

# Teachers' Reflections After One Year of Integrating SSEHV Into Mainstream Teaching Qujiang Experimental Primary School, Guandong Province March, 2006

Translated from Chinese

## The Values Education Lit a Heart Lamp Liu

After teaching for 17 years, with the continuous challenges, preparing lessons, correcting students' papers and counseling students, I was feeling burnt out and restless. This year when I participated in the values education experimental study, fortunately the theory of love was like fresh blood. I feel it has lit a heart lamp, has illuminated my chest! In the year there have been many benefits. Teaching has become a happiness! Under the influence of the traditional ideas, I thought I was a good teacher as long as the students were getting results. Therefore in my teaching I would always strive for perfection and always thought the students had grasped the complete knowledge as long as they obtained good test results. But the fact is not so. You pay very much, but the harvest is actually very little. Facing this fact, I had become excessively sad, excessively disappointed and very tired. My teaching did not have any meaning. Then I started to participate in the values education training and we became aware of the theory to "awaken the child's innermost feelings, thoughts and values", "help the children to know they all have special qualities" and "the deepest impression the student has is of the teacher's personality, not the knowledge which she teaches". All of this touched me in a very big way and I blushed with shame when I recalled the past. Though I had thought myself to be a teacher, only pursuing the academic score was really superficial. I have learned the "humanist" side of the work, to "take the love as the starting point" even if the student's outcomes are not so good. I try as much as possible not to look at the superficial things but to discover the students' true intrinsic selves. As a result of my own values change I now always set out to try to discover the students' happy side, maintain a happy mood in the classroom, and now I have finally found the work to be a joy, and my teaching to be happy.

Second, the theory provides an ingenious plan to nurture the human. After a year's practice, I have seen many successful cases arising from learning how to treat the students. Loving the students has indeed had some very good results. I remember one day early in the semester when I arrived at school and found that the class leader had not taken up her duty. Everything was chaotic. As soon as I saw that, my reaction was to become angry. But I changed my mind as soon as I questioned whether getting angry can have a good educational effect. So I looked for the class leader and asked why she had not taken up her duty for the day. Then I asked her why she thought her teacher and classmates had elected her to be class leader. She had tears streaming down her face. I knew that forgiving her had lightened her conscience and had awakened her innermost feelings.

Third, the values education has been like a light radiating to others. For a year I was like a honeybee taking honey, absorbing the nutrition from the values education. This led to very good results in my work, and I have shared these experiences with other people. My younger sister expects everything to be perfect. She was even like this with her own daughter. She expected the daughter to do everything according to her wish, scolded her frequently, and had consequently aroused a rebellious attitude in the child. She is only very young but she did not like studying. My younger sister became worried about this. I told her that every child is an independent individual who must be respected and given loving care. I said, “You now always scold her. This can only develop hatred in the child’s psychology. If you really love her, broadcast the seed of love”. She listened, reconsidered her own words and deeds and asked me to lend her material to read. She has slowly nurtured the idea and transformed. The daughter eventually changed to become open and bright, and now the mother and daughter relate harmoniously.

The year-long experiment must come to an end, but the valuable experience of this year has given me life-long benefits. Actually, it is like a beacon light – it has illuminated my teaching profession, helped me to become warm and to walk happily.

### **Let Us Embrace the Values Education Together** **Lin Shaofang**

According to modern education theory, the teacher is the knowledge disseminator, not merely the classroom organizer. The teacher must also co-ordinate interpersonal relationships and concerns with student psychology. I think that the values education has brought equally good results to all of these areas, from the different methods used. I am extremely grateful to the school for giving me the chance to study the practice of values education, letting me change my thoughts and emotions. The truth from my heart of hearts was that I did not think these matters could be achieved, however since participating in the values education project I have changed my feeling.

This semester I teach Grade 3 mathematics. I have taught my two classes since they were in Grade 1. When these two classes were formed the gender balance was not very even. One class had predominantly girls and the discipline was quite good. The other had predominantly boys and the discipline was bad.

Since I have been participating in the values education research I use silent sitting as much as possible to influence the students’ sentiments. When I first started the students all thought it was very amusing. Once in a while they would secretly open their eyes to look. Afterwards when they started to take it more seriously, they really started to experience the effects. In the class with mostly boys, they will now do silent sitting well. Few students speak out of turn now. In the girls’ class, where the discipline was originally good, I have noticed that since using silent sitting more are raising their hands to speak. Their work quality has also improved. There has been some transformation in the students’ thoughts and behaviour. The love, non-violence, right conduct etc. have started to seep through the class. In the mathematics class I use group co-operation and discussion as much as possible and this displays the students’ team spirit and the spirit of benevolence and mutual help. In teaching the content I try as far as possible to change the question content to reflect values like environmental protection, offering compassion, doing good and so on – while the students are studying new knowledge they can also be paying attention to ecological equilibrium,

cherishing the schoolmates, forgiving etc. The right behaviour, non-violence and truth values are seeping in. After class the children are asked to write a diary reflecting on the knowledge, feelings and ideas they have learned about. I also write comments in their diaries. This has narrowed the distance between the students and me. In practicing the processes of values education, I think the influence on the students' thoughts and behaviours has been the biggest.

As for myself: As the teacher, I can also sometimes can have mood changes and lose my temper. Sometimes I can say things that can injure a child like an arrow. But since participating in the study, whenever I want to have a fit of temper, I can look for a place – either go outside the classroom, breathe deeply, or imagine a golden-coloured cloud – and this lets my mood become more stable. Then I can carry on with my work. Sometimes when I am at home or in the office I may encounter an unhappy or worrying matter. Then I also use silent sitting. It is most often advantageous to me.

