Ethical Character Development
and Personal and Academic Excellence

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Introduction

The development of ethical character virtues is the key to personal, academic, and professional success in life. We will realize happiness and self-fulfillment in life, achieve our highest potential in school and work, benefit those around us, and contribute to human society as a whole, if we pursue a life of virtue. Ethics is good for us.

This paper describes a balanced approach to ethics and character development. There are positive consequences to being ethical and negative consequences to being unethical; I will identify both.

Though personal happiness and professional success in life are examined, the center of gravity for the discussion is the dimension of academic success.

This paper outlines a character development approach to education. Instead of assuming that the primary purpose of education is simply learning theories, facts, and skills, I propose that the central goal of education is the development of people of character who will use their knowledge to benefit themselves and others. Acquiring knowledge is important but acquiring ethics is more important, and, in fact, ends up serving the acquisition of knowledge.

The sequence of specific topics I cover is as follows:

- The nature and importance of ethics in life
- Values and the relationship between values and character virtues
- The central importance of character virtues in creating a good life, academically, personally, and professionally
- The concepts of educational values and virtues
- An examination of what I have identified as the key character virtues integral to a positive academic experience and academic success.

The key virtues I examine are:

- The pursuit of excellence
- Self-responsibility
- Truth, honesty, integrity, and authenticity
- Courage
- Self-understanding and self-honesty
- Justice and fairness
- Love of learning and knowledge—Curiosity, wonder, and open-mindedness

- Love of thinking
- Discipline and determination
- Optimism and belief in personal growth
- Social conscience and mutual respect
- The creative and adventurous spirit
- Love and the appreciative spirit
- Transcendence
- Holism, Temperance, and Balance
- Wisdom and the ethical application of knowledge to life

I propose that the final virtue listed above, wisdom, is the central academic character virtue, pulling together all the other character virtues. All the other character virtues contribute to the realization of wisdom. I argue that the pursuit and development of wisdom is pivotal to academic success, as well as personal happiness and professional achievement. It should be the chief goal of the academic or educational process.

The Nature and Importance of Ethics

"When I do good, I feel good.
When I do bad, I feel bad. That's my religion."
Abraham Lincoln

Ethics is a topic often taught in philosophy classes, and a range of related courses in business ethics, professional ethics, medical ethics, research ethics, environmental ethics, and even bio-ethics has sprouted up at various colleges and universities in recent years. In fact, ethics comes up in almost every course offered in college. Ethics is important across the entire academic curriculum.

Though usually not taught in a formal or abstract manner, long before they take college courses on ethics if they ever do), people learn ethics through family practices and upbringing, religious instruction, peer influence, popular culture (including media), and other socialization processes. Ethics and moral instruction permeate throughout human life, guiding the development of all of us right from the beginning.

In essence, ethics is the study and practice of what is good—what is moral—what is best. Ethics can be defined as a set of principles of conduct or a system of moral values (Thiroux and Kraseman, 2009).

There are many ways to come at the question of ethics. There are many theories of what makes something right or wrong:

- Perhaps a person believes that ethics is determined by some hard and fast rules, which should never be questioned or broken, such as, "Do not steal", "Do not lie", and "Do not murder." This is an *absolutist* theory of ethics.

- Perhaps a person thinks that such absolute rules should be followed by everyone. For example, many people (across all human cultures) believe in

some version of the Golden Rule: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Believing that everyone should follow the same ethical rules or principles is a *universalist* approach to ethics.

•   Perhaps a person believes that we should consider the specific consequences of different actions in a given situation in determining what is right and what is wrong. Which choice leads to the best results or consequences? This is a *consequentialist* theory of ethics.

•   Perhaps a person believes that instead of following some set of absolute rules, we should rationally think about ethics and what the right thing to do is. Ethics should be thoughtful rather than simply the observation of rules. This is a *rational* and *deliberative* approach to ethics.

•   Or maybe a person believes that feelings (emotions) should determine ethics. If it feels good, it is right; if it feels bad, it is wrong. This is an *emotive* or *hedonistic* approach to ethics.

•   Perhaps a person thinks that love, care, and concern for fellow human beings should be the foundation of ethics. This is a *care* theory of ethics.

•   Conversely, perhaps a person believes that what is good is what best serves his or her own self-interest or self-benefit. This is an *egoist* theory of ethics.

•   And finally, perhaps a person thinks that ethics is entirely relative and subjective —either relative to each person who individually determines what is right or wrong for him or her, or relative to a specific culture. This is the *relativist* theory, whether personal relativism or cultural relativism. Relativism stands in direct opposition to a universalist approach to ethics.

Even though theories and approaches to ethics abound, everyone has some theory of ethics. A person's ethics may derive from familial or religious teachings, cultural and social influences, individual thought and deliberation, or usually some combination of all of the above. Nevertheless, everyone has their dos and don'ts; everyone arrives at ethical decisions based upon some approach or dispositional inclination. A person's ethics may be clear, strong, and thoughtful, or half-baked, self-serving, vague and muddled, or some hodgepodge combination of different ideas, but everyone has some set of beliefs and principles for determining what is right and wrong. And everyone, to some degree or another, attempts to follow whatever ethics they believe in, more or less successfully.

Values and Virtues

"Every life is a march from innocence,

through temptation, to virtue or vice."
Lyman Abbott

A way to get clear about individual ethics is to consider what a person values. Ethics carries with it a subset of values but not every value is an ethical value. A person's ethics does though reflect in very strong ways a person's general set of values.

A dictionary definition of the idea of value is: "A person's principles or standards of behavior...one's judgment of what is important in life." What we do—what we think, what we want—reflect what we value. All humans have values and express them through how they behave and what they think and feel.

To expand upon the above opening definition, values are the ideals or standards that people use to direct their behavior; values are what people strive to realize in their lives. Values are the standards we use in making judgments about what is important in life and what is right or wrong in human behavior. We judge ourselves and others in terms of our values. We may not agree with another person's values, but everyone lives by values—everyone makes judgments about what is important in life through their values.

Virtues are character traits or dispositions in a person that embody and express values that are judged desirable or admirable. A person's virtues define the ethical character of a person. Virtues are values that have become intrinsic to the personal identity and way of life of a person. If a value is practiced enough, it becomes part of the personality or character of a person. We become what we do—what we value and aspire toward.

Not all values lead to virtues though; some values lead to vices. If a person values money above all else, or power over others, developing character traits that embody these values would not be seen by most people as examples of ethical character virtues. The values expressed within such character traits would not be judged as desirable or admirable. Do we see unbridled, uncompromising greed as a virtue? Do we see a domineering or manipulative personality as virtuous? Do we see a psychopath as virtuous, that is, someone who cares about his or her own happiness and personal gains (the psychopath's central values) but not at all about others?

Hence, not all values are good. Some values lead to unethical behaviors. If a person values being rich regardless of whether they need to steal from others or manipulate them with false promises and lies to get rich, then that person will develop a whole set of character traits that are vices rather than virtues.

To review this key point:

Even though everyone possesses values, not everything that is a value, if practiced, turns into a virtue. There are things that people value that lead to vices rather than virtues.

There are though values that if pursued and practiced lead to recognizable virtues. Valuing truth leads to honesty, integrity, and courage; valuing justice leads to fair-mindedness; valuing freedom and self-determination leads to self-responsibility and autonomy; valuing others leads to respectfulness, compassion, and kindness. These character traits are generally valued around the world and have positive effects on one's life.

So as a general question: How are we going to determine what are good values to live by? How are we going to determine which character traits to develop within ourselves—traits that can be called virtues?

Part of the answer is that we should look at what values and character traits lead to positive results in life and which lead to negative results, both for ourselves and others. This is (to recall the ethical theories introduced above) a consequentialist approach to ethics, but also included in this approach are elements of egoist and care ethics, in so far as we consider the impact of values both on ourselves and others. In so far as we are considering and thinking about our values, we are also adopting a rational approach to ethics. And we can also consider, in thinking this question through, which values and practices seem to provide a solid foundation for everyone in creating success for themselves and benefiting others—the universalist idea.

One could simply present a set of rules or values and state that these rules or values are the right ones and must be followed. This is an absolutist approach to ethics. An absolutist approach to values and ethics though is not rational. An absolutist approach, by its very nature, does not ask why a value is good or bad. We should always ask why it is a good thing to adopt and follow a value or rule of ethics. Ethics should be approached thoughtfully and rationally. What reasons or evidence can be provided that a certain ethical principle or character trait is indeed a good thing? If we follow this approach, then it should become apparent what values are admirable and important and lead to the development of ethical character virtues.

In real life situations, we need to think about the ethical response to challenges, and not just follow absolutist rules. When faced with a choice, we should think about what the ethical thing to do is, and act accordingly.

The Importance of Character Virtues

"Happiness is not the reward of virtue, but virtue itself...
All things excellent are as difficult as they are rare."
Baruch Spinoza

There are certain values that are positive and constructive and lead to character traits that are ethical virtues. These values and corresponding virtues will, in fact, be the key to creating a good life—a successful and happy life—academically, personally, and professionally.

Let's start at a very general level and begin with happiness, something everyone presumably wants to pursue and realize. How does one achieve happiness in life?

One of the most interesting surveys of human values was conducted by the contemporary positive psychologist Martin Seligman and his associates, summarized in his book *Authentic Happiness* (2002). What is particularly important about his research is that it surveyed key values not just across cultures but across human history. A large selection of influential writings from different cultures and different historical periods was identified and presented to a group of investigators for review and summation. Six fundamental virtues across all cultures and historical time periods emerged from this review. The six virtues and subcategories are:

- Wisdom (Curiosity, love of learning, judgment, ingenuity, social intelligence, and perspective)
- *Courage* (Valor, perseverance, and integrity)
- Love and Humanity (Kindness, generosity, nurturance, and the capacity to love and be loved)
- Temperance (Modesty, humility, self-control, prudence, and caution)
- Justice (Good citizenship, fairness, loyalty, teamwork, and humane leadership)
- Transcendence (Appreciation of beauty, gratitude, hope, spirituality, forgiveness, humor, and zest)

Seligman's central psychological argument is that "authentic happiness" is built upon the exercise and development of these character virtues, a basic formula that seems to be universal for all human beings. Thus, we have in this theory a universalist approach to ethical character virtues.

Striking a resonant chord with the Greek philosopher Aristotle and his virtue-based theory of ethics, Seligman believes that authentic happiness is a relatively enduring quality, one not necessarily associated with short term pleasure at all. Momentary pleasures tend to diminish quickly and people adapt to the frequent experience of a repeatable pleasure. Character virtues, on the other hand, require effort for their development and when practiced and pursued lead to long-term benefits in the overall quality of life. Hence, authentic happiness is something that must be worked at and the pathway involves ethical growth in the individual through the development of virtues. For Aristotle "happiness"—which is the ultimate goal of life—is not the same as pleasure. Pleasure is a good feeling; happiness is an accomplishment, a form of excellence, and a way of life. Happiness is a sense of well being about one's life. Happiness is not achieved through the practice of a hedonism of the present (pleasure for the moment). It is achieved through long term effort.

For Seligman, meaning and purpose in life involve the development of character virtues and in particular the identification with some reality or goal beyond oneself. Our lives should serve a transcendent reality (God, country, spouse, family, community, etc.) rather than just being self-serving. "Transcendence," in fact, is one of the primary character virtues in Seligman's list. In many ways, transcendence contradicts our modern emphasis on the ego, self-gratification, and subjectivism—transcendence means realizing that there is something beyond our private reality that needs to become our center of gravity and our standard of truth and value. Hence, an unadulterated egoist approach to ethics interferes with finding meaning and purpose in life. Extreme individualism or self-centeredness works against realizing meaning and purpose. Consider the value of "me first/I'm number one/it's all about me, etc"—this value generates the character traits of selfishness, self-centeredness, and narcissism, all clearly vices rather than virtues. They do not lead to a sense of self-fulfillment in life.

One can also connect this point with education: Although it is important to strive for self-improvement through education and to pursue education to realize professional goals and advancement, these goals are one-sided and self-centered; one should also pursue education so that one can contribute something to the world—to humanity, to something beyond oneself.

