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Living Values e-News

Living Values Education Newsletter

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▶ [To Our Readers](#)

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Welcome to the twentieth issue of Living Values e-News, the electronic newsletter of the [Living Values Educational Programme](#).

We are pleased to be able, in this edition, to feature a guest editorial by Dr. Derek Sankey, adapted and summarised from a presentation that he made for Living Values at a LVEP training in Beijing in 2002 for the China National Children's Centre. Derek is a Senior Lecturer at the Hong Kong Institute of Education and is also a member of the Living Values committee in Hong Kong.

Rationality, Emotion and Values

One often hears people accusing others of being emotional and not rational in presenting an argument. The idea seems to be that emotion and rationality are two distinct and opposing states of mind, such that if one wishes to be rational one needs to empty oneself of emotion.

Certainly we need to keep a check on our emotions, but frequently our most rational decisions seem to be laced with emotion and guided by values. Consider, for example, what is involved in making a decision whether to attend a family gathering, when really preferring not to go. This is not simply a matter of pure logical reason, or objective facts. We have to empathise with the feelings and emotions of others who would miss our presence, and also consider what we feel we 'ought' to do, which means making a value judgement and indicates that there seems to be a link between rational thought, emotion and values.

Recent developments in neuroscience offer interesting perspectives and a significant result of research into artificial intelligence (AI), for example, is that we now see more clearly than ever before that the human mind is not simply a mental calculator, and human rationality is much more than simply following logical rules. An important aspect of this is the realisation that human rationality depends on context, and different contexts have different rules of operation. Wearing a swimming suit when enjoying time on the

beach by the seaside is entirely rational, but wearing it when going to work in the office will likely be judged completely irrational. It is not wearing the swimsuit that is at issue, but the context in which it is worn.

Likewise, the message from Antonio Damasio's detailed studies of people with damage to the pre-frontal lobes of the brain seems to be that if we empty ourselves of emotion our thinking becomes irrational – the very opposite of the Enlightenment concept of rationality. It is not the absence of emotion that leads to rationality, but the way in which it is held in balance.

This has an important message for teachers of values. The values that children hold and act upon in their daily lives need a balanced emotional content so that they are able to feel and think about the impact of their words and actions on other people, and in relation to themselves. Teachers should help children to appreciate their emotions and to develop them, and that can occur in every subject in school, including science. At the same time we need to help children to develop the ability to judge how to balance the emotional content of their rational thought, in any given circumstance and for each different situation and context.

The LVEP website - at <http://www.livingvalues.net> - 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



► **Focusing on the Value of: SIMPLICITY - Activities for Parents, Children and Young Adults**

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Living Values: An Educational Program (LVEP) is a comprehensive values education programme. This innovative global character education programme offers teachers and facilitators a variety of experiential values activities and practical methodologies to enable children and young adults to explore and develop [12 key universal values](#): Cooperation, Freedom, Responsibility, Honesty, Simplicity, Love, Peace, Respect, Happiness, Humility, Tolerance and Unity. LVEP also has special materials for use with parents and caregivers, children affected by war, street children and children affected by earthquakes.

LVEP's [Living Values Series of five books](#) is published by Health Communications, Inc. In each newsletter we bring into focus one of the values explored by LVEP, excerpting from this award-winning series

selected ideas and activities on each value. In the last edition the focus was on [responsibility](#); this edition focuses on **simplicity**.

Simplicity



Simplicity is staying in the present and not making things complicated.

Simplicity is being natural.

Think of the moments you have enjoyed simply relaxing, being you – or delighting in those seemingly slowed-down moments of feeling one with nature. When we are healthy and full, self-respect is natural. In that state we seem to "need" and "want" less. Does advertising create artificial "needs" and desires? What does my happiness really depend on? Simplicity in relation to my "needs" and generosity in my heart allow me to live in such a way that a better quality of life is possible for all. Please explore the Reflection Points on Simplicity below in the light of your own experiences.

Reflection Points from *Living Values Activities for Young Adults*, Simplicity Unit.

