

Developing our ability to love with a parental heart (2)

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My dear brothers and sisters,

Responding to the invitation by Paul Saver to reflect about a few questions that he suggested in the iUnificationist Meeting House I wrote a comment which you could read in the previous instalment. Here is the final part of my response to Paul's post "*The Emotional Intelligence Of Our Second Gen.*"

4. Do you really believe that emotionally intelligent kids do better in terms of developing and maintaining relationships, ability to calm down and soothe themselves when entering the eye of an emotional storm, have less illnesses, are better able to focus and perform better academically and achieve goals?

I absolutely believe in this not as a theory but as a fact which I could witness in many people's lives.

Paul, you are very right when you say: "*Since "true parents" and "true family" is our Unification Church brand does it not follow that we should be raising exceptional children and phenomenal families that cause people to irresistibly want to know about us and our teachings?*"

In order for this to become a reality, we must really invest wholeheartedly into the quality of the relationships we establish. In my life of witnessing, I have always worked with the attitude that first of all I need to listen to people well before I can teach them. Therefore I did not bring people quickly to lectures but tried to listen to their hearts thoroughly before confronting them with the new truth. On this foundation I was also in a much better position to help them when they got into trouble, maybe being persecuted by their families or friends for coming to our church, because I already knew my guests/spiritual children by that time well and could support them internally knowing their strengths and weaknesses.

Yes, Paul, we should be "*raising exceptional children*", but the solution does not lie simply in parents concentrating more on their own children. I see the only way that will be successful in the long run is our truly following the example of our True Parents, in loving others more than our own children. This will make our children strong and self-confident based on seeing how blessed their parents life is based on living the Heavenly tradition in the right way.

Only by doing so will we as parents have enough depth of heart and the amount of love that is needed in order "*to raise phenomenal families.*" They will only become a substantial reality if we are truly focused on uniting absolutely with the desire of our Heavenly Parent based on having learnt to put the higher purpose first. Such a vertical alignment provides the inner foundation to become people of true self confidence and profound conviction."

Upon reading my response to Paul one brother noted: "*I think your observation is fairly accurate...even when parents are confident people their children can lack these qualities...the solution is probably multi*

faceted...they don't know who they are...they see our reality...they are strongly attracted to the secular, cool culture in music, movies, art etc...a lack of awareness of being a sinner etc..

Perhaps we need different kinds of training programmes that help young people to discover their true confidence & abilities...training programmes that also allow young people to focus more internally in a good way etc...thanks”

I responded to this person: “Dear Brother John, Thank you for your response to my comment. I agree with you that we need different kinds of training programmes that help young people to discover their true confidence & abilities by focusing more internally in a good way. In order to be able to provide such urgently needed initiatives it is essential that we have people in our midst who have been successful in internalizing the content we are teaching as members of the Unification Movement.

The majority of our long-time active members have sons and daughters who are already grown up or their children are teenagers. This means that we have a rich reservoir of experiences, whereby some families have been more successful than others in dealing with difficulties. Those who feel called need to invest into developing teaching materials that are fully based on the understanding that Emotional Coaching is an irreplaceable essential part of any proper form of education.

Basically, we have already been practicing an attitude of taking care of people with a loving heart in so many ways while we accomplished our activities, but we did not perfect this art and therefore did not see the longed for results. Therefore I am convinced that besides all the present initiatives to move forward as a church or movement it is most important that we focus on quality more than ever before, especially in the way how we deal with people.

As you noted, John, the Second Generation sees our reality and it may not be attractive to our young people. But at the same time it is clear that when we elder members joined our church, most of us were attracted by the quality of relationships that were present in the “good old days” when the word “*Unified Family*” was still part of our everyday vocabulary, in an era of our movement when most members were still truly proud to be a part of the Heavenly work of investing everything for the sake of bringing this world back to God.

Of course the “good old days” were not only all good, but the seed of the division, which we find manifested today, was already beginning to grow in those days and therefore we must indeed go back to the original spirit of our church and look honestly at what had become a reality over the years and learn from the serious mistakes that were made.

Sadly, few people have been ready to do this job thoroughly, to face one's own shortcomings and to clean up our past - as a movement - so that there may be a crystal clear future ahead of us.

Personally I am dedicated to this essential task and therefore I am writing a lot about what True Parents have taught us and what has actually become a reality in our church in the hope that we all may be ready to deal honestly with our past and to resolve open issues so that the future may be secured with our children standing on a very solid foundation of problems having been overcome by the First Generation.

Only if we are ready to fulfil this urgent task now can we make sure that our Second Generation can advance on a victorious foundation of which they can be truly proud, and which will inspire them to become themselves true Peacemakers and Unifiers in this broken world, with a heart filled with love and compassion for others.”

In response to these comments Paul offered the following lines on iUnificationist: *“Thank you Nikolaus and John for your insightful and encouraging comments. Both of you speak of education that can more specifically meet the needs of our second gen to help them to develop in the ways outlined. Just wondering if either of you or anyone else reading this knows of any existing programme that could be adopted or what ideas you might have that could be say integrated into STF education or as a separate stand alone programme? By the way I am familiar with the character education programmes that have been developed and promoted by the International Educational Foundation, Richard Panzer's Free Teens stuff, RYS etc. I find all that good and helpful.*

Are you thinking perhaps of a kind of mentoring programme Nikolaus where say First gen members volunteer to be an aunt or uncle to a Second gen member? Over the past 12 months our eldest son has been so positively impacted by certain parents whom he himself kind of adopted. This has included some dialogue with parents involved in STF Europe.

