Chapter 13

Links between education, personal change and personal learning

> Any education worthy of the name is essentially education of character.
>
> Martin Buber[1]

> [The best education helps people develop] the courage to change their minds.
>
> John Dewey[2]

The first statement on the large bulletin board outside Annandale public school in Sydney read 'Teaching values since 1886'. This was the school's response to the public debate about values in education, and to the charge that government schools took a values stance that was too neutral. To the extent that there has always been a values basis to the work of public school teachers, the statement is true. However, as noted earlier in the book, the verb 'teach' when applied to values does not have the same meaning as it does when it refers to knowledge. The development of personal values is much more complex than the acquisition of knowledge and understanding. Hence the notion of 'teaching values' is intrinsically problematical and needs further clarification. It also applies to other aspects of personal development (beliefs, attitudes, emotions, behaviour).

The words 'promoting learning' and 'learners' have become new buzz words in education. They figure prominently in school mission and vision statements and in educational discourse. This is not a bad thing. But 'what is being learnt' is the crucial question. Just getting more information in an information-saturated world is hardly an important goal for education. In the long term, it is the learning that leads to wisdom and personal change that is of consequence – hence the significance of the notions 'personal learning' and 'education for personal change'.

Often 'change' and 'learning' are equated, and this is valid enough. Sometimes one may gain new information or react to a new situation, but it makes no ongoing difference to the way one may respond in the future – as if the change had no lasting effect. Sometimes 'experience' is automatically regarded as 'learning', but this is not necessarily the case: people often do not learn from their experience and make the same mistakes repeatedly. Young people can share the same classroom experience; some will learn much from it, others will not. Sometimes change in personal aspects is regarded as 'personal development', but the direction of change is not always healthy for the individual, so it is hardly 'development' in the sense of being positive or progress.

The chapter proposes a useful pathway for clarifying these questions. It looks at links between education and personal change, first by noting a range of experiences and events that affect personal change. Then it judges which of these are available and

ethically appropriate for use by the school. The purpose of the exercise is to foster more realism in expectations of the spiritual-moral role of schools.

Then, attention is given to relationships between personal change and personal learning. Experience, and even change, do not always become *learning* in a personal sense, and the distinction has important consequences for classroom teaching. The chapter works towards a suitable language for talking about the spiritual-moral role of the school that acknowledges the complexities involved and does not overstate the school's potential. It will argue the case that the most realistic role for the classroom is to give young people the relevant knowledge and understanding; it is the pupils themselves who will make any changes to their beliefs and values. The notion of 'personal teaching' or 'personal pedagogy' will be critiqued. The concluding section considers the professional ethics of teachers, particularly with respect to the potential use of their own views and commitments in the teaching and learning process.

The discussion will not refer to the extensive literature on the personal development of children and adolescents; rather it will list different dimensions to psychological development for the purpose of exploring links with education.

13.1 The notion of education for personal change: Personal learning and the classification of educational aims as cognitive and affective

Education for personal change is, by intention, concerned with bringing about change in a number of personal aspects: values, beliefs, commitments, virtues, attitudes, imagination, emotional maturity, aesthetic sensitivity, personal qualities – along with skills related to each. They can be defined as 'personal' to contrast them with the cognitive or the intellectual (knowledge, understanding, cognitive skills). More will be said later about what constitutes 'personal learning'; here, it is sufficient to note that it involves change in the personal aspects. Strictly speaking, change in knowledge and understanding is itself a 'personal' change, but not personal to the same degree as in beliefs and values.

At times, these components have been grouped together as 'affective' to differentiate them from the rational or cognitive, leading to the idea of 'affective learning'. However, the usage creates misunderstandings of the nature of values and commitments. Since the genesis of Bloom's *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives* in the late 1950s and 1960s, educational aims were often written in the form of *cognitive* and *affective*.[3] While the division has been useful for drawing attention to the non-cognitive dimensions, it has drawbacks as noted below.

Affective educational aims were said to include aspects of human development that are non-cognitive, such as emotions, the aesthetic sense, attitudes, values. While this arrangement may be satisfactory for emotions and aesthetics, there is a danger that it equates emotions with values, attitudes and beliefs. In turn, it may be implied that values and morals are just matters of emotion. It discounts the dimensions of *moral reasoning*, *volition* (or willing) and *commitment* that are key elements in the holding of moral values. The affective category, in being too broad and non-specific, can simplistically lump together aspects of human development that are complex in their genesis and their influence on behaviour.[4]

Another problem with the analytical division between cognitive and affective is the tendency towards a dualism that does not reflect the complex relationships that exist

between the cognitive and the affective in the human person. There is a natural unity to cognitive and affective learning.

Some educators talk about an association between 'affective learning' and 'affective teaching procedures', giving the impression that the type of learning is determined by the teacher's intention and by the particular pedagogy employed – as if the teacher could intentionally 'change gear' and turn the learning into a process that influences pupils' beliefs, emotions and values. Such thinking is also evident in discussions of 'personal learning' and 'spiritual learning', which makes unrealistic presumptions about personal change in pupils through education. It may not always be clearly articulated, but it affects teacher expectations for personal responses from the students. Such thinking is often implied in the public debate about teaching values, and also in discussions of personal learning through pedagogies informed by theories such as left brain/right brain learning, multiple intelligences, and brain-based learning. The problem is not with the use of different pedagogies suited to different styles of learning – this is not in question; rather, the problem is with unrealistic expectations that particular pedagogies will bring about 'personal learning'.

Before looking into personal learning in more detail, attention will be given to personal change and how it might be affected by education.

13.2 The components or building blocks for personal change

An understanding of how school education can promote personal change requires a prerequisite understanding of the components involved. The short list below identifies key components (more detailed analysis is beyond our scope here).

knowledge, understanding and cognitive skills:	The cognitive dimension.
emotions:	fundamental visceral feelings such as joy, zest, fear, guilt, anger, sexual feelings.
attitudes:	abiding dispositions to think, feel and behave in particular ways with reference to an issue, person or thing.
values:	beliefs or principles which the individual holds as important and which can have an orienting influence on motivation and behaviour.
beliefs:	principles believed to be true; may or may not be inspired by religious faith; may be inspired by people, significant others, science.
virtues:	habits of motivated thinking, valuing and behaviour that are regarded as 'good' for the individual and the community.
morals:	moral values and moral code.
commitments:	values or beliefs to which the individual adheres and to which he or she is prepared to be accountable.
imagination:	the mental capacity to create new possibilities of what might be – a precursor to action and change.
intuition:	judgment made on ideas and feelings about situations where a clear rational or evidence-based answer is not yet available.

