical principles: non-harming, benevolent truthfulness, non-stealing, universal love, simple living, and service. Children express these principles in their lives by learning to play cooperatively. They learn to give and take. They make friends and develop empathy towards others and even towards inanimate objects. Learning ethics is a subtle process that entails children’s examining their beliefs about themselves and others. Do children believe they are worthy people with important contributions to make? Do their smiles brighten the day, or are they ignored and scorned? If trust has been offered to children, they become trusting and open. If young children have felt neglected or have been ignored, for example, not fed when hungry or not comforted when distressed, they feels weaker and less valuable in their relationships.

Most educators agree that ethical and social development is significantly tied to other areas of children’s development. Learning is very integrated, like a delicately woven tapestry, each thread enhancing another. For instance, while children learn language, they may also improve morality and social skills indirectly. In this way, Neo-humanist educators look at most of children’s experiences as integrated, especially ethical, emotional, and social opportunities.

PSYCHO-SOCIAL STAGES

To facilitate children in creating harmonious social relations, particular care is given in the early childhood years. From this critical developmental period, the way children mature will have ramifications throughout life. During the early years, social maturation unfolds in a complicated process of predictable learning stages. Many theories explain the various stages a child goes through in social growth. Cognitive psychologist Erik Erickson focused on what he called "psycho-social" stages of development. He believed that all people go through certain developmental stages throughout their lives. At each stage individuals meet dilemmas they must resolve or tests they have to complete. Any stage that is not successfully completed leaves a residue that effects all subsequent stages. Erickson believed that children’s success in completing a stage is heavily dependent on their relationships with their significant adults.

Each of Erickson’s developmental stages centers on a specific core value. At each stage a child would either learn a specific value or its opposite, the results becoming integrated into the child’s personality. For instance, if children do not acquire trust as infants, they evolve distrust instead. This forms a negative subconscious pattern of distrust throughout life. Usually, this pattern would remain and affect the person throughout life or until something else significantly changed it.

When a core personality element such as trust remains unrealized, the phenomenon is called “arrested development”. Arrested development refers to a break in an individual’s healthy and natural development, leaving a less healthy condition that keeps driving the individual. Distrust that occurred when one was an infant colors the child’s view of the world. This weakness continues until some positive intervention transpires that corrects the weakness and changes the unhealthy subconscious pattern. A
positive intervention in the case of mistrust would be a significant and extended experience of trust.

In another case, due to unhealthy sibling rivalry where parents show disinterest or favoritism, a child can form begrudged sharing. The child may have an arrested development in sharing that carries on into adulthood. For instance, Arthur had parents who fought with each other and pitted the children against one another. They used the children's toys as tools in their arguments, taking away toys of children who sided with the other parent and allowing "favorite" children to play with the toys they wanted. Consequently, Arthur became defensive and possessive of his toys. His childhood experience did not enable Arthur to learn to share willingly. After he grew up, without fully understanding why, Arthur felt irritable and angry whenever anyone asked to borrow his things. Even with his wife, he divided their possessions into "hers and his" instead of "ours." These feelings that drove Arthur's behavior came from arrested development in the early years. With re-education he may become aware of his behavior patterns and learn how to negotiate and share willingly. According to Erickson, the critical stages cover:

**BIRTH TO ONE YEAR**
Basic Trust / Basic Mistrust
I can depend on you / I can't depend on you. 
This is a safe place / I'm not safe here.

**ONE TO THREE YEARS**
Autonomy / Doubt
I can do it myself / I probably can't do it. 
You approve of me / You don't approve of me.

**THREE TO FIVE YEARS**
Initiative / Guilt 
I can solve problems / I'm doing it wrong. 
I can take risks and make mistakes / I'd better not try or make mistakes.

**SIX TO TEN YEARS**
Industry / Inferiority
I find accomplishments and interests / I can't do anything right. 
There is purpose / Life is boring.

**ELEVEN TO SEVENTEEN YEARS**
Identity / Confusion when assuming different roles
Strives to know "Who am I?" / Is reactive, rebellious and promiscuous. 
Authentic / Acts one way to parents and another way to others

**EIGHTEEN TO THIRTY-NINE YEARS**
Intimacy / Isolation 
I am responsible / I lack stability and have trouble with intimacy. 
Shares and affiliates with others / Needs to control or be controlled.

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**ROLE MODELING**

A teacher can intervene with a troubled child by providing consistent help and love at school. Children learn a tremendous amount through their teacher's example. If they see the teacher modeling concern for others, fairness, and cooperating with others, the children will tend towards these themselves. Positive, consistent modeling goes a long way in motivating a child to adopt good behavior and to seek help when needed.

Occasionally, times arise when children lose control or have negative feelings, and need redirecting. In cases of children who often display negative behavior, they usually have low self-esteem and arrested development. These children demand much reassurance and good, consistent guidance. For instance a boy pushes another child in front of the teacher for no apparent reason. When he exhibits negative behavior to attract attention, his teacher helps by not rejecting him and by channeling him towards more positive beliefs about himself. By focusing on the positive instead of the negative, children learn both self-worth and self-control. The core social beliefs such as "I am worthy" or "My contributions count" become the auto-pilot of the child's life. Certainly these efforts are at the heart of teaching morality and at guiding young children socially. With appropriate and consistent care, a teacher furthers children's self images and social patterns. These images and patterns may drive children their entire life.

Good role models are essential for early growth. Children gain social ethics and social skills through authentic role models and through the rewarding of efforts. In an open and empathetic atmosphere. Ethics and social skills can never be acquired by rote memory or by force. In the spirit of play, children learn social ethics and social skills.

**STAGES OF PLAY**

Other stages related to children's social development are from the work of renowned cognitive psychologist Jean Piaget, who described children's stages of play. Social development, similar to other areas of development, primarily takes place in the arena of play. In play children first relate to the world about them. Teachers observe children go through set stages of social play regardless of their intelligence or cultural backgrounds. Before two years of age, most children primarily play by themselves. Usually then around two to three years old, children take interest in what other
children do. They play along side other children, parallel to them. For instance, a little girl starts building a blockhouse and a two year old boy sees her and comes over. He will start his own instead of joining her. With maturity, in little phases, they gradually increase their play with other children. Around three or four years of age, children generally begin the group play stage and interact with other children. This becomes more sophisticated with age and experience. Exposing children to playmates at younger ages through nursery programs advance these skills sooner. Likewise, children who do not have many social opportunities to play with other children learn these stages later.

Early play stages critically influence the evolution of character. Teachers and parents have to give children a positive atmosphere for character and social development. During these young ages, the character patterns they form usually remain for life. Any arrested development that occurs affects a child’s future growth. A child can have arrested development due to traumatic experiences, continuous rejections, or a frequent lack of success over time. For instance, if arrested development occurs in a toddler when he is learning to respect other children’s boundaries, that individual may keep elements of being inconsiderate of others throughout his life. It takes a huge change as an adult to break a personality pattern that occurs during early years.

PROMOTING SOCIAL SKILLS

For children to have good social skills they need to also have good role models that demonstrate kindness and care. Without a sense of being loved and cared for, a child has no motivation to acquire socially oriented moral concepts and skills. When Children feel acceptance and security, they more likely form positive feelings about themselves and others. For instance, self-assured children have an easier time in the early stages of sharing. A stronger sense of self engenders them with a resilient base, not easily crushed by the process of trial and error.

Many activities help a child flourish in their interactions with others. Dramatic play constitutes one of the best activities for young children as they naturally are inclined to play at imitating the world. In this type of play they practice getting along with others. Teachers can organize a special corner for “dress ups” to facilitate dramatic play. This corner could include child-sized furniture, dolls, dishes, and used adult clothes. Dramatic corners can change to fit various themes such as a restaurant, an office, or a beauty parlor. By rotating the props in the drama corner around certain themes, the teacher not only aids social development, but also cognitive skills and language growth. Dressing up and pretending to be someone else provides invaluable experiences in understanding different roles.

Any small group activity where children have to cooperate and share with others supports social development. Good group activities such as group art projects and science experiments provide opportunities for problem solving and give children a sense of belonging. Block play is another excellent way to aid social skills. Block play allows children to naturally progress through the different stages of play - solitary play, parallel play, and group play. In block building with other children, the group makes a plan, discusses its progress, decides on the final use, and when and how the structure is to be knocked down. This requires the children to co-operate and negotiate. Block-play also advances language and spatial awareness. Most group play contributes vital information to children about their value to others and about life.

SERVICE SPIRIT

As part of social development, Neo-humanist education includes the responsibility to serve others. From their earliest years, teachers nurture children’s service spirit. Service is an essential Neo-humanist concept. When social skills blossom into service awareness, that is the highest fulfillment. Service touches the hearts of others more than other kinds of interactions. Society attributes greatness to a person’s actions and not to a person’s intentions. By pointing out opportunities as they arise or by creating opportunities for children to do service, teachers help young children develop more awareness of it. Cleaning the school yard, making get well cards for sick classmates, thank you cards for visitors, and singing songs to old folks are some activities that children can undertake to feel the experience of service.

Service is not done for praise. It involves a genuine concern and response to another’s need. Although praise is not the goal, in young children praise for service helps them learn more about its value. When children receive praise for service, they become more aware of its value and may incorporate it into their characters.
SOCIAL CONSCIENCE

Similar to service, social skills reach a higher level when there is the development of social conscience. Social development needs to be expanded to its fullest. Social conscience, linked to service, is particularly essential in Neo-humanism. Schools want to broaden children’s outlook until they reach the heights of social conscience. Children need to feel a greater responsibility toward the whole world. By forming this awareness in very young children an impression is made that will be carried throughout life. In Neo-humanism the term “conscience” refers to the inner perception of a personal situation, and the term “awakened conscience” or “social consciousness” refers to understanding more distant and less subjective situations. To develop an “awakened conscience” in children, teachers need to first awaken the child’s conscience and then encourage them to extend this awareness to the impersonal.

As explained in an earlier chapter, teachers promote young children’s awareness of their conscience by teaching them to recognize their “uh-oh” and “ah” feelings. Children can understand the “uh-oh” and “ah” feelings as the moral sense within them when they daily interact with others. When they play and act unfairly they feel “uh-oh” and when they play nicely and help others they experience “ah” feelings. The “uh-oh” and “ah” feelings assist children in the practice of fairness, evolving in their play. These feelings teach them how to balance their individual needs and wishes with those of other children.

The development of social conscience goes beyond twinges of consciousness and involves the development of rationality. Rationality forms when children study facts and ponder pros and cons. After weighing consequences, teachers encourage children to reach decisions or judgments about the subject studied. They explain to children that the true test of a decision consists of whether the outcome benefits and does no harm to people, plants, and things. The real litmus test of a new idea is whether its outcome is universally beneficial. Neo-humanism terms this measuring stick of welfare for all an “awakened conscience.” For instance, in June’s class the children prepared lemonade. After discussing the ingredients June asked the children what would happen if they put too much lemon or too little? They made a simple recipe together. When in agreement on the amounts, children prepared the drink. June extended this activity to help develop their social conscience. She asked, “We can pour a few large glasses for only a few children to drink or we can pour enough small glasses for all to drink. What should we do?” Easily the children said they wanted many small glasses so everyone could drink. This opportunity allows children to weigh consequences and decide in favor of a socially fair situation. Ask children “Is it nice to include and share with everyone?” Such discussions further the development of a social conscience.

In general, teachers find that careful attention to children’s concerns about fairness reveals many teachable moments to assist children with the development of a social conscience. Most activities that promote teamwork provide opportunities to learn fairness. A collaborative learning style and one not overly competitive offers the best atmosphere for children to learn how to work with others and to develop the spirit of social equality.

Other opportunities to promote social conscience arise throughout the school year during discussion time of various themes. Teachers include questions that encourage a sense of social justice in children. From preschoolers up, teachers ask provocative questions such as should people dump garbage on the moon? Should anyone be able to own a cloud? Should anyone die for lack of water to drink because of drought? Once the children catch the idea, teachers carefully avoid teacher-child mechanistic question and response by encouraging whole-group dialogues. During the process, educators remember to thank children for their remarks and contributions.

Overall, it cannot be stated enough that children learn by observing adults. Children closely watch even the most unconscious actions of adults. By observing if teachers act fairly in their treatment of others, students pick up any bias that teachers hold. Children perceive if teachers discriminate in any way. If children are taught by example, not only to sympathize with other people but with the environment as well, they become more responsible. When teachers seek out dialogues and moments to connect and aim children towards critical thinking and empathy, they go far in promoting social conscience. The development of an awakened conscience supports the children in making more astute choices and in creating solutions. When they grow up, this ability will allow them to find new solutions to alleviate human suffering.

Social development is an ethical process whose seeds are the skills of how to get along with others and whose blooms are the flowers of service and social conscience. Social conscience is a key element of Neo-humanism. As Sarkar said,

"Remember that no created being in this universe is independent by itself - it cannot exist all by itself. All of us have a supra-cosmic relation with the rest, at times prominent, elsewhere indistinguishable. In this plan of mutual relationship, even the slightest mistake or discord anywhere will raise a furor in the universe. In this mighty task of creation the brilliantly luminous sun and insignificant ant hold the same importance of existence, all these having combined to create the world family. In the same way, in human society, as well, the importance of a highly powerful and eminent person is at par with that of a disabled or dying patient. None can be ignored. The slightest injustice done to anyone will cause the breakdown of our entire social framework."
Introducing Math in the Early Childhood Classroom: One to One Correspondence and Counting
Compiled by Mahajyoti Glassman

This article is the first in a series. This issue will be primarily pertaining to the aspects of one to one correspondence and counting.

