

Being and Becoming a Good Person: The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Moral Development and Behavior

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There can be little doubt that one of the primary concerns of parents and educators is that children under their care grow to develop a strong sense of moral responsibility. Within the past few years especially, a fear that something can go wrong—that the process by which children acquire this sense could fail—has led to increased attention to the formation of moral character. Nationwide, programs have been instituted that implement a standardized curriculum of moral and values education in classrooms. This has been due in part to the media exposure of shocking incidents involving children (in many cases very young children) acting violently in schools across the nation, but can also be understood as an attempt to apply what researchers have learned about moral development over the past decades to the home and the classroom. The topic itself has fascinated students of psychology for more than a century, and has inspired a great deal of research within the field. Indeed, it can be argued that moral development is one of the most important processes for psychologists to study, as one of the most critical conditions for the survival of society is that its members learn the differences between right and wrong.

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The study of emotion in psychology, on the other hand, has ebbed and flowed, enjoying periods of flourishing theory and research, yet also spending time on the "backburner" of psychological thinking. Despite its cyclical nature, the study of emotion has yielded valuable information to our understanding of human thinking and behavior. In recent years, psychology has experienced a surge of interest concerning the role of emotions in various psychological processes, including their role in judgment and decision making, and motivation. Part of this rebirth in interest about emotions has been due to a public fascination with popular theories of emotional intelligence and emotional competency—theories that describe a set of emotional skills that are important for social functioning. The surge of public interest in emotional intelligence has been accompanied by a plethora of books and articles on the topic (reviewed by Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2000). Emotional intelligence has been implicated by many as an important skill or set of skills necessary for social adjustment and happiness, yet until present times relatively ignored. Some have gone as far as to equate emotional intelligence with moral character, making the terms "emotionally intelligent" and "moral" nearly synonymous (e.g., Goleman, 1995; Saarni, 1999). This interest has raised intriguing questions concerning the role emotions and emotion-related skills play in our moral lives. This chapter seeks to shed light on some of these important issues. Among the questions we address are, What role do various emotions play in the moral development and education of children, as well as in the moral decision-making of adults? And, is it necessary to be emotionally intelligent to be a moral person? Before we do so, however, let us first take a look at what we mean by "emotional intelligence."

WHAT IS EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE?

Although emotions play a large role in the daily life of all people, it is clear that there are large individual differences in the way people deal with emotions; some people seem to be more adept emotional managers than others, for example. For instance, receiving a bad grade on a project might incite one child to intense anger, causing the child to act out in class, while another child, although angered at first, might use his or her feelings to motivate working harder on the next project. The various emotion-related skills that are employed by individuals have been grouped together and labeled *emotional intelligence* (Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). The emotional intelligence framework was proposed as an attempt to organize the growing body of research on emotions and their influence on cognition and behavior into a single theory that highlighted the way individuals use these skills in their everyday lives. Emotional intelligence has been divided into four main branches, each focusing on a different set of emotional skills: (a) the ability

to perceive, appraise, and express emotion; (b) the ability to use feelings in cognitive activities; (c) the ability to understand emotion and emotional knowledge; and (d) the ability to regulate or manage emotions to promote emotional and intellectual growth (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

Many theorists, researchers, and journalists eagerly picked up on emotional intelligence, and framed it as a skill that was of critical importance to be a caring, moral, and otherwise well-adjusted person (e.g., Goleman, 1995). This characterization is not at all surprising. After all, perceiving, generating, and regulating emotions are generally things we do to maintain and improve relationships with others. Very often we enlist our abilities at managing emotions when we become angry with a best friend or have an argument with our spouse, for instance. In these situations, the ability to understand how the other person is feeling and to regulate our emotional reactions comes in very handy, and serves to fulfill the goals we have of remaining friends or of staying married for longer than a few months. It seems natural, then, that understanding how emotion-related skills affect social relations should be of primary importance to those interested in studying emotional intelligence.

The relationship between emotional intelligence and moral character is, however, not as clear-cut as might first appear. The same emotional skills that make some individuals good, caring people can also be used to achieve more nefarious goals. Criminals who are masters at deception or con artists who are trained to manipulate others may in some ways be among those highest in at least some of these emotional skills (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Any discussion of how emotions and emotional skills relate to moral development and behavior must take this into account.

A (VERY) BRIEF HISTORY OF MORAL PSYCHOLOGY AND EMOTION

Although research on moral development has grown enormously within the last 50 or so years, most of the interest has come from researchers within the tradition known as *cognitive-developmental*. Building on the work of Piaget (1932), Kohlberg (1969), and others, researchers from this tradition have had the strongest influence in the field of moral psychology. Unfortunately for those of us interested in emotions, this tradition has largely ignored the role of feelings in the way children grow to become moral individuals. Rather, it has focused on the development of the child's cognitive abilities and the way these developmental changes affect the child's moral world view. Kohlberg, for instance, viewed the child as progressing from an early morality based on parental authority to a fully autonomous morality, based on an understanding of universal

moral principles. Although Kohlberg sometimes touched on the topic of emotions, his theory never adequately sought to describe the role of emotions in the development of a mature morality.

