Fostering Conscience and Moral Character Through Classroom Teaching

Darcia Narváez

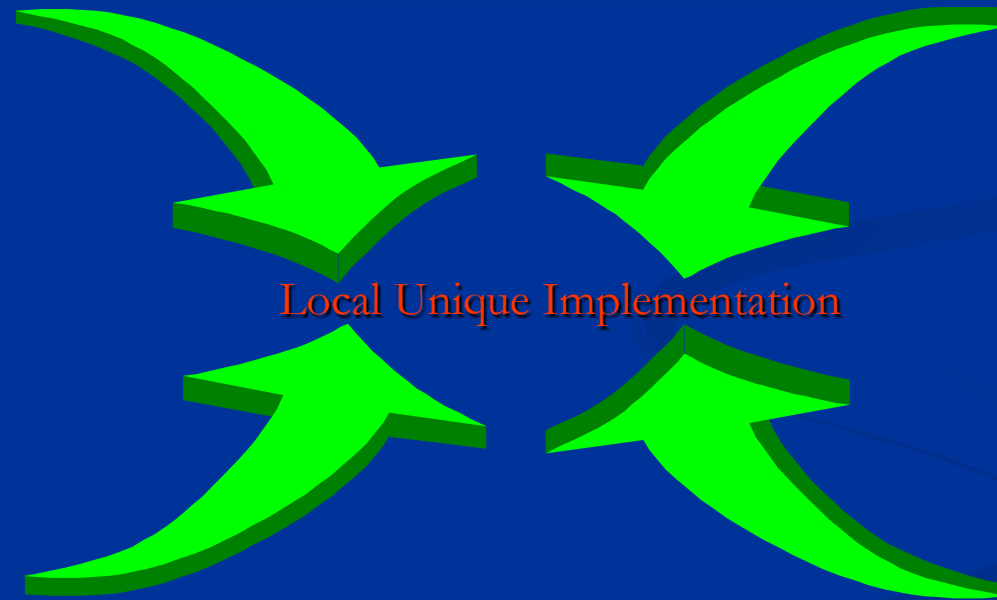*University of Notre Dame*

Department of Psychology

Collaborative for Ethical Education

The Common-Morality Model of Integrative Ethical Education

Top-down research-based guidelines

Psychology of Character   Pedagogy: Expertise

Local Unique Implementation

Community Needs   Embedded Instruction

Local educators provide *Bottom-up (Specificity)*

Top-down Research-based Guidelines

- Psychology of character
- Pedagogy: Expertise development

Provided by the

academic members

of the team

What is *Character*?

Character is a set of skills or capacities

or ethical know-how

that can be cultivated to high levels of expertise

What Should Character *Education* Look Like?

Character should be coached and practiced like any expertise or practical know how

Character as Ethical Know-how or Ethical Expertise

- Ethical expertise is NOT
  - narrow technical competence
  - merely intellectual skill
- Ethical expertise is refined, deep understanding evident in practice and action

Expertise Has Gained Prominence

- Intellectual abilities as forms of expertise (Sternberg)
- Children develop along a continuum from novice to expert (Bransford et al., 1999)
- In each area of study
- Including moral character

How Are Experts Different from Novices?

- They have more and better organized knowledge
  - They have procedural & conditional knowledge:
    - <u>What</u> knowledge to access
    - <u>Which</u> procedures to apply
    - <u>How</u> to apply them
    - And <u>when</u>
- They perceive the world differently
  - They see underlying patterns
- They behave differently
  - Automatic and effortless behavior

How are *Ethical* Experts Different?

"A wise (or virtuous) person is *one who knows what is good and spontaneously does it.* Varela (1999, p. 4)

What does this mean psychologically?

Ethical Expertise involves individual capacities in

- Ethical Sensitivity
- Ethical Judgment
- Ethical Focus
- Ethical Action

Narvaez, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008; Narvaez et al.. 2004

Those with Ethical Expertise are:

- More Ethically Sensitive *(perceptive, imaginative, deeply feeling)*

- Better at Ethical Judgment *(reasoning, reflection)*

- More Ethically Focused *(attentive, motivated, personal identity)*

- Better at Completing Ethical Action *(effectivities, steadfastness)*

Integrate in academics

Ethical Process Skills to Embed in Classroom Instruction

Ethical Sensitivity Skills: NOTICE!
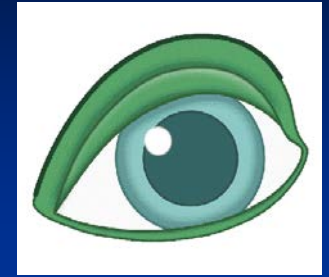
- ❖ Notice the need for ethical action
- ❖ Feel empathy
- ❖ Put yourself in the other person's shoes
- ❖ Imagine possibilities
- ❖ Determine your role

Ethical Sensitivity Skills: NOTICE!

