

COVER

BACK COVER IN

Educating for a Happy Life in
**DON BOSCO'S
WAY**



A STUDY GUIDE
for parents, educators and youth leaders
of different faiths

PETER GONSALVES

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*To
parents, educators and
youth leaders
of different faiths
and
all who have at heart
the holistic education
of young people*

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FOREWORD

It is no mean achievement to present the educative system of Don Bosco in a way that is complete as to its essentials and appealing to the reader.

Don Bosco himself, in devising this method of educating the young, took a long time to set his thoughts down on paper. In fact, it was only in 1877, thirty-six years after he first began working with young people, and after being solicited from many sides, that he ventured to write what he called, 'The Treatise on the Preventive System in the Education of the Young'.

Don Bosco was no armchair educator spinning pedagogical theories at his desk. His system of education grew out of a long experience – a daily contact with thousands of boys.

Because of this concreteness, it has a realism and a practicality that mere pedagogical theories scarcely possess. Practised in thousands of Don Bosco institutions the world over for more than a hundred years, it has stood well the test of time.

The challenge for us today is to interpret his system for our times in a manner that is both faithful and creative.

This task is a formidable one. Don Bosco lived in the nineteenth century, at the dawn of the industrial age, and in a context which was largely Christian. We, instead, live in the twenty-first century, in an age shaped by the rapid advances of technology, overwhelmingly influenced by the ubiquitous presence of the mass media, and diversified by social and religious pluralism.

The task is also an urgent one. In a period of cultural transition – as was the age of Don Bosco, and as is ours too, although in a much more complex way – the young are the most vulnerable section of human society and, unfortunately, its first victims.

A faithful, yet creative, re-interpretation of Don Bosco's method of education is imperative!

To meet this urgent challenge, Peter Gonsalves has brought out, "Don Bosco's Way". The content, the style and the presentation make the book both clear and appealing.

I congratulate him for this genial idea, and wish this work every success.

May Don Bosco's system of education come alive through these pages and become a meaningful and useful resource to parents, teachers, youth counsellors and all those who have at heart the growth of young people to maturity.

Joaquim D'Souza, SDB

Superior

Salesian University, Rome.

24 January 2011

INTRODUCTORY UNIT

Welcome to the Don Bosco's Way – A Study Guide.

The purpose of this introductory unit is to provide an overview of the course.

1. Aim of the Course

Don Bosco's Way is an introduction to the world of Salesian¹ education interpreted for the pluri-religious readership of South Asia. Upon completion of the course, participants should have a working knowledge of the values, attitudes and skills required for its successful implementation.

2. For whom

The course is meant for persons interested in the education of the young like parents, educators, teachers and youth leaders, irrespective of the religion they belong to.² It has been specially created for the staff of institutions run by the Salesian Family. Participants who have at least three years experience in working with young people will benefit more.

3. Organisational options

This text is a study guide. As such, it can be used for personal study, or as an induction programme for teachers of any educational institution. While the duration of the course is left to the discretion of the organisers, a period of two months is preferable. This will give the participants enough time to reflect on the content, discuss it in groups and put it into practice.

¹ Salesians of Don Bosco is the name given to the religious and educational Society founded by Don Bosco who wanted its members to model their lives on a French Catholic Saint called Francis de Sales.

² It must be noted that this presentation of the Don Bosco's Way addresses the educator, parent, teacher and youth leader on an equal footing. These terms are used in an interchangeable manner. Conversely, the words student, pupil, educand, child, youth, young person and youngster are also interchangeable. It is not our intention to highlight their nuances.

4. Course Content

The course is divided into three sections. The first part deals with the three popular methods of educating young people. The second is a detailed study of the principles underpinning Don Bosco's Way. The third section is a practical guide that applies Don Bosco's Way to the early stages of life, from infancy to young adulthood.

The content is spread over ten units. It is arranged to facilitate learning at one's own pace. Worksheets and a glossary are included for better assimilation. A website containing resources for additional study and research may be visited at www.dbway.in

5. History

The first attempt at elaborating a study guide on Don Bosco's Way was created in 2008 as a response to a request from the Salesian management of Don Bosco Technical Institute, Kurla, Mumbai. There was an urgent need to make Don Bosco's System of Education known to the staff of the institute, the majority of whom belonged to various faiths other than Catholic Christianity (the religion in which Don Bosco's educational pedagogy originally developed). This 2011 version of the study guide is a further elaboration of the original concept to make Don Bosco's best gift to humanity accessible to a wider audience.

6. Acknowledgements

The author is deeply indebted to those responsible for initiating the idea of an induction programme on Don Bosco's Method of Education designed for teachers of different faiths. They are Salesian Fathers Mario Vaz, Adolph Furtado and Bosco Pereira. Members of the committee that met to share ideas at Don Bosco Institute of Technology, Kurla in July 2008 are Salesian Fathers Joaquim D'Souza, Tony D'Souza, Joe Mannath, Mr. Conrad Saldanha and Mr. S. Krishnamoorthy. The author is deeply indebted to each of them for their valuable suggestions

7. About the Author

Although this study guide is based on the inspiration received from the initiators and members of the committee, the author has given

the project concrete shape in view of implementation through the www.dbway.in and through this printed version published jointly by DBIT and Tej-Prasarini.

The author, Fr. Peter Gonsalves, PhD, is a Salesian of Don Bosco. He has produced a variety of educational resources and founded the multi-media publishing centre, Tej-Prasarini, Mumbai. Two of his books are, *Exercises in Media Education (1994)* and *Clothing for Liberation (2010)*. His first presentation of Don Bosco's Way was in cartoons and was called, *Growing with the Young (1994)*. He currently teaches at the Faculty of the Sciences of Communication, Salesian Pontifical University, Rome.

UNIT 1

DON BOSCO, THE SALESIANS AND DON BOSCO'S WAY

This unit is divided into the following sections.

- Who is Don Bosco?
- What is Don Bosco's Way?
- Who are the 'Salesians of Don Bosco' and what is the 'Salesian Family'?

1. Who is Don Bosco?

John Melchior Bosco, affectionately called Don Bosco (Father Bosco), was born into a family of poor farmers on August 16, 1815 at Becchi, a hamlet near Turin, Italy.

A mysterious dream at the age of nine left an indelible mark on his life. He saw himself amidst scruffy street kids who were fighting and using abusive language.

Intending to stop them, he jumped into the fray hitting out wildly with his fists. Suddenly, a majestic personage stood in their midst and stopped



The dream at the age of nine

Luigi Zonta

him short. He entrusted Johnny to his mother, a beautiful lady who appeared by his side. She would teach John how to change the 'wild animals' into 'gentle lambs'. There and then, Mary, the mother of Jesus, began her first lesson. "Johnny", she said, "not through violence, but with loving kindness." She instructed him to prepare well for a great mission by becoming "humble, steadfast and strong".

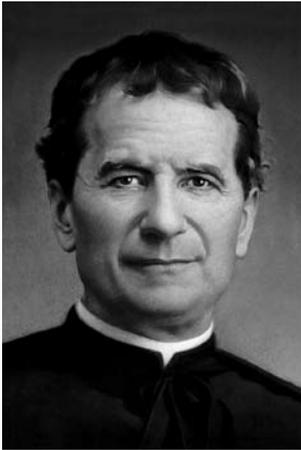
John saw in this dream a divine commission to work for young people especially... those who were poor and abandoned. He decided to become a priest – in imitation of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, totally dedicated to caring for underprivileged youth. Everywhere in the rapidly industrialising city of Turin, he saw the urgency of his call. He grew concerned about the different forms of human misery that were affecting vulnerable young people the most. There were hungry and lonely orphans, uneducated and unemployed urchins, migrant youth from rural areas in search of work, young victims of abuse by unscrupulous adults. He began reaching out to them in the by-lanes and market places of the city. He brought them to a safe and secure place at Valdocco which he called the 'Oratory of St. Francis de Sales'. It was his very first educational enterprise - the first step in the realisation of his dream and, together with it, his first attempt at designing a suitable pedagogy for young people throughout the world.

An attractive personality

To understand Don Bosco's Way of educating for a happy life it is necessary to know the man behind the method. From the little he wrote on the subject, one can clearly see that it was not his aim to put forth a new theory of education. He merely wanted to share with his successors the ideas he gleaned from personal experiences with youngsters. Pietro Braido, a historian and an expert on Don Bosco's pedagogy says, "Since we are dealing with an experience and not with an abstract theory, our re-construction cannot be understood without an explicit reference to Don Bosco's personality."³

Don Bosco was able to attract people wherever he went. "Priests or young clerics who happened to go out with him were amazed to see how

³ Braido, *Prevenire non Reprimere*, Rome: LAS, 1999, 10. (Henceforth PNR)



Don Bosco in 1880

much people liked him.”⁴ Here is a statement from a townsman of Chieri:

“When I was still a boy at Chieri, Don Bosco, who was then a seminarian, was highly esteemed as a cleric of great virtue not only by us young boys, but also by older people. He was liked by all because he cared so much for youngsters. He was forever in our midst charming us with his affability and warm affection. One might say that he literally lived for young people. Whenever the seminarians passed on their way to the cathedral for religious services, everyone would stop to catch a glimpse of him and people would

point to the curly-haired seminarian, ‘curly’ for short, the nickname we boys had given to John. His pleasant and easy manners encouraged me to try and get to know him better.”⁵

To have a complete grasp of Don Bosco’s exceptional traits as a human being, as a Catholic priest and as an educator, one would have to read his biography. Here we briefly mention just six characteristics that will throw some light on his practical method of educating young people.

Exuberance and initiative

Much of Don Bosco’s inspiration was derived from an unquenchable enthusiasm that was “youthful, persistent, and buoyant.”⁶ How was he to invite the tough street-urchins to his oratory? Many young people of this sort preferred to stay far from priests and religion. But Don Bosco did not hesitate to use unconventional means to attract them:

“He would go to the market place in his cassock, walk up to the gang of boys engaged in a game of cards, sit down on the footpath with them

⁴ Lemoyne, *Biographical Memoirs*, Vol V, 126. (Henceforth BM)

⁵ Lemoyne, *BM*, Vol. I, 307

⁶ John A. Morrison, *The Educational Philosophy of St. John Bosco*, New York: Salesiana Publishers, 1979, 19.



René Follet

and join them in the game. At first these dishevelled youths would eye him suspiciously. Once, he was aware that they had grown accustomed to his presence in their midst he would unexpectedly snatch the money-bag and sprint straight for the Oratory. Once there, he would dash into the church which would be full of boys who, by now, were used to their teacher’s methods, and would enjoy watching the look on the faces of the new arrivals who were unaccustomed to Don Bosco’s unique style. In no time their money was returned, a laugh shared, and the Oratory had enrolled yet another group of street-kids in its ranks.”⁷

Adaptability to needs

Don Bosco was flexible in the way he thought and acted. He could easily adjust to the needs of time and place. When, for example, in 1847, he realised that there were no suitable prayer-books for young people because the existing ones were theologically too obtuse, he wrote *The Companion of Youth*. In doing so he addressed the needs of young people and furthered their religious education.

Again in 1846, when he found that he had insufficient teachers to cope with his expanding evening classes at the Oratory, he came up with

⁷ Lemoyne, *BM*, Vol III, 82-84.