Within the last 20 years, however, social and developmental psychologists have turned their attention to emotional processes in the social development of children and in the judgments and behaviors of adults. Developmental researchers specifically have sought a description of how emotions work in fostering a child's moral sensibilities. There are at least two reasons why theorists consider emotions important for the study of moral development and behavior. First, emotions are powerful sources of motivation. In other words, most emotions are associated with what has been labeled an *action tendency*, or a propensity to engage in certain actions when experiencing a specific emotion. For instance, anger is associated with the tendency to attack and fright with the tendency to escape (Lazarus, 1991). Emotions such as empathy and guilt motivate prosocial behaviors (constructive behaviors that are also generally understood as moral (Eisenberg, 1986)). Helping a person in need and apologizing for hurting someone are examples of these kinds of behaviors. Knowing in what circumstances emotions motivate us to do good is therefore an important component of understanding moral behavior in general. Even cognitive theories recognize this role of emotions as an energy source for moral functioning.

Because emotions are powerful motivators of action, they are also important mechanisms that aid in the process of socialization (the process by which children come to internalize the values, norms, and morals of their parents and society at large). Emotions, as naturally occurring events in children, are resources that can help in the transmission of norms and values. By inducing emotions such as guilt, empathy, shame, and even disgust (see Rozin, Haidt, & McCauley, 1993), parents can mold children's responses to behaviors, events, and people. In time, these emotional reactions come to occur naturally in the child in appropriate situations, and act as internal sources of motivation and constraint. It is these two features of emotion, their motivational arousal and their role in socialization, that have made the study of emotion an important area of inquiry to researchers interested in moral development and prosocial behavior.

When discussing the emotional intelligence of morality, we focus on those emotions that seem to have a distinctly moral nature, such as empathy and guilt. This is not to say that emotions such as happiness and sadness do not affect our moral lives. Certainly, we become happy when we do good things for others and sad when we ponder the misfortune of others. However, for the purposes of our discussion, we focus on the emotions investigators have generally lumped together as morally relevant. In our discussion, we organize the functions of these various emotions using the four branches of the emotional intelligence framework (Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Salovey, Woolery, & Mayer, 2000).

PERCEIVING AND APPRAISING EMOTIONS

When discussing moral rights and wrongs, there seems to be room for a lot of disagreement. Issues such as abortion, the death penalty, and same-sex unions, for example, seem to draw a moral dividing line across our nation. Fortunately, however, there exists much more agreement about issues concerning right and wrong than it might seem. For instance, causing innocent individuals to suffer is rarely seen as anything but a morally reprehensible action. Because moral events usually center around the presence of victimization, encountering the suffering of innocent others in our daily lives is a strong indication that a moral event is taking place. It is generally not the case, however, that people wear signs around their neck that announce their pain, such as "I just got dumped by my girlfriend" and "My favorite aunt just passed away." Rather, there are subtle signals sent by those individuals that clue us in to their distress. These signals act as efficient forms of communication. However, as may seem obvious, a signal must be perceived and understood for it to be effective. The ability to perceive emotions accurately in others is thus a very important emotional skill, arguably the most fundamental skill of all when it comes to human relationships. This ability to know how others are feeling has been labeled *empathy* by many researchers (Eisenberg & Miller, 1991; Feshbach & Roe, 1968; Hoffman, 1987), and has been the most well-researched of all the so-called moral emotions.

What is empathy? Some researchers have defined empathy strictly in terms of the ability to take the perspective of others, a distinctly cognitive ability. However, empathy can be seen as having both a cognitive component and an emotional component, that of actually feeling an emotion that is more appropriate to the other person's situation (this is the definition offered by Hoffman, 1998). In fact, the word "empathy" literally means, "to feel oneself into" (Wispé, 1987). For our purposes, we restrict our definition of empathy to the emotional arousal one feels when presented with the emotional experience of another, particularly the distress of another. It is this empathic arousal that allows us to feel suffering when others are suffering and, thus, motivates us to help the individual in distress.

Most people are able to experience empathy, but some are better than others. For instance, there is evidence that some antisocial youth suffer from an inability to feel empathy, an "empathic dysfunction." As Gibbs (1987) states, "Empathy is available in most [juvenile] offenders but is not readily elicited and tends to be either an isolated impulse or a mawkish sentiment. In either case, the empathy is superficial and erratic; when it lingers, it is readily suppressed by self-centered motives or aggressive impulses. (p. 303)." It has also been argued that psychopathic individuals suffer from a lack of the capacity for empathic affect (Blair, 1995). This serves as further reason to consider empathy a truly moral emotion: if you cannot feel empathy, chances are you are not a very moral person.

