EDUCATING HEART AND MIND:
FOSTERING ETHICAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING IN ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS

by

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There have been calls for a renewed emphasis on balancing educating the heart and mind in elementary education in response to troubling global problems such as poverty, environmental destruction, war, and genocide. The hope is that educating the hearts as well as the minds of students will begin a process of thoughtful healing of this world. Despite calls for broader educational objectives, teachers in public school systems are under increasing pressure to narrow the curriculum to encourage better performance on standardized tests. I am engaging in this conceptual inquiry into emotional learning both to provide a defensible philosophical position on emotional learning that will help resist political pressures to narrow the curriculum and to answer theoretical questions arising out of my teaching practice.

The general purpose of my study is to contribute to the conceptual research literature on ethical emotional learning of pre-adolescent children. By ethical emotional learning, I am referring to the ways in which a child acquires appropriate emotions and learns to direct both her negative and positive emotions so as to live in moral or good ways. This conceptual inquiry and related educational approach is grounded in neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics as I believe it avoids the intellectualist bias found in other prominent ethics, and provides an appropriate balance between emotional and intellectual development.

The concept of habituation is often discussed in virtue ethics literature as an early form of learning of the emotional virtues. Amongst neo-Aristotelian virtue ethicists there are divergent interpretations of the concept of habituation, and I am undertaking a conceptual inquiry in order to arrive at a normative conception of the term. I also position
my normative conception of habituation in a broader consideration of the achievement of practical wisdom or *phronesis*.

To further develop this research, I have also provided the teaching methods and educational configurations that are practically effective and drawn a theoretical connection to virtue ethics. I have also brought in the topics of teacher/student relationships and teacher identity and integrity as I believe that these considerations are of fundamental importance, but not widely discussed in the conceptual literature.
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This Master's thesis is dedicated to my husband

Martin Granatstein.

His compassionate heart inspires me.
Chapter I
Introduction

"Educating the mind without educating the heart has produced brilliant scientists who used their intelligence for evil."

Archbishop Desmond Tutu

There has been a renewed emphasis in education on balancing educating the mind with educating the heart. This trend can be evidenced through the increased focus in educational conferences, websites and publications on developing the emotional capabilities of students in addition to pursuing purely academic goals. I believe that this renewed emphasis is an appropriate response to the realities of the modern world, which many believe is in a state of crisis. As humanity is collectively faced with injustice, poverty, environmental destruction, conflict, alienation, species extinction, war and genocide; I believe educators must balance educating the heart and mind so as to encourage the development of persons who can begin a process of thoughtful healing of this world.

Despite this renewed emphasis on the importance of attending to a balance between the emotional and academic development of students with an ultimate goal of the development of a “good person”, schools are under increasing pressure to focus on a narrow academic agenda. As Berkowitz and Bier (2004) state:

In the current climate of high-stakes standardized testing in schools, quality education is taking quite a beating. Schools are skewing their curricula

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toward the narrow content of tests, in some cases actually dropping entire subject areas that are not being tested. (p. 78)

Ranson (2003) argues that the current narrowing academic agenda is the result of a neo-liberal corporate accountability mindset dominating governance in education (p. 464). Ranson points out that the accountability movement in education has grown out of a perceived loss of trust in public schools, but is grounded in a conservative political ideology. Whereas school governance was previously entrusted to the professional judgment of educational administrators, there has been a shift to open accountability and participation in governance from the public sphere. But this change has not been based on the model of open discourse between educators and the public, but on the model of the public as consumer in which schools are accountable to consumer needs and interests as a way to enhance performance. Ranson argues that this model has generated perverse and unintended consequences (p. 460). He argues that the focus on quantitative measurement of quality displaces concern for the internal goods of excellence,\(^2\) (p. 460) and leads to a limited set of performances and outcomes, principally test and examination results, which inadequately represent the more comprehensive spiritual, cultural, moral, aesthetic and intellectual values and purposes for schools (p. 467).

\(^2\) Ranson argues that the current neo-liberal accountability movement can be understood through Alasdair MacIntyre's distinction between "internal goods of excellence" (such as realizing the virtues of justice, courage, etc.) and "the extrinsic goods of effectiveness" (such as wealth, status and power). Ranson believes that these two types of goods remain in tension within educational settings and that the current perception of accountability as "holding to account" reflects an emphasis on extrinsic goods of effectiveness.
In light of my experience as an elementary school teacher in Vancouver, British Columbia, I believe that Berkowitz and Bier (2004) are correct in their assessment, and that Ranson (2003) reveals the current context in educational governance that has lead to a narrowing of the curriculum. Consequently, I believe that educators who recognize the need to focus on emotional learning should be able to clearly articulate a defensible philosophical and related methodological position on emotional learning, in order to provide the justification that is necessary in this high pressure context. The motivation to articulate such a position is not necessarily to answer a summons to be accountable, but rather to provide an account that can lead to more conversation on and greater understanding of emotional learning.\(^3\) I believe it is important for me to contribute to the research literature that can support educators in this regard.

Along with the modern day pressures to narrow the curriculum to exclude emotional learning, there are also ideological and philosophical issues which can serve to inhibit teachers from engaging in emotional learning with students in a formal way.\(^4\) Maxwell and Reichenbach (2005) point out that the importance of emotions to personal and social development is widely acknowledged in educational literature, but it is less clear what it means to educate the emotions (p. 295). The authors point out that many ethical theories view the emotions as irrational affective responses that are not by nature educable (p. 296). The authors also raise the issue that educating the emotions can be seen as potentially

\(^3\) Ranson (2003) makes the distinction in accountability between “holding to account” based on neo-liberal governance and “providing an account” based on discursive practices which bring understanding (p. 461).

\(^4\) I use the term “formal way” to acknowledge that it is perhaps inescapable for children to learn about emotions, whether or not teachers are consciously engaging in teaching about the emotions or not. All of our interactions with children involve emotions, which children incorporate into their own complex understanding of emotion. I use the term “formal way” to refer a teacher’s conscious efforts to encourage emotional learning.
violating principles of political liberalism by trespassing upon individual freedoms (p. 297). The authors are largely sympathetic to the cause of educating the emotions, but I am raising their concerns to point out the importance of developing a clearly defensible philosophical and related methodological position on educating the emotions in today’s modern context.

I am undertaking this conceptual inquiry not only because of the external pressures to clearly articulate a defensible philosophical position on educating the emotions, but importantly I have conceptual questions that have arisen out of my teaching practice that I feel I need to answer. I use a variety of methods in encouraging emotional learning in my students that range from rational engagement to purely experiential engagement. Questions that arise for me are: “On what basis am I choosing my methods?” “Are there different forms of knowledge within ethical emotional learning that need to be approached with different teaching methods?” “If this is true, what form of knowledge in ethical emotional learning might not be subject to rational reflection, but is better learned through experience, and why is this so?” “Alternatively, what form of knowledge in ethical emotional learning might be more appropriately learned through rational reflection and intellectual engagement, and why is this so?”

Aside from my questions about the relationship between methods and potential forms of knowledge in ethical emotional learning, I also have conceptual questions from my practice about the justification for my choice of content. In my practice I am concerned with encouraging the development of appropriate emotional responses so that students continue to live in “good” ways. This assumes that there are emotional dispositions that I believe are
good and thus worthy of being taught. On what basis do I make these choices? Are these choices appropriate to me and my cultural background, or is there some intrinsic goodness to certain emotional dispositions that can be widely recognized?

I have also found through my practice that my relationship with students is pivotal in encouraging emotional learning. I often think that I require a “good” relationship with my students, but the idea is somewhat vague in my mind. What is the nature and quality of a relationship between a teacher and student that is required to encourage ethical emotional learning? Due to my belief in the importance of the relationship between student and teacher, what type of self-exploration is required of teachers in order to honour that relationship? I am hoping that this inquiry will help to clarify these conceptual questions which have arisen out of my teaching practice.

The general purpose of my study is to contribute to the philosophical and conceptual research literature on ethical emotional learning with a particular focus on pre-adolescent elementary school children. By ethical emotional learning, I am referring to the ways in which a child acquires appropriate emotions and learns to direct both her negative and positive emotions so as to live in moral or good ways. That is to say, through ethical emotional learning a child learns to feel appropriate emotions. In this way, I am not speaking only of emotions that might be considered ethical, in that a consideration of goodness need necessarily be derived from the emotion. For example, I am not considering only such emotions as compassion or caring, in that such emotions could be viewed as in themselves being ethical, and then seeking to find out how such emotions are learned or
acquired. Importantly, I am not excluding such emotions, nor unconcerned with the related process of learning either. I am more generally referring to the idea that all of our emotions influence our attempts to live in ethical ways, and that learning to direct our emotions, feel appropriate emotions, and enhance our more specifically ethical emotions, so as to live in ethical ways, is in essence ethical emotional learning in my view.

My view on ethical emotional learning presupposes two assumptions about emotions that I believe are important to articulate at the outset. The first assumption is that emotions are a part of a person's response to interactions with the world or self that are amenable to direction by the individual, and not merely unregulated biological impulses. The second assumption is that emotions are not merely facets of the human response that serve to obscure correct judgment, but are things that can in fact form an important part of judgment.

I believe it is important to formulate an approach to ethical emotional learning that is grounded in a comprehensive ethical framework, and I have chosen to consider neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics for this purpose. By "approach", I am referring to the teaching methods and educational configurations that are derived from a theoretical or philosophical foundation. A virtue approach to moral education based on neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics is currently receiving mounting interest in educational circles (Steutel and Carr, 1999, p. 3). The virtue approach is rooted in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (ca 325 B.C.), where the central questions of morality concern character. For Aristotle, "The good of man is an activity of the soul in conformity with virtue" (Rachels, 1993, p. 159). The virtue approach was neglected in post-Enlightenment western moral philosophy, but it received a boost with
the publication of G.E.M. Anscombe’s (1958) influential article “Modern Moral Philosophy” in which she argued for a return to the virtue approach based on Aristotle’s virtue ethics (Rachels, 1993, p. 161). Since that time, a body of philosophical work has been accumulating that could adequately be described as a neo-Aristotelian virtue approach to moral education, although there is no settled doctrine on which there is agreement (Steutel and Carr, 1999, pp. 10-12).

I have chosen neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics as a framework for formulating an approach to ethical emotional learning, as I believe this framework avoids the intellectualist bias\(^5\) that haunts other ethical frameworks. I will be arguing that ethical frameworks such as deontological ethics and Kohlbergian cognitive-developmental theories of moral reasoning do not provide a balance between emotional and intellectual development, and that neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics provides this necessary balance.

Within the neo-Aristotelian virtue framework, ethical emotional learning is understood through understanding the development of *phronesis* or *practical wisdom*. Dunne (1999) explains that phronesis is practical ethical judgment, and is a necessary component in the exercise of all of the virtues (p. 49). The virtuous person, on the Aristotelian view, has emotions that hit the mean (Sherman, 1999a, p. 39) – emotions are neither excessive nor deficient in response to the particular context a person finds herself. Practical ethical judgment is interpreted by authors such as Dunne (1999), Curren (1999), Sherman (1999a) and Vokey (2000) as being learned through an inductive or dialectical approach.

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\(^5\) The term “intellectualist bias” was created by Vokey (2000) pp. 215–216. A greater account of this term and its implications for choosing an ethical theory for my research will be provided in Chapter II.
In terms of the foundations of ethical emotional learning, authors in the neo-Aristotelian tradition argue that the education of the ethical emotions, to some degree, starts with habituation (Steutel and Spiecker, 2004, p. 534). Steutel and Spiecker sum up what they believe are the basic agreements on habituation of neo-Aristotelian authors as follows:

It can be stated that habituation, in the Aristotelian sense of the term, consists in (i) practicing the virtues, or more precisely, performing those actions that correspond with virtuous sentimental dispositions, (ii) performing such actions frequently and consistently, and (iii) doing so under the guidance or authority of a virtuous tutor. (p. 536)

Aristotle did not provide a full accounting of the process of habituation (Dunne, 1999, p. 58; Sherman, 1999a, p. 45; Vokey, 2000, p. 255), and I have found that neo-Aristotelian authors have developed the concept of habituation quite differently. I believe there is a basic divergence between neo-Aristotelian authors based on an interpretation of habituation as being either mechanical or cognitive. Authors such as Steutel and Spiecker (2004) represent a mechanical interpretation. In the analytic philosophical literature, habituation has been interpreted as mechanical as it has been viewed as the non-rational training of desires toward appropriate objects through practice (Sherman, 1999b, p. 231). In contrast, authors such as Sherman (1999a), Burnyeat (1999), Dent (1999) and Dunne (1999) interpret habituation as being cognitive. In Sherman’s cognitive view, habituation is not the “mindless repetition of behaviour, but is critical practice that develops the cognitive skills constitutive of virtuous choice-making and action” (Sherman, 1999a, p. 45).
I believe the divergence between authors that interpret habituation as either mechanical or cognitive, results in ultimate developments of the concept that are radically different. Authors such as Steutel and Spiecker (2004), Kupperman (1999), and Spiecker (1999) develop a behaviourist or “Pavlovian” accounting of habituation. In contrast, authors such as Curren (1999), Dunne (1999), and Sherman (1999a) develop an essentially inductive accounting of habituation.

Within the philosophical discourse on habituation, Burnyeat (1999) offers an interesting alternative. Burnyeat argues that habituation is concerned with a specific type of knowledge – namely that the virtues are noble and just. Burnyeat argues that habituation is concerned with starting points in ethical beliefs that are learned from experience (p. 210). For example, a belief that kindness is a virtue that is noble and just would be a starting point that is learned from experiencing kindness. From this foundation in starting points in the virtues, all learning on the path to phronesis is based on this knowledge. This interpretation of habituation differs from most accounts, but I believe Burnyeat’s views are worth greater exploration, and I intend to do so in this thesis.

Due to the greatly differing interpretations and developments of habituation within the philosophical discourse and to the key role that habituation plays in any neo-Aristotelian account of ethical emotional learning, I will undertake a conceptual inquiry into habituation in order to inform a normative conception of the term that is theoretically defensible. Importantly, my intent is to provide a full accounting of habituation by also positioning
habituation within the larger ethical framework of neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics. More specifically, I will be positioning habituation in relation to phronesis. I believe this is an important step as practical wisdom is the ultimate end being sought, and therefore it is important to consider what role habituation might have in the achievement of phronesis.

My overall intent in this thesis is to develop an approach to ethical emotional learning grounded in neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics that is both theoretically and practically defensible. After obtaining conceptual clarity on habituation, and the role of habituation in phronesis, I will further develop an approach to ethical emotional learning based on teaching methods and educational configurations that are prominent in educational literature that I have found practically effective. My appreciation for these configurations and methods grew from my own back and forth interaction between theory and practice over a period of years. My purpose is not to provide detailed exposition of the methods and configurations that are already abundant in educational literature. My purpose here is to make a theoretical connection to configurations and methods I have found practically effective, and thus provide both the theoretical and practical justification for implementation. Within this discussion, I will be specifically considering pre-adolescent children and the methods and configurations that I have found most appropriate to this age group.

I believe, from my experience attempting to encourage ethical emotional learning in children, that the ultimate success of various teaching methods and educational configurations are conditional upon the quality of the relationship between the students and teacher. I believe we need to pay close attention to the ethical environment in which the
learning takes place, and that the quality of the relationship between the teacher and students, and the teacher's self understanding of her own identity and integrity, are pivotal in this regard. In my review of the virtue ethics literature, there is often discussion of the teacher as exemplar of the virtues, but no directed discussion of the importance or quality of the relationship between teacher and student. Authors such as Maxine Greene, Martha Nussbaum, Nel Noddings, and Parker Palmer write at length on identity and relationships, and I will be drawing on these authors to further refine my approach to ethical emotional learning.

Methodology

As stated in the introduction, I am engaging in philosophical inquiry in order to develop a normative approach to ethical emotional learning that is theoretically defensible. In his article *Analytic Philosophy of Education*, Portelli (1993) draws attention to some common criticisms of analytic philosophy of education that would seem to make my choice of method questionable. These criticisms are that analytic philosophy of education does not provide normative prescriptions for education, and that it ignores the socio-cultural dimensions of educational issues (p. 22).

Portelli (1993) argues that these criticisms of analytic philosophy of education are ill conceived and outdated. The author makes his argument by drawing on the work of philosophers working in the analytic mode to show that normative and socio-cultural concerns are addressed by contemporary educational philosophers. Portelli draws the distinction in philosophical inquiry of education between the analytic mode, as a branch of
moral and social philosophy concerned with conceptual clarity, and the normative mode, as a manner of dealing with judgments about educational aims and methods that is more directly related to practical educational matters (p. 19). Portelli draws on Frankena’s position that these two modes of philosophical inquiry can be joined (p. 19). Portelli also draws on Edel’s position that a consideration of empirical, normative and socio-cultural dimensions should be integrated into analyses of educational issues (p. 22).

I stated in the introduction that my intent is to undertake a conceptual inquiry into habituation that will yield normative conclusions, and therefore I am attempting to join these two modes of philosophy of education. I believe that conceptual inquiry is foundational to arriving at informed and defensible normative conclusions. Coombs and Daniels (1991) suggest that a conceptual inquiry should provide reasons for thinking that a normative conception will be more fruitful in guiding thinking about educational issues (p. 35). Further, the conceptual inquiry should provide a normative conception that is precise, free of dichotomies, and considers the moral implications of viewing the world as the concept would suggest (p. 35). Vokey’s development of wide reflective equilibrium also has implications for this discussion. In his development, Vokey (2000) provides specific criteria for wide reflective equilibrium that I believe are applicable to conceptual inquiry that seeks to provide normative conclusions. More specifically, the conceptual inquiry should: a) have a logical compatibility between expressed beliefs and implications in practice; b) internal and external coherence; c) have an ability to account for rival claims and integrate these claims into the analysis; and d) be free from distortion or bias (pp. 118-120). In my conceptual inquiry, I
will be considering the suggestions and criteria of both Vokey (2000) and Coombs and Daniels (1991), in order to arrive at normative conclusions.

In engaging in this inquiry, I am also mindful of warnings from critical theorists that no form of inquiry is neutral and ahistorical. Noddings (1998) points out that philosophical inquiry has been criticized on the grounds that conceptual inquiry has had a traditional (but now changing) practice of prizing detachment and objectivity (p. 68). In recognition that personal history and subjective experience can meaningfully inform research, I will be providing my story, and also drawing on my practical experience in this inquiry. Bentz and Shapiro (1998) also argue firmly that research needs to be tied to the major social and political changes of the current time, as these new realities bring about new human and social problems which with research should be consciously addressed (pp. 17-19). In the introduction, I have attempted to demonstrate that ethical emotional learning, as my subject of inquiry, is connected to very serious human and social problems in our current time.

As a teacher, it is important to me that my research is meaningfully connected to important questions that I have about my practice, and suggestions for how I might improve my practice. I agree with Barrow that conceptual work is an integral part of research aimed at improving educational practice. As Barrow (1990) states, conceptual work “provides the criteria for recognizing and understanding what is going on in practice and thus for evaluating it” (p. 274). With all of this in mind, my philosophical inquiry into ethical emotional learning will be both conceptual and normative, and directly linked to what I
believe are major socio-cultural problems facing the world today and my educational practice.

In this thesis, my concern is to locate the conceptual inquiry into habituation within the practical educational question of how to encourage ethical emotional learning in children. The conceptual inquiry is meant to develop a normative conception of habituation that can be used to better inform the methods used to encourage ethical emotional learning in children. As Coombs and Daniels (1991) argue, analytic philosophical inquiry is not limited to one method of analysis, but is comprised of a range of analytic questions, techniques and procedures (p. 27). I will be undertaking the following procedures from Coombs and Daniels in my conceptual inquiry into habituation: a) point out and address dichotomies and paradoxes; b) provide a definition of the term as a starting point, without making assumptions about authoritativeness; c) assess the strengths and weaknesses of various interpretations; and d) extend the implications of using the term as the interpretations suggest (including moral implications).

My first objective is to identify and address paradoxes and inconsistencies that have been raised about the concept of habituation in the philosophical literature. I have found three major concerns raised in the analytic literature regarding the concept of habituation as understood in the basic form that Steutel and Spiecker (2004) have provided above. To address these concerns I will break down the arguments presented and assess their logical validity.
My second objective is to clarify what philosophers mean by the term habituation. In this regard, I have chosen a technical use analysis as my approach to conceptual analysis of the term habituation. The term technical use analysis as developed by Coombs and Daniels (1991) refers to a type of analysis of a technical or semi-technical concept that provides "an account of the range of diverse and sometimes conflicting meanings it has for educational theorists and researchers" (p. 34). In this case, I will contrast and analyze the conception developments of habituation by authors employing either a cognitive or mechanical interpretation of the term. More specifically, I will be considering these authors': 1) interpretation of the defining characteristics of habituation; 2) method of conceptual inquiry; 3) explanation of how habituation might work; and 4) the positioning of habituation in relation to phronesis.