During the ages from two through five years old, the child is very actively absorbed in acquiring and remembering basic concepts. These are the beginnings of constructing our life foundation upon which many more blocks will be placed (or made to fall into place as the case may be). Math concepts enable us to develop the skills to organize and categorize information. They heighten our visual perception, observation and logical thinking abilities. These understandings are essential to maintaining a balanced intellectual as well as intuitive base for proper application to the daily problem solving tasks of real life learning.

Some of the basic mathematical functions to be facilitated in early childhood education (ECE) are: one to one correspondence, counting, classification, sequencing, and measurement. Math learning opportunities which offer the maximum sensory experience provide maximum learning and fun. Touch, taste, smell, hearing, sight are all integral to learning. The more the senses (as well as hands and full body movement) are invested into the lesson, the better the concepts will be assimilated.

One to One Correspondence

One to one correspondence is the foundation of math. It is fundamental to the comprehension of the relationship between value and objects. For example when setting out a row of chairs for a train, there is one chair for each child. The teacher is helping the child to understand that each item (in a group) needs to be recognized once and only once. Each item receives one number name. When the children set the table, there is one napkin for each child, one cup, and so on. In the school environment there are countless routine situations that naturally occur for children to participate with the teacher in experiencing one to one correspondence.

"Maria, find out if everyone has a pencil."
"Everyone can take one spoon, please."
"Please take one sheet of paper."
"Can everyone please get one book."

One to one correspondence not only addresses the concept of matching (i.e., one item to one person) but obviously understanding the basic concept of the value of one. When holding one item by itself, all alone, we call this "one". We are establishing the concept of "oneness".

* When playing store, each child will have to present one penny (or perhaps a ticket or a pebble) for each item that is purchased.

* Have a Teddy Bear Tea or Picnic. Does each bear have a chair, a napkin, a cup, a spoon?

* Blocks or Sticks: Build one garage for each car, one home for each animal.

* Give each child one pretzel stick. It even looks like the number "one". Draw one on the chalkboard. Let everyone eat one pretzel.

* Let everyone wear one hat from home or dress up collection. Have a Hat Parade. (If possible they should pass by a mirror so they can see themselves). Every body has how many heads? Every head has how many hats?

* Using an egg carton put one item (see Math Materials List) in each section. When finished, close the lid and shake. Upon reopening, some sections will have none, some a few. Once again have each child place one item in each section. (Try this with raisins, popcorn, peas.)

* When we play the game "Duck, Duck, Goose", the students are assembled in a circle on the floor or ground. One student goes around the circle, tapping each head one time and at the same time saying "duck", "duck", "duck". When you get to your special friend, one says "goose" with a tap and the person chases you around the circle and you quickly sit in their seat. The child left standing continues.
Counting

Counting skills are eventually coordinated with understanding the concept of quantity. Rote counting or reciting the numeric names in order from memory is basic. It is the teacher’s eventual objective to enhance the student’s learning experience to rational counting, relating the numeral to a selective group of objects. This eventually enables the student to understand the numeric value of each number and to use numbers in a practical way.

Rational counting is obviously more complicated than rote counting. A number of functions are simultaneously occurring: coordination of eyes, hands, speech as well as memory. This can be challenging for some two to three year old children due to differences in coordination, concentration, and other developmental as well as growth factors. Counting experiences may need to be very simplistic in nature with an initial emphasis on the values for 1, 2, and 3 for this age group.

By the age of four or five we observe greater eye-hand coordination and general maturation. More structured and advanced math activities can be introduced. They may count to 10 or beyond. On the other hand five to six year olds are capable of understanding 20’s and ultimately 100.

Assessing what the child knows:

* Count out loud for me as far as you can.
* Give me 5 blocks. Give me 10 blocks.

Counting activities:

* “Let’s count together and see how many girls are here today.”

* “Stand up if you wore a jacket to school today. Let’s count together.”

* Let’s see how many train cars we can build with the blocks.

* Let’s count and see if we are all here.

* How many kids are at this table?

* How many napkins do we need?

* How many body parts do we have 2 of? 1 of? 5 of? 10 of?

* Everyone put one thing from anywhere in the school on this table.

* Using playing cards, picture cards, or cards you have made, have the children select matched pairs.

* I want everyone to find a pair of crayons (or two) and hold them in the air.

* Prepare a Pairs Bag (Tray, or Box) with some of the following: pairs of - socks, shoes, earrings, dice, mittens, salt & pepper shaker, gloves. Mix and match.

* Make one snake from playdough. Cut it in half. Cut it again. How many snakes?

* Drop (or toss) clothespins (pencils, sticks, ball, or buttons) into a container. How many did you land in the can?

* Show me how many blocks are in your tower (or wall)?

* Today we are going to act out the story "Goldilocks and the Three Bears". I want Dakota and Aiden to set out the bowls, Jakob and Nkembe can get the spoons we will need, Marika and Juan may set out the blankets for the beds, and Ana and Niko can set out the chairs. How many bowls will we need? etc.

* How many noodles (or straw pieces) do we need to put on the yarn necklace to make 5? Show me.

* Make a snowperson with 3 playdough balls or with 3 paper circles.

* OK, let’s count together the number of dough balls in this apple I have just cut into pieces.

* I want each child to count the seeds in the watermelon slice they have just eaten. Raise your hand when you are ready to tell me.

* “Guess My Number”. A student stands in front of the group with a card that no one else can see with a number on it, s/he claps the number. Class members have to guess the number. (The leader can also hop, sneeze, jump, quack the number value).

* To play "Musical Chairs" or any game, ask the children to stand in a line. One or two selected students count them aloud while pointing to each person. Some other students bring the specified number of chairs. Everyone sits down to verify if the correct number of chairs were brought.

* Make a large ball from playdough (at least the size of a golf ball). Give each person a card with a certain numeral (or number of circles). Each student must press into the “porcupine” that number of items. Items used can be uncooked rigatoni or spaghetti, paper clips, pencils, crayons, sticks, toothpicks, etc. With a pencil poke 2 eyes, a nose, and mouth. Each porcupine may be placed on a paper plate with their name. How many quills does your porcupine have?
Young children want time to explore and discover math concepts in a supportive, nonjudgmental environment. They need to feel free to explore and make mistakes. Encourage them to test their ideas. You may choose to accept their "reasoning" even when faulty to enable the child to feel confident about participating in the process -- to keep them thinking, questioning, and sharing. Through continued practice and exploration, the attentive teacher will notice the child will come to learn the correct answer. For the early learner, the teacher is more concerned with the student understanding and catching a glimpse of the process rather than the exactly correct answer. In time the teacher may notice that different students will arrive at the anticipated answer in different ways!

Hands on daily activities will encourage everyone to have fun with learning math concepts. Real objects that are familiar to the child are the very best. The second resource available are pictures (from magazines and newspapers for example). The third method of introducing math is with writing or drawing lessons.

Math Materials
acorns, beans, birthday candles, cereal (Cheerios, Fruit Loops, Wheat Chex), buttons, clothespins, coins, crayons, drinking straws, flowers, keys, leaves, lids (screwable plastic or metal), uncooked pasta (macaroni, rigatoni), magazine pictures, marbles, nuts, nuts and bolts, paper clips, pebbles, pinecones, playdough, popsicle sticks, pretzel sticks, raisins, sea shells, seeds, sticks, toilet paper tubes, toothpicks (colored)

Developmental Goals: Numbers

3 - 3 1/2 years
• Understands the value of 2

3 1/2 - 4 years
• Can count using one to one correspondence up to 5
• Can indicate number of halves in a whole

4 - 4 1/2 years
• Understands the value of 5
• Names numerals 1-10

4 1/2 - 5 years
• Can give the teacher 10 objects upon request
• Can perform simple addition and subtraction
• (Can add or subtract 1 from 3)
• Can recognize numerals and understand value equivalent to 10

Children's Play

The early childhood educator is always looking for that special "teachable math moment." Encourage children to keep score during games with counters, paperclips, stones. Then later with slashes or marks and eventually numbers. Take a chalkboard or large piece of paper with you during outside play time. Count how many times they run around the playground, bowling scores, toss bean bags, bounce balls, ride their bikes around, throw balls in a basket, clap their hands, jump.

Children love to play store, post office, library, bank, space travel. Whatever the theme, help them to incorporate math. Find math opportunities to expand their play.

Puzzles provide the challenge of identifying shapes, matching colors and recognizing designs to complete the picture.

Blocks are a wonderful investment in children’s learning. They offer a multifaceted experience. Through blocks, the concepts of (size) depth, width, height, length, classification, fractions, and measurement are visually and kinesthetically introduced. Fingerplays, poems, and stories containing math concepts are in abundance. Make every day a more meaningful and fun day with math!
Counting Rhymes and Songs

1, 2, 3, 4, 5 Once I caught a fish alive.
6, 7, 8, 9, 10 Then I let it go again.
    Why did you let it go?
Because it bit my finger so.
Which finger did it bite?
The little one upon the right.

5 Little monkeys jumpin’ on the bed.
   1 fell off and bonked her head.
Momma called the doctor and the doctor said,
   “No more monkeys jumpin’ on the bed.”
   4 Little monkeys....
   No little monkey jumpin’ on the bed.
   None fell off and bonked their heads.
Momma called the doctor and the doctors said,
   “Put those monkeys straight to bed.”

One elephant went out to play
   upon a spider’s web one day.
   He had such enormous fun
   that he asked another one to come.
   Two elephants....
   (One child in middle of circle pretends to be an
    elephant swinging “trunk” from side to side.
   Then goes and picks another child who also
    comes into the center with trunk swinging. This
    continues until all the children are in the middle.
   We then count all the children.)

Linda pounds with one hammer, one hammer, one hammer.
Linda pounds with one hammer then she pounds with two.
Linda pounds with two hammers...  
   Linda pounds with three hammers....
   Linda pounds with five hammers...
   And then she went to sleep.
   (1-Children pound closed fist on floor like a
    hammer.  2-Two fists.  3-Two fists and one leg.
    4-Two fists and two legs.  5-Two fists, two legs, and bouncing head.
   And then she went to sleep -all lay down and pretend to sleep)

Two little feet go jump, jump, jump. Two little hands go thump, thump, thump.
One little body turns round and round. One little child sits quietly down.

Here is thumbkin, Number 1
   He is big, but see him run.
   Here is pointer, Number 2.
   He can show the way for you.
   This is long one, Number 3.
   She’s the tallest one you see.
   This is lazy, Number 4.
   Try to lift her just once more.
   Here’s the baby, Number 5.
   Tiny, yes, but quite alive.
   Now move your fingers, do a dance!
   Lift them high, like horses prance.
   Now into their houses they all creep.
   Make a fist - they’ve gone to sleep!

5 Little Chickadees standing by the door.
   1 flew away and then there were 4.
   4 Little chickadees sitting in a tree.
   1 flew away and then there were 3.
   Chorus.
   3 Little chickadees with nothing to do.
   1 flew away and then there were 2. Chorus.
   2 Little chickadees sitting in the sun. 1 flew away and then there was 1.
   Chorus
   1 Little chickadee not having fun. 1 flew away
   and then there were none.
   Chorus.

Here is the beehive. Where are the bees?
   Hidden away where nobody sees.
   Soon they come creeping out of the hive:
   1, 2, 3, 4, 5.
The following workshops and workshop ideas used for teaching college students can be adapted to use with younger students at the primary, middle or high school level, and even as part of a teacher training program with the staff of teachers working in neo-humanist schools. They all employ the use of the arts as a tool for learning and internalizing neo-humanist principles.

Neo-Humanism and Aesthetic Sciences
Using the Arts in Teaching Neo-Humanism by Ac Vishvamitra

This article deals with how aesthetic and supra-aesthetic sciences involving art, drama, music, dance and storytelling enhance our teaching of the principles of Neo-humanism. P. R. Sarkar's (Baba) social philosophy of Neo-Humanism deals with overcoming internal and external barriers for individuals and society in order to attain devotional love for all created beings of the universe. The inner asset of devotional sentiment is considered the most valuable treasure of humanity. The philosophy of Neo-humanism is offered as a necessary and sufficient fence to protect this inner devotional asset against an array of prejudices and biases referred to as sentiments. These sentiments include geo-sentiment, the attachment to place; socio-sentiment, the attachment to groups or particular communities; and finally the human sentiment which ignores the existential value of plants and animals.

**There are three stages on the path of Neo-Humanism.**

The first stage is spiritual practice which involves a physico-psycho-spiritual process of removing the defects, including the negative sentiments, of the psychic and external world. The second stage is spiritual essence (psychic and spiritual strata) which involves creating a new wave of thought with powerful spiritual force in the collective mind that supports universalism. Finally the third stage is spirituality as a mission in which individuals become one with their inner most Self. Baba encourages that attaining this highest expression of Neo-Humanism will save not only the human world but also the plant and animal worlds. To achieve these lofty goals we will have to teach the principles of Neo-Humanism to people of all ages in a manner that touches their hearts and minds. Using the aesthetic sciences to teach neo-humanistic values circumvents cynicism and adds the touch of spontaneity, beauty, humor and heroism that is much needed to instill dynamism in the educational process.

