

Discovering the Real Me

Teacher's Manual 11

A Companion for Student Textbook 11

Developing Leadership Skills

For teenagers 16 to 17 years of age

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Section I: Introduction

Dear Educator:

As our world becomes smaller through globalization and advancing technology, parents and educators the world over share concerns about raising the younger generation. Family breakdown, sexual immorality, substance abuse, media influences, and youth's challenging of authority and tradition are just a few of the widespread concerns. Teachers in the United States report that students of today are less respectful toward their elders, one another, and themselves than they were just a few years ago. This makes them harder to discipline and teach.¹ As traditional religious, civic, and family values come into question in our rapidly changing world, adults sometimes feel they are swimming upstream in a culture saturated with images of violence, sexual license, and material ease.

An alliance between educators and parents for the moral good of the young is essential to combat these negative trends. Many societies have considered moral education to be part of education's mission in partnership with and in continuation of the parents' moral instruction of their children. Plato of ancient Greece said, "As soon as the child can understand what is said, mother and father exert themselves to make the child as good as possible, at each word and action teaching and showing that this is right and that wrong, this honorable and that dishonorable. . . . At a later stage they send him to teachers and tell them to attend to his conduct far more than to his reading and writing."²

In China, learning was tied to the great moral philosophy of the sage Confucius. Students were to memorize and learn writing skills from the Confucian classics by copying such phrases as "Idleness when young regrets before long" and "Where there is a will, there is a way."

The founders of major universities in the United States—Harvard College, for example—wanted to train leaders for a more civilized and virtuous society. Two founding fathers of America, Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin, believed that education was supposed to contribute to the moral character of society—to raise up people of virtue so that freedom would always be tempered by responsibility. They thought the schools had a large part to play in the raising of good citizens.³

This book is designed to help the teacher educate for character by providing lesson plans accompanying the chapters of *Discovering the Real Me*, a character education curriculum based upon universally admired moral principles. *Discovering the Real Me* is a dynamic curriculum for which international feedback is sought and welcomed. We hope that each culture in which *Discovering the Real Me* is used will make its own unique contributions in knowledge, methods, stories, and legends.

1. Alcestis Oberg, "Values Education Wins Supporters," *USA Today*, April 19, 2000, p. 27A.

2. Protagoras 325 c-e.

3. *Cultivating Heart and Character: Educating for Life's Most Essential Goals*, eds. Devine, Seuk, and Wilson (Chapel Hill, North Carolina: Character Development Publishing, 2000), p. 14.

In countries around the world, Western culture and media have had a strong influence on youth, and that is one of the reasons why young people are turning away from traditional morals and ethics in their native cultures. One of the goals of *Discovering the Real Me: A Student Text Book in Character Education* is to support traditional morals and ethics in different cultures, while acknowledging that we live in a plural world and need to be part of that world.

Happily, there are character strengths or virtues that are admired around the world. No society honors liars, cowards, cheaters, or killers. Every society admires the sacrificial, the noble, the brave, the strong, the honest, the true. Likewise, no parent would object to his or her child being taught honesty, bravery, integrity and respect in school—all of which lead to a life of morality.

Students are not the only ones who benefit from a program of character education. Teachers who educate for character find their teaching experience more pleasant and fruitful, with fewer discipline problems. It lends their teaching new life and purpose and helps them feel fulfilled in their teaching mission. Educating the young in how to be good human beings, in addition to teaching them academic knowledge, helps reignite teachers' original enthusiasm for going into the field of education.

We hope this book will make your teaching task easier, more enjoyable, and more meaningful. We hope that it will enable you to touch the hearts and lives of the young people you serve with messages that will enhance and improve their chances for successful and meaningful lives.

1. A BALANCED EDUCATION

A museum exhibit in London displays piles of salt, potassium, carbon, etcetera, alongside a container of water. Underneath there is a caption that reads, "THIS IS A HUMAN BEING." Yes, materially speaking, these are the components of a human being. Yet most people would argue that there is something more to being human.

The human mind aspires to truth, beauty, goodness, virtue and love. Finding or realizing these things gives us a deep sense of fulfillment as well as happiness and joy. Without these things, life is ashen indeed.

At the same time, we have material desires and needs coming from our physical selves—the part of us that is indeed salt, potassium, carbon, water, etcetera. We like to eat tasty food. We want to be physically healthy. We seek shelter to protect us from the elements and provide us with a comfortable place to live. We value money and the things that it can buy. We seek a mate. Fulfilling these physically based desires brings us physical happiness.

Throughout human history people have pursued both the physical and spiritual aspects of understanding. Through science we have come to understand the nature of our physical universe more and more, leading to technological advances that have enhanced the quality of our material life. Religion and philosophy have given us a deeper understanding of the internal or spiritual aspect

of life, addressing fundamental questions such as the meaning of life, the way of goodness, the existence and nature of God, human relationships, and so on. Science, on the one hand, and religion and philosophy, on the other, have both been involved in the pursuit of human understanding.