Understand **Emotional** Expression

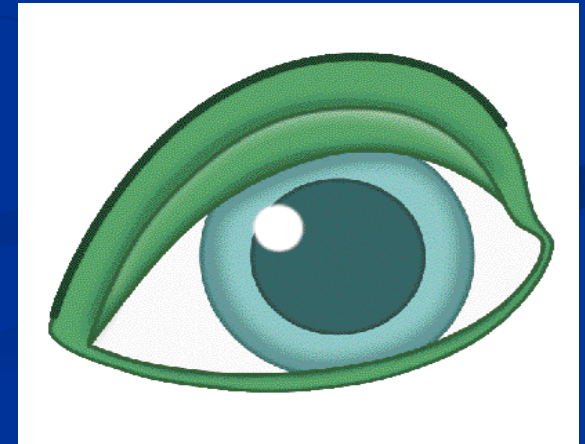Take the **Perspectives** of Others
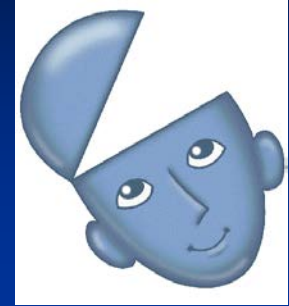
Connect to Others

Respond to **Diversity**

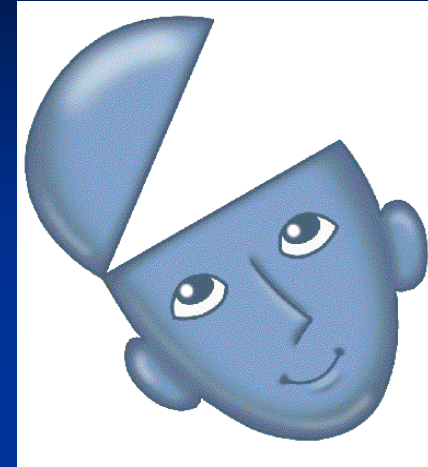Control **Social Bias**

Interpret Situations

Communicate well

Ethical Judgment Skills: THINK!

- Reason about what might be done
- Apply your code of ethics
- Judge which action is most ethical

Ethical Judgment Skills: THINK!

Reason Generally

Reason **Ethically**

Understand **Ethical Problems**

Use **Codes** & Identify Judgment Criteria

Understand **Consequences**

Reflect on the Process and Outcome

Coping & Resiliency

Ethical Focus Skills: AIM!

❖ Make the ethical action a priority
   over other needs and goals

❖ Align ethical action with your identity

Ethical Focus Skills: AIM!

Respect Others

Cultivate **Conscience**

Act **Responsibly**

Be a **Community** Member

Find **Meaning** in Life

Develop Ethical **Identity** & Integrity

Ethical Action Skills: ACT!

- ❖ Implement the ethical action by
  - ❖ Knowing what steps to take
  - ❖ Getting the help you need

- ❖ Persevere despite hardship

Ethical Action Skills: ACT!

Resolve Conflicts and Problems
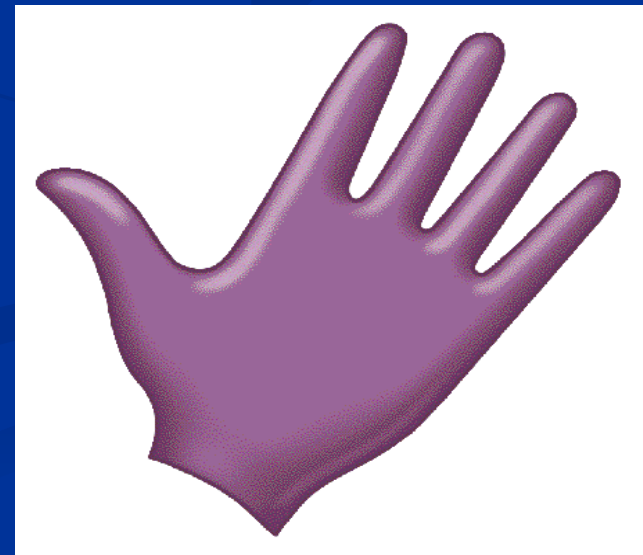
Assert Respectfully