What influences the ability to experience empathy? It is clear that a capacity for empathy is not all-or-nothing; individuals vary as to their degree of empathic responsiveness. Various factors have been pointed to as important for the development of empathy (for a review see Barnett, 1987; Davis, 1996, pp. 62–81). These include genetics (e.g., Matthews, Batson, Horn, & Rosenman, 1981), childhood temperament (e.g., Mehrabin, 1980), a stable and positive relationship with a caregiver (e.g., Mussen & Eisenberg-Berg, 1977), and disciplining techniques that focus on inducing empathy in children (e.g., Hoffman & Saltzstein, 1967). Summarizing the research on the development of empathy, Barnett (1987, p. 156) concluded:

The development of empathy and related responses would appear to thrive in an environment that (1) satisfies the child's own emotional needs, (2) encourages the child to identify, experience, and express a broad range of emotions, and (3) provides numerous opportunities for the child to observe and interact with others who, through their words and actions, encourage emotional sensitivity and responsiveness to others.

Parents and educators should therefore strive to create an environment in which children are encouraged to take the perspective of others, to imagine what the other person is feeling, and to be active in speaking to their children about emotions.

Before we conclude that the capacity for empathy is sufficient to be a moral individual, we must discuss its limitations. As was mentioned above, empathic arousal motivates us to alleviate the suffering of others. It seems as if the distress we feel when in the presence of distressed others can be alleviated only by helping the individual in need. In fact, individuals tend to help even if there is an easier escape from the empathic distress, for instance, by leaving the situation (e.g., Batson, Dyck, Brandt, Batson, Powell, McMaster, & Griffitt, 1991). People high in dispositional empathy (people with an "empathic personality") are also more likely to engage in helping behavior (Davis, Mitchell, Hall, Lothert, Snapp, & Meyer, 1999). However, being "high" in empathy is not a surefire qualification for being a moral individual, nor is it a guarantee that a person will always do the right thing. One of the interesting features of empathy is that it is more easily elicited for people that we perceive as similar to us (e.g., Feshbach & Roe, 1968) and that we view as innocent (Betancourt, 1990). Conversely, the more different we perceive others to be, and the more at fault we think they are, the less likely we are to experience empathy for them and, thus, the less likely we are to help them if they are in need. This "empathic bias," as Hoffman (1987) has labeled it, is one reason we cannot always rely on our emotional reactions as a reliable guide to moral truth. Sometimes, we have to try very hard to feel empathy for others, by imagining ourselves in their position and by focusing on similarities rather than differences. Indeed, one of the primary tasks of parents and educators should be to make the empathic response available in children regardless of perceived differences between themselves and the victim.

Another problem with empathy is that sometimes we feel empathy for individuals who we know do not deserve it. For instance, we may feel sorry for a criminal who had a rough childhood, only to find out that he committed numerous brutal murders. In this situation, felt empathy must be "squashed" so that the motivational consequences (helping the murderer) dissipate.

When speaking of empathy as a moral emotion, then, one must be careful not to assume that the capability to feel what others are feeling is the same as making mature moral decisions. Indeed, the ability to perceive and appraise emotions in others is an ability that may even be used to manipulate others.

EMOTIONS THAT HELP US THINK

The idea that emotions are forces that act contrary to reason has plagued Western thinking since the days of the earliest Greek philosophers. Plato (1988) characterized emotions as being akin to wild horses that need to be controlled by the "rational" rider. Freud (1977) also viewed most emotions as strong instinctual forces that must be conquered by the Superego, that portion of the mind that was in charge of matters of conscience. The notion that emotions disrupt cognitive activities persists even today in conceptions of emotional processes (Mandler, 1975; Simon, 1981). For example, labeling someone as being "too emotional" is synonymous with calling him or her irrational. Similarly, crimes of passion are punished less severely than cold, calculated acts because emotions are seen as temporarily seizing the will of the individual, rendering him or her unable to make informed decisions in the planning of actions.

Although there are some investigators who continue to maintain a strong position concerning the divide between reason and passion (e.g., Metcalfe & Mischel, 1999), most researchers agree that emotions often serve to facilitate reasoning, rather than hinder it (e.g., Damasio, 1994; Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Emotions prioritize events, pointing the individual toward problems in the environment that are of immediate importance (Easterbrook, 1959; Leeper, 1948). In this sense emotions serve to aid judgment, by steering thoughts in the right direction. For instance, negative moods encourage careful, deliberate ways of thinking, causing people to elaborate more on problems than they would in a more positive mood. The presence of happy moods, on the other hand, encourages a more creative style of thinking, leading some to listen to happy, upbeat music to facilitate creative thoughts (Isen, 1993; Palfai & Salovey, 1993; Schwarz, 1990).

