Chapter 10

Educating young people in meaning, identity and spirituality

> We need to put out heads together to work out a view of life that offers a future for our children.[1]
>
> Chief Sitting Bull of the Lakota Sioux Nation, 1890

> There is evidence that the developed world has passed a threshold, a point beyond which economic growth (as currently defined and derived) ceases to improve quality of life. Trends in suicide, depression and other psychological disorders suggest that young people, in particular, are paying a high price for progress.
>
> This situation poses a formidable challenge to education. The task of education is not just to prepare students for the future, but to equip them to create a future they want to live in. This includes nurturing a sense of social and spiritual connectedness that transcends the individual and the material.[2]
>
> Richard Eckersley, 2000

The previous chapters in this part of the book provided background on the constructs meaning, identity and spirituality, together with initial suggestions as to what constituted 'health' in each. Judgments about what constitutes healthy personal development need to be based on values, and they need to be clearly articulated as a prerequisite to any planning of an education in meaning, identity and spirituality. The task of this chapter is to work from the notion of what constitutes health in these areas towards content and pedagogy that might promote personal development. This will be done in a generic way, with attention to implications and related issues in different school contexts taken up in Parts III–V.

While this book is mainly educational in its focus, much of the analysis in Part II can be useful for professionals variously engaged in the care of youth. For these readers, the principles in this chapter still have relevance in the sense that a broad understanding of education in meaning, identity and spirituality is applicable to youth counselling, welfare and other activities in both advocacy for, and care of, youth.

The generic education in meaning, identity and spirituality considered here is proposed as a 'guide' for giving direction to young people's exploration of processes and issues in meaning, identity and spirituality. In the school context, it would not be a new subject seeking a place in the curriculum, but a thematic study that can be included in learning areas like religion or personal development, as well as having potential for integration elsewhere in the curriculum. It can serve as a template or a perspective for showing how an education in meaning, identity and spirituality can enter into the key learning areas.

For convenience, the phrase 'personal development education' will be used in this chapter as shorthand for an 'education in meaning, identity and spirituality'.

10.1 Underlying value assumptions

The value assumptions in any community activities intended to enhance young people's meaning, identity and spirituality fall into five groups.

10.1.1 The nature of the human person

The analysis in Part II presumes that while autonomy is a fundamental goal for human development, this is not achieved quickly or fully in children and adolescents. Hence their quest for meaning, identity and spirituality needs to include as a starting point a basic familiarity with the cultural traditions of their immediate family and community. As they mature, they can take greater responsibility for the cultural elements that sustain their personal life. So their personal development education is not just the communication of packages of institutional meaning, identity and spirituality, but a study of these traditions in a way that promotes their growing responsible involvement.

While the interpretation of meaning is a fundamental human task, it is also a significant educative process. Thus the aim of helping youth become wise interpreters of life should be one of the foremost aims of agencies concerned with the education and care of young people.

10.1.2 Access to cultural traditions

Young people need to be given a basic level of access to their cultural heritage. The state school is concerned particularly with transmitting the 'intellectual culture', as embodied in the curriculum. As far as particular ethnic and religious traditions are concerned, it would be both unrealistic and inappropriate to think that public education should have a prominent role in their transmission. But what the school should do is try to promote the shared community values in multiculturalism and tolerance. In the curriculum, this could include studies where a range of related questions such as the following could be examined: ethnicity, multiculturalism, democracy, religious freedom, respect for individuality, the need for shared values, as well as problems like racism and sexism.[3] Pupils could learn about the psychological and social functions of ethnicity, about its enrichment of the country's cultural resources, as well as about its potential for conflict.

School education contributes to young people's 'cultural exposure' in a general way; it may extend their cultural horizons beyond what they might absorb from their immediate home and community environment. For example, young people need to know about the religions in their society. A general study of religions may also contribute to a better understanding of their own religious tradition, whether or not they are practising members. The curriculum will inevitably deal with cultural, ethnic and religious diversity in a generic way, but it is not responsible for trying to cover any particular tradition comprehensively. Independent schools have more scope to do this and it is evident in the denominational religious education that they often provide.