In the 20th century, education throughout the world came to take on more of a scientific and technical character. In the process, the more traditional concept of education, which stressed the development of a person's character in preparation for life, became more and more marginalized. Daniel Goleman, researcher and author of the groundbreaking book *Emotional Intelligence*, wrote, "Our schools and our culture fixate on academic abilities, ignoring emotional intelligence, a set of traits—some might call it character—that also matters immensely for our personal destiny."⁴

Our tendency has been to focus on developing knowledge, skills and creative talents while neglecting the more fundamental dimensions of educating people to become good. The result of this overemphasis has been the education of people with high levels of professional abilities who do not possess moral standards commensurate with their influence and responsibility. Thus, we have computer specialists using their knowledge to create viruses whose sole purpose is to destroy the workings of thousands of computers, or creative artists who use their talents to propagate sexual exploitation and violence.

The challenge for education in the 21st century is to correct the current imbalance. To neglect doing so is actually dangerous. As our power to control and manipulate our physical universe grows, the need to channel that power through morality grows too. Historian Arnold Toynbee put it like this: "The greater our material power, the greater our need for spiritual insight and virtue to use our power for good and not for evil... We have never been adequate spiritually for handling our material power; and today the morality gap is ... greater than it has ever been in any previous age."⁵

It is not a far stretch to realize that technical knowledge without the guidance of morality is dangerous. Knowledge of how to make nuclear weapons in the hands of immoral killers would be a disaster for humanity. Medical expertise in the hands of torturers refines their methods to a horrific degree.

One headmaster, having experienced the Nazi concentration camps during the Second World War, summed up this point in a letter he wrote to his new teachers each year:

*My eyes saw what no man should witness: gas chambers built by learned engineers, children poisoned by learned physicians, infants killed by trained nurses, women and babies shot and burned by high school and college graduates. So, I am suspicious of education. ... My request is: help your students become human. Your efforts must never produce learned monsters, skilled psychopaths, educated Eichmanns. Reading, writing, arithmetic are important only if they serve to make our children more human.*⁶

4. Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam, 1995), p. 36.

5. Arnold Toynbee, *Civilization on Trial* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1948).

6. Haim Ginott, *Between Teacher and Child* (New York: Avon, 1976).

Whether the knowledge and skills imparted by conventional education are used for the benefit or the detriment of society depends primarily on the heart and conscience of the educated person. Therefore, character education is not only desirable; it is absolutely necessary.

HEART AND CONSCIENCE—THE CORE OF CHARACTER

The deepest motivation for all moral striving arises from the heart—in particular, the heart is the source of the fundamental impulse for relatedness. It is what motivates a person to yearn for the joy of loving and being loved, the satisfaction of valuing and being valued. Love and relatedness describe a human need no less strong than the need for food or shelter. Indeed, people often are willing to give up both of these for the sake of love.

Love in its true sense is inherently moral. It requires altruistic action: giving, serving, and sacrificing one's self for the sake of one's beloved. Love is also inherently ethical, because it can be realized only in a relationship with another human being.

The beginning point of education lies with the cultivation of the child's heart by providing experiences of love. This enhances the child's feeling of security and worth, making a solid foundation for subsequent growth and development. Because the heart is the core of human character, the ability to give and receive love is the ultimate manifestation of true maturity, over and above academic knowledge.

Along with heart, the development of a strong conscience is also an important aspect of building good character. Whereas the heart is the source of love, we may view the conscience as an internal compass guiding one's love in the direction of goodness. Parents, teachers, and other mentors serve as important guides and role models for the development of a child's conscience. The school can provide a supportive atmosphere by creating a moral community in which students, teachers, and school administrators are working together in harmony and with mutual respect. The school would benefit also from instilling in each student a sense of shared responsibility for creating a moral culture.

THE THREE BASIC GOALS OF LIFE AND EDUCATION

This curriculum is developed around the idea that there are Three Basic Goals of Life and Education. Bearing these goals in mind shapes education to fulfill its deepest purpose: to produce well-rounded, capable, and benevolent people who are a boon to society and to themselves.

Developing a mature heart and character is the first basic goal of life and of education. Yet it is not an end in itself. Ultimately, the goal of developing heart and character is to produce a person capable of altruistically loving others. A person mature in virtue is a person capable of beneficial and loving relationships, which are further contexts for fostering human development and growth. To help people develop loving relationships, especially in the context of a family, is the second basic goal of life and education.