As a general principle, one should conceptualize ethical character virtues as benefiting not only oneself, but other people and humanity as a whole. Not only does ethical behavior benefit the individual, it benefits others; conversely, behaving unethically not only hurts the individual but hurts others. In fact, one of the main reasons for behaving ethically has to do with the well being and happiness of others. Many ethical principles and values (such as the Golden Rule; respect for fellow humans and their lives; and the prohibitions against stealing, murder, assault, and adultery) specifically focus on how we treat others. Now it may not always seem obvious how our behavior and values invariably impact others, but as a general rule, we benefit others in numerous ways by being good people and we harm or hurt others in numerous ways by being unethical. "No man (or woman) is an island." To be honest—to be fair, to show respect—sends positive ripples out into the world around you. To lie, to cheat, to steal sends out negative effects into the human sphere. In fact, a frequent argument in ethics is that what goes round, comes round. Following a principle of "enlightened self-interest," it is to our benefit to act with concern toward others. By being concerned about how our behavior impacts others, we practice and develop the virtue of transcendence.

One can argue that our social reality can be significantly improved through the focused exercise and development of character virtues. The idea that the "good life" for all can be achieved through the internalization of character virtues in each of us goes back at least as far as Aristotle. For Aristotle, a life of virtue not only creates happiness in the individual but equally contributes to the well being of the community.

Applying this idea to the present, contemporary society is beset with a variety of significant problems and challenges—environmental, economic, inter-cultural, and political—all of which can be constructively addressed through the exercise and development of ethical virtues. Many, if not most of our problems are due to a lack of ethical virtues or the presence of vices, such as greed, discrimination, human suppression, selfishness, thoughtlessness, and the hunger for power over others. Hence, the solutions to our modern difficulties frequently are not technological or economical, but ethical—that is, through changes in the character of our behavior and the values to which we aspire (Lombardo and Richter, 2004).

In short, the pursuit of virtues will help individuals make more valuable and positive contributions not only to their own lives but to the improvement of human society. Indeed—as I will argue in the next section—to facilitate the development of individuals who will positively contribute to society should be a primary goal of education.

Aside from the pursuit and development of virtues being the avenue to authentic happiness, as well as purpose and meaning in life, virtues are also the foundation for the pursuit of excellence in all spheres of life. In fact, virtues are forms of character excellence. Both Aristotle and Spinoza made this connection between excellence and virtue. Specifically, for Aristotle, a virtue is an area of excellence in one's character. Further, Aristotle equates ethics with virtue: to be an ethically good person means that the person possesses character virtues and is a person of excellence. For Spinoza, a life of virtue is a challenge, and though a rare achievement, virtue is the path to excellence.

Educational Values and Virtues

"Education is growth. Education is, not a preparation for life;
education is life itself."
John Dewey

"Education is simply the soul of a society
as it passes from one generation to another."
G. K. Chesterton

Now let us focus on education. There is a key set of values and virtues connected with education, for example, learning, thinking, integrity, honesty, growth, and the pursuit of excellence. These values and virtues reflect the general goals and standards of behavior among educators and educational institutions. They also define what is judged by educators as central to the educational process. In short, they define academic excellence and the methods for realizing academic excellence.

Higher education, in numerous ways, attempts to model and teach those key character virtues which embody these central values. Beyond learning specific facts and skills, higher education frequently highlights these virtues. Educators invariably encourage their students to pursue these values and develop these character virtues.

The reason is simple: Modeling and teaching these values and virtues, and helping students to embrace and practice them, enhances their overall academic performance, serving as the necessary foundation for the acquisition of factual and theoretical knowledge and intellectual skills. For example, the love of learning and thinking and the pursuit of excellence enhance student performance in all academic disciplines. And further, it helps to create educated individuals who will benefit others and society as a whole. Hence, one could argue that the primary focus of education should be teaching these character virtues.

Although it is frequently assumed that natural intelligence, upper socio-economic class, or educated parents are key determining factors to doing well in school, the number one factor determining success is the practice of ethical character virtues—nothing else will help you as much. The development of just one positive character trait—personal responsibility and self-control—wipes out the combined statistical advantage of both higher social-economic class and educated parents (Zimbardo and Boyd, 2008).

Becoming an educated person—a life-long learner—involves living these virtues throughout one's life. It is often said that a main goal in education in this fast paced, highly evolving world is facilitating the development of life-long learners. Since things keep changing so quickly and knowledge is growing exponentially, everyone needs to keep learning throughout their lives. Character virtues are the key to developing this capacity and desire. They are therefore necessary not only for one's survival – but for one's flourishing - in the future.

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All of the opening definitions for key values, virtues, and concepts at the beginning of each section are taken from the following dictionaries:
- *Webster's New Universal Unabridged Dictionary*. Deluxe Second Edition. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1983.
- *Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary*. Tenth Edition. Springfield, Massachusetts: Merriam – Webster Inc., Publishers, 1991.
- *The Oxford American College Dictionary*. New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons. 2002.
- The Free Dictionary - http://www.thefreedictionary.com.

The Pursuit of Excellence: The Value of Values

"The secret of joy in work is contained in one world—excellence.
To know how to do something well is to enjoy it."
Pearl Buck

"The quality of a person's life is in direct proportion to their commitment to excellence, regardless of their chosen field of endeavor. "
Vince Lombardi

"Excellence is an art won by training and habituation. We do not act rightly because we have virtue or excellence, but we rather have those because we have acted rightly. We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit."
Aristotle

I define a "principle" as a rule or belief governing one's behavior…a fundamental truth or proposition that serves as the foundation for a system of belief or behavior or for a chain of reasoning. I define a "standard" as a level of quality or attainment… an idea or thing used as a measure, norm, or model in comparative evaluation. And "excellence" I define as the quality of being outstanding or extremely good.

The idea of excellence assumes that things can be done well or done poorly; all actions and efforts are not equal in quality. Excellence within a given field usually involves standards and principles that define and prescribe the nature of a superlative performance. Such standards and principles of excellence are used to evaluate actions, products, and results, and are used both to identify what is very good and what is not good. Excellence implies that there are values and standards relative to which we can evaluate our actions and the actions of others.

Further, if one does not believe in the concept of excellence one cannot define what it would mean to grow. To grow is to improve and only if we assume that there is a better way to do things than we presently do, can we then say that we have grown, when and if we realize this better way. One grows relative to a standard of excellence.

The first step toward developing character virtues and pursuing constructive values then, is the realization that there are better ways to do things and worse ways;

one cannot believe that all actions are equal in quality and value, and also believe in excellence.

Recall that Aristotle equated being virtuous with the pursuit of excellence; virtues are areas of excellence within one's character. Conversely, a vice would be an area of weakness, deficiency, or failing in one's character relative to standards of excellence.

The belief in and pursuit of excellence will give purpose and direction to the educational experience; it brings with it goals and standards relative to which we aspire and evaluate ourselves, and it generates, when realized, a sense of authentic happiness in the educational experience. The achievement of excellence feels good.

Excellence is connected to and reflective of a range of positive dispositions and character traits:

- Pursuing excellence motivates us and generates discipline and determination (another set of virtues).
- Pursuing excellence keeps us growing.
- Pursuing excellence reflects optimism (another virtue).
- Pursuing excellence requires courage (another virtue).
- Pursuing excellence requires honesty in admitting mistakes and failings such that we will learn (another virtue).
- Realizing excellence (or growing toward it) produces authentic self-esteem and real confidence.

It is critically important that teachers and students support the idea that there are general standards and values of excellence. Our standards should always be open to further refinement and development, but we need to stand for something and practice and aspire toward standards in our behavior. In general, ethical leaders across the world agree on this basic point. The noted futurist and sociologist, Wendell Bell, would describe it as believing in the "value of values"—the belief in evaluating behavior and performance relative to the best standards we can articulate (Bell, 1996). Another way to state this principle would be the belief in the "validity of comparative value"; we can compare actions and make valid determinations of better and worse performances.

In this era of ethical relativism, it is often argued that all human values are relative to culture, personality, and time, and that somehow this relativism implies that one belief system or mode of behavior is no better or worse than the next (Anderson, 1990; Best and Kellner, 1997; Watson, 2001). Relativism also implies that actions cannot be comparatively assessed regarding better or worse, since there is no non-relative standard for comparing actions.

This article is based on the idea that there are critical values and virtues pertaining to education—that is, principles of excellence—that make sense, that are important, if not essential, for success in education (as well as life in general), and that even if we are not totally certain that these are the best values, they are clearly better than either holding other destructive or negative values in approaching an education, or believing that all values are equal. Hence, relative to these critical values, performances can be comparatively evaluated.These core academic values give teachers and students standards of quality and a sense of direction and purpose which could not be achieved or obtained if these values were thrown out the window. Just as we can say

one student's performance is better or worse relative to others, we can identify the values that led to a given performance as better or worse. All values are not equal; all performance is not equal.

First, consider that at a general sociological level there is in fact strong support and evidence that fundamental human values show a strong degree of constancy and universality across all cultures around the world. There are values that are collectively judged as critically important to human life and that define the "good life." According to Wendell Bell (1996, 1997), despite cultural diversity, all human societies share the common values of human life and health, knowledge, truth, and evaluation itself. (As noted above, all cultures believe in the value of values.) According to Bell, there are many other almost universal values, including justice, peace, loyalty, courage, friendliness, trust, self-realization, and autonomy.

Rushworth Kidder (1994), another social researcher, also suggests that there is a significant degree of global consensus on human values. Interviewing a number of culturally diverse people, each of whom has been acknowledged by their peers for their ethical thinking and behavior, the following eight common values emerged from the interviews:

- Love
- Truthfulness
- Fairness
- Freedom
- Unity
- Tolerance
- Responsibility
- Respect for Life

As noted above, Martin Seligman identified six fundamental character virtues that generally all cultures throughout recorded history have esteemed as admirable human traits: wisdom, courage, love and humanity, temperance, justice, and transcendence.

In a more general vein, the anthropologist Donald Brown has compiled a vast list, numbering into the hundreds, of "human universals" across all cultures. This list includes social conventions, modes of behavior, conceptual distinctions, and values (Brown, 1991; Pinker, 2002). The contemporary emphasis on cultural relativism appears clearly contradicted by Brown's research. We seem to have been misled by the propaganda of extreme individualism. As a species, we think and behave in very similar ways, and part of this commonality is in our values. It is simply not true that most of us believe or practice a philosophy of "anything goes" or that one thing is as good as the next.

This discussion of ethical relativism is very important at a practical level. One of the most common problems associated with unethical behavior is that people will excuse or rationalize unethical behavior due to situational, personal, or special circumstances. I will refer to this psycho-social phenomenon as "the special circumstances argument." A person might acknowledge as a general principle that stealing or lying is wrong, but engage in such actions in particular situations, believing that in this special case it is permissible to do so. There may , in fact, be cases where

breaking an ethical rule is warranted—but these are very special cases. What usually happens in the real world, though, is that people too frequently invoke the "special case" (or it's relative-to-the-circumstances) excuse and rationalization for their unethical behavior; in so doing, it becomes a slippery slope and a habit of behavior.

Individuals who pursue excellence—who have high standards and constructive values regarding their behavior; who expect the best out of themselves—as a rule do not make excuses for behaving unethically or below their standards. Again, they expect the best out of themselves and do not slip into the habit of doing less than the best, and excusing themselves in one manner or form for it.

In summary on excellence: The value is the principle of excellence itself—the belief that what is superlative, superb, or very good can be defined and demonstrated in action, and that it is through believing in and pursuing excellence that life is given meaning and purpose. In this case, the virtue associated with this value is the general quality of "being virtuous" (or believing in and pursuing virtue)—in being principled or possessing "character." The virtue is the practicing belief in and pursuit of excellence in all spheres of life.

Self-Responsibility

"Irresponsibility cancels out every ethical precept as soon as it enters consciousness.
The self without a feeling of responsibility would no longer be the self…"
Arthur Schnitzler

"Let everyone sweep in front of his or her own door,
and the whole world will be clean."
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

"Responsibility" is defined as being the cause or explanation of something…the ability to answer for one's conduct or obligations. And "accountability" is defined as a synonym of responsibility; being subject to giving account for one's actions.

