NEED FOR EDUCATION FOR PEACE

By Professor Najma Siddiqi and Naghma Siddiqi

Peace is a paramount concern in the world today. It is, in fact, a fundamental pre-requisite for ensuring human progress. Unfortunately peace is also the one thing that man has not been able to achieve. UNESCO has related this problem with globalization, stating: *It is changing the very fundamentals of human relations and social life*. The fact remains that violence seems to have become a part of both society and the global community.

A solution to this problem finds expression in the words of Mahatma Gandhi (1869-1948): 'If we are to teach real peace in the world we shall have to begin with children.' This formula, unfortunately, could not become a reality. Society, in general, is witnessing 'a quantum leap in violence,' in the form of hatred, enmity confrontation and conflict. What is most disturbing is the fact that violence is manifesting itself in the actions and behaviours of the younger generations. Schools and colleges that are meant to lay the foundation of peace are consequently becoming transmission points for violence.

India, in particular, is witnessing an alarming increase in violence in school life, with early signs of violent behaviour being witnessed among children. This can range from aggression, bullying, quarrelling, to actual violence eventually. To cite some cases, on December 12, 2007 there was a fatal shooting of a 14-year old, grade 8 student by two other students (14 and 13) at a school at Gurgaon, Haryana; on January 2008 a 15-year old student was shot dead by a 17-year old classmate at a government school in Madhya Pradesh; on February 11, 2008 an eleventh grader was stabbed in the shoulder and chest at a Central School, New Delhi when he was trying to break a fight; luckily he survived.

Students, parents, principals, teachers, psychiatrists and social workers are all distressed. A blame-game is on, with parents blaming the school administration for inadequate security and school administrators and police blaming the parents for making arms available to their children. The question remains: What is it that needs to be done? Sameer Malhotra, a psychiatrist, suggests anger-management classes to deal with the rising aggression in school

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¹ UNESCO IIEP: Globalization and Educational Reform, p. 14

children. Social workers are suggesting initiating meditation classes in schools. Members of the Control Arms Foundation of India called for the 'Redrafting of India's Gun Legislation' so that arms availability is checked. There is no consensus on why violence is spreading and how to make our youth adopt peaceful ways of resolving differences. It seems to be clear that the onus of reducing aggression among students and making them realize the importance of a peaceful environment for their overall well-being rests with the schools. Teachers will have to don the mantle of being an educator of peace, but the question is: How?

INTRODUCTION OF VALUE EDUCATION

As a possible solution to the problem of escalating violence educators have introduced the concept of value education, both informal and formal, in the name of moral education, character education, religious education, etc. Jan Amos Comenius (1592-1670), a Czech bishop and teacher, was probably the first to initiate efforts towards informal value education when he published a popular series of books on education reform that were translated into various European languages, Arabic and Persian in 1628. Asserting that education should be universal, he reiterated that if people in general and youth in particular are educated in matters relating to different religions, are familiar with different languages and ways of life, and have an internationally oriented education, this would help in achieving peace.²

Maria Montessori (1870-1952) introduced value education on formal lines through the introduction of the Montessori Method of school education. Referring to a possible solution to the problem she writes in her book entitled *Education and Peace*: 'those who want war prepare people for war, but those who want peace have neglected young children and adolescents so that they are unable to organize them for peace.'

As in other countries, value education gained popularity in India too. NCERT's *National Curriculum Framework for School Education* (2000) laid emphasis on value education on formal lines, citing religion as a source of value generation. Consequently values from each religion were sought to impart value education formally in schools and informally through religious and community groups and organizations.

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² Rachel M. Macnair: *The Psychology of Peace – An Introduction*, Praeger Publishers, London, 2003, p. 75.

³ Maria Montessori: *Education and Peace*, Regnery, 1972, p. 32.

An important value that was used was the *Golden Rule* of the principle of reciprocity. In Hinduism it is given as: 'One should never do that to another which one regards as injurious to one's own self. This, in brief, is the rule of dharma. Other behavior is due to selfish desires' (Brihaspati, Mahabharata); in the Bible it is given in these words: 'Do unto others as you would have them do to you' (Luke 6:31); in Islam this rule is given as: 'A believer is one who likes for others what he likes for himself' (Tradition of the Prophet Muhammad in Bukhari, No:13); and in Buddhist scriptures: 'Hurt not others in ways that you yourself would find hurtful' (Udanavarga 5:18).