The sense of subtle aesthetics arose in the human mind early in evolution as seen in the paintings on the walls of cave dwellers in the Paleolithic era. Perhaps the early vestiges of aesthetic science took shape in the early stages of civilization over 10,000 years ago. With the introduction of the musical scale by Shiva over 7,000 years ago, music and dance began to grow more subtle. When we examine the archeological remains of pre-historical humans and some of the ancient traditions of relative still intact native cultures we find that the visual arts, storytelling, dance and dramatic enactments, which highlight important aspects of nature and culture, are the primary means of education. The oral traditions of storytelling and poetry along with the enactment of the stories through dance, music and drama have been an effective means for transmitting culture for eons before the advent of the written word. In the next installment of the article we will explore the theory of the multi-sensory aesthetic sciences behind the teaching of social values but now let us put practice first and look at how these ancient arts can help us teach the much needed vitality of universalism in modern society.
Ecological Art Workshop

Recently at a Spring Break program for college students Neo-Humanism was taught in two workshops that made use of the art of painting and story telling. The art workshop called an Ecological Art Workshop began with a brief lecture that defined neo-humanism as extending the underlying spirit of humanism to a love of plants, animals and the environment. The guidelines for Neo-Humanistic solutions for all entities were also presented on newsprint:

- rational mentality
- seeing all entities as divine
- social equality
- promoting the welfare of all

What follows is an outline of the workshop:

Morning: 10:30-12

I. Neo-Humanism Defined (15 min)

II. Individual Art- Being Chosen by an Entity in Nature (15 min)

Have some background music. The workshop leader speaks: "In a sitting posture induce deep relaxation. See yourself in nature walking in the woods. See yourself walking slowly being aware of the time of year, time of day, temperature and the details of the environment...... Now see through the woods a clearing ahead of you. Coming to the edge of the clearing you look around and then you become aware that your are not alone in this clearing. You see an animal in front of you. Allow yourself to spontaneously see the animal that appears to you. Now ask permission to enter and become this animal so that you can sense its body from within- how it moves, smells, and deals with its environment. Go slowly as you sense the inner and outer world from the perspective of this animal. Now respectfully request permission from the animal to paint them. Now ask this animal how it wishes to be represented in your painting...... Now return to your breathing and be aware of returning to the room.... Open your eyes when you are ready."

III. An art instructor demonstrates his painting of the animal that appeared to him and guides the participants in painting their animal on a 4x4 sheet with inexpensive acrylics. A medium size brush and a cup of water constitute the other supplies needed. (60 min)

Afternoon 2:30-4:00

I. Relaxation again and this time see your animal in its environment and let the animal show you the different aspects of its own environment and how it survives in this world. In this environment what supports its existence and what threatens its existence. (10 min)

II. Now complete the painting you started in the morning and paint the environment you see your animal inhabiting. After completing the individual paintings arrange them as a mural and give individuals a chance to discuss the process they went through with their painting and any other comments they wish to make about the exercise. (60 min)

III. Now each individual will give a voice to their animal in the present tense: (20 min)

1. State what life is like in the current environment as it has been affected by human development.
2. To humanity state what it requires to protect and improve it’s quality of life.
3. Each animal state what special gift and powers you offer to the artist and everyone.

IV. End with a circle ritual decided upon by the group (i.e. simultaneously making the sounds of the animal you painted; each individual internally making a vow to serve plants, animals and the environment in some specific manner in the near future.)

This art workshop can be given in one hour and a half if there are time constraints and surprisingly the shorter time used in the second week of Spring done on smaller canvases (2x2) resulted in very spontaneous work with less concern for detail.

The variation on ecological art that was used in this workshop was taken from John Seed’s book, *Thinking Like a Mountain*. This art approach uses masks painted by the participants (in this case on a paper grocery bag in 20 minutes) as support for a Council of All Beings in which the participants speak for the entity in nature they represent as was done in the above exercise. This council is preceded by two other segments involving “evolutionary remembering” and “grieving the loss of species”,...
both of which will be described below. The use of these three segments in succession serves well the Neo-Humanistic aim of creating a deep devotional sentiment which fosters the desire to serve plants, animals and environmental elements. These council of All Beings exercises can easily be adapted for a 3 hour to 3 day workshop with the aid of the manual style book by John Seed and his colleagues.

The paintings produced by the recent Spring Break participants were hung on the dining room wall as a continuous mural, creating a beautiful display that became a backdrop for our open mike Ananda Café where the participants presented their music, poetry and dance dramas on Thursday night. This was a good warm up for their final dramatic skits on the following night.

**Storytelling Workshop for Overcoming Narrow Sentiments**

Story-telling was enacted through the Story Wheel as described below:

Present an overview of the different sentiments- geo-sentiments, socio-sentiments, human sentiment and devotional sentiment followed by how the first three can produce negative and sometimes disastrous consequences (i.e. psychic, economic, political, religious and cultural exploitation supported by dogmas that imprison the intellect and limit collective progress).

Then present Baba’s guidelines for neo-humanistic solutions to the negative effects of these sentiments

- study,
- rational mentality,
- social equality, proto-spiritual/devotional mentality and
- awakened conscience/what serves the general welfare).

Put these definitions and consequences for the sentiments and the guidelines for the solutions to the sentiments respectively on newsprint for them to refer to for the “problem” and “solution” phase of the story telling.

Start a story filled with potential Neo-Humanistic issues then have each person in the circle pick up and continue telling the story where the person next to them left off. They can assume the point of view of narrator or adopt the role of the characters they are portraying. You can suggest for an ice breaker on the first round that individuals begin their part of the story with “Fortunately” or “Unfortunately”. Encourage individuals to express geo-sentiments, socio-sentiments, and human sentiments in the initial “problem” phase to create tensions and in the Neo-Humanistic “solution” phase encourage the use of rational mentality, social equality, proto-spiritual mentality and awakened conscience. These two phases produce a dialectical style including thesis (protagonist), antithesis (antagonist) and synthesis (sense of collective cooperation). At an appropriate stage encourage the story towards a neo-humanistic solution or outcome.

**Example:** First person starts out, “Once there was a monastery in Europe that had been very successful in attracting young men to its order and all the people from the surrounding towns and country-side used to love to visit the monastery and its beautiful surroundings. But in recent years the monastery had lost its attractive force and neither new young men joined the order nor was the public attracted to visit. The remaining monks wondered what they could do to restore their order at this monastery to its former glory.”

Now turn to the next person to your right and invite them to continue the story as the narrator or in first person as one of the monks, townspeople, hierarchy of church etc.; and thus goes the story wheel until antagonistic forces are overcome and a neo-humanistic conclusion is reached. Large groups of 15 to 20 may make fewer rounds than smaller groups. Individuals may role play characters in the story and give the story a more dramatic presentation- this becomes like improvisational theater. Additionally you may stop the story at critical scenes and ask the participants to create a silent sculpture with their bodies that portrays the story at that point. This use of sculpturing often inspires additional spontaneity and creativity.
The stories to prime the Neo-Humanistic story wheel pump at Spring Break this year are shared below. 2 hours were allotted for telling the story with a break in the middle; 1&1/2 hours were allotted for Follow Up Session.

1. There is a young high school girl whose younger brother, a member of the boys wrestling team, teaches her to wrestle. Subsequently, at wrestling practice she beats one of her brother’s wrestling team-mates in a wrestling match. This inspires her to make efforts to join the boys wrestling team. This produces many different points of view from family, the public and school officials, one of which is…… (turning to the next person to your left or right and so on.)

2. A mother in her 50’s, from a liberal Unitarian family background longs to have her four children re-united after years of a bitter divorce and custody battle that had separated them 20 years ago- the sons now ages 22 and 28 live with the father in Iran; the daughters 24 and 30 live with their mother. As a young graduate student in religious studies at age 24 she had met an Islamic man ten years her senior, who was her preceptor on a fellowship in Iran, fell in love and married him after 6 months acquaintance. She moved to Iran after getting her Ph.D. in religious studies and they raised a family of four but because of religious differences, particularly around the children’s spiritual practices, they separated and she was able to return to the US with only her daughters where she now teaches Tantric Studies at a university. Now having inherited a 1500 acre island off the coast of Georgia from her family she decides to put the island in a trust with a foundation with the aim to reunite her children by giving them a common task. The only stipulation for the trust and foundation is that the island be used for the purpose of serving humanity in a manner the children see fit. The story begins in the lawyer’s office as all the children are there to sign the agreement…….turn to the next story teller.

These stories were told in a manner that provoked intense involvement with race, culture, gender, religious, political and intergenerational issues. Creative conundrums were the rule in matching the wits of unlikely partners in mayhem. However, in the world of imagination the imposing themes of the heroic older sisters and a younger Islamic brother with a Sufi identity save the day for dharma. You will have to fill in the blanks or create your own story wheel to get all the details.

To maximize the learning of Neo-Humanistic values it is a good idea to have a follow up session to the art and story telling sessions at a later time to examine the application of the Neo-Humanistic definitions used as guidelines listed on the news print. This is important because in experiential learning the degree of involvement may make it difficult to assimilate the definitions. With the calmer reflective recall of the story the concepts can be integrated. The recall session can be designed after Jerome Kagan’s Interpersonal Recall method. This method is facilitated by having a tape recording of the storytelling session. Simply replay the storytelling and have the participants stop it often and say what they were thinking and feeling at a given point. The leader of the discussion then prompts the participants to apply what they were thinking and feeling to the sentiments, consequences and neo-humanistic solutions on the newsprint in front of them. With the art work the paintings can be used as the medium for recall (i.e. what they were thinking and feeling when they were painting as it relates to the Neo-Humanistic concepts on the newsprint). Even without this recall session the Neo-Humanistic concepts of social equality and collective welfare have been modeled and integrated on the level of sentiment and intuition. Rational mentality involving recall and assimilation is another good application of a Neo-Humanistic principle.

Workshop on Culture, Race and Gender

Before looking at the following exercises on culture, race and gender let’s consider the difficulty in becoming self aware. Shakespeare had said that “Awareness is all”. Einstein comments that “the last thing that a fish will discover is water”. To extend this analogy, the last thing that humans will discover is how they have been influenced by their culture of origin; i.e. attitudes and behavior that are imposed by our culture of origin. The cultural customs and values we grow up with are adopted through an unconscious process of assimilation and taken for
granted. Like a fish out of water we become more aware of these customs, language and values associated with our culture of origin when we move to another culture and have to adapt to a new culture’s language, customs and values. Shrii Shrii Anandamurti, the preceptor of Ananda Marga has been creating circumstances which have members of Ananda Marga being fish out of water by having our monks and nuns posted to countries other than their country of origin and encouraging margiis to choose revolutionary marriages, as well as traveling to India and other countries to meet their larger family and become familiar with different cultures. This represents some of Anandamurti’s concrete approaches to getting us to expand our identities beyond our geo-sentiments and socio-sentiments associated with having been reared in a particular culture. He wants us to be universalists. We can say that this preceptor is creating a drama for all of us to have an opportunity to work through our various sentiments to attain the universal perspective.

However, as adults we tend to repeat the same dramas over and over and appear to be slow learners in becoming aware of our own cultural baggage. Lectures and reading philosophy appear to be the slow train in gaining insights into our biases and prejudices and counseling and/or advice seems like pulling teeth to many. This article offers the alternative of a more direct encounter with ourselves and others through experiential workshops that employ our multiple sensory awareness as we seek a balance within ourselves and with others. Towards this ends the following Neo-Humanistic workshop on culture, race and gender was conducted at the winter retreat 1999 at Ananda Kanan.

The ancient “lost” art of conversation/dialogue was used to create a respectful conversation concerning the topics of culture, race and gender among a number of small groups (6 per group) of the extended family of members of Ananda Marga. It was designed as follows: Communication ground rules were laid down (i.e. follow Yama and Niyama, 15 shillas, conduct rules, make “I” statements from your own experience, one person speak at a time, display magnanimity of mind concerning other’s perceptions and avoid analyzing.) The group membership was chosen to reflect the diversity of all present. A brief lecture is given on Neo-Humanism and gender issues from the writings of P. R. Sarkar. As outlined above in the story-telling section put the definitions of sentiments, consequences and neo-humanistic solutions to these sentiments on newsprint for participants to observe. The workshop then proceeded as follows:

**Cultural Self Awareness: (2 Hours)**

**Select a recorder**

Start with introductions of individuals in a group (going around the circle for each statement at a time) by having everyone in turn state:

- My name is …..I am from……and …..My family’s ethnic background is…..
- My first experience with someone from a different background was…..
- My family’s perception of people from different backgrounds was…..
- My friends attitudes towards people of different cultural background was…..
- My first experience with a person from a different culture was…..

Everyone discusses the socio-sentiments imposed upon you socially and what has happened to these socio-sentiments in your own behavior and social attitudes in your current interactions with others. The recorder reports a summary of the discussion to larger group which is reconvened for 30 minutes of reports and discussion.

**Cultural Perceptions: (2 Hours)**

**Select a recorder**

- Each person in the group in turn shares perceptions of how they think people from the other cultures represented in the group perceive people from their culture.
- Each person from the other cultures in the group then comments on the accuracy of the sharer’s perceptions of how their culture perceives them.
- Everyone in the group discusses the stereotypes and socio-sentiments inherent in these perceptions and the potential harm or benefit of these perceptions.
- Everyone suggests solutions to overcome these geo-sentiments and socio-sentiments based on Neo-Humanistic guidelines discussed and displayed on newsprint.
- Discuss concrete strategies that can be immediately implemented to correct these sentiments and create a multicultural flow that is beneficial to all. (Someone records and the group plans for follow-up). Report summary to larger group- 30 minutes.
Gender Awareness: (3 Hours)
Select a recorder

Characteristics of both genders are listed by each participant and two master lists of non-duplicated traits, one from males and one from females, is listed for all to observe on newsprint. The group discusses first the comparison of male and female perceptions and secondly which traits are strengths or weaknesses or both strengths and weaknesses simultaneously for both sexes by marking plus, minus or both.

Needs and obstacles to meeting the needs for both genders are listed by each participant. Make non-duplicating lists on newsprint of the needs and obstacles for males and females, as generated by females integrating all male perceptions and non-duplicating lists entailing needs and obstacles for both males and females as generated by males integrating all male perceptions. The group discusses first the difference of male and female lists and secondly the implied socio-sentiments in all the lists.