- Simplicity is natural.
- Simplicity is learning from the earth.
- Simplicity is beautiful.
- Simplicity is relaxing.
- Simplicity is learning from the wisdom of native cultures.
- Simplicity is giving patience, friendship, and encouragement.
- Simplicity is appreciating the small things in life.
- Simplicity is enjoying a plain mind and intellect.
- Simplicity calls on instinct, intuition, and insight to create essenceful thoughts and empathetic feelings.
- Simplicity is appreciating inner beauty and recognizing the value of all actors, even the poorest and worst off.
- Simplicity is the precursor to sustainable development.
- Simplicity teaches us economy – how to use our resources while keeping future generations in mind.
- Simplicity calls upon people to rethink their values.
- Simplicity asks whether we are being induced to purchase unnecessary products. Psychological enticements create artificial needs. Desires stimulated by wanting unnecessary things result in value clashes complicated by greed, fear, peer pressure, and a

false sense of identify. Once fulfillment of basic necessities allow for a comfortable lifestyle, extremes and excesses invite overindulgence and waste.

You can read an excerpt on [Simplicity](#) from Living Values: A Guidebook to stimulate thought. Please click as indicated below for activities on Simplicity for Parents, Children and Young Adults. Young adults may wish to explore a few of the ideas with family or friends while parents may wish to take up some of the activities with their children. And do [let us know](#) the outcome or if you have other experiences or activities you'd like to share!

- ▶ Excerpts from [Living Values Activities for Young Adults](#)
- ▶ Excerpts from [Living Values Activities for Children Ages 8-14](#)
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Simplicity Ideas at Home for [Parents](#)

"In developing countries, for example, women are key to the management of many environmental systems. They grow food as well as cooking it; they provide fuel as well as burning it; they manage the water supply as well as using it. If energy, land and water are the keys to survival, the keys are held by the women of the world."

Dr. Nafis Sadik, Executive Director, United Nations Population Fund
June 1992



Success Stories and Appreciation from Around the World

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CHINA : Comments by Beijing teachers

A three-day train-the-educator programme was held at the Beijing Institute of Education in August 2002. The following are some of the comments from teachers at the end of the training:

- "LVEP facilitates a bridge to bring people together."
- "Co-operation is our strength. Through Living Values, we study how to co-operate through respect. We need respect to understand one another."
- "I have learnt how to make children feel that they are unique in a pleasant atmosphere."

- "Education and attitude towards the students are very important. Living Values helps to make a serious topic very relaxed. For Chinese students and teachers it is a new concept. This way makes the classroom very enjoyable."
- "I have much to say. The smile touched me. I want to bring happiness to all and to bring this habit back to the students. I learnt a lot of Living Values teaching methods. I know that my responsibility is to promote LVEP."
- "Some see but cannot know. Some hear and they forget.
However, if you do it and it becomes your own - that's Living Values."
- "I'm very lucky to be involved in Living Values. It is whole new concept that will mean lots of changes in classrooms - especially smiling."
- "Living Values plays an emphasis on Emotional Intelligence and its cultivation. It will be good to integrate this concept into teaching. We should look to combine EQ and IQ."
- "We are peaceful angels. Angels are peace. We have a saying - Compare a country to a river." We say of the Yellow River - "Goodbye to the past and go to the future." By holding hands with and across the new river, we can make the world better. Living Values makes China look towards a new world. We are all angels of peace because what we do is spread peace to the children."
- "From this training, we have learnt that education is something beautiful and great."
- "The Living Values training has taken place in a happy and active environment during holiday time. All the schools who participated are like a seed. We hope that the seed will grow into a big tree and be fruitful. We are already seeing that the seeds are growing very fast like young bamboo shoots."

FRANCE : A parent marvels at the effect of LVEP 'respect' activities

"After two days at the "Living Values" seminar, I was eager to put in practice what had being brought to my awareness.

My 13-year-old son is, like a lot of boys his age, passionate for video games. Whenever he talked to me about the games or asked me to play with him, I shrugged him off thinking that listening to him was encouraging him to play games that I didn't want to encourage.

During the LVEP seminar, in a session dealing with respect and listening, a discussion was lead by a group about the possible options to boost the child's self-esteem in order to help him move from a negative attitude to a positive behaviour. Soon after this group discussion, I perceived the solutions to this latent conflict between my son and me. I realized that

refusing to listen to his passion for the video games was in fact rejecting him and his universe. When I started to listen to him and participate in his video games he looked at me with new eyes, wondering and surprised that I was showing interest for something that I had rejected. Regardless of how much he wanted to talk about his games, I listened attentively. I noticed that he was expressing himself very well. I acknowledged that in him, remembering at the LVEP seminar how they encouraged us to point out what our child is doing well and to encourage him when we appreciate his behaviour or his attitude. Before going to bed, he asked me again about the games he wanted me to try; I did it with pleasure.

