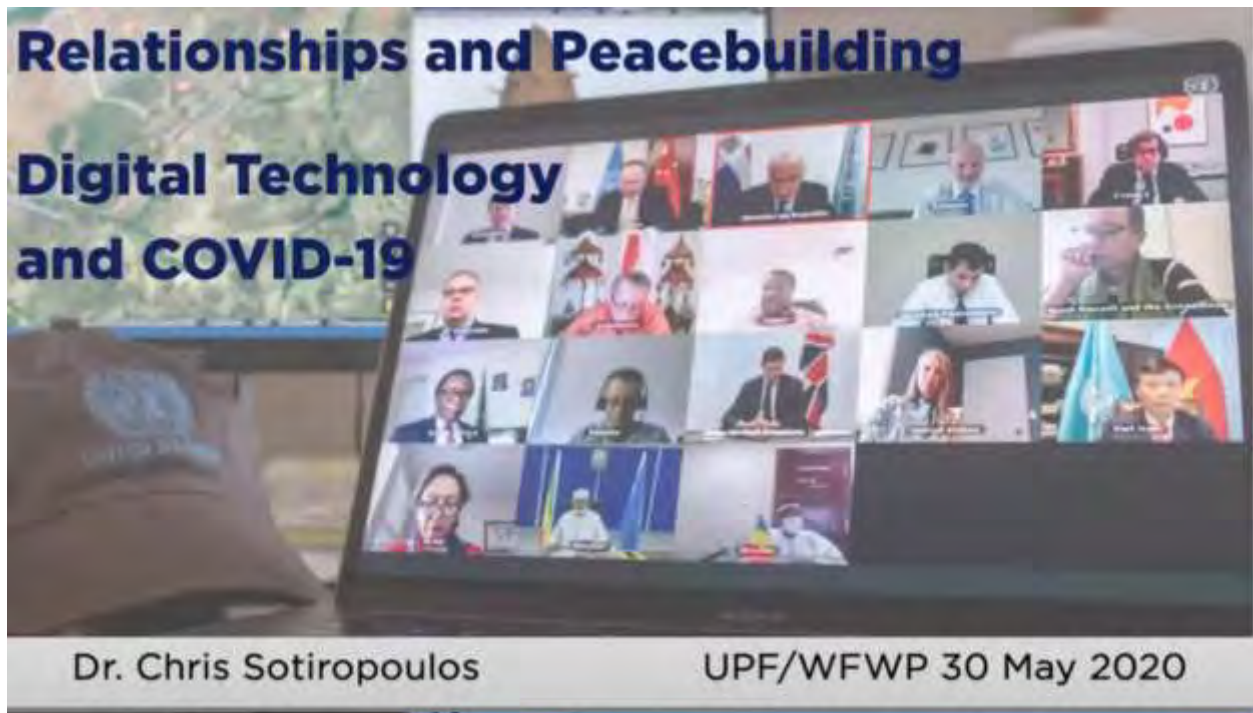


UPF Melbourne, Australia: Relationships and Peacebuilding: Digital Technology

Juluis Malicdem
May 30, 2020



Melbourne, Australia -- On May 30, 2020, thirty-five participants joined the Melbourne chapter of UPF-Australia for a virtual seminar on "Relationships and Peacebuilding: Digital Technology and COVID-19." The event, which took place on Zoom, was held as part of the chapter's "Being Self-Aware, Responsible and Loving" webinar series.

Ambassador for Peace Dr. Chris Sotiropoulos, who holds a doctorate in molecular microbiology from RMIT University, and is the founder of the Communal Nations by Kids, a project whose goal is to create a better world for children by using Zoom, was the first speaker. He discussed how peacebuilding can be accelerated using technology. For example, technology can be used to support trauma care and actions during the COVID-19 pandemic. It can also foster a sense of global identity, love, faith and family relationships. In order for this to happen, there is a need for people to overcome their fear of technology and learn new skills.

The second speaker was UPF-Australia Vice President Dr. John Bellavance, who gave a presentation on managing oneself and self-actualization entitled, "Managing Ourselves and Values in the Global Village."

To view Dr. Sotiropoulos's presentation, [click here](#).

To view Dr. Bellavance's presentation, [click here](#).