My third objective is to make use of the technical use analysis as a basis for my normative conception of habituation. I believe that the technical use analysis will reveal inconsistencies and questionable interpretations that, once revealed, will offer logical suggestions for improvement of the concept and hence inform a normative conception of habituation. My belief in this step is based on the questionable conclusions reached by Steutel and Spiecker (2004) concerning the Pavlovian method of learning that their mechanical interpretation suggests is appropriate. It is apparent to me that something is not quite right, and through looking more closely at their interpretations, something questionable might be revealed. Similarly, with Sherman's (1999b) cognitive interpretation, it seems that the concept of habituation might be overextended as she suggests that being habituated to certain ways of being can result in phronesis. Again, something seems not quite right, and I believe taking a
closer look at her conception development will reveal any inconsistencies or questionable interpretations.

In order to more meaningfully ground the conceptual inquiry and normative conception of habituation in my practice, I have chosen to frame my role as researcher as the scholar-researcher as articulated by Bentz and Shapiro (1998). Bentz and Shapiro define a scholar-researcher as:

someone who mediates between her professional practice and the universe of scholarly, scientific, and academic knowledge and discourse. She sees her practice as part of a larger enterprise of knowledge generation and critical reflection. (p. 66)

In this thesis, I will be mediating between my experiences as a teacher actively engaged in encouraging ethical emotional learning in children, and the scholarly writings on the topic.

I am engaging in this inquiry in the hermeneutic spirit. Noddings (1998) argues that whenever philosophers reject ultimate purposes and fixed meanings and urge a continuing conversation they are working in the hermeneutic spirit (p. 72). My intent in this thesis is to enter and contribute to an ongoing conversation. I am hoping that through this inquiry I will arrive at something of value that can contribute to this conversation, but do not suppose that I will arrive at something fixed and certain. I acknowledge that my understanding is bounded by my own horizon. Lonergan (1973) uses the metaphor of horizon to refer to the boundaries of our knowledge: horizon "is the limit of one's field of vision ...Beyond the horizon lie the objects that, at least for the moment, cannot be seen... As our field of vision,
so too the scope of our knowledge, and the range of our interests are bounded” (pp. 235-236). My hope is that through engaging in the inquiry I will expand my horizons.

My Story

My interest in ethical emotional learning has grown from my involvement over the last 4 years in a joint research project with the Vancouver School Board (VSB) and The University of British Columbia (UBC) with a purpose of supporting socially responsible learning environments. The research project is ongoing and involves three other elementary schools in the Vancouver school district. In each of the schools, the direction of the research is set by a school-based committee in collaboration with VSB and UBC staff. I am the chair of the committee at my school and have had the opportunity to work closely with school colleagues as well as VSB and UBC staff. Through looking at the theoretical and research literature and examining professional practice, our school is involved in investigating how providing a school climate that encourages members of our school community to experience a sense of belonging, autonomy and competence encourages the development of socially responsible behaviours.

The lead researcher from UBC on this project is Dr. Kim Schonert-Reichl and it was through her warmth, support and encouragement during the first year of the research project that I engaged in a master’s program at UBC. Since that time, Dr. Schonert-Reichl has included me in presenting the results of our research at The Association for Moral Education, 2004 in California, The Association for Moral Education, 2005 in Boston; and Harvard Graduate School of Education in November, 2005. Dr. Schonert-Reichl’s specific interest is in
children’s social and emotional development, and the numerous conversations we have had on the subject; the graduate course on social and emotional development that I completed with her; the articles and research with which she has provided me; her direction and collaboration in ongoing research at my school; and her encouragement of my attaining certification as an instructor of the Roots of Empathy program; has deepened my understanding of and commitment to emotional learning.

My interest in moral philosophy and conceptual inquiry developed during my initial teacher education program at Simon Fraser University, and has had an enduring influence in how and why I conduct research. I completed two courses with Dr. Tasos Kazepides in philosophy of education and moral philosophy and I was struck by the importance of conceptual clarity as a guide and foundation to educational programs and research. Also, when taking these courses, I was changing from a career in business to education based on a personal desire to have a career that provided an opportunity for more personal meaning. Dr. Kazepides’ passionate interest in questions of moral philosophy such as “How should we live?” and “What is knowledge?” struck a chord in my own personal exploration for greater meaning in my life. I believe it was this initial interest in moral philosophy that encouraged me to become so involved in the research project above when the opportunity presented itself at my school.

In my initial courses at UBC in my master’s program I decided that I wanted to contribute to conceptual research on moral education. The research literature that I had initially encountered I felt did not offer enough conceptual clarity, and I began coming across articles
by Alfie Kohn and Nel Noddings particularly critical about the literature on character education. I was lucky enough to come across Dr. Daniel Vokey at UBC who not only encouraged me to pursue a conceptual thesis topic in moral education but also agreed to supervise my master’s thesis. Dr. Vokey’s interests in moral philosophy and conceptual inquiry are both deep and expansive and my interest in this area has intensified through the hours of conversation, and also taking courses with him in ethics, morality, spirituality and conceptual inquiry.

Importantly, my commitment to research in ethical emotional learning has grown from my experience attempting to encourage ethical emotional learning in my students; reflecting on these efforts; and discussing these efforts with my colleagues, students, professors and other master’s students. Engaging in these conversations has deepened my appreciation for the many perspectives from which this subject can be viewed, and the many ways of appreciating development in ethical emotional learning. My commitment to conceptual research in the hermeneutic spirit is also a result of this journey.

In this introductory chapter, I have attempted to introduce the importance of research in ethical emotional learning in regard to current global concerns. Specifically, I have tried to highlight the importance and justification of using philosophical and conceptual inquiry in research on this topic. I have also provided a methodology and positioned myself as a researcher in relation to this topic. In Chapter II, I will attempt to ground this research in

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neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics and provide a justification for my choice. In Chapter III, I will develop a normative conception of habituation through conceptual inquiry. In Chapter IV, I will further refine my normative conception of habituation through drawing on both research and practical experience, and provide a conceptual link to the teaching methods and educational configures that I believe support ethical emotional learning. In the final chapter, I will explore the nature of teaching in ethical emotional learning, the types of relationships with students that can encourage this learning, and the teacher’s inner journey and personal reflection that I believe is required in this regard.
Chapter II
The Neo-Aristotelian Virtue Approach (NAVA) to Moral Education as a Framework for Understanding and Promoting Ethical Emotional Learning in Children

I have chosen a neo-Aristotelian virtue approach to moral education as a framework for understanding and promoting ethical emotional learning in children as I believe it is grounded in an ethic that allows for greater understanding of how we might educate both the heart and mind of children. More specifically, the NAVA is grounded in virtue ethics, which provides an account of the importance of both the intellect and the emotions in moral life. Hursthouse (1999) points out that the revived attention over the last 30 years to virtue ethics has resulted from, among other things, a dissatisfaction with deontological and utilitarian accounts of the emotions in moral life (pp. 2-3). Similarly, attention to the ethic of care has also developed from dissatisfaction with deontological and utilitarian accounts of the emotions (Noddings, 1984, p. 2). In this chapter, my aim is to provide an understanding of a NAVA to moral education and defend my choice of this approach as a way to understand ethical emotional learning in children.

Steutel and Carr (1999) point out that a virtue approach to moral education could be considered in both a broad and narrow sense. They argue that, in the broad sense, it can be construed as an approach that takes moral educational aims to be concerned with the promotion of admirable character traits (p. 4). They find that this broad sense of a virtue approach fails to meaningfully differentiate this approach from either deontotology or utilitarianism. They argue that, for a virtue approach to be meaningful, it must be interpreted in a narrow sense in order to show that it is, in fact, an alternative to other approaches in
moral education. The authors argue that, in the narrow sense, a virtue approach should be based on virtue ethics which grounds the moral life and educational aims in considerations that are not utilitarian or Kantian (p. 7).

At this point, I believe it is helpful to clarify what is meant by a NAVA, as this is the virtue approach that I have chosen to frame my exploration of ethical emotional learning in children. Hursthouse (1999) states that neo-Aristotelian virtue ethicists reject Aristotle’s positions on slaves and women, and do not necessarily restrict the virtues to those explicitly pointed out by Aristotle (p. 8). Also, while neo-Aristotelian authors “stick pretty close to his ethical writings,” where the modern context could not be foreseen in Aristotle’s writings, a neo-Aristotelian author has to “launch out on her own”, in interpreting Aristotle’s writings for the modern context and to areas where Aristotle has not been specific (p. 9).

This chapter comprises three major sections. In the first section I will set forth the important meta-ethical positions underlying neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics. In the second major section I will provide the foundational concepts of neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics that inform a virtue approach to moral education. My intent in these first two sections is to simply provide an account of what neo-Aristotelian authors on virtue ethics either hold in common or are discussing that I believe are important to a virtue approach to moral education. Time, space and focus will not allow for much more. In the third and final section, I will defend the adequacy of NAVA as a framework for understanding ethical emotional learning in children.
Meta-ethical Positions Underlying Neo-Aristotelian Virtue Ethics

Hursthouse (1999) doubts that any short answers to “What is virtue ethics?” would be at all useful (p. 4). She argues that the lines separating virtue ethics, Kantianism and utilitarianism have become blurred and it no longer can serve to refer to virtue ethics as an approach that emphasizes the virtues (p. 4). After all of the reading that I have done on virtue ethics, I would have to agree with her.\(^7\) I believe that, in order to understand virtue ethics, it is necessary to be familiar with its underlying meta-ethical positions. To this end, I will draw heavily - but not exclusively - both on Steutel and Carr’s (1999) chapter *Virtue Ethics and the Virtue Approach to Moral Education* (pp. 3-18) and Hursthouse (1999) *On Virtue Ethics*. The authors of these two texts follow the practice of others in this field in contrasting the philosophical positions of deontology and utilitarianism with those of virtue ethics to attain some kind of conceptual clarity on exactly what virtue ethics might be, and also to argue that virtue ethics is in fact a qualified rival to the other two major ethics noted. Through this process they have been able to articulate the important positions that clarify the nature of virtue ethics, and at the same time are both able to show the philosophical points of divergence and convergence within the neo-Aristotelian group of authors. All in all, I have found that reading these authors has helped me to understand the philosophical positions underlying virtue ethics and the complex ways in which virtue ethics is differentiated from deontology and utilitarianism. I will also refer to other texts by other authors, who extend points made by Hursthouse and/or Steutel and Carr or provide more philosophical insight on specific points.

\(^7\) I reached this conclusion from reading the seventeen chapter contributions in Carr and Steutel, along with the books in my bibliography by Hursthouse and Maclntyre.
As I stated earlier, I believe that there are important meta-ethical positions on which neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics is based that differentiate this ethical tradition from its competitors. In this section, I will be discussing the aretaic, teleological and non-consequentialist foundations of virtue ethics, as well as the Aristotelian conception of the human soul.

Steutel and Carr (1999) point out that, although there are philosophical disagreements of detail concerning the more precise nature of virtue ethics, there is broad agreement that, as far it is appropriate to construe ethics as deontic or aretaic, virtue ethics is aretaic (p. 8). Deontic judgments are related to the idea of “duty”, and such judgments as “stealing is wrong” or “you ought to tell the truth” are deontic constructions (p. 8). In contrast, aretaic judgments are related to the idea of “excellence” and such statements as “her devotion is admirable” or “spite is unbecoming” are aretaic constructions (p. 8). Thus, deontic judgments are primarily concerned with the evaluation of actions, and appeal to rules and principles; while aretaic judgments are concerned, not only with actions, but also with “the evaluation of persons, their characters, intentions and motives” (p. 8). Steutel and Carr also draw attention to the fact that aretaic appraisals have scalar properties. They point out that being good or admirable are comparative qualities, and therefore we can be better or more or less admirable, whereas deontic appraisals ultimately bear a resemblance to legal judgments where an action is considered basically right or wrong (p. 8).

Although there is agreement among virtue ethicists that virtue ethics is aretaic, Steutel and Carr (1999) also call attention to the divergence between virtue ethicists on a related point. They point to two versions of virtue ethics that emerge from aretaic judgments – the
replacement view and the reductionist view (p. 9). The replacement view is represented by authors such as Elizabeth Anscombe, and hold that deontic judgments are “inappropriate or redundant” and should be replaced by aretaic notions (p. 9). In contrast, the reductionist view represented by authors such as Hursthouse, hold that deontic judgments are not redundant, but merely that deontic judgments find their justification in terms which are aretaic (p. 9). Steutel and Carr provide examples such as telling lies is wrong because it is dishonest, or breaking a promise is wrong because it is unjust or a betrayal (p. 9). Hursthouse (1999) also reinforces this point in arguing that the virtues and vices generate both prescriptions and prohibitions for action, but are in themselves logically prior to such prescriptions and prohibitions for action (p. 36).

Along with being considered aretaic, virtue ethics is also considered to be a teleological ethic. MacIntyre (1985) defines a teleological view of human nature as any view of man as having an essence which defines his true end (p. 53). Steutel and Carr (1999) similarly state that Aristotelian virtue ethics is teleological “since the value of character traits is held to depend on their relation to human well-being” (p. 14). MacIntyre also argues that Aristotelian ethics is teleological in that the ethic “represents a fundamental contrast between man-as-he-happens-to-be and man-as-he-could-be-if-he-realized-his-essential-nature” (p. 54). MacIntyre also argues that the virtues and vices in virtue ethics instruct us in how to move from potential to the realization of our true nature and reach our true end (p. 52). Further, it is the telos of the human species that determines what human qualities are virtues (p. 184).
Steutel and Carr (1999) argue that, although virtue ethics and character-utilitarianism could be considered teleological, there are some important differences. First, a utilitarian justification of virtues in terms of well-being "indifferently emphasises the good of all who are affected by the possession and exercise of virtues,... the focus of Aristotelian virtue ethics is primarily – though not exclusively – upon the good of the possessor of virtues (the agent)" (p. 15). Second, and more importantly, they also point out that virtues in a utilitarian conception would only have moral significance in their relation to human happiness, and therefore is a consequentialist ethic. In contrast, an Aristotelian conception is non-consequentialist as an "Aristotelian has no conception of human fulfilment which would exclude practice of the virtues" (p. 15).

I believe this second point is a fundamental distinction for virtue ethics, and as Steutel and Carr (1999) point out, has created difficulties for virtue ethics. Specifically, they raise the possibility that the relationship of virtue to flourishing can be seen as an internal conception which gives rise to the possibility of relativization of the virtues (p. 15). They raise MacIntyre’s exploration of virtues in today’s cultural pluralism, and point out that there is a concern as to the extent that “different cultural constituencies appear to embody different conceptions of the good life” which may give rise to rival and incompatible accounts of the virtues (p. 15).

I believe that Vokey’s analysis of MacIntyre’s arguments serve to address how the virtues could be considered morally good in a non-relative sense. Vokey (2000) argues that MacIntyre basically departs from an Aristotelian interpretation of virtue ethics and takes up a
Thomistic interpretation, and it is the structure of the Christian Thomistic narratives which pose the problems for virtue ethics (p. 235). Vokey argues that, in the Thomistic tradition, the virtues are instrumental means to attaining the human telos, which is located outside and beyond human life in relation to God. This view results in the virtues being considered good in a relative sense, instead of the virtues being considered good for their own sake. In contrast, in the Aristotelian tradition each virtue “represents the perfection of a particular capacity of the human species” (p. 235). In this view, the virtues are “desired for their own sake because the overriding good is the life of virtuous activity” (p. 235).

The difference in interpretation between the Thomistic and Aristotelian traditions of virtue ethics centres on the notion of intrinsic goodness of the virtues. Vokey (2000) distinguishes two forms of intrinsic goodness. In one sense, something could be considered intrinsically good because it “affords satisfaction of a human interest or desire” (p. 258). In this way, something is considered intrinsically good in a relative sense. In a second sense, something could be considered intrinsically good because it “embodies or actualizes what merits being valued because it is good” (p. 258). In this way, it is good in a non-relative to human interest sense. Vokey argues that an Aristotelian interpretation represents the virtues as having intrinsic goodness in this non-relative sense.

Vokey (2000) acknowledges that it is much easier to consider the goodness of the virtues in relation to human interests or desires, but argues that the intrinsic goodness of the virtues is implicit in the quality of human cognitive-affective response that they engender (p. 259). Vokey explicitly argues that the meaning of the position that the virtues are intrinsically
good is rooted in the experience that a virtue *merits* a certain degree and kind of qualitative response, which is tied to loving virtues for their own sake” (p. 259). He provides such examples of being profoundly moved in a positive way by witnessing or experiencing compassion, and being profoundly moved in a negative way by witnessing or experiencing oppression (p. 263).

In arguing that what it means for something to be intrinsically morally good is “always appreciated in part with reference to the degrees and qualities of cognitive-affective human response,” Vokey (2000) points to Aristotle’s concept of *kalon*, which translates to something like “noble and fine” (p. 263). For Aristotle, it is with reference to the quality of human experience that we differentiate what is noble and fine from what is only pleasant or useful (p. 263). I believe that Vokey has been able to articulate a neo-Aristotelian metaethical position in which: (a) the virtues are clearly understood to be good in a sense that is not relative to human interests and desires; and (b) the emotions are understood to exercise a cognitive, and not just motivational, function in ethics.

A final area of discussion for this section is the neo-Aristotelian account of the human soul. I believe it is important to discuss the concept of the human soul, as this is the point at which Aristotle is able to bring in the importance of the emotions to the moral life. Curren (1999) interprets Aristotle as saying that the human soul is the “source and cause of growth and movement” (p.67). Curren (1999), Dunne (1999), and Hursthouse (1999) all represent Aristotle as conceiving the soul as being divided into rational and non-rational elements corresponding to desiderative and nutritive elements, and all of these authors interpret that
the desiderative part of the soul is associated with reason and the nutritive part with emotions (Curren, p. 67; Dunne, p. 53; Hurthhouse, p. 110). Although, Hurthhouse (1999) more clearly points out that Aristotle believed that the irrational part is divided again into both rational and non-rational parts, as can be the rational part (p. 110). The point being that human emotions are intertwined with reason, in contrast with deontological accounts which figure emotions as elements that obscure reason (pp. 109-110).

A final point for this section is that Aristotle is considered to be a metaphysical and epistemological realist. Smith (2003) states that Aristotle believed that there is an “unconstructed, mind-independent world” that exists outside of any necessary human conceptualization of it, and that we can know these realities (p. 3). Smith argues that Aristotle believed that virtues are latent in the human soul, and are thus part of our human nature. To Aristotle, we can come to know reality through the development of the virtues which are latent in our soul, which will fulfill our human nature (p. 3).

To this point, I have attempted to highlight the important meta-ethical positions that help to provide a more fundamental understanding of neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics. In the next section, I will provide more particulars on the foundational concepts in neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics.

**Foundational Concepts in Virtue Ethics**

My objective in this section is to provide and discuss the foundational concepts of a neo-Aristotelian conception of virtue ethics that are central to a NAVA to moral education. In
my view, the important concepts in this regard are the distinction between the intellectual and the emotional virtues; the nature of the emotional virtues; virtue and vice; *phronesis*; the unity of virtue thesis; *eudaimonia*; and *habituation* and learning.

In neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics there is a distinction made between the intellectual and emotional virtues, also referred to as the moral virtues, or virtues of character. Curren (1999) quotes from Aristotle’s *Nichomachean Ethics*:

> some kinds of virtue are said to be intellectual and others moral, contemplative wisdom (sophia) and understanding (sunesis) and practical wisdom (phronesis) being intellectual, generosity (eleutheriotes) and temperance (sophrosune) moral. (I 13 1103A5-7) (p. 67)

As discussed in the first section, the moral virtues are associated with the nutritive non-rational part of the soul, but are not considered in the Aristotelian sense to be non-rational, as they are intertwined with the rational part. Curren (1999) quotes Aristotle in saying that “the moral virtues thus come to be defined as dispositions to feel and be moved by our various desires or emotions neither too weakly nor too strongly, but in a way that moves us to choose and act as reason would dictate, and allows us to take pleasure in doing so (II 5, 6)” (p. 67). In contrast, the intellectual virtues are capacities which enable the rational part of the soul to attain truth (p. 68).