Stated simply, emotional reactions focus our cognitive resources on the problem at hand. It is no different with moral emotions. Moral emotions prioritize thinking about our moral principles and beliefs, motivate appropriate moral judgments, and prepare us to take moral action. When we become distressed at the sight of another individual suffering, the negative arousal

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mobilizes our mental resources and facilitates thinking concerning moral questions such as why the individual is suffering, whose fault it is that she is suffering, and what course of action should be taken to help her. For example, when, on a winter day, we come across a man who is obviously cold and hungry, and who appears to be homeless, the empathy we feel turns our thoughts toward the plight of the homeless and the inequalities of society. Or, it may cause us to pronounce harsh moral judgments on the individual, attributing his or her position to some flaw of character. In either case, the immediate felt empathy is what served to stimulate thinking about the moral implications of the situation.

If empathy generally motivates us to help, guilt is what motivates us to make amends, either by seeking to repair the damage to a valued relationship, as when we ask forgiveness for offending a friend, or by correcting our behavior to be consistent with our principles concerning how one should act. Guilt is a negative evaluation of a specific behavior, and usually occurs when we feel as if we have violated one of our moral principles, for example, by hurting someone else or by otherwise acting in a manner unbecoming of how we think we should act. In contrast to shame, which usually causes us to focus on ourselves, guilt shifts the focus to the transgression and is associated with a desire to undo what has been done (Tangney, 1999). For instance, a young child who feels guilty for hitting his best friend will most likely find it hard to spend too much time organizing his baseball cards. The guilt he is experiencing will turn his thoughts toward how he hurt his friend and to what he should do to make things better. Similarly, if we have hurt the feelings of a good friend, we are easily distracted if we try to work, because our thoughts are constantly turning to the damage we have done. Although one can have maladaptive levels of guilt, in normal individuals guilt is an incredibly adaptive emotion, because it maintains relationship health by motivating individuals to repair any damage done to the relationship.

Once an emotion such as empathy is aroused in an individual, and thoughts turn to matters of a moral nature, one will naturally draw conclusions regarding the situation (Hoffman, 1998). Moral judgments, the conclusions drawn by individuals concerning the moral rightness or wrongness of actions or events, often influence the presence of subsequent emotions. If we feel empathy in the presence of a distressed other and realize that her or his distress is due to the unjust actions of some third party, our empathy is likely to turn into "empathic anger." For example, when viewing footage of police brutality directed toward an innocent African American man, the empathic distress we feel may turn into anger at such a violation of basic rights. If, on the other hand, we feel empathy for the distress of another, but realize that *we* are the cause of the others' distress, empathy transforms into guilt. For example, the distress aroused when seeing our younger siblings crying uncontrollably quickly turns into guilt when we realize that they are crying because of something we said. Empathy combines with attributions of blame and other moral judgments, and it is the

motivational power of the emotion in combination with our judgments that informs our subsequent actions.

The knowledge that moral emotions will mobilize our thinking concerning moral issues (such as the plight of the homeless or the importance of not hurting those we love) is knowledge that can be used to serve our individual moral goals. By taking the perspective of other people, for instance, we can make ourselves feel empathy for someone with whom we may not have otherwise concerned ourselves. A pragmatic use of these emotional skills is therefore an advantage, in that the emotions encourage the critical thinking necessary to work through moral situations and moral dilemmas, and they harness the full motivational force of the emotion.

EMPLOYING EMOTIONAL KNOWLEDGE

Human interactions are full of complex emotional information. The ability to understand and discern this emotional information adds quality and depth to our own lives, and allows us to understand better the lives of others. Knowledge such as what emotion an artist is trying to convey through her work or of the complex combination of emotions that are making us feel a certain way is considered a sign of a healthy emotional life. Knowledge concerning how emotions work and are communicated and the way that people employ this knowledge is organized under this third branch of emotional intelligence. Among the skills are the ability to define emotions, the ability to understand complex blends of emotions, and an accurate understanding of the likely transitions between emotions (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

How is this emotional knowledge used in moral life? Thus far we have discussed how emotions work as motivation through their immediate action, as in the empathy we feel when we see someone in distress or the guilt we feel immediately after we hurt someone. But emotions also motivate us from a distance. In other words, merely anticipating that we might feel an emotion is sometimes enough to affect our present behavior. A child who is thinking about cheating on an exam might be motivated not to do so because she knows that she would feel guilty immediately following the act. In this case, knowledge of the emotional consequences of an act becomes an important determinant for whether or not a person will be motivated to avoid performing an "immoral" action.