As people develop their knowledge, skills, and technical expertise, they have the potential to be of enormous benefit to the larger society. With their maturity and sense of social responsibility, such people can balance their natural desire for personal success with the larger purpose of serving their society. A strong conscience and a well-developed capacity to love make for an ennobling contribution to the human community. Making a contribution to society is the third basic goal of life and education.

The pursuit and fulfillment of these three life goals—1) **becoming a person of mature character** 2) **establishing loving relationships and family**, and 3) **making a contribution to society**—point the way to valuable and productive lives. By designing our educational system with these three goals in mind, we can help young people to find true satisfaction and fulfillment in life while realizing their full potential as human beings.

The *Discovering the Real Me* curriculum and teaching manuals emphasize the development of heart and conscience within the context of attaining the three basic life goals. Educating children to be better and happier human beings is the essential goal of education, even as they learn the technical expertise needed to serve our world to the best of their abilities. *Discovering the Real Me* seeks to correct the imbalance in current education by devoting special attention to the development of the inner human being, the core of which is heart and conscience.

2. TEACHING METHODS

This section includes a number of methodologies for teaching the *Discovering the Real Me* material. Each teacher has his or her own teaching style and may not feel comfortable using all of our suggestions. We provide this information in order to help you, the teacher, get started. You are encouraged to use and adapt these recommendations as you see fit.

INTERACTIVE METHODOLOGY

The general approach recommended for teaching the course *Discovering the Real Me* is one that encourages the maximum degree of interaction between teacher and students. Because the focus of the course is on developing the students' character, it is best if students become agents in their own learning and development. Encourage students to speak up, to express their ideas, emotions, and opinions and to participate actively. The desirable outcome is that students think and discuss in such a way that any moral conclusions they come to about right and wrong are their "own".

Yet, in guiding the learning process, you remain the authority. To be effective, it is best to guide the students according to the clear moral framework laid out in the book. Otherwise, you run the risk of the class believing that all viewpoints are equally valid.

GROUP AND INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS

Both group and individual projects are useful in teaching character. It is suggested that you continually re-create the groups throughout the course (even on a daily or weekly basis) so that unhealthy cliques, which can be detrimental to class unity, do not form. While group projects are a good way to teach students to work together, individual projects encourage personal creativity and interest in a topic. In assigning projects, it is well to take student interest into consideration. You may even want to allow the students to choose or design some projects themselves. This way they will be much more creative and enthusiastic about their work.

COOPERATIVE LEARNING

Over the past one or two decades, “**cooperative learning**” has become very popular in many Western school systems. It has formed its own society—the International Association for the Study of Cooperation in Education, and has its own practitioner-oriented magazine—*Cooperative Learning*. Hundreds of studies have been conducted that demonstrate the effectiveness and applicability of cooperative learning on all levels.

Cooperative learning is a **team approach to learning**, involving students working together to accomplish a shared task. Through this method students can learn social as well as scholastic skills. It is an approach that is oriented toward the student’s interests and teaches them responsibility for the results of the learning process.

The traditional method of education emphasizes the subject content. In cooperative learning, the study process is primary. It says to the teacher: “Take what you would normally teach, teach it through cooperative learning for at least part of the day or period, and you’ll be teaching virtues and academics at the same time.” Cooperative learning can be utilized in teaching almost any kind of subject, whether it is ethics, literature, math, science, or sports.

Here are some of the specific benefits of cooperative learning:

1. It teaches the value of cooperation

It teaches students that it’s a good thing to help each other. Studies show that the opportunity to be a contributing member of a benevolent peer group promotes caring about fellow group members, develops more altruistic attitudes, and encourages pro-social behavior.

2. It builds a sense of community in the classroom

Interaction helps students to get to know and understand each other better. One effect of this is to reduce interpersonal conflicts. Cooperative learning has been found to foster greater acceptance of classmates who are physically challenged or from different ethnic or racial backgrounds.

3. It tempers the negative aspects of competition that often pervade classrooms

Often, the spirit of destructive competition, rather than cooperation, dominates the school or classroom atmosphere.

4. It improves academic achievement, self-esteem, and attitude toward school

By encouraging student participation and interaction, cooperative learning has been shown to dramatically improve academic achievement, self-esteem and a positive attitude toward school among all students, but especially for chronic underachievers.

5. It teaches life skills

Cooperative learning teaches students some of life's most important skills, including learning to listen, taking the viewpoint of others, respecting others, patience, tolerance, communicating effectively, solving conflicts, and working together to achieve a common goal.

Some Types of Cooperative Learning:

- *Learning partners.* This is the easiest and least threatening way to begin cooperative learning. It is a building block for other, more complex forms of cooperation.
- *Small group projects.* Students work together in groups of four to six on a single project. The emphasis is on cooperative processes such as group problem-solving, creativity, and team research.
- *Whole-class projects.* At times the entire class can work together on a single project. The project can be divided into several sub-projects. For example, divide the research into the life of a historical figure into different categories (childhood, adult life, contribution to culture, influence on others, etc.), then combine reports.

