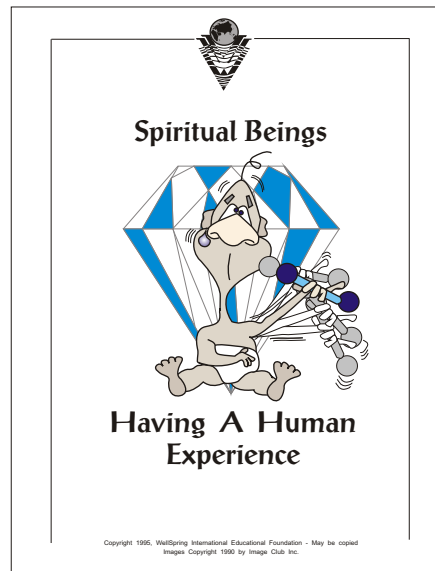


Who Are Our Children Really?

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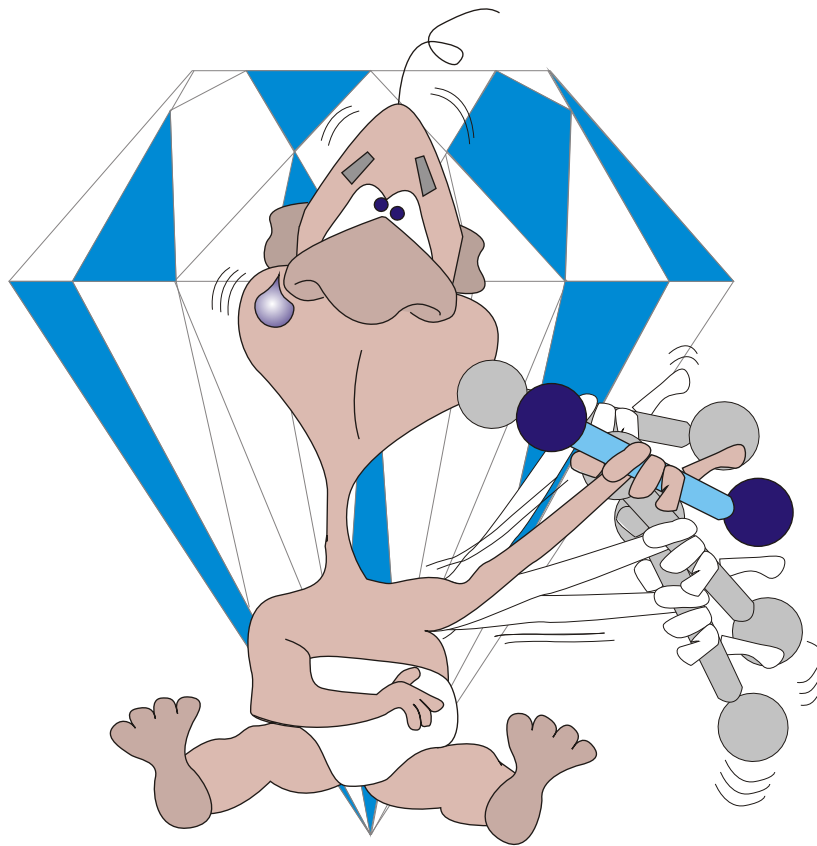


Key Points

- * **When we talk about who are children are we are also talking about who each of us is as well.**
- * **First and foremost, we are spiritual beings going through this world to grow and develop.**
- * **We are not, as many believe, human beings with a spiritual component (perhaps).**
- * **Our reality is spiritual -- our individuality is spiritual -- it is the spirit that educates -- it is the spirit that is educated.**
- * **More important than the behaviour is the intent behind the behaviour -- here you will find the virtues**
- * **Spirituality and virtues are not a function of age**

