

Neo-Humanist Education

Holistic Self Development, Values, Universal Love, Applied Learning



*"Sa Vidya Ya Vimuktaya" Knowledge is that which liberates
- Shrii Prabhat Rainjan Sarkar*

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A'nanda Ma'rga Gurukula

Headquarters: Anandanagar, PO Baglata, Dist Purulia, West Bengal, India

PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS OF NHE

All educational systems are based on a philosophical foundation. The elements of describing this philosophical foundation are normally ontology, epistemology, axiology and psychology. In his Philosophical Treatise, Shrii P. R. Sarkar has added in, metaphysics and spiritual practice for a total of 6 areas. These elements are expressed in the form of their practical application.

** Is there a preface that introduces P.R. Sarkar? And which 'philosophical treatise' do you mean? [probably Ananda Sutram, but that should be stated.]

Ontology

Ontology is the science or study relating to the nature of being. The philosophical foundation of NHE adheres to monotheism, or one Supreme Consciousness. This One Entity, Brahma or Bliss, has two aspects, Saguna or expressed Consciousness and Nirguna Brahma or unexpressed Consciousness. The Supreme Entity, as the nucleus, playing the role of the controller of the universe is called Purus'ottama, the nucleus, and controls all created beings and entities by virtue of His centripetal and centrifugal forces. The inherent nature of all being is divine, and joy or bliss is experienced when one's distance from the nucleus is lessened, the goal being to realise oneness. The link between the expressionless Nirgun'a Brahma state and the expressed Sagun'a Brahma state is Ta'raka Brahma or guiding Consciousness, which is more a devotional concept than a philosophical one.

*** If this is for non-Margiis, and even for many Margiis, it is too complex. After the part about expressed & unexpressed consciousness, I think you'll lose many readers, or at least they won't easily understand your approach, and how this all relates to education.

Epistemology

Epistemology is the theory of knowledge, and the accepted ways of knowing and assessing truth especially with regard to the methods and validation of knowledge. In NHE there are two branches of knowledge. One is Para'vidya' or Self-knowledge, which is knowing the Supreme Reality beyond the scope of time, space and person. Self-knowledge or absolute knowledge is attained through introspective practise or intuitional science, leading to pinnaced intellect and self-realisation. The other one is Apar'a'vidya' or worldly knowledge, which is every changing within the scope of time, space and person. Worldly knowledge or relative knowledge is attained through scientific approach together with pinnaced intellect. The synthetic approach enables us to tap into our latent spiritual knowledge as a vital element in really understanding who we are and how to live benevolently in the world around us.

*** again, Didi, too complex, especially for a non-Margii audience. I would try to minimize the amount of Sanskrit words you use, and also think what is the average, educated persons understanding of English terms such as 'pinnacled intellect', 'introspective practice', etc. The last sentence of this paragraph is very good. In fact, the paragraph is quite clear, except that the Sanskrit terms and the undefined terms, as I mention, may well confuse your readers.

Axiology

Axiology, or Ethics is concerned with the values we hold. NHE is inherently value based. Morality, spirituality and humanity are the foundations. The principles of Neo-humanism include universalism, love for all creation, social equality and awakened conscience or all round benevolence. Education is for liberation of self as a means to serve humanity. The aim is to achieve a balanced progressive sustainable society. NHE values freedom from the bondage of dogmatic and narrow-minded thinking and freedom from being ruled by crude desires. The ten principles of Yama and Niyama are cardinal universal principle of relating to society and personal integration. (Non-harming, using words for the welfare of others, non-stealing, simple living or non-accumulation, seeing the Cosmic Consciousness in all, cleanliness of body and mind, contentment, service, study and guidance from wisdom sources, meditation or effort to reach one's goal in life). Morality is not considered the goal of human life, but the starting point of life's journey.

*** Didi, below I re-write this paragraph, to show what may be a more readable style, assuming this is for the educated non-Margii, or even the average Margii.

Axiology, or Ethics is concerned with the values we hold. NHE is inherently value based. Morality, spirituality and humanity are the foundations. The principles of Neo-humanism include universalism, love for all creation, social equality and awakened conscience or all round benevolence. Education thus encourages all-round development, such as self-knowledge (or wisdom), and the development of a desire to help others. As the individual develops more profound moral and spiritual qualities we can move toward a balanced progressive sustainable society. NHE values freedom from dogmatic and narrow-minded thinking and freedom from being ruled by passions, or crude desires. The ten principles of Yama and Niyama are cardinal universal principles of relating to society as well as personal integration. (Non-harming, using words for the welfare of others, non-stealing, simple living or non-accumulation, seeing the Cosmic Consciousness in all, cleanliness of body and mind, contentment, service, study and guidance from wisdom sources, meditation or effort to reach one's goal in life). Morality is not considered the goal of human life, but the starting point of life's journey.

Psychology

Psychology is the scientific study of the human mind and its functions, which translates into various approaches. NHE sees the origin of unit mind as having evolved out of matter. Mind is the composite of different functional chambers - objective, subjective and self-awareness. There are four mental states - wakefulness, dream, sleep and transcendence. Mind has five layers - conscious, subconscious and three super-conscious layers. The expression of mind, whether crude or subtle, depends upon the different layers of mind. The association of mind with external objects is established through [[inferences. The inferences are]] vibrational frequencies of material objects such as: sound, touch, form, taste and smell. The inferences come in contact with the mind through the five sensory organs. The human being is seen as a physical, mental and spiritual being. In NHE psychology encompasses biopsychology and pinnacled psychology.

*** again, Didi, good information here, but I think it will be over the heads of many of your readers, including our teachers in India, to some extent. First I'd change the word inference. Baba means one thing by that word, but the average English speaker won't grasp it. You can find another term that Baba may have used for inferences, or just leave out the words I've bracketed. What you say is correct, and precise, but not so understandable to the average person, even to many Margiis.