Take **Initiative** as a Leader

Planning to **Implement** Decisions

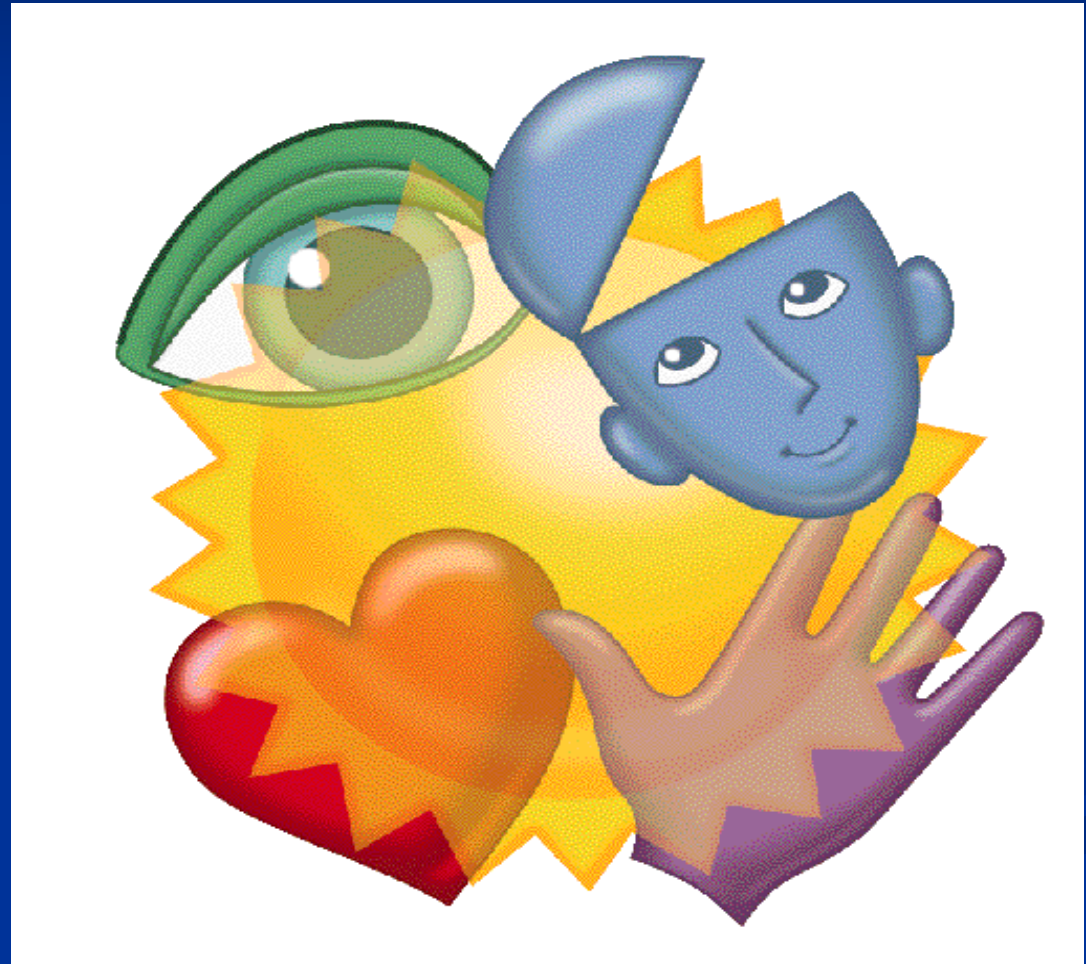Cultivate **Courage**

Persevere

Work Hard

Success requires all processes!

Notice

Think

Aim

Act

How Can We Nurture Good Character as Youth Leaders and Educators?

First, Know Your Students

- Stressed
  - Undermines learning
- Undercare in early life
  - Insecure attachment
  - Poor behavior regulation
  - Stress reactive

Second, Know Their Brains

Protoreptilian

- **Survival**: anger, fear, panic (fight, flight, freeze, faint)
- *Morality is self-protective*

Stress

Mammalian

- **Social**: care, play
- *Morality is compassionate*

Human

- **Executive controls interact with** survival and prosocial systems

- *Moral imagination* *can build on either*

Know the Moral Power of Brain Systems

Protoreptilian

- **Survival:** anger, fear, panic (fight, flight, freeze, faint)
- *Morality is self-protective*

Safety Ethic

Mammalian

- **Social:** care, play
- *Morality is compassionate*

Engagement Ethic

Human

- **Executive controls interact with survival and prosocial systems**
- *Moral imagination can build on either*
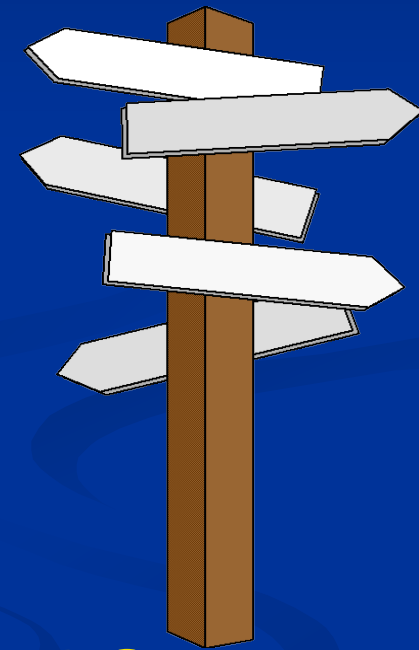
Imagination Ethic

Fostering Ethical Know How

in Schools

Helping students answer: Who should I be?

FIVE INTENTIONAL STEPS

5 steps for fostering ethical know how

+Joy

=Citizenship

5-Restore the village

4-Encourage Self-Authorship

3-Foster Ethical Skills through Apprenticeship

2- Provide a Sustaining Climate

1-Establish a Caring Relationship

Step 1: Establish a Caring Relationship with Each Child

"You cannot teach a child whom you do not love. You cannot teach a child whom you do not respect. You cannot teach a child whom you do not understand. You cannot teach a child whom you are afraid of. You cannot teach a child if your political baggage (i.e., sexism and racism) is brought into the classroom. **You cannot teach a child without bonding first**, which results from love, respect, and understanding."

(p. 32, *Countering the conspiracy to destroy black boys, Vol. II,* by J. Kunjufu, Chicago: African American Images, 1985.)

A Caring Relationship

- Engages the **emotions**
  - Fundamental to learning
- Fosters a **secure attachment**
  - Builds the bridge for instruction
    - Secures the child's attention
    - Establishes a line of influence
  - Physiological orientation toward engagement ethic (oxytocin, opiods)
  - May take longer with some students
- Recall that a good relationship with one adult <u>outside of family</u> (for at least a year) is PROTECTIVE

Step 2. Set Up Sustaining Environments: Establish a Caring Classroom Community

- **Adults help kids meet their basic needs**

- **The five basic human motives are (Fiske, 2004):**
  (1) Sense of control (choices)
  (2) Understanding (meaning)
  (3) Belonging (connectedness)
  (4) Enhancing Self (competence)
  (5) Trust (community support)

Good leaders/teachers help ensure members needs are met.

