

## **Understanding Morals - Toward a Higher Stage of Social Development**

If we are to move toward a society at peace, we all need to think deeply about what the elements of being at peace in society are. Whenever social issues concerning the breaking of the rule of law emerge and hit our social cognition, we shallowly explore them with eye and not deeper perception. No matter what efforts we make, there will be no path to social enlightenment if we are unaware of, and pay no heed to, the psychosocial and moral development of children. In terms of the basis of life for mankind, it is not only to keep the law, but to build a deeper moral development to act as cornerstones for our societal peace. With a higher moral development, the values to life rules and self-discipline naturally burst. Lawrence Kohlberg's theory of development of moral judgment and Erik Erikson's psychosocial development theory show us that it is essential we realize how crucial the initial education of young children is. Seeing the light, this paper is concerned with understanding of the moral development of young children with the goals of generating self-discipline and keeping positive attitudes toward the higher stage of social development; hence, stepping up into the society peace can be easier.

If we don't have any footing of values of the society and a firm grasp on children's initial education, human development will slip down an evolutionary black hole. From the moment a baby is born it is subjected to a great deal of social washing from parents, peers, adults, history, culture, and so on. As John Locke's concept of tabular rasa meant, the blank slate tells that the mind at birth will be imprinted by experiences, it is a notice presenting that offering a reasonable and rational social development is to offer children a warm and healthy social bed. There is only one way to step up to the highest level of civilization; that is to baby the children in peace. In fact, we all need to be continuously educated in order to understand more about new generations and offer better ways of helping them progress to maturity, foster intellectual development and higher moral judgment, etc. Therefore, it is worthwhile to be aware of children's psychosocial development, moral judgment, and social development.

Exploring the stage of physical self to psychological self and social self, it is comprehensive that children begin to expose themselves in inner attempts of their own. Self-center creates an impulse to get in touch with the new world. Referring to Erikson's Psychosocial Development Theory, he has mentioned that the stage of Initiative Versus Guilt occurring at the age of three to six is generated because children realize their own responsibilities and understand the conflicts arising between the people around them. They want to have the initiative; that is to say, they decide to do the things that they want to do, and when they want to do them. In the meanwhile,

they must also struggle with the guilt arising from making a wrong decision. This stage is just like a turning point. If it goes well; then, children arrive at a higher stage of social development. On the other hand, it goes wrong; then, dilemmas appear. Their willingness to change their attitudes and behavior will decrease. At the same time, parents are the key to opening the door to higher mental development at this stage. It is believable that parents are characterized by a determination to successfully achieve children's cognitive development. It is also obvious that parents are the hands to shape the model of children's performance. Briefly, parents are the initial deliberate givers that deliver the golden rules of life to very young children, valuable input at a very early stage.

Conflicts in mental development make cognition unbalanced; being unbalanced for long results in loss of self-identity. Identity Versus Role Confusion, the fifth stage of psychosocial development from Erik Erikson, is also crucial because individuals often appear at this stage. It is also called the great crisis of adolescence because they struggle with what their real roles in life will be. They are expected by cultural and social factors to fill roles. Thus, family and school play significant roles during this period. The discovery of identity for adolescents digs out their meaningful social positions. Their life value and social identity are clearly carried out by the security of the family, by knowledge gained from school and by experiences arising from social interaction. In short, young children walk out of parents' arms into a small community, school, where they start to find the way to their own clarified individualism, not confusing personal traits. Similarly, the role of teachers is as important as parents at the stage of Initiative Versus Guilt.

Good learning comes from a good development of one's cognition. Equally, a good cognitive development brings a good moral development, Kohlberg thinks. He also believes that moral development is generated by individuals alternately interacting in a community. Each individual will determine what is right and wrong in this process. According to the three levels of moral development from Kohlberg, children's moral value comes from obeying rules and authority at the beginning level. When children begin to value their family, group, and even community at the second level, cultural traditions cultivate their moral judgments. At the third level, social order maintaining and social-contract legalistic orientation make the individual have rational and independent judgments. Helping children heighten their moral judgment, continuously cultivating their moral value in daily life and encouraging them to fulfill moral value from community service are included in parents' and teachers' duties.

Virtues are created by the values of the individual, social identity, and a high moral development; hence, everyone is responsible for the society they are in. At the same time, obligation is relative to responsibilities as well.

Referring to Vygotsky's Socio-cultural Theory, it points out the importance of the socio-cultural function for children's cognitive development. It also emphasizes the influence of culture, peers and adults on the development of children's cognition. In other words, Vygotsky believed that children's cognitive development can be affected by their surrounding and by others. Their value input also comes from the environment and the people around. Therefore, we, as adults, should maintain higher moral judgment and keep growing in social cognition. Besides, we must arouse the self-discipline in our minds in order to be good examples for children. We must absolutely avoid immersing children in a poorly educated environment. Let children develop in a well-integrated society with virtues and values.

Only being considerate to create a wonderful surrounding for young children can we build a peaceful kingdom in their minds. Such a peaceful kingdom will be full of the blossoms of peace. The sprouts of self-discipline would naturally grow tall and deep. To summarize, the higher morals grow; the higher social development will become.