⁸ Lemoyne, *BM*, Vol III, 434.

a bold solution: he began peer-to-peer education. He selected a few students from the more intelligent who were desirous of employment. He made them teachers of their companions. In return, he offered them free courses in Italian, Latin, French, arithmetic and other subjects that would help them achieve their goals.⁸

Historian, Pietro Stella gives us this description of the man:

“Don Bosco had his absolute values and his constants but, working in the concrete, he had not become an absolutist and while making his decisions he never stopped to dwell on an organic and theoretical systemization of his ideas. What he said, what he did, what he got others to do, was always inspired by circumstances; and even when he generalizes or theorizes, he is quick to base these on immediate experiences.”⁹

Versatility

Don Bosco’s biographer, Lemoyne, bore witness to his versatility. His competence in various trades, organizational ability, and academic accomplishments, presented a formidable picture for an educator to emulate. He could, for instance, cope with several things at once. Speaking to his personal secretary in 1869 he candidly declared, “This morning, while preaching on church history, I mapped out an entire issue of the *Letture Cattoliche* and also figured out a solution to a certain need of this house.”¹⁰



One of the earliest photographs of Don Bosco with the boys of his oratory, 1861

Humility

Don Bosco always cherished the memory of his humble beginnings even as he moved higher in learning on the road towards the priesthood. The memory helped him to open his heart to the poor and the abandoned who, like his own family, had to struggle

⁸ Lemoyne, *BM*, Vol III, 434.

⁹ P. Stella, *Don Bosco Nella Storia Religiosità Cattolica. Vita e Opere*, Vol. 1, Roma: LAS, 18.

¹⁰ Lemoyne, *BM*, Vol IV, 377.

to make ends meet. He learned humility from others as well. As a young priest, he read the texts of some of his sermons to his mother to check if simple people like her would understand what he was saying.

He did not parade his wide knowledge of languages. He humbled himself by submitting for criticism drafts of his writings to young clerics. He was not upset by admonitions he received over the years about his ideas. It was said that he shunned honours, declined high church positions, was at ease with both rich and poor. It was as if he had a sincere conviction of his own nothingness.¹¹ Lemoyne recalled, “Everyone admired his honest simplicity and humility.”¹²

“Make yourselves loved”

The boys themselves regarded Don Bosco as the Oratory’s inspiration and centre. At one time, in 1846, he had to go to Becchi for health reasons. After two weeks had passed, the impatient Turin boys walked to Becchi to visit their teacher who had been sorely missed. They presented him with the proposition that either he had to come back to join them in Turin, or, they would move the whole Oratory to Becchi and join him there.¹³

On another occasion, some three hundred boys went looking for him when he did not appear at their school to hear confessions. The sight of this crowd of boys “soaked in perspiration, bespattered with mud, so tired and hungry that anybody would have felt sorry just to see them” must have moved Don Bosco when they finally found him at Sassi, a suburb of Turin.¹⁴

His personality shapes the method

We conclude this section on the characteristic traits of Don Bosco with John Morrison’s reflection on the link between his personality and the method of education he employed:

“Flexible and practical, extremely popular with children and youths, both relaxed and yet perceptive in his assessment of them, and at the

¹¹ Lemoyne, *BM*, Vol. IV, 452-457.

¹² Lemoyne, *BM*, Vol. V, 583.

¹³ Lemoyne, *BM*, Vol II, 395.

¹⁴ Lemoyne, *BM*, Vol II, 353.

same time maintaining a father-friend image, Don Bosco had adopted a technique compatible with these characteristics. It would appear, then, that a certain type of person would feel free to follow him; that teacher training was to be more than the gaining of academic qualifications and classroom expertise; and that character-formation would become of importance. The Salesian [and the Salesian Educator] would be, for instance, capable of relating in a relaxed and friendly way to young people.”¹⁵



The home of the Boscoss at Becchi, Turin, Italy

2. Some significant dates:

Don Bosco's biography, with a focus on his educational work, may be divided into three periods:

- A. preparation (1815-1844)
- B. educational activity (1844-1869)
- C. institutionalisation (1870-1888)

A. The period of preparation

- 1815** August 16, Don Bosco is born in Becchi, Castelnuovo d'Asti.
- 1817 His father dies.
- 1824 Fr. Joseph Lacqua, introduces him to reading and writing.
- 1828 He becomes a labourer at the Moglia farm till late Autumn
- 1829 He studies Italian and Latin under Fr. John Calosso
- 1830 He attends the Castelnuovo Public School.
- 1831 From November onwards he attends the public school in Chieri to study grammar, the humanities and rhetoric.
- 1835 He enters the Chieri seminary and begins his philosophy and theology courses.
- 1841** June 5, Don Bosco is ordained a priest.

¹⁵ Morrison, 57.

B. The Foundations of his Educational Activity

- 1841 November, Don Bosco begins to gather young people in order to teach them while he completes his studies in moral theology.
 - 1844 October, Don Bosco is appointed chaplain to one of the works of Marchioness Giulia di Barolo.
 - 1845** May – 1846 March, the Wandering Oratory begins at the Church of St. Peter in Chains. Successively, it is transferred to the Dora Mills, to the Moretta house and to the Filippi meadows.
 - 1846** April 12, the Oratory finds its definitive location in the Pinardi Shed in the suburb of Valdocco. It is here that Don Bosco and his mother come to live. The evening school is started during the winter of 1846-1847.
 - 1853 Don Bosco begins publishing and also opens a modest shoemaker's workshop in the Oratory.
 - 1854 Don Bosco has his first encounter with government minister, Urban Rattazzi who encourages him to form a 'society', contrary to the prevailing anti-clerical climate.
 - 1856 The first carpentry shop is opened at the Oratory; the first two high school grades are introduced.
 - 1857** He introduces peer education in the form of Sodalities for young people.
 - 1858 He presents to Pope Pius IX his plan for a religious society whose members will completely dedicate themselves to working for young people.
 - 1859** He forms a society and names it after his patron Saint Francis de Sales. He calls it the 'Salesian Society'. It is made up of lay and clerical members.
 - 1861 The first printing press is authorised.
 - 1862 A blacksmith's shop is introduced.
 - 1863 The first school outside Turin is inaugurated under the direction of Fr. Michael Rua, one of Don Bosco's first peer-educators.
 - 1865 Don Bosco's new project is a collection of writings from Latin authors for use in schools: *Biblioteca degli scrittori latini*.
- ### C. Institutionalisation of his Educational activity
- 1869** The Pope approves the Salesian Society.
 - 1870 The College at Alassio is founded.

1871 The College at Varazze and the Technical School in Marassi are opened.

1872 Don Bosco begins a female association to care for the education of girls. The new society of women is called, 'Institute of the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians'. Its members are popularly known as 'Salesian Sisters'.

1874 The Salesian Constitutions are definitively approved by the Holy See.

1875-1887 The Salesian work spreads throughout Europe (France, Spain, England) and South America (Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay, etc.)

1876 The Union of Salesian Co-operators is approved.

1877 Don Bosco publishes his 'Treatise on the Preventive System' together with the 'Rules for the Houses'. The first General Chapter of the Salesian society is held. In August, the publication of The Salesian Bulletin begins.

1888 Don Bosco dies at 4:45 a.m. on Tuesday, January 31.

To this timeline we may add a few significant dates connected with South Asia

1906 Six Salesians come to India and take up the mission of Tanjore, Madras.

1922 Another group arrives in Assam, Northeast India.

1927 The Salesian presence in India is recognized as an independent province and the expansion in South Asia begins: Burma/ Myanmar (1938), Sri Lanka (1956), Bhutan (1965), Nepal (1995), Pakistan (1999), Bangladesh (2009) with presences also in some parts of the middle east. In the year 2009 the total number of Salesians in South Asia was about 2,455 out of a total of 15,762 worldwide.

2. Who are the 'Salesians of Don Bosco' and what is the 'Salesian Family'?

To pursue his dream for underprivileged youth in every continent, Don Bosco created the 'Salesian Society' named after his beloved saint, Francis de Sales. Its members adopted the title 'Salesians of Don Bosco' (SDB) after his death in 1988. Today they are in 130 nations. They dedicate their time and resources to the service of young people, especially those who are poorer and disadvantaged.

The focus of all their initiatives is 'Youth Resource Development'. They believe that a total dedication to the *holistic* education of young people is their best service to humanity.

Besides the "Salesians", Don Bosco founded other autonomous organisations in order to form a world wide network committed to youth development. He called it the 'Salesian Family'. Beginning with the Salesian Sisters, the Salesian Cooperators and the Salesian Past Pupils, the total number of member organizations in 2010 was twenty-eight. The same year, the comprehensive membership of the Salesian Family reached nearly 402,500, and is scattered through approximately 2,040 works on behalf of youth, especially those who are underprivileged. It has one common heritage: Don Bosco's Way of educating young people for a happy life.



3. What is Don Bosco's Way?

Don Bosco's Way is a happiness project for youth. It is a unique contribution to the science of holistic education. Beginning in 1841, it has proved its versatility across continents, cultures and contexts, regardless of the differences and challenges so typical of grass-root implementation - from formal educational institutes of higher learning to non-formal programmes for children on the streets; from lobbying for child-rights at the UN to safeguarding those same privileges in the *favellas* of San Paulo or the *bastis* of Mumbai.

This course is an attempt to present Don Bosco's Way to the multi-religious, multi-cultural population of South Asia and beyond. It offers educators, parents, social workers and youth leaders the opportunity to be enriched by the genius of Don Bosco and his educational method, even though they may not share his religious beliefs, or accept his original writings that are clothed in cultural and religious vocabulary. It will provide the concepts, themes, attitudes and skills that are essential to Don Bosco's Way.

UNIT 2

PART 1:

THE AIM AND FOCUS OF DON BOSCO'S WAY

This unit is divided into the following sections.

- The Aim of Don Bosco's Way and the South Asian reality
- The Focus of the present course

1. The Aim of Don Bosco's Way and the South Asian reality

Don Bosco had a precise goal underpinning all his educational activity. To youngsters he described it in simple terms as "true happiness in this life and the next"¹⁶. To co-educators and collaborators, however, he was more explicit.



Working in the Christian context of his country and his times, he expressed the aim of his educational work as forming "Honest Citizens and Good Christians". This singular aim was the driving energy that led him to begin and develop a multitude of initiatives for young people, most of whom came from Christian families in Europe, and later, in South America.

¹⁶ Don Bosco, *Giovane Provveduto: The Companion of Youth*, (1847), English version, London: Burns Oates & Washbourne, 1938, cited in Lenti, *Don Bosco History and Spirit*, vol. 3, 40.

Our situation in South Asia in the twenty-first century is very different. As South Asians we are a world within a world, a continent within a continent. Some would even say 'a universe' of different cultures, classes, creeds and perspectives. Our societies are multi-ethnic and socially stratified. In recent years, the spirit of enterprise has boosted some of our economies and has generated an extremely demanding competitive culture. Simultaneously, corruption is rampant and is affecting all levels of society. The majority has to struggle hard to survive. Religion is all too often reduced to ritualism. Inter-cultural and inter-faith disputes hinder us from making progress.

The fundamental needs of our societies in South Asia today are an honest work-ethic, mutual respect for one another, openness to differences, dedication to truth, justice, equality and peace – despite the fact that, by and large, we are a God-worshipping people.

Can we then reinterpret Don Bosco's educational goals for our context as "**Honest Citizens and True Believers**"? Whether we are Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jains, Parsis... or simply believers in our ability to live and work together as human beings for an equitable society, we need to educate our youth to honesty and truthful citizenship both as members of our countries and of various religious denominations. Assuming that such a goal is acceptable to participants of this course, implementing it in the Don Bosco Way would be extremely demanding for educators and parents.

Educating to honest citizenship and true belief challenges us:

- to be *well-integrated individuals*, capable of blending our rights and duties as citizens with our core values as believers,
- to reason with an *inclusive mindset* that does not discriminate against those who are different from us and that shuns the path of prejudice and violence at all cost.
- *to work hard and creatively* so that the ethical foundations of our societies are not compromised, and we are able to establish peace, equality and justice for all.

If we make this educational goal our own, we would have to specify further for whom it is targeted (focus) and how it can be made concretely realisable (method).



Street kids at the mela organized by Shelter Don Bosco, Mumbai, 2005

2. The Focus of Don Bosco's Way

Don Bosco's Way is a *student-centred* approach to education.

