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CAN PHILOSOPHICAL PRACTICES SERVE AS TOOLS
FOR WELL-BEING IN EDUCATION?

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CAN PHILOSOPHICAL PRACTICES SERVE AS
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A Master's Thesis

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Ankara
June 2023

To my Family and my Sisters



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The Graduate School of Economics and Social Sciences
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by

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IN EDUCATION?

By Simge Zeynep Deniz

I certify that I have read this thesis and have found that it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Philosophy.

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ABSTRACT

CAN PHILOSOPHICAL PRACTICES SERVE AS TOOLS FOR WELL-BEING IN EDUCATION?

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Philosophical practices have an important place in the tradition of philosophy as a way of life. In this thesis, I support the utility of philosophical practices in education. I begin with the idea that one of the objectives of education is to promote tools for individual well-being. In the first two chapters, I present an account of well-being which I discuss with the concepts of self-knowledge, authenticity, autonomy, resilience, and integrality. Next, I show that even if education aims primarily at communal gains, liberty, and cultural transmission, they do not contradict the well-being account that I present as the aim of education. In the last chapter, I introduce philosophical practices as tools of well-being and choose journaling practices as an example that can be applied to educational curricula. The thesis also aims to encourage pedagogues and psychologists to empirically work on these practices and choose the appropriate ones that can support well-being in education.

Keywords: Well-Being, Education, Philosophical Practices

ÖZET

FELSEFİ PRATİKLER EĞİTİMDE İYİ-OLUŞ ARACI OLARAK HİZMET EDEBİLİR Mİ?

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Yüksek Lisans, Felsefe Bölümü

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Felsefi pratikler, yaşam biçimi olarak felsefe geleneğinde önemlidir. Bu tezde bir felsefi pratiklerin eğitimde kullanılabilirliğini destekledim “Eğitimin amaçlarından biri iyi-oluş hali için kişiye araçlar sağlamasıdır” düşüncesi ile başladım. İlk iki bölümde iyi oluş halini öz bilgisi, otantiklik, otonomi, psikolojik esneklik ve bütünün parçası olma kavramları ile sundum. Üçüncü bölümde eğitim başlıca sosyal kazanımlar, özgürlük ve kültür aktarımını hedeflese dahi bunun eğitimin bir amacı olarak tanıttığım iyi olma hali ile çelişmediğini gösterdim. Son bölümde felsefi pratikleri iyi oluş halinin bir aracı olarak sundum ve günlük tutma pratiğini eğitime uygulanabilecek bir örnek olarak verdim. Bu tez ayrıca pedagogların ve psikologların deneysel olarak felsefi pratikler üzerinde çalışmasını, uygun pratiklerin eğitim müfredatına iyi oluşu destekleyecek biçimde dahil edilmesini destekliyor.

Anahtar kelimeler: İyi-oluş, Eğitim, Felsefi Pratikler

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis will show why secondary and higher education curricula should include appropriate philosophical practices. Philosophical practices are cognitive and behavioral exercises that can help one expand their point of view and guide the individual to a more authentic and integral way of living and help one live a more examined life. To start the project, I take that one of the objectives of education is the promotion of tools for individual well-being.

In the first two chapters, I present an account of well-being. The first chapter focuses on the epistemic and agential aspects of well-being, such as the importance of self-knowledge and its expression. In the second chapter, I elaborate on well-being's psychological and emotional aspects. The third chapter focuses on well-being in the educational context. In the final chapter, I present philosophical practices to strengthen individuals' well-being. I aim to show that it is plausible to include the appropriate practices in the secondary and higher education curriculum. Here is the summarized version of my argument:

1. One of the objectives of higher and secondary education is the promotion of the tools for the well-being of an adult or young adult individual.
2. An adult (or a young adult) individual's well-being increases when:

- a. They do self-monitoring and introspection to understand better their intentions, reactions, emotions, and desires as a tool for self-knowledge. (Self-knowledge)
- b. They freely use their rational capacities, such as the ability of logical deduction, critical assessment, and choice, which make individuals autonomous. (Autonomy)
- c. They recognize their genuine values independently from the negative aspects of the socialization process and harmonize their values with their actions. (Authenticity)
- d. They recognize their emotions and moods, understand their contingent nature, gain emotional flexibility and learn to regulate emotions. (Resilience)
- e. They expand their perspective to look at themselves and events from above with a broader perspective; cultivate the ability to feel and become a part of the bigger whole. (Integrality)
- f. Individuals are not in emergency conditions and do not have survival concerns such as fatal injuries or starvation.

3. Philosophical practices help one strengthen or obtain self-knowledge, autonomy, authenticity, resilience and integrality, and self-discipline to express them.

To conclude:

4. Therefore, philosophical practices help one increase their well-being. (From 2 and 3)

5. Therefore, the application of philosophical practices should be considered in education. (From 1 and 4)

An increase in one of these elements increases well-being if the other elements are present to a certain degree. Later, at the end of the second chapter, I will concentrate on the connection between them and how an increase in one element may lead to an increase in other elements and the individual's well-being since all elements are connected to the tool of self-examination.

Preliminaries:

I primarily focus on individual well-being and education. However, this account does not deny the connection between the well-being of the community and education; or the contribution of philosophical practices to the community's well-being. However, this is not the primary concern of this investigation.

Another critical point is that this thesis focuses on adult well-being since one can consider children's well-being differently, mainly because one cannot expect children to act as autonomously as adults since they depend on their caregivers. Furthermore, their cognitive capacities are not as developed as adults. They may not perform well in self-monitoring, and reason-giving. Some philosophers consider that children's well-being should be assessed differently than that of adults. For instance, Cormier and Rossi (2020) point out there are some philosophers¹ who think that the prominent theories of well-being do not apply to children because these theories

¹ They refer to studies of Raghavan and Alexandrova (2014); Skelton (2015); Tomlin (2018).

emphasize the cognitive and emotional capacities that children have not yet developed (p. 1147). Secondly, the authors state that some philosophers consider children's well-being depends on particular childhood goods inaccessible in adulthood. For these reasons, I do not focus on primary education or young children. Moreover, practices can also potentially apply to high school students if they have acquired the cognitive capacities required for the exercise, such as self-examination and reframing the event from a broader perspective.

Similarly, this account will not apply to adults with low rational and cognitive capacities. I also think they need specific education and care. To conclude, this well-being account is suitable for adults and young adults with a certain level of rational and cognitive capacities.

CHAPTER 1

EPISTEMIC AND AGENTIAL ASPECTS OF WELL-BEING

1.1 General Introduction to Well-being

Well-being is widely defined as what is non-instrumentally good for a person (Crisp, 2021). I consider well-being an active process in which an individual's desires, intentions, values, actions, and emotions are appropriately in harmony with each other and the awareness of unity. Individuals can assess and report their well-being appropriately when they genuinely monitor themselves. The elements that I present below are necessary and jointly sufficient for well-being. They are important because they strengthen the different parts of self-understanding to better connect with oneself and help them give more appropriate self-reports on how they feel. Furthermore, this well-being account includes the element of integrality that connects one to the idea of unity, and it helps individuals connect these self-reports with appropriate situations.

Lastly, it is essential to say that this account does not necessitate the perfect practice of any of these elements. I separate and present elements of well-being in two chapters. Firstly, I introduce the epistemic elements of well-being.

1.2. Self-Examination for Self-knowledge:

By the term self in self-knowledge, I do not mean a transcendental or a noumenal sense of self that one cannot gather knowledge. I mean one's sense of personhood, or identity composed of experiences, beliefs, and adopted values. Self-examination aims at questioning them.

Self-examination is not a paralyzing state in which one feels stuck with the constant flow of thought and unable to take action. Instead, it is an active and nonjudgmental process to acknowledge the present beliefs, desires, intentions, and sense of self. It is not a constant effort that intervenes in one's action. I liken self-examination to Jon Kabat-Zinn's definition of mindfulness. He states, "I define mindfulness operationally as the awareness that arises by paying attention on purpose, in the present moment and non-judgmentally" (2013, p. 91). Likewise, I take self-examination as the ability to observe one's beliefs, values, intentions and actions, etc., and acknowledge all that is present. It connects one with the knowledge of the self that can constantly change with experience and perception.

Some might worry that the self-examination may keep one from the flow experience. Csikszentmihalyi, Abuhamdeh, and Nakamura (2005) describe the state of flow as a subjective state in which people are completely involved in the activity such that they forget time, fatigue, and everything else, and the attention is given entirely to the task (p. 600). Additionally, they mention three important subjective characteristics of the flow state that, at first sight, can be considered at odds with what I point out as self-examination: "The merging of action and awareness, a sense of control, and an altered sense of time" (p. 600). According to these characteristics, one may object that self-examination may prevent the flow state (the optimal experience²). In the flow, the optimal experience arises when the habituated sense of self disappears, and the action merges with the doer in the present moment. I argue that self-examination does not prevent the flow state because:

- Self-examination aims to question adopted values, behavioral and cognitive patterns, and coping strategies that one may adopt in childhood for a sense of security and approval. In self-examination, one aims to question these habits, let go of the parts that restrict autonomous action, and broaden one's restrictive sense of "I". Likewise, in the flow state, one also gets rid of it and forgets the attachment of identity and sense of time and space, and the doer merges the action.
- Secondly, examining values, desires, and actions does not always have to be the primary cognitive activity.

² Csikszentmihalyi (1990).

It means that self-examination and the state of flow coincide when one does not define oneself with habits, patterns, and coping mechanisms and expand the understanding of the sense of self.

