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Six Modes of Giving Pedagogy for Engagement and Wellbeing—for Teachers and Students

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Abstract: The present study took place across two outdoor education trips to the Great Barrier Reef with two groups of college students (N = 36; 16-19 years), five staff, and one of the authors (TWN). The aim was to explore how an explicit understanding and implementation of the wellbeing research around cultivating generous behaviour for meaningful happiness could be 'experienced' by staff and students and articulated as an educational framework, or 'pedagogy'. Hermeneutic phenomenology was used to record and interpret pedagogical transactions of giving. Six repeated themes were identified: (1) exploration, (2) modelling, (3) explicit instruction, (4) incidental learning, (5) crisis management, and (6) intent. Discussed as instrumental for promoting eudaimonic happiness ('meaningful living'), these categories may assist educators by providing a broader spectrum of teaching pedagogies with which to not only improve engagement and wellbeing in young people, but also improve their own sense of professional satisfaction and wellbeing.

Keywords: giving; pedagogy; teacher education; student; engagement; wellbeing

Introduction

The group of students and staff going on the Lady Musgrave Island expedition are all gathered in one of the well-worn outdoor education classrooms of the school. Peter, the expedition leader, is in the middle of explaining what to pack for the trip, when Jack, a muscular student in a sleeveless shirt, receives a call on his mobile telephone. He stands up from his chair, and, in the middle of the lesson, swears heavily as he accidently cuts off the call. With the whole class staring at him, he re-dials and starts chatting with his friend, while leisurely walking out of the classroom. Peter does not look amused. But he chooses not to say anything. Instead, after Jack has left, he continues calmly from where he left off. And I have been reminded, I feel, of the general challenge these days of engaging young people and taking them 'with you,' let alone into the wilderness where safety and authority are paramount.

As most educators will testify to, it is not easy to engage young people in formal learning (e.g., Goss et al., 2017; Pedler et al., 2020). We live in a fast-paced world marked by a 'Fourth Industrial Revolution' that continues to disrupt and transform entire global systems and the way we 'live, work, and relate to one another' through the rapid development of technologies that blur the lines between our physical, digital, and biological worlds (Hillyer,

2020; Schwab, 2016, para 1). Teaching and learning are no longer confined to school buildings, certain times, or even to one's professional credentials. Anyone can now upload, download, and disseminate information 24/7 to and from global audiences through the use of digital platforms and pedagogies (Väätäjä & Ruokamo, 2021). Many students, of all ages, now have smart phones, tablets or laptops, offering them a plethora of excitement and distractions, in and out of the classroom. Close to half (46%) of Australian children aged 6 to 13 reported having used a mobile phone, primarily to play games, take photos and videos, use apps or to text message in 2020 (Australian Communications and Media Authority, 2020). While technological devices can be used as learning tools, an over-immersion in 'screen time'—and by extension, consumerism and pop-culture— has been associated with poorer psychological outcomes and can be a factor in fostering a materialistic and anti-social mindset in young people (Bauer et al., 2012; Kasser et al., 2004; Oswald et al., 2020; Swist et al., 2015). Add to this the many other challenges and stresses facing young people (Vikram et al., 2007), such as climate change and public health crises—just to name a few—and it is perhaps not so strange that it can be hard to get students' attention at times.

The above-mentioned challenges are not new to those in the field of Outdoor Education (OE). Outdoor educators have long strived to demonstrate the benefits of taking students out of the classroom and into natural environments in order to heighten their awareness of and respect for self (though the meeting of challenges such as adventuring), others (through group experiences and the sharing of decisions), and nature (through direct experience; Department of Education and Science, 1975). It is important to note that learning experiences are not dichotomised as 'good' or 'bad' based on whether they take place in natural (e.g., outdoors) versus artificial environments (e.g., classroom, technological). Rather, what OE centralises as the vehicle, in terms of both pedagogy and content, is the role of experiential learning for student transformation, where it is acknowledged that students have 'individual but shared biographies that are constantly being written, made, constructed, [and] performed' (Quay, 2019, pp. 71-72). In other words, although there is a tendency for OE be equated with recreational outdoor activities (e.g., rock-climbing, camping, etc.), OE is a manifestation of a larger educative effort to provide students with opportunities for direct, personally meaningful experiences coupled with guided reflection and analysis (Chapman et al., 1992).

This larger educative effort, known as Experiential Education (EE), was inspired by progressive education ideas that can be traced back to Dewey (1916, 1938). Dewey was an American philosopher, psychologist and educational reformer who viewed the development of citizenship or a 'social spirit' to be the central purpose of education (Mason, 2017). This 'social spirit' could be developed through nurturing students' habitual attitudes of directedness (i.e., confident approach to situations), open-mindedness, single-mindedness (i.e., undistracted unity of purpose), and responsibility acquired through active practice – all qualities cited as aims and goals of educative efforts today. According to Itin (1999), modern EE is not a particular teaching method, but a way of thinking about the teaching-learning transactions between educators, students, and the learning environment beyond knowledge being a one-way process transmitted from educator to student. This premise of re-thinking relational processes has also been emphasised in later educational thinking, such as in the case of Freire's 'pedagogy of love' which focuses on the role and mechanisms of dialogue between persons for the purpose of humanising relations and education (Freire, 1970; Shih, 2018). As such, awareness of EE as an educative philosophy holds much value to educators because it is often, knowingly and unknowingly, applicable to and used across many areas of education (e.g., see Roberts, 2015). In the case of OE, EE has been traditionally explicitly linked out of a need to root OE's diverse practices within an overarching, foundational theory and framework in order to unify and progress the field (Nicol, 2002a, 2002b, 2003).

