

Mentor's Energizer

Nov.-Dec., 2015
Volume 3 Issue 6

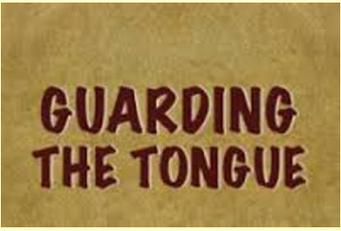
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Medical Analogies Apply

Discourses at the global stage lately are reflecting a new and momentous pattern: input from individuals, communities and social institutions are being sought out, listened to and developed into goals. One may invariably ask, what are we creating as a global society? And is there a vision or a long-term strategy to achieve that vision, or are we simply checking off a to-do list of short-term goals to "fix" things? Our vision which applies to each individual as well as to families, communities, societies and world parliaments, is vital both for taking stock of what exists and moving toward a better future. Many of the universities participating in the Universal Human Values Programme offer degrees in medicine—clearly a field where values are at the heart of every decision that is made. The following medical analogy illustrates an important fact that also pertains to any future-based vision. For example, healthcare programs that are designed to alleviate diseases differ significantly from those programs designed to actively promote health and wellness. The goals and plans of the healthcare programs may be linked, but they are certainly not the same. Most of us recognize that emergency treatments might be required, but that our healthy future should be more about prevention and promotion than simply eradication of diseases. If our vision only involves less discrimination, less of a gap between the rich and poor, fewer diseases or fewer weapons or wars, it is worthwhile, but basically focused on the negative. So once the negatives are gone, what then? Having Peace (no fighting) isn't the same as being in harmony (respect and working together). Thereby, with Universal Human Values as our foundation, we're developing a community of change makers who aspire to be a just, equitable and inclusive world and are committed to working together to promote sustained and inclusive community and planetary progress. This new humanity wants to alleviate both the suffering that accompanies destruction, and promote the universal wellbeing that complements construction. A vision based on Universal Human Values is therefore very essential to achieving transformative change. We must ensure that we are building the future that we all want and that benefits us all, as opposed to merely avoiding the future we don't want.



GUARDING
THE TONGUE

Backbiting and Its Harmful Effects

Backbiting is a pernicious habit that stems from a contagious moral disease. It often manifests itself in our daily lives and is contrary to the values that are fundamental for our overall moral health. Although backbiting is strongly discouraged in all belief systems, it is a common trait prevalent in the affairs of man universally. It poses a serious threat not only to our personal well being but that of the community as well. The progress of any community or family is thwarted if it is afflicted with backbiting.

Backbiting can be defined in simple terms as speaking unfavorably or slanderously of a person who is not present. There are varying forms of how people backbite. For instance if there is jealousy in the hearts of people they will easily find some faults and convey it to others in order to undermine their integrity. Another form of backbiting is blaming others for a wrongdoing instead of taking responsibility for the same; it is caused by ego or the 'persistent self' which tries to feel superior to others. It is a great challenge to forgive and forget a wrongdoing of someone; as a result there is a tendency to backbite about them to satisfy one's ego. Then there are individuals who take pleasure in talking about the faults of peers and colleagues simply because they have leisurely time at their disposal and have nothing constructive to do. Yet there are those who begin backbiting in moments of anger or depression, to unburden their souls. In this way backbiting gradually becomes a very destructive habit. Faultfinding and backbiting are the characteristics of the weak minds and the worst human quality, and the most hateful characteristic of man.

We cannot argue the fact that backbiting has adverse effects on all of us. Backbiting can wreck lives and shatter the communities. The harmful effects of backbiting at a personal level may reflect in the form of damping the zeal of one's associates and making them indifferent to each other. The heart which is created to love its fellowmen gets obscured by the dust of backbiting, thereby one's ears do not hear the good nor do his eyes see the light of truth anymore. At the same time, the community suffers from disunity as a result of backbiting.

To avoid backbiting we must keep a daily vigil of our own words and actions, focus on our own faults and not the shortcomings of others, instead remember the virtues and positive qualities of others.

Common Goal Energizers

Cooperative Storytelling



Students performing a Show on Human Rights at their College



Consultation about bad effects of tobacco and Misri at a village



Students Presenting a Happy Hippo Show in a local community

Procedure

Gather the players in a circle. Ask one of the players to mention a category of stories (for example mystery, fiction, etc.) and then ask another player to say a title for the story you are going to create. Have one player start creating the story and continue to tell the story until you (the leader) points to another player. The new player will pick up exactly where the other player left off (even if it's mid-sentence or mid word). Continue until all but one player has contributed and then say "and the moral of the story is" and point to the final player to finish it off.



Back issues of the Mentor Energizer and the full Energizer Compilation are available on the website. If you've missed an issue, please feel free to download it at www.bahaiacademy.org



Scenes from the Agricultural Exhibition at Dr. PDKV, Akola, Dec. 2015
(The vegetables displayed are organically grown.)



How can we decide between acquiring certain knowledge and protecting ourselves from it?

There is a lot to learn, but how do you decide what is worthy of your attention? When a lifetime's worth of information is available every day, what criteria can help us decide if it's useful, not useful, aligned with values or harmful? We all have our opinions on what we ought to learn or need to know, but only oneself can choose what one wants to permanently input into one's bulging brain. Here are some pointers to consider:

Useful: Does it improve your life? Does it improve the life of others and the planet? Does it teach you a skill that you need to know? Does it teach you something that you can use in your job, family, community? Does it make you more aware of unity based on diversity?