Within education (and within life) it is important to take responsibility for one's actions rather than to blame or explain away one's behavior due to situations and the influence of other people. Responsibility assumes that each individual acts according to choices he or she makes. "We make our own beds and then we sleep in them."

Until one accepts responsibility for one's actions and one's present reality, one is disempowered to change things. One becomes empowered through accepting responsibility. If a person cannot see or accept how their present situation is of their own doing, they cannot see what they can do to change it. They remain a victim of circumstances in their own eyes and hence disempowered.

Achieving authentic happiness and developing character virtues are first and foremost accomplishments. It requires effort, rather than being something that can be purchased, or something that can be realized through momentary pleasures. Virtues cannot be bestowed upon a person—these qualities require self-initiative, action, and work. Developing character virtues requires self-effort and produces a sense of personal achievement and self-confidence. Hence, a prime virtue that is required for the exercise and development of all other virtues is self-responsibility. One needs to take

responsibility for realizing a good life, developing one's character virtues, and becoming a good person. What is good in life and within ourselves is achieved rather than given to us. One must see this and take responsibility for realizing it. Nothing of value is easy.

Focusing on education, a key implication of the above discussion is: Becoming educated is something accomplished or achieved; it is not something purchased or given to us. We earn it. A second equally important implication specifically regarding students is: Whenever problems or difficulties arise in school or in particular classes, the first question that should be asked is what action one can take to improve things rather than what someone else can do to help.

Again, it is important to empower oneself regarding difficulties or challenges; to see how one can correct the problem; failing this, one remains a victim.

Through the accomplishment of goals, one strengthens one's sense of self-efficacy. Without self-accomplishment there is no sense of self-efficacy. Perceived self-efficacy is the degree to which one sees oneself as capable of accomplishing goals—that is, the degree to which ones feels a sense of personal power. People show different degrees of "self-efficacy." A person with low self-efficacy believes he is relatively powerless with respect to the future, whereas a person with high self-efficacy believes he has a high level of control or influence on the future. High self-efficacy is the opposite of perceived helplessness and counter-acts the feelings of depression and defeatism. People who don't take responsibility for their life have a low sense of self-efficacy (Lombardo, 2006a, Chapter one; Lombardo, 2007b).

A critical belief connected with the idea of self-efficacy is that one can transform one's life for the better. Behind this belief is a set of key assumptions:

- One assumes that the future is not determined by uncontrollable forces.
- One also assumes that one is not trapped by the past.
- Additionally, one assumes that one has the power through self-initiative and the exercise of various capacities to significantly influence the future.

One's future is not a result of causes that affect one but of choices and effort to realize one's ideals. What is it that a person hopes to achieve? What can a person achieve? Values and choices based on these values, rather than external causes, will determine one's future.

Developing and maintaining a sense of responsibility is one of the biggest challenges facing everyone today. Although Western culture emphasizes individualism, several factors work against nurturing a sense of responsibility in our society:

- Psychology is used by people to explain away their behavior, e.g., upbringing, personality type, childhood environment, and genetic disposition are all used by people to excuse or justify their behavior.
- Also people frequently expect quick fixes that don't require any personal effort. People expect that problems can be solved through pills or more efficient customer service. People expect that problems can be solved through technology. People expect problems can be solved quickly (Didsbury, 1999).
- Although we espouse individualism, we are all influenced by social pressures and norms of behavior. If everyone cheats, then so can I.

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- Ethical relativism is excessively used as a way to justify all types of questionable behaviors.

To review, self-responsibility involves first accepting responsibility for the present situation—with it problems and short-comings—and second, believing that it is through one's own efforts that the present problems can be solved. Even if it seems totally clear and obvious that someone or something else is to blame for one's present problems, even if this were true, it does the individual no good to focus on these external causes. It disempowers the person, thus precluding a positive change. Moreover, chances are that a person embroiled in difficulty has in some way or other contributed to the problem in the first place.

Within psychology there is a distinction made between people who act and think from a perceived internal locus of control versus those people who act and think from a perspective of external locus of control (Lombardo, 2006a, Chapter one; 2007b). That is, some people see themselves as in control of their life; other people see themselves as being controlled from the outside—they see themselves as victims. Developing a sense of responsibility involves developing more of a sense of internal locus of control. It means giving up the role of the victim, of being controlled by external forces.

One of the most common reactions of students (or people in general) when their unethical behavior is pointed out to them, is to deny or rationalize away responsibility for the action. A person can say that he or she didn't know the action was wrong, or that there were external factors or special circumstances that strongly influenced their behavior. That is, people won't accept responsibility for their actions. But avoiding responsibility can lead to other unethical actions, such as being dishonest about the facts, and again, this disempowers the individual to change his or her behavior. Further, it interferes with learning; one can't learn if one doesn't acknowledge one's mistakes. Responsibility entails accountability. We should be able to explain why we do what we do, openly admit that we committed the action (own up to it), and accept the consequences. Only then do we learn.

Although self-responsibility is essentially an individual character trait and virtue, without each individual accepting responsibility for his own actions, social cooperation and collaboration cannot be realized. One can count on and trust people who are responsible; one cannot count on irresponsible people. Irresponsibility undermines cooperation, collaboration, and constructive social relationships. Since education is a social reality (as is life in general), education cannot realize its purpose if those involved are irresponsible. Teachers trust that students will do their assignments; students trust that teachers will conscientiously evaluate and grade their assignments. Without self-responsibility on the part of both teachers and students, this condition of trust cannot be realized, and the whole educational process falls apart.

Several of the key character traits associated with mental health and human happiness are directly connected with the trait of self-responsibility. Autonomy, purpose and direction, and environmental mastery are all central to happiness and psychological well-being; without these qualities people feel depressed, pessimistic, hopeless, aimless, and impotent/helpless (Ryff and Singer, 2005). Again, to drive home the message: Ethical behavior—the pursuit and practice of character virtues—is good for us.

In summary, the value behind self-responsibility is nothing short of the belief that each individual can and should determine (chose) his own life and create his own destiny. The value is individual freedom and self-determination. The general virtue is self-responsibility; specific character traits (or subsidiary virtues) connected with self-responsibility include being trustworthy, dependable, self-initiating, conscientious, and autonomous.

The opposites of being responsible include negligence, undependability, unreliability, untrustworthiness, self-dishonesty, passivity, and self-victimization. – Carried to the extreme these are all vices that bring with them a host of different negative results.

Truth, Honesty, Integrity, and Authenticity

"Honesty is the first chapter in the book of wisdom."
Thomas Jefferson

"The best mind-altering drug is truth."
Lily Tomlin

"By a lie a man throws away and, as it were,
annihilates his dignity as a man."
Immanuel Kant

"Believe those who are seeking the truth;
doubt those who find it."
Andre Gide

"Truth" can be defined as the state of being the case—what really is. "Honesty" is adherence to the truth—the refusal to lie, cheat, or deceive. "Trust" is confidence—a reliance on the integrity, veracity, justice of another person or thing. "Integrity" is the quality or state of being complete or undivided—implying firm adherence to a code or set of values—a concept closely related to honesty. And "authenticity" is defined as the quality of trustworthiness, of being genuine.

Academic disciplines value truth. It is the ultimate goal of all academic inquiry— the assumption underlying all statements of belief. (If one believes in something, one thinks it is, at least probably or tentatively, true.) Science searches for an accurate and true understanding of nature. When scientists report their findings, it is always expected that they are reporting the truth regarding their findings. The most damaging flaw one can uncover in a scientific paper is that the scientists in question did not report the truth of what they discovered. To intentionally lie or deceive—and be caught at it—often spells the end of a scientist's career. The same would be true for any researcher, any writer, any scholar.

Educators value truth. It is expected that teachers should always strive to present the truth of what they know as best they can. Just as in science, without the intent of

being truthful, there can be no trust—in this case between teacher and student—no credibility as regards anything said. Truth is a basic value of critical thinking. In thinking we strive to get at the truth—again, as best as we can. The opposites of truth are falsity and deceit (presenting something as true while knowing that it isn't).

The concepts of learning, information, and knowledge all assume the concept of truth. Acquiring false beliefs or information is not learning; false information is misinformation; mistaken beliefs do not constitute knowledge. Truth may come in degrees and truth may be complex, but there is still a difference between being correct and being mistaken.

Truth is an ideal towards which we strive. We can never know for certain if what we believe is true, but we should make every effort to find the truth, to assess the truthfulness of our beliefs, and to check on the truth of the statements of others. In fact, the end of the quest for truth—of truth itself—comes when we think we possess the final definitive answer and stop thinking, questioning, and checking our beliefs. The ideal of truth is served through openness, dialogue, and critical thinking.

In general, the road to knowledge and learning requires that we diligently and actively pursue the truth as best as we can. Truth does not always come easy. We should pursue it with a passion and effort. The active critical thinker (discussed below) realizes that truth is something that needs to be actively pursued. If truth is an important value for us, it stands to reason that we would search it out with energy and diligence. One can't be lazy about the truth.

Truth and honesty are critical in life and in education. Education couldn't function if educators were dishonest or falsified information. Although politicians are often stereotyped as manipulators of the truth—if not downright dishonest—without some level of truthfulness among human beings, society could not function. Without an effort among humans to be truthful, there can be no trust. Truth is a universal human value and a universal human distinction across all human cultures. And trust, which involves the pre-conditions of both self-responsibility and honesty, ranks high as a universal human value as well as being one of the central values identified in college academic integrity programs.

When people present ideas or statements to others that they know are not true, they engage in deception and lies. When people omit facts or information that is relevant or important to an issue or question, they also engage in deception and dishonesty. In both cases such behaviors, across human cultures, are seen as vices.

When a student presents work on an assignment that the student himself didn't do—when the student copies the work of another—this is deceit and it is a breach of trust. And if one considers the consequences that follow from such deceitful behavior, the situation gets even worse.

Assume a person is getting educated in a particular profession (such as nursing, accounting, or auto mechanics). Assume assessments are required to test if the person has actually learned the relevant knowledge and skills to competently practice the profession. But the person presents the work of others as evidence of his own knowledge and passes the assignment. Hence the person goes out into the world never having really demonstrated that he or she learned what is necessary to be competent in his or her profession. No one would want to be treated by a doctor who cheated on his final medical exams—who did not really demonstrate sufficient knowledge of medicine.

Therefore, the degree and professional credentials themselves represent a form of deception which is now perpetrated on those individuals who trust and depend upon the competence of the presumed professional. This is a breach of public trust. And the deceiver knowingly puts in jeopardy the well being of those he serves by practicing the profession without having earned authentic qualifications. It is the responsibility of all professionals to learn the necessary knowledge and skills required to demonstrate their professional competence. The effects of unethical behavior ripple out. Mistakes compound upon mistakes; vices, gone unchecked, provoke other unethical behaviors.

Integrity refers to consistency in thinking and behavior. It means practicing what one preaches. It means expressing the same beliefs to different people instead of saying one thing to one person and another thing to someone else simply to please each person. Of course, people modify their behavior depending on social context, but when one carries this behavior to an extreme one loses integrity. The opposites of integrity include hypocrisy, deceptiveness, being a coward, lack of conviction, and insincerity.

Being authentic is connected to integrity, for people often sacrifice integrity through lies and distortions of what they believe and think. Authenticity is similar to being honest, presenting oneself without distortion or deception.

In summary, honesty and truthfulness are the character virtues associated with the value of truth. Honesty pertains to both what we tell other people and how truthful and open we are to ourselves about ourselves. An atmosphere of trust depends on honesty and truth. Integrity and authenticity are other character virtues associated with honesty and truth. One cannot learn and grow without being honest. And open-mindedness—a quality discussed below under the love of learning and thinking—cannot be realized without being honest and possessing a real concern for the truth.

Courage

"The worst mistake anyone can make is being too afraid to make one."
Unknown

"Courage is not the absence of fear, but rather the judgment
that something else if more important than fear."
Ambrose Redmoon

"Courage is not simply one of the virtues,
but the form of every virtue at the testing point."
C.S. Lewis

"Courage" can be defined as the ability to do something regardless of the fear one feels. Courage is one of Seligman's key virtues.

