

NEO-HUMANIST TEACHERS' TRAINING COURSE

By: NIITI GANNON

and AV. ANANDA GAORII AC.

All rights reserved by the authors

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

INTRODUCTION

NEO-HUMANIST TRAINING COURSE OBJECTIVES

PartA. THE SPECIALTY OF BEING A NEO-HUMANIST TEACHER: PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND AND FOUNDATION

NEO-HUMANISM

SPIRITUALITY AND MEDITATION

BRAHMACAKRA

YAMA-NIYAMA, VALUES AND ROLE OF THE EDUCATOR

SARKAR'S EDUCATIONAL THEORIES

Part B. SPECIAL ASPECTS OF NEO-HUMANIST EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN: NEO-HUMANIST EDUCATION METHODOLOGY

1. NEO-HUMANISM & UNIVERSAL LOVE

2. GOAL OF EDUCATION

3. SPIRITUALITY & MEDITATION

4. VIEW OF THE CHILD & DEVELOPMENT OF THE WHOLE CHILD

5. FANTASY AND PLAY

6. COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

7. MORALITY

8. BRAHMACAKRA CURRICULUM

**Part C. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS AS A TEACHER AND
ADMINISTRATOR**

GUIDANCE AND BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

PARENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

PROFESSIONALISM

PRESCHOOLER'S ETHICAL OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

INTRODUCTION

Effective teacher's training is important to ensure good quality education programs. Educators strive to heighten their understanding of children and to improve their ability to help them learn. Regular ongoing developmental programs are necessary to support educators effort to grow in the education field.

Throughout the world many Neo-humanist schools are serving thousands of children. To help uniformly strengthen the philosophical base of all Neo-humanist schools and to better define the teacher's role, this course was created. It demands a higher level of participation from the teacher and a deeper knowledge of philosophy.

It is an abbreviated course which highlights salient points to know and to put into practice. Due to the condensation of this training, only a short, concise analysis of the philosophy and a few key activities were chosen for the educators to study and to demonstrate their practical application. Although brief, it will act as an indicator of a teacher's knowledge and ability.

**NEO-HUMANIST TEACHERS' TRAINING
COURSE OBJECTIVES**

After completing the course the following objectives in sections A, B & C will be achieved:

Part A.

THE SPECIALTY OF BEING A NEO-HUMANIST TEACHER: PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND AND FOUNDATION:

NEO-HUMANISM

1. To demonstrate an adequate knowledge of Neo-humanism (hereafter known as NH), NH philosophy and a commitment to integrating NH ideals in one's daily life.

SPIRITUALITY AND MEDITATION

2. To demonstrate an understanding of what spirituality is, and its relationship with the layers of the mind and their development through meditation practice.

BRAHMACAKRA

3. To demonstrate an understanding of Brahmachakra.

YAMA-NIYAMA, VALUES AND ROLE OF THE EDUCATOR

4. To demonstrate an understanding of the importance of Yama and Niyama (hereafter known as YN). To demonstrate a commitment to character development through

self-reflection and refining human interactions. This is accomplished by integrating the principles of morality (Y N) in daily life. In this way the teacher becomes an ideal role model to children both at school and in their personal life.

SARKAR'S EDUCATIONAL THEORIES

5. To demonstrate a basic understanding of P.R. Sarkar's educational theories.

Part B:

SPECIAL ASPECTS OF NEO-HUMANIST EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN:

NEO-HUMANIST EDUCATION METHODOLOGY

Objective: To demonstrate as a teacher that you understand the theoretical background of each of the following points, and show competence in integrating these into the educational curriculum.

1. NEO-HUMANISM & UNIVERSAL LOVE
2. GOAL OF EDUCATION
3. SPIRITUALITY
4. VIEW OF THE CHILD & DEVELOPMENT OF THE WHOLE CHILD
5. FANTASY AND PLAY
6. COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT
7. MORALITY
8. BRAHMACAKRA CURRICULUM

PartC.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS AS A TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR

This involves the blending of the best techniques known today in the field of education with NH ideas and theories. When studying other education ideas, the NH educator will decide its appropriateness through her rationale and conscience.

GUIDANCE AND BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT

1. To demonstrate basic understanding of behavioral management with young children.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

2. To create and maintain a healthy, safe educational environment.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

3. To demonstrate an ability to communicate well with the children's families and to participate and network with the community in various ways.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

4. To demonstrate a basic knowledge of program management for an early

childhood education centre.

PROFESSIONALISM

5. To demonstrate a commitment to professionalism and to view their own education as a life long process requiring reflection, critical thinking, and self direction. Professional growth requires interacting with other professionals in the educational field in various ways.

Part A

THE SPECIALITY OF BEING A NEO-HUMANIST TEACHER:

PHILOSOPHICAL BACKGROUND AND FOUNDATION

A1. NEO-HUMANISM

OBJECTIVE: To demonstrate an adequate knowledge of Neo-Humanist philosophy and a commitment to integrating NH ideals in one's daily life.

Teachers should have an understanding of the following salient points of NH philosophy, see how these points relate to their work in the educational field and also see how they integrate these points in their own daily lives.

NEO-HUMANISM:

1. Devotional sentiment & Universalism - To develop an ongoing loving relationship with the Infinite Consciousness in one's personal life and in collective life through recognising each entity of the Cosmos as a manifestation of Infinite Consciousness.

2. Rationality & Conscience (Proto-psychic spiritual structure) -The mental process of studying, and learning to discriminate by weighing the pros and cons of any subject. One learns to discern which aspects of rational knowledge are worth pursuing by measuring them against one's conscience. Conscience is a faculty which considers whether or not an idea is for the benevolent welfare of all.