[Box not styled]

13.3 Personal change processes: Influences on the various dimensions to personal development

This section looks at the ways in which experience, events, people and cultural agencies can catalyse *personal change*. If it is regarded as relatively enduring change that is healthy, then it can loosely be regarded as *learning* in one of more of the personal components listed above; and such positive change can also be regarded as *personal development*. If a value judgment about particular change is negative or considered unhealthy, then it would be regarded as unhealthy learning, and it would be the reverse of personal development. There is a fundamental moral dimension to personal change, personal learning and personal development.

 All of life experience can lead to personal change; it occurs in many and complex ways, influenced by a variety of personal, social and physical factors. The list below is necessarily brief and not exhaustive, but useful for demonstrating a range of change processes and for carrying forward the argument in the chapter. From the range of processes, there are some, though certainly not all, that could be selected as ethically appropriate for use in the classroom.

Table 13.1 A list of personal change processes

	Personal change process	**Brief description**
1	Absorbing beliefs/values/attitudes from human groups	Both unconsciously and consciously people can absorb beliefs/attitudes/values from their immediate human reference groups (often called socialisation). The values absorbed may be implicit in the ways individuals are treated by parents and others. Human relationships are a prime source of values. The ways individuals are treated by others may confirm certain values or may promote other values through a negative reaction.
2	Emulation of others (role models)	Individuals can emulate the values displayed by others who serve as role models (both positive and negative).
3	Satisfaction of personal needs	Values can develop through the satisfaction of personal needs; patterns or regularities emerge in the ways individuals behave in satisfying wants and needs (for example altruism, kindness, selfishness).
4	Exhortation	Beliefs and values can be accepted from exhortation; people are told what is good and important for them and for the good of others (this will be influenced by the level of respect for, and perceived authority of, the source).
5	Coercion	Personal change can be brought about by coercion. Psychological pressure or threat can be brought to bear on the individual. It might be motivated by anxiety, fear, shame.
6	Idealism	Personal change may flow from idealism; the attraction of an ideal can facilitate the development of particular values. This can include values developing out of admiration for a role model or hero/heroine, values flowing from religious beliefs or values exhibited by reference groups.
7	Events and experience	Personal change can result from responses to events and experience; it includes long-term experience or shorter, critical (sometimes traumatic) events which trigger an appraisal of values. There may be a significant emotional component to the experience and the change. It can include what people describe as a spiritual or transcendent experience.
8	Reflection	Beliefs and values can change during and after reflection. The change may flow from new knowledge and understandings. It includes values derived from education in the broad sense (more than schooling). For

		example, from reading, travelling, watching film/television, school education, leisure and work.
9	Imagination	Through imaginative identification and imaginative rehearsal, individuals can test out in advance what it might be like to change personally. Hence the imagination is often a 'precursor' to personal change. This mechanism may work in conjunction with many of the other processes listed here.
10	Ethical instructional process	Personal change can be part of a response to an ethical instruction process. Through information, analysis, evaluation and making preliminary judgments about worth, individuals are persuaded, without coercion, to consider the desirability or importance of adopting particular values. Instruction can be one-to-one or in a group. Values can be learned from content and instructional process even when this was not the intention. Instruction does not always have to be 'instructor centred' – it can be 'learner centred' where the study initiative rests with the learner.
11	Indoctrination	Personal change can result from indoctrination, that is, through a supposedly educational process that is flawed in various ways as described in the concept of indoctrination. For example, the persuasion is not fully open to rational evaluation; or there is some form of deceit, even if it means that not all the relevant information is provided, or that some of it is concealed or misrepresented.
12	Other processes	Other types of experience and process that could occasion personal change.

13.4 The selection of personal change processes that are considered ethically acceptable for the classroom

It is likely that the most significant personal change brought about in pupils by their school has to do with interpersonal relationships and the community environment. This involves processes 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 and 8 from Table 13.1.

By contrast, the classroom curriculum is much more limited in its scope for change experiences, being more or less confined to an ethical instructional process (10), with the hope that it will stimulate some personal reflection (8) and imagined possibilities for change (9). This is the case even though the curriculum can include excursions and educational visits beyond the school.

It would not be ethical to plan traumatic events for children in the classroom for any purpose, let alone as an intended learning process. Great care needs to be exercised in choosing activities that are likely to trigger emotional responses from pupils. It would be unethical for teachers to use coercion, humiliation, guilt or fear.

Thus it is more appropriate and realistic to regard the classroom as not so directly concerned with bringing about personal change; rather, its role is to *inform* pupils about personal change – what they need to *know* to be able to better negotiate personal change when the opportunity arises. As explained in more detail later, because learning in the classroom has a natural cognitive or intellectual contextual emphasis, it makes process 10, instruction, the normal channel or pathway towards personal change in that particular context.

The limited place for personal learning in the classroom is normal. It is not because of any deficiency in that context or because of any deficiency in the pedagogy; the

classroom is a *public place* where a community of learners meets for educational purposes. This judgment is the basis for working out both the real possibilities and limitations of the classroom for promoting spiritual and moral change in pupils. In this sense, the classroom does not actually *effect* spiritual and moral change in young people; rather, it provides '*helpful infrastructure' for personal change*; the appeal for personal change is through reason and relevant information. The classroom can *affect* the personal change process in pupils, primarily through input to the rational parts of the process. But whether or not, and when, personal change might occur are matters that depend on the pupils and not on the teacher or the pedagogy; and if change does occur, it will usually not be a dramatic event and it will probably not be noticed by the teachers; it will not be a sudden and radical reconfiguration of the young person's values. A desire to observe or assess personal change in pupils is not a legitimate concern of teachers, even though at times they may have the privilege of seeing that education has contributed to healthy change in some of their students.

The sort of personal change occasioned in young people by their education is not usually something sudden or immediate, but slow and drawn out across their schooling; it may not become evident until after they leave school. Also, such change is usually driven by other factors, so it is difficult to ascribe any particular change exclusively to schooling. A good schooling gradually enhances young people's capacity to learn personal lessons from life experience; education can help them to consider personal change issues and to think about implications; it can favourably dispose them towards the possibility of being open to the lifelong enhancement of their personal lives through education.

This discussion conflicts with views that claim or imply a more significant role for the school. It puts the educational intention of promoting pupils' spiritual and moral development into better perspective. It can show how both particular 'personal' subjects, as well as across-the-curriculum studies, can make valuable contributions, even if limited.

In addition, the discussion points to the desirability of using less inflated language for talking about education and personal change. As long as there are unrealistic assumptions about what the school can do in 'teaching values', real progress in promoting what schools can do best in this regard will be hampered. Clarifying what is meant by an 'education in values' has more promise.

