

Training Dignified Young Leaders For The Future

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Abstract

The last decades saw drastic changes in global relationships. More and more people became aware that global cooperation is needed to create a peaceful future for humanity that is sustainable and provides quality of life to everybody. Some values like, the integrity of the family, loyalty to our community, hospitality, compassion, collaboration, fairness, and respect for all human beings are at the core of the notion of dignity, and dignity is at the core of human rights. However, new generations seem to be lacking our values, including dignity. In order to train 'dignified leaders' for the future, a new approach with new content at schools is needed based upon Human Rights. A camping program will be shared in this paper to realize "Peace at home, peace in the world" motto that encapsulates the message of dignity.

Keywords: Collaboration, Dignity, Human rights, Leadership, Quality.

Human Dignity Gaining Importance

Introduction

The world is changing more rapidly than it has in the past. Technology and media are the main agents of that change because they allow every person access to every kind of information, even at the other side of the world. A country near the Arctic Circle is like a close neighbor for the countries at the Equator through a cellular phone or PC. This connectivity also effects the human relations. All nations, with different cultural beliefs, learn about the value systems of others. This causes either empathy or rivalry. It seems that in the near future all the new generations will know more about global issues than previous generations. However, the needed question here is this: Will they meet similarities with joy and understand the differences in a dignified manner and have empathy for them? Or will they humiliate the behaviors which are not approved in their own cultures? In other words, what kind of future awaits them: war and terrorism peace? These are the main questions of the 'current era adults'. It is believed that Human dignity and Humiliation are going to be the key factors of a peaceful world of the coming years.

Focusing on Terms

In order to discuss the probable problem issues of the approaching danger, its causes, the possible cures, and their expected results, it is wise to understand the meanings of the terms "Dignity" and "humiliation".

"Dignity" is a term used in moral, ethical, and political discussions to signify that a being has an innate right to respect and ethical treatment. Wikipedia explains it as; "an extension of Enlightenment-era beliefs that individuals have inherent, inviolable rights, and thus is closely related to concepts like virtue, respect, self-respect, autonomy, human rights, and enlightened reason."

On the other hand; *"Humiliation is the abasement of pride, which creates mortification or leads to a state of being humbled or reduced to lowliness or submission. It can be brought about through bullying, intimidation, physical or mental mistreatment or trickery, or by embarrassment if a person is revealed to have committed a socially or legally unacceptable act."* from the same source.

These two concepts are currently an active research topic, and are now seen as a forming core dynamic in human relationships, for they have implications at intrapersonal, interpersonal,

institutional and international levels. It must be mentioned here that a specially focused Network exists in the world focusing on these issues: "Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies Network (HumanDHS)" (See: www.humiliationstudies.org).

The Founding President of that Network, Evelin G. Lindner defines humiliation as; *"The enforced lowering of a person or group, a process of subjugation that damages or strips away their pride, honor, or dignity."* To be humiliated is to be placed, against your will (very occasionally with your consent as in cases of religious self-humiliation or in sadomasochism) and often in a deeply hurtful way, in a situation that is greatly inferior to what you feel you should expect. Lindner maintains that; *"In everyday language, the word humiliation is used, at a minimum, in three different ways. It signifies; an act, a feeling, and a process:*

I humiliate you, you feel humiliated, and the entire process is one of humiliation."

According to the Black's Law Dictionary; *"The dignity of the human person is not only a fundamental right in itself but constitutes the real basis of fundamental rights. The 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights enshrined this principle in its preamble: 'Whereas recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world'.*

Starting from that point, we believe that it is necessary to transform the minds of the present world into a having more dignified understanding of others and removing any type of humiliation. Nearly all of the nations suffer from some kind of humiliation. And if the citizens are "Caught Young!" the future world might be a friendlier one. As Lindner points out in her talk at the 15th Annual Conference of HumanDHS in Istanbul (2010);

"...The desired thing is to stimulate systemic change, globally and locally, to open space for mutual respect and esteem to take root and grow, thus ending humiliating practices and breaking cycles of humiliation throughout the world..."

The members of the Network work for more dignity and less humiliation and they also want to promote more unity and at the same time, more diversity. It is believed that these are the core values of the future since the borders lose their importance between the countries due to the huge changes in technological issues. However, the problem lies in the heart of that issue: Are we training our youngsters accordingly? Do they know the real meaning of dignity? Or Are they trained in such a way that humiliation is the main qualification of their future leadership? The main aim of this paper is to find a solution through a camping program design to explore and remedy that problematic area.