3. Broadmindedness and anti-dogmatic sentiments - NH recognizes only the broadest sentiment of Universalism, which embraces all the entities of the Cosmos, including plants, animals and the inanimate world, and rejects all other dogmatic sentiments such as geo-sentiment, socio-sentiment, human sentiment, internationalism, etc., which impose limitations on human mind.

4. The Principle of Social Equality (Samasamajtattva) vs. The Principle of Selfish Pleasure (Atmasukhatattva) - Principle of Social Equality is where a person practices goodwill and service towards others as life principles; they accept the inter-relatedness of all life and the responsible role that human beings play in the universal structure. Contrarily, the Principle of Selfish Pleasure is where one pursues one's own pleasure and success in life regardless of how one's actions affect others. Persons following the Principle of Selfish Pleasure ignore the painful sufferings and deprivations of other entities on the planet.

5. Revolutionary zeal - Regarding implementing any changes in life there are different strategies one may adopt. First is the reformist. Such an individual would like to see change over a very gradual period. Often this dilutes the process of change so that it becomes ineffective. Secondly is the reactionary, who does not want to see change at all. Third is the pseudo-reformist who speaks in favour of change but actually doesn't really want to see change. Lastly is the revolutionary, who works for positive change in the shortest possible time. A Neo-Humanist, after analyzing that an aspect of social change is for the collective welfare, pursues it with dynamism and revolutionary zeal.

6. Three Stages of Neo-Humanism - The first stage is NH as a practice, when a person takes practical steps to implement NH in their daily lives e.g. like becoming a vegetarian or taking up meditation. The second stage is NH as a principle, when the Neo-humanistic practices are not just casual or experimental activities, but become an integral and essential part of one's life philosophy and life-style. The third stage is NH as a mission; it is a stage of total commitment when one works single mindedly and tirelessly for the implementation of Neo-Humanistic principles.

REQUIRED READING:

Chapters entitled "Devotional Sentiment and NH" and "Awakened Conscience" from Liberation of Intellect -- Neo-Humanism by P.R. Sarkar. Chapter entitled "Neo-Humanism: Its implementation" from Neo-humanism -- An Ideology for A New Generation, p. 39 - 49.

FURTHER READING:

Liberation of Intellect - Neo-Humanism by P.R. Sarkar

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Create a personal narrative that reflects on the salient points of NH. i.e. journal style.
2. Oral form. Sit with a NH expert and orally explain the points. This type of dialogue should go over a couple of hours in order to demonstrate a deep personal understanding of NH.

NOTE: The evaluator should give written suggestions to the trainee on any point where they still need to deepen their understanding.

3. Essay format: Write an essay applying NH principles to one's own life e.g. give examples of your understanding of each salient point and how it applies to your work with children and your own life.

A2. SPIRITUALITY AND MEDITATION

OBJECTIVE: To demonstrate an understanding of what spirituality is, and its relationship with the layers of the mind and their development through meditation practice.

Teachers should have an understanding of the following salient points of spirituality, layers of the mind and meditation practice, and see how these points relate to their work in the educational field and also see how they integrate these points in their own daily lives.

SPIRITUALITY

Spirituality is not a religion or a doctrine. It is an acknowledgment that there is a sublime reality beyond the mundane, psychic and suprap psychic realms. This can be called the Infinite Consciousness. One deepens one's understanding of spirituality through recognizing each entity of the Cosmos, including one's own self, as a manifestation of Infinite Consciousness.

LAYERS OF THE MIND

NH recognizes five distinct functional layers of the mind. These layers resemble the structure of a banana flower, one layer inside the other. Each inner layer is successively subtler than its outer part. The following are the five layers of the mind:

1. Conscious mind - receives outside stimuli, has a desire based on the stimuli, and motivates the sensori-motor system to fulfill the desire. This layer deals with our basic survival instincts.

2. Sub-conscious mind - this layer is the most used by human beings. It is the layer of computation, analyzing, thinking and memory including dreaming. It is the layer which experiences psychic pleasure and pain.

3. First layer of the super-conscious mind - It is the layer of intuition and para-normal psychic experiences, creativity and prophetic dreams. Great scientific and artistic achievements were inspired by this layer of the mind.

4. Second layer of the super-conscious mind - It is a layer of profound compassion, intuition and thought. Here one discriminates between what is deeply fulfilling, meaningful, lasting and spiritual in one's life, and what is ephemeral.

5. Third layer of the super-conscious mind - It is the most spiritual layer. Here one has profound attraction for the Infinite and can experience a joyful realization of the oneness of all.

MEDITATION

Like a drop of water in a river merging back into the ocean, in meditation one's mind aims to merge back into its original source, the Infinite Consciousness. Meditation is a systematic process whereby one channelizes the energy of each layer of the mind towards the more subtle layers. The ultimate goal of meditation is to merge oneself into the Infinite Consciousness beyond all the layers of the mind.

While most young children do not have the maturity to practice formal meditation, they can be encouraged towards quiet self-reflection.

REQUIRED READING:

1. Chapter on "Kosas - The structure of the mind" from The Wisdom of Tantra by Ac. Vedaprajananda Av.
2. Chapter on "The Unfolding Mind" from The Awakening of Self, Ananda Marga Publications

FURTHER READING:

1. Chapter on "Mind and sadhana" from The Spiritual Philosophy of Shrii Shrii Anandamurti - A Commentary on Ananda Sutram by Ananda Marga Publications
2. The Spiritual Philosophy of Shrii Shrii Anandamurti - A Commentary on Ananda Sutram by Ananda Marga Publications
3. Chapter on "Kosa" from Idea and Ideology by P.R. Sarkar
4. Beyond the Super-conscious Mind by Av. Ananda Mitra Ac.