Relationships and Peacebuilding

Digital Technology and COVID-19



Dr. Chris Sotiropoulos

UPF/WFWP 30 May 2020

**Love
Spiritual Enlightenment**

**Power of God
Family
Community
Being Alive
Living your Mission**

Peace





+ve Tools



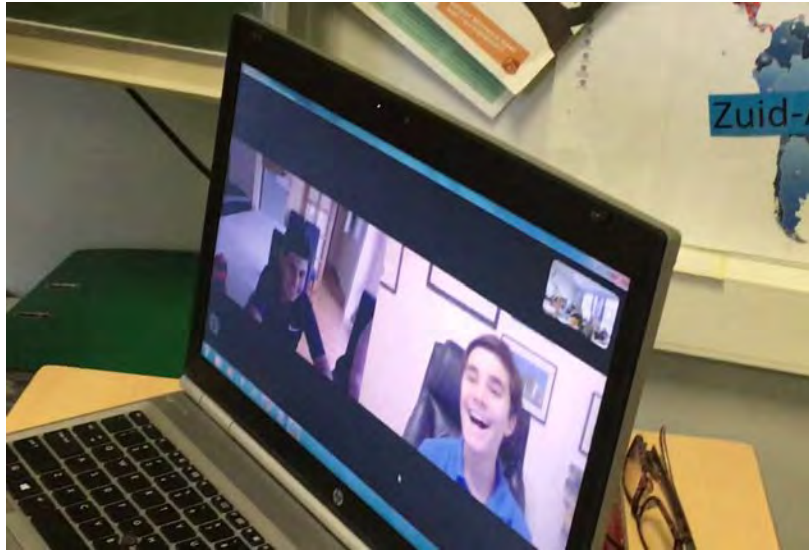
Peacebuilding is accelerated using technology

- **COVID-19 Trauma and Action**
- **Global Peer energy, Relationships, Family**
- **Individual, community, International bodies**
- **Responsiveness**
- **Group action to challenge hurdles – overcome fear**



Communal Nations by Kids

Ambition is to create a better world for kids



Currently interviewed over 30 children from 8 countries
...the journey continues




**Love
Faith
Nature**

**Good
Family
Development**

Global Community

**Human Essence + Technology
= Peace Love a better world**

The background of the slide is a dark blue/black field. On the left side, there is a large, semi-circular graphic composed of concentric rings and radial lines, resembling a stylized globe or a complex data visualization. The graphic is overlaid with a grid of small, light blue squares. Scattered throughout the background are strings of white binary code (0s and 1s) arranged in curved paths, suggesting digital data or network connections.

Values in the Global Village

Dr John Bellavance



What Are Values?