This is not the same as pampering young people who grow up to think that everyone must satisfy their desires. Rather, student-centred education generates expressive youngsters who cultivate *happiness* wherever they go. The focus of the entire educational endeavour - the syllabus, the staff, the location, the architecture, the building, the playground, the facilities - is to be planned with a view to the holistic development of the young person for *whom and in whose name* it is created.

Reflecting on Don Bosco's educational contribution to humanity, Pietro Ricaldone affirms that the modern approach of his method was on the pupils' welfare. They were treated with kindness and respect; it was the educator's responsibility to place them in a happy, vigorous, enquiring educational environment, a context where all were treated as equals, where all were encouraged to speak up, and speak out, to one another and to their teachers. Knowledge was adapted to the level of the students; classes were assigned to students on the basis of their age.

The indignity felt by an older student when sitting down in a classroom of younger pupils was not experienced in Bosco's schools. He urged his teachers to show patience and understanding when pupils could not grasp essentials. And lessons to be effective, had to be prepared well by the teacher before they were given.¹⁷

Choosing young people as the prime focus of his grand educational project was not all. Don Bosco even related to each of them individually, taking a stand in favour of the more vulnerable students. Once, on considering the admission of a boy whose father had been executed because he broke the law, Don Bosco made the following observation: "We must be careful, because if we put a boy like this with other boys, he may suffer more, because boys can be crueller than they realise and could make his life miserable by making fun of him. Instead of improving his unhappy situation, we could make it worse."¹⁸ He therefore made arrangements to put him in a special care-giving environment and followed his progress till he was able to readjust to normal life.

The focus on student-centred education flows directly from the general aim of Don Bosco's pedagogical approach. Far from being the passive object of instruction, the student is invited to become the active subject and enthusiastic learner – the future agent in the reconstruction of society.¹⁹

The focus of Don Bosco's method is, therefore, student-centred for self-actualization and social participation. Through it, the student matures into a dynamic agent of social, political and cultural progress.

Speaking to his co-operators in 1881, Don Bosco revealed the holistic dimension of his educational concern:

"The money you donate affects body and soul, society and religion, time and eternity. It affects the family and civil society, because if our dear

17 Cf. Peter Ricaldone, *Festive Oratory, Catechism and Religious Formation*, Madras: St. Joseph's Technical School, 1939, 237-263, cited by Morrison, 54.

18 G. Bracco, 'Don Bosco and Civil Society' in Egan-Midali, *Don Bosco's Place in History*, Rome: LAS, 1993, 242.

19 Cf. Braido, *Il progetto operativo di Don Bosco*, 24.

boys are trained in our workshops, they will become capable, through the exercise of their skill, of supporting their own families; at the same time their work and industry will be of considerable benefit to society. Those studying science and literature will be equally useful to society through the exercise of their talents or through their work in the employment of the state. But what is more important, both these groups will not only be well trained but wisely educated, and so *will help to guarantee morality and public order within the population.*"²⁰



A scene from the TV film, Don Bosco, interpreted by Flavio Insinna (centre) and directed by Ludovico Gasparini, 2004.

²⁰ Don Bosco, Bolletino Salesiano, 5, 1881, no. 12, 5.

UNIT 3

METHODS OF EDUCATING THE YOUNG

This unit is divided into the following sections.

- The three methods of education
- A comparative study of the three methods
- Don Bosco's Way

1. THE THREE METHODS OF EDUCATION

Throughout history, there have been three basic educational methods of raising children. They are, broadly speaking, the repressive, the preventive and the expressive methods of education.

REPRESSION

PREVENTION

EXPRESSION

Each method is an articulation of a certain view of the human being that promotes a specific kind of learning. Each method is accompanied by attitudes and convictions that rely on skills for effectiveness. All three methods have been used by parents and educators at various moments in the challenging task of educating their children.

In this unit we will study the characteristics of each of these methods in order to better understand the uniqueness of Don Bosco's Way.



The seal of Louth Grammar School, London, in 1552, with the motto "Spare the rod and spoil the child."

a. Repression is an ancient model of education that continues to thrive even today. It is based on a negative view of the human being: persons are imperfect and should be remodelled through fear, force and punishment in line with the desire of the one in command. It seeks to make known the rules and then punishes all those who disobey. It is also mechanistic in its understanding of how the human being functions. Obedience must work with clock-like precision. Love must be tough. It must be shown in punishing wrongdoing. According to the Romans, *Qui bene amat, bene castigat!* He who loves well, punishes well. Tough love does not tolerate difference of opinion and diversity. Those who impose this method must maintain their distance and must remain unapproachable.

“The repressive system is centred more on the goal to be achieved. It looks at the young person as if it is looking at the future adult who, as a consequence, should be treated like an adult from the early years. The end results are severe and demanding domestic patterns, schools with a stricter regime of discipline, relationships and measures loaded with responsibility, military-style academies and the like.”²¹

Examples:

- ✓ Parents who control their children by fear and threat of punishment.
- ✓ Authorities who maintain strict reserve and distance from their subordinates.
- ✓ Teachers who use the cane to get children to obey.

b. Prevention developed around the early nineteenth century as a method of dealing with juvenile delinquents in remand homes. In France and northern Italy in particular, progressive perspectives on the human being were being promoted in contrast to the repressive model. The strategy of discipline used in remand homes was based on the view that



²¹ P. Braido, PNR, 7-8

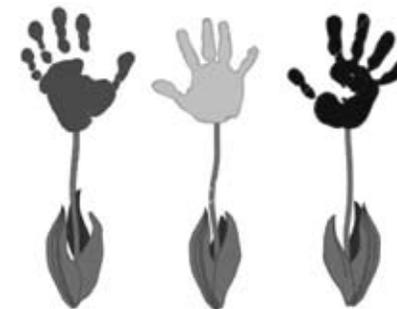
the tendency to evil exists in all humans. Young people, who are the most vulnerable, need to be *protected* from all influences that would morally harm them, rather than be punished for being affected by them.

Such a view caused educators to work hard at constructing *educational spaces* that would keep youth away from crime, and therefore, away from punishments for breaking the law. It was a *parental approach* that safeguarded the young with kindness, availability and the creation of a family atmosphere. Education and religion were seen as essential to creating positive strategies to forestall physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual damage.

Examples:

- ✓ The encouraging presence of parents at their daughter’s first job-interview.
- ✓ Educating youth to fundamental rights to prevent them becoming victims of abuse.
- ✓ Explaining to young people the reasonableness of a law with a forewarning to respect it at all costs lest they invite the consequences.

c. Expression as a method of education has its roots in the thought of the mid-eighteenth century educational philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau. Education to expression complements and completes preventive education. The forestalling of harm is always in view of the complete growth of the young person. The expressive method provides



a wide variety of opportunities for maturation. Experiential learning, talent-nurturing, skills-development, training for livelihoods – all these possibilities are made available in order to create the positive reinforcement needed for a healthy self-esteem and for growth in self-actualization and citizenship. The entire pedagogical experience is based on cooperation with one’s peers.

Examples:

- ✓ Outdoor excursions, hikes and picnics are rich learning occasions for personal and group expression.
- ✓ Games and sports are experiential lessons in discipline and peer collaboration.
- ✓ Communication skills facilitate capacity-building and help to break the inhibitions of children, especially those suffering from complexes caused by past experiences or social discrimination.

2. A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF THE THREE METHODS

The **philosophy** underlying the repressive system is mechanistic. The human being is prone to fail if not controlled and disciplined from time to time, just like a machine that will function badly if not well-regulated and cleaned. The preventive model of education acknowledges human freedom and the power to choose between good and evil while admitting, at the same time, human frailty. The task of the educator is to let the good succeed over and against the young persons' evil tendencies. The expressive system of education perceives the human person as positively capable of self-realisation given the conditions favourable to maturation. The educator is one who provides those conditions so that growth in the young person is facilitated.

The **attitude** of the educator in the expressive method is encouragement and support. The educator creates the opportunities for such positive self-actualisation through a motivating presence. The attitude of the preventive educator, instead, is one of accompaniment and assistance, one of forestalling the possibility of harm through vigilance and the creation of a safe and healthy environment. The attitude of the repressive educator, however, is to control the student through force and threats.

The educator's **skills** in the repressive system are honed on instilling fear by maintaining distance and reserve. This is a strategy to ensure that students behave precisely as they are dictated to. In the preventive system, however, educators develop skills of loving concern. They are kind guides who are discreet and farsighted in the care of their students. They accompany them in the hope of fostering good and healthy habits.

A COMPARATIVE OVERVIEW OF THE THREE EDUCATIONAL METHODS

METHOD	REPRESSION	PREVENTION	EXPRESSION
Educational Philosophy	Mechanism 'Man is a machine to be regulated.'	Realism 'Man is free yet prone to evil.'	Humanism 'Man is a self-actualiser.'
Educator's Attitudes	Be distant, be severe. Control through fear.	Be responsible and caring Protect, Assist, Accompany	Be growth-enhancing, Encourage, Motivate
Educator's Skills	Regulate through rules and sanctions; punishments and rewards. A measure of violence is needed to discipline recalcitrant behaviour. Maintain distance; familiarity breeds contempt.	Prevent harm. Avoid punishments. Create the conditions to cultivate good habits. Create positive environments. Guide with foresight and discretion. Familiarity infuses confidence. Know and defend children's rights.	Begin from what students Like and facilitate talent-development through opportunities. Create systems, networks and spaces for growth in freedom, creativity and responsibility
Learning	Forced	Guided	Self-determined
Educator is perceived as	Dictator, Policeman, Intruder	Father / Mother, Brother / Sister, Guide, Protector	Friend, Motivator, Empathiser, Model
Student is perceived as	Adult to be kept in check	Child, Fragile, Vulnerable, Having rights	Friend, Fellow-seeker, Future contributor to society
Emphasis on	Control	Protection / Defence of rights	Growth/Self-reliance

Educators in the expressive method develop skills of encouragement and motivation beginning from the things that interest their students, to the things they consider important for them to learn. Such educators surround their students with a growth-facilitating network so that they mature in freedom, self-esteem and responsibility.

The strategy that facilitates **learning** in each method is different. The first induces learning through force, the second through guidance and the third by fostering self-determination. In the first two methods, the student continues to be dependent on the educator in the third, the educator stands back and encourages the progress made by the student in his/her journey towards maturity.

Students **perceptions** of educators and educators perceptions of students also differ. In the repressive system, educators are looked upon as intruders and surveillance police while students are perceived as adults to be checked and controlled. In the preventive method, students see their educators as parents, guardians and accompanying guides while educators consider their students as fragile and vulnerable persons with rights that have to be defended. In the expressive method, the educator is looked up to as a friend, motivator, hero and fellow pilgrim on the road of life. The educator, in turn, perceives the student as a friend and fellow seeker who is to be prepared for self-reliance as a future contributor to society.

The **emphases** of the repressive, preventive and expressive methods of education vary radically: the first highlights control, the second protection and the third growth.

The table compares the three methods at a glance. They are intentionally presented as isolated prototypes. In real life, however, parents and educators do not operate in water-tight compartments. They are likely to use all three methods at various moments in the educational process.

3. DON BOSCO'S WAY

Don Bosco was clearly against the **repressive methods** used to control juvenile delinquents during his time. He was also aware that some of his Salesians had difficulty in educating some students and were eager

to know his opinion on the use of punishments. He responded to their requests in a circular letter addressed to the Directors of various Salesian schools in January 1883. One can clearly see the heart of a father who is eager that young people “benefit rather than suffer when they are the objects of disciplinary action.” He insists that his Way continue to be used because “we are making it clear that there is no place for coercive measures when dealing with children. Rather, we are committed to educating them by means of kindly persuasion.”²²

Don Bosco was impressed by this novel method of education. He even called his educational experience the ‘**Preventive System**’. In doing so, he borrowed the title from the novel method of educating that had been accepted by the more humanistic educational institutions of his time. He chose, thereby, a modern approach to education through loving persuasion, instead of through the medieval method of repression.