Coordinated Cooperation is achieved by having brothers and sisters work together to arrive at collective decisions using Neo-Humanistic guidelines. Each gender will select the obstacle that they consider urgent and realistic to submit for collective decision making and solutions at this point in time. Applying the Neo-Humanistic guidelines for solutions for each gender in turn, collective problem solving is employed in defining the needs, obstacles, solutions, strategies in achieving immediate goals and long term goals, follow up plan and evaluation for fine tuning at intervals. Report summary to larger group- (30 minutes)

These are general introductory exercises to beginning Neo-Humanistic workshops on race, culture and gender. A similar format can be used to approach specific issues concerning race, culture and gender. The important ingredient is to develop communication skills which keep the dialogue respectful and positive. Groups that have a history with each other pose the biggest challenge because of all the water concerning these issues that has gone over the dam already. Take time to build trust in more informal contacts and sharing of some cooperative task or social service among potential participants for this work. There are numerous exercises for improving communication skills and cooperative games that help prepare the participants for dealing with sensitive issues. Experiential exercises which have people practice non-harmful assertiveness, discriminating truthfulness and how to listen in preparation for these workshops would be very helpful. During the exercise on culture, race and gender breaks which allow informal discussion among participants is highly recommended. Also interjections of sculpturing exercises in which participants create a silent sculpture with their bodies that reflects a geo-sentiment or socio-sentiments being expressed in the group provides a refreshing and often humorous break in the dialogue.

Additional Workshops on Neo-Humanism

I will briefly list some other Neo-Humanistic workshops in the early stages of being developed. The first two Evolutionary Imagery and Acknowledging Extinct Species, when combined with the above Ecological Art exercise, provide material for a one day environmental workshop.

Brahma Chakra or Evolutionary Imagery - Starting with the present encourage individuals through the use of internal mental imagery to move backwards through evolution to lower primates, dogs, cats, cows, etc. to birds, reptiles, dinosaurs, plants, multi-cellular organisms, unicellular organisms, minerals, stone, liquid, gas, aerial, ether and finally the Big Bang. Return up the ladder of evolution quickly and as a human being ponder our origin, our present purpose visa via the other entities in nature and our ultimate goal. Discuss this exercise and these questions. End with kirtan and meditation as it demonstrates the goal of evolution.

Ritual to Acknowledge Extinct and Threatened Species- using drums, music, pantomime, etc. as a means of dealing with our losses and threatened losses of species. End with inspirational poetry and readings that point toward solutions. Everyone takes a vow to, in some small way, to exercise their determination in defending against further losses of ethnic groups, plants, animals and ecosystems including earth.
Mock Court - (Role Play) Trial of individuals and groups who have violated neo-humanistic principals employing Neo-Humanistic guidelines to reach a conclusion of guilt or innocence and a sentencing involving restitution. This format would make use of a panel of sadvipras (highly evolved individuals) who would employ Neo-Humanistic guidelines of rational mentality, awakened conscience, social equality and proto-spiritual mentality in determining guilt or innocence and sentencing.

Genderrifics - A dynamic movement/pantomime of the genders including the following movements:

1.) Men and Women dressed in costumes enter stage left (women) and stage right (men) and begin to perform the movements of women things and men things respectively, not noticing the other gender.

2.) Finally they notice each other and make observations by mimicking to members of their own gender the other gender's activity.

3.) They continue to do their men and women things but now some members of each gender make forays into the other gender's world and attempt to stop or change the flow of some of the other gender's activity. This is infectious and a gender "riot" ensues.

4.) Then a truce ensues and a more formal battle is arranged to settle their differences which includes possibly fencing en masse or a competitive game of some kind ending with both sides declaring victory and withdrawing unto their own gender.

5.) Their declaration of victory and isolation robs them of the other gender's strength and they feel the unrequited need for the strength and unity they might offer one another. They are sad. Then suddenly a teacher or teachers (Shiva and Parvati) appear center stage and offers them both a spiritual path that respects their differences (teaching tandava and kaoshikii) but transcends gender (teaching them both kiirtan and meditation.)

6.) They cast off their men and women symbols (sashes over their shoulder displaying the biological symbol for male and female) placing them in a collective pile in the center of the stage under a puja table and do kiirtan together. They then meditate and end with offering all their colors to the Supreme.

7.) As they leave they offer their symbols of their gender under the puja table to each other as a garland. They then sing a bhajan of We All Come From God and/or Oh Divine Mother.

Choreography and music designed for each movement; with appropriate slides in background.

A Revolving Skit Wheel.
Near the end of the above workshops and before the closing, a skit is useful to evoke some humor. Two people go to the center of the circle and act out a spontaneously improvised drama using words, movement and sculpturing of postures to represent a satirical drama of something from the workshops events. In the middle of the dramatic enactment anyone can come and tap one of the two people in the center on the shoulder, take their place and/or posture and use any element of the former drama, such as a posture or anything that caught their ear or eye to create a new drama inspired by the previous one. This is rollicking fun as the participants begin to feel comfortable with each other and the leaders. The leaders may participate. It appears that even the most shy of the group express and enjoy some humor at no one's expense.

Conclusion
We have looked at applying the arts to the teaching of Neo-Humanistic principles. The subtlety of the arts catches us by surprise. We start out thinking we are the observer when we look at or create some artistic work but we soon become the object of our own observations reflected in the art. We improvise a story (written or spoken) and soon we realize that it is a reflection of our own true selves at many levels. We see the universality of our attitudes and values when we create and share some art or literature in groups. The spontaneity of drama, storytelling, movement and dance makes us laugh and cry as we share the reflections of beauty, pain and heroism of our journey. Art dramatizes life and life is the ultimate lilla or drama. However, the inspired artist gives us the needed beauty and humor to transcend the mire of our everyday lives. The supra-aesthetic science of music, especially devotional songs and chanting accompanied by dance and instruments (prabhat samgit & kiirtan), can ultimately help
Annotated Book List on Holistic Teaching
by Kalyan Volpe

One of my favorite quotes about education comes from Johann Pestalozzi speaking in 1809.

"God's nature which is within you is held sacred in this House. We do not hem it in; we try to develop it. Nor do we impose on you our own natures. It is far from our intention to make of you men such as we are. It is equally far from our intention to make of you such men as are the majority of men in our time. Under our guidance you should become men such as your own natures - the divine and sacred in your nature - require you to be."

For me Pestalozzi's words carry many important messages as well as a beautifully stated goal for education. I got this quote from a book called What are Schools For by Ron Miller. Ron is one of a small but growing group of educators that are calling themselves Holistic Educators. They are a diverse group from all around the world. I highly recommend his book for anybody wanting to get a quick historical overview of progressive education thought and an idea of what is happening today.

I have given some short annotations below on some of the books that I have found most useful in my study of holistic teaching this year. Moffet's and Gardner's books are both fairly large (350+) pages and deal with education and child development as a whole. Kohn's and Kriedler's books are more limited in nature and are of important practical consideration.

Other books definitely worth reading would be John Miller's The Holistic Curriculum and Krishnamurti's On Education; two different books that consider the importance and place of spirituality in education. Regie Routman's Invitations gives some excellent ideas on how to teach reading and writing to young children. Paulo Friere's Pedagogy of Hope is especially for anybody working in third world countries.

The Universal Schoolhouse: Spiritual Awakening Through Education by James Moffet (1998, Calendar Island Publishers)

Moffet proposes an entirely new system of education that takes place in the community. He feels that separating our children from their community violates the basic principle of spirituality. He writes "identifying with other people, creatures, and ultimately the All, really defines spirituality in a non-sectarian way. The more inclusive the wholes that individuals dwell in, the holier the society they can create together." Moffet talks about lessons he has learned from his Yoga practice in his book and draws upon many ideas from Rudolph Steiner (Founder of the Waldorf Schools) to make his case for the need for spirituality in education. He sees this as a necessary precursor for the transformation of society and the world. "To be spiritual is to perceive our oneness with everybody and everything and to act upon this perception. It is to be whole within oneself and with the world. Morality ensues."

Moffet's book covers a lot of topics very germane to Neo-Humanist education. He considers child development from a spiritual perspective; looks at the importance of service in learning; examines ways to bring education into the community; shows the importance of the arts in education and explains in detail why we need to move away from our current education system. Moffet also tries to offer some interim solutions for our schools to adopt while they move in the direction of his "universal schoolhouse". He notes that we cannot expect change to come all at once but feels that such change is necessary and ultimately inevitable.

Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences by Howard Gardner (1993 Basic Books)

Gardner's work is very important for several reasons. First he introduces the idea of more than one basic intelligence. Through scientific study he postulates that there are at least seven separate areas of
intelligence: logical-mathematic, linguistic, body-kinesthetic, musical, spatial, interpersonal and intrapersonal. His theory has added a new dimension to educational debate giving great impetus to the idea of educating the whole child. The importance of a well rounded education that integrates and considers all aspects of each child is clear in his work. Additionally Gardner has opened the door to the consideration of introspection as an invaluable aspect of human development. He doesn’t speak about spirituality in his work but he shows that people who have a developed intraspective intelligence are generally important and positive figures in society.

Gardner’s work considers the mind at the cognitive level only but he does lay an important groundwork for expanding our understanding of how we develop and what our education system should consider. He also puts forth the possibility of a sense of self that may act as an overseer of these different aspects of our minds. In this way his work is an important step to a better understanding of what it means to be human.

**Beyond Discipline: From Compliance to Community: by Alfie Kohn 1996 ACSD**

Kohn has written several books about how to run holistic classrooms. His work is very accessible and easy to understand. It helps the reader consider teaching practices in a very concrete way. He examines current “progressive” ideas for keeping order in a classroom and shows their shortcomings. More importantly he talks about things that teachers can do to build communities in their classrooms and create environments where compliance is not necessary. While this book focuses on important ways to build a positive environment in the classroom it is its deeper message that I found most compelling. Kohn emphasises the need for teachers to be aware of the underlying message that their actions and policies send to children. We can easily say that our classrooms are student centered places which value morality and universalism but our actions will speak much louder than our words. At the core of Kohn’s ideas therefore is a need for awareness. This awareness must be of the students needs, our own needs as teachers and of the lessons we are teaching knowingly or unknowingly to our students. This is a great book for beginners who are trying to formulate a positive teaching persona and for veterans who can use a fresh perspective on how they work in the classroom.

**Creative Conflict Resolution by Kriedler**

This is a very straightforward and practical book that offers a wide array of activities to work toward a more understanding and equitable classroom. Kriedler offers a very simple framework for considering the causes and solutions to conflict in school. As with Kohn, the critical point is that we gain an awareness of the motivations and needs of those involved in conflict, be it mental or physical, in a school. He provides a simple framework for examining and resolving problems. Kriedler also details many activities that can be used to foster a sense of community in the classroom as well as raising kids’ consciousness on issues of equity, acceptance and consideration for others.

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**Neo-Humanism and Aesthetic Science**

us transcend the sensory world and join with the Infinite. In the next installment of this article we will explore the theoretical underpinnings of the aesthetic and supra-aesthetic sciences applied to art and Neo-Humanism.

**Bibliography:**


Working for Education in Mombasa, Kenya
by A. Giitika

I arrived in the hot, steamy coastal city of Mombasa in February, 1997, to take over the responsibilities of children’s home directress and school manager. The home charges included 17 girls ages five to 16 who had come into our care for a variety of reasons—mainly they were orphaned, but a number had been neglected through extreme poverty of their families. They also come from different parts—“tribes”—of Kenya, and the newest arrival spoke neither English nor Swahili, the common language which links east African coastal peoples.

The school (located at the same site, a 1.8-acre plot) consisted then of six classes, KG through Std. 5 (or fifth grade), each class serving about 30-35 pupils. Unbelievably, each classroom was a mere 3.5 meters wide by 6 meters long, indeed rectangular close quarters for all the pupils. (The desks resembled those seen in photos of the 17th century in U.S. - shared by two or three) The teachers were managing with a bit of chalk on faded blackboards. There were no books, and teachers had to borrow textbooks from the pupils; they prepared their lesson plans on flimsy exercise books; and they attempted to order their personal lives on salaries amounting to about $27 a month (a half litre of milk costs 33 cents, but more costly is housing-- the very cheapest of rooms in a shared mud-walled windowless dwelling needs $14 a month.)

It was a unique situation: on one hand the children’s home with its deficiencies and its charm and on the other, the school with its failings and its potential. One comes to Kenya anticipating some hardships, but the shock was in the extremes at all levels. the almost quaint picture postcard parts of Mombasa (the town like a “jewel” with beaches of white coral sand) mixed with the images of men with vacant stares at roadsides. Droughts and floods; strictly religious people and extremely asocial people; homes like palaces others hovels; high level meetings with educated Kenyans and outside high levels of illiteracy. In this setting, one needs adaptability and patience, I found out.

From different tribes we have come
From different corners of the world
But together we stand under one sun
Together we dream, every boy and girl...
--one stanza of poem by Shirley Eng, volunteer

How the children at the orphanage gave me orientation to work in the school

In the children’s home, if you want something done, start doing it. Within seconds there are thirty or forty hands to help out. And lots and lots of noise. After digging in the shamba (vegetable garden) for a while, if you go in for a drink and return, there may be no one left in the shamba.

No doubt, if someone wants to “know” another culture, the best way is to be with children. In my case it was and continues to be the best way to understand the education system, know what the teachers are really doing, and formulate ideas for changes or interventions.

In the latter part of 1997 I decided to give the children in the home some simple Piaget tests. Without any reference books on Piaget, I attempted to recall tests we would give to preschool level children in U.S. In the conservation of quantity test, two balls of clay are given to a child (preferably one is alone with the child), and the teacher asks, “Which ball is bigger, this ball or that ball, or are they just the same?” The child handles the balls and looks them over. Often the child feels that one is a bit bigger. Then the teacher tells the child to make them both the same size by adding clay to the smaller one, transferring some clay, or any other way. This continues until the teacher asking, “Now are they the same?” finds that the child is sure they are. Afterwards, in front of the child, the teacher puts both balls on the floor side by side, and then flattens one like a chapati. The teacher then asks, “Now does this one have more clay or this other one have more clay, or do they have the same amount?” In this exercise used to test the transition between pre-operational and
concrete operational thought, many children of pre-school age think that the chapati shape has more clay or is bigger. They have not yet learned that changing the shape does not change the essential quantity. Other tests along the same line are used to test ‘conservation of liquid quantity’ and conservation of number.

