The Foundations of Morality

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I'd like to thank John Murray for all that I have learned from him and his example about thinking, learning and teaching. My gratitude also goes to Joan Bergstrom, Lisa Lahey and Peg Cronin for their valuable advice and support in writing this thesis. Special thanks to Patricia Davidson for her support and encouragement.

Special appreciation to my most influential role models, my parents, Marcia and Tom Gilbert. They first gave me respect and nurturance and showed me how life can be lived morally, according to thought, and thoughtfully, according to values.
Beginning in preschool, moral education should provide children with a foundation for making good and reasonable decisions as well as the motivation to act with integrity. In a complex and changing world, figuring out what is good or what is the 'right' thing to do is often difficult, and decisions often require highly developed critical and creative thinking skills and deep motivation. A moral person arrives at decisions concerning what to do, how to live, and what to believe through reflective and reasonable thinking. Critical and creative thinking skills and dispositions enable a moral person to arrive at a clear conception of the world and his or her place in it. Realizing that something must be done and figuring out what to do is only half the battle; it is often just as difficult to do what we know is right. Thus, integrity is essential to the moral character. The demands that the world will someday place on children will challenge the ideals and
sense of responsibility that are central to their integrity.

Relationships in early childhood form the basis of personal standards. This basis is then augmented and modified throughout life. A young child's preschool provides a unique setting where the child interacts with many different people. Early childhood educators have a great deal of influence over the environment in which these interactions take place. Consequently, teachers can influence the foundation the child construes from his or her experience. Any teacher who purports to teach the whole child has an obligation to consider and enhance the moral education which is already going on in her classroom. In order to set appropriate goals for moral education, the teacher needs to consider the fundamental questions 'What is morality?', 'How does the development of critical and creative thinking skills and dispositions affect moral development?' and 'What motivates morality?'

This thesis attempts to answer these questions with a synthesis of diverse views and findings from leading experts and researchers concerned with the moral life of children and concludes with a few recommendations for preschool teachers who would like to translate the findings into practice.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Many of the greatest dangers faced in today's world, such as war, pollution, disease, and hunger have their source in people's motives and sentiments: greed and hostility, carelessness and neglect, arrogance and narcissism, nationalism and prejudice. People have the power to choose the 'good' or the 'bad', but why they make the choices they do often seems like a mystery. Yet amidst the mystery is some clarity. It is clear, for instance, that many human beings are strongly motivated by money. Economically motivated acts are often malicious and sometimes murderous. If people cannot learn to submit the profit motive to higher principles, the world is in great danger (Peck 1990, Paul 1990).

According to Rest (1986), there are four major psychological processes behind morality. I have adapted and labeled them as steps: awareness, desire, judgment and action. First, one must be aware of the existence of the good and the bad; then desire to be good instead of bad; apply skills to decide what is good and what is bad; and finally, act on these conclusions. In a complex and changing world, figuring out what is good is often difficult to do, and making decisions often requires highly developed skills and deep motivation. Realizing
that something must be done and figuring out what to do is only half the battle; it is often just as difficult to do what we know is right. Thus, integrity is essential to moral character (Frankena 1980).

Relationships in early childhood form the basis of personal standards which are modified throughout life (Gilligan and Wiggins, 1987). The demands that the world will someday place on children will challenge the ideals and sense of responsibility that are central to their integrity. Beginning in preschool, moral education should equip children with the skills and knowledge which are necessary to make good and reasonable decisions and the motivation to act with integrity (Wilson et al, 1968).

The objective of this thesis is to provide preschool teachers interested in attending to the moral education in their classroom with an understanding of morality, moral development and moral motivation in children. To accomplish this objective, the next three chapters that follow will attempt to answer the following three questions respectively: 'What is morality?', 'How does morality develop?' and 'What motivates morality?'. Implicit throughout the thesis is that critical and creative thinking, defined as "reasonable and reflective
thinking that is focused on deciding what to do and what to believe" (Ennis, 1987), is an integral part of the process of morality (Paul, 1990). In conclusion, the last chapter offers ideas on translating the theory into practice when creating a context for moral development in three, four and five year olds.

Chapter II synthesizes leading experts' definitions of morality. Morality is seen in this thesis as a thoughtful process that addresses both the morality of persons and the morality of a person's actions. Many leading experts in the field address only part of the process of morality. In an effort to provide a comprehensive definition of morality that will enhance the understanding of the moral life in a preschool, this thesis attempts to synthesize diverse views from leading experts on morality. The definition that the synthesis of pieces of theories creates may not be compatible with any of the definitions from which they are derived. Rather, the definition should be viewed as a mosaic created from pieces of complete works of art. The pieces may be fundamentally incongruous but the resulting work can be viewed as a coherent whole. A summation of the synthesis, which functions as a working definition for the purposes of this thesis, is provided in Table 2.1.
Chapter III discusses how moral development occurs in the context of social experience according to cognitive and affective forces, and critical and creative thinking skill development.

Reviews of research by Damon (1988), Lickona (1983) and Shulman and Melkler (1985), and Gilligan and Wiggin's (1987) theory on the origins of morality are used as a basis for the synthesized version of moral development which focuses on the preschool years as a part of a lifelong process.

The fourth chapter presents a synthesis of leading experts' conclusions on what motivates prosocial behavior. Prosocial behavior is frequently defined as "voluntary behavior such as helping, sharing and comforting behaviors" (Eisenberg 1992). Many prosocial are motivated by expectations of rewards, social approval or the desire to reduce one's own negative internal states. But prosocial behaviors also include moral behavior which is motivated by concern for others. Motivation is an important aspect of morality. "Only by understanding the motivations behind people's prosocial behaviors," says Eisenberg (1992), "and how these motives develop and are elicited in various situations, can we begin to promote systematically the development of kindness and caring." If early childhood educators can promote a deep seated
motivation for children to think about morality and to act morally, the children in their classes will have been affected in all aspects of their lives, perhaps for a lifetime. To reach the goal of motivating children, it is helpful for teachers to know what motivates children to think and act morally. The difficulties of assessing moral thought and action are discussed at the beginning of this chapter. With these limitations in mind, predispositions and experiences that help motivate critical and creative thinking and morality are then identified.

The synthesis emerges in four sections corresponding to the four steps of morality identified in Chapter II; each section will be discussed in terms of cognitive development and critical and creative thinking skills and then the influence of affect and thinking dispositions. For example, moral awareness will be discussed in terms of the development of empathy which has both a cognitive and an affective component.

The last chapter offers goals for a preschool curriculum with ideas for implementation with particular attention to how morality and critical and creative thinking are an integral part of all areas of the curriculum. The thesis concludes with a discussion of what the teacher's role is in moral
education and ends with a cautionary note on attending to the child's perspective.

Additionally, the use of the words "he" and "she" are not used to indicate gender differences. "He" and "she" refer to both males and females.

The chapter that follows will attempt to show that the morality of an individual depends on his skills, abilities and attitudes. Early childhood is where the foundations for the development of these skills, abilities and attitudes are laid. The term "morality" when applied to children, therefore, is seen as the basis of the adult morality discussed in the following chapter.
Philosophical definitions and psychological underpinnings of morality found in research and writings on the topic can be divided into two groups. One group of definitions focuses on the morality of persons and the other group focuses on the morality of a person's actions. The questions answered by the two types of definitions are 'What does it mean for someone to have a morality?' versus 'What does it mean for someone to do the right thing?' The first question concerns the lifestyle, the standards, the general viewpoint and behavior of a moral person. The second question asks about particular intentions, reasons, and consequences of a particular action. Both questions are important, and their answers help to provide a more complete view of morality.