“[The] preventive system is more centred on the child, on the limitations of his or her age, and therefore calls for a constant and loving assistance by the educator or teacher, who like a father or like a mother is there present, gives advice, guidance and lends support. The end results are family-oriented educational patterns.”²³

Don Bosco chose the ‘preventive’ method for another reason. Not only did he wish to manifest the total break from the repressive system so common during his time, but he also saw prevention of physical and moral harm through education and love an indispensable solution to the problems of abandoned youth. He saw preventive care as the only way to stop juvenile delinquency and socially accepted forms of child exploitation.

“[It was] his *mindset*, which really was ‘preventive’, [which] had inspired him from the first years of his consecration to actually care for ‘poor and abandoned youth’ who needed to be strengthened in advance, to be protected and saved. He started doing this by using means and resources capable of introducing young people to the world of [God’s] grace and

22 Cf. Don Bosco’s Circular Letter, January, 1883, in M. Ribotta, JSS, VI/1, 1995, 96-108.

23 Braido, PNR, 7-8.

helping them grow in it in addition to being constructive as far as their up-keep, their instruction, their professional skills, and their moral and social growth were concerned.”²⁴

While he called his method the preventive system, he applied it in a manner that was intrinsically linked to his exuberant and expressive personality. These **expressive characteristics** form part of his educative methodology. They transcend the preventive aspects of protection from harm so as to include positive motivations to enable young people become the best they can be. Preventing young people from bad influences was essentially linked to training them for self-expression through creative activity. If prevention was better than repression, expression was the best form of prevention from negative influences – whether physical, psychological and moral.

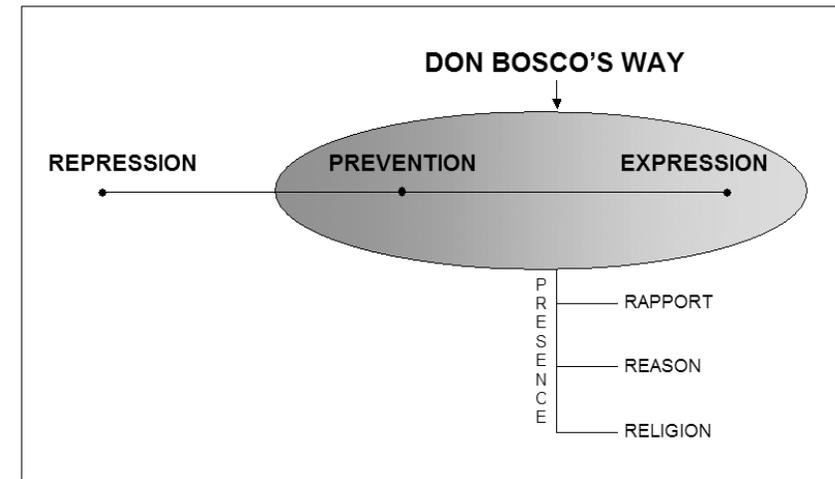
Through expressive education he strengthened the fundamental capacity of the youngsters to believe in themselves by feeling valued, cared for and loved. A healthy **self-esteem** was the foundation upon which all else could be built. Whether it was teaching languages, presenting the metric system, getting them to sing in chorus, letting them enjoy an excursion to the countryside or training them for a professional job; Don Bosco’s expressive education was directed towards self-discovery, the forming of character and the strengthening of personal resiliency against the great challenges that life had in store for his young friends.

It is worth noting that Don Bosco’s use of expressive techniques anticipates by a hundred years the ideas of twentieth century humanistic psychology and cooperative education. The advice he gave his followers in 1877 when the mentality in most educational institutions catering to juvenile delinquents was still largely repressive is truly avant-garde:

“Let the boys have full liberty to jump, run and make as much noise as they please. Gymnastics, music, theatricals and outings are most efficacious means of obtaining discipline and of benefiting spiritual and bodily health.”²⁵

24 Braido, PNR, 9-10.

25 Treatise on the Preventive System, 2.2 in Constitutions and Regulations, 1997, 249.



www.dbway.in

Through the encouragement of personal and community expression, Don Bosco gave young people opportunities for maturing in body, mind and spirit, for leadership, for talent-development, for becoming honest citizens capable of contributing positively to the betterment of society. This harmonious blend of the preventive and expressive methods distinguishes Don Bosco’s educational approach from other preventive approaches of his time.

Don Bosco’s Way as we have seen, is a combination of the preventive and expressive methods of education. His presence among his students as father, guide, motivator, hero, friend and fellow pilgrim won their admiration and their love. Many were even willing to lay down their lives for him.

His presence, practical insight, charm and charisma may be translated into three essential components of holistic growth. They are rapport, reason and religion, or to put it in another way, they are the attitudes of loving kindness, reasonableness and religious integrity.

The second part of our study deals exclusively with these finer details of Don Bosco’s Way.

UNIT 4

PART 2: NEEDS, VALUES, ATTITUDES, SKILLS

This unit is divided into two learning objectives:

- Need-based Education
- Attitudes and Skills for the Educator

A) NEED-BASED HOLISTIC EDUCATION

Don Bosco was a positive realist.

He was positive because he believed that there was no such thing as a 'bad child': "In every youngster, even the most wretched, a point of goodness is accessible, and it is the primary duty of the educator to discover that spot, that sensitive cord of the heart so as to draw out the best in the young person."²⁶

His realism consisted in his awareness of the many possibilities that could impede a well-rounded education during the journey from childhood to adulthood. Having worked with youth for over forty years, he was convinced that the only education worth the name had to be one that addressed the fundamental yearnings of the heart, the mind and the spirit; an education that was a response to three *fundamental needs* of every youngster: the emotional needs, the rational needs and the spiritual needs.

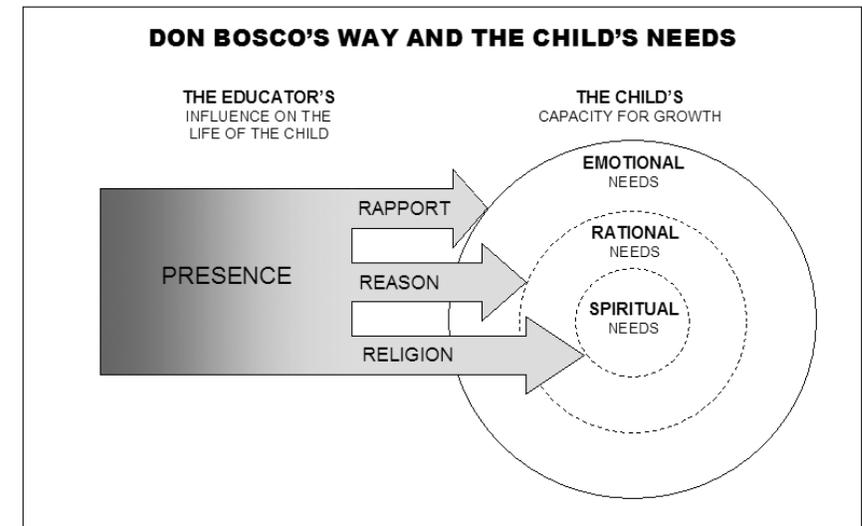
In order to answer these needs adequately, he considered the importance of three values as the foundation of his pedagogy. They are rapport, religion and reason.

²⁶ MB, vol. 5, 367.

reason and religion. Therefore, in Don Bosco's Way:

- ✓ the student's emotional need for a trusting relationship is met with the kindness of the educator's rapport.
- ✓ the student's rational need for intellectual enquiry encounters the reasonable dialogue of the teacher.
- ✓ the student's spiritual need for personal and social happiness is inspired by the religious guidance of the educator.

Diagrammatically, this educator-student (or parent-child) encounter may be expressed as follows.



Understandably, the holistic nature of education is far more complex than can be demonstrated by a diagram. The relationship of each of the arrows – rapport, reason, religion – is not oriented to the emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs separately in isolated circles, which is why the circles are separated by dotted lines. Reason is as important to the emotion and the spirit as it is to the intelligence. The religious quest that affects the spirit has its influence on the heart as well as the mind. The rapport that an educator establishes with the student invigorates not just the emotions but also the rational and spiritual capacities of the

young. Each need and educational response is symbiotically related to each other and to the whole human person.

This holistic nature of Don Bosco's Way involves not only the whole life of the youngster but also the life of the educator or parent. Holistic education is not a one way flow – from the educator to the student or from the parent to the child. *Holistic education is holistic even in the educational relationship it fosters between the two interacting parties.* It is, therefore, more challenging than mere teaching from a pre-arranged syllabus or an inert text book. Don Bosco's Way puts the educator and educand or the parent and child, on a combined journey towards maturity. For Don Bosco, education is the art of *growing* with the young day by day.

To accept such a difficult challenge as one's own, educators ought to prepare themselves well by cultivating the right attitudes and sharpening their skills. The sessions that follow will explore in detail the three values, attitudes and skills essential to Don Bosco's Way.

B. VALUES, ATTITUDES, SKILLS

The word '**value**' can have many meanings depending on the context in which it is used. For example, in sociology, values are "the ideals, customs, institutions, etc., of a society toward which the people of the group have an affective regard." Ethically, a value is "any object or quality desirable as a means or as an end in itself." Commercially, a value is "the worth of something in terms of the amount of other things for which it can be exchanged."²⁷

In this course, we understand a value to mean "a principle, standard, or quality" which we consider worth pursuing and striving after for the benefit of the whole educational enterprise. Seen in this light, rapport, reason and religion are values that are integral to Don Bosco's Way. They are ends in themselves as well as means to achieve the overarching goal of holistic education.

²⁷ All meanings in this chapter are taken from dictionary.com

An '**attitude**' is "a state of mind or a feeling, orientation or disposition". Attitudes can be positive or negative. Positive attitudes motivate us to realize the values that contribute to holistic growth. Negative attitudes reinforce our negative prejudices and impulses.

The deeper our conviction of the importance of the values we hold, the better our disposition or attitude to live by them. This disposition orientates us towards living out our values through our words and actions. Therefore, as an educator:

- ✓ the conviction that 'reason' is a value in the growth of my students, moves me to develop an attitude of reasonableness in my relationship with them;
- ✓ the conviction that 'rapport' is a value in education, urges me to develop an attitude of loving kindness with them;
- ✓ the conviction that religion is a value, moves me to cultivate attitudes of moral and religious propriety in my dealings with them.

A '**skill**' is "the ability, coming from one's knowledge, practice, aptitude, etc., to do something well." It means competence and expertness.

The attitude of being reasonable in my relationship with young people prompts me to improve my skill of reasonableness in the daily contacts I make with my students. Conversely, a conscious, daily practising of skills will improve my attitudes to students, which will reinforce the values I live by, which in turn will affect my general behaviour and my relationships. Thus, values, attitudes and skills are essentially linked together in the one process of responding to the young person's basic needs.

The chapters that follow are meant to filter the values and attitudes of Don Bosco's Way down to concrete skills for participants to practise in their daily interaction with youngsters. This methodology will ensure that Don Bosco's holistic education is understood, rendered practical and effective.

UNIT 5

RAPPORT

This unit is divided into the following sections.

- What is Rapport?
- Developing rapport skills

1. WHAT IS RAPPORT?

Carl Rogers, the renowned educational psychologist, has this to say about learning:

“We know that the facilitation of learning rests not upon the teaching skills of the leader, not upon his curricular planning, not upon his use of audiovisual aids, not upon the programmed learning he utilizes, not upon his lectures and presentations, not upon an abundance of books, though each of these might at one time or another be utilized as an important resource. No, the facilitation of significant learning rests upon certain attitudinal qualities which exist in the personal relationship between the facilitator and the learners.”²⁸

There is **no learning without a relationship**.