I was surprised that in the children’s home, about one-fourth of the children thought the chapati had more clay. I repeated in some cases and tried similar exercises, especially upon finding that our 15-year old thought that the chapati was bigger. Some, after pouring water from one of a pair of short, fat filled glasses into a long thin one, also perceived that the long thin one had more water than the other. The results of the tests did not correlate with age.

Surprisingly, although Kenya is 80% agricultural and most children grow up in the outdoors under the shade trees, they don’t seem to have the experiences (with concrete objects) necessary to develop the “conservation” logical concepts. As a result, in the nursery and KG sections of the school, we began the slow task of equipping the classrooms with hands on materials appropriate to Africa. There is still a lot of work to be done in order to test the results of the interventions, and even more in training. And we wish to bring more concrete objects into the other classes, but there are quite a few obstacles...

Kenya’s “Catch 22” - the “8-4-4” system

The present educational system in Kenya was designed by the current national administration. The term 8-4-4 refers to the number of years: 8 years for primary, 4 years for secondary and 4 years for the lucky few who go to university. (In fact, lucky are who complete the first eight years.)

(Before the 8-4-4, Kenya had the 7-3-2-4.) However, aside from the years at each level, 8-4-4 implies the curriculum and syllabus used. In order to be registered—whether “public” or private—as a school and enable the pupils to get a certificate for the following level, everyone needs to follow the 8-4-4 system. In the past two years, the system has come under more scrutiny, and many many educators want change.

The following are examinable subjects in the 8-4-4: English, Math, Kiswahili, Compositions, GHC (Geography, History and Civics combined), Science, Agriculture, Business Science, Art & Craft, Music, CRE or IRE (Christian/Islamic Religious Education) and Business Science. The examinations are abstract; consider this question for the subject ART & CRAFT—

i) Which one among the following four topics would not fall under local material culture? (A) clay work, (B) ornaments, (C) weaving, (D) textile making.

or this for MUSIC--

ii) “d r m s l” These five notes are referred to as: (A) diatonic, (B) pentachord, (C) pentatonic, (D) detachord.

Examinations normally have between 50-60 questions such as the above (times ten or 11 subjects = 600 picayune questions for each of the three terms), and are set by certain educational authorities together with head teachers. The results of the exams are highly competitive (the real Kenyan marathon). Poor overall results can cut short the further education of a pupil or even bring down a whole school as parents frantically search for “successful” schools (often changing in mid-year accordingly). For this reason, many schools keep the pupils cramming six days a week, and some even seven!! (While “child labor” is decried...)

Considering that English is the second or third language in Kenya, and considering that pupils need many experiences with concrete objects at the primary level to develop their reasoning abilities, the examination system is fostering just the opposite effect than intended, and it is giving everyone a huge headache. No wonder many Kenyans want change.

To divert from the subject of examinations, once in a special class called General Knowledge for pupils from std. 6 - 8, we began a discussion about justice. One pupil casually related an incident that happened in his neighborhood the same week. A man had been loitering around the area. He was
not well known. After some days, one family’s house was broken into. The local people immediately ran and found the stranger. He was beaten mercilessly and was probably crippled for life before taken to the police for questioning. I felt relieved that many pupils in the class perceived the injustice involved in “mod justice” (and we also did some role play acting showing “just justice”). Some pupils questioned the common practice of beating first and asking questions afterward.

In order to develop rationality in the students, a new system must evolve. At our Ananda Marga Academy, we are striving to develop the elements of that system even while we’re obliged to work within the current framework set by the government.

**An Important Element in the Neo-Humanist Education approach in Kenya**

In Kenya, and I think in Africa as a whole, people love to hear stories and laugh. Even if a situation would seem to be tragic, people here will find the humor in it. (To an outsider, it can even seem inappropriate to laugh). Recently, a group of our pupils in Std. 5 spontaneously made a play during free time. The teacher, appreciating their talents, allowed them extra time to develop their drama, and later we staged it for an upper class assembly. The story of a day in the life of an old man (e.g., trying to make a phone call), kept everyone in “stitches”.

We are trying to bring back the joy and spontaneity into education and allow the children to express themselves and their feelings. This would seem obvious in many school systems in the world, but here it represents a major change to the status quo, (and it is difficult to pry some teachers from their notes on the blackboards).

The following is a poem written by a secondary school child in Kenya—Miriam Were

**They Ran Out of Mud**

There is a deep gully  
Running along the road.  
They have filled it half way  
And the rest is still gaping...  
For they ran out of mud

There is a pot by the altar  
That they began to mould;  
They finished the base  
But the neck remains undone...  
For they ran out of mud.

Mud! Mud!  
Who can find mud?  
Maybe if it were gold  
Someone would.

If we substitute the word “mud” for “imagination”, we get close to one of the major crises in this school system.

Therefore, one very important element of neo-humanism, and one of the first priorities is to allow the expression and development of the imagination.

**Conclusions**

In 1998 we were fortunate to receive a grant from the Japanese Embassy to expand the school through the construction of new buildings. Presently, the school is registered with nursery to Std. 8. The rooms are more than double the size of the previous and with more ventilation, and painted lively colors of blue and green shades outside. We have alleviated some of the water crises by building rain catchment tanks, which have also allowed us to start tree planting on the stark, rocky site. Today there are 400 pupils. The lowest teacher salaries this year are $58 per month.

Although the school achieved some improvement on the material side, we are only starting to formulate methods and gather materials for the real change which must occur in the actual education.

Through the efforts of the teachers, and through the help and inspiration of the children’s home, there is hope that the school can evolve a neo-humanist curriculum—with rationality as a base—and full expression of humanity as the goal.
Near the Dhyanmandir in the WWD compound of the Ananda Marga Center in Tiljala there is now a door newly made into the wall that connects to the premises of the school run now by Didi Ananda Krsnaprana. Didi took over the Kindergarten 3 years ago when it had about 20 children attending from the surrounding neighborhood. Originally the school was started with the inspiration of having a model school attached to our ashrams where passing Acaryas and visitors could have a glimpse into our neo-humanistic methods of teaching. Didi Ananda Mitra and Malati had some initial input while they were staying in India. The school has been quite popular since the beginning and draws a lot of appreciation and sympathy from the local neighborhood.

But within the last 3 years some miracle seems to have been at work. The school has grown in leaps and bounds and has now 250 children. It has become the largest school in the whole of Calcutta region. Didi had to fill up the low land of the compound and constructed 3 rooms attached to one wall of the compound. Now the school goes up to primary classes of grade 4. This is now the maximum capacity and for the current year, Didi had to put 70 children on a waiting list. Now additional construction is taking place on the other side of the road near the Girls Prout compound to make the previous site of ANDS bag factory into the extension of this school. Didi has her own living quarters with a telephone just within the school compound surrounded by a small vegetable garden. Every corner is well utilized and the children seem to have just enough space in the classrooms and in the yard. Didi has worked for the last ten years in different areas running schools but this has become now the biggest school and a very challenging task.

All classrooms have a small blackboard; the primary classes have desks and benches and a table for the teacher. The Nursery and Kindergarten has just enough space to have the children neatly seated in rows and columns with their school bags in front of them. The school starts at 8:30 with the children assembled in black and red uniforms in the yard, reciting prabhat samgiit songs, rhymes, Ananda Vanis, some shlokas including the samcachadhvam mantra after which the children close their eyes for a few minutes standing with folded hands. Some exercises close up the morning circle and the children go neatly in rows to their respective classrooms. From Nursery class starting children have their workbooks for writing exercises, reading, math and drawing. The primary classes have additional workbooks in history, geography, science and Stuvol which contains general knowledge, rhymes and songs. All levels have English, Bengali and Hindi. The school hours go up to 12:30 when the
guardians come and pick up the children.

Didi would like to have two more floors constructed on the main building, the second for classrooms and the third for a hostel. She said that there is a need for parents who work full time and live farther away to entrust the care of their children in a fashion similar to a boarding school. She said that the popularity of the school stems from the discipline, etiquette and respectful behavior of the children towards parents and the academic skills the children learn at school.

There are 12 teachers, some who have been with the school for 3 years. Their allowance is 500 Rs. a month and they see the service aspect of the school. Every year they have a cultural program on a stage set up in the center of the village. Also they organize colorful sports and games contests with lots of fun and spectacles attended by teachers, parents and the community.

Up to grade 4 of primary there is much freedom in the syllabus and curriculum, but to enter standard 5 all children must pass an entrance examination in schools accredited by the government. At the moment this school does not yet have this accreditation. So the children meanwhile need to be prepared for this entrance examination to grade 5 into public schools. Didi hopes that in the future she can have facilities to accommodate all classes up to standard 10.

Seemingly inspired with good spirits Didi started a special program on Sundays in her schools. She calls it Prabhat Samgiit Academy. She hired three teachers, one for dance, one for fine art and one for music - singing and playing harmonium. The most talented children from the school and other older children totaling almost 50 girls come every Sunday to perfect their skills. They rehearse plays and performances and 9 girls performed in the cultural program on the stage at this millennium DMS in Ananda Nagar.

This Ananda Marga school in its own way seems to fulfill a need and draw the best out of the children and community. There is much scope for upgrading the teacher’s training and skills and for improvement in workbooks and general teaching methods. The spirit unleashed by the dedication, hard work and forward striving of the devoted principal and staff is very much inviting support, encouragement, help and appreciation. It is a wonderful lotus unfolding in the Tiljala surrounding that can be witnessed by all visitors and sympathizers. It certainly deserves all our love and caring input to become a shining model of our neo-humanist education at the very door steps of our ashrams.

Ananda Marga School
Didi Ananda Krsnaprana
VIP Nagar, Tiljala, Kalikata India 700039
Tel. 3434923

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Children Performing at the Prabhat Samgiit Academy
In Brazil violence is increasing day by day. In São Paolo alone, there were 4379 homicides in 1999. In the area where we have our kindergartens there is also much violence and mostly young people are involved. Most families are broken up, and there is a lack of proper education in their homes. As the economic crisis is so difficult most of the parents have to work the whole day to earn less than 100 US$. Therefore they don’t have much time to give to their children. Adolescents have nothing to do with their free time. There are few opportunities for them to take courses or get involved in some cultural activities. So they move in the streets and get involved with drugs, alcohol, arms, violence... To counteract this reality the municipality of Porto Alegre sponsors those NGO’s who promote courses for the adolescents who need occupation, training and good company in their lives.

Actually I never worked with adolescents and was frankly speaking a little frightened, because I thought they might be violent, aggressive and even steal things from our project. But finally we decided to try it and we planned to have a course on landscaping. The main goal was to develop skills in gardening and landscaping for the purpose of integrating the adolescents into the society. Through this project they will be able to participate more actively in their families and the community, develop their self-esteem, become motivated to continue their studies, develop love for nature and get acquainted with the rights and duties of a citizen.

We got a donation of US$ 15,000 to construct bathrooms and one room to keep tools. We bought furniture, school material, plants, soil, fertilizer, seeds etc.

We enrolled 24 adolescents between 14 and 18 years, who came twice a week. There were two groups, 12 in each. One group came in the morning and the second group came in the afternoon. We hired one agronomist and one social assistant. On Mondays the social assistant was working more on their emotional development including work with group dynamics, visualization exercises, showing videos, visiting the botanic gardens, holding a photo exhibition, and having...
discussions on drugs, violence and sexuality. We did many activities where they could visualize their future, creating goals in their minds and giving them the confidence that they will be able to achieve these goals.

On Wednesday and Friday the agronomist gave them basic ideas about different kind of soils and how to improve them, how, when and where to plant and how to make cuttings of plants. They learned how to make compost, how to prepare beds, how to plan and organize an area with flowers, ornamental bushes and trees. They studied how to combine flowers as well as how and when to cut them.

Parents and families came to participate and were very proud of them.

I feel it was very little we did for them, but it inspired me to work again with them and give them continuous motivation to improve their lives. We are going to hold a meeting with them and make a survey of what kind of course they would like to have.

During the course they also sang songs, played cooperative games, football, volleyball and we could see in their facial expression that they felt at home and very happy. My experience was that they actually need much attention and need somebody who can listen and talk to them. My opinion about them has totally changed. Mostly they were adolescents with a complicated background, many of them abandoned from their families. What they need is love and somebody who encourages them to fight to overcome the difficult situation they are living in. By the end of the course we had a graduation where they got their certificates.
It was a great shock when we heard about the disaster which occurred in Venezuela on the 16th of December. It happened just after the New Constitution had been approved and just a few days before Christmas and New Year’s Eve. Everybody was watching the terrible news which was shown around the clock by all the TV stations in the country. People were searching for their family members and friends which had been separated from them.

Many of the main roads were cut off and the first few days it was impossible to reach the most affected areas. A few days later we got a chance to fly by helicopter and visit some of the most affected places in Vargas. Basically the whole State was devastated. Many houses were left only with the roof sticking out above the mud. Thousands of trees were washed down from the mountains and with them a still unknown amount of people who died in the mudslide. Huge containers were flooded and washed into the sea and chemicals were spilled causing a serious problem of toxic waste.

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Working with the Children

AMURT/AMURTEL started to work by providing clothes and food to some of the affected people. Later on we went to some of the relief camps which had been established in Caracas and other cities of Venezuela. In the university camp we started working especially with the children, we taught them dances and songs and just spent time talking with them and hearing the most incredible stories of how they had escaped the rocks and mud coming down from the Avila mountains together with huge amounts of water. It really was a nightmare. Many families got separated and only the lucky ones were able to meet their entire family later on in other shelters. Other people lost their parents, children, spouses and friends forever.