Provide a Supportive Climate

- Encourage ethical skill development in everyday practices
- Keep Safety Ethic calm
- Support and practice Engagement and Communal Imagination ethics
- Emphasize positive purpose
  - Enhancement of human potential
 - Not impositional
  - Global awareness

Well-Structured Social Environments Provide

❖ CHOICE: Student autonomy, self-direction, & influence

❖ VOICE: Student interaction, collaboration, & participation in open discussion

❖ PRESENCE: Teacher warmth, acceptance, support, & modeling

❖ SKILLS: Provide training in social skills

❖ HELPING: Provide opportunities for helping others

❖ DISCIPLINE AS CITIZENSHIP: Foster discipline through a sense of citizenship to school

(From Solomon et al, 2002)

Step 3a. Teach for Ethical Expertise

- Nurture ethical character skills in
  - Ethical Sensitivity
  - Ethical Judgment
  - Ethical Focus
  - Ethical Action
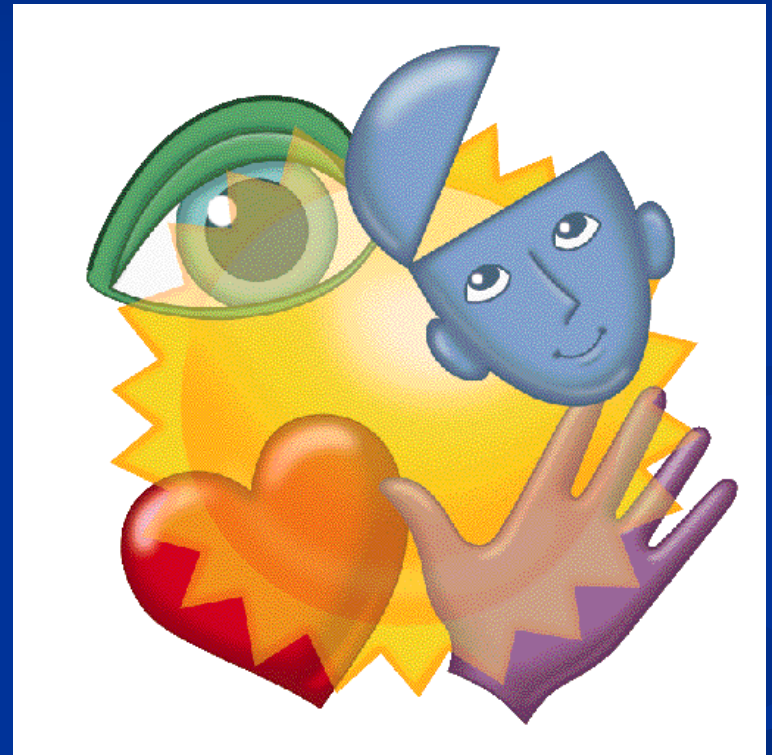
How Do Experts Become Experts?

Experts-in-training engage in practice that is

- Focused
- Extensive
- Coached

In other words, *apprenticeship*

Step 3b: Teach Through Apprenticeship

- How does apprenticeship look?
    - Modeling by someone more "expert"
    - Model thinks aloud while solving problems
    - Instructor uses Zone of Proximal Development
    - Instructor scaffolds and fades
    - Theoretical explanation (reasoning, meaning) at the same time as authentic experience

Instruction can be Model-centered or Learner-centered

1. Model-Centered Instruction
   - First, teacher **models** the appropriate behavior
   - Throughout learning, teacher **coaches** students:
     - Guiding students in completing small tasks they can **successfully** complete
     - **Explaining** why, providing meaning
2. Learner-Centered Instruction
   - Help students construct a coherent understanding
   - Provide opportunities for extensive, focused practice

Combine *Model- and Learner-Centered* Instruction

- Cultivate character through four levels of expertise development

  1. Immersion in examples and opportunities

  2. Attention to facts and skills

  3. Practice procedures

  4. Integrate across contexts

Expertise Level 1:
Immersion in Examples & Opportunities

- Attend to the **big picture**
- Learn to recognize **basic patterns**

The teacher **plunges** students into multiple, engaging activities. Students learn to recognize broad patterns in the domain (Identification Knowledge). Students develop gradual awareness and recognition of elements in the domain.

Expertise Level 2:
Attention to Facts and Skills

- Focus on **detail** and **prototypical examples**
- Build knowledge

The teacher focuses the student's attention on the elemental concepts in the domain in order to build elaboration knowledge. Skills are gradually acquired through motivated, focused attention.

Expertise Level 3: Practice Procedures

- Set goals
- Plan steps of problem solving
- Practice skills

The teacher coaches the student and allows the student to try out many skills and ideas throughout the domain to build an understanding of how these relate and how best to solve problems in the domain (planning knowledge). Skills are developed through practice and exploration.

Expertise Level 4:
Integrate Knowledge & Procedures

- Execute plans
- Solve real-life problems
- Solve problems in multiple contexts

The student finds numerous mentors and/or seeks out information to continue building concepts and skills. There is a gradual systematic integration and application of skills across many situations. The student learns how to take the steps in solving complex domain problems (execution knowledge).

Why? Moral Exemplary Action

- Moral exemplars exhibit at the same time
  - higher *affiliation* with others (communion and compassion)
  - *higher self efficacy or agency* (Walker & Frimer, 2008; 2009)
- Monroe (2001), study of WWII:
  - Rescuers: "What else could I do? —They were human beings like you and me."
  - Non-Rescuers: "What could I do? —I was one person alone against the Nazis."

Working with the Levels of Expertise

- Select levels appropriate for your students
- Use more than one expertise level to catch all students
- Teach more than one process at a time
- So students learn that the skills are not static
- Modify activity for your context

Skill: Conscience
Subskill: Self-Command

- Level 1: Teacher provides examples of self-command in multiple formats, demonstrating its helpfulness in different situations.