A Network for Human Dignity

Global relationships have shown great changes recently. As it is mentioned earlier, the affects of the improved information and communication technologies (ICT) cannot be denied. People belonging to various cultures have gained awareness about the systems of other countries through the Internet. They communicate; they question their social, educational, political, economical and legal systems and then, compare them with theirs. As the communication gains speed and ease, those with similar interests have started to form "Networks" through various systems such as Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter and many others. Even though those people cannot come together physically, they meet through the teleconference system of Skype and meet in virtual world and discuss many common issues. One of the networks mentioned above is; *the Human Dignity and Humiliation Studies (HumanDHS)*. I am proud to be one of the members of the Global Advisory Board of it.

As it is stated by the Founding President, Evelin G. Lindner; *"We are a global and transdisciplinary network dedicated to stimulating systemic change, globally and locally, thus ending cycles of humiliation throughout the world."*

We are currently around 1,000 personally invited members, and our website is being accessed by between 20,000 and 40,000 people from 160 to 180 countries per year

(www.humiliationstudies.org). The Director of the HumanDHS, Linda M. Hartling emphasizes the target of the group by saying; "*Members of the HumanDHS community are engaged in addressing some of the most serious issues of our time, such as human trafficking, forced migration, poverty, and illness, and violence, war, and genocide— forms of brutality beyond imagination.*"

It is believed that by eliminating those harmful cycles, space is opened for mutual respect and esteem to take root and grow. In order to realize that a frame of cooperation and a spirit of shared humility are needed not a mindset of humiliation. Researchers of the Network based the foundation philosophy upon the following principles:

- Study the dynamics of humiliation, promote interventions that can help break the cycle of humiliation and
- Restore human dignity.

On the other hand, the practitioners of that group attempt to;

- Bring incidents of humiliation in national and international affairs to the attention of people across the globe,
- Create public awareness of the destructive effects of such humiliation, and
- Promote alternative approaches that generate human dignity and respect.

Leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu and Martin Luther King Jr. are considered as role models for their philosophies. One of the best ways of working in this group is to build bridges between research and practice. Theory means nothing if it is not put into practice. The results of the processes must be investigated and measured scientifically. Science must be the leading force for the changing process of the world. Otherwise, fanaticism forms the changing values.

It is strongly emphasized that ***each human being is born with equal dignity that ought not to be humiliated.*** This forms the focal point of our Network.

TRAINING FUTURE LEADERS

It is a noble wish to contribute to 'building a future world-society including dignified citizens'. Since the wise vision is to contribute to reducing and ultimately eliminating humiliation around the world and to work for bringing more dignity, it was decided to design a curriculum for training dignified future leaders by Köksal in May, 2010.

Köksal believes strongly that theory and research illuminate practice, and practice informs research. She also thinks that the impact of humiliation on human dignity is great. Until recently, the consequences of humiliation were largely overlooked by researchers, neglected by scholars, denied by political leaders, and discounted by individuals and groups at all levels of society. It has been like this not only in one country but everywhere at every corner of the world. What was the reason? Like other thousands of educators, she had also realized that '*humiliation has become a fundamental mechanism in human relations, a mechanism that disrupts and damages interpersonal, social, and international relationships around the world.*'

The Newly Designed Camping Program

A competent system serves the end of enhanced achievement for all students who are accepted as the future leaders of the world as a whole. Meaningful growth can come only by focusing on change from the "inside out". The best way of teaching something new starts by thinking about learning and moving outward from there (Zmuda, Kuklis, Kline, 2004). Another important rule is to learn by doing. The necessity of practice is emphasized here.

As an educator, researcher and writer with 35 years experience, the goal of Köksal is to give support to the *training dignified and qualified future leaders for the planet.* Through teacher training courses (for 25 years at various universities)(www.hayalkoksal.com) and collaborative International ICT Seagulls Projects (at K-College levels for 7 years) (<http://www.bilisimcimartilar.com/en>), she has

gained immeasurable experience and she believes in the importance of training dignified leaders. And now through the well-established networking system and excellent core philosophy of HumanDHS, she invites all the educators of the world to a collaborative platform on the way of building bridges and bringing hands together: *A Program for Dignified Young Leaders of the Future*