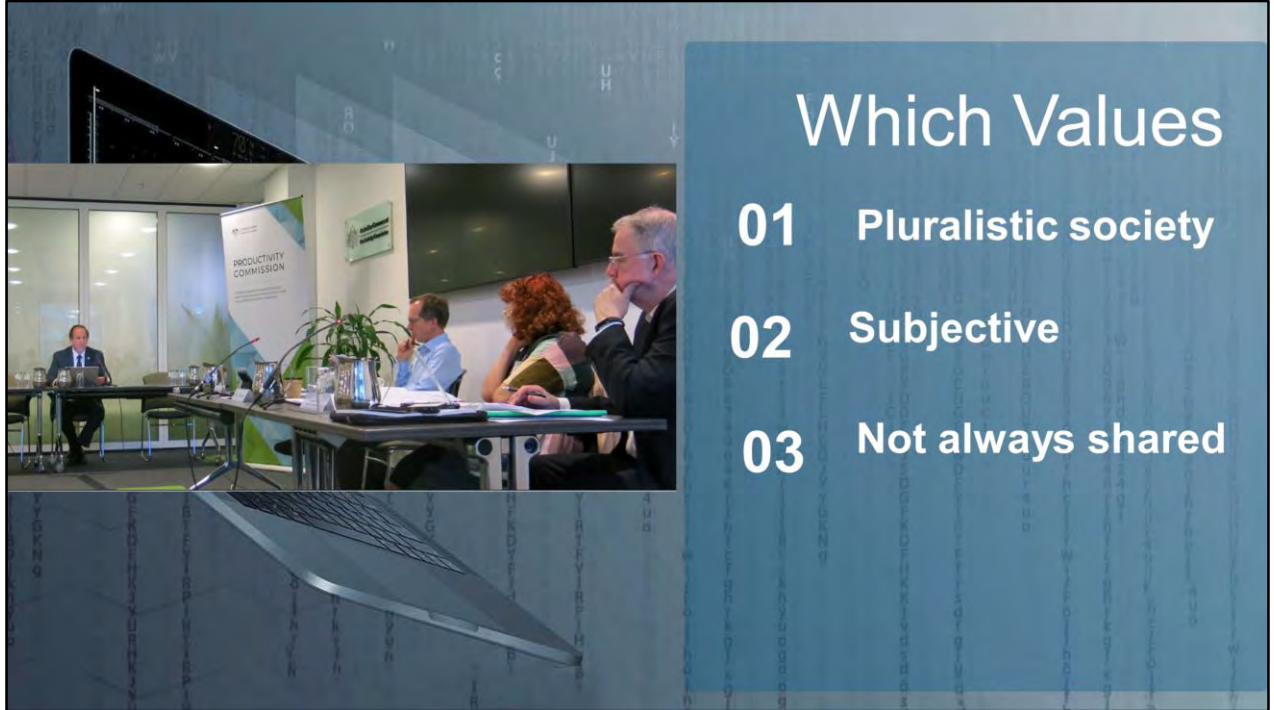
Personal

Moral

Personal values and moral values are different. Personal values advance our own objectives, such as, a career path and involve individual likes or dislikes, such as, one's taste in music. However, moral values have a broader scope because they affect others. They are necessary to advance the public good, such as altruism, freedom and justice.



Immoral values (selfishness, injustice and corruption) undermine the public good. This distinction can also be understood as the difference between personality and character. Personality is unique to each person, while character is underpinned by moral values such as integrity, justice and self-discipline, which are common to good character.

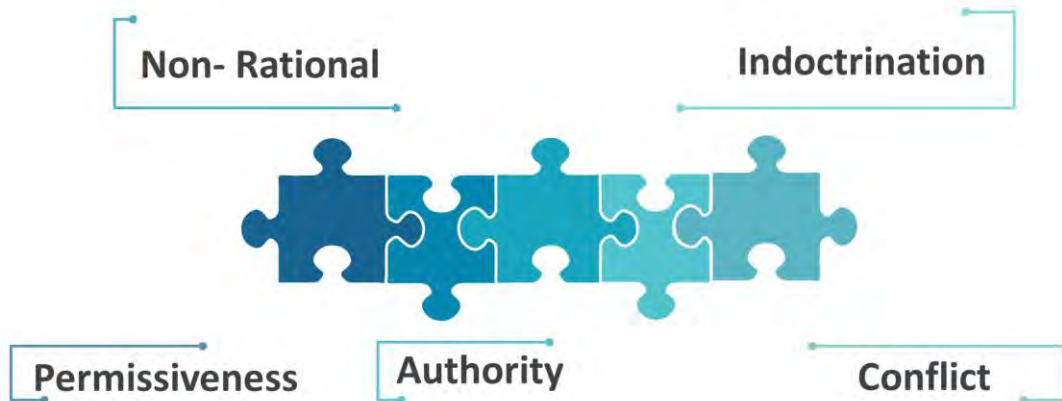


Listing and justifying a particular list of values and abilities as moral, is a complex. I was asked the question many times.

Dr Bellavance which values, who's values?

1. We live in a pluralistic society - people believe in all kinds of things.
2. Moral judgments can be subjective based on our own worldviews and cultures.
3. Some moral values are shared across cultures, while others vary between social groups and cultural contexts.

Moral Relativism vs Shared Values



If moral relativism (there are no shared values) is pushed to its logical limits, it must be concluded that moral values are all non-rational. Fearing indoctrination of a particular worldview, we may decide to stay away from defining moral values. However, permissiveness is not the answer either, because it holds no genuine moral authority and conflicts cannot be resolved without shared values.