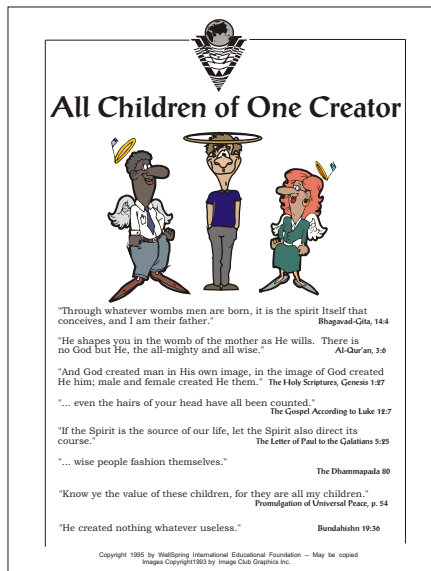


Spiritual Beings



Having A Human Experience

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Key Points

- * **Every person has a Creator -- parents provide the genetic material but God is our Creator.**
- * **Not only does God give us life, our soul, the Divine Spirit shapes us individually -- God wants each particular person in the world.**
- * **We each have a place in the human spirit as an individual, independent spiritual being with our own purpose, and plan for our life.**
- * **We are created in the image of God with free will, the ability to develop our spiritual potential, and acquire the Divine Virtues.**
- * **This is the birthright of every human being -- each of us is worthy of the honour and respect due a child of God.**



All Children of One Creator



"Through whatever wombs men are born, it is the spirit Itself that conceives, and I am their father."

Bhagavad-Gita, 14:4

"He shapes you in the womb of the mother as He wills. There is no God but He, the all-mighty and all wise."

Al-Qur'an, 3:6

"And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them."

The Holy Scriptures, Genesis 1:27

"... even the hairs of your head have all been counted."

The Gospel According to Luke 12:7

"If the Spirit is the source of our life, let the Spirit also direct its course."

The Letter of Paul to the Galatians 5:25

"... wise people fashion themselves."

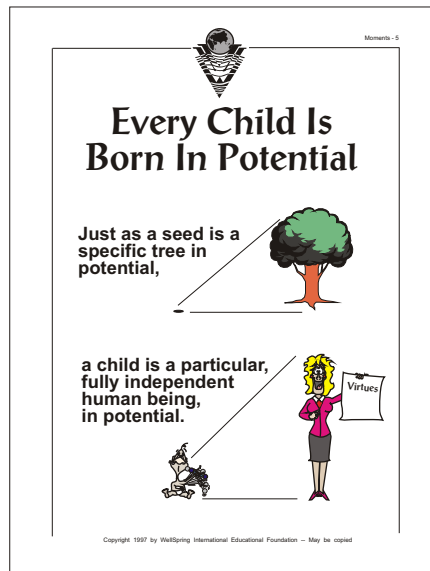
The Dhammapada 80

"Know ye the value of these children, for they are all my children."

Promulgation of Universal Peace, p. 54

"He created nothing whatever useless."

Bundahishn 19:36



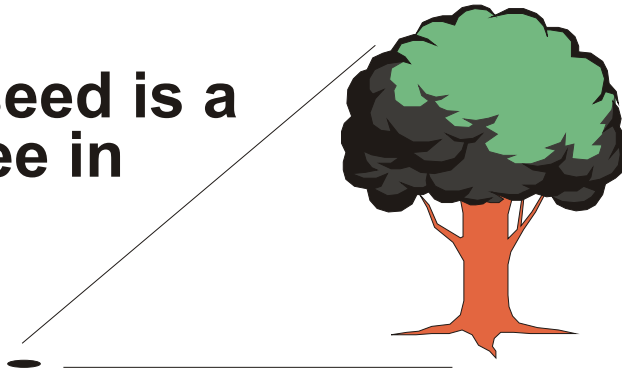
Key Points

- * **Just as a seed is a tree in potential, a child is a fully developed, independent person, in potential.**
- * **A seed is always a particular tree in potential -- an acorn will become an oak of a given height if cared for.**
- * **A child is destined to become a particular person if properly provided for -- it is the parent's task to make that gentle unfolding possible.**
- * **Like a careful gardener, wise parents learn about the specific person entrusted to them -- what gifts are there, how (s)he learns, the strengths and the weaknesses.**
- * **Like every successful gardener, successful parents provide their charge what (s)he needs to grow and develop the full potential within.**