This type of emotional knowledge, although crucial when it comes to behaving morally, takes time to develop. One of the most interesting findings concerning children's knowledge of moral emotions is the so-called "happy victimizer" effect (Arsenio & Kramer, 1992). Very young children expect that a wrongdoer will feel good after having committed a moral transgression. There is a clear age trend in this phenomenon; as children develop (usually between the ages of 6 and 10) they come to believe that a wrongdoer will feel badly after

having committed a transgression. The development of this ability is critical; if a child is unaware of the emotional consequences of his or her act, there will be little motivation to avoid it (or to perform it). Pointing to the emotional consequences of an act can serve to strengthen the connections between transgressions and the feelings of guilt. In fact, there is evidence that disciplining children by pointing out how they feel after an act (what is called inductive discipline) is the most efficient form of discipline, because it pairs emotional consequences with certain acts.

A second type of emotional knowledge, which takes time to develop as well, is the knowledge of complex combinations of emotional states. This knowledge is one of the most important feats of mature emotional and cognitive development. When, for instance, we see an Olympic athlete in a track race fall, we are aware not only of the physical pain he is experiencing, but also of the disappointment he must feel at achieving so much and failing at such a critical moment, and also of the possible wound to his pride caused by falling in front of an audience of millions. Such an understanding of the complex emotions experienced by the individual is important in informing our subsequent actions. Should we help ease his physical pain? What types of things should we say to him to ease his emotional pain? Should we remain quiet rather than speak to him? An inability to answer these complex questions concerning the individual involved renders our helping abilities rather useless. If we were unable to figure out some answers to these questions, our helping behaviors would be similar to those of young children, who often offer a safety blanket or a favorite toy (decidedly not the kind of help that most adults would want). Adequately helping others means knowing how they may be feeling in the larger context of their life experiences.

EFFECTIVELY REGULATING EMOTIONS IN OURSELVES AND IN OTHERS

Regulating Emotions in Ourselves

Emotional regulation is perhaps one of the most important features of emotional intelligence when it comes to moral judgments and behaviors. Emotional reactions sometimes need to be guided in the right direction, lest they steer us into the wrong one. This is obvious for negative emotions such as anger; if anger is not regulated, it can motivate us to act inappropriately. It is less obvious why we would need to regulate emotions such as empathy. After all, empathy is a good thing, is it not?

This discussion should be prefaced with a point concerning emotions that is especially useful when discussing moral emotions. Sometimes emotions are elicited almost automatically (see Hodges & Wegner, 1997). When survival is threatened, we react immediately with fear. In the same manner, when the desire for social approval is threatened (e.g., by someone who made us look foolish in

public), we immediately feel angry. We also have immediate and automatic reactions of empathy, disgust, jealousy, and nearly every other emotion. The bright side is that human beings are not mindless animals condemned to act on our every impulse, so we are constantly able to choose the emotions that are appropriate and those that are not by stepping outside the emotion and deciding whether or not it is appropriate, then regulating it accordingly (see Gross, 1999). If we have an emotion that we believe we should not be having, or at least that we think would be wrong to act on, we can enlist a higher-order desire to regulate that emotion. If we have an immediate emotional reaction, such as anger, and with it comes the desire to act on that emotion (attack our offender), we can step outside the emotion and act as judges of it. We can have desires about desires or emotions about emotions (Gottman, Katz, & Hooven, 1997). In the case of the anger, it is the greater desire to do the right thing that motivates us to regulate our emotional reaction.

Sometimes, it is the case that the immediate emotional reaction and the greater desires match up with each other nicely. For instance, the motivation brought on by empathy (the desire to help the person in need) goes along very well with our greater desire to "do good," and the end result is that we perform the action. In the cases where they do not match up, however, our skills in regulating our emotions are called into play, and we take on the role of emotional managers. When we become angry with a boss, for instance, we know that we cannot slap him in the face. Thinking about our anger and turning our thoughts toward constructive ways of dealing with the problem are strategies that are often effective in the regulation of the emotion.

Not all people have mastered this skill, as one might guess. Oftentimes, individuals allow inappropriate emotions to exert their full motivational force, with the end result sometimes being disastrous. The recently coined "road rage" phenomenon, where drivers become so angry that they stop at nothing until they satisfy their revenge on other drivers, certainly attests to the unfortunate consequences of poor emotional regulation.

This discussion of emotional regulation should not be taken as evidence that emotions are bad and that by regulating them we necessarily mean eliminating their effects. On the contrary, emotional reactions that are channeled constructively can act as excellent sources of motivation. Anger at the presence of societal injustices, when effectively regulated (which may mean letting ourselves experience the anger fully rather than suppressing it), can motivate individuals to great moral achievements, for instance. In fact, there are some instances in which regulating an emotion, by not allowing ourselves to fully experience it, may have drastic consequences for ourselves and others. For instance, suppressing anger is thought to affect various physiological mechanisms that are vital to our health (Petrie, Booth, Pennebaker, & Davison, 1995). Similarly, suppressing an emotion such as empathy might have disastrous moral consequences, allowing people to do things they would never otherwise do (such as harm innocent people).