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Create a personal narrative that reflects your understanding of spirituality and meditation in your personal life.
2. Oral form. Sit with a NH expert and orally explain the points. This type of dialogue should go over a couple of hours in order to demonstrate a deep personal understanding of spirituality, the layers of the mind and meditation.

NOTE: The evaluator should give written suggestions to the trainee on any point where they still need to deepen their understanding.

3. Essay format: Write an essay on meditation in your own life. Refer to the layers of the mind and spirituality in your essay.

A3. BRAHMACAKRA

OBJECTIVE: To demonstrate an understanding of Brahmachakra philosophy. Brahmachakra (The Cycle of Creation) -- Another unique method that NH education adopts in order to nurture the child's awareness of the Oneness of all is the concept of Brahmachakra (Brahma means the Cosmic Consciousness and Chakra means circle or cycle).

The basic idea of Brahmachakra is that every part of this creation is a transitional phase in the de-evolutionary or evolutionary journey of Cosmic Consciousness as it expresses Itself in successively less subtle (more physical or solidified) or more conscious forms. Just as water (H₂O) transforms from vaporous steam to liquid water to solid ice, and then again from ice to water to steam, depending on the temperature of its environment, yet it remains always H₂O, so Cosmic Consciousness transforms from subtle psychic forms to solidified physical forms, yet remains always Cosmic Consciousness.

More explicitly, Brahmachakra shows that the subtle psychic phase of Cosmic Mind emerges from Cosmic Consciousness and then transforms itself into the successively cruder (more compact) vibrations of this inanimate physical world viz. ether (space or void), air, light, liquid and finally solid factors; from this inanimate world then emerges biological life or individual entities with individual minds or consciousness viz. amoebas, plants, fish, reptiles, insects, birds, animals and, at the top of the evolutionary phase, human beings who have the most highly expressed mind or consciousness of all. All these forms are, however, essentially Cosmic Consciousness. Human beings have the capacity to complete this Cosmic Cycle. Through nurturing the subtle qualities and insights of their own inner consciousness, human beings learn to recognise the consciousness inherent in all parts of creation. This recognition expresses as universal love and responsibility towards others, and this in turn leads to a spiritual realisation of the joyful Oneness of all.

This underlying theme of the essential Oneness and interconnectedness of everything runs through all the activities and teachings of NH education, providing a synthetic view of life. This gives the child an intuitional and holistic, rather than purely analytical and compartmentalized, understanding of the Cosmos. They can realize the truth of the statements that "the universe is contained in a single grain of sand," or that "the movement of a single ant upon the earth reverberates in the entire Cosmos."

REQUIRED READING:

1. Chapter on "Mind to Matter, Matter to Mind" from The Awakening of Self, Ananda Marga Publications

FURTHER READING:

1. Excerpt from The Spiritual Philosophy of Shrii Shrii Anandamurti - A Commentary on Ananda Sutram by Ananda Marga Publications P 1 - 12
2. Chapters on "Saincara and Pranah", "Pratisaincara and Manah" and "Bhutattatva, Tanmatra Tattva and Indriya Tattva" from Idea & Ideology by P.R. Sarkar.
3. Chapter on "What is this World?" from Ananda Marga Elementary Philosophy by Shrii Shrii Anandamurti (This has also been published in Ananda Marga Philosophy in a Nutshell Part ? by Shrii ShriiAnandamurti)

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Create a visual diagram of the de-evolutionary and evolutionary cycle of Brahmachakra.
2. To someone who is familiar with Brahmachakra, create and perform a creative movement, using dance forms, music, costume, etc., to represent the de-evolutionary and evolutionary aspects of Brahmachakra.
3. Using actual natural items, explain to a group of people, which includes someone familiar with Brahmachakra, the successive stages of the evolutionary phase of Brahmachakra, e.g. show a rock, then a plant, then a butterfly, etc.

A 4. YAMA-NIYAMA, VALUES & THE ROLE OF EDUCATOR

OBJECTIVES:

To demonstrate an understanding of the importance of Y-N for children and the ability to integrate it by teaching children their values and role modeling them in the classroom.

To demonstrate a commitment to character development through self-reflection and refining human interactions. This is accomplished by integrating the principles of morality (Y N) in daily life. In this way the teacher becomes an ideal role model to children both at school and in their personal life.

"Those who have acquired academic qualifications do not have an automatic right to become teachers. Teachers must possess such qualities as integrity, strength of character, righteousness, a sense of social service, unselfishness, and an inspiring personality and leadership capacity." (P.R. Sarkar, Prout In A Nutshell, Part 18, pg. 44)

The ten universal ethical concepts implicit in Neo-Humanism are:

5 principles of YAMA

1. Non-harming (Ahimsa) - Not to do harm to others consciously by thought, word or action. Force may be used in cases of self-protection against natural or circumstantial aggressors.
2. Benevolent truthfulness (Satya) - Speaking with the welfare of others always in mind. In most cases this means applying the factual truth. In

circumstances where speaking the factual truth may cause harm to others, then we temper factual truth out of a spirit of universal welfare.

3. Non-stealing (Asteya) - Not taking nor mentally coveting what does not belong to oneself.

4. Universal Love (Brahmacarya) - Trying to see and love the Infinite Consciousness manifest in everything around us. By understanding the inter-relatedness of all, we superimpose a spiritual attitude over our mundane existence.

5. Simple Living (Aprigraha) - Meeting the necessary requirements of life while considering the well-being of others is the essence behind simple living.

