



LIVING VALUES

an educational program

Values Education for Children and Young Adults

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Living Values e-News

Living Values: An Educational Program Newsletter

April to May 2000
Issue Number Six

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TO OUR READERS

The globalized world, and the myriad forces and trends within it, are putting pressure as never before on individuals, society and social structures and systems. Amongst others, educationalists worldwide are tackling the challenges of preparing the next generation for a world that is not only very different from the one they grew up in but is also in many ways less safe, secure and caring. Each day brings news of events somewhere in the world - if not in our neighbourhood - that highlight a lack of personal, moral and social values. So it is heartening that educationalists are seeking to address this crisis in our social fabric with educational programmes and materials such as Living Values offers.

Yet notwithstanding the clear need for a renaissance of values within society, there are some who resist such moves. Perhaps this sensitivity - or even reluctance sometimes to touch the topic at all - indicates not just an awareness of its complexity but also the importance of an issue that touches the fundamentals of human life and the very spirit of our being. For values relate to who we are and how we choose to live and let live.

And it is an understandable reluctance, given, for example, the attempts over the years of some individuals and institutions to insist that others share the values they endorse. For no matter how well-intentioned such efforts may be, such imposition on others amounts to a moral bullying that fails to recognize and respect the individuality of others and their right, and ability, to judge for themselves and form their own opinions, beliefs and values.

But if the dangers of dogmatic indoctrination, or absolutism, are apparent, so are the pitfalls of a cultural relativism that suggests that anything goes and that there is no such thing as right and wrong, good and bad, when it comes to values and value choices. Is there an alternative to such extremes, or to inaction based on awareness of the risks they involve? Is it possible, without creating polarities of right and wrong, and condemning the latter, to identify some value choices as more constructive and responsible and leading to more desirable consequences than others? Living Values attempts to offer a viable alternative to the troubled routes of extremes or inaction while also indicating a way forward with regard to the latter question. Thus while some may feel that to speak of certain values as being universal is presumptuous, it is certainly possible to identify values which attract very widespread endorsement and acceptance.

Recognising, and nurturing, the critical thinking processes and judgement capability of the individual, Living Values offers, but does not impose, guidance and support in the development of values

Forthcoming Events

Greece - Athens

Saturday 20th May, 2000
(3 pm to 7 pm) and
Sunday 21st May, 2000
(10 am to 1:30 pm)

Living Values Teacher Development Seminars:

"Communication Skills:
Active Listening and
Conflict Resolution"

"Educator Training in
Values-Based Education"

(Participants should
attend both sessions)

Seminars will be
conducted by Sue Emery,
LVEP Coordinator for
Greece. For further
information and
registration, please
contact

greece@livingvalues.net

Tel: +30.1.8650972

United Kingdom - Oxfordshire

18th to 23rd August, 2000

International LVEP Train- the-Trainers

For further information,
please contact
training@livingvalues.net

awareness and the making of value choices that are neither arbitrary nor made under pressure but are soundly-based and supportable by each individual and his or her experience.

Living Values believes that each individual has the right, and responsibility, to discover, construct and deepen his or her own values and it aims to help children and young adults in this process. Further, it seeks to do so in a way that leads to an outcome derived from an awareness of the basis, significance and consequence of the choices made. Values then become something valuable; they are no longer handed down as outdated heirlooms whose purpose has long been forgotten or imposed as a one-size-fits-all straitjacket or stumbled upon so as to amount to little more than beliefs picked up as a random message-in-a-bottle drifting by in an ever-shifting sea of endless possibilities. Instead they are values that are alive, living values, that will guide behaviour in a way that is judged to be worthwhile, fulfilling and desirable. There are sensitivities involved and we must think carefully about values and the consequences of implementing them, take account of others' values and their right to them, and accept the near-inevitability that we need to continue to reflect on and modify our understanding and practice of our own values.

The task may be challenging but it is not one that we can put in the too-hard file and leave for someone else to deal with. The stories below show how people are taking up this challenge and finding some of the rewards and achievements that this can bring. We hope that you too will find the stories below inspiring, and for those whose inspiration becomes action, please set aside time to tell us of your experiences! It is only by sharing them that others can know about them. This generates enthusiasm - and allows many to profit by the experience of others.