This concise guiding principle, that one should refrain from such behaviour that one does not want to receive from others, has been extensively used in imparting value education. This standard of ethics is very simple and effective as everyone knows what attitude he or she wants or does not want from others.

Another important value of unilateral ethics that is often quoted is: 'Love your enemies' (Bible: Matthew 5:44). In the Quran it appears as: 'Repel evil with good. And you will find that one who was your enemy will become your dearest friend' (23: 96). This value teaches people to first of all consider no one as their enemy, and even if they receive negative behaviour from others, their response should be positive. The result of this unilateral behaviour will be that even the supposed 'enemies' will become their friends.

The basic core values frequently taught are forgiveness, sharing, well-wishing, mutual respect, tolerance, among others. Such values have been used in moral science classes in schools for some time now. The results of these efforts have been questioned by educators.

FROM VALUE EDUCATION TO EDUCATION FOR PEACE

The latter half of the 20th century witnessed value education integrating in peace education being presented as a solution to the problem by peace movements, peace researchers and educators. Cora Weiss, president and initiator of the Hague Appeal for Peace (May 1999) stated at the turn of the millennium: 'There are many campaigns that are working on a variety of issues which must be addressed if this new century is not to carry forward the legacy of the twentieth century, the most violent to sow seeds for peace and the abolition of war, but none

can succeed without education...'⁴ They concluded that their best contribution would be to work on peace education.

In the year 1988 Betty Reardon (b. 1929), published a book entitled *Comprehensive Peace Education* in which she argued that the core values of schooling should be care, concern, and commitment, and the key concepts of peace education should be planetary stewardship, global citizenship, and humane relationships.

In India peace education emerged through the efforts of *The National Curriculum 2005* (December 2005) that took formal value education one step further and linked it with peace education, aim of which being, 'seeking to nurture ethical development, inculcating the values, attitudes and skills required for living in harmony with oneself and with others.' NCERT brought out a Position Paper by the National Focus Group on 'Education for Peace' (September 2006) that stated: 'Peace, as an integrative perspective for the school curriculum, is an idea whose time has come. Terming it 'education for peace' that becomes the shaping vision for education in general, NCERT used the term in contrast with 'peace education' that refers to the subject in a syllabus. In this article, however, we will use the term interchangeably.

The position paper acknowledges that the goal of 'education for peace' is the nurturing of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values that comprise and promote a culture of peace as the purpose shaping the enterprise of education. This was a concept previously presented by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, UNESCO in its *Culture for Peace* program established in 1992 (although the phrase 'culture of peace' was first elaborated for the organization in 1989).

UNESCO defined the *culture of peace* as 'a growing body of shared values, attitudes, behaviours and ways of life based on non-violence and respect for fundamental rights and freedoms, on

⁴ Peace Education: A Transformative Response to Major Societal Challenges, p. 2.

⁵ National Curriculum Framework 2005, National Council of Educational Research and Training, New Delhi, 2005, p. 61.

⁶ Ibid.

understanding, tolerance and solidarity.'⁷ Professor Felipe McGregor (1914-2004),⁸ one of the architects of the culture of the peace program, in his book entitled *Cultura de Paz*, linked the culture of peace with education for peace, stating: 'The concept of education for a culture of peace links it closely with educational themes, fields and concerns with a view to generating a holistic vision of quality education.'⁹

Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) also promised efforts to introduce subjects focusing on adolescence education and peace, the contents of which are being designed. In February, 2007, the then Chairman of CBSE, Ashok Ganguly mentioned this in a statement to Khaleej Times (Dubai): 'Emphasis is being laid on integrating peace and value education as well as adoloscence education programmes into the curriculum from six grade upwards to expose students at an early age to various social, cultural and religious issues facing the world.' The aim given by CBSE for this exercise is 'to expose children at an early age to gain better perspective on the various issues which are a cause of concern to civilizations that peace and value education will be able to achieve.' 10

Historically moral instruction and value education, grounded in religious education were, therefore, the precursors to education for peace.¹¹ This became all the more vital when the word peace was used as an 'umbrella term', to collectively refer to all the positive values.¹³ The result was that values and attitudes, as the building blocks of the culture of peace, such as non-violence, tolerance, patience, non-confrontation, controlling anger, good conduct, etc., began to be used to impart education for peace.¹⁴

⁷ UNESCO Asia Pacific Regional Bureau of Education: *Learning to Be: A Holistic and Integrated Approach to Values Education for Human Development* – A UNESCO-APNIEVE Sourcebook for Teachers, Students and Tertiary Level Instructors, UNESCO, Bangkok, 2002, p. 173.