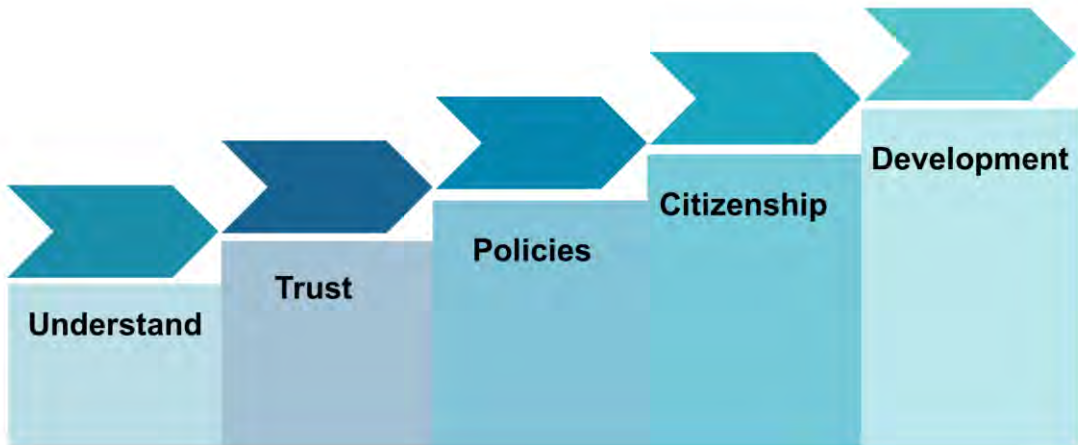
Why do we Need Moral Values?



Why do we Need Moral Values?

Standards of right and wrong and the behaviours that determine the outcomes of our lives are very real. In civilised and open societies, the majority of people abide by a social contract and this underpins security and mutual prosperity. As a human race, we have made value judgements as to what is better. Justice and human rights are better than injustice and altruism is better than selfishness. The idea of a value-free choice is a contradiction in terms, because value judgements are preconditions to the actions we take, that is what we consider important to pursue.

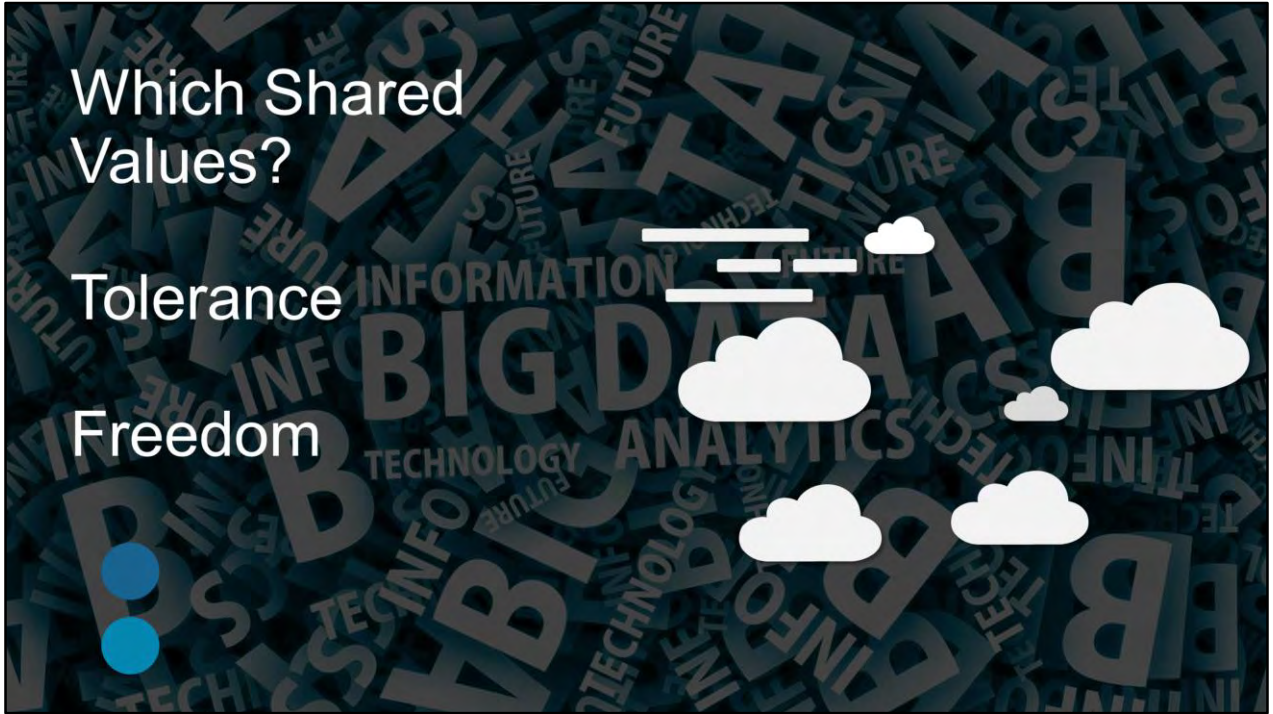
Values – One Human Family



Shared values are critical to the existence of society. They allow people to understand each other, stabilise human interaction and values-driven behaviours increase trust. Without shared values we cannot set clear policies about how countries manage immigration. We cannot determine what are our shared obligations as national and global citizens. We cannot guide scientific and technological development ethically and sustainably. We cannot set economic policies and rules of trade. A spirit of cooperation is needed for human beings to resolve the global problems we face. We need to view ourselves as members of one human family. All humans have obligations towards others in the human race. This is vital to our survival.