Defining morality in life and morality in a particular situation can be seen as defining the process of morality (Rest 1986). In order to synthesize diverse definitions, it is helpful to break down the process of morality into steps (see Table 2.1).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEPS in the process of morality</th>
<th>MORALITY IN LIFE</th>
<th>MORALITY IN A PARTICULAR SITUATION</th>
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<td><strong>1. Moral Awareness</strong></td>
<td>To Have A Morality A Moral Person</td>
<td>To Do The Right Thing A Moral Action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>There exists a good and a bad versus conventions, aesthetics, etiquette, prudence, law and religion</td>
<td>This is a moral situation versus amoral (not having to do with morality)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good is desirable over bad</td>
<td>To want to do the right thing versus immoral (the opposite of moral) Intention is good</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>Chooses good even when can get away with bad Lives morally as an end in itself Passion for the truth and the good</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2. Moral Desire</strong></td>
<td>Decide what is good Holds principles, personal standards as guides Committed to thinking clearly about world and place in it</td>
<td>Decide what is the best thing to do Based on principles Considers all views and outcomes rationally and with a passion for truth Involves risk of being wrong</td>
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<td><strong>3. Moral Judgment</strong></td>
<td>Integrity Lives according to principles and accepts responsibility for outcome</td>
<td>Do the right thing May require perseverance, inner strength and a feeling of competence or community</td>
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Four Steps in the Process of Morality of a Person and of an Action

According to Rest (1986), there are four major psychological processes behind morality. I have adapted and labeled the four steps: awareness, desire, judgment and action. First, one must be aware of the existence of the good and the bad; then desire to do what is good instead of bad; apply skills to decide what is good and what is bad; and finally to act on these conclusions. Implicit throughout the steps are the use of critical and creative thinking skills and dispositions.

It is important to recognize that the steps are presented in a logical order, not necessarily in a real time order. Actually, the four steps interact with each other in real life. For instance, a person's awareness or perception of good and bad may be affected by his or her judgment about what is good. Additionally, possessing skills and motivations in one step does not mean a person's life or actions are moral. For instance, a person could possess the ability to make skilled, reasonable judgments without the inclination to carry them out. Another person could perceive and desire good, and possess the will to do whatever it takes, but lack the critical and creative thinking skills.
necessary to make an informed reasonable decision about how to live or what to do (Paul 1990).

Defining morality can be seen as defining the content of morality as well as defining the process of morality. The content is the specific answer to the question 'What is good?' An attempt to answer the question is provided in the next section. First, in an effort to provide a comprehensive view of morality, there will be a discussion of each of the four steps in relation to both morality of a person and of an action.

Awareness of Good and Bad. A moral person is morally aware. He is aware that life has "shoulds" which guide our perceptions of events. The "shoulds" of life can also pertain to prudence, etiquette, aesthetics, law, religion and conventions (Frankena 1980); these can be considered amoral "shoulds", that is, not having to do with morality. Often the line between conventions and morals vary among different cultures. For instance, even young children in the United States agree with adults that using proper greetings is a conventional behavior that has nothing to do with morality (Shweder et al. 1984). The Luo in Kenya, in contrast, believe not using appropriate greetings is a moral transgression (Shweder et al. 1984). Often the "shoulds" that are not moral overlap with those that are moral,
but the moral person is aware of the "should" that pertains to morality. He sees the moral dimensions in life: the existence of 'good' and 'bad' or 'right' and 'wrong'.

A moral person knows that he is responsible for perceiving when a moral judgment is required. He is habitually open to, and ready to accept, questions concerning his personal morality, the standards he holds for himself to live up to. 'Am I morally good?', 'What am I responsible for?' and 'What is the morally right way to live?' are such questions.

As Shulman and Mekler indicate, moral awareness means perceiving when a particular situation requires moral judgment: a person's acts may be moral, immoral or amoral the last referring to behavior not performed specifically to benefit or harm others. (Shulman and Mekler 1985). Questions such as 'Is anyone being hurt or helped in this situation?' and 'Does everyone have all the information they need in this situation?' indicate moral awareness in a specific time and place. Perception of the situation requires critical and creative thinking skills which try to take into account the unique perspective of all the participants. Of course, perceiving morality in a situation does not always arise consciously as thoughts or questions. Recognition of morality
may arise as a feeling of discomfort or on occasion (such as when someone standing next to you collapses), as an impulse to do something (such as catching the person). The reason humans have a tendency to see morality in life is unknown. Perhaps it is simply because our humanity is in touch with a deep design for how human beings are meant to attend to each other (Kohn 1990).

Desire Good Over Bad. A moral person genuinely desires good over bad (Lickona 1991). She has a love of the good and a passion for the truth. Truth exists behind her intentions. Her intentions are to choose good even when she can get away with bad. A moral person intends to live morally as an end in itself; it makes her happy. She wants to treat others well simply because she believes that is how people should be treated. She is not motivated to live morally out of fear or need for approval. She chooses to have good intentions and because she voluntarily makes her choice, she holds herself responsible for her intentions.

A person is immoral if she lives her life with bad intentions. An immoral person wants to treat others badly or with no intentions of choosing to treat others well unless there's an ulterior (usually selfish) motive.
Intention or desire is important when judging the moral standing of an act in a particular situation (Shulman & Mekler 1985). An act is right or good if its intention is good; "if it's aimed at promoting another's good" (30 Blum 1980). The person whose action is moral desires good. Conversely, an act is immoral if its intention is bad (Shulman & Mekler 1985).

Judgment of What is Good and Bad. Frankena clarifies how a personal morality determines how humans make judgments:

A morality is some kind of action-guide, ... a standard for conduct, character formation and life, something by which, together with the facts or what we believe to be the facts about ourselves, or situation, and the world, we do or may determine how we should act or shape ourselves. (19 Frankena 1980)

The moral person is concerned with answering the questions 'What is the right way to live?' and 'What is morally good?' He holds principles that he believes to be true. There are principles outside of a person that he may choose to make his own; for example, the Ten Commandments, the Bill of Rights, even old adages. Whether he chooses to make established principles his own, or he chooses to create his own, a moral person arrives at his principles through a commitment to thinking reasonably, carefully and clearly about the world around him and his place in it (Frankena 1986).

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Moral principles can be conceived as "significant historical and social statements that have developed through experience and that are important and helpful referents for judging particular cases today" (107 Chazan 1986). People apply their own rules, in the form of abstract moral principles, to concrete situations as they arise (Blum 1980). Moral decisions will vary with individual style, perspective, knowledge, experience, place and emotion. Someone making a moral decision asks the question, "What is the best, most right thing, for me to do now?"

The decision about what is the right thing to do in a particular situation has its basis in the principles a person lives by. Because the rules are never very precise and always admit of exceptions, even our most deeply held ones may come into conflict with one another (Frankena 1973, Blum 1980). Because a person's personal standards may come into conflict with each other, "the essence of moral decision is the exercise of choice and the willingness to accept responsibility for that choice" (Gilligan, 1970, 1967). Human's have the freedom to choose. A person may choose to do what he believes is right, but even then, what he does may not be what he ought to do. In the moment of decision, there is a risk of being wrong. Personal standards can help guide decision making. However, moral principles are
only maps; they neither take away our freedom nor relieve us of freedoms risks (Frankena 1980).

Sometimes, in simple situations, some people don't even think consciously about "the right choice". They do the right thing by force of habit (Lickona 1991). More complex moral decisions take into account the probable consequences of all options available and consider them in the light of rationality, without favoritism or prejudice. Behind the rationality of a person who is concerned with morality will be a driving feeling, a passion that strengthens the ability and the inclination to confront moral issues (Paul 1990). It is a passion unlike hate or greed that does not interfere with clear judgment; it is a passion for the truth, a love of the good.