Above, I likened my concept of self-examination to Jon Kabat-Zinn's definition of mindfulness (2013). I take it as a non-judgmental examination of one's self. It opens a space for awareness of actions, choices, and self-identification. Csikszentmihalyi similarly emphasizes the control over consciousness for the flow experience. He states that some techniques, such as meditation and spiritual disciplines, attempt to control consciousness, attention, and memory and limit awareness for goals. He states that such skills which facilitate balancing challenges are necessary for the flow experience (1988, p. 31). Likewise, I think self-examination's mindful characteristic may facilitate getting into the flow experience.

Self-examination is the first and the most crucial step for well-being since it is a tool for self-knowledge. Without it, one cannot recognize personal values, see the contingency of emotional states, and place herself in her community and nature.

Furthermore, it is natural to expect inauthenticity without self-examination since one learns from the environment, and adjustment to the community for survival concerns is essential. For instance, children adjust their behaviors to their caregivers and learn from them since they depend on them for survival. For this reason, I do not suggest eliminating the effect of social learning and prosocial behaviors that one benefits from and develops a sense of empathy. Similarly, Decety (2010) states that empathy emerges in the second and third years of childhood through social interaction. On the

other hand, the effort to meet social expectations and excessive adoption of others' values can make one alienated from one's values and emotions. With self-examination, one starts to separate what serves one in social life and what disrupts one's sense of agency.

One may object that it is impossible to know oneself fully or that the mind is not transparent to the subject. Hence one might question the function of self-examination. Moreover, one might object that no one can genuinely observe thought processes since understanding and reasoning are affected by social conduct. None of these worries can undermine what I emphasize because well-being does not require complete transparency or knowledge of the self, nor is it result-oriented. The crucial point for well-being is to become a nonjudgmental monitor of one's behaviors, intentions, recurrent reactions, emotions, and values. Self-examination does not aim at the perfect acquisition of self-knowledge; it emphasizes the process, not the result.

Lots of thinkers consider self-knowledge and introspection. In his book *Socrates and Self-knowledge* (2015), Christopher Moore elaborates on the different aspects of Socratic self-knowledge. He states that his thesis has three faces, metaphysical, epistemic, and practical. He considers the metaphysical part of the Socratic self-knowledge as self-constitution:

The effort to know oneself is not simply a matter of struggling to know something that already exists, though the process does include remembering and recalling. This effort comprises, too, the making of oneself into the right sort of thing. (p. 5)

In the Socratic sense, it is plausible to think that getting to know about one's own is a tool to transform one's self, to constitute a version that becomes responsible to oneself and others (p. 6). Furthermore, this idea of self-constitution can help one understand the dynamic character of the self. In this sense, the self is constantly transforming. For this reason, one cannot wholly know but can only become an observer of his intentions, biases, and values. I think this is what is significant for well-being.

1.3. Authenticity, Values, and Well-being

Another condition for individual well-being is authentic action. Authenticity is the harmonious relationship between values, intentions, and actions. Dammann, Friederichs, Lebedinski, and Liesenfeld (2021) state that congruence is the essence of authenticity. It fits my definition. The two concepts, value and authenticity, are often used in the formulations of well-being. However, without a close examination of them, the individual may mistake what is taught to her for her genuine values. Thus, self-examination is prior to authentic action.

Values are the fundamental elements of authenticity. Tiberius and Hall (2010) consider that a person with a specific value can provide good reasons for performing actions. Secondly, values should match with appropriate emotions: "Part of what it is to care about something in the way distinctive of valuing is to have some positive emotional response toward it" (p. 218). Lastly, values are relatively stable (p. 218).

In my opinion, even if values are more stable than emotional fluctuations, they can also change in time with a new experience. Accordingly, authentic action can change in the process. Damman et al. also suggest authenticity is a developmental process (p. 1).

Some consider the value the core element of life satisfaction in their well-being accounts. For instance, Jason Raibley (2010) connects agential flourishing with value realization (p. 596). Raibley refers to Sumner's theory of well-being: "An account of well-being, based on the realization of one's values will, paraphrasing Sumner, make one's well-being depend on one's concerns: the things one cares about, attaches importance to, and regards as mattering" (p. 605). I interpret that the things one cares about and attaches importance to are what Raibley considers values. Regarding this, I suggest that recognizing one's genuine values and manifesting them are essential components of well-being which I prefer to call authenticity.

Authenticity is also central to Sumner's welfare theory³ (1999). He considers that welfare resides in authentic happiness. Authenticity has two components: information and autonomy. These components ensure that one's behaviors genuinely belong to her (p. 139). Likewise, I emphasize the genuineness of the values that one holds for action. Unexamined or uninformed values may restrict authentic self-expression. For instance, an adult may unconsciously perpetuate values and connected actions which he adopted to get caregivers' protection and approval.

³ What I understand from Sumner's usage of welfare is not different than my usage of well-being. Hence, I take his account as a theory of well-being. His choice of the word welfare and my naming well-being are interchangeable in this paper.

However, this habituated pattern that once benefited the individual may become restrictive. For instance, he may seek external approval rather than internal harmony in adult life. In this case, I believe the values that direct his actions are not genuine. To hold genuine values, one should approach them critically and be informed. Unexamined values can be prima facie values since one does not scrutinize them, and they can be a continuance of old defense/survival mechanisms. Genuine values are ultima facie values examined by individuals' unconditioned decision mechanisms and rational choices.

One can discuss values and actions together with free will. Harry Frankfurt gave a critical insight (1971) on desire and free will. He thinks that fulfilling a desire to do X does not become an expression of free will if the person does not desire to desire X. To illustrate, let us consider a very familiar example of smoking: An individual wants to smoke. However, he wishes that he would not have such a desire. Freedom of the will arises when the individual puts the first and the second-order desires in line. In other words, one shows free will when he desires what he prefers to desire. I consider such a thing possible when one questions the first-order desire and be informed about its consequences. Likewise, I think when one desires to adopt the given set of values, one should consider its consequences and have the option to experience other ways and still evaluate it better for oneself. The awareness of other options, having an opportunity to experience, and impartial, unconditioned choice mechanisms are crucial for realizing genuine values.

When one fails to distinguish genuine values from non-genuine ones, the individual feels like living the life of two different people. For instance, sometimes individuals internalize the voice of social expectations, norms, or their parents' unmet desires. They decide and act in the way the voice directs them to do. On the other hand, they feel something wrong and unsatisfactory about their lives. Such a person feels divided, empty, not a whole, and does not feel he belongs in his life. I will talk about these feelings as signs of discomfort and alienation that one naturally evades for the sense of safety and survival⁴. Such feelings⁵ may also be the signs of clinging to non-genuine, inauthentic values. These can be values of other people or dominant ways of living, values of capitalism, etc.

One likely objection to authentic value realization may come from social conditioning. One may question the possibility of finding an authentic voice. It leads to some critical discussions in feminist literature. I want to mention one of the feminist theories of self and a possible objection. Roughly, Kathleen Wallace (2019) states that the self is "relational" and a process, which she named "cumulative network". She argues that one's social presence, including her relationships and familial and cultural background, is as significant as one's physical, psychological, and biological traits (p. 2). She continues that in feminist literature, desires, motivations, and values are externally and socially shaped (p. 2). It means that the self or identity is not only a biological and psychological unity but also a product of the social environment. Accordingly, one can object that one's values and desires are

⁴ Daniel Haybron (2008) also considers alienation as a defensive state as opposed to feeling of home and security.

⁵ For the relationship between emotions, alienation and authenticity, see: Szanto (2017).

created and directed by the environment where one finds herself from birth. As a result, there may be nothing unique to realize as an authentic value.

A similar objection is within the frame of adaptive preference theory: One may learn to adapt desires and values to the living conditions. It may be problematic if adaptive preference leads to completely adapting one's values to social conditions and expectations. Narayan considers that (as cited in Khader, 2011) a woman's sense of self can be affected by her circumstances and the cultural environment where she grows up. As a result, she genuinely values things that she would not prefer if she were informed about other ways (2005, p. 34). In both cases, it seems unlikely to realize what is genuine because these individuals are not given an opportunity to experience or see the options or are not taught to think of their preferences and a different way of being. In this case, it seems natural to question that when there is no way to understand whether one would value the same thing if she was given a chance to observe other ways of living. Additionally, I think awareness and observation alone cannot serve one's well-being when they do not lead to any change in the action. Hence, they are legitimate concerns. For this issue, I am going to suggest a different approach. Indeed, distinguishing whether a value is held genuinely may not be possible, and the environmental conditions shape the way of thinking and processing. Admittedly, without the opportunity of experience, it seems unlikely to talk about value realization. However, there may be bodily signs of inauthenticity.

Some studies support the relationship between authenticity and emotions⁶, and some theories point out the relationship between inauthenticity and physical disorders and discomfort. Inauthenticity may be in the form of being unable to speak one's truth (beliefs, emotions, and values) and act accordingly at the expense of security and approval. Gabor Maté (2003) points out the relationship between chronic, stress-related illnesses and unexpressed, suppressed emotions. He thinks that if the individual does not express and acknowledge her emotions, beliefs, and values habitually, the body often releases the stress hormones that suppress the body's defense mechanism and result in physical diseases that have psychological roots. In other words, inauthenticity may show itself as a psychosomatic disease⁷. In conclusion, tracking inauthenticity in bodily and emotional responses is possible. However, it requires self-examination.

Secondly, I want to re-emphasize that well-being is not a matter of perfection. We are not looking for a perfect identification of genuine values. Instead, we experience the process. When the psychological effects of perfectionism are considered, on its negative side, one can define it as trying to be faultless, establishing high parameters and disposition to assess behaviors critically⁸ (Geranmayepour & Besharat, 2010, p. 643). Geranmayepour and Besharat suggest that this negative aspect of perfectionism positively correlates with maladjustments. They state, "Those aspects of perfectionism which are related to prefectural worries such as worries about making mistakes, uncertainty, and fear of the others judgments and disharmony of

⁶ See Conte, Hahnel & Brosch (2022).