In many cases either speaking the truth or admitting the truth requires courage. We may be afraid to speak the truth because it would upset someone or jeopardize our own situation or happiness; we may be afraid to admit the truth because it would be admitting to a mistake or some unethical behavior. Of course, one has to practice good

judgment regarding what to say or admit, but people often start to engage in deceitful or dishonest behavior simply because they lack the courage to be honest.

Courage comes into play in many ways in life. It takes courage to accept self-responsibility for one's life; it takes courage to be honest and admit to one's mistakes; it takes courage to face the challenges and uncertainties of the future; it takes courage to tenaciously pursue one's goals; it even takes courage to love. Integrity requires courage, as does hope. Pessimism and depression probably involve a lack of courage.

Academic integrity programs in colleges around the country often state that one needs to be committed to the values and ethical principles espoused by the institution "…even in the face of adversity…" Of course it is much easier to be ethical if one doesn't have to deal with real life challenges, problems, and pressures. It requires courage (among other things) to be ethical in the face of adversity.

The vice usually associated with a lack of courage is cowardice, but it is important to keep in mind that courage does not entail a lack of fear; rather courage is the capacity to act despite the fear. Cowardly behavior involves being ruled by fear.

Self-Understanding and Self-Honesty

"The unexamined life is not worth living."
Socrates

"Know thyself."
Socrates

"This above all: to thine own self be true,
And it must follow, as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man."
Shakespeare

"Self-understanding" means self-knowledge—the ability to understand one's own actions. "Self-awareness" can be defined as the state of awareness of one's individuality, including one's traits, feelings, and behaviors. "Self-honesty" means being truthful to oneself about one's own beliefs, feelings, or motives.

One of the major goals of education is to foster increased self-awareness and self-understanding. Just as one should become knowledgeable about the world, one should strive toward increasing self-understanding. Knowing oneself is a key ingredient to success. Of course, this is much easier said than done. It requires the consideration of key questions: What is it one wants in life? What does one believe? What are one's key values? What are one's weaknesses and strengths? Answering these questions is essential to determining what direction and goals one should pursue.

Honesty is a key element in the development of self-understanding. One cannot become self-aware without self-honesty. Self-honesty involves developing a fair and accurate self-assessment, admitting one's mistakes, and therefore taking responsibility for correcting them. Unless one is honest with oneself one cannot grow and learn—one cannot remedy a mistake or failing unless one admits to it. One cannot even accept the

possibility of error unless one believes in the concept of truth. One cannot be wrong unless one can be right. Hence, self-honesty requires belief in the concept of truth and and the commitment to pursuing it in the face of one's own self-assessment.

Self-honesty often requires courage. We may not want to admit to ourselves things we do not like about ourselves. Following the principle of truth—exhibiting the virtue of honesty—is often most difficult when one looks at oneself.

Intellectual performance and intellectual growth is enhanced, though, through active and honest self-assessment. Evaluating one's beliefs and one's understanding turns the individual into an active learner and a thinker, and this facilitates the process of learning.

In summary, the basic values identified above are truth and self-understanding. The virtues are honesty, candidness, and being fully self-aware. The vices are dishonesty—particularly about oneself—self-deceit, and ignorance of oneself.

Justice and Fairness

"Justice is that which is most primitive in the human soul, most fundamental in society, most sacred among ideas, and what the masses demand today with most ardour. It is the essence of religions and at the same time the form of reason, the secret object of faith, and the beginning, middle, and end of knowledge. What can be imagined more universal, more strong, more complete than justice?
Pierre-Joseph Proundhon

"Justice is the first virtue of social institutions,
as truth is of systems of thought."
John Rawls

"Fairness" can be defined as marked of impartiality and honesty—free from self-interest, prejudice, or favoritism. "Justice" is conforming to a standard of correctness—impartial—synonymous with fairness—equity.

One of the key intellectual values connected with critical thinking is fair-mindedness. Being fair is weighing both sides of an issue; listening to both sides of a debate; and basically attempting, as best as possible, to be unbiased. Hence being fair is connected with being open-minded and non-egocentric.

Justice is a central value within all functional social organizations. Without justice, social systems deteriorate, fail, and fall. All human societies around the world have systems of justice. Everyone expects justice where rewards and punishments are equal and commensurate with actions and deeds.

Fairness and justice come up as values within education in several ways. Students expect to be treated fairly (without bias). When unethical behaviors are exhibited within education, justice should be enacted. Wrongs should not be tolerated; wrongs should be righted. Conversely, everyone expects to be rewarded appropriately for their accomplishments and efforts.

This last point deserves special attention. Receiving a reward for something one hasn't earned is not justice. Receiving a reward for something one hasn't earned when others had to earn the same reward is not justice. When one receives a passing grade on an assignment, in cases where the work on the assignment was copied or plagiarized off of another student or another source, this isn't justice.

Justice implies that one receives a reward commensurate with the quality of one's work. Each person should be treated equally in this manner; each person should receive rewards commensurate with the relative quality of his work. In philosophy, this is referred to as distributive justice. Hence, an individual who expects a reward when, in fact he is misrepresenting the work of someone else as his own, is actually committing an injustice against his fellow students. Getting a passing grade for work not done is unfair relative to those students who received a passing grade for work they actually did. A person plagiarizing or cheating may think that he is only trying to fool the teacher or the system, but in fact, the person in question is behaving in an unfair and unjust fashion relative to his fellow students. From the perspective of a student who did not cheat to earn his grade, it seems totally unfair and unethical (which indeed it is) that someone who did not do the work receives the same reward.

Retributive justice refers to incurring negative consequences for unethical behaviors. If a student receives a zero on an assignment for plagiarizing or cheating, this is retributive justice. In our general social systems, we expect that individuals who commit unethical actions get punished for them. If nothing else, society sets up deterrents (potential negative consequences) against unethical behaviors in the hope that these deterrents will reduce the incidence of unethical behavior. Almost all systems of justice have both distributive and retributive dimensions. Both types need to be diligently enforced if the system is going to work. We should accept the negative consequences of our ethical transgressions; we should expect the positive consequences associated with our positive efforts. In both cases, we are valuing the importance of justice (Solomon, 2002).

Without justice, people do not learn well and people do not develop authentic self-esteem and confidence. If rewards are not appropriately given for good versus poor performance, there is no extrinsically driven motivation to perform well or perform better. A just system of reward and feedback provides necessary information for areas in need of improvement. If people are praised or rewarded in some fashion, even if their performance is poor, they develop, at best, a false or unrealistic sense of confidence and self-esteem. They do not develop a realistic sense of what excellence means.

The values associated with this standard are justice and fairness. Generally, the same terms or similar ones are used to describe the virtues—fair-mindedness and just. The vices associated with this standard include bias, favoritism, and greed, or being unfair, self-centered, and inconsiderate.

Love of Learning and Knowledge: Curiosity, Wonder, and Open-Mindedness

"I know of no disease of the soul but ignorance."
Ben Jonson

"I wonder why, I wonder why.
I wonder why I wonder.
I wonder why I wonder why
I wonder why I wonder!"
Richard Feynman

"The most beautiful and most profound emotion we can experience is the sensation of the mystical. It is the dower of all true science. He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer wonder and stand rapt in awe, is as good as dead."
Albert Einstein

"Learning" is the acquisition of knowledge or skills through experience, practice, or study, or by being taught. "Knowledge" is facts, information, or skills acquired through experience or education—true justified belief—awareness or familiarity. "Love" is an intense feeling of deep affection—a great interest or pleasure in something. "Wonder" is a cause of astonishment, amazement, or marvel—amazed admiration—or to feel doubt, uncertainty, curiosity. "Open" is having no enclosing or confining barrier—not shut or locked—free from concealment.

Learning can be seen as having value in itself or as having value as a means to an end. If learning is valued in itself it has intrinsic worth; if learning has value as a means to an end it has instrumental or secondary worth. Education values learning in both ways.

Though not to discount instrumental learning, if learning is not intrinsically valued, individuals will approach education as simply the procurement of a degree, a necessary step for job advancement, or as a way to satisfy the expectations or hopes of significant others. Consequently they will see no problem in getting grades or degrees without having learned anything. If learning has no intrinsic worth, learning is nothing but a means to an end. The failure to value learning for its own sake opens the door to a variety of unethical behaviors in education.

What does it mean to value learning for its own sake? It means that a person possesses the "love of learning"; that the person emulates the spirit of philosophy—the love of wisdom and knowledge. It means that understanding something new is an enjoyable experience in itself. It often carries with it a sense of self-accomplishment for having mastered the information, ideas, and skills that needed to be learned. Of course, a person who enjoys learning will probably be able to give various reasons why learning is a good thing and has an instrumental value, but fundamentally learning is its own reward. (As with Spinoza's maxim that "virtue is its own reward," learning is its own reward as well.

A person who values learning for its own sake possesses the virtue of inquisitiveness. Psychologists have studied the drive to know—the curiosity or exploratory motive—and they have found that there seems to be in both animals and humans a motive to learn that is independent of satisfying any other primary or

biological drive. This natural drive or tendency needs to be nurtured and reinforced; it should not be allowed to wither on the vine. Studies in critical thinking reveal that the ideal critical thinker possesses a strong trait of inquisitiveness (an active desire to learn about things) that is essential for good critical thinking skills.

The love of learning in connected with what psychologists and educators refer to as deep learning. Without a positive experience of learning, the result is frequently only surface learning. Love of learning provokes deep learning. Some of the main differences between deep learning and surface learning are:

Deep learning involves getting the big picture—a synthesized and comprehensive understanding of a domain of study, rather than simple surface learning of a set of disconnected facts. Whereas surface learning never penetrates to the core ideas of a learner, deep learning penetrates and affects the learner's fundamental values and beliefs. Deep learning involves conceptual re-organization; in surface learning nothing of importance in the learner's mind changes. Deep learning is carried into the future and affects decisions and problem solving; deep learning transfers from the original learning situation to new situations. Surface learning is the opposite—it doesn't transfer. Deep learning empowers the individual. Deep learning is achieved through thinking about the subject matter; surface learning involves rote memorization. In fact, deep learning means that a person can think about the new ideas learned and can think with these ideas—the new knowledge becomes operational; it is active and useable knowledge. Surface learning is inert, floating on the surface of the mind, and a person's thinking processes and problem solving do not incorporate the new knowledge. Hence, deep learning creates practical knowledge—knowledge that can be used—whereas surface learning is the accumulation of trivia. Deep learning also connects with self-awareness, reflection, and meta-cognition: when individuals engage in deep learning, they think about their own thinking processes and beliefs. Surface learning occurs without self-reflection. Finally, deep learning is usually associated with an intrinsic motivation to learn and the associated emotional affect is positive. Surface learning is extrinsically motivated (e.g., to pass a test) and the associated emotional affect is frequently negative, involving anxiety, fear, and stress. Deep learning is an active and exhilarating process; surface learning is more passive and often felt as mere drudgery. All these qualities of deep learning apply to the type of knowledge associated with wisdom (Bransford, Brown, and Cocking, 2000; Lombardo, 2006c).

For teachers, it is important to demonstrate a love of learning, a love of understanding and wisdom. It is important to evince fascination; to show a desire to "figure things out"; to explore and inquire; to question and ponder. It is also important to reinforce and stimulate this value and virtue in student behavior and performance. As a student, it is important to cultivate the love of learning and to pursue deep learning. It is important to question, to think about, to actively engage the subject matter. It is important to consider how the new knowledge connects (or contradicts) present beliefs and how it applies to life.

Perhaps all real learning—all meaningful understanding—begins with a state of wonder. All thinking begins with a question. The love of learning begins in inquisitiveness. Until we wonder we are basically unconscious.

The unknown is not something to fear. It is something to revel in, something to approach. Students are often afraid or closed off to the mystery of it all. Wonder

requires courage (another example of the importance of this virtue in education). Without wonder there is no drive for learning.

