

CHAPTER 7

Character Education

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Character education is both popular and controversial. In this chapter, a psychological approach to understanding its central constructs is proposed. We review philosophical conceptions of virtues and conclude that character education cannot be distinguished from rival approaches on the basis of a distinctive ethical theory. We review several educational issues, such as the manner in which the case is made for character education, the implications of broad conceptions of the field, whether character education is best defined by treatments or outcomes, and whether character education is

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best pursued with direct or indirect pedagogies, a debate that is placed into historical context. We note that character education requires robust models of character psychology and review several new approaches that show promise. Six general approaches to character education are then considered. Integrative Ethical Education is described as a case study to illustrate theoretical, curricular, and implementation issues. We summarize issues of implementation that are challenges to research and practice. We conclude with several challenges to character education, chief of which is the need to find a distinctive orientation in the context of positive youth development. Problem-free is not fully prepared, but fully prepared is not morally adept.

The moral formation of children is one of the foundational goals of socialization. The ambitions that most parents have for their children naturally include the development of important moral dispositions. Most parents

want to raise children to become persons of a certain kind, persons who possess traits that are desirable and praiseworthy, whose personalities are imbued with a strong ethical compass. Moreover, other socialization agents and institutions share this goal. The development of moral character is considered a traditional goal of formal education. It is a justification for the work of youth organizations, clubs, and athletic teams. It is the object of homily and religious exhortation. It shows up in presidential speeches. It has preoccupied writers, educators, curriculum experts, and cultural scolds. The number of titles published on character and its role in private and public life has increased dramatically over past decades. So have curricula for teaching the virtues in both schools and homes. Several prominent foundations have thrown their resources behind the cause, and professional meetings dedicated to character education are marked by significant commitment, energy, and fervor. In 2003 a new periodical, the *Journal of Research in Character Education*, was launched to bring focus to scholarly inquiry.

Yet, for all the apparent consensus about the need to raise children of strong moral character, and for all the professional attention devoted to the cause, it is a striking fact that character education occupies contested ground in American society. Indeed, the issues that surround character education are riven with such partisan rivalry that the very terms of reference seem to function like code words that betray certain ideological and political commitments. Whether one is for or against the character education movement is presumably a signal of whether one is a liberal or a conservative, whether one is sympathetic toward traditional or progressive trends in education, whether one thinks the moral life is more a matter of cultivating excellence than submitting to obligation or whether moral evaluation is more about agents than about acts, or whether one prefers the ethics of Aristotle and classical philosophy to that of Kant and the "Enlightenment Project."

This ideological division sometimes surfaces as a technical argument about pedagogy, for example, whether one should endorse direct or indirect methods of instruction. It shows up in how one conceives fundamental questions concerning, for example, the source of our moral values or the epistemological status of our moral claims. It shows up in our understanding of the very goals and purposes of education in liberal democratic polities and in our understanding of what an ethical life consists of: what it means to be a moral agent,

to possess virtue, and to live well the life that is good for one to live. It shows up, too, in the sort of developmental literatures, constructs, and metaphors that one finds compelling.

There is a certain value, of course, in casting large, fundamental, and deeply felt perspectives into such stark relief. It often is useful to draw sharp boundaries around contesting points of view to discern better their strengths and weaknesses. Yet Dewey (1938) warned of the folly of construing educational options in terms of either/or. In so doing, he argued, one runs the danger of advancing one's view only in reaction against the rival, which means that one's vision is controlled unwittingly by that which one struggles against. "There is always the danger in a new movement," he writes, "that in rejecting the aims and methods of that which it would supplant, it may develop its principles negatively rather than positively and constructively" (p. 20), with the result that it fails thereby to address "a comprehensive, constructive survey of actual needs, problems and possibilities" (p. 8).

In this chapter, we review the literature on character education but in a way that avoids, we hope, the dangers of either/or. It is necessary, of course, to sketch the contours of the great debates that have characterized this field. Fortunately, however, there has emerged in recent years a literature that has attempted to bridge the conceptual and ideological divide (e.g., Benninga, 1991a, 1991b; Berkowitz & Oser, 1985; Goodman & Lesnick, 2001; Nucci, 1989; Ryan & Lickona, 1992), or at least to face it squarely. Our search is for the via media that provides, in Dewey's words, the "comprehensive, constructive survey of actual needs, problems and possibilities."

We do not approach our task in complete neutrality. Our own view is that character education would profit from advances in other domains of psychological science (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2005). Indeed, character is a concept with little theoretical meaning in contemporary psychology, although it has been the source of ethical reflection since antiquity. An approach to character education that is deeply "psychologized" would look for insights about moral functioning in contemporary literatures of cognitive and developmental science, in the literatures of motivation, social cognition, and personality. Researchers in these areas rarely draw out the implications of their work for understanding the moral dimensions of personality and its formation. Yet it is our contention that a considered understanding of what is

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required for effective character education will be forthcoming only when there emerges a robust character psychology that is deeply informed by advances in developmental, cognitive, and personality research. Moreover, effective character education will require deep integration with the educational psychology literatures that constitute the knowledge base for instructional best practice. In short, *character* education must be compatible with our best insights about psychological functioning; *character education* must be compatible with our best insights about teaching and learning (Lapsley & Power, 2005; Narvaez, 2005a).

In the next section, we take up important preliminary issues that establish the context for our review. First, we attempt to understand the various ways character has been conceptualized. Second, we discuss what is at stake with these different conceptualizations for the various theoretical, philosophical, and educational perspectives that have taken up positions on the question of moral character. Third, we attempt to place this discussion in a historical context. As we will see, there is an enduring quality to much of the debate around character education. Fourth, we review recent research on moral personality that could serve as a basis for an integrated psychology of character. Following this discussion, we review promising character education strategies, describe an integrated approach to ethical education, discuss various implementation issues that are common to character education, and outline possible futures for the field.

HOW IS CHARACTER DEFINED?

Character is derived from a Greek word that means “to mark,” as on an engraving. One’s character is an indelible mark of consistency and predictability. It denotes enduring dispositional tendencies in behavior. It points to something deeply rooted in personality, to its organizing principle that integrates behavior, attitudes, and values. There have been numerous attempts to define character more precisely. It is a “body of active tendencies and interests” that makes one “open, ready, warm to certain aims and callous, cold, blind to others” (Dewey & Tufts, 1910, p. 256). It is made up of a set of dispositions and habits that “patterns our actions in a relatively fixed way” (Niegorski & Ellrod, 1992, p. 143). It refers to the good traits that are on regular display (Wynne & Ryan,

1997). Character is an individual’s “general approach to the dilemmas and responsibilities of social life, a responsiveness to the world that is supported by emotional reactions to the distress of others, the acquisition of prosocial skills, knowledge of social conventions and construction of personal values” (Hay, Castle, Stimson, & Davies, 1995, p. 24). It includes the capacity for self-discipline and empathy (Etzioni, 1993; 1996). It allows ethical agents, as Baumrind (1999, p. 3) put it, “to plan their actions and implement their plans, to examine and choose among options, to eschew certain actions in favor of others, and to structure their lives by adopting congenial habits, attitudes and rules of conduct.”

As one can see, defining character is no straightforward matter. Still, one can point to habits, traits, and virtues as three concepts that are foundational to most traditional accounts of moral character. These concepts are interdependent and mutually implicative. Moral character, on this view, is a manifestation of certain personality *traits* called *virtues* that dispose one to *habitual* courses of action. Habits and traits carry a heavy semantic load in the history of psychology that complicates their being used in the context of character education with much conceptual clarity. Virtue is a notion derived from ethics but has very little traction in psychological science unless it is translated into terms such as “habits” and “traits” that are themselves larded with conceptual implications that are controversial.

The Problem with Habits

According to a traditional view, a habit is a disposition to respond to a situation in a certain way. Repeating a behavior or set of procedures over the course of socialization develops this disposition. But not only does right behavior serve to establish habits; they are its consequence as well. Persons of good character behave well without much temptation to do otherwise (W. J. Bennett, 1980), nor is their right behavior a matter of much conscious deliberation: “They are good by force of habit” (Ryan & Lickona, 1992, p. 20). Habits are sometimes used as synonyms for virtues and vices, as in the claim that “character is the composite of our good habits, or virtues, and our bad habits, or vices” (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999, p. 9), and habits also stand in for the dispositional (or “trait”) qualities of character.

The appeal for character educators of the role of habits in the moral life has important classical sources. In Book

II of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle (350/1985) takes up the nature and definition of virtues. He argues that moral virtue is not a natural part of the human endowment but must come about as a result of habituation. We acquire virtues, on this account, by exercising them. We learn what virtue requires by acting virtuously. No one has the prospect of becoming good unless one practices the good. This would not be unlike the acquisition of skill in the arts or in crafts. Just as individuals become “builders by building and harp players by playing the harp, so also, then, we become just by doing just actions, temperate by doing temperate actions, brave by doing brave actions” (1. 1103b).

According to Steutel and Spiecker (2004; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2005), the Aristotelian notion of habituation is best understood as learning by doing with regular and consistent practice under the guidance and authority of a virtuous tutor. This is not unlike the cultivation of skills through coached practice, although the affinity of skills and virtues is controversial (Peters, 1981; Ryle, 1972). The habits that result from Aristotelian habituation are permanent or settled dispositions to do certain kinds of things on a regular basis but automatically, without reflective choice, deliberation, or planning (Steutel & Spiecker, 2004). In our view, there is a way of understanding Aristotelian habits that is completely compatible with contemporary models of social cognition and cognitive science, including the requirement of automaticity (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2004). For example, Aristotelian habituation can be understood by reference to developing expertise and skill development, notions that underwrite an integrative approach to ethical education that we discuss later (Narvaez, 2005a).

However, retaining the language of habits comes at a cost. When the notion of habits is invoked in the present context, what comes to mind is not classical ethical theory but a certain strand of behavioral learning theory whose core epistemological assumptions have long been challenged. It is linked with an epistemology that locates the developmental dynamic solely in the environment and not with the active child. It is linked with a mechanistic worldview that understands the person to be reactive, passive in his or her own development, and shaped by external contingencies arranged by others. It suggests that learning takes place from the outside *in*, where learning is the acquisition of a repertoire of conditioned responses—habit family hierarchies—that take little notice of the child’s own initiative in transforming

the learning environment in constructive acts of cognitive mediation.

Hence, an unvarnished behavioral account of habits is belied by contemporary models of developmental science that emphasize the cognitive-constructive activity of the developing child, who is in dynamic interaction with changing ecological contexts across the life course. Consequently, when the notion of habits is invoked to account for moral character, it seems at odds with what is known about developmental processes and constructivist best practice in education (Kohn, 1997). Although invoking habits seems to keep faith with a certain understanding of character in the classical sources, it also has made it more difficult for educators and researchers who reject the behaviorist paradigm to rally around the cause of character education with much enthusiasm (Nucci, 2001). This is unfortunate, in our view, because Aristotelian habits are not coterminous with the habits of behavioral theory. Aristotelian habituation is not coterminous with behavioral laws of learning that use the same term. Aristotelian perspectives contribute much of value to our current understanding of character and its formation, although an understanding adequate for psychological analysis will require translation into contemporary models of developmental and cognitive science.

The Problem with Traits

The language of traits also presents a terminological challenge. The notion that the dispositional features of character are carried by a set of personality traits called *virtues* is both deeply entrenched and controversial. In one sense, there is something completely obvious about trait language, at least in common parlance. Human personality is marked by important continuities. We are disposed to reach certain cognitive interpretations and judgments of events and to experience certain affective and behavioral responses in ways that are predictable and consistent, and these dispositional patterns we designate with the language of traits. We use trait terms to pick out the dispositional tendencies that serve as the basis for charting individual differences. Moreover, our differential valuation of these trait differences provides the basis for moral evaluation of persons. Some displays of individual differences warrant praise and encouragement, and we designate them virtues; others warrant condemnation and admonishment, and we designate those vices.

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This view of traits typically comes with two additional assumptions. One is that traits denote stable behavioral patterns that are evident across situations. Another is that traits coalesce as a unity within the person of moral or vicious character. Both assumptions are problematic. The first follows from a traditional understanding that traits-of-character generate dispositional tendencies that are on “regular display.” They are adhesive, deeply constitutional aspects of our personality, elements that are engraved “on our essence” (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999, p. 10) that bid us to respond to situations in ways typical of our character. Ryan and Bohlin’s example of character is instructive:

If we have the virtue of honesty, for example, when we find someone’s wallet on the pavement, we are characteristically disposed to track down its owner and return it. If we possess the bad habit, or vice, of dishonesty, again our path is clear: we pick it up, look to the right and left, and head for Tower Records or the Gap. (p. 9)

This example illustrates what we take to be the received view: Dispositions are habits; some habits are good and carry the honorific title “virtues,” other habits are bad and are designated vices; and habit possession clears the path to predictable and characteristic action. Indeed, a dispositional understanding of traits seems part of our folk theory of human personality and would seem to translate into a straightforward goal for character education: See to it that children come to possess the virtues as demonstrable traits in their personality; see to it that children come to possess good habits.

Yet, to say that moral dispositions coalesce in individuals as traits (or even as “habits”) strikes many researchers as a peculiar thing to say. Indeed, in personality research, the nomothetic trait approach has not fared well. This is because the cross-situational generality and consistency of trait behavior has not been demonstrated empirically, nor do trait models have much to say about how dispositions are affected by situational variability. As Mischel (1968, p. 177) put it, “Individuals show far less cross-situational consistency in their behavior than has been assumed by trait-state theories. The more dissimilar the evoking situations, the less likely they are to produce similar or consistent responses from the same individual.”

This is remarkably close to conclusions reached by Hartshorne and May (1928–1930) in their classic *Studies in the Nature of Character*, published in three volumes. In one “terse but explosive statement” (Chap-

man, 1977, p. 59), Hartshorne and May (1929) concluded that the

consistency with which he is honest or dishonest is a function of the situations in which he is placed so far as (1) these situations have common elements, (2) he has learned to be honest or dishonest in them, and (3) he has become aware of their honest or dishonest implications or consequences. (p. 379)

These studies indicated that the virtue of honesty is not an enduring habit marked indelibly on the essence of a child’s character, nor is dishonesty a similarly enduring vice. Children cannot be sorted cleanly into behavioral types on the basis of presumptive traits, habits, or dispositions. In these studies, traits associated with moral character showed scant cross-situational stability and very pronounced situational variability, which is precisely the findings that later personality researchers would report for other traits.

The pessimistic conclusions of Hartshorne and May (1928–1930) have been described variously as a “body blow” (Leming, 1997, p. 34) or “death blow” (Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg, 1989a, p. 127) to the cause of character education. Indeed, they are often cited by partisans of the cognitive developmental tradition as evidence of the poverty of the character approach (e.g., Kohlberg, 1987). Certainly these studies, along with Mischel’s (1990, 1999) analysis, seemed to cast doubt on the fundamental assumption of the received view of character traits. Consequently, the ostensible failure of traits in the study of personality made recourse to virtues an unappealing option for many researchers in moral psychology (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2004).

Still, one should not draw the wrong conclusions from evidence that traits show significant situational variability. What is doubted is not the fact that personality shows important dispositional continuity; what is doubted is the implausible view that trait possession invariably trumps the contextual hand that one is dealt. The reality of cross-situational variability is not a failure of the dispositional approach to personality; it is a failure only of the received view of traits. There is, indeed, coherence to personality, but personality coherence cannot be reduced simply to mere stability of behavior across time and setting (Cervone & Shoda, 1999). Instead, coherence is evident in the dynamic, reciprocal interaction among the dispositions, interests, and potentialities of the agent and the changing contexts

of learning, development, and socialization. Person variables and contextual variables dynamically interact in complex ways, and both are mutually implicated in behavior. It is here, at the intersection of person and context, where one looks for a coherent behavioral signature (Mischel, 2005; Mischel & Shoda, 1995; Mischel, Shoda, & Mendoza-Denton, 2002; Shoda, Mischel, & Wright, 1994).

The inextricable union of person and context is the lesson both of developmental contextualism (Lerner, 1991) and social cognitive approaches to personality (Cervone & Shoda, 1999; Mischel, 1999), and a robust character psychology will have much in common with these paradigms. Indeed, recent research already vindicates the promise of this perspective. For example, Kochanska's research program shows that the development of conscience and internalization in early childhood requires a goodness-of-fit between styles of parental socialization and children's dispositional temperament (Kochanska, 1993, 1997; Kochanska & Thompson, 1997). In one study, toddlers (age 2 to 3 years) who were temperamentally fearful showed strong evidence of internalization when maternal discipline was mildly coercive, whereas toddlers who were temperamentally fearless profited from mother-child interactions that were mutually cooperative, positive, and responsive (Kochanska, 1995), a pattern that was longitudinally stable 2 years later (Kochanska, 1997). Other studies showed that the quality of the parent-child relationship, as reflected in attachment security, can itself moderate the relationship between parenting strategies and moral internalization (Kochanska, Aksan, Knaack, & Rhines, 2004), and that power assertion can have heterogeneous outcomes for moral behavior and moral cognition (Kochanska, Aksan, & Nichols, 2003). Similarly, Eisenberg and her colleagues showed that a prosocial personality disposition emerges in early childhood and is consistent over time (Eisenberg et al., 2002), although the manifestation of the "altruistic personality" is mediated by individual differences in sympathy (Eisenberg et al., 1999) and the demand characteristics of social contexts (Carlo, Eisenberg, Troyer, Switzer, & Speer, 1991). Finally, Mischel and his colleagues (Shoda, Mischel, & Wright, 1994; Wright & Mischel, 1987) showed that dispositional aggression in children is not, in fact, on regular display across settings but is observed typically when aggressive children are placed in settings of a certain kind, in settings, for example, where demands are placed on their sense of competence. In these exam-

ples, evidence of dispositional coherence requires contextual specification.

A second assumption is that traits hang together to form a unitary consistency within a person. On this view, the various virtues cohere in unified practice. One cannot adequately display courage unless one is also prudent; one cannot be just without temperance; one cannot display any one virtue without all the others. The unity of virtues is a notion that has classical sources, and it is at least implicitly assumed in many discussions about the role of character in public life. Carr (1991, p. 266) points out that the unity-of-virtues perspective is simply the claim that "if a quality of character is a *genuine* virtue it is not *logically* inconsistent with any other real virtue," and that virtues "form a unity because they stand in a certain direct relationship to the *truth* in human affairs." The unity of virtues is a logical possibility; it is an ideal aspiration of the virtuous life.