It is important to point out from Curren’s (1999) interpretation, that “reason” and “rational” cannot be equated with discursive reasoning that is typically assumed in modern usage.
Aristotle conceived the highest intellectual virtue to be *nous*, being immediate intuitive perception, in contrast with discursive intellectual reasoning (Vokey, 2000, p. 291). In differentiating between the moral and intellectual virtues, perhaps the most clear or useful distinction is that Aristotle believed the intellectual virtues are those virtues that could be acquired by direct teaching and instruction, and the moral or emotional virtues were those virtues acquired through habitual exercise (MacIntyre, 1985, p. 154).

The emotional or moral virtues, in the Aristotelian conception, are generally held to be character traits; the quality of one’s character. An emotional virtue is not a disposition to merely act in certain ways, but being disposed to act in those ways for certain reasons, and also with a reliability that reflects an attitude that to act in certain ways is important (Hursthouse, 1999, p. 11). Hursthouse provides the example of honesty to highlight this point. A person who has acquired the virtue of honesty does not merely act in honest ways to give the appearance of being honest. An honest person would “tend to avoid the dishonest deeds and do the honest ones in a certain manner – readily, eagerly, unhesitatingly, scrupulously as appropriate” (p. 11). Hursthouse further points out that we would expect certain emotions from the honest person such as being unresentful of honest criticism and pleasure when honesty triumphs (p. 12). A final point is that an honest person would have an acute sense about occasions where honesty is at issue (p. 12). In other words, features of situations that concern matters of honesty have salience for the honest person, and attention is directed to these features. Hursthouse argues that, once a virtue or vice is acquired, it is strongly entrenched, because it is about so much more than a tendency to act in a certain way (p. 12).
I believe that Hursthouse (1999) points us to the important distinction between natural virtue and Aristotelian virtue. On the Aristotelian view, virtues do not spring up fully developed, but require education to complete each virtue. Also, as Dent (1999) points out, Aristotle would acknowledge that there is "natural virtue" in that there are people who are "blessed with an affectionate nature, who make friends easily and rejoice in their company, and will do a thousand and one acts of kindness, consideration and care" (p. 27). The distinction for true virtue is that such a person would understand why such acts are important for a "well conducted life", and would know how to balance the original temperament so that other matters of concern are not marginalized or neglected (p. 27).

In a later discussion on motivation, Hursthouse (1999) points out Aristotle's distinction between the person of full virtue and the one who is self-controlled. In the Aristotelian view, the person of full virtue has desires that are in harmony with virtue, whereas the self-controlled individual acts against desire to bring their actions in line with reason (p. 92). Hursthouse interprets Aristotle to mean that the fully virtuous person is morally superior to the self-controlled agent, whereas deonotology makes the same distinction but weighs the moral superiority on the self-controlled agent (pp. 92-93). Dent (1999) makes this similar distinction as he states that:

to the extent to which one has such dispositions and undertakes the acts appropriate to them under the aspect of acknowledgement of an obligation, one has not really succeeded in achieving one's objective. ... The ordinary life of virtue consists in
easy spontaneity, unforced naturalness, light gladness of offering help, being comfortable with requests and so on. (pp. 27-28)

Another point about the virtues is the relation of virtue to vice. In the Aristotelian view, virtuous dispositions are, in most cases, means set between two vices – one of excess and the other deficiency (Rachels, 1993, p. 163). Rachels provides the example of courage to highlight this point. He states that courage is a virtue set between the two vices of cowardice and foolhardiness (p. 163). In other words, the attainment of a virtue is finding the middle point between excess and deficiency. Kupperman (1999) importantly points out that, in the Aristotelian view, finding the mean is about much more than finding or achieving moderation. He believes that, for Aristotle, finding the mean requires practical judgment to respond adequately to the nuances of differing particular situations (p. 201).

This discussion brings us to what Dunne (1999) considers the eccentric virtue that Aristotle calls phronesis. Phronesis is often translated as practical judgment or practical wisdom, and is officially categorized by Aristotle as being an intellectual virtue of the desiderative part of the soul (p. 55). Dunne refers to phronesis as eccentric as it does not lie comfortably on either side of the divide between the moral and intellectual virtues, but is a necessary component of every virtue (p. 49). Hursthouse (1999) points out that the moral virtues are considered in the Aristotelian view to be excellences of character, and each of the virtues

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8 Mean is used in the metaphorical sense only. In my research, I did not come across a mathematical formula in ethics for determining the mean between excess and deficiency of a virtue. I understand that this idea was articulated by MacIntyre but my search did not reveal this notion in his writings. Suffice to say, that it is a worthy point, but it did not originate with me.

9 Dunne (1999) points out that Aristotle officially designates phronesis as an intellectual virtue, but finds it is conspicuously absent from the hierarchical scheme of the intellectual virtues in Aristotle's Metaphysics and a parallel passage in Posterior Analytics (p. 50 and note 1).
requires phronesis—"the ability to reason correctly about practical matters" (p. 12).

Hursthouse provides the example of the virtue of generosity to illustrate the importance of practical wisdom. "In the case of generosity this involves giving the right amount, of the right sort of thing, for the right reasons, to the right people, on the right occasions" (p. 12).

Dunne (1999) goes on to argue that phronesis is crucially important to Aristotle's virtue ethics as it demonstrates, not simply knowledge of practical matters, but also more advanced knowledge of the particulars of situations and hence informs at the level of universal knowledge as well (pp. 51-52). Dunne provides the example of the virtue of courage to demonstrate that the real "nerve" of moral knowledge is not just to understand the universal concept of what courage is, but also to know what might count as courage in the multitude of contexts in which a person might find herself (pp. 51-52). A further point is that moral experience in diverse contexts serves to "enrich and refine" the universal concept itself (p. 52).

Sherman (1999a) argues that the concept of phronesis makes evident that Aristotelian virtue ethics is a particularist ethic, but not necessarily a relativistic ethic. Sherman (1999a) states that Aristotelian particularism emphasizes that a moral agent "has an obligation to know the facts of the case, to see and understand what is morally relevant and to make decisions that are responsive to the exigencies of the case" (p. 38). In the Aristotelian view, Sherman argues that moral decision making requires both a "top down" account of general ends, and a "bottom-up" narrative of specific circumstances (p. 39). She notes that moral decision
making in virtue ethics does not preclude moral rules, but that such rules will only be "rough guides or summaries" viewed in light of the particulars of the case (p. 38).

Kent (1999) argues that Aristotle's distinction between phronesis and theoretical knowledge is an important distinction for moral education. Kent quotes Aristotle's distinction between practical wisdom and mere cleverness, "that is, expertise in achieving one's ends, however base one's ends might actually be (NE1144a23-b18)" (p. 115). Kent believes that the concept of practical wisdom informs moral education in that it does not equate "moral goodness with moral knowledge, theoretical reasoning, or some other purely cognitive ability" (p. 115). Rather, phronesis involves being practically wise in matters of goodness, which involves appreciating the goodness of the virtues for their own sake.

A final point that I believe is important to an understanding of phronesis is a point provided by Dunne. Dunne (1999) argues that, on the Aristotelian view, ethical theory is ultimately aimed at action, not knowledge (p. 54). Dunne quotes Aristotle in that "merely knowing what is right does not give a person phronesis; he must be disposed to do it too (NE VII 10 1152a8-9)" (p. 54). Therefore, phronesis is both knowing and doing, and cannot be considered complete without both.

Our discussion of phronesis or practical wisdom leads to another important concept in neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics, generally referred to as the unity of virtue thesis. Curren (1999) quotes Aristotle on the unity of virtue thesis as follows:
It is clear then . . . that it is not possible to be good in the strict sense without practical wisdom, nor practically wise without moral virtue. But in this way we may also refute the dialectical argument whereby it might be contended that the virtues exist in separation from each other; the same man, it might be said, is not best equipped by nature for all the virtues, so that he will have already acquired one when he has not yet acquired another. This is possible in respect of the natural virtues, but not in respect of those in respect of which a man is called without qualification good; for with the presence of the one quality, practical wisdom, will be given all the virtues. (VI131144b16-1145a2) (p. 70)

Curren interprets Aristotle as meaning that practical wisdom requires all of the virtues to be present, as the lack of even one virtue will corrupt perception, judgment and related action at least in that one respect (p. 70). He concludes that true virtue requires practical wisdom, which implies that all of the virtues must be present (p. 70).

Kent (1999) argues that the unity of virtue thesis is a contested subject in modern virtue ethics, but believes that it is a viable thesis in need of some refinement (p. 112). Kent believes that Aristotle needs to be interpreted as presenting an ideal of moral perfection that might never be attained, but should be sought as a goal, which itself would develop over time in a person’s life (p. 114). Kent also believes that Aristotle is correct to suggest that character cannot be “compartmentalized” with, for example, a “commitment to justice easily coexisting with cowardice, greed or other serious character flaws” (pp. 114-115).
Kent (1999) does warn that the unity of virtue thesis fails to capture the difference between a bad person and a good but flawed person, and therefore does not capture our experience of ourselves as developing moral agents (p. 117). Kent suggests that we need a more “fine grained analysis of ordinary people” that distinguishes between people who consistently pursue bad ends verses persons who go wrong now and then, or in relatively minor ways (p. 119). Kent also suggests that more work might be done by virtue ethicists on making a distinction between virtues in general, and identification of a subset of virtues, the lack of which would tend to make a person “blameworthy or reprehensible” (p. 119).

Another concept that is central to Aristotelian virtue ethics, and was referenced somewhat indirectly in the earlier discussion on the teleological nature of Aristotelian virtue ethics, is the concept of eudaimonia or the eudaimon life. Dent (1999) interprets Aristotle as claiming that the eudaimon life, “a life where we are well and do well, is the active life of virtue” (p. 29). Kupperman (1999) similarly interprets Aristotle’s concept of the eudaimon life as the “focus on the entire life of an agent, the sum of what is worth seeking” (p. 200).

Hursthouse (1999) argues that the translation of eudaimonia from the ancient into the modern context poses problems. According to Hursthouse (1999), translations for eudaimonia are generally happiness, flourishing or sometimes well-being (p. 9). Hursthouse believes that flourishing can be adequate in that it describes an objective state, although the problem with flourishing is that it can apply as well to plants and animals, whereas Aristotle only meant eudaimonia to apply to rational humans (p. 9). She also points out that, in the modern context, happiness is often considered a subjective state and so does not readily
invite outward appraisal (p. 10). Hursthouse also believes that well-being has difficulties as it does not have a corresponding adjective, which would make it difficult for use (p. 10).

Hursthouse (1999) believes that an adequate and more useful translation for eudaimonia would be “true happiness” or “the sort of happiness worth having” (p. 10). Hursthouse argues that there are some objective notions for true happiness in that “we tend to say that someone may be happy, though not truly happy if they are living in a fool’s paradise, or engaged in what we know is pointless activity, or brain-damaged and leading the life of a happy child” (p. 10).

The final concepts from neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics that I believe are important in relation to moral education to discuss, and perhaps most important in my view, are learning and habituation. At this point, I am not providing an extended discussion of learning and habituation, as I will be discussing these concepts at greater length in the following chapters. For the present purpose, habituation fits into the overall picture of virtue ethics as a form of early learning of the moral or emotional virtues through habitual action (Dunne, 1999, p. 57).

The Adequacy of Using Neo-Aristotelian Virtue Ethics in This Inquiry

I believe it is important to ground the concept of ethical emotional learning in a comprehensive ethical framework, and I have chosen to consider neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics for this purpose. To this point, I have provided the foundational meta-ethical positions of neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics, as well as the important foundational concepts that I believe are central to moral education, generally, and ethical emotional learning in children, more
specifically. A final endeavour for this chapter is to defend the adequacy of neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics for my purposes. My intent here is not to defend neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics as a moral theory in itself or in comparison to its competitors, nor to provide a conceptual structural assessment of virtue ethics per se. My intent, more modestly, is to defend my choice of neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics as an adequate framework for bringing understanding to ethical emotional learning in children in comparison to other ethics.

I regard ethical emotional learning as a fundamental part of moral education, therefore my choice of framework necessarily is in the realm of ethical theory – and more specifically, a theory that is amenable to the importance and complexity of emotions in the moral life. For my purposes, I require a comprehensive ethic that provides a view to moral education which emphasizes and accounts for both the intellectual and the emotional development of the individual in a balanced and/or integrated manner. I would argue that neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics can meet these criteria to a greater degree than its competitors. First, I will argue that Kantian deontological ethics and Kohlbergian cognitive-developmental theories of moral reasoning contain an intellectualist bias\(^{10}\) that hinders a conception of moral education that can meet these criteria. Further, Nodding's ethic of care, which arose in reaction to Kohlbergian cognitive-developmental theory, is equally incapable of meeting these criteria, as it does not provide enough specifics on the intellectual development of the individual and is too narrow in focus. Finally, I will argue that neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics is capable of meeting these criteria through the concept of phronesis.

My first argument is that Kantian deontological ethics and Kohlbergian cognitive-development theory contain an intellectualist bias. The term intellectualist bias as defined by Vokey (2000) refers to a set of related tendencies:

1. to equate the highest, most uniquely human faculty with reason (where *reason* is identified with the intellect; and the *intellect* is the capacity for having, formulating, and deductively developing *ideas* into an abstract, logically consistent conceptual framework), and to overlook, deny, or disparage other cognitive faculties;

2. to equate cognition primarily or even exclusively with the intellect, and to overlook, deny, or disparage other forms of cognitive activity …;

3. to equate knowledge primarily, or even exclusively with some subset of the beliefs that are capable of being formulated as propositions, … and to overlook, deny, or disparage other forms of knowledge.…

(pp. 215-216)

In the Kantian view, morality is primarily concerned with a moral agent’s intellectual discernment of action from categorical principles of morality in the form of propositions that a moral agent could determine as being universally applicable (Rachels, 1993, pp. 117-118). The emotions, as such, have no part in this rational engagement. As Hursthouse (1999) points out, Kant believed emotions came from the non-rational animal side and hence emotions are “not rational in any way” (p. 109). Further, Sherman (1999a) portrays Kant as arguing that emotions are unreliable even in the sense of providing motivation for moral action (p. 42). I believe it is this disparagement of the emotions in relation to cognition, and
the exclusive reliance on the intellect in cognition, that reveals the intellectualist bias in Kantian deontological ethics.

I similarly believe that Kohlbergian cognitive-development theory is also haunted by this intellectualist bias. A Kohlbergian account of moral development is based on the identification of staged forms of moral reasoning in relation to questions concerning "justice" (Crittenden, 1999, p. 170). Crittenden points out that Kohlberg incorporated Piaget's general theory of cognitive development, and followed Piaget in "espousing an essentially Kantian conception of morality in terms of universal ethical principles of justice rationally grasped by the autonomous individual" (p.169). Again, the intellectualist bias is found in the reliance on the intellect in cognition to the exclusion of the emotions.

Both Kantian deontological ethics and Kohlbergian cognitive-development theory provide a view to moral education that does not provide a balance between the intellect and the emotions. Both perspectives suggest moral education as being concerned with the development in children of intellectual discernment of rules and principles of conduct. The role of the emotions in moral life is noticeably absent, and thus these ethics are ill-suited for my purposes.

It could be argued that the ethic of care as developed by Noddings might in fact provide a view to moral education which could provide a balance between the intellectual and the emotional development of children. The ethic of care places caring as the foundation of the ethical response, and explicitly rejects approaches which maintain the primacy of moral
reasoning and the acceptability of universal moral principles as guides to moral behaviour (Noddings, 1984, p. 2). For Noddings, caring is the ethical response located in relations; involving engrossment in another's feelings and situation and a corresponding motivational displacement to the concerns of the other, ultimately being completed in caring action (pp. 31-33). Thinking objectively and using rational thinking to come up with a plan can be enlisted in the caring response, but Noddings argues there needs to be a continual turning back to the concrete situation and the recipient of care as the priority for ethical action (p. 26).

Noddings (2002) proposes a relationship centred approach to moral education that prioritizes the caring context of the school community, as well as opportunities for students to develop, maintain and enhance an ethical ideal of themselves as good people (p. 2). Noddings believes that attending to the ethical ideal involves educating the moral sentiments through modelling, dialogue, and practice in a caring environment (p. 8).

Despite the focus in the ethic of care on sentimental education, I do not believe that the ethic of care and the related approach to moral education as advocated by Noddings is specific enough or comprehensive enough for my purposes. First, I require an ethic that provides a balance between the intellectual and emotional development of children. I believe that the ethic of care is too focused on the emotional aspects of development to the neglect of the intellectual. Noddings does not provide any specifics on the ways in which a moral agent comes to learn how to engage rational and objective thinking in living a moral life, and provides few specifics on how to educate students to engage rational and objective thinking.
in the service of care. Perhaps Noddings believes, not that intellectual development is unimportant, but that other authors have treated it adequately already. In any case, the emphasis in Noddings writings is on the emotional, and therefore is not as balanced between the intellectual and emotional as I believe it should be. Second, I require an ethic that is capable of considering how all of our emotions direct our attempts to live moral lives. The ethic of care lacks comprehensiveness through its primary focus on caring, or the development of the ethical relation-centred emotions, to the neglect of the range of emotions in the human response that direct and shape our moral lives.

Although it is not within the scope of this thesis to defend neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics against its competitors, I would like to briefly point out some advantageous points of the ethic from my perspective and conclude with the key concept of phronesis which I believe makes this ethic well-suited for my purposes. First, I believe that aretaic constructions, appraisals and judgments engage more meaningfully with a moral agent in terms of motivation. I believe aretaic constructions engage with an agent's struggle to make sense of life and seek betterment, in contrast with external obligations of duty as a source of moral motivation. As Dent (1999) asserts, “the commitment to moral betterment is thus not to be seen as an alien demand, imposed from without, constraining an agent to be and do that in which they have otherwise no investment” (p. 29). Second, the prominent role of the emotions in the life of virtue avoids the intellectualist bias that is notable in previously mentioned ethics. Third, I believe the particularist nature of moral reasoning in virtue ethics strikes closer to the moral complexity of real life decision making. I find virtue ethics superior in this respect as it posits that practical wisdom is required, instead of a decision
making formula in leading the moral life. Finally, I believe that the balance between the intellectual and emotional development of individuals within virtue ethics captures the essence of what it means to be human.

I believe that the concept of phronesis or practical wisdom or judgment in neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics is the key to providing a view to moral education which strikes a balance between the development of the emotions and the intellect that makes this ethic a suitable choice for my purposes. Each of the emotional virtues requires practical judgment to become complete, and it is this concept that provides the necessary balance between the intellectual and emotional development of the individual that I believe is required in an approach to ethical emotional learning in children. For example, it is important to develop the sentimental disposition of compassion and also an appreciation for the value of compassion. At the same time, it is also of great importance and equally necessary to develop the intellectual ability to understand and recognize the various manifestations of compassion, as well as the practical ability to put compassion into some form of appropriate action. Consequently, I believe that a NAVA approach to moral education based on neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics is the most suitable framework from which to explore ethical emotional learning in children.

Of course, neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics is not without its challenges. Recall again MacIntyre’s exploration of virtues in today’s cultural pluralism, and the difficulties in coming to agreement between different cultural constituencies on what virtues, if any, should be considered intrinsically good. Although I believe that Vokey’s (2000) ideas on
considering the non-relative intrinsic goodness of the virtues through the degree and quality of cognitive-affective human response provides an adequate support to the idea that it is possible to recognize non-relative intrinsic goodness, there is not yet any set of virtues that has been analyzed and widely agreed upon in the philosophical literature in this way. I believe that until such conceptual work is furthered, a great deal of reflection, humility and discussion is required by educators that are implementing programs based on virtue ethics. More specifically, I believe that educators should be reflecting on the choice of specific virtues in their program on the basis of non-relative intrinsic goodness, and how these virtues are expressed or understood across cultural experiences.