Schools, therefore, should provide a range of cultural resources for their pupils' personal development,[4] though the extent to which these are assimilated depends on the individual. The school's contribution is one of many from the different cultural sources that influence the young.

What is attempted at school in terms of education in meaning, identity and spirituality complements but does not substitute for what should be done by the family and the various communities in which young people participate. Children and adolescents have a right to a basic level of cultural heritage as meaning and identity resources. Requiring them to start life with a *tabula rasa* as far as these resources are concerned would be unfair.

10.1.3 Critical evaluative activity

From their earliest years at school, children can gradually understand that an evaluative approach in their learning is much more than being critical – in the sense of just complaining or criticising. The word 'critical' when applied to evaluative learning means that the learner is trying to get beneath the surface layers of what is being studied to its meanings and values. It involves appraising arguments and seeking evidence to back them up or call them into question; it leads to tentative value judgments; it considers implications for self and others.

In industrialised countries, most of the support networks for meaning and identity that functioned for earlier generations no longer have the same plausibility and force. While many people still identify themselves as religious, beliefs about life's meaning drawn from religions do not seem to have the same cogency they apparently had in the past. But there is no shortage of available meanings. In an environment awash with ways to make meaning and to find the 'true self', there is an urgent need for young people to learn how to evaluate critically what is being offered. Education has an important role here in helping youth in their search for meaning and identity.

There is a common tendency to think about culture as something static – it has a sort of taken-for-grantedness about it. An evaluative approach to the study of cultural meanings begins by questioning this assumption, showing that culture is a human construction and that it can be analysed and evaluated in terms of authentic service to communities and individuals. Social problems can be brought out into the open and debated, not left hidden within the culture as if 'this is the way things are, and must always be'.

An evaluative dimension is essential for any personal development education. The young need to become more aware of the shaping influence of culture on people's spiritual and moral development so that they can be more discerning of the factors that affect their own thinking and behaviour.

The extensive range of issues in meaning, identity and spirituality covered in this part of the book can be overwhelming for educators if they read too much in one sitting, or wonder about how they might deal with so much content in class. They might be intimidated by the thought of themselves trying to become a classroom 'Dr Phil' (Dr Phil McGraw conducts a popular television counselling program), forever dispensing packages of wisdom to a youthful audience that is not interested or responsive. This image misinterprets the educational role of the teacher and it overestimates both the time and scope that might be available for addressing the issues. The agenda in the foregoing chapters is principally for the education and personal development of educators. It can contribute to the background knowledge and wisdom they bring to their educational dealings with young people – but they do not have to tell all they know!

Nevertheless, there is a side to the Dr Phil analogy that is pertinent here, and it has to do with pedagogy. The style of Socratic questioning employed by Dr Phil in his counselling program has useful pedagogical implications for personal development education. This is not to say that therapy or counselling should be a principal paradigm for classroom teaching, but it does suggest that judicious questions asked by teachers about the meaning of what is being studied can help young people learn how to think critically. Such Socratic questioning *probes* for meaning but does not *pry* into pupils' privacy. Much of the personal learning in the classroom is unnoticed; it takes place within the safety of private reflection.

10.1.4 Young people's responsibility for personal change

School education can inform, challenge and favourably dispose young people towards personal change, but it cannot impose or require it.[5] For personal change to be authentic, it must be freely chosen. How much of their study of meaning, identity and spirituality will actually be used by young people to change personally will vary considerably from individual to individual. Any personal change is usually going to be remote from the classroom; it will be determined by the young people themselves, in the light of many non-school influences on their growth as persons. Hence the school has scope to *educate* young people in meaning, identity and spirituality. But this intention needs to be realistic: such an education does not automatically change them spiritually and morally. This natural limitation to the educational process needs to be acknowledged. There is the legitimate *hope* that education will enhance their personal development, but this hope is different in kind from the sorts of outcomes that are commonly proposed for schooling.