Without wonder, as Einstein noted, the mind and the human spirit are as good as dead. Igniting or re-igniting wonder in one's mind is in essence bringing one's mental capacities back to life. Wonder is the breath of life of the mind. Looking up at the stars and feeling awed by the immensity of it all is the beginning of true learning and wisdom.

Wonder is, in part, an emotion. Education consequently is more than developing cognitive or intellectual skills; it is more holistic. The capacity to feel wonder is a virtuous emotion. Teachers often comment that many students seem apathetic or indifferent. Such students lack a sense of wonder. Such students, at best, engage in surface learning. Without wonder there is no deep learning—no love of learning. Education should astonish through what it reveals to the student's mind.

Open-mindedness as a character trait applies to both the love of learning and the love of thinking as well. The human mind needs to be open in order to learn. One cannot learn if one's mind is closed. As noted above, the person who loves learning is inquisitive. Having a closed mind destroys inquisitiveness. Being open means being receptive and thoughtfully considering new information or ideas. One cannot be honest and self-aware without being open; defensiveness closes off self-examination.

Through exchange with others, one's ideas can be tested and one can learn new perspectives on various topics. The desire to dialogue and discuss demonstrates social openness. Dialogue is not simply exposition of one's own views, but an exchange of ideas. Dialogue is both listening and talking. Dialogue in fact is a cooperative activity where all parties allow for give and take in the discussion.

Dialogue opens the mind to other points of view. It empowers critical thinking. The opposite of critical thinking is egocentric thinking, only being able to see things from one's own point of view. A big part of deep learning is breaking out of closed, egocentric mindsets. To move out of biased or one-sided perspectives, one should consider a diversity of points of view. Hence, the virtue of being open-minded connects with the virtue of being a thoughtful person—a good critical thinker. It also connects with deep and comprehensive learning, with understanding the various perspectives one can take on any issue.

Being open, listening to, and considering other points of view does not mean simply accepting or believing whatever someone else says. The ideas of others need to be assessed through the principles of critical thinking and other intellectual standards.

In summary, education values knowledge and learning (the acquisition of knowledge). The corresponding virtues include inquisitiveness, wonder, curiosity, open-mindedness, or simply the love of learning. The vices or deficiencies associated with this standard include apathy, disinterest, closed-mindedness, arrogance, defensiveness, anti-intellectualism, or simply a lack of fascination with life. One could even argue that the pursuit of deep learning is a virtue, whereas settling for surface learning is a vice.

Let us finish this section with one final quote that serves as a transition from the topic of "love of learning" to "love of thinking." The quote captures the essence of both virtues, as well as the importance of the virtue of courage.

"Very few people seek knowledge in this world…few really ask. On the contrary, they try to wring from the unknown the answers they have already shaped in their mind…

To really ask is to open the door to the whirlwind.
The answer may annihilate the question and the questioner."
Ann Rice

Love of Thinking

"Learning without thought is labor lost;
and thought without learning is perilous."
Confucius

"Reading furnishes the mind only with materials for knowledge;
it is thinking [that] makes what we read ours."
John Locke

"Thought is subversive and revolutionary, destructive and
terrible, thought is merciless to privilege, established
institutions, and comfortable habit. Thought looks into the pit
of hell and is not afraid. Thought is great and swift and free,
the light of the world, and the chief glory of man."
Bertrand Russell

"It is good to be open-minded
but not so open that your brains fall out."
Jacob Needleman

"Rational" can be defined as relating to, based on, or agreeable to reason. To be rational is to be logical. "Thinking" is the process of using one's mind to consider or reason about something. "Critical thinking" has been defined as "the art of thinking about your thinking while you are thinking in order to make your thinking better…" (Facione, 1990)

According to the *American Philosophical Association*:

"The ideal critical thinker is habitually inquisitive, well-informed, trustful of reason, open-minded, flexible, fair-minded in evaluation, honest in facing personal biases, prudent in making judgments, willing to reconsider, clear about issues, orderly in complex matters, diligent in seeking relevant information, reasonable in the selection of criteria, focused in inquiry, and persistent in seeking results which are as precise as the subject and the circumstances of inquiry permit." (Facione, 1990)

Education values thinking. According to Peter Facione "Education is nothing more nor less than learning to think." It is not enough to simply memorize information.

One must be able to think about the information—to evaluate, question, and think through the meaning of what is being learned. Thinking also involves going beyond simple belief. Having a belief is not thinking. Thinking involves the active examination and evaluation of information and beliefs. Thinking may involve bringing into serious question what one believes. The capacity and willingness to question—especially one's own beliefs—is a virtue; it requires openness, humility, and courage.

Thinking improves the quality of learning; it facilitates deep learning. Quality learning is an active process and the mind becomes active in thinking. When a person begins to think about some topic, the person becomes mentally active and alive. – Thinking is the active use of one's mind. Thinking is empowerment.

Thinking is also a skill. Although all normal adults think, the capacity and ability to think varies among people. There are standards and principles of skillful thinking. These standards and principles provide a set of criteria for assessing the level of skill or quality in thinking. These standards define excellence in thinking; they define qualities toward which one aspires when one thinks. These "universal intellectual standards" as described by the *Foundation and Center for Critical Thinking* (Paul and Elder, 2006) are:

- Clarity means that the meaning of a term, expression, or statement is understandable. The opposite of being clear is being vague, confusing, and ambiguous.
- Accuracy means that a statement is true. The opposite of being accurate is being false or wrong.
- Precision means that a statement provides sufficient detail. The opposite of being precise is being too general.
- Relevance means that a statement is meaningfully connected with the topic being described or addressed. The opposite of being relevant is being disconnected or without significance to the topic.
- Depth means sufficient examination of the richness and complexity of a topic. The opposite of depth is superficiality.
- Breadth means how broad a perspective one takes on a topic. Are other viewpoints considered? The opposite of breadth is being narrow and singular in viewpoint.
- Logic means being rational—drawing conclusions that follow from premises—being consistent in one's thinking. The opposite of logical is being contradictory, disconnected, or opinionated without any reasons to support one's views.

Also, according to Richard Paul and Linda Elder (2006), there is a set of intellectual virtues or universal standards that are essential to good thinking. Good thinking necessarily involves good solid character virtues. The virtues are listed below together with their opposites (intellectual vices).

- Intellectual humility vs. intellectual arrogance
- Intellectual courage vs. intellectual cowardice
- Intellectual empathy vs. intellectual closed-mindedness
- Intellectual autonomy vs. intellectual conformity

- Intellectual integrity (honesty) vs. intellectual hypocrisy
- Intellectual perseverance vs. intellectual laziness
- Confidence in reason vs. distrust of reason and evidence
- Fair-mindedness vs. intellectual unfairness

Improvement in the skill of thinking is important in all aspects of life, but in particular, improvement in thinking skills facilitates/enhances the learning and understanding of information and the acquisition of knowledge. It follows, then, that the development and active use of thinking skills improves academic performance. This skill can be improved or developed with practice and effort; it is important to take self-responsibility for the level of one's thinking (Paul, 1993).

Improvement in thinking skills will also support the development of active, life-long learning. Given the rapid and continuous changes in our world, it is important for people to keep learning throughout life. Further, it is important to be self-motivated and self-responsible in this pursuit of knowledge. People are much more likely to persist in activities if they are self-motivated. The development of thinking skills empowers the individual to become a self-motivated, proactive, and life-long learner.

The skills involved in thinking include logical reasoning and critical thinking. Educators value the capacities to think rationally (or logically) and to think critically. Teaching and reinforcing these skills and values is one of the most important tasks that educators take on.

In summary, it is important to emphasize that in the case of thinking, the value involves standards and principles. There are normative criteria that define the value, e.g., clarity, precision, relevance, and consistency. There are rules for good thinking. The virtues pertaining to good thinking include being rational, reflective, and thoughtful, all of which refer to specific intellectual virtues associated with critical thinking. The vices connected with these standards include mental laziness, impulsiveness, narrow-mindedness, foolishness, immaturity, dogmatism, and authoritarianism.

Discipline and Determination

"Learning is not attained by chance,
it must be sought for with ardor and attended to with diligence."
Abigail Adams

"Genius is one per cent inspiration and ninety-nine per cent perspiration."
Thomas Edison

"Nothing in the world can take the place of Persistence. Talent will not; nothing is more common than unsuccessful men with talent. Genius will not; unrewarded genius is almost a proverb. Education will not; the world is full of educated derelicts. Persistence and determination alone are omnipotent. The slogan 'Press On' has solved and always will solve the problems of the human race."
Calvin Coolidge

"Work" can be defined as activity involving mental or physical effort, done in order to achieve a purpose or result. "Effort" is a vigorous or determined attempt—strenuous physical or mental exertion. "Determination" is firmness of purpose—resoluteness. And "disciplined" is defined as showing a controlled form of behavior or way of working.

One variable that seems to have more to do with success and learning than almost anything else is effort. All gimmicks and learning techniques aside, the more time and energy a person puts into study, the better the person does. This principle applies to life in general. Again, as a general truism, nothing of real value in life is easy. The character virtue is being "hard-working"; the vices are laziness, sloth, and self-entitlement.

The virtues of discipline and determination connect to the general virtue of self-responsibility. Practicing self-discipline and tenacious determination reflects a sense of self-responsibility in the realization of what one wants. A person takes responsibility for his success and in so doing makes a self-initiated, conscientious, and determined effort to succeed.

One problem that educators face today is that education is being commoditized and commercialized—it is being advertised as a product that can be purchased. Of course buying something requires no more effort than going to the store and handing over your money. Education though—like anything else of value in life—cannot be bought; it must be earned and it is earned by the student. (You can buy a degree but getting a degree is not necessarily getting an education.) As noted earlier, virtues are accomplishments: they can not be purchased; they can not be given to us; they must be earned. And all worthwhile accomplishments are going to involve significant effort, persistence, and determination.

Teachers can of course try to help students in many different ways, but since learning is an active process involving doing, teachers cannot do the reading, the studying, the thinking, and the writing for the student. Teachers can inspire; teachers can show; teachers can explain; and teachers can guide, but teachers cannot do for students what they have to do. This simple fact needs to be emphasized. Teachers and academic institutions should not promise students success without effort. Students should not expect success without effort.

There are certain key principles and practices behind discipline and determination:

- To achieve something—to create something; to realize a dream—one must commit oneself to a schedule for working on it; one must not waver from it. There are always excuses. Life is a bottomless pit of rationalizations and reasons for not doing something, so one must simply not allow for any. Regularity is critical to discipline and success; he who aspires to some achievement must get a rhythm and work schedule going in his life and keep banging on the drum. Accomplishments are built upon a steady, incessant accumulation of individual actions.

- The individual who would achieve success in life must focus and concentrate on what he wants to do—on the task at hand. The surrounding world should fade away, there but not there. He must forget the world—forget himself. There are always things to worry about, to distract the mind, to intrude on ones attention. The person must immerse himself in the object of his desire, his interests and aspirations.

- He must accept the fact that he will encounter challenges and difficulties along the way. He must be ready to exert himself, to suffer some pain, anxiety, and disappointment. He must relish the sweat, struggle, toil, and intense expenditure of energy he will need to experience in the process of growth and evolution. He will derive pleasure from accomplishments that involve great effort and some level of distress. That which opposes or challenges a person strengthens that person.

- Taken together, this point and the last one describe some essential features of what the psychologist, Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi, refers to as "flow"—the experience of immersion and exertion in a challenging task (Csikszentmihalyi, 1993; Csikszentmihalyi and Nakamura, 2005). One must cultivate flow, realize it everyday. Flow will create and amplify purpose and direction in a person. It will charge the person. It will open the future. Flow is not something one walks into; it is something one must seek out and nourish.

- One must identify an over-arching goal or direction in the future. One must see what one is doing today in the context of the future. We are all on a journey through time—the time of our lives—and the light ahead of us, the light we imagine and build off of in the future, will give meaning and coherence to what we are doing today. But one must set the light burning and keep it burning. One must feed the future. One must work on and cultivate future goals today. Future goals give order to things, define a sense of progress and combat the influence of chaos, distraction, confusion, and apathy that can easily come into one's life. Regularity comes through having a goal set in the future and keeping it in mind everyday. Having purpose and direction in life is one of the key factors supporting psychological well-being and happiness.