Conclusion

In this chapter I have provided an understanding of a NAVA to moral education and defended by choice of this approach as a way to understand ethical emotional learning in children. In the following chapter I will be looking more closely at the concept of habituation. In the neo-Aristotelian tradition, habituation is considered the central method of cultivating appropriate affective dispositions (Steutel and Spiecker, 2004, p. 534). In my review of the literature on habituation, I believe there is divergence between neo-Aristotelian authors on the account of habituation in terms of interpretation of the defining characteristics and the manner in which it might actually work. I have also located a few concerns in the analytic discourse about the concept itself. In the following chapter, I will be outlining and addressing concerns raised in the literature, as well as looking more closely at the differing interpretations in order to arrive at a normative conception of habituation that is theoretically defensible.
Chapter III
Habituation

This chapter has three major sections. In the first section I will provide a basic understanding of habituation and identify the concerns that have been raised in the literature. I believe that some of these concerns have been reasonably addressed by other authors, and I will provide these authors’ views. Also in this section, I will raise a concern about habituation that I do not believe has been fully addressed—namely, that habituation seems more suited to the development of skills or habits than emotional dispositions. In the second section, I will be reviewing the conceptions of habituation developed by neo-Aristotelian authors in an attempt to address the outstanding concern raised in section 1. I will be arguing that neo-Aristotelian authors have interpreted habituation in two fundamentally different ways, and that an understanding of these different interpretations will ultimately address this concern. In the second section I will also examine differing conceptions of habituation in terms of its relation to phronesis. In the third and final section, I will suggest a normative conception of habituation that is theoretically defensible in the light of the concerns raised and differing interpretations found in the literature.

Habituation – Basic Understandings and Concerns

I believe that a very basic understanding of habituation is that habituation is learning through practice. Dunne (1999) cites Aristotle as stating that moral goodness is the result of habit and follows with an extended quote from Aristotle:

Anything that we have to learn to do we learn by the actual doing of it: people become builders by building and instrumentalists by playing instruments. Similarly
we become just by performing just acts, temperate by performing temperate ones, brave by performing brave ones. (NEII 1 1103a33-1103b2) (p. 56)

Aristotle did not provide a full accounting of the process of habituation (Dunne, 1999, p. 58; Sherman, 1999a, p. 45; Vokey, 2000, p. 255). Consequently, neo-Aristotelian authors have engaged in conception developments that have resulted in very different interpretations of the original notion. Despite the differing interpretations, Steutel and Spiecker (2004) sum up what they believe are the basic agreements on habituation of neo-Aristotelian authors as follows:

It can be stated that habituation, in the Aristotelian sense of the term, consists in (i) practicing the virtues, or more precisely, performing those actions that correspond with virtuous sentimental dispositions, (ii) performing such actions frequently and consistently, and (iii) doing so under the guidance or authority of a virtuous tutor. (p. 536)

I have found three concerns raised in the analytic literature regarding the concept of habituation as understood in the basic form that Steutel and Spiecker have provided. The first concern is raised by Steutel and Spiecker (2004) themselves and has to do with the claim that "consistent and frequent virtuous behaviours are needed for the growth and settlement of the affective dispositions that are constitutive of the moral virtues" (p. 535).\footnote{The authors use the term virtuous "behaviours" instead of "actions" in this claim. The term "action" formed part of the initial basic understanding provided in habituation. I am taking the change in language to reflect an understanding that behaviour reflects the internal psychological interpretation of an action.} The authors point out that this claim appears to present a paradox, as the requirement seems to be that being morally virtuous is a precondition for acting virtuously, yet acting virtuously is a requirement for becoming morally virtuous (p. 535). The concern here is that it seems
implausible to claim that a person who is not yet virtuous could be capable of acting virtuously.

Steutel and Spiecker (1999) argue that this apparent paradox actually has two dimensions, the motivational and epistemic, and that each can be reasonably answered. The motivational dimension concerns the claim by Aristotle that acting virtuously requires that “the agent must have chosen the action for its own sake and be stably disposed to act in that way” (p. 535). The authors point out that this “thicker” sense of virtue would preclude someone not yet virtuous from acting virtuously, but in a “thinner” sense we could say that a person is acting in conformity with virtue without referencing the person’s motivational state (p. 536). As such, a child could perform those actions that are virtuous in this “thinner” sense, without possessing full virtue which would include the motivational aspect.

In contrast, the epistemic dimension has to do with a person’s insight into the moral character of her actions. Steutel and Spiecker (1999) point out that phronesis, or practical wisdom, is required to complete each virtue, and therefore the objection on the epistemic level is that a person needs to be practically wise to act as virtue requires, but practical wisdom grows out of acting virtuously (p. 536). Therefore, even in the “thinner” sense mentioned above, a child could not be said to be acting virtuously without the insight involved in phronesis. The authors respond to this objection by pointing out that the role of the virtuous tutor or adult in habituation is to provide the practical wisdom that guides the child to act in conformity with virtue (p. 536). In this way the child’s actions are practically wise, and thus in conformity with virtue, through the guidance of the virtuous tutor.
Although this seems like a sufficient answer to the paradox, it still leaves a question, which was raised by Vokey (2000) in reference to MacIntyre's similar analysis, as to how the virtuous tutor knows what is practically wise (pp. 220-221). I believe that Vokey's response to MacIntyre, which was provided in more detail in Chapter II of this thesis, provides an adequate response. The virtuous tutor, as one who is practically wise, is able to appreciate the non-relative intrinsic goodness of the virtues through the quality of human cognitive-affective response that they engender.

The second major concern in the analytic literature is that habituation does not involve rational engagement with a student, as it primarily involves establishing patterns of habitual behaviour. This raises an apparent paradox in that non-rational habits are considered to be the very foundation of reason that is manifest in phronesis (Kazepides, 1991, p. 260). In order to address this concern, I believe we need to consider whether all knowledge is subject to rational engagement, and particularly if the emotional virtues are things that need to be, or can be, justified, explained or doubted through rational argument.

I believe that the most compelling response to this apparent paradox can be found in Kazepides' (1991) article *On the Prerequisites of Moral Education: A Wittgensteinian Perspective*. Kazepides' basic argument is that the foundations of our understandings, including our moral understandings, are not subject to rational scrutiny, but can only be described. Kazepides draws on Wittgenstein's metaphor of the "riverbed" to describe the

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12 Kazepides repeatedly refers to "prerequisites" of educational development, and I believe the term "foundations" is more appropriate as it implies it is a part of education and not something outside of education – which I believe is what Kazepides is actually arguing.
foundations of our thought. The very basics of Wittgenstein’s metaphor are that there is a body of knowledge that arises out of prelinguistic human experience, which is the “indispensable ground of the most sophisticated thinking” (p. 263). This body of knowledge is not subject to justification, but is in fact the justification or grounds for our beliefs and convictions (pp. 262-263). It is the “inherited background against which (we) distinguish between true and false” (p. 263). The forms of knowledge in the riverbed are: logical propositions (i.e. a = a); methodological propositions (i.e. belief in the uniformity of nature); primordial concepts (i.e. event, state, object); language games (i.e. describing, explaining, reporting); and ordinary certainties (i.e. this is my hand, that car did not grow out of the ground) (p. 263).

Kazepides (1991) goes on to argue that, because the riverbed is not subject to rational scrutiny, the propositions\textsuperscript{13} within the riverbed, including our moral understandings, must be acquired, rather than learned through the sophisticated use of intellectual acts such as explaining, doubting, justifying, etc. (p. 266). Kazepides supports this assertion by arguing that moral understandings, “like other river-bed beliefs, are embedded in shared human activities and cannot exist outside some social context” (p. 268). He states “[we] begin our moral lives not with catechism or sophisticated lectures on our duties and obligations, but as apprentices, i.e. as participants in a form of life” (p. 268).

I believe that Kazepides’ arguments are compelling, and reasonably address the apparent paradox of how the development of virtuous emotional habits can be the foundation of

\textsuperscript{13} I don’t believe that the claim that moral understandings are propositional necessarily means that a child understands these ideas in propositional form - only that these understandings can be articulated later, by the mature adult possessing practical wisdom, in propositional form.
phronesis. As the goodness of the virtues, as a form of knowledge, occupies an epistemologically prior position as foundational premises for our moral arguments, it is not subject to rational scrutiny. Consequently, rational methods of inquiry into the emotional insights at the foundational stage are inappropriate – initially, appreciating the goodness of the emotional virtues can only be discovered through experience. For example, a child can discover through repeated opportunities that it is "moral" in the sense of "good" to be kind. Developing a habit of behaving in kind ways will provide more opportunities to discern the goodness of being kind. This knowledge of the "goodness" of being kind will later serve as premises for moral considerations required in phronesis. The considerations will not involve whether it is good in itself to be kind, but whether certain circumstances require kindness or some other response. Consequently, a start in good habits of virtuous conduct serves to provide a foundation for more sophisticated moral considerations that would be required in phronesis.

Of course, a challenge that remains is to determine the emotional virtues that actually belong in the "riverbed". Unfortunately, to be resolved this matter would require much more consideration than is possible within the scope of my thesis. I believe that what is important to clarify, at this point, is that there can be knowledge that is not subject to rational scrutiny; emotional virtues can occupy this position; and, consequently, the non-rational method of habituation is an educationally defensible method, as a starting point, for encouraging the development of virtuous sentimental dispositions.
A similar notion that justifies the idea that some forms of knowledge are not subject to rational scrutiny can be found in the positioning of the three laws (or principles) of thought, formulated by Plato and Aristotle. Briefly, the three laws, as provided by Angeles (1981) in the Dictionary of Philosophy, are as follows: 1. The law of identity: If \( p \) is true, then \( p \) is true; 2. The law of non-contradiction: \( p \) cannot be both true and false at the same time and in the same respect; and 3. The law of the excluded middle: either \( p \) is true or \( p \) is false; one or the other but not both at the same time and in the same respect. The laws of thought are positioned as logically prior, and thus foundational, to thought as both “all coherent thought, and all logical systems, rely upon them for justification” and the laws are non-inferential knowledge (Angeles, 1981, p. 153). This positioning of the laws of thought is consistent with the claim that some forms of knowledge or thought are foundational and not subject to rational justification.

The third and final concern regarding the concept of habituation that is raised in the analytic literature is that habituation as recommended by Aristotle is more suited to the development of habits or skills than ethical affective dispositions. In this section, I will simply outline this concern, and then address it fully in the next section.

The idea that Aristotle’s conception of habituation is more suited to the development of habits or skills than affective dispositions is forcefully advocated by Steutel and Spiecker (2004) in their paper Cultivating Sentimental Dispositions through Aristotelian Habituation. In this paper, the authors elaborate concept interpretations of habituation by Ryle, Passmore and Peters to argue that skills and habits are “things” that can be learned through frequent
and consistent practice, but virtuous affective dispositions are inherently different and thus not amenable to learning through habituation in the Aristotelian sense. In terms of skills, the authors point out that certain skills are involved in virtues of self-control (such as curbing greed, or temper) where the focus is on curbing a disposition that is in "excess", but the virtues of compassion or gratitude, where there is "deficiency" do not involve skills (p. 543). The authors argue that being virtuous involves having "wants and aversions, attitudes and feelings, cares and preferences" and therefore the moral virtues cannot only be acquired through repeated practical exercises as they are constituted by affective dispositions (p. 538).

In terms of habits, Steutel and Spiecker (2004) cite Peters' argument that virtues of compassion, concern or gratitude (what Peters' refers to as motivational virtues) cannot be construed as habits as they involve the active employment of one's mind and the arousal of feelings (p. 541). In contrast, habits are "dispositions to do certain things automatically, without reflection, deliberation, planning or choice" (p. 539). Consequently, the authors conclude that the moral virtues cannot be completely characterized as habits, and therefore, as habituation is likely to be effective only in developing habits, it will be ineffective in the development of ethical affective dispositions. In line with these criticisms, the authors develop a concept of habituation that they believe results in the settlement of virtuous affective dispositions, but it is one that significantly departs from the Aristotelian conception.

**Conceptions of Habituation**

In the previous section, I left an important concern about habituation unaddressed; namely, it is an effective means for establishing habits and skills, but that the moral virtues cannot be
completely characterized as habits or skills, and therefore habituation as conceived by Aristotle is an ineffective means for establishing the ethical emotional dispositions constitutive of the moral virtues. I do not believe that refuting this concern directly would have much value, as I would only be left in a position to argue that moral virtues can be construed as habits – and I will argue later that that sort of discourse misses the point. I do believe that this concern is rooted in a particular interpretation of habituation, which I will refer to as the mechanical interpretation\textsuperscript{14}, and that this mechanical interpretation contains an intellectualist bias that precludes a reasonable consideration of Aristotle’s concept of habituation as being an effective foundation of moral education.

In order to more clearly articulate and substantiate these views, I will be contrasting and analyzing the conception developments of habituation by neo-Aristotelian authors that employ either a cognitive or mechanical interpretation. More specifically, I will be looking at the differences in: a) the interpretation of defining characteristics of habituation; b) the method of inquiry; and c) interpretation of the manner in which habituation might work. Through this process, I will be uncovering the implications of these differing interpretations, as well as the underlying beliefs which influence these interpretations, in order to both refute the unaddressed concern above and inform my own normative conception of habituation.

\textsuperscript{14}The term mechanical, as used with regard to Aristotle’s concept of habituation, was originally used by Alexander Grant in \textit{The Ethics of Aristotle} (Longmans, Green 1885). This book is cited by Sherman (1999b) in which Sherman quotes Grant’s disapproving comments on habituation as being a “mechanical theory” of learning. Steutel and Spiecker (2004) similarly acknowledge that they interpret Aristotle’s concept of habituation as being a mechanical or non-cognitive theory (pp. 531, 539).
Cognitive and Mechanical Interpretations of Habituation

As I have mentioned earlier, Aristotle did not provide a full accounting of the process of habituation (Dunne, 1999; Sherman, 1999a; Vokey, 2000). Accordingly, neo-Aristotelian authors have engaged in conception development projects that have resulted, in my view, in very different interpretations of the original concept. Although most authors differ to varying degrees, there is a readily apparent division between those authors who construct a mechanical interpretation and those who construct a cognitive interpretation of habituation. Since the outstanding concern about skills and habits is raised only by those authors that present a mechanical interpretation, I believe that examining and contrasting the cognitive and mechanical will reveal that it is the intellectualist bias underlying the mechanical interpretation itself that raises the concern, and that such an interpretation is problematic, and not the Aristotelian conception of habituation itself.

A Technical Use Analysis of the Mechanical Interpretation of Habituation

Interpreting the Defining Characteristics of Habituation. The contemporary mechanical interpretation of habituation is advocated directly by Steutel and Spiecker (2004). The term mechanical, as used with regard to Aristotle’s concept of habituation, was originally used by Alexander Grant in *The Ethics of Aristotle* (Longmans, Green 1885) (Sherman, 1999b, p. 231). In this book, Grant is disapproving of Aristotle in that “a mechanical theory is here given both of the intellect and the moral character, as if the one could be acquired by teaching, the other by a course of habits” (Sherman, 1999b, p. 231). Sherman points out that, traditionally, habituation has been interpreted as the non-rational training of desires toward appropriate objects through practice, as originated by Grant (p.
231). Steutel and Spiecker (2004) argue that a mechanical view should be attributed to Aristotle, as Aristotle sees habituation as “essentially involving the establishment of virtuous sentimental dispositions through acting frequently and consistently as the virtuous person would do under the circumstances” (p. 548).

**Method of Inquiry.** Steutel and Spiecker (2004) begin their analysis by looking directly to the explicit remarks on habituation in the *Nicomachean Ethics*, as well as the writings of Aquinas and MacIntyre - whom they refer to as “representatives of the Aristotelian tradition” (p. 534) - in order to determine the defining characteristics of habituation. From this point, the authors analyze the terms *habits* and *skills*, in order to conclude that affective dispositions cannot be considered as habits or skills, and that Aristotle’s concept of habituation issues in an unsatisfactory mechanical theory. To conclude, the authors develop the concept of habituation by drawing on Aristotle’s remarks about pain and pleasure, and impose a theory of learning through conditioned response to reinforcing and punishing stimuli (pp. 544-545).

**How Habituation Might Work.** Steutel and Spiecker (2004) develop what they consider a plausible account of habituation by drawing on Aristotle’s statements concerning pleasure and pain. The authors summarize Aristotle as arguing that the virtues include “dispositions to like or to enjoy the things that are noble and just, and to dislike or to be pained by the things that are unjust and bad” (p. 544). The authors refer to a passage from the *Nicomachean Ethics*: “we need to have had the appropriate upbringing - right from our
early youth, as Plato says — to make us find enjoyment or pain in the right things (NE 1104b11-13)” (p. 544).

Interestingly, Steutel and Spiecker (2004) interpret these comments to mean that pleasure and pain should be used by the adult to inculcate appropriate emotional dispositions. The role of the tutor in this process is to provide positive and negative sentimental responses to a child’s behaviours, which will act as positive and negative reinforcing stimuli. The authors provide examples of reacting to a child who is exhibiting appropriate virtuous behaviour with “joy, delight, elation,” and when acting contrary to virtues to react with “distress, sorrow, disappointment”. The authors point out that the child will experience these reactions as pleasurable or painful, and in this way, the tutor’s reactions act as reinforcing pleasurable and painful stimuli (p. 544-545). As the authors directly state: “In modern jargon, we might say that habituation is a form of conditioning in which various virtuous affective dispositions are inculcated by connecting the child’s behaviour with different reinforcing and punishing stimuli” (p. 544). 15 There is no mention in the authors’ conception of how arriving at an appreciation of the goodness of virtue and corresponding love of virtue for its own sake is possible through this process.

In terms of the connection between habituation and phronesis, the authors position the concept as a prerequisite to other forms of teaching that would be required for phronesis. In the authors’ view, habituation, as they have developed the concept, establishes the

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15 Steutel and Spiecker (2004) are not alone in interpreting pain/pleasure as conditioned response. See also Kupperman’s (1999) defense of a “Pavlovian” interpretation of habituation in “Virtues, Character and Moral Dispositions” (p. 205).
appropriate sentimental dispositions from which the teaching of the intellectual virtue of phronesis is possible (p. 532).

A Technical Use Analysis of the Cognitive Interpretation of Habituation

Interpreting the Defining Characteristics of Habituation. A cognitive view is not only advocated by Sherman (1999a), but is also explicitly advocated by Burnyeat (1999), Dent (1999) and Dunne (1999). I believe the following quotes sufficiently highlight cognitive interpretations as a starting point for conception developments of habituation:

"From the strength of the conditions introduced by way of marking its *terminus ad quem*, it is clear that habituation cannot be a matter of mindless repetition or simple-minded drill" (Dunne, 1999, p. 58).

"The plea is not for mindless repetition of behaviour, but for critical practice that develops the cognitive skills constitutive of virtuous choice-making and action" (Sherman, 1999, p. 45).

"It turns out that Aristotle is not simply giving us a bland reminder that virtues take practice. Rather, practice has cognitive powers, in that it is the way we learn what is noble and just" (Burnyeat, 1999, pp. 209-210).

From these quotations, it is obvious that there are cognitive interpretations by different authors in the neo-Aristotelian tradition. Despite the general agreement on the cognitive nature of habituation, these authors significantly depart in an understanding of how habituation could be considered cognitive. As a synthesis of *cognitive* ideas is not possible, I have chosen to analyze Sherman's (1999b) development of habituation as she has provided
the most comprehensive development from a cognitive perspective. The differences within
the cognitive group of authors is important, and I will attempt to bring more understanding to
the main difference in the next section.

Sherman (1999b) believes that to claim that learning through practice will result in full virtue
is to “abbreviate a whole series of steps” (p. 247). Sherman argues that the action itself is
preceded by the discriminating perception of a certain situation, including reactive emotions
as part of that response, together with desires and beliefs about the situation. The exterior
moment of action cannot be isolated from the “interior cognitive and affective moments
which characterize even the beginner’s ethical behaviour” (p. 247). Consequently,
habituation in the cognitive view is complex and involves the active engagement of the child.
Further, Sherman interprets the idea of learning through repetition as not implying that the
same action is done over and over, as this would be impossible due to the change of context
from situation to situation. Sherman finds that learning through repetition of experience
involves the “refinement of actions through successive trials rather than a sheer mechanical
repetition of any one action (pp. 247-248). Further, the repetition should be seen as part of a
process toward excellence, as simply repeating the same misguided action over and over
would be fruitless (p. 248).

**Method of Inquiry.** In her analysis, Sherman (1999b) acknowledges that
habituation is not a fully developed concept and thus looks to Aristotle’s comments in the
*Nicomachean Ethics*, as well as extrapolating from the *Rhetoric* and *Metaphysics*, in order to
develop the concept while remaining consistent with the spirit of Aristotle’s ideas (p. 242).
Specifically, Sherman brings in Aristotle's cognitive theory of the emotions, as well as his comments on the role of pleasure and pain, to fill out the concept of habituation. Sherman also attempts to position the concept of habituation within a developmental perspective, where a person over time acquires and moves from *habituated* and *natural* virtue to the realization of full virtue and phronesis (p. 232).