5 principles of NIYAMA

1. Cleanliness (Shaoca) - This includes both external and internal cleanliness. Mental cleanliness means removing internal impurities such as greed, hatred, envy, pride, etc.

2. Mental Contentment (Santosa) - Maintaining a positive outlook. This is a continuous process of finding fulfillment in the challenges and simple joys of life.

3. Spirit of Social Service (Tapah) - Developing the spirit and habit of helping others who really need it, even if it may cause inconvenience to oneself.

4. Inspirational Study (Svadyaya) - Developing the habit of regularly reading, listening to or discussing a spiritual topic, with an effort to deeply understand it.

5. Meditation & Inner Self-improvement (Ishvara Pranidhana) -To think that the most important thing in life is to understand one's inner self and to try to live according to that inner Truth.

REQUIRED READING:

Chapter on "Yogic Ethics - Maintaining a Dynamic Balance from The Awakening of Self, Ananda Marga Publications

FURTHER READING:

A Guide to Human Conduct by Shrii Shrii Anandamurti

ASSIGNMENT:

1. In written form, or orally with an expert, explain the 10 principles of Yama and Niyama, giving practical examples for each. Consider the following quote: "Remember when this moralism, on which human

existence is based, leads a person to the fullest expression of their finer human qualities, then alone is its practical value properly realized." (Human Society Part 1, page 10, by P.R. Sarkar) Then brainstorm 5 values for each principle e.g. Non-harming relates to the values of kindness, compassion or consideration.

A 5. SARKAR'S EDUCATIONAL THEORIES

OBJECTIVE: To demonstrate a basic understanding of P.R. Sarkar's educational theories.

The principle points of Sarkar's educational theories are:

1. NEO-HUMANISM AND UNIVERSAL LOVE -

Sarkar redefined the boundaries of education itself by applying a larger framework based on the philosophy of Neo-humanism. Neo-humanism means to expand the underlying spirit of humanism (love for all human beings) to encompass love for the whole creation through a realization that everything is an expression of the Infinite Consciousness. On the basis of NH philosophy, he extended education to include all living beings, animate and inanimate; he emphasized the importance of developing the whole child in order that they may realize their highest human potential. He included in education the nurturing of the child's sense of social responsibility and spirit of service to the universal family; through the Brahmachakra curriculum the child learns to see the inter-relatedness of everything and to develop love and respect for all. NH warns against dogma and supports the idea of being rational and eclectic while at the same time utilizing the a measuring stick of conscience to discern the quality and bearing of an idea. NH sees society as a dynamic ever-changing entity and encourages human beings to work constantly work for progressive, benevolent social change in the shortest possible time.

2. GOAL OF EDUCATION - Sarkar envisioned the goal of education as the full development of human potentialities, and the development of a compassionate outlook. He defined knowledge as "Sa Vidya Ya

Vimuktaya" which means "Knowledge is that which leads to liberation - physical, mental and spiritual" He further said that, "The real meaning of education is trilateral development -- simultaneous development in the physical, mental and spiritual realms of human existence. This development should enhance the integration of the human personality. By this, dormant human potential will be awakened and be properly utilized." NH education aims to impart an awareness of self, i.e. to help the student become aware of 'Who I am' and 'What is my role in this world'. NH education aims to awaken the thirst for knowledge within the child's mind, and properly equip them with the skills and qualities necessary for life as refined, dignified and responsible members of a universal family.

"They are 'educated' who have learned much, remembered much and made use of their knowledge in everyday life. Their virtues I will call education." (P.R. Sarkar, Human Society I, p. 56)

Sarkar summed up the important features of NH education in the following anagram:

E - Enlargement of mind

D - DESMEP (Discipline, Etiquette, Smartness, Morality, English - as the present lingua franca of the world, Pronunciation - for clear communication)

U - Universal outlook

C - Character

A - Active habits

T - Trustworthiness

I - Ideation of the Great

O - Omniscient Grace

N - Nice Temperament

See Appendix for detailed definition of E-D-U-C-A-T-I-O-N

3. SPIRITUALITY & MEDITATION

Spirituality is not a religion or a doctrine. It is an acknowledgment that there is a sublime reality beyond the mundane, psychic and suprap psychic realms. This can be called the Infinite Consciousness. One deepens one's understanding of spirituality through recognizing each entity of the Cosmos, including one's own self, as a manifestation of Infinite Consciousness.

Spiritual development requires the regular practice of a proper meditative method. Teaching spirituality in school begins with encouraging the children to develop the power of internal reflection and self-control during a regular quiet-time. While young children may not have the maturity to practice real meditation, they can learn to begin to develop an internal awareness leading towards spiritual development by keeping a regular quiet time, by visualizations or by centring games.

4. VIEW OF THE CHILD & DEVELOPMENT OF THE WHOLE CHILD

Almost all education theorists recognize the importance of early childhood. Sarkar believed, "One is moulded in one's childhood. If one received the fundamentals of education in the formative period of life, one will keep oneself all right in the teeth of the heaviest odds in life. A bamboo, when green, can be shaped or bent in any way you like. Once it ripens, any attempt to reshape it will break it. That's why, more stress is to be laid on kindergarten schools. That is the first phase of human-making." (P.R. Sarkar, *Some Hints on Education, Prout in a Nutshell P?*, p.37) Sarkar theorized that young children are in an extremely subtle period; they have access to extra-cerebral memory. "In the case of a child, since the crude experiences are relatively few, the subtle mind remains tranquil. Thus the waves of the causal mind can easily surface in the subtle mind. As a result, the accumulated experiences of the child's previous life can easily be recollected." (P.R. Sarkar, "Yoga Psychology", 6) Due to more curiosity and exploration with the physical world, as a child matures, there is a natural progression of moving away from recollection of extra-cerebral memories, to pre-occupation with the experiences of its present world. NH educators recognize that it is natural for the child to quickly switch between the sensori-motor and fantasy or intuitional modes of experience. So, while acknowledging the child's subtle nature, NH educators support the young child's effort to gain their identity and place in the world.