⁸ Felipe MacGregor: *Culture of Peace*, Peru, 1986.

⁹ UNESCO Asia Pacific Regional Bureau of Education, op. cit., p. 163.

¹⁰ CBSE Blogspot, http://www.cbseschools.blogspot.in/, July 28, 2012.

¹¹ Position Paper, National Focus Group on "Education for Peace", National Council of Educational Research and Training, September 2006, p. 7.

¹² Johan Galtung: *Theories of Peace – A Synthetic Approach to Peace Thinking*, International Peace Research Institute, Oslo, 1967, p. 6.

http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0012/001252/125228eo.pdf, Learning the Ways to Peace: A Teachers' Guide to Peace Education, May 26, 2012, p. 1.

¹⁴ A. S. Balasooriya: *Learning Ways to Peace: A Teacher's Guide to Peace Education*, UNESCO, New Delhi, 2001, p. 9.

Accordingly, over the decades, there was a shift in focus from religious and moral education to education for peace. Here, peace mandates the practice of core values such as *love and compassion*, *truth*, *justice*, *equality*, *tolerance*, *harmony*, *humility*, *togetherness*, and *self-control*, which are the basic foundations of ethics and morality. Consequently the 21st century educators started using peace education as a tool to make people aware of the negative effects of violence and the need for peace and specialized peace studies in schools and colleges. Although positive efforts have been initiated, there is an urgent need to fortify them further in this direction, both formally in schools and colleges and informally through the activities of governmental and non-governmental organizations.

OBJECTIVES OF EDUCATION FOR PEACE

Peace education can be described as: 'the process of acquiring the values, the knowledge and developing the attitudes, skills, and behaviors to live in harmony with oneself and with others'. 17 When planning to undertake peace education, at both the formal and informal level, we have to ask ourselves certain questions: If we want to change society on peaceful lines, where do we begin? How can we train people in the culture of peace? Should society be rightsconscious or duty-conscious? Should peace be maintained unilaterally or bilaterally? And so on. Let us attempt to answer such questions so as to make education for peace meaningful.

1. Focusing on the Individual as the Target of Change

We know that the traditional model of values education has not received much success. But when we tried to find out why, an important fact came to light. These value education modules placed greater emphasis on the content of values rather than on the one who practices these values – the *individual*. This realization gave us a very important principle: if we want peace education to be result-oriented, we have to focus on the individual who chooses to act on the

¹⁵ Position Paper, National Focus Group on "Education for Peace", op. cit., p. 13.

¹⁶ UNESCO Asia Pacific Regional Bureau of Education, op. cit., p. 38.

¹⁷ Peace Education, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peace_education, July 28, 2012.

values.¹⁸ This laid emphasis on a long-term proactive strategy to nurture peace-loving individuals who choose to act non-violently, ¹⁹ thus training them in the culture of peace.

In education for peace, therefore, the *individual is the target of change*, not society. The Institute of Individual and World Peace (Santa Barbara, USA) supports this view, stating that as individuals are the foundation of society, it is only by changing the individual that society will change. The Dalai Lama confirms this by saying that it is the individual's responsibility to shape himself/herself towards peace. Once the individual is transformed, he/she becomes an instrument of broader change.²⁰

Hence, we should keep in mind that the *target of education for peace is the individual* and the *objective of education for peace is to make him/her understand the importance of the culture of peace*, using education and spirituality.²¹ It is only by doing this that peace education become meaningful and result-oriented.