**How Habituation Might Work.** Sherman (1999b) draws on Aristotle's statements regarding the relation of practice to the pleasure consequent upon it, as a way to develop states, to fill out the concept of habituation. Sherman interprets Aristotle as meaning that pleasure arises from the discriminatory activity involved in practice, and such pleasure impels the child to continue to engage in creative activity that is required to refine discrimination (p. 251). In Sherman's view the pleasure derived from virtuous activity is thus "internal to the practice".

Sherman (1999b) acknowledges that the child is not acting virtuously in the sense of actualized virtue found in the mature adult, but believes that the child experiences pleasure to the degree the actions actualize virtue. As she states: "though the habituating action is not itself an exercise of a perfected state, it is none the less an exercise of a part of virtue, and yields pleasure to the extent to which it develops that part...In the case of virtue, pleasure increases as the character state develops" (p. 256). The pleasure derived through the discriminatory activity involved in practice is thus motivating for the child to continue the virtuous practice, and through this practice there is continual refinement, in terms of discriminatory ability, until eventually full virtue is actualized. Sherman does not specify
how the pleasure a child may take in doing a virtuous action is related to the apprehension of
the intrinsic goodness of that action required for valuing virtue for its own sake.

Sherman’s contention that habituation is essentially a cognitive process rests on the idea that
emotions are cognitive. Sherman (1999b) draws on Aristotle’s explicit theory of the
emotions as intentional or cognitive in that “the passions are viewed not as blind promptings
and urgings that merely happen to us, but rather as selective responses to articulated features
of our environment” (p. 240). In Aristotle’s view, emotions are the result of evaluation of
the environment, but are also partly constituted by the evaluation. Sherman (1999a) calls on
Aristotle’s example of anger and fear. “Anger would not be anger without thoughts that one
was unfairly injured or the like. Fear would not be fear if there were not some mental
content of a threat or danger” (p. 44). Viewing the emotions in this way allows for an
interpretation of habituation as similarly cognitive in that the act of experiencing situations is
naturally subject to discrimination and resulting evaluative responses, and not an inert
process of being acted upon.

Sherman (1999b) argues that this form of critical habituation requires the guidance of the
virtuous tutor in a specific way. The role of the tutor is not to scold or provide explicit
instructions on acting, but to tutor the child’s vision of the world through drawing attention
to the salient aspects of differing situations in order to draw more critical discriminations.
The tutor helps the child interpret circumstances in a more refined way such as showing
“how what the child took to be a deliberate assault and cause for anger was ... an accident,
that the laughter and smiles which annoy were intended as signs of delight rather than of
teasing" (p. 242). This rests on the Aristotelian idea that the ability to discriminate and take pleasure in discriminating is innate (p. 242). In this way, the tutor is not only encouraging the child's natural propensities for discrimination and evaluation in the specific circumstance, but also teaching the child to attend to particulars as a preparation for arriving at practical judgments independently.

Sherman (1999b) sketches a developmental picture of habituation as a process that eventually leads to full virtue. Sherman argues that habituation is educating the emotions in part through their constitutive beliefs, but this cultivation of the emotions is "bound up in learning to discern the circumstances that warrant these responses (p. 238). The degree that reason intervenes in the process is determined by the child's capabilities. Initially, a child's choices may require a "certain level of simple means-end reasoning and specification of ends" (p. 244). What is precluded in the earlier stages is dialectical reasoning characteristic of more mature rationality in terms of consideration of the role of virtue in the whole life. In the more mature youth, practice will be in weighing up competing factors and rational justification. At that stage, "practice will be in choice making of this sort" (p. 245). In this view, habituation is seen as critical practice in which reason intervenes on practice to greater degrees with increases in maturity.

A Comparison of Mechanical and Cognitive Interpretations of Habituation

The fundamental difference between the mechanical and cognitive interpretations of habituation is that, in the former, practice lacks a cognitive dimension, whereas in the latter,
the cognitive dimension is crucial. I believe that the idea that practice lacks cognitive powers reflects underlying beliefs rooted in an intellectualist bias. Steutel and Spiecker (2004) are quite firm in their belief that Aristotle's account of habituation as learning through practice cannot explain how practice can lead to the growth and settlement of appropriate emotional dispositions (pp. 537-541). I believe that this conclusion can be reached if one equates cognition with the exercise of the intellect and overlooks the possibility that cognition can occur through the felt quality of the emotional response to a virtuous action.

More direct proof of these statements can be seen in the ways in which Steutel and Spiecker (2004) do not explicitly provide a theory of the emotions, but make unquestioned statements that the emotions are motivational and thus without a cognitive dimension. The authors do not directly define emotions as being motives for action, but the numerous references to “motivational virtues” used to describe the emotional virtues (pp. 536, 537, 541, 542), and lack of any account of emotions as having a cognitive nature, I believe reflects an unstated bias that emotions are generally non-cognitive motivations for action.

I believe that the mechanical interpretation leads to a truly questionable development of habituation in the manipulative and Pavlovian sense presented. If one only thinks of emotions as being “things” that motivate, then experience of emotions actually has no transformational capacity. Also, if emotions are completely non-cognitive, then direct experience of the emotions to provide transformational learning is useless – all that is required to acquire virtuous affective dispositions, on this view, is the manipulation of emotions.
Another problematic aspect to Steutel and Spiecker’s (2004) conception development of habituation is that it lacks the resources to explain how the virtues could come to be valued for their own sake. I believe that one could only take the learning of virtuous sentimental dispositions as being through manipulation and associations if the virtues were not in themselves things that are intrinsically good, and capable of being recognized as such.16 This view is certainly contrary to an Aristotelian conception of the virtues, but I believe it may be one that underlies the authors’ views. Habituation, as presented by Steutel and Spiecker, provides only an extrinsic connection to appreciating the virtues, and makes no connection to how a child will develop a love of virtue for its own sake.

In contrast, the cognitive interpretation, as advocated by Sherman (1999b), avoids the intellectualist bias to a greater degree, in that she does not equate cognition with the intellect, and acknowledges that the emotions have a cognitive dimension. This is not to deny that emotions are motivating factors, but to assert that emotions are not simply motivating factors. For Sherman, emotions are motivations for action, but they are also sensitivities that record what we value; help us signal those values to ourselves and others; help us establish what we value; and are intrinsically valuable as part of living a full human life (Sherman, 1999a, p. 42) The fact that Sherman explicitly draws on Aristotle’s theory of the emotions as cognitive is evidence of her belief that cognition is not only possible through intellectual activities, but through practical experience as well.

16 These types of criticisms were leveled at MacIntyre’s Thomistic interpretation of practical reasoning by Vokey (2000). I believe that Steutel and Spiecker’s views incorporate the Thomistic worldview which is incongruent with an Aristotelian worldview - specifically, the inability to incorporate the notion of non-relative intrinsic goodness and also the non-cognitive view of the emotions. Unfortunately, space precludes delving as deeply as it is possible to go on these points.
Although Sherman advocates a view of the emotions as cognitive, I do not believe her development of habituation completely reflects her stated commitment. A view that the emotions are cognitive would entail that, in some way, emotions can perceive at least certain aspects of objective reality - whether completely accurately or not (De Sousa, 2004, p. 69).

In this way emotions, in conjunction with intellectual appraisals, give us some sort of insight into objective reality. This would involve more than the idea that emotions ascribe value, but that the emotions can also recognize things that have intrinsic value. In the case of habituation and the virtues, this insight would be the intrinsic goodness of the virtues through the felt emotional experience of the virtues.

In Sherman’s (1999b) development, the value of the virtues is perceived through the pleasure of discriminatory activities involved in practicing virtue. Discriminatory activity is an intellectual activity that is not intrinsically good in itself. Further, although Sherman argues that the emotions are sensitivities, she develops this idea as sensitivity to ascribing value and not recognizing value. In Sherman’s development it is difficult to see in what way the emotions contribute to the insight of the goodness of the virtues and how the emotions are particularly cognitive.

Despite Sherman’s (1999b) development of the cognitive view, I do believe that a cognitive view differently developed provides a more plausible connection between habituation and an appreciation of the intrinsic value of the virtues. In an earlier discussion, I referenced Vokey’s (2000) differentiation between non-relative intrinsic goodness (good in itself) verses
relative intrinsic goodness (relative to a human interest or desire). As Sherman stated, it is clear that a child’s initial appreciation of intrinsic goodness will be relative to the pleasure that acting virtuously yields, to the degree such acting actualizes virtue. Also, this motivational role of pleasure is but a first step in motivating a child to continue practicing virtuous activities and related emotional dispositions and ultimately gaining insight through the felt experience. But, instead of locating the pleasure in the discriminatory activities involved in virtuous action, we can locate the pleasure in the virtuous action itself. In that way, the appreciation of virtue for its own sake, in the non-relative sense, comes from habituated virtue over time through a refined sensibility. The role of the emotions in the cognitive perspective would need to appreciate that the emotions are capable of recognizing this intrinsic goodness.

The following example might help clarify the point I am trying to make. Two children are playing and one child is upset because they want a toy that the other child has been playing with for a while. An adult instructs the child who has the toy to share it with the reason being it is good to be kind. The child goes along with the instruction, perhaps out of love and trust in the adult, and shares the toy. The child takes some small pleasure in the act of kindness, and at the same time gains some small insight into the goodness of the action through the felt experience of being kind.\textsuperscript{17} Through repeated opportunities to be kind, in which the child takes a greater role in initiating the action, the child experiences greater pleasure in the virtuous action and also develops a keener perception of the situations where

\textsuperscript{17} This is not to deny that the response of the other child and adult will have an influence on the child’s perception of the situation and potentially the child will make an instrumental connection of kindness to approval and acceptance. The point for now being that it does feel “good” to be kind and the child is capable of feeling this.
kindness is at issue and more refined insight into the goodness of kindness through the felt experience. This develops a more refined sensibility. The true pleasure in this situation is not located in the ability of discriminating situations, although there might be some pleasure there, but the true pleasure is located in the virtuous action and the goodness is perceived through the felt experience. The child over considerable time and experience can come to believe what she has been told – it is good to be kind.

I believe that this comparison of the mechanical and cognitive interpretations, among other things, provides a greater understanding of the initial criticism that was leveled in the first section – namely that habituation is an effective means for establishing habits and skills, but that the moral virtues cannot be completely characterized as habits or skills, and therefore habituation as conceived by Aristotle is an ineffective means for establishing the ethical emotional dispositions constitutive of the moral virtues. I think it is obvious at this point that this criticism could only be levelled by a proponent of the mechanical interpretation. A belief that virtues are initially realized in the form of habits of behaviour is unproblematic to a cognitive interpretation of habituation. There is an unstated premise in the argument above that practice of the virtues has no cognitive dimension as the child is not actively engaged in making sense of experience, as emotions are not evaluative but simply motivational. On such a view, acting habitually realizes nothing in terms of transformation of the perspective of the child. On the other hand, if one appreciates that repeated action provides opportunities to experience goodness, and that experience leads to insight into intrinsic goodness, one could see how practice leads to transformation. Thus, this argument can be reconceived as follows: habituation is an effective means for establishing habits and skills;
habits of virtuous behaviour lead to virtuous emotional dispositions and an appreciation of the intrinsic goodness of the virtues; therefore habituation is an effective means for establishing the ethical emotional dispositions constitutive of the moral virtues.

**Positioning of Habituation in Relation to Phronesis**

As was mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, I also believe it is important to consider the position of habituation in relation to phronesis. I believe this is an important step as practical wisdom is the ultimate end being sought and therefore it is important to consider what role habituation might have in the achievement of phronesis. I also believe this is an important step as it reintroduces a difference that was left unaddressed between authors working from a cognitive interpretation. It might be helpful to have a few reminders about phronesis before proceeding. In a virtue approach to moral education, the intellectual virtue of practical wisdom or phronesis is a desired end, and completes each of the moral virtues. In the Aristotelian view you cannot have practical wisdom without moral virtue, and you cannot have moral virtue without practical wisdom. Habituation is proposed by Aristotle as foundational activity to the moral virtues, but the intellectual virtues are developed through teaching. This requires that any account of habituation has to position the concept in relation to phronesis. I would ask the following question: Does habituation itself result in phronesis, and if not, how close does it get?

In my review of the literature, the relation between habituation and phronesis in conception developments seems to differ substantially, and does not differ strictly in relation to mechanical or cognitive interpretations. From the examples above, Steutel and Spiecker
place habituation as a mode of learning that establishes the prerequisite emotional dispositions necessary to the virtues, and insinuate the virtues are completed in phronesis through another mode of learning. In contrast, Sherman places habituation as a mode of learning that takes you all the way to phronesis.

I believe an interesting positioning of habituation in relation to phronesis is proposed by Burnyeat. Although Burnyeat is working with a cognitive interpretation of habituation, he argues, quite similarly to Steutel and Spiecker (2004), that habituation is a method for establishing prerequisites to full virtue and not a method that develops phronesis. In Burnyeat’s (1999) chapter Aristotle on Learning to Be Good, he argues that Aristotle positions habituation as a distinctive way of learning that establishes starting points in the moral virtues that are developed into phronesis through teaching. Burnyeat reconstructs, from numerous references throughout the Nicomachean Ethics, a distinctive picture of the development of phronesis, and the distinct role of habituation in this process. He argues that we come to have knowledge about our actions in accordance with the virtues from things familiar to us (p. 212). Therefore, we need to be familiar in our lives with the noble and just in order to develop knowledge of it. The starting point that habituation develops is this sort of knowledge, which he qualifies as “knowing that” actions are noble and just, without explanation, but through experience. Burnyeat quotes Aristotle as follows:

By doing the things you are told are noble and just you will discover that what you have been told is true. What you may begin by taking on trust you can come to know

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18 I am not implying with the word “insinuate” that Steutel and Spiecker have some sort of covert agenda in not explicating the learning process appropriate to phronesis. The focus of their article is habituation, and not phronesis, therefore the authors chose to focus on habituation and make less explicit references to other forms of learning which they felt would be appropriate to full virtue.
for yourself. This is not yet to know why it is true, but it is to have learned that it is true in the sense of having made the judgment your own, second nature to you ... Nor is it yet to have acquired any of the virtues, for which practical wisdom is required ...

But it is to have made a beginning (6.13; 10.8 1178a16-19). (p. 209)

From this point, a person well brought up in starting points, is receptive to inductive teaching about the moral virtues and is able to develop the intellectual capacities in practical wisdom that are necessary to complete the moral virtues (Burnyeat, 1999, p. 215). Therefore, habituation is positioned as a method for developing starting points for acquiring an internalized conception of things that are noble and just, and the development of phronesis is reliant on these starting points. From there, inductive modes of teaching are effective in developing phronesis.

A Normative Conception of Habituation

My conceptual inquiry into habituation has led me to my own normative conception of habituation. The following is my normative conception of habituation outlined in the same manner as my inquiry in the previous section.

Interpreting the Defining Characteristics of Habituation

I interpret the frequent and repetitious practice of actions that correspond with virtuous affective dispositions to be an essentially cognitive process. I believe that people are complex in the ways that meaning from experience is registered and incorporated into existing understandings. I agree with Sherman's (1999b) view that an action cannot be
separated from the interior cognitive and affective moments that characterize the action itself. As Sherman (1999b) points out, an action “presupposes the discrimination of a situation as requiring a response, reactive emotions that mark that response, and desires and beliefs about how and for the sake of what ends one should act” (p. 247). As the virtues essentially involve actions that are good for their own sake, I believe that through the practice of virtuous actions a child can come to appreciate the intrinsic goodness of the virtues through the felt quality of the experience. I believe that the emotions are capable of recognizing intrinsic goodness. I believe a mechanical interpretation assumes a too simplistic view of a passive child merely repeating behaviours without making an intrinsic connection to the goodness inherent in virtuous dispositions, or having the possibility of attaining any insight into the nature of the practice in which they are engaged.

I also believe that frequent and consistent practice of the virtues is not mere mechanical repetition of the same behaviours. I agree with Sherman’s (1999b) argument that repetition of behaviour in a mechanical way is neither what Aristotle intends or possible in practice. The practice of a virtue is embedded in a context that changes with the particulars of any given situation. I agree with Sherman that the frequent and consistent repetition of virtuous actions is not mechanical, but is a refinement of actions and pleasures through repeated opportunities to approximate closer to virtue.

**Method of Inquiry**

I have chosen a technical use analysis as my method of conceptual inquiry to develop a normative conception of habituation. The term *technical use analysis* as developed by
Coombs and Daniels (1991) refers to a type of analysis of a technical or semi-technical concept that provides “an account of the range of diverse and sometimes conflicting meanings it has for educational theorists and researchers” (p. 34). In this case, I have looked to the conception developments of habituation by various theorists to understand the diverse and conflicting meanings of the term, in order to inform a normative conception of habituation.

How Habituation Might Work

I believe that, in trying to understand how habituation might work, we need to be more precise as to the type of knowledge with which habituation is primarily concerned. I believe that the type of knowledge that is being acquired through habituation is not a type of knowledge that can be doubted, explained or justified — in short, it is not subject to rational engagement. Recall again Kazepides’ use of Wittgenstein’s metaphor of the “riverbed”, and the related assertion that the foundations of our moral understandings occupy an epistemological prior position to other forms of knowledge as they are premises for sophisticated moral arguments. I believe this is the same argument made by Burnyeat in his interpretation of Aristotle’s starting points which are not subject to explanation, but can only be experienced. In line with Kazepides (1991) and Burnyeat (1999), I believe the type of knowledge being acquired through habituation is that virtuous actions are noble and just, and in that sense good. It is not to know why the virtues are good in the context of leading a eudaimon life, but it can be seen as a start on that road. Since the knowledge of the virtues as provided here is not subject to intellectual engagement, an accounting of the specific type
of method of acquisition of this knowledge needs to be provided – I believe this is habituation.

To explain how habituation might accomplish the acquisition of the knowledge that the virtues are noble and just, and in that sense good, I believe a child comes to appreciate this knowledge through experiencing the pleasure inherent in virtuous activities and through the felt experience. Further, through repetition (in differing contexts) comes to a more refined understanding and a love of virtuous activity for itself. Recall again the example I provided regarding the kindness of sharing. The important aspect is that through the felt quality of the virtuous activity, a child will come, through repeated opportunities, to appreciate the non-relative intrinsic goodness of virtuous activity.

To further clarify these points we could consider the development of compassion through habituation. Initially a baby’s first experience of compassion is through the compassionate responses of the mother to the baby’s needs, and the pleasure that is felt through experiencing compassionate acts. The baby gains insight into the goodness of compassion not through a rational discussion, but through the felt response. As the baby grows into a small child, the opportunities to experience compassion in different situations develop and the parent also provides opportunities for the child to act compassionately. Along with acting compassionately toward the child, the parent points out instances where the child will have an opportunity to act compassionately. For example, the parent might point out another child who has lost a toy and ask how that child might feel and what could be done to make the child feel better. As the child is given opportunities to act compassionately, to the degree
that the child’s action actualizes virtue, the child will feel the pleasure of the compassionate response and also gain insight through the felt experience. As many opportunities are provided in childhood, the child develops a more refined appreciation for the circumstances that warrant compassion and the ways in which compassion can be expressed. The point being that the pleasure of experiencing compassion supervenes on the good inherent in compassion. The insight is perhaps intuitive in the sense that it is nondiscursive, as it is appreciated through the felt quality of the experience.

Positioning of Habituation in Relation to Phronesis

I am in agreement with Burnyeat’s (1999) analysis of Aristotle’s positioning, and disagree with Sherman’s assertion that habituation eventually results in phronesis. I believe that habituation is appropriate to starting points as discussed above, due to the nature of the type of knowledge with which habituation is concerned. I believe these non-rational foundations are acquired through experience, as no explanation is really possible. In contrast, phronesis is concerned with practical judgment and the ability to reason morally. As such, a different form of learning is required, as it is a type of knowledge that is subject to rationality, but is still based on experience. I will not fully develop this idea at this point as I believe it goes beyond the concept of habituation that I am seeking to develop in this chapter, and will be a more appropriate discussion for the following chapter.

I believe the complexity of differentiating types of learning by the corresponding type of knowledge learned and translating this understanding to educational practice should not be underestimated. I do not believe in any sense that these differentiations result in a linear
sequence of learning that begins with habituation before a different form of learning, such as rational reflection, takes over. I agree with Sherman's position that cultivating the emotional dispositions through habituation is inextricably bound up in inductive rational processes with reason intervening to the degree that is amenable to the child's developmental level. Although I believe these types of learning are "bound up", I believe it is important to recognize the distinction due to the implications for educational practice.