*** do you define pinnacled psychology somewhere else? If not, it needs to be defined [even just as a parenthetical statement, if nothing more]. Your description of the layers of mind and the mental states would be very attractive to your readers, I think. So if that can be elaborated somewhere [maybe in an appendix, if you haven't discussed it later in this paper], then your readers will develop a stronger interest in our philosophy & practices.

Metaphysics

In Metaphysics one describes the process of creation and the relation between mind and matter. In NHE, matter evolves from Cosmic Mind and mind evolves from matter as described in the Brahmachakra cycle with its Saincara and Pratisaincara phases. In Saincara first Mind emerges and out of this Cosmic Mind emerges matter and the five fundamental factors. In Pratisaincara, life originates from matter and the unit mind emerges first as plants, animals and finally humans. This evolutionary model of creation leads to a greater understanding of and reverence for each part of creation.

Spiritual Practice

In Epistemology we can claim that knowledge can be gained from both objective and subjective processes. In Spiritual Practice Shrii P. R. Sarkar links philosophy to practical life by ascertaining the importance of there being an actual means

offered for deep realisation, transformation and evolution "Philosophy which has no link with the dusty earth, nor with the children of the soil has no practical value". In order to establish a co-ordination between philosophy and practical life, and for self-realisation and transformation NHE has spiritual practices based on the ancient Tantric system such as Astaunga Yoga.

BASIC PRINCIPLES OF NEO-HUMANIST EDUCATION

HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE CHILD

"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 utilised. They are 'educated' who have learned much, remembered much and made use of their knowledge in everyday life. Their virtues I will call education."

The development of the whole person implies a balance of the physical, mental and spiritual potentialities of the person. Here "mental" includes the emotional, social, ethical, intellectual aesthetic and intuitional realms, thereby spanning one's thoughts, feelings and actions. The full spectrum of the human being is integrated leading to greater wisdom, freedom, joy, sensitivity, compassion, benevolence and purpose.

NHE 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', infusing children with love so that they can grow into people who care to improve the world in which they live. Contact with the Self provides a deeply aesthetic experience where subject and object fuse in joy and the mystery of the indefinable is kept alive.

NHE addresses the potentialities of each of the kos'as, or layers of mind.

- Anamaya Kos'a - Physical Body - Awareness of inner and outer physicality.
- Ka'mamaya - Kos'a - Conscious Mind - The Senses - Interacting with the world through our senses, includes ethics and practical life skills.
- Manomaya Kos'a - Subconscious Mind - The Intellect - Conceptual and analytical ability, contemplation and recollection, includes problem solving.
- Atima'nasa Kos'a - First Layer of Super-conscious Mind - Creativity, aesthetics - includes performing any action in such a way that it brings joy and happiness all around.
- Vijina'maya Kos'a - Second Layer Super-conscious Mind - Intuition, intuitional insight, discrimination and predictive skills, includes understanding the past while moving into the future.
- Hiran'maya Kos'a - Third Layer Super-conscious Mind - Spirituality, realisation of higher consciousness, includes universal love)

In addition to the Kos'as, NHE addresses the optimum functioning of the Pra'n'endriya and the biopsychology of the human being, which are related to the physico-psychic level of existence.

"Pra'n'endriya is the collective name of the 10 vayus. (Vital airs) The position of the Pra'n'endriya is in the yogic heart. Pra'n'endriya plays the most vital part on the physical and psycho-physical level."

"...pra'n'endriya plays a vital part in helping the organs indirectly to receive the tanma'tras, in assisting the citta to perceive them correctly, and thus in letting the ego have a cognition in that connection."

**** Didi, unless you deal w/this later on, including defining the terms, it will be confusing to many of your potential readers.*

CARDINAL HUMAN VALUES

"In our education system, emphasis should be given to moral education and the inculcation of idealism—not only philosophy and traditions. The practice of morality should be the most important subject in the syllabus at all levels. The sense of universalism should also be awakened in the child. Etiquette and refined behaviour are not enough. Real education leads to a pervasive sense of love and compassion for all creation."

Universal cardinal human values are basic to NHE. Morality forms the basis of an emotionally balanced, self-confident, self-disciplined, integrated and discriminating individual who is well adjusted and able to form joyful relationships and take responsibility in society.

Universal cardinal human values, which are oriented towards creating mental harmony, include principles of relating to society (*Yama*) and principles for personal integration (*Niyama*).

- Yama: non-harming, benevolent truthfulness, non-stealing, simple living, universal love
- Niyama: cleanliness, mental contentment, service, inspirational study, self-knowledge and meditation.

Application of these values transcends a do's and don'ts mentality, leading to a sense of love and compassion for all creation, and thus finding their culmination in the principles of Neo-humanism

Social learning is central to the student's daily learning process. Students are guided to make relationships with other students and the world in a benevolent manner. Guidance of students by the adults emphasises conflict resolution, empathy and kindness.

The understanding and application of the science of Bio-Psychology supports emotional health and moral development.

NEO-HUMANISM - UNIVERSAL LOVE

"...So that there may not be any intellectual extravaganza or any physical subjugation, human beings require proper training both physically and mentally. And this is what is called "education" -- properly training the physical existence and also the psychic world. "... One is to get proper education; one is to be imparted with proper education -- not general education --, in the idea of Neo-humanism. This will help human beings in training the mind. And at the same time spiritual practice should go on for proper psychic remoulding. This is what we require most. There is no alternative."

The Philosophy of Neo-humanism leads every aspect of Neo-Humanist Education. Its practice develops into life principles and the basis of one's actions in life.