2. Duty-Conscious vs. Rights-Conscious Ethics

Another important question that needs to be addressed is: if we want peace in society, should the focus be on rights-consciousness or duty-consciousness? Ensuring human rights are definitely an essential part of social life, but can merely making demands assure human rights for all? This is the subject of a discipline called *deontology*. Derived from the Greek word *deon*, meaning duty, deontological ethics are described as morality of an action based on 'duty' or 'obligation'. The most famous deontological ethicists was Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), whose ethics can be summarized as 'do only the action that you would wish to see made a universal rule to govern the lives of everyone around you all the time.'²²

It is important to understand that education for peace will become result-oriented if it is based on the belief that the only way to ensure peace in society is to promote duty-conscious ethics.

¹⁸ UNESCO Asia Pacific Regional Bureau of Education, op. cit., p. 37.

¹⁹ Position Paper, National Focus Group on "Education for Peace", op. cit., p. 10.

²⁰ Dalia Lama: *The Human Approach to Peace*, http://www.dalailama.com/messages/world-peace/a-human-approach-to-peace, July 28, 2012.

²¹ Nathan C. Funk: *Peace Paradigms: Five Approaches to Peace* in Peace In Gandhi Marg, October-December, 2002, Vol. 24, p. 3.

²² Immanuel Kant, http://trivialcontemplations.wordpress.com/2011/01/13/ethics-why-deontology-teleology-and-existentialism-are-illogical-apart-from-god/, July 28, 2012.

This is because individuals who are conscious of their own rights will always make demands upon others, whereas the duty-conscious person will realize that his self-development lies in fulfilling his own duty. The formula of a rights-conscious person is, 'others must do it,' while that of a duty-conscious person is, 'I will do it'. Rights-based ethics, founded on the 'we-they' concept, focus upon what has to come from others, whereas duty-based ethics, founded on the 'we-we' concept, start with the self. A rights-based society will lead to social anarchy, whereas a duty-based society will lead to harmony, solidarity, peace and compassion. Education for peace should, therefore, lay emphasis on duty-conscious ethics as opposed to rights-based ethics.

3. Training of the Mind to Build a Culture of Peace

The preamble of UNESCO's *Peace in the Minds of Men* echoes this: 'Since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.'²³ Thus the focus of education for peace is the training of the individual at the level of the mind where the change must begin.²⁴ The Hague appeal also suggests that education for peace 'transforms people's mindsets'.²⁵

Jerome D. Frank (1909-2005), a professor of psychiatry at John Hopkins University School of Medicine explains, giving the example of Dr. Scott, a psychologist, that man's mind can be trained.²⁶ Danilo Dolci (1924-1997), an Italian reformer had laid emphasis on education or training to improve humanity, something that cannot be achieved by making speeches but by working towards it.²⁷ Such a training of the individual on positive lines to become a duty-conscious member of society at the level of the mind is the aim of education for peace.

The reason why ethical development is usually not successful is that it is done in the language of do's and don'ts, as prescriptions that do not address the individual mind. As a result the person is not able to understand the relevance of following the values. The aim of education for

²³ Theodore Besterman: *UNESCO: Peace in the Minds of Men*, Mehuen & Co. Ltd., London, 1951, p. 7.

²⁴ Nathan C. Funk: *op. cit.*, p. 3.

Peace Education: A Transformative Response to Major Societal Challenges, www.scribd.com/doc/39053320/Peace-Education-2, July 31, 2012, p. 2.

²⁶ Arthur and Lila Weinber: *Instead of Violence – Writings by the great advocates of peace and non-violence through history*, Grossman Publishers, New York, 1963, p. 78.
²⁷ Ibid, p. 24.

peace, therefore, is to train individuals in a manner that they understand that although they are completely free to make their moral choices, to ensure peace in society they have to limit their freedom so that it does not interfere with the freedom of others. The formula of social ethics, therefore, entails, 'you are free, but your freedom ends where another's nose begins.'28

Another aspect of training for peace is by using the 'formula of reciprocity'. Individuals can be made aware of the fact that if they want positive behaviour from others, they too have to be positive towards others. Once the realization dawns on them that the choice is theirs, individuals are able to distinguish between the right and wrong, keeping in view the broader implications in terms of personal and social values.²⁹ Being able to achieve this is the real test for education for peace.

EDUCATION FOR PEACE IN SCHOOLS

To introduce education for peace in schools the values related to peace need to be holistically integrated formally into the school curriculum. NCERT has initiated efforts in this regard and suggest two broad ways: one, by infusing the different subjects such as science, social studies, environmental studies, etc., with education for peace and two, by treating peace as a separate subject under the name of education for peace. Let us take a broad look at certain efforts made in both these directions.