The LVEP website - at <http://www.livingvalues.net> - warmly welcomes hearing from educators with one or two success stories (or even not-so-successful stories!) of values activities that they've tried in their classroom. So read on and, as ever, we hope that you'll do more than just read: please also send us your news - and go out and make some news!

With warmest wishes
The Editor

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Hungary - Szob

(3 1/2 hours by train from Budapest)
22nd June to Sunday 25th June, 2000
from 9am to 7pm

Four-day Educator Training for LVEP for secondary school teachers.

The training will be carried out by Sue Emery in English with Hungarian translation and Hungarian-speaking facilitators. Materials for the 8-14 age range have been translated into Hungarian along with the Values Cards.

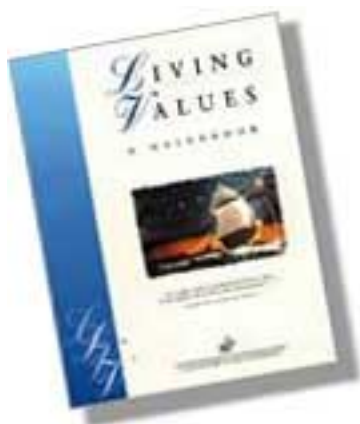
A second seminar is scheduled to take place in July in Budapest; details to be confirmed.

For further information, please contact
hungary@livingvalues.net

Egypt - El-Menia

(6 hours south of Cairo, near the Nile).
Friday 30th June to Sunday 2nd July
from 9am to 5pm

Have you read the book yet?



Living Values: A GuideBook

A Publication in Honor of the United Nations' Fiftieth Anniversary

*"To reaffirm faith in fundamental
human rights, in the dignity and
worth of the human person ..."*

(Preamble, United Nations Charter)

Three-day LVEP Educator Training for school teachers

Training will be led by Sue
Emery.

Monday 3rd July to
Wednesday 5th July.

Living Values Self Development

A new seminar for people
who are working in the
caring professions
including education,
psychology, social
services, etc.

The training will be
conducted by Sue Emery
with help from the
Egyptian LVEP
Coordinator, Dr Reem
Bahgat.

For further information,
please contact
egypt@livingvalues.net

Israel: Pilot Project and Ministry Approval

Expanding upon the story on Israel referred to in our last issue, Living Values e-News has now received a detailed report, highlighted below:

Pilot Project for Ages 0-7, March, 2000

Highlights:

- Two-day seminar for leaders of early childhood education in Ramla.
- Approval by Ministry of Education to introduce LVEP officially in Israel.
- Two-day introductory programme for teachers, trainers and early childhood education staff in Ramla.
- Creation of Teacher-Trainer-Team for Ramla and special training.

A Successful Introduction:

The Living Values programme in Israel is currently being developed as a pilot project in early childhood education, designed in cooperation with the members of the city of Ramla's early childhood team. An inter-disciplinary group of professionals, which is in charge of various development programmes for 0–7 year olds in Ramla, includes representatives from:

- The Municipality of Ramla – Department of Education and Ramla's Early Childhood Centre;
- The Ministry of Education – National Director and Regional Inspector of the Pre-school Division - orthodox and non-orthodox sectors;
- The Ministry of Housing – National Renewal Project (Social Department); and
- The Ministry of Health – National Renewal Project.

Factors of Success:

The success of the introduction of LVEP in Israel is based on the ability of the above small group of people to work in cooperation with each other. The fact that this group is made up of key local and regional officials enabled a comprehensive model to be created from the diverse needs, vision and resources of each.

Another factor is that representatives from 4 other communities from across the country were also invited to participate in the introduction programme: Kiryat Malachi (Central Region), Beer-Sheva (South), Neve Shalom (near Jerusalem) and Natania (North). The result of this is that there is a lively interest being generated in LVEP in all four corners of the country.

Furthermore, it was noted that at the 2-day introduction programme, people of no less than 6 different positions in the administration and services hierarchy came together to explore universal values. This turned out to be a practical demonstration of one such value – harmony. This rare occurrence of so many different rankings coming together in a thoroughly enjoyable way provided a direct experience of the philosophy of the project and an inspiring atmosphere of genuine respect, harmony and love.