Personal development education engages pupils in much the same sort of inquiring activity as goes on in other learning areas, but the subject matter is more directly related to their own spiritual and moral development. While personal relevance is intended, it cannot be engineered.

An informative, evaluative study explores social and personal issues, helping young people make links between the study and their own personal life. School education can help them learn more wisely from their own personal experience. But it is a mistake to presume that students need to share at a personal level when discussing issues in the classroom, or that they need to draw personal implications then and there as part of a lesson. It they feel free enough to want to share personal views, then their contributions should be respected and valued. But to expect such personal contributions on cue is to put unethical psychological pressure on them.

The power of reason to change people for the better should not be overestimated. While education can enhance young people's meanings, it should not be expected to perform behavioural miracles. So the popular notion of 'transformative education', which is intended to change students personally, needs to be used with caution.[6]

10.1.5 Background of the teacher (or facilitator, counsellor etc.) in relation to the educative process

The first and most important step for community activity designed to foster young people's meaning, identity and spirituality is the development of understanding of the relevant issues on the part of the adults involved. The sorts of issues with which they need to be familiar were illustrated in the previous chapters in Part II. How educators

understand these questions will filter through into their interactions with students both in the formal curriculum and outside the classroom. While teacher–pupil relationships can be significant in fostering young people's personal development, the focus here and in later chapters will be on classroom teaching–learning transactions.

Having an explicit code of teaching ethics is essential if teachers are to enhance, and never manipulate, the meanings of their students (**13.11**).

10.2 Education in meaning

An education in meaning has implications for both content and process as summarised below.

10.2.1 Understanding the nature and psychological functions of meaning

This involves young people's exploration of the meaning-making process as a distinctively human characteristic. It includes the various ways in which meaning functions in the human person. Also pertinent is an investigation of what might constitute 'healthy meaning', and of the possible psychological effects of 'deficient meaning'. It is presumed that healthy meaning needs to have a broad scope, with reference not only to the individual but to the community and the environment; it should not revolve exclusively around the needs and interests of the individual. In addition, the study of meaning should address relationships between personal and cultural meanings, and the particular problems that can arise from too great a responsibility falling on the individual (at too early an age) for the construction and maintenance of personal meaning.

10.2.2 Knowledge of traditional cultural meanings about human nature and purpose

Young people need to know about the role of traditional agencies like family, religions and community groups in the communication of meaning. This includes knowledge and understanding of their own religion, world religions and non-religious worldviews (whether or not they are affiliated with religion), as well as of issues like secularisation. There is also psychology, which can help people make sense of their lives. Consideration of how beliefs help give purpose and value to life provides an opportunity for young people to reflect on their own personal search for meaning in a puzzling world.

The study of religions and worldviews needs to avoid being caught up in descriptive details; it should include a strong issue-oriented component; attention should be given to 'psychological' and 'social' functions of systems of beliefs, while showing sufficient respect for the traditions in their own right to avoid treating them in a purely instrumental way.

The study of traditional meaning systems needs to be complemented by an investigation of the meaning-making significance of the media, especially film and television.

10.2.3 Some understanding of the contemporary crisis in meaning, especially for youth

Young people's school education should provide them with an opportunity to consider what has been described as a contemporary crisis in meaning, with particular reference to its impact on adolescents. It should include an exploration of what is involved in the 'search' for meaning, and consideration of the problems youth may have with deficiency of meaning and unhealthy meaning. It should also try to put cultural postmodernity into some perspective.

10.2.4 Evaluation of the many personal meanings available in society

The multiplicity of cultural meanings – all looking for adherents – creates its own problem for the individual's search for meaning. How to judge the appropriateness of meaning and what criteria might be used therefore become important in education. An evaluative approach can help young people become more aware of cultural meanings, and of behavioural consequences. For example, conflicting meanings from different groups can be a root cause of prejudice and racism; frameworks of meaning can be sources of liberation or of domination; and the dissemination of meanings can insinuate the causes of particular economic and political interests. Learning how meanings are assigned and how they may need to be 'uncovered' is a part of becoming wise. What youth need is not so much new meaning but the capacity to evaluate it carefully, and this skill can become a part of their lifelong learning. It can not only help them in any dialogue with traditional religious meanings, but also with seeing where they stand with respect to various ideologies, political views and 'messages' coming from different quarters, especially the commercial and entertainment worlds.