The reason I am asking this question and throwing this out to the iUnificationist community is because I am currently researching to create such a programme that can help firstly parents/leaders and secondly teenagers themselves. So I really appreciate and value your input. Kind regards, Paul”

I answered with the following letter: “Dear Paul, I am very glad to hear that your eldest son has been so positively impacted by *“certain parents whom he himself kind of adopted.”* I am fully convinced that such an attitude is one of the keys to resolving the difficulties we have in dealing with the Second Generation – or from the their side: with the frustrations they may have with their own parents.

True Parents have taught us to strive to love the ones distant to us even more than our own beloved family members. Such a heart, manifested in the lives of True Father and True Mother, has moved many people around the world, whether in high or in low positions, to respect them deeply and to be open to their teaching. To the extent that we manage to do this ourselves we will have the needed internal authority to be able to touch others.

Therefore it is essential that we all show a similar attitude as your son in being ready to adopt certain people to whom we may feel a certain affinity as our special elder brother or sister in a parental position – to receive through them one or the other aspect of love which we may be lacking in order to go beyond certain inner barriers.

Based on having overcome such limitations in our ability to love we can be free as First or Second Generation to connect closely with more people – expanding the realm of True Love which we are dedicated to establish.

In other words, I advocate not only implementing a *“kind of mentoring programme where First gen members volunteer to be an aunt or uncle to a Second gen member”* but I see the education of our youth in direct connection with the heartistic growth of the parents of Blessed families. Both have to go hand in

hand. Only when we reach a higher standard as fathers and mothers based on connecting more closely with each other, helping each other out in heart matters, will we be able to provide a more qualified education for our children.

I do not see the primary problem in education materials as such, because there is already a great amount of valuable books out there which can be used, but what is not yet developed is a “unified foundation” similar to Unification Thought from the viewpoint of True Love. Unification Thought deals with the question of education, but certainly not to the extent that it is needed. What I see as primary task is to develop first of all a wide foundation of materials that can be used for education programs which you, Paul, intend to create.

A wide variety of publications that teach about good principles in life and attitudes that lead to lasting happiness have been printed already. Paul, you mentioned a few. I would include a lot more as I see that our Heavenly Father has inspired many people to offer precious insights in the books which they wrote. I think that there are a number of books that have been a source of concrete inspiration in your life at one point or another to be a better person.

What is still missing are publications that look at the already available content, offered in the form of a great variety of books dealing with attitudes one should acquire, from the viewpoint of manifesting a Heavenly Heart - of implementing a tradition in life that is centred on True Love.

In order to prepare such materials as foundation for educational programs it is not primarily professors who are needed but people who have deep love in their hearts - what we are all striving to be as members of True Parents’ extended family. The insights of loving fathers and mothers are the most valuable teaching materials to inspire young people to take up the good cause of wanting to contribute to the realization of a world where loving relationships abound.

Therefore, what I am advocating is collecting the insights by whoever wants to share his or her insights in life concerning what is important to develop a more loving heart. These testimonies provide a precious foundation for high quality and most of all very effective educational programs because they will be based on victories that have been already achieved in the hearts of Unificationists around the world.

To summarize, one task is to gather core contents (quotations) from books dealing with good attitudes one should acquire in life and present them from the viewpoint of building a culture that is centered on Heart.

And the second challenge is to build a foundation for effective educational programs by collecting the sharing from people who have been victorious in overcoming limitations and learnt to love in a selfless and unconditional way.”

It is my hope that each one of us can reflect about our own best practices – the times when we were deeply moved by the Love of God and lived wholeheartedly with the desire to support others with a loving heart – and take the time to write about some of our most moving experiences in order to let others know what touches our heart and what motivates us to invest ourselves to support others with a parental heart.

There is so much to be learned from one another in the realm of heart and therefore it is ever so important that we have an open mind towards our brothers and sisters in order to enable our Heavenly Father/Mother to show us more of the precious aspects that are manifested in the souls of those who strive to live according to their conscience in a God-centered way.

From this viewpoint it is indeed a great blessing that we can meet nowadays easily via the internet in e-groups like the iUnificationist Meeting House to share with one another, to enrich each other's lives.

Let us therefore make the best use of it, not only through Facebook or other means of communication in the worldwide net, manifested in all kinds of internet groups that represent a social network to connect people, where we may share with one another on a day to day basis, but to develop especially the realm of deep sharing from the heart which has eternal value and compile such materials in new publications.

I find it essentially important that we build a strong foundation of heart to heart sharing which can be a source of inspiration for others, materials, which will move also future generations to excel in their dedication to live a Heavenly life – just as our True Parents are doing through the example which they have established during their life-time of unconditional service for others, motivated by a profound love that is alive in their hearts due to their oneness with our Loving Creator.

May we all recognize the great potential of developing our own hearts to encompass more and more profound levels in the realm of Heart which are waiting to be explored by each one of us through practicing what the True Parents of Heaven, Earth and Humanity have taught us.