13.5 Personal change, personal learning and personal teaching

Discussing personal change, for all its complexity, is relatively easy when it involves making a list of personal characteristics and then linking these with different sorts of experience that can influence them. But when there is a progression to talk about 'personal learning' resulting from the change, significant problems and new complexities emerge; the difficulties are compounded if it is proposed that there is a 'personal teaching' (or personal pedagogy) that can bring about both of the above. The passage from teaching to learning to personal change in pupils (or even a pathway from teaching to personal change and then to learning) is by no means as straightforward as it is in, say, knowledge of mathematics (although mathematics educators would justifiably qualify the statement). And the difficulties are not just to do with increased uncertainty in the causal pathway – taking into account factors outside the educational process that affect young people such as home environment, peers, popular culture, or television. There are fundamental difficulties with the

meaning of the terms 'personal learning' and 'personal teaching' that need to be clarified.

In one sense, *personal learning* is simple to define: change in one or more of the personal aspects of individuals (for example a combination of beliefs, values, emotions) that achieves some continuity and level of personal integration, and that disposes them to think and behave in a particular way. It is not just having a 'personal experience' but involves some *understanding* and *contextualisation* of that change that *reverberates* internally; it is not ephemeral but lasting, even if not permanently. For example, the death of a parent can be a very emotional experience but it can also change the way individuals perceive and value things from then on; it can prompt the development of a new perspective that enters into thinking and behaviour for a long time afterwards. There has been a change in outlook and in meanings. Something very personal has been learnt through the experience.

When the meaning of *change* and *development* is teased out, the complexity of personal learning becomes more evident. For example, personal learning may be primarily rooted in new knowledge and meanings that precede any change in emotions, values and behaviour; it is like a new 'disposition'. Personal learning can be acquired by rational inquiry. Individuals can 'learn' by studying the personal experience of others – like vicarious personal learning without having to go through the actual experience themselves. However, it may be that the more common instances of personal learning flow from the contextualisation of people's own experiences – as a follow-up to emotion, exciting and important experiences, trauma and personal interaction. This interpretation shows how it is difficult to conceptualise a logical sequence in personal learning because knowledge, feelings, values and attitudes are intimately related within people and are closely connected with their experience. It is possible to refer to these separate components of the person in an analytical sense while recognising that no such 'separateness' actually exists within the individual.

The complexity of relationships between experience and personal learning can be illustrated by considering *emotional learning*. People have emotional experiences and responses all the time, but these do not in themselves amount to emotional learning. Does it have to be the experience of a 'new' emotion to register as learning? Or at a new level of intensity? Or the expression of previously repressed emotions? Some inappropriate behaviours trigger unwanted emotions in others and the self but the individual may keep repeating these behaviours; he or she does not seem to have learned! Emotional learning means getting emotional experience into some rational perspective; it needs to be contextualised and integrated. It may include some 'training' or regulating of emotions in the light of values and commitments. The appropriateness of emotional expression in different situations needs to be learned. Emotional learning leading towards emotional maturity would require neither emotional repression nor emotions out of control. Emotional maturity presumes that emotions have a healthy, integrated place in the personality. While the object and measure of mathematical learning is knowledge and understanding, for emotional learning it is more complicated than a particular sort of emotional response; it is more than knowledge and understanding of emotion, even though such knowledge is a valuable part of emotional learning. Also, emotional responses have a significant moral dimension, in their effects on the individual and others, that is not there with knowledge of mathematics.

To summarise: For emotional learning to occur, whether or not it originated in particular emotional experience, it would need to include elements of the following:

- An *understanding* of emotions and of one's emotional experience, which means getting them into some *perspective* – being able to make sense of it all; sometimes this learning can come through reflection on past experience or on some educational input, without there being any emotional experience as such at the time; the understanding of emotion becomes a part of the individual's *meaning* – it becomes an interpretive principle that can be brought to bear on new experiences;

- Healthy *integration* of emotion within the personality; a healthy place for emotions becomes part of self-understanding;

- Some movement towards *emotional maturity*, involving the two points above, as well as appreciation of the appropriateness of particular emotional responses in particular contexts;

- A capacity to *express emotional responses* appropriately;

- After having learned, the emotional response to a situation that occurs again will be somewhat *different* or *moderated* in the light of past experience and reflection (for example there will be learning from past successes and mistakes);

- Sensitivity to and respect for the *emotions of others*.

Emotional experience is not necessarily emotional *learning*. When one or more of these developments takes place, the experience can be 'converted' or 'enhanced' to the status of learning. In other words, it becomes emotional learning when it makes some contribution to emotional maturity. Because of the complexity, it is unlikely that any lesson would be likely to show that observable emotional learning has taken place. There may be evidence of emotion, but that is not the complete picture.

Also, what emerges as significant from the discussion is the centrality of *understanding* – the rational dimension – in emotional learning. This will have important consequences when education is conceptually linked with personal change and personal learning.

What then of '*emotional pedagogy*'? Presumably, it is implied when educators advocate 'affective teaching'. Does it suggest that it is justifiable for teachers to intentionally set out to stimulate particular emotional responses in pupils? What range of emotions should be targeted? What of sexual emotions? Is there a distinctive pedagogy that is effective in promoting emotional learning?

We argue that it is both undesirable and unethical for teachers to set out with pupil's emotions as their pedagogical targets. To do so is manipulative. Rather, the objectives always need to be principally within the domain of open inquiry, knowledge and understanding. If emotions are triggered as a by-product of such study, because of the sensitivity of the subject matter, and if the emotion is expressed by pupils in a way that can be comfortably accommodated in the classroom, it can be a natural and healthy part of the educational process. But safeguards need to be in place. Teachers need to judge whether particular expressions of emotion in the classroom are appropriate both for the individual and the class; and if emotions are expressed, the teacher needs to address the situation in a way that tries to bring balance. Pupils' emotional vulnerability needs to be protected. Teachers need to consider in advance the potential in particular content/resources/classroom experiences for stimulating emotion, and if there is a danger that it cannot be handled comfortably, then the plan should be changed. This is not to eliminate emotion from

the classroom; indeed, we consider that more controversial and emotional issues need to be considered than is currently the case. We maintain that generation of emotion is not a desirable goal for teaching though it can be a valuable component of holistic learning because it is a natural concomitant of some investigations. Teachers and classes need to be respectful of individuals' emotions when these are exposed in the classroom; and all in the class need to learn about the appropriateness of particular emotional expressions in that public context, respecting people's sensitivities. What is also important is care about the questions asked of pupils; there should never be psychological pressure to reveal their own feelings or personal views.

Is there then a distinctive emotional pedagogy? There may well be for voluntary therapy groups, and for contexts like the Jerry Springer Show, but for the classroom we think not. No classroom pedagogy will automatically stimulate emotion; similarly, all pedagogies are capable of touching pupils' emotions. Nevertheless, emotive topics are more likely to arouse emotions and discussion formats are more likely to provide scope for the expression of emotional responses. When teaching topics that have the potential for emotionality, teachers need to be careful and sensitive in the planning and conduct of lessons. Referring back to pedagogies that purport to work with emotions, for example social and emotional learning or SEL (**12.4.2**), our view is that such pedagogies are excellent for multidimensional approaches to learning in a generic sense. While they may well connect with pupils' emotions, one cannot presume that this will occur automatically, as if the pedagogy is guaranteed to bring about emotional change. Also, such approaches do not seem to take into account the great psychological complexity in what emotional learning means; they presume that emotional learning is important and is not in question, but they give the impression that the meaning of emotional learning is simple, which suggests that the links between such pedagogy and emotional development are superficial.