Notwithstanding that the assumptions, values, practices and justification of OE are not homogenous and have developed as a 'dynamic process of change over time' across the world (see Fang et al., 2023; Nicol, 2002a, p. 31; 2002b, 2003), it is also useful for educators to know that OE imperatives can generally be placed on a spectrum that ranges from endorsement of a more anthropocentric approach (i.e., nature viewed as having an instrumental value that serves human interests) to an ecocentric approach (i.e., nature has intrinsic value independent of human needs) (Cocks & Simpson, 2015). This delineation has reflected educators' tendencies to elevate the personal and social development aspects of OE over the environmental education aspects, or vice versa, in practice and research. For example, OE programs have been found to have small to moderate effects on participant outcomes such as leadership, self-concept, personality traits, interpersonal and adventure skills, and environmental awareness in meta-analytic studies (Neill & Richards, 1998). Participants have also been found to frequently cite the life-long personal and interpersonal effects of their outdoor adventure experiences 1 to 70 years later in retrospectives studies (Ramirez et al., 2019).

Interestingly, the personal and social development imperatives of OE align with a wider, quantitatively driven positive psychology and wellbeing movement which has shown that cognitive practices such as regularly adopting an optimistic attitude**,** behavioural practices such as being kind to others**,** and volitional practices such as striving towards meaningful personal goals, provide sustainable mental and physical wellbeing gains (Layous & Lyubomirsky, 2012; Sheldon & Lyubomirsky, 2004). Of specific relevance to the fields of OE, EE, and education more broadly, is that contributing to someone or something other than just oneself seems to be a common denominator for what people around the world identify as meaningful in life (Aknin et al., 2013; Delle Fave et al., 2016). The Greeks referred to this kind of meaning-filled life as 'eudaimonia'—living a life of virtue for others – as opposed to 'hedonism', the pursuit of pleasure for its own sake (Raibley, 2011; Ryan & Deci, 2001). Today, this is what some researchers (e.g., Seligman, 2002) refer to as 'meaningful happiness' or 'eudaimonic wellbeing', which has been shown to have deeper and more stable levels of mental and physical health benefits than experience of only the state-based 'pleasurable happiness' – the kind of positive emotion that primarily comes from having our senses stimulated and from the avoidance of negative emotions.

If OE and, by extension, EE are predicated on identifying opportunities for students' meaning-making and life-long transformation, then use of the evidence-based pathway of contributing or giving to something greater than oneself is one that inherently asks participants to question connections between the anthropocentric and ecocentric, the micro-level self in relation to the macro-level whole (Nielsen & Ma, 2018). Such connections are critical in a time where the message that consuming 'more stuff' will make us happier is being beamed at us from more angles than ever before in our entire human history, despite the fact that we live on a planet with finite resources (De Graaf et al., 2005; Knoll, 2015). Moreover, even though our nervous systems can now be unrestrictedly 'fed' with more input, stimuli and excitement at the touch of a button, many of us report not being terribly happy and struggle with new forms of existential anxiety attributed to the global situation, such as climate anxiety (Clayton, 2020; World Health Organization, 2017). What does all of this mean for educators, wanting not only to help students be more meaningfully engaged and have hope for a liveable future, but also have more of this themselves?

The aim of this study was to explore how an explicit understanding and implementation of the wellbeing research around cultivating generous behaviour for meaningful happiness could be articulated as an educational framework, or 'pedagogy,' of giving for student and teachers' engagement and wellbeing in synergy with OE and EE. In doing so, the research took a pluralistic stance that acknowledged the advantages of

connecting the multitude of ways of knowing, whether cognitively (head), aesthetically (heart), or action-based (hands), and experiencing (self-focused or environmental-focused), to create evidence-based educative spaces that can meaningfully 'meet' and 'stretch' students from 'where they are at'. Specifically, we wanted to: (1) examine how opportunities for giving were cultivated and manifested in practice on the outdoor education trips researched, which were thought to invite direct, experiential giving (thoughts, feelings and actions) in a variety of ways – to the team, the local community, natural environment - over and above traditional classroom settings, and (2) consolidate and triangulate these findings to develop grounded theory and framework to support teacher education and practice in response to the many wellbeing challenges, individual and collective, facing young people and educators today.