Still, there are doubts about the adequacy of the unity thesis on both ethical (Carr, 2003; Kent, 1999; MacIntyre, 1981) and psychological grounds. One is not so much concerned with whether the various virtues cohere as a logical possibility, but with whether the unity thesis satisfies a basic criterion of minimal psychological realism that it be a possibility for creatures like us (O. Flanagan, 1991). It is possible after all, given the exigent contingencies of human development, that not all good qualities are equally compatible, or that a good life lived well requires the full range of human excellence. Rather, we become specialists in limited domains of application as a result of the particularities of our developmental experiences, the choices we make, and the environments we select. Our choices canalize the development of dispositions proper to our commitment and to our aspiration, while leaving others unselected, undeveloped, and unobserved in our behavioral repertoire. As a result, certain character blind spots might well be the price one pays for cultivating excellence in other domains of one's life. It may even be the case that our virtues are made possible *just because* other aspects of our character have gone undeveloped.

The Problem with Virtues

The "Character Education Manifesto" (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999, p. 190) asserts that the business of character education "is about developing virtues—good habits and dispositions which lead students to responsible and mature adulthood." We have seen that the appeal to habits

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and dispositions is not entirely satisfactory given the status of these notions in contemporary psychology. But talk about virtues is also fraught with difficulties. One problem for virtue is the specification of what it entails. How does one “fill out” a particular virtue? How should any virtue be manifested in concrete situations? Aristotle argued famously that virtue lies in the mean between excess and defect. Virtue aims for the intermediate of passions, appetites, and actions: “To feel them at the right times, with reference to the right objects, toward the right people, with the right motive, and in the right ways, is what is both intermediate and best, and that is characteristic of virtue” (1985, l. 1106b). Of course, it is a complication that some actions and passions have no mean, and many states of character have no name: “Now most of these states also have no names, but we must try, as in other cases, to invent names ourselves” (l. 1108a). Kupperman (1999) points out that Aristotle’s main point here is not moderation, as many assume, but judgment and flexible response to individual cases. The virtuous person does not follow habits or rules inflexibly but adapts conduct to particular circumstances.

Noddings (2002) noted that the specification of the content of virtue often derives from one’s religion or philosophy. Take, for example, Lickona’s (1991a, p. 364) view that character education must take a stand on whether it’s a good idea for adolescents to masturbate, use condoms, or engage in sexual activity, all behaviors “which [are] clearly wrong for students to do.” “The truth is,” he writes, “that sexual activity by unmarried teenagers is harmful to them and harmful to society. The morally right value is for young people to avoid such activity” (p. 364). Although this makes the content of virtue quite clear, and quite possibly correct, it does not entirely settle the matter, and one suspects that very different calculations of what is “clearly wrong” and “harmful to society” are possible given a different starting point.

At other times, the moral basis for a specification of virtue is not entirely apparent. One account of the characteristics of a moral teacher suggests, for example, that teacher morality is made evident by small actions, such as “presenting well-planned, enthusiastically taught classes,” not being petty, not gossiping, getting homework and test papers returned to students promptly, removing the wad of gum from the water fountain, planning a surprise birthday party for a fellow teacher, or going the extra mile for a struggling student (Wynne & Ryan, 1997, p. 123). Good student character is simi-

larly reflected in small acts: being a member of the math team, tutoring, cleaning up the classroom, joining a sports team, serving as an aide or monitor. One should not minimize praiseworthy behavior or gainsay the value of small kindnesses and good deeds well done, yet the present examples either underspecify the content of moral virtue (insofar as these behaviors could be motivated by a consideration not of virtue but of duty and obligation) or else link it with such commonplaces that virtue is indistinguishable from any behavior that is simply well regarded by others.

Most approaches to character education stress the importance of practical reasoning in the life of virtue (e.g., Lickona, 1991a; Ryan & Bohlin, 1999). Knowing the good, sizing up the situation, gaining insight about how to apply or use moral rules are the work of practical wisdom. Its importance to virtue is evident in Aristotle’s (350/1985, l. 1107a) definition of virtue: “It is a state [of character] concerned with choice lying in a mean relative to us, which is defined by reference to reason and in the way in which the person of practical wisdom would determine it.” Moreover, Aristotle seems to acknowledge that the proper display of virtue would require keen attention to situational complexity, “to know the facts of the case, to see and understand what is morally relevant and to make decisions that are responsive to the exigencies of the case” (Sherman, 1999, p. 38). Or, as Aristotle put it, “For nothing perceptible is easily defined, and since these circumstances of virtuous and vicious actions are particulars, the judgments about them *depend on perception*” (l. 1109b, emphasis added).

So, if virtues are habits, they must be habits of a certain kind. The kind of habituation proper to virtues is a critical facility; it includes learning how to discern, make distinctions, judge the particulars of the case, and make considered choices (but sometimes automatically). They are dispositions of interpretation (Rorty, 1988) that cognitive psychologists might conceptualize as schemas, prototypes, or scripts whose accessibility and activation make possible the discriminative facility that allows one to act in ways appropriate to the situation (and whose functional readiness could approach automaticity).

The context specificity that attaches to the work of virtues would suggest that one goal of character education would be to help children sort through moral ambiguity by learning when and how to activate what virtue requires given the concrete requirements of a specific context (Noddings, 2002). Of course, what the concrete situation requires of us, say, by way of honesty might

well conflict with the demands of compassion, for example. This means that no account of the virtues can be absent the lesson of developmental contextualism, which is that person and context interpenetrate in complex ways and cannot be separated. One must learn, during the course of character development, that the exercise of virtue requires contextual specification; it requires *triage* with respect to the dispositions required for particular settings and an ordering of priorities for their expression given the requirements of the situation. The work of virtues is not unlike the work of any dispositional quality in that the coherence of moral character, its dispositional signature, is to be found at the intersection of person and context (Mischel, 2005).

PHILOSOPHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Character is fundamentally an ethical concept that struggles for psychological specification. Consequently, the nature of character, both as the moral dimension of personality and as an object of education, invites significant philosophical reflection. In this section we take up two fundamental issues. First, we describe the role that character education plays in responding to concerns about ethical relativism. Second, we examine whether character education can be distinguished from other educational objectives by its commitment to a particular ethical theory associated with Aristotle and the virtue ethics tradition.

Bag of Virtues and Foundations

One suspects that there is deep ambivalence among theorists of character education to consider how virtue works in context for fear that it invites comparison to “situational ethics” and ethical relativism. This is a charge that character education has had to fend off ever since Kohlberg derisively characterized character education as the “bag of virtues” approach. For Kohlberg and the cognitive developmental tradition, the study of moral development was a way to provide the psychological resources by which to defeat ethical relativism. In answer to the ethical relativist who claims that moral perspectives are incommensurable, Kohlberg (1969, p. 352) asserted Piaget’s “doctrine of cognitive stages,” which provides a developmental criterion for assessing the adequacy of moral judgment. Moral judgments that approach the moral ideal represented by the final stage

of moral reasoning were more adequate on both psychological and ethical grounds (Kohlberg, 1971, 1973). Moreover, justice reasoning at the highest stages made possible a set of operations that could generate consensus about hard case moral quandary. One defeats ethical relativism, then, by motivating justice reasoning to higher stages of development (Lapsley, 2005).

But Kohlberg’s project left no room for traits, virtue, or character, for two reasons. First, there was no sensible way to talk about virtues if they are conceptualized as traits-of-character. After all, the Hartshorne and May (1928–1930) studies appeared to show that the psychological reality of traits could not be empirically confirmed (see also Puka, 2004, for trenchant doubts about the reality of virtues) or else could not be relied on to document dispositional consistency in moral behavior. Second, and perhaps more to the point, the language of traits did not provide what was wanted most, which was a way to defeat ethical relativism on psychological grounds. For Kohlberg, any compilation of favored or approved virtues is completely arbitrary. It entails sampling from a “bag of virtues” until a suitable list is produced that has something for everyone. What’s more, and worse, given Kohlberg’s project, the meaning of virtue trait words is relative to particular communities, for, as Kohlberg and Mayer (1972) put it, one person’s integrity is another person’s stubbornness; one person’s honesty in expressing true feelings is another person’s insensitivity to the feelings of others. Not surprisingly, the character education movement uniformly rejects the notion that character education gives comfort to ethical relativism. Indeed, as we will see shortly, the reconstruction of educational history favored by advocates of character education typically pins the blame for “youth disorder” on the ethical relativism promoted by other trends in American culture and education, for which character education is the remedy.

If the problem of settings and context specificity is taken up at all, it takes the form of addressing the question of “whose values” are to be taught in the schools. But this is unproblematic for many character educators because, it is asserted, there are objective values universally agreed on that schools should address with confidence (Lickona, 1991a). For example, one might appeal to natural law theory to “define morality in rational terms agreeable to all” (p. 141). One might distinguish between universal core values that we all do agree on (e.g., respect, responsibility, honesty, justice, caring), possibly because they meet certain canons of objectivity

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(e.g., Kant's categorical imperative or Kohlberg's "Piagetian" criteria of reversibility) and additional values that are unique to certain communities, such as the Amish, who might endorse, in addition to core values, such things as piety, simplicity, and modesty (Davidson, 2005). Although the list of "common moral values" might differ among communities, there is, nonetheless, a "core" and a "large overlap in the content that emerges" (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999, p. 50).

Still, we think this debate has gone on long enough. The specter of ethical relativism has been a bogey haunting moral psychology and education for decades, but it has been a distraction, and it has distorted the work of both the cognitive developmental and character education paradigms. It has prevented the cognitive developmental tradition from considering the role of personality and selfhood in moral reasoning because these variables could not secure the autonomy of reason or the universality of judgments (Lapsley, 1996; Walker, 2002; Walker & Hennig, 1998). It has distracted character education with worries about moral objectivity and foundations, and with the seeming necessity to show that it is just as sternly antirealist as the committed stage theorist. However, whether moral claims are universal or incommensurable, whether there is anything like objective moral facts that vouchsafe our moral convictions, are ethical-philosophical or theological issues that psychological research is ill equipped to address with its armamentarium of empirical tools (Blasi, 1990). The attempt to resolve philosophical problems with empirical data has been a big mistake, in our view, and has led to cramped and truncated research programs restricted by perceived philosophical restrictions and boundaries.

Carr (1991) suggested that much of the anxiety about foundations in moral education has got things the wrong way round. In his view, we do not start with principles and then derive practices; rather, the principles are induced from within the practices and experiences of our social life. The principles, in other words, are underwritten by practices, not practices by the principles. Practices are the "product of a fallible human attempt to understand the web of moral association by reference to consideration of . . . what sort of conduct conduce to good and ill, well-being and harm" (p. 4). One can reject the balm of foundationalism and still affirm that workable criteria of right and wrong, of good and evil, of virtue and vice can be discovered "in the rough and tumble of human interpersonal relations and conduct"

(p. 4). Virtues, then, are not foundational axioms or first principles; they are not

hard and fast principles which may be applied to any conceivable circumstance but general patterns or tendencies of conduct which require reasonable and cautious adjustment to particular and changing circumstances and which may even, in some situations, compete with each other for preference and priority. (p. 5)

And although different communities may well flesh out the meaning of virtues (e.g., courage, caring) in different ways, "it is hard to envisage a human community in which these qualities are not needed, recognized or held to be of any value at all" (p. 6), given the affordances of our shared biological and social nature (see also Nussbaum, 1988).

One appreciates in Carr's (1991) account of virtues and foundations the notion broached earlier, that virtues, and traits generally, do not trump invariably the contextual hand one is dealt; that virtues must be contextually specified and situationally ordered; that virtues are socially implicated dispositions; and that the desired schedule of virtues, their meaning and mode of expression, are deeply embedded in the practices, customs, and expectations of communities—and that none of this should give comfort to the ethical relativist (or else the issue of ethical relativism is a different sort of conversation). This also suggests, as we will see later, that moral education can never be simply about the character of children without also addressing the context of education, that is to say, the culture, climate, structure, and function of classrooms and schools (Berkowitz & Bier, 2005). Persons and contexts are inextricably linked and cannot be separated.

If Carr's (1991) view is correct, that virtues are dispositional templates induced from social practices, whose meaning can be discovered in the "rough and tumble of human interpersonal relations" (p. 4), then one way to approach the problem of whether there are "core values" that overlap is to determine if such templates are evident in the way ordinary people think about character. That is, rather than nominate core values from some alleged objective standpoint, from natural law or the perspective of eternity, one might proceed inductively from the standpoint of individual informants.

There have been recent attempts to address the matter empirically. Lapsley and Lasky (1999) provided evidence that conceptions of good character are organ-

ized as a cognitive prototype, and that this prototype has a significant influence on recognition memory and information processing. In this study, the top 10 traits with the highest prototypicality ratings are honest, trustworthy, genuine, loving, dependable, loyal, trusting, friendly, respectful, and caring.

Similarly, Walker (2004; Walker & Pitts, 1998) has pursued naturalistic studies of the prototype structure of a "highly moral person" and has identified clusters or themes that commonly show up in people's understanding of moral maturity. One cluster, for example, is a set of "principled-idealistic" commitments to strongly held values. Another includes themes of "fairness." Other clusters identify dependable-loyal, caring-trustworthy, and confident-agency themes. Subsequent research examined the prototype structure of conceptions of just, brave, and caring persons (Walker & Hennig, 2004). Although these attributes differ somewhat from the prototypical good character, as one might expect with different targets, it would appear that a common core of trait attributes for character and moral personality can be identified empirically.

Character and Virtue Ethics

It is widely assumed that Kohlberg's cognitive developmental approach to moral education represents an instantiation of an ethical theory associated with Kant, whereas character education focuses on a different set of ethical concerns represented by Aristotelian virtue ethics. Indeed, Steutel and Carr (1999; Carr & Steutel, 1999; Steutel, 1997) argued that if character education is to be distinguished from other forms of moral education, such as Kohlberg's, it must be grounded in an explicit commitment to virtue ethics and not to other ethical theories. If character education is in fact committed to virtue ethics, what might that entail?

G. Watson (1990) suggested a useful tripartite division of ethical theory: the ethic of requirement (where the primary moral considerations concern rational judgments of obligation and duty and the moral appraisal of action), the ethic of consequences (various forms of utilitarianism), and the ethic of virtue. An ethics of virtue is distinguished from the others by its claim that the basic moral facts are facts about the quality of character (*arête*); that judgments about agents and their traits have explanatory primacy over judgments about duty, obligation, and utility; and that deontic judgments

about obligation and action appraisal are, in fact, derived from the appraisal of character and ancillary to it. "On an ethics of virtue," he writes, "how it is best or right or proper to conduct oneself is explained in terms of how it is best for a human being to be" (p. 451).

Hence, a virtue ethics has two features: (1) It makes a claim of explanatory primacy for aretaic judgments about character, agents, and what is required for flourishing; and (2) it includes a theory about "how it is best or right or proper to conduct oneself" in light of what is known about human excellence. Surprisingly, neither feature has much resonance in character education. In most accounts of character education, one cultivates virtues mostly to better fulfill one's obligation and duty (the ethics of requirement) or to prevent the rising tide of youth disorder (character utilitarianism, or the ethics of consequences). Although one can conceive of virtues as providing action-guiding prescriptions just as deontological theory does (Hursthouse, 2003), the point of virtues in most accounts of character education is to live up to the prescriptions derived from deontic considerations: to respect persons, fulfill one's duty to the self and to others, and submit to the natural law. When the goal of character education is to help children "know the good," this typically means coming to learn the "cross-cultural composite of moral imperatives and ideals" (Ryan & Bohlin, 1999, p. 7). Rather than emphasize agent appraisal, the animating goal of many character educators is appraisal of actions, for, as Wynne and Hess (1992, p. 31) put it, "Character is conduct," and the best test of a "school's moral efficiency" is "pupils' day-to-day conduct, displayed through deeds and words" (Wynne 1991, p. 145).

It would appear, then, that character education and cognitive developmental moral education cannot be distinguished on the basis of the ethical theory that animates them. Character education, for all its appeal to virtues, seems to embrace the ethics of requirement just as surely as does moral stage theory, rather than an ethics of virtue. The most important moral facts for both paradigms are still facts about obligation, universal principles, and duty. The most important object of evaluation for both paradigms is still action and conduct; it is still deciding the good thing to do rather than the sort of person to become. The fact that character education is so thoroughly deontological and utilitarian with so little in common with virtue ethics is not inherently problematic, although it does attenuate some hope that virtue

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ethics would open up a new front in moral psychology and education (Campbell & Christopher, 1996; Campbell, Christopher, & Bickhard, 2002; Punzo, 1996).

EDUCATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

If character education cannot be distinguished from rival approaches in terms of its justifying ethical theory, then perhaps its singularity is to be found elsewhere, say, in terms of its educational practices or in the way that it frames its educational mission. There does seem to be something quite distinctive about the way the case is made for character education, what has been called the *genre of discontent* (Lapsley & Power, 2005) and the *litany of alarm* (Arthur, 2003).

Typically, the first move in making the case for character education is to review a long list of social ills that characterize children and adolescents to document the rising tide of youth disorder. Brooks and Goble (1997, p. 6) point to youth crime, violence, drug addiction, and “other forms of irresponsible behavior.” Wynne and Hess (1992; also Wynne & Ryan, 1997) review the statistics for homicide, suicide, out-of-wedlock births, premarital sex, illegal drug use, delinquency and crime rates, and plunging academic achievement test scores. Lickona (1991a) notes the increase in violence and vandalism, stealing, cheating, disrespect, peer cruelty, bigotry, bad language, self-centeredness, and use of illegal substances.

After cataloguing these trends, there is an attempt to understand their source. Lickona’s (1991a) account is paradigmatic. Like other writers in this genre, he draws attention to troubling evidence of cultural decline that is attributed to broad changes in American education. In the early days of the republic children were instructed intentionally on matters of character by the exhortation, discipline, and example of teachers, by the models of virtue encountered in the Bible and the McGuffey Reader, and elsewhere in the curriculum. Eventually, however, this “old-fashioned character education” was forced into retreat by a convergence of larger forces that undermined the confidence of schools in taking on their traditional moral educational responsibilities.

The influence of Darwin’s theory, for example, led people to wonder if even moral sensibilities could be uprooted from fixed and static foundations and regarded as something changeable and evolutionary. Einstein’s theory of relativity encouraged a kind of moral perspectivism that viewed moral claims as relative to a certain

point of view. The Hartshorne and May (1928–1930) studies highlighted the role of situations in moral behavior. And the general rise of logical positivism encouraged the view that the only sensible things to say were those amenable to publicly verifiable empirical demonstrations (as “facts”), whereas everything else (“values”) was held to be subjective, personal, and quite literally “nonsense” (see, e.g., Ayer, 1952).

These four trends, then, according to Lickona (1991a), forced character education into retreat. “When much of society,” he writes, “came to think of morality as being in flux [Darwin], relative to the individual [Einstein], situationally variable [Hartshorne and May] and essentially private [logical positivism], public schools retreated from their once central role as moral educator” (p. 8).