Hence we see educational value in the notions of emotional change and emotional learning. But we think that the terms 'emotional teaching' and 'emotional pedagogy' should be avoided because of the problematic assumption that there is a pedagogical style that is effective in generating emotions – and that the resultant emotions constitute learning. There is also some concern that an interest in emotional pedagogy can lead to manipulative practice. Rather, we consider that the phrase 'education in the emotions' is more appropriate; it takes the focus off emotional experience as an objective for teaching, and handles emotion respectfully when and where it enters naturally into student responses. It also focuses on what classroom teaching and learning can do best for emotions, helping students understand what emotions are and how they work, with the aim of learning to see how they might be integrated within the personality in a healthy way.

What has just been said about emotion, emotional learning and emotional pedagogy can be applied to beliefs and values, but with new complications because these have rational, emotional and volitional dimensions. The 'development' of beliefs and values requires much conceptual clarification (for example, does it mean 'more' beliefs? 'deeper' or 'stronger' values?). While there may be a legitimate *hope* that classroom teaching and learning will contribute to pupils' acquisition of desired beliefs and values, it is better to avoid phrases like 'teaching beliefs' and 'teaching values' because of the unrealistic assumptions that can be readily associated with such use of the verb 'teach'.

The phrase 'education in beliefs and values' is a better and less misleading way of expressing this hope; it can also give a more accurate picture of what is intended and what is possible in the classroom. As noted earlier, we consider that the community experience in the school, and the quality of its personal relationships, are much more likely to affect young people's beliefs and values than classroom teaching and learning. Also, beliefs and values change slowly and imperceptibly. What classroom studies can do well is help young people become better informed about beliefs and values and help them understand how beliefs and values are developed and how they affect behaviour.

The discussion of learning in the areas of emotions, beliefs and values can be collectively 'distilled' to account for what is understood as *personal learning* – especially an extrapolation of the ideas in the dot points about emotional learning. A classroom activity becomes *personal* when it engages with these dimensions of the person; but it only becomes *learning* when personal change is *understood*, and when this understanding furthers the integration of personal aspects within the personality. Personal learning is a new understanding – a new *meaning*, or disposition – that has 'reverberations' throughout the personality both at the time and into the future. The relationship between personal learning and meaning can be linked back to the extensive discussion of the development of meaning in Chapters 2–4.

The above discussion helps differentiate personal change and personal learning. From here, our focus shifts to the classroom teaching/learning process.

13.6 Students' freedom of inquiry and issue-oriented pedagogy

There are many issues related to beliefs and values that can be studied in the classroom. An educational exploration of values-related issues is an effective way of addressing the spiritual-moral dimension to the curriculum. It is more relevant to students than a series of lessons with content titles like 'honesty', 'caring', and the other core common values proposed for education (see Chapter 11); topics with such names are all too readily seen by students to be about the '*getting* of values' rather than the '*exploration* of values', and young people will naturally be hesitant about participating. They will be resistant to perceived attempts to engender values in them – even desirable ones. An approach that apparently focuses too directly on changing their beliefs, values and behaviour is readily perceived by students as an exhortation (or sermon) in a negative sense; it makes them feel a subtle psychological pressure to impose personal change – even when it may not be the educator's intention.

The matter of perceived freedom on the part of students is central to the problem, hence the special attention given to it here. In most learning areas, students have come to take for granted the freedom to explore different viewpoints and various explanations; they are accustomed to offering diverse theories to account for psychological and social data. But when they sense that a study has a values agenda, their 'antennae are up'. That is, if they feel that the exercise is concerned with communicating particular values and beliefs, they may immediately disengage and be on their guard; they know that the freedom they had to think about and discuss interpretations in their literature studies is not evident here. This subtlety about freedom of inquiry is often missed by teachers, and it is unfortunate, because the question of student freedom can often be the single most important factor in making the activity one of personal learning – or not! It has significant pedagogical implications. The problem with perceived freedom is a natural one that a church

school has to negotiate in its religion program; the committed religious position of the school can be perceived by students as a condition that precludes the possibility of ever having a fully open, free, inquiring study. And the only way they can be convinced that this is not the case is an educational experience of the contrary. The same problem looms for values education programs in public education. Even the naming of topics as 'desired values' (as noted in the previous paragraph) can give young people a scent of the problem. Sensitivity to their freedom of inquiry is behind students' wariness about the mandate of schools to 'teach values' (as noted in the previous chapter). Care is also needed to ensure that this freedom is present in across-the-curriculum approaches to values; otherwise, students can feel that the freedom they usually have in these learning areas is being eliminated by the purpose of making the studies instrumental to values education. The problem will be taken into account when a framework for the spiritual-moral dimension to education is proposed in the next chapter. In addition, the issue is prominent in the following discussion where a 'contextual emphasis' on rational inquiry is proposed as a necessary condition for creating and sustaining this freedom for students.

A more 'issue-oriented' approach to studying beliefs and values helps create a *zone of freedom* in and around the student inquiry. It is not focused on their personal lives, but on issues that are 'out there', but that often have personal implications. It is not perceived as invasive, and it gives them the freedom needed to consider personal implications in their own time and in their own terms. While anchored in rational inquiry, the activity allows scope for pupils to reflect on issues, and to 'feel in empathy' or to 'feel angry'; it can even allow them to 'try on' particular views and values. But all the time there is an overarching respect for their personal space and freedom. Much of the 'personalising' of the study is done privately and students should feel no pressure to make this known to the class. Such an information or research focus on values harmonises with the style of critical inquiry they are accustomed to in the rest of the curriculum.

While we have emphasised the importance of a zone of freedom in classroom inquiry, this does not mean a *zone of escape*. Respect for students' freedom does not mean that anything that is likely to challenge or confront their thinking and values should be avoided; that would result in an 'antiseptic' curriculum, shielding them from any evaluation that might question their own views. A healthy personal education needs the dimension of personal challenge, but it needs to be respectful and not manipulative. It may well generate some internal dissonance, and this may or may not lead towards healthy personal change; but students will not be pressured to display any such dissonance. While their zone of freedom should always be respected, it is not a good idea for teachers to keep referring to their freedom (especially freedom of choice), because this can be misinterpreted as an 'escape clause' from adopting any moral stance and from evaluating stances with integrity and honesty. Overemphasising their freedom can also play into the hands of moral relativism – that morality is just a matter of opinion and that 'because this is my own opinion it is therefore valid'.