There are multifarious aspects to a child's personality. A NH educator strives to make an integrated curriculum that sees to the development of all these aspects -- social, emotional, self-identity, creative, cognitive, communication-skills, cultural, ethical, physical, spiritual, intuitional, etc.

5. FANTASY & PLAY -

In recognizing the young child's subtleties, the importance of the use of imaginative fantasy arises in early childhood education. Psychodynamic theorists appreciated the use of fantasy, but used it particularly as an indicator of a child's unconscious mind. NH educators recognizes fantasy as an important part of a young child's life as the child's mind is naturally filled with fantasy. The child's mind is more fluid than an adults as for a child there is no strong demarcation between the sensorimotor activities of the conscious mind, the rational analysis of the sub-conscious mind, and the fantasy and intuitional activities of the unconscious mind.

NH educators nurture the child's creative potentials to teach what is real and what is not. By continuing to foster the child's imagination throughout their childhood, NH educators help the child to develop a greater array of expressive abilities and higher thoughts. As Sarkar emphasized, "The child's mind is filled with fanciful imagery, and so the literatures will also have to soar in the sky of imagination with outstretched wings...what is more important is to carry the child's mind along in the current of joy and in the process to acquaint the child with the world in an easy and simple manner." (P.R. Sarkar, "The Practice of Art and Literature" from A Few Problems Solved, 36) Sarkar, as almost all educational theorists, agrees that play is important in early childhood development. It is the medium through which a child learns best. "The thirst for knowledge in children can be awakened through the medium of play, and through this alone children may be taught. Children also naturally like fantasies and stories. Through the medium of stories, children may easily be taught the history and geography of various countries. They may also be initiated into the primary lessons of meditation or how to practice universalism in their lives. Love of play and stories are liked equally by a child, and so should be used to the fullest advantage." (P.R. Sarkar, Prout in a Nutshell Part 1, p. 17)

6. COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT -

The four aspects of cognitive development are:

- i) Awakening the child's sense of curiosity and wonder. The educators aim is to motivate the child to keep learning.
- ii) Instruction be based on fact and free from narrowism - For a child to obtain their full cognitive potential, their learning needs to be broad based and concise.
- iii) The sensori-motor exploration in play enhances cognitive development.

iv) The importance of a balanced mind for both the teacher and students:

To help develop a balanced mind for teachers and students by keeping the mind unassailed by unimportant activities. Often unwanted outside distractions interfere with the child's ability to learn e.g. TV. With today's overwhelming amount of information, only an ordered and organised mind can fully appreciate and use this vast amount of knowledge. Developing a balanced mind helps a child make effective choices; here the child weighs the pros and cons against the measuring stick of conscience.

7. MORALITY -

The ten universal ethical concepts implicit in NH are:

5 principles of YAMA

- i) Non-harming (Ahimsa) - Not to do harm to others consciously by thought, word or action. Force may be used in cases of self-protection against natural or circumstantial aggressors.
- ii) Benevolent truthfulness (Satya) - Speaking with the welfare of others always in mind. In most cases this means applying the factual truth. In circumstances where speaking the factual truth may cause harm to others, then we temper factual truth out of a spirit of universal welfare.
- iii) Non-stealing (Asteya) - Not taking nor mentally coveting what does not belong to oneself.
- iv) Universal Love (Brahmacarya) - Trying to see and love the Infinite Consciousness manifest in everything around us. By understanding the inter-relatedness of all, we superimpose a spiritual attitude over our mundane existence.
- v) Simple Living (Aprigraha) - Meeting the necessary requirements of life while considering the well-being of others is the essence behind simple living.

5 principles of NIYAMA

- i) Cleanliness (Shaoca) - This includes both external and internal cleanliness. Mental cleanliness means removing internal impurities such as greed, hatred, envy, pride, etc.
- ii) Mental Contentment (Santosa) - Maintaining a positive outlook. This is a continuous process of finding fulfillment in the challenges and simple joys of life.

iii) Spirit of Social Service (Tapah) - Developing the spirit and habit of helping others who really need it, even if it may cause inconvenience to oneself.

iv) Inspirational Study (Svadyaya) - Developing the habit of regularly reading, listening to or discussing a spiritual topic, with an effort to deeply understand it.

v) Meditation & Inner Self-improvement (Iishvara Pranidhana) -To think that the most important thing in life is to understand one's inner self and to try to live according to that inner Truth.

By the age of five children have formed their moral outlook according to Sarkar. It is an essential aspect of early childhood development. Children learn much of their ethical development as they mature their social interactions. Sarkar believed that the adults' affectionate behavior and good role modeling were the most effective ways of helping children develop their morality.

8. VIEW OF THE EDUCATOR -

Although the importance of the relationship of the educator and the child was important to many theorists, Sarkar's stressed the character of the teacher as one of the most important elements/aspects of the teaching process. He stated that it is not merely academic qualifications that make a teacher, but that teachers must possess qualities such as strength of character, integrity, sense of social service, unselfishness and inspiring personality and leadership capacity.

REQUIRED READING:

Selected articles of P.R. Sarkar's discourses on education related topics.

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Create a personal narrative that reflects on five of the points of Sarkar's education theories

.

2. Oral form. Sit with a NH expert and orally explain all the major theoretical points. This type of dialogue should go over a couple of hours in order to demonstrate a deep personal understanding of NH.