It is important that the behavior expected of the students be made clear. Here are some suggestions that the teacher could post on the wall concerning classroom expectations:

Classroom Expectations

1. Cooperate with each other
2. Do not speak when someone else is talking
3. Do not distract each other
4. Say what you think honestly without putting others down
5. Do not leave others out
6. Support each other
7. Do not make sarcastic comments

The following describes the basic procedure for conducting cooperative learning in the classroom:

1. Place students in groups (groups will vary in size—four to seven is optimal)
2. Assign each member of the group a specific role. Examples of roles:
 - a. Organizer: Organizes all the research information of the group in a presentable manner.
 - b. Secretary: Takes notes for the group.
 - c. Team captain: Makes sure that all the group members are fulfilling their responsibilities.
 - d. Spokesperson: Presents the group's work to the class and responds to any questions from the class.
 - e. Noise keeper: Makes sure the volume level does not become excessive.
 - f. Timer: Makes sure the group's assignment is completed on time and that the group is using its time wisely.
- Depending on the size of the group, the roles can be combined.
3. Clarify the task to be worked on and the time allotted for its completion.
4. Review rules (should be posted on the wall in such a way that they are visible and readable).
For example:
 - Get into your group quickly and quietly.
 - Bring necessary materials with you.
 - Stay in your group unless asked to do otherwise.
 - Wait to begin until you know your role and the roles of others in your group and have received all instructions.
 - Speak quietly.
 - Listen to your partner or teammates.
 - Address your partner or teammates by name.
 - Raise your hand if you have a question for the teacher.
5. Give each group feedback concerning their work and accomplishment, including any signs of improvement.

GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Group Circle

As you probably have experienced, the use of a circle formation has proven effective in helping students to open up and share their ideas.

Guidelines for group discussions**1. Set a non-relativistic context for discussion**

Adolescents may adopt the attitude that everyone is entitled to his or her own opinion, asking, “Who’s to say what’s right?” This may lead them to adopt a relativistic attitude toward morality. Group discussion provides students with the opportunity to affirm students’ right to their own viewpoints while challenging them to consider the existence of a clear sense of ethics and morality that applies to everyone.

Challenging students’ relativistic thinking requires teaching them the following general criteria that apply to any moral issue:

- Does a given action respect the rights of those it affects?
- Would I want to be treated in such a way? (test of reversibility)
- What if everyone acted that way? (test of universalizability)
- Does the action bring objective benefit to individuals and society?

2. Challenge students’ thinking, concepts and assumptions

As you know, you can challenge students’ thinking through the questions you ask. Even young children can be helped to grasp objective ethical criteria if the teacher’s questions are formulated well. You might want to consider, “What questions will I pose if students take such-and-such a position?” For example, if the teacher is discussing with the class whether it is unethical to steal or shoplift, here are some questions he or she could formulate prior to the actual discussion:

- Imagine that you were the owner of a shop. How would you feel if someone stole from you?
- How does stealing affect people who don’t steal?
- Is stealing wrong for someone who has enough money to buy what he or she wants and not wrong for someone who does not have enough money? If so, does that mean that stealing is only wrong depending on the person’s situation?
- What would happen if every person in society stole whatever he or she wanted?
- If you think stealing is all right when you don’t like the owner of a shop or if you think the shop is too expensive, does that mean that people have the individual right to decide when it is okay to steal?
- When you do things such as stealing, do you feel corrupt inside?
- What problems does stealing create for a society?

Some of these questions could be raised in an initial discussion; others could be made as part of a writing assignment; still others could be posed as part of a subsequent discussion of the issue.

3. Require sincerity and careful thinking

There is nothing more frustrating for a teacher than when students do not treat an issue seriously. Discussing moral issues may challenge some students’ own personal behavior, and they may rebel

because of this. It would be best if you make clear before any discussion that students are expected to keep a serious attitude.

Also, you might want to reflect on what format for moral reflection and discussion best helps students to think carefully and critically. There is a big difference, for example, between a loose, open-ended approach that simply invites students to voice their opinions and an approach that requires them to engage in research and/or systematic ethical analysis before taking up a position. To encourage continuing thought, you might also give students some thought-provoking reading on the topic and ask them to write an essay in response.

Additional points in support of moral reflection and discussion

1. Relate to the existing curriculum.
 - Use examples from literature to teach virtues: e.g., what moral choices do the characters in a particular story have? How would the story change if they made one choice over another?
 - Use examples from history or social studies to ask moral questions: e.g., what have been the effects of prejudice and discrimination in history?
 - Ask students to ponder how scientific fraud—scientists faking their data—undermines people's life and health?
2. Discuss hypothetical moral dilemmas as a way of diagnosing and developing students' moral reasoning.
3. Draw out dilemmas that students themselves may be facing.
 - Design decision-making activities that encourage conscientious reflection.
 - Use role-playing to help students take and understand a point of view different from their own.
 - Help students develop moral self-knowledge through personal ethics journals and character improvement activities.