Moral Action According to Judgment. A moral person has integrity, she fully abides by her beliefs and principles and accepts full responsibility for the outcomes of her way of life. In a complex and changing world, figuring out what is good is often difficult to do, and making decisions often requires highly developed critical and creative thinking skills and deep motivation. Realizing that something must be done and figuring out what to do is only half the battle; it is often just as difficult to do what we know is right. Moral action is a necessary

Being part of a community that conforms to one's principles can compel one to action. Frankena explains:

Society's pressure, aid, and discipline helps when we are ignorant, weak-willed, prejudiced, wayward, easily tempted, thoughtless, inconsiderate, careless, unloving, irresponsible, lazy, and self-interested even when we are not hypocritical, mean, cruel, vicious or wicked ... or immature, acting quickly, under pressure or self deceiving. (36 Frankena 1980)

However, sometimes doing the right thing goes against the beliefs of loved ones, community or country. When someone feels it is right to go against what society dictates is right, she must rely on her own reasoning and will. Most of the time, the choice to do what is morally right is a hard one. Thus, critical and creative thinking dispositions such as perseverance and inner strength and a feeling of competence are necessary to carry out a choice that is difficult.

**What is Good? Three Principles**

Chazan examines the importance of including both process and content when defining morality. He explains,

To be moral is both to apply a procedure and to accept or operationalize some contents (just as 'to have an experience' refers both
to the process someone undergoes as well as to the content or event undergone). (106 Chazan 1985)

The content of morality includes the content of a particular situation and the content of the answer to the question 'What is good?'


There has been much debate in the field concerning which principles are overriding. This thesis contends, like Lickona (1991) and Damon (1988), that these principles are equal in importance although they may be utilized with varying degrees as referents by people in different situations. For instance, a person who is allocating resources may place issues of need over issues of fairness.

Underlying each principle are the values of understanding and honesty. Concisely, a moral person
strives to understand and to be honest about life and events in a continuous effort to be caring, just and responsible (Lickona 1991).

The Principle of Justice. The principle of justice (Kohlberg 1970 and Frankena 1980), comparable to the principle of fairness (Shulman and Mekler 1985), and of respect (Lickona 1983, 1991) requires people to think of and treat human beings (including the self) as having dignity and inherent value. Justice treats others without bias or favoritism as having rights equal to one's own. Justice and respect implies every effort is made to use critical and creative thinking skills to understand situations from the point of view of all the people involved. Without understanding, it is easy to prejudge, to jump to conclusions and to make poor judgments about what is fair to everyone concerned.

The Principle of Care. The principle of care (Gilligan 1970, Noddings 1984), which is similar to the principles of kindness (Shulman and Mekler 1985), beneficence (Frankena 1980) and love (Lickona 1983), tells people to be genuinely concerned about other people's feelings and well being, to treat others well and respond to their needs and prevent their harm. The larger picture of the principle of care expects people to try to nurture, help and support each other, to alleviate suffering and to make the
world a better place for every person. Care implies every effort to try to use critical and creative thinking skills and dispositions to understand the needs, desires and state of the other person, from the other person's point of view.

The Principle of Responsibility. The principle of responsibility says people must act on their concern for others' well being and rights (Shulman and Mekler 1985, Damon 1988, Lickona 1983 and 1991). Responsibility means considering all that affects other people's rights and well being including the environment that sustains them. Responsibility means that the consideration will be the basis for actions that will be carried out and performed with the best possible ability. Specific personal and social responsibility is determined by using critical and creative thinking skills and dispositions to think clearly and gather knowledge about the world and life. A person dedicated to living responsibly is committed to discovering truth and understanding about his or her place in the world.

What is a Good Morality? A Summary

Being moral is part of a moral person's lifestyle and personality. A moral person reflects on his or her morality with a commitment to having a clear conception of the world and his or her place in
it. As a result of recognizing a connectedness with other people, a moral person is concerned with and feels responsible for others well-being and rights (Rest 1986). A good person respects people in their own right. He or she is kind, fair and responsible. A moral person confronts moral issues with feeling and passion, and uses critical and creative thinking skills to make moral judgments according to reason. He or she lives according to resulting beliefs because integrity is part of the character of a moral person. A moral person does what he or she thinks is right.

Moral awareness points out when a moral situation exists: someone needs consideration or help from harm or injustice. A desire to help follows. Moral decision is based in principles of care, justice and responsibility, and varies with the unique components of and reactions to a specific situation.

Thus, moral behavior is good, just and thoughtful. It's good because its goal is the well being of a human. It is also just because it considers others' rights without favoritism or prejudice. It is based on clear reasonable thinking that is compelled by a passion for the truth and the good, moral action carried out with voluntary will and the knowledge of responsibility. The outcome of moral behavior makes the world a better place for each person.
MORAL DEVELOPMENT

How Does Morality Develop?

Morality in children is seen in this thesis as the foundations for the morality defined in Chapter II. As Chapter II attempted to show, the morality of an individual depends on his or her skills, abilities and attitudes. As a person learns new skills and abilities grow and attitudes change, the person develops. Moral development occurs along with this personal development. Thus, moral development in children is part of the lifelong development of the whole person.

Early childhood is where the process is begun and the foundations are laid. The building blocks of morality will be seen here as the skills and dispositions necessary for morality. In this thesis, the term "morality", when applied to children, is seen as the basis of morality that includes these growing abilities and attitudes. Morality is a fundamental, natural and important part of children's lives from the time of their first relationships (Damon 1988).

The child begins with some natural emotional reactions to social events. Moral behavior is shaped
through cognitive and affective reactions to social experience. Damon explains:

The early moral emotions provides a ready-made affective structure upon which a child can build a set of deep and abiding moral concerns. The child however does not do so in isolation, but in context of social experience and constructive social guidance .. children learn to know and interpret their own moral emotions in the light of moral reactions of others. (29 Damon 1988)

Emotion is in fact inextricably tied to cognitive and social aspects of children's development (Damon 1988). Moral development occurs within a social context. "Broad variations in social experiences," says Gardner (118 Gardner 1991), "can lead to broad differences in children's moral orientations."

This chapter addresses how cognitive and affective forces, including the development of critical and creative thinking skills and dispositions, determine moral development. This chapter will have four sections, each addressing one of the four steps in the process of morality (awareness, desire, judgment and action). The four steps will be discussed in terms of cognition and affect (see Table 3.1) and critical and creative thinking skills and dispositions (see Table 3.2). Experiences are interpreted and reconciled by children in their own ways as moral awareness expands.
### TABLE 3.1 COGNITION AND AFFECT

#### DEVELOPMENT OF MORALITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEPS of the process of morality.</th>
<th>COGNITION</th>
<th>AFFECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Moral Awareness</td>
<td>Awareness of affect on other people and ability to take another's perspective expands with broadened awareness.</td>
<td>Empathy develops from infancy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Moral Desire</td>
<td>Awareness of inequality and attachment causes desire for principles of justice and care.</td>
<td>Desire caused by feelings of love, sorrow, shame and guilt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Moral Awareness</td>
<td>Self awareness is basis of integrity.</td>
<td>Self esteem provides strength for faith in ability to do good.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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TABLE 3.2 CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING

DEVELOPMENT OF MORALITY
ACCORDING TO CRITICAL AND CREATIVE THINKING ...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STEPS of the process of morality</th>
<th>...SKILLS.</th>
<th>...DISPOSITIONS.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Moral Awareness</td>
<td>Observation</td>
<td>Sensitivity to recognize problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sorting relevant information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interpretation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Moral Desire</td>
<td>Must have an appropriate representation of goal.</td>
<td>Must have a positive affect toward goal (doing the right thing).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Problem solving.</td>
<td>Ability to identify personal feelings toward the content of a situation and people involved.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reasoning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Generating ideas.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Evaluating.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Moral Action</td>
<td>Skills needed to carry out plan should be anticipated.</td>
<td>Perseverance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flexibility.</td>
<td>Ability to tolerate ambiguity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Flexibility.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Development of Moral Awareness

Answers to questions concerning the first step in the process of morality such as 'What is the right way to live?' or 'Does everyone have all the information they need in this situation?' require perceiving the world from other people's points of view. This perception involves both a cognitive and affective component that ultimately combine to form a true understanding of one's place in the world.