Regulating Emotions in Others

So far we have talked about the importance of regulating emotions in ourselves, but what about regulating emotions in other people? At first thought, this might seem rather manipulative. However, in everyday life we know individuals who are skilled at manipulating emotions in other people in ways that are considered constructive. For instance, the friend that everyone turns to when they are feeling down is often sought out because of his or her ability to "raise spirits" and make people feel better. Motivational speakers and preachers are also good regulators of emotion in others, and are applauded for these skills. So, while one can certainly see the manipulation that might occur by regulating the emotions of others, by and large people use these skills for the achievement of noble goals.

The ability to regulate the emotions of others is a critical skill when it comes to the socialization of children. As we have mentioned, effective disciplining is often achieved by using children's natural emotional reactions as sources of motivation. Parents can capitalize on these emotional reactions by generating them in children when appropriate. The induction of emotions or moods is something that psychologists interested in emotions often do in an experimental setting. For instance, in our emotions laboratory we often induce moods by asking people to watch sad movie clips or listen to happy music (e.g., Palfai & Salovey, 1993; Salovey, 1992; Salovey & Birnbaum, 1989). Similarly, when disciplining a child, caretakers can take advantage of the ease with which children are likely to experience emotions such as empathy and guilt, and use it to motivate appropriate moral behaviors.

The children of parents that tend to induce emotions such as empathy and guilt when a moral situation arises are more likely to internalize moral norms efficiently (Hoffman & Saltzein, 1967). For instance, pointing out the consequences of stealing, thus inducing empathy for the victim of the theft, is an effective way of teaching children not to steal. By repeatedly inducing empathy in similar situations, children come to associate the act of stealing with empathy for the victim, and this emotional energy provides an internal source of motivation in the children. This type of discipline stands in sharp contrast to disciplinary tactics in which caretakers merely exert their authority over children, threatening them with punishment if they do not act in a moral manner. In any future moral situations, children who were disciplined through the use of inductive methods will continue to act morally even in the absence of external authority or threat, as compared with children who were disciplined merely through an exertion of parental authority. Recent research on children's development of "conscience" has supported these ideas (Kochanska, 1995, 1997).

Empathy and guilt are not the only emotions recruited in the transmission of moral norms. Emotions such as shame and disgust are also implicated. Some authors have pointed to the power of feelings of disgust when it comes to

certain moral practices. For instance, vegetarians (who are vegetarian for moral reasons) are more likely to find meat disgusting than vegetarians who become vegetarian for health reasons (Rozin, Markwith, & Stoess, 1997). Inducing disgust over certain practices may be one of the most powerful ways to get children (and adults, as some religious leaders can attest) to stop performing certain behaviors.

Inductive discipline works not merely as simple conditioning, i.e., the pairing of emotions with situations. Through time, caretakers elaborate on the moral principles involved in situations that arouse emotions, focusing on the similarities across situations such as hitting others, stealing, or lying, and teaching the child the appropriate principles involved. By linking moral principles to emotions like this, thinking about moral principles becomes an emotion-laden task, lending the principles greater motivational power. Every time there is a co-occurrence of moral principles with empathic affect, the association causes a bond between the two. Moral principles thus acquire a motivating power that they would not have acquired without the effective pairing of the empathic response. Moral principles come to elicit empathy and guilt, and conversely, empathy and guilt elicit thinking about moral principles, leading Hoffman (1987) to refer to them as "hot cognitions." This may help to explain why emotions become so intense when individuals disagree about their moral beliefs.

A WORD ABOUT MORAL PRINCIPLES

In our discussion of emotions, we have briefly mentioned the importance of moral principles in guiding the regulation of emotions and in elaborating on them when disciplining children. As mentioned before, many psychologists studying morality have largely ignored moral emotions, choosing to focus on the development of cognitive abilities instead. They have focused on how maturing cognitive abilities affect children's thinking about moral principles, and how understanding these principles affects their judgments concerning right and wrong. However, moral theorists who do focus on emotions have been criticized for ignoring the role that an understanding of moral principles plays in the moral development of children, choosing rather to focus on how emotions act as rewards for doing good or punishments for doing wrong (e.g., Blasi, 1999).

It is our belief that any discussion of morality should ignore neither the role of moral principles nor the role of emotions. In the moral lives of individuals, it makes little sense to separate the two. We feel guilt when we violate what we believe to be a moral principle. Guilt does not exist without previous judgments that certain acts are wrong. In the same manner, were it not for the emotions of guilt and empathy we would have little motivation to act on our moral principles. Because the two cannot be separated in real life, we do not think they should be separated in our theoretical frameworks either.