10.3 Education in identity

The first response that the phrase 'education in identity' commonly brings to mind is its association with the intention of a group to transmit a particular social identity to the young. While religious schools and some cultural groups make this intention explicit, public schools (in Australia) tend to be more cautious and avoid talking about identity as an educational goal. They are reluctant to say anything that might give an impression they are promoting any particular cultural or religious identity – unless this referred to some broadly based qualities of good citizenship or shared values. In so doing, there is a tendency to neglect the contribution that public education can legitimately make to young people's identity development. But this role needs clarification; it cannot be endorsed without qualification. It is not principally concerned with the handing on of distinctive cultural and ethnic heritage, but with helping young people understand how heritage affects identity, and how they might make best use of identity resources.

Schools therefore have a *limited* role in young people's identity development. Schools, including religious schools, are not as influential as are other agencies and forums for the communication of cultural, ethnic and religious identities. Sometimes parents and school authorities tend to overrate the scope and the effectiveness of the school's contribution.

In accord with sound teaching ethics, an education in identity should respect the freedom and integrity of the individual, and his or her right to participation in the process of identity development. Hence it involves not just the teaching of identity content, but a study of the complex identity-forming process itself. Such a dual approach could help young people become better informed about identity formation in

a way that prompted their own increasingly conscious participation (depending on their age and maturity). While learning about aspects of cultural, ethnic and religious identity, they could become more aware of identity-related issues. This could help them become more reflective about their own identity as linked interactively with heritage and contemporary cultural elements, while avoiding any excessive emphasis on self analysis.

Four areas merit special attention.

10.3.1 Some understanding of the nature and psychological function of identity, and of identity-forming processes

Identity is like meaning, viewed from the perspective of self-understanding and self-expression. Young people need an understanding of different components to identity, helping them become better interpreters of their experience and of potential influences on their personal development. This would show them something of the dynamic interplay between culture and identity, as well as helping them make sense of behaviour, both in the self and in others. An education in identity can make them more aware of influences that previously worked at a relatively subconscious level, providing the groundwork for a more conscious and discerning involvement in the development of identity – as well as a better capacity to evaluate (and resist where necessary) efforts from outside to affect their identity.

What constitutes a healthy identity needs to be explored, including the idea of balance between internal and external identity resources; that is, where one's identity is not dominated almost exclusively by dependence on externals (authorities) or internals (beliefs, values). A healthy identity is not only concerned with development of the self, but also with the welfare of others; it should not motivate behaviour that is anti-social or harmful to others or the environment.

10.3.2 What the developmental theories say about personal development

The adolescent quest for a sense of authentic self can be resourced by an introductory study of theories of human development. In addition to looking at various notions of identity and issues for personal or group identity, young people can examine schemes for personal development proposed by the structural developmental theorists. This would give them more perspective on the identity-related developmental tasks of adolescence.

10.3.3 The relationships between cultural identity resources and the personal construction of identity

The scheme for identity in Chapter 6 offers young people a useful *interpretive framework* for exploring relationships between the external, cultural identity resources proposed by agencies in the community (home, religion, peers, popular culture) and inner, personal identity resources.

Their identity development needs to be *resourced* by community efforts to communicate some basic sense of identity to them when they are children; this informs their initial self-understanding and interpretation of society. They would be disadvantaged by an education that kept them in a type of identity vacuum until they were mature enough to determine their own identity; that is, choose rationally in the light of an appraisal of the many values and identity components available in a

pluralist, multicultural society. This is a more adult-oriented process; it needs to be scaled appropriately for children and adolescents.

But educational efforts to communicate a particular identity should not be exclusive, trying to impose a fixed identity that inhibits individuals' growing conscious involvement in determining their own identity. Rather, a basic starting point in identity development is needed – a cultural identity inheritance. This will be one significant contribution towards young people's mature identity, but not necessarily an all-encompassing or predetermining one.