- **Universal Love, Ecology and Devotional Sentiment**

Neo-humanism simply stated extends the love of the human heart to embrace the entire creation, including all living beings as well as the inanimate world. In contrast to the western view that the individual is alone in the universe and in competition with others for resources and status, Neo-humanism promotes a vision of humanity as intimately linked with the fabric of the universe. This fundamental concept of interconnectedness is at the heart of the pedagogy. Neo-Humanist Education helps students develop an intimate living relationship with the web of life around them. It promotes an awareness of ecology in its broadest sense: i.e. the realisation of the inter-relatedness and interconnectedness of all things, and encourages respect and care for all living beings and the inanimate world. Neo-humanism presupposes 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.

- **Universalism**

"No 'ism' except universalism can be tolerated in the educational system"

A universal outlook is nurtured which transcends caste, creed, colour, race and gender. This includes an appreciation of historic contributions to human society from all people and promoting the ethic of society as 'one universal family'. Neo-humanism recognises only the broadest sentiment of universalism, which embraces all the entities of the cosmos, including plants, animals and the inanimate world. It rejects all other dogmatic sentiments, which impose limitations on the human mind such as geo-sentiment or partiality to one's territory, socio-sentiment or partiality to one's community, human sentiment or partiality to humans on the cost of animals.

*** small correction: 'AT the cost of animals' [not ON the cost...]

- **The Principle of Social Equality and Sense of Justice**

Recognising social equality leads to the practice of goodwill and service towards others as life principles, as well as the acceptance of 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. Persons following the Principle of Social Equality fight for justice.

- **Liberation of Intellect, Rationality and Awakened Conscience**

"Knowledge must be disseminated throughout all sections of society. You must create opportunities for all people to judge everything in the light of truth. Liberate the intellect of each and every person. Human

intellect is now bogged down in a marshy quagmire. Let people enjoy the sweet taste of intellectual freedom."

Neo-humanism calls for liberating the intellect from dogmatic and limiting views. Through awakened conscious, one learns to think in terms of the welfare of all. Awakened conscience is the mental process of studying, applying rational mentality and the principle of social equality. One discriminates 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.

*** a small correction: change the first 'conscious' to 'conscience'

- **Revolutionary Social Change**

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 analysing that an aspect of social change is for the collective welfare, pursues it with dynamism and revolutionary zeal.

*** This is good, but I would imagine many of your readers asking: "Who decides what social change is for the collective welfare?" This is an honest question. Do you address it later on? How do these Neo-Humanists analyze and decide?

- **Fighting Against Pseudo Culture**

Neo-humanist educators value the multitude of cultural expressions that make up the whole of humanity, fostering indigenous language, arts, and other cultural expressions in their schools.

One of the currents that Neo-humanist schools find themselves swimming against is what is termed "pseudo-culture", the homogenous music, films, and television shows that are designed not to uplift the human spirit, but to gain short term profits for their makers. These products are finding their way into every corner of the world, and eroding local cultural expressions and sentiments. This raging current of cultural products is countered in Neo-humanist schools by working to develop local art and craft forms, by media literacy and the development of a critical social and political awareness. NHE fosters the creative transmission of cherished local values to future generations through plays, murals, literature, and other forms of expression.

ASTAUNGA YOGA

"We must develop the physico-psychic aspect of students through proper physical culture which will include yoga asanas, proper diet; we must reorient the entire curriculum of all schools from kindergarten to

postgraduate level according the Neo-humanist philosophy, and must incorporate the practice of Astaunga yoga into the curriculum in all grades. This will be the practical approach. And the guiding philosophy, the controlling philosophy should be: "this universe is ours" and "we " means, humans, animals and plants."

The universe is an integrated whole emerged from pure consciousness in which everything is interrelated. The realisation of this oneness fosters a deep sense of connection to one's spiritual self, to others and to all of life. The spiritual subjective worldview instils a commitment to care for all creation, and as such is fundamental to the understanding and practice of Neo-humanism. So a spiritual practice, however simple, is at the base in any NHE school. The validity of spiritual experience is affirmed through myth, story, play and the opportunity for reflection within the context of the overall life and rhythm of the class. Spirituality is not a doctrine, but a living sense of one's connectedness within a greater whole and as such permeates the entire learning process. The practice of Astaunga Yoga further trains the mind with all it's layers, to be balanced and peaceful and able to focus and absorb itself in learning.

APPLIED LEARNING

"They are 'educated' who have learned much, remembered much and made use of their knowledge in everyday life. Their virtues I will call education."

"So the people of the orient could not but be spiritual in their thoughts and actions. Whereas there is, in the western system of education, a clear and unilateral emphasis on mundane knowledge. So to build up an ideal human society in the future, the balanced emphasis on the two is indispensable. We should remember that morality, spirituality and humanity, and a happy blending of occidental extroversial science and oriental introversial philosophy is the very foundation of our system of education"

Children learn about themselves and the world and are enabled to live full and purposeful lives. Children are provided with the skills and resources they will need to meet life's challenges and with the academic and other skills necessary for the successful pursuit of higher education. Learning involves co-ordinated action on the physical, ethical, emotional, intellectual, aesthetic, intuitive and spiritual levels and is pursued both introversially and extroversially. Introversial learning is gaining knowledge about one's Self and includes the practice of meditation. Extroversial learning is gaining knowledge about life and the world as an interconnected whole. The application of learning is aimed at personal and collective empowerment towards Neo-humanist living.

*** Interesting, but if I'm new to these ideas, as some of your readers are, I wonder about the meaning of the last sentence. Sounds weird, too stiff. Maybe it could be something like: "Thus learning in NHE is aimed at personal empowerment where the individual also works wholeheartedly to help the community adapt Neo-Humanistic standards." [or something like that, Didi. I just think that the original sentence is not too clear.]

Remembered Much

Methods used in NHE contribute to retention of what is learned. Here are a few that are especially important for remembering.

