

# Meenakshi Gopinath (New Delhi, India) - III. Being human, 16, 13. IV. Pedagogy, 22. II. Democracy, 9

From Human Education in the 3rd Millennium

At a time of unprecedented multiple crises threaten life on earth, the

interrogation of cultures and practices that sustain violence has never been more imperative. More than any other single factor, transformed educational institutions, curricula and methodologies could help meet the challenges of the 21st century and shape a positive future for the earth. We look at 'Whole Mind' education as a central feature of transformed educational models and posit three components of it as capable of providing the needed impetus: integration, creativity and peace. For this, we also need to build impactful institutions that move away from purely instrumentalist approaches and goals. We also need to nurture an alternative imagination, an alternative conversation that encapsulates this vision.

Imagine a world that inscribes in all its educational initiatives the wisdom that True Knowledge Leads to Liberation and attempts to free all learners of the shackles of prejudice, ignorance and hubris and to set them on a path of self-discovery, expansiveness and the quest for mental and spiritual abundance.

Imagine a world that nurtures global citizens and empowers them with perspectives to transcend egocentric, ideocentric, sociocentric even multi-centric prisms and adopt a transformative geocentric worldview embracing all of life.

Imagine a world that recognizes the Proustian exhortation that the true voyage of discovery lies not merely in seeking new landscapes but having new eyes.

Imagine an education where every learner awakens to the joys of infinite possibilities, capabilities and choices and is able to discover and connect with the artist that resides within each one of us.

Imagine an education that encourages us to see the linkages between the local and the global, the particular with the universal, the immanent and the transcendent and reveals how every considered choice and action has the power to impact many worlds. This is often described as the Butterfly effect.

Imagine an education and pedagogy that does not merely cultivate our intellect but also harmonies body mind and spirit to balance our ecological, emotional, normal and spiritual aspects.

Imagine pedagogies embodied with a social purpose to remove all kinds of discrimination and ensure justice, equity and access – one that puts its own certitudes to stringent scrutiny. This kind of Whole Mind education would harness values drawn from the world's diverse cultural civilizational, indigenous spiritual and ethical traditions that are harmonious with Nature. It will enable us to live life without illusions and shake us out of "thoughtlessness".

It will emphasize self-knowledge, the recognition of the interconnectedness of all things, be embedded in a dynamic curriculum that is trans-disciplinary and cull ancient wisdom from diverse cultures in non-hierarchical teaching-learning environments. It will focus on the arts and creativity, life-long learning and develop interpersonal skills for transparent and non-violent communication, including conflict transformation and deep listening. It will also strive to give voice to the voiceless.

The challenges of fragmentation, violence, alienation and the monocultures of the mind, can be overcome by pedagogies that are invested in facilitating Cultures of Peace both within the Academy and society at large. We need to creatively craft an affirmative discourse that can make despair unconvincing and hope practical, to help usher in a more inclusive world. We need an integrative vision that nurtures imagination, creativity and peace. To harness the great potential of all learners, our institutional arrangements for education must provide for:

- i) Ruminative spaces
- ii) Aspirational spaces
- iii) Dialogic spaces
- iv) Inclusive and collaborative spaces
- v) Democratic spaces
- vi) Engendered spaces
- vii) Energized and creative spaces
- viii) Spaces to envision a Borderless World

We need spaces, where more and more people can converse in a non-hierarchical non-sensorian, inclusive tongue, where scripts can be re-

written to speak truth to power and include multiple histories where the lotus within unfolds to the myriad possibilities of empathy wisdom and compassion.

We need to look afresh at issues of:

- Equity and Access, Affirmative Action,
- link between Human Development and Human Security,
- Generating a new Environmental Sensibility,
- Polycentricity,
- Indigenous wisdom, and Traditional knowledge systems,
- Democratic Community and the Articulation of Alternatives,
- link between the universes of ideation (theory), policy and praxis,
- A humane conception of citizenship premised on the celebration of difference
- A rights based notion of the citizen,
- Reinforcing linkages between the formal education system and sub-cultures of non-violent activism within civil society.
- Forging links with people's movements, in a participatory process,
- dissolving the borders and boundaries that are created between "formal" and "people's Politics",
- The Slippage between Niti (Law) and Nyaya (Justice) between public policy and popular practice,
- Link between theory and praxis, between town and gown, between ideation and livelihood,
- The importance of Learning from Conflict and Waging Conflict Non-Violently,
- Putting our own truths to scrutiny to inoculate us against dogmatic closure about our own deep sealed ambivalence to violence,
- Combating the monocultures of the mind, developing critical thinkers,

· Engendering Institutions and the Ethics of Care,

· Fostering the Leadership of Women in new Partnerships with Men

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