Besides studying the values education, I also try to expand myself through reading appropriate related material. I remember a French fable. The north wind and south wind were having a competition to see which one could make a passer-by remove his coat. The north wind first assumed an awesome pose, but in order to resist its attack the man wraps his coat more closely around himself. The south wind then sways slowly – immediately the man thinks the spring weather has come and slowly unbuttons then later takes off his coat. This makes me think about knocking on a door. If we rap more and more loudly and anxiously we are not going to be able to open a solid door any more easily. We have to inspire, and seek the opportunity to guide the person inside to slowly unlatch their gate and let the sunlight penetrate. I am profoundly aware of the lines from the opera "A Metre of Sunlight": "For me a metre of sunlight, only then another metre, will accompany me brightly to walk each step".

There was a new boy who joined my class whose name was "Bright Bright", but his performance did not reflect his name. His knowledge and understanding were quite good, but he always spoke in a little voice, lowered his head, would not answer questions and would not speak to anybody.

Through a conversation with his parents, I found out more about his situation. He had spent a lot of time living with his paternal grandparents, while his parents had lived somewhere else. From his parents, therefore, he had received very little loving concern or communication and he had become estranged from them. The parents lacked basic parenting methods. When he was mischievous his parents would hit him. In addition, because he had lived apart from his parents for a long time, their bond was not deep and they were not very willing to express their feelings to him. In addition the parents paid excessive attention to his older brother, which caused another kind of damage to "Bright Bright's" psyche. I noticed that he always hoped for the teacher to pay attention to him. When I stood beside him, although I did not look at him specially, I could feel that he was looking at me secretly, listening earnestly, and not disturbing me. In the classroom even if I called upon him directly to answer, from the beginning he would not open his mouth. His classmates and I would applaud him and encourage him to speak. With this encouragement over time, Bright Bright began to dare to answer questions. He is very intelligent and the transformation was very quick. I asked him to have a conversation with him alone. I told him that I was very pleased with his great progress, that his classmates and I all like him very much. I also asked him whether he thought we were good friends and that he was welcome to talk to me whenever he had



something he wanted to say, but that one premise for our conversations was for him to make eye contact with me. Because of this conversation, Bright Bright began to gain ground slowly. I would often prompt, or start a sentence and allow him to complete, then I would praise him promptly, as would his classmates. Throughout the semester's endeavour, even though he had several relapses, with my patient endeavour and his parents' co-operation, Bright Bright has changed brightly – really changed! He is no longer the boy we saw before, with his head forever lowered and lacking self confidence. He has turned into a joyful young boy who is positive, lively, open and bright, and fills the class with sunlight.

### **The Students and I Grow Through Values Education**

#### **Lai Jianmei**

“A year ago, a pair of warm hands powerfully gripped my hand. His eye was filled with love, like warm sunlight, like a happy song – and his love flowed in to open trust in my heart.... For a year I have kept firmly in mind the sincere words and I have given my most honest reply through my efforts, to my teacher.” Reading this student's reflection, I remembered what had happened a year ago that allowed me to change this student. One day last March I was correcting papers in my office when suddenly in through the gate came an indignant parent with a fat boy and a thin boy. “Teacher, this fat boy has bullied my child all day!” The parent described his words and deeds, and I was very angry. Looking at the fat boy's defiant appearance, I really wanted to step up to him and take his Young Pioneer badge off his chest and reprove him. At this critical moment I remembered a comment, “We should still love students even in their unlovable moments”. By this time I had controlled my mood slightly. I asked the parent and the thin boy to sit down, then held the fat boy's hand and said, with a smile on my face, “You also sit down”. Now I was trying, like shooting at him, to fill my vision with love as I said to him, “You are all 5<sup>th</sup> class students, growing to be men. A man should have strong emotions and dare to acknowledge a mistake. Do you think you are able to do that well?” Strangely, by this time the boy had lowered his head. Then I said, “As human beings we all do the wrong things sometimes, but we have to know that wrong can't change wrong. Whoever was wrong in this event I am no longer going to investigate. I forgive you for this passing impulse and believe that in your next performance you will show how well you have grown up. Do we have an agreement?” “Good,” came a very low voice from the fat boy. Next I guaranteed to the parent that there would be no repeat of the matter. Encouraged by the trust they all placed in me, I was startled to see that the fat boy had tears in his eyes and had closed his lips tightly and made an effort to nod. “Only through love can we teach students to love”, says Sathya Sai Baba. Because he was treated with love and trust, three days later the fat boy visited the parent and thin boy of his own initiative to apologise. Two weeks later the student on duty reported that he had helped a lower grade schoolmate to work. At the end of the semester he was voted by the class as the “pivotal man to take pleasure in serving others”. Because of the love and the trust shown to him that day the sprout started to grow healthy and strong. I closed his book, reflecting on how the ideas of the values education have changed me, also changed my student, caused us to learn about love, and created an atmosphere in which love can grow.

#### **Hu Shihong**

In the values education experiment I tested various methods of introducing the different values in the five domains to the students. I hope that by letting the students develop their own values they would come to have high morals. The knowing and the doing need to be unified. Hopefully the values education talks to us. It can produce students' behaviour from

within rather than imposing from the outside influenced. Once a person's values are formed, it is not easy to change.