Educational institutions (both public and religious) need to ensure that their curriculum includes adequate attention to the culture and traditions needed by students as identity 'building materials' (with the qualification noted earlier about the limits to this role). The idea is to give students *access* to these resources, along with those provided by home and other agencies, as well as by the wider culture. Whether or not individuals incorporate particular elements into their sense of identity cannot be determined by teachers. The school might introduce some pupils to potential identity resources they might not otherwise encounter. Education can open them to larger cultural horizons, and to a broader imagination of the sort of person they could be.

10.3.4 The evaluative study of identity issues

An evaluative study of identity not only encourages youth to look carefully at what is happening in the world socially and politically, but also models for them useful ways of interpreting their own identity development. It suggests that they need to understand how cultural elements and their own internal needs and drives interact, affecting the way they understand and express themselves.

This approach can help them become more alert to the shaping influence of culture, especially through commerce and advertising. There is then less chance that they would accept 'ready-made' or imposed identities in an uncritical fashion. The evaluation of identity issues can cover the range from the socio-cultural at the level of nation-states, to the identity messages in television, through to the personal level, where perceived identity may be a key to understanding behaviour.

The values and identity that a particular group wants to hand on to its young people should be kept open to evaluation, and not as a hidden agenda. Education in identity needs to show that the development of autonomy and individuality is a complex process. It involves achieving independence from, and less reliance on, traditional authorities like parents and religion. But this does not necessarily require conflict or rebellion. It is more a 'differentiation' of the new adult. What is important is a new level of maturity in relationships between the individual and authorities, flowing from a new level of maturity in values, commitments and self-motivated behaviour. In some instances it will involve open conflict, and this may have a variety of causes: it may be that either the individual or the authority (parents, for example), or both, do not want the new level of independence. There is also a need to consider the economic dimensions of this issue; shrewd marketing has played up teenage rebellion as a selling point for consumer products. Advertising psychology is alert to capitalising on young people's identity vulnerabilities.

An evaluative approach can have personal implications for students because it covers questions about the moral character of self-expression. It can inform their own self-evaluation: they may or may not do this in their own time and space. This is a

potential personal enhancement arising from the educational process, but not an intentional educational requirement. Education in identity is not concerned with moral evaluation of the students, but with the moral evaluation of issues that may affect identity generally.

Some aspects of self-expression may not be in the best interests of the individual or it may be harmful to others. This is related to popular thinking about what constitutes one's 'better self'. There are both light and dark sides to the self. The mature, moral individual can be interpreted as one whose better self is maximised in expression and behaviour, and where harmful behaviours that may emanate from the negative self are minimised. Fidelity to one's own personal beliefs and values could be proposed as a mark of a morally mature self.

10.4 Education in spirituality

Because of its long historical links with religion, spirituality poses problems for education (mainly in public education) that are not so evident in an area like 'values'. However, this should not be an excuse for failing to work out an appropriate way of studying spirituality because it is central to young people's personal development.

Addressing this problem can begin with the questions: 'What *sort of spirituality* do we want to promote in a particular educational context?' and 'What *sort of educational engagement with spirituality* by pupils is appropriate?' The discernment process requires taking a value stance about the nature of spirituality and what are regarded as its most important elements; in turn, these judgments can be used as criteria for informing decisions about curriculum content, resources and pedagogy, and about implications for the organisational and community life of the school. The school context, whether it is a religiously sponsored, independent or government school, will alter the terms of reference for this process.

Just what constitutes spirituality will always remain a *content* problem for education. But this problem of definition can itself be usefully turned into a research question for students; they can explore the nature and psychological functions of spirituality, its origins and history, influential social developments, the divergence between the spiritual and the religious, as well as its complex relationships with religion and culture.

The same patterns suggested above for education in meaning and identity can be applied to spirituality. This is summarised under three headings.