MORAL EDUCATION

Having covered a few key points concerning moral emotions and emotional intelligence, we are now in the position to take a closer look at the implications for moral and emotional education. There is a large push for the implementation of programs in schools across the nation that focus on the education of character, values, and morals. Although this is not intended to be a review of socio-moral-emotional education programs, there are a few points to be made concerning the broad approaches that are currently in favor. In his article "How Not to Teach Values," Kohn (1997) takes a critical look at many character education programs, guiding his criticism by asking five questions he considers vital. Among these are "What is the view of human nature [espoused by the program]?" and "What is the theory of learning [espoused by the program]?" Many character education programs adhere to an underlying assumption that children are intrinsically evil and that their natural impulses must be curbed. This bleak view of human nature, according to Kohn, leads to efforts at controlling behavior by "breaking the will" of the child, and by offering the child rewards for their good behavior. As Kohn correctly points out, this approach is directly contrary to psychological research on motivation; one way to extinguish behavior is to encourage it with extrinsic rewards (Lepper, Green, & Nisbett, 1973). The rewarding of behavior (e.g., by giving tokens to children when they are "caught" performing a good behavior) may undermine intrinsic motivation.

Attempts to stop misbehavior by external punishments are just as ineffective. If character education is to work, it must foster internal motivation to do good, and not depend on the presence of external rewards and punishment. As discussed above, moral emotions are, by their very nature, internal sources of motivation and constraint. The easy solution seems to be just to "teach" emotional skills, focusing especially on moral emotions. In fact, it is strange that more moral education programs do not pay special attention to emotional education. But the goal sounds easier than it may actually be to accomplish it. Berkowitz (1995) lists some reasons why this may be the case. First, developmental evidence points to an early emergence (within the first 2 years of life) of empathy, making its presence dependent on factors that occur before children even reach school. Second, there is a general lack of research on how to educate moral emotions. As Berkowitz states, "[T]he role of the school is to direct the child to care for the good and abhor the bad; e.g., empathize with victims and despise injustice. *Unfortunately it is quite unclear how this is done.* The literature on moral education pays little attention to this issue" (p.25, emphasis added).

A more general approach to moral learning has also been popular in schools across the nation—programs that focus specifically on issues such as conflict resolution, emotional learning, and social development in children. Although in most cases more broadly focused than character education programs, these

programs were also initiated because of the desire to minimize behaviors such as interpersonal violence, drug abuse, suicide, and lack of civility among students. There is only limited evidence at this point regarding the effectiveness of many of these programs (see Lopes & Salovey, in press, for a review). However, this is most likely due to a lack of controlled research (i.e., adequate comparisons between programs) rather than an inability of these programs to foster change in students.

Lest the state of affairs seem beyond remedy, it must be made clear that there are strategies that can promote moral emotions in children. We have already mentioned some strategies for effectively inducing emotions in others. For instance, pointing to the consequences of a child's actions is an effective method of promoting an empathic response in the child, and capitalizes on the child's natural tendency to feel for others. Below we present further strategies that may promote the education of moral character through the use of emotions:

1. Build an environment that encourages the expression and discussion of emotions. There is no substitute for having good models of emotional skills. The way in which parents and educators treat and talk about emotions has been shown to be an important part of the child's ability to adjust (Gottman et al., 1997).

2. Be an effective regulator of emotions in children, especially when confronted with moral situations. For instance, induce empathy for innocent victims of crime, or guilt when the child has hurt someone. The built-in motivation provided by these emotions will continue to exert an influence even in the absence of caretakers.

3. One strategy for inducing empathy in children is to point to the similarities between them and the victim, framing victims in ways that allow children to fully experience empathy. In contrast, framing victims as different preempts feelings of empathy. By fostering a universal respect for humanity, as opposed to drawing boundary lines across races, religions, and nationalities, parents and educators can ensure that children will not fail to experience emotions when presented with the victimization of others.

4. Although there may be a heritable component to the tendency to experience empathy, it is most certainly the case that we can improve this ability in ourselves and in children. Encourage children to be constant "perspective takers," to learn to see the world through the eyes of others. Encourage conversation about how others must be thinking or feeling. This is especially important in situations where there is a conflict between two parties. Encouraging both sides to take the perspective of others will help children not only to feel what the others may be feeling, but is also an important exercise in respecting the opinions of others. Make it a habit to verbalize your empathic feelings when presented with the suffering or victimization of others.

5. Discuss important moral principles, and link them to moral emotions. Discussions about justice and fairness will come naturally to the developing child (e.g., when having to share toys with other children, or when having to take the blame for mishaps). Seize these opportunities to engage children in a discussion of justice and fairness. Say, for instance, why feeling anger at the sight of unfair practices is okay (i.e., because the principle of justice has been violated). If a child is effective at reasoning about moral issues, it is usually the case that appropriate moral emotions will follow.

There is little reason to think that we are helpless when it comes to the emotional and moral education of children. The truth of the matter is that we can be systematic and effective in fostering the moral and emotional development of children.