- Level 2: Students gather read historical or literary accounts, and/or gather personal stories from elders about their own successes or challenges in maintaining self control.
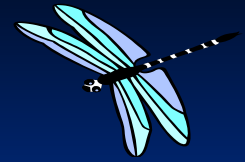
- Level 3: Students research techniques people use to help control their impulses and select one to practice.

- Level 4: Teacher asks students to identify areas where they need to practice self command.

  - Students practice these techniques over a week or a month, perhaps working with a mentor, reflecting on the experience along the way.

Step 4: Teach for Self-Regulation and Self-Authorship

- Virtuous individuals must be autonomous enough to monitor their behavior and choices.

- Once developed, virtues must be maintained through the selection of appropriate friends, activities and environments (Aristotle, 1988).

Self-Authorship of Right Brain

- Self-awareness activities
  - Journal
  - Pay attention to likes and dislikes
  - Spend more time doing things that bring joy
  - Art. music, play
    - Playful activity is a good way to learn to stay in the present.

Self-regulation

- Individuals can be coached in self-efficacy and self-regulation in specific domains *(Zimmerman, Bonner, & Kovach, 2002).*

- How good we feel about ourselves is affected by how well we can self regulate *(Zimmerman, 2000).*

Self-Monitoring of Ethical Skill Development

- Students are at the center of determining "who should I be" and "how am I doing?"

  <u>Self-command example</u>

- Students can evaluate themselves pre-post on self evaluative statements like:

  - "I take charge of my own feelings and don't blame them on others"

  - "I know what to do to cheer myself up when I am down."

STEP 5:
RESTORE THE VILLAGE

Foster Strong Links to the Local Community

*Build Collaborative, Democratic Citizenship*

- ❑ **The purpose of ethical behavior is to live a good life *in the community*.**

- ❑ Each individual lives within an active ecological context (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) in which, ideally, the entire community builds ethical skills together.

- ❑ Together community members work out basic questions such as:

  - ❑ How should we get along in our community?

  - ❑ How do we build up our community?

  - ❑ How do we help one another flourish?

Restore the "Village" of Support for the Engagement Ethic

- **Community immersion**
  - **Active, full body experiences with others**
- **Find pleasure from social relationships**
  - **Embodied, positive sense of community**
    - **singing, playing, dancing, laughing**

The ancient Greek understanding of ethics as still relevant today

Ethics is the practical and moral wisdom or expertise cultivated in the context of individual and community flourishing
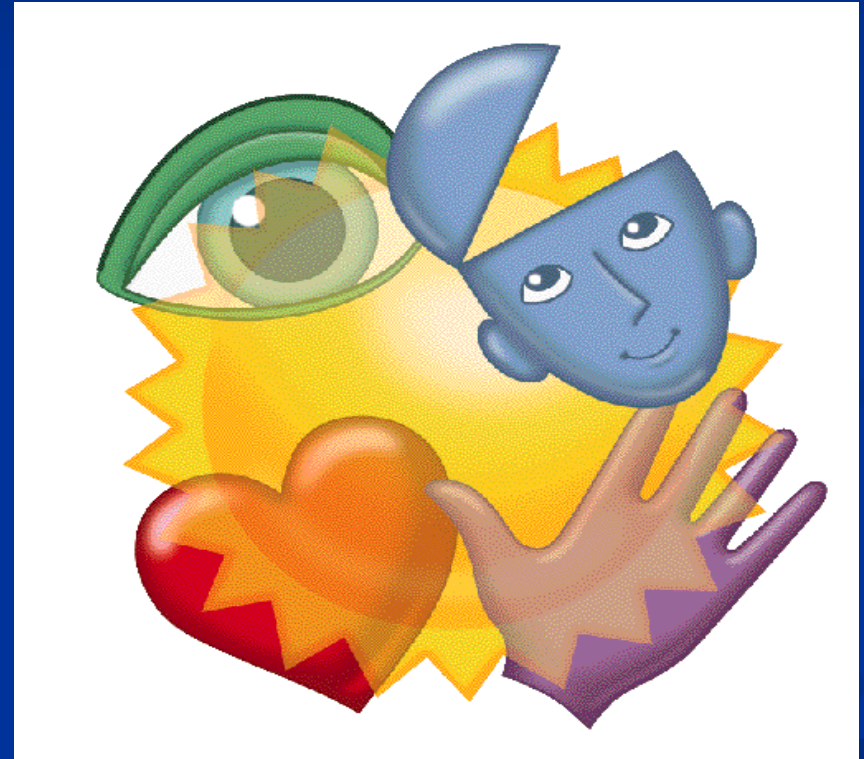
Mindful Morality Uses Our Fullest Moral Capacities

- **ENGAGEMENT**: Full presence in the moment *(right brain)*
  - Intersubjectivity
  - Resonance with the Other