Methods

Background

Data from the present study is derived from a collaborative action-research program run by outdoor education teaching staff at the University of Canberra Senior Secondary College Lake Ginninderra (UCSSC Lake Ginninderra) and one of the authors (TWN). Action research is an 'iterative process involving researchers and practitioners acting together on a particular cycle of activities, including problem diagnosis, action intervention, and reflective learning' (Avison et al., 1999, p. 94). In this program, teaching staff explicitly adapted curricula to incorporate activities that aimed to promote positive thoughts, feelings, and behaviours through 'giving' for student engagement and wellbeing across two, two-week outdoor education expeditions conducted in 2013 and 2014. For example, in addition to partaking in conventional outdoor activities such as snorkelling, diving, and nature walks, students were also exposed to activities such as 'sunset solitude' (journaling and daily gratitude), 'sunrise warriors' (yoga), meditation, 'SELF CARE AIMS' (strategy and domains for self-care), and discussion around how these activities were aligned with positive psychology and wellbeing research around meaningful happiness throughout the trip (see Nielsen & Ma, 2016; Nielsen & Ma, 2018 for specific program details and other reported outcomes).

Participants

Students were recruited from the UCSSC Lake Ginninderra Outdoor Education trips conducted in 2013 and 2014. Information and consent forms for the research component were provided to students and guardians prior to commencement on the trips. Parental consent identified which students were eligible to participate in the project. All students chose to participate in the research component. Ethics approval was obtained from the University of Canberra's Human Research Ethics Committee and the A.C.T Education and Training Directorate.

Sample 1

Eighteen students (11 boys and 7 girls) aged between 16 and 19 years of age participated in the 2013 iteration of the program. The student sample was predominantly male (61.1%), with a mean age of 17.2 (SD = 0.95). Three staff members from UCSSC Lake Ginninderra (team leader, diving instructor, and one teaching staff) and two academics from the University of

Canberra (TWN included) were involved in the program delivery. Gender composition of teaching and academic staff was three men and two women.

Sample 2

Eighteen students (8 boys and 10 girls) aged between 17 and 18 years of age participated in the 2014 iteration of the program. The sample consisted of slightly more females (55.5%), with a mean age of 17.3 (*SD* = 0.48). Five staff members from UCSSC Lake Ginninderra (team leader, diving instructor, and three teaching staff) and one academic (TWN) from the University of Canberra (UC) were involved in the program delivery. Gender composition of teaching and academic staff was three men and three women.

Data Collection and Representation

To closely align with OE and EE epistemologies, which focus on participants' construction of knowledge and meaning through direct experience, the research employed a phenomenological approach to explore the dimension of participants' lived experiences. In phenomenology, the truth of an event is viewed as subjective and knowable only through embodied perception and it is these experiences that are used as the unit of analysis (Starks & Trinidad, 2007). In contrast to quantitative methods, phenomenology is a qualitative method that aims to further discovery, description and meaning over prediction, control, and measurement (Laverty, 2003).

Specifically, the interpretive branch of hermeneutic phenomenology (van Manen, 2016) was used to observe how opportunities for giving were cultivated and manifested in practice by staff and students, and to assist the outsider (reader) to 'experience' some of this data via the first-person reporting of significant 'moments' (i.e., clustered units of meaning). Since the essences of aesthetic and social phenomena often reside in experiential, abstract and immaterial spheres of 'knowing', hermeneutic phenomenological data representation tries in evocative ways, not unlike poetry or story telling, to use language that reverberates the world of the phenomenon to the reader as it occurs. Hermeneutic data analysis is said to 'demand self-reflexivity' because 'interpretation arises from pre-understandings and a dialectical movement between the parts and the whole of the [experiences and] texts of those involved' as opposed to via the use of a finite set of procedures (Laverty, 2003, p. 30). In this way, the researcher's interpretation of participants' experiences is inherently embedded in the curation process and acts to provide an important lens or layer of understanding to the findings that will be 'experienced' by the outside reader.

Over the duration of the two trips, 19 hermeneutic, phenomenological, significant 'moments' were recorded as handwritten field notes by TWN during or soon after observation, and later constructed into more complete writing at the end of a session or day in a reflective journal (a methodological practice outlined by Heidegger, 1962; van Manen, 2016). Out of this collection, a sample of six 'moments' are presented to illustrate the repeated pedagogical themes that were identified via dialectical interpretative processes applied by the researcher to the individual units of meaning recorded. The individual units were increasingly grouped according to assessments of main pedagogy utilised until no internal contradictions remained. This process resulted in the identification of six repeated pedagogical modes. Additional sources of qualitative data in the form of daily student diary entries, informal interviews and group discussions with students and staff were collected to complement the phenomenological findings. This approach, accommodating for a collection

of data that is both contextual and interpretive, aimed at assisting the development of a grounded theory of giving pedagogy to further elucidate the socio-educative processes studied in-situ (Glaser & Strauss, 1967).

Due to the idiographic nature of the data and its representation, typical sample sizes for phenomenological studies commonly range from 1 to 10 people, and from 10 to 60 people when grounded theory is involved (Starks & Trinidad, 2007). In this regard, it is important to acknowledge the small-scale nature of such research (present study included; N = 36) and inherent limitations around the direct replicability of reported 'experiences' (particularly in relation to other contexts) when interpreting the results.