At the end of a unit of work that tapped into controversial issues, and that generated vigorous discussion, a teacher may surmise that some students have retained, perhaps even reinforced, their simplistic and bigoted views. The challenge to consider the implications that common values would propose seemed to have fallen on deaf ears. Perhaps the study exacerbated negative student attitudes in some, rather than challenging them. However, these indications have little to do with the 'real' success

of the study. It may have been as successful as it could be; rather than failing, the teacher did a good job, and needs reassurance for so doing. The study challenged pupils' thinking in a positive way. An accepting or an antagonistic response is not a matter over which the teacher has control. Hence the significance of being careful in determining what is to count as 'effective' teaching in a situation like this.

A balanced, challenging approach can counter such relativism. Where issues are explored, the various stances and interpretations, including potential effects on people, need to be developed vividly so that it is but a short step for pupils to see how these views 'out there' might connect with their own, with possible consequences for their decisions. For example, an investigation of the problem of bullying would explore, among other things, why some people like having power over others, and to be able to humiliate and exclude them. It could look at ways in which this might be done in various contexts like workplace, school and home; those who bully others may feel some benefit or satisfaction even though others are compromised, but eventually they themselves are likely to suffer as their bullying nature becomes more widely acknowledged. People have choices regarding their behaviour, but they are not free to choose the consequences that are often beyond their control. This is an example of a 'close to home' issue for students. The topic is not 'Are you a bully?' But it confronts pupils to ask themselves this question; at least it could make a bully feel somewhat uncomfortable without having to acknowledge it publicly. So respecting pupils' freedom does not mean the elimination of challenge to their personal views. Other issues not so 'close to the bone' will also challenge their thinking (for example the problem of unemployment or casualisation of work), but not in the same way as topics with immediate relevance to their everyday behaviour. A good education needs to include a judicious selection of both types of issues.

Whenever sex education or values education is reported on television, almost invariably it shows a student discussion. These images reinforces the stereotype that personal learning occurs best in such interactions. It is easy to get the impression that 'exchange of opinions' is the most important personal learning activity and that any critical appraisal of information has a minor place, if any. In turn, this view can overrate the significance of discussions and underrate student research and reflection. It would be more helpful to make discussions into an 'informed debate' and not just an 'exchange of opinions'; the former is a more accurate description of the component of critical inquiry and it helps avoid the impression that classroom discussion is just about swapping opinions.

This approach also helps show why meaning, identity and spirituality were selected as key themes through which the spiritual and moral dimension of the curriculum could be addressed: they provide considerable scope for student inquiry. In addition, it explains the emphasis on personal and social issues that young people need to negotiate in their personal development. Intentionally, the focus should counter student concerns that the educational process is just an exhortation – telling them that 'these are the values we want you to adopt'.

A student-centred investigation of issues is the most realistic and effective way of studying beliefs and values in the classroom context. Often, talk about 'teaching to communicate beliefs and values' is unrealistic; it does not adequately take into account the complexities of belief or value development, the significance of student freedom, the natural limitations to educational processes for engendering beliefs or

values, or the valuable contribution that education can make to understanding beliefs or values.

Below, further attention is given to the type of learning that we consider most relevant to the classroom because it is the key to articulating the spiritual and moral dimension to the curriculum.

13.7 A rational 'contextual emphasis' to personal learning in the classroom

The key question here is the nature of personal learning in the classroom. Our earlier working definition of the term proposed that it occurs when students are 'engaged' or changed at a personal level. Whether or not personal learning occurs depends on the *response of the learner and not on the intention and pedagogy of the teacher*. Teaching that is intended to affect pupils at emotional and values levels may influence some while having no effect on others. The intention to educate young people spiritually and morally requires built-in acknowledgment that ultimately a free personal response from the student is essential. Whether students consider a study has personal relevance is also determined by them and not by teacher intention. Hence personal learning is significantly different from the ordinary knowledge or skills learning; it is not so evident, but it can develop in and through ordinary learning – indeed in the classroom, that is where personal learning usually originates.

Nevertheless, content and pedagogy are still important for fostering personal learning, particularly in presenting issues that challenge students to think. Generally, personal learning begins with experience (such as a significant event, an emotional experience, talking with a friend, watching television). But in the classroom, the potential for occasioning personal learning is limited to the usual range of teaching and learning procedures that are appropriate in that context; it can include aesthetic and innovative events. But if the classroom is mainly concerned with information and learning how to think critically (a basic 'rational literacy'), then the normal *channel to personal learning* in this context will be naturally limited to working through the same process – *rational inquiry*.

The learning environment in the classroom has a natural cognitive contextual emphasis, or 'intellectual slant'. It provides a basic framework for, and orientation to, all learning in that context, no matter how personal it occasionally becomes. It is not a matter of wanting to exclude or limit the personal dimension, but to *contextualise* it in an appropriate and ethical way for the public forum. This does not apply in the same way to other settings, such as a voluntary group, one-to-one counselling or a therapy group. Learning experiences that trigger emotional and aesthetic responses, as well as reflection and consideration of possible personal change, can be included comfortably as intended additional layers to rational inquiry – but these would be inappropriate if they were manipulative. However, the intention does not guarantee that pupils will be engaged at a personal level. The pupils' response determines the scope of any personal learning.

There are both procedural and ethical questions about teaching that claims to engage students directly at emotional or values levels. The potential for emotional or beliefs/values learning needs to be embedded in content and process that set out initially to get students to think about the issues. The rational investigation of emotionally or values-charged content is psychologically *safe* for students; whether or not they wish to refer to their own feelings and beliefs publicly is something they

need to feel both free and comfortable with.[5] Thus we treat with caution claims about 'emotional', 'affective', 'spiritual' and 'personal' teaching strategies as if these were pedagogies that were clearly different in nature from usual classroom practice. Rather, we would classify them as strategies that it is 'hoped' will engage students at personal levels, while at the same time acknowledging that they carry no automatic guarantee that pupils will respond as intended. Also, we claim that ordinary classroom teaching across the curriculum has the potential to promote personal development – it is not something limited to particular so-called 'personal pedagogies'.

Rational inquiry has been proposed as the main pathway or channel for promoting personal change in the classroom. Hence it should be principally concerned with *what* young people need to know and understand as a basis for charting their own personal growth. As far as the school curriculum is concerned, the fundamental change it seeks to bring about in pupils is change in *knowledge* and *understanding*.

This interpretation suggests that talk about affective or personal learning should avoid unrealistic presumptions about causal links between intention and outcomes. Such presumptions are at the heart of problems in the debate about 'teaching' values; they also result in unrealistic expectations associated with notions such as 'holistic education', 'personal and social transformation' and 'spiritual development'. Language for articulating the spiritual and moral dimension to the school curriculum needs to show that educators *hope* classroom teaching will provide educational experience that can occasion personal change and growth.