⁷ Maté (2003).

⁸ The authors refer to the works: Burns (1980); Flett & Hewitt (2002).

expects and results" (p. 643). These stated worries about making mistakes, uncertainty, and fear of others' judgments create an uncomfortable and insecure environment for authentic expression since individuals are driven to compare themselves to others. Moreover, they may choose to conform with the majority since they fear criticism even if the majority's choice does not reflect their authentic value. As a result, perfectionism may impede well-being.

Well-being can be considered in degrees rather than the search for perfection in each element. The more one gets close to one's way of living, including genuine value recognition, emotional recognition, and integral feeling and action, the more well-being increases. Being one step closer to the genuine way of being is still better than being one step away. For this reason, one of the aims of education should be to provide tools for individuals to broaden their worldviews. It should help them see and create different options and equip them with experiences to realize their genuine values and authentic expressions.

1.4. Autonomy and Well-being

Another necessary element for well-being is the cultivation and free use of natural capacities, such as critical assessment and rational choice. Joseph Raz takes the autonomous person as his own life's (part) author (as cited in Taylor, 2005). Taylor continues that what is vital for Raz's understanding of autonomy is the way one assesses, adopts, and pursues the goals (p. 605). In parallel, I propose that individual

well-being increases when the individual can assess the given situation freely with reasoning and then decide and act accordingly to this assessment, or briefly, become an author of her own life. I believe that autonomous act is a potential in human beings. Cultivating rational, impartial, informed decision and choice mechanisms contribute to individuals fulfilling their human capacities and distinguishing them from other living beings. This way of putting it gives my well-being argument a perfectionist tone. It is important to note that what I previously stated as perfectionism is a psychological mindset that differs from the perfectionist accounts of well-being. A perfectionist account of well-being states: "The good life for a human is determined by human nature. Human nature involves a specific set of capacities. The exercise and development of these capacities are good for humans" (Fletcher, 2016, p. 77). Furthermore, the well-known concept of Aristotelian Eudaimonia also aims to realize the human potential in the activity according to virtue (Capuccino 2013).

However, I consider the perfection of the reason insufficient for well-being because emotional aspects are other significant contributors to well-being. Still, if humans have the capacity for reasoning and critical assessment, their observation, cultivation, and realization will contribute to individual well-being. Rational evaluations take one step further to their authentic and unique way of being since individuals may have a chance to express and act according to their own unique choices if they examine themselves.

CHAPTER 2

PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EMOTIONAL ASPECTS OF WELL- BEING

This chapter emphasizes the psychological aspects of well-being: The recognition and regulation of emotions and the appropriate feeling of belongingness. Up to this point, I have been examining the significance of value recognition and autonomy. When not considered with self-examination, these elements may make this well-being account a future-oriented one since autonomy and value realizations usually emphasize the following action. However, one's present emotional state can affect how one evaluates present circumstances, beliefs, actions, values, and decisions. For this reason, it is crucial to include psychological aspects as elements of well-being.

2.1. Resilience and Well-being

2.1.1. Mood Fluctuations and Well-being

This section investigates how mood fluctuations affect individual well-being. Emotional recognition and developing the ability to regulate emotions are essential for well-being since one's long-term decisions and values may be affected by

impulsive emotions. For instance, one may no longer value long-lasting friendships and commitments after being frustrated by a best friend. Additionally, Daniel Haybron (2008) considers the effect of emotional states on one's conception of the self and self-reports on well-being. According to him, temporary changes in moods and emotions, or mood dispositions, lead to a temporary change in how one perceives things, such as how one approaches a situation and perceives oneself physiologically and psychologically (p. 32). I also consider that unwatched emotional inconsistency affects one's evaluation of well-being. If emotional propensities or mood changes lead to an alteration in one's perception of life, when a mood gains dominance in the long term, it may affect one's perception of own life in the long term and also one's evaluation of how she is going. Hence a watchful attitude towards emotions is crucial for well-being.

Additionally, I take emotional regulation capacity not as eliminating fluctuations and indecisions as in Weiss' article (2020). He states that Foucault takes (as cited in Weiss, 2020) Stoic Telos as the elimination of *stultitia* (p. 337), which is "persistent vacillation, regret, and changes of heart" (p. 336). However, the termination of these constant changes in decisions and emotional oscillations is a demanding mission, in a way, a demand for perfection. I previously stated that a perfectionist state of mind and perfectionist desires might hinder one's well-being. Secondly, since human beings have complex interpretation skills, they can rapidly see different aspects of the same event or object. They develop different emotional responses to these different aspects. Additionally, they bring their experiences and the corresponding emotional response. As a result, they may momentarily jump to each response and

change their emotional state. For this reason, mood fluctuations are natural for human beings. Acknowledgment of these rapid changes and recognizing and regulating them are essential. This way, one can control and understand their emotions. Accordingly, the elimination becomes unnecessary.

Learning to examine emotions and connected attitudes helps one gain emotional flexibility. It may change one's perception of oscillations and help one see oscillations as a natural part of being human. I have indicated in previous sections that self-examination is fundamentally a mindful attitude.⁹ Several studies emphasize the effect of the mindful attitude as opposed to emotional and behavioral problems. For instance, research focusing on Chinese low-income gifted adolescents¹⁰ shows that "mindfulness and life skills are directly associated with reduced EBPs (emotional and behavioral problems) (2020, p. 5). A recent article¹¹ (2022) emphasizes that a high level of mindfulness provides individuals with the "enhanced ability to respond appropriately to difficult situations without reacting in automatic and non-adaptive ways"¹² (p. 3). Plus, the study indicates that mindfulness increases resilience. Resilience is another element in individual well-being, and I will elaborate on resilience which I adapted as hedonic emotional resilience.

2.1.2 Hedonic Emotional Resilience and Well-being

⁹ See Linder & Mancini (2021).

¹⁰ Huang , Chen, Jin, Stringham , Liu & Oliver (2020).

¹¹ Bajaj, Khoury and Sengupta (2022).

¹² See Langer and Moldoveanu (2000); Wallace and Shapiro (2006); Sass et al. (2019).

Other significant contributors to well-being are the increased tendency to feel at home in one's life and the improvement of the ability to return to a preferable baseline. Positive feelings such as comfort, peace, ease, security, and harmony are significant contributors to well-being because they help maintain a home-like environment as a mental state, despite whatever individual faces every day.

Likewise, Daniel Haybron (2008) also emphasizes "feeling at home" for well-being. From the biological perspective, he states that the responses concerned with safety and security contribute to one's well-being. He exemplifies the feeling as "Letting one's defenses down, making oneself fully at home in one's life -being in a state of utter attunement with one's life, we might say- as opposed to taking up a defensive stance" (2008, p. 112). In parallel, I consider that the individual's tendency and ability to feel at home both in one's life and body and the ability to return to this state after a distressing experience contributes to well-being. I call this elasticity to return to comfortable emotions "hedonic emotional resilience". Now, I will elaborate on the concept.

I take hedonic¹³ emotional resilience as returning to a comfortable baseline after an abrupt emotional alteration. If this baseline for resilience is placed on a more uncomfortable side, then the emotions of distress tend to last longer. The feeling of distress becomes familiar and safe for the subject even if it is not good for the health.

¹³ I use hedonism as a one's inclination to a preferable/comfortable state of mind, rather than only stimulus based- outwardly oriented hedonism, I take hedonism similar to what Feldman states as attitudinal pleasure:

See Feldman (2010).

Likewise, LePera¹⁴ (2021) states that the mind tends to the familiar even if it is painful because the habits one repeatedly returns to are the safest environments for the individual. It is the automatic comfort zone. In this case, distress becomes the individual's normal and familiar state, even if it is bad for the individual's psychological and psychological health. It changes how one perceives her life accordingly to this frequently experienced emotional state.

On the other hand, if the baseline is placed on the more positive side, such as security and ease, it becomes familiar and normal for the individual. If one more easily returns to emotional comfort after a distressing situation, then the general perception of one's life changes accordingly. Orienting one's emotional state in a way that one can return to its familiar, comfortable state of ease, security, attunement, and peace is what I call hedonic emotional resilience. Bajaj, Khoury, and Sengupta (2022) take resilience as a stress resistance source for traumatic situations. Additionally, by referring to some previous studies,¹⁵ they state that "Resilient individuals could maintain their physical and psychological health both through buffering negative consequences from difficult times and through improving psychological well-being" (p. 3).

One may liken resilience to an arc to better understand it. The pressure on it is a regular everyday event that one faces, and the arc's reaction to returning to its

¹⁴ LePera (2021).

¹⁵ See Ryff and Singer (2000); Connor and Davidson (2003).

previous position is its resilience. Hence, one should place the emotional baseline to more comfortable and peaceful moods and emotions to return to the familiar state of attunement and ease. Likewise, Haybron takes one's tendency to experience some moods rather than others as *mood propensity*. He states, "When one is happy, bad moods can still occur in response to negative events. They are less likely and will tend to yield quickly to positive ones" (2008, p. 30).

What if someone prefers painful, uncomfortable emotions and situations over comfortable ones? Is it possible to say that this preferred emotional discomfort increases well-being? Naturally, to some degree, humans adopt harmful thinking and acting habits that once were helpful but are no longer needed. Still, these habits of mind become standard and familiar. Suppose a person prefers painful emotions rather than security and ease (our survival emotions). In this case, the mind habituates to perceive discomfort as familiar and contributive to survival. In this case, learning how to work with this mind patterning will increase well-being.