We will discuss points 5 and 6 in the final three sections.

ROLE-PLAYING

During role-playing, students assume the roles of various characters and act out a brief episode resembling real life that involves a problem. Those assuming a role use their own words, attitude, thoughts, and feelings in the role play. The role-playing process involves four basic steps:

1. **A specific problem is identified.** It could be, for example, a conflict between a student and his/her parents, or between two students.
2. **After the problem is described,** roles must be established and assigned to various students. We recommend that the teacher seek out volunteers to play the roles.

3. **The actual role-playing takes place and should be brief.** The same situation may be repeated several times with different students in order to demonstrate that there are often several solutions to a single problem.
4. **A debriefing and discussion follow,** focusing on the behavior itself or the actions taken, rather than on the student who played the role, emphasizing how he or she addressed or solved the problem that was the focus of the role play. If the students did not solve the problem effectively, the class can suggest alternative approaches.

Role-playing allows the student, in a safe context, to understand and learn ways of coping with various types of difficult situations. It encourages seeing situations from different points of view and applying innovative solutions.

This technique demonstrates to students that very often conflicts are the result of misunderstandings between different parties. It shows the importance of listening carefully, of controlling one's emotions, and of recognizing prejudices and biases that one might have. Experiencing what it is like to be in another person's shoes can help to foster greater empathy and mutual understanding. Role-playing has the effect of muting ridicule and put-downs, which are so often a part of the school environment.

JOURNAL WRITING

In addition to the spaces provided for written reflections and responses in the students' textbooks, you may want to have students keep journals in which they can explore the topics introduced more thoroughly.

Journal writing (and drawing) is a tool for encouraging the student's personal growth. The exercises at the end of many of the chapters in the student textbook are designed to take students to places inside themselves that they may have rarely visited. The exercises can help them to:

- express their feelings and thoughts
- sort out the seemingly random experiences in their lives
- make more conscious choices and decisions
- define and implement desired changes
- get a clearer picture of their creative potential and how to use it
- change negative thought and behavior patterns
- discover new and different parts of themselves and learn how these parts can relate to each other harmoniously
- investigate their life purpose and find deeper meaning in their lives
- envision a better future and discover what their particular contribution to that future might be

The journal is a place where they can let their inner selves come out. The pages become a mirror for seeing themselves more clearly. Starting with self-communication in private, they then can

develop their ability to communicate with others. Being clear with themselves opens the way for being clearer with others.

Clarify to students that, as with life, the more they put into their journal, the more they will get out of it. It is good to encourage them not to restrict themselves to the assigned exercises but to feel free to explore and experiment on their own.

Some students may be hesitant because they think they have no talent for writing or drawing. It is good to emphasize that no special talent or training is needed to do these exercises. The goal is not to make art or literature but to explore their inner world. They are not drawing or writing to please anyone else or to get anyone's approval. Their journal is by them and for them. Assure them that while writing assignments will be checked by the teacher to make sure they have been done, sharing the contents of writing assignments will be voluntary.

To help students feel more comfortable and confident with journal writing, you may want to do a sample journal exercise together with them at the beginning of the course.

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

This is a concept with a long history in educational theory but which has been given new impetus in recent times in reaction to the excessive emphasis on cognitive learning in the 20th century. Most theories of education, even in character education, have stressed the development of a person's reasoning faculties and intellect. We, too, acknowledge the importance of learning to think logically, rationally, analytically, and critically. However, as we have already stated, the development of one's heart and conscience is more important in order to deeply internalize moral and ethical values. This requires the active engagement of the student in relationships with other people and the surrounding environment, in which both the mind and body can be involved.

We can understand the value of experiential learning if we consider the way a person learns to drive a car. One aspect, of course, involves studying and memorizing a driver's manual. However, this by itself is not sufficient to qualify one to receive a driver's license. What is ultimately necessary is real driving experience. Only through actual experience behind the wheel of a car does a person come to really comprehend the contents of the manual.

As Kathy Winings states in her book *Building Character through Service Learning*: "When the 'experience' outside the classroom was structured meaningfully, and carefully integrated with the classroom, it could become an excellent teaching tool. Learning involves more than absorbing data and information. For profound learning to take place, the student needs to not only understand the academic aspects of the question, but also to see how this knowledge is relevant to his/her life."⁷

7. Kathy Winings. *Building Character through Service Learning* (Chapel Hill, NC: Character Development Publishing, 2002), p. 16.