This reconstruction of history, and others like it, has been called the “cultural declinist” perspective (Nash, 1997) for perhaps the obvious reason that it sees an empirical relationship between the neglect or abandonment of intentional character education and the rise of disorder and immorality among young people. This way of making the case serves as a preface for three additional issues that we will consider here. The first issue concerns whether the singularity of character education can be identified on the basis of the sort of problems it attempts to address, or the manner in which it attempts to address them, or whether any conceivable intervention targeting problematic behavior would qualify as an instance of character education. Second, is character education identified by a commitment to direct or indirect methods of instruction? We will see that this debate is best understood in the context of much larger histories of teaching practice and of the idea of liberal education. Third, in what sense is the cultural declinist genre itself a recurring movement in educational history, and how can we understand its resurgence over the past 2 decades? An examination of the historiography of character education will show that there are recurring cycles of concern about character education during periods of rapid change, and that character education movements typically fail without well-attested models of self and personality.

Broad Character Education

When the case is made for character education by appealing to troubling social trends or to the epidemiology of adolescent risk behavior, there is an implication that

any program that attempts to drive down these trends or ameliorate the incidence of risk behavior might reasonably fall under the broad umbrella of character education. If getting bad grades, cheating, dropping out of school, having sex, bearing children, using drugs, getting into fights, committing status offenses, breaking the law, attempting suicide, showing disrespect, being a bully—if these are the mark of poor moral character, then programs designed to encourage school persistence, prevent teen pregnancy, discourage the use of drugs and alcohol, improve social skills and social problem solving, increase resilience to social-affective problems, and the like might qualify as moral character interventions. There is evidence for such a sweeping view of character education. In her study of the character education practices of 350 Blue Ribbon schools, Murphy (1998) reported a wide range of practices, including self-esteem programs, general guidance counseling, drug education, citizenship, discipline, and conflict management. However, in only 11% of schools was there explicit mention of any program called “character education.”

Similarly, Berkowitz and Bier (2004b) identified 12 recommended and 18 promising practices in a review of what works in character education. These practices covered a wide range of purposes, including problem solving, health education, empathy, social skills and social competence training, conflict resolution, peace making, life skills training, developmental assets, and positive youth development. Although Berkowitz and Bier (2004a) concluded that these programs work, they also noted that most of them do not use the term “character” to describe their intentions and objectives. Very few of them were designed with any notion of virtues, character, or morality in mind, and were not described as instances of moral or character education. Nonetheless, the success of these programs is claimed for character education because their methods, outcomes, and justifications are similar to what might be expected of character education programs. “After all,” they write, “they are all school based endeavors designed to help foster the positive development of youth” (p. 5).

By these criteria it is difficult to imagine what would *not* count as character education or be excluded from its purview. If character education is all of these things, and if the success of character education is parasitic on the success of any well-designed intervention or prevention program, then the singularity of character education as a distinctive educational objective or pedagogy,

with unique curricular and programmatic features, appears to vanish.

It would seem paradoxical that the manner in which the case has been made for character education actually results in its disappearance as a distinctive educational objective in its own right. If the case is made on the basis of disturbing trends in the epidemiology of adolescent risk behavior, then it bids one to look for the success of character education in the diminution of this behavior. But then character education becomes any program that has a positive outcome with respect to adolescent risk behavior. It becomes a catalogue of psychosocial intervention, promotion, and prevention programs whose objectives are framed by reference to an entirely different set of theoretical literatures that make no reference to morality, virtue, or character. Moreover, there is little reason to appeal to character education, or use the language of moral valuation, to understand the etiology of risk behavior or how best to prevent or ameliorate exposure to risk or promote resilience and adjustment.

The problem with the broad view, then, is that it does not point to anything distinctive about character education. Yet, perhaps the problem of singularity derives from the fact that all good causes in education, from social-emotional learning to positive youth development, risk reduction, psychosocial resilience, academic achievement, and character education, are driven effectively by a common set of school practices. Just as problem behaviors are interrelated and are predicted by a similar profile of risk factors, so, too, are adaptive and prosocial behaviors interrelated and linked to a common set of developmental factors and instructional practices. Indeed, Berkowitz and Bier (2004b) nominate “positive youth development” as the inclusive term to cover all of the program objectives and suggest that these objectives are simply part of “good education” generally. The downside of this maneuver is that character education appears to lose its singular focus. But the loss of conceptual distinctiveness for character education is offset by the gain in instructional clarity for practitioners. The problem for the practitioner is not the problem of knowing which program “works” or of correctly labeling curricular and programmatic activities, but of mastering the instructional best practices that are common to all of them (see Howard, Dryden, & Johnson, 1999, for a similar point with respect to promoting resilience).

Yet, there is a case to be made for character education that has little need for troubling epidemiological

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trends. The case is made simply by pointing to the fact that moral considerations are immanent to the life of classrooms and schools, that teaching and learning are value-laden activities, and that moral aims are intrinsic to education (Bryk, 1988; Goodlad, 1992; D. T. Hansen, 1993; Strike, 1996). The case is made by reference to the developmental objectives of schools and to the role of schools in inculcating the skills proper to democratic citizenship and to full participation in the life of the community. The immanence of values and the inevitability of moral education is an argument almost always found in the character educator's brief, but mostly for countering the charge of indoctrination rather than for making the case. Yet the immanence-and-inevitability thesis would seem to arm the character educator with all the resources that are needed to defend an intentional and transparent commitment to the moral formation of students. Moreover, the case that is made from this standpoint is a positive one; it makes reference to developmental purposes, to a conception of what it means to flourish, to the skills, dispositions, and excellences that are required to live well and competently, the life that is good for one to live in a democratic society. This is in contradistinction to the traditional argument that builds the case negatively by making character education just another prevention program, viewing character education as a kind of prophylaxis or cultural defense against "youth disorder."

Direct and Indirect Methods

In an early essay, Dewey (1908) defined the terms of this debate. It "may be laid down as fundamental," he asserted, "that the influence of direct moral instruction, even at its very best, is *comparatively* slight in influence, when the whole field of moral growth through education is taken into account" (p. 4, emphasis in original). Rather, it is the "larger field of indirect and vital moral education, the development of character through all the agencies, instrumentalities and materials of school life" (p. 4), that is far more influential. This larger field of indirect education reproduces within the school the typical conditions of social life to be encountered without. "The only way to prepare for social life is to engage in social life" (p. 15).

Moreover, this sort of moral education is possible only when the school itself becomes an "embryonic typical community" (Dewey, 1908, p. 15). Indeed, for

Dewey, the school has no moral aim apart from participation in social life. The rules of school life must point to something larger, outside of itself, otherwise education becomes a mere "gymnastics exercise" that trains faculties that make no sense and have no moral significance just because they are disconnected from larger purposes. Absent these purposes, moral education is pathological and formal. It is pathological when it is alert to wrongdoing but fails to cultivate positive service, when it stresses conformity to school routines that are arbitrary and conventional but lack inherent necessity. Moral training is formal when it emphasizes an ad hoc catalogue of habits that are "school duties," not "life duties." To the extent that the work of schools is disconnected from social life, insistence on these moral habits is "more or less unreal because the ideal to which they relate is not itself necessary" (p. 17). The moral habits of interest to Dewey concern an interest in community welfare, in perceiving what is necessary for social order and progress, and in the skills necessary to execute principles of action. All school habits must be related to these "if they are to be animated by the breath of life" (p. 17).

Dewey (1908) was critical of a traditional pedagogy of exhortation, didactic instruction, and drill. Such pedagogy fails to cultivate a social spirit; it emphasize individualistic motives, competition, comparative success, dispiriting social comparison; it encourages passive absorption and emphasizes preparation for life but in the remote future. It reduces moral instruction to simply teaching *about* virtues or in instilling certain attitudes about them. What is required instead is an approach to education that links school subjects to a social interest; that cultivates children's ability to discern, observe, and comprehend social situations; that uses methods that appeal to the "active constructive powers" of intelligence; that organizes the school along the lines of a genuine community and selects curricular materials that gives children a consciousness of the world and what it will demand. Only if schools are prepared to take on these principles can they be said to meet their basic ethical requirements.

Dewey's vision of moral education is sometimes called a "progressive" or "indirect" approach because it eschews traditional pedagogy that relies on didactic instruction and direct transmission of moral content. Instead, indirect approaches emphasize the child's active construction of moral meaning through participa-

tion in democratic practices, cooperative groupings, social interaction, and moral discussion (e.g., DeVries & Zan, 1994).

In contrast, the direct approach to instruction is widely associated with traditional character education (Benninga, 1991b; Solomon, Watson, & Battistich, 2001). In a defense, Ryan (1989, p. 15) asserted that “character development is directive and sees the teacher in a more active role than does the cognitive developmental tradition.” There is sympathy for what is called the Great Tradition that views the educational encounter as one of transmission from adults to children (Wynne & Ryan, 1997). For traditional character education, morality is ready-made and good character requires submission to its preexisting norms. It is suspicious of indirect or constructivist approaches that seemingly allow adults to abdicate their role as moral teachers in favor of “consensual” democratic practices in schools. Such practices are antitradition because they seem to allow students to engage in “highly relativistic discussions about value laden issues” where alternative views might emerge with respect to such things as obedience or the limits of loyalty to one’s country (p. 35). These practices seem to let the kids decide what important values are and naively assumes that children will choose well when given opportunities for self-direction. “Is it wise,” writes Wynne (1991, p. 142, emphasis added), “to ‘teach’ pupils that basic moral principles and conventions generally accepted by responsible adults should be considered *de novo*, and possibly rejected, by each successive adolescent cohort? *Must each generation try to completely reinvent society?*”

Mimesis and Transformation

The debate over direct and indirect methods of character education has a much longer history and, when properly considered, points to a middle way for practitioners. Jackson (1986) captures much of this history in his useful distinction between mimetic and transformative traditions of education. Both traditions are centuries old and describe a complex worldview about the nature of teaching and learning. These traditions are at the nexus of partisan rivalry not simply because they articulate different perspectives on what constitutes proper teaching, but because they each comprise a different “form of life” (following Wittgenstein, 1968), a fact that raises the stakes considerably.

The mimetic tradition embraces a transmission model of teaching and learning. Knowledge is considered something detachable (it can be preserved), secondhand (it first belongs to someone else before it is transmitted), and reproducible (which facilitates its transmission). As such, knowledge is presented to the learner, rather than discovered by the learner. It can be judged as right or wrong, correct or incorrect. The mimetic teacher is directive, expert in the substantive bodies of knowledge and in methodological competence. The student is a novice, without knowledge of what teachers know, and hence the object of transmission. “In more epigrammatic terms, the slogan for this tradition might be: ‘What the teacher knows, that shall the student come to know’” (Jackson, 1986, p. 119).

In contrast, the transformative tradition intends a qualitative change in that which is deeply foundational in a person: in one’s character, set of traits, or other enduring aspects of one’s psychological makeup. The goal of teachers in this tradition is to:

bring about changes in their students (and possibly in themselves as well) that make them better persons, not simply more knowledgeable or more skillful, but better in the sense of being closer to what humans are capable of becoming—more virtuous, fuller participants in the evolving moral order. (Jackson, 1986, p. 127)

And transformative teachers attempt to bring about these changes not through dogmatic presentation of foundational texts, not by means of didactic instruction, but by discussion, argumentation, and demonstration. The transformative teacher, in other words, attempts to influence students by philosophical means. As Jackson put it, “Armed only with the tools of reason the transformative teacher seeks to accomplish what can be attained in no other way” (p. 127).

Oratorical and Philosophical Traditions

The distinction between direct and indirect character education can be framed historically not only by reference to (mimetic and transformative) traditions of teaching, but also by reference to the history of liberal education. According to Kimball (1986), the history of liberal education from the ancients to the present is the struggle between two distinct traditions that he termed “philosophical” and “oratorical.” Moreover, the value

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conflicts between these traditions have resulted in recurring cycles of educational reform as first one then the other tradition becomes ascendant.

The “philosophical” tradition is aligned historically with Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. It asserts that the pursuit of knowledge and truth is the highest good; that because truth is elusive and because there are many uncertainties, one must cultivate the philosophical dispositions, be open-minded, judge fairly, reason critically. In this tradition, it is freedom of the intellect and diligent inquiry that is the goal and purpose of education.

The “oratorical” tradition is aligned historically with Isocrates and Cicero. It is committed to the public expression of what is known through classic texts and tradition. One becomes a virtuous citizen-orator by becoming acquainted with the wisdom evident in rhetoric and in the classics. If the philosophical tradition saw truth and goodness as something elusive and unsettled, as something not yet realized or achieved, but that can be grasped only by the critical discernment of speculative reason, the oratorical tradition locates truth and goodness in the great texts and past traditions. If the philosophical tradition conceives the search for truth as an act of discovery, it is an act of recovery for the oratorical tradition. If the philosophical tradition intends to equip individuals to face an uncertain future, the oratorical tradition intends to equip individuals with the certain and settled verities of the past.

Featherstone (1986) points out that the great strength of the philosophical tradition is its emphasis on the free exercise of reason in pursuit of the truth, but that its weakness as an educational philosophy is its silence on just what is to be taught. It urges one to seek the truth like a philosopher, but cannot say what truth is with much certainty. It is strong on method, weak on content. This is where the oratorical tradition has an advantage. The educational point of the oratorical tradition is to master the content of traditional texts. In the oratorical tradition, the task of education is to impart the truth, not to help students seek it (Featherstone, 1986). It is strong on content, weak on method.

It would seem, then, that the contemporary debate concerning direct and indirect methods reflects deeper and longer-standing conflicts over the role of mimesis or transformation in teaching, or the relative value of preparing orators or philosophers in education. Yet it also seems clear that the modern expression of direct character education reveals a fundamental confusion

about its sources, aims, and traditions. For example, although direct character education intends to transform students’ character in the direction of virtue, it attempts to do so with teaching that is mimetic rather than transformative. Moreover, in spite of its frequent invocation of classical sources such as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, it is apparent that direct approaches to character education are not, in fact, the heirs of the philosophical tradition but of the oratorical tradition. Indeed, the direct approach is largely mimetic and oratorical, whereas the indirect approach is transformative and philosophical.

Of course, it is not hard to see the middle way in this debate. There are occasions in teaching for both mimesis and transformation. We need both orators and philosophers. The best teachers are experts in pedagogical content knowledge (Shulman, 1987; Wilson, Shulman, & Richert, 1987) and are able therefore to use instructional methods appropriate for teaching specific content. The best approaches to character education flexibly balance the philosophical methods of inquiry, discussion, and discernment with the oratorical respect for text and tradition; both direct and indirect approaches find a place in the curriculum (Benninga, 1991b). Lickona’s (1991a, 1991b, 1992, 1997; Lickona & Davidson, 2004) integrated approach to character education is a good example. Although this approach has decided oratorical sympathies and resorts to the genre of discontent to make its case, there is also significant and welcome appreciation of the constructivist nature of learning and of the necessity for transformative approaches to teaching. Alongside directive advocacy of certain value positions there is use of indirect strategies as well, including cooperative learning, conflict resolution, classroom democratic processes, moral discussion and reflection, and the need to build a sense of moral community within the school.

Historical Lessons

We noted earlier that a “cultural declinist” reading of American history is commonly used to make the case for character education. And that the debate between traditionalists and progressives, between advocates of direct and indirect methods of character education, is just the contemporary manifestation of more fundamental conflicts concerning the nature of teaching (mimesis versus transformative) and of liberal education (oratorical ver-

sus philosophical) that have quite long-standing historical roots. But what of the history of character education itself? Chapman's (1977) observation summarizes a common theme. "It is curious to note," he writes, "how the concern for character seems to have been associated with times of rapid social change" (p. 65).

McClellan (1999) notes, for example, in his influential history of moral education, that the nineteenth century ushered in a revolution in moral education that was motivated by massive social upheaval and the collapse of the old order brought about by urbanization, mobility, and immigration. "Traditional sources of social order—stable hierarchical social structures, patterns of cultural and political deference, webs of extended kinships and tight-knit communities—weakens as images of control and orderly change gave way to visions of movement and opportunity" (p. 15). The response was to urge early instruction of a common moral code, taught largely through a new genre of children's stories and by the suffusion of maxims and moral lessons throughout textbooks. Typical themes included the certainty of progress and the perfection of the United States, love of country, duty to parents, the importance of thrift, honesty, and hard work for accumulation of property.

In the early twentieth century, the demands of modernity further sundered the seamless weave of the community into largely disconnected sectors of home, employment, marketplace, church, and recreation, each operating with seemingly different value systems. Schools were now required to prepare students to take up "a variety of roles across the differentiated spheres of a segmented social order" (McClellan, 1999, p. 47). Schools became complex institutions with varied purposes, only one of which was moral education.

Among character educators there was a sense that modernity presented important challenges to traditional values that could be mastered only by vigorous teaching of specific virtues and character traits, not just in school but in a variety of clubs and youth organizations that proliferated in the early twentieth century. Codes of conduct were promulgated, and teachers were expected to use these codes to provide themes for instruction. Much like today, these themes were exhibited in classroom posters and laws of the month. Citizenship and comportment grades were commonly taken as signs of character development. Moral education itself was directed largely to the problem of motivation and will rather than to reasoning. The problem was how to make moral conduct ha-

bitual rather than to teach ethical decision making, a notion that has a familiar ring a century later.

The progressive alternative, as we have seen, rejected the emphasis on teaching particular virtues as being unsuited to help children meet the demands of a changing social order, and it rejected, too, the direct approaches to instruction as pedagogically ineffective. Instead, it emphasized ethical sensitivity to the demands of changing society, the ability to make moral judgments, and the larger civic and political purposes of moral education as opposed to the traditional emphasis on private virtue and conduct. Hence, rather than focus on traditional texts, the progressive alternative encouraged democratic decision making, critical thinking, and scientific inquiry as the methods best able to equip students to take up their obligations in modern society. These are the very terms of reference for the current debate concerning character education.