The special interest that educators have in the affective, aesthetic and personal dimensions to education can incline some of them to dismiss the proposals above about a cognitive contextual emphasis to personal learning. Rather than providing the best conditions for enhancing their presence in the classroom, they may think that it compromises the affective and the personal, and they may see the cognitive slant as old-fashioned or as an unwelcome step towards 'back to basics'. Such criticism does not appear to grasp the holistic dimension to our interpretation – that in a formal learning environment, the affective and the aesthetic, as well as the imaginative and the intuitive, are more 'at home' and effective, precisely because knowledge and understanding have a priority. The cognitive priority does not exclude or minimise these other dimensions, but gives them a stronger basis, integration and coordination, and protects against problems such as emotional manipulation, where emotional responses loom too large as outcomes of teaching. The cognitive priority is consistent with our view that schooling is primarily about handing on an intellectual culture. Our proposal no more compromises the affective or aesthetic dimensions than would any good 'study' of poetry, literature and art.

We have underlined the fundamental importance of an overall rational orientation to learning and personal change in the classroom because this contextual emphasis is the most appropriate one for that formal, public setting. This view reflects the most realistic and ethically justifiable appraisal of the potential for educationally sponsored personal change in the classroom. Under these conditions, the rational, affective, aesthetic and volitional dimensions of learning can flourish; these are the best classroom conditions for the healthy operation of personal change dynamics in children and adolescents. Basically, the rational contextual emphasis constructs and preserves the *situational freedom* they need for considering personal change comfortably and favourably, as well as for being confronted in a challenging way by

new ideas and community values. And it is precisely because of this freedom that the aesthetic and affective dimensions have more scope for enhancing personal change.

In practice, where educators have tried to replace the cognitive contextual emphasis with excessive attention to the affective (for example emotional responses), we found that their efforts were often counterproductive; the students were amused and cynical about a pedagogy that seemed to achieve little beyond a temporary 'feel-good' experience that had little substance; and it appeared to them to be concerned not with their learning but with the emotional needs of the teacher – or it was perceived as manipulation.

To show how the affective can be integrated within rational inquiry in a healthy way, we will expand on how the *imagination* figures in personal learning. (This builds on earlier material on imagination and intuition as dimensions of meaning in section **2.9.7**; and it complements the discussion of imaginative learning in sections **15.4.10–15.4.12**).

13.8 How the imagination is involved in personal change and personal learning in the classroom

Imagination, listed as process 9 in Table 13.1, is often involved as an affective component in the other personal learning processes.[6] It functions like a bridge between knowledge and personal change – so an important link between education and personal learning.

Rational inquiry can promote personal learning by engaging and enhancing the imagination. An active imagination is essential for *appropriating knowledge*; it makes connections between the content studied and the student's perception and understanding of the world and it feeds into self-understanding. In addition, it helps students explore personal implications.

Individuals can construe a great range of future possibilities; there are no restrictions or rules for the imagination. Sometimes the newly imagined may remain at the level of fantasy; sometimes it can be translated into reality. As regards the latter, imagination of innovative formats is a source of creativity and ingenuity. Imagining is like daydreaming, but with a more constructive and positive connotation; 'dreaming' can also be interpreted as thinking about new possibilities, about envisioning and creating.

But what is of most importance here is the way that imagination often functions as the '*precursor*' *of personal change*. Individuals can do an *imaginative rehearsal* of possible change, trying themselves out in new situations and testing the imagined possibilities in new ideas to see what the novelties might feel like and how they might work in practice; if comfortable and happy with the imagined change, individuals feel encouraged to take steps to achieve it. In this sense, imagination is influential in human behaviour and personal development.

Imaginative identification is a natural and commonly used learning process through which individuals empathise with the situations of others; it involves imaginatively 'standing in their shoes', seeing things as they see them. It can lead to the acquisition of new attitudes and values; one can learn vicariously by identifying with others. If the individuals with whom one identifies are felt to be admirable, then there is more chance that they will be emulated; characters who are repulsive are less likely to be perceived as good role models. People's own feelings in the imagined situation can

help them understand the emotions and behaviour of others. Imagination can help with learning empathy and sympathy – and hence respect and tolerance.

Imaginative identification is a part of character development. It is used by children and adults all the time; they can imaginatively test potential 'new selves', wearing the same characteristics as those with whom they identify.

Role-playing is a technique that sets out to make imaginative identification into a more formal learning process. Children and adolescents (as well as adults) can learn about different behaviours, value positions and commitments by role-playing. Both imaginative identification and role-playing can contribute to the clarification of emotions and values.[7]

This consideration is sufficient to illustrate the imaginative life that needs to be activated as an integral part of classroom teaching and learning. And it suggests one basic psychological mechanism through which personal learning might at some stage be translated into personal change.

13.9 Articulating spiritual and moral outcomes for students, and the assessment of such outcomes

In the 1970s, subject syllabuses began to include 'attitudes' along with the desired knowledge and skills. But little was said in the normative curriculum documents about what was understood by attitudes, or about how it was proposed that subject teaching could actually influence the development of pupils' attitudes. Then values were included in the syllabuses; the same difficulty applied to their implementation. Without an adequate conceptual framework for addressing these aims, teachers tended to ignore them or consider that something along the lines of attitudinal and values development in pupils might occur incidentally to the regular teaching and learning process. Some state education authorities eventually made it clear that formal assessment should be kept to the knowledge, understanding and skills and that it was not appropriate to try to assess attitudes or values; but attitudes and values still remained in the syllabus documents.

Consistent with the proposals for personal education outlined above, it is important to articulate *hopes* for the personal development of pupils to which their classroom learning can make a valuable contribution. It can give useful direction to curriculum planning. The specification of hopes is more appropriate than formulating values outcomes that presumably are measurable.

Not having measurable performance outcomes for beliefs and values is appropriate for three reasons. First, it is not ethical for teachers to want to measure the values and beliefs of pupils. Second, teacher identification of values or beliefs in pupils and monitoring change is just short of impossible. In addition, applying outcomes measures to beliefs and values makes unrealistic assumptions about the links between education and personal change. So while there should be hopes for personal development, measurable outcomes for beliefs and values should be kept to knowledge and skills, as is the case for the key learning areas. In turn, assessment will be limited to these same knowledge and skills outcomes.

In some instances where curricula specify values outcomes, on closer inspection the items are more about knowledge and awareness of values issues than about actual personal change. Thus it would be better to designate these as knowledge outcomes.

The verb 'appreciate' is often used for stating attitudes and values outcomes. To appreciate means to be aware of and to understand; and it includes acknowledgment of value and respect, as well as some attachment. Hence to appreciate is to move in the direction of changed values, and it is understandable that this is why it has been used for articulating values outcomes – it is somewhere between knowledge and actual change in values.