- Freedom from internal and external distractions
- A happy relationship between the children and the teacher.
- Sufficient time allotted for delving deep into a given area or subject.
- Connection between learning and life.
- Knowledge brought within the scope of rhythm and the arts.

*** This section, including the title, doesn't make sense to me. Are you saying that these 5 points are some of the important things that a student gains from NHE? Also: I know the title is from Baba's quote, but it seems oddly-phrased. Can you say something, like: "Remembering much". This sounds better to the ear, Didi. [but you decide: see my note below next section.]

Made Use of Their Knowledge in Everyday Life

- Learning finds relevance when it emerges from and contributes to life. Knowledge of introversial practices, moral values, Neo-humanist principles, the arts or the sciences is applied in one's day-to-day life for the greater welfare of oneself and the world. NHE upholds the teaching of ethically based science, technology and economics for the just utilisation of the world's resources, and the pursuit of the arts for service and blessedness.
- The spirit of service is inculcated in the students from their earliest years by fostering a sense of compassion. Students are encouraged to direct their efforts outwards to the community in self-selected service projects. Service-to people, plants, animals and the earth itself helps to develop feelings of selflessness, and a sense that one is involved in the web of life as a contributor. Older students practice active citizenship, taking initiative for social change and justice.

*** Given the titles of these 2 sections, you should have a section called: 'learned much.' Otherwise, you can put all these points in one section. These are really great selling points for NHE. Just to be a bit picky, though, in your last sentence, I'd prefer to give a couple of tangible examples of what the older students do.

TEACHER

"Academic certificates do not necessarily confer on a person the right to become a teacher. Teachers must possess such qualities as personal integrity, strength of character, righteousness, a feeling for social service, unselfishness, an inspiring personality and leadership ability. They are samaja gurus and for this reason it is not possible to accept just anyone as a teacher. Because teachers have an extremely important role to play, their professional standards must be very high."

***** do you say what samaja means somewhere else? Otherwise, you can change that phrase to: 'gurus of the society'.**

Spiritual and Ethical Development

Teachers cultivate their moral and spiritual development. They must embody the noblest qualities of humanity – selflessness, strength of character, leadership, service spirit and love for all of life. Teachers have the power to transform the students by their own example and loving guidance and to nurture the highest aspirations of the human spirit; therefore their personal moral and spiritual development is very important. The practice of Astaunga yoga develops both these areas as it includes moral values and meditative practices.

Spiritual development involves daily spiritual practice, and provides the practitioner with a deeply aesthetic and joyous experience. Moral development involves being self aware, working with one's emotions and biopsychology and learning to interact with others in a benevolent manner. This facilitates the formation of loving and joyous relationships.

Teacher as Neo-humanist

"Neo" means "ever new." A Neo-humanist teacher is to keep an open perspective, free of dogma or limiting views. Neo-humanism stands for the liberation of intellect by nurturing devotion as the highest treasure of the human heart that provides the inspiration to the learner to break through all kinds of limiting attitudes. Neo-humanism is the practice of love for all creation. The practice is embedded in the Tantric spiritual principles and aims at the continuous striving with vigour and dynamism to liberate one's own mind and move towards the subtle, towards spiritual perfection. The teacher is a contemplative practitioner continuously learning and educating. This practice is carried on to become one's mission in life, which results in a deep sense of responsibility for the interconnectedness of all of life. The culminating vision of what it means to be a Neo-humanist teacher is that one's own individual nucleus is one with the cosmic nucleus when one's being and action is in harmony with the greater cosmic purpose.

The teacher's practice of the principles of Neo-humanism is exemplified in their personal lives, in the classroom and in their interactions with the students. These

principles include love, ecological awareness, universalism, rationality and awakened conscience, social justice and social change. The teacher fosters a Neo-humanist classroom environment and is non-biased with regards to gender, race, creed and nationality.

"The noblest form of social service to educate the public and create a sense of consciousness in them. This sense of consciousness is to be inculcated in each and every human being. This is your duty. The goal of education is to elevate the all-round standard, and especially the intellectual standard. In addition, the elevation of the moral standard is extremely necessary in the sphere of education. This moral standard is deficient today. It is lacking in the present educational system also. You are to create a new social order. Therefore, you should first acquire more and more knowledge in different spheres of life and also you are to upgrade your morality. Along with your intellectual standard, if you have morality, then everybody will respect you. Try to acquire as much knowledge as possible through our own books. Education which leads to the acquisition of knowledge plus morality makes for a peaceful society."

"The teachers training is to include public psychology, teaching psychology, author's psychology, child psychology, phonetics and acoustics and politics."

****"The noblest form of social service IS to educate the public and create a sense of consciousness in them."
[you had left out the word IS in the first sentence above]*

Knowledgeable and Skilled Professional

In addition to knowledge of their trade, teachers must work on increasing their knowledge in all spheres of life. This involves having the skills for life long learning, or learning how to learn. They must further have the ability to apply their knowledge in the classroom setting. In addition to elevating their intellectual standard, they must work on developing all their other kos'as or layers of mind including their creative and intuitive abilities. They must also have a broad knowledge of psychology and be able to apply it in their interaction with others.

In Loving Relationship with Students and Others - Interpersonal Skills

"The teacher must bear in mind that whatever the ages of his students -- child, teenager, young adult, or older person -- all to him are but children of different ages, and he too is a child like them. Keeping himself aloof or always trying to put on a forced attitude will undermine mutual affection. In the absence of this mutual affection, free and open exchange of ideas will be simply impossible. Because of this lack of a loving relationship many students heartily wish for the death of either their implacable teacher or their oppressive parents."