Indeed, Cunningham (2005) points to many common themes between the current popularity of character education and its predecessor movements earlier in the twentieth century. He notes that many modern proponents of character education who ardently look back to the Great Tradition, when traditional character education was allegedly pervasive, widely embraced, and successfully implemented, might be surprised to learn that the educational "tradition" they seek was not apparent to contemporaries. Widespread anxiety about social disintegration was as common to the first decades of the twentieth century as to the later decades. Both periods exhibited alarm at the sorry state of moral character among business leaders and politicians, as well as youth. Both periods saw evidence of cultural decline, loss of traditional values, and abandonment of foundational principles. Both periods saw the formation of character education lobbies, pressure groups, and professional societies; both saw state action by legislatures to mandate character education in the schools; both saw the need for experiential or service learning; both saw the promulgation of widely divergent lists of urgently needed virtues, debates about direct and indirect methods, and the proper place of coercion and democratic practices in the schools. Moreover, the chasm between educators and researchers, between the ardent confidence of character educators in their favored curriculum and the skepticism of researchers about its efficacy, also has a long history (see Leming, 1997). Moreover, Cunningham argues that whereas the "rise" of traditional character education in

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the twentieth century typically accompanied periods of great social ferment and rapid social change, when there were profound challenges to national identity and widespread anxiety about social cohesion and the unsettling forces of modernity, its “fall” was inevitable without an adequate character psychology to guide curricular development and instructional practice. “Unless psychology can provide a better model of human development,” he writes, “character will continue to receive sporadic and faddish treatment and the public’s common school will continue to be undermined” (p. 197).

We return, then, to a central claim of this chapter, which is that the conceptual grounding required for any minimally adequate character education must be found in robust models of character psychology (Cunningham, 2005; Lapsley & Power, 2005). Although ideological commitments are notoriously immune to influence, it is our view that consensual frameworks for addressing character education will be forthcoming when controversies are anchored to appropriate psychological literatures. In the next section, we take note of relatively recent approaches to character psychology that provide new ways of conceptualizing the moral dimensions of personality.

NEW APPROACHES TO CHARACTER PSYCHOLOGY

There are at least two new approaches that have emerged for conceptualizing moral character. One approach argues that a moral identity results when the self identifies with moral commitments or a moral point of view. A second approach conceptualizes character in terms of the literatures of cognitive and personality psychology. We briefly consider each approach in turn.

Identity, Exemplars, and the Moral Self

One way to conceptualize character is in terms of moral identity. According to Hart (2005), moral identity includes self-awareness, a sense of self integration and continuity over time, a commitment to plans of action and an attachment to one’s moral goals. Moreover, he argues that the contours of moral identity are constrained by stable aspects of personality but also by characteristics of family and neighborhood. Moral identity is a joint product of personal and contextual factors. Indeed, moral identity is influenced by factors beyond the con-

trol of the adolescent, which introduces an element of “moral luck” in the sort of commitments a young person might identify with. Yet there is plasticity in moral identity development. Moral identity is open to revision across the lifecourse, particularly when one is given opportunities to engage in moral action. This possibility underscores the importance of providing youth with opportunities for service learning and community service, a topic we take up later.

Blasi’s (1984, 1985, 1995) account of moral identity shares some similarity with Hart’s (2005). According to Blasi one has a moral identity to the extent that the self is organized around moral commitments. One has a moral identity when moral notions are central, important, and essential to one’s self-understanding. This yields a personality imbued with a deep, affective, and motivational orientation toward morality. Blasi (1984) insists, however, that any account of the moral personality be grounded on the premise that rationality is the core of the moral life. To have a moral identity is to have good moral reasons for the identity-defining commitments that one makes.

Of course, not everyone has a self-concept that is constructed by reference to moral reasons. Some individuals organize self-related information around moral categories, others do not. Some individuals let moral notions penetrate to the core of what and who they are as persons; others have only a glancing acquaintance with moral notions but choose to define the self in other ways, by reference to other values and commitments (Walker, Pitts, Hennig, & Matsuba, 1995). Even those who define the self in moral terms may do so in different ways, emphasizing different sets of moral priorities. In this way, moral identity is a dimension of individual differences; it is foundational to the moral personality (Blasi, 1995). When moral commitments are vital for one’s self-understanding, and one commits to live in a way that keeps faith with these identity-defining commitments, one has a moral identity. Indeed, not to act in accordance with one’s identity is to put the integrity of the self at risk. Not to act with what is essential, important, and central to one’s self-understanding is to risk losing the self, a possibility that introduces a motivational property to the moral personality (Bergman, 2002; Blasi, 1999; Hardy & Carlo, 2005).

Blasi (2005) recently proposed a psychological approach to moral character that trades on these themes. According to this view moral character is best described not by reference to lower-order virtues, such as honesty,

generosity, and humility, among numerous others, but by three sets of higher-order virtues that include willpower (as self-control), integrity, and moral desires.

Willpower as self-control is a toolbox of strategic and metacognitive skills that allow one to break down problems, set goals, focus attention, delay gratification, avoid distractions, and resist temptation. These virtues are necessary to deal with obstacles that we encounter invariably in the pursuit of long-range objectives. The cluster of integrity virtues connects our commitments to a sense of self and is responsible for feelings of responsibility and identity. Integrity is felt *as responsibility* when we constrain the self with intentional acts of self-control, effort, and determination in the pursuit of our moral desires; when we make the self conform to the moral law out of a felt sense of necessity and obligation; and when we hold the self accountable for the consequences of actions. Integrity is felt *as identity* when a person constructs the very meaning of the self by reference to moral categories. In this case, living out one's moral commitments does not feel like a choice; living in ways that offend what is central and essential about oneself is unthinkable self-betrayal.

But the virtues of self-control and integrity do not have inherent moral significance. Both are morally neutral unless they are attached to moral desires. Both require a will that desires and tends toward the moral good. The language of moral desires is distinctive of Blasi's (2005) theoretical system, but "moral desires" is an expression he prefers to the closely related notion of moral motivation, and for three reasons. First, the expression connotes an intensity of affect that connects to traditional notions of character as that gives direction to one's life. Second, insofar as moral desires clearly belong to a person, they are preferred over other psychological accounts that treat motivation as an impersonal regulatory system or in terms of cybernetic models of self-control. Third, the notion of desires aligns closely with Frankfurt's (1988) concept of will and his distinction between first- and second-order desires. A person certainly has (first-order) desires, but one can also reflect on them, order them, and have desires about some of them (second-order desires). One has a will when one desires to implement and put into effective action that which is a first-order desire. Here one transforms impulses into something that is reflected on from a greater psychological distance. The will is an intervention on oneself that turns a first-order impulse into something that can be rejected or accepted, and on this foundation

rests the possibility of a moral self if the distancing and appropriating is governed by a consideration of the moral good.

Blasi's approach to moral self-identity is associated with an important line of research on moral exemplars. Colby and Damon (1992) interviewed 23 individuals whose lives demonstrated exceptional moral commitment in such areas as civil rights, civil liberties, poverty, and religious freedom. Although the specific commitments of each exemplar were a unique adaptation to the situational challenges that each faced, one of the most important common characteristics of exemplars was the fact that moral goals were so closely aligned with personal goals. There was an identification of self with moral commitments. Moral goals were central to their self-understanding, to their sense of identity, to such a degree that moral choices were not seen as a burden but simply as a way to advance one's personal objectives. Exemplars also were characterized by a sense of certainty and clarity about what was right and wrong, of their own personal responsibility, and by a sense of optimism about how things would turn out.

A similar theme is evident in the research by Hart and his colleagues (Hart, Atkins, & Ford, 1998; Hart & Fegley, 1995; Hart, Yates, Fegley, & Wilson, 1995), who studied inner-city adolescents who had been nominated by community organizations for their uncommon prosocial commitment. In contrast to matched comparison adolescents, care exemplars more often included moral goals and moral traits in their self-descriptions; and ideal self-representations and parental representations in their actual self-descriptions; articulated a mature self-understanding whereby beliefs generated coherence among elements of the self; and perceived continuity of the self that extended from the remembered past into the projected future. Moral exemplars also have been reported to show advanced moral reasoning, more mature faith and identity development, and an affinity toward agreeableness (Matsuba & Walker, 2004).

In a separate line of research, Aquino and Reed (2002) designed an instrument that measures the degree to which having a moral identity is important to one's self-conception. They assumed, following Blasi (1984, 1985), that moral identity varies in content and in the degree to which moral traits are central to one's self-understanding. They identified nine moral traits (caring, compassionate, fair, friendly, generous, helpful, hardworking, honest, kind) that individuals regard as characteristic of a moral person, which then served as

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“salience induction stimuli” to activate a person’s moral identity when rating the self-importance of these traits on their instrument. Factor analysis revealed two factors: a Symbolization factor (the degree to which the traits are reflected in one’s public actions), and an Internalization factor (the degree to which traits are central to one’s private self-concept).

Aquino and Reed (2002) showed that both dimensions predict the emergence of a spontaneous moral self-concept and self-reported volunteering, but that internalization showed the stronger relation to actual donating behavior and to moral reasoning. Subsequent research (Reed & Aquino, 2003) showed that individuals with a strong internalized moral identity report a stronger moral obligation to help and share resources with outgroups, to perceive the worthiness of coming to their aid, and to display a preferential option for outgroups in actual donating behavior. Hence, individuals with internalized moral identity are more likely to expand the circle of moral regard to include outgroup members. Moreover, moral identity is thought to mediate the relationship between deviant organizational norms and deviant behavior. If moral identity is highly salient in comparison to other identities within the self-system, then internalized moral identity is likely to inhibit the motivation to respond to deviant norms within the culture of organizations (R. J. Bennett, Aquino, Reed, & Thau, in press). The authors have in mind employee behavior in business organizations, but there is no reason to limit the identity-moderator hypothesis solely to this context.

Research on moral self-identity and on the qualities of individuals who demonstrate exceptional moral commitment is a promising avenue for character psychology, although the implications for character education are not clearly understood. One implication of Blasi’s theory is that character education should encourage children and adolescents to develop the proper moral desires and master the virtues of self-control and integrity. But how is this possible? How do children develop self-control and a wholehearted commitment to moral integrity? There are intriguing clues about possible pathways to moral identity from research on the development of conscience in early childhood. For example, Kochanska and her colleagues (Kochanska, 2002; Kochanska et al., 2004; Kochanska, Aksan, & Koenig, 1995) proposed a two-step model of emerging morality that begins with the quality of parent-child attachment. A secure, mutu-

ally responsive relationship with caregivers characterized by shared, positive affect orients the child to be receptive to their influence and eager to comply with parental suggestions, standards, and demands. This encourages wholehearted, willing, self-regulated, and “committed” compliance on the part of the child to the norms, values, and expectations of caregivers, which, in turn, motivates moral internalization and the emergence of conscience. The model moves, then, from security of attachment to committed compliance to moral internalization. Moreover, the child’s experience of eager, willing, and committed compliance with the parents’ socialization agenda is presumed to influence the child’s emerging internal representation of the self:

Children who have a strong history of committed compliance with the parent are likely gradually to come to view themselves as embracing the parent’s values and rules. Such a moral self, in turn, comes to serve as the regulator of future moral conduct and, more generally, of early morality. (Kochanska, 2002, p. 340)

Indeed, children are more likely to regulate their conduct in ways that are consistent with their internal working model of the self.

This model of the emergence of conscience in early childhood suggests that the source of wholehearted commitment to moral considerations, and the cultivation of the proper moral desires characteristic of what Blasi requires of a moral personality, lie in the mutual positive affective relationship with socialization agents and the quality of the child’s network of interpersonal relationships. The source of self-control, integrity, and moral desires is deeply relational. It is motivated by the sense of moral self-identity that emerges within a history of secure attachment. If true, such a model underscores the importance of school bonding (Catalano, Haggerty, Oesterle, Fleming, & Hawkins, 2004; Libby, 2004; Maddox & Prinz, 2003), caring school communities (Payne, Gottfredson, & Gottfredson, 2003; Solomon, Watson, Battistich, Schaps, & Delucchi, 1992), and attachment to teachers (M. Watson, 2003) as a basis for prosocial and moral development. For example, Payne et al. showed that schools that were organized and experienced as a caring community had higher levels of student bonding to school and greater internalization of common norms and goals, which, in turn, was related to less delinquency. Similarly, the Seattle Social Development Project has documented its theoretical claim that strong

bonds of attachment and commitment to school and clear standards of behavior create a press toward behavior consistent with these standards (Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, Abbott, & Hill, 1999; Hawkins, Guo, Hill, Battin-Pearson, & Abbott, 2001). Evidence from the Child Development Project showed that elementary school children's sense of community leads them to adhere to the values that are most salient in the classroom (Solomon, Watson, Battistich, Schaps, & Delucchi, 1996). Moreover, perceptions of moral atmosphere in high school promote prosocial and inhibit norm-transgressive behavior (Brugman et al., 2003; Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg, 1989). These findings are quite close to Kochanska's model of early conscience development: Secure attachment promotes committed compliance, which leads to internalization of norms and standards. Hence, there appears to be continuity in the mechanisms of socialization in both families and schools in early and middle childhood and adolescence.

The moral exemplar research holds out another goal for character education, which is to encourage the sort of prosocial commitment observed in care exemplars. This would certainly be a welcome alternative to the more typical understanding of character education as a risk-and-deficits prevention program. How do individuals come to align personal goals with moral ones, or to identify the actual self with ideal representations? One mechanism suggested by Colby and Damon (1995) is social influence. In their view, social influence plays a decisive role in transforming personal goals into important moral commitments. Social influence instigates moral development. It provides a context for reappraisal of one's current capabilities, guidance on how best to extend one's capabilities, and the strategies required to pull it off. "For those who continually immerse themselves in moral concerns and in social networks absorbed by such concerns, goal transformation remains the central architect of progressive change throughout life" (p. 344). Other mechanisms include participation in voluntary organizations (C. Flanagan, 2004; Hart et al., 1998), school attachment (Atkins, Hart, & Donnelly, 2004), and service learning opportunities more generally (Waterman, 1997; Youniss, McLellan, Su, & Yates, 1999; Youniss, McLellan, & Yates, 1997; Youniss & Yates, 1997).

These mechanisms may provide not just the means for the transformation of personal into moral goals, but also an opportunity for adolescents to experience other char-

acteristics of moral exemplars, such as coming to see moral concerns with greater clarity, developing a greater sense of personal responsibility for the welfare of their communities, and developing a sense of optimism and efficacy that personal effort pays off and makes a difference. We will have more to say about community service and service learning. But if these mechanisms are critical to the formation of moral identity (Hart, 2005), then the challenge for character educators is how best to transform the culture of schools so that they become places where social networks are absorbed by moral concerns, where attachment to school is encouraged, where opportunities abound for broad participation in the sort of voluntary associations that predict prosocial engagement with the community.

Models of Personality Psychology

One strategy for framing models of moral personality is to appeal to the theoretical resources, constructs, and mechanisms of personality psychology. Yet, personality psychology is not a unified domain. According to Cervone (1991), there are two disciplines of personality psychology that are distinguished by how the basic units of personality are conceptualized. One discipline favors trait/dispositional constructs and understands personality structure in terms of between-person variation that is described by "top-down" abstract latent variable taxonomies, such as the Big 5. The second discipline favors cognitive-affective mechanisms, or social cognitive units, and understands personality structure in terms of "bottom-up" within-person processes (Cervone, 2005). Each discipline of personality psychology is reflected in recent attempts to understand the moral personality.

For example Walker and his colleagues examined the personality structure of moral exemplars by reference to the Big 5 trait dimensions. In one study (Walker & Hennig, 2004, Study 2) prototype descriptors of moral exemplars was examined with the interpersonal circumplex and the five-factor model of personality. The prototype of the just person was described as a moderate blend of nurturance and dominance, and aligned with conscientiousness and openness to experience. An earlier study (Walker & Pitts, 1998) reported a relationship between trait dimensions and three kinds of moral exemplars. The brave exemplar was linked with a complex of traits associated with extraversion; the caring exemplar was associated with agreeableness; while the just

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exemplar was a complex mixture of conscientiousness, emotional stability, and openness to experience. Hart (2005) reports an association between the care exemplar and three of the Big 5 trait dimensions (openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness), while Matsuba and Walker (2004) showed that the personality structure of young adults who were nominated for their moral exemplarity was characterized by traits associated with agreeableness.

In contrast to trait taxonomic approaches, we have attempted to understand moral personality from the perspective of social cognitive theory, the second discipline of personality psychology (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2004; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2004). Social cognitive theory draws attention to cognitive-affective mechanisms (scripts, schemas, prototypes, and other cognitive frameworks) that influence social perception but also serve to create and sustain patterns of individual differences. If schemas are readily primed and easily activated (“chronically accessible”), for example, then they direct our attention selectively to certain features of our experience at the expense of others. This selective framing disposes one to choose compatible or schema-relevant life tasks, goals, and settings that are congruent with one’s social perceptions. Repeated selection of schema-congruent tasks, goals, and settings serves over time to canalize and sustain dispositional tendencies and to result in highly practiced behavioral routines that provide “a ready, sometimes automatically available plan of action in such life contexts” (Cantor, 1990, p. 738). According to Cantor, this makes one a “virtual expert” in highly practiced regions of social experience demarcated by chronically accessible schemas and allows schemas to function as the cognitive carriers of dispositions.

In our view, the moral personality can be understood similarly in terms of the accessibility of moral schemas for social information processing (Narvaez & Lapsley, 2005). A moral person, a person who has a moral character or identity, is one for whom moral constructs are chronically accessible. These chronically accessible categories provide a dispositional preference or readiness to discern the moral dimensions of experience, as well as underwrite a discriminative facility in selecting situationally appropriate behavior. Recent research has shown, for example, that moral chronicity is a dimension of individual differences that influences spontaneous trait inferences as well as the kind of evaluative moral inferences that are generated when reading stories (Nar-

vaez, Lapsley, Hagele, & Lasky, in press). Moreover, available constructs can be made accessible by situational priming as well as by chronicity, which combine in an additive fashion to influence social perception (Bargh, Bond, Lombardi, & Tota, 1986). This supports the social cognitive view that dispositional coherence is to be found at the intersection of person (chronicity) and context (situational priming), and that stable behavioral signatures are to be found in patterns of situational variability rather than cross-situational consistency (Mischel, 2005; Shoda & Mischel, 2000).

A social cognitive approach to moral character has a number of benefits. It provides an explanation for moral identity. For Blasi (2005), one has a moral identity when moral notions are central, essential, and important to one’s self-understanding. We would add that moral notions that are central, essential, and important to self-understanding would also be chronically accessible for appraising the social landscape. The social cognitive approach also accounts for at least one characteristic of moral exemplars. As Colby and Damon (1992) have shown, individuals who display extraordinary moral commitment rarely report engaging in an extensive decision-making process. Rather, they “just knew” what was required of them, automatically as it were, without recourse to elaborate and effortful cognitive exertion. This is also experienced by exemplars as a kind of moral clarity or as a felt conviction that one’s judgments are appropriate, justified, and true. Yet, this is precisely the outcome of preconscious activation of chronically accessible constructs: that it induces strong feelings of certainty or conviction with respect to one’s social judgments (Bargh, 1989; Narvaez & Lapsley, 2005). Moreover, the automaticity of schema activation contributes to the tacit, implicit qualities often associated with Aristotelian and traditional understanding of the “habits” of moral character. To put it differently, the moral habits of virtue theory are social cognitive schemas whose chronic accessibility favors automatic activation.