The division, corruption, injustice and conflict in the world is ultimately a conflict of values. What is the basis for differences in values perspective? First, this stems from selfishness. It is hard to find the common good when selfishness is the motivation.



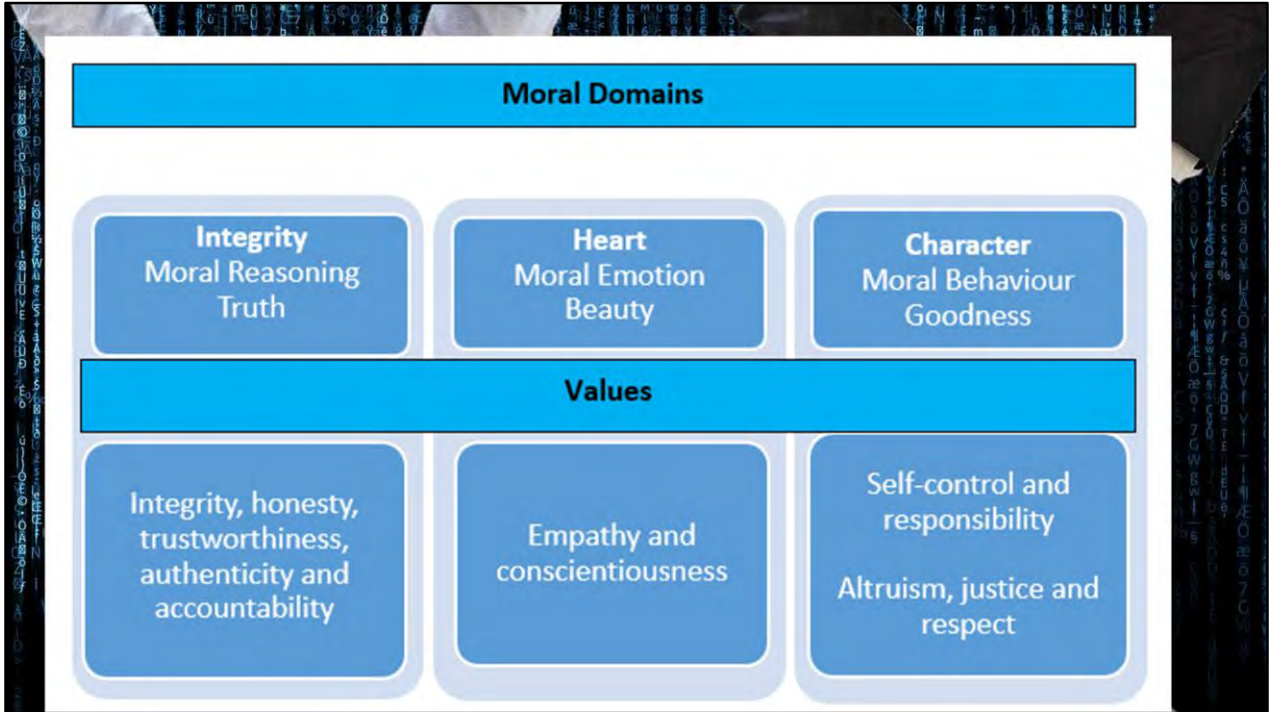
Which Shared Values?

Standards of value have changed according to the historical age and the environment. The core modern values from a Western perspective are the liberal values of tolerance and freedom. Provided that people do not harm the freedoms and rights of others, all is good. Tolerance is important but a willingness to tolerate the opinions or behaviours of others, does not foster a willingness to understand others or care for them. Freedom on the other hand requires an active participation of citizens to advance the public good.



Values in the Global Village

The debate about merit of the values of different cultures around the world is one of the key conversations in our global village. Cultural relativists argue we should celebrate diversity and give equal value to all beliefs and practices. Human diversity is great when it comes to food, music and literature, but it is not good when human dignity and rights are violated. There are two key questions. First, which cultures are better? This approach focusses, who is better and power. The second question is what values do we have in common? This focus is on cooperation. We need a shared value perspective that will serve the common welfare of humanity and be unchanging – values we can rely on from generation to generation.