Experiential learning seeks to integrate the cognitive with the active and thus lend greater meaning to both. For character education to be effective, virtues need to come out of the realm of the abstract and enter the realm of practice. Through experiencing virtues in action, the student naturally absorbs them into his or her character. Educator David Kolb states that constructive experiential learning requires four basic steps: 1) the experience itself; 2) reflection on the experience; 3) synthesis and abstract conceptualization; and 4) testing the learned concepts in other situations.⁸

What kind of experiences are we talking about? The best are those that are structured to serve others. In the United States such programs have come to be known as “service learning” and can take any number of forms, such as:

- Big brother/big sister programs
- Tutoring younger children
- Visiting or working in a nursing home, hospital, homeless shelter, or orphanage
- Doing jobs for elderly people living alone
- Providing meals for homebound senior citizens
- Food or clothing drive
- Cleanup activity: park, streets, graffiti
- Planting trees, flowers, vegetable garden
- Painting murals to beautify the neighborhood
- Letter-writing or petition campaign on some public issue
- Serving a religious, civic, or service organization
- Fundraising for a worthy cause: playground equipment, computers for the school, etc.

Such activities afford students the opportunity to step beyond the boundaries of their previous experience. They experience the joy of living for the sake of others.

The reflection step is important to the student internalizing the experience. This helps to keep service from becoming simply a passing phenomenon. To stimulate reflection, you may want to encourage students to ask themselves the following questions:

- How did I feel before the activity compared to how I feel now?
- How did it help me to become a better person?
- What did I learn from the experience?
- What obstacles did I have to overcome?
- How did the activity benefit others?
- How do I feel about helping others now?

Overcoming obstacles, both internally and externally, in one’s heart, mind, and body, has been shown to be essential to achieving lasting personal growth. The student also needs to experience

8. David Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1984).

the substantial beneficial effect of his or her action on the recipient of the service. This gives a profound stimulus to offer oneself for other altruistic activities in the future.

Through reflection, the student can begin to comprehend the internal value of the experience and synthesize this with previous experiences that have shaped his or her attitudes and character. New conceptualizations of living can take form in the student's mind and heart, which then can be tested in other areas of life. If the experience of planting trees and flowers in a neighborhood park has sensitized the student to the value of creating a beautiful environment, he or she may be stimulated to plant flowers near home or to take better care of his or her own room or area. By experiencing the effect of caring for or feeding the elderly, the student can be naturally stimulated to show greater care and concern for those in need.

Through experiential programs such as service learning, students will be encouraged and challenged to adopt a lifestyle at variance with the self-centered and consumer-oriented one advocated by much of modern culture. Hopefully, the experiences gained through such programs will stimulate the natural goodness residing within each person and become precious memories that will nourish the development of his or her overall character.

GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

To conclude this section, we would like to offer you some general recommendations for teaching character education. As a conscientious educator, you already may be doing some, most or all of these.

Act as a caregiver, model, and mentor, treating students with love and respect, setting a good example, supporting pro-social behavior, and correcting hurtful actions.

Create a moral community in the classroom, helping students know each other, respect and care about each other, and feel that they are valued members in the group.

Practice moral discipline, using the creation and enforcement of rules as opportunities to foster moral reasoning, self-control, and a generalized respect for others.

Create a democratic classroom environment, involving students in decision-making and shared responsibility for making the classroom a good place to be and to learn.

Teach values through the curriculum, using academic subjects as a vehicle for examining ethical issues. (This is simultaneously a school-wide strategy when the curriculum addresses cross-grade concerns such as substance abuse prevention or sex education.)

Encourage moral reflection through reading, writing, discussion, decision-making exercises, and debate.

Teach conflict resolution so that students have the capacity and commitment to solve conflicts in fair, nonviolent ways.

Foster caring beyond the classroom, using inspiring role models and opportunities for school and community service to help students learn to care by giving care.

Create a positive moral culture in the school, developing a total school environment (through the leadership of the principal and administrative staff) that supports and amplifies the values taught in classrooms.

Recruit parents and the community as partners in character education, supporting parents as the child's first moral teachers; encouraging parents to support the school in its efforts to foster good values; and seeking the help of the community (e.g., churches, businesses, and the media) in reinforcing the values the school is trying to teach.

3. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

As you know, the best way to get what you want from your students is to inform them clearly about your expectations. In the beginning lesson, you may want to say to the students something along the following lines:

This course is designed and intended for you. This means that your participation and involvement in classroom and group activities related to the class are extremely important. This class will be what you, as students, make it. The course is designed to be interactive, which means that many times you will be asked to work together with your classmates in order to complete an assignment. The aim is for you to learn to work effectively with other people, as well as learning to respect the opinions of others (which may not be the same as yours). The skills that you will learn as you work cooperatively with others will prepare you in your relations with all kinds of people in the future. The most successful people in the world are those who know how to listen and respect others from all walks of life.