One challenge for a social cognitive theory of moral character is to specify the developmental sources of moral chronicity. Indeed, our preference for the social cognitive option reflects a strategic bet that it will more likely lead to integrative developmental models of moral personality than would the taxonomic approach (Narvaez et al., in press). One speculation is that moral personality development is built on the foundation of generalized event representations, behavioral scripts,

and episodic memory that characterize early socioper-sonality development (Kochanska & Thompson, 1997; Lapsley & Narvaez, 2004; Thompson, 1998). Event representations have been called the “basic building blocks of cognitive development” (Nelson & Gruendel, 1981, p. 131), and it is our contention that they are the foundation as well of emergent moral character. They are working models of how social routines unfold and of what one can expect of social experience. These prototypic knowledge structures are progressively elaborated in the early dialogues with caregivers who help children re-view, structure, and consolidate memories in script-like fashion (Fivush, Kuebli, & Chubb, 1992). But the key characterological turn of significance for moral psychol-ogy is how these early social cognitive units are trans-formed from episodic into autobiographical memory. Autobiographical memory is also a social construction elaborated by means of dialogue within a web of inter-locution. Parental interrogatives (“What happened when you pushed your sister?”; “Why did she cry?”; “What should you do next?”) help children organize events into personally relevant autobiographical memories which provide, as part of the self-narrative, action-guiding scripts (“I share with her” and “I say I’m sorry”) that become frequently practiced, overlearned, routine, ha-bitual, and automatic. These interrogatives might also include moral character attributions so that the ideal or “ought” self becomes part of the child’s autobiographi-cal narrative. In this way, parents help children identify morally relevant features of their experience and en-courage the formation of social cognitive schemas that are chronically accessible (Lapsley & Narvaez, 2004). Moreover, as Kochanska’s (2002) model suggests, there is every reason to suppose that this developmental pro-cess is affected both by variations in the quality of the parent-child relationship and its goodness-of-fit.

One implication of this account, and of Kochanska’s (2002) research on the emergence of conscience, is that character education is not something that takes place initially in schools as a formal curriculum, but rather is embedded within the fabric of family life and early so-cialization experiences. In the next section, we take up school- and community-based programs that are of sig-nificance to character education.

APPROACHES TO CHARACTER EDUCATION

In this section, we review promising or prominent school- and community-based approaches to character

education. The range of programs that are claimed for character education is quite diverse, and there are very many of them. Our intention here is not to review the full range of specific programs but to identify general cate-gories of programs that make some claim for character education. Some of the programs that we review might also be considered examples of one or more of the 11 Principles of Effective Character Education (Lickona, Schaps, & Lewis, 2003) adopted by the Character Edu-cation Partnership (CEP). We begin our review by a con-sideration of these principles given their prominence among character educators.

Eleven Principles of Effective Character Education

The Character Education Partnership is a coalition of organizations and individuals dedicated to helping schools develop moral and character education pro-grams. Many school districts embrace approaches to character education that are guided by principles devel-oped by the CEP. The first principle asserts that good character is built on the foundation of core ethical val-ues, such as caring, honesty, fairness, responsibility, and respect. Sometimes core values (alternatively, traits or virtues) are selected by school districts after broad consultation with the community. More often, the core values are those endorsed by national advo-cacy organizations, such as the six “pillars” of charac-ter (trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, citizenship) articulated by the Aspen Declara-tion and the Character Counts movement. What is crit-ical is that the values selected for character education be universally valid, promote the common good, affirm human dignity, contribute to the welfare of the individ-ual, deal with issues of right and wrong, and facilitate democratic practices.

Accordingly, programs should teach core values holistically with cognitive, affective, and behavioral components (Principle 2) and in a way that engages school personnel in an intentional, proactive, and com-prehensive way (Principle 3). It is particularly important to create caring school communities (Principle 4) and to provide students with opportunities to engage in moral action, such as service learning and community service (Principle 5). Effective character education does not neglect rigorous, challenging academic curricula (Prin-ciple 6). It fosters intrinsic motivation to do the right thing by building a climate of trust and respect, by en-couraging a sense of autonomy, and by building shared

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norms through dialogue, class meetings, and democratic decision making (Principle 7). Moreover, the core values that animate student life should engage the school staff as well (Principle 8). For character education to take root it must result in shared educational leadership that makes provision for long-term support of the initiative (Principle 9); it must engage families and community stakeholders (Principle 10); and it must be committed to ongoing assessment and evaluation (Principle 11).

This remarkable set of principles provides a useful guidepost for the design and implementation of intentional, programmatic, and comprehensive character education. It insists that ethical considerations be the transparent rationale for programmatic activities and, on this basis (e.g., Principle 3), would not support efforts to broaden the definition of character education to include all manner of prevention and intervention programs absent an explicit, intentional concern for moral development. It endorses a set of well-attested pedagogical strategies that are considered educational best practice, including cooperative learning, democratic classrooms, and constructivist approaches to teaching and learning. It endorses practices that cultivate autonomy, intrinsic motivation, and community engagement (Beland, 2003c). Indeed, the CEP Principles look like a blueprint for progressive education, and would seem to settle the historical debate concerning direct and indirect approaches to character education in favor of the latter paradigm.

Yet, the Principles are not without their discontents. Principle 1 insists on core values that are foundational, objectively true, universally valid, immanent to human dignity, and crucial to democratic practice, yet its elision of familiar anxieties about the source and selection of favored values gives one pause. This insistence that character education first be grounded on objectively valid core values is, in our view, a misleading and unnecessary distraction. It is misleading because it assumes that practices are derived from principles rather than the other way around (see, e.g., Carr, 1991). It is distracting because it forces educators to defend a transparent and intentional approach to the moral formation of children on grounds other than its immanence and inevitability in the life of schools.

Moreover, the first Principle smuggles a premise into character education; for example, that core values are objectively true, foundational, and universally valid is itself a deeply contentious matter for epistemology and

ethics, and attempts to settle an argument about ethical relativism that it is ill equipped to address except by dogmatic assertion.

But the necessity, inevitability, and desirability of character education does not hinge on the outcome of this argument. Indeed, to suggest that it does is to repeat the mistake on the educational front that the cognitive developmental tradition commits on the psychological front. Just as Kohlberg (1981, 1983) attempted to use stage theory to provide the psychological resources to defeat ethical relativism, so, too, does the first Principle of the Character Education Partnership attempt to take up arms against the bogey of relativism on the educational front.

Although the Principles call for comprehensive infusion of ethical concerns throughout the curriculum and in all facets of school life, and although the *Eleven Principles Sourcebook* (Beland, 2003c) encourages a variety of pedagogical strategies that are compatible with best instructional practice, we observe that not much of contemporary character education gets past the first Principle, or else reduces character education to simply teaching *about* values and the *meaning* of trait words. The broad school reform and commitment to best practice required by the remaining Principles are too often neglected in favor of fussing over the meaning of words denoting core values (leaving aside the problem of how one fills in the meaning of these words). The hard work of character education is not *learning about* core value words, but *learning to* engage the range of developmental and educational experiences countenanced by the remaining Principles.

Although there is value in a first Principle that requires educators to make explicit the moral implications of school practices, it would be far better, in our view, if CEP's first Principle articulated a commitment to a distinctly virtue-centered approach to education that gave primacy to aretaic concerns about agents and flourishing rather than Kantian concerns about universality and objectivity. What is required as a first Principle is not a disguised stance on the epistemological status of "values"—that certain of them are foundational, universal, and objectively valid—but a statement that makes explicit the ethical commitments immanent to educational practices endorsed in the remaining Principles. The goal of character education, in other words, is less about enlisting children in the battle against ethical relativism, and more about equipping them with the moral disposi-

tions and skills required for effective citizenship in a liberal democracy.

A Conceptual Framework

We think there is a better way to make the case for character education that has little to do with taking a stance on the question of ethical foundations. The conceptual framework for character education is adequately anticipated by a commitment to a developmental systems orientation. A developmental systems approach to character education draws attention to embedded and overlapping systems of influence that exist at multiple levels, to the fact that dispositional coherence is a joint product of personal and contextual factors that are in dynamic interaction across the life course. As Masten (2003, p. 172) put it, “Dynamic multisystem models of human learning, development and psychopathology are transforming science, practice and policies concerned with the health, success and well-being of children and the adult citizens of society they will become.” A credible character education must resemble dynamic multisystems models of development and be located within contemporary theoretical and empirical frameworks of developmental science if it is going to understand adequately the mechanisms of change, plasticity, prevention, resilience, and the very conditions and possibilities of what it means to flourish—to live well the life that is good for one to live.

Moreover, a developmental systems perspective already underwrites more specific approaches to youth development. For example, Lerner and his colleagues (Lerner, Dowling, & Anderson, 2003; Lerner, Fisher, & Weinberg, 2000) make the case for “thriving” as a basis for understanding the role of adaptive person-context relations in human development. “An integrated moral and civic identity,” they write, “and a commitment to society beyond the limits of one’s own existence enables thriving youth to be agents both in their own healthy development and in the positive enhancement of other people and of society” (Lerner et al., 2003, p. 172). Indeed, thriving and character education point to the same end, as do other notions derived from developmental contextualism, such as developmental assets, resilience, and positive youth development. Moreover, developmental contextualism provides not only a basis for understanding the dispositional qualities of personality (“character”), but also a vision of what it means to flourish (e.g., thriving and positive development). These developmen-

tal considerations already carry the conceptual load for understanding constructs that are crucial to broad conceptualizations of character education and thus would serve much better as a first principle of character education than the CEP’s current emphasis on foundational core values.

Educating for Character

Lickona (1991a, 1991b, 1997, 2004) has developed an integrative approach to character education that is largely congruent with CEP principles. Along with a commitment to core values, he also advocates a variety of strategies that are broadly compatible with instructional best practice for elementary (Lickona, 1992) and high schools (Lickona & Davidson, 2004). A distinction is drawn between two aspects of character: performance character and moral character. Performance character is oriented toward mastery of tasks and includes such qualities as diligence, perseverance, a positive attitude, and a commitment to hard work. Performance character is what is required to develop talents, skills, and competencies. Moral character, in turn, is a relational orientation that is concerned with qualities of integrity, caring, justice, respect, and cooperation. It is an ethical compass that guides the pursuit and expression of performance character. If performance character makes it possible to live a productive life, moral character is required to live an ethical life (Lickona & Davidson, 2004). Effective education should aim to develop both aspects of character.

Lickona and Davidson (2004) recently articulated seven principles of schools that effectively address elements of moral and performance character. These schools:

1. Make the development of character the cornerstone of the school’s mission and identity.
2. Cultivate an ethical learning community that includes staff, students, and parents, who share responsibility for advancing the school’s character education mission.
3. Encourage the professional staff to form a professional ethical learning community to foster collaboration and mutual support in advancing the ethical dimensions of teaching and student development.
4. Align all school practices, including curriculum, discipline, and extracurricular activities, with the goals of performance excellence and moral excellence.

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5. Use evaluation data to monitor progress in the development of strength of character and to guide decision making with respect to educational practices.
6. Integrate ethical material into the curriculum while encouraging lifelong learning and a career orientation.
7. Treat classroom and schoolwide discipline as opportunities to support the ethical learning community by emphasizing the importance of caring, accountability, shared ownership of rules, and a commitment to restitution.

One salutary feature of this framework is that it urges schools to understand their educative mission in terms of a moral framework. A second salutary feature is that many of its instructional strategies are informed by the research literatures of developmental and educational psychology. It promotes, for example, instructional practices that encourage mastery motivation, metacognitive instruction, and cooperative learning. It sanctions constructivist strategies that embrace the active participation of students in learning. It advocates strategies (e.g., dilemma discussion, just community) more commonly associated with development of a moral education. Indeed, many of the suggested practices that attempt to link home and school, influence school culture, involve community stakeholders, or capitalize on the unique developmental needs of students could be underwritten by a developmental systems orientation.

Caring School Communities

The fourth of the CEP's Principles of Effective Character Education states, "Effective character education creates a caring school community." (Beland, 2003a, p. 1). There is a strong consensus that effective character education must include efforts to promote "communities of caring" in classrooms and schools (Battistich, Solomon, Watson, & Schaps, 1997; Berkowitz & Bier, 2005). A school climate that encourages social and emotional bonding and promotes positive interpersonal experiences is one that provides the minimum necessary grounding for the formation of character (Schaps, Battistich, & Solomon, 1997). Indeed, as Berkowitz (2002, p. 58–59) put it, "Relationships are critical to character education, so character education must focus on the quality of relationships at school."

Research has shown, for example, that the quality of early teacher-student relationships can have a strong influence on academic and social outcomes that persist

through eighth grade (Hamre & Pianta, 2001). Moreover, in schools where there is a strong perception of communal organization there is less student misconduct (Bryk & Driscoll, 1988) and lower rates of drug use and delinquency (Battistich & Hom, 1997). Student attachment or bonding to school also improves school motivation (Goodenow, 1993) and counterindicates delinquency (Welsh, Greene, & Jenkins, 1999) and victimization of teachers and students (Gottfredson & Gottfredson, 1985). In a study of a nationally representative sample of 254 high schools, Payne et al. (2003) found a connection between communal organization and student bonding to school. Schools characterized by communal organization, that is, by mutually supportive relationships among teachers, administrators, and students, a commitment to common goals and norms, and a sense of collaboration, tend to have students who report an attachment to school (an emotional bond to teachers or school and a sense of belonging), a belief in the legitimacy of rules and norms, and a high value placed on schoolwork. Moreover, bonding to school was related, in turn, to lower levels of student misconduct and victimization. Payne et al. suggested that by "improving the relationships among school members, the collaboration and participation of these members and the agreement on common goals and norms, schools could increase students' attachment to school, commitment to education and belief in school rules and norms" (p. 773) and thereby reduce misconduct, delinquency, and victimization.

The work of two research teams, the Social Development Research Group at the University of Washington and the Child Development Project of the Developmental Studies Center (Oakland, CA), has provided particularly impressive evidence on the role of school bonding and caring school communities for a range of outcomes of interest to character educators.

Social Development Research Group

This group launched the Seattle Social Development Project (SSDP) in 1981 in eight Seattle public elementary schools. The project initially provided an intervention to first-grade pupils, but the program expanded by 1985 to include all fifth-grade students in 18 elementary schools, with additional intervention components that targeted parents and teachers as well. The longitudinal assessments of participants continued throughout adolescence and subsequently every 3 years after graduation until age 27. The SSDP was guided by a social

development model that assumes that behavior is learned within social environments. One becomes socialized within the norms of a social group to the extent that (a) one perceives opportunities for involvement, (b) becomes actually involved, (c) has the skill for involvement and interaction, and (d) perceives that it is rewarding to do so. When socialization goes well, a social bond of attachment and commitment is formed. This social bond, in turn, orients the child to the norms and expectations of the group to which one is attached and to the values endorsed by the group. "It is hypothesized that the behavior of the individual would be prosocial or antisocial depending on the predominant behaviors, norms and values held by those individuals and institutions to which/whom the individual bonded" (Catalano, Haggerty, et al., 2004, p. 251).

The SSDP included interventions that targeted three primary socialization agents of school-age children: teachers, parents, and peers. Teachers were given training in proactive classroom management, interactive teaching to motivate learners, and cooperative learning. The intervention for children targeted social and emotional skill development, including interpersonal cognitive problem-solving skills and refusal skills. Parent training targeted behavior management, how to give academic support, and skills to reduce risk for drug use.

Research showed that training teachers to use targeted teaching practices was successful in promoting both school bonding and academic achievement (Abbott et al., 1998). Moreover, the SSDP demonstrated long-term positive effects on numerous adolescent health-risk behaviors (e.g., violent delinquency, heavy drinking, sexual intercourse, having multiple sex partners, pregnancy, and school misconduct) and on school bonding (Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, Abbott, & Hill, 1999; Hawkins, Guo, Hill, Battin-Pearson, & Abbott, 2001). For example, school bonding at grade 12 and increases in school bonding between grades 7 and 12 was negatively correlated with use of alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana, and other drug use at grade 12. Students bonded to school at grades 5 and 6 were less likely to become minor or major offenders in middle school. Students with a lower sense of school attachment and commitment were twice as likely to join gangs as were students with a stronger sense of school bonding. Moreover, school bonding also had positive academic outcomes. For example, an increase in school bonding between grades 7 and 12 was associated with higher GPA and lower student misconduct at grade 12. Students with greater bonding

to school at grade 8 were less likely to drop out of school by grade 10 (see Catalano, Berglund, Ryan, Lonczak, & Hawkins, 2004, for a review).

Thus, the intensive, multicomponent interventions of the SSDP had clear effects on school bonding and on a range of outcomes of traditional interest to character educators, including substance use, delinquency, gang membership, violence, academic problems, and sexual activity. But is this character education? It depends on whether character education is defined by treatment or by outcomes. The SSPD has generated empirical outcomes that are claimed for character education broadly defined, although the SSPD "treatment" is guided by the theoretical considerations of the social development model and not of virtue, morality, or character. Still, if character education is to be considered a treatment or intervention in its own right, then it must possess the characteristics of successful interventions like the SSDP: It must be guided by explicit theory; it must be comprehensive; it must involve multiple components; and it must be initiated early in development and sustained over time.

Developmental Studies Center

The Developmental Studies Center (DSC) has been particularly influential in documenting the crucial role that children's sense of community plays in promoting a wide range of outcomes commonly associated with character education, including altruistic, cooperative, and helping behavior, concern for others, prosocial conflict resolution, and trust in and respect for teachers (Solomon, Watson, Delucchi, Schaps, & Battistich, 1988; M. Watson, Battistich, & Solomon, 1997). The research agenda of the DSC assumed that children have basic needs for belonging, autonomy, and competence and that their engagement with school depends on whether these needs are adequately met (Battistich et al., 1997). It was assumed further that "when children's needs are met through membership in a school community, they are likely to become affectively bonded with and committed to the school, and therefore inclined to identify with and behave in accordance with its expressed goals and values" (Schaps et al., 1997, p. 127).

In 1982, the DSC initiated the Child Development Project (CDP) in three program schools in suburban San Francisco to examine these core assumptions. It was first implemented by teachers in kindergarten, with one grade level added each year until 1989. Program evaluation followed the cohort annually from kindergarten to

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sixth grade, with a 2-year follow-up assessment when the program cohort was in eighth grade. The evaluation also included students and teachers from three demographically similar comparison schools.