Results

From the hermeneutic coding of 19 phenomenological moments, six repeated modes of giving pedagogy were identified: (1) exploration, (2) modelling, (3) explicit instruction, (4) incidental learning, (5) crisis management, and (6) intent. In the following sections each of the themes is introduced via a representative phenomenological 'lived moment.' The discussion and analysis of these identified pedagogical modes is further supported by the qualitative responses collected from student diaries, student and staff interviews, and references to research literature where appropriate. The chosen moments presented are not exclusive to the pedagogical mode they represent, as a moment often has elements of the other modes within them; however, each of the moments was carefully selected to best help the reader 'experience' the distinctive nature of each mode. Student participant names were changed to protect anonymity. Informed consent from the school site and participating staff was obtained to disclose their details where these appear.

Exploration

> *It is all happening. It's the morning of the start of the journey—the road trip up to Queensland, from where we are going to catch a boat to Lady Musgrave Island. Students are working hard on packing the cars and trailers. There is an air of excitement, as last minute gear is loaded. Suddenly, after months of preparation, the trip seems very real to everyone. As the last bags are loaded and everything on the trailers checked one last time, Peter, the expedition leader, calls everyone around for a meeting in the outdoor equipment shed. Sitting in a circle, he informs the students how long the day's ride is going to be, what to expect on the trip, and where we are going to stop on the way. He is taking ample time to emphasise the importance of teamwork, and what it may look like on a long bus trip—how there will be some hard times where things will go wrong; how people will get tired and grumpy on the road trip; how it will be important to chat and connect with others; how we can be synergistic, all adding to the trip for everyone else. He ends the meeting by adding a little mystery and suspense…*
> *'When we get to Moree, there is a pleasant little treat waiting for you there. Those of you who have been on the trip before, or have been to Moree and know what I am talking about, perhaps if you can contain the temptation to tell the others and let it be a nice little surprise for them, I am sure they'd appreciate that.' The few students who know that Peter is talking about Moree's natural hot springs, of which there are some at the caravan park we are staying at in the*

evening, have a look about them of privilege—of being in the 'know.' The others look as if they can't get on the bus soon enough. The journey has begun.

A teaching tool that staff used regularly on the trip was that of revealing learning outcomes and experiences for students in a slow and measured manner, often adding mystery and suspense in the process. Adding mystery and suspense to an unfolding learning experience may be a useful teaching tool in general, but it seemed particularly useful in implementing something that can easily be seen as a little 'wet' by young people, such as giving. By not front-loading the giving on the trip, but rather gradually introducing it via emphasising teamwork, courtesy, etc., staff created a foundation for the theory and practice of giving (as it relates to eudaimonic wellbeing or 'meaningful living') to be accepted and have a greater impact on the students when this was introduced explicitly later in the trip.

Encouraging explorative and imaginative engagement with something tangible and practical illustrates the importance of introducing the complex and abstract via something that is close to the students. The 'meaningful life' is a complex and somewhat abstract concept that takes time to understand. Teamwork and working together, on the other hand, are concrete, easy to understand concepts that can become the building blocks and experiential base upon which students come to see the wider connections between the micro-level self (giving) in relation to the macro-level whole (the meaningful life) later on. It may seem paradoxical, at first, to work from the concrete and tangible to the more abstract and complex, as such an approach seems to stand in opposition to that of using mystery and suspense—the unknown and the abstract—as a 'hook' in teaching. However, this observation merely highlights John Dewey's (1902) penetrative insight that student-centred learning encompasses the benefits of both being an explorer and having a map. Exploring is fun, but it can also make us waste much time; having a map is time efficient but can detract from our sense of exploration and, ultimately, our enjoyment. Peter and the staff had a strong sense of where they wanted to take the students, but also knew that 'leading' them is best done, as much as possible, by allowing them to be fellow travellers (explorers), slowly discovering the curriculum (map) for themselves.

Modelling

Arriving in Moree, take-away food makes for a quick dinner so that we can all get into the hot springs at the motel before it closes for the night. After about half-an-hour in the pool, Peter asks everyone to gather around in a circle in the pool. Peter waits for complete silence, and then speaks quietly and deliberately. 'I am very pleased with how well the trip has started today. Everything has gone very smoothly, thanks to good teamwork.' After what seems a long, deliberate pause, Peter continues, 'On the way up here, I most enjoyed seeing how the landscape was changing all the time. What is something that you have enjoyed on the journey today?'

As we go around the circle, each student and staff telling the group about what they most enjoyed on the trip today, I am surprised about the openness and vulnerability shown by many of the students. Some speak about how they have enjoyed meeting new people and getting to know each other better. Others speak about how they have enjoyed feeling part of a team and achieving as much as we did today. As the students speak, quietly and deliberately, just as Peter did, it all becomes part of a wonderful end to the first day of travelling. It is a warm night, and the stars are out. It is our first significant group bonding on the trip. The hot water feels good on our travel weary bodies. It also feels like a conduit for

bringing the group together, exemplified by the words of Paul: 'I have really enjoyed how everyone are with each other.' When I later ask Paul about his comment, he elaborates: 'I think the bus trip up here enables us to sort of leave this mask that people put on in, you know, normal society, to come here and to show their true honest selves. And when that happens you can see how good natured everyone is.'