Often there is mismatch between thoughts and actions. Most people know that to casually throw down rubbish is not right, but after having said this, some students will throw it down anyway. The students knew what is right but they were not willing to do it. Moreover, some negative influences could affect them quickly. "Learn for three years, fail to study for three days" and the good effects are all undone.

In China today the desire of most people is for material welfare, quick success and immediate gain. The traditional morality has been abandoned by the people and they have not yet developed a new set of values. Elementary school students are commonly gluttonous, want to play all the time, are selfish, do not have any sense of responsibility, and have not formed any good behaviour habits. I deeply felt that education was pale and weak and sadly realized the  $5+2=0$  truth [ie that the effects of 5 days at school are undone by the 2 days spent at home on the weekends]. As an educator I felt deeply the need to shoulder the responsibility. Therefore I think the values education not only aims to instill each kind of value into the students, but that it must also be carried over to the teacher. To give the students the correct values, first the teacher must have the correct values, understand how they apply, and treat the students accordingly. In my teaching practice, through the study of values education, I have deepened my understanding, transformed my own values and educational views. In my own life I have changed to become calmer. For example when students are mischievous or quarrel or do not listen to me in class, I respond with repeated patience. With this "gentle mood" treatment I try to guide the students with kind expression, enlighten their thoughts and avoid the stiff teaching methods. I also reconsider myself frequently. For instance, with the moral education strengthened and my understanding more profound, I feel my teacher's sense of mission more strongly, love the students more deeply, am more harmonious in my relationships with the students, and more artistic in my methods of work. In brief I have enhanced my ability to be a good person.

I have now taken over the worst class in the entire grade – as well as their lack of discipline, their academic performance was not entirely as desired. My class was the one recognized in the school as the most disobedient. The previous teacher had given me a bad impression of one child and I also did not have a favourable impression of him. Frequently he interrupted, disturbed others to get attention, and hit his classmates. His name is Deng Fengchen. One day in a mathematics class I called the name of a child and he shouted an insulting nickname, "The Bearded Chicken". I was mad, pulled him to his feet and made him stand facing the wall because of his foul mouth. He continued to use foul language, even about my mother. I really was in an uncontrollable rage and raised my hand to hit him. He said, "If you hit me again, what my mother will do to you..." I told him to apologise to me and to his classmates. He glared angrily, both of his fists gripped tightly, turning a deaf ear to me. He became flushed in the face, with a look of hatred in his eyes. I was really regretting that my impulsive response might have injured his immature mind. But I completely lost face trying to get him to apologise. All I could do was let him return to his seat, and continue to preach to the whole class. After school I had a heart-to-heart talk with him. First I apologized to him. But he still did not say a word and was still hostile towards me. For half an hour he stayed the same while I talked to him, until I told him to go home. I pondered for a long time about how to deal with his hostility and transform him. I had observed that he likes sport very much. I often organize basketball or soccer matches for the children after school or on holidays. So I recommended him to participate in the school track and field team and the

basketball team. He managed to come second in the fifth class 60m and 100m races, which brought honour to the class. I used the opportunity to praise him, his self-confidence improved and his academic record started to progress. But the changes in his discipline and behaviour were not obvious. It was still very difficult to find anything to praise in this regard. Talking openly with him or preaching to him was only effective for a short time and before long his former behaviour would sprout again. I felt truly puzzled about what to do.

One day I was in my office correcting students' papers. The class leader ran in, shouting loudly, "Mr. Hu! Deng Fengchen has broken the class' daylight lamp!" Hearing this news, I was extremely angry. I raced to the classroom, wanting to punish him. But I tried to calm down – telling him that it is good to play ball but not in the classroom. What would happen if it hit somebody? Then I let him sweep the room and the disturbance passed.

The next day the children handed in their diaries. I opened his diary. He had written: "Today I make a mistake. My teacher could have told my father or hit me. But he did not do this, and actually did not scold me. Mr Hu, to you, my true feelings, I cannot forget". This student's heart-to-heart writing left me deeply, deeply moved. A child who has not previously handed in his diary has written this speech explaining how my method has moved him deeply, from his heart's core.

From this time he changed. I found various ways to encourage him to progress. Once the school had a competition for the "most civilized class" and our class won. I let him go onto the stage on behalf of the class to receive the reward. I smiled at him, saying, "Aren't you good! The class has obtained this result and you share in the merit." As he listened to my speech he happily came onto the stage to accept the award. From that time on, he has been a changed person. He is extremely warm-hearted to his classmates. I let him display his special skill, and he is responsible for the school environmental protection committee, keeps order at the school gate and has received high praise from the school. His father happily said to me, "Mr. Hu, thank you. My child now has hope." Having seen his progress and heard this comment from his father, I reflected that if I had initially flown into a rage over the incident of the broken lamp, and punished him, the story might have turned out very differently. As a teacher, forgiving this kind of student has led to the establishment of democracy, equality, a harmonious teacher-student relationship, and good effects. The good relationship suggests many different roles of the teacher: concern education teacher, recognition education teacher, success education teacher, values education teacher!

### **He Xin**

In the year of the values education project I have learned to maintain peace with the students, forgive, be selfless, trust, teach from the heart and let the children subtly come under the influence of my words, deeds and manner, thus developing pure hearts in their own studies and lives. My love has won students' affection and trust and in return this has helped me to be more resolute and effective as a teacher.