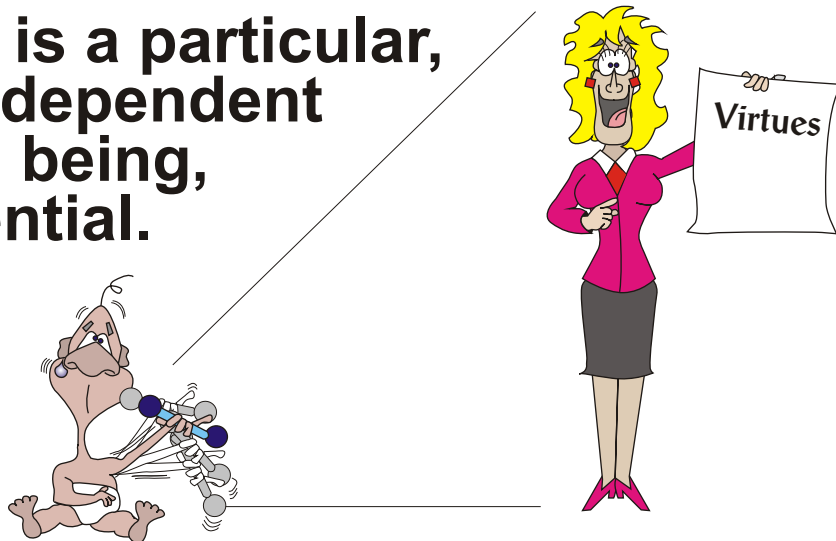


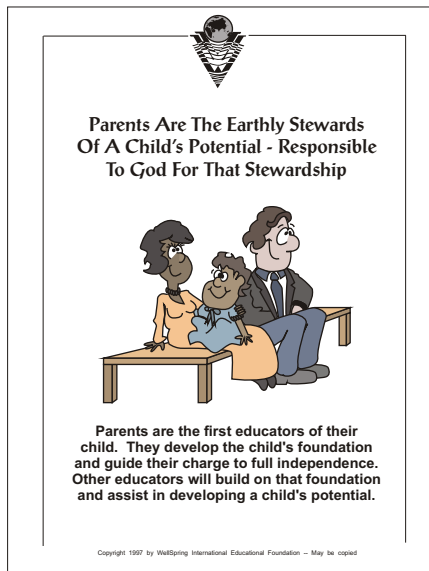
Every Child Is Born In Potential

Just as a seed is a specific tree in potential,



a child is a particular, fully independent human being, in potential.





Key Points

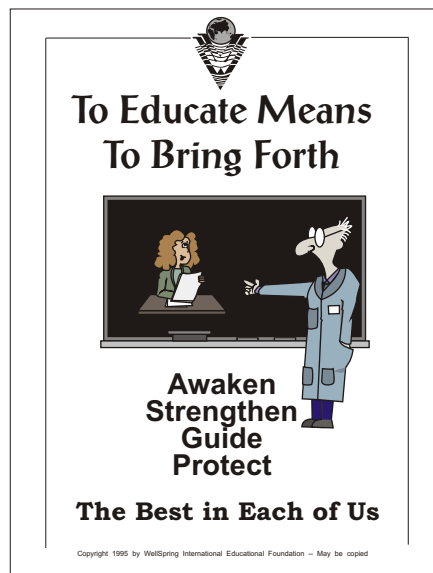
- * **Every person belongs only to themselves and to God -- a child is not a possession of his/her parents.**
- * **Children are placed into the arms of parents for care and development -- for preparation for the day when they take their places as independent human beings.**
- * **Children are a sacred trust -- parents are responsible to God for the execution of that trust -- the community must step in if parents fail to execute that trust.**
- * **Parents may enlist the help of others to prepare their charges for full independence, but they still remain responsible until the job is done.**
- * **Parents provide the most important part of a child's education -- the foundation upon which everything else rests.**



Parents Are The Earthly Stewards Of A Child's Potential



Parents are the first educators of their child. They develop the child's foundation and guide their charge to full independence. Other educators will build on that foundation and assist in developing a child's potential.