The above account represents the unconditional positive regard that staff modelled to the students, which allowed the students to feel safe and let themselves be vulnerable in meetings and social situations. It also represents how being taken out of their usual setting can be a significant catalyst for the students to gain new perspectives of themselves, each other, and their lives back home (an apparent strength of Outdoor Education initiatives); yet, none of that seems possible without the underlying pedagogical mode of modelling generosity, care and respect by staff, so that students felt safe and supported to open up in new ways. From the care and respect in Peter's instructions and facilitation at group meetings, to other staff members' untiring work rate to give the students an 'awesome' adventure experience, to the open invitation to students to 'hang out' at the staff campsite, giving was embedded in conduct as well as words.

There are an infinite number of ways to give and show unconditional positive regard, and an equally infinite number of learning activities in which giving and social concern can be incorporated. However, this observation highlights that a 'giving pedagogy' seems most efficient when not viewed as a model or framework only, but also as a philosophy or overarching pedagogy, similar to how Outdoor Education is an example of Experiential Education philosophy in practice. Having a set framework, in other words, could be limiting if the above understanding is not present or 'lived' by education staff. What the staff regularly exemplified was that giving could be a way of *being* with each other and the students, not just an overt action or activity.

Interestingly, given the nature of living in each other's pockets, as the students did on a trip like this, there was a remarkably low amount of conflict between them. Obviously, the students got on each other's nerves a few times, but even when that happened, they seemed to resolve most conflicts really well with little interference from staff. The literature suggests that this was no coincidence, as the evidential impact of teacher modelling is uniform: students will imitate and exemplify the behaviours of the teacher – good or bad (Becker et al., 2014; Tierno, 1996). We also know that the teacher constitutes the single most important variable in effective learning (Hattie, 2003, 2009), and in no other 'subject' might this be truer than in the case of any type of values or wellbeing education. This does not mean that teachers have to be perfect exemplars; it merely highlights that there has to be a critical mass of staff ability to model a broad understanding of social concern and giving in their own thoughts, feelings, and actions, in order for the students to embrace such an understanding in their lives.

Explicit Instruction

It is the night before we go to the island. Everyone is gathered for a team meeting in the entertainment room in the backpackers motel we are staying at. Peter talks about the logistics of the coming day and what to expect. He then talks about the trip so far, and one thing that he has been grateful for lately. 'This one is a bit personal, but I'd like to share it with you. I feel very grateful to my wife for making it possible to go on this trip. Being away much of the year for these types of trips is not easy for your partner. So having her support to do

these trips is something I am very grateful for. I would like to give you some time now to write in your journal something that you are grateful for. It can be something big, or it can be something small.' Never to expect the group to do something that the leader is not prepared to do themselves, Peter shared something personal with the group. It seems to have inspired much thought in the students, as some of them are already writing vigorously; others are content to sit and ponder a bit first. Soon, though, everyone is writing.
After a while, students gradually show they have finished their writing by quietly putting pens and journals down. Eventually, everyone has finished writing, except Jack. The other students notice that Jack is still writing, and they respect that by being silent and waiting patiently. Jack is not aware that he is the only one still writing, but eventually, he finishes his entry. Peter thanks the students for their efforts, and finishes the meeting with a suggestion to not stay up too late because of the early start tomorrow. Afterwards, I learn from Peter that Jack has had a very difficult time this year. The other students showing so much patience towards Jack, Peter told me, was something that touched him deeply.

Apart from further exemplifying how the educational program improved social cohesion through staff modelling of mindfulness and care for others, the above moment also illustrates the pedagogical mode of explicit teaching of evidence-based interventions—in this case a gratitude exercise. As such, the moment is also an example that 'giving' can include subtle, positive emotions (e.g., I am grateful for my partner), and thus encompass more than just overt actions that benefit others. Most relevant for this section, however, is that the moment illustrates the type of teaching that makes a big difference to the level of knowledge acquisition achieved by students when it comes to any type of wellbeing program. A decade of values education in Australia (Education Services Australia, 2010) has demonstrated that whilst teachers' modelling of values is important, it needs to be supplemented by the explicit teaching of shared language and tangible strategies in order for students to develop detailed understandings of and ability to apply such values to their life contexts.

The pedagogical mode of explicit instruction is the aforementioned 'map' that must accompany the 'explorer' for the journey to be effective as well as fun. In the above moment, the explicit gratitude exercise seemed conducive to the generous behaviour of the other students towards Jack. The activity was about 'giving-emotions' (gratitude), thus nurturing a 'giving ethos' of patience and tolerance. As mentioned, irritation and small 'bust ups' would flare up at times, as it does in any group living and working together for a period of time. However, in general, the students exemplified giving in conduct as well as words—especially after the times when explicit teaching of giving interventions took place, as such teaching set the tone for the whole group and for how to be with one another.