The Reason

On the way of realizing peace, dignity and love, an annual conference was held in Istanbul on 28-30 April 2010 (15th Annual Istanbul Conference of HumanDHS) Please visit: <http://www.hayalkoksal.com/V1/index.php?lang=tr> Twenty three outstanding experts of HumanDHS had displayed a magnificent sample of collaboration there which is named "İmece" in Turkish. After the event, Dr. Köksal decided to spread those warm feelings and peace-focused thoughts to the world's children starting from the children of volunteer countries in addition to the children of the host country, Türkiye. She believes the importance of "catching people young" to establish some noble characteristics within them. As a result, she developed a program for an international camp which would be held annually. The first (pilot) study was planned for the fall months of 2010, and the venue was determined as a camping region of Istanbul (Silivri) upon the request of sponsors. The advisors of this Program are determined as; Evelin G. Lindner and Linda M. Hartling. The program would blossom with their valuable guidance and support. The members of the HumanDHS would be the leading experts of the program for the countries they come from and they would guide those participating. They were all the inspiring source of this initiative. You will find more information below about the program.

Project Title: © Dignified Young Leaders Camp Program

Main Goal: Providing the future leaders of the world with some basic characteristics and thoughts on the way of attaining peace, quality and dignity to be a perfect (total quality) person. In order to teach these qualifications;

- Creating awareness in young people about the importance of human dignity, honesty, modesty and peace.
- Ornamenting them with basic leadership skills.
- Teaching the importance of speaking a foreign language through positive words and good communication skills not only in personal relations but also in national and international gatherings.
- Focusing on arts, sports, music and meditation skills to achieve a healthy brain and dealing with conflict resolution and anger management.
- Teaching problem solving skills to the participants through İmece Circles and leading them to prepare creative and innovative solutions to the main problems of the world.

Through that content (additions are welcome) participating children will:

1. Gain a deep understanding about dignity,
2. Remove humiliation from their lives as the future leaders of the world.

An important issue should also be emphasized here: Teachers and instructors of the students will also be parts of the "training & producing" cycle.

Time Table:

- Day 1 : Meeting, Introduction and Plenary,
- Day 2-6 : Training and producing,
- Day 7 : Sharing & Caring Festival Day.

During the training days, 5 hours would be dedicated to training of the above mentioned skills and then social and sports activities will be available, in addition to city tours provided by the sponsors. Fun and games along with 'project development' will be essentials of the program.

Target Groups:

Young people ages 14-18 from various countries, along with a responsible teacher for them. Since it was the first and the pilot version of the Program, Turkish participants would be determined among the award winning teacher-student leaders of the 7th International ICT Seagulls Project (www.bilisimcimartilar.com). The same condition was valid for the participants coming from India. Bosnia and Herzegovina would participate through an NGO "Obrazovanje gradi BiH /Education builds Bosnia and Herzegovina" under the dynamic leadership of Ardian Adžanela.

Content:

Each day 5 hours will be set aside for;

1. Human Dignity, honesty, peace and conflict management and Leadership skills (theory and practice),
2. Improving communication skills and ELT practice,
3. Sports, yoga, music and meditation to keep body and brain healthy,
4. Problem solving skills and Īmece circles. Producing a collaborative project concerning Human Dignity.

Days would be enriched through Daily City Tours and cultural gatherings.

Sustainability:

This program will be held every year regularly. If any international organization wants to be the organizing country for any year, it should be negotiated in advance.

Participating Countries:

The participating countries of the 15th Annual Conference of HumanDHS will be the guests of the first year. However, we will welcome all other volunteer nations as well.

Instructors:

For the courses to be given during the Camp program; HumanDHS leaders are supposed to be giving the courses concerning Human Dignity, Humiliation, Conflict and Anger Management, Music, Yoga and Meditation. Detailed organization about the syllabus and teaching styles will be shared later on.

Expected Outcomes:

It is believed that each activity or program must have a logbook or a product to share the unique experiences. During the camp, students will work in groups (Īmece Circles) to produce their own projects based upon dignity and those will be prepared as CD and also shared through a web page or Blog. The final Festival day will create a wonderful opportunity for the participants to share their camping days with the public.

Some Final remarks

It is believed that this project will open a new page for the dignified leaders of the future world. As mentioned earlier, practice is the key. Establishing and maintaining a competent system might pave the ways of the dignity for a peaceful world. If we all believe in the power of collaboration, we can create the beauty of sharing and caring with love, respect and tolerance without witnessing any sign of humiliation.

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