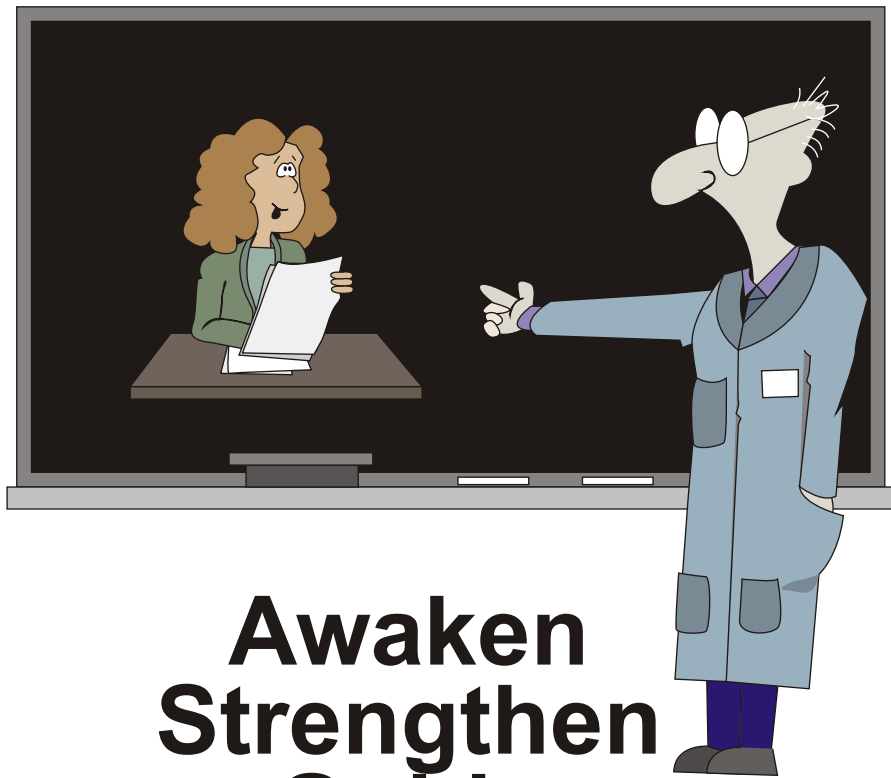


Key Points

- * **Education means to bring forth -- the potential is already there, for both the positive and the negative.**
- * **The challenge for educators, and for parents -- the first educators -- is to bring forth the best within.**
- * **The process of bringing forth the best begins with recognizing the potential and responding to it.**
- * **The best within is strengthened by providing opportunities to act on it, encouraging the best, and then acknowledging efforts to develop the best.**
- * **Every child comes prepared to learn -- (s)he is learning even when no one is formally teaching.**
- * **The vast majority of what a child learns comes from observation, thought and practice.**

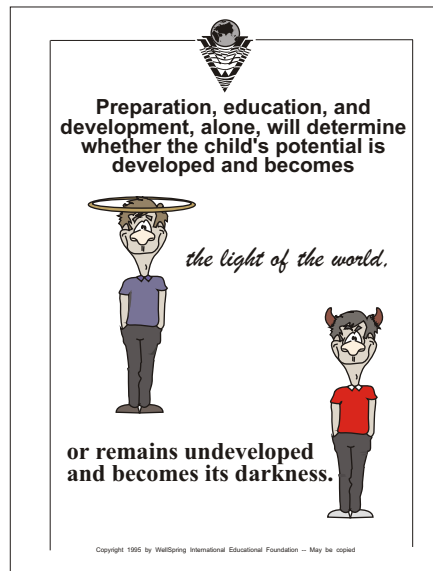


To Educate Means To Bring Forth



**Awaken
Strengthen
Guide
Protect**

The Best in Each Child

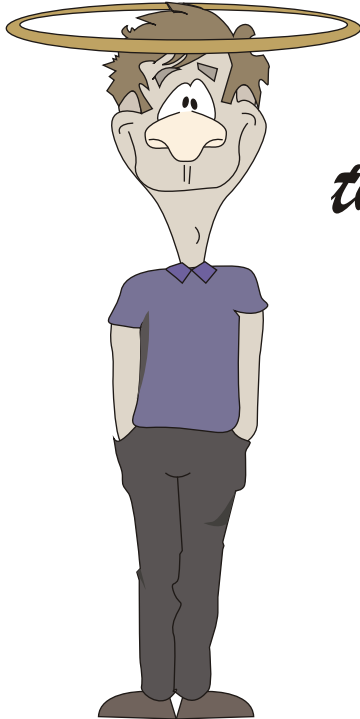


Key Points

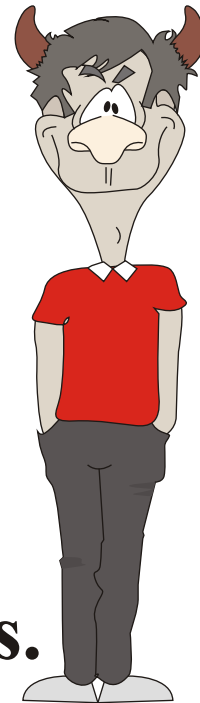
- * **There is no need to teach a child about the lack of the virtues, things like impatience or dishonesty.**
- * **These things have no reality -- they are the absence of real qualities such as patience and honesty -- impatience is what is left when patience runs out.**
- * **Each child is born with a capacity to develop the virtues -- each child with a different capacity for each of the virtues.**
- * **A child with a large capacity for patience, left undeveloped, will be very impatient.**
- * **Education awakens and strengthens the real qualities within the child and banishes their opposites -- just as light banishes the darkness.**