- **COMMUNAL IMAGINATION**: Uses abstraction capabilities to solve moral problems *(left brain)*
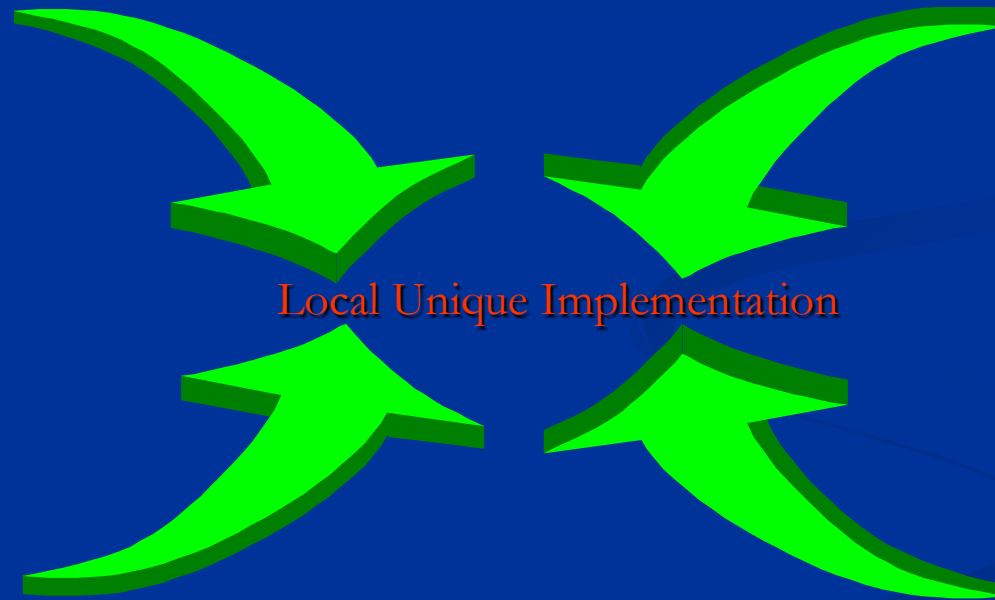 - Self-regulatory capacities
  - Ethical know-how

The Common-Morality Model of Integrative Ethical Education

Top-down research-based guidelines

Psychology of Character   Pedagogy: Expertise

Local Unique Implementation

Community Needs   Embedded Instruction

Local educators provide *Bottom-up (Specificity)*

The Minnesota Community Voices and Character Education Project

A common-morality partnership between educators, academics and the state department of education

Project Colleagues

- Collaborators
  - Tonia Bock (University of St Thomas)
  - Leilani Endicott (Walden University)
  - Jim Lies (University of Stony Brook)
- MN Dept of Education: Connie Anderson

MN Community Voices and Character Education Project

- Collaborative model building over 3 years
- Volunteer educator teams at schools from around the state
- Research team offered character framework and novice-to-expert pedagogy
- Each local team integrated ethical skill developmet into academic-driven instruction, based on local needs and circumstances

Final Year Evaluation

- **Comparison of student effects at**
  - 2 high-implementing schools (n=88)
    - Advisory/homeroom, Curricular infusion, School-wide projects
    - Most if not all teachers involved

  - 2 low-implementing schools (n=168)
    - Only one or two types of implementation
    - Half or fewer teachers involved

  - 1 control school (n=125)

Measures of Comparison

- **MANOVA with Climate measure composite as covariate**

  - student connectedness to school, perception of teacher connectedness to student, perceptions of teacher attitudes, perceptions of teacher behavior

- **Students compared on Gain Scores**

  (Post Test – Pre-Test)
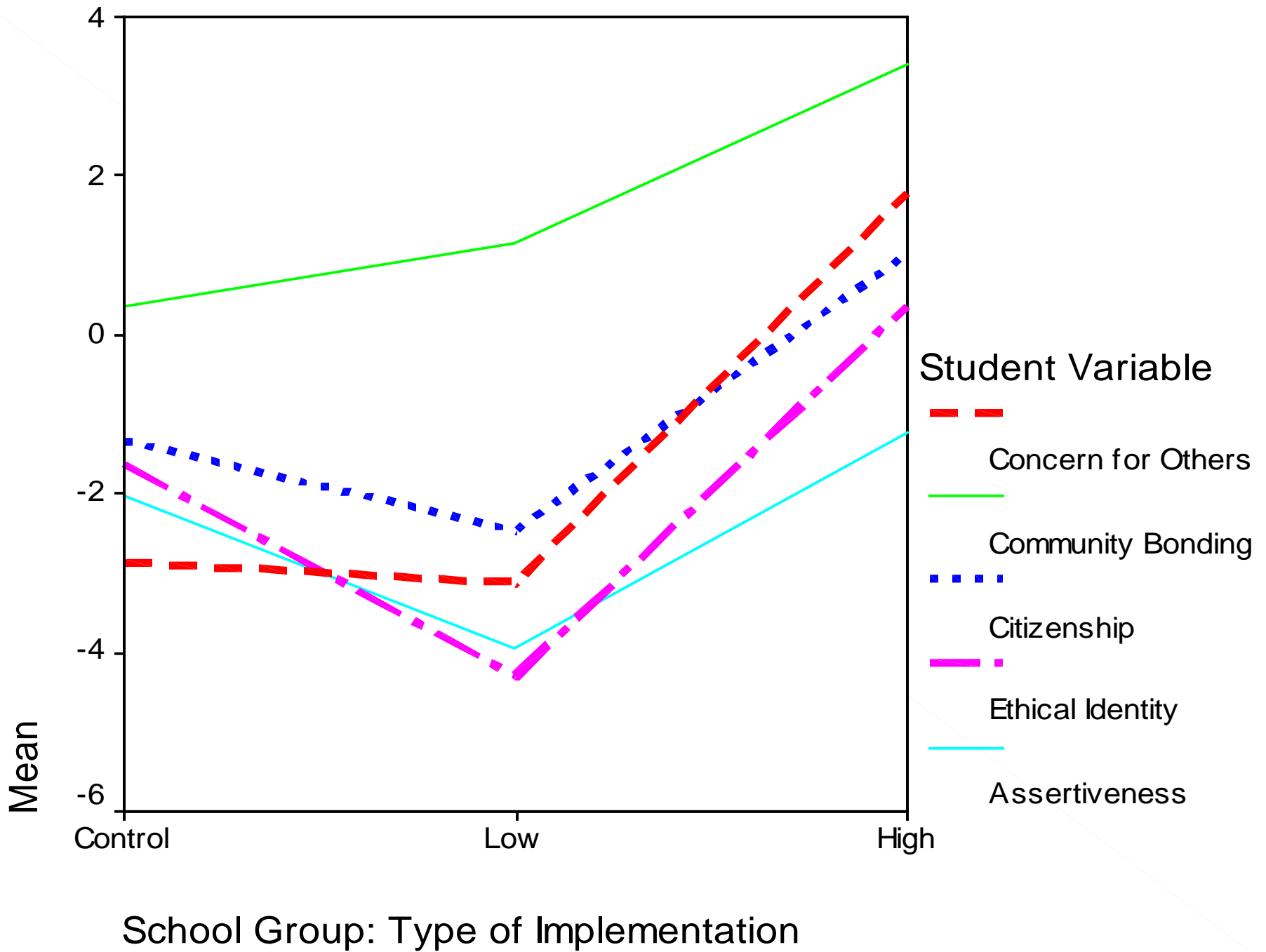
Student Gain Score Measures