Development of Awareness According to Cognition.
The ability to put oneself in another's shoes and see things from a different person's perspective grows with cognitive development and with experience. Perspective taking is clearly multifaceted rather than one generalized ability (Kohn 1990, Damon 1988). Aspects of this ability include the critical and creative thinking skills of observing, using imagination, making sense of observable cues, sorting relevant information, attributing causes, making inferences and understanding one's own immediate feelings (Rest 1986).

The course of development of perspective taking ability probably starts (at 2 or 3 years of age) from a "rudimentary sense of other's having inner states (thoughts, feelings, perceptions) independent
of their own" (Hoffman 1977). Children's understanding of the inner states of others becomes increasingly complex as their experience interacting with others grows. In contrast to early theories of cognitive development, Damon points out that even babies are not solely egocentric. They are eager to interact with other people. He reasons that if "they were not to some degree always open to others' perspectives, there would be no possibility of social development" (Damon 1988). Because children know by age four that the real world and their perception of it are not always the same and that the inner states of the other are independent of their own, they become more cautious and tentative in their influence and more alert to cues about the feelings of others (Gardner 1991, Hoffman 1977). With experience, a young child's ability to expect and to discern individual differences grows. The more people that the child interacts with, the more readily the child will understand that people have different information, ideas, emotional reactions, interests and life conditions (Shulman and Mekler 1985). At the same time, experience will give the child a greater appreciation of the possibility that he can predict another's viewpoint. An accompanying attitude or disposition necessary to
identify a situation as being moral is grounded in affect.

**Development of Awareness According to Affect.** To be morally aware is to know when a moral situation exists. Empathy is a reaction that supports moral compassion. Therefore, a moral person is empathetic and predisposed to being sensitive to recognizing problems. Empathy is likely to be a motivating feeling that causes a moral person to reflect on a given situation. Another feeling that alerts awareness of a moral situation or question is explained by Lawrence Blum. Blum (1980) posits a state he calls "responsiveness" or "connection" which is a sense of relatedness to others (xix Blum 1980). A sense of connection can be reinforced by a broad base of experience building relationships with a variety of people. The sense of connection emerges prior to the cognitive ability to infer that others share functions with the self. It is this sense of connection that is actualized in early childhood.

Development of moral awareness probably begins as a natural, purely affective response to observations and events and progresses to a point by age four when a moral agent can anticipate what kind of actions can improve the state of another individual (Damon 1988). Empathy is an inborn capacity that varies
in its consistency from person to person. Shulman and Mekler point out:

Some children show strong empathetic feelings for others during their earliest social contacts, when they are 2 or 3, while others need to be taught to be sensitive to people. ... Children can learn to be more empathetic. (22 Shulman and Mekler 1985)

A wide base of experience helps to broaden the context where an individual will be able to recognize moral situations.

Moral awareness comes from within a child's normal social experience. Moral issues of fairness, honesty, responsibility, kindness and obedience are a part of every person's life from the first interaction with another human being. Damon sums it up in this way:

Children's morality therefore, is a product of affective, cognitive and social forces that converge to create a growing moral awareness. The child begins with some natural emotional reactions to social events; they are supported, refined and enhanced through social experience. (119 Damon 1988)

Skills and dispositions that are the foundations of moral awareness can be used to pursue the altruistic goal of improving the well being of others or to deceitful and self serving ends. Children are capable of harmful as well as helpful behavior. How does moral desire or a commitment to "do good" develop?
Development of Moral Desire

A commitment to do what's morally right requires a desire that can evolve from early childhood. The passion for the truth and the good can develop from concerns of the very young child.

Development of Desire According to Cognition. In a study concerning the origins of morality (Gilligan and Wiggins 1987) morality is seen as developing along two paths in early childhood: one according to experiences of attachment and another according to experiences of inequality. The two paths correspond to the "two basic developmental processes" discussed by Lickona (1983): integration, which reflects humans need to be included and differentiation, reflecting humans need to be independent. Along the first path a child learns that he is capable of knowing other's feelings and affecting them. Along this path, the child feels what happens when he is hurt or helped and observes what happens when another is hurt or helped. These feelings (discussed in the next section) cause a desire for care. This path yields a morality of self in relation to others; a morality with concern for care.

The second path yields a morality of desire for justice as a child learns to take care of herself and to be independent. A child sees the self in
relation to others as being less capable and more dependent. A desire for justice is developed as the child makes progress toward equality and independence.

When biological growth occurs and new psychological capacities emerge and new social worlds are experienced, conflicts between concerns about justice and care arise. Gilligan and Wiggins describe what happens:

When the child's search for equality comes into tension with the child’s search for attachment—the experience of moral dilemma may be the most intense and the potential for moral development may as a result be highlighted. Early childhood is such a time. (118 Gilligan and Wiggins 1987)

Furthermore, Gilligan says that while they are young, children discover the efficacy of moral standards, the extent to which justice offers protection to the unequal in the face of oppression and the extent to which care protects attachment against threats of abandonment or detachment. The lessons learned about justice and care in early childhood relationships generate expectations which are confirmed or modified in later childhood and adolescence. (116 Gilligan 1970)


Intentions are an integral part of moral behavior. An act is well intentioned when it appears to enhance the well being of the person to whom the act was directed. No one can ever be totally sure what the real payoffs will be to someone else. Good
guesses can be attempted by observing what a person does and how his behavior is affected by different outcomes. The goal of a behavior is feasible as far as it is based on a true interpretation of events. Critical and creative thinking abilities that can increase the possibility that the guess is the right one can be strengthened. These abilities include attributing causes, making inferences, evaluating and predicting. The acquisition of critical and creative thinking skills increases the likelihood that a child will have an appropriate representation of a goal in mind (Rest 1986).

Development of Desire According to Affect. A child reacts to a social experience with feelings of love, sorrow, shame and guilt or a combination of these feelings when he is confronted with his own or another's experience of attachment/detachment or equality/inequality (Gilligan and Wiggins 1987). Where do these emotions come from? Damon explains that "most scholars believe that moral emotions are a natural part of a child's social repertoire and that the potential for moral emotional reactions is present at birth" (13 Damon 1988).

It is generally agreed that the moral emotions emerge by three or four years of age and change substantially with cognitive growth throughout the course of development (Damon 1988). Damon explains:
The child's cognitive awareness of others—their pain and joy, and their social perspectives—enhances and transforms the child's capacities to experience empathy, shame and guilt. (26 Damon 1988)

Development of Moral Judgment

Morality starts as a set of culturally defined principles and values which are external to and imposed upon the individual. When the principles are internalized and the individual takes them as his own, they become personal standards by which he regulates his conduct. Moral development, according to Damon is characterized as a "gradual process that entails continual additions, modifications and revisions of the child's values and behavioral standards" (110 Damon 1988). Thus, principles of care, justice and responsibility are not simply taken as personal standards by children; the process of internalization requires that the principles are confronted, wrestled with and arrived at.

However, as Blum explains:

Humans do not ordinarily reach our decisions by a purely rational process, the outcome of which is a decision on our part to adopt those values. Rather, most of our values and attitudes are imparted by and absorbed from our upbringing, peers, surroundings, etc. (174 Blum 1980)

Because a principle is not wholly grounded in decision, choice and reason, there must, in addition, be a context of certain reactions and
feelings for a person to hold the principle as his own. Damon calls moral emotions “the lifeblood of the moral development process” (13 Damon 1988). He explains the development of principles according to the interaction of cognitive and affective development within a social context:

As children reflect on these moral feelings, they question and redefine the values that give rise to those feelings. Sooner or later the redefined values are tested through conduct, all of which gives rise to new feelings, new reflections, and further redefinitions of the child’s moral code. (13 Damon 1988)

Development of Judgment According to Cognition.