Later that week he started paying attention to a new hobby that removed him from his video games. He hardly played his video games!! My fear that by showing interest in his video games he'd be encouraged to play them more was alleviated. In fact, what happened was exactly the opposite!

The simple effort to listen to him and to respect his world has reestablished an ongoing dialogue with him. I have learned that opening my mind to his virtues and not his defects is truly beneficial and that positivity is a medication and real nourishment for the self!"



Worldwide Happenings

▶ China

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LVEP is taking root in with much success as it complements the China National Children's Centre's (CNCC) ten-year campaign to promote values such as love, simplicity, respect, care and responsibility. Professor Gong Qun of the CNCC addressed the strong role that LVEP can play in China. He stated that, "The 12 Living Values and the programme is very good to lay a solid base. It provides a foundation for the future and a foundation for China." At the CNCC's Symposium on Child Development and Participation in October 2002, an adult education teacher shared how the students are enjoying Living Values. He related the appreciation students had of the lesson on honesty and the happiness they experienced in working with this value.

On 29 March 2002, the Unit of Education for International Understanding of Beijing Institute of Education organized five teaching sessions in Living Values in Mentougou District and Xi Cheng District, Beijing. One teacher integrated LVEP with the "thinking and virtues" class, educating the students on the value of "cooperation." Through the story of the "monkey and deer", she successfully taught the children the importance of cooperation and let them understand the meaning, the basic techniques and skills of cooperation. The Institute reported that from Phase I of this

project, it can be seen that LVEP is not only understood by some teachers, but is now being learnt and practised by more and more teachers. Second, there is a close integration between LVEP and tradition curricula. Teachers are able to carry out LVEP through traditional classes such as language class, mathematics class and virtue class. Their proactive and new model of teaching method reflects the spirit of Living Values education.



▶ **Egypt** **Maintaining Children's Well-Being the Focus of One-Year Educator Training**

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Due to the increased demand for LVEP educator trainings in Egypt, and to help build up a cohort of Living Values trainers to meet this need, the Jesuit and Frere Association in El-Menia is currently hosting a one year training for 15 carefully-selected educators. The training programme began in December 2002 and will be followed by three more 3-day trainings during the year. Sessions will look at how LVEP can help maintain children's well-being and support the development of appropriate behaviour.



▶ **Indonesia** **Non-Teaching Staff Touched by 'Unforgettable and Remarkable' LVEP Training on Values in Daily Life**

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After an LVEP educator training in Al-Izhar High School in Pondok Labu, Jakarta in November 2002 in which approximately 100 senior teachers participated, the school followed up with another LVEP training for non-teaching staff. There were more than 150 eager and enthusiastic participants including administration staff, security guards, cleaning service staff, drivers, pantry staff and gardeners. "It was an unforgettable and remarkable training in values of daily life," stated one of the participants touched by the seminar.



▶ **Indonesia** **LVEP Training for 13 Street Children Agencies Empowers and Uplifts Participants**

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The LVEP team in Indonesia, Taka Gani, Trishna Kuslim and Helen Quirin, organized a six-day training for street educators and agencies caring for street children in Sukabumi. In a small villa overlooking terraced rice fields, 27 street educators, some former street children themselves, gathered

from 31 October to 5 November 2002. They came from 13 varied agencies: the Indonesian Sunshine Children's Organization (ISCO), Ghifari Foundation, Setara, Better Life Indonesia (BLI), Child Welfare Foundation (YKAI), Rifka Annisa, FKRM Malang, Indriya-Nati Foundation (YIN), Urban Poor Consortium (UPC), Indonesian Women Coalition (KPI), Gerak-Bogor, Indonesian Dynamic Foundation (YDI), and Jesuit Refugee Service (JRS). Diane Tillman, the author of the Living Values Activities for Street Children (LVASC) materials, led the training. The intensity of the training was mixed with creative dramas, games, the guitar-playing of participants and an occasional hike into the countryside. Participants felt the training and materials were relevant and very useful for their work with street children. They felt empowered by the values-based methodology. Some reported that they experienced love and peace for the first time in their life.