In my class there was one child who was intelligent, diligent, fluent and clever. However his conduct was unsatisfactory. He spoke out of turn in class, misbehaved, found excuses to shirk his work, talked back when the class leader reprimanded him – although he was intelligent and had outstanding results, the teachers did not like him and his classmates did not want to have him as a friend.



The intention of the values education is to instill the values. “If I hear I forget, if I see I can remember, but if I do I can understand.” I clearly remember on December 21<sup>st</sup>, a Wednesday, I stepped onto the platform for a language lesson, and began to speak, “The will to succeed is one half of success – who in this class is going to be the strongest?” The children all placed their hands on their tables and their eyes looked at the blackboard for 20 minutes. The students enjoyed this game. Three class leaders sat on the platform, their eyes bright, watching the children sitting straight. Ten more minutes passed and the students were still peaceful. Su Qique began to be restless, and started to look out the window and scratch his body. The class leader mentioned his name, and immediately he sat straight again. But eventually he became restless again and when the class leader mentioned his name he answered back. More than 50 pairs of eyes looked at him like fire. I had to think quickly how I should punish him. I stood at the back of the classroom calmly watching, not willing to scold the culprit because I did not want to interfere with the class leader’s dignity. There was complete silence and the students were all anticipating what I would do to punish him. I did not look at him or criticize him, but very happily praised other students for their good performance in the game. After school, on the way home, I met Su Qique and we talked about his life and he told me a joke. The morning event had not affected our exchange. My heart felt nice and warm and made me realize that loving the other person is the most powerful way to forgive them for doing wrong. I rejoice very much over the children in my class and love their merits and their shortcomings.

On December 22<sup>nd</sup> I allowed Su Qi to have a turn as the monitor. He accepted happily and was almost dancing with joy. I had made a prior agreement with the class leader, Lai Baowen, that he would pretend to misbehave and not concentrate on his studies. Su Qi became angry and said to him. “How can you, the class leader, not be earnest about your study”. I quietly moved around the class listening to children read, while Su Qi was left with the task of maintaining silence. I thought my goal was achieved – I let him experience how it felt to his classmates when they were in the role of monitors and he behaved badly. Engaging him in this kind of experience was more beneficial than giving him a lecture. This experience shocked him in a very big way – as the result he changed a lot, and gained his classmate’s and teacher’s affection. I think that if I had initially scolded him crudely I would have lost a potential pillar of the class.

Since participating in the values education, the children in the class and I have grown together, letting me realize the value of the human values. Their pardon, forgiveness, loyalty, sympathy, love, selflessness, peace, patience, mercy and so on have given my own life a focus and this has caused my life to have warmth, forgiveness and love.

I remember that a year ago I was quick to vent grievances, without considering the other’s feelings. If my husband was late home for his meal I would become uneasy, agitated and restless. I would drift from the guest room to the bedroom to the computer room to the kitchen, could not focus on the television or reading a book, then take the handset and send him text messages or phone him. Although I have been married for 34 years, at that time my heart’s core did not have a foothold – I therefore became immersed in my own moods. Life and work can lose their direction. When the values education came to our school I was very happy to participate in the research. In the year of the research my impetuous heart has gradually become tranquil. Even if my husband does not come home for his meal, I am tranquil. I will watch television, prepare a lesson, perhaps practise writing some characters. I no longer get into a rage or slam down the telephone, but look at it from his point of view, understand, and forgive him.

## Gong Yuanzhen

Since participating in the values education experiment, the students and I have all matured. We have grown more healthy in body and mind. I personally feel that I have been reborn, and we are much more relaxed about our work and study.

First regarding the students' physical and moral integrity development, the EHV has been like a beacon light illuminating the students' paths, improving their quality, and their behaviour and habits have made very big progress. The students have changed from being quarrelsome to peaceful, from liking fighting to becoming loving, caring schoolmates. Even those who did not like studying have come to like it, those who did not understand politeness have become civil, and their academic records have also slowly improved. The quality of their behaviour has changed and they now show compassion and filial piety. It has built a solid foundation for the students' future. Before we implemented the values education the entire class discipline was loose. It was a bad class which was infamous in the school for fights and not handing in work. Since starting the values education the use of silent sitting has enabled them to settle down peacefully and immediately, the behaviour became more civilized, the entire class' discipline became much better and the academic record also progressed. These are the advantages that values education brings to the students. It lets them transform for the good, and have a good start. Sowing a good seed for the student's healthy growth enables the growth of a fruit which later is positive to harvest.

Next, take the teacher, an average person. The values education has allowed me to make a big transformation in my thinking. I have learned to forgive and forget, I have changed from hot tempered to restrained. Before in the classroom I would often scold the students but now I patiently guide them to speak the truth.

There was a student in the class who did not pay attention to lessons, always lowered his head and got into mischief. I did not immediately criticize him, but suggested to him with a "look". He was aloof and my "look" did not have any effect. Before I would have flown into a rage, clutched him and criticized him maliciously, but now I patiently waited until the students were doing their practice, then went to stand beside him, reminded him, spoke the truth with him. The result was that this student corrected himself very quickly and afterwards did his exercises very earnestly. Also he guaranteed to me that he would no longer get into mischief in class and would study well. This matter affected my feelings in a very big way. It helped me to understand that I should learn to forgive – when the student makes mistakes I must guide patiently. With patience rather than a storm of criticism the student finds it easy to accept, is not rebellious, there is no conflict, and only then is it easier to correct one's errors.