The more loving and trusting the relationship is, the greater is the confidence of the learner with respect to what is learned.

We only need to look at our own experiences to know how important loving kindness is in education:

²⁸ Carl Rogers, *Freedom to Learn*, Ohio: Merrill, 1969, 105-106.

✓ The things we learn from people we love have a greater impact on our lives and are more difficult to forget than what we learn from others.

✓ The things we learn in an atmosphere of trust are not merely bits of information to memorise but experiences that we become passionate about.

Contrast this with **learning in a climate of fear**.

✓ When we are afraid, we rarely learn. We often act in order to please the one we fear. How we perform for them matters more than what we think about them and what they teach us. We become dishonest. Youngsters who are raised in fear learn the art of wearing masks.

✓ In a climate of fear, we also grow more dependent on others. We are afraid of making mistakes. We lose confidence in ourselves. We begin to look to others for ideal solutions. We lack self-appreciation and believe we are incapable of success. Children brought up in fear are handicapped even before they take their first steps into a complex world.

Don Bosco gives us **three keys to establishing rapport** in any educator-student relationship:

- a) “Love what the young love, that they may love what you love.”
- b) “It is not enough to love, they must know that they are loved.”
- c) “Familiarity breeds affection. Affection breeds confidence.”

Education is not mere teaching. While the latter is a one way transmission of knowledge from teacher to pupil, the former is the ability of the educator to draw out the best from the educand.

This ‘drawing out’ cannot happen unless (a) a relationship of love first exists. Too often teachers rush in to ‘indoctrinate’ the values they cherish without first establishing a kind and friendly relationship with their students. Don Bosco’s Way guarantees that youngsters are ready to receive “what their educator’s love” once the educators themselves have made efforts to appreciate what they (the youth) love and feel most comfortable with.

The things that young people like are, therefore, the first points of contact in education – not the school syllabus or the class assignment. Just as in cognitive learning we move from the known to the unknown, so also in affective learning, educators must meet the learners in the ‘places’ where the learners feel most at home and in the things that the learners like: play, fun, recreation, sports, music, theatre, outings, new media, entertainment technologies, or simply hanging out with their peers. Being with young people in the things that interest them is the best way to letting them know that (b) they are loved. In this relationship of confidence, a positive disposition is fostered and the process of learning becomes a joyful experience.

‘Spending time’ with young people builds rapport between educator and educand and redounds to the advantage of the total learning experience. Affection gives rise to genuine trust and confidence (c) in which learning



Don Bosco and the Oratory Band, 1870

becomes a joyful experience. The prospect of making mistakes in an *ecology of love* does not deter the learner from taking risks. Failures become stepping stones to self-discovery, and confidence fosters creativity.

2. RAPPORT SKILLS

Some skills used to promote genuine rapport, a true ecology of loving kindness in Don Bosco’s Way are:

a. Listening in order to understand:

When an educator listens with the heart, i.e., in a non-judgemental way, he or she empowers the learner. Young people look for recognition (a basic need of every human being). By giving them time and attention they feel encouraged to be themselves and to express themselves without wearing masks.

b. Being Available:

Love shows itself in the physical presence of parents and educators among their children and not in flowery speeches or expensive gifts. The secure way to make them return love for love is to reach out to where they feel most at home. The presence of the educator in the life of the students beyond the classroom will boost the quality of their participation in class. There can be more learning in playgrounds, music clubs, hobby time, picnics and excursions than within the walls of a lecture hall.

c. Being Respectful to all:

Love shows itself in the esteem teachers have for their students - for all students equally and without distinction. This can be a big challenge for educators of South Asia where it is easy to relate well with only those students who share the educator’s cultural or religious background. Partiality to certain students and intolerance or rudeness to others is the end of a dignified teaching career. Educators must make extra effort to reach out in respect to other groups besides those with whom they feel most comfortable. Such educators are valuable assets to any educational institution.

d. Concern for the Underprivileged:

The attitude of loving kindness has to translate into care for those who are on the periphery. This special attention to the slow, poor, weak, the differently-abled is essential for educating in Don Bosco’s Way. It is a type of partiality that is respected by society, because it is directed towards

those who are usually left behind in the race to compete. South Asian society is so markedly stratified that a special concern for those at the bottom of the social ladder becomes a moral obligation to any genuine educator.

e. Being Creative:

Love is full of surprises. Educators who are inventive in their methods of teaching usually endear themselves to their students. This means taking risks. In an environment of loving acceptance, the failure or 'making



A Sri Lankan picnic - building rapport through the Salesian educative presence of optimism and joy.

a fool of oneself' is an opportunity for new insights, a chance to know why things went wrong, a possibility for greater self-discovery. Mistakes become occasions for improvement and success because love is the safety net that bears all things and understands all things.²⁹

29 Cf. The Holy Bible: I Corinthians 13:7-8.

UNIT 6

REASON

This unit is divided into the following sections.

- What is Reason?
- Developing reasonability skills

1. WHAT IS REASON?

The role of reason in Don Bosco's Way is indispensable because it acts like a **bridge** in the education of young people in three important ways:

- ✓ It safeguards a relationship based on love (the emotional need) from degenerating into mere sentimentality.
- ✓ It checks the believer's faith (the spiritual need) from falling into superstition or religious fanaticism.
- ✓ It checks reasoning (the rational need) from becoming individualist anarchism.

In short, reason checks the three values from turning into extremes or exaggerations. Thanks to the healthy balance of love, faith and reason, educators in Don Bosco's Way encounter their students with a disposition of respect that facilitates learning and discovery.

However, respect for students is possible only when educators are happy with their own **identity**. They will be able to know and accept their students only if they first know and accept themselves. This is the basis for the reasonable formulation of rules:

- ✓ Educators who are uncomfortable with their own identities are more likely to use rules as defences to conceal their insecurities. They wear

masks to hide their complexes and are not at ease in their students' company. The rules they make are usually convenient to *their* interests and seldom challenge their students to grow.

✓ Teachers who do not know or accept their students are unable to gauge whether the rules they make are really helping their students.

✓ Educators who have a **healthy self-esteem**, those who know and accept themselves as they are (with their positive and negative characteristics), are more likely to know and accept their students well. Only teachers like these are at home with their pupils. The rules that they design are trusted by the students as positive steps for personal and community growth.



The harmony between self-understanding and student-understanding enables educators create excellent learning spaces that benefit the educator-student relationship.

2. REASONABILITY SKILLS

Don Bosco's Way gives reasonableness great importance especially in formulating rules, in dealing with corrections and in applying sanctions:

a. On Rules

Some hints to make the rules reasonable are as follows:

1. Base your rules on common sense.
2. Keep them few.
3. Keep their formulations simple and clear.
4. If rules need to be explained, it is important to briefly emphasise how they will benefit the students.
5. Communicate the rules clearly; orally and in writing.
6. Youth have a tendency to forget, often without malice. Timely reminders will help.
7. Not all rules have the same value. Those that take priority need to be firmly implemented. Those that are merely convenient can be applied with a certain flexibility.
8. Rules have functional value and are not ends in themselves. Their usefulness needs to be evaluated in course of time.
9. It is best to let students have a say in the formulation of their own rules. They are likely to show greater responsibility in abiding by them.
10. To check your sense of fairness before promulgating rules, it may be good to put yourself in the shoes of those who would have to observe them.

b. On Corrections

Since youth are apt to forget rules, corrections are often necessary. Here are some useful hints:

1. Decide whether a correction is really necessary. There may be more tactful ways of reminding a young person about an error committed. Note that an error may occur because of other intervening factors and not because of the student's fault. In such a case, deal with the cause and not the student.

2. Correct personal faults personally in an atmosphere of concern and respect for the offender.

3. Before correcting ask yourself:

- ✓ What is the principal reason for the correction.
- ✓ What is the core value violated.
- ✓ What method of correction is proportionate to the offence.

4. Avoid the following methods of correcting:

- ✓ Do not accuse, impute malice, or jump to conclusions.
- ✓ Do not call names or use offensive language.
- ✓ Do not be sarcastic.
- ✓ Do not lecture.
- ✓ Do not moralise.
- ✓ Do not be violent, don't raise your voice.
- ✓ Do not get personal.
- ✓ Do not publicise or make a scene of the act of correcting.
- ✓ Do not involve the parents – unless deemed important or urgent.

5. When correcting:

- ✓ Be factual.
- ✓ Be polite.
- ✓ Be reasonable.
- ✓ Be firm.
- ✓ Be brief.

6. After correcting:

- ✓ Do not hold a grudge; be ready to forgive students who ask pardon for their mistakes.

- ✓ Do not remind the student about faults committed in the past.
- ✓ Do not use the fault of a known student as a public example of behaviour to be avoided by your listeners.
- ✓ Ensure that the relationship and lines of communication with the offender are still intact.
- ✓ Ask pardon of the student if you have been unjust or rude in the act of correcting.

c. *On Sanctions*

- ✓ Never humiliate.
- ✓ Never use physical force.
- ✓ In general, never punish.
- ✓ If faults are big ones, or if they are repeated often, check what is the underlying cause or the psycho-social background of the offender. It may be necessary to put the offender through a counselling session.
- ✓ Invite parents to participate in the search for a solution, always with a view to understanding and helping. Care should be taken to create a respectful, non-formal atmosphere.
- ✓ If sanctions are necessary, here are two suggestions. Use assignments that will redound to the long-term benefit of the offender; for example, make the youngster memorise an inspiring text or use deprivations: temporarily deprive the offender of a certain privilege, like your personal attention, or something he or she is fond of.
- ✓ A sense of proportion is absolutely necessary. There must be no exaggeration with regard to the quality or duration of the sanctions given.

Discipline is necessary. It reveals the tough face of love. Reason is a useful means to discipline behaviour, yet, *education is a matter of the heart*. When reason and love work in harmony, the student at the centre of the educational project is always the winner.

UNIT 7

RELIGION

This unit is divided into the following sections.

- What is Religion?
- Skills for educating to Religion

1. WHAT IS RELIGION?

South Asia has been home to nearly nine major spiritual traditions.³⁰ While the number of customs and rituals in each of these religions varies considerably, there are some spiritual goals and values that many of them share.

Today religion is often associated with fundamentalism and acts of violence in God's name. These are aberrations of religion – the very opposite of the many positive values that lie at the heart of traditional religions. Basic questions that religions try to provide answers to are the concern of all human beings: the miracle of life, the meaning of living, the search for happiness, the mystery of sin and death, the right way to live with other persons, the just ordering of society, the longing for eternal bliss...

Most religions believe that the answer to all these questions is found in **a sincere and trustful relationship with God**. They teach that such a relationship gives the believer inner/spiritual stability, peace and joy; that it builds a society based on truth, love, equality and justice; that it creates respect for the preservation of nature and the human family.

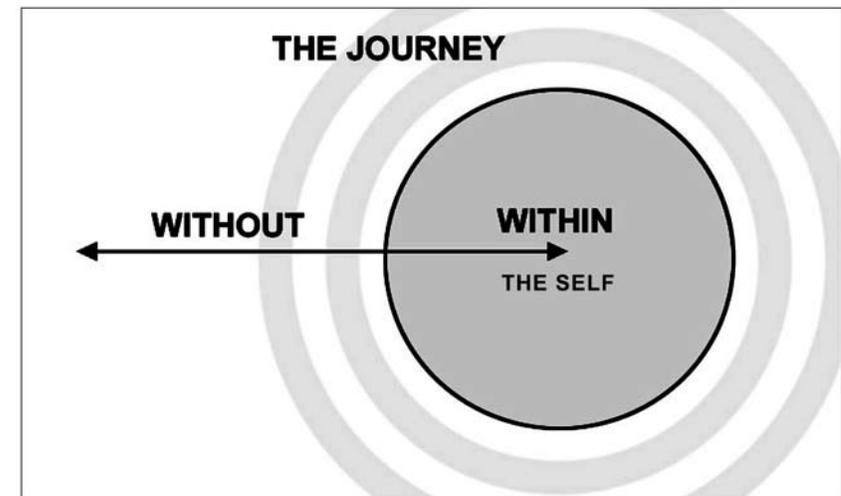
³⁰ The nine major religions that find a home in South Asia are: Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Sikhism, Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Jainism, Judaism, Bahá'ism.