"Whatever the students learn out of fear of their parents and teachers fades into oblivion as soon as the agencies of fear are removed. When learning and fear are placed in close juxtaposition, then with the disappearance of fear, knowledge too disappears from the recesses of the mind. When the bullying teacher leaves the classroom, the students heave a sigh of relief. Whatever they had committed to memory starts growing hazy within a few hours. Fearing examinations, students work hard, poring over their books, accomplishing ten days' work in one hour. But after the examinations are over, at a football game or at the movies, they forget much of what they learned, because Mr. Fear is no longer in command."

Teachers are counsellors and friends who facilitate the unfolding of the creative learning processes by being attentive to the needs and abilities of each student.

Learning that takes place when fear or intimidation is present will soon be forgotten. Teachers need to develop a loving relationship with their students. Teachers are encouraged to see the child in all of his or her potential fullness, encouraging and guiding the children to bring out what is within themselves and fostering a free and open exchange of ideas. For this they must possess strong interpersonal and communication skills, applied psychology skills and leadership skills. They must further engender love and trust in their interactions not only with children, but also with other staff, parents and the community

TEACHING METHODS

"Education is just remoulding the old structure of the mind and goading it unto the highest state of realisation, the exalted status of Supreme Veracity, the highest status of factualities. We have to keep in view three fundamentals before imparting education.

The first is that education must always be based on factuality. There must not be the injection of any dogma or fanaticism or any type of geographical or racial chauvinism in the education system.

The second fundamental is that education must awaken the thirst for knowledge in the students' minds. The students themselves will create environmental pressure by persistent demands for answers to queries like: What is the answer? Is it correct? The longing, "I wish to know.... I wish to understand and assimilate the entire universe" should be created. Such a thirst for knowledge should be created in the minds of students. A learner, in Arabic, is called "ta'lib-ul-ilm meaning "a genuine seeker of knowledge." So a tremendous thirst for knowledge must be awakened in the students' minds. They will constantly pry their teachers, their parents and their neighbours with questions like: Why is this so? What is that? Why does that happen? Why does this not happen? etc. They are ready to assimilate the entire universe.

The third fundamental of education is that teachers and students should have a balanced mind, unaffected, unassailed by unimportant entities. These are the three fundamentals of education. Education is a must not only for human beings, but also for all living beings."

FUNDAMENTALS

- **Absence of dogma; being factual**
- **Awakening the thirst for knowledge and love of learning**
- **Freedom from distractions**

Children are natural inquirers, wanting to know about the world in which they find themselves. It is this natural thirst for knowledge that guides the learning process and needs to be fostered and encouraged in all possible ways. In order for children to engage fully in the learning experience, their full attention needs to be present. Freeing the child from distractions, both internal and external while awakening and encouraging their natural interest in learning are fundamental to the learning process. Freedom from internal distractions is enhanced by a meditation practice, which calms and stills the mind. It is essential to keep away from dogma and narrow ideas so the child's mind can be liberated to truly learn.

VEHICLES FOR LEARNING

Through Play, Games, Stories, Idealism and Realism

"The child's mind is superlatively inclined towards play. So the thirst for knowledge has to be awakened through the medium of games. The child's mind is also partial to tales and stories. Through the medium of stories he may easily be taught the history and geography of various countries. With these methods he may

be initiated into sa'dhana' or the practice of universal kindred ship. Children love games and stories equally, so both must be utilised to the fullest advantage. In the mental horizon of a teenager the dream of the future breaks like the first streak of an early dawn. Without indulging in narrow-mindedness, he should be taught through the medium of idealism. The youthful mind, however, is somewhat realistically inclined. Therefore in this case pure idealism will not be sufficient. In order to educate him a mixture of idealism and realism should be evolved. "

As appropriate for a given age group, students are taught through the medium of play, games, stories, idealism and realism. These methods contribute to the awakening of their natural thirst for knowledge, which will provides the momentum for learning to flourish.

*** Can you say more on this topic? It seems to be central to the booklet, yet only one small paragraph of commentary.

Through the Cultivation of Aesthetics and Joy in all Disciplines

"Now the question is, what is the primary factor that imparts joy and delight to people? ...This is the basic psychology of aesthetic science."

"The quintessence of Aesthetic Science is to get joy and give joy."

"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."

The capacity for "wonder at the beauty and mystery of the world" is essentially an aesthetic capacity, and Neo-humanist schools understand art and the creative process as central to the full development of human being. Literature, music, theatre, painting, dance, and sculpture are at the core of the curriculum in NHE schools, not at the periphery. These art forms are the vehicles for teaching all subjects, for it is art that expands the inventive, intuitive, and imaginative powers of the super conscious mind and that infuses learning with joy.

Through Rhythm

"In the absence of rhythm, it is difficult to memorise. That is why since ancient times, for 15, 000 years, the common practice has been to bring every branch of knowledge within the scope of rhythm. Human beings do not easily forget rhythm. One may forget the content of knowledge, but not the rhythm."

Rhymes, music, songs, poetry, movement and similar rhythmic methods are employed as part of the learning process. Rhythm creates joy and on the current of joy the child learns easily.

*** Again: can you say more on this; if you don't have much to say, perhaps you can give some examples of poems, songs, etc that fit this category.

CULTURALLY SENSITIVE PEDAGOGY

"Now, the best way of enmity against a person or a race is to deprive the person or the race of the freedom to cultivate their Prana Dharma, and to prevent them from channelising their potentiality accordingly."

"The culture of the entire human race is one, but there are different local expressions. This difference in local expressions does not mean that people of different corners of the earth have different cultures - culture is the same, but the expressions vary. Education is a part of cultural life. Education should be free, and education must be based on universalism. While imparting education you should also remember that there are certain local conditions, local problems and local requirements; so while formulating the educational structure, we should do everything remembering this fundamental fact."