To conclude, this section carries a subjective concern since how one feels changes self-reports on well-being. Furthermore, this section indicates that maintaining emotional balance on a more peaceful and positive side and gaining the ability to observe emotional fluctuations are crucial for subjective aspects of individual well-being. Additionally, emotional observation and practice of regulation help one understand that well-being is not only a future-oriented pursuit but also a present one.

2.2. Integrality

So far, I have emphasized the cultivation of some subjective features that help human beings examine themselves and act with the awareness of their emotions, authentic values, and autonomy. However, even if individuals act authentically and be able to recognize and regulate their emotions, this account of well-being remains deficient from what I call integrality.

Integrality connects individuals to the awareness of unity and creates harmony in two aspects: Firstly, it becomes a subjective feeling. Secondly, it is manifested in the appropriate action and takes an objective stance. Both objective and subjective aspects of integrality are necessary for well-being.

2.2.1. Subjective Integrality

The subjective aspect of integrality makes an individual *feel* that her actions and values are in harmony– which makes the individual authentic. Also, it is a feeling that the individual is part of nature and a member of the living.

Individual well-being is connected to the *feeling* of integrality, which one can feel as a part of nature, the bigger whole, and everything else as part of nature. It creates a sense of belonging and connection. The feeling of belonging ensures one the feeling of safety and home in which one does not constantly have to defend herself for

protection. Instead, she feels harmony in her life and body regarding the fit of her values and actions. In parallel, Haybron (2008) considers the feeling of attunement as "physically being at home in one's life" (p. 116). Moreover, he takes the opposite of attunement as alienation when one's circumstances become threatening (p. 116). Likewise, in threatening situations, one cannot feel safe; in contrast, one may feel defensive when one does not feel like belonging. This results in the habituation of uncomfortable feelings in the more negative side of hedonic resilience, negatively affecting individual well-being.

The feeling of integrality manifests itself as belonging to nature and being a world citizen. Luca Valera (2018) considers the individual-nature relationship and its effect on individuals' sense of self by referring to Arne Naess:

The identity of the individual, 'that I am something' is developed through interaction with a broad manifold, both organic and inorganic. There is no completely isolatable I, no isolatable social unit. To distance oneself from nature and the 'natural' is to distance oneself from a part of that which the I is built up (Naess, as cited in Valera 2018, p. 664).

Similarly, I think that one's sense of self develops through interactions. It may look controversial to what I have asserted in authenticity and autonomy. However, with self-examination, one can distinguish which interactions serve the individual and which impede one from expressing genuine values and autonomy. Furthermore, I think that feeling part of a bigger whole in terms of one's interactions and nature contributes to a positive emotional disposition, such as belonging and safety, which I

stated as crucial for well-being¹⁶. Moreover, Stoic philosophers point out the feeling of integrality with nature. Pierre Hadot emphasizes the relationship between nature and the sage. He restates Bernard Groethuysen and points out that his words are particularly true for the Stoic sage:

He (the sage) never forgets the world, but thinks and acts with a view to the cosmos... The sage is a part of the world; he is cosmic. He does not let himself be distracted from the world, or detached from the cosmic totality. (Groethuysen, as cited in Hadot, 1997, p.251).

Another characteristic of subjective integrality that increases well-being is approaching the community members or the members of other communities with empathy and taking them as world citizens, not different from one another. Martha Nussbaum also emphasizes empathy when considering "cultivating humanity". She states that the cultivation aims to improve three qualities. These are critical thinking, the ability to be a citizen of the world, and narrative imagination, which is the ability to put oneself in the situation of another person who is a member of a different society (1999). Besides her ideas of cultivating humanity, I would like to emphasize the last two abilities, being a world citizen and the ability to take the perspective of another person who comes from a different society and probably has a different lifestyle. These are some instances of taking a broader perspective instead of one's limited view. Taking such a perspective makes individuals feel connected. It helps them place themselves as a part of the human community, which increases safety and a feeling of belonging. As a result, individuals do not feel disconnected or apart

¹⁶ Feeling of belonging and well-being was studied also in: Allen, Kern, Rozek, McInerney, and Slavich (2021).

from everybody and everything else. Instead, they feel being an authentically expressed part of something bigger.

Up to this point, I have investigated the *feeling* of unity, belonging, and harmony. The feeling of integrality alone may help one feel better and increase hedonic emotional resilience. For instance, one might worry that when one gets lost in the jungle, does the feeling of integrality in nature increase one's well-being? I would say yes to this concern, mainly because the feeling of integrality with nature helps one feel safe and calm. It may help him reason to protect himself better.

Secondly, one might object that feeling integral does not make one integral. For instance, what can we say about the well-being of a serial killer or a dictator who reports feeling integral and safe after committing mass crimes? When integrality is taken only as a feeling, it is possible to validate their well-being if other elements are satisfied to a certain degree. Then raising a serial killer with well-being would not become controversial for the aims of education. Naturally, I do not defend such a well-being account as an aim of education. I will respond to this objection from a subjective and objective sense of integrality. Firstly, suppose the problem is taken from the subjective aspect. In this case, the killer may lack the ability to do the self-examination to realize his sense of unity and connection between other beings and nature. It is also possible that he cannot make critical assessments and rational choices and calculate his actions' consequences. One might attribute this inability to lacking metacognition skills, empathy, and autonomy. These may arise due to some medical conditions or developmental problems. Secondly, from the objective sense

of integrality, the serial killer's sense of integrality may not be placed appropriately to its object, which is the next aspect I will investigate.

Let me introduce another worry before dealing with the objective aspect of integrality. One might wonder about an individual's well-being tied to Nozick's experience machine (1974). If merely the feeling is sufficient for integrality, one may plausibly accept being tied to Nozick's experience machine and acquire well-being. However, would one prefer it? Or can education approve to promote the delusion of integrality, belongingness, and connectedness? From the subjective aspect, the individual lacks self-knowledge to assess her situation. Hence, if she had a chance to know that she is connected to a machine, she would not choose merely the delusion of the feeling of integrality when it is not the case. Nevertheless, responding to this worry regarding the objective aspect of integrality can be more plausible. In this sense, I propose that an individual's feeling of integrality should fit the external conditions that can potentially give a sense of integrality. Now, let us consider the objective aspect of integrality, then return to this worry.

2.2.2 Objective Integrality

The other aspect of integrality connects individuals to all living things and creates a ground for compassionate¹⁷ *actions* while preventing the case of intentional harm to

¹⁷ Compassion is widely accepted as a benevolent emotional response toward another who is suffering, coupled with the motivation to alleviate their suffering and promote their well-being.

another being. It means the feeling of integrality should also conform to actions considering their appropriateness. In other words, the feeling of integrality should connect with the actions or object conveniently. One should consider what gives this condition of appropriateness.

In her context of the meaningful life, Susan Wolf emphasizes the appropriateness of feeling to the situation: “According to my conception, meaning arises when subjective attraction meets objective attractiveness” (2010, p. 9). My intention is similar to what Susan Wolf proposes for a meaningful life: Integrality only contributes to well-being when an individual *appropriately* feels part of humanity and nature. The awareness of unity that “Everything in the universe is part of something bigger, and everything is in connection” ensures the objective aspect of integrality and gives actions a compassionate ground. However, arriving at this idea requires observing the self, others, and nature from a holistic perspective and acting according to it. It necessitates unlearning the discriminative social and cultural conditioning and its effects on thinking. Additionally, matching the feeling with the present world situation is the other aspect of objective integrality.

One may ask about the relationship between objective integrality and the family or community relationships individuals are born into and presume to be a part of. Indeed, belonging to one's social environment is important for security or survival. However, I consider that families and larger communities are human constructions. What I mean by being a "part of a bigger whole" is beyond these social

Mascaro et al. (2020).

constructions. The awareness of integrality, which appropriates feelings to actions, is the recognition that every living being lives under the same sky and is constructed by atoms in the universe and living according to their capacities. Thus, it is an inclusive viewpoint. This awareness creates a compassionate ground.

On the other hand, one may still question objective integrality on a smaller scale. For instance, one may ask how the individual's well-being is affected when there is tension between the feeling of belonging and the awareness of unity in the family scale. Or what happens when systematic injustice exists in the family or community? Should one force herself or maintain the feeling of belonging because one is born into this family or community, and this is appropriate to real-world conditions? I think this "fact" of the world is a social construct; traditions and cultures strengthen its meaning. However, I believe that it is a distortion in the understanding of awareness of unity. In awareness of unity, what is important is not the social constructs but developing a cosmic understanding like a stoic sage¹⁸. Besides, I also believe this understanding of unity in which every individual considers herself an authentically expressed part of the universe will create more healthy communities due to increased empathy and tolerance.

To return to the problems, if a serial killer feels integral, at home, and ease after committing a crime -besides the possibility of subjective deficiencies- his feeling is placed inappropriately with the situation since the feeling does not come from the appropriate action that is rooted in the awareness of unity and compassion.

¹⁸ See Hadot (1997).

Nozick's Experience Machine objection can also be answered: In this case, the person's feeling of integrality does not fit the real-world situation, and such a machine cannot contribute to the individual's well-being.

Lastly, let us consider this interesting thought experiment:

A and B are individuals who are in the matrix through a machine. Person A feels integral after he kills people mercilessly. On the other hand, B feels integral and appropriately acts as a part of the matrix world and matrix community.

Is there a difference between these two integralities regarding their contribution to well-being?

I can compare this situation with their real-life counterparts. The feeling integrality of A and B is not as effective as the one that is felt appropriately in real-world conditions. Counterintuitively, person A may have more well-being than an actual serial killer in the real world, according to real-world conditions. Because at least he only harms in the matrix, and in real life, he is connected to a machine and cannot harm other people. In other words, he does not act inappropriately without the critical assessment and awareness of unity; he only unconsciously sleeps.