The only difference between moral reasoning and other types of reasoning is the kind of topics thought about; the procedure or style of thinking is the same (Chazan 1985, Paul 1990). The ability to reason develops from a simple cause and effect thinking to an understanding of complex interactions and causes. Likewise, from preschool to adulthood, we progress through stages of moral reasoning (Lickona 1983). Gradually, a child understands that decisions about rules of conduct within a relationship are mutual. A child realizes that moral rules can be arrived at through freely chosen consensus and cooperative agreement that may undergo conflict. The rules are not simply to be followed, but to make, alter, and enforce (Damon 1988). Rest (1986)
characterizes 5 conceptions of how cooperation among people is organized; each answers differently the question 'How do people get along with each other?'. His five conceptions are: 1) giving in, obeying commands 2) exchanging favors 3) positive long term relationships based on mutual understanding, loyalty, and affection, 4) "society wide networks" such as institutions and laws and 5) ideal societies according to principles that optimize human welfare.

There are many critical and creative thinking skills that are a part of the ability to understand and to apply the right reasons. Skills such as observation, inference, uncovering assumptions and evaluating, help clarify the reasoning process and in turn help children make good decisions about what to do.

A child's sense of right or wrong rests on her own standards of how people should treat their fellow human beings and what kind of person she wants to be. Arriving at principles or personal standards to live up to involves emotions and dispositions as well as decision making.

Development of Judgment According to Affect. The natural emotions of love, sorrow, shame and guilt provide a base for the child's acquisition of moral values by causing motivation to attend to moral learning and development (Damon 1988).
Additionally, a child's willingness to rely on her own standards depends greatly on the confidence she has in her ability to reason about effects of her actions (Shulman and Mekler 1985). She must also be committed to thinking clearly about one's place in the world and be disposed to considering how hopes, fears, desires, and guilt influence beliefs.

**Development of Integrity and Moral Action**

Moral action is a necessary part of morality. To act according to decisions about what is the right thing to do requires special skills and dispositions rooted in early childhood development.

**Development of Integrity According to Cognition.** To have integrity, to consistently act according to beliefs, requires self awareness and skills necessary to carry out the actions. The standard of consistency between beliefs and behaviors emerges when a child, usually before the age of four, believes he has choices about his beliefs and behaviors (Kagan 1984).

**Development of Integrity According to Affect.** Self esteem provides strength for faith in the ability to do good. Sometimes moral action requires the abilities to take risks, to persevere in the face of frustration, to be flexible and to tolerate
ambiguity. Additionally, a sense of responsibility that can compel one to action builds from a pre-existing sense of concern (Kohn 1990).
Kagan (1984) points out that American society has "awarded special ethical status to individual freedom and the intentions to be fair and honest . . . (with) minimal restraint on one's willed efforts to improve one's talents and to attain wealth and status" (115) at the expense of caring about other people. The main thrust of this thesis is how to get children to be motivated to think about morality, and to carry out prosocial actions in the face of strong pressure not to attend to morality at all.

In his most recent book The Unschooled Mind, Gardner describes many vivid studies that show how deeply the foundations laid in early childhood are grounded. In fact,

The milieus in which children spend their early years exert a very strong impact on the standards by which they subsequently judge the world around them. . . . Models initially encountered by children continue to affect their beliefs about which behaviors are good and which values are to be cherished . . . These preferences prove very difficult to change. . . . It is no accident that Lenin and the Jesuits agreed on one precept: Let me have a child until the age of seven, and I will have that child for life. (101 Gardner 1991)

If early childhood educators can promote a deep seated motivation for children to think about
morality and to act morally, the children in their classes will have been affected in all aspects of their lives, perhaps for a lifetime. To reach the goal of motivating children, it is helpful for teachers to know what motivates children to act morally. Unfortunately, it is extremely difficult to assess moral thought and action, especially in very young children.

Assessing Morality in Young Children

There are two approaches most researchers have used to get at a child's morality: asking them questions and observing them. Both methods have their drawbacks.

Many studies measure the moral reasoning of preschool children by assessments that record their verbal answers to hypothetical questions (Kohlberg 1976). This method may unfairly regulate children to a low stage of moral reasoning because they lack prerequisite skills such as sophisticated attention and language (Eisenberg 1992). Studies show that even most adults "do not have good verbal access to their own available concepts or intellectual processes" (16 Shweder et al. 1990). Additionally, hypothetical situations are unlikely to be useful
to assess children whose experience is limited to three or four years of living. Assessments based on talking about actual experiences instead of hypothetical situations unfairly test children who are hampered by unsophisticated memory skills as well as language and attention skills. "We know that children do not need to accurately represent adult moral codes in order to have a rich morality based on their own social experience" (Damon 1988). This knowledge has led to more research on morality that uses observations of children in natural settings.

Observation, as a method of getting at the morality of children, also has its drawbacks. Like adults, children’s moral thoughts are of honesty, fairness and concern for others (Damon 1988). Children, however, do not wrestle with the same moral situations that adults do. Therefore, if compared to adult standards of behavior, a child’s morality is easy to misinterpret or to overlook altogether. Damon explains:

The child may express a moral view that escapes the view of the adult who is observing the child. Or the child may operate from such an unfamiliar framework that the adult fails to capture it in all its integrity. Many times the discrepancy in frameworks does figurative violence to the child's perspective (even real violence to the child), as when an adult mistakes a child's well intentioned act for a punishable offense. ... The message is clear. Adults who would understand children's morality must understand the significance of children's moral views.
acts within the context of the child's world. 
(6 Damon 1988)

Obstacles to assessing moral reasoning, intentions and behaviors of children represent conceptual, methodological and communicational problems that make it difficult to understand children's morality. With these limitations in mind, research can be examined that provides some evidence for many psychological theories that account for the motivation to be moral. The theories describe some motivations that are part of human nature and some that are learned from experience. Ultimately, the cause of moral action is most likely an unknowable mixture of both nature and nurture (Damon 1988) that varies with the person, the time and the place (Eisenberg 1992).

Predispositions

Recent empirical work suggests that children are biologically prepared to believe that some acts are classed as right or wrong (Kagan 1991). Research and writings on morality point to a few predispositions that are part of human nature that cause people to make moral judgments and compel them to act morally. As motivations, these predispositions have distinct features. In real life they overlap.
Altruism. Altruism is a direct concern for another for the sake of the other (Blum 1980). It is grounded in regard for the other's state of well being. Altruism says a person acts morally (e.g., helps) because he or she cares about another because the other person is a person. Altruism "has survived through natural selection" (Kohn 1990) and "is as natural to humans as aggression" (Shulman and Mekler 1985).

Special Relationships. Preschoolers justify many of their prosocial behaviors by appealing to the needs of others. However, their descriptions of their peer directed prosocial acts seem to be more other oriented and based on relationships (liking, friendships) than their prosocial acts toward adults.

Empathy. Empathy is an inborn capacity (Shulman and Mekler 1985) to react to another person with feelings that are similar to the other's feelings (Damon 1988). To feel other people's feelings means feeling bad over someone else's unhappiness and pleased over someone else's joy (Damon 1988, Shulman and Mekler 1985, Kohn 1990). Like any inborn capacity, its degree of consistency varies from person to person (Shulman and Mekler 1985, Damon 1988). When empathy arouses painful emotions, it causes helpful
behavior. Shulman and Mekler explain how empathy contributes to children's motivation to be moral:

When a child feels someone else's joy or pain, he winds up feeling good when he makes them feel good and bad when he hurts them. . . . Because of empathy a child can understand--without anyone telling him--that harming others is bad and comforting them is good. (53 Shulman and Mekler 1985)

Emotions. Children experience intense moral feelings that cause prosocial behavior. Kagan proposes five candidates as moral emotions (1984); these emotions motivate morality by creating an effort to resolve the tensions they cause. The five candidates and the moral behavior they invoke are: (1) Fear of failure, punishment or social disapproval, which causes effort to live up to standards; (2) Empathy over another's distress, which causes helping; (3) Guilt over causing harm, which causes trying not to harm; (4) "Ennui" (oversatiation of desire), which causes moderation; (5) Anxiety due to inconsistency between beliefs and behaviors, which causes integrity of action.