10.4.1 Religion and spirituality

Aspects of spirituality should be a prominent part of the study of religion in school, but it should not be restricted to this rubric. Young people need basic educational access to the spirituality of their own religious tradition, as well as some awareness of the spiritualities of other religions. The public school, however, can only make very limited contributions in this direction (religious schools have more scope). In addition, they need to know about distinctions between religion and spirituality, and about non-religious spiritualities.

A study of spirituality and religion is appropriate in any school type, but the extent to which an experiential dimension might be included would be qualified according to the context. While such a dimension is usually desirable in any school learning (depending on the nature of the experience), whether this could involve religious

practices would depend on whether or not it was a religiously sponsored school. For example, prayer and worship would be justified in the religious school as a part of its constitution as a type of community of faith, but this would not apply in a public school. The purpose of enhancing a particular religious spirituality is contextually appropriate in the religious school, but not in public education.

At present, there is little scope for spirituality studies in Australian government schools, though they remain an important part of public education in the United Kingdom.[7] Nevertheless, this discussion of what is entailed in an education in spirituality can help to give a better perspective on the common values underpinning public education in Australia, on values education and on the spiritual and moral dimension to education generally. In addition, this can be a starting point for appraising the extensive writings about spirituality in education, particularly in the United Kingdom, where there has been an ongoing, vigorous debate over the last twenty years.

For the religious school, the idea of an education in spirituality is not new. In this context, many of the components to spirituality are covered either in the religion curriculum or the religious life of the school (theology, scripture, world religions, prayer, worship and liturgy, articulation of the community religious values). Nevertheless, the problematic relationships between spirituality and religion should also be included for study. As noted below, the identification and evaluation of spirituality remains a significant topic for religious education in the church school.

10.4.2 Spiritual and moral dimensions to life

An exploration of what it means to be spiritual should not only examine religion. Spirituality may be religiously oriented, but not always; study of the constructs meaning and identity can be a useful part of exploring spirituality – there is significant overlap between the three. Attention also needs to be given to what constitutes spiritual experience, and to the notion of the transcendent.

10.4.3 Evaluation of spirituality

As for education in meaning and identity, an evaluative approach is essential for helping young people develop skills in appraising what the culture offers in the way of spiritualities: this means allowing a place for both controversial content and evaluative pedagogy. For example, in the religious school, it is not enough to give students access to the religious spirituality of their faith tradition; they also need to look at various issues related to spirituality in the wider sense.

10.5 Education as the critical interpretation of culture

Education in meaning, identity and spirituality makes a valuable contribution to the role of schools in handing on the intellectual culture. In addition, the critical interpretation of culture is stressed throughout the book as an increasingly important dimension to education because it helps young people learn how to interrogate the personal influence of culture; in turn, this can help them think about the ways in which they themselves may have been affected. While the opportunity for such informed reflection may or may not lead to personal change, at least it gives them some educational stimulus to reflect on their own personal development. Pupils should be able to see that the educational process has the potential to enhance their

lives – if not there and then, perhaps in the future their personal learning may become influential and helpful. But for this to happen, both content and pedagogy need to have identifiable links with their personal development needs.[8]

This sort of education is promoted where pupils see their teachers as critical *interpreters of meaning*. Both those who teach and those responsible for curriculum development need a good understanding of the life-world of young people in all its complexity; this includes a basic familiarity with the issues in meaning, identity and spirituality that impact on youth. This 'interpretive background' can inform both classroom teaching and personal interactions with youth – for example, ranging from comments on issues in class, to silent knowing empathy, as well as to occasional advice given to individuals.

In doing this, teachers are modelling the role of *evaluators of culture*. If young people see that the language used by educators in this role is *relevant* and *meaningful*, they can respond to this leadership and try themselves to develop their own interpretation of contemporary issues, particularly those likely to affect them. They are being helped to explore *reasons for living*. They will see their teachers' interpretations as relevant if they show an awareness of the questions about life and problems that the young have to deal with, and if the teachers' diagnosis of contemporary situations is realistic and not paternalistic.