13.10 Socialisation and education: Contrasting social processes for the development of beliefs, values and attitudes

In the light of the above discussion, we can briefly compare and contrast the processes of socialisation, inculturation and education. These are derivative social processes that make use of combinations of personal change elements listed in Table 13.1.

Socialisation involves learning by absorption of beliefs and values from the community. Individuals are usually socialised into the beliefs and values of their home, which serves as a type of primary values reference point for children until such time as they are able to learn from other groups in which they participate; family and group socialisation may be reinforced and appropriated consciously; it may be modified in the light of experience and education (education in the broad sense as being wider than schooling). Socialisation involves both conscious and unconscious identification. Increasingly, it is film and television that provide a significant socialisation of young people.

Inculturation is like socialisation at the broader cultural level. It can include ethnic, local community and national identifications. Values and beliefs can also be drawn from popular culture through interaction with its complex mix of knowledge, stereotypes, propaganda, trends, fashions. Again, the prominence of film, television and music is noted.

Education is contrasted with socialisation and inculturation because it is a formal and intentional activity that aims at changing children and adolescents through an ethically appropriate teaching and learning process. While primarily concerned with handing on an intellectual culture, and with developing knowledge and skills in the key learning areas, it is also concerned with education in beliefs, values and attitudes.

13.11 The place for teachers' own views and commitments in the teaching and learning process

An essential component for education intended to promote the spiritual and moral development of young people is a code of teaching ethics that highlights the respect needed for the freedom and integrity of pupils; it should also cover pedagogy to ensure that indoctrination and manipulation are always excluded.

While specification of a code of teaching ethics is beyond our scope here, attention will be given to one particular aspect: the place that teachers' own views, beliefs and commitments might have in the classroom. It is important for five reasons outlined in the following sections.

13.11.1 Accountability and safeguards in teaching about controversial issues

Clarifying the responsibilities of teachers when dealing with controversial subject matter is part of the professional commitment of educators to accountability for the

trust that the public places in them. It articulates safeguards intended to prevent teachers from insinuating their own personal views in a situation where the pupils are vulnerable. It counters indoctrination and the potential for emotional manipulation.

13.11.2 Institutional endorsement for teaching about values-related topics

For a long time departmental handbooks required teachers to refrain from personal comments on controversial issues. This was intended primarily as protection for both pupils and teachers. However, it inclined teachers towards neutrality and could possibly indoctrinate by giving the impression that neutrality on moral issues was the appropriate stance to take. If teachers are to be involved in some aspects of values/beliefs education in a constructive way, then there is a need for public and institutional endorsement of the role; and it requires in advance a clear articulation of ethically sound ways in which teachers might refer to their own personal views in teaching transactions.

If teachers are hesitant about referring to their own views for fear of indoctrinating the students, or for fear of complaints by parents or school authorities, they may wonder whether their own beliefs and opinions are irrelevant to the treatment of social issues in the classroom. They will be inclined towards a position of neutrality which not only stops them from commenting on issues but tries to eliminate all controversial issues from the classroom.

To resolve these questions a distinction needs to be made between the personal views or commitments of teachers and their professional commitments in the classroom. Teacher privacy is both a right to be respected as well as a professional duty – their educative role is not about revealing or trying to communicate their personal value stance. Teachers' personal views cannot be unconditionally regarded as appropriate subject matter for the classroom; only under certain conditions should they be disclosed, and then as additional resources for the student inquiry. A code of teaching ethics, part of which is proposed below, should regulate what personal views are referred to, as well as when and how they might be used.

13.11.3 Teacher confidence in handling controversial issues

As a consequence of the above, teachers should no longer feel in an ambiguous situation where they see the need for engaging pupils in considering spiritual or moral issues, but have no institutional endorsement for the role. A proposed policy, as outlined below, does not give teachers a licence to try to align pupils with their personal views; rather, it describes the conditions needed for a responsible teacher contribution to the personal learning of students. Where these conditions are observed, teachers have a professional freedom that gives them confidence to conduct critical inquiries in the classroom and to handle controversial issues appropriately. The procedure is all about enhancing the capacity of students as critical interpreters of the culture and not about the teacher's personal views; it has nothing to do with teachers having to 'wear their values on their sleeve'; and it is professionally liberating. It overcomes one of the principal obstacles to teacher involvement in trying to promote the personal development of pupils.

13.11.4 Pedagogy in teaching about beliefs and values

Working out a place for teacher personal input in lessons helps establish a valuable place for personal contributions generally, including those of students. This has significant pedagogical implications. While not be the principal content of teaching about issues, they have the potential to be a valuable component.

13.11.5 Debate about value-neutrality in public education

As noted in **13.11.2**, a relatively neutral stance for teachers had been proposed for controversial issues.[8] It is related to claims made in community debates that public schools have a neutral stance with regard to values in education. If this impression is to be overcome, then articulating the responsible role for teachers would be one component in a scheme that showed the place of values in public education as well as the ways in which schools would engage in values education.

A proposed policy for the place of teachers' own views and commitments in the educational process is explained below. It should be part of a code of teaching ethics espoused by educators.

While teachers' own views should not have a prominent place in their teaching, they can be a valuable content resource if used wisely and educationally. The proposed stance of the teacher should be that of *committed impartiality* – as described in the ethical teaching scheme devised by Brian Hill.[9]

This ethical position lies between two extremes 'partiality' and 'neutrality', both of which are inappropriate.

One of the extreme positions, *partiality*, is where the teacher's personal views on issues occupy a dominant or relatively exclusive place in the teaching process. It narrows the content significantly, making it coextensive with the teacher's own views; in fact it makes the term 'content' problematic as the lesson appears more like an exhortation than an exploration of content. Only one point of view is presented, and bias is evident. When this happens, the teacher will tend to omit anything about which he or she is uncertain, while overloading the content with material in which he or she is interested. Such an approach can be perceived by pupils as the teacher trying to make them think the same way the teacher does; it comes across as authoritarian and may evoke perceptions of moralising or 'sermonising'.

The other extreme is *neutrality*. Here, teachers never makes known their personal views on issues, even if asked for their opinion by students. It is a safe position, but it can give the impression that neutrality is a suitable stance to take on moral issues. Also, it is somewhat incongruous if there is any expectation that the pupils might exchange personal views in the course of the study.

The preferred position is *committed impartiality*. It presumes that it is appropriate and permissible for teachers to refer to their own personal views, beliefs and values as content along with other content, if and when this is judged to be capable of making an educational contribution to the study. The teacher's views are then not accorded privileged status, but are to be examined critically alongside the other content. On the same grounds, students' personal views can also contribute as content. But this does not regard the teachers' or students' views as the principal content for investigation. A significant place for objective content is essential for making the study an open, inquiring exploration of issues. It examines content on an issue and is not just an exchange of personal views; such exchanges are not necessary for the success of the study; if they do occur, they are valued.