- Tenacity (or persistence) also comes through having a goal and one must cultivate tenacity, above all else. People who possess talent frequently fall by the wayside because they give up. They can waver in the moment and avoid doing what they intended to do today, or they can waver in the long run and not stay with something long enough to bring the endeavor to fruition and completion. It is a fundamental truism that there are ups and downs in everything. There are challenges, defeats, sometimes even disasters. There is no such thing as a smooth and steady ascent upward. Roads are rocky, filled with holes and crevices, and we frequently stumble, fall, and slide backwards along the way. Tenacity is maintaining forward determination and continual action through these interludes of chaos and momentary failures. Having long-term goals or

aspirations bolsters tenacity. Tenacity keeps us going when we want to give up (and everyone at one time or another wants to give up). It picks us up after we have fallen down. It defines the value of what we are doing—of the meaning and direction we are taking. As the psychologist Abraham Maslow pointed out, even self-actualizing people feel anxiety, fear, frustration, anger, and depression, but they pass through it and keep growing and living (Maslow, 1968).

In summary, regularity, focus, struggle, flow, goals for the future, and tenacity: these are some of the key factors behind success, accomplishment, and the realization of one's dreams. These are some of the key factors connected to discipline and determination.

The key values associated with this standard are excellence, success, and personal accomplishment. The virtues include discipline, self-determination and self-motivation, focus and purpose in life, persistence and tenacity, and enthusiasm. The vices include laziness, sloth, passivity, aimlessness, a flighty and distracted mind, and defeatism.

Optimism and the Pursuit of Growth

"Our only security is our ability to change."
Annonymous

"Perfection would be the end of evolution,
the end of freedom, the end of creativity."
Elizabet Sahtouris

"The sages do not consider that making no mistake is a blessing. They believe, rather, that the great virtue of a person lies in their ability to correct their mistakes and continually to make a new person of themselves."
Wang Yang-ming

"Growth can be defined as the process of developing physically, mentally, or spiritually—the process of increasing in amount, value, or importance. "Optimism" can be defined as hopefulness and confidence about the future or the successful outcome of something.

Educators emphasize the importance of growth and progress; teachers look for improvement rather than perfection in their students. No one is perfect in anything; in fact, it is impossible to even define what perfection could mean regarding human beings. The belief in perfection, in fact, interferes with continual learning and critical thinking. If one is perfect, what is there new to know? Perfection would set a limit on things and there is no limit to how much people can learn, how much they can grow, and what they can be. Awe, wonder, curiosity, and humility, all would be undermined if one believed one were perfect. Seek growth and improvement. Seek excellence. But give up the idea of perfection.

Growth is a value; it is a value that if pursued leads to positive psychological well-being. If people believe they are growing or improving, they are happier than if they believe they are stagnant or without direction (Ryff and Singer, 2005).

Believing in the possibility and desirability of growth reflects an openness and willingness to change and an appreciation of the value of change. Valuing growth is therefore connected with valuing openness, a character quality described either under the love of learning. And of course one won't see the value in growth and learning if one believes that one is perfect or that one possesses the absolute truth about things. Valuing growth reflects humility and implies an awareness and acceptance of one's limitations and willingness to admit to mistakes. In contrast, arrogance, closed-mindedness, and egocentric thinking (the opposite of critical thinking) resist growth.

People may believe that things can (or will) get better in the future, especially regarding their own lives, or people may believe that their situation is hopeless and going from bad to worse. People may believe in the possibility of growth or they may not. The former are optimists; the latter are pessimists. Believing in the possibility of growth and improvement is one way to define the character trait of optimism.

If people believe that they can improve themselves—that they can grow and progress in their lives—they stand a much better chance of success. Believing that one cannot improve maximizes the chances of failure and stagnation. Both optimism and pessimism are self-fulfilling prophecies. Each way of thinking gets reinforced in life since each tends to produce the very results that that mode of thinking anticipates—either constructive (optimistic) or defeatist (pessimistic) behaviors. As the psychiatrist Thomas Szasz stated, "It may not be true that where there's a will there's a way, but if there ain't no will, there ain't no way."

Seligman, who has studied the attitudes of optimism and pessimism extensively, argues that the belief that one can positively affect the future is critical to optimistic thinking. Optimism involves a strong sense of self-efficacy. Hence, optimists have a strong and positive sense of self-responsibility regarding the creation of their future. Seligman defines optimism as a way of thinking involving the beliefs that misfortunes are relatively short-lived, limited in their effect, and due to external circumstances.

Not only do pessimists, on the other hand, have negative images about the future, they believe that they cannot positively affect any change in what is to come. They believe that they are doomed to failure. They feel hopeless and helpless. Seligman defines pessimism as involving the beliefs that misfortunes have long-term and pervasive effects and are the fault of the individual. Seligman contends that depression is primarily due to pessimistic thinking (Seligman, 1998).

Seligman sees optimism and pessimism as "habits of thought," which obey the laws of reinforcement. He believes, based on considerable research, that these habits of thought can be changed through re-learning, education, and training.

Psychological studies reveal that optimism is always better than pessimism. Optimists tackle problems; they approach life. Pessimists, because they anticipate failure, run from problems; they avoid life. Because optimists look at life's challenges in the eye, they are more realistic. Because pessimists run and avoid, their perceptions of reality are impoverished. Optimists have more positive feelings about life. Pessimists have more negative feelings. Since positive feelings contribute to increased

performance and creativity, optimists experience hope toward the future whereas pessimists feel despair (Reading, 2004; Carver and Scheier, 2005; Fredrickson, 2005).

Optimists believe that they are capable of positively affecting their future. Pessimists do not believe that through their efforts they can create a positive future. Because a pessimist is a defeatist about life and has a low level of confidence in his abilities, a pessimist may resort to dishonest or unethical behaviors to achieve his goals.

Believing that goals can be achieved through personal effort will make one much less susceptible to resorting to disingenuous or easy ways around life's challenges.

In summary, the values are growth, development, and improvement. The associated virtues are optimism, hopefulness, courage, flexibility and a willingness to change, humility, hopefulness, and self-confidence. The vices include pessimism, perceived helplessness, nihilism, defeatism, inferiority, and arrogance.

Social Conscience and Mutual Respect

"No man is an island entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main…any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in mankind, and therefore never send to know for whom the bells tolls; it tolls for thee."
John Donne

"I see the whole of humankind becoming a single, integrated organism...
I look upon each of us as I would an individual cell in the organism,
each of us playing his or her respective role."
Jonas E. Salk

Tsze-Kung asked, saying, "Is there one word which may serve as a rule of practice for all one's life?" The Master said, "Is not 'reciprocity' such a word?
What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others."
Analects of Confucius

"Social conscience" is an inner sense of concern for other human beings—for humanity. "Respect" is defined as high or special regard or esteem. "Mutual" can be defined as experienced or done by each of two or more parties toward the other or others—having the same specified relationship to each other. And "reciprocity" can be defined as the practice of exchanging things with one another for mutual benefit.

Emphasizing the importance of social conscience in education is critical in counter-acting certain negative trends in both popular culture and higher education today. Aside from education being increasingly seen as simply a means to an end, the ends that education serves are increasingly self-serving. Financial and professional advancement are certainly important considerations in life, but such goals are self-centered. Even personal enlightenment and enrichment are, to a degree, self-centered. Along with facilitating individual achievement, education should also serve the purpose of instilling in students the desire to contribute to human society and the betterment of the human condition. We need to counter-balance the "cult of individualism" that

pervades our culture. In an age of increasing globalization and global consciousness, this value is all the more important (Anderson, 2001, 2003).

Students need to consider in their own career choices and educational development the contributions they can potentially make to the welfare of humanity. They should consider what they can do to make the world a better place.

One of the central driving forces in history is the human desire for recognition and respect (Fukuyama, 1992). Everyone wants to be respected. Everyone wants to be valued. Student performance improves when students are given attention, respect, encouragement, and recognition for their efforts to learn. In like manner, faculty and teachers want to be acknowledged by students for their education, professional position, wisdom, and the numerous ways in which they attempt to help students.

Mutual respect generates a climate for cooperation and collaboration. Without mutual respect, or as Francis Fukuyama states, "reciprocal recognition", society falls apart and education does as well. It is important in this regard to understand that although we have the right to expect respect from others, we have the responsibility to show it to others; one cannot expect to receive what one doesn't give. This is a principle of social justice.

Civility is a key feature of mutually respectful relations between students and teachers. Hostility, personal insults and attacks, vulgarity, rudeness, and demeaning language all undermine an atmosphere of mutual respect. In order to foster mutual respect, most academic institutions now have rules for civility between teachers and students. Sadly, lack of civility has become an increasing concern with the emergence of online education which allows people to express critical comments and negative feelings toward others without having to face them in person. (If nothing else, such behavior is an indication of lack of courage.) To work against this negative trend, it is important to ask oneself how one might improve a social interaction or relationship that has become strained or hostile. Can one look at the situation from the other person's point of view before going on the attack? Has one at least made an effort to move toward a peaceful and constructive interaction? Such behavior demonstrates open-mindedness and the transcendence of ego-centricity. No one is suggesting that a person shouldn't defend himself if unfairly criticized or attacked. But the injured party must first strive to ascertain if his perception of being wronged is accurate and then consider how best to deal fairly with the situation.

Many concepts of justice and fairness derive from the idea of reciprocity. The expressions "An eye for an eye," "Do unto others," and "You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours" all describe social reciprocities. Reciprocity is a key principle underlying the idea of partnerships (Lombardo and Lombardo, 2008). Reciprocity—developing mutually beneficial relationships and forms of exchange—is a key factor in the evolution of human societies (Bloom, 2000; Wright, 2000). Whereas cultivating win-win relationships is an expression of reciprocity, viewing life as win-lose encounters reinforces competition and excessive individualism. Reciprocity also underlies the Eastern principle of karma—a form of cosmic justice: "What goes round, comes round." Reciprocity highlights the essential dimensions of cooperation and interdependency within human life.

At the most basic level, integrating the idea of reciprocity into one's philosophy and behavior means acknowledging one's interdependency with the rest of humanity,

with nature, and even with the cosmos. It means giving up the mistaken notion of extreme individualism: the mistaken idea that each of us is a separate self-contained entity. No one truly does anything alone; everyone depends on others. In our emerging global society, it is critical to recognize our interdependency with others. Reciprocity as an ethical duty means giving to others, knowing full well that others (and society as a whole) have given to you.

In summary, the values reviewed above are the betterment of human society, reciprocity and justice, and mutual respect. The virtues are social conscience, a sense of responsibility and desire to contribute to society, empathy, care and concern for humankind, civility, and respect for others. The vices are disrespectfulness, narcissism and self-centeredness, entitlement, and insensitivity to others.

The Creative and Adventurous Spirit

"Life isn't a mountain that has a summit. Nor a game that has a final score. Life is an endless unfolding, and if we wish it to be, an endless process of self-discovery, an endless and unpredictable dialogue between our own potentialities and the life situations in which we find ourselves."
John W. Gardner

"Be brave enough to live life creatively. The creative is the place where no one else has ever been. You have to leave the city of your comfort and go into the wilderness of your intuition. You can't get there by bus, only by hard work and risk and by not quite knowing what you're doing. What you'll discover will be wonderful.
What you'll discover will be yourself."
Alan Alda

"God is creating at every moment of the world's existence in and
through the perpetually endowed creativity of the very stuff of the world."
Arthur Peacocke

To "create" is defined as to bring into existence—to produce through imaginative skill. "Creative" means the power to create. To "invent" means to devise by thinking—to produce something for the first time through imagination, ingenious thinking, or experimentation. "Adventurous" means inclined to undertake new and daring enterprises.

Educators want students to go beyond simple memorization and regurgitation. They hope that students achieve more than simply the capacity to follow the rules and "talk the talk." As noted above, the love of learning and the processes of thinking and dialogue all facilitate deeper understanding than rote memorization does. Students must first learn the fundamentals, though, which involve some amount of memorization before they begin to move to higher levels of learning, competence, and performance.