Incidental Learning

It's the first whole day on the island, and everyone's excited to go into the water. We swim and snorkel in small groups, each led by a staff member. I am in Piper's group. After only a short time in the water, some in the group spot a large green sea turtle. A couple of students immediately swim after it, trying to touch it. The turtle swiftly swims away from the group. Piper takes the group up to the surface. She explains that even though we may feel compelled to touch the wildlife, and that we may see some do this, we do not touch them because we want to respect the wildlife in their natural habitat. She further explains that we can swim alongside the wildlife if they seem okay with that, but that we have to

remember that we are guests in their environment.
A little later, we encounter another large green sea turtle, and the whole group starts to swim alongside it, quietly and calmly. We are all rewarded, as the animal doesn't seem to mind us at all. Instead, it seems slightly curious, looking at us as we glide through the water together. Personally, I have one of those special moments that I would hear other students speak about as well—the sense of wonder and awe that comes from being eyeballed by a wild animal in its natural surroundings.
Afterwards, I think to myself how special it was to see the students respond to Piper's request, and in return be rewarded with something much better than a few students touching the turtle for a brief moment. The respectful 'giving' attitude shown by the group meant that the whole group and the green sea turtle swam together in a blue, cool world for what seemed like an eternity.

Incidental learning happens in those teachable moments that sometimes arise unexpectedly out of a situation. It is those moments that teachers did not plan for, but which now suddenly present an opportunity to teach a particular concept or reinforce one taught at an earlier time. In the case of this program, the staff seemed highly attuned to those moments where it was possible to either introduce or reinforce parts of the underlying giving curriculum that served as the educational foundation for all learning outcomes on the trip. Some staff attributed this to having created a theoretical 'lens' beforehand, with which to better 'see' when giving could be taught or reinforced in structured and organic ways. As incidents hold great potential to facilitate students' direct engagement with and application of teachable moments, having a theoretical lens with which to recognise such opportunities seemed advantageous in this program, especially since 'giving' is a topic that can easily be seen as a bit evangelic, or prescriptive prior to own experience. When staff taught giving behaviours in relevant moments of actual student experience, as in the above account, the 'theory' had something upon which it could rest; the experience became the vehicle for the explicit teaching. This observation reflects the nested role that learning and knowledge have as experiences, in and of themselves, in Experiential Education philosophy. That is, knowledge acquisition is not seen as an elevated formal process that operates separately from experience because it is, in actuality, a type of experience.

Crisis Management

Everyone is tired and sweaty. We have completed the boat ride from the island back to the mainland, and worked hard to pack all of our gear back onto the buses and trailers. We have driven to the hotel we are staying at tonight, but are now stuck in the bus while a staff member is dealing with an issue about our accommodation. Tired minds grow into grumpy ones, and some students start to shout for the first shower and choice of bed, which in turn makes others protest fiercely. Things are getting a bit heated. Peter has been quiet so far. But now he turns around in his seat and looks down the aisle of the bus, sending the students that look that everyone knows means that he is waiting for silence.
'While we are waiting here, I'm just going to tell you a little story about Todd McKenzie. Todd McKenzie used to be an interesting student. Something clicked for him in year 11, and he reversed the whole selfishness thing, 'shot gunning' the best bed and the first shower on every trip and in every situation. Instead, he started to say, 'I'll have whatever bed is left. I don't mind showering last.' Tim is now a very successful person. I am not going to tell you what to do—it is just a

little story while we wait.' And then, as calmly as he turned to face the students, Peter slowly turns back around in his seat.
The students are quiet. Some are looking out the window with a slightly embarrassed look on their faces. There are no more complaints on the bus. When we finally get off the bus and begin to settle into our rooms, there is no fighting about beds or showers. Instead, there is courtesy and even chivalry displayed by some. 'Would you like this bed?' 'Is it ok with you guys if I use the shower now?' The day after, I ask one of the students what he thought about the incident. 'I thought it was brilliant the way Peter handled that,' he said. I had to agree.

Crisis management is about seeing problems as 'opportunities with prickles on them,' as one colleague once put it to me—that in every challenge or loss, there is usually a potential to gain something else. As the above incident illustrates, such moments can be opportune for teaching social concern and giving. Unlike incidental learning in general, however, this type of incident is characterised by having the potential to seriously erode student behaviour and conduct, or create some other conflict or imbalance in the group. It is harder to look for the opportunity in an incident when there is crisis because there will usually also be a heightened sense of stress or anxiety present in both teacher and students.

Yet, that is exactly where the potential of the pedagogical giving mode of crisis management lies. Working with young people will always include crisis and conflict at times. The only question is how well we model and teach students how to handle such moments. Most can probably recall a teacher who said one thing but then did another. It is also not hard to imagine how ineffective it would be for a teacher to teach about integrity, only to turn around and gossip about someone else in the same breath. In general, the staff on this trip did not seem afraid of conflict and tension, but rather saw it has an opportunity with which to reinforce the social ethos. We know from research how much respect teachers get from students if they stay calm and continue to show respect and care, even in situations when faced with student defiance (Finn et al., 2009); showing social concern is one of the foundation stones of successful behaviour management because students are much more likely to comply with a request if put forth with empathy and understanding (Korpershoek et al., 2016). For this reason, a curriculum centred on giving for meaningful living seems highly dependant on understanding how the pedagogical giving mode of crisis management can avoid, de-escalate, and repair difficult situations with students, as well as provide them with effective models for managing future life crises.