Afterwards the university camp was closed, and the people were transferred to other shelters. We continued working in the Poliedro camp where about 5000 people found temporary shelter. The military did a huge job in providing everybody with the basic necessities, and many volunteers worked literally for 24 hours every day, but nevertheless the hygienic conditions were terrible and emotionally the people suffered tremendously. Didi Ananda Sadhana and myself spent the New Years Eve in the Poliedro, there were no firecrackers, no champagne or other feasting, at seven minutes to 12 somebody announced that the New Year was about to start at 12 everybody shook hands or embraced each other wishing a Happy New Year to everybody. We were quite impressed, nobody complained about the hardships and the loss they had experienced and the truth is, the only one who started crying was myself. A little boy with whom I had played before, came up to me to console me.

It was a wonderful experience to work with the people there. Didi Ananda Sadhana was busy helping the other volunteers to prepare baby food, which was a non-stop job, and I concentrated on spending time with the children. They had no play materials and were happy about any little activity we did with them. We brought a lot of crayons, colored pencils and paper and about 99% of the drawings the children made were houses, many of them with rain and some with the sun shining and flowers growing in the garden. Even some of the adults got interested when we brought some Mandalas for them to paint. They enjoyed creating their little works of art. The children were especially happy about the children’s stories and they loved it when we brought puppets and acted out some of our Neo-Humanistic stories. Dada Atmapranananda who is working here with us also helped the children with some handicrafts and did a wonderful Circle of Love painting for a later project which happened in one of the military bases which are being used as a relief camp.

Many of the affected families are very poor with no regular income, they have an average of
three to seven children and are not able to provide good education or medical care for them. Some of these children haven’t been treated very well by their parents and several of them expressed they would like to come and live with us.

A School in the Making

Since I reached Venezuela I had the idea of starting a neo-humanistic pre-school in Caracas. By working with the affected children in the camps this idea has taken much more of a concrete shape. The need for quality education is immense, more than the poverty. The lack of moral and academic education is affecting the people. Venezuela is know more as being one of the most corrupt countries in the world and from what I have seen so far this is absolutely true. But it is also true that Venezuela is one of the most potential countries in the world. Baba, in His visit to Caracas, said that if Venezuela is able to create good moral and spiritual leaders, it can become the leader of South America, and afterwards he added, no, not only of South America, but of the world. This impressed me a lot and also gave me a lot of hope. The people here are by nature very friendly, open minded and ready to help those in need. The disaster was a good example for that, everybody helped in whatever way they could.

But, while Venezuela is one of the richest Latin American countries, it is also one of the countries with the highest illiteracy rate. So, I really feel, that if we start a neo-humanistic model school here, we would provide an invaluable service to the country.

Through the disaster we have been able to contact many important people and of this great country.

For spiritual practice you are to create a spiritual urge. Therefore you are to create a proper system of education. Education should be imparted in a spiritual and psychic style. When they get proper education, a proper spiritual urge is created and then they will start sadhana. So we must start primary schools throughout the entire world to create a spiritual urge amongst the little pupils.

Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar
Presentation of the Verona Neo-Humanist School at the Education Conference in Bologna, Italy
by Supriya Bonotto

Didi Ananda Nirmila and I presented the Verona Neo-humanist school and Neo-humanist education at an international convention on alternative education “Seeking the freedom to educate towards freedom” in Bologna, Italy on 24th and 25th January 2000, part of the current debate in Italy on public funding of private schools. The convention was organized by the Steinerians but a variety of other groups were invited to participate including Reggio Emilia, Montessori, and the Brahma Kumaris Spiritual University. Some local margiis were involved in organizing the convention and so encouraged our participation.

Our presentation was on the second day of the convention in the session “Towards an alliance for the right to childhood”, dedicated to the current state of education in the world and the Italian launch of the “Alliance for Childhood” - an organization recently formed in the USA to work for the defense of children’s rights and health in the face of increasing stress and nervousness in children in Western society. Joan Almon of the Waldorf Early Childhood Association of North America introduced the session. She said that the breakdown of family life in the U.S. and Scandinavia should be taken as a warning to the rest of the world as also the use of machines, television and computers which cut children off from human interaction. Teachers working in Waldorf schools started working on these problems but found they were not very effective alone, and decided that perhaps by joining with other groups working on behalf of children - in education, medicine, research, social work, together maybe they could make a difference. This is how the Alliance for Childhood was founded in the winter of 1998-99 at meetings in New York, Stuttgart and London.

The goals of the Alliance are as follows:

1. To create a universal awareness that a healthfully nurtured childhood is a basic human need and to protect the rights of childhood.

2. To develop ways of educating children which honor childhood and recognize the need for time and space to grow, for a healthy rhythm in life, and for the development of play and multi-faceted activities in daily life.

3. To research the impact of technology, computers and electronic media on child development and to apply the results of research in daily practice.

4. To address the growing concerns about the effects of commercialism aimed at children by publicizing the results of research, promoting effective family solutions, and advocating consumption based on genuine need.

5. To promote cooperation between those working in child care, education, medicine and related fields in order to develop a broad understanding of children's needs and apply this knowledge to all work with children.

6. To build a scientifically-based and developmentally-oriented picture of the whole human being and the stages of childhood.

Our contribution was entitled “Seeing the child as a divine being: the child’s right to self-realisation” and we were presented as a Neo-humanistic vegetarian kindergarten. We started by commenting that the materialistic messages coming from our society do not help children to understand themselves, and stressed the need to protect and develop the devotional sentiment in children. We introduced Neo-humanistic education as a blend of western extroversial science and eastern introversial philosophy with its emphasis on intuition, self-knowledge and ethics. Then we gave practical examples of how we implement NHE in our Verona kindergarten. We began this with a short video of the nursery which had been filmed and hastily edited a couple of days before by the mother of one of our old students! It was not professional by any means (a stark contrast to the excellent new Steiner video of Waldorf schools throughout the world, which was shown at the end of
the conference), but it gave a good idea of the special characteristics of a NH school - kiirtan, meditation, spiritual songs and stories, vegetarian diet, asanas, care of animals and plants, neo-humanistic murals. It showed the development of a spiritual culture, as opposed to a material culture, within the classroom. At the end of our presentation I felt we had been talking about love and showing love in action and just the beautiful natural expressions of the small children in the video showed this.

I think our presentation touched the hearts of and was appreciated by some of the audience. Immediately before us had been the Brahma Kumaris Spiritual University who presented their educational programme “Sharing values for a better world” in which educators have been working with children in different countries from England to China using values as a universal language. This project is sponsored by UNESCO and their project materials include stories, exercises and visualizations. Their presentation, however, was largely theoretical.

Other contributions from people working in projects to foster a healthy childhood were more animated. Dario Manuetti, founder of the association The Possible City in Turin spoke about their work to defend the green spaces of the city where once children were free to play unsupervised by adults, but which have now been lost to cars, buildings and increasingly limited and defined spaces. The projects implemented to recuperate these spaces with the design and effort of young people are imaginative, low cost and effective. Gianfranco Zavaloni, of the University of Puppets in Cesana, talked inspiringly about the natural rights of children to earth, water, wood, iron and fire, again stressing children’s need for wilderness areas and to self-manage their activities without continual adult direction.

The first day of the convention assessed the contribution of state institutions and private initiatives for the innovation of education in Europe in the year 2000. Carlos Diaz Muniz, president of ENCAIS the European Council of National Associations of Independent Schools described the large variety of solutions to the problem of the funding and autonomy of private and public schools in the different European countries. These differences need to be repaired he noted if we are truly moving towards a European union. The contrasts are great. In Italy, and similarly in Spain and Greece, independent schools do not receive any government funding, whereas in the Netherlands and Belgium 60 percent of schools are private, receive 100% central government funding and enjoy a large autonomy in choosing programs. The different financial and legal situation of private schools in Europe is of interest to us with regard to where to concentrate effort on setting up new schools. For example in Holland private schools are greatly assisted suggesting that this is a good possibility for a NH primary school.

The afternoon session addressed the question Is it possible that a unique education model is able to answer the needs of a world in constant and increasingly fast evolution? Rejo Wilenius of the European Forum for Freedom in education outlined the dangers of the monopolistic approach to providing education. In Italy, despite the State monopoly in education there have been notable success stories such as Montessori schools and the Reggio Emilia project.

Carla Rinaldi spoke about the Reggio Emilia kindergartens where the child is viewed as a competent being full of potential, able to create and communicate in numerous ways right from the beginning. The most important task of the adult is to listen to the child. She presented slides of the schools and read the moving poem of the late founder of the project Loris Malaguzzi, The 100 languages of children. Although in existence for 30 years, it was not until the visit of the Minister of Education in 1995, that the innovative Reggio Emilia project became officially recognized by the Italian Ministry of Education. Now they are building common programs for the development of teacher training throughout the national education network.

Pietro De Santis of the National Montessori Schools Association talked about the heritage of Maria Montessori in her work for the cause of the child. In Italy there are both state and private Montessori schools. In fact the Montessori school is the only alternative school which has entered into the state school system. However this has not been without problems, and he described how difficult it is for Montessori schools to operate in the public sector because the structure of the state school limits this.

In summing up Joan Almon noted that it is a strength that we have so many different ways of approaching the child, and that it is important that people work out of the depths of their own heart. Teachers and people working on behalf of children should keep their eyes, hearts and minds open to find the ways we find best to serve children and see what is healthy and healing but also when we are doing harm.

Some of our NH schools may be interested in associating themselves with The Alliance for Childhood which has contacts now in many countries as well as the US. Anyone interested can write to me for addresses. They are holding a conference Protection of Childhood from October 11-14, 2000 in the Convention Centre in Brussels, Belgium. However, it may be that the Alliance will turn out to be purely a Steinerian association instead of a true partnership of different people working on behalf of children. Organizing a convention is a great way of getting publicity. Even though the Bologna convention was not that well attended the Steinerians gained a lot of press and TV coverage before, during and after the convention which was part of a two week program introducing Steiner pedagogy to the public with lectures, an exhibition, and theatre, chorus and circus performances. Wouldn’t it be nice if we could organize NHE conventions like this!
Bi-Annual

Education Training Camp
at Tatanagar, India, December 1999

A five-day Education Training Camp (ETC) was held at Tatanagar, India from 14th to 18th December 1999, organized by A’c. Devashraddhananda Avt., Global Education Incharge-1. More than 300 principals and teachers from different parts of Delhi Sector participated in the camp.

A’c. Sambhutyananda Avt.; Avadhutika Ananda Arundhati A’carya’, A’c. Mohanananda Avt., A’c. Pratyagatmananda Avt., A’c. Tattvavedananda Avt., Shri P. S. Ghosh from Bal Bhavan, Delhi and Smt. Lakhi and Gautam form Adarsh Seva Samsthan, Tatanagar, gave the theoretical and practical classes on Neo-Humanistic Education. These included the play way method of teaching different subjects to primary classes students; child psychology, methods of teaching Arts and cultural activities, games & sports, P.T. & Parade etc.

A’c. Keshavananda Avt., ERAWS Secretary (Central) kept on inspiring the participants by his sweet talks and inspiring classes during his stay in the camp. Apart from theoretical and practical classes oratory competition, rhymes recitation competition, self composed rhymes text competition also took place.

On the fourth day of the camp i.e. on 17th December 1999, a procession was held for 4 kilometers. A cultural program based on Prabhat Samgiit by the local artists of Tatanagar was also staged in the local Milani hall on the last evening i.e. on 18th December 1999.

Symposium

A symposium was held on two consecutive days i.e. on 15th and 16th December 1999 which were attended by a good number of intellectuals and elites of the city. The topics of two days (15th & 16th December 1999) symposium were "The solution to the present day crisis in the education" and "The need of fundamental changes in education in order to elevate the value of human life", respectively. On the first day i.e. on 15th December 1999, Shri Bachan Pathak Salil, a noted litterateur was the chief guest and A’c. Keshavananda Avt., Central ERAWS Secretary presided over the symposium. Shri A. K. Lal, Manager, TISCO, Tatanagar and A’c. Madhuvratananda Avt., Principal, A. M. School, Varanasi, spoke.

The second day (16th December 1999) of the symposium was presided over by Shri G. S. Jaiswal, a senior Lawyer of the city, Shri Dineshananda Goswami, National president Akhil Bharatiya Vidyaarthi Parishad was the chief guest and A’c. Sambhutyananda Avt., SES, Delhi Sector and Shri Sudhamshu Prasad, Headmaster, Nibaranpur High School, Ranchi spoke on the subject. While speaking all the speakers decried the present day education system and expressed their concern for the degrading standard of education. A’c. Sambhutyananda Avt. while explaining at length spoke that in order to solve the present crisis in education fundamental changes in education i.e. a revolution (not reformation) in education is needed. Hence, changes in all the eight aspects of education are to be brought forth.

The eight aspects are:

1. **Educational philosophy** - Education must be based on a comprehensive philosophy of life.

2. **Ideal teachers** - the teachers maintaining a harmony between educational philosophy and his/her conduct

3. **Teaching methodology** - Neo-humanistic and psychological.

4. **Curriculum & syllabus**

5. **Management** - Education should not be in the hands of Govt., politicians or educational traders but rather should be in the hands of dedicated educational missionaries.

6. **Students** - must be psychologically inspired to grow love for knowledge (inquisitiveness for learning)
7. Guardians

8. Society/environment

A pictorial depiction of ERAWS activities in Delhi Sector and educational thoughts of Shri P. R. Sarkar were also displayed. Prizes to the winner of different competitions etc. were also awarded by A‘c. Devashraddhananda Avt., Global E.I.-1. The participants were very happy with the programs and they wished to organize more and more such camps at regular intervals.

Teacher Training Workshop
London, England
by Didi Ananda Rama

There was a brief Teachers’ Training held in London, taught by Didi Ananda Rama.