When I started practicing values education I felt puzzled because I thought Grade 1 children were too small to understand truth and forgiveness and would think that if the teacher shows love instead of criticism and punishment they would be able to get away with making mistakes and become spoiled. Just as students make mistakes I realized that as the teacher I also sometimes make mistakes and needs to say sorry. I believe that the teacher should be tactful and give rewards for good behaviour – criticism can affect students' healthy growth. I believe now that along with the values education and the children's growth in age, they can eventually learn to understand the truth, and my worry can be solved.



Besides the classroom, I think the values education can expand to extracurricular activities in the family, community and so on. If we can do this the effect can be much better.

As the next step in the values education experiment I am prepared to continue using it in the classroom to carry on the discipline. At the same time I plan to mobilize the parents, let the values education also seep into the home education. As such the school version and the home education can do three things at once: train the students to be high-quality, talented people; let the students receive more human values education about truth, benevolence, peace, good conduct and non-violence along with the subject knowledge so they can understand these fully to their marrow; and allow the students' physical and moral integrity to grow. In the future they will be socially useful, talented people.

### **The Values Education Changed Me Dong Shanmei**

For a year I have been involved in the ongoing values education research. Through the exploration process I have gradually come to realize that the values lie within each person and that love can bring them out.

After participating in the values education, first I changed my former manner to my students. In values education it is clear that only if the students learn love through the teacher can they love others. I remember in the past when the class troublemaker, Liao Junsen, had misbehaved I would usually look at him with an angry expression and scold him loudly. Then he would lower his head and not utter a word, but shortly afterwards his bad behaviour would be repeated. His classmates also complained about him. At the beginning of this semester he broke the lock on the classroom door. His classmates were all scolding him. When he saw me enter the classroom he probably thought I was coming to scold him. He lowered his head and did not utter a word. I remembered a famous quotation.... So I did not criticize him, I was determined to change him. I let him come to the platform then I said, with a kind expression, "Teacher believes you broke the lock intentionally. You certainly want your classmates to say it was not intentional – right?" Then I asked his classmates to forgive him. After listening to my speech, he was startled at first, but later was moved and finally said to his classmates. "Everybody forgives me. Later I will become a student that the class loves." His classmates listened to his speech and all, as if by prior agreement, applauded. It was a surprise to them all that the teacher forgave him. I believe that forgiveness is the seed of love, already sprinkled in the classroom and growing in each student. Therefore I want to have a warm atmosphere in our classroom, like the warm harmony of a family, enabling each child to feel cared about and cherished. Even if they make a mistake it can be solved and the correct guidance given in a peaceful, forgiving situation can enable them to correct their own errors.

The values education has changed me and my relationships with my colleagues. Before I would speak extremely candidly and had not considered the feelings of the person I was speaking to. Now I have learned to pay attention to others' feelings, which has helped to build a harmonious atmosphere with colleagues. Many look from the other's point of view, render encouragement and assistance and respect each other equally as one respects one's own family members.

The values education has changed my relationships with my family members. The whole family lives together and has a lot of clashes. Before I could not deal well with these

relationships. When I had conflicts with my husband, in most situations it was my husband who forgave me. Now I consider the other family members and our whole family lives happily and contentedly.

Finally I want to say that each person who lets in love illuminates, like the sunlight, in each corner every day!

### **Dong Shanmei**

First, since my participation in values education, the students have all co-operated with me. The students pay attention in class and listen, wholly absorbed. Especially the usually mischievous Liao Junsen – he said to me “Teacher, before in class I could not bear to be around my classmates, meeting with them or speaking with them.” After listening to the teacher in front of the class many times leading silent sitting, I have found that the class has become peaceful”.

Second, as an ordinary person and a teacher, I have found that since participating in the values education this method has led to obvious improvement. The effect has been better and better. This semester, 50 Yuan which a student had brought for school uniform money disappeared. A student came to tell me that the classmate with whom he shares a table, Chen Yizhong, had stolen it. After listening, I looked immediately for Chen Yizhong and asked if he stole the 50 Yuan. Chen Yizhong is usually mischievous and likes to pilfer, therefore he did not acknowledge. At that time I wanted to scold him loudly, again asking him to confess. Then I remembered something we had heard in the values education course: “Love the students, trust them fully, and try to find a solution to let them reform.” Yes, I should believe in this child – he can certainly correct his own shortcoming. Thereupon I let myself calm down and said to him, “Teacher believes you, certainly it was a mistake to blame you, moreover Teacher will forget, because you were not the thief, right?” After Chen Yizhong had listened to my speech he nodded immediately and said, “Teacher, later I will give the money to you and I will not steal anything else”. Because of my tolerant, trusting speech I really changed the student. Afterwards, he not only stopped stealing, he actually stopped misbehaving and progressed earnestly with his study. This is the effect the values education has had on me and on the students.

Third, in the process of studying values education I still feel puzzled about the suggestion that we should encourage pupils “to endure patiently”. I worry that if our students grew up constantly exercising forbearance, then excessive forbearance can enable selfish or unprincipled people to use them, with not-so-good consequences.

Fourth, I think that the values education does not have to take place only in the classroom, but we should also instruct the child to practise in life. for example, each week we can encourage the children to participate in a specific matter: do a good deed for a family member or teacher, contribute funds for the disabled.....