Additionally, one may ask what would happen if person A in the matrix woke up. Would he still have the urge to kill? Naturally, if he kills, he does not become different from his real-world counterpart. However, what would happen if he had the urge but kept himself? In this case, he uses his autonomy and rational decision-

making over his urge to kill. However, he does not have the awareness of unity which guarantees the appropriate action. He is using his autonomy and will. One may consider which quality contributes more to well-being: autonomy or integrality. Developing integrality is more critical in such other-related issues because when one is aware of integrality, he takes everything in unison, and an urge to kill or harm cannot sway the person.

Finally, one may find herself in a dichotomy: What does happen when one needs to give up the sense of integrality at the expense of hedonic emotional resilience's baseline feelings, such as security? For instance, should one put herself in danger to maintain the sense of integrality even if her feeling of security is threatened? Different situations may lead to this dichotomy. For example, if there is a life-threatening condition, I believe that individuals should prioritize safety in the physical and emotional sense since survival is a precondition of well-being. Additionally, the individual should cultivate and maintain a sense of security to place herself in the universe to create a sense of belonging. In conclusion, hedonic emotional resilience and integrality support each other because belonging is essential to feelings of security and safety.

To sum up, integrality becomes an appropriate feeling when it is felt conveniently to the situation. This objective aspect of integrality prevents destructive actions from contributing to individual well-being. In this sense, the feeling of integrality and the intentional harm of a psychopath is not a good match and does not increase one's well-being. The comfortable feeling of harm, I think, is a result of a deficiency in

one's capacity to feel empathy and to realize the common ground of unity. Secondly, since objective integrality requires the appropriateness of feeling and the world situation, it can answer the objection from Nozick's experience machine.

2.3 A general note: No emergency and survival concerns

Self-examination, authenticity, autonomy, resilience, and integrality are necessary and jointly sufficient for individual well-being when there is no life-threatening emergency. In such situations, the primary concern is not to live well and realize the self but only to survive. Emergency conditions, such as severely starved individuals, refugees, asylum seekers, and individuals with terminal illnesses, are not in the scope of the thesis. These individuals are in extraordinary situations in which they cannot autonomously choose and act or cannot regulate their mood fluctuations. Also, they may autonomously choose not to act according to their authentic thinking because of their survival concerns. Consequently, survival conditions, such as physiological needs and safety, should be ensured to some degree for one to talk about well-being.

2.4 Priority of Self-Examination

Firstly, I will focus on the relationship between self-knowledge and values. I propose that self-examination is a tool for self-knowledge. In its absence, one cannot genuinely discern their values. To answer the questions about oneself, individuals

need to acknowledge the present values and question whether they hold them because it is what is expected from them or not. For instance, questioning one's way of living may result in the realization that society arranges the values and one manifests them as if they result from an independent choice. For instance, it is not uncommon that when college students broaden their vision and experience different ways of living other than they habituate growing up, they realize that the childhood dream jobs do not belong to them. They are inherited from parents' incomplete desires about themselves or arranged by society's definition of success. For this reason, individuals, especially young adults, need to closely observe their desires, values, and behaviors to see whether values and purposes are genuine. Individuals should examine themselves, their reactions, and their changing values in different life experiences. Self-examination is a tool that allows individuals to see themselves in different settings. For this reason, I consider broadening of vision and experiencing oneself in different conditions important for authenticity. The educational system should equip students with different life experiences, such as social work and internships, and it should also equip them with the tool of self-examination.

Secondly, there is a connection between emotional state awareness, hedonic resilience, and self-examination. Self-examination helps emotional recognition and increases awareness of signs of distress. It helps one be awake when the uncomfortable feeling takes over, and this wakefulness can prevent habituating an uncomfortable baseline. Self-examination emphasizes a nonjudgmental observation of the emotional fluctuations and mood changes to recognize them and stay in their

presence. Gabor Maté (2003) stresses emotional competence, similar to inner state awareness. He states that emotional competence necessitates the ability to discern which psychological reactions are given as a response to the moment and which are the residues of the past. Secondly, emotional competence necessitates the cognizance of genuine needs that require satisfaction. I think what he presents as requirements of emotional competence can be obtained only through careful examination. Hence, I consider there is a strong relationship between inner state awareness and self-examination.

Lastly, self-observation is connected to cultivating one's place in the community and nature. With the correct questions for observation, one starts to ponder, "Who am I as a human being, what is my place in nature, who am I as an agent in the community, and which values make me human?" These are the questions that one may search for oneself. Search for the answer connects self-examination and integrality. To sum up, it is plausible to think that these elements are all connected to self-examination, which is the tool for self-knowledge. The most crucial step for well-being is to work on the knowledge of the self.

Additionally, the mere awareness of genuine values and emotions is insufficient to increase one's well-being. Awareness through self-examination is necessary; however, manifesting them in one's life is also necessary to increase well-being. Otherwise, realizing one's values and not acting according to them may result in an uncomfortable emotional state and inauthenticity. One should also manifest authenticity, autonomy, resilience, and integrality in action.

2.5 Possible Objections to My Account of Well-being:

First, one may immediately think of well-being in situations of inadequate physical supplies, disease, or handicap. A concern may be related to individuals living with distressing conditions and physical insufficiencies. One may ask whether it is possible that a person who lives in poverty feels better and goes better and become more integral in her life than the one who lives in better conditions, such as physical abundance. My answer is yes, it is possible. This account of well-being is primarily about cultivating and acting accordingly to the appropriate mental state with self-examination. Hence material wealth becomes secondary unless there is an emergency, life-threatening concern. Another concern is health. For instance, one may consider whether it is possible for a person who has physical handicaps to report positively and also have more well-being than other individuals. Or is it possible that a person with a compelling condition¹⁹, such as cancer, feels better and goes better than someone without such a condition? I answer this question positively as well. Firstly, physical incapacities do not restrict the positive report on well-being. One may still self-examine, feel attunement, and be integrated into one's life regardless of physical condition. Even if it is difficult, I think it is not impossible. In other words, the subjective well-being requirement can be ensured in compelling

¹⁹The effect of mindfulness-based self-examination practices on compelling situations see Kabat-Zinn (2013); Ladenbauer and Singer (2022); Ott and Bauer (2006); Zimmerman, Burrell and Jordan (2018).

conditions. One may ask whether such a person who can report positively on her well-being can have well-being in the objective sense. I consider yes because it is not logically impossible. She can have well-being if she acts authentically, feels integral, and considers herself part of her community and nature appropriate to the actions and situation. Hence, I do not think illness and well-being are mutually exclusive. However, I think that there may be another compelling situation. For instance, how can we interpret the well-being of the individual who thinks his purpose is to become an award-winning runner and he values success, yet, at the same time, he has a physical handicap that makes it impossible to realize this purpose? Even if it is compelling, I still consider that he can report positively for his well-being if he practices self-examination to reconsider his values and purpose. With self-examination, he can accept himself and his conditions as it is when it is not possible to change them. When self-examination's mindfulness characteristic is considered, this tool may reveal that this is not an appropriate goal for his present state or is very demanding. The value and purpose may be replaced with the optimal ones, or self-examination may even reveal that this is not his genuine desire or goal but a way of self-validation to keep up with social standards. In this sense, self-examination is essential for acknowledging one's present state.

Another likely concern on the given account of well-being is "side contributors." For instance, one may think that this account undermines the contribution of creative activity, leisure, or abundant physical conditions. I prefer to call them side contributors. I suggest two ways to approach them: Firstly, one may consider how creative activities and leisure contribute to these elements. In this case, elements of

well-being can include side contributors. That is to say, creative activity and leisure increase well-being because they give individuals a space to express their authenticity and feel more attuned to their bodies and their lives. For this reason, taking them as means of self-examination and authenticity is plausible.

Another example can be friendship and making social connections. They increase the well-being of individuals because they contribute to the feeling of belongingness, safety, and attunement to the environment. The concept of integrality can include friendship and social connections. Another worry can be about sensory pleasures. I think their optimal presence can increase the individual's well-being and help one perceive her life as enjoyable and worth living, at least for a person seeking sensory enjoyment. However, they are neither necessary nor sufficient. Secondly, physical conditions increase individual well-being. However, it is not as essential as the other given elements when no emergency is concerned.

Lastly, one may wonder whether increasing only one of these primary elements increases one's well-being. As I have shown before, these elements are strongly connected. For this reason, an increase or decrease in one element affects other elements' efficacy or contribution.

2.6 Conclusion

So far, I have listed that self-examination; recognition of genuine values; autonomous action and choice; resilience; the integrality of the person to life, and the appropriate feelings of integrality are the fundamental elements for individual well-being under no emergency and survival conditions. To summarize my argument, I would like to compare it to Derek Parfit's main categorization of theories of well-being (1984). According to this classification, there are three main theories of well-being. The first one is hedonistic theories. He states, "What would be best for someone is what would make his life happiest" The second one is the Desire-Fulfilment theory: "What would be best for someone is what, throughout his life, would best fulfill his desires" The last classification is Objective List theory: "Certain things are good or bad for us, whether or not we want to have the good things or to avoid the bad things" (p. 493).

In my account, what is good for an individual's well-being is explored through self-examination. Self-examination is the main tool for individuals to understand what is of primary importance to them, how to choose and take action as an individual, how to approach emotions, and how to feel and act as an integral part of life.

From one perspective, these given elements of well-being are similar to the objective list. However, it differs from what Parfit states as a characteristic of the objective list. In classical objective list theories, certain things are accepted as good for well-being, and one should include them in life, whether one feels comfortable with them or not. I do not claim that some things should be present in one's life regardless of one's affection for them. On the contrary, I present these elements as a list to help

individuals find what they become content with and accordingly help them feel attunement to their life and be a harmonious part of it. Accordingly, contentment, one's satisfaction from life, and a feeling of attunement are important for individual well-being. The pursuit of such positive feelings creates the hedonic part of the account. Lastly, one may also see that the search for authentic values and autonomous action toward what one values, in other words, obtaining what one desires is similar to desire-satisfaction theories.