The programmatic focus of the CDP was designed to enhance prosocial development by creating the condition for a caring school community (Battistich et al., 1997). A sense of community was encouraged through activities such as collaborating on common academic goals; providing and receiving help from others; discussion and reflection on the experiences of self and others as these relate to prosocial values such as fairness, social responsibility, and justice; practicing social competencies; and exercising autonomy by participating in decisions about classroom life and taking responsibility for it. Moreover, the CDP encouraged an approach to classroom management that emphasized induction and developmental discipline (M. Watson, 2003).

Hence, the CDP provided numerous opportunities for children to collaborate with others in the pursuit of common goals, to give and receive help, to discuss and reflect on prosocial values, to develop and practice prosocial skills, and to exercise autonomy through democratic classroom structures.

Research studies of CDP implementations indicate that in comparison to control schools, students make positive gains in targeted areas. In classroom observations, individual interviews, and student questionnaires, program students exhibited more prosocial behavior in the classroom (Solomon et al., 1988), more democratic values and interpersonal understanding (Solomon, Watson, Schaps, Battistich, & Solomon, 1990), and more social problem-solving and conflict resolution skills (Battistich, Solomon, Watson, Solomon, & Schaps, 1989). Students in CDP schools were more likely to view their classrooms as communities, which led them to adhere to whatever norms and values were salient in the classroom. For example, in classrooms that emphasized teacher control and student compliance, student reasoning about prosocial dilemmas was oriented toward heteronomy and reward and punishment. In contrast, in classrooms that emphasized student participation, autonomy, democratic decision making, and interpersonal concerns, student prosocial reasoning emphasized autonomy and other-oriented moral reasoning (Solomon et al., 1992, 1996). When program and control students entered the same intermediate school, former program students were rated higher by teachers at eighth grade in conflict resolution skills, self-esteem, assertion, and popularity (Solomon, Watson, & Battistich, 2002).

The most important variable positively influenced by participation in CDP programs is students' sense of community, which is promoted through structures of the classroom and the school (Watson et al., 1997). For example, teachers who hold class meetings, use cooperative learning strategies, and discuss prosocial values are more likely to foster a sense of community in students. Schools that provide cross-age buddies, homework that links school and family, and schoolwide projects also promote a sense of community. Student sense of community is positively related to self-reported concern for others, conflict resolution skills, altruistic behavior, intrinsic prosocial motivation, trust in and respect for teachers, enjoyment of helping others learn, and positive interpersonal behavior and academic engagement (Battistich, Solomon, Watson, & Schaps, 1996; M. Watson, Battistich, & Solomon, 1997).

Other Approaches

Other approaches have focused similarly on building a sense of community within classrooms and schools. For example, the *Don't Laugh at Me* curriculum attempts to sensitize children to the painful effects of peer ridicule, ostracism, and bullying and to help them transform their classroom and school into "ridicule-free zones" characterized by a climate of respect. A recent efficacy study using a within-school quasi-experimental methodology showed that program participants (fourth and fifth graders) reported significant gains in a psychological sense of school membership, increases in quality of relational experiences and in the desire to stop dissing and ridicule, and declines in bullying, compared to youngsters in the control group (Mucherah, Lapsley, Miels, & Horton, 2004).

Similarly, the Resolving Conflicts Creatively Program (RCCP) attempts to build peaceable schools and classrooms through an emphasis on conflict resolution and positive communication skills (Lantieri & Patti, 1996). The curriculum cultivates a selected set of skills that target conflict resolution, cooperation, caring, appreciating diversity and countering bias, responsible decision making, and appropriate expression of feelings. The curriculum emphasizes the importance of adults coaching these skills as students practice them across a variety of contexts. Students learn to give "I" messages about their feelings, listen actively to others, mediate peer conflict, and become interculturally competent. An evaluation of RCCP performed by the National Center for Children in Poverty at Columbia University (Aber, Brown, & Heinrich, 1999; Aber, Pedersen, Brown, Jones,

& Gershoff, 2003) showed that students from grades 2 through 6 who were involved in an average of 25 lessons per year had a significantly slower growth rate in self-reported hostile attributions, aggressive fantasies, and greater problem-solving strategies than students who received fewer lessons. High-exposure students also showed greater improvement on academic achievement scores in the 2-year study.

Service Learning and Community Service

As we have seen, classroom practices that include democratic cooperation, problem solving, and decision making encourage the cultivation of skills and dispositions that are crucial for citizenship, and hence are an important component of character education. The fifth of the CEP's Principles of Effective Character Education (Beland, 2003c) urges schools to provide students with opportunities for moral action. In some sense, democratic classrooms include important moral lessons concerning fair play, civility, civic friendship, and cooperation. Children learn how to sustain moral conversation in the context of joint decision making. They develop a "deliberative competence" (Guttman, 1987) in solving problems, resolving conflict, establishing shared norms, balancing perspectives, and other skills crucial for effective citizenship (Power et al., 1989a). But the effort to cultivate democratic dispositions and a sense of community within classrooms is being joined by efforts to connect students to the larger community through service learning and community service.

According to Tolman (2003):

Service learning is rooted in the notion that acts of "doing good" for others—anything from cleaning up neighborhoods, to teaching younger students, to spending time with elderly community members—are the basis for significant learning experiences, for community development and for social change. (p. 6)

Service learning is distinguished from community service by the degree to which it links service activities to clearly defined learning objectives and to an academic curriculum (Pritchard, 2002). Both kinds of activities are now a ubiquitous and pervasive feature of American education. A national survey conducted by the National Center for Educational Statistics estimates that 64% of all public schools, including 87% of public high schools, had students participating in community service activities. About a third of these organized service learning as part of their curriculum, which is typically justified

by the desire to strengthen relationships among students, the school, and the community (Skinner & Chapman, 1999).

The desire to strengthen connections among home, school, and community is supported by ecological perspectives on human development. There are adaptational advantages for children whose developmental ecology is characterized by a richly connected mesosystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Indeed, Warter and Grossman (2002) appeal to developmental contextualism to provide a justification for the specific case of service learning and its implementation. Yates and Youniss (1996b; Youniss & Yates, 1997) argue similarly for a developmental perspective on service learning that is strongly influenced by Erikson's (1968) conceptualization of identity. According to this view, service learning opportunities provide an important context for helping adolescents sort out identity issues. For Erikson, identity work requires psychosocial reciprocity between the characteristics, identifications, and ideals of the young person and the affirmation of the community that give these choices significance and meaning. Identity is deeply characteristic of persons, to be sure, but like dispositional coherence of any kind, it plays out in dynamic interaction with community, culture, and context. In this way, identity is compatible with the person-context interactionism that is characteristic of a developmental systems approach.

Research has documented outcomes that are of interest to character education. Service learning experiences and participation in voluntary organizations increase one's sense of social agency, responsibility for the moral and political dimensions of society, and general moral-political awareness (Youniss et al., 1997). Indeed, youth who participate in service experiences often report significant transformation in personal values and orientations, an increased civic-mindedness and sense of social responsibility, along with enhanced learning and better grades (Markus, Howard, & King, 1993; Pancer & Pratt, 1999; Pratt, Hunsberger, Pancer, & Alisat, 2003; Scales, Blyth, Berkas, & Kielsmeier, 2000). They report higher levels of trust and more positive views of others in their communities (Hilles & Kahle, 1985). Similar findings were reported in national evaluations of two federally funded national service learning initiatives (Serve America, Learn and Serve). Melchior and Bailis (2002) report, for example, positive effects of service learning on the civic attitudes of adolescents. In addition, there was a reduction in school absenteeism for program participants and a

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lower incidence of teenage pregnancy. High school participants showed more school engagement, better math and science achievement, and a lower incidence of course failure. Middle school participants did more homework, got better grades in social studies, and got into serious legal and disciplinary problems less often.

Moreover, service learning and community service may be critical to political socialization and the process of forming a moral-civic identity (C. Flanagan, 2004; Yates & Youniss, 1999a). In one study, Yates and Youniss (1996a) examined the reflective narratives of Black parochial high school juniors who worked at a soup kitchen for the homeless as part of a service learning commitment. Over the course of a year, the researchers noticed that these youth came to invest their service with greater meaning and at a higher level of transcendence. Initially, participants tended to view the homeless in terms of stereotypes; then, at a higher level of transcendence, they started to think about the consequences of homelessness for their own life, or to compare the lot of the homeless to theirs; finally, they were able to reflect on homelessness from the perspective of social justice or in terms of appropriate political action. Over the course of a year, then, serving the homeless in a soup kitchen motivated reflective judgments about weighty matters of justice, responsibility, and political engagement.

In addition to promoting moral-civic identity, there is evidence that participation in service activities and voluntary organizations also increases civic participation in later adulthood (Youniss et al., 1997). Indeed, C. Flanagan (2004, p. 725) argued that membership in community-based organizations, along with extracurricular activities at school, provides a "sense of place" wherein youth "develop an affection for the polity." "Affection for the polity," she writes, "and engagement in community affairs are logical extensions of the sense of connection youth develop from involvement in community-based organizations" (p. 725).

Service learning and community service, then, are significant components of a school's commitment to character education (Hart, 2005). They are justified on the grounds that service significantly transforms moral-civic identity and predicts civic engagement in later adulthood (Youniss & Yates, 1999), both of which are foundational goals of character education. Of course, much depends on how service learning is implemented. It is generally agreed that successful service learning programs include opportunities for significant student

reflection as part of the experience. Matching students to projects consistent with their interests and holding them accountable for outcomes but giving them autonomy in selecting goals are also important program elements (Stukas, Clary, & Snyder, 1999; Warter & Grossman, 2002). There is evidence that service learning is particularly effective at high school compared to middle school, and that positive outcomes are most likely to be evident in areas directly related to the service learning experience (Melchior & Bailis, 2002).

Positive Youth Development

We noted earlier that a developmental systems approach (Lerner et al., 2003) might well serve as a conceptual framework for character education, as opposed to the current epistemological preoccupation with core values. A developmental systems orientation is foundational to the positive youth development perspective that has emerged as a counter to a risks-and-deficits model of adolescent development. Although adolescents certainly do face risks and obstacles, there is an emerging consensus that effort to ameliorate risk exposure, overcome deficits, or prevent problems is not sufficient to prepare young people adequately for the competencies that will be required of them for successful adaptation to adulthood. The mantra of positive youth development is "Problem-free is not fully prepared." Children and adolescents must be equipped with the strengths that will allow them to thrive, be resilient, take initiative, and contribute productively to society (Larson, 2000). This will require programmatic efforts to help children develop what Lerner (2001, 2002) calls the "5C's of positive youth development": competence, confidence, character, caring and compassion, and connection to the institutions of civil society.

The work of the Search Institute on the developmental assets is one instantiation of this general approach (Benson, Scales, Leffert, & Roehlkepartain, 1999; Scales & Leffert, 1999). Developmental assets are those features of a developmental system that promote positive outcomes. Forty assets have been identified on the basis of research, 20 of which are external and contextual, and 20 of which are internal and personal. The external assets are grouped into four categories: support (assets 1 to 6), empowerment (assets 7 to 10), boundaries and expectations (assets 11 to 16), and constructive use of time (assets 17 to 20). These refer to the positive developmental experiences that result from the

network of relationships that youth have with adults in their family, school, and community. The internal assets are grouped similarly into four categories: commitment to learning (assets 21 to 25), positive values (assets 26 to 31), social competencies (assets 32 to 36), and positive identity (assets 37 to 40). These refer to endogenous skills, dispositions, and interests that emerge over the course of education and development.

In many ways, the developmental assets approach already constitutes a richly articulated conceptual framework for character education that has little need for epistemological wrangling over foundational core values. Virtually all of the internal assets are familiar targets of character education, such as the positive values assets (caring, equality and social justice, integrity, honesty, responsibility), social competency assets (decision making, interpersonal competence, cultural competence, resistance skills, conflict resolution), and identity assets (personal power, self-esteem, sense of purpose, positive view). The external assets are similarly crucial for any comprehensive approach to character education insofar as it targets sources of mesosystem support for positive development (e.g., family support, caring schools and neighborhoods, parental involvement in schooling), ways to empower youth (perceptions of communal support, service learning), the importance of setting appropriate boundaries and expectations (e.g., adult role models, positive peer influence, and high expectations), and constructive use of time (e.g., creative activities, youth programs, participation in a religious community, and time spent at home away from peer influence).

Moreover, all of the CEP Principles of Effective Character Education (Beland, 2003c), save the first Principle, are well in evidence among the 40 developmental assets. Principle 10 is of particular interest. It states, "Effective character education engages families and community members as partners in the character-building effort" (Beland, 2003b). The Search Institute has argued similarly that the success of positive youth development depends on community resolve to construct the building blocks ("assets") of its developmental infrastructure. However, communities vary in the assets that are available to support positive youth development (Benson et al., 1999).

One study assessed the perceived availability of assets in a 1996–1997 survey of more than 99,000 youth in grades 6 through 12 from 213 cities and towns across the United States (Benson, Leffert, Scales, & Blyth, 1998). In this sample, 62% of adolescents experience at

most half of the developmental assets associated with positive youth development. The mean number of assets for the aggregate sample was 18, and the least and most affluent communities in the sample differed by only three assets (in favor of the more affluent community), indicating that students typically experience less than half of the developmental assets and that even wealthy communities have work to do on building their developmental infrastructure. Notably, from the perspective of positive youth development and character education, three of the least experienced assets are a caring school, youth being treated as a resource, and community valuing youth (Scales, 1999).

Benson et al. (1998) reported dramatic differences in the percentage of youth with low (0 to 10) and high (31 to 40) assets who engage in risk behavior: Low asset youth are more likely than high asset youth to use alcohol (53% versus 3%); to smoke tobacco (45% versus 1%); to use illicit drugs at least 3 or more times in the past year (45% versus 1%); to have had sexual intercourse at least 3 or more times (42% versus 1%); to report frequent depression or to have made a suicide attempt (40% versus 4%); to report at least 3 incidents of antisocial behavior (52% versus 1%); to engage in at least 3 acts of violence (61% versus 6%); to report school problems (43% versus 2%); to drink and drive (42% versus 4%) and gamble (34% versus 6%). The conclusion is inescapable: Youth who report fewer developmental assets tend to engage in more risk behavior; youth who report more assets engage in fewer risk behaviors (see also Oman et al., 2004). Moreover, youth who are more vulnerable, that is, who have more deficits and risk factors (e.g., experience physical abuse, violence, unsupervised time), profit the most from assets (Scales, 1999).

Benson et al. (Benson, Leffert, Scales, & Blyth, 1998) also report a strong connection between asset levels and thriving factors. High asset youth are more likely than low asset youth to report getting mostly As in school (53% versus 7%); to place a high value on cultural diversity (87% versus 34%); to help friends or neighbors at least 1 hour a week (96% versus 69%); to be a leader in a group or organization in the past year (87% versus 48%); to resist doing dangerous things (43% versus 6%); to delay gratification by saving money rather than spending it right away (72% versus 27%); and to overcome adversity and not give up when things get tough (86% versus 57%). Although not as dramatic in every instance as in the comparison of risk behavior,

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these data indicate that youth who report the fewest assets also report fewer thriving factors and, conversely, that youth who report more developmental assets also report more thriving indicators.

These data underscore the importance of Principle 10 for effective character education. It requires a fundamental mobilization of the community. There must be an intentional commitment to become an asset-building community, to construct the developmental infrastructure to support the positive development of all youth. The Search Institute suggests some core principles of asset-building communities. There must be broad *collaboration* among all of the socializing systems within a community. The community initiative must be *comprehensive*; it should seek to promote all 40 assets and not just a subset. It should promote the *civic engagement* not just of traditional leaders but of all the residents within the boundaries of a community. It should involve *youth as partners* with adults.

Many adolescents participate in largely community-based youth programs that are guided by a positive youth development orientation. Roth and Brooks-Gunn (2003) surveyed 71 youth-serving organizations to determine the characteristics of programs designed to promote healthy adolescent development. Consistent with the youth development philosophy, 77% of the programs said that their primary goal was to build competencies; 54% also indicated prevention goals. However, prevention goals were strongly in evidence when asked specifically about whether the program was designed as prevention against high risk behaviors, such as substance abuse (76%), school dropout (63%), violence (73%), and gang activity (59%). Interestingly, not one of the youth development programs apparently viewed their competency-building and prevention work in terms of moral or character development.

Another perspective is what adolescents themselves report learning in organized youth activities. In one study (D. M. Hanson, Larson, & Dworkin, 2003), 450 adolescents in a medium-size, ethnically diverse school responded to the Youth Experiences Survey (YES), which asks respondents to report their experiences in several domains (identity, initiative, basic emotional, cognitive, and physical skills, teamwork and social skills, interpersonal relatedness, connections with adults, and negative experiences). Learning in these contexts was compared against “hanging out with friends” and with academic classes. The results showed that organized youth activities were a better context for learning initiative skills (e.g., goal setting, problem

solving, effort, time management), exploring identity and reflection, and learning to manage anger, anxiety, and stress than hanging out with friends or taking required classes. Moreover, adolescents reported learning about teamwork, social, and leadership skills in organized youth activities. Interesting learning differences emerged among program activities. For example, the development of identity, prosocial norms, and ties to the community were said to be learned in faith-based, community service, and vocational activities, but participation in sports was associated with mostly gains in personal development (e.g., self-knowledge, physical skills, and emotional regulation) but not teamwork, social skills, prosocial norms, or positive peer interactions. Perhaps the competitive nature of sports works against the development of skills required for interpersonal competence (see Shields & Bredemeier, 2005).

Two reviews have attempted to gauge the effectiveness of youth development programs. Roth, Brooks-Gunn, Murray, and Foster (1998) examined 15 program evaluations that met criteria for methodological rigor. Six programs largely met the goals of the positive youth development framework by focusing on competency and asset building. Six programs were designed as preventions against specific problem behaviors, albeit by strengthening competencies and assets. Three programs were preventions designed to teach skills for avoiding risk behaviors (e.g., assertiveness training, peer resistance, planning for the future) and were the least representative of the ideal youth development program. In general, all 15 programs showed evidence of effectiveness, although a number of general distinctions emerged. For example, programs that are more comprehensive and sustained tend to result in better outcomes. Program effectiveness was also linked to the continuity of caring adult-youth relationships and the extent and quality of youth engagement with program activities.