NOTE: The evaluator should give written suggestions to the trainee on any point where they still need to deepen their understanding.

3. Essay format: Write an essay comparing Sarkar's educational theories to those of other educational theorists.

PART B.

THE SPECIAL ASPECTS OF NEO-HUMANIST EDUCATION DEVELOPMENT OF CHILDREN:

NEO-HUMANIST EDUCATION METHODOLOGY

OBJECTIVE: To demonstrate as a teacher that you understand the theoretical background of each of the following points, and show competence in integrating these into the educational curriculum.

B1. NEO HUMANISM AND UNIVERSAL LOVE

Neo-humanism means to expand the underlying spirit of humanism (love for all human beings) to encompass love for the whole creation through a realization that everything is an expression of the Infinite Consciousness.

NH accepts the inter-relatedness of all life and sees the responsible role that human beings play in the Cosmic cycle. Children are encouraged to deepen and extend their concern for the welfare of others not only to all human beings but to all other living things such as animals and plants.

In order to expand the mind to embrace Universalism, the development of rational mentality is important. This is developed through study. Before finally adopting any rational strategy or idea, NH stresses that the measuring stick of conscience be applied. Educators are encouraged to keep up with the innovations of their field, and to discern what is progressive in the socially benevolent sense of the word.

NHE shares with other theorists, especially the human potential theorists, the importance of love and mutual respect in education. However, NHE expands this to a more profound level to include all forms of life. Research shows that children who learn to care for others and animals are more responsible and empathetic as they mature. "glandular theory quote from bio-psychology"

METHODOLOGY:

1. Service to the created world - humans, plants, animals, environment; make a garden, take care of animals.
2. Arrange a service outing for the school children.

3. Give the children a simple social justice issue to discuss e.g. what do they think about violence on television?
4. Explain how NH affects guidance strategies.
5. Explain how NH affects your choice of books, stories, activities, etc. If a fairy tale has a violent ending, how could you turn this into a NH learning opportunity?
6. NH emphasises the nurturing of an environmental consciousness in children. Give examples of how you could do this with your children.
7. Describe how you as a teacher will keep abreast of new ideas in education.
8. What local organizations may be a resource for new information in your field?

B2. GOAL OF EDUCATION

Goal of education - The goal of education is for the full development of human potential combined with developing a compassionate social outlook.

"The real meaning of education is trilateral development --simultaneous development in the physical, mental and spiritual realms of human existence. This development should enhance the integration of the human personality. By this, dormant human potential will be awakened and be properly utilized." (P.R. Sarkar)

Education for only individual success may omit ethics and benevolence (character development). Also education for the accumulation of knowledge for its own sake may lead to selfishness and intellectualism, and may not necessarily benefit society or individuals.

METHODOLOGY:

1. Service to the created world - humans, plants, animals, environment; make a garden, take care of animals.
2. Arrange a service outing for the school children.
3. Give examples of how you would discuss with older children what is the goal of education.

4. Choose and describe how you would do projects/activities with the children around three great personalities who did something remarkable to help society.

B3. SPIRITUALITY & MEDITATION

Spirituality is not a religion or a doctrine. It is an acknowledgment that there is a sublime reality beyond the mundane, psychic and supra-psychic realms. This can be called the Infinite Consciousness. One deepens one's understanding of spirituality through recognizing each entity of the Cosmos, including one's own self, as a manifestation of Infinite Consciousness.

True spiritual development needs a regular practice of a proper meditative method. Teaching spirituality in school begins with encouraging the children to develop the power of internal reflection and self-control during a regular quiet-time. While young children do not have the maturity to practice real meditation, they can learn to begin to develop an internal awareness leading towards spiritual development by keeping a regular quiet time, by visualizations or by centring games.

METHODOLOGY

MEDITATION & MORNING CIRCLE

The NH teacher will use morning circle time, particularly meditation during morning circle, to help children in their spiritual development. How the teacher introduces the meditation time, how they conduct it, and how they conclude it are all important. Different schools may call the meditation period by other terms such as "quiet time", "inner time", "centring", "silence games" or "finding that place inside you where you feel safe and peaceful". Choose whatever is appropriate for your area.

You can begin your meditation time in various ways to channelize the children's energy and generate a feeling of group solidarity e.g. singing songs, telling stories, warm-up exercises, discussion, greeting each other, creative movement. Just before meditation, choose an activity which is calming. One method is by having a regular meditation song which the children know precedes meditation. Another is chanting a universal mantra* such as BABA NAM KEVALAM which means "Love is all there is" or "Love is everywhere".

For young children, their silent meditation period can be enhanced by directing their minds with a spiritual thought which culminates in the silence of meditation. For example, use simple visualizations which end in a silent time of meditation e.g. Visualize your mother; feel the love you

feel for your mother and that your mother feels for you; keep your eyes closed and just feel that love around you and within you. Another example is to choose a simple metaphor which relates to the weekly theme and arouses a spiritual feeling in the mind e.g. "Be like a monolithic rock"; close your eyes and feel like you are a rock, quiet and feeling peaceful inside; now children, sit quietly like a rock and sing inside your heart BABA NAM KEVALAM or just sit quietly and feel love and peace inside yourself and all around you.

NH teachers utilize the post-meditation atmosphere to channelize the children's subtle energy in different ways. The teacher may follow meditation with a spiritual story, or repeat the essence of the visualization or metaphor used before meditation. There are subtle activities which can heighten the children's collective spiritual experience, for example: watering and kissing a plant which has been placed in the centre of the meditation circle, passing around small objects such as chestnut or imaginary object such as light from one to another, handing out raisins. After these subtle collective activities, the children may engage in service activities such as feeding fish, or share news or show-and-tell, or practice children's yoga, etc.