Positive Emotions. There is a relationship between happiness and goodness (Frankena 1980, Kohn 1990, Lickona 1991). Although prosocial behaviors sometimes involve sacrifice, living up to personal standards of responsibility, care and justice causes satisfaction, fulfillment and pleasure (Frankena 1980). Respecting others, helping them and living
responsibly is a reward in itself. Moral people feel best when they achieve excellence in their relations to others (Frankena 1980). People naturally strive to have self respect. In Frankena's words, "one would choose to be moral if one clearly knew what one was about." (Frankena 1980).

**Personality Traits, Moods and Expectations.** There are several personality traits that correspond to consistent prosocial behavior (Kohn 1990). For instance, a healthy self esteem that is not contingent on acceptance from others or on a certain level of accomplishment, provides an acceptance of one's own worth. Self esteem is required to value other people just as self respect is required to respect others. Other traits that foster prosocial action are perseverance, assertiveness, self awareness and good interpersonal skills. Finally, inner strength provides an ability to mobilize and sustain action (Kohn 1990).

Mood can effect the initiation of a prosocial behavior and its follow through. For example, people who are in a good mood (resulting from pleasant memories, a recent pleasant or humorous experience, being given something, etc.) usually are more positive, generous and cooperative (Kohn 1990, Eisenberg 1992). Additionally, having confidence in ability to do what needs to be done and/or expecting the activity...
to be fun, easy or worthwhile, helps move one to action.

**Experience**

**Reward and Punishment.** Extrinsic controls over moral behavior do not cause consistent morality over the long run (Damon 1988, Eisenberg 1992).

Basing his conclusions on research, Damon asserts:

Authority obeying plays only a minor role in the rationales that children express to justify their acts of caring and fairness.... Even when such authoritarian or normative concerns emerge in a child's prosocial reasoning on a rare occasion, they are overshadowed by the far more common concerns of empathy and justice (43 Damon 1988).

Another review of research points to the same conclusion: "Children subjected extensively to discipline based on external controls develop low internal commitment to good behavior" (110 Lickona, 1991). Additionally, intrinsic motivation, not extrinsic motivation, enables moral behavior to occur when no one outside the moral agent knows about it.

**Personal Standards.** A person who identifies himself as a good person, one with standards of how people should treat each other, is motivated to live up to those standards (Kagan, 1984, Rest, 1986, Shulman and Mekler, 1985). By living up to personal standards, one avoids feelings of self condemnation. More
importantly, someone who identifies the self as good will do good because of the simple belief that is part of 'who he is' or 'how she is'.

The Ultimate Cause: Predispositions and Experience

Why does a person go through the four steps of the moral process? The answer lies in a combination of motivations. Anyone who wants to motivate children to act morally must recognize the pull of empathy, feeling of responsibility, identification with good, pressure of society, fear of feeling bad and desire to feel good that cause moral action. If one is already in a good mood and the situation appears to be easy, there exists even more compelling forces to be moral.

Sometimes motivations build on each other, securing future moral acts. For instance, a young child's desire for social play and his empathy for another child leads to the experience of sharing a toy. The experience leads to a concern for fairness which leads to an elaboration of his understanding of fairness. The more elaborate understanding includes notions of equality, merit, kindness and compromise. A greater understanding of moral principles applied to real life situations leads to a greater consistency and generosity in the child's sharing behavior.
This chapter has shown that morality, prosocial behavior and moral development are deeply rooted in inclinations that exist at birth, and are shaped by experiences early in a child's social life (Damon 1988).
The practical implications here follow from the theoretical frameworks set up in the preceding chapters. We have seen how moral behavior is shaped through cognitive and affective reactions to social events. What follows are some ideas on how the theory translates into practice when creating a context for moral development in three, four and five year olds.

Moral education is a process that happens to human beings, throughout life, in day to day living. It begins the first time a human being experiences being attended to, nourished, being made to feel good, being loved; it begins at birth. The first relationships in early childhood provide the standards of care and justice and responsibility which will be modified or confirmed throughout life. A person whose life begins with the security of a healthy attachment to another human being begins life with confidence and motivation to live up to high standards, to be caring and just, to hold high ideals. Lickona explains:

There's a direct relationship between security and individuality. Babies who are secure in their attachments to their parents have the confidence to explore their world. ... At three and a half, securely attached children are already more morally mature than insecurely attached children. Because secure children
have their own need for love met, they're more open to the needs of others. (49 Lickona 1983)

This is the ultimate goal of moral education in preschool.

Experiences interacting with people will challenge or reinforce standards by which people live. A child's preschool provides a unique setting where the child interacts with many people. It is usually the first time the young child is socializing with peers and exploring the world outside of the family and home. Teachers have a great deal of influence over the environment in which these interactions take place. Consequently, teachers can influence the principles the child takes from his or her experience. Any teacher who purports to educate the whole child has an obligation to consider and enhance the moral education which is already going on in her classroom. Fundamentally, the teacher needs to define her own goals. The process of examining the moral education of a classroom includes considering the answers to the questions, 'What are the goals of my curriculum?', 'What are the goals of my classroom rules and discipline practices?', and 'How do my actions and questioning techniques impact the foundations of morality that each child is forming?' The first section of this chapter
addresses the first question and the last section addresses the final two questions.

Moral education takes place in every part of the curriculum in order to transfer what is learned into everyday thinking and behavior. Throughout ten years of my working with preschoolers in a wide variety of settings in the northeastern United States, I have determined and redefined the goals of my curriculum for preschoolers (see Appendix). My goals reflect the child's whole development. The focus of these goals are the development of skills and attitudes. As these skills are applied in a social context, morality will develop with experience. This chapter will explore these goals in terms of moral education, and the preschool environment that I believe best promotes moral education. Instructions are directed at preschool teachers concerned with attending to the foundations of morality in their classrooms.

Goals

The curriculum of a preschool classroom can be broken down into six areas. The first area is Social and Emotional Confidence and Capabilities, with the subcategories of Helping Others and Accepting Help, Sharing, Feelings, Social Skills and Flexibility, Responsibility, and Confidence. The other five
areas are Communication Skills, Motor Skills, Self Help Skills, Attention and Learning Attitudes and Cognitive Skills.

Social and Emotional Confidence and Capabilities.

It has been said that self esteem provides strength for faith in the ability to do good. If children are going to one day have the strength that adult morality sometimes requires, they need to, above all, develop a positive self concept. A sense of justice, which requires people to think of and treat human beings as having dignity and inherent value with rights equal to one's own, is only possible when one thinks of and treats oneself as having rights and worth (Lickona 1983). Preschool educators can help children develop confidence by accepting and appreciating them as they are.

Another important factor in moral development is the ability to take another person's perspective. Experience interacting with different people helps children learn to expect and discern another's perspective including the other's differing knowledge, ideas, emotional reactions, interests and life conditions. In the course of daily routines, teachers can help children to see others as similar but different in respect to their specific thoughts feelings, and ways of viewing the world (e.g., "Greg, you like Ninja turtle games, what does Paul like..."
to do?" or "Amy gets upset when she spills her juice, what gets you upset like that?"). Asking specific questions is one of the best ways to develop children's abilities to take the viewpoint of others and to get in the habit of using that ability in their social interactions. The long range goal of questioning is to get children to ask questions of themselves. Adults can ask children leading questions that direct them to make their own discoveries about people's needs and feelings and how they might be helped (e.g., "How do you think that made Pam feel? Remember when you felt that way? How can you help her?").

Guided practice identifying and expressing one's own feelings is the first step towards identifying the feelings of others and towards understanding how feelings effect behavior. The ability to identify emotions of the self and others help children to make thoughtful decisions and to carry out prosocial behavior because they will be better able to identify reasons and consequences of their own and other's behavior. Ultimately, the goal is to develop the disposition of taking into account another person's perspective when making decisions. The teacher can also explain reasons for his own observed feelings (e.g., "I'm cranky
because I'm tired." and answer children's questions candidly.