Conclusion

Up to this point I have provided what I would consider a normative conception of habituation that is theoretically defensible. In the following chapter, I will reposition the discussion back to the original purpose of this thesis – to explore the ways in which *ethical emotional learning* in pre-adolescent children can be promoted.
Chapter IV
Ethical Emotional Learning in Pre-Adolescent Children

In this chapter, my objective is to clarify the nature of the relationship between habituation and induction in the development of full virtue, and bring the discussion back to the concept of ethical emotional learning and the ways in which it might be promoted in pre-adolescent children. This chapter has three major sections. In the first section, I will present a developmental framework for the types of learning that are required for phronesis. This framework will describe the overlapping relationship between habituation and induction, and introduce the notion of dialectical learning. In particular, I will be considering the potential positioning of pre-adolescent children within this framework. In the second section, I will clarify how ethical emotional learning, as I have defined it, can be understood in neo-Aristotelian terms. In this way, I will attempt to show the congruity between my understanding of ethical emotional learning and central concepts from Aristotelian virtue ethics. In the third section, I will look at the teaching methods and educational configurations that would predominantly figure in this approach, particularly with pre-adolescent children.

In this chapter, I will be approaching my objectives somewhat differently. In Chapters II and III, I have been drawing solely upon theoretical knowledge to increase my understanding of the subject matter. In this chapter, I will also be drawing upon my experience teaching pre-adolescent children, recognizing this as valid and relevant knowledge. In this way, I hope to refine the concept of ethical emotional learning, and the methods appropriate to it, in a way that is both practically and theoretically defensible. Thus, in this chapter, there will be a back and forth consideration of theory and practice.
A Developmental Learning Framework for Phronesis

I argued in Chapter III that habituation is concerned with a specific type of knowledge – namely, that the virtues are intrinsically good ("noble and fine"). I also argued that this type of knowledge was derived from the quality of the experience of virtuous action. Further, that this knowledge is a starting point, and that inductive forms of learning are required to move from the starting points to full virtue or phronesis. I suggested the process was non-linear and complex — as Sherman (1999b) argues, "bound-up" — but I did not develop a framework that would clarify all of these points in a systematic way. In this section, my intent is to develop such a developmental learning framework for phronesis.

Ways of Learning From Practice

In order to develop this framework, a consideration of the potential forms of learning involving practical action is required. Vokey (2000) proposes three ways of characterizing the relationship between theoretical reflection and practical action – deductive, inductive and dialectical:

Deductive accounts locate learning in theory, where practice is the straightforward implementation of general principles developed and justified independently. . .

Inductive accounts locate learning in practice, seeing theoretical frameworks as mere summaries of convictions developed and justified through particular moments of active engagement with the concrete world. Dialectical accounts locate learning in
the back and forth interaction between reflection and action, seeing both theory and practice as being incomplete without the other. (p. 222)

With this in mind, we can consider the type of learning characteristic of phronesis. As Dunne (1999) argues, Aristotle characterizes the intellectual virtues as being primarily learned through a deductive path. Dunne provides the example of math, where from “axioms and definitions further knowledge can be derived from an apodictic process” (p. 57).

Although phronesis is officially designated by Aristotle as an intellectual virtue, it differs from the other intellectual virtues in the way in which it is learned. Recall from Chapter II that phronesis does not sit comfortably on either side of the divide between the moral and intellectual virtues as it is required to complete each of the moral virtues. Dunne points out that Aristotle represents phronesis as being learned in the inductive mode as follows: “It is the process that begins with acts of perception or discrimination, some of which persist and are repeated so that they produce a coherent memory, only for further repetition at the level of memory to yield (in the midst of multiplicity) a grasp of universals” (p. 58).

I would also argue that this accounting of phronesis might be equally reflective of the dialectical mode. In the dialectical mode there is a greater integration of both theory and practice from the back and forth interaction of each. I would argue that, with increases in maturity, memory not only captures what is learned through practice, but also what is learned through theory. I believe that, with increases in ethical maturity arrived at through practical experience and theoretical reflection, there naturally evolves an integration of practical and theoretical considerations in making ethical decisions as they are tied at the level of memory.
refinement of practical wisdom through dialectic presents as a linear picture – this is not my intent. As I previously stated, there is a great deal of overlap and complexity that needs to be accounted for. The first set of complexities is found in the starting points. First, appreciating the intrinsic goodness of the virtues through habituation might never actually end. It might be that, as we go through life, we attain a deeper level, or refinement of, our understanding of this goodness through new and unusual circumstances. For example, an 80 year old woman with an appreciation for the intrinsic goodness of compassion might be on the receiving end of an extraordinary act of selflessness which deepens her understanding of this goodness. An appropriate metaphor might be sugar that is course grained but can be continually refined. Second, the starting points in the virtues can not happen altogether as situations involving specific virtues are required. For example, a child may have many opportunities to begin to acquire an appreciation for the goodness of being kind, but perhaps few opportunities regarding courage. The starting points in the virtues will necessarily differ with life experience – some developing in early childhood, perhaps others not until late childhood, and perhaps some may never develop. Third, the degree of attentiveness or distractibility of the child, whether by innate capacity or parenting, will ultimately affect the length of time it takes for the child to gain a foundation in starting points. Finally, there is the complexity of the natural virtue that we are born with that differs from person to person. The starting points themselves will differ from natural gifts of virtue by birth; degree of attentiveness and distractibility either by birth or developed; opportunities to gain insight through experience, and also by the depth of understanding over time.
The above discussion locates phronesis as being inductive and dialectic in terms of the theory-practice relationships, but there is the type of knowledge on which phronesis is reliant that seems unaccounted for in this picture: namely, the knowledge that the virtues are noble and fine. Phronesis is not just a deliberative excellence, but it is a deliberative excellence specifically concerning the good, from a settled affective disposition towards the good. As I have argued, the knowledge that the virtues are noble and fine is acquired from practical action without theoretical reflection, and have defined this as habituation. The question remains as to where habituation might fit within the types of theory-practice relationships. At this point, some might argue that habituation as I present it could be considered a type of deductive learning – that I have located the learning in theory. I would argue that the major difference is found in the type of knowledge with which habituation is concerned – knowledge that is not subject to theoretical justification. Theoretical reflection, in this case, is not possible as the knowledge cannot be developed or justified – only known from experience. It seems habituation does not fit properly into any of the three categories provided in the theory-practice relationships. From these understandings, I believe we could include habituation as a distinct fourth category: habituation locates learning in a type of knowledge that is incapable of theoretical justification, and is acquired through the active implementation of this knowledge in the concrete world.

The Framework – Addressing Complexities

The idea that starting points in affective dispositions are acquired through habituation; followed by increasing knowledge of universals via particulars through induction; and final
The second area of complexity involves the previously introduced idea that habituation is bound up with inductive processes. Recall again Sherman's (1999b) argument that cultivating affective dispositions is "bound up in learning to discern the circumstances that warrant these responses (p. 238). Sherman argues that the degree that reason intervenes in the process is determined by the child's capabilities, and initially, a child's choices may require a "certain level of simple means-end reasoning and specification of ends" (p. 244). What is precluded in the earlier stages is dialectical reasoning characteristic of more mature rationality in terms of consideration of the role of virtue in the whole life. Although Sherman argues that these inductive processes are a part of habituation, and I of course disagree, the point is an important one. I believe that, as habituating actions start to develop in a child an appreciation for the goodness of the virtues, the child also needs to make sense of the situations in which the actions takes place. The discernment of the particulars of the situation will largely figure into this appreciation, and induction will most certainly be involved.

I believe that this picture of induction and habituation as forms of learning being bound together is a more common understanding of how children learn. When a child starts to acquire knowledge about the goodness of certain ways of being, this cannot be separated from the context in which the knowledge was learned. As more opportunities to deepen the understanding of the goodness appear, children tend to make gross generalizations as to the similarities of the situations. With increased opportunities, and increasing cognitive ability with age, the discriminations become finer. I believe that we can see in children the desire to make sense of experience. The ways that habituation and induction are bound up are
particularly obvious with pre-adolescent children. At this age, children are able to think abstractly and make finer mental discriminations. At the same time, life experience is still somewhat limited and opportunities to obtain starting points in some virtues and further refine others through habituation are still needed in abundance.

My views on the ways that induction and habituation are bound together, has grown from my general experience teaching. I believe a particular 12 year old student I will call Justin, whom I taught in a small group daily over the period of a year, illustrates what I am trying to get across. Justin had little experience of compassion in his young life and was generally cruel and resultantly disliked by the other students. I made it a point to be particularly compassionate with Justin and provide opportunities for Justin to be compassionate with others. Along with this I drew attention to compassionate themes in the literature we were studying and provided more refined language to understand compassion. Over the course of the year, through increased opportunities to talk and write about his experiences on being compassionate and experiencing compassion, Justin began to show compassion towards others and was starting to independently discern circumstances that warranted compassion. Justin’s language around compassion grew from “being nice” to “being sensitive and responding to someone’s needs when they are suffering”. I believe that Justin’s development of the virtue of compassion grew from both being habituated to compassion and from the opportunities for inductive learning through experience. I do not believe that habituation and induction can be pulled apart, but are needed to work together in the development of virtue.
Of course, some of the same complexities regarding differences in obtaining starting points through habituation are similar to the differences regarding inductive processes. First, inductive processes will continue over the lifetime as new and unusual circumstances present themselves. Although, as previously mentioned, in the maturing adult dialectical reflection as to the role of virtue in the well conducted life will figure more prominently. Second, learning to discern the circumstances of a specific virtue relies on repeated opportunities to experience a part of what that virtue requires – such opportunities may or may not be present. Third, attentiveness and distractibility of the individual will affect the amount of time it takes for virtues to be actualized. Fourth, a person born with a natural disposition towards a virtue will likely develop heightened discrimination for situations involving that virtue by nature.

Ultimately, the developmental framework that I am providing for phronesis understands coming to be a fully virtuous person as a complex and non-linear process. There are no lock step stages where one form of learning starts and another stops. In terms of habituation and induction, both should be present even from very young ages; the difference is in the degrees to which they need be present. In my view, in very young children, habituation will be prominent and induction will have a smaller role. Moving throughout the childhood experience, induction will increase while habituation decreases. Moving into adulthood, habituation will significantly decrease; induction will start to decrease; while dialectic will increase. At the same time, the complexities that I have introduced reflect a process that is very individualized as it based on the specific experiences and innate capacities of the individual. A final point is that the reasoning process with moral matters will not be even. A
more fine grained appreciation of a specific virtue will naturally encourage more sophisticated reasoning processes regarding that virtue. In contrast, a course grained appreciation of a specific virtue will be accompanied by reasoning based on more gross generalizations.

Positioning Pre-Adolescent Children in the Framework

To conclude this section, I would like to position pre-adolescent children within this framework. When I speak of pre-adolescent children, I am generally looking at children in grades 4 to 6 (ages 9 – 11). From my account of the development of phronesis, it might be obvious that I do not believe that moral development occurs in lock step stages. I do believe, its complexities notwithstanding, that it is possible to make some useful generalizations about pre-adolescent children’s moral development, so long as we approach such generalizations with caution and remember that individuals within categories vary. In other words, categories are not real, they only allow us to make sense of reality. With these cautions in mind, I would like to offer some general observations on where pre-adolescent children fit within my framework based on my interactions with pre-adolescent children in an educational context over many years, with particular attention to their moral development.

I believe the best way to approach this task is to provide a brief typical scenario that I have encountered repeatedly in varying forms with pre-adolescent children, and then pull apart some general features. I could provide many scenarios, but I do not believe that would add much value to the points I want to make. I believe that all of the complexities that were previously introduced reveal that generalizations about age groups are potentially quite few,
and require too many disclaimers. Therefore, this scenario is meant to point to the few generalizations I believe I can make about the age group in question.

**Scenario**

One child refuses to lend an eraser to another child. Two children are watching and discuss the situation as follows:

First Child: “Did you see what she did? She’s so selfish.”

Second Child: “Yeah, she never lets me borrow a pencil and she’s got so many.”

First Child: “I’m not inviting her to my birthday party.”

Second Child: “Good.”

There are a number of features of this situation that tend to represent the moral development of pre-adolescent children. First, the children are able to describe others in terms of virtuous and non-virtuous dispositions. In this example, there is an understanding of a child’s action reflecting the virtuous (or in this case non-virtuous) disposition of another child. Second, there is an appreciation of the goodness of the virtue of generosity that can be inferred from the negative reactions to the child that does not possess this virtue. There is no discussion of whether or not it is good to be generous – the goodness of sharing is implied and mutually understood. Third, the children are able to discern the particulars of this situation and apply it to a similar situation. This reflection is not necessarily refined, but inductive processes are readily apparent. Fourth, the fact that the discussion is going on at all, and the action was not simply ignored, reflects a responsiveness to the moral situations of others. Something was salient enough in the situation for both of these children to reflect together upon it.

Generally, I have found that pre-adolescent children tend to be responsive to the condition of
others. Finally, the children did not intervene, but used social exclusion as a way to address the problem. Again, speaking generally, I have found that children are hesitant to confront another peer who has not directly done some kind of non-virtuous action to them. I believe that affective virtuous dispositions develop differently with perhaps an appreciation for the virtue of generosity starting before appreciation of virtues such as courage.

From analyzing this scenario a few points can be made that have direct implications for learning and moral education. First, pre-adolescent children have an appreciation for the intrinsic value of some moral virtues, but not all. Second, pre-adolescent children are generally responsive to situations involving virtues that they have recognized as being good, and use inductive reasoning to make sense of the situation. Third, pre-adolescent children tend to have simple categories and lack language to discuss moral situations in depth. With this in mind, habituation should be a strong feature of moral education for this age group, in order to develop a more fine grained appreciation of goodness. Induction will also figure prominently, as a start in appreciating goodness is already present. Therefore, there is a need to help pre-adolescent children discern the particulars of situations through developing their abilities for discrimination. There is also a need to provide the refined language that needs to inform refined thinking about moral situations.

In this section, I have provided a developmental learning framework for phronesis. I have also cautiously positioned pre-adolescent children within this framework, by respecting a view that innate capacities and experiences make such categorizing of only general use. At this point, I believe it is important to reposition the discussion back to the main purpose of
this thesis – to consider how ethical emotional learning can best be promoted in pre-adolescent children. In the next section, I will attempt to show the congruity between the central concepts in Aristotelian virtue ethics that I have provided, and my understanding of ethical emotional learning. In the final section, I will provide the instructional methods and educational configurations that would prominently figure in an approach to ethical emotional learning with pre-adolescent children.

Ethical Emotional Learning as Understood in the Aristotelian Sense
As a refresher, let me reiterate my understanding of ethical emotional learning. By ethical emotional learning, I am referring to the ways in which a child acquires appropriate emotions and learns to direct both her negative and positive emotions so as to live in moral or good ways. That is to say, through ethical emotional learning a child learns to feel appropriate emotions. In this way, I am not speaking only of emotions that might be considered ethical, in that a consideration of goodness need necessarily be derived from the emotion. For example, I am not considering only such emotions as compassion or caring, in that such emotions could be viewed as in themselves being ethical, and then seeking to find out how such emotions are learned or acquired. Importantly, I am not excluding such emotions, nor unconcerned with the related process of learning either. I am more generally referring to the idea that all of our emotions influence our attempts to live in ethical ways, and that learning to direct our emotions, feel appropriate emotions, and enhance our more specifically ethical emotions, so as to live in ethical ways, is in essence ethical emotional learning in my view.
I believe that important foundational concepts in Aristotelian virtue ethics can be found in my understanding of ethical emotional learning. First, the idea of learning to direct one's emotions and feel appropriate emotions is related to the Aristotelian concept of finding the mean between excess and deficiency in the emotional response. The emotional virtues are dispositions to feel and be moved neither too weakly nor too strongly, but appropriately. Aristotelian virtue ethics is not only concerned with our specifically ethical virtues, but also with the management of our emotions generally. Second, the idea of enhancing our specifically ethical emotions is related to the Aristotelian idea of working toward actualizing full virtue in phronesis. Phronesis involves practical judgment in responding to particular situations, and each of the emotional virtues is actualized in phronesis. To enhance a specifically ethical emotion such as compassion is similar to working towards actualizing the ethical virtue of compassion in phronesis. It involves coming to know the particular contexts that require compassion and knowing the sorts of actions that compassion requires, suitable to the context. Most importantly it involves coming to love compassion for its own sake. Finally, undertaking all of this to live in ethical ways, is similar to the role of phronesis in the eudaimon life. Aristotelian virtue ethics is concerned with valuing the virtues for their own sake, but the virtues are also valued in relation to living a "good" life.

I believe the congruity between ethical emotional learning and actualizing emotional virtue necessarily leads to the same learning processes as discussed in the first section. In essence, the promotion of ethical emotional learning, will involve the same understandings and methods that promote the emotional virtues. As I have previously argued, the promotion of the emotional virtues in pre-adolescent children requires a synthesis of habituation and
inductive learning in line with the forms of knowledge to which each is concerned. In the next section, I will provide the more specific instructional methods and educational configurations that will support this type of learning.

**Instructional Methods and Educational Configurations to Promote Ethical Emotional Learning**

I consider the instructional methods and educational configurations to promote ethical emotional learning that I will be discussing, to be part of a neo-Aristotelian approach to moral education grounded in neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics. Although I have argued that the learning processes of habituation and induction are bound together in this approach, there are some methods and configurations that are more directly related to either habituation or induction due to the type of knowledge with which they are concerned. With this in mind, I will organize this section first by habituation, followed by induction. I am also discussing methods and configurations specifically related to the pre-adolescent age group, and the related points from the previous section about the needs and abilities of this age group should be kept in mind.

The instructional methods and educational configurations I am providing will be more than familiar to most teachers who consider emotion related education as being a worthy objective. I also believe these methods and configurations, by and large, are considered by most such teachers to be practically effective. My appreciation for these configurations and methods grew from my own back and forth interaction between theory and practice over a period of years. My purpose is not to provide detailed exposition of the methods and configurations that are already abundant in educational literature. My purpose here is to
make a theoretical connection to configurations and methods I have found practically effective, and thus provide both the theoretical and practical justification for implementation.

**Habituation in Ethical Emotional Learning**

The type of knowledge with which habituation is concerned is the knowledge of the intrinsic goodness of the emotional virtues. An appreciation for this intrinsic goodness comes from being habituated to virtuous conduct, and results in stable affective dispositions towards goodness. Pre-adolescent children, I believe, have an uneven appreciation for virtues, due to natural virtue and the virtues they have been habituated to from experience thus far in life. I also believe that the appreciation of the intrinsic goodness of the virtues at this stage is more course-grained and in need of refinement through repetition of virtuous conduct. The following are methods and configurations that I believe contribute to knowledge of intrinsic goodness which leads to more stable affective dispositions:

**Co-operative Learning Activities.** I believe co-operative learning activities are valuable for a number of reasons, but specifically for this discussion, co-operative learning can be seen as providing practice in the virtues. I have found that students engaging in activities of mutual interest in a co-operative way, not only learn more than is possible independently, but also have the opportunity to display concern, care, kindness and compassion within the interactions. I believe most pre-adolescents have at least a course-grained appreciation for the virtues required in cooperative learning. In this way, co-operative activities, properly structured, are appropriate for encouraging a stabilization of ethical affective dispositions.
**Community Service.** Community service projects similarly provide the opportunities to practice the virtues. Community service could be linked to a wide variety of virtues, but I believe that the virtue of compassion is generally connected to extending service to others. I believe a key feature of community service is the degree of commitment of the student and that the student has a choice in the specific project. An earlier point made by Sherman is helpful to clarify why this point is key. Sherman (1999b) argued that the closer an action actualizes true virtue, the greater the pleasure experienced. True virtue would require that the virtuous action is chosen by the agent and the pleasure derived will be relative to that personal choice. Community service that is assigned to students, without personal commitment, would result in decreased pleasure, and might make the student actually resent the situation. Community service with personal commitment, chosen freely, is likely to result in greater pleasure of the experience and a deeper commitment to compassion for others that is such an important part of community service.

**The School as a Caring Community.** The literature on caring school communities is abundant and has grown from the writings of Nel Noddings and the work of the Child Development Project that has taken place over the last 20 years. The theoretical basis for this approach, as advocated by the Child Development Project Group, is based on Deci and Ryan's Self Determination Theory (Battistich, Solomon, Watson and Schaps, 1997, p. 137). The basics of Deci and Ryan's theory is that when the social context meets a person's innate needs for autonomy, belonging and competence, the person will maintain and enhance intrinsic motivation; internalize extrinsic motivation; experience positive affect; and
experience psychological well-being (Deci and Ryan, 2000, p. 263). The Child Development Group assume that when the social context of the school meets the child’s innate needs for autonomy, belonging and competence, the child will affectively bond with the school and be inclined to internalize the schools expressed goals and values (Battistich, et al, p. 138). Noddings (2002) also supports caring environments from the perspective that attendance to the ethical environment is required as we can only be as moral as the environment around us (p. 9).