### **Lu Fengying**

First, through values education we have been able to change the students’ bad habit of being careless with their studies. It has changed the atmosphere one from an agitated one to a tolerant one. For example, there is one pupil called Liang. His height is more than 170 cm, his weight more than 80 kg – he is only in primary school but even if he was in the middle

school he would be an overwhelming, powerful boy. Not only is he big in stature, he was noisy like thunder and his academic record was not good. He was always stirring up trouble and had a tendency for violence. Everyone feared him, and over the years his disposition had become worse and worse. As his teacher I felt anxious and felt pain in my heart, and was always trying to find a solution to help him, to transform him. I fully used time in and out of the classroom to encourage him, guide him, do everything possible to stimulate him and to prevent him from having a fit of temper. I worried day and night. One day I was calling each of the children who had not handed in their work to come out into the corridor so I could talk to them one by one. When I called his name and looked to his seat I was scared by his behaviour. I saw him stabbing at his own face with his pen. My heart was sobbing and the tears also wet my face. At the time I could only do everything possible to control his mood and his behaviour as soon as possible. I put the class leader in charge of the class, took him firmly by the hand and took him out of the classroom. In tears as I applied medicine to his wounds I asked, “Why are you so silly? You know this causes pain in your teacher’s heart. When you grip that pen to hurt yourself, it is as if you are gripping your teacher’s heart!” When he heard this heart-to-heart talk he hugged me and said “Teacher, sorry, sorry”. I see this as a turning point. After that I created the opportunity to let him demonstrate his talent. He enjoys photography so at school events I let him bring the camera to take photos, and held a photographic exhibition in the class for him. He produced some splendid photos for display on the classroom wall for the teachers and schoolmates to enjoy, and at the same time he was enjoying the joy of success. His disposition has gradually changed – others have started to hold him in high esteem, he has started to show a love for study and has improved his discipline. He contributes to the group, lives together with others in peace and harmony. He has also donated more than 100 Yuan of his pocket money to the class charity fund. Everybody has commented on his progress and he receives praise frequently from teachers and his classmates. Now he has gone on to study in the middle school, but our friendship has continued and he keeps me informed about his progress. His mother said, “You are not like mother and child, it exceeds the mother and child.” This is the strength of love. This shows how using “the love” that is emphasized in values education can educate the students and contribute to a student’s good results.

Second – I think the values education has guided me in my practical life and work. As a teacher it is my responsibility to study new teaching theories about the science of teaching. However, these do not teach about the love, the character. The correct education method is to bring out appropriate emotions from the students – only then will their abilities develop. Sathya Sai Baba says “The child’s mind needs enormous attention and loving care”. In my work I persisted with taking the love as the educational starting point. I always use love to educate them, to influence them, placing “love” in first place. Just as Sathya Sai Baba says, “You can only teach them about love through love”. I use love with others and handle matters with love. This gradually influences us to have good personalities, charm the students and cause everybody to live joyfully, and to complete tasks in a high quality way. For example, in the past I used to be quite irritable. When I encountered a difficulty I did not deal with it very calmly, I was intolerant of students’ mis-deeds. The students obeyed me but I was very authoritarian. I also criticized the students constantly, blamed them for not studying well, but now I can use an understanding point of view to talk openly with them, and guide them to make an effort to do well with their study. The same matters can have different effects with different education methods.

I have a new class this year. In the class there was one student who was often late to class. On the first day, I said to the class, “In my mind, you are all clean slates, and I need you to



use good words and deeds to fill in the blanks. I did not look at your past, will look only at your present and future. In the first week, the pupils all did very well, and in that week the latecomer had not been late at all. I praised him in class and affirmed his progress. However one day in the third week he came very late. This time I was very angry but suppressed it. I remembered the words of Sathya Sai Baba, “When some people have injured you or let you suffer pain, enable wisdom to grasp you. Do not draw conclusions, promote the truth.” Therefore I let him join the class. After class I asked him the reason and found out that he had slept late. I said, “Oh I thought there was some serious problem and had worried. If you sleep earlier you can wake earlier and will not be late for class!” This kind of love criticism enabled the student to accept and to take self responsibility.

In teaching the strong transfer of love educates the students, through tolerant understanding, with sincerity, with acceptance of their shortcomings and mistakes. But the centre of the love has to be strict – only then can education achieve the “twice the result with half the effort” effect. There is a student in my class who does not like studying very much, does not concentrate in class, does not hand in his work. In order to help him to progress, I used extra-curricular time to give him supplementary lessons and also arranged a pair of good students to support and counsel him. I praise him promptly and encourage him unceasingly. One day when I was correcting students’ papers I discovered he had not completed his work. I asked him why and he said loudly, “I cannot do it”. I did not shout at him but said, “If you cannot do it you should consult a teacher”. I returned the work to him and explained it again. He changed his bad habit slowly. “Strictness” must be reasonable, must be moderate, must allow some leeway. This does not mean to let matters drift. But the students must feel that the teacher’s strictness is coming from a centre of love. Frequently people compare the teacher with a gardener, a mother – the mother who, when the child who has a problem, shows loving concern. Regarding underachievers, we should also be caring and loving. This kind of love, not given with nurturing and tireless zeal, will accomplish a new generation of people with love. When one sincerely, unconditionally loves others, such love can have an enormous effect.