The ethical rules for teaching and learning in the classroom need to be clear to both teachers and students; no one should feel compelled to reveal their personal views. If a situation develops where some do talk about their own views, it can make a valuable contribution to the study; but the participants still retain the respected capacity to 'pass' if someone else asks them for their personal view. When there is an exchange at a personal level, it originates from a position of freedom (see the earlier discussion of a zone of freedom). Critical evaluative discussion of issues can take place vigorously as long as no one has to identify precisely their own personal value stance. Such discussions will often include a range of critical opinions, some personal, some theoretical in a complex mixture; but what is important is that the exchange is a critical debate and exploration of issues and is not seen as a session in which individuals have to identify their own values stance. This is what an educative discussion or debate is all about. If participants freely wish to contribute from their own personal stance, it should be respected and valued for its personal quality. But it should not be considered as a requirement, or written in as an objective for the lesson. Ironically, setting up these safeguards around the personal domain seems to create the very conditions within which pupils and teachers feel more comfortable about revealing personal views. But the purpose of the study remains the critical examination of issues, not the opportunity for personal testimony.

Teachers need to understand that their role is more about *professional* commitment to a process of student inquiry than an exposition of their own *personal* commitment. They need to model for their students critical, impartial inquiry; while acknowledging that they have a particular value stance (this need not be disclosed unless it is judged educationally useful), they are able to undertake a respectful but critical appraisal of the issues being studied. In particular studies of issues, there may often be no need to make reference to their own views, but this is different from taking a neutral stance. They will not hide their values, neither will they advertise them. They will try not to let their own bias influence the impartiality that should be evident in a fair treatment of different points of view. But it may be helpful for them to alert students to their particular bias so that the students themselves can better interpret any personal input from the teacher.

Such an approach strives for objectivity while acknowledging that perfect objectivity may not be possible; what is desirable is an open, respectful intersubjectivity. It is within such a healthy, inquiring environment that students can acknowledge that their teachers have their own established value positions on issues. Because these positions are not forced on them, the students can learn from the teachers' personal views, just as they can from the principal content. Teachers may well have some personal influence on their students through such inquiries, but if all the safeguards are in place, then it can be acknowledged and accepted as a natural and valuable part of school education.

When it comes to the point of teachers deciding whether or not to reveal their own personal views on a particular issue, there is a need for diplomacy and wisdom. For example, it could be expected that an ethical teacher who is an atheist should be able to help students respectfully examine aspects of religion without demonstrating prejudice. Also, a religious teacher should be able to teach the topic in the same respectful way without using the situation as an opportunity for religious witness or evangelising in favour of religious belief. It may well be diplomatic in such a situation for both of these teachers to invoke the 'pass' ethical rule if asked by students about

their religious affiliation. The publicly stated reason would be to avoid any possibility of prejudice or indoctrination.

What is important is that the inquiry is informative and challenging, where value positions are well identified. Teachers who know their classes well will be in a better position to make judgments about whether or not to make known their personal views; often, when the value stance is not too controversial, it will not be an issue; and if asked, teachers can explain their view without its coming across as the one students are being encouraged to embrace. Where the issues being studied relate to the common agreed values accepted for schooling (Chapter 11), there will be no difficulty for teachers showing how they are both professionally and personally committed to that value stance; also, in these circumstances, the students will be in no doubt about the teacher and school alignment with these values. In a healthy student inquiry into values issues in across-the-curriculum studies, the teacher's personal value stance will not be a prominent feature. This approach makes for impartiality in the teaching and learning process; but it is not taking a neutral values position; neither is it proposing that all values stances are relative, and that 'one opinion is as good as another'; one of the key points to values inquiries is precisely to find out what is the best and most humane view.

When it comes to the moral values of teachers, the profession should have no hesitation in saying that it wants educators with the highest personal moral standards to carry the responsibility of educating children and adolescents. The profession of teaching wants *good* people. However, both in the job selection of teachers and in the school's values charter and code of teaching ethics, it is more appropriate not to contemplate any evaluation of teachers' personal moral values; rather, the emphasis should be on spelling out clearly the professional values and commitments that should be evident in the ways teachers deal with students and carry out their professional responsibilities. To these professional values, all teachers should be unconditionally committed. For example, as regards the role of teachers in promoting the spiritual and moral development of pupils, it is more important to have the professional commitment of teachers to an impartial student-centred study process than it would be to engage in trying to determine how spiritual or religious the teachers were, as if this was the criterion for judging whether or not they should have such an educative role.

To summarise: the professional commitment of the teacher is about being

- knowledgeable of the topic under investigation
- fair and respectful in presenting content
- able to show alternative points of view where these exist
- able to lead student inquiry
- able to facilitate student evaluation of issues
- sensitive in managing students' questions and discussion
- wise and responsible in making reference to one's own views.

Notes

1   M Buber 1965, *Between man and man*, p. 104.

2   TP Cross, www.college.columbia.edu/core/oasis/history6.php Accessed 5/5/05.

3   BS Bloom (ed.) 1956, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Cognitive domain*; BS Bloom 1971, *Handbook on Formative and Summative Evaluation of Student Learning*; DR Krathwohl et al. 1971, *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives: Book II Affective domain*.

4   This issue is analysed in BV Hill 1989, The taxonomy of educational objectives; 1990, *A time to plant and a time to uproot: Values education in the secondary school*.

5   Our suggestions for handling the personal dimension to classroom interactions (as well as how to conduct discussions and to treat controversial topics) are presented in ML Crawford & GM Rossiter 1985, *Teaching Religion in the Secondary School: Theory and practice* (Chapters 4, 6); 1988, *Missionaries to a Teenage Culture: Religious education in a time of rapid change* (Chapters 4, 5, 6, 10, 19, 20).

6   J Dirkx 2001, The power of feelings. **[I DID PUT IT IN THE FINAL VERSION OF BIBLIOGRAPHY THAT I SENT YOU   BUT I MUST HAVE FORGOTTEN TO DO THAT   NO, THAT IS THE CORRECT SPELLING Graham, this isn't in the printout, or the Bibliography, so I can't check if it has a subtitle, or if the name shd be Dirk. It looks as if an extra note has been inserted here.]**

7   A discussion of the use of these processes in classroom religious education is provided in Crawford & Rossiter 1985, Chapter 6.

8   This problem is discussed in BV Hill 1991, *Values education in Australian schools*.

9   Brian Hill's ethical guidelines for teachers on how to make educational reference to their own views and commitments appear in 'Teacher commitment and the ethics of teaching for commitment', Chapter 10 in GM Rossiter 1981, *Religious Education in Australian Schools*. See also BV Hill 1982, The religious education teacher's commitment. In P Slattery (ed.) *Curriculum development in religious education*, vol. 2.