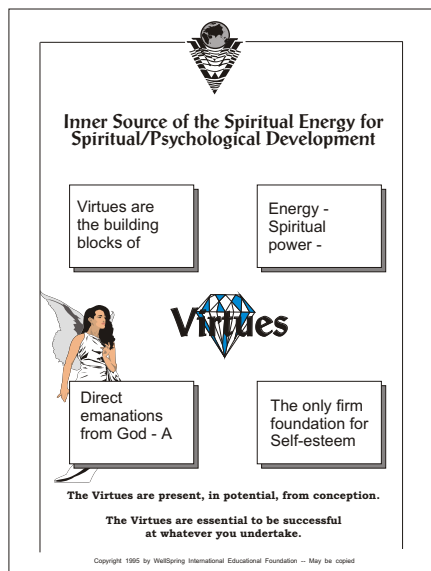
Preparation, education, and development, alone, will determine whether the child's potential is developed and becomes



the light of the world,



or remains undeveloped and becomes its darkness.



Key Points

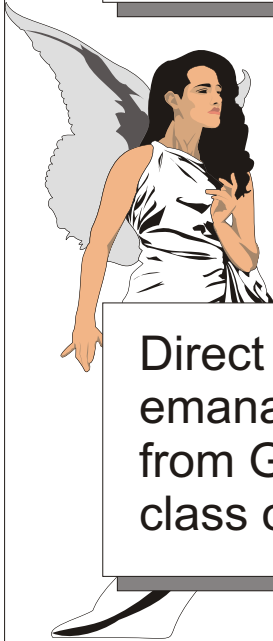
- * **The human virtues are our birthright -- they are the Image of God written on our souls.**
- * **Many are spiritual entities that motivate our highest behaviour -- they can be called on to support our efforts.**
- * **We are always virtuous by choice -- if we are made to do something, it does not belong to us.**
- * **Virtues are more basic than values -- you need the virtues to be successful in whatever you undertake.**
- * **Self-esteem can be defined as the sum of the accurate, positive things you know about yourself.**
- * **Virtues are not accomplishments, they are states of being -- they belong to you -- they are the only basis for true self-esteem.**