Not useful: Is it simply information for information's sake? Is it irrelevant to your life, your family, your community or your world? Is it false or fake, contrived or designed to keep you busy rather than moving forward?

Aligned with Values: Does it fall in line with your values? Does it enlighten you, make you healthier, happier, more human? Do you trust the source? Does it align with the wisdom of the world? Does it exhibit Universal Human Values?

Harmful: Does it diminish you or others? Does it poison your body or mind? Does it waste precious brain space or time that you could devote to knowledge which enhances your vision and purpose?

Tips for better learning:

1. Eat breakfast and healthy snacks. Drink plenty of water. A fueled and hydrated brain absorbs more.
2. Sleep and take breaks. Rest makes us more creative. We solve problems faster after a nap.
3. Focus and immerse yourself—Multitasking doesn't work.
4. Use all learning styles—visual, auditory and kinesthetic.
5. Use tricks and techniques for memory like putting things to music, movement or rhyme.
6. Avoid time wasters/distractions—surfing the Net, texting, gossiping, junk mail, well-intentioned people who think they know what's best for you, negative movies and music.
7. Be engaged, teach yourself, collaborate, teach others, write about it, experience life.

Next month: Do we really need more spice?

Individual and Social Values for Rural Development

There is an "ethereal bond which binds the human being to the land whence he has come, and seek to create a way of life in which each individual can find within himself a sense of harmony with the natural forces of the physical world.



We feel that rural development is best accomplished through inculcation of some fundamental values and attitudes to animate and orient each member of society. It is essential, for instance, that the dignity of work be emphasized, and that manual work be regarded as no less meritorious than other forms of work when performed with the attitude of service to the common welfare. Agriculture is the foundation of a sound economic system, as it is the means by which the most basic human physical needs for survival are met; a change in values to accord agriculture its proper position in the scale of occupations would increase its attraction to the new generation and diminish the tendency to depopulate the countryside and overcrowd the cities.

Rural development is facilitated if the people of the villages are open to new ideas and receptive to innovation; under such conditions, they are likely to adopt more efficient agricultural techniques, to encourage their children to acquire education, and to practice good hygiene. Yet, so often, village people are apprehensive about the technological and social changes invading their settled way of life, are fearful of the future, and are uncertain whether there will be a place for them in the world of tomorrow. There is a pressing need for re-affirmation of the intrinsic worth of every individual human being, and for an overriding recognition of the oneness of mankind. The values we call for are spiritual values, which will penetrate to the core of being and will create a sense of personal self-worth and security, freeing the individual to respond positively to innovative change.

It does not seem possible to overestimate the extent to which rural development would be fostered by full implementation of the principle of equality of rights, privileges and opportunities for both sexes. The rational powers and creative energies of one-half of the population, so far neglected, would then be developed and brought to bear on the problems of rural life. In purely practical terms, co-operation between two equals united by a marriage bond is far more productive than the unequal relationship which exists wherever women are regarded as inferior. The education of women, and their encouragement, has the further effect of implanting in the minds of the children entrusted to their care an appreciation for literacy and mental development as well as a facility for innovation.

Interpersonal relations between the constituent elements of a village have a crucial effect on rural development. When unity and co-operation exists between families and households, agricultural machinery can be shared and used most effectively, a diversity of specialized skills can be fostered and used to mutual advantage, and the detrimental effects of adverse weather and farm animal disease are minimized. Such unity cannot be legislated, but must rest on a commitment to the welfare of the entire village together with a sincere and lasting affection for all the members of the village. Upon this basis will be developed the practice of cooperation, increasing with experience and memory. This unity must encompass the diverse elements which are to be found in ... communities, including races, generations, and religions, must eradicate traditional barriers which are so often a consequence of irrational prejudice. With this unity, the unique cultural diversity ... can be a source of strength and richness, rather than the cause of weakness and animosity.

In essence the individual and social values are fundamental to the fostering of rural development. Such a view does not discount the importance of appropriate technology, nor does it seek to minimize the importance of economic and administrative measures. However, it does hold that individual attitudes are the key to enduring development and that these attitudes are a natural consequence of spiritual values.

(Ref.: <https://www.bic.org/statements/spiritual-and-social-values-rural-development#RzoIdmfyEhtyw130.97>)



The Bahá'í Academy has the pleasure to announce
**The 3rd National Conference on
 Universal Human Values**

Whom for? 'YOU: THE CHANGE MAKER '!
 Why? 'TO CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIAL PROGRESS'!!!
 When? '4th-5th JUNE 2016'

Theme: Universal Human Values

"What is Happening to The World Without Universal Human Values?"

Sub-Themes: The Need to Promote Universal Human Values from

- A. Social And Educational Perspectives
- B. Environmental Perspective
- C. Economical Perspective
- D. Scientific Perspective

Venue: Bahá'í Academy, Shivaji Nagar, Panchgani

Duration: 2 days

- Share your experiences and action-based findings,
- Spread the impact of your unique work to make a better world and
- Get them widely published through '**THE COMPASS (Special Issue for the Conference)**', the Bahá'í Academy's magazine with ISSN number!!
- **REGISTER TODAY!!!**
- **Note:** Those who are interested can attend a two days preparatory workshop on 'Research Methodology' at the Bahá'í Academy soon.

- **For details please contact:**

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