A final factor is the cooperation we are receiving from the Living Values international network.

Chronology of Project Development:

Creation of an inter-disciplinary Living Values Core Team, as mentioned above, to introduce Living Values officially in the city of Ramla.

Two day promotional seminar, facilitated by Pilar Quera from Spain, for a leadership group of

twenty from Ramla's Early Childhood Centre, members of its Steering Committee and concerned parents.

Approval by the Ministry of Education – Pre-School Division – officially to introduce LVEP in 2 cities of Israel. Ramla will be the first to pilot it; all the kindergartens of Ramla will be involved – a total of 2,000 children from both the Arab and Jewish (orthodox and non-orthodox) sectors.

Two day LVEP introduction programme for 160 kindergarten teachers, teacher trainers, Early-Childhood Centre staff, inspectors and people from Health Services (February, 2000).

Decision to create an LVEP Teachers-Training-Team for Ramla and its neighbouring districts, as a follow-up to the success of the February introduction programme, with a special training programme of 7 sessions.

Upon completion of the training programme, the team is invited to participate in the Train-the-Trainers workshop to be held in England, April 2000; eight participants are projected to attend. Hopefully, this will lead us to the first autonomous Israeli LVEP Teacher-Trainer-Team, which will specialize in early childhood and parenting training.

Future Developments:

Creation of a national 'bank' of ideas and experiences.

Introduction of art into the project. This has already been approved by the Ministry; we are currently exploring ways to have art teachers become actively involved.

Involvement of community TV programmes and the development of a national website.

Creation of a team to prepare a presentation of LVEP activity in Israel at the upcoming Congress on Early Childhood. This Congress is being organized by the Ministry of Education, in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the first kindergarten in Israel. We hope that the children themselves will be ready to bring in their own experiences of Living Values.

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Kuwait: Qualitative Study of Values with Grade 3 Students

Living Values e-News has received the following report from David Deruiter, a Living Values resource person working at Kuwait's American School (KAS), which was featured in Living Values e-News of January 2000:

A Qualitative Study of Values at KAS (Grade 3)

"You are the best teacher because you play football (soccer) with us, and tell us what you did on the weekend" said one 3rd grade student. The words were broken as English is a second language in Kuwait; however, they were heart-felt and the meaning understood. I believe he meant to say "thank you for loving me, listening to me, and treating me as an autonomous

human being."

Every morning I wake up and wonder at the exciting work that is my present lot in life. Who am I to teach these children? I have little experience and graduated from University less than one year ago. Before packing up and leaving Canada indefinitely, my mother counselled me always to "love the children" and "always listen to what they want to say." Every day I am asking the students to share their lives with me. During their triumphs and tragedies, I require them to study Maths, Science, Social Studies and Language Arts. In truth though, I am sharing my life with them, so I decided not to hide behind an image of TEACHER, but reveal the inner teacher, the frail, strong, successful, failure that we all are. I share what I did on the weekend, or over the holidays. I teach with, and not teach to the students.

The students' responses are positive. Four of the boys used to stay after school to do extra work even though I encouraged two of them that it was not necessary. They were disappointed when I cancelled a tutorial. When I was a student, I remember longing for the holidays. The students here often express a desire to remain at school where teachers are role models and playmates.

A pragmatic example of the outworking of "love the children" and "listen to what they want to say" is found in the treating of children as autonomous beings. They are. From the opening day until present, the children have been given choices as to the outcome of their school. "Who should open the school?" A student. "Who chooses to sign Manifesto 2000 for a Culture of Peace?" The students chose to sign for peace. "Who wishes to give gifts to children in Turkey?" Gifts are flown to Turkey. These are some examples of school initiatives. In the Grade 3 class we also apply the same principle. I inform the class of the work that needs to get done (after all, we are a school) but there are many ways to go about doing the work. So we decide on an appropriate plan.