Inner Source of the Spiritual Energy for Spiritual/Psychological Development

Virtues are the
building blocks
of character

Energy -
Spiritual power
- Resources



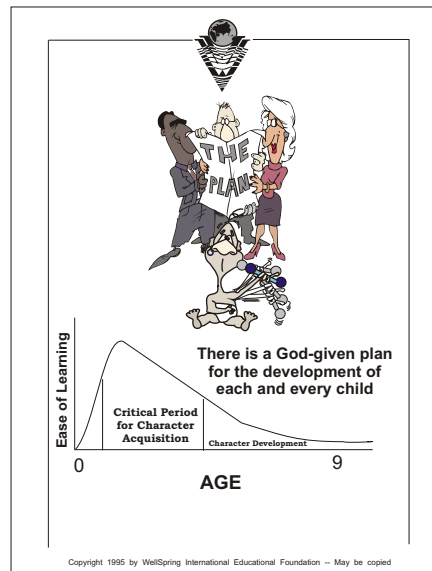
Virtues

Direct
emanations
from God - A
class of Angels

The only firm
foundation for
Self-esteem

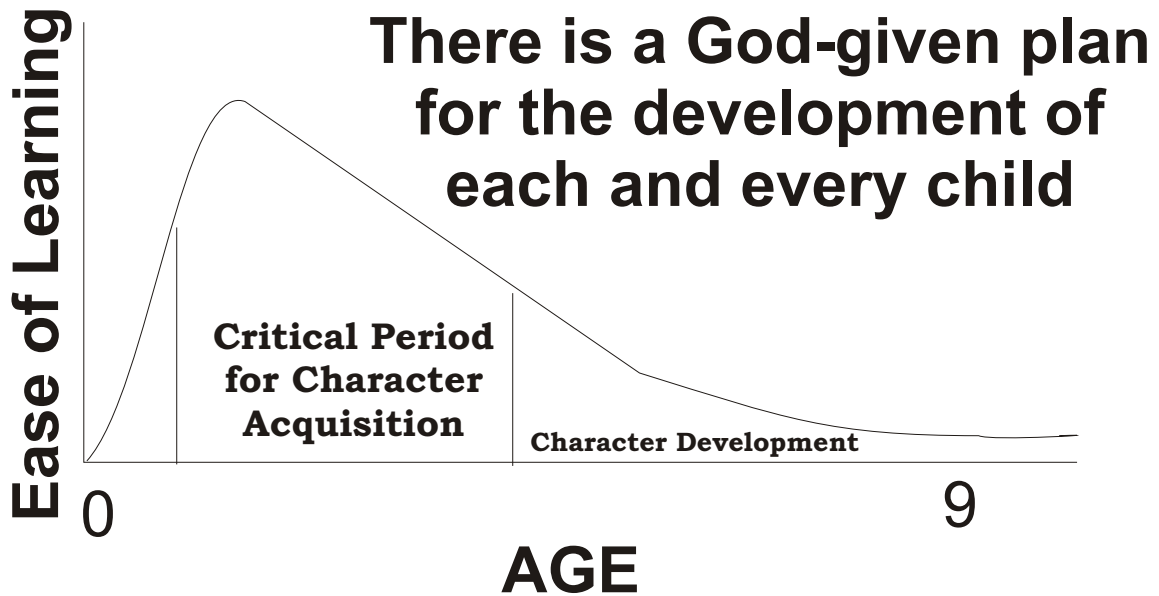
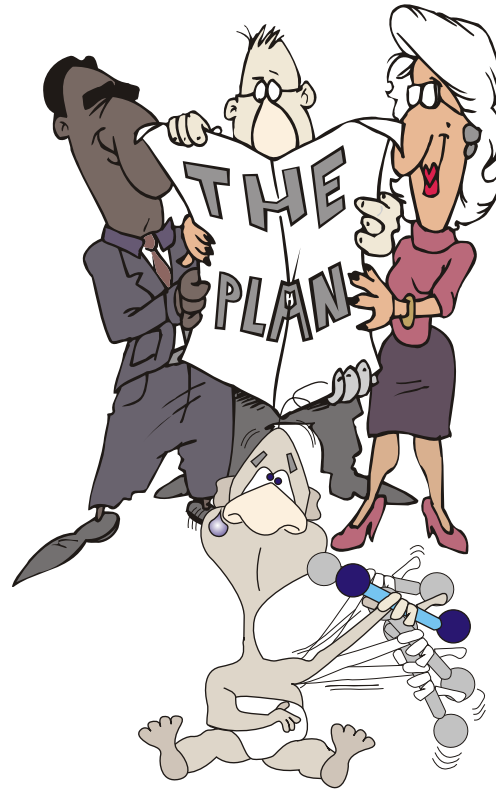
**The Virtues are present, in potential,
from conception.**

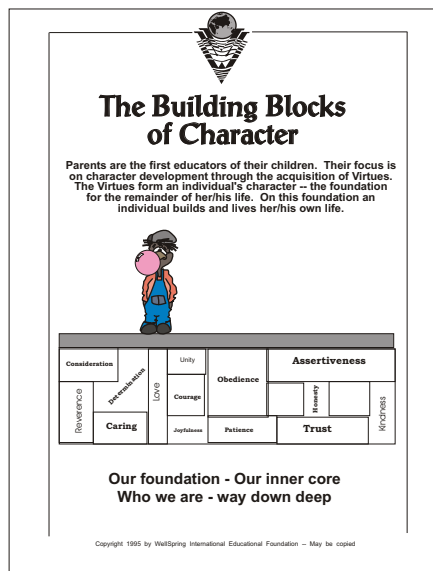
**The Virtues are essential to be successful
at whatever you undertake.**



Key Points

- * **A Critical Period is a particular time in a child's development when a specific element is acquired easily if the right conditions are present.**
- * **This is a part of our Creator's plan -- a time of readiness -- before this time a child is not ready -- after this time, learning requires much more effort.**
- * **It is never too late to start, but the effort required from both the parents and the child increases a great deal for the same result.**
- * **The foundations of our character are laid in the first five or six years of our lives -- this is the time to most easily acquire the virtues.**