CONCLUSION

Emotions play an enormous role in the moral development, moral judgment, and moral behavior of individuals, and have often been ignored by researchers in moral psychology. For a full psychological understanding of morality, one must take emotional processes into account. The emotional intelligence framework provides a useful background by which to organize the various ways emotions work in moral processes. The ability to be effective in dealing with emotions—accurately perceiving them, using them to guide thinking, being knowledgeable about complex emotional states, and being effective regulators of emotions—comprises skills that come into play in being a moral individual. In fact, these skills can be used to teach children right from wrong more effectively. There is no doubt that people who are poor at dealing with emotions and emotional events would find it hard to maintain their moral character over time. As it is, moral judgments are nearly always affected by our emotions, and being bad at dealing with emotions would seem to imply being bad at dealing with moral situations.

In discussing emotions and emotional skills, however, we must be wary not to transform emotional intelligence into something it is not. Emotional skills are merely one subset of all human skills. Cognitive abilities, emotional abilities, and various other skills and talents are important in making us complete individuals. And, as we know, any human skill can be used to achieve destructive goals. Just as an individual who has the IQ of a genius could use her or his intelligence to hurt others (the notorious Hannibal Lecter of *The Silence of the Lambs* comes to mind), so can a person who is high in emotional intelligence use his or her skills to manipulate and hurt others. Being good at knowing how others feel, regulating the emotions of others, and controlling one's display of emotions are all skills that are prerequisites for any great leader, whether she or he chooses to lead people to do good things or evil things. Emotional intelligence is therefore not a cure-all for the ills of society. If tomorrow everyone in

the world became emotionally intelligent, the world still might not be a paradise. However, by understanding the role of various emotional processes in the development of morality and in our everyday moral behavior, we are that much closer to being effective moral agents and effective moral educators.

Teachers' Questions and Answers

Q: In the wake of the Columbine tragedy, what kinds of interventions can schools implement to help violent or withdrawn students deal more effectively with their emotions? How early should these interventions take place? Is there a point where it is simply too late to effect change?

A: Recent violent incidents reported in the news media have made the mental health of our youth very salient. Partly in response to these incidents, schools across the nation have implemented programs in an attempt to preempt any future tragedies (according to one count, more than 300 such programs are in place in the United States alone (Cohen, 1999)). Although they often go by different names (character education, positive youth development, emotional intelligence, emotional literacy, social-emotional learning), they usually have as their main goal the teaching of skills surrounding the effective management of emotions, the building of healthy social relationships, and the achievement of positive social and personal goals.

It is too early to offer a critical evaluation of the success of these programs. However, there have been some optimistic reports. For instance, one of the first of such programs (instituted in the public schools of New Haven, CT), has contributed to the reduction of school violence and feelings of hopelessness among students (Shriver, Schwab-Stone, & DeFalco, 1999). A conflict-resolution program in New York City (Resolving Conflict Creatively) has also contributed to a reduction in aggressive behavior; children who received more conflict-resolution lessons were less aggressive overall (Aber, Brown, & Henrich, 1999). These early findings provide some assurance that we are headed in the right direction.

As far as the ideal age of implementation, the easiest answer is the earlier the better. This is not to say that older children and adults cannot benefit from such training. It seems as if old dogs can learn new tricks when it comes to emotional skills. It is never too late to teach a child to take the perspective of others, for instance, or to teach children to reappraise situations so as not to feel overwhelmed with violent emotions.

If there is a take-home message, however, it is that there is still much to learn about the motives of children such as those involved in the Columbine and Jonesboro incidents. It would be a mistake to say that emotional intelligence training could have prevented such a tragedy—we just do not know at this point. However, the hope remains that by paying closer attention to the social and emotional well-being of children at high risk for such behaviors, we may be able to prevent such tragedies in the future.

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Mozart and the Mind: Factual and Fictional Effects of Music Enrichment

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The "Mozart effect," a term coined by the *Los Angeles Times*, refers to the finding that college students who listened to the first 10 minutes of a Mozart sonata (K.448) scored higher on a spatial-temporal reasoning task immediately afterward—an effect that lasted approximately 10 minutes. The original search report, first published by my colleagues and me in the journal *Psychology of Music* (Rauscher, Shaw, & Ky, 1993), received a disproportionate amount of attention from the popular press. To our horror, the finding has spawned a Mozart industry which includes books, CDs, web sites, and all manner of hype. Articles with titles such as "Mozart Makes You Smarter" and "Mozart: The Brain Hum" have led readers to believe that classical music in general, and Mozart in particular, can improve babies' math scores later in life, improve scores on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), and turn average healthy children into Einsteins. Unfortunately, press reports of scientific findings are particularly seductive to parents, educators, and policymakers. In fact, Georgia Governor Zell Miller, based on his understanding of these results, asked legislators to purchase classical music CDs for every newborn baby in the state. "No one doubts that listening to music, especially at an early age, affects scores

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