1. Infusing Education for Peace with Different Subjects

The first method aims to infuse peace material into the curriculum of different subjects holistically, which will significantly reduce, not increase, the curriculum load.³⁰ In her book entitled Education and Peace, Maria Montessori referred to this holistic approach when she wrote: 'All education is for peace,' as it embraces the physical, emotional, intellectual, and social growth of children within a framework of human values. Ian Harris, known as the father of peace education, in his book *Peace Education* (1988, United States) stressed on a holistic approach to peace education, emphasizing that this could apply to community education, elementary and secondary schools, as well as in college classrooms. He also emphasized that a

²⁸ CPS International, http://cpsglobal.org/content/forbidden-tree, July 31, 2012

²⁹ National Curriculum Framework 2005, op. cit., p. 62.

³⁰ Position Paper, National Focus Group on "Education for Peace", op. cit., p. 7.

peaceful pedagogy must be integral to any attempt to teach about peace. The key ingredients of such pedagogy are cooperative learning, democratic community, moral sensitivity, and critical thinking. The APNIEVE Sourcebook, *Learning To Be*, also envisions an educative process that is both holistic and integrative in approach.³¹

Using this approach suggestions are given to infuse education for peace with lessons on almost any subject, which can lead to a more open outlook that awakens positive feelings, encourages mutual respect and raises awareness in terms of values. This could be followed up with activities that offer opportunities to students to apply this understanding of peace in their daily life. For example, the use of story format, discussions, games, dialogues, role-play, etc., can be used to promote peace in the teaching-learning process. It should, however, be kept in mind that some peace values may be more easily merged with a particular subject at a particular stage or grade; while others are better integrated with other subjects in a different grade.³²

2. Teaching Education for Peace as a Separate Subject

The second method suggested to introduce education for peace in schools is to treat it as a *separate subject* or *course*. Educators have only recently started using this method when they tried to unify around a common curriculum for peace education with focus on building a culture of peace (Harris and Morrison, 2003). As a result education for peace is no longer perceived merely as a method to resolve violence and conflict, but is viewed as 'education for life'. Efforts in this direction have only been initiated.

Although initial efforts have been made, there are problems. One important question that remains is: How to introduce such a subject in schools that already have an overloaded curriculum? Moral Science has been taught in Indian schools for some time now, although with questionable results. Efforts are on to merge personality development, positive living, etc., with moral science in an effort to make it more effective. The aim of the present exercise is to transform moral education into education for peace, with two primary goals:

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³¹ UNESCO Asia Pacific Regional Bureau of Education, op. cit., p. 19.

³² Position Paper, National Focus Group on "Education for Peace", *op. cit.*, p. 17.

- Education for personality development in which an individual's personality is shaped on positive, peaceful lines and
- 2. Education to foster responsible citizenship in which interaction between individuals is developed on positive, peaceful lines.

In spite of these efforts, there is a need to develop a uniform curriculum and material to introduce education for peace as a separate subject.

Training Teachers for Education for Peace

An initial step that has been undertaken is the organization of innumerable seminars, workshops and teacher's training programs to help teachers to become *educators of peace*. One worth mentioning is the six-week long training course organized by the *Department of Educational Psychology and Foundations of Education*, NCERT in 2006 in which teachers from 32 government schools participated. Another important development in this regard is that certain teacher-education institutions have started offering peace education as an optional paper for pre-service teachers.

Unfortunately these efforts are at a nascent stage and there is a long road ahead from a purely theoretical to a practical level. Not only is there a need for more such training workshops for teachers, but efforts also need to be made by educators and school administrators to make education for peace available to students directly.

INFORMAL PEACE EDUCATION

Another aspect of peace education that deserves mention is the role of non-governmental agencies. Pioneering work in preparing peace material has been done with the support of UNESCO, New Delhi. UNESCO's original work in this field was: 'Learning the Way of Peace: A Teacher's Guide to Peace Education' (2001) followed up with material such as 'Peace Education – Framework for Teacher Education' (2005). The National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration, NIEPA (now a University, National University of Educational Planning and Administration, NUEPA) has and continues to make efforts in training teachers for education for peace.