The capacity for creativity follows this same principle: those who are creative first learn the basics, the vocabulary, the language, and standard answers before they move

beyond them (Koestler, 1964; Lombardo, 2011e). People who have been acknowledged for their creativity always apprenticed with someone, even if only virtually through the study of the master's works. Study, hard work, and immersion in the subject matter are necessary for the creative process to emerge and flourish. As Edison stated, "Genius is one per cent inspiration and ninety-nine per cent perspiration."

It can be argued that once a subject matter has been mastered, creativity is the ultimate goal in the educational development of students. Knowledge is a "living reality" that grows through the active and creative contributions of humans, or it dies and becomes dogma. Because educators value the application of learning to life, they hope that students will take what they learn and engage reality with this knowledge, producing whatever unique products come of this learning. In fact, educators can always tell if a student really understands something—that is, if he demonstrates deep learning—if they see that the student can creatively use the knowledge to weave new thoughts, new connections, and new applications. Valuing creativity means teaching students how to become active generators of ideas and applications based on their learning.

It might seem strange to treat creativity as a character virtue. Isn't creativity a skill, a trait, a propensity with which an individual is simply born? And how can creativity be understood as something ethical within the make-up of a person? But consider the proposition that creativity is a capacity that can be cultivated and developed, one that, as noted above, only emerges through studious effort in first understanding a given domain of inquiry. Further, creativity is connected with an adventurous and unorthodox spirit which also can be purposefully enhanced. Creativity requires courage and courage doesn't come easy; it requires the tenacious capacity to venture into the unknown, the different, the unconventional, and not be frightened or intimidated by it. Venturing into the unknown frequently brings with it mistakes and false starts, hence creative individuals—who invariably demonstrate a spirit of adventure and quality of unconventionality—are willing to take chances and make mistakes. Also, this openness to (and willingness to learn from) the possibilities of error characterizes critical thinkers and wise individuals (see below).

As a general principle in the psychology of motivation, people show the oppositional inclinations toward security, safety, stability, and certainty versus change, growth, adventure, and risk-taking (Maslow, 1968; Lombardo, 2006a, Chapter One). Though generally people find going to extremes aversive in either direction, the creative individual, probably more so than average, pursues and embraces the latter motivational tendencies. Taking risks can be positive, though, for if the dimensions of security and stability rule the human mind too much, individuals become closed-minded, dogmatic, and defensive, which inhibits deep learning, effective critical thinking, and ultimately the development of wisdom (again, see below). Further, without a desire, at least to some degree, to embrace the novel, the transformative, and the different (qualities of the creative, adventuresome spirit), one's capacity to deal with the future (an arena of ongoing change) is severely inhibited (Lombardo, 2009c; Lombardo, 2011e).

In summary, the values and virtues emphasized above include the creative and the novel, the importance of growth and personal change, adventure and risk taking in

life, and bravery and courage. The vices include passivity, conformity, incapacitating fear, excessive security motivation, closed-mindedness, and personal stagnation.

Love and the Appreciative Spirit

"Love is a better teacher than duty."
Albert Einstein

"Love recognizes no barriers. It jumps hurdles, leaps fences,
penetrates walls to arrive at its destination full of hope."
Maya Angelou

"A coward is incapable of exhibiting love; it is the prerogative of the brave."
Mahatma Gandhi

"A loving heart is the beginning of all knowledge."
Thomas Carlyle

As defined earlier, "love" is an intense feeling of deep affection—a great interest or pleasure in something. To "appreciate" means to recognize the quality, significance, or magnitude of—to be thankful or show gratitude for—to admire greatly.

The central importance of the capacity to love is a central theme in numerous theories of psychological and ethical development. Maslow highlighted it in his theory of growth motivation and self-actualization (1968). Seligman (2002) identifies "love and humanity" as one of the six central character virtues, and lists the virtue of "gratitude" as one of the sub-categories under the more general trait of transcendence. Love and gratitude are critical to the quality of life and to human happiness, and these connected qualities are accomplishments in the ethical development of people. Eric Fromm in his classic study and highly popular book, *The Art of Loving* (1956), argued that love is a skill and capacity that can be purposefully developed, rather than simply a feeling that comes over an individual. Love is active, rather than passive. Love is an art; it is an area of excellence; it is something one learns to do well. Although we may have spontaneous and simple feelings of love, higher love needs cultivation and practice. Care theories of ethics (Gilligan, 1982) highlight the importance of love, empathy, and compassion as a foundation for ethical behavior; can we feel the ethical impulse toward others without love? For Barbara Fredrickson, love empowers thinking, creativity, and intellectual functioning (2005). To recall from above, love and passion are essential elements in the virtue of discipline and determination and the pursuit of future goals. Love fuels, energizes, and maintains the tenacious spirit. As one final example, inspired by the work of Riane Eisler (1987, 1995), I have identified love as an essential ethical character virtue that needs to be continuously cultivated in happy, constructive, growth-promoting partnerships, in particular, marriage. (Lombardo and Lombardo, 2008). Eisler, in fact, sees love as foundational to a healthy human society.

Even granting all of the above points, it could seem strange that love is listed as an essential character virtue for academic success. What does love have to do with doing well in school? The answer is simple: Without the passion, appreciation, and intrinsically motivating quality of love, success in anything is doomed. One must love what one pursues, or else there is no fire and energy in the endeavor. Specifically regarding academic success, recall that two key virtues listed above are "love of learning and knowledge" and "love of thinking." Below I will add another important trait, "love of wisdom"—which is the core etymological meaning, derived from the ancient Greeks, of the word "philosophy." We may think of academic success as built upon cognitive and intellectual capacities, but following a more holistic view of the educated mind, there is an essential emotional-motivational dimension to the development of academic excellence. We love what we do well; we do well at what we love.

In summary, the virtues and values highlighted above include love, appreciation, gratitude, and a passion and zest for life. The vices include indifference or apathy, lack of passion for life, and a lack of appreciation and gratitude.

Transcendence

"...it is precisely in the world of matter and energy that we encounter transcendence,
a principal connotation of what people refer to as spirituality."
Ray Kurzweil

"What is transcendence?
Transcendence is a never-ending climbing process,
a dynamic reality."
Sri Chinmoy

"Transcendence" generally means the state of excelling or surpassing or going beyond the usual limits; in the following discussion it will specifically mean going beyond egocentric or self-centered concerns.

As I described earlier, Seligman lists transcendence as one of the six key virtues, essential to realizing purpose and meaning in life. Further, I noted that although education has been excessively marketed as a self-serving process, we should equally highlight the importance of education as a vehicle by which individuals can be prepared to contribute to society as a whole. Schools should emphasize the value of transcendent goals and students should pursue them. In fact, professional goals should also embody transcendence: students—traditional and non-traditional—should consider how a career or vocation is going to contribute to the betterment of human society.

Transcendence can also imply identification with ecological-environmental concerns and even the life of the cosmos as a whole. Naturalists see the importance and value of the environment in which we live and upon which we depend; great spiritual and religious thinkers (and scientists as well) aspire toward getting in a resonance or communion with the universe as a whole. Transcendence, then, generally

means grasping the importance of the whole (social, ecological, cosmological) rather than just focusing on individual concerns.

The contemporary positive psychologist, Mihalyi Csikszentmihalyi, has proposed a new vision of the self—an "evolving self"—for the new millennium (1993). His theory of the "evolving self" emphasizes the need to transcend the egocentric constraints within us. Csikszentmihalyi argues for a new type of self in the future, one that does not identify with or accept the selfish needs of genes (the body), culture, or the ego. He refers to such evolving selves as "transcenders." Transcenders not only recognize and value the interconnectedness of all things in nature, they also see and value the evolutionary flow and progression of life and the universe. Transcenders get the big picture of space and time, and place themselves within such a holistic context.

Of special note, transcendence stretches the boundaries of the ego and expands consciousness; it is a necessary condition for a holistic and integrative perspective on reality. This level of consciousness is a key dimension of an educated mind—a mind that can see beyond the immediate here and now (Lombardo and Richter, 2004; Lombardo, 2011b). It is a key dimension of the character virtue of wisdom. And finally, it should be noted that love—the passionate concern for something or someone beyond oneself—motivates and energizes the journey of transcendence.

In summary, the virtues and values highlighted in this section are transcendence and seeing oneself within the context of the whole. The vices are self-centeredness and narrowness in perspective in space and time (for example, presentism and ethnocentrism).

Holism, Temperance, and Balance

"He who lives in harmony with himself lives in harmony with the universe."
Marcus Aurelius

"Happiness is not a matter of intensity
but of balance, order, rhythm and harmony."
Thomas Merton

"It is better to rise from life as from a banquet—
neither thirsty nor drunken."
Aristotle

"The whole is more than the sum of its parts."
Aristotle

"Holistic" is defined as relating to or concerned with wholes, or with complete systems rather than the analysis of, treatment of, or dissection into parts. "Temperance" in the general sense means moderation or self-restraint. "Balance" can be defined as equilibrium and a harmonious arrangement or proportion of parts.

A basic argument in this paper is that education should contribute to the total development of the person, not just intellectual skills and academic knowledge but the entire personal identity, including character traits, attitudes, values, sense of self, and emotions. Education should be holistic (Lombardo, 2011b). If—as most educators believe—learning and knowledge have value and relevance to all of life, then that should include all aspects of personal growth. To simply become informed, skillful, and intelligent—all cognitive capacities—isn't enough. Psychopaths can possess highly developed cognitive abilities but that does not make them admirable or good people. Even the literature on critical thinking shows that aside from developing the skills of thinking, ideal critical thinkers also develop certain general character traits, emotional dispositions, and attitudes. As just one example, ideal critical thinkers seem fair-minded, which is connected with a sense of justice. As Paul and Elder (2006) note there is a whole set of ethical character virtues (subsuming emotional, motivational, personal, and cognitive traits) connected with the development of critical thinking skills. One cannot realize excellence in critical thinking (a cognitive domain) without developing the character of the total person.

Aside from being used to refer to the total make-up of an individual, "holistic" is frequently used to mean a broad, comprehensive, and integrative understanding of reality as a whole. In this sense, a holistic understanding of reality and the practice of the virtue of transcendence align together; one must pursue the latter to realize the former. One of the great deficiencies in contemporary education and vocational-professional training is excessive specialization and narrowness of study (Wilson, 1998). Even if students in higher education receive a broad sampling of courses from different disciplines, it is very rare that any systematic effort is made to synthesize the ideas, information, and principles across disciplines of study (Lombardo, 2011b). The pursuit and development of wisdom, though, requires the integrative synthesis of knowledge. Deep learning—as one of the key foundational dimensions of wisdom—involves synthetic and integrative study and thinking as well. Relatively comprehensive and integrative knowledge demonstrates balance in thought and perspective.

Aside from its role in realizing an integrative or holistic understanding of the world, balance, is a key character virtue in educational and personal development for a number of other reasons. Although in the above section on the love of thinking, the rational capacities associated with critical thinking were emphasized, intuition and insight are equally significant modes of understanding. I will use the terms "insight" and "intuition" as synonymous; either term will mean to apprehend or understand the meaning or significance of something in a relatively instantaneous and holistic fashion without consciously going through a series of analytical and logical steps. As the psychologist Richard Nisbett (2003) has demonstrated, Eastern thought puts more of an emphasis on understanding or perceiving the "Gestalt" (the whole pattern) of a reality, whereas Western thought emphasizes linear, analytical thinking. Contemporary wisdom research comes to a similar conclusion: Eastern notions of wisdom highlight intuition; Western concepts of wisdom highlight rational, linear competence (Takahashi and Overton, 2005). The process of creativity, discussed earlier, seems to involve the capacity to integrate both rational, linear thought and problem solving with holistic insight and intuition (Lombardo, 2011e). As Nisbett argues—and I would concur—the most efficacious and well rounded mode of cognitive competence within an individual

would be to combine and synthesize both logical-analytical and intuitive-holistic modes of thinking and understanding.