Catalano, Berglund, et al. (2004) identified 25 programs that addressed one or more positive youth development constructs (e.g., bonding, resilience, socioemotional, cognitive, behavioral or moral competence, self-efficacy, self-determination, spirituality, identity, belief in the future, recognition for positive behavior, prosocial norms, and prosocial involvement) in multiple socialization domains (or many constructs in a single domain), using children from the general or at-risk population (but not in treatment). These studies also met strong methodological criteria. The analysis of program characteristics showed that effective programs addressed a minimum of five positive youth de-

velopment constructs. Competence, self-efficacy, and prosocial norms were addressed in all 25 programs; opportunities for prosocial involvement, recognition for positive behavior, and bonding were noted in over 75% of the programs; and positive identity, self-determination, belief in the future, resiliency, and spirituality were noted in 50% of the programs. Effective programs also measured both positive and problem outcomes, had a structured curriculum and frequent youth contact for at least 9 months, and took steps to ensure fidelity of implementation.

Social-Emotional Learning

We noted earlier that a developmental systems orientation that focused on positive youth development would constitute a powerful conceptual framework for character education. A similar claim can be made for social-emotional learning (SEL). The Collaborative to Advance Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) has developed a unifying framework to promote the development of important competencies that both enhance strengths and prevent problem behaviors (Graczyk et al., 2000; Payton et al., 2000; Weissberg & Greenberg, 1998). Its focus on competence and prevention place it well within the positive youth development framework (Catalano, Hawkins, Berglund, Pollard, & Arthur, 2002), although its long-standing concern with school-based implementation makes it particularly attractive for character education (CASEL, 2003; Elias, Zins, Graczyk, & Weissberg, 2003; Elias et al., 1997). Indeed, CASEL insists that effective programming for SEL competencies has an instructional component with well-designed and organized lesson plans that are sequenced in a coherent curriculum that is programmatic over consecutive grades (Payton et al., 2000), as well as broad parent and community involvement in planning, implementation, and evaluation (Weissberg & O'Brien, 2004).

The key SEL competencies identified by CASEL include self-other awareness (awareness and management of feeling, realistic self-assessment of abilities, perspective taking), self-management (self-regulation of emotions, setting goals, persevering in the face of obstacles), responsible decision making (identifying problems, discerning social norms, accurate and critical appraisal of information, evaluation solutions, taking responsibility for decisions), and relationship skills (cooperation, expressive communication, negotiation, refusal, help seeking, and conflict resolution skills). All of these competencies are familiar targets of character education.

A substantial research base links these competencies to effective and adaptive functioning and to prevention of risk behavior. For example, evidence cited earlier for the Child Development Project and the Seattle Social Development Project are claimed as support for school-based SEL objectives (Greenberg et al., 2003; Weissberg & O'Brien, 2004). Similarly, a substantial literature shows that programs that address SEL competencies are effective in preventing problem behaviors (Durlak & Wells, 1997; D. B. Wilson, Gottfredson, & Najaka, 2001), drug use (Tobler et al., 2000), and violence (Greenberg & Kusche, 1998; Greenberg, Kusche, Cook, & Quamma, 1995). SEL is also a strong predictor of academic outcomes (Elias et al., 2003). One study showed, for example, that the best predictor of eighth-grade academic achievement was not third-grade academic achievement but indices of social competence (Caprara, Barbanelli, Pastorelli, Bandura, & Zimbardo, 2000).

One crucial issue that CASEL has taken on concerns program implementation and sustainability. As Elias et al. (2003, p. 308) put it, "Even widely acclaimed evidence-based approaches to classroom organization and instruction that integrate both academics and SEL are dependent for their success on the delivery systems into which they are embedded." We review various implementation issues in a later section.

Character education does not end with high school. Indeed, a developmental systems perspective on moral character would lead us to expect opportunities for dynamic change across the life course. Although there has been comparatively less programmatic emphasis or research on character development in postsecondary institutions, there are notable recent efforts to explore the contributions of the collegiate experience to the moral formation of undergraduates (e.g., Colby, Ehrlich, Beaumont, & Stephens, 2003; Mentkowski & Associates, 2000). One survey, for example, identified an honor roll of 134 colleges and universities to serve as exemplars of character-building institutions (Schwartz & Templeton, 1997; Sweeney, 1997). These institutions emphasized students' moral reasoning skills, community-building experiences, and spiritual growth, while advocating for a drug-free environment. They also conducted critical assessments of their character-building assets and programs.

The emphasis on moral reasoning skills is premised on the expectation that the critical engagement and inquiry that is ideally characteristic of postsecondary education will stimulate moral deliberation to higher stages of complexity. Indeed, one of the best-documented changes that

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results from the collegiate experience is a significant increase in the quality and complexity of moral reasoning (Pascarella & Terenzini, 1991), demonstrating the effect of college on humanizing “values and attitudes concerning the rights and welfare of others” (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005, p. 348). College environments that encourage questioning, inquiry, and openness to evidence and argument foster the largest gains in moral reasoning (e.g., Rest & Narvaez, 1991; Rogers, 2002), although this relationship is attenuated in collegiate environments that are narrowly careerist and where critical inquiry is not valued (McNeel, 1994).

There are indeed differences among colleges and universities in the degree to which they make moral and civic education a central institutional commitment. Colby et al. (2003) noted that moral and civic development is not a high priority for most American universities and colleges. “We have been struck again and again,” they write, “by the very many lost opportunities for moral and civic growth in curricular and extracurricular programs on most campuses” (p. 277). In their study of 12 universities that do make moral and civic growth an institutional commitment, Colby et al. identify (a) the important dimensions of moral and civic maturity that should be addressed, (b) the sites where these dimensions can be exploited, and (c) the thematic perspectives that a fully rounded commitment to moral and civic education should embrace.

With respect to the dimensions of moral and civic maturity, Colby et al. (2003) nominated three categories: *understanding* (e.g., key ethical and civic concepts, knowledge of democratic principles, expertise in one’s field), *motivation* (e.g., hope and compassion, desire to be an engaged citizen, sense of political efficacy, sense of civic responsibility as a part of self-understanding), and *skills* (e.g., communication skills, ability to collaborate, forge consensus, compromise). These dimensions are exploited in the curriculum, in extracurricular activities, and in the general campus culture. The curriculum, for example, presents numerous opportunities to cultivate moral and civic maturity. Moral and civic understanding, motivation, and skills can mutually enhance academic learning (e.g., Markus et al., 1993). A wide range of pedagogical strategies, including service learning, project-based learning, field placements, site-based practicum experiences, and collaborative work, encourages student engagement with the broader community and has significance for moral learning (Brandenberger, 2005). Moral and civic issues can be framed in core

courses and in the coursework of one’s major and can be the target of faculty development.

Finally, a comprehensive and intentional commitment to moral and civic growth by universities and colleges takes on three themes: community connections, moral and civic virtue, and social justice (“systemic social responsibility”). According to Colby et al. (2003, p. 284), “Moral and civic education is incomplete if it does not somehow take account of all these themes.” Feeling a connection to a community cultivates a sense of allegiance and duty, where the benefits and burdens of cooperation, and of citizenship, can be experienced and practiced. Postsecondary institutions are also places where the virtues proper to democratic citizenship can be cultivated. Although these dispositions have been variously conceived, there is a strong consensus that a deliberative character (Guttman, 1987) is minimally required, a character that is able to carry on the public conversation in a way that is tolerant, respectful, and generous. Nash (1997) has noted, too, that democratic dispositions are essentially “conversational virtues” that take on moral significance because they are necessary for living well in a democracy. The democratic citizen must engage in public discourse with toleration, fairness, and respect for different perspectives and for the canons of civility. Civic engagement in a democratic society requires a disposition to listen with generosity, to compromise, to argue on the basis of factual evidence, to abide by outcomes, and to affirm the validity of a democratic process even if it results in outcomes that are contrary to one’s own preferences (Knight Higher Education Collaborative, 2000). Moreover, the democratic citizen must have hope and confidence in the value of deliberation and be able to engage in adversarial discussion in a way that does not compromise civic friendship, mutual respect, and sense of common purpose. Hence, an important moral responsibility of higher education is to cultivate “dialogic competence in public moral language” (Strike, 1996, p. 889), and to provide occasions, in the context of scholarly engagement and intellectual inquiry, where these virtues are on frequent display and avidly practiced.

The third theme encourages curricular and extracurricular activities that allow undergraduates to take on “systemic social responsibility”: to be active in the democratic process, to take a stand, to take an interest in social policy, and to view the life of the community through the lens of social justice and one’s own responsibility as an engaged citizen. Postsecondary institu-

tions vary in how they address these three themes, but what is crucial is that colleges and universities make moral and civic maturity an explicit, intentional, and comprehensive part of their educational mission.

Character and Professional Education

“Professional practice,” according to Bebeau (2002, p. 271), “is predominantly a moral enterprise.” Indeed, ethical development is a concern for schools across the professional landscape, including business, law, medicine, dentistry, nursing, and education. An increasing number of professional schools are adopting ethics education with greater frequency.

Rest and Narvaez (1994a) point out specific methods that promote moral reasoning development in professional educational programs. First, following Dewey’s advocacy of immediate experience and active problem solving, one of the most effective methods is deliberative psychological education, reading academic theory, providing direct experience, and reflection that integrates theory with the direct experience (Sprinthal, 1994). The individual’s conceptual frameworks developed from these integrated experiences are not only more sophisticated but are resilient. Studies have documented that the most popular and successful methods of instruction for moral reasoning development involves student discussion about dilemmas and cases in the field (e.g., Hartwell, 1995). Moral dilemma discussion is particularly effective when students are coached to develop the skills necessary for expert moral problem solving, using profession-specific ethical constructs (Bebeau & Thoma, 1999), such as role taking and logical analysis for determining valid and invalid arguments (McNeel, 1994; Penn, 1990). However, even less experiential courses such as film-based courses and writing-intensive courses can have positive effects (e.g., Bebeau, 1994, 2002; Self, Baldwin, & Olivarez, 1993).

The most integrative programs have moved beyond a sole focus on moral reasoning to include other aspects of moral functioning, such as those described by the four component model (Rest, 1983). For example, programs at the University of Minnesota assist nursing and dentistry students in developing the four components: ethical sensitivity, ethical motivation, and ethical implementation as well as ethical judgment (Bebeau, 1994; Duckett, 1994). Recently, Bebeau (2002) has addressed the importance of developing a professional moral identity. She suggests that “the conceptual frameworks of professional identity are not part

of an initial self-understanding, and must be revisited frequently during professional education” (p. 286). The study of professional exemplars is a useful method for providing concrete models for professional ethical identity formation (Rule & Bebeau, 2005). Such studies offer glimpses to novices of what a virtuous professional looks like and how to conduct oneself in typical and nontypical situations and provide role models for initiates.

A CASE STUDY: INTEGRATIVE ETHICAL EDUCATION

Integrative Ethical Education (IEE) is a conceptual framework that attempts to incorporate insights of developmental theory and psychological science into character education (Narvaez, 2005a; Narvaez, Bock, & Endicott, 2003). It is integrative in several senses. It attempts to understand character and its development in terms of cognitive science literatures on expertise and the novice-to-expert mechanisms of best practice instruction. It attempts to keep faith with classical sources by linking Greek notions of *eudaemonia* (human flourishing), *arête* (excellence), *phronesis* (practical wisdom), and *techné* (expertise) with developmental and cognitive science. It is compatible with positive youth development in its claim that the goal of integrative ethical education is the development of important competencies that contribute to productive adaptation to the demands of adulthood, but that these competencies are understood as clusters of skills that one may learn or practice to varying degrees of expertise. It assumes that the best context for expertise development is a caring relationship with teacher-mentors wherein skills are learned by means of coached practice and “guided autonomy.” In delineating the elemental skills of good character, IEE addresses *character* education by integrating the findings from developmental psychology, prevention science, and positive psychology. In proposing the best approach to instruction, IEE addresses *character education* by integrating contemporary findings from research in learning and cognition.

In this section, we outline some of the key features of IEE. Integrative Ethical Education is predicated on the importance of caring classroom environments, but we focus on just three components of the model: character as expertise development, the cultivation of character as the cultivation of expertise, and the importance

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of self-regulation for developing and maintaining virtuous character.

Character as Expertise Development

Human learning is increasingly conceptualized as a matter of novices developing greater expertise in domains of study (Ericsson & Smith, 1991; Sternberg, 1998a). A domain expert differs from a novice by having a large, rich, organized network of concepts or schemas that include declarative, procedural, and conditional knowledge. Unlike novices, experts know what knowledge to access, which procedures to apply, and how to apply them and when. Expertise refers not to mere technical competence but to the multitrack capacities and sensibilities of an exemplar, the refined, deep understanding built from lived experience that is evident in practice and action (Hursthouse, 1999, 2003; Spiecker, 1999).

In the *Republic*, Plato describes virtue as a type of *techne*, or “know-how” that is characteristic of experts (e.g., painters, writers, politicians) in specific domains. Similarly, the virtuous person has ethical know-how, that is, ethical skills honed to a high degree of expertise. Ethical expertise refers not only to behaviors, sensibilities, and orientations but also to feelings, motives, and drives. Ethical expertise is not just what a person does but that which the person *likes* to do (Urmson, 1988). It is a complex of characteristics, skills, and competencies that enable ethical behavior and sustain one in pursuing the life that is good for one to live.

Rest (1983; Narvaez & Rest, 1995) identified four psychologically distinct processes that must occur to enable ethical behavior: ethical sensitivity, ethical judgment, ethical motivation/focus, and ethical action. The four-process model provides a holistic understanding of the ethical exemplar, one who is able to demonstrate keen perception and perspective taking, skilled reasoning, ethical focus, and skills for completing moral action (Bebeau, Rest, & Narvaez, 1999; Narvaez, 2005a; Narvaez, Bock, Endicott, & Lies, 2004). Each process is represented by a set of skills (Narvaez et al., 2004; Narvaez et al., 2003). For example, experts in the skill of ethical sensitivity are able to more quickly and accurately read the moral implications of a situation and determine a suitable response. They are better at generating usable solutions due to a greater understanding of the consequences of possible actions. Experts in ethical judgment are more skilled in solving complex problems and seeing the syntactic structure of a prob-

lem quickly and bring with them many schemas for reasoning about possible courses of action. Their information-processing abilities are both complex and efficient. Experts in the skill of ethical focus are able to sustain moral priorities in light of the commitments of a moral self-identity. Experts in the skills of ethical action engage the self-regulation that is necessary to get the ethical job done.

Pedagogy for Cultivating Character Expertise

The IEE model emphasizes two critical features of successful pedagogy: First, it must be constructivist; second, it must attend simultaneously to cultivating expertise on two fronts: conscious, explicit understandings and intuitive, implicit understanding. Integrative Ethical Education adopts the cognitive-mediational view that learning depends on the cognitive activity of students; that learning occurs when incoming information is actively transformed in light of prior knowledge; and that teachers facilitate learning by engaging students in active cognitive processing about content and facilitating self-monitoring understanding (L. M. Anderson, 1989). It assumes that learners are active constructors of meaning, competencies, and skills and that individuals build conceptual frameworks—declarative, procedural, and conditional—in the process of learning to get along with others. When these skills are practiced extensively in multiple contexts, they take on the qualities of tacit, implicit knowledge and the automaticity characteristic of the “unconscious” mind (Hassin, Uleman, & Bargh, 2005; Hogarth, 2001).

A model of instruction that captures these pedagogical goals is coached apprenticeship. A coached apprenticeship model involves using both direct and indirect instruction, mimesis and transformation, a focus on both content and process, tuning both the deliberate conscious mind and the intuitive mind. In an apprenticeship, the guide provides examples and models of skilled behavior and the theoretical explanation for why things are done one way and not another. At the same time, the apprentice is immersed in well-structured environments that cultivate appropriate intuitions (Hogarth, 2001).

Teaching for ethical expertise requires coached apprenticeship and extensive practice in multiple contexts. Integrative Ethical Education offers instructional guidelines for helping children move along a continuum from novice to expert in each ethical content domain that is studied. To do this, children must experience a

type of expert-in-training pedagogy, that fosters appropriate intuitions and deliberative understanding for each skill that they learn. Teachers can set up instruction to help students develop appropriate knowledge by designing lessons according to the following four levels (based on Marshall, 1995). At Level 1 (“Immersion in examples and opportunities”), teachers draw students’ attention to the big picture in a subject area and help them learn to recognize basic patterns. At Level 2 (“Attention to facts and skills”), teachers focus students’ attention on the details and prototypical examples in the domain to build more elaborate concepts. At Level 3 (“Practice procedures”), the teacher provides opportunities for the students to try out many skills and ideas in a domain to build a procedural understanding of how skills are related and best deployed to solve domain-relevant problems. Finally, at Level 4 (“Integrate knowledge and procedures”), students gradually integrate and apply systematically knowledge across many contexts and situations.

Self-Regulation for Sustainability

The role of self-regulation in character development is of long-standing interest. Aristotle emphasized that virtues are developed with extended practice, effort, and guidance from parents, teachers, and mentors until the child is able to self-maintain virtue (Urmson, 1988). Recent research demonstrates that the most successful learners are those who self-monitor their success and alter strategies when necessary. Thus, self-regulation requires sophisticated metacognition. According to a social cognitive view, self-regulation is a cyclical, ever-changing interaction among personal, behavioral, and environmental factors, involving three phases: forethought, performance or volitional control, and self-reflection (Zimmerman, 2000).

Integrative Ethical Education infuses self-regulation on two levels: the teacher level and the student level. For school reforms to be sustainable, educators must take on a self-regulatory orientation for the implementation of character education. This means taking a systematic intentional approach to building a caring ethical school community, facilitating the development of instructional and ethical skills in all members of the school community, including teachers, administrators, and other staff, as members of a comprehensive learning community.

For students to develop and maintain ethical skills, they must increase their metacognitive understanding,

self-monitoring skills, and self-regulation for ethical and academic development. Individuals can be coached to domain-specific self-efficacy and self-regulation (Zimmerman, Bonner, & Kovach, 2002). In the IEE model, teachers continuously draw student attention to the moral issues immanent in classroom life and learning (Narvaez, 2005b). Students are provided guidance and tools to answer one of the central questions of their lives: Who should I be? As McKinnon (1999, p. 42) points out, individuals must “do the work necessary for constructing a character.” The IEE model helps students develop the skills for ethical behavior but requires their active participation in making the decisions that are crucial and relevant for the construction of their own characters. To develop ethical know-how, one must be self-directive; one must take seriously the charge of continually building one’s character. Ethical know-how must be trained holistically, as a type of expertise, at first coached, then increasingly self-directed.

An Implementation of IEE: The Community Voices and Character Education Project

The Community Voices and Character Education Project (CVCE) was an early prototype of the Integrative Ethical Education conceptual framework. The CVCE was a federally funded project implemented in the state of Minnesota from 1998 to 2002.* It was a collaborative effort among the Minnesota Department of Education (called at the time the Department of Children, Families, and Learning), the University of Minnesota, and educators across the state. The focus of the CVCE project was to develop and provide a research-based framework for character education at the middle school level with teacher-friendly guidelines for how to incorporate ethical development into standards-driven instruction. Classroom activity guidebooks were created along with other supportive materials, including teacher-designed lesson plans.

