

Should Schools Teach Values?

by Nathan Taylor

This may be the most simplistic article I've ever published. It deals with mutual respect and the Golden Rule – ideas that've been around for thousands of years and are today dismissed as little more than cliché's. And yet, if you read between the lines, this article is both profound and ironic. As you'll see, our government spent \$9 million to discover the Golden Rule, used that discovery to topple the Soviet Union, and then tried to conceal the discovery from the American people.

How many problems have you ever had that can't be finally traced to a lack of respect? He doesn't respect your person or your work; you don't respect his person or authority. Result? Conflict, shouting, divorce, fights, sometimes jail, sometimes war.

"R-e-s-p-e-c-t! Find out what it means to me!" Who hasn't heard the song? But who has understood it? Perhaps more than love, we truly need respect.

In 1971, I attended the University of Tennessee to get a degree in Education. I wanted to be a teacher so I could take an active role in developing high moral values in the next generation.

However, during one of my classes, the professor stated: "You can not teach values in public school be-

cause whose values are you going to teach?" I didn't know how to refute his statement so I remained silent. Nevertheless, because teaching values was forbidden, I reconsidered my career as a public school teacher. Although I completed my undergraduate work in Education, I never even applied to teach in a public school. I had no desire to contribute to an institution that prohibited the promotion of values. Instead, I worked for private organizations such as the Boys' Clubs and Scouting which promoted values as a priority.

Over the years I've been haunted by the fact that I didn't try to refute the professor's assertion that values can not and should not be taught in public school. Over the years, however, I found proof that teaching values (specifically the "Golden Rule") is not only lawful but has an important, perhaps essential, role in our public school curriculum:

In 1955, during the Cold War, Dr. Robert Humphrey researched "Conflict Resolution Methodology" at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and discovered there are Natural Laws of human behavior which are controlled by *values*. As a result, *values* are the key to understanding, predicting, and even *modifying* human behavior. He established that humans get emotionally charged by the things

they "value". The higher they value something, the greater risk they are willing to take to protect or keep it.

For example, our individual life and the lives of our loved ones are normally our highest value because we will fight to the death to protect them. This value or natural trait is common to all humans. In essence, when you violate the fundamental Natural Law of human behavior (all humans value their lives equally and will become violent when treated otherwise), crime and violence results. Properly understood, Dr. Humphrey's work is the key to creating a better, less violent and more cooperative world.

Dr. Humphrey's discovery attracted the attention of the U.S. State Department and he was recruited as an Ideological Warfare Specialist. He was sent on covert missions to several communist bloc countries to resolve crime, violence and cultural unrest. His methods worked and his missions were highly successful. He became a secret weapon of the State Department and was sent to hot spots all over the world because of his ability to change peoples' attitudes and behavior.

Secretly financed with \$9 million, Humphrey began his work in Turkey where the U.S. was building nuclear missile silos and basing the U-2 Spy planes. According to the \$9 million research project, the root cause of crime and violence is "people feel they are

being treated with disrespect". Stated in a positive way; we tend to get along with those we respect and who show respect toward us. Dr. Humphrey's work proved that almost all social ills can be resolved by simply motivating people to show greater respect toward others. It sounds simple, but his conclusions were closely guarded to prevent his methods for effecting behavior from being widely known.

At the completion of his foreign missions, Dr. Humphrey returned to the U.S. At his debriefing he said he was excited to be home so his knowledge could be used to help stop violence, promote racial harmony and improve the education system. He was amazed when the government officials stated, "Destroy all of your documents and tell no one of your work." Apparently, government did not want crime and violence curtailed or racial tensions resolved.

During the late 70's early 80's, Dr. Humphrey's son Brad wanted to demonstrate how effective his father's methods were. He set up his own street corner school located in one

of the rougher neighborhoods in National City, California. He took in only those kids that the public school system declared, "could not be educated". However, according to an article in the *San Diego Union* newspaper, in just 13 months he turned these "could not be educated" hard-core dropouts into, "bright, sparkling pictures of health, who bubble with enthusiasm when asked about their lives and plans for the future." Brad Humphrey's school received the county's outstanding award from the Greater Industry and Education Council, and also from the Corrections Department for juvenile offenders.

Curiously, the more successful Brad's private school became, the more official opposition resulted from the public school bureaucracy. Eventually, Brad's private school moved to Canada because, "The educational establishment, especially at the local school board level, kept trying to close the school". The reason? "We (the public school bureaucracy) favor a strong *public* school system; we are not interested in going *private*." Apparently, the *public* schools didn't like being outperformed by a *private* school or being required to reform to meet modern needs. A school based on the concept of teaching children to truly respect each other was unwelcome.

Today, some public educators even deny that there is scientific proof of a universal value shared by all humans, or that there are Natural Laws of human behavior. However, The FBI's Behavioral Science Department proves that there is a science of human behavior and that there are Natural Laws which control behavior. After all, FBI behavioral scientists can determine the characteristics of a person who committed a crime before the person's identity is known. How could that be possible if there were no fundamental laws of human behavior? Therefore, if it is possible to determine the characteristics of *criminals* (someone who assaults society), doesn't it follow that it's also possible to determine the characteristics of individuals who can resolve conflict, stop crime and violence, promote racial harmony, protect others and generally support society?

The answer is Yes. Dr. Humphrey identified those characteristics forty years ago. He successfully trained agents in Communist Bloc countries to cause nonviolent, positive social change and advance the cause of individual freedom. Doing so helped to win the Cold War and topple the Soviet Union. The basic technique these agents used was to promote human equality and respect toward others. Shouldn't our children be taught these same characteristics and values in public schools?