The Teachers Training was attended by all the teachers of the KG and Primary school, totaling 10. Since some teachers were new and others well experienced, we had a sharing workshop using the developmental stages according to the layers of mind. Designing the lesson plans according to the layers of mind has been a specialty in the London schools and the experienced teachers had gained a lot of skills.

We discussed one of the main concepts on NHE "Knowledge is for liberation" a very lofty goal which we as teachers need to keep in mind. This concept reminds us to see the child as a divine being with a vast potential now lying like a seed within the child.

We need to assist the child to develop all the layers of the mind. The physical body is the shelter of the mind and needs its care. Here we gathered the methods which the teachers were using in school such as yoga and other exercises, climbing, running, group games, dance, sports, hygiene and healthy food. The sensory layer is developed by using the educational material of Montessori which the schools have a good collection of. Also in nature there are many ways to acquaint the child with the world using the sense perceptions. Background music of Kirtan and classical or cultural music was mentioned as very uplifting for the children. For the older children the idea of control of the senses is already touched on by putting emphasis on etiquette and discipline.

For the intellectual or cognitive layer of the mind, the teachers mentioned memory games, language development through letting the children tell their own stories and engaging them in observations. The idea came up to teach poetry and new vocabulary to refine the speech. Science experiments, maths exercises as well as related science can well be taught in an integrated way with arts.

The creative layer can be developed with variety of art techniques, music, drama and all round aesthetics. Art can be the base of the entire learning process. The creative mind of the child is full of joy in expressing and creating her own reality. The teacher needs to be fine tuned in order to flow with the creative speed of the child which is usually faster than that of the adult. There are many ways the teacher can enhance the free flow of the creative mind of the child during every moment of a lesson.

The intuitive and harmoniously social layer of mind is when the child can be in a nice temperament. Sharing, caring, and helping are encouraged to foster this aspect of development. The child has a natural affinity to plants, animals and peers which is nurtured through one’s own example, stories, drama and free play where the children can spontaneously interact with each other.

The spiritual aspect is enhanced through our silent time, spiritual songs, Kirtan, meditation, visualization, relaxation exercises and celebrations. Here also the self-restraint and good judgement on part of the teacher plays a significant role. The teacher needs to gain wisdom and insight through one’s practices and embody the spirituality which the child feels attracted to automatically.
Global News

Manila Sector
By Didi Ananda Gaorii

There are 17 schools run by WWD in Manila Sector - 2 in Thailand, 1 in Laos, 2 in Malaysia, 3 in Indonesia, 9 in Philippines.

The school in Laos is the biggest school with over 200 children in the kindergarten and 6 primary grades. As Laos is still a socialist country, we are only able to implement a restricted version of NH education, but still the school is well appreciated by the foreign and local communities who are looking for a creative educational environment for their children.

The two schools in Thailand are connected with our two children’s homes. One in Sangkhlaburi north west of Bankgok. This school is a kindergarten and a 'non-formal' education facility. This facility caters for our own home children and also local children who do not have any other educational facility available to them. It has been active for around 6 years. 'Non-formal' education is a specialty of the Thai education system which enables children or adults who cannot, or have not been able to, complete 'formal' primary school education, to study on a part-time basis and take the government examinations at specific times throughout the year. Last year we had around 40 children in our kindergarten and 20 in the 'non-formal' education school.

The other school in Thailand is also a kindergarten and non-formal education facility which mostly caters to our 16 home children and has been running for around 7 years. Our home and MU in this southern province of Thailand are situated in quite a remote 'jungle' area. Recently we received a grant for the construction of a 'community library' on the MU which the local people can come to use. This is a great new service for the people and children living in that 'jungle' area who would otherwise have to travel far to have access to library facilities. Our Didis and also older children, also help in a local 'jungle' school (non-formal education), which is nearby our MU and which is run by the members of the 'border' police force as a service to the local community.

The two schools in Malaysia are in nearby Kuala Lumpur. One is a community service school which serves around 25 children from low income families. It has been running for around 15 years. The other school is in Seramban. It is a neo-humanist kindergarten AMSAI school with 50 kids in our own building. It has been running for around 8 years.

In Indonesia we have one neo-humanist kindergarten school which is in our own building in Cirebon, Java. It has around 20 children. The other two schools are in Sumatra island. One in Jambi and one in Medan. Both of these are English tuition schools which use neo-humanist educational methods. Both have around 35 children.

In Philippines we have 2 schools in Manila run by Margii sisters. News of the 6 schools in Davao area in southern Philippines is from Didi A. Ujjvala below:

"In Mindanao, which is the southern province of the Philippines we have 8 AMSAI kindergarten schools - 1 in Digos, 1 in General Santos, and 6 in Davao. 7 of the schools are run by WWD and one by the brothers of the WT Training Center. All the schools have around 20 - 35 children. Digos school was renovated last December 99 and we expect to have many new children in the next year. The Amsai in General Santos will be renovated this summer too.

Last January 23rd, Ananda Mela 2000 was celebrated in a grand way in Davao. All children and parents of our schools participated in a colorful motorcade parade on the streets of Davao. After that they had assembled for a 'mela' program which included competition among the schools in different items such as declamation, singing, dancing, and more. The children could perform in English, Tagalog or in Visayan which is the local language. The parents also competed in groups, dancing ethnic dance. There was also a painting exhibit on different subjects. All of the schools won some of the competitions, and the over all winner was Palm Drive school.

In the Philippines there is a system of choosing the prince and princess of the school each year. Our AMSAI schools use a different system for selection that most other schools whose princes and princesses are the children whose parents had collected the most donations for the school. In AMSAI, our little prince and princess were chosen by their teachers for their singing and dancing talents, and many of the parents had tears in their eyes seeing their kids on stage. Actually, all the children had their own unique talents and were winners and all became princes and princesses and got a certificate of special appreciation.
Last March 27th we had our end of year graduation ceremony, or as we call it here, "Moving Ahead" ceremony, for all 6 Davao schools. In this ceremony a certificate of posthumous recognition was awarded to Didi Ananda Supriiti for her commitment and dedication over the last 15 years to the AMSAI schools in Mindanao. It is now summer vacation and new school year 2000-2001 will open in June.

Nairobi Sector

Kangemi, Nairobi
By Dada Vratadhiriandananda

We opened the Ananda Marga Academy High School Department in Kangemi, Nairobi on February 14, 2000, with only 1 student. Slowly, the number of students increased until we've got 15 Freshmen students. The first term has just ended and by the second Term which will start in May, we expect to get another 25 students.

We have started modestly by opening Form I or first Year. People want to know first the quality of the instruction we provide to students. Our school is also approved by the government, therefore, it is legal as it is registered. We opened the high school to cater to our primary students. The Ananda Marga Academy has 3 departments: nursery, primary and secondary. At the moment, we have 240 nursery & primary pupils and 15 first year high school students. By next year, we will open the second year high school and so the year after that, we will open another until we shall have opened the fourth year. We have qualified teachers and I myself serve as Principal/manager of the high school as well as teacher of English, French & Music.

We have started building a library and we've gotten a donation of 500 textbooks & readers from the Giants of Nairobi. At present we are struggling to complete the construction of additional classrooms for our students. Dada Rameshananda and myself are working together & doing our best to raise the standard of instruction in all levels by regularly giving training in Neo-humanistic education to our teachers. We also have teachers' meeting every Friday to discuss defects and solutions on matters concerning the school.

The Ananda Marga Academy was first established as a nursery school in 1991. Now, it has got three departments and its high school, which I believe, if I am not wrong to be the first established outside India.

Capetown, South Africa

Kulapati Dada Shambhushivananda attended the Parliament for World Religions held in December, 1999. There were about 6000 participants attending from all faiths and traditions. Dad was among the 200 invitees from all around the world in the Assembly of the Parliament. Our service projects were highlighted along with gifts of service of all other organizations and individuals. Dada spoke on two occasions -once on PROUT and another time on Universal Religion. In smaller group workshops, he also presented the Principles of Neo-Humanist Education and all present unanimously loved it. Daily meditations for interested persons were held and we had two stalls, one at the Civic Centre of Cape Town and another in the Good Hope centre.

New York Sector

Long Island, New York

The Progressive School of Long Island has full enrollment this year in all the grades, K-7, totaling 125 students. The theme for this school year is "A Year of Peace and Unity". How do we achieve peace in our lives and unity in our social environments? In the child’s world it means that no one is left out or left behind, that each child's dignity is intact regardless of appearance, ability, culture, religion or race. As part of this theme, the seventh graders received training in VIP "Violence Intervention Prevention" with local professionals. Students attended workshops on violence prevention, communication skills, safety tips, anger management and other techniques to diffuse, avoid, prevent or stop violence.

Denver, Colorado

Our school in Denver, (Morning Star), directed by Mahajyoti has received national recognition and is also listed in national directory of reputed Kindergarten Schools.

Nicaragua

Dada in Nicaragua has already bought the Land for a School building construction and very soon the building should be ready.

Jamaica

The School in Jamaica is doing well with an increase of 15 students this term, bringing the total up to 95 students.

Delhi Sector

We have covered 78 percent of all Diocese of Delhi Sector with Ananda Marga Primary schools. 46 percent of all Districts of Delhi sector (India, Nepal, Bangladesh and Srilanka) are covered by Ananda Marga primary Schools.

Agartala, India

Georgetown Sector

Sao Paulo

The school in Sao Paulo increased from 17 to 31 children. We are receiving milk donated by the government for the children of the school and for families of low income.

Brasilia

Dada Pranakrsna, RS Brasilia has now 30 children in the school from ages 3 to 6, who learn Baba Nam Kevalam meditation. The Consul General of Philippines Embassy visited the school and was inspired to help improve the school building. He wrote letters to different embassies with the cooperation of RS Brasilia. Two embassies already responded to the letters, and asked for more documents, to analyze our project.

Sorocaba

The Sorocaba school “Lar e Creche Jardim Ecologico” now has 40 children. Parents are very happy with the school after seeing changes in their children after they joined the school they become more clean and organized.

Porto Alegre

Didi Ananda Vandhana inaugurated the new Project for Adolescents in Porto Alegre. The Municipality attended. They had a program for the schools and 1000 people participated in the biggest hall in the city. A professional video about Neo-Humanistic Education was produced. The construction of new sports hall in the Primary School was started. Neo-Humanistic Education Seminar was held for the 55 employees. The quality of education is continually improving.

Caracas, Venezuela

After the disaster hit Venezuela, much service work was done with the children in the University Camp, Poliedro Camp, and Fuerte Tiuna Camp, for an extended period of time. The educational activities included stories, songs and dances with several hundred children. Plans are now underway for a permanent school in Caracas. See separate article in this issue.

Photographs on this page from Georgetown Sector were provided by Dada Brahmananada and Dada Pranakrsna.
**Berlin Sector**

**Trento, Italy**

Kamaleshvar continues to teach his yoga classes to children. This spring he has taught kirtan and BNK meditation to 235 children. One interesting thing happened during a class. Six children out of 12 did not want to stop meditation, so they asked their teacher to stay for some more time; actually it was their free playing time. Together with Kamaleshvar they did more than 20 minutes sadhana. The children were so concentrated that they did not hear the lunch bell of the school. So after he had to push them to go to eat, because the other children where already at the tables.

In addition, Kamaleshvar has given 4 multi-media public lectures on NHE with several hundred attendees. He is soon joining a project which will enable him to teach Yoga to the teachers of many schools. Another project nearing completion is a book he is editing with 10 stories on yama and niyama for the primary school level. He is now waiting for the illustrations to be completed.

**S’Hertogenbosch, Holland**

Zonnelicht School in S’Hertogenbosch, Holland under Brccii. Asiima Ac. as principal and Yadurani as director has received a government grant for insulating the roof and as well for a school bus. The Daycare program is extended to care for primary school children in the afternoons, which is attended by thirty children bringing the total attendance to 80. The afternoon care is a preparation for a primary school. Student teachers help as additional teachers in the afternoon program. The school is very popular and was featured on the local TV. Regular vegetarian dinners are held in the wonderful spacious homey atmosphere of the school for fundraising purposes, attended by around 60 adults and 40 children. The usual cultural programs are highlights of the school attended by up to 200 parents and friends. A presentation on the program and the layers of mind was given by the teachers at the parents evening, followed by Ac. Pranakrsnananda.

**Verona, Italy**

Avtk. Ananda Nirmala Ac. the principal of Giardino del Sole, in Verona, Italy and Supriiya, gave a presentation on NHE at a congress on different educational methods at Bologna, which was attended by 140 people.

**Suva Sector**

**Lismore, Australia**

**Vistara Primary School**

In the last issue of Gurukula Network, an incorrect e-mail address was included for Vistara Primary School. The correct address is: <ampsups@ozemail.com.au>. In addition, Vistara Primary School has a new web page at <www.amps.org/suva/VISTARA>

At the end of the school year the students performed Baba’s play, “The Golden Lotus Of the Blue Sea” to an audience of 200 people at Lismore’s Performing Arts Theatre. The play was slightly adapted so that both boys and girls had parts in the play and the theme was not set in any particular country, based more on fantasy. The flying peacock horse was stunning with a 15–20 metre wing span. We had a Sound and Lighting Technician and costumes were amazing. We used wonderful backdrops and the story was truly inspiring. It was that night that we observed parents making comments like, “this was amazing”, “There was a special spiritual presence in this theatre and with the children tonight”, “it was the best school production I have ever seen”, “Baba would have been so proud of these children”. It was such a high feeling of inspiration that by the end of the performance, the audience cheered and cheered. The performance was done in September and we are still receiving positive comments. We even had the Drama Production Teachers from other schools in the audience wanting to pick up tips from our children. The school has made a video tape of the performance, clearly stating that this is an Ananda Marga school and respectfully shows Baba’s name as the author of the Golden Lotus of the Blue Sea. A video man took a video of the play for parents and it is being sold for $30 ($5 fundraiser goes towards venue hire). It can be an invaluable resource for anyone who works in schools and inspiring for margiis as well. Children love performing plays.