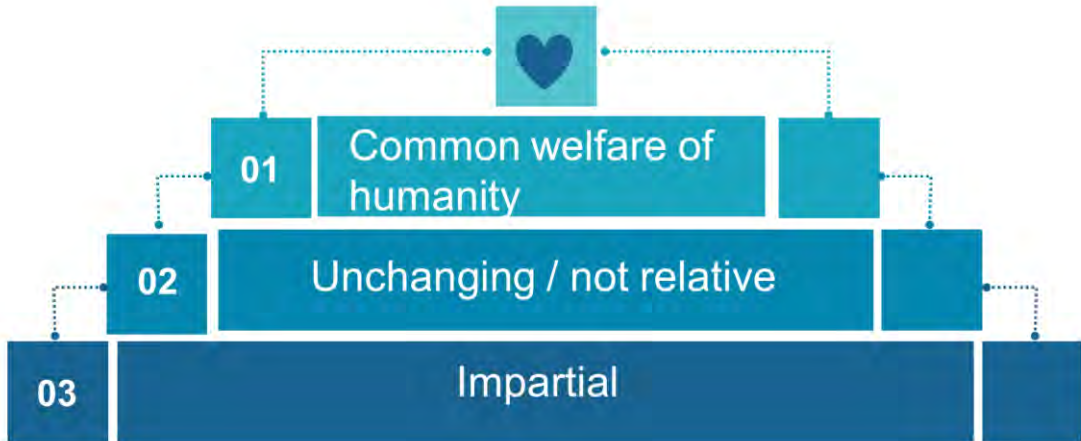


In PhD thesis I drew on moral philosophy, computer ethics and moral psychology to identify a values framework.



The development of science and technology, and the growth of economics has had a great influence on fostering a “materialistic value perspective.”

Absolute Moral Standard



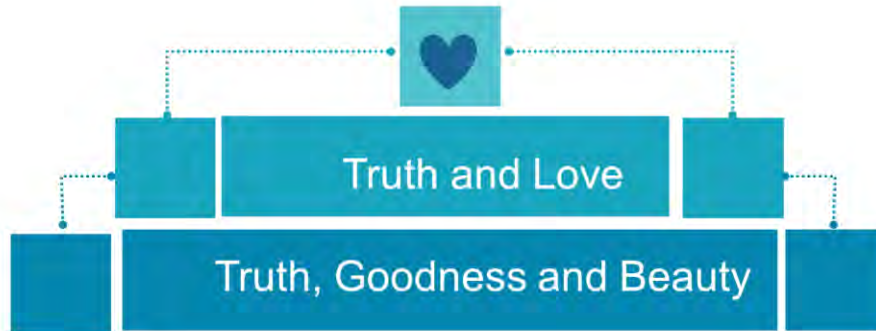
In the final analysis, the standard of value that will serve the common welfare of humanity is love – an absolute moral standard. Love can be considered absolute because it is unchanging, exists independently and is not relative to culture. Love is the core value that drives motivations, decisions and actions in the family. One could argue that this standard of love in the family has never changed in history, despite the fact that people have not always loved their families the way they should have. People of good conscience and religious people have always placed love as the highest value. In love there is no discrimination based on colour or nationality. Love is impartial.

Absolute Value Perspective



From a spiritual perspective a standard of values that serves the welfare of others and unchanging is based on God's love. This can be referred to as an "absolute value perspective". Many spiritual texts share a common view that goodness includes an ethic of love and self-sacrifice. God's love is the source of truth, goodness and beauty, which forms the basis for religious virtues. For example, Islam it is said that, "not one of you is a believer until he loves for his brother what he loves for himself." In Hinduism, to love is to know God.

Absolute Value Perspective



Judaism and Christianity advocate that we love our neighbour as ourselves. Confucianism encourages us to embrace universal love. This is the true form of benevolence and righteousness. While Sikhism maintains that, “One should be known as true who to truth is devoted in love.” In Christianity, God is love and love is patient and kind; love is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Love does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Buddhism, maintains that, “Compassion is a mind that savours only mercy and love for all sentient beings.”

When we look at the following values : integrity, honesty, trustworthiness, authenticity and accountability are associated with truth and love. While, empathy, self-control, responsibility, altruism, justice and respect are also practices associated with goodness and love.