How important are these behavioral characteristics? Harvard psychologist Daniel Goleman researched this question in his book *Emotional Intelligence*. According to Dr. Goleman, the ability to positively effect others has a greater effect on one's success than intelligence. (See, *Time Magazine* 10/2/96).

Even our military is aware of the importance of teaching values. Marine General Krulak knew of Dr. Humphrey's missions during the Cold War. Later when he became Marine Commandant, General Krulak added an extra week to basic training for values training. According to Commandant Krulak, "Developing moral values has become an integral part of Marine Corps training. We hope to bring this awareness to the entire military. After all, everything the military does affects the rest of society. Now, if only our civilian institutions would get in step."

History teaches that society benefits from teaching children to be more respectful of others; and that even reaching just one child can produce profound world changes. Consider George Washington, Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Gandhi, Rosa Parks, Martin Luther King, or Jesus. Their cause – freedom – and message have always been based on the idea that all are equal under the eyes of God, and all should treat others as they would like to be treated.

Today, if that professor were still around to ask me, "Whose values are you going to teach?" I would not sit silent; I could answer that we should teach respect for the *universal* value shared by all humans. This value can

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be stated, “My life and the lives of my loved ones are just as important to me as your life and loved ones are to you.” This leads logically to the “Golden Rule”: Do unto others as you would have them do unto you. Treating people with respect is not only just a good idea, it’s the law - the Law of Nature.

And if he still resisted teaching values, saying there was no legal foundation to do so, I would remind him that our Founding Fathers were not only aware of the importance of values, Thomas Jefferson enshrined those values as the “Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God” in the *Declaration of Independence*. The American Revolution was finally fought to achieve a measure of equal respect: “We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” If the *Declaration of Independence* isn’t sufficient legal authority to promote and teach the value of mutual respect in our public school system, what is?

In any given situation, our natural instinct is to “fight or flee”. In both cases - fleeing *and* fighting - the motivation comes from *fear*. To make the world a better place, someone must be courageous enough to step forward and try to resolve conflicts *non-violently*. Someone who neither fights nor flees. He seeks the middle ground, using his knowledge and skill to achieve voluntary cooperation. To create positive social change, the conflict resolution specialist must act not from the emotion of *fear*, (fight or flee), but rather from the emotional feeling of *fearlessness*.

A fearless person has no problem approaching adversaries face-to-face to discuss a problem. Some people are confident and fearless by nature. They make the best conflict resolution specialists. Their personality invites friendliness. People respect these characteristics. In most cases, problems can be resolved by mutual respect and empathic verbal persuasion.

If you’re not lucky enough to be naturally fearless, one the fastest ways

to boost confidence is through training in the art of self-defense. Another, better way is to find your faith in God. Faith is truly the opposite of fear, and with real faith, one becomes fearless – not in an aggressive sense, but in the sense of one ready to help, ready to serve, ready to respect.

The Cold War is over. Isn’t it time that Dr. Humphrey’s methods for achieving positive social change through values development be made public? Armed with this knowledge, our public school system would be better able to teach our youth how to become successful, resolve social problems, stop crime and violence, and even help maintain world peace.

It’s interesting that our government reportedly used Dr. Humphrey’s discovery to reduce crime and violence in Communist countries, but refused to do the same in the USA. This implies that governments depend on domestic crime and violence for “legitimization” and the key to destabilizing an adversary’s government is not to institute violence, but peace. (If there are no foreign or domestic threats, why do we need or even tolerate government?) Was the key to destroying the Soviet Union teaching Communists to respect each other? Conversely, is the key to maintaining our federal government’s power the maintenance of the public’s mutual disrespect and resultant high crime rates. . . ?

One last point: If there’s a school anywhere that should teach values, it’s law school. According to an article in The Florida Catholic (“Dean: Legal System Has Hit Bottom”; 12/11/97), Professor David Link, dean of the University of Notre Dame Law School recently said, “The adversarial system is not about justice but about winning. Adversarial ethics . . . leads to disregard for the broader concerns of justice and fairness.” As a result, “the reputation and ethical level of the legal profession are at an all-time low. Part of the problem was that law schools teach a kind of sterile ethics rather than emphasizing professional responsibility.”

Professor Link’s solution? “Scrap adversarial ethics . . . adopt a ‘do good’ ethical system . . . [and] return to the day when lawyers were trusted . . . because they concentrated not so much on winning but healing.”

Like most lawyers, Professor Link’s comments are erudite but obscure. They sound good, but what do they mean? Is it possible that when Professor Link talks about “ethics”, “reputation” and “responsibility” all he’s really discussing is “respect”?

Our adversarial court system is inherently disrespectful – it actually teaches and institutionalizes professional contempt for opponents and clients. The “win at any cost” mentality is finally based on a contempt for others that refuses to consider the possibility that your opponent might be a decent person or even right. If courts treat litigants with respect, those litigants won’t riot even if they lose their cases. But if the courts treat litigants, their families and values with contempt, those litigants will be angry even if they win – and potentially dangerous if they lose.

Lawyers can’t use their education, privilege and courts to routinely smear innocent people, destroy businesses and families, ignore righteous values, and still command America’s respect. Every judge and lawyer who truly wants to regain a measure of respect for himself and his profession should read Mr. Taylor’s article, study Dr. Humphrey’s research and learn to simply treat the public with real respect.

If you, me, and even lawyers want respect, we have to earn it. How do you earn it? You give it. Do unto others. This “natural law” is so simple we dismiss it as naive. But as Dr. Humphrey’s work suggests, this “law” may be profound, even self-enforcing and can therefore be ignored only at our peril .

For additional information concerning Dr. Humphrey’s methods for promoting values and activating children to show greater respect toward others contact Nathan Taylor, PO Box 2079, Dunnellon, Fl. 34430.