To sum up, it is plausible to conclude that this is a hybrid theory since, from different perspectives; it fits all of the above. This theory provides an account of an individual good life, in which individuals express their authenticity within the integrality of unity and empathy. I claim that providing individuals with the tools for this given account of well-being is one of education's main objectives.

CHAPTER 3

WELL-BEING AS AN AIM OF EDUCATION

This chapter aims to show that what I have claimed in the introduction, “providing tools for individual well-being is one of the objectives of education,” is also convenient for different educational ideals, such as liberation, collective welfare, or virtue-based education. This chapter discusses exemplary pedagogies that seemingly conflict with my claim. Even if the emphasis is on the collective, cultivating individual well-being can still advance education's communal objectives.

Firstly, I will point out the connection between my claim and critical pedagogy. Then, I will elaborate on the relationship between feminist pedagogy and hook's engaged pedagogy, and finally, I will emphasize value-based education and culture transmission.

I do not directly refer to any governmental institution by considering communal or societal gains because human beings create them to facilitate organization and communal living. They are of secondary importance. I do not think that education should directly aim at the good functioning of such structures. However, it should

aim to improve individuals who create and affect such institutions' efficacy. In other words, education should deal with human influence and create integral individuals in the community. Then issues about community and governmental structures can be addressed more rationally.

3.1. Critical Pedagogy and Well-being as an Aim of Education

This section focuses on Paulo Freire's educational ideals. I show that one who supports critical pedagogy can still benefit from my opinion on well-being in the context of education. Ira Shor (1993) states that Freire's social pedagogy takes education as a construction place of society and individuals. Education can either domesticate or empower individuals. Emphasis is on the mutual learning of teachers and students. I think the reason is to enable students critically assess and express their opinions. It also encourages them to play an efficient role in social change and not be dominated by existing norms of knowledge. It is essential to state that Freire takes education as politics (Shor & Freire, 1987, as cited in Shor, 1993). To briefly rephrase Shor, Freire's pedagogy entails the following:

- Critical assessment of the social context and seeing how it is applied to one's own life and understanding;
- Obtaining critical and analytic skills to get information;
- Having an awareness of individual and organized group power;
- Obtaining a critical attitude through myths, values, and dominant culture and their internalization into consciousness;

- Transforming schools and society from undemocratic unequal dominant forms of knowledge and styles of education (1993, pp. 32-33).

I will show the parallels between my argument and Freire's critical pedagogy. First and foremost, Freire takes education as a tool for critically assessing existing norms and ways of obtaining knowledge and as a practice of liberation (hooks, 1993).

Freire wants education to give students tools for realizing how one internalizes the norms of social context and the traditional "banking method" of education and how these norms affect an individual's life in the social environment. I relate these aspects to the elements of well-being, mainly to self-examination, autonomy, and integrality. For instance, if individuals have the tools of self-examination, they can better assess how the existing norms and the internalized social context shape their interpretation and perception. This understanding accordingly affects student autonomy in that one can discern the effective mechanisms one is surrounded by.

One may increase the ability to express the distortion about existing mechanisms and societal norms. One can express their authentic ideas and possibly have the option to be attentive. As a result, providing tools for autonomy and authentic expression is significant in both views. Lastly, Freire takes education as a tool for social change by empowering individuals with critical skills to challenge inequality and injustice (Shor, 1993). I consider that integrality fits this ideal well. Since, in integral understanding, one is invited to cultivate the idea of looking at humanity from above without any etiquettes of race, religion, or language and act accordingly.

Consequently, providing tools for cultivating the appropriate feeling of integrality

will carry itself in an action that defends equality and justice²⁰. It also helps make a community that can ponder critically for the good of the bigger whole with the awareness of unity.

3.2 Feminist Pedagogy, Engaged Pedagogy, and Well-being as an Aim of Education

Feminist Pedagogy, similar to critical pedagogy, primarily emphasizes education's influence on society and its power to change. Shrewsbury (1987) states that feminist pedagogy prioritizes the engagement of the students in the learning process and encourages them to get beyond discriminative norms such as racism, sexism, and class relations; and has a respectful attitude to the differences to connect with the community and the social actions of change. I consider it appropriate to start with individual progress by encouraging students to adopt an attitude that promotes integrity—providing them with a viewpoint not to look at each other behind the veil of social identities and etiquettes and see the humanity and unity behind it. Furthermore, Shrewsbury notes that feminist pedagogy aims at critical thinking not only in an abstract way but in the form of a reflective process associated with everyday living (p. 7). It means that the engagement of reflection and action is essential for change. In other words, feminist pedagogy prioritizes autonomous thinking and authentic manifestation in everyday life. Lastly, she states that feminist

²⁰ Seeing from above prioritizes the actions that are good for the whole, found in Stoic Ethics: “I am essentially part of a greater whole. My interests are therefore bound up with the question of what it means for me to function well and harmoniously in relation with the whole” (Robertson, 2019, p. 212).

pedagogy involves the recognition of power relations and domination and traditional education settings (p. 8). It is also crucial that the individual is encouraged to discern the dominating power implied on herself and how it changes how she lives. This idea parallels what I consider as recognition of genuine values, apart from the ones that the social environment or educational settings condition one. The individual can realize them by observing the self and the external world. In feminist pedagogy, individuals are invited to distinguish genuine values from those resulting from the internalization of dominant power structures. In conclusion, providing tools of authenticity and self-knowledge in education fit this ideal.

To sum up and clarify, Conrad et al. (as cited in Martin, 2017, p. 12) present the characteristics of feminist pedagogy, and I summarize them as follows:

- Learning is a lifelong transformational and reciprocal process from which teachers also learn from it;
- Diversity of opinions is important, and education should challenge the settled norms and injustices in society;
- Finally, reflection and action should go together.

Given these, it is plausible to assert that feminist pedagogy also stresses the importance of critical assessment to consider diversity, social identity, and class relations and how they affect the individual. This investigation requires self-examination and critical assessment of oneself and the environment. Furthermore, reflecting on integrality and exercising is crucial for renouncing discrimination and being a part of the transformation. As a result, my argument fits the feminist framework.

Similar to what is presented above, bell hooks shapes her pedagogy inspired by critical theory and the holistic ideas of Thich Nhat Hanh. Hooks claim that teaching should be respectful for the souls (1994, p. 13). Connected to this, hooks' approach to education is holistic and progressive. Taken as her inspiration, Hanh also stressed the unity of reflection and action to change the world, adopted a holistic approach that emphasizes the wholeness of mind, body, and spirit, and considered the teacher as a healer (1994, p. 14). Following this, hooks point out that apart from critical and feminist pedagogies, engaged pedagogy emphasizes well-being and teachers' self-actualization (p. 15). I think that to actualize oneself and to better engage in reciprocal teaching and learning processes, teachers should first examine their thinking, emotional responses, and attitudes. They should critically monitor their decisions to realize authentic values and direct their lives accordingly; they should manifest what they believe and teach about justice and equality to feel connected to themselves and others. In this way, firstly, they create a living example for the students as a person. They become tolerant of individual differences, learning paces, and different opinions. Such a learning environment can encourage students to form and express their authentic ideas, help them listen to different opinions, facilitate living together as a community, and contribute to integrality. As a result, teachers and students are mutually affected by each other's well-being.

To conclude, hooks would also agree that education should aim at self-knowledge and the cultivation of autonomy and authenticity to transform and transgress the

norms one finds herself. Similarly, Thich Nhat Hanh states, “The way out is in”²¹ I interpret these words in this context as in order to transform the systematic and structural injustice, inequality, and suffering; one should discover and learn to transform the injustice and unconscious assumption within. In this respect, both feminist pedagogy and hook’s engaged pedagogy can benefit from my argument while prioritizing the transformative role of education in society.

3.3 Values Education, Culture Transmission, and Well-being as an Aim of Education

In this section, I show how well-being tools in education curricula align with character and virtue education when these terms are broadly used. It means that when virtue education cultivates the good potential²² and dispositions in human beings to make them live better and in collaboration with each other, well-being tools can be applied appropriately. However, an objectionable point may arise if one takes virtue education only for social welfare. I will elaborate on this point and show that individual well-being tools may also serve social good and culture transmission.

Alkis Katsonis (2022) states that one of the primary aims of contemporary education should be making human beings good collaborators with the motivation and necessary abilities, and a virtue-based education model can serve this purpose. He

²¹See the documentary *A Cloud Never Dies*.

²² Ynhui Park states “Education has to do with changing a human being through transformation of his human potentials... Since change and transformation presuppose a direction, education involves value judgment” (1997, p. 9).

adds that virtue education aims to produce learners with the skills to grasp knowledge with a good moral compass informed by practical wisdom and learners motivated to promote social goods (p. 312). When a good moral compass is appropriately defined, placing well-being tools as the basis of virtue education can serve individuals' emotional and intellectual development and improve society. Since the cultivation of well-being aims at individuals, who are integrated with themselves and connected with society, it also invites individuals to be emotionally and intellectually self-aware.

However, the most objectionable part of values education is teaching or adopting an existing set of values. For instance, if values education is grounded in the values of the dominant culture or way of living, it may become oppressive and paternalistic for individuals. It contradicts the claim that individual well-being is an aim of education since it becomes a tool of oppression. Hence, values education aims at the individual's well-being only if it directs students to approach internalized values critically. Values education should provide tools to adopt values that can be shared by humanity in the most inclusive way possible, distinguishing them from the oppressive, dominant ones that one is born with. For this, it is necessary to develop a sense of self-understanding by examining and putting oneself into the context of humanity to realize one's connection with humankind and develop critical thinking and expression skills. As I mentioned in the previous chapters, these are elements of well-being. I consider that to align with my objective of well-being as an aim of education, value-based education should not adopt the superiority or method of any

power structure. It should only guide students to find in themselves the values that humankind shares.