▶ **Jamaica Discussions Underway with Asst. Minister of Education About Developing Mentoring Project**

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Prof. Ed Wondoloski, Sharon Chambers and Dr. Rodd

Several LVEP educator workshops took place in January 2003. During a meeting with Maxine Henry Wilson, Asst. Minister of Education; Dr. Rodd; LVEP's Prof. Ed Wondoloski and other representatives for LVEP; Dr. Rodd expressed interest in developing a mentoring project in Jamaica for "unattached students."



▶ **Jordan Minister of Education Endorses LVEP Pilot Programme in Two Schools**

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Reem Bahgat, LVEP coordinator in Egypt, recently conducted a three-day

educator training in Amman, Jordan. The training was hosted by the Orthodox School and attended by 27 educators from three schools, namely; National Orthodox School, Ahliya Girls School and Baccaloria School. There were also two attendees from the Development Institute of Queen Zein Al-Sharaf. The training included sessions on “Discovering our Values,” small-group training on several values activities, active listening and conflict resolution. As well as covering the theoretical background of LVEP, there was also a long session in which the attendees themselves practised applying the values activities with children. In common with most LVEP trainings, the time together also allowed for the attendees’ own values to emerge, a values-based atmosphere to be developed and a close values-based relationship to be formed among the attendees. The training was followed by a meeting with His Excellency the Minister of Education who accepted that the Ayliya Girls School, together with a public school, use LVEP on a pilot basis in order to assess its suitability to Jordanian culture and its possible application in other Jordanian schools.



▶ **Pakistan LVEP Effectively Modified to Local Culture at 104 Educational Centres**

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The College of Home Economics in Lahore has a Child Care Resource Centre. One of the College’s teachers, Mrs. Salma Syed, is involved with curriculum development and teacher training programmes for primary education in Pakistan. In 2002 she started using LVEP and introduced it at the primary level in 104 educational centres in Punjab province. Materials were translated into Urdu and LVEP’s activities and songs modified to suit local culture. She reported that LVEP is “a very effective educational programme and it is being very well received.” Watch this space for further developments!



▶ **Romania Coordinators Begin Effort to Develop LVEP**

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Monique Liger and Alexandru Matei have recently assumed the responsibility of coordinating LVEP efforts in Romania. Monique will be responsible for the French-speaking enquiries and effort and Alexandru will be responsible for the Romanian-speaking enquiries and effort.



▶ **Serbia and Montenegro** Educators Re-emerge Their Own Values and Take Interest in Conflict Resolution

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Despite the negative events that have disrupted life in this region (Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo) over the last decade or so, the family unit and community continue to support and appreciate values. Undergoing major reforms, the Ministry of Education has had the foresight to include reinforcement of values in its new plans.

As a first step in this direction, early in November 2002, Belgrade was the venue of two LVEP educator workshops. Both training programmes were conducted in English by LVEP trainer Sue Emery with Zana Borisavljevic (Serbia's LVEP Coordinator) and her team; co-coaching, facilitating and translating into Serbian. There were 36 participants in the three-day training programme comprising top officials and secondary school trainers and inspectors from the Ministry of Education. The general consensus was that there is a great need for a values programme in Yugoslavia, that the people there already have values, but that training and awareness programmes are necessary to get educators and others to re-emerge those values in their practical everyday life. Participants were particularly interested in the conflict resolution steps for children and the way in which Living Values addresses different learning styles and teaching techniques. In addition, they expressed happiness at the Ministry's willingness to cooperate in the programme and the atmosphere created by the trainers. At the end of the third day, with Action Plans in hand, this group proposed that a five-member team be formed to create a 'final' version of educator training in LVEP that could be disseminated to all schools in the region.

Following this training, there were a one-day training for 40 pre-school and primary school trainers and inspectors from the Ministry of Education, and a programme for the general public to introduce LVEP.



▶ **Singapore** Seng Kang Teachers Transform Classrooms into Learning Centers

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At an educator training in Seng Kang in January 2003, teachers were already on the journey to creating a values-based learning environment as they easily understood and adopted the Living Values process. Since then, the teachers have transformed their classrooms into little learning centres with corners for pupils to study in an inviting classroom. Evidence of pupils' work on values is reflected on the walls of the classroom.