### **Ye Zhenlian**

First, the values education enables the students to co-operate with each other. At present the majority of children are from one-child families and their parents have spoiled them, fostering their selfish behaviour, with no concern for other people and expecting to be considered as the centre. For example, when studying the topic of classification, I set the following scene: You help Mother to divide the fruit and vegetables into two kinds. In order to thank everybody you are going to give each group a package of small gifts. How can you classify these gifts (eg according to colour, size, shape). But as soon as the students heard “gifts” they struggled to snatch these “gifts” and some were actually panting with indignation – so much that I was unable to carry on with the teaching link! But after a year of the values education experiment there were many changes in the students’ ability to co-operate. Now we can carry on group co-operation in many learning activities. For example, in mental arithmetic we did a relay race and the students helped their classmates who had difficulties.

Second, the values education has helped to bring out compassion, helping and niceness in the pupils. Before if a student fell ill and vomited in the classroom, all the children would cover their noses and say “It’s really foul smelling, really foul smelling.” Nobody would, of their own initiative, come forward to help their classmate. Through immersion in values education, now if there is such an occurrence the classmates will take the initiative to help.

Some will bring him some paper, some will give some medicine, some will take him to the school doctor and some who do not fear the mess will clean the floor.

Third, the values education has strengthened the children's consciousness of environmental protection. They have developed an understanding that everybody has a responsibility. Before when I entered the classroom I saw trash everywhere, with paper scraps all over the place. Since we have studied the environmental protection content and carrying out activities to recycle waste products, and frequently discussing the environment, this kind of phenomenon has been reduced and now the classroom is neat and clean.

As an average teacher, I think that the values education has changed me in many ways. The values education has changed my disposition when I encounter a difficulty. Instead of being irritable or having a fit of temper, it has helped me to learn to endure patiently and be tolerant. The values education has changed my ideas about teaching and has enabled me to unify the students and to unify mathematics teaching and the values education. The values education changed my mannerisms with the students – it changed my outlook on life, let me think that this world is filled with love.

Before I was a person who was very irritable when I encountered difficulties. I would have fits of temper, regardless of whether with my students or my family members. In the recent half year my husband and daughter have said I have changed and become gentle. I am tolerant, have good intentions, and am no longer anxious or ominous. And the students said to me, "Teacher I now like you very much".

In my class I have a student named Liao Junsen, a boy who was active, mischievous and had a slight tendency to violence. In class he often did not pay attention, left his seat to take his classmates' study apparatus, and either whipped his classmates' hands or punctured them with a pencil when he was sharing a table. He seriously affected his classmates' study and was a very repugnant student. Before I would roughly pull him to the office, scold him for his malicious behaviour or ask his parents to give a written guarantee that he would no longer behave like this. But this was not effective and he refused to mend his ways despite repeated admonition. After I learned some ideas about human values education (for example Sai Baba's quotation about only letting children be able to learn love through love), I changed my approach to him. When he makes a similar mistake I am still very indignant but I breathe deeply several times, let myself become tranquil, try to understand patiently and inquire why he wants to do this. I tell him how his behaviour can have an effect on his classmates and ask him to think about how he would feel if others did this to him. After many attempts, this patient education and the use of vigorous praise for his small progress, he has made a lot of progress in many aspects. In class he can listen attentively, raises his hand, likes very much helping the teacher with work after class, and after every lesson asks, "Teacher, how was my display in class?"

When I experienced unhappy matters in the school, I would give vent to my mood on my husband. When my daughter had some questions to ask me about her study, when she could not understand, when she calculated carelessly or even when she could not fall asleep, I would criticize or reprove her loudly. After I had calmed down I would think, "How can I treat the child like this?" but once my temper started to rise I was unable to control myself. Because I often showed fits of temper to my daughter, it caused her to become timid, to feel inferior and not to dare to raise her hand in class. Since I have been involved in the values education experiment, I try to alleviate the pressure. When I counsel my daughter to study,

even if my mood is not good and I want to have a fit of temper, I can close my eyes, breathe deeply several times, let my heart tranquilly calm down and then patiently counsel her to study. Her study has progressed and now various teachers praise her progress in a big way. She speaks up very boldly in class and reads sentences aloud in English class. If a classmate will not dare to raise her hand, she will encourage her to have the self-confidence to raise her hand. When she cannot fall asleep I will sit with her and lead her through some silent sitting visualisation. This helps her to become tranquil and she happily goes to sleep. My daughter says, “Mother, it is really mysterious! After I listen to you reciting I can fall asleep very quickly.”

## **Values Education Makes Me So Beautiful**

Zheng

It treasures life and moulds the personality – values education is a long-cherished wish and is unceasingly and thoroughly with me. I look forward more and more to being sincere and happy. Looking back, I feel that the values education is like a beacon. It has illuminated human ideas and human thoughts, purified the body and the mind and the idea is gradually internalized to my soul. Therefore I can teach my students to be good, honourable people.

First, it has allowed me to look at education, to reconsider and establish a noble outlook on life and the values. After my participation in values education, I have come to realize the teacher’s sacred duty. The teacher is a human soul engineer, who awakens the mind and constructs the soul. Therefore my own personality and teaching strategies are subtly affecting my students. Therefore in my work I need to control myself and develop my own noble moral character, to develop the good and discard the bad in myself. I must show love. Love is the warm current, the rain and the dew, the handful of seeds that I am responsible for raising in my plot with painstaking care, with sweat.

Second, it is a simple way to put me onto the road of being a good person.