While I agree with these authors to a large degree, I do believe there are qualifications that should be made. First, I would qualify the Child Development Group’s assertions in that the child is not bonding with the school, but the people in the school. I would also qualify that children have an ability to appreciate goodness and not merely internalize feelings of goodness extrinsic to the experience. I do agree that a caring community meets certain psychological needs, and I would add that the intrinsic goodness inherent in caring is capable of being recognized by the child through the experience of being in such a community.

I believe attention to the ethical environment of the school is crucially important in the acquisition of an appreciation for the intrinsic goodness of the virtues, because such an environment allows the virtues to become things that are familiar to us. Attendance to the ethical environment makes the virtues more familiar and the opportunities for appreciating the virtues abundant. Schools that are based on relations of respect, care, compassion, and fairness, both in norms of interaction and discipline practices, between all of the people in
the school, provide the opportunities for students and adults to refine the appreciation of the intrinsic goodness of the virtues that are present in the school.

**Attentiveness.** As I have previously argued, the degree of attentiveness and distractibility of the child will greatly determine the length of time it might take for a child to appreciate the intrinsic goodness of certain virtues. In general, anyone who is not paying attention to a situation, will not learn from that situation. I have found over time a few strategies for encouraging the “skill” of attentiveness to experience. One strategy is to have children listen to the sound of a bell and have them close their eyes and listen intently until the sound disappears then turn their hands over. Although this might sound a little “Pavlovian”, the point is to focus in on a sense other than eye sight, and follow that sense until it disappears. This requires great attentiveness and helps build this capacity through repeated opportunities. Another strategy is a writing or thinking activity that requires a thoughtfulness about all the senses in reaction to a given experience of emotional significance.

My experience as an instructor with the Roots of Empathy program for the last two years has shown me that attentiveness greatly increases when there is an emotional connection to the situation. As part of the Roots of Empathy program the children engage in activities and discussions before and after a baby visit, with the baby visits occurring once per month over the school year. The children show a great deal of attentiveness both during the activities and discussion, and during the baby visit. I believe the degree of attentiveness is related to the emotional connection that the children make with the baby. I believe the salience of the
emotional relationship directs their attention, and increases, over the course of the year, an increased ability to be attentive.

**Induction in Ethical Emotional Learning**

The type of knowledge with which induction is concerned is the ability to discriminate the ethically relevant features of situations in order to arrive at practically wise judgments and decisions. Pre-adolescent children, I have argued, have a natural desire to make discriminations and typically engage in inductive learning. At this stage, children need educational methods and configurations that will assist in making finer discriminations and expansion of moral categories. Although, as previously mentioned, it is crucial that such learning grows out of stable affective dispositions for the good.

**Perspective Taking and Imagination.** The ability to understand another person’s situation and perspective is crucially important in understanding moral matters. At the pre-adolescent stage I have found that children are generally able to perspective take with a little practice. Interestingly, I have found that children vary greatly in their ability to interpret facial and body gestures that would give great information about the affective state of another person. In my view, perspective taking is a skill that is amenable to development with pre-adolescents. It involves helping children identify facial expressions and body language as clues. It also involves encouraging imagination in reconstructing another person’s situation and values that might lead to certain feelings. The use of literature and role playing is central in developing the ability to take another’s perspective and develop the moral imagination both through exploring other characters and also experiencing a different
perspective. Literature can free students to see more clearly: "When we examine our own lives, we have so many obstacles to correct vision ... A novel, just because it is not our life, places us in a moral position that is favourable for perception and it shows us what it would be like to take up that position in life" (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 163).

**Developing an Emotional Vocabulary.** The ability to understand and direct emotions requires that children have an ability to identify and discuss emotions. Pre-adolescent children vary greatly in the language that they use in this regard. For example, some children of this age use language such as happy, sad, or angry, while others use language such as anxious, frustrated, content or joyful to describe the emotional experiences of themselves or others. The ability to refine understanding of an emotional response depends upon having words that discriminate from larger, simpler categories. In my experience, extending this vocabulary through role play of emotions, artistic representation, and literature is enjoyable and engaging for this age group. Also, providing opportunities within class discussions and meetings to practice using this new vocabulary helps stabilize the understandings inherent in the vocabulary.

**Refining Moral Categories.** Blum (1994) in his book *Moral Perception and Particularity* raises the point that perception of particulars is often a sensitivity to particular sorts of moral features, such as dishonesty, injustice, racism, etc. (p. 45). The ability to refine perception would involve moving children from using moral categories such as good and bad to using more refined categories, as Blum notes. The previous references to Wittgenstein I think are instructive here. Language is crucial in developing morality, and
refinement of moral language results in a refinement of moral ideas. Pre-adolescent children vary greatly in the moral categories that they employ and the related language that they use. Encouraging children to make finer discriminations through refined categories, and using this language in class meetings, class discussions and small group dialogue will help assist in refining the sensitivity to moral issues.

Problem Solving. Developing abilities in problem solving is a key aspect of practical judgment. In my view, problem solving is often a practical case of discerning particulars in a specific situation and attempting to bring in the appropriate universal concepts to these particulars to find possible solutions. A great degree of time is spent teaching problem solving in math and science, and of course this is helpful and instructive to understanding the logical standards within problem solving. However, an important point about problem solving in moral matters is that emotions establish the salient features of a situation that become figured into a reading of the overall situation – sometimes with accuracy and sometimes not (Vokey, 2000, p. 292). Helping children realize the salience of certain considerations, I believe is intertwined with the appreciation of intrinsic goodness. For example, a child with a more refined appreciation for the intrinsic goodness of honesty, will result in that child more readily recognizing honesty as a salient feature of certain situations. At the pre-adolescent stage, the salient moral considerations of a situation are not always appreciated, and while appreciation of the virtues is developing, an adult will often need to help point some things out. As mentioned previously, this will involve refining emotional vocabulary and moral categories.
I have found that pre-adolescent children are often in conflict with one another, and that this can be a great opportunity to develop moral problem solving skills. I believe the increased level of conflict is in part due to the peer group at this stage taking on greater importance, and children are required to navigate through more complex attachments to others. Conflicts usually involve behaviours that lack virtue and are characterized by high degrees of emotion. For example, John stole Peter's Yugi-oh cards and Peter hit him. Helping John and Peter reflect on the experience through perspective taking, reflecting on emotions, considering the moral categories involved, etc. provide a salient context in which to develop moral problem solving skills and deepen self understanding.

**Conclusion**

To conclude, I believe that ethical emotional learning in pre-adolescent children involves both establishing stable affective dispositions through habituation, and developing practical judgment through increasing self-understanding and knowledge about the world through inductive learning (developing knowledge of universals through experience of particulars). The educational configurations that I have provided have stressed an environment that makes virtue a daily part of children's lives. The methods I have provided are directed at encouraging children's reflection on experience and knowledge from an ethical perspective, through dialogue, writing, literature and role play, to encourage greater self-understanding and understanding about the world. In my view, direct teaching, in terms of helping children refine moral categories and emotional vocabulary and thus refine thinking, is sourced from the children's experiences and the knowledge under consideration, and returns to it.
The model that I am advocating for teaching ethical emotional learning does not proscribe a certain formula. I do not believe that the emotional virtues can be learned through a systematic teaching of one virtue after another out of context. I am arguing that emotional understanding and development must occur within a context for two reasons. First, acquisition of virtue requires more than being able to understand a concept such as compassion, but to understand what counts as compassion in the many contexts in which a person might find herself (Dunne, 1999, pp. 51-52). Therefore, learning occurs through experiencing a variety of contexts in which a certain virtue is involved. Second, the context provides the salience to attend and direct attention. Whether the context is a real-life situation in which the student is embroiled, or a great piece of literature that evokes emotional identification, the context provides the saliency to attend and encourage deeper reflection.

You may also notice at this point that I have not directly advocated a list of virtues that would form the basis for ethical emotional learning. As I have stated earlier, I believe that further philosophical work needs to be undertaken to arrive at agreement on a set of virtues that are recognized as having non-relative intrinsic goodness. In the meantime, in my practice I have been cautiously and reflectively working with students on compassion, caring, honesty, kindness, generosity, friendship, courage and self-control in relations with others and the natural world. I have chosen these virtues as I believe that they are capable of being recognized as being intrinsically good in the non-relative sense based on my reflections on the conceptual and theoretical literature, discussions with colleagues and
practical experience. I am very careful to ensure that the conversations and learning concerning these virtues are sourced directly from the children’s experiences, not only due to the salience for each child, but also to bring in the cultural variation that is needed to show the complexity of virtue in differing contexts and potentially differing value systems. I am also mindful of using literature from a variety of cultures for this same reason.

I think I might be giving the impression that ethical emotional learning occupies my entire day, and that developing academic skills and knowledge is a secondary consideration in how and what I teach. Actually, most of my day is spent crucially involved in academic activities, but for me, these academic activities cannot be properly understood without considering the moral side of any form of knowledge. For example, when studying water there would need to be teaching about evaporation and condensation, but there need also be a consideration of who has water and who does not, and why this is so. Further, I see school as a gathering of people, and interacting with people is inherently a moral engagement. All of these methods and educational configurations are meant to work together with academic activities, so that I am educating both the heart and mind of students.

Despite my belief in the value of the above educational configurations and methods, I also believe that we need to consider the conditions that would encourage these configurations and methods to result in ethical emotional learning in students. For example, I believe we need to consider what conditions make methods such as co-operative learning activities result in ethical emotional learning. In the above-discussion, I pointed to the importance of attendance to the ethical environment towards these ends, but I also believe that the quality
of the relationship with the teacher, and the teacher's self understanding, are also pivotal. In my review of the virtue ethics literature, there is often discussion of the teacher as exemplar of the virtues, but no directed discussion of the importance or quality of the relationship between teacher and student. In the following and final chapter I will bring up the notion of the teacher being an exemplar, but I will also bring in the complexity of the relationship between the teacher and students, and the teacher's self-understanding, in promoting ethical emotional learning.
Chapter V
The Nature of Teaching in Ethical Emotional Learning

This chapter has three major sections. In the first section I will explore the notion of the teacher as exemplar. More specifically, I will be looking at two areas – what the teacher can and should be exemplifying, and also how an exemplar influences ethical emotional learning. In the second section, I will consider the requirements of the relationship between the teacher and students in influencing ethical emotional learning. I will be arguing that relationships based on mutuality, trust and authenticity create a space in which ethical emotional learning is possible. In the third section, I will explore the inner journey of the teacher that is required to maintain the type of relationships that create space for students to safely open up their true selves that is necessary in ethical emotional learning.

The Teacher as an Exemplar

In the neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics literature, the requirement that the teacher be an exemplar of the virtuous life is one of the most prominent requirements in teaching virtue (Carr and Steutel, 1999, p. 253). It seems reasonable to conclude that, if a teacher seeks to cultivate virtuous behaviours in her students, then necessarily she needs to embody virtue in both action and emotion. This implies not only that the teacher in her role as exemplar is exemplifying full virtue, but also that some sort of learning happens for a child from being in the presence of an exemplar. In this section, I will be exploring the implication that the teacher must be in possession of full virtue, and also if it is even possible to be in possession of full virtue. I will then be considering how exemplars influence learning.
What Should the Teacher Exemplify?

The distinction between the types of knowledge with which the virtues are concerned, and the types of learning related to each, is important in theoretically considering what the teacher should be exemplifying. In terms of the knowledge that the virtues are intrinsically good, the teacher needs to exemplify both prizing the virtues and acting accordingly for their own sake. As previously discussed, when children actualize a part of virtue, they are getting a taste of virtue. An exemplar provides a more sophisticated model of actualized virtue to which a child can aspire. In terms of supporting students in the development of practical judgment, the teacher needs to exemplify accurate and sensitive perception of the ethically relevant features of situations as well as provide direct instruction on moral categories and emotional language.

This discussion makes an assumption that a teacher can be an exemplar of full virtue, and I believe we need to consider whether this is practically possible. In looking at my own life, I know that I am not in possession of full virtue. Although I aspire to be a good person and live my life in a reflective way, I can be insensitive to the needs of others and become entangled in my own challenges and commitments. Despite my awareness, and efforts to remain present and sensitive to others, I still at times lose my focus and make poor choices. I am not the person of full virtue actualized in phronesis, and it feels hypocritical to put myself in a position to say that I am capable of being an exemplar of full virtue and practical wisdom for my students.
I do not believe that I am the only teacher that struggles with becoming the type of person I want to be. When talking with other teachers, and other people, I find that this struggle is a common feature of life. In fact, I believe the requirements for full virtue might be too high and unrealistic, and consequently it might be unreasonable to expect that teachers could and should exemplify full virtue. In Chapter II of this thesis, I provided an interpretation of the unity of virtue thesis by Curren (1999) and outlined a concern raised by Kent (1999) that the unity thesis in Aristotelian virtue ethics fails to capture our experience of ourselves as developing moral agents. Briefly, in Aristotelian virtue ethics full virtue requires all the virtues to be present, as the lack of even one virtue will corrupt perception, judgment and related action at least in that one respect (Curren, p. 70). Kent (1999) argues that the unity of virtue thesis is a contested subject in modern virtue ethics, but believes that it is a viable thesis in need of some refinement (p. 112). Kent believes that Aristotle needs to be interpreted as presenting an ideal of moral perfection that might never be attained, but should be sought as a goal, which itself would develop over time in a person’s life (p. 114). Kent suggests that we need a more “fine grained analysis of ordinary people” that distinguishes between people who consistently pursue bad ends verses persons who go wrong now and then, or in relatively minor ways (p. 119).

I believe that Kent is correct to interpret Aristotle as presenting full virtue as an ideal that should be worked toward over the lifetime, but I also believe that the requirements of full virtue are unrealistic. Nussbaum is particularly critical of Aristotelian virtue ethics on the emotional requirements of full virtue. Nussbaum (1990) “urges us to reject as both too simple and too cruel any picture of character that tells us to bring every emotion into line
with reason’s dictates, or the dictates of the person’s ideal, whatever that is... If Aristotle’s view entails that the good person can and should demand emotional perfection of herself, so that she always gets angry at the right person, in the right way, at the right time, and so forth, then Aristotle’s view is tyrannical and exacts of us more than humanity can deliver” (p. 234).

I believe that Nussbaum’s (1990) book *Love’s Knowledge* raises important concerns about whether the emotions can always be brought into line with reason as full virtue would require. A thorough analysis of this book is not possible within space of this thesis, but an important point that Nussbaum raises is that we are not benign creatures into which negative emotions are simply implanted. Nussbaum argues that the roots of negative emotions lie in the structure of the human life, specifically, our ambivalent relation to our lack of control over the world and the frailty and helplessness of our bodies (p. 234). If negative emotions come with the territory of human life, then it is somewhat unrealistic to think that reason will always be capable of informing the emotions or that our emotions will always be in line with our ideals. I believe that Aristotle points us to the importance of seeking inner harmony by working toward congruence between affect and conduct in virtuous action, but Nussbaum points to the obstacles to always realizing this harmony and the importance of acknowledging our limitations.

I believe that, for the purposes of this discussion, the points raised by both Kent and Nussbaum interpreted in light of my own experience help me to understand more specifically what a teacher can and should be exemplifying. In my view, the teacher can and should exemplify an appreciation for the intrinsic goodness of the virtues, which can be seen by the
students through the teacher’s virtuous actions, emotions and words. But, the teacher should also be exemplifying the continuous journey for greater self-understanding and understanding of the world which is required for getting ever closer to actualized virtue and inner harmony.

**How Exemplars Influence Learning**

In addition to gaining clarity on what the teacher should be exemplifying, it is also important to establish how an exemplar, as one who is actively providing an example of valuing virtue and working towards actualizing virtue, actually encourages learning in others through her actions and words. According to Curren (1999), it is evident in Aristotle’s thought that, in order to develop the virtues, children need an “upbringing that surrounds them with good models and guides them towards good habits” (p. 72). From this quote it is clear that learning from appropriate models needs to be coextensive with actual experience in the virtues. I have observed that through the practice of virtues, children develop an appreciation for the goodness of virtues, and sensitivity towards situations in which virtues are involved, and they become, as Dent (1999) argues, “drawn in” and struck by” models of virtue (p. 29). In my experience, a child, once drawn in, incorporates the examples of others into her own developing understanding of virtue.

Although the child may be *drawn in* and *struck by* models of virtuous behaviour, the question remains as to why a child might incorporate these models into her existing understanding of virtue. I believe that the authenticity of the exemplar allows for the development of a trusting relationship that makes the exemplar’s actions and words salient
considerations for a child, and this salience encourages reflection on existing understanding. The authenticity of an exemplar is found in the consistency between word, action, and emotion. This consistency allows a child to trust that the exemplar is a person worthy of attention and makes the exemplar’s actions and words salient considerations. I believe that, when the exemplar’s actions and words become salient for a child, the child will naturally incorporate the model into her existing understanding of virtue.

To conclude this section, I believe that exemplification is an important part of what teachers need to do, but I believe it is only one facet of the way in which teachers encourage virtuous development. The examples in the previous chapter illustrate how teachers need to actively engage children, in a variety of ways, in reflection to encourage self understanding. Teachers also need to create an environment in which virtue is the norm for interaction and children feel safe to explore issues of personal significance. I believe that the motivation of children to attend to such learning is also attributable in part to the relationship between the teacher and student. In the next section I will explore the quality of relationship that encourages children to attend to the teacher and the learning situations in such a way that the child feels free to undertake the exploration of the inner dimension of self that is required in ethical emotional learning.

**Teacher and Student Relationships**

I believe that the nature of a positive relationship between the teacher and students is one of the most significant factors in encouraging the type of inner reflection that is required in ethical emotional learning. My understanding of the importance of relation with students
started from the first day I walked into my teaching practicum, and has deepened with each year that I have taught. I was lucky enough to have been in a teacher education program at Simon Fraser University that focused on building community and trusting relationships with students as a way to engage students in making personally meaningful connections to curriculum. My practicum in a grade 7 classroom involved putting various methods into practice towards those ends and importantly also involved deep personal reflection on my identity and the ways in which my identity impacted my students. I believe that my focus on building trusting relationships combined with continual reflection on myself and my relationships with my students allowed for the depth of learning that I witnessed in my students and myself.

Despite this positive start in my developing understanding of teaching, I have not always maintained this kind of focus. Over the years, out of frustration with the limits of time and space, and the complexity of the needs and personalities of all the students in the room, I have tried to take shortcuts. I have heard myself saying things such as “you need to really pay attention because this will be on your report card” or “next year your teacher will expect that you know this”. This extrinsic connection to the learning often works in the short term. The children will pay attention and get the work done – but often with little depth or personal commitment. In order to engage, and to help my students engage, in meaningful learning—the type of engagement that ethical emotional learning requires—I need to know and respect the students. I need to know what matters to them and what scares them. They need to know who I am and that I can be trusted when they are at the vulnerable position of looking into
themselves. In short, we need to know each other, and this requires being in relation with one another.

When I think about how important relationships are to meaningful learning, my mind immediately recalls a student that I encountered last year who I will call Lynh. Lynh was new to the school, but immediately became the centre of a group of friends. Lynh’s interactions with me were amazingly polite and courteous and helpful, but lacking in depth and meaningful connection. I really had no idea who Lynh was. As time went on, Lynh began engaging in social exclusion and manipulation, and general unkindness towards others, yet the other children still flocked to be her friend - perhaps out of fear or some other reasons. Co-incidentally, at the same time, Lynh engaged herself in a special project that I was doing with a small group of children that involved self-reflection and identity. I was meeting with this group once a week at lunch, and we would talk about ourselves and our thoughts, and our perspectives on the world outside the school. Immediately, Lynh tried to control the group and divert the focus. Although a very strong student, Lynh produced images and poetry that lacked depth or imagination. I realized that Lynh was afraid to expose her true self to the group, and she lacked trust in me to make sure that she would be safe and so came to interpret her manipulative behaviours as attempts at self protection. The only way I could reach Lynh was through trying to find her true self and exposing my true self. I listened to her stories and shared mine - separate from the others. After Lynh felt safe with me, she was able to expose herself to the group and produce art and poetry with greater depth and meaning.
When I think of Lynh, I realize that ethical emotional learning requires that I be in relation with students, but also that there needs to be a certain quality to that relationship. I believe that relationships based on mutuality, trust, and authenticity encourage children to attend to the teacher and learning with the quality of attention that is required for ethical emotional learning. I would argue that relationships based on mutuality, trust and authenticity, create a space where the type of attention and reflection that is needed in ethical emotional learning is actually possible. In this section I will explore mutuality, trust and authenticity, and the ways that these qualities create space that allows for ethical emotional learning.