Grading

The issue of giving grades in such a course as *Discovering the Real Me* needs to be addressed by the school, keeping in mind the ultimate goal—the character development of students. The traditional form of grading students according to their cognitive knowledge can lead to a situation in which students invest themselves simply for the sake of getting good grades. Obviously, such an approach would distort the very meaning of the course. It would be better if the course accepts only those students who want to participate for the sake of their own character development, without such external stimuli as formal grading. In the majority of cases, however, this will be unrealistic. Also, students—and parents—usually want some way to measure how well they are doing. One possibility is to use an intermediate method—such as self-grading—either individually or by group.

Students need to know how they will be evaluated. For this kind of course, written examinations alone are not sufficient. In some cases the teacher may decide that students do not need to take written tests at all. Students should also be evaluated according to their class participation and general behavior, as well as insights and personal character changes. A lot of this will be self-reported.

The problem of unsatisfactory grades needs to be discussed separately. Experience indicates that grades given in moral/ethical courses should only be positive. For those students who don't study hard enough, we recommend not giving any grade at all. Instead, they are encouraged to invest more in the course so that in the future they can receive a positive grade.

4. HELPING STUDENTS TO GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER

Helping students to get to know each other is a recommended first step in building a moral community. One way to do that is to give students a non-threatening task to do with one other person or a small group, such as the following:

Partners

Teachers pair their students with someone they don't already know, or don't know well, and give them about ten minutes to complete a sheet titled "Partners" (see the box below). After the students have completed their sheets, they are invited to come together in a circle and share their lists with the group.

This activity accomplishes several things: Partners learn about each other; each class member learns about the others through the whole-group sharing; and the activity shows that people are both similar and different, laying the groundwork for a classroom community that values individuality and diversity as well as unity.

PARTNERS: Name	Name
<i>Ways We Are Alike</i>	<i>Ways We Are Different</i>

Some questions partners can ask each other:

1. What is your favorite food?
2. What are two things you like to do?
3. What's your favorite color?
4. Do you have any brothers or sisters?
5. What is your favorite subject or activity in school?
6. What is something you learned to do during the last year?

Class directory

Often teachers have found that many students don't know the names of all their classmates even by the end of the school year. Learning names and developing friendships can both be facilitated by a making a class directory.

On the first day of school individual photos are taken or drawings are done of all the students in the class. When developed, they are mounted on the bulletin board or in a class book. Beneath each portrait are three sentences, which the student completes:

"My name is _____"

"I like to _____ and _____"

"My phone number is _____"

Students then can contact each other based on common interests.

An alternative idea is to have students interview each other, take notes, and then write biographical sketches, which the teacher then duplicates to make a directory.

The treasure bag

One community-building activity is the "treasure bag." Here, each student brings in a bag which contains five things that tell something about themselves. Together the whole class tries to guess which bag belongs to which student.

The seat lottery

As teachers of adolescents, you know that they tend to form exclusive cliques, which meet the need for social membership of those who are "in" but at the expense of those who are "out." Such cliques can spell death for an overall sense of community in the classroom.

One way to deal with this problem is through a "seat lottery". Every desk in the class is given a number. Each Friday afternoon before leaving, each student goes to the front of the room and pulls a number from a bowl that will designate his or her seat for the next week.

The seat lottery can come to be eagerly anticipated. A new desk almost always means two new neighbors. This way there can be more friendships in the class than before, and the social groups that do form will be more open and less antagonistic.

Good feeling/bad feeling

One way you can lay the groundwork for good participation in discussions is to start the year with an exercise that helps students become comfortable with each other and gets them thinking about their responsibilities as class members. Students are asked to write "Two things that people do in a group discussion that give me a good feeling" and "Two things that people do in a group discussion that give me a bad feeling".

Gathered in groups of three, students then share their lists with each other. Next, the entire class forms a circle. Going around the circle, each person shares one of the things from his or her "good

feeling” list. The next time around the circle, each student then shares one of the things from his or her “bad feeling” list. Everyone keeps a running list of what is mentioned. At the end, each student chooses one thing that he or she will work on to improve as a member of a group discussion.

This procedure will not eliminate all problems—follow-up is needed—but it is a good consciousness-raiser as to what makes for productive discussion. Typically, students will say it makes them feel good when someone really listens to them, and nearly always they will mention that they don’t like it when somebody monopolizes a discussion while others say nothing at all.