Every student in a class should feel that their culture is appreciated and valued, and the education imparted should be sensitive to the needs of the local culture. Whether the Neo-Humanist educator is living and teaching in a culture other than their culture of origin, or whether they are teaching in their own culture but have students from many different cultural backgrounds in their classroom, the teachers need to understand first their own cultural conditioning, secondly how one studies and comes to understand a culture other than their own, and finally how to educate all students in a culturally sensitive way.

Neo-humanism values diverse cultural expressions. It also embodies a critical understanding of the ways in which the politics of colonialism, imperialism, racism, consumerism, and ethnocentricity have served to oppress people and destroy the unique cultural expressions of humanity. Neo-Humanist Education seeks to heal the wounds that have been inflicted by the abuse of power. A starting point in this project is the affirmation of the cultural expressions of the locality in which a Neo-Humanist school exists.

*** Good points, Didi. But what is prana dharma? Your readers won't know. And, I hope this doesn't seem 'intellectual' or picky, but it is sometimes confusing when Baba says that there is one human culture, but then we go on and talk about the different cultures in the world.

HOLISTIC LEARNING

Care is taken to include and integrate the whole child in the learning process – the physical, mental and spiritual aspects of the child. Learning is thus not limited to the intellect but involves the whole child: the physical body, the senses, the intellect, the emotions, aesthetics, intuition and consciousness.

INTEGRATED AND INTERDISCIPLINARY LEARNING

Learning takes place in a broad context that fosters a sense of the interconnection and interdependence of all subjects and practical everyday life. Learning and teaching is adjusted to new discoveries and research.

INDIVIDUALISED APPROACHES

Appropriate methods are employed to meet the individual needs of the students and may include a variety of information delivery methods providing a wide range of individual and group learning experiences in a non-biased manner. These might include lecture style, didactic style, one-on-one, co-operative

teamwork, small group lessons grouped according to ability and independent work.

CURRICULUM SPECIALTIES OF NEO-HUMANIST EDUCATION GRADES K-8

Curriculum standards will be locally written. For each grade level they will include the content and skill requirements of the locale in which they are used. Outlined below are the specialities of Neo-Humanist Education as they manifest in the curriculum in relation to various subject areas. These subject areas are taught in an age and grade appropriate manner over the course of the primary school years.

Note:

- The elements of Astaunga Yoga are present, but distributed through various areas of study
- Neo-humanism and Morality are the base for every other subject, and therefore not introduced as separate subjects
- Applied Learning is not only a subject, but also a basic principle for all learning, as learning arises from the child's natural interest and inquiry about real life.
- The Arts are not only a subject, but also a vehicle through which all other subjects are taught.
- Learning is not limited to the intellect but involves the whole child and all the kos'as: the physical body, the senses, the intellect, aesthetics, intuition and consciousness.

CURRICULUM SUBJECTS GOALS AND DESCRIPTIONS

Language Arts

Students read the finest literature available, and through this medium explore and discover the universal values of NHE. Children are equipped with appropriate skills for effective communication through written, oral and practical language arts, programs and activities

NHE Specialities:

- **Reading** – Books are selected consciously according to Yama and Niyama and universal outlook. Content comes first, then love of literature, finally skills. Books reflecting higher values can be at the centre of the curriculum and many extensions developed from this hub, such as drama, art activities, science and history extensions, etc. Books are discussed in an open manner, and the values they reflect are thus brought forward and then applied to life in some practical way.
- **Writing** - Children are taught that the writer has a responsibility for the effect of their works on others
- **Language:** A second language is taught to broaden mental horizons

Skills:

- Read and understand a variety of materials, media, and resources.
- Apply skills in explanation, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation to their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and viewing
- Choose vocabulary and sentence structures that communicate clearly and precisely in writing and speaking
- Generate topics and develop ideas for a variety of writing and speaking purposes according to Neo-humanist values
- Use appropriate technology to extend comprehension and communication skills in reading, writing, speaking, listening and viewing

Social Studies

Students understand themselves, their position in the family, peer groups, community and the human family as a whole. Students are encouraged to become global citizens and to have a universal and non-discriminatory knowledge of and outlook towards all people regardless of race, religion, gender and creed and to develop love of all cultures. Students are learning to make judgements based on the Principle of Social Equality and to live one's judgements.

- Study different aspects of human cultures, and interactions with peoples of diverse backgrounds
- Study the lives of great personalities including actual quotations, speeches, personal writings and biographies.
- Learn the elements of the world's religions
- Study History
 - Learn to evaluate information from various viewpoints
 - Learn to identify narrow sentiments such as geo-sentiment and socio-sentiment
 - Recognise strategies and patterns of exploitation
 - Grade appropriately examine religious, political and philosophical ideas that have been powerful forces throughout history and how they affect the world
 - Learn to use the 4 steps of awakened conscience (advanced or intermediate) in analysing history.
- Learn, discuss and debate about local, national and global issues, social justice, human rights and current events
- Apply knowledge of the past to compare and contrast present day issues and events from historically objective perspectives
- Study PROUT related topics

Science, Ecology and Environmental Studies

Students have an understanding of the natural world, the living things within it and their interrelationships. Students develop a caring and nourishing attitude towards the environment as a whole. Studies, grade and age appropriately, introduce a) the physical sciences of physics and chemistry b) life sciences of anatomy, physiology, botany, zoology and

ecology and c) earth and space sciences of geology, meteorology, astronomy and oceanography.

- Learn about the oneness behind all things
- Learn about flora, fauna and the environment
- Learn about systems on the microcosmic and macrocosmic scales
- Learn about our custodial, not dictatorial role with Earth's living things
- Study, reflect upon and act upon local and global environmental issues
- Practice ecology as a way of life at school
- Encourage love, compassion and respect for animals, plants and the environment through school activities
- Participate in environmental excursions and campaigns
- Learn the processes of scientific investigation
- Use appropriate technology to understand scientific concepts and conduct scientific inquiry
- Conduct scientific experiments, observations, discussions, projects and fieldtrips.
- Learn about the evolutionary cycle of Brahmachakra
- Learn about the basic principle of Microvita

The Arts

Students are immersed in the arts, music, art and drama. The arts permeate every aspect of the school curriculum, and pseudo culture is replaced with true human culture. Music, art and drama should reflect true human culture and not pseudo culture. True human culture transmits values and history to the next generation and is uplifting. Pseudo culture is harmful and designed for profit. (Pseudo culture is not banned, but replaced).