As another example of the importance of balance, we should note that Seligman lists "temperance" as one of the central character virtues. Philosophers as culturally diverse as Aristotle and Confucius emphasized the importance of the "golden mean" and moderation in their respective teachings. As Aristotle argued in his theory of character virtues, when traits or tendencies are taken to extremes they become vices rather than virtues. Courage, for example, is a balance or middle point between timidness and restraint on one end of the continuum and rashness and foolhardiness on the other. Similarly, for Confucius—following a Yin-yang logic of harmony and complementarity within life—the good life is to be found in a balance or dynamic equilibrium of opposing traits and dispositions (Lombardo, 2006a, Chapter three).

The contemporary psychologist, Robert Sternberg, argues for a balance theory of wisdom. As he argues, wisdom involves a balancing of intra-personal, inter-personal, and extra-personal concerns; of long and short-term consequences and goals; and of adaptation, changing, and switching environments. Wisdom involves balancing the importance of individual concerns and desires with the needs of others and the needs of the environment; considering what might be good in the short run versus the long run; and, given life's challenges, rationally ascertaining whether one should change oneself, change the environment, or opt for a new and different reality within which to live (Sternberg, 1998, 2001).

The importance of balance as it relates to wisdom brings us to a critical issue in understanding ethics and character virtues. As is often the case, when people are presented with challenges and problems in life, and engage in thoughtful deliberation regarding what the best or most ethical course of action is, they often find themselves having to weigh the relative importance of different (and often conflicting) values. Should one be honest or kind? Should one emphasize discipline and rigor, or empathy and flexibility? Although all the character virtues listed above may seem important, if not essential in life, one cannot expect to practice all of them without there being conflicts and contradictions among them in everyday decision making. Perhaps it is more accurate to describe the ethical challenges of life not so much as choosing between right and wrong, but rather as choosing between two different rights, neither of which may seem absolutely perfect.

As is often the case, people make decisions based on one particular virtue or value, and yet in so doing slight some other virtue or value that should have also been considered in the decision. A key feature of wisdom is synthesizing (balancing) all of the relevant values and all of the relevant facts and considerations, and arriving at a solution that is ethically and factually comprehensive and integrative. Developing the capacity to realize such decisions should be a key dimension within education, which is, after all, (or should be) primarily concerned with learning how to lead the good life.

In summary, the key virtues highlighted in this section are holistic personal development, balance, and temperance. The vices would be going to extremes, being too one-sided or narrow in perspective or modes of understanding, and developing certain aspects of one's personality and character to the exclusion of other equally important personal qualities.

Wisdom and the Ethical Application of Knowledge to Life

"Knowledge is power…"
Francis Bacon

"A seeker after truth climbs a mountain to ask the guru
at the top what the secret of the universe is.
The answer is 'everything converges on oneness.'
The climber replies 'Surely you are kidding.'
'You mean it doesn't?' the guru asks."
Joel Kupperman

"Wisdom is the highest expression of self-development and future consciousness. It is
the continually evolving understanding of and fascination with the big picture of life, of
what is important, ethical, and meaningful, and the desire and creative capacity to apply
this understanding to enhance the well being of life,
both for oneself and others."
Tom Lombardo

Knowledge obtained in school can be perceived as irrelevant or relevant to life. Individuals can gain knowledge and never consider how that knowledge can be applied to life. On the other hand, a person can view new knowledge as contributing to the improvement of his own life, if not the lives of others. Perhaps no one understood the significance of the acquisition of knowledge better than Francis Bacon when he famously declared that "Knowledge is power…"

Further, students frequently take classes and learn information that has great significance to their pre-existing beliefs, yet they may or may not apply this new knowledge to their personal beliefs. Personal beliefs may be undermined as a consequence of information or knowledge learned in school—a person may even be significantly transformed by what he learns—or the reverse may occur: personal beliefs may stay the same; the person may stay the same, impervious to whatever information is acquired in school. The former case typifies what happens in deep learning; the latter what happens in surface learning. The former is preferable to the latter.

Educators value, and frequently emphasize in their teaching and writing, the relevance and applicability of learning and knowledge to life. Although educators intrinsically enjoy the processes of learning and teaching, they also believe that the acquisition of knowledge improves the quality of life, enhances and enriches consciousness, and can even transform a person's character. Educators attempt to communicate this message to students.

Valuing learning and knowledge for its relevance and applicability to life is not the same thing as valuing a degree because it will improve one's professional and financial situation. In the former case the knowledge is applied to real life situations and to improving one's beliefs and practices. In the latter case, the information acquired in

gaining a degree simply leads to a better job. Has the knowledge been applied to deep engagement with life, or is the degree simply a means to some pragmatic end?

In order for information to be retained and to have real value in improving the quality of life, it is important that students actively work at connecting the knowledge learned in school to life and to pre-existing beliefs and values. Although teachers should strive toward helping students to see the connections between knowledge and life, to a significant degree it is the responsibility of students to search out the connections. This is part of active learning. This is what happens in deep learning.

Both "the love of learning" and striving to see "the relevance and applicability of knowledge to life" enhance the process of learning and the growth of knowledge in the human mind. The more a person enjoys learning and the more a person attempts to apply new ideas and information to life the more effective and relevant the learning.

A person who applies knowledge to life acquires the virtue of educated or informed competence. A person who applies what they learn to life in an ethical and broad, holistic fashion acquires the virtue of wisdom.

The virtue of wisdom is often identified as the highest potential level of human development (Sternberg, 1990; Sternberg and Jordan, 2005; *The Wisdom Page*). It is important to note, however, that wisdom should be seen as a journey or process rather than some fixed end. People grow in wisdom throughout their lives; it is a never-ending ascent. Again, there is no perfection.

The study of wisdom has a long history, beginning with ancient philosophy, religion, and spirituality. Through the ages cultures around the world have attempted to define what it is. Clearly it has been revered and it is one of Seligman's six universal character virtues. More recently, there has been a renaissance of interest and study in the nature of wisdom; philosophers, psychologists, spiritual thinkers, and educators have attempted to delineate its basic features (Lombardo, 2006c; Lombardo, 2009c).

It can be argued that wisdom should be the central or over-riding goal of all higher education; it should be the pinnacle of the educational experience toward which all students aspire; and it should be what educators universally model and practice in their profession. The reason why the pursuit and practice of wisdom should be the main focus of education is self-evident. It is the highest form of knowledge and human development, integrating heart and mind, and ethics and practice. This conclusion aligns with the idea that that the development of character virtues and ethical values, rather than simply the accumulation of knowledge and skills, should be at the core of education and academic inquiry (Gardner, 1999; Gardner, 2008; Weigl, 2002).

It can also be argued that wisdom is exactly what we need more of to successfully address the challenges and problems facing society today. We have plenty of money, plenty of technologies, plenty of creativity, but we are lacking in the ethics and wisdom to effectively employ these resources and capacities (Lombardo, 2011a; Lombardo, 2011b; Lombardo and Blackwood, 2011). The adoption of wisdom as a goal of higher education addresses the need for learning and knowledge acquisition to be applied to the benefit of human society as a whole, rather than to the benefit of the individual alone. Many contemporary educators agree that the teaching and cultivation of wisdom would greatly benefit not only modern society but educational practice as well (Sternberg, 2001). If leaders practiced the virtue of wisdom in problem solving and

decision making in our modern world, we would make great progress in solving the social problems of today and creating a better world for tomorrow.

Let us return to the question of what wisdom is. The answer is not that complicated but we must elaborate and expand upon the opening definition included at the beginning of this section:

- First, wisdom is something acquired through ongoing deep learning and critical thinking throughout one's life; the foundation of wisdom is the love of learning and thinking—wisdom builds upon these two academic character virtues. Consequently wisdom is associated with openness, humility, curiosity, wonder, and awe.

- Second, the pursuit of wisdom involves trying to figure out what is really important in life; that is, wisdom involves thinking about values and evaluating different values. Wisdom connects with an ethical and holistic mindset; it is seeing the value in thinking about values.

- Third, wisdom involves applying this knowledge to life; wisdom is highly informed practical knowledge. Wisdom, in fact, grows through dealing with the challenges and problems of life. Wisdom pulls together the knowledge acquired in the past and applies it to making the best possible decisions for the future. Wisdom involves seeing the consequences of things. Wisdom is heightened future consciousness.

- Fourth, various studies have demonstrated that the pursuit and development of wisdom leads to happiness in life; wise people enjoy the pursuit and practice of wisdom. Wisdom is the pursuit of the good life.

- Fifth, wisdom transforms the human personality; there is an identifiable set of personality traits connected with wisdom. Wise people show great integrity and self-awareness, and engage reality with enthusiasm and optimism (wise people hold the belief that they can positively affect the future through their actions).

- Next, and critically so, wisdom is not just an intellectual or practical ability or repository of knowledge, but an ethical concept—in fact a virtue. Wisdom involves the ethical and constructive application of knowledge to life. Wisdom involves compassion and empathy for others; wise people use their knowledge, not only to bring themselves happiness, but to help others realize it as well.

- Finally, wisdom, as is illustrated in the above points, subsumes many other character virtues. That is, in order to become wise one needs to develop a whole set of virtues. Aside from love of thinking and learning, and holism and transcendence, wisdom also requires courage, honesty, self-understanding, optimism, self-responsibility, and respect for others.

Wisdom has been placed as the final—in fact, culminating—ethical character virtue because it pulls together most of the other virtues discussed already and because it can serve as the central or all-encompassing virtue to pursue and practice in becoming an educated person—in living a life of excellence and achieving success.

In summary, to further illustrate how other character virtues connect with wisdom, consider the following list of distinctive features of wisdom (Lombardo, 2006c; Lombardo, 2007c; Lombardo, 2011b; Lombardo and Blackwood, 2011):

- Deep learning and understanding about life and reality
- The capacity to synthesize and see the big picture—at a global and cosmic level; understanding of the connectivity of things
- A sense of connection between the self and other people, human society as a whole, nature, and the cosmos; compassion and empathy for others
- A synthesis of past and future—temporal expansiveness; seeing long-term consequences of actions
- Highly developed practical ability—applying knowledge to concrete problems in life; engagement with the world
- The application of knowledge, guided by ethics, to the well-being of both oneself and others; ethics in thinking
- Multi-faceted thinking skills and modes of understanding—rational and intuitive
- Capacity to see multiple points of view; open-mindedness
- A self-stimulating, evolving, and open system of knowledge balanced and driven by questions, doubt, and a degree of uncertainty
- Curiosity, inquisitiveness, and wonder; a love of learning and thinking
- A sense of happiness and well-being associated with the pursuit and use of wisdom; optimistic pursuit of good life
- Creative synthesis and application of knowledge
- Courage, integrity, honesty, fair-mindedness, humility, and reverence
- Reflects contemporary knowledge
- Synthesis of heart and mind
- Exceptional self-awareness and the capacity for self-reflection; self-actualizing and self-transcendence; a widening away from the egocentric
- Ongoing self-accomplishment

A curriculum organized around the facilitation of the growth of wisdom provides a center of gravity around which content knowledge (holistic, comprehensive, and integrative), cognitive skills, and ethical character virtues can be brought together. Further, in so far as the cultivation of wisdom serves life in general, it provides a foundation of personal and professional success and supports the goal of life-long learning.

Summary and Conclusion

To review, the central idea presented in this paper is that the development of character virtues is the key to academic success. These character virtues, in fact, define the essence of academic success or academic excellence. Becoming an educated person amounts to pursuing, practicing, and strengthening these virtues. Principles of deep learning, critical thinking, and positive psychology are essential to realizing these virtues.

The character virtues identified and described include: the love of learning and the love of thinking, discipline, honesty, fair-mindedness, and wisdom. Wisdom is seen as the highest and most comprehensive of the character virtues, one that should be modeled and developed within the educational process. It requires wisdom to balance and integrate all of the other academic character virtues.

Further, the development of these character virtues addresses a variety of general life concerns, such as happiness, meaning and purpose in life. Furthermore, character virtues such as optimism, courage, and self-responsibility support a constructive and positive approach to the future. Ethics is the key to academic excellence, as well as excellence in life.

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