Empathy, or a sense of connection, can be fostered by building relationships with a variety of people. Adults can educate children to be more aware of the similarity between themselves and others. A good way to give this kind of information to a child is to draw analogies to struggles she's gone through herself (e.g., "Remember when you first came to school and you were very very sad and a little bit afraid when your Daddy left? Do you think that's how Mark feels?")

If a child does not act out of empathy, it is usually because he does not know how to or isn't sure it's allowed. Teachers and peers can model helping behaviors. Given practice and encouragement, preschoolers discover the value of cooperation, helping others and being helped. Teachers can direct moral emotions toward effective social actions (e.g., "Remember yesterday when Diane pushed you and you skinned your knee? Then she brought you your favorite truck and you felt better? Well, Rita is crying because you stepped on her finger, what would make her feel better?").

Being open, flexible and confident in social interactions, enable and cause greater understanding between people. In preschool, one of the great
explosions in development that occurs is the discovery
and use of alternative strategies when dealing with
people. A child’s success or failures in dealing
with conflicts, making friends and keeping them,
result in enforcing and internalizing personal
standards of moral behavior. The classroom teacher
should be extremely aware of interactions and guide,
help and model successful experiences.

Communication Skills, Motor Skills and Self Help
Skills. Ultimately, a child must decide what to
do for herself, if she is going to be held responsible
for her actions. Preschool teachers can provide
choices throughout the day in all areas of the
curriculum.

Language ability affects moral development.
As language develops, children are better able to
connect present acts with distant outcomes, to use
words to control behavior, to reason through dilemmas
and to understand other people’s reasoning.

Success in what you’ve never done before provides
incentive to try new things. Confidence in motor
skills and self help skills spill over to other
areas. Teachers can point out feelings and
frustrations during the learning process that can
facilitate understanding another’s point of view
(e.g., “Remember how you used to feel about this

activity? How do you think Mary Ellen feels? How can you encourage her?"

Critical and Creative Thinking Skills and Dispositions.

As we have seen, the use of thinking skills, such as accurately observing, interpreting, evaluating reasons, thinking actions through before carrying them out, predicting consequences and knowing when additional experience is necessary, help in all steps of morality. When these skills are taught directly in many circumstances, including social circumstances, these skills will be used in moral situations.

Again practice in thinking takes place most effectively during the "teachable moments" of children's play, exploration and daily routines. The more relevant and personal the practice is, the greater the growth in self awareness, which in turn effects the learner in all aspects of her life. Guided play provides natural opportunities for teachers to teach and model the benefits of using such skills as "take time to think before you act" and "put yourself in the other guy's shoes". Teachers can provide choices to children that are important to children according to their abilities for practice in decision making. Limits help children feel secure. Freedom should be provided so children can experience risking failure. Teachers can help
children feel confident about trying new things and the possibility of making mistakes. Teachers can ask children for reasons. Teachers can foster the child's willingness to take responsibility for "good" and "bad" consequences of his actions. It is especially important to help a child get to the bottom of why he feels good.

Be mindful that the results of promoting prosocial behaviors on the basis of self interest may result in inculcating self-regarding shrewdness rather than a genuine concern for others. Effective reasons for moral decisions of preschoolers stress the impact of actions on others; whether or not the actions are harmful, helpful or fair. Adults can help support the child's reflection on his emotional reactions and sort out his beliefs and values that give rise to these feelings.

Teachers can build confidence in decision making by respecting children's choices. Self awareness and a belief that one has choices about beliefs and behaviors promote a sense of responsibility. Another consequence of questioning and helping children think about reasons is that they become more resistant to passive explanations and orders. Additionally, as children grow accustomed to hearing other's reasons and to providing their own, they are more likely to be tolerant of diverse views.
To develop responsibility, children must have responsibility. Having responsibility means having opportunities to care for others. In the preschool years, it means that the child believes she has "the opportunity to make some tangible contribution to the welfare of other human beings" (25 Lickona 1983).

Additionally, it is important that children's play is fun for them. Enjoying new challenges and experiences also provides incentives to try, to explore, to persist, and to think about new things. These activities will one day be important to being able to judge between differing moral codes and authorities.

**Environment**

Amidst faithfully keeping goals in mind, carefully observing children, and implementing enriching curriculum, teachers must attend to how the hidden curriculum effects the environment. The hidden curriculum refers to "the values, attitudes and assumptions toward learning and human relationships reflected in the school's policies and practices" (Purpel 1989). The hidden curriculum influences the young child deeply and covertly. It is especially important that teachers of preschoolers are aware of what messages children get from the way their
classrooms are run. The danger is that if the hidden curriculum is not attended to, it quietly undermines the moral curriculum that is apparently being implemented.

The environment also affects and is affected by the community in which the preschool operates. This is especially true of community or church centered preschools and the growing number of corporate day care centers. The effect of the role and responsibility of the parents and community in its preschools on the messages it gives to children and families should be carefully thought through. An atmosphere of respect, nurturance and acceptance is the result and cause of a preschool that promotes moral education.

The Role of The Teacher. The role of the teacher is not to impose his or her own thinking but to point out general principles. For example, a teacher who regularly considers the perspective of other people (e.g., "Boy, I guess Russell's mom must have had a pretty hard day to get mad at me like that, huh?") and acts in accordance with that perspective, is modeling these behaviors for children (Kohn 1990).

Teachers concerned with the moral life of children are willing to make a commitment to try to keep the moral dimensions in mind at all times. They strive to achieve for themselves the morality
discussed in Chapter II. They genuinely care for and strive to meet the needs of the children in their care with warmth and affection. They understand that modeling prosocial behavior is more effective than telling children about it. They provide reasons for their behavior, and believe what they say. They make challenging but not unrealistic demands of children. Their expectations are that the norm, the regular behavior of children is good; consequently, children in their classrooms identify themselves with the good. They consistently enforce demands and explicitly confront children about actions which may be harmful to others. They are direct and honest with children; they are not indirect or manipulative. They are keen observers and are sensitive to a child's perspective; they are careful to support natural empathetic responses. The kindness, competence, consistency and honesty they show gains the respect of children and makes them attractive role models that children will emulate (Kagan 1984). The importance of role models to young children is clarified by Damon:

Children are ignorant of social rules and too impulsive to conform rigorously to rules they know. But at the same time they are aware of the difficulties of these moral challenges. When they see their parents living up to complex standards, they glory in their parents' moral success. When they witness moral shortcomings on the part of the parent, children respond with anxiety and disappointment. (Damon 1988)
Finally, there are standards or rules of behavior that have more to do with classroom management than morality (e.g., one person at a time speaks during circle time). Teachers need to be clear about the bigger picture such as why rules or norms exist, what the hopes are behind them (e.g., we don't all talk at once so we can listen to each other), so that the particular skills are not ends in themselves.

The Child's Perspective. The teacher must open his mind to the divergent beliefs of others concerning what constitutes fair solutions to moral problems. A child is to be respected as a person whose feelings, preferences and questions matter and who has a distinct viewpoint, unique needs and own particular way of reasoning. Adults need to try not to confuse their own preferences and sensibilities with the children in their care. Kohn points out that "a child's viewpoint can't always be accommodated, but can always be considered and need never be dismissed" (95 Kohn 1990). A context for moral learning makes room for a child's own initiatives and reactions (Damon 1988). For instance, questioning children versus telling them lets the child take the active role in grappling with moral thinking. Real life peer confrontations will be the subject of most of the children's moral learning. Adults can effectively guide a child's natural responses to
real life situations that the child cares about by asking questions. Open ended questions such as "Why are you upset that Angela took your turn on the swing?" will yield information about the child's viewpoint. For instance, in this case, the child could answer from a justice perspective (e.g., "Because it's not fair.") or a care perspective (e.g., Because it's not nice."). A teacher can best respond to a child's concern by first discovering the child's perspective. The questions that adults ask can also take into account the child's language skills and provide new information in a form that builds carefully on what the child already knows.