Lastly, some might argue that the primary aim of education is culture transmission, socialization, or handing on collective knowledge to the next generations. Taking well-being as one of education's aims does not undermine education's transmission function. In fact, it makes cultural transmission more convenient. Suppose individuals do not cultivate their capacities, such as autonomy, critical assessment, and authentic choice. In that case, societal knowledge and culture cannot be appropriately controlled, and dominant knowledge can become a tool of oppression. Unchecked culture and habits may become a prevalent way of perception and socialization of the next generations. Following this, unmonitored cultural transmission can bring up individuals who are not encouraged to use their rational capacities and only act according to existing norms. When well-being elements are not included in an educational theory, communal values may also disappear because individuals who accept and transmit them cannot properly form a healthy society where its members can assess and express the cultural elements. Even if education primarily aims at culture transmission, it should focus on developing individual capacities and well-being.

3.4 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have investigated different pedagogies that prioritize the transformation of society. I show that individual well-being is consistent and significant for societal transformation and collaboration because cultivating individual well-being has multidimensional benefits. It helps create responsible, autonomous people with integrity who can look at things from a broader perspective and act for the good of humanity. In this sense, well-being as an aim of education is similar to Socratic and Stoic ideals of education, which Nussbaum states "confront the passivity of the pupil, challenging the mind to take charge of its own thought" (1998, p. 28). It is essential to distinguish the individual voice from the voice of convention and to act with awareness and intention. It is also appropriate to assert that the development of a healthy community starts with individuals fulfilling their rational²³ and emotional²⁴ capacities to reason and act and to consider the good of the whole of nature without discrimination.

²³ Emily Robertson supports that knowing how to produce and evaluate knowledge, investigating the worth of testimonial reports, and making students aware of biased opinions are among aims of education (2010).

²⁴ Works of Daniel Goleman revealed that social and emotional intelligence are at least as vital to cognition as the IQ (intelligence quotient) which is considered central in education (Lovat, 2010, p. 9).

CHAPTER 4

PHILOSOPHICAL PRACTICES AS A TOOL FOR WELL-BEING

Initially, I stated that philosophical practices help one strengthen or obtain self-knowledge, autonomy, authenticity, resilience, integrality, and self-discipline. In this chapter, I will dwell on the third premise and the conclusion of the main argument. I present journaling as an example of philosophical practice since it can enhance all these elements, and its application is attainable in education. Firstly, I introduce the concept of philosophical practices and why I choose to present journaling as an exemplary case applicable to education settings. Then I elaborate on how journaling cultivates elements of well-being.

4.1 Philosophical Practices

In this section, I offer a general explanation of the concept of philosophical practices based on their function regarding Pierre Hadot. I define philosophical practices as holistic exercises, including cognition and behavior, which lead to a change in the practitioner's way of thinking and behaviors that lead to expansion in the vision and

a more holistic interpretation of nature. I prefer to call them philosophical practices since they are part of philosophy as a way of life tradition and lead to an examined life. Such practices use the mind, action, and ideas (such as precepts) to develop the individual as more attuned with themselves and nature.

Philosophical practices help human beings first realize and then transform their relationship with themselves, their way of connecting with the world, and their perception of the world by fostering human capacities and leading them to live an examined life. Pierre Hadot similarly describes the philosophical act. He states that the act of philosophy makes one better by shaking the ground of settled beliefs. It is a rise from inauthenticity to an authentic living with self-awareness (1997, p. 83). Philosophical practices can contribute to an individual's life in many ways. Firstly, they provide individuals with a new world vision apart from habit. Secondly, they become a tool for metacognition. It means that individuals start to think about and critically assess their decisions, reactions, and intentions. They begin to discern their ideas from others and may recognize habituated interpretation and reaction mechanisms. In parallel, Pierre Hadot states that philosophical practices (which he calls spiritual exercises) transform the vision of the world and lead to a metamorphosis in personality (1997, p. 82). It is possible to find many philosophical practices, primarily rooted in Stoic traditions and Buddhism²⁵, which are the basis of modern psychological interventions²⁶. For instance, mindfulness-based practices derived from Buddhism and commonly used in psychological interventions.

²⁵ For instance, the very popular method that is used in MBSR technique finds its source from Buddhist practice of mindfulness. For further information: Kabat-Zinn (2013).

²⁶ Robertson (2019).

Mindfulness fits Pierre Hadot's definition of a philosophical act: It gives self-awareness by leading one to get out from the autopilot mode of living,²⁷ transforming one's way of being in the world.

One known Stoic practice that potentially transforms the self and contributes to well-being is Epictetus' testing impressions²⁸, which emphasizes that it is not the things that disturb people, but the opinions they form concerning them. He invites people to have a watchful attitude toward opinions. One may apply this suggestion in many ways, from abrupt emotional arousal to the critical assessment of one's genuine values. It becomes a practical tool for improving self-knowledge. Furthermore, Marcus Aurelius, in his meditations, invites himself to meditate on others' attitudes and what may likely happen during the day, first thing in the morning²⁹. He practices keeping his decision mechanism alive, reminds himself not to be swayed easily by emotional triggers, and intends to approach others' mistakes from an integral perspective. He reminds himself that "all things happen to them by reason of their ignorance" (X.13). It is possible to multiply the examples as follows:

- Practicing silence (Holowchak, 2009, p. 178);
- Thinking what a sage would do? (Robertson, 2019, p. 126);
- Meditating on impermanence (Robertson, 2019, p. 144);
- To live in here and now and measure the right value of things (Robertson, 2019, p. 136);
- Premeditation (Robertson, 2019, p. 179);

²⁷ For autopilot mode, see: Paulson, Davidson, Jha, and Kabat-Zinn (2013); Marchand (2016).

²⁸ Enchiridion. I.5.

²⁹ Meditations, X.13.

- To prepare the mind for the adversities in advance, the practice of acceptance of unchangeable (Robertson, 2019, p. 199);
- View from above (Robertson, 2019, p. 211) to think of the totality of existence and self-belonging to the Whole (Robertson, 2019, p. 212), or it takes the form of "cosmic perspective" and so on.

Philosophical practices are not restricted to Stoic or Western traditions. For instance, one can consider Buddhist Noble Eightfold Path, including many practices. These practices are philosophical since they aim to eliminate the mind's habituated mechanisms that lead to the cycle of suffering and expand the vision. These practices are: "correct view, correct intention, correct speech, correct action, correct livelihood, correct effort, correct mindfulness, correct concentration" Another example can be Zen Koans which are brief paradoxical statements³⁰ and questions to eliminate the mind's dualistic interpretation and habitual responding mechanisms. Although the method is controversial to Western analytic thinking and philosophizing, I consider them powerful methods to think beyond dualistic understanding. It leads to the expansion of vision since the identification of the thing with the opposites, such as good-bad, small-big, etc., is one of the most familiar ways for an individual to understand nature. This understanding may lead to missing other important elements found in nature, such as unity.

Now, I elaborate on journaling as an exemplary philosophical practice. I choose journaling because I consider adapting it to the educational curricula easier, and it is

³⁰ See Encyclopedia Britannica, 2017

convenient for the purpose of the thesis. Holowchak (2009) presents some philosophical practices as epistemological curatives (p. 175). The reason for this naming is that it targets a positive change in the understanding and thinking mechanisms of the individual. I present journaling practice as a concrete, consolidating one which does not only targets mental "opinion-shifting" since it would be hard to observe in teaching but also help individuals express and be witness to this opinion shift by writing it. Likewise, Schmidt (1999) emphasizes using writing tools in classrooms for discovery and learning, not only as a "proof" of learning.

4.2 Journaling as a Philosophical Practice

I present the journaling method as a compilation of different styles of personal writing that are primarily reflective and expressive. It can entail reflections, emotional expressions, reminders, and self-principles. With reflection-based writing³¹, individuals analyze and intensify their understanding of the experience. For instance, they investigate their impressions to understand how their opinions change the quality of the experience. Then they may use this insight to improve everyday life. Expressive writing is a technique in which individuals write freely about a troubling experience (Krpan et al., 2013). Individuals using these methods may write down their experiences aiming for emotional disclosure and analysis. Plus, journaling may facilitate habit formation, broadening the perspective and transformation of the worldview and the personality because it helps one do self-

³¹ See: McCarthy (2011).

assessment and acquire self-knowledge in thinking and responding mechanisms. Consequently, I take journaling as a philosophical practice that can foster given aspects of well-being.

4.2.1 Self-knowledge and Journaling

Journaling primarily cultivates individuals' self-knowledge. It is an essential contribution since I have prioritized self-knowledge in well-being. Journaling practice can improve self-knowledge in expressive and reflective ways. It can inform one about how the patterned formation of opinions and responses affects one's interpretation of the world and how experiences consolidate thinking and response mechanisms. In other words, one can track the relationship between the external world and interpretation and attitudes. To monitor this relationship, one may write either reflectively or expressively. In both ways, individuals take their attention from outside and purposefully bring it inside. Then individuals deal with their impressions; they can monitor and track how their thoughts, emotions, responses, and habits form. Likewise, Robertson states journaling is "therapeutic self-monitoring" (p. 151). This definition of "therapeutic self-monitoring" is plausible because Stoics also use the method to keep track of unhealthy thoughts³².