TEACHERS SHOULD DEMONSTRATE COMPETENCE IN THE FOLLOWING

1. Ability to channelize kids' restless energy through warm-up movements, songs, creative movement, children's yoga or guided fantasy.
2. Ability to transition group of children from warm-up stage to meditation pose.
3. Knowledge of and ability to use meditation related songs.
4. Ability to lead the children in singing several tunes of BABA NAM KEVALAM.
5. Ability to invoke a spiritual feeling during meditation time.
6. Ability to lead group in short meditation/"quiet time"/centring.
7. Ability to maintain the subtle post-meditation atmosphere by engaging the children in subtle activities.
8. Knowledge of and ability to tell several "meditation" stories.
9. Knowledge of and ability to relate the lives of several great saints.

See Appendix from Circle of Love - NHE Teachers Manual for Kindergarten and *Appendix on the Science of Meditation

B4. VIEW OF THE CHILD AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE WHOLE CHILD

Sarkar recognized that early childhood is the most formative period of human life. During this period, NH educators especially acknowledge the child's subtle (creative and intuitional) nature, while at the same time supporting their efforts to gain self-identity and a place in the world.

There are multifarious aspects to a child's personality. A NH educator strives to make an integrated curriculum that sees to the development of all these aspects -- social, emotional, self-identity, creative, cognitive, communication-skills, cultural, ethical, physical, spiritual, Neo-humanistic, etc. Under communication skills, as well as teaching the local language, NH schools incorporate the teaching of English as a first or second language, as English is the present lingua franca(international means of communication) of the world today.

METHODOLOGY:

1. The educator chooses a theme from Brahmachakra and prepares activities around the theme which helps develop all the areas of a child's personality - social, emotional, self-identity, creative, cognitive, communication-skills, cultural (local and multi-cultural), ethical, physical, spiritual, Neo-humanistic. For example for the theme on water, a teacher may tell a story about water and through this will arouse a child's curiosity, develops their communication skills, enhances their creativity, etc. Then the teacher may have them play a float and sink game which develops their cognitive skills, social skills, fine motor skills and communication skills. Then she may ask them to dance as if they are waves to help them in their creative and physical development; she can use a metaphor of water during their meditation period. The teacher may talk about how to keep the water clean, or how not to waste water, which develops ethics and the spirit of NH.
2. Observe children and write an essay on one of the following: the subtle aspects of their non-verbal communication; their intuitive or spiritual nature.
3. List four problem behaviours and show a positive and sensitive guidance strategy for each of these problems. For example, instead of saying "Don't hit others!" say "Use your gentle hands."

See Appendix from Circle of Love

B5. FANTASY AND PLAY

NH educators recognizes fantasy as an important part of a young child life as the child's mind is naturally filled with fantasy. The child's mind is more fluid than an adults as for a child there is no strong demarcation the sensori-motor activities of the conscious mind, the rational analysis of the sub-conscious mind, and the fantasy and intuitional activities of the unconscious mind. By continuing to foster the child's imagination throughout their childhood, NH educators help the child to develop a greater array of expressive abilities and higher thoughts.

Sarkar, as almost all educational theorists, agrees that play is important in early childhood development. It is the medium through which a child learns best. "Love of play and stories are liked equally by a child and so should be used to the fullest advantage." (P.R. Sarkar)

METHODOLOGY:

1. Teacher demonstrates telling five stories using each of the following techniques:

i) reading a book;

ii) drawing the story while telling it;

iii) using puppets;

iv) flannel board (optional if materials not available);

v) magic circle. Magic circle is a technique where one uses small figures made from locally available materials such as clay, cloth, clothes pegs, etc. According to the story the figures are moved on a cloth which is decorated with leaves, stones, twigs and other items to make the story scene come alive. While telling the story the teacher demonstrates dramatic voice, sound effects, appropriate repetition, and involving the audience in the story. Also the teacher may need to modify the story to reflect NH principles viz. change sexist, racist images, language, etc.

2. Choosing one of the stories above, the teacher demonstrates being able to do a simple drama of the story with the children.

3. The teacher arranges activities and the environment to enhance cognitive development through play-way method. Play-way method is active and joyful exploration through sensori-motor manipulations of objects (blocks, play dough, practical life activities, water and sand play, etc.), songs, games and stories.

See Appendix from Circle of Love

B6. COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT -

The four aspects of cognitive development are:

- i) Awakening the child's sense of curiosity and wonder. The educators aim is to motivate the child to keep learning.
- ii) Instruction be based on fact and free from narrowism - For a child to obtain their full cognitive potential, they need to develop critical thinking, open-mindedness, reflective thinking in light of Neo-humanism.
- iii) The sensori-motor exploration in play enhances cognitive development.
- iv) The importance of a balanced mind for both the teacher and students to help develop a balanced mind for teachers and students by keeping the mind unassailed by unimportant activities. Often unwanted outside distractions interfere with the child's ability to learn e.g. TV. With today's overwhelming amount of information, only an ordered and organised mind can fully appreciate and use this vast amount of knowledge. Developing a balanced mind helps a child make effective choices; here the child weighs the pros and cons against the measuring stick of conscience. The teacher helps a young child to learn to make choices by providing multiple activities from which they have to choose.