Kohn provides an excellent example of the importance of not imposing our reasons on a child's behavior:

A child should get the idea that he is a good, caring person. This does not mean that parents should attribute altruistic motives to a child who obviously acted so as to gain a reward. Apart from the dishonesty involved -- which may itself be a lesson for the child -- this blatant repudiation of reality may encourage her to deny the existence of her egoistic impulses. The idea ought to be to nurture altruism, not to put the child in the position of having to disavow or repress other motives. (92 Kohn 1990)

Teachers can avoid the danger of making the wrong assumptions about a child's behavior by appreciating the child as a thinker, as someone who has his or her own ideas about what's right.
and wrong, and by making a commitment to understanding why children say and do the things they do.

Morality, prosocial behavior and moral development are deeply rooted in inclinations that may exist at birth, and are shaped by experiences early in a child's social life. It is imperative that early childhood educators recognize that relationships in early childhood form the basis of children's resilient conceptions about the world and people. Teachers can promote particular skills and attitudes in children by attending to their thoughts and actions and classroom practices. For instance, a preschool teacher can help a child to understand other people's perspectives and to practice effective thinking skills. If early childhood educators can promote a deep seated motivation for children to think about morality and to act morally, the children in their classrooms will have been effected in all aspects of their lives, perhaps for a lifetime. This thesis has presented a rationale and ideas for beginning to equip children in preschool with skills and knowledge necessary to make good and reasonable decisions and the motivation to act with integrity. Ultimately, the outcome of moral action which is grounded in a commitment to thoughtful reflection makes the world a better place for each person.
REFERENCES


Brandt, R. "Character and Critical Thinking" in Educational Leadership 43 (December 1985) 4: 3.


APPENDIX

All By Myself:
Goals for a Preschool Curriculum

The following preschool curriculum goals are expressed from the child's perspective to emphasize the importance, joy and reality of a preschooler's becoming independent. The format is inspired by the satisfactions a teacher feels when a child confidently announces "I did it, all by myself!" The format also enables the teacher to record a child's growth of abilities and to communicate goals to a child's parents.

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All By Myself

My name is _________________.
I came to this school in ________________ when I was ____ years old. I am discovering quite a bit about the world around me and how I affect it. In school especially, I am gaining confidence in myself and learning about getting along with other people. My teachers keep this record of my development in these important areas that are the focus of attention at my school:

I. Social/Emotional Confidence and Capabilities
II. Communication Skills
III. Self Help Skills
IV. Attention and Learning Attitudes
V. Motor Skills
VI. Cognitive Skills

Every other month, my teacher checks off the skills and behaviors that she observes that I acquire and demonstrate consistently. The color check corresponds to the date it was recorded.

It is interesting to notice the stages through which I develop because they are unique to me; I go through each in my own special way, in my own special time.

******************************************

Teacher/Date

Teacher/Date

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I. SOCIAL/EMOTIONAL CONFIDENCE AND CAPABILITIES

A. Helping Others and Accepting Help
All by myself, I can...
- try to solve problems myself before asking for help.
- ask adults for help.
- ask other students for help.
- help my friends (i.e., take off their boots).
- let my friends help me.
- understand how someone else feels.
- comfort my friends when they're upset.
- say "I'm sorry" and compensate for any wrongdoing.
- treat people like I want to be treated.

B. Sharing
All by myself, I can...
- share toys.
- share adult attention.
- take turns.
- wait for my turn.

C. Feelings
All by myself, I can...
- have confidence that my parents will return to school.
- be comforted when upset or afraid.
- express fears or concerns.
- express feelings—happy, sad, angry.
- identify others' feelings—happy, sad, angry.
- express feelings—embarrassed, frustrated.
- identify others' feelings—embarrassed, frustrated.
- express feelings—lonely, disappointed, hopeful.
- identify others' feelings—lonely, disappointed, hopeful.
- have high self esteem.
D. Social Skills and Flexibility
All by myself, I can...
___ approach other children appropriately when I want to play with them.
___ use my words to solve conflicts with other children.
___ stand up for myself instead of crying, tattling, submitting or hitting.
___ accept routine transitions.
___ accept occasional changes in routine.
___ play by myself sometimes.
___ not discriminate or prejudge others.
___ not make racist comments.
___ enjoy socializing with my peers.
___ be open to others suggestions.

E. Responsibility
All by myself, I can...
___ take care of books and toys.
___ listen at circle time while waiting for my turn to speak.
___ help clean up.
___ take care of my own things.
___ tell the truth about my actions.
___ enjoy making decisions.

F. Confidence
I am confident about and enjoy ... 
___ helping others.
___ asking for help.
___ sharing and cooperating.
___ my friendships.
___ getting along with other people in general.
___ communicating with others.
___ using my physical abilities.
___ becoming independent.
___ my cognitive skills.
II. COMMUNICATION SKILLS

A. Speech
I can...
____ speak clearly to be understood.
____ control the loudness of my voice.
____ use articulation appropriate to my age level.

B. Language
I can...
____ repeat words.
____ communicate through gestures.
____ communicate through language.
____ use single words.
____ use phrases.
____ use sentences.
____ use complex sentences.
____ follow directions.
____ answer who, what, where questions when shown a picture.
____ answer why, when, how questions when shown a picture.
____ converse with other children.
____ converse with adults.
____ explain.
____ ask questions.
____ make suggestions.
III. MOTOR SKILLS

All by myself, I can...

- do a puzzle
- build a block building
- use clay
- color
- draw
- buckle
- paint
- paste and glue
- cut with scissors
- button
- snap
- zip
- crawl
- roll
- walk
- run
- jump
- climb
- gallop
- hop
- skip
- gallop
- snap
- throw
- pedal

IV. SELF HELP SKILLS

All by myself, I can...

- put my coat on.
- zip my coat.
- put my shoes on.
- tie my shoes.
- put my smock on and take it off.
- keep my things in my cubby and get them when I need them.
- put my nap things away.
- let people know when I'm thirsty, hungry, cried or have to go to the bathroom.
- get a drink of water.
- pour.
- clean up a spill.
- wash my hands.
- wipe myself and flush the toilet.
- conform to limits set for safety.
- try unfamiliar foods.
V. ATTENTION AND LEARNING ATTITUDES

A. Participation
I participate in different activities with confidence. (ae= with adult encouragement m=all by myself)

- water table
- tools
- stories
- music
- organized games
- outdoor equipment
- dramatic play
- small manipulatives
  (like leggos)

- blocks
- playhouse
- puzzles
- art
- organized projects
- outdoor games
- climbing structure
- creative mediums
  (like clay)

B. Attention and Concentration

I can sit for the duration of...

- lunchtime.
- circle time.
- story time.

I can play in one area for...

- 5 minutes.
- 10 minutes.
- 15 minutes.
- 20+ minutes.

I can work on a project for...

- 5 minutes
- 10 minutes
- 15 minutes
- 20+ minutes

COMMENTS
VI. COGNITIVE SKILLS

I demonstrate...

- an adequate short term memory.
- an adequate long term memory.
- imagination.
- curiosity.
- humor.

All by myself, I can...

- enjoy books.
- look at a book front to back, as appropriate.
- look at a book left to right, as appropriate.
- look at a book top to bottom, as appropriate.
- recognize red, blue, yellow, black and white.
- recognize green, purple, pink, grey and orange.
- recognize circle, square.
- recognize rectangle, triangle.
- count up to 5 objects.
- count up to 10 objects.
- count to ___.
- group objects according to shape.
- group objects according to size.
- group objects according to color.
- give a napkin, cup, or snack to each of my friends.
- recite the alphabet.
- recite the letters in my name.
- recognize my name.
- recognize others' names and/or some words.
- know sounds of some letters.
- tell a story in sequence.
- when role playing an everyday event, I can take another's perspective.
- provide reasons for my behavior.
- evaluate reasons.
- think for myself, question authority.
- think about consequences before I act.
- be persistent when problem solving.