Reflecting both an empowerment model and the historical and legislative emphasis in Minnesota on local

*U.S. Department of Education Office of Educational Research and Improvement Grant # R215V980001. Copies of CVCE materials on CD are available from the Minnesota Department of Education or from the Center for Ethical Education, University of Notre Dame, 154 Institute for Educational Initiatives, Notre Dame, IN 46556; e-mail: cee@nd.edu; downloadable from <http://cee.nd.edu>.

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control of curricular decisions, the CVCE project used a “common morality” (Beauchamp & Childress, 1994) approach of presenting research-based principles (top-down) to a local team who adapted them for the local context (bottom-up), formulating a unique intervention. The top-down recommendations included fostering a caring climate conducive to character growth, using a novice-to-expert approach to ethical skill instruction, developing self-regulatory skills in students as they practice ethical skills, and including parents and community members in cultivating character in students. School teams and their leaders were guided in designing a local vision for character education with specific action steps for how to incorporate ethical skill instruction with links to the community. As Elias et al. (2003) pointed out, all program implementations are limited because they must be adapted to local circumstances. “Too often it is assumed,” they write, “that evidence-based programs can be ‘plugged-in’ and then work effectively” (p. 310). Each team developed a unique approach to cultivating character, using schoolwide projects, advisory/homeroom lessons, and/or infusion into academic instruction into some or all subjects. Some teams incorporated existing character interventions (e.g., Lions Quest) into their CVCE intervention. Indeed, the IEE framework provides a comprehensive approach within which existing character education programs can be integrated, extended, and strengthened.

Evaluation of the Community Voices and Character Education Project

In the final year evaluation, only five of eight experimental schools and one control school provided completed pretest-posttest data. The evaluation had several components that correspond to the emphasis of the project (for a more detailed discussion, see C. Anderson, Narvaez, Bock, Endicott, & Lies, 2003; Narvaez, Bock, Endicott, & Lies, 2004).

The primary focus of the project was to design a conceptual framework for character education at the middle school level along with activity books to guide teams of teachers in incorporating character skill development into standards-driven instruction. Both participating and nonparticipating teachers from partner schools thought the framework was valuable. The majority of respondents reported “easy” or “so-so” for the ease of use of the activity books.

We also evaluated the quality of the implementation. Implementation varied across sites in terms of depth

and breadth. Differences in local implementation design, leadership, and stability of the leadership and of the core team, as well as demands on teachers, led to differences in depth and quality of implementation and how many students were influenced. In only two of the five schools was there full implementation of the model. In these schools, all teachers were involved in teaching ethical skills during advisory/homeroom, in their academic instruction, and in schoolwide projects. In these two schools, significant effects were found in student pre/posttests. The other schools addressed a wide number of skills in a limited manner by only a subset of teachers. Other approaches have required the full participation of the school for implementation (e.g., the Child Development Project) so that the student experience is consistent across teachers; as a pilot program emphasizing local control, CVCE did not.

The substantive evaluation addressed effects on students and school climate. Four student measures of climate were used: staff tolerance, student tolerance, student self-report of climate perceptions and attachment to school, and student perception of peer ethical behavior. One or more general measures of each of the four ethical processes were also used. For ethical sensitivity, we used the Child Development Project’s Concern for Others Scale. For ethical judgment, we used a global moral judgment scale. For ethical focus, we used measures of citizenship, community bonding, and ethical identity. For ethical action, we used a measure of moral assertiveness and prosocial responsibility.

Student survey responses were compared with a matched comparison group ($n = 125$) from another school not involved in the project. Across schools, the findings with the ethical development scales were mixed. Most scales indicated nonsignificant improvements over the comparison group, with one exception. Program students reported more sensitivity to intolerance than did control students. The two schools that fully implemented the program emphasized ethical sensitivity. When contrasted with the comparison group, program students in full-implementation schools reported significant gains on ethical sensitivity. Climate was used as a covariate in a MANOVA with school group as factor (full implementation schools, partial implementation schools, comparison school). For climate, effect sizes were moderate for citizenship and community bonding and small for ethical identity. For school group, effect sizes were small for concern for others, community bonding, and ethical identity. These findings

suggest that climate may mediate the majority of effects of ethical skill instruction.

There were three challenges to finding significant differences in pre/post student assessments. First, leadership changes at three schools undermined the test administration in one way or another so that only five sets of usable pre/post data were extant. Second, given the amount of time required for successful interventions to demonstrate an effect, it was deemed a challenge to find significant pre/post differences within 1 year. Third, one of the strengths of the program—local control and local distinctiveness—meant that cross-site comparisons were not possible, insofar as each site's implementation was not strictly comparable with those at other sites. Thus, for a particular implementation, the numbers tested were small.

These features of CVCE are relevant also to the question of replicability. Replicability typically refers to successful implementation in more than one school. This definition assumes that what is being implemented is identical across sites. This is contrary to the approach taken in the CVCE project. Instead, the emphasis was on local control and local adaptation of the conceptual framework. Replicability did not refer to identical implementation but instead to the replicability of the process and the general features of the model. Based on the lesson plans teachers created in virtually every subject area, CVCE evaluators determined that teachers were able to integrate character skills development into standards-driven academic instruction. Based on the teacher-created lesson plans and the local team and local leader reports, educators were generally able to implement the model with minimal supervision.

The key features of the model were largely followed by most schools. Most teams viewed character as a set of ethical skills derived from four processes. According to the lesson plans teachers devised, most sites did use a novice-to-expert approach to teach character skills. Most sites at least attempted to involve the community in planning and implementation in one way or another, although outcomes were mixed. It is not clear how empowered the students felt as the university Human Subjects Committee did not give permission to interview student participants.

Lessons Learned

The IEE model provides a conceptual framework for character cultivation that guides educators in how to think about what character entails and how to nurture it

in students. The implementation of IEE in the CVCE project was locally controlled, providing maximum flexibility and allowing for adaptations that met local needs and issues (and that are unforeseeable by a curriculum writer). However, the fact that CVCE did not provide a script for teachers made it necessary for teachers to put in time to modify their lessons to incorporate ethical skill development. With minimal training, teacher teams were able to construct multiple units and lessons. Lessons that a teacher modified himself or herself were lessons that he or she would use again and again. This is an advantage. Nevertheless, sometimes modifying lessons can be a daunting first step in character education, especially for inexperienced teachers. Consequently, a year-long scripted curriculum for homeroom/advisory purposes (currently being piloted) could more easily familiarize teachers with the conceptual framework and scaffold understanding of how to apply the model to classroom activities. Maximum flexibility and local control also made it difficult to measure replicable program effects. A scripted approach will make possible a cleaner estimation of replicable program effects.

ISSUES OF IMPLEMENTATION

Our examination of the IEE case study revealed a number of interesting challenges to successful implementation of a character education intervention. In this section, we summarize some of the enduring implementation issues that have emerged in the various character education literatures and from our own experience.

One enduring problem concerns the fidelity of implementation (Laud & Berkowitz, 1999). In the CVCE project, the quality of implementation was related to disparate outcomes. Schools with a broader (across more classrooms and by more teachers) and deeper (more frequent and focused) implementation were more successful, a finding corroborated by other character development programs (see Solomon et al., 2002). This underscores a point made by Elias et al. (2003) that interventions are rarely delivered as planned, even in trials marked by stringent methodological rigor. And even if the program is implemented and delivered as planned, there are few assurances that it will be received by students as intended. As Elias et al. put it, "If children are inattentive, a classroom is chaotic, or the material is not at the right developmental level, 'delivery' by instructors may not strongly predict children's skill acquisition and use" (p. 309–310).

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Thus, in addition to implementation fidelity, one must also attend to factors that limit student exposure to the intervention (Berkowitz & Bier, 2004a).

In their analysis of implementation and sustainability of social-emotional interventions, Elias et al. (2003) note a number of additional obstacles that are highly relevant to character education. For example, implementation fidelity can be threatened by turnover in teachers and program staff. Characteristics of educators and their roles can support or undermine implementation. Not all roles are equally satisfying, level of commitment varies, and tacit knowledge is not communicated to new staff. As the authors put it, "It is not the same thing to create, to deliver, to administer and to continue" an innovative program (p. 314). Working out role differences and supporting new staff is crucial to sustainable programming. Indeed, "success seems to accompany a spirit of continuous improvement and reinvention without excessive divergence from what exists" (p. 314). In addition, although virtually every approach to character education calls for extensive and active collaboration with family and community, the difficulties in forming, effectively utilizing, and sustaining these partnerships are often underestimated.

Elias et al. (2003) summarize a number of factors associated with successful and sustainable program implementation. Such programs (a) have a program coordinator, preferably with appropriate preparation, or a committee, to oversee implementation; (b) involve committed individuals who have a sense of ownership of the program; (c) have continuous formal and informal training; (d) have varied and engaging instructional materials that map onto goals of the school or district; and (e) have buy-in of key educational leaders and the consistent support of critical constituencies. Elias et al. also suggest that a pragmatic, theoretically informed perspective is essential. "Local ecologies," they write, "will not support an infinite variety of possibilities. What has a chance to work is what fits" (p. 314). What is required, in other words, is a goodness-of-fit between program planning, its objectives and goals, and its flexible implementation "in the spirit of continuous improvement."

The reference to the local ecology of schools and to obstacles and opportunities that are endemic to complex organizations draws attention to the culture of schools as an arena for character education. The cultivation of a professional learning community within a school is critical to sustainable school reform efforts (Fullan, 1999, 2000). For example, schools that were successful in rais-

ing student achievement and improving school climate had staffs that developed a professional learning community, addressed student work through assessment, and changed their practice to improve results (Newmann & Wehlage, 1995; Pankake & Moller, 2003). Professional learning communities have particular characteristics. They take the time to develop a shared vision and mutually held values that focus on student learning and foster norms for improving practice. Leadership is democratic, shared among teachers and administrators. The entire staff seeks and shares knowledge, skills, and strategies to improve practice. The school structure supports an environment that is collaborative, trusting, positive, and caring. Peers open their classrooms to the feedback and suggestions of others to improve student achievement and promote individual and community growth. We believe that these same practices are critical to sustain a commitment not only to academic achievement but to moral learning as well, and it is welcome to see a commitment to learning communities in a prominent report on high school character education (Lickona & Davidson, 2004).

We suggest that if character education is to be considered an instance of primary prevention then it should possess the features of any well-designed intervention. It should be comprehensive, have multiple components, address multiple assets at different levels of the ecological setting, and be implemented in the early grades and sustained over time. It is now a truism to remark that one-trial or short-term intervention programs have little lasting impact. Moreover, insofar as dispositional coherence is located at the interaction of persons and context, there is little hope for enduring character education that does not attend also to the climate and culture of classrooms and schools. Effective character education requires a pervasive commitment to change the culture of schools as much as to change the behavior of children.

Payton et al. (2000) note a number of specific features of quality social emotional learning programs. These programs (a) articulate a conceptual framework that guides the selection of program and learning objectives; (b) provide professional development instruction to teachers to enable their effective implementation across the regular academic curriculum; and (c) include well-organized and user-friendly lesson plans with clear objectives and learning activities and assessment tools. Moreover, they note that successful programs take steps to improve schoolwide cooperation and school-family and school-community partnerships.

There is a significant literature on the school characteristics that promote academic achievement. Schools with high achievement are orderly and safe; they are respectful and provide students with moral and personal support while expecting them to achieve (Sebring, 1996). Achieving schools have a strong sense of community and high academic standards (strong norms and high expectations for achievement; Bryk, Lee, & Holland, 1993). Interestingly, the characteristics that foster achievement overlap with characteristics that nurture prosocial development. Schools that foster prosocial development have caring climates that nurture a feeling of belonging and competence in students (M. Watson et al., 1997). In other words, there are not two sets of instructional best practice, one for academic achievement and one for character. Both objectives work out of the same playbook. In this sense, effective character education is, indeed, good education. A recent study in Catholic schools using structural equation modeling showed, for example, that climate influenced directly character development. Moreover, character development mediated the effect of climate on academic motivation more so than climate's direct effect on motivation (Mullen, Turner, & Narvaez, 2005).

This suggests, of course, that effective character education ultimately comes down to what teachers do in their classrooms. The extent to which moral and character education is taught explicitly in teacher preparation programs is not clear. It is well known that teachers who have more expertise in both content and pedagogical content knowledge conduct their classes more effectively than do novice teachers (Berliner, 1994a, 1994b; Shulman, 1987; Sternberg & Horvath, 1995). However, if explicit instructional focus on moral content knowledge and pedagogy is limited or absent during preservice teacher training, then one cannot be optimistic that efforts to expand character education will be met with the requisite levels of teacher expertise.

On the other hand, Carr (1991) argued that if teachers fail in their implementation of moral education it is not because they lack knowledge of curriculum theory or lack pedagogical skills. Indeed, he argues that we do our student teachers in education programs "no great favors by proceeding as though education and learning to teach are matters only of the mastery of certain pedagogical skills, knacks or strategies apt for the successful transmission of value-neutral knowledge or information" (p. 11). Rather, teachers fail because the value questions immanent to teaching are not systematically addressed

in their professional formation. Instead, there is "something approaching a conspiracy of silence among teacher educators on this topic" (p. 10). Carr contends that when teacher education programs do not require "sensible reflection upon the moral character of human life and experience, the nature of values and the ethical aspects of the educationalist's role," then the resulting intellectual vacuum leaves teachers vulnerable to faddism; it leaves them ill-prepared to make transparent the immanence and inevitability of fundamental value questions that attend education, teaching, and learning. Sensible reflection might also point to how preservice teachers are taught to frame the moral significance of daily classroom life. Teacher educators might take direction from Jackson, Boostrom, and Hansen (1993), *The Moral Life of Schools*, when thinking about cultivating awareness among preservice teachers of the immanence and inevitability of morality in the classroom. Jackson et al. (1993), for example, pointed out that teachers who maintain ethical classrooms model a strong moral character and expect students to do the same. These teachers point out the moral aspects of subject matter materials and choose materials based on these characteristics. Moreover, in these classrooms moral discussions become part of the classroom flow, occurring spontaneously in and outside of the classroom. In any case, teacher educators need to complete the task of linking best practice with moral character development, a task started by Williams and Schaps (1999).

OPEN QUESTIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

We have argued that character education requires a defensible psychological understanding of dispositional coherence and of development and a defensible approach to education that conforms to what is known about effective teaching and learning. We proposed a developmental systems perspective as a conceptual framework for character education and reviewed several categories of youth development and prevention programs that show promise as school-based or community-based interventions.

It is an enduring question, however, whether these programs are rightfully considered instances of character education. We made a distinction between character education as a treatment and character education as an outcome. As our review makes clear, there is very little that is distinctive about traditional character education

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that warrants it be considered an educational treatment in its own right. Indeed, when advocates point to character education programs that work, these are programs motivated by an entirely different theoretical agenda than one of morality, virtue, or character. Programs that work are associated with positive youth development or social-emotional learning. Developmental science, including developmental psychopathology and the science of prevention, already provide powerful frameworks for understanding risk, resilience, adaptation, and thriving that has little need for the language of character. On the other hand, if character is considered not a treatment but a set of outcomes, then, of course, there is nothing untoward about claiming the findings of developmental interventions as its own. In this case, interventions that are motivated by developmental science, by perspectives on youth development and SEL, for example, provide outcomes that are relevant to a certain understanding of character and give insights about how to prepare youth for the travails and opportunities of adulthood.

Yet we do not want to give up on the idea that character education can be a distinctive educational intervention. Although the literatures on youth development and social-emotional learning provide an attractive vision of adaptation, thriving, and positive adjustment, and although it is tempting for character educators to want to claim these literatures as their own, we think that this vision of successful adulthood is incomplete without a specification of the moral dimensions of selfhood, identity, and community. The metaphors of thriving and flourishing and positive development point mostly toward the notion of what it means to live well. But living well is only half of the challenge. We must not only live well, but live well *the life that is good for one to live*. Discerning the life that is good for one to live is a moral question; it has profound moral dimensions that are not exhausted by avoiding risks and acquiring social-affective competencies.

Certainly, the life that is good for one to live requires avoidance of significant risk behavior, and so character education embraces the science of prevention as a prophylaxis against risks and deficits. Certainly, the life that is good for one to live requires the cultivation of competencies that prepare one for the challenges of adulthood, and so character education embraces positive youth development in its several forms, along with its slogan: Problem-free is not fully prepared. Yet fully prepared is not morally adept. In our view, character education should aim minimally for full preparation of

young people for adulthood, but should not be content with full preparation for living well; it should aim, too, at helping students cope with the ethical dimensions of the *good* life lived well.

The challenge for character education, then, is how to maintain a distinctive voice in educational innovations, psychosocial interventions, and youth programming. An approach to positive youth development that is also an instance of character education would be marked, in our view, by an explicit conceptual framework that embraces a developmental systems orientation while articulating a moral vision of what it means to flourish. This moral vision is ideally a virtue ethic that articulates a positive conception of moral agency as a deeply relational and communitarian achievement that expresses the nature of our self-identity through our lived moral desires.

Another challenge is to exploit the resources of psychological science in framing a defensible notion of moral agency, self-identity, and dispositional coherence. We have made a number of suggestions along the way for a “psychologized” approach to moral character. In our view, social cognitive theories of personality and the cognitive science literatures on expertise provide useful frameworks for understanding the moral dimensions of personality, although other literatures may be exploited with profit as well. We reiterate our conviction that an adequate character education will require robust models of character psychology, characterized by deep integration with multiple psychological frameworks.

Moreover, a developmental systems orientation broadens our perspective on character and character education. There is a tendency, for example, to regard character education as something that takes place in schools as a formal curriculum. Yet, as we have seen, the foundations of emergent morality and of conscience are evident quite early in childhood, and the developmental dynamic and pattern of socialization in early family life is most assuredly a kind of character education that will be of interest to researchers for some time to come. What’s more, a developmental systems perspective bids us to examine the possibilities of dynamic change in character psychology throughout the life course and within the multiple life worlds of the individual beyond family and schooling in areas such as leisure activities and peer relations. Perhaps a life course perspective on character will require additional constructs, such as wisdom (Staudinger & Pasupathi, 2003; Sternberg, 1998b), purpose (Damon, Menon, & Bronk, 2003), personal goals (Emmons, 2002), spirituality and self-

transcendence (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000), ecological citizenship (Clayton & Opatow, 2003), and character strengths (Peterson & Seligman, 2004), to capture adequately the complexity of phase-relevant dispositional coherence and human flourishing.

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