Teachers are not professional counsellors or 'life coaches', and their role in fostering young people's meaning, identity and spirituality is not a counselling one. But particularly where the curriculum deals with questions relevant to youth personal development, as well as through interactions outside the classroom, teachers have an opportunity to help young people engage in thinking about these issues. Where this happens, they can see that both their education and their teachers are endeavouring to *resource their personal development*. It is not intrusive, but it is informative and occasionally challenging; it affirms the young, and gives them hope because they can feel tangibly that the school is trying to point them in directions that will be satisfying and fulfilling personally. This can be true even if quirky teenagers would be the last to acknowledge publicly that it was the case, and even if they were not confident at the time that the proposed 'directions' for personal development were the right ones for them.

Any personal support that teachers give young people in their search for meaning, identity and spirituality needs to fit comfortably within the teachers' larger educational role. They should not try to give advice excessively; neither should the appropriate opportunity to give advice be neglected. A sensitivity to the personal development needs of youth should be a balanced part of educators' interface with their pupils; and it should be an important part of their professional commitment.

10.6 Conclusion

The chapters in Part II have covered a substantial range of issues related to meaning, identity and spirituality. Educators and other professionals concerned with the care of youth need a basic familiarity with this agenda, which can also serve as a stimulus for further research. If young people are to be helped to identify and negotiate this agenda, then it first must take root in the knowledge and understanding of youth care professionals.

This chapter has begun the task of considering educational implications; how these might be implemented in different contexts will be taken up in the next parts of the book.

Notes

1   There are some variations in records of this quotation from Chief Sitting Bull. This version came from the Carnegie Museum in Pittsbugh, PA. A more common version is 'Let us put our heads together to see what we can do for ourselves and for our children and for the Seventh Generation yet to Come'. Retrieved from http://www.mhanation.com/main/news/11_29_01_hall_wins_ncai.html Accessed 5/5/05.

2   R Eckersley 2000, *Wealth, health and youth: The impacts and implications of progress*, quoted in T Wallace 2000, Values and spirituality: enriching curriculum development and teaching/learning processes for a new millennium.

3   In Chapters 11 and 17 it will be suggested that studies which use these questions as titles for units or work (e.g. tolerance, respect) are likely to be less relevant to students because they are perceived as exhortatory. Where these questions emerge as part of a more general topic (e.g. the relationship between identity and violence) they can be considered more effectively.

4   As considered in later chapters, the study of cultural traditions needs to strike a balance between descriptive content and content or pedagogy that is more relevant to pupils' needs and interests. There needs to be respect for the integrity of the traditions being studied, while acknowledging that young people will make differential use of these traditions as personal development resources in the fashioning of their own worldview. In one sense, the traditions are being studied instrumentally to foster pupils' personal development, rather than for their own sake; seeking personal relevance should be an integral part of the study of traditions. Correspondingly, the other extreme should be avoided: where this is such a strong focus on encouraging students to construct their own personal meaning that the study of traditions becomes fragmented and incoherent. A good balance between the two emphases is often promoted by the use of student-centred pedagogies.

5   The contributions that the school might make to young people's personal development will range from comparatively insignificant to important; it will depend on the individuals, their personalities, their needs and level of maturity.

6   Whether or not there *is* a transformational pedagogy, as opposed to a non-transformational one, is considered in chapter 13.

7   There has been an extensive debate about spirituality in public education in the United Kingdom for many years. It is well documented in books and in journals like *Journal of Moral Education*, *British Journal of Religious Education*, *International Journal of Children's Education*, and the *Journal of Beliefs and Values*. A tendency to be more hesitant about studying religious spirituality has been related to unvoiced fears about the possibility of religious indoctrination. Watson (2004) has suggested that in theory and practice there is too much bias towards non-religious spirituality, concentrating on generic aspects of spirituality. She argues that both religious and non-religious spirituality need to be studied

critically in public education. See B Watson 2004, Spirituality in British state education: An alternative perspective, *Journal of Beliefs and Values* 25(1): 55–62.

8   From a pedagogical point of view, a full range of evaluative activities can make useful contributions to young people's personal learning skills: studying issues, getting relevant information, reading, reflecting, getting advice, listening to something inspiring, and informed discussion.