**Mutuality**

The notion of relationships based on mutuality does not have an established body of educational literature. The way in which I interpret mutuality is more from my own reflections on my relation with my students and our relation to the subject that we are looking into. A few years ago I encountered Parker Palmer’s writings and, although he does not address mutuality directly, his reflections on learning in community have helped me to develop my understanding of the importance of mutuality. In my interpretation, mutuality in relationship denotes a positioning of equality between students and their teacher. Their equality is not that of having the same quantity of knowledge about a given subject, but that of having some unique knowledge about some subject that, when shared, contributes to everyone learning about it. There is an inherent understanding in mutuality that *knowing* is not absolute, and not the property of the teacher to give to the students. There is an

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19 The term *create a space* is found in the writings of Parker Palmer (1998) in *The Courage to Teach* - “to teach is to create a space where the community of truth is practiced” (p. 90). Implicit in the discussion is that teaching should encourage space for students to bring forth their true selves and the knowledge that they possess.
understanding that the teachers and students need to be related because of what they mutually do not know, and the desire to know more, that can be realized in being connected with others in learning.

Parker Palmer (1998) in his book *The Courage to Teach* provides a model of relationships that is subject centred, which I believe reflects the mutuality between teachers and students in coming to know. Palmer points to the traditional model of coming to know as being that there is an object out there that is known; there are experts that know the objective reality of the object; and there are amateurs who learn from the expert (p. 100). In contrast, in Palmer’s model, the subject (not object) is at the centre of inquiry, and the teacher and students come around the subject to look into the inwardness of the subject (p. 102). The students and teacher possess some knowledge and the goal is to share that knowledge under the consideration of the subject.

In considering mutuality in ethical emotional learning, the teacher and students are related in the search for greater self understanding and inner harmony. The teacher is not the ultimate knower and expert in emotional learning, but the teacher, through greater life experience and reflection, (hopefully) will know more than her students. Further, the teacher needs to acknowledge the importance of what the students bring to the learning situation as contributing to her own learning. In my experience with children, I have always been thankful that I am able to provide room for the children to express their knowledge, as I have learned a great deal about life and myself from being with them and listening to them. I have found that it can be difficult to wait and let the children’s knowledge unfold, especially as I
work within a larger educational structure pressing for quicker results in a limited time. But, I believe it is well worth it. Mutuality is not merely a technique that I employ to engage students in deeper learning, but a heart felt belief that the students have knowledge that I lack that contributes to my knowledge, just as I have knowledge that the students lack that contributes to their knowledge.

In my practical experience in attempting to develop ethical emotional learning, I have found the learning is flat and inert when I present myself as knower and the students as not knowing – this is the relation of authority, not mutuality. Those moments in teaching when there is a crowd of blank faces staring back and revealing nothing, have encouraged me to look deeper into what it is I do to encourage that type of response. It is not difficult to take the student’s perspective and see how this happens. If I know everything about how to live the best life, and this is knowledge that I can objectively possess and give to my students, then why should a student bother to think, consider and reflect on the emotional life? I believe that a relationship based on authority stifles thinking and deeper reflection, and one of mutuality encourages the type of learning that is necessary for ethical emotional learning.

Trust

Palmer is quoted as saying that fear is one of the most unexamined topics in education (Seymour, 2004, p. 45). In Palmer’s (1998) book The Courage to Teach, Palmer writes extensively about his own fears as a teacher as he encounters a new group of students, as well as his students’ fears in not knowing. He discusses the common fears most teachers have, that I can readily recognize in myself – fear of losing control, not engaging with
students, being boring, failing to help students learn (p. 36) He also discusses students' fears of being ignorant, and being exposed as not knowing something that everyone else seems to know (p. 37). I believe that, when students and teachers act from fear, little meaningful learning is going to take place. Whether I as the teacher “threaten” phone calls home or detentions to regain my sense of control, or a student locks herself in a passive “I don’t care” body posture to mask the fear of exposure, our actions spring from mutual fear. I believe that, in order to mitigate the fears that can drive so much of our behaviours, we need to develop relations with children based on trust.

I believe that a child’s trust in a teacher develops through relationships based on mutuality as discussed above, and caring relations in which children are listened to deeply. I believe that mutuality exposes my own vulnerability in not knowing, that the students need to see as a natural part of learning. When I present myself as all knowing, I distort reality and put my students in a position of fear. It is this fear that encourages withdrawal and disconnection. When I expose the limits of my knowing, I invite students to engage with me in coming to know together. I need to communicate implicitly and explicitly that not knowing is a part of being human and that we come together to increase all of our knowing. Mutuality encourages me to trust in my students’ ways of knowing and my students to trust that they will be safe to engage. The inward journey required for ethical emotional learning requires a high degree of safety, and mutuality builds the trust that is necessary for feeling safe enough to engage in this type of learning.
Trust also develops out of caring relationships. Nel Noddings writes extensively about the nature of the caring relationship and draws on Buber’s distinction of “I-it” verses “I-thou” as a way of encountering another in relation. Noddings (1993) points out that relating in the “I-it” mode is an instrumental relation where we observe another and glean from the other materials to be used for our own purposes (p. 47). In contrast, in the “I-Thou” mode we encounter another through deeply listening and shifting our own energy to the other (p. 47). I believe that through relating in the “I-thou” mode we can develop trusting relationships where children feel safe enough to engage in the type of inner reflection that is necessary for ethical emotional learning. This type of relation creates a safe place for children to engage in ethical emotional learning.

An extension of the idea of deep listening is found in Mary Catherine Stager’s (2003) Master’s Thesis Teaching and Living in the Classroom of the Soul. Stager draws on Palmer’s notion of teaching as creating space and Mary Rose O’Reilly’s notion of listening people into existence to develop a concept of listening as bearing witness to allow for transformation (pp. 38-39). In Stager’s view, listening is a disciplined silence where the teacher holds a safe space to allow the stories of the students to unfold. Within such a space, students begin to exist and the teacher is there to witness and affirm that existence (p. 41). The expansion of the soul in such a space allows for the possibility of transformation.

In my teaching, I often struggle with silence in dialogue. I worry about the other children mentally wandering off as we wait together for another to reflect and share. I worry that as we explore our relations to one another that something hurtful will emerge from the silence.
that I will not know how to manage. I sense my vulnerability and also the vulnerability of
the children in silence. When I worry about silence I remember a group of 8 students
developing a scene from the book *Les Miserable*. Two students, who I will call Philippe and
Joe, desperately wanted to play the character Javert. We ended up picking a number to see
who would play the part and Joe picked the right number. At that point, Philippe who was
struggling with personal traumas collapsed on the table as Joe did a joyful dance around his
chair. I asked Joe to sit down and told him that he had the right to pick the part of Javert, but
to think about whether he really wanted it. At that point Joe looked at the crushed Phillipe
and sat silent for what seemed like an eternity. The whole group sat there in silence, and I
sat there in fear of what Joe might say and how I would support Philippe through this. I
wanted to jump into the silence. Finally, Joe spoke up and said he picked Phillipe for the
part of Javert. At that point Philippe got up and put his arm around Joe and told him that was
the nicest thing anyone had ever done for him. Joe looked more joyful than I ever recall him.
He told me later that “my heart told me that it would be the right thing to do and my heart
was right.” When I fear the silence, I recall the possibility of beauty that came out of silence,
and I wait for it to emerge.

**Authenticity**

I believe that the ability to have mutuality and trust in relationships with students is
dependent upon my own authenticity. In my view, maintaining a consistency between
word, action and emotion brings authenticity. Palmer argues that when children sense that
teachers lack authenticity – when they sense that what is on the inside of this teacher is
different from the actions or words on the outside – “the situation becomes unsafe”
(Seymour, 2004, p. 44). The consequence of inauthenticity is that students do not engage meaningfully as they withdraw energy and attention from the unsafe situation (p. 44). I believe that inauthenticity breeds mistrust and ultimately brings disconnection from the learning situation in all but a superficial level of compliance. The students in general will comply with participating in learning out of fear of report cards, but the depth will be minimal and the learning minimal as well.

My views on authenticity have grown from my own experience as a student. I had an abusive grade one teacher who instilled in me a basic mistrust of teachers. As I went through the grades I maintained a safe distance from my teachers out of fear. I thought the nice exterior might be a mask to a darker person inside. I watched intently for clues as to who these people might be and I found nothing. I withdrew and stuck with my peers and eventually dropped out of school in grade 10. The point of sharing this story of me as a student, is that students often come from a place of mistrust for a variety of reasons. When I was a student in elementary school, I would never have revealed myself in the way that is required for ethical emotional learning, because I never felt I truly knew who my teachers were. If we are to build trust with students, especially those students who mistrust adults, I believe we have to take great pains to be authentic and risk our own vulnerability. We need to share who we are and the stories of our lives, and not put up a false front of perfection out of fear. We need to be authentic with ourselves so that we are able to be authentic with our students.
I believe that relationships based on mutuality, trust and authenticity create a space in which ethical emotional learning is possible. Ethical emotional learning requires looking inward at the self and developing self-understanding. In a school setting this is asking a lot of students. The pressures and systems within educational settings do not generally make school a safe place to reveal the vulnerability that we all share. Having children engage with adults at this level, should not be expected, but is earned through being in a certain quality of relationships with children. Relationships based on mutuality, trust and authenticity create that space in which it is safe for children to explore issues of personal significance. Teachers need to create a safe space within the bureaucracy, in which children can explore the inner self that yearns to be meaningfully connected to others.

The Inner Journey of the Teacher

Recognizing that teachers need to foster relationships that create space for ethical emotional learning, and also be exemplars of the journey for self-understanding, leads to the natural assumption that teachers need to be involved in a journey inward themselves. As Palmer argues, "we teach who we are", and unless we know ourselves we are unable to see our students clearly and cannot teach them well (Palmer, 1998, p. 6). In this last section, I want to explore the inner journey of the teacher. I am approaching this section with a great deal of caution and humility. The ways in which a person can engage in self understanding are vast, and there is no formula. I am not even clear where I am in my own journey, as often a single experience can leave me feeling as if I know little about my true self. However, from authors I have read, and my own attempts at trying to go inward to encourage self-
understanding, I believe there are interesting ways to conceptualize this inner journey that might be as helpful to others as they have been to me.

Palmer (1998) conceptualizes the journey inward as reflection on identity and integrity. Palmer characterizes identity as a “moving intersection of the inner and outer forces that make us” who we are “converging in the irreducible mystery of being human” (p. 13). He identifies these inner and outer forces as being our genetics; the form of parental nurturing; relationships; actions; experience of love and suffering; and much more (p. 13). I believe that Palmer points to the complexity of identity as not being reducible to a collection of experiences and genetic factors that inform a fixed sense of who we are. In his view, identity is complex and fluid and is formed from within and without. Palmer characterizes integrity as ways of relating to these inner and outer forces in ways that bring wholeness and life (p. 13). As these forces converge, we can relate in fear and rejection, but integrity requires that we welcome, embrace and move with these forces to bring wholeness, life and self-understanding (p. 13). I do not believe this means we can magically do away with fear, only that we do not have to choose fear as the position from which we relate to the forces that converge on us.

One of the writers that has had the most influence on my self-understanding of my identity in terms of the inner and outer forces is Martha Nussbaum. I would like to briefly bring up a few key points from Nussbaum’s writings that relate to gaining self-understanding of identity. Very briefly, Nussbaum has developed a neo-Stoic philosophy of the emotions. For Nussbaum (1990), our emotions are about objects in the world, and not unthinking forces
that sweep over us (p. 27). Further, an object is viewed from our own “window”, and the emotional assessment of that object may be accurate or not, but is necessarily invested with value and importance in our perception of the object’s relation to our own life and well being (pp. 27-32). For example, fear would not be fear without an object of fear, and a corresponding belief that the object threatened my life or well being. Whether there is truly anything to be afraid of, and my belief is correct, is another matter.

As the emotions are about intentional objects, our emotions that seem to not match our present reality are connected at a deeper level to our childhood history and originate in infancy from experiences and the nature of positive and negative emotions embedded in being human (Nussbaum, 1990, p. 230). These human emotions are related to our original experiences of love and care, and our ambivalent response to our experience of being needy and frail as discussed earlier (p. 234). Nussbaum argues that, as negative emotions such as anger, jealousy, or fear well up in us, we often put up a “polite social veneer” or “mask” (p. 230). At a deeper level, we can also be so out of touch with the object of our emotions that we put up a mask to ourselves as well (p. 230). Nussbaum argues that to develop self-understanding we need to get at the intentional content and beliefs behind these emotions that seem to sweep over us.

In my experience, emotions which seem to swell up from nowhere, provide opportunities to develop self-understanding in terms of my identity. An example of this was my anger and frustration at a student for continually diverting the conversation away from whatever subject was under consideration. Around this student I became snappy and dismissive in tone, but
my words were polite – my social veneer. Students do a lot of things that can be construed as annoying, but in general I do not have a flooding feeling of emotions in connection to these behaviours. I usually am able to look at the behaviour as the student attempting to meet some need and then help the student meet that need. Why could I not have the same relaxed and helpful attitude with this student? My clue was that the strength of the emotional reaction did not match the reality of the situation, and therefore the emotion was about something else not involving the student. The issue was my perception that I had lost power, and developing self-understanding involved looking at why I needed power and control. It involved taking off a mask I was wearing to myself.

I believe that Nussbaum’s writings provide us with clues to bridge the duality between inner and outer life in a way that enhances our integrity. My earlier reflections upon authenticity in relationships with students are also relevant for this discussion, since part of such authenticity is attempting to take off the masks that we wear to ourselves and others. Authenticity involves not hiding behind roles and routines that provide a safe shelter from self-exploration, but being alive, present and curious about our identity so that we can have the possibility of living with integrity.

The work of Maxine Greene and Nel Noddings is also instructive in considering how to align our inner and outer lives in ways that give life and wholeness. I have particularly in mind Greene’s notion of being “wide awake”. Greene quotes Henry David Thoreau – “to be awake is to be alive” (Greene, 1978, p. 42). Greene points out that we can live our lives immersed in the daily mechanics and demands of life, but life is best lived when we are
awake—when we think about the condition of ourselves and the world, and inquire into the forces that impact us, and develop a sense of agency (p. 44). In teaching, this is particularly important, as some of the forces found in educational bureaucracy can sap life and agency. The importance for me is in being awake to these forces, and to develop a sense of autonomy and agency, so that I remain authentic in terms of inner beliefs and outward word and action. Nel Noddings writes about the importance of dialogue in the process of gaining self-understanding. For Noddings (2002), we need to ask the questions: “What do I really want? What was I trying to do when I acted? What good (or evil) am I capable of? Am I being honest with myself?” (p. 17). I believe this type of inner dialogue helps to bring the external and internal forces together in ways that bring integrity. I believe these questions help me be awake to myself.

To this point, I have been focusing on the inner dialogue and encounter with the other—the importance of being awake and questioning myself and experience and encounter with others. The implication is that I believe it is important to be open and not closed off to others and experiences. Another dimension that I believe is important in developing my self-understanding is my relationships of love and trust, and the dialogue that I have with trusted others. In the previous section, I discussed the types of relationships that students need with teachers in order to develop self-understanding—relationships based on mutuality, trust and authenticity. These are the same relationships that I require to develop my self-understanding. The conversations that I have with other teachers, fellow students, friends, professors, my students, my husband, and children, in the context of relationships that I have
characterized as above, are invaluable in developing my own self-understanding. The challenge for me is to remain open to them and the honesty and truth that they can deliver.

**Conclusion and Recommendations for Further Work**

In this thesis I have tried to explore how teachers can engage children in ethical emotional learning. I believe where I have ended is truly where we should start. Ethical emotional learning starts with a teacher actively engaged on an inward journey of self understanding; a teacher that engages with students in relationships characterized by mutuality, trust and authenticity; and is an exemplar of the continuous journey for self-understanding that ethical emotional learning requires. All of the theory, methods and techniques are reliant on such a teacher. This is definitely not the perfect teacher or person, but a teacher who aspires to be awake; better; to live in good ways; and teach in ways that respect children and create space for children to develop their goodness.

In looking forward, I believe that this conceptual research would be complemented by further qualitative research. I believe that research on the emotional and ethical lives of teachers would help to provide greater understanding of how to encourage ethical emotional learning. More specifically, a consideration of teachers' ethical beliefs and how these beliefs impact teaching strategies; types of discourse in the classroom; relationships with students; and choice of curriculum; and how this impacts ethical emotional learning in students. Also, a study could examine the difference in how students make meaning from ethical emotional learning by contrasting students who have teachers that have engaged in reflective practice as I have presented it, verses teachers who are teaching strictly from packaged curriculum.
with little background in reflective practice in ethical emotional teaching. Qualitative research could also focus on student perception of ethical emotional learning and attempt to identify the factors in relationships with teachers that encourage deeper engagement in this type of learning. Also, further qualitative research could seek to develop more precision in balancing induction and habituation at different age groups. In addition, this research could be complemented by further investigation into the causes or sources of negative emotions.

I believe there is also further conceptual work suggested by this thesis. The first priority, in my opinion, is philosophical discourse that seeks to develop a set of moral virtues that could engender wide, reflective agreement across cultural constituencies, and thus form the basis for ethical emotional learning. Earlier, I referenced Vokey’s (2000) ideas on considering the non-relative intrinsic goodness of the virtues through the degree and quality of cognitive-affective human response they engender. I believe Vokey’s ideas provide support to the idea that it is possible to recognize intrinsic goodness in ways of being that transcend local cultural norms. I believe that further conceptual work in this regard, and related qualitative work across cultures, would be worthwhile. Also, as Kent (1999) argued, conceptual work could focus on coming up with a set of virtues that can differentiate between a reprehensible person and a good but flawed person. As Kent has argued, virtue ethics can fail to capture our sense of ourselves as developing moral agents.

I also believe this conceptual research provides some important considerations for curriculum developers in emotional learning. First, curriculum developers should consider whether they are approaching the topic with humility and acknowledging the complexity of
the topic by providing an openness in design that invites teachers to engage in reflection and
discourse with students and other educational professionals, rather than prescribes ultimate
and closed conclusions. Second, curriculum developers should consider whether the design
allows for students to draw on their own experience, and is open to encouraging each student
to develop authentic meaning. Third, developers should consider the degree to which
habituation and induction are included in the model of learning, and the reasons for
encouraging the balance that is implicit in the design. Fourth, curriculum developers should
appreciate the non-linear nature and complexity of ethical emotional learning. Fifth,
developers should consider how the curriculum fits into the ethical environment of the
school and classroom. Sixth, curriculum developers should consider whether they are being
mindful that ethical emotional learning is not segmented or distinct from the rest of the
curriculum, but is part of a holistic educational experience. Finally, developers should
consider whether the design invites cross cultural reflection or may be limiting student
reflection to more specific norms of a particular cultural context.

This conceptual research also provides considerations for educational leaders and
administrators. Educational leaders need to consider the ways in which school communities
and school districts can support discourse on ethical emotional learning. This research
suggests that ethical emotional learning requires a teacher on a reflective journey and is in
meaningful discourse with other educational professionals among others. Educational
leaders need to consider how to support discourse and reflection, in contrast to mandating
programs that potentially have little meaning and ultimate impact. Educational leaders also
need to consider the ethical environment that is suitable to encouraging ethical emotional
learning, and the ways that a positive ethical environment is encouraged. The discussions on providing a climate where all members of the school community experience autonomy and belonging I believe are pivotal considerations in that regard. Importantly, educational leaders need to consider whether they are living reflectively – if they are “awake” and trying to live ethically and better.

Finally, I believe that this conceptual research suggests considerations for educational policy makers. In the introduction to this thesis, I introduced Ranson’s (2003) ideas on the current neo-liberal corporate accountability that is governing educational policy with the result that there is an inadequate representation of the more comprehensive spiritual, cultural, moral, aesthetic and intellectual values and purposes for schools. I believe that educational policy makers should be working towards accountability that focuses on providing an account in contrast to holding to account, and encourages a discourse model for accountability that seeks to make schools better in more fundamental ways than performing well on math and reading tests. For ethical emotional learning to be encouraged, policymakers need to consider the ways in which accountability can ultimately narrow the curriculum to the extent that there is no safe time or space to engage in meaningful learning. With all the issues currently facing humanity, policymakers need to ensure that educating the heart and mind is made possible through considering how policies ultimately affect the likelihood of achieving this goal.
Bibliography