METHODOLOGY:

1. Teacher demonstrates the ability to awaken curiosity by showing intense curiosity in an activity herself.
2. Teacher observes a group of children noting which children are more curious than others. She makes an activity to help stimulate the curiosity of all the children, especially those who show less curiosity.
3. Plan a multi-cultural week, exposing children to various cultures through interesting activities e.g. cooking food or wearing costumes from various cultures.
4. Prepare five open-ended questions you can ask a child after reading a particular story. Open-ended questions are questions that have no one right answer, or a yes-no answer e.g. "What else could so and so do to.....?"

5. Teacher prepares a simple science experiment which the children can do. She helps them learn to observe and predict what will occur.

6. Do an activity with the children in which the teacher demonstrates that she has the children conclude the activity by putting away the materials in their proper place.

7. Teacher has the children eat together in an aesthetic and refined manner e.g. put a table cloth, flowers on the table, set the table in an orderly way, good table manners, clean up, etc.

B7. MORALITY -

The ten universal ethical concepts implicit in NH are:

5 PRINCIPLES OF YAMA

- i) Non-harming (Ahimsa)
- ii) Benevolent truthfulness (Satya)
- iii) Non-stealing (Asteya)
- iv) Universal Love (Brahmacarya)
- v) Simple Living (Aprigraha)

5 PRINCIPLES OF NIYAMA

- i) Cleanliness (Shaoca)
- ii) Mental Contentment (Santosa)
- iii) Spirit of Social Service (Tayah)
- iv) Inspirational Study (Svadyaya)
- v) Meditation & Inner Self-improvement (Iishvara Pranidhana)

By the age of five children have formed their moral outlook according to the Sarkar. It is an essential aspect of early childhood development. Children learn much of their ethical development as they mature their social interactions. Sarkar believed that the adults' affectionate behavior and good role modeling were the most effective ways of helping children develop their morality.

Many schools refer to ethical learning and character development as STUVOL. Stuvol is an abbreviation for Student Volunteers. During this time, children build their character through mentally and physically challenging activities such as role playing moral dilemmas, co-operative athletic games, general knowledge skills and practical life activities. Another important aspect of Stuvol is the practical application of these skills in issues of social justice and service projects.

METHODOLOGY:

1. In various sittings over a week's time, the teacher observes five children and makes anecdotal records on their ethical development. See Appendix of Ethical Observation Checklist
2. Teacher brainstorms three values for each of the Yama and Niyama principles. Choose three values and demonstrate how you would integrate them into your daily lesson plan. Give five or more ways you would do this. For example "love" relates to the principle of Brahmacharya; one can teach the value of "love" through a story, caring for animals, etc.
3. Find stories and activities to teach three of the universal ethical principles to children. One of the activities should be creating a moral dilemma for the children to discuss.
4. Choose one issue of social justice and design a project that children can do to develop their moral courage and empathetic feelings towards the disadvantaged.

BS. BRAHMACAKRA

Brahmacakra (The Cycle of Creation) -- Another unique method that NH education adopts in order to nurture the child's awareness of the Oneness of all is the concept of Brahmachakra (Brahma means the Cosmic Consciousness and Cakra means circle or cycle). This gives the child an intuitional and holistic, rather than purely analytical and compartmentalized, understanding of the Cosmos. This underlying theme of the essential Oneness and interconnectedness of every thing runs through all the activities and teachings of NH education, providing a synthetic view of life.

METHODOLOGY:

1. With the children make a visual diagram of Brahmachakra.
2. With the children, using actual natural items, do a project to observe

the successive stages of the evolutionary phase of Brahmachakra, e.g. show a rock, then a plant, then a butterfly. The stages are rock, plant, sea life, amphibian, reptile, animal, and people.

3. Make a three month schedule of weekly themes to cover various Brahmachakra topics. Make a lesson plan for one of these weeks. Prepare activities around the theme which helps develop all the areas of a child's personality, - social, emotional, self-identity, creative, cognitive, communication-skills, cultural (local and multi-cultural), ethical, physical, spiritual, neo-humanistic.

PART C.

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS AS A TEACHER AND ADMINISTRATOR

This section of teacher training involves the blending of the best techniques known today in the field of education with NH ideas and theories. When studying other education ideas, the NH educator will decide its appropriateness through her rationale and conscience.

GUIDANCE AND BEHAVIORAL MANAGEMENT

1. To demonstrate basic understanding of behavioral management with young children.

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

2. To create and maintain a healthy, safe educational environment.

PARENT AND COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

3. To demonstrate an ability to communicate well with the children's families and to participate and network with the community in various ways.

PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

4. To demonstrate a basic knowledge of program management for an early childhood education centre.

PROFESSIONALISM

5. To demonstrate a commitment to professionalism and to view their own education as a life long process requiring reflection, critical thinking, and self direction. Professional growth requires interacting with other professionals in the educational field in various ways.

PRESCHOOLER'S ETHICAL OBSERVATION CHECKLIST:

Prepared by, Av. Anandanivedita Ac.

Non-harming

shows remorse after harming another

shows self control in angry situations

tries to stop others from harming

tries to stop another from harming plants or animals

Benevolent Truthfulness

looks adult in face while talking

gives answer without fear (when asked calmly)

Non-stealing

returns school toys when finished

does not pocket or hide another's toy

Universal love

shows care for plants and animals

accepts new children

shows concern for other's distress

shows pleasure for other's happiness

shows affection

Simple living

shares with others

waits for a turn without a fuss

is content with only a few toys

Cleanliness

Is enthusiastic to wash hands

follows daily health habits

when angry, recovers in reasonable time

Contentment

adjusts to new situations without fuss

recovers from distress in reasonable time smiles often

Service-oriented

gives something they own to another

helps another do a task

helps another in need

Spiritual study

likes to listen to inspiring stories

asks many questions

Meditation

participates in silence game and in visualisation