Intent

Understandably, the road trip back to Canberra has been a little more sleepy than the trip out. Students are tired. Many look forward to sleeping in their own bed tonight. As the bus is getting closer to the school where many of the parents will be waiting, Peter, who is driving, asks if we can listen to 'Skinny Love' by Bon Iver (2007) on the bus stereo. We listen to it, some singing along, albeit still a little sluggishly. One of the students puts on another song, 'Someone like you,' by Adele (2011). Now, many are singing along. This is obviously the more current hit with the students. As the chorus comes around, most of the students sing loudly, now in high spirit. Some sing in silly voices. Some sing with dreamy eyes, lost in their own world. A few are just enjoying the singing. But it is as if we were all together. Staff and students, joined in one last moment of togetherness on these last few steps of our journey.

'You know how the time flies
Only yesterday was the time of our lives
We were born and raised
In a summer haze
Bound by the surprise of our glory days'
I feel a tug in my heartstrings as the bus turns into the parking lot of the school. Not only because these young adults look so full of promise, so united, singing together as they do. But also because I feel a deep sense of belonging with the community that we together have created on this trip. And once again, I am in awe of Peter. As the great conductor he is, he has orchestrated one last crescendo of this magical journey. Even if he is a year or two behind the pop charts.

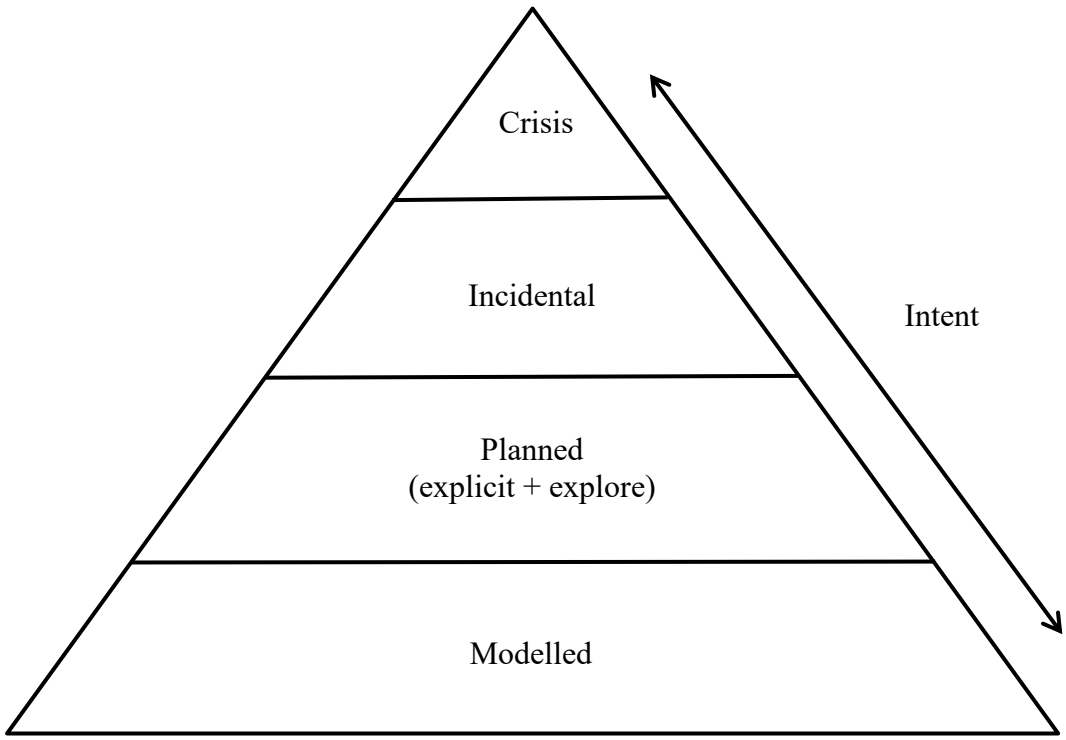
Although it can appear redundant at first, it might be useful to highlight that a general intent to foster social cohesiveness is somewhat distinct to the five modes of pedagogy discussed so far—at least in the sense that it does not exist in isolation but should, ideally, operate across all of the other five modes. The above moment encompasses elements of exploration and incidental learning within it, but is used here to bring to the forefront the importance of the educator having a general intent to facilitate moments of social cohesiveness. Peter's wish to finish the journey on a high note led to a magical moment of togetherness for the group. Having a general and pervasive intent can be an important catalyst, even if luck, circumstance, or student choices dictate much of the outcome at times. Success is 99% in the attitude and 2% in the detail, as a colleague once pointed out to me. His math didn't fail him. He simply highlighted, in a slightly amusing way, the importance of our general attitude.

How do we cultivate a pervasive giving attitude and intent as educators and caregivers? We started out noting that educators can inspire and influence children and young people through their own being, their modelling. We point back to the connection between having a general giving intent and modelling giving, in order to highlight their interrelationship and the fact that the latter is near impossible without the former. Modelling a curriculum centred on giving for meaningful living might be a foundation for teaching it, but such modelling ultimately starts with having the personal *will* to give in the first place. Without a genuine and consistent will to exemplify, teach, and continuously search for ways to promote social concern and cohesion, our educational efforts to implement a giving-based curriculum or pedagogy will be sporadic at best. We teach who we are, Parker Palmer (2007) says. This suggests that any transformative effects of a pedagogy of giving must begin and end with the teacher.