- Incorporate the arts into every aspect of the school curriculum.
- Receive training in the arts such as music, theatre, dance, fine arts, drawing, painting, video arts, modelling, jewellery making, woodwork, fibre arts, crafts, etc
- Participate in the performing arts - drama, instrumental music, dance, art exhibitions
- Learn about true human culture along with cardinal values and how they influence art
- Learn to use Art for upliftment, welfare, joy and helping to move the society forward, and not for its own sake.

Mathematics

Students increase their mathematical powers, learn to better reason and communicate mathematically, explore the connections between mathematics and other subjects, appreciate the wonder of mathematical laws and patterns in our universe, and are able to use mathematics in their everyday lives

- Use mathematical methods and understanding in problem solving situations and activities

- Learn and practice critical thinking skills which include data analysis and measurement
- Explore mathematical laws and patterns in our universe and its life forms and appreciate the wonder
- Understand and utilise technology in mathematical understanding and application

Technology

Students access technology in a responsible and ethical manner to enhance and extend their learning and activities.

- Learn basic word processing and skills
- Learn to use the internet for research and communication
- Learn to use the internet to communicate with other schools or to participate in collaborative learning and service projects
- Utilise technology to learn skills necessary to create multi-media and graphic presentation in the digital world
- Employ various technologies to facilitate study and collection of data

Physical Education

Students develop physical fitness, gross and fine motor control, the senses, co-ordination, rhythm, grace, discipline and dynamism

- Develop physical fitness through individual and group sports, games, yoga exercises, etc.
- Develop discipline and dynamism, through competitive and co-operative games, gross motor exercises and martial arts
- Develop co-ordination, rhythm and grace through dance, creative movement, kaos'ikii and mudra dance.
- Strengthen fine motor co-ordination through exercises, crafts and manipulatives
- Develop, sharpen and control the senses through sensory exercises and games

Health and hygiene

Students understand a variety of techniques for promoting personal and physical well being.

- Practice cleanliness for self and environment
- Learn healthy living habits and personal hygiene
- Learn about basic nutrition and proper diet, and vegetarianism
- Participate in exercise techniques and learn about their benefits
- Practice yoga asanas, including relaxation techniques and understand their benefits
- Learn about yogic life style
- Receive training in personal and environmental safety, and first aid
- Learn protective behaviours (physical, verbal and psychological self defence)
- Learn the importance of keeping good company - whether it be food, friends, books or music, and to avoid pseudo-culture

Personal Development

Character Building, Emotional Intelligence and Moral Development

Students reflect personal growth in areas including: nice temperament, self-discipline, self-confidence, courage, personal integrity, moral discrimination and sense of responsibility.

- Read literature and biographies that reflect moral and Neo-humanist values
- Participate in regular peer support discussion groups and peer mediation and counselling with a focus on individual and group issues
- Demonstrate self-regulation through contract work in the classroom and project work.
- Recite moral aphorisms to inculcate practical wisdom
- Learn about and use co-operative learning and conflict resolution strategies
- Learn to redirect limiting emotions through self introspection
- Develop a greater emotional balance through the study of psychological development, bio-psychology, anger management, stress reduction and other topics

LIFE SKILLS

Students are equipped with practical life skills including communication and interpersonal skills

- Learn skills needed in everyday life maintenance
- Learn practical skills such as gardening, agriculture, mechanics, typing, woodwork, sewing, weaving, home economics, handicrafts, use of a computer, etc.
- Study techniques to be an effective communicator and listener one on one and in groups
- Practice basic etiquette, social skills, and social norms
- Learn conflict resolution techniques
- Take advantage of leadership training

SPIRITUAL PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE

Students develop an understanding of and a relationship with the Source of Creation and their innermost being. Mental clarity and intuition are strengthened. Students explore philosophic questions concerning the nature of reality.

- Practice daily meditation on cosmic love or cosmic consciousness
- Practice mind expanding techniques of concentration and creative visualisation
- Participate in spiritual singing, dancing, chanting, and drama
- Participate in spiritual celebrations and ceremonies
- Study philosophic topics and participate in discussions, as appropriate to the given situation:

Examples: brahmachakra, reincarnation, karma, kos'as, Guru, microvita, etc.

APPLIED LEARNING

Students apply what has been learned to life situations. Knowledge of spirituality, Neo-humanism, moral values, the arts and sciences are practised for the greater welfare of oneself and the world.

- Through children teaching other children
- Through practical care of the school environment
- Through electives such as a school newspaper or radio station
- Through service learning through projects in the local community
- Through vocational opportunities for older students for integration into the community
- Through active citizenship initiatives for social change

STUDENT VOLUNTEERS (Clubs)

Students are given opportunities for broadening their life experience and contributing towards building a more dynamic community

- Learn community service skills and participate in community based projects
- Participate in emergency skills training
- Learn skills for independent living
- Learn about Neo-Humanist citizenship
- Study great personalities and their influence on human society
- Practice DESMEP (discipline, etiquette, smartness, morality, English, pronunciation)
- Participate in co-operative games to develop leadership, initiative and collective spirit
- Participate in festivals, games, singing, story telling
- Participate in adventure oriented field trips
- Become practically involved in local, national and global issues

CURRICULUM FOR KINDERGARTEN **Ages 3-5**

GOALS AND DESCRIPTIONS

LANGUAGE ARTS

Students engage in pre-reading, pre-writing, speech, and other language related skills - exploring the universal values of Neo-Humanist Education.