However, the type of religion that is more popular is often success-oriented: like praying for good results in exams to obtain good degrees, to get better jobs, to get richer. But success, and the salaries it brings, does not lead to true happiness. A success-motivated lifestyle emphasizes outward shine, not inward growth. It is based on appearances and acquisitiveness. But it does not form the complete person.

Holistic education caters to the exterior as well as the interior maturity of the young person. Every "true believer" of any religion is challenged to reach such maturity, which can be called by different names, such as, happiness, holiness, wholeness, integrity. Essentially, being mature means living in:

- ✓ harmony with oneself, in thoughts, words and actions
- ✓ harmony with others, with all humans, creatures and the environment
- ✓ harmony with Transcendence, God, Ishwar, Allah, Waheguru, Ahura Mazda,...

We have seen that the aim of educating in Don Bosco's Way for our time and in our context is to form "Honest Citizens and True Believers". Young people are motivated to become honest citizens, not merely because they are well-informed about the rights and duties of citizenship, but



fundamentally because they are, first and foremost, *true believers*, that is, persons who strive for harmony both interiorly within themselves and exteriorly within the society that surrounds them.

This striving implies embarking on a unique double-destination pilgrimage, a voyage into one's self and into the world, a journey *within and without*.

The **journey within** is the search for one's uniqueness; one's reason for existence; one's inner voice; one's struggle to be true; one's personal intimacy with God who is reverently worshipped in South Asia under innumerable names.³¹

The **journey without** is the search for social harmony. It consists in building loving relationships with others; in making choices responsibly; in balancing one's inner truth with the demands of daily living; in accepting difference and diversity as a challenge to broaden perspectives; in contributing to a more just and peaceful society; in avoiding everything that harms another human being, whether physical, psychological or spiritual; in cooperating with people of goodwill to make the world a better place. In this sincere search, the pilgrim strives to make God's abode/ kingdom a reality on earth.

But here is the greatest challenge that even many very religious people fail to perceive at times: the above-mentioned journeys are not two, *but one and the same*.

The religious quest, the journey to happiness is a single double-destination pilgrimage. The more one cultivates a passion to embark on the journey within, the deeper one enters into the journey without. The greater the depth of inner peace, the wider is the peaceful impact one has on society. The deeper one is in the embrace of God, the more effectively is one able to embrace his or her brothers and sisters. The more one experiences God's love and forgiveness in oneself, the more one wishes to be compassionate with underprivileged sections of humanity. The journey within is incomplete if it neglects the journey without. The journey

³¹ Some of these names are: Almighty, Truth, Goodness, Love, Father, Mother, Progenitor (*Mata-pita*), Soul (*Atma*), In-dweller (*Antaryamin*), Most Merciful (*Ar-rahim*), Infallable Guide (*Ar-Rashid*), Wonderful Lord (*Waheguru*), Source, Force, Ground, Light, Bliss, Reference Point, Reason for Living,...

without is superficial if it is not rooted in the journey within. *Happiness, holiness or wholeness consists in establishing perfect harmony between the two movements of the one journey.*

Educators in Don Bosco's Way are not merely 'think-tanks' or 'data-banks' from which the students' hunger for success is replenished. They are persons who have experienced the double-destination journey in their own lives, so that they can guide and motivate their students for the same adventure. Like sincere gurus, who have themselves started out on this pilgrimage and are serious about persevering no matter their own failings, they humbly and patiently *lead by example* rather than by merely teaching techniques. They strive to cultivate the truthfulness in their own personalities before they can build other persons. Their education for a happy life becomes first and foremost a shining personal example of what happiness is. They will seldom be disappointed. As their children mature through the years, they will have demonstrated by their own lives *the true key to happiness*.



2. SKILLS FOR EDUCATING TO RELIGION

To embark on Don Bosco's Happiness Project, it is necessary that young people learn to develop ten skills. The first four facilitate the journey within, while the remaining six, the journey without.

a. Meditation:

The educator assists the students to develop silence within themselves. Silence forms the basis for an intimate encounter with God. It helps to orientate and sustain the student through the various phrases of growth. It is the inner peace which a student can return to in the face of doubt, disappointment and despair.

b. Prayer:

Students are taught how to enter into a personal relationship with God

through sincere and humble dialogue in prayer, through reflection on the scriptures, through encounters with wise people, and through problems in society that await solutions.

c. Obedience to the Inner Voice:

Education is not merely about imbibing scientific knowledge, it is also about developing an awareness of what is right and wrong and training oneself to habitually align with what is right. The educator encourages the students to cultivate the taste for listening daily to the judgement of their inner voice on how they fared during the day.

d. Death and the Afterlife:

Don Bosco was a realist. He knew how to prepare his students well for the one inevitable fact of all human life. Educators in the Don Bosco's Way periodically remind their students about death in order to help them scan their motivations, clarify their orientations and set priorities for the future. Looking at life backwards, from the perspective of the grave, can be an insightful way to make wise decisions and to live with a sense of hope.

e. Duty:

People of different ages and religions have used self-inflicted pain as a form of self-discipline or an expression of repentance in the desire to feel nearer to God. Contrarily, Don Bosco suggests that the best self-discipline comes from knowing one's duty and fulfilling it daily and cheerfully. For a student, duty can involve a variety of things: taking study seriously, being fair at games, respecting elders, obeying one's parents, balancing fun and responsibility, developing a healthy body and mind.

f. Joy and Optimism:

Youth live life as a celebration. Music, theatre, dance, games, sport, picnics – these are youthful expressions of happiness. Using these elements, the educator promotes attitudes of gratitude, praise, joy, optimism, reverence and respect. Young people usually enjoy sharing their experiences of faith and fellowship through creative and symbolic expression.

g. Service:

The 'journey within' will be reduced to an exercise in egocentricism if

it does not translate into genuine service of society. The act of serving others, especially the underprivileged of society, can take many forms. The fundamental purpose is to establish a bond of solidarity with the less fortunate through mutual respect and without condescension. The traditional hierarchical model of South Asian society must give way to the internationally established principles of social equality and fundamental rights for every person.

h. Collaboration and Dialogue:

By its very nature, South Asian society is a confluence of opposites. It demands an appreciation of diversity as well as a struggle for unity. It enables people to express themselves and to disagree amicably. It means seeking truth in complexity with attitudes of non-violence through collaboration and dialogue. Only a broad-minded, inclusive culture will help South Asia turn its diversity into its best asset.

i. Peer Education:

Young people easily personalise attitudes and change behaviours through peer pressure. Don Bosco was quick to capitalise on this reality for an educational purpose. He chose youth leaders and entrusted them with the responsibility of leading their companions by word and example. He divided them in groups and called them 'sodalities' – a companionship strategy for developing wholesome habits of heart, mind and spirit.

j. Forgiveness and starting afresh:

Young persons tend to feel passionately about what they like and what they believe. Disagreements often end up in skirmishes and broken friendships. Education can help youth discover the healing power of forgiveness as a path to happiness and maturity without nursing past grudges and yielding to revenge.

UNIT 8

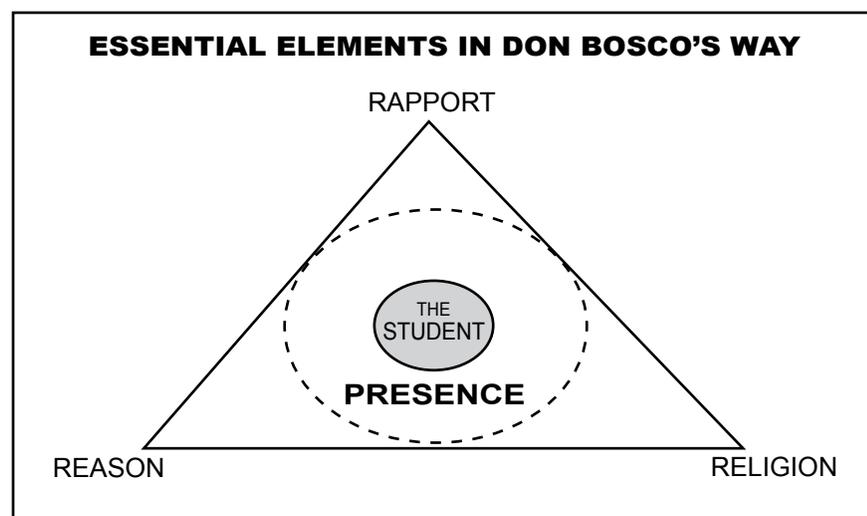
PRESENCE

This unit is divided into the following sections.

- What is Presence?
- Presence Skills

1. WHAT IS PRESENCE?

The basic principles of Don Bosco's Way – Rapport, Reason and Religion – are lived out concretely in a determinate place, at a particular time, through a network of resourceful collaborators, for a specific group of youngsters. This emphasis on localising education is an important detail in Don Bosco's solicitude for young people on their way to maturity.



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The potential for happiness is in the here and now – not in what was, what will be or what could be. This concrete way of being fully with the student is called 'presence'. In its most profound sense, presence means being in this place and at this time as "a sign and bearer of the love of God for young people".³² Aware of this great privilege and responsibility, educators in Don Bosco's Way look at real encounters with young people as opportunities for holistic growth.

Here are some characteristics of this endearing presence:

1. It is a presence that **welcomes**. Educators are pro-active and ready to take the first step in making new acquaintances. They are hospitable and homely. They ensure that even the institutional environment communicates this open arms approach.
2. It is a presence that **motivates** and encourages. It is enthusiastic and optimistic. The students are enticed to learn, search and discover. The presence of the teacher infuses in them a thirst for knowledge through the tactful use of queries, puzzles, quizzes, debates, excursions, simulation games, role-plays, etc.
3. It is a presence that is **personal** and caring with a special concern for those in need. Each student is called by name, feels known, loved, respected and accepted. This is all the more essential with those who are poor, weak, physically and mentally challenged or socially marginalised.
4. It is a presence that is '**incarnational**' and based on **sound moral values**. 'Loving what one's students love' or 'getting into their shoes' has a purpose. Seeing the world through their eyes will entice them to experience the values the educator lives by.
5. It is a presence that is **creative and open to discovery**. Life is too rich, too precious, too diversified to be experienced between the fine print of a cold text book. Being open to discovery means being ready

³² Constitutions and Regulations, 1997, 16.

to try new ways, new solutions, new ideas. Risk is essential to creative learning.

6. It is a presence that **networks** with others for the benefit of young people. Don Bosco's uniqueness lay in his ability to involve all people of goodwill around a common project. Besides the Salesian Society, he set up a world-wide family of consecrated sisters, cooperators, past pupils



Nino Musio

and lay volunteers. His benefactors included businessmen, government officials and even the Pope. He spent his whole life involving others for the benefit of poor and abandoned youth.

2. PRESENCE SKILLS

Some practical skills on being present to students in formal and non-formal settings are presented below.

a. *Formal settings:*

Educational institutions like schools, colleges and universities are accountable to many people: students, parents, staff, sponsors,

benefactors and government officials. They have systems and strategies to ensure efficiency. Unfortunately, these structures of administration can become so complex that they run the risk of distancing the very persons for whom they were created to serve -- the young learners.

Below are some suggestions to maintain a friendly environment without compromising standards of quality. If accepted and practised, these suggestions will give the educational institute the credibility required for a centre of holistic education.