- **<u>Ethical Sensitivity</u>**
  - Concern for Others ("When I see someone having a problem, I want to help")

- **<u>Ethical Focus/Motivation</u>**
  - Ethical Identity ("Being a good person at school is important to me.")
  - Community Bonding ("People in my city care about me")
  - Citizenship ("It is important to support those who are following the rules.")

- **<u>Ethical Action:</u>** Ethical Assertiveness ("When friends ask me to do something wrong, I say no.")

Student Variable

- Concern for Others
- Community Bonding
- Citizenship
- Ethical Identity
- Assertiveness

School Group: Type of Implementation

Analyses

MANOVA with 3 School Groups

- For Climate (covariate): Wilk's lambda=. 68
  $F_{(5,374)} = 35.75$, $p < .001$, $\eta 2 = .32$

- For School Group (factor): Wilk's lambda= .89
  $F_{(10,748)} = 4.35$, $p < .001$, $\eta 2 = .06$

Univariate Analyses-1

For Climate:

- Concern for Others $F_{(1, 378)} = .007$, $p < .93$, $\eta 2 = .00$

- **Community Bonding $F_{(1, 378)} = 113.42$, $p < .001$, $\eta 2 = .23$**

- **Citizenship: $F_{(1, 378)} = 118.79$, $p < .001$, $\eta 2 = .24$**

- **Ethical Identity: $F_{(1, 378)} = 45.33$, $p < .001$, $\eta 2 = .11$**

- *Assertiveness: $F_{(1, 378)} = 21.38$, $p < .001$, $\eta 2 = .05$*

Univariate Analyses-2

For School Group:

- **Concern for Others F (2, 378) =14.80, p<.001, $\eta 2$=.07**

- **Community Bonding F (2, 378) =3.68, p<.03, $\eta 2$=.02**

- Citizenship: F (2, 378) =2.82, p<.06, $\eta 2$= .02

- **Ethical Identity: F (2, 378) =3.39, p<.03,$\eta 2$= .02**

- *Assertiveness: F (2, 378) =3.38, p< .03, $\eta 2$= .02*

Evaluation Summary

- **Climate** positively influenced the development of student Ethical Focus skills (each p<.001)
    - Community Bonding, Citizenship, Ethical Goodness

- **High Implementation positively** influenced the development of
    - Ethical Focus (each p<.03): Community Bonding, Ethical Goodness
    - Ethical Sensitivity (p <.001): Concern for Others
        - The two high-implementing schools worked on ethical sensitivity specifically