**Certification and Professional Development**

On Dada Shambhushivananda’s recent visit to Suva Sector, we were very fortunate to have Dada train our teachers in the six dimensions of NH education and they were incredibly
inspired. The six strands of neo-humanist education being: inner and outer ecology; practical life skills for self-reliance; decision making skills; aesthetics & creativity; historical insight & predictive skills and universal love. These six dimensions correspond to the six kosas. They were also awarded a certificate with the Ananda Nagar Gurukul gold stamp recognising them as Neo Humanist Educators after their training. Additionally, this year, Guru Charan from the NERI Institute in Ananda Pali has been conducting regular training programs with the teachers at Vistara Primary School.

Melany, Australia
River School

Enrollment at the River School has doubled recently, and is now up to 100 students grades preschool through 6th grade.

This year started with the theme of “Spirit” being explored in each of the grades. The little family (grades K-2) built a spirit house - a sacred place that can be used for many purposes. Big family (grades 5-6) investigation of this theme resulted in many discussions including the realization that spirit is also part of nature. The children also wrote about their own personal identification with spirit within. Two samples are included on this page.

Guam

Didi Arpana is now working in the preschool in Guam. There are four teachers and a new permanent sub. They have 43 children now, which is the maximum capacity. The children are from diverse ethnic backgrounds including New Zealand, Australian, British, American, Filipino, Chamoor, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Taiwanese and Afro-American. The school is highly recommended by educators there and is well known for its high standard. Didi Arpana is currently taking Early Childhood Education courses which is assisting her in her work managing the school and the staff.

My Spirit

My Spirit is a part of me
It’s very small but has great strengthen and power
It’s wise and knows just what to do
It helps me to be and not hold it inside of me.

My Spirit

I feel my Spirit deep within,
It’s soft and mushy and strong
But sometimes I forget it’s there
But when it shines it’s hard to push it away
And when I’m sad it helps me smile
**Dialog**

* A regular column exploring problems and challenges in early childhood education situations with Mahajyoti

**The Dilemma with Hitting**

**Dear Dialog,**

We have a child who hits and we cannot get her to stop. We send her to sit in a chair when she gets too aggressive, but this really does not change the behavior. She is 3 1/2 years old and though we know she understands what we are saying she cannot stop hitting others. Her parents are just as frustrated as we are about this. On rare occasions she will hit a staff member. - Help us

**Dear Help,**

An aggressive child is a child in pain. In the case of children (and sometimes adults) it is sometimes not always possible to pinpoint the root of the inner frustration. Become the social scientist. Engage with your staff in careful, attentive observation. Have each staff member record the details surrounding the events as well as their frequency.

* Who is the victim? An older or younger child? Boy or girl? Please bear in mind that occasionally the victim can be the initial provoker or instigator.

* When and where does she hit? During what specific times or activities (structured class or free play)? Transitions or intervals when students are crowded can sometimes contribute to potential hitting situations. Certain environmental factors can be better manipulated by the staff. The teacher may reconsider alternative methods of facilitating transitions.

* What events occur when she hits? Does she admit to hitting?

When the other child cries, does she get upset? Does she receive extra attention from the teacher? Is she apologizing or trying to make the victim feel better? Does she simply walk away?

* What behaviors trigger the aggressive action? What happens right before she engages in hitting? Does another student have something she wants? Is a teacher saying “no” to the child? Is the student experiencing a challenge in completing a task or activity? Is she simply tired?

After determining who, where, when, and how the child hits, consider what elements may be contributing to her desire to engage in hitting behaviors. What factors encourage her to hit again? What skills does she require that would better equip her to cope with the situation? Have any outside stresses or changes contributed to the misbehavior? When a child is aggressive, it can make the staff as well as other children angry. Consider taking shelter in the Supreme. Remember your mantra then try the following.

1) First, the teachers need to hold in their hearts a positive visual image of this child. In order to bring about a constructive long-lasting change in any situation, we must adjust our incomplete and sometimes false mental picture of the child in our Selves first. In a staff meeting, the teachers may hypothesize the source of the child’s suffering or the nature of what may be out of balance. This helps to bring into focus a more positive visualization and ultimately better understanding of the child. Collectively envision a happy, loved child, expressing her maximum potential.

2) Try implementing a TLC (Tender Loving Care) Program. In this approach each staff member makes a sincere effort to touch the child, hold the child, rub the child’s head, say “I love you” -- to physically and verbally engage in actions and conversations, reflecting a caring and compassionate position towards the child at least 4 times (per teacher) each day. Often when each staff member strengthens the physical-emotional-psycho-spiritual bond with the child, the child’s pain and/or frustration may be lessened, opening a gateway to easier resolution.

3) When she is not engaged in the activity, encourage conversations with the child about the undesirable behavior in a nonjudgmental and curious way. “Tell me about what you are feeling when you need to hit someone.” Reflect back to the child and acknowledge the feelings she is experiencing without judgment. “You get very angry when someone has a toy that you want.” (You may want to physically be touching the child’s hand or shoulder during the conversation.) During this phase of resolution, the educator wants to separate the feelings from the behavior. “How do you feel about having to hit?” How does the child feel about other behavior options available? “Friends are for hugging. Let’s think about other things that you can do in this situation.”

4) When children are crossing the 2 1/2 - 3 1/2 year threshold into the world of verbal intercommunication and language, they have not yet fully integrated into their being the value and power of words. Every individual needs to be equipped with "tools" by which to protect themselves and to ease their passage through conflict. Key words or sentences must be developed by the staff which can be used by students to warn others of their discomfort in any social situation such as “Please stop.” “I don’t like that.” or “Teacher I’m having a problem.” Offer acceptable alternative ways of expressing feelings. Whenever a child elicits one of these warnings, the teacher lovingly validates their discomfort. "When someone says 'stop', it's your job to stop." This is delivered very 'matter-of-factly'
without a judgmental tone of voice. Once children learn that systems such as this can work for them in resolving their own conflicts, aggressive behaviors significantly subside.

5) Occurrences of undesirable behaviors are one of those “teachable moments” where the lesson for One is actually the lesson for All. These special events are an integral part of our Curriculum of Kindness, an opportunity to discuss anger and discomfort issues with the entire class without pointing fingers at any one child. Role-playing situations that make them angry can be dramatized as well as collectively brainstorming possible alternative responses. Verbalize the expectations of the class and the teacher. As a collective group, set limits on unacceptable aggressive behavior and their consequences. A review of appropriate social skills reinforces the neo-humanistic curriculum of kindness. Regularly practice these options with the child(ren) in the classroom setting. Eventually as these concepts are integrated into the students’ being, you will see these techniques applied more and more in their social interactions.

6) When the staff observe “the pattern” in progress, the alert teacher may coach from the sidelines. “Amanda, this is one of those times when you may want to say: ‘I don’t like that’”. Support her in recognizing those ‘triggers’! The neo-humanistic teacher handles all interventions with calm firmness and perhaps most importantly with unconditional love. When the child shows self restraint and exercises her more constructive options, be sure to pour on the praise, the hugs, “give me five” gestures, “Good job, Amanda!” Let the child know how pleased you are which will encourage her to engage in the desired behavior more often. Be sure to praise other positive behaviors the child exhibits throughout the day as well.

7) Encourage the child to draw pictures (perhaps with red and black crayons) about those situations that generate anger and frustration. Together the teacher and student can make a book of drawings about what makes her want to hit, including descriptions of the new behavior options she would like to attempt. Read it with her several times. You may want to make modifications or additions to the book as she tries out her new responses. Hopefully a happy ending will materialize which pictorially describes how she feels using her new “tools” and what its like to be in control without having to hit. Maybe some day she will feel comfortable about sharing her book with the class.

8) When repeated or excessively aggressive hitting occurs, immediate intervention is required to assure the safety as well as comfort of the other students. During these instances a corresponding privilege is lost. The teacher may need to introduce an intention: “I’m sorry but if you cannot be nice to my friends, you may have to play alone.” Be prepared to back it up. “I’m sorry since it is hard for you to be the good friend, you will need to sit by my chair and read books for a while.”

In such extreme situations I have also seen teachers use the phrase “You hit. You sit.” While a Time Out Chair may help the teacher rebound back to sanity, it rarely alters misbehavior on a long term basis. Regular use is not recommended. If this method is applied, my personal favorite is to implement it with a kirtan tape playing nearby. When returning the child to play, the teacher may want to interject: “Are you ready to show me how you can be a good friend? Tell me how to be the good friend….. Make it so.” Rewarding the desirable behavior when it occurs is much more effective than excessive punitive measures. “Good job being the good friend, Amanda! Give me five!”

(A footnote: Some individuals are plagued by chemical imbalances in the brain frequently accompanied by hormonal imbalances in the lower chakras which may influence aggressive behavior. These are the most challenging situations for the teacher and for the child. These children find it virtually impossible to control the urges that emanate as a result of these physically and organically based conditions. Some herbal, homeopathic and prescription remedies in addition to dietary changes have been known to ease these symptoms.)

As educators, it is our responsibility to actively support each and every student in our care to the best of our ability and to empower them with techniques which will maximize their ability to practice ahimsa: the principle of nonviolence, non-injury, kindness, and compassion. Striving to advance the competency of our students so that they can understand and apply ahimsa more fully in their daily lives -- to themselves, to others, and to the environment -- is the greatest gift we can give. Herein lies the very essence of neo-humanistic education.

Please send us your additional suggestions and comments concerning this topic. If you have other concerns you would like to see addressed in this column,

contact us at:

Dear Dialogue
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Mahajyoti Glassman has been the Director and Head Teacher of Morning Star Preschool for the past 12 years. Morning Star Preschool is a Neo-Humanist School in Denver, Colorado, USA.
New Publications

Teach Me To Fly- Insights into Early Childhood Neo-Humanist Education
by Didi Anandanivedita

*Teach Me To Fly* focuses on the education of children from birth to 8 years of age, and highlights the major components of Neo-humanism as the base of the educational process. A must read for anyone working with young children, this book can also serve as a major support in the teacher training process in Neo-humanist Schools.

*Teach Me To Fly* contains a myriad of exciting ideas regarding early childhood education and includes the following essential components of the Neo-Humanist Education model.

- The role of the teacher as guru
- Understanding the uniqueness of early childhood and providing psychological care
- Nurturing the spiritual qualities of the child
- Teaching universalism to children
- Incorporating morality into every aspect of the educational process
- Helping children to understand and work with their tendencies and emotions
- Ethics and social skills
- Guiding children and managing their behavior with understanding of child psychology
- Setting high standards for each individual
- Cognitive development
- Learning to read and write
- Fantasy and creativity
- The learning environment

Head in the Stars, Feet on the Ground
Explorations of Yoga Psychology
by Didi Anandanivedita

Head in the Stars, Feet on the Ground, aims to help people better translate the ideas of yoga psychology into everyday beneficial psychological practices. The book is intended as a practical beginners guide to yoga psychology and no previous knowledge about psychology or spiritual practices is assumed. Head in the Stars, Feet on the Ground guides one on a personal journey through issues such as “What am I feeling inside?” “How to resolve my negative tendencies and inner pain?” “Who am I?” “What is my purpose in life?” Many of the chapters end with suggested exercises for further self discovery.

Although this book is not written about children – it is about human development starting at birth and going into adulthood, so naturally all the stages of childhood are included as well. Therefore it can serve as a guide for those working with children. Written in very understandable language, it is also a publication you will want to give to the teachers in your school for understanding the bio-psychology of human development as well as a tool for their own personal unfoldment.
Ordering Information
These books are available from your Sectorial Publications Secretary. If the books are not available as of yet in your Sector, they can be ordered directly from India in bulk.
Please contact: Gurukula Publications <gurukula@vsnl.com>

About the Author
The author, Didi Anandanivedita has over twenty-five years of experience in early childhood education. She opened and directed preschools in the Philippines, Malaysia, and Guam. Her first educational publication was For Universal Minds followed by three teachers’ guidebooks co-authored with Ketana Bardwell: Safe and Sound, Who Am I, and I Can Draw the Sun.

In the words of the author
These two books reflect my main interests at this time in our service work. Generally, regarding working with young children I look at morality as a combination of areas such as yama and niyama, virtues, self and social development. These are key aspects in psychology as well. Sri P. R. Sarkar said, "Morality is the most important subject in the syllabus." Therefore I feel an understanding of child psychology is vital for our educators.

Child psychology is helping children to be in a good self and social flow. They are resilient and open in these matters when one has some understanding of child psychology. There is a growing body of literature that is available on this topic. Adult psychology is looking at adults who now are the end products of their parents and school education -- full of many imposed samskaras (arrested development) and immaturity. They take much more effort to help. Education from a psychological perspective means looking at the earlier part (the formative part) of the psychological spectrum. When I work with young children I am aware of the immense good or harm that is going on in these children's lives and how to help. Similarly when working with adults, I think of the later part of the spectrum, when harm has already occurred and maturity is arrested in various ways. Seeing how difficult it is for adults to change makes me aware how important it is to reverse psychological harm with young children before they reach adulthood. Teenagers and children should have so much more help available to them.

Coming Soon!

Neo-Humanist Education
A Documentary on NHE Schools Around the World - Edited by Didi Ananda Rama

The NHE Documentary is now complete and at the printers. It is a full size 100 page book of text and photos documenting our NHE program with articles and many many pictures (260!) from schools around the world, displaying a colorful picture of our worldwide education system.

This will be an invaluable book for all of our schools around the world - for teachers, parents, community and sympathizers.

Price details are not available as of yet, but for more details and to order copies for your school and your sector, please contact Didi Ananda Rama at:
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