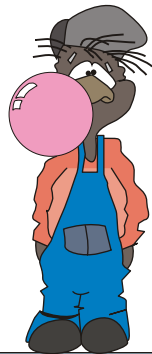
Key Points

- * **After a certain point in our development, the lessons we have learned fade from conscious memory.**
- * **While the early years of our lives fade from memory, they become the inner balance with which we weigh our later experiences.**
- * **These experiences become our inner sense of who we actually are -- all of our later experiences are unconsciously compared to that inner sense.**
- * **If our foundation is shaky -- we will doubt and dismiss later successes -- if firm, challenges to the inner sense will be dismissed.**
- * **Our inner foundation consists of things we actually know about ourselves -- the things that belong to us -- the most enduring of which are our virtues.**



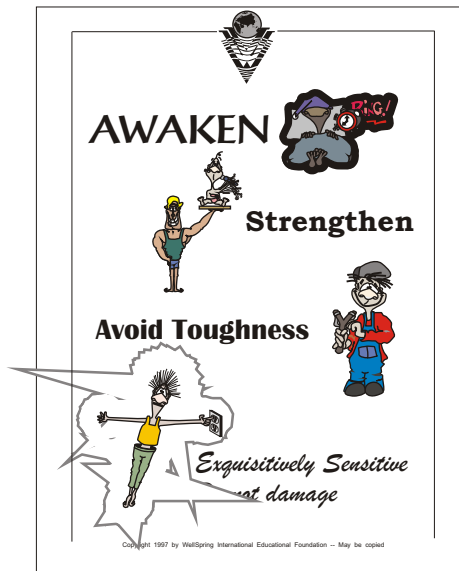
The Building Blocks of Character

Parents are the first educators of their children. Their focus is on character development through the acquisition of Virtues. The Virtues form an individual's character -- the foundation for the remainder of her/his life. On this foundation an individual builds and lives her/his own life.



Consideration		<i>Determination</i>	Love	Unity	Obedience	Assertiveness		
Reverence	Caring			Courage		Honesty	Trust	Kindness
				Joyfulness	Patience			

**Our foundation - Our inner core
Who we are - way down deep**

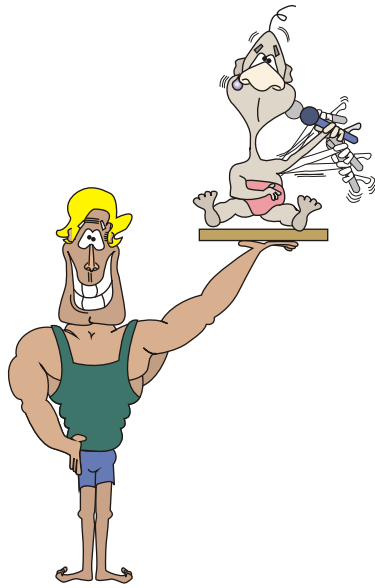


Key Points

- * **We are exquisitely sensitive beings -- destined to maintain that sensitivity throughout our lives.**
- * **The spiritual difference between a mature adult and a child is the strength of the adult -- the wonder, sensitivity, and simplicity remain intact.**
- * **Strengthening requires that the challenges remain manageable for the child -- too little challenge and no progress occurs -- too much overwhelms.**
- * **When we are overwhelmed we protect ourselves -- if possible, we become tough -- numb to the pain -- if not possible, we become damaged.**
- * **In both cases, our sensitivity remains intact.**

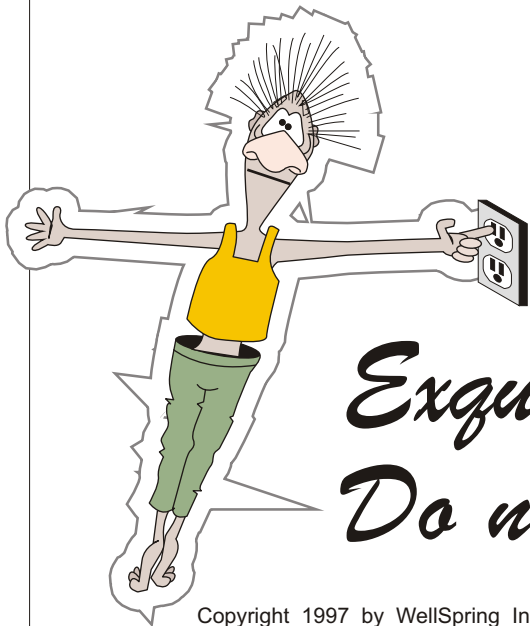


AWAKEN



Strengthen

Avoid Toughness



Exquisitively Sensitive
Do not damage