- **Deep and broad implementation** of ethical skill instruction had positive significant effects on students whereas minimal implementation had little positive effect
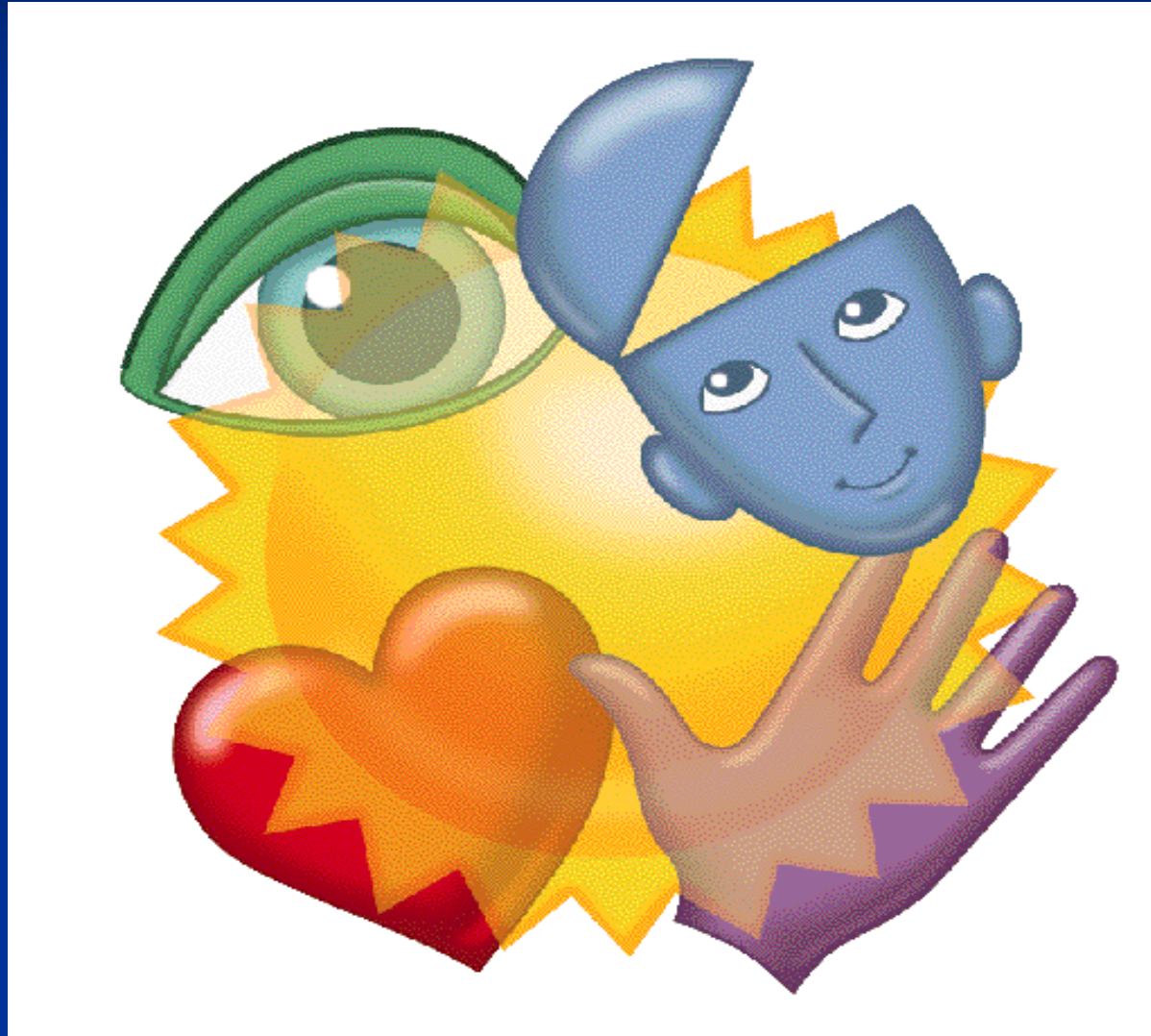
Overall Framework

Caring Relationships
(Context)
&
Supportive Community
(Process)
&
Ethical Skill Development
(Content)

through Mentoring **Apprenticeship** & **Self-Regulation**

(Methods)

results in

Citizenship

Common Good

Character

Community Flourishing
(Outcome)

http://cee.nd.edu/curriculum/

UNIVERSITY OF NOTRE DAME

COLLABORATION FOR ETHICAL EDUCATION

Curriculum

Online Curricula

- Community Voices and Character Education
- Final Report for Community Voices and Character Education

Books ($15 each or 4 for $50)

Curriculum

Community Voices and Character Education

Framework

- Overview (pdf)
- Introduction Booklet (pdf)

Classroom Application Booklets

- Activity Booklet 1: Ethical Sensitivity (pdf)
- Activity Booklet 2: Ethical Judgment (pdf)
- Activity Booklet 3: Ethical Motivation (pdf)
- Activity Booklet 4: Ethical Action (pdf)

Lesson Planning

- Lesson Planning Guide (pdf)
- Linking to the Community Worksheet (pdf)

Sample Lesson Plans

- Caring By Connecting to Others Around the World (pdf)
- Examining Bias in Media and Everyday Situations (pdf)
- Analyzing Ethical Problems in Technology Plagiarism (pdf)
- Developing General Reasoning in Current Event Analysis (pdf)
- Values and Ethical Identity in Music (pdf)
- Helping Others Using Accounting and Research (pdf)
- Setting Reachable Goals (pdf)
- Overcoming Obstacles in Nature Conservation (pdf)

Project Presentation Resources

Project Presentation Resources

- Overview (pdf)
- Getting Started (pdf)

Project Posters

- Composite Poster (40MB tiff file) (jpg file)
- Sensitivity Poster (40MB tiff file) (jpg file)
- Judgement Poster (40MB tiff file) (jpg file)
- Motivation Poster (40MB tiff file) (jpg file)
- Action Poster (40MB tiff file) (jpg file)

Project Bookmarks

- Bookmarkers (32MB tiff file) (jpg file)

Remember the Principles of the "Integrative Ethical Education" Approach
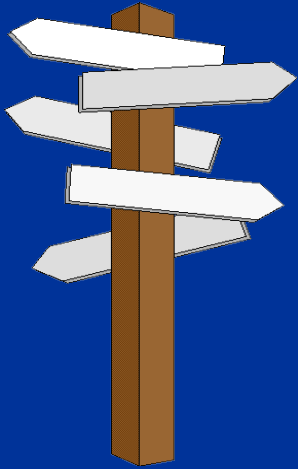
Using the Teacher Guidebooks

- Focus on skills
- Develop student expertise
- Embed in regular instruction
- Adapt to specific needs
- Integrate local community

For more information and papers

- Darcia Narvaez, University of Notre Dame (dnarvaez@nd.edu)

- Webpage (download papers): http://www.nd.edu/~dnarvaez/

- My blog at Psychology Today: Moral Landscapes http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/moral-landscapes