Reading - Books and other language arts materials are selected consciously according to Yama and Niyama with an emphasis on universal outlook. All core areas of study (social studies, math, science, speech, art, and spiritual studies) are correlated through language arts. Because young children are highly visual and pre-literate, considerable attention is given to the visual representations in books which may include colourful and finely illustrated water colours, mixed media, and drawings, as well as aesthetically pleasing photography.

Language - Stories, dramas, skits, puppet shows and other media are made available. Extending opportunities for social interaction and dialog expand the potential of language arts as do music, finger-plays, and movement.

Writing - Writing is supported by providing occasions for creative fine motor activities involving the fingers and hands, such as painting, playing, drawing, cutting, working with clay as well as sand.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Students understand themselves, their position in the family, as well as the community.

Students demonstrate appreciation, respect, and tolerance for diversity and cultivate universal sensitivity.

Children may be exposed to various aspects of human culture, people of divergent backgrounds, ages, skin colour, gender, ethnicity, cultural dress, physical or mental challenges, and other specialities. Emphasis is placed on the differences and similarities found among humanity, promoting universal acceptance of individual or collective preferences. Initially social study incorporates what students directly experience in their immediate community and daily lives, always watching for opportunities for helping others.

This study empowers students to understand themselves and may include stories of individuals who find themselves in moral dilemmas or stories where inappropriate choices and their consequences are evident. Principles of Yama and Niyama are interwoven into these activities as is learning how to resolve conflicts peacefully with courtesy and mutual respect.

SCIENCE, ECOLOGY, AND ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES

Students know and understand the wonders of bio-diversity as found in the worlds of plant, animal, and mineral kingdoms (as well as the elemental forces) and their interrelationships.

Students develop a sentiment of benevolence and caring for the environment.

The contributions that every living being makes for the world community is observed and how we are all interconnected. Every life form is an expression of the Divinity. Through the study of nature, students learn about themselves and their relationship with the world. Inquiry and discovery become a way of life, encouraging respect and love for all members of the physical universe. Direct experiences and excursions are sought as much as possible since the more we are present in nature, the more we connect with our Inner Nature.

THE ARTS

Students explore the creative arts, replacing pseudo culture with true human culture, creating artistic life long learners. Students experience integrated creative arts into every aspect of the school curriculum.

A wide spectrum of activities are introduced including but not limited to drawing, singing, acting, moving, playing music, sculpting, and painting. Creating art from a teacher's model is minimised and unrestricted use of imagination, creativity, and

exploration are encouraged. Artistic expression is dedicated more to experiencing particular elements of the creative process than the final product. Aesthetics are important not only in the facilitation of the curriculum but also in the environment.

MATHEMATICS

Students increase their mathematical abilities, learning to reason and visually discriminate the qualities and characteristics of the natural world. Students cultivate a basic understanding of relationships, logic, and appreciation of differences, using math in their everyday lives.

The usefulness of math experiences in our daily lives is demonstrated by introducing practical fun qualitative and quantitative activities and observing the relationship of objects or living beings. Many activities can be implemented in the course of the normal daily routine. These concepts when combined with science enable the student to engage in problem solving and improve higher critical thinking skills.

TECHNOLOGY

Students access technology within all areas of early child education when appropriate.

Technology is generally used sparingly in order to maintain a balance with more socially based experiential activities.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Students encounter a wide range of physical education experiences.

Diversified experiences are offered to practice gross and fine motor abilities. Play may include practising spatial awareness and physical co-ordination skills as well as individual, group, co-operative, and competitive activities.

HEALTH, HYGIENE, AND SAFETY

Students practice and understand cleanliness and healthy living habits.

Health and hygiene practices are part of the daily rhythm of the class. The advantages of cleanliness and orderliness are examined as well as the importance of safe behaviour.

PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Students experience challenges that enhance character building, emotional intelligence, and moral development. Students demonstrate personal growth in such areas as: compassion, self-discipline, anger management, self-confidence, courage, personal integrity, emotional balance, moral discrimination, and sense of responsibility.

The advantages of self-restraint, self-regulation, and patience are explored. Co-operative learning situations nurture empathy, compassion, and moral proficiency. Simple conflict resolution strategies evolve to strengthen self-esteem and moral courage. Guidance techniques are implemented, enabling students to: process emotions; deal with fear and insecurities; reduce aggression, frustration, and stress. Pro-social skills, such as, sharing, generosity, care giving, and kindness are practised and reinforced

LIFE SKILLS

Students are equipped with communication, interpersonal and self-sufficiency skills that are appropriate for their age.

An integral part of education is enabling students to become more independent by managing their own personal needs while being considerate and caring of others. This includes expanding benevolent communication and interpersonal techniques, basic etiquette, and leadership training. Areas of study are developed which will make available for each student the skills required to be a valued member of the community.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE AND PHILOSOPHY

Students develop an understanding of and a relationship with the Source of Creation and their innermost being.

The mind-expanding techniques of meditation and creative visualisation are introduced and practised as well as asanas, spiritual singing, kiirtan dancing, and mantra chanting. Studying and discussing spiritual oriented stories and dramas also demonstrate Neo-Humanist principles.

APPLIED LEARNING

Students apply what has been learned to daily life situations.

Through older children mentoring and teaching younger children, practical care of the school environment, and service opportunities in the local community; teachers empower children with responsibility and leadership opportunities, enabling them to become valuable members of the world society.

Acronym for Education

E Enlargement of Mind
D DESMEP - Discipline, Etiquette, Smartness, Morality, English and Pronunciation
U Universal Outlook
C Character
A Active Habits
T Trustworthiness
I Ideation of the Great
O Omniscient Grace
N Nice Temperament