In my family I am the only daughter, therefore I was often impulsive, did not consider others’ feelings and always expected to be the “centre”. If something happened to not meet my expectations I was unable to recover after a setback. But after participating in the values education I changed optimistically upward. I have become magnanimous, open minded and forgiving. I say frequently to myself that others must feel happy and joyful because of my existence. If I can make others joyful I can also be truly joyful. In my daily life, I smile and nod to express to others my sincerity and regard, and the other person responds warmly to me. I am quite joyful. When I hear others express gratitude because of my friendly help, I am quite happy. When I have a conflict with others, I let myself calm down and reconsider the entire event, find the crux of the problem, examine myself and tolerantly complete the damage control. For example, this semester I managed to improve the character of the class I received praise from my senior colleague. But another colleague queried “Are you tired? How much time do you have to use to arrange your classroom. The teacher’s work is already tedious and now you have made it worse for us. The principal has wanted us to learn from you and it has increased our workload”. Before I would have ill-humoredly counter-attacked. But this time I smiled. I arrange the classroom carefully to establish the atmosphere – the happiness and contentment is very important to the students. But in secret I calmly analysed the problem. I did not want to make extra work for my colleague. After several days, I provided the materials on my own initiative and helped her to arrange her classroom



personally. She sincerely thanked me for taking the trouble. I was joyful. The values education helped me to learn to be open-minded and tolerant.

The values education has helped me to harness my mood. I remember that one day I went into the classroom and found that the whiteboard had not been cleaned. When I asked the child who was responsible, he explained that the eraser was broken. The broken eraser was on my desk. I did some deep breathing to calm myself down as much as possible. After a silent moment I did not scold the child on duty for not fulfilling his duty and also I did not try to find the culprit immediately. But I used my own handkerchief to clean part of the board and, with red pen I wrote "The Special Memorial Service". Then with a low intonation I delivered the speech: "Our schoolmate and friend that has constantly been with us and a good partner has today passed away. In this lesson we will borrow some time to hold a brief memorial service for him." I waited for the class to observe this with curiosity. They looked around but could not see any empty seat, so they were very puzzled. I only then pointed to the table and said "This partner's body is sitting there on the table. His name was the black eraser." Then I invited the class to discuss and draft a memorial speech for the eraser. After much discussion the children wrote "The black eraser – the sex is unclear – was born on March 1. On June 3 in the same year it unfortunately died, at the age of 0.33 years. The black eraser was loyal, devoted and conscientious. When it attended a class it stayed calmly on the platform, for fear of disturbing our study. When we went out of the classroom, it jumped up to the blackboard and cleaned it. It was so obscure that we almost forgot its existence. He was our friend and now we have lost him. We will cherish the new black eraser and will take good care of public property. The respected black eraser rests." Then with great seriousness we read the memorial speech and paid silent tribute for three minutes. Many students even had tears in their eyes. The students were dignified, solemn and respectful. From the special memorial service they have learned to take good care of public property. The values education allowed me to calm down when faced with this event and also I had, more and more, the touch of humanity.

Third, let me change the topic and pay attention to the spreading of sunlight in the students' minds. Since participating in the values education experiment I have been pursuing true knowledge in the beautiful sunlight, trying to offer compassion, and I feel this has been successful. I feel like a protective lotus leaf protecting the dew drops, showing love and concern for each life, each individual growth. The student and I are friends. In the democratic, harmonious atmosphere we merge into one organic whole, with mutual cooperation, love and communal development. Everybody treats others' errors with tolerance, waits for other people's progress and tolerates the others' points of view, and commends the others' success with a joyful mood. The student has a special trust in the teacher, therefore I frequently try to be a worthy example. In requesting the students to donate to charity, I am the first one to make a donation. If I request the students to work hard I also do so. I do not stand by, but do my equal share with the students. One activity we did was to hoe weeds in the school, in order to help the students set the goal of discipline. I persisted together with the students and nobody made a complaint. When we returned to the classroom everybody was dead-tired, including me. I had thought of returning to the office to rest, but if I tried to escape from the work, where would it leave the children? I continued to work beside them although I was very tired. In this kind of silent exchange I saw the students' eyes in my own, also saw my ideals in the students. Therefore we were mutual partners.

## Hou Xiao Ling

As the values education experiment went on I was pleasantly surprised to discover that the students in my class were changing quietly, changing to be more and more good, more and more lovable. Some incidents have made me feel warm in the heart. One day the mathematics teacher was on sick leave, so for the whole day I was in charge of the class. By the third class of the afternoon I was really tired. I was subconsciously holding my back with my left hand. I heard a child's voice clearly in my ear, "Teacher, you are tired. Sit!" It was Ou Jinhua, usually a very mischievous student, his face very red, bringing me his own stool. My heart felt very warm. I touched his head and said, "You are really very kind to think about teacher. Thank you! Teacher is not tired. You sit, and pay close attention to the lesson." When I continued teaching the classroom was more peaceful. After we finished the class the students all gathered around me and chorused, "Teacher, you sit! Teacher I will give you a massage! Teacher, I will pound your back!" I felt unprecedented happiness. The children have really changed, changed to care about other humans, to care about the class as a whole. If one child's belongings fall to the ground, each time there is a small hand that reaches out to pick them up, of his or her own initiative. In the classroom we frequently hear, "Thank you, you are really great" – such warm sounds!

Before, if students did the wrong thing I would usually accuse and criticize them angrily. After participating in the values education I no longer use these simple and crude methods if students make mistakes. When a student makes a mistake I remain, as far as possible, calm. I try to understand clearly the cause and effect of the matter and solve it in a temperate way that does not injure the child, letting them know that with determination they can correct their errors. I discovered that gradually the students have come more and more to like me. The relationship between teacher and students is now more harmonious.