I was taught late in life that democracy is not appropriate in the classroom. I learned quickly that classrooms have cliques just as countries have political parties. Therefore we do not vote any more. We discuss as a class. One Wednesday (our last day of the school week in Kuwait) the students were tired after a long week and wished to end the day early to play football. I explained that due to the nature of the week, we did not do a lot of the work that really needed to get done and asked what we should do. We came up with the option of either staying in class, working and having only a little homework over the weekend, or we could end the day early, play football but have more homework for the weekend. The class was split on what students wanted to do. I told them to decide as a class what we would do and that everybody must agree. They came to me with the unanimous decision to play football; we did.

Children need to be loved. Children need to be listened to. Children are autonomous beings like you and me. I believe that the students honour and respect me, and possibly love me, because I let them be human and present myself as a human being also.

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Hong Kong, China: Living Values at In-Service Teacher Training

Commissioned by the Government Education Department, the Hong Kong Institute of Education

organised a series of In-Service Teacher Training Courses on Civic Education. As part of the Courses, Living Values was invited to run two sessions of two and a half hours each for primary and secondary school principals and teachers in March 2000. Attendance was encouraging and there was an enthusiastic response to the interactive sessions run by local teacher Esther Lung and LVEP coordinator Lai Lai-Fong who took participants through some of the LVEP activities. The majority of participants requested copies of the Chinese editions of the Values Activities books and plans were made to take the Programme up in schools. Course Coordinator Dr Philip Hui described the sessions as "a most valuable experience for in-service teachers".

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Egypt: Living Values Overwhelms!

Following on from the Living Values teachers' training in January 2000, Pere Francis from the Jesuit community started regular monthly meetings with the teachers of the Jesuit primary schools in Cairo, with the aim of training those teachers to start implementing Living Values activities with the students of the coming academic year (2000/2001).

On 30th March 2000, Caroline Al-Ashaab and Reem Bahgat gave a 3-hour Living Values seminar for 32 teachers of the Maria Ozilia Triche school in Cairo - a girls' school that includes classes at all Primary to Secondary levels. The seminar included an introduction to the Living Values Programme, a values-awareness session and activities on two values: Respect and Love.

Though the event did not initially elicit much interest from some teachers who were not used to such things, the programme then went very successfully and the positive response of all teachers was overwhelming and a follow-up training has been planned.

A three-day Living Values teachers' training is planned for 30th June to 2nd July 2000 for about 50 teachers in El-Menia, followed by a 2-day self-development programme for organisations who are involved in educational activities but are not directly teaching school students. See Forthcoming Events, above, for further details.

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Mexico: Congress on Values for Educators

The Living Values team in Mexico sent in news of some of the wonderful things that have been happening there:

"Warmest greetings from the sunny land of the Mayans, in the Yucatan, Mexico. We just had the First Congress on Values for Educators in a University in Merida.

This event was organized by the Technological Institute of Merida and its teaching staff in cooperation with the local Union of Teachers of this area. Eighty teachers had done a TTT and during the Congress some of these teachers were facilitators for 300 students and teachers who attended the different workshops. Visiting French painter Marie Binder also gave a talk about values in arts and creativity, touching the audience with her sensitivity and deep insight."

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Italy: Four-City Tour!

During a weekend dialogue on values in Gubbio, outside Rome, plans emerged for a road show to present Living Values during mid-May in Milan, Florence, Olbia and Gubbio. The director of 13 Gubbio schools attended the dialogue and agreed to start with the teachers of his schools. Living Values' stalwart Pilar Quera Colomina will come from Spain to guide the presentations and lend her expertise and enthusiasm to the task.

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Australia: Living Values Taken up by Whole School

Last year Vicki and Maria, two teachers at Glendale East Public School, attended a Living Values training programme and were inspired to take up LVEP in their schools. Maria sent in news of the response they received:

"At the beginning of the year we introduced the programme to all teachers and all staff decided to have a whole school approach. All seven classes are currently enjoying the Peace unit. Our school is, to my knowledge, the first school in Lake Macquarie to take the programme on as a whole school. Both teachers and students have been positive about the programme. We understand that it will take a while to see change, but that is fine; nothing worthwhile is instantaneous."

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our website.

Hard copies of text and/or images may also be sent to the Living Values Office in New York:

Living Values: An Educational Program
Office for the United Nations,
866 UN Plaza, Suite 436, New York, NY 10017 USA
Fax: +1 (212) 504 2798



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