1. **Physical presence:** Ensure that you are physically present in places where students gather in large numbers, for instance, in classrooms, corridors, gymnasiums or playgrounds.

2. **Participate:** During recreational breaks, avoid, whenever possible, the refuge of the teachers' rest room. Make attempts to be among the students as friendly guides and observant care-givers.

3. **Animate:** The time of recreation is an excellent opportunity to get to know your students and establish rapport. Devise creative ways to involve as many as possible in wholesome fun and activity.

4. **Decorum:** When class resumes, encourage students to switch to a seriousness appropriate to classroom learning. One way to do this is by showing that at the stroke of the bell, you are serious yourself. This ability to change from light-hearted interaction during recreation to earnestness when the time for learning begins, will, in the long run, earn you the respect and appreciation of the students.

5. **Contingency plan:** Prepare for any eventuality when you are among your students, especially for programmes that involve large numbers in a determinate area. Anticipate possible casualties and conduct safety-checks even before they arrive.

6. **Environment:** The context within which education takes place is as important as the educating itself. The type of lighting, colour, acoustics, location, equipment, furniture, landscape can either enhance or obstruct learning. Essentially, the goal of each learning activity will dictate the

type of environmental design. For example, the ambience created for a birthday party is not suitable for a study centre and vice versa.

7. **Co-responsibility:** Collaboration of staff in an educational institute is a visible way to ensure a caring atmosphere. When the management and staff work as a team, students are encouraged to give their best. This involves a type of dedication that transcends the mere teaching of a syllabus or sticking to a curriculum.

8. A **Counsellor's desk** is of utmost importance in complex institutions. A trained counsellor - usually the Superior of the institute - has the task of being available to students, especially those in difficulty. He/She is readily available, discrete in maintaining secrecy, and encouraging in their pursuance of a happiness project.

b. *Non-formal settings:*

Eco-friendly, non-formal settings in education have the advantage of bonding educator and student in ways that are impossible within structured classrooms. Young people are naturally spontaneous during games, picnics, camps and excursions. In such contexts they grow better and are healthier. Yet, non-formal settings also have their risks. There is the danger of a well laid-out plan going awry, a sudden change in time-table because of an unforeseen eventuality, or the challenge to improvise at short notice. The responsibilities for informal education rest squarely on the shoulders of the educators.

Here, are a few points to keep in mind when organising non-formal educational experiences.

1. **Logistical arrangements:** Ensure that the preparation and planning have been worked out to the last detail: places to visit, time-tables to be set, permissions to be sought, types of recreation and amusements to be enjoyed, boarding and lodging facilities to be arranged and budgets to be foreseen. It is also useful to have information on the educational suitability of the site and the relevant phone numbers and addresses of people who are in a position to help should anything go wrong.

2. **Team work:** It is important that responsibilities are assigned to co-

members of the organising team in keeping with their expertise. As their leader, you would need to have a copy of the overall plan and a detailed list of 'who-does-what' in case reminders are necessary.

3. **Enjoy their company:** During the whole event you and your team will have to maintain a friendly atmosphere. Your style of relating to the students must be friendly and non-judgemental, allowing them to express themselves freely and spontaneously. Show that you are happy to be in their midst and to enjoy their company by participating in their recreation.

4. **Be vigilant:** Your informality, however, should not distract you from your responsibility. A keen observation of all the students, even while you relax in their company, is essential. Take an inventory of their presence from time to time, especially when travelling from one place to another. With younger age-groups, it may be necessary to form teams and to assign responsibility to leaders. Take special care of the slow, weak, aloof, as well as, the mischievous, uncontrollable and unpredictable.

5. **Contingency plan:** Having an alternative plan can prepare you for unforeseen eventualities. It is essential to carry along a first-aid kit and to have someone trained in administering first-aid.

6. **Learning attitude:** To make the occasion truly educational, you must motivate the students to sustain a learning attitude throughout the journey. Well-prepared information may be given to them in advance or they could be asked to research and discuss the information themselves. During the outing, they should take notes on what they see, hear, feel and discuss in order to give expression to their creativity on returning home. Some outlets for sharing their experiences could include essay writing, preparing a notice board, publishing their stories in the school newspaper or creating a blog.

UNIT 9

PART 3: AGE-WISE APPLICATION OF DON BOSCO'S WAY - I

This unit is divided into the following sections.

- Introduction
- Infancy
- Childhood
- Intermediates

1. INTRODUCTION

How would a parent or educator use Don Bosco's Way to get the best out of young people of varying age-groups?

This section provides **useful guidelines** that are selections from development psychology.³³ It presents a brief description of the 'likes' and 'dislikes' during the stages of growth from childhood to young-adulthood, and what needs to be kept in mind when applying Don Bosco's Way.

Kindly note that:

- ✓ The lists in each group are not exhaustive.
- ✓ The age-wise classification has a heuristic purpose. It is not meant to compartmentalise the stages of growth.
- ✓ The suggestions are generalisations and are not applicable to all situations all the time.

33 For details see: Laura Berk, *Development Through the Lifespan*, International Edition, Allyn & Bacon, 2009. Also: Child Development Institute, Orange, California: <http://www.childdevelopmentinfo.com/> (25-1-2008).

- ✓ The influence of culture, society, religion, etc. on the development of the young person are not dealt with here.
- ✓ The educator's response to variations in behaviour caused by gender are not treated.
- ✓ This is a basic guide, and not a panacea for every challenge in the parent-child or educator-learner relationship.

What is suggested may make educating seem next to impossible. This is not a cause for panic. Educating is an on-going process of discovery that requires wisdom, discretion, good timing, patience and introspection.

According to Don Bosco's pedagogical philosophy, *education is the art of growing with the young*.

2. INFANCY (ages 1 -- 4)

Children at this stage are totally dependent on parental care. The discovery of the senses urges them to explore. It increases the drive for sense appeasement. They are extremely egocentric and have a short attention span. They enjoy the attention of adults and like to imitate their gestures. Already at this stage, the learning of values begins by looking and imitating others. A loving environment will help to establish the foundations of self-confidence and serenity.

Infants like:

- ✓ Attention
- ✓ Happy faces
- ✓ Being caressed and cuddled
- ✓ Touching things
- ✓ Being talked to or sung to with accompanying gestures
- ✓ Plenty of action
- ✓ Pictures, bright colours
- ✓ Animals, short stories
- ✓ Pleasant surprises
- ✓ Hearing curious noises
- ✓ Babbling

Infants do not like:

- ✓ Abstract conceptual talk
- ✓ Lengthy bouts of just anything
- ✓ Being made to sit still
- ✓ Being fussed over to the point of unpleasantness

WHEN USING...

RAPPORT:

- ✓ Care -- especially motherly care is indispensable.
- ✓ Play with the child.
- ✓ Create enthusiasm for discovery.

RELIGION:

- ✓ The infant imbibes basic values not so much by listening to words as by imitating the actions of adults. Reverence for the Sacred and respect for people are learned through role models. The example of parents and educators is, therefore, absolutely essential.
- ✓ Through parental example they will learn to distinguish the good from what is not good.
- ✓ Incentives or rewards help to encourage good behaviour.
- ✓ Prayer must be short, simple and specific.
- ✓ God must be presented in a tangible form.

REASON:

- ✓ Encourage the sense of discovery by providing various opportunities.
- ✓ Corrections can be conveyed by a firm glance or tone of voice.
- ✓ Reasoning should be minimum.
- ✓ Decisive and unambiguous signs of approval or disapproval from elders are effective.

3. CHILDHOOD (ages 5 – 8)

Children of this age group have already picked up basic attitudes to people and things. They know how to perform before elders. They are

curious, inquisitive and love to play with whatever they find. They are in the process of developing a conscience and begin to make moral judgements. Their imagination is abundant. They love the make-believe world of fantasy. All that they hear or see is real. They are unable to distinguish fact from fiction. They enjoy learning through song, drama and games. They express themselves better through art. They are capable of reaching out to help those they love. They like making friends. They begin to feel a sense of belonging as they learn to identify family members.

Children like:

- ✓ Play
- ✓ Stories
- ✓ Secrets, even if they don't keep them
- ✓ Pleasant surprises
- ✓ Short term activities
- ✓ Using new skills
- ✓ Whatever their friends like
- ✓ Attention and being attended to immediately

Children do not like:

- ✓ Bullies
- ✓ Favouritism by elders
- ✓ Being sent to bed
- ✓ Being lectured to

WHEN USING...

RAPPORT:

- ✓ Get to know the groups children like to associate with.
- ✓ Be firm on the use of their time. Fix a period for recreation and study.
- ✓ Enthuse them in their studies. Make learning an experience of joyful discovery.
- ✓ Participate in their recreation.
- ✓ Make sacrifices to attend to their needs like cutting down on your relaxation or TV watching. When you do this, you are showing them that *they* are your prime concern.

RELIGION:

- ✓ At this stage, the connection between prayer and life can be taught. Reason can help to see that asking for God's blessings cannot be done while holding a grudge against one's brother or sister.
- ✓ God's love for all creation can be inculcated through family prayer.
- ✓ Encourage their spontaneous childlike formulations of prayer.
- ✓ Encourage sharing and generosity especially with the less fortunate.
- ✓ Acquaint them with the great outdoors. Bringing them in close contact with nature in all its variety will provide them with the fundamentals of praise and worship.
- ✓ The pluralism they find in their peer group must not be an excuse for teaching snobbishness or social discrimination. On the contrary it is an occasion to educate them to accept differences as a fact and an enrichment of life.
- ✓ Be aware of their growing sensitivity to what is right and wrong.
- ✓ Teaching by example can make the greatest impact on their minds.

REASON:

- ✓ Avoid comparing their behaviour with others. Accepting each one for his/her own uniqueness will help to build a healthy self-esteem.
- ✓ Be excited about the new ventures they are fond of.
- ✓ Feed their curiosity with wholesome information about facts and general knowledge.
- ✓ Begin training for art, song, drama and dance.
- ✓ Incentives for work well done are needed. Contrary to the first stage where rewards can be promised for good behaviour, here let rewards be surprises. Gradually dissociate the value of being good from being



good for a reward. This will help them recognize the importance of good behaviour for its own sake (and not for pleasing the educator / parent or for being 'paid' to do good).

4. INTERMEDIATES (ages 9 – 13)

At the intermediate stage, the difference between girls and boys is quite pronounced. Girls appear more mature than boys because of which boys are often shy of girls. They do not mix freely. Peer approval begins to dominate and influences their lives. They look up to the peer leader. They are able to reason for themselves. They can perceive what is symbolic and are more able to grasp spiritual ideas. They can assume responsibility for their actions. Children at this stage have a natural exuberance and like to be helpful. They are sensitive and their feelings are easily hurt. They discriminate between those they naturally like and those they don't. They make strong moral judgements. Successful adults are their models.

Intermediates like:

- ✓ Their friends
- ✓ Spending time in play and gossip
- ✓ Action
- ✓ Drama
- ✓ Contemporary music
- ✓ Thinking for themselves
- ✓ Competition

Intermediates do not like:

- ✓ Rival groups
- ✓ People who do not trust them
- ✓ Do's and don'ts

WHEN USING...

RAPPORT:

- ✓ Know their peers and encourage them whenever possible.

- ✓ Get familiar with the leader of the group.
- ✓ Do not compare.

RELIGION:

- ✓ Teach them to assume responsibility for their actions.
- ✓ Utilize constructively their natural exuberance to be of service.
- ✓ Encourage them to pray in groups.

REASON:

- ✓ Encourage quality friendships.
- ✓ Encourage group activity and create opportunities for the same.
- ✓ Develop their talents.
- ✓ When correcting, give brief and simple explanations.

UNIT 10

AGE-WISE APPLICATION OF DON BOSCO'S WAY - II

This unit is divided into the following sections.