People hunt

Another first-day activity that works well with students of different ages is the “people hunt.” The teacher gives the students a list of twenty items and instructs them to fill in people’s names for as many items as they can by going around and talking to classmates. Sample items:

1. Is able to whistle
2. Likes doughnuts
3. Enjoys reading
4. Likes to fish
5. Is new in the school
6. Has a living great-grandmother
7. Can ride a horse
8. Is good at sports
9. Plays a musical instrument
10. Parents were born in another country

All of these “ice-breaking” activities will help students realize that the course *Discovering the Real Me* is different from their other courses and hopefully will be providing them with growth-promoting and exciting experiences for their inner development.

Section II: Lesson Plans

Chapter 1

You Are the Leader!

OBJECTIVES

Cognitive

Students will understand the importance of good decision-making in leadership and will have mental tools to help them make better decisions.

Affective

Students will want to make wise decisions and will enjoy using good decision-making skills.

Behavioral

Students will make better decisions and choices in their lives.

Class Session 1

Have students read Chapter 1: “You Are the Leader!” in their student books. From now on, the students should read every chapter as homework before each class.

Emphasize to students that they are the leaders of their own lives. As they mature, more and more decisions and responsibilities will be theirs alone.

Have students break into small discussion groups of three or four and tell each other about leadership positions they have held and what challenges and/or victories they experienced.

Explain that leadership means making decisions, whether the person is the leader of a nation—like Abraham Lincoln in the example given in the chapter—the leader of a town, group, family (point out that all parents are leaders), or just the leader of his or her own life. A good leader needs to make good decisions.

Point out the small boxed quote in their student books:

We are free to choose what we will do or not do, but we are not free to choose the consequences of our decisions.

Ask students to think about that for a moment. Give an example of choosing not to study for an exam, but instead going out with friends. Mention that they are free to make that bad choice or decision, but they will not be free from the consequences of the decision. Have students brainstorm the consequences of the decision—both in the short and long terms. Then ask them to come up with examples of choices that are theirs to make, but about which they cannot choose the consequences.

Ask students to keep a decision-making log until the next class session on character education. Each time they are faced with a decision, they should write it down and note how they made the decision, and, if the results have become clear, what the results of that decision were.

Class Session 2

Have students review the approaches to decision-making in their student books:

- A *logical* decision. I collected, checked, and sorted out all the information available and then decided what would be best based on the facts.
- An *impulsive* decision. I didn't think about it much. I acted on impulse.
- An *emotional* decision. It was based on my feeling; what I wanted and what I felt attracted to.
- An *intuitive* decision. It was hard to explain, but I just felt inside that it was the thing I ought to do.
- An *emergency* decision. There was no time to agonize over it. The decision had to be made quickly.
- A *bitter* decision. I knew someone would be hurt, but it couldn't be avoided.
- A *responsive* decision. I was concerned about other people's opinions and how they would be affected, so I took account of their advice and suggestions.
- A *prayerful* decision. I didn't know what to do, so I prayed and asked God for his guidance.
- A *guided* decision. I felt I was out of my depth, so I asked someone I respected for advice.
- A *group* decision. I felt that we all needed to be involved and take responsibility for the outcome.
- A *rash* decision. I knew at the time that it was probably a mistake, but I neither had the time nor the inclination to think seriously about the consequences.
- A *default* decision. I did nothing, and matters took their own course.

Place students into small groups to discuss their decision-making logs or a decision they have had to make in their lives. Ask them to share with one another what the decision was, who was involved in the making of it, how they decided, what they decided, what the effects were, and what category of the decision approaches the decision fell under, if any.

Ask students to do the Questions for Reflection in their student books and the Exercise: "Approaches to Decision-Making":

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION

1. How much do decisions depend upon external circumstances and how much on our own will?

2. How much freedom do you have to make decisions?

3. What decisions are you free to make now that you were not free to make five years ago?

4. What kinds of decisions do you not yet have the freedom to make?

5. Are there some decisions in your life that you regret having made?

6. If so, why did you make those decisions?

7. Can you change the consequences of those decisions?

8. How would you go about trying to change the effects of a bad decision?

9. What have you learned from your past decisions, whether good or bad?

EXERCISE: “APPROACHES TO DECISION-MAKING”

1. Look at the list of approaches to decision-making listed near the end of this chapter. Are some of these approaches better or worse than others? Try to list them in order of best to worst.

2. For each of the ways of making a decision, think of:
 - a) a situation in which that approach would be the right one
 - b) another situation in which that approach would not be the right one

3. Which way of making a decision might be best for the following?
 - Deciding whether to go to college or get a job
 - Deciding which university to attend
 - Deciding on a career
 - Deciding whether to report a friend for stealing
 - Deciding whether to get romantically involved with someone
 - Deciding whether to marry a certain person
 - Deciding how to help a friend who is going through some struggle
 - Deciding how to respond if someone offers you drugs

For homework, assign the Reflection Exercise: “Future Decisions” and the reading of Chapter 2.