Discussion

In Figure 1 we highlight that each of the modes of giving pedagogy generally takes up an amount of time that is analogous to the triangle's ascending shape. The broad base of the triangle (modelling) should, ideally, be present all the time when teaching and caring for children and young people, whereas we hope only to deal with the top of the triangle (crisis) on occasions. Throughout them all, intent is paramount.

Figure 1. – Four modes of giving pedagogy



Is there something radically new about the above findings? Yes and no. No, because the findings on one level echo those evidenced about quality teaching over the last three decades: good teaching is about modelling desired learning outcomes in socially constructed learning environments, using teachable moments as a conduit for reinforcing pro-social behaviour (Hattie, 2009; Lovat et al., 2009; Wang et al., 2020). Yes, because such findings are rarely linked to any overarching philosophy of what makes for individual *and* collective wellbeing and meaning in life, and how such a philosophy might serve as a 'compass' for navigating the challenges of modern living, as discussed in the introduction.

For example, peer tutoring has long been recognised as a predictor of improved academic achievement and pro-social behaviour in the classroom (Bowman-Perrott et al., 2012; Moeyaert et al., 2019). However, whilst such outcomes are valued in schools, they are rarely articulated as by-products of giving and meaningful living more broadly. It is our contention that this needs to change if we are to better understand the underlying causes for student disengagement and lack of wellbeing beyond the level of the personally 'happy/satisfied' or 'unhappy/dissatisfied' self, as well as what preventative measures can be developed to specifically target this. In the same way in which Outdoor Education (and any educative endeavour that targets students' meaning making through experience) is a concrete example of Experiential Education philosophy in action, it is imperative for educators to realise that peer tutoring is but *one example* of a broader principle—the principle of being something for someone or something other than just oneself, which, if explicitly understood and adopted, may produce similar outcomes if applied in other areas of teaching and learning, not just peer tutoring.

The need to explore and understand underlying principles for student engagement and wellbeing led us to assess the effects of a 'giving curriculum' (Nielsen & Ma, 2016) and develop a beginning framework for identifying the social and environmental dimensions in which it is possible for students to be something for others —termed an 'ecology of giving'

(Nielsen & Ma, 2018). In this study, the focus was on formulating a beginning framework for the pedagogies with which teachers can intentionally teach giving behaviours and attitudes in a variety of ways—not because these modes of interaction (modelling, explicit instruction, etc.) are fundamentally different to good teaching in general, but because they might have significantly different mental, physical, and environmental wellbeing implications for students when applied through the *lens* of giving pedagogy. It is through 'transformative pedagogies' such as this that students can be empowered to 'critically examine their beliefs, values, and knowledge with the aim of developing new epistemologies, centre multiple ways of knowing, and develop a sense of critical consciousness and agency' when it comes to their own and others' wellbeing (Lopez & Olan, 2018, p. viii).

For educators, the pedagogy of giving serves as a 'metapedagogical' method for the promotion of student *and* teacher engagement and wellbeing in contexts where pedagogy can seem 'invisible' and 'hard to pin down' (O'Conner et al., 2018; Thomas & Yehle, 2018). Akin to metacognitive practices that involve 'thinking about one's thinking,' metapedagogical methods involve the intentional planning, implementation, and critical discussion of instructional processes for, in this case, giving for meaningful living in educational contexts. It is also in this regard that having a different lens to teaching, and consequently different student outcomes, might be of significance. As the findings indicate, a giving pedagogy tends to afford genuine community with students, and thus gives teachers more of what made many of them want to be teachers in the first place; most teachers become teachers because they find it rewarding to work with people (Fokkens-Bruinsma & Canrinus, 2014; Spilt et al., 2011). Most teachers also appreciate those special moments when students seem to 'get it,' the 'light bulb' moments. What makes teachers take up the profession, in other words, is closely associated with the very aspects that are problematic today—communal wellbeing and student engagement. A giving pedagogy might rejuvenate teachers as much as students to this end. A key strength of this study might be its role in showing that a pedagogy of giving can happen anywhere and at any time, challenging the prevailing view that wellbeing has to be an 'add-on' or just functions as a 'lip-service' for schools and students in an already crowded curriculum and for time-poor teachers.

Conclusion

Educators will continue on an up-hill battle to create a better world until we realise that new *pedagogies*, rather than new methods, are needed to address the current and emerging education and wellbeing challenges of today. This new pedagogy, we would argue, is not an added curriculum, but rather a deeper understanding of the philosophical foundations with which to assist the existing curriculum to be meaningful and worthwhile to our collective wellbeing. It is a knowledge and science of and about human virtues and values and what makes us truly human(e). Suffice to say that there are many definitions of what wisdom is, but a simple definition could be that we are wise when we do something that is healthy for not only ourselves but also the greater whole in which we find ourselves. Furthermore, if social concern is synonymous with a definition of wisdom, it seems that the research is quite clear as to how we can live more wisely. We can do that by giving more, and, by pedagogical extension, exposing young people to opportunities to give, and helping them through exploring, modelling, providing explicit instruction, and using incidental and crisis management situations, to experientially connect with the abovementioned benefits of giving for meaningful living and become an active part in building a future where social concern and care are the norm, not the exception.

Biographical Note

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