Teachers have initiated a number of projects aimed at developing values in the classroom:

1) At an assembly programme in February the teachers came together to perform a multi-media item centred on the value of "respect." 2) The P5 teachers brainstormed and suggested ideas for values-based education that would involve the whole school; because of their ideas, they won The Best Suggestion of the Month Award. 3) A number of teachers have also created their own web page solely focused on the teaching of values. It is an interactive site where pupils visit and their efforts are posted.

Teachers report experiencing a paradigm shift in the way they relate to pupils. With the focus on values like "respect" they are able to steer challenging situations to a win-win solution for both the teacher and the pupil. Teachers also are thankful for being "re-inspired" and being able to connect with the pupils in a refreshing way.



▶ **South Africa** LVEP Joins With African Traditions of Values-Based Living

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South Africa is a home to the African notion of Ubuntu, a traditional code of ethics that embraces generosity, tolerance, warm-heartedness and selflessness. The connection with Living Values is natural and, with LVEP being in its 6th year in South Africa, a deeper and combined exploration of the two was very appealing to the Living Values Association of South Africa (LIVASA) which organized an Ubuntu–Living Values Conference in Cape Town from 22-24 November 2002. The aim of the conference was to explore possible ways in which Ubuntu could enrich and support LVEP through a heightened awareness of African cultural traditions of values-based living and in which LVEP could provide an educational structure and context for the promotion of Ubuntu and its value system.

The conference was opened by Dr. Koka, co-founder of the Karaites Institute of Afrikology. Included in the programme were a reflection on values, speakers who shared their experiences and knowledge of Ubuntu, and a planning segment to form a series of country-wide roundtable discussions and workshops that include experience-sharing/story telling sessions. The arts were also well represented with poetry, song and a puppet show.

Participants left filled with the spirit of Ubuntu in the form of mutual respect, co-operation and harmony.



▶ **Spain** Commitment to Integrate Values in Educational Work the Outcome of International Congress on Education and Society

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More than sixty people from Australia, Colombia, Spain, France, Gibraltar, Holland, Israel, Italy and Portugal gathered together in late 2002. One of the rationales for this Congress was based on the understanding that with the aim of continuous learning, education provides an intellectual meeting place that allows us to progress towards a more cooperative and better society. One of the aims of the Congress was to generate, through dialogue and reflection, a shared vision based on a deeper understanding of values and the extent to which they are shared. This process, enriched with mime, dance and musical improvisation, inspired plans that reaffirmed participants' commitment to integrate values into their educational work. The Congress also clearly demonstrated that notwithstanding language differences, doubts and the harsh realities of this world, it is essential to live the values that we cherish.



▶ **Thailand** Enthusiasm for Living Values Leads to Planning of "LV Club"

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Chiangmai Kindergarten School in Chiangmai Province hosted a two-day LVEP training on 28-29 December, 2002, with much success. 52 participants attended the program. This group was very enthusiastic and seemed to really understand the process and its underlying philosophy and how to implement it in their school. They all plan to pilot LVEP in their school. They also have an idea to form an LV Club. Chiangmai Kindergarten School offered itself to play a leading role in organizing it, with each school sending one or two teachers to comprise the committee. The purpose of the LV Club is to help each other and share ideas in implementing LVEP etc. The Director of Chiangmai kindergarten School has asked the LVEP coordinator, Jim Suwantee, to train all teachers at the school (about 100 teachers).



▶ **USA** Chinese School Principals Highlight LVEP as a Practical Teaching Model for Moral Education

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A delegation of 26 Chinese principals from Beijing, invited to study in the USA at Hope International University in Fullerton, California, participated in a Living Values workshop on 24 November 2002. One of the interactive activities in the workshop concerned the use of some teaching strategies and skills to practise values education in the classroom. The participants benefited a lot from the program. Harry Liu, one of the principals from Cao

Yang school district of Beijing said, "LVEP provides a very practical teaching model of moral education." Yu Xin of the Beijing Institute of Education and leader of the delegation said, "This workshop will involve more schools in LVEP and the Institute's Project of Education for International Understanding after this delegation returns to Beijing in the spring of 2003."



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