Furthermore, hypomnemata, which Foucault emphasizes as material records of things read, heard, or thought (as cited in Weisgerber & Butler, 2016), is an

³² Robertson states that Epictetus uses it to monitor his student's unhealthy thoughts (p. 151)

important historical example of self-writing or self-recording to help one develop self-understanding. It is plausible that journaling is not only for emotional disclosure but also for the apprehension and cultivation of the overall mindset by internalizing precepts, maxims, and rules³³ to acknowledge, unlearn and change the mind habits with the more convenient ones. In other words, one aims to return to how the mind works when not conditioned from the outside. The effort to reach this authentic state of mind also cultivates self-knowledge and other elements of well-being. Besides, CBT³⁴ also advises journaling as a self-monitoring method to develop insight and objectivity. (Beck, Emery, & Greenberg, as cited in Robertson, 2019). Then it is possible to say that ancient and modern practitioners have used journaling as an effective self-monitoring method.

4.2.2 Autonomy-Authenticity and Journaling

Reflective journaling can be used as an effective tool to increase autonomy and authenticity since it helps one create a space³⁵ to reconsider events, concepts, impressions, emotions, and responses. Furthermore, Schmidt (1999) points out that the writing process helps one formulate, clarify, expand, and deepen the thinking.

Referring to studies of Emig (1977) and Griffin (1983), Schmidt (1999) states that:

The process of writing intertwines in a reinforcing cycle the use of the brain, the hand, and the eye; it involves both hemispheres of the brain and thus integrates thought in the most basic sense; it helps us formulate, synthesize and connect

³³ One of the most important examples of stoic writing is Marcus Aurelius' *Meditations*, which compiles his own personal writings, affirmations precepts, reflections, and rationalizations of events for himself.

³⁴ Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

³⁵ See Alt, Raichel and Naamati-Schneider (2022).

ideas; it can be used to communicate to ourselves as well as to others and provides a means of receiving both immediate and long-term feedback, it is active, engaging and personal. (p. 32)

Schmidt concludes that writing is a tool that can help students develop and use the higher-level cognitive skills that are important for critical thinking (p. 32). When writing activity focuses on reframing an individual experience, it allows the person to see the connection between the incident and the response more objectively. In other words, writing becomes a tool for self-monitoring to assess one's thinking process. If one can approach herself critically, one can begin to distinguish the internalized ideas in the sense of whether they are grasped by society as a norm, or from parents' expectations, or they are authentic and intended. Then reflective writing becomes a tool for the assessment, decision-making, and attitude-changing mechanism for the next time. As a result, it becomes a tool for authentic action.

Moreover, the aim of writing is similar to the Stoic purposes of education.

Nussbaum states that when Stoics work with their pupils, they aim to free their minds from the thoughts and ideas of others and make them responsible for their thoughts (1998). Likewise, Robertson (2019, p. 150) states that personal journals are another tool that provides individuals with a systematic examination of one's thoughts and behaviors. They are also a method to investigate thought pattern formation and its behavioral reflection. Finding journaling practice complementary to modern therapy techniques such as MBSR³⁶ and CBT³⁷ is possible. In schools, self-reflection homework may expand students' space for evaluation, self-

³⁶ See Ivtzan and Lomas (Eds.) (2016);
Levin, Potts, Haeger and Lillis (2017).

³⁷ Ruini and Mortara (2022).

monitoring, and reframing skills to take more integral, authentic, and autonomous actions or help one unfold.

4.2.3 Resilience and Journaling

Journaling cultivates resilience by facilitating emotional recognition, regulation (Sargunraj, Kashyap, & Chandra, 2021), and unfolding, yet I am not interested in this tool as a prescription for psychopathology. I take journaling into consideration as a practical tool for well-being. A study focused on the relationship between writing and emotional regulation (Sargunraj, Kashyap, & Chandra, 2021) uses different writing tasks for the individual to write regularly, such as "labeling emotions and choosing an appropriate response" (p.75), to promote cognitive flexibility. The authors note improvements in emotional regulation (pp. 76-77). Furthermore, Pennebaker and Seagal (1999) state that writing about significant emotional experiences over three days improves mental and physical health (p. 1243). Referring to these studies, I consider that expressive and reflective journaling can help one acknowledge feelings because it provides an undistracted space for the emotional unfolding. After the disclosure and expression, one may approach emotions and reflect on their potential impact on thought formation, and potentially, as DeBrabander (as cited in Robertson, 2019, p. 71) states that as a part of Stoic therapy, transforming the irrational emotions into rational ones, however, rather than "rational emotions" I prefer moderated emotions through individual awareness and monitoring. Pennebaker and Seagal also point out that the emotional response

becomes more manageable when experiences are given structure and meaning (1999, p. 1243). Secondly, I believe journaling is a helpful tool to keep one's emotional baseline on a more positive side. It means that journaling is a tool to cultivate and preserve hedonic resilience if the individual is ready to unfold. When one is ready to write about emotions (emotional discharge) and search for the triggers of the particular emotional arousal relating to the event, one may start to reason about it and becomes aware of the triggers. Then she may become more ready and calm for the next time and can reorient herself more quickly in a more relaxed state. Journaling is also a reminder to take the proper perspective. Just as Stoics use the ready-to-hand principles in their minds, one can remind herself to be prepared for future adversities in the daily written form. Rather than emotional disclosure and analyzing, one can also take daily notes of what they feel thankful for in their lives to feel contentment for them regularly, which is called gratitude journaling. I believe that writing about contentment may make these feelings easy to reach and familiar and replace an uncomfortable feeling, increasing hedonic emotional resilience. A study focused on student well-being in the classroom observed the positive impact of gratitude journals in terms of positive affect and engagement with others (Flinchbaugh, Moore, Chang, & May, 2012, p. 194).

One objection to using expressive writing in emotional disclosure is that even if expressive writing reduces stress for those with high expressive skills, writing for emotional disclosure may lead to more stress when less expressive (2014, p. 13)³⁸. I acknowledge the importance of this point. The reason may be that individuals with

³⁸ See Niles, Haltom, Mulvenna, Lieberman and Stanton (2014).

low expressive skills mentally re-experience the event and cannot express their emotions. However, I intend to present journaling primarily as a tool for self-monitoring. Secondly, for the purpose of this thesis, I am interested in the possibility of its educational application. I do not claim that teachers or consultants should use journaling to impose more stress on the individual. One possible and appropriate application for resilience practice may be to rewrite an event that leads to anger in ordinary life in a more objective language to *moderate one's emotional response* (Robertson, p. 153). The individual may do self-monitoring, gain insight into daily conflicts, and approach them with more awareness next time.

4.2.4 Integrality and Journaling

Journaling can connect the individual harmoniously to the inside and outside and facilitate their engagement³⁹. It can increase the feeling of belongingness to one's own life and a bigger whole. When the individual bounds his critical thinking and decision skills with the insight of unity, one can appropriately act with integrality. Consequently, with critical thinking and the idea of unity, one does not act at the expense of humanity.

Writing regularly on unity and connection increases one's sense of integrality as a citizen of the world. The reason is that if one attentively practices changing perspective with another and monitors herself to transform thinking and see things

³⁹ Flinchbaugh, Moore, Chang and May (2012) note that gratitude journaling with a combined intervention increases level of engagement and meaningfulness in the classroom. I consider it is possible to think in a larger scale.

from a broader perspective, one gradually changes the habit of thinking about the world and others. For instance, when an individual writes an experience from the second or third-person perspective, she gets away from her familiar point of view. She analyzes the event less subjectively. She may see that her vision and understanding drive her to understand the event in a specific, partial, one-sided way. As a result, she may acknowledge that impressions and tendencies can be restrictive for understanding, so they can also limit others' reasoning.

Journaling can also connect human experience through the increase of empathy and compassion. Nussbaum considers "the narrative imagination" one of the objectives of cultivating humanity (1999, p. 38). I interpret her ideas on this subject as follows: To become a good citizen, one should cultivate a mindset of being a citizen of the world (have an awareness of unity) at first and carry sensitivity towards others with the acknowledgment and development of unity in oneself and others. For instance, one can write to imagine the world outside given relations, such as socio-economic conditions, class relations, and discrimination. Then one can try to see others and oneself without religion, gender, or class and only focus on humanity. This practice may widen one's perspective to overcome the worm's eye view and increase one's tolerance and forgiveness of others.⁴⁰ As a result, even if awareness of unity is about being a world citizen and seeing everything as a whole, cultivating empathy and tolerance will also affect one's understanding and presence in smaller scales, such as being a tolerant and collaborative neighbor or a citizen.

⁴⁰ There is a study on the relationship between writing exercise and forgiveness: Barclay and Saldanha (2016).

Conclusion

I have presented the relationship between individual well-being and education throughout the thesis. Given that well-being aim of education, then well-being tools, primarily the ones that foster the ability of self-monitoring, should be implemented in education. In the first two chapters, I present an account of individual well-being which posits that well-being has five dimensions. Its elements are necessary and jointly sufficient. In the third chapter, I show that even if one maintains that education is primarily interested in communal gains or cultural transmission, well-being should still be an important educational objective. In chapter four, I present philosophical practices as one of the tools that foster elements of well-being, and I maintain that philosophical tools, at least the applicable ones, can be effective in education curricula. For the scope of the thesis, I choose the journaling practice as an exemplary practice that can foster all the given elements of well-being. However, this does not mean that all philosophical practices promote all the given aspects of well-being at once, nor are all of them applicable to education. Instead, I claim that pedagogues and educational psychologists can evaluate and decide which exercises are apt to use in education. Having philosophical practices in education may increase self-awareness and integrality as a world citizen and individual.

Finally, I hope this insight will encourage further empirical investigations on the practicality of philosophical exercises to emphasize self-knowledge and well-being. In this way, we can utilize integral and humane sides of philosophy in education.



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