- Adolescents
 - Young Adults
-

1. ADOLESCENTS (ages 14-19)

The search for identity is on. Teenagers struggle to assert their individuality. They tend to feel more at home among their peers than with their parents. Peer acceptance is of vital importance. Negative feedback about their dress, behaviour or adult generalisations such as, 'when I was your age...', 'in our time...', are detested.

The teenager is now capable of thinking, assessing, and reasoning. The arena in which he/she has to make choices is now much wider than the home, and therefore confusing. The voices of parents, educators and elders are now competing with louder voices of peers and the youth media culture. This makes it difficult to have a clear perspective on what values to choose, what priorities to respect, or how to gauge the gravity of circumstances. This state of indecision and inconsistency typifies teenage behaviour.

Teenagers are highly idealistic and hate hypocrisy especially among adults. They begin to discover their own sexuality and strive to impress those with whom they are infatuated, even spending long hours in chatting on the phone or in each other's company. They enjoy teasing each other about their infatuations.

Teens like:

- ✓ People who are tolerant
- ✓ People who excuse their erratic behaviour
- ✓ Belonging to a peer group
- ✓ Being listened to
- ✓ Privacy
- ✓ Being taken seriously
- ✓ Honest people
- ✓ Teasing
- ✓ Sports, music, TV
- ✓ Heroes and heroines

Teens do not like:

- ✓ People who are quick to judge
- ✓ People who cannot take a decision
- ✓ Nagging
- ✓ Being corrected in public
- ✓ Personal remarks in front of their peers or the opposite sex
- ✓ Being left out or criticized by their peers
- ✓ Being betrayed or deceived
- ✓ Dishonesty and compromise
- ✓ Strain or pressure

WHEN USING...

RAPPORT

- ✓ Let love be alert, yet patient and discerning.
- ✓ Always keep the channels of communication open.
- ✓ Encourage peer group gatherings from time to time.
- ✓ Establish good relations with the group leader.
- ✓ Be aware of the biological and emotional changes and respect their feelings.
- ✓ Encourage them to widen their circle of friends.

RELIGION

- ✓ Propose models of good behaviour tactfully, without making comparisons or being too insistent.
- ✓ Look out for personality development seminars that may be available and get them to participate. If coaxing doesn't work, get the leader of the group to attend or get a friend to accompany your teenager.
- ✓ Prayer must be relevant to personal and social needs.
- ✓ Encourage peer-participation in prayer gatherings.
- ✓ Arrange a volunteers' participation programme at a hospital or at any centre for disadvantaged people in order to balance their faith in God with generosity and social concern.

REASON

- ✓ Do not generalize; treat each individual case separately.
- ✓ Appeal to reason without forcing ideas on them. Ask pertinent questions and let them sort out the answers.
- ✓ Be sincere when responding to their queries. Sooner or later they will realize that parents and educators are not omniscient.
- ✓ Give them 'space'. This means tolerating disagreement
- ✓ Encourage discussion and critical appreciation of media issues.
- ✓ When correcting them, get to the point.
- ✓ If cooperation from your teenagers is not forthcoming even after being reasonable with them, a firm, decisive stand may have to be imposed without being harsh or abusive.

2. YOUNG ADULTS (ages 20 - 22)

In their search for identity, young adults eagerly try to assert their individuality. A job, college degree, fiancé, fashion trend, type of music, etc. are some of the means used to establish their independence. Parents and Educators are seen as interfering. Young adults like to decide for themselves. The contacts they establish are usually beyond the boundary of home, village, social club or religious group. They are opportunities for broadening their outlook on life. Reasoning and moral judgements are, therefore, not always in agreement with the dictates of tradition and orthodoxy. The media have a major influence in defining

their culture, lifestyle, status, social acceptance, tastes, mannerisms and ideals.

Many young adults, however, do show a keen interest in life's burning questions. Social involvement and care for the earth and its people are some issues of concern. Many are emotionally linked to the social or religious causes they espouse, sometimes to the extent of staking their lives. Born into a world they have not created, they have high ideals for creating a world on their own terms.

On questions of emotional development and sexual growth, youth clubs and social gatherings are ways to enter into relationships and maintain contact. In cultures where love marriages are accepted, dating begins. In cultures where arranged marriages are the norm, prospective spouses are introduced to each other. The search is on for a life partner.

Winning the confidence of the young adult is a precious asset that a parent/educator will do well to safeguard through discretion and tact. It is essential to know what young adults like and dislike before choosing to respond in Don Bosco's Way.

Young adults like:

- ✓ Independence and freedom
- ✓ Being with friends
- ✓ Associating with the opposite sex
- ✓ Dreaming about their future
- ✓ Criticising the system
- ✓ Privacy

Young adults do not like:

- ✓ Condescending adults
- ✓ Interference in their decisions
- ✓ Nosey people
- ✓ Being corrected -- especially in public
- ✓ Criticism from friends
- ✓ Being rejected

WHEN USING...

RAPPORT:

- ✓ Show care and concern through action rather than through words.
- ✓ Respect their 'space'.
- ✓ Recognize and accept their right to be independent.

RELIGION:

- ✓ A spiritual life that makes sense to young adults is one that touches their emotional life, relationships, careers and future aspirations.
- ✓ Appropriate themes like peace and justice can help channelise their energy towards a social commitment.
- ✓ Peer participation through symbolic expression at religious and social rituals enthuses them.

REASON:

- ✓ Be firm about what you think and believe to be true even if they disagree.
- ✓ If a correction has to be given, be reasonable, forthright, clear and brief.
- ✓ A correction in private is much appreciated by young adults and it helps to build the confidence of a parental or educational relationship.
- ✓ An appeal to reason may mean facing the challenge of their questions. They may also be encouraged to seek the answers for themselves from reliable sources.
- ✓ Encourage a critical appreciation of media issues with a view to finding solutions.
- ✓ Fair play and respect are values they most appreciate.

WORKSHEETS



Music has a therapeutic effect on orphans at Don Bosco Roga, Paraguay.

WORKSHEET - UNIT 1

1. What do you expect from this course?

2. What has motivated you to join it?

3. What characteristic traits of Don Bosco appeal to you? Why?

4. Match the columns:

a. Don Bosco is born	1869
b. The Oratory finds a permanent home at Valdocco	1815
c. The Salesian society is established	1906
d. Don Bosco writes the treatise on his educational pedagogy	1846
e. Don Bosco dies	1888
f. The Salesians come to South Asia	1877

WORKSHEET - UNIT 4

1. Don Bosco's Way is a type of education that is based on the needs of young people. What are these basic needs?

2. What are the values that meet these needs?

3. What are attitudes and how do they differ from skills?

WORKSHEET - UNIT 5

1. What is Rapport?

2. In your own words, what do these sayings of Don Bosco mean?

a) "Love what the young love, that they may love what you love."

b) "It is not enough to love, they must know that they are loved."

c) "Familiarity breeds affection. Affection breeds confidence."

3. To develop rapport with his/her students the educator needs to:

WORKSHEET - UNIT 6

1. In what way does Reason act like a bridge in educating youth?
2. Why is knowing and accepting one's identity important for an educator /parent in the task of educating?
3. Mention at least five different ways by which rules can be made reasonable.
4. What are some hints to keep in mind:
 - before correcting
 - while correcting
 - after correcting
5. When and how should sanctions be given?

WORKSHEET - UNIT 7

1. The aim of Don Bosco's Way is to form "honest citizens and true believers". What does "true believers" mean?
2. "Educators in Don Bosco's Way are not merely 'think-tanks' or 'data-banks' from which the students' hunger for success is replenished." Then who/what are they?
3. What are four exercises for a journey within the soul?
4. What are the six exercises for a journey into the world?
5. What is the aim of these two journeys? Are they separable?

WORKSHEET - UNIT 10

Say how you would apply two aspects of Rapport, two aspects of Reason and two aspects of Religion to each of these stages of growth:

a. Infancy

b. Childhood

c. Intermediates

d. Teenagers

e. Young Adults

GLOSSARY

Attitude: A state of mind or a feeling; a disposition; a way of being, feeling and thinking

Cassock: The cassock is a black, brown, grey or white robe that is worn by Christian priests. It is still worn in South Asia, although in many Western countries it is often substituted by the clergyman's collar.

Catholic Church: According to statistician David Barrett, the Catholic Church represents over half of all Christians in the world. The other half belongs to a variety of other churches such as the Orthodox, Anglicans, Lutherans, Methodists, Baptists, etc., each of which worships Jesus Christ in different ways. It looks to the Pope as its highest human authority in matters of faith, morality and Church governance. The headquarters are in Vatican City. While it promotes fidelity to Christ's teaching among its members, and extends an invitation to all peoples of good will, it continues to look upon all those who do not share its beliefs as fellow-pilgrims on the path towards the Source of all happiness.

Chaplain: A Catholic priest who is invited to conduct religious services at a chapel, prison, hospital or any similar institution on a regular basis.

Clergy, Clerics: The body of ordained persons in the Catholic Church (such as priests and bishops) as distinguished from those not ordained (the laity). A cleric is a member of the clergy.

Confession: This is one of the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church. It is a purification rite that involves the acknowledgment of one's sinfulness. It offers the penitent the chance to begin a new life with God and fellow human beings.

Constitutions and Regulations: An acronym for "The Constitutions of the Society of St Francis de Sales", the legal document of the Salesian Congregation.

Don: An Italian title for priest, which means , 'Father'.

Expression: The act of setting forth one's thoughts in words, or indicating one's feeling, spirit or character through the body, often through music, theatre, dance, art, symbols; the act of representing in stylistic form; the act of 'pressing out'.

Evangelisation: The word comes from the Greek word 'Euangelion' and Latin word 'Evangelium' which refers to the Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John -- also called the four Evangelists). The Greek word originally meant the good news given by the messenger (the word 'angel' also comes from the same root). Evangelisation means making the good news a reality through the announcing and establishing of a loving and just social order in line with Gospel values. It is different from 'Evangelism' which is proselytism, or the explicit conversion of non-Christians to Christianity.

Holy See: This expression is normally used in international relations to refer to the central government of the Catholic Church headed by the Pope.

Laitie or Lay persons: In the context of Catholic Christianity, the terms laity or lay persons refer to members who are not ordained to the priesthood.

Oratory: Originally, the word meant a place where people gather to pray and interact with each other. For Don Bosco it was a kind of youth club where various activities were conducted for young people. It became the hub of a young person's life, work and solidarity. The first of Don Bosco's Oratories was at Valdocco, Turin. It was established in 1846 and was called the Oratory of St. Francis de Sales.

Peer Education: A method of education whereby capable young people are entrusted with the responsibility of educating members of their own age group.

Prevention: The act of impeding, forestalling or avoiding something

Repression: A state of forcible subjugation, the act of controlling by holding someone down.

Salesian: The word is used as an adjective to refer to the humanistic philosophy of Saint Francis de Sales, a saint of the Catholic Church. Don Bosco chose him as the patron and inspiration of the society he founded by calling it the 'Society of St. Francis de Sales', or simply, 'Salesians'. After Don Bosco's death, the members of this society decided to call themselves 'Salesians of Don Bosco' (SDB). Membership consists of priests or lay brothers who pledge to live a life in community through the practice of three vows: poverty, chastity and obedience.

Salesian Cooperators: These are Catholics who, while living their faith within the framework of their own state of life as married or unmarried persons, draw their inspiration from Don Bosco's mission to contribute to the holistic maturation of the young.

Salesian Family: Don Bosco founded many organisations that network for the benefit of young people. A few of these are Salesians of Don Bosco, Salesian Sisters, Salesian Cooperators, Salesian Past Pupils and Salesian Volunteers. Today the family membership consists of a total of 26 organizations.

Seminarians: These are young men preparing for the Catholic priesthood.

Skill: Proficiency, facility, or dexterity that is acquired or developed through training or experience; an art or a technique; a developed talent or ability

