

Part 3 GROWING IN MORALITY

Syllabus Aim	To explore the human need to order relationships at the personal, communal and global levels.
Syllabus Objectives	As a result of studying this section, the students should: 1. have a sense of the development of personal morality.
Key Concepts	moral growth, moral maturity, conscience
Description of Content	1. Moral development from selfishness to altruism – describing moral immaturity and moral maturity.
Methodology	A variety of methodologies are used including presentation and interpretation of data, discussion, problem solving and decision-making exercises. These methodologies were used so as to give students an opportunity to identify, explore and clarify the concepts and to structure and elaborate on their existing knowledge and understanding of the content.

Procedure

Introduction

From the moment we are born we are learning and developing a sense of right and wrong upon which we will later base important decisions in our lives.

Picture Exercise: Using Photospeak pack or photographs from newspapers or magazines.

- Ask students to choose two photos each. One, which shows what they consider to be right behaviour and the other showing wrong behaviour.
- Divide the board in two columns labelled “right behaviour”, “wrong behaviour”
- Ask students to come and place their pictures on the board under either heading.

Discuss: What do the pictures on the side of the board labelled “right” have in common?
What do the pictures on the side of the board labelled “wrong” have in common?

Take feedback and note points under each column.

Present students with the idea of being given two labels: “selfish behaviour” & “un-selfish behaviour”

Discuss: On which side of the board would you place these labels? Why?
Pick one photograph from students’ examples in each column. For each Photograph ask students to identify - How would the action in the photograph affect the person themselves, their community, and the world at large?

Take feedback and conclude that selfish and un-selfish behaviour has an affect on the person themselves, their community, and the world at large.

Moral development

Read *Student Work: JOHN’S STORY* and give students time to complete the assignment.

Take feedback and discuss:

- As John grew up if he continued to make decisions for the same reasons he did aged five what effect would it have on him?
- As John grew up if he continued to make decisions for the same reasons he did aged fifteen what effect would it have on him?
- As John grew older if he continued to make decisions for the same reasons he did aged twenty-five what effect would it have on him?

Read an article on the morality of childhood, adolescence and mature adulthood Growing in Christian Morality - Ahlers, Allaire, Koch Chapter 1.

Discuss: In what ways do John's statements aged 5, 15 and 25 years, reflect the different stages in moral growth?

Take feedback and conclude that as people grow we realise that it is important to take other people into account (as well as ourselves) when we make decisions about our behaviour.

Describing moral immaturity and moral maturity

Read the story TENDING LIFE'S GARDEN in *Stories and Parable*-Wharton p. 35 and discuss:

Why is the garden filled with weeds?

What could the gardener do to bring it back to life?

Why do you think the gardener showed his friend the garden?

Can the development of a person be compared to the garden? Explain

What point is this story making about how people mature?

Take feedback and conclude that to reach moral maturity it is necessary to grow beyond selfishness.

Present students with the following dilemma: "You work part-time in the local newsagent. Your best friend comes in to buy her favourite magazine. As you get it for her you notice her putting a packet of crisps into her bag."

Discuss: What should you do?

Present students with the following alternatives and ask them to identify which they consider to be morally mature or immature:

1. Just ignore what you have seen.
2. Give her another bag so you can both share them later.
3. Tell her to put it back or you will report her.
4. Don't say or do anything while she is in the shop but tell the owner later.
5. Inform the Gardai.
6. When she has gone you pay for the stolen crisps.
7. Ask her why she took the crisps.
8. Tell another friend about the incident and confront her about the incident.

Or Present students with the following dilemma: A woman was near death from a special kind of cancer. There was one drug that the doctors' thought might save her. It was a form of radium that a chemist had recently discovered. The drug was expensive to make. He paid £200 for the radium and charged £2000 for a dose of the drug. The sick woman's husband went to everyone he knew to borrow the money, but he could only get together about £1000 which is half of what it cost. He told the chemist that his wife was dying, and asked him to sell it cheaper or let him pay later. But the chemist said: "No, I discovered the drug and I'm going to make money from it."

Discuss: What should the husband do?

Present students with the following alternatives and ask them to identify which they consider to be morally mature or immature:

1. The sick woman's husband should not steal the drug because he might get caught and put in jail...
2. The husband should steal the drug. A human life is more important than any other moral or legal value, whatever it is. A human life in itself has value, regardless of how much it is valued by other people...
3. The husband should not steal the drug because it is against the law. Even when we are tempted to break the law, we are still obliged to keep it...

Or Present students with the following dilemma: The teacher asks you to put some books away for her in the cupboard at the back of the room. As you put them on the shelf, you notice a photocopied pile of exam papers for the test your class will take tomorrow. The teacher is busy with the other students and has not noticed.

Discuss: What should you do?

Written Assignment: Considering the consequences for yourself, your class and the teacher list the possible solutions to this dilemma.

Take feedback and discuss: Which of these solutions would be morally mature or immature? Explain What do you consider to be the most mature thing to do? Why?

Take feedback on the board and conclude that taking other people into account in making decisions is a mark of moral maturity.

Resources which teachers have suggested include:

Community of Faith, Book 1, Veritas, pages 6, 51, 137, 138.

Community of Hope Veritas, pages 140–145.

Cyberclass Manual Scholastech Disk 2

Growing in Christian Morality, Koch et al, Saint Mary's Press, Chapter 1.

Introducing Moral Issues, Joe Jenkins, Heinemann, Chapter 1.

Key Christian Beliefs, Chris Wright, Lion Educational, Chapter 12.

Logos

Show Us The Way New Christian Way Series 2 Veritas pages 84 - 85.

Student Work: JOHN'S STORY

John - 5 yr Child:	"Stealing is wrong because I'd be in trouble if I did."
John -15 yr Adolescent:	"Everybody steals - so why can't I?"
John - 25 yrs Adult:	"Stealing is wrong when it takes from other people what is rightfully theirs"

Questions:

As a 5 year old did John think stealing was wrong? Why?

As a 15 year old did John think stealing was wrong? Why?

As a 25 year old did John think stealing was wrong? Why?

As John grew older in what way did his sense of right and wrong change?