Many other NGOs are also involved in these efforts. Among them are the *Centre for Peace Education* Manipur, CFPEM, Manipur University, Canchipur, which organizes education for peace workshops; *One Care Charity Organization*, New Delhi, which organized an event in a few schools entitled, 'Children have a Right to Peace' in South India, with nearly 300 students participating; and *Centre for Peace and Spirituality*, New Delhi, that has been organizing weekly spiritual classes for informal peace education since 2001. The aim of these classes is to reengineer individual minds towards the culture of peace.³³ Regular participants of these spiritual classes say that these classes have helped them to become positive, peaceful people by learning the 'art of converting negativity to positivity', which essentially is the training of the mind to remain positive even in the face of provocation.³⁴ This is the desired goal of education for peace.

THE DESIRED RESULT OF EDUCATION FOR PEACE

The aim of education for peace is to make people understand that an atmosphere of peace is crucial for any positive development to take place in the world.³⁵ Once this is understood people themselves initiate the process of training their minds towards the culture of peace. When they do this they realize that differences and provocation will always be there in society. Only by accepting differences as a part of life and responding positively to provocation can one continue one's journey of life so as to climb the ladder of success.

The desired result that education for peace should aim for is two-fold: *one*, to ensure that an individual develops his/her own personality on positive lines and *two*, his relations with others in society are developed on positive lines so that he/she becomes a responsible peaceful citizen of society. It should be kept in mind that such a non-violent approach is neither passive submissive nor indifferent; it is dynamic, active peace that enriches the quality of the individual's life in society and the world at large. This is how education for peace becomes 'education for life'; it equips individuals with the values, skills and attitudes that they need to

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³³ Wahiduddin Khan: *The Prophet of Peace: Teachings of The Prophet Muhammad*, Penguin Books, New Delhi, 2009, p. 28.

³⁴ CPS International Brochure, Goodword Books, New Delhi, 2006.

³⁵ Wahiduddin Khan: *The Ideology of Peace – Towards A Culture of Peace*, Goodword Books, New Delhi, 2003, p. 63.

become wholesome persons so that they are able to live in harmony within themselves and with others.

Positivity being the mainstay of education for peace, the aim is to instill positive thinking at an individual level while at the same time focusing on the individual's spiritual development, thus helping him to become a responsible, peaceful citizen of society. It is only such education that will replace the culture of violence with the culture of peace. Once individuals are trained at the level of the mind in the culture of peace, peace will have a better chance of finding its way into our family, our communities, our nation, and eventually the world. In the words of Betty A. Reardon, the acknowledged founder of peace education:

"The ultimate goal of peace education is the formation of responsible, committed, and caring citizens who have integrated the values into everyday life and acquired the skills.³⁶

IN CONCLUSION

In spite of its tremendous growth in the 20th century, education for peace has not really been able to take off. The culture of violence prevails throughout society, especially among our youth. Hence, the situation needs to be immediately reviewed and more concrete efforts made in the field of education for peace, both at the formal and informal levels, so as to counter the escalating violence.

Although NCERT, CBSE, NUEPA, etc., have made a positive contribution and laid the foundation for this new discipline in the formal sphere, the future is in the hands of the educators. School administrations need to integrate peace education in the school curriculum or alternatively include or substitute peace education with moral education classes. It is important to keep in mind that educators need to be creative in their endeavours to make such an exercise interesting for students. This can be done by using different contexts to inculcate various positive values in students at an individual level. In the informal education sphere greater efforts need to be put in to make peace material available to individuals, especially through the use of the Internet.

³⁶ World People's Blog: Betty A Reardon, http://word.world-citizenship.org/wp-archive/883, July 31, 2012.

The aim here is to *firstly* make people *aware of the importance of peace* by making them realize that all positive development can only take place in a peaceful atmosphere. Emphasis in this case will need to be put on the fact that violence is a futile activity; it is only through peace and positivity that success can be achieved. *Secondly* the goal is *to train people to inculcate these values in themselves*. This will go a long way in helping them to become peaceful members of society. And this can only be achieved by making education for peace available that targets individuals at the level of the mind to become duty-conscious, to masses in general and youth in particular.

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