



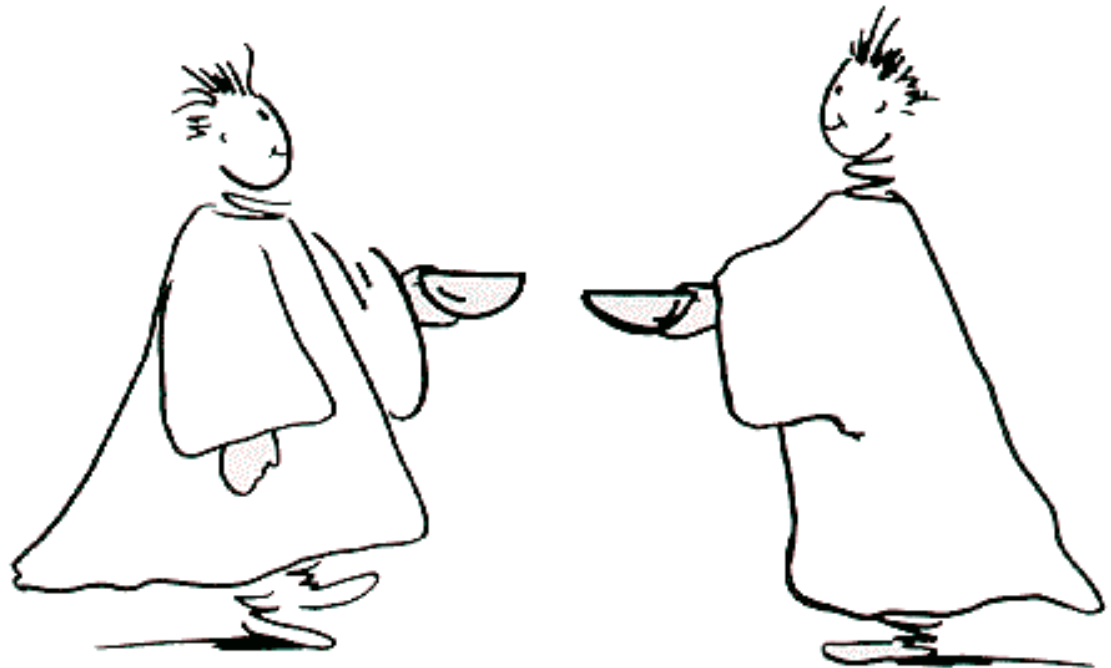
LIVING VALUES

an educational program

Honesty

Honesty

Honesty means there are no contradictions or discrepancies in thoughts, words, or actions. To be honest to one's real self and to the purpose of a task earns trust and inspires faith in others. Honesty is never to misuse that which is given in trust.



Honesty is a clear conscience "before myself and before my fellow human beings."

Honesty is the awareness of what is right and appropriate in one's role, one's behavior, and one relationship. With honesty, there is no hypocrisy or artificiality which create confusion and mistrust in the minds and lives of others. Honesty makes for a life of integrity because the inner and outer selves are a mirror image.

Honesty is to speak that which is thought and to do that which is spoken. There are no contradictions or discrepancies in thoughts, words, or actions. Such integration provides clarity and example to others. To have one form internally and another form externally creates barriers and can cause damage, since one would neither be able to come close to anyone else, nor would others want to be close. Some think, "I am honest, but no one understands me." That is not honest. Honesty is as distinct as a flawless diamond which can never remain hidden. The worth is visible in one's actions.

Clouding Issues

Inner honesty needs to be examined to provide wisdom and support and ensure strength and stability. Positive firmness within creates an oasis of spiritual resources, giving confidence to be grounded in one's self-esteem. That is assertiveness. If internally there is attachment to a person, object, or idea, that attachment poses an obstacle to reality and objectivity, and action cannot be taken in the interest of the whole. The internal state should not be influenced by the negativity of one's nature, feelings, or personality traits. Selfish motives, hidden agendas, and negative feelings and habits are stains on the mirror of life. Honesty acts as the stain remover.

For self-growth, there should be cleanliness in one's efforts and truth in one's heart. Cleanliness mean exploring and changing consciousness and activity which blemish the self and raise doubts in others. There should be honesty of the heart and also honesty of the head; otherwise, there will be self-deception or a tendency to deceive others by clouding issues with excuses or long-winded explanations. When the mirror of the self is clean, feelings, nature, motives, and objectives are clearly visible, and the individual reflects trustworthiness. There is the saying, "The boat of truth may rock, but it will never sink." Even with honesty, the boat sometimes rocks, but trustworthiness guarantees the boat will not sink. The courage of truth makes one worthy of trust.

To be trusted and to trust provide the foundation and cohesion necessary for untarnished relationships. It is also necessary to share with honesty the feelings and motives of one another. When there is honesty and cleanliness, there is also closeness. Without these principles, neither individuals nor societies can be functional.

Application and Experimentation

Personal and collective application of such ethics and principles involves experimenting to see what works best, to see what is meaningful and useful. Such is a continuous process of application and learning. Progress comes through experimenting with honesty and implementing it as completely and sincerely as possible at any given moment. When

there is the experience of success, commitment to honesty and integrity is strengthened. To carry out a task out of force, compulsion, or with a careless or selfish attitude does not reflect pure motives. To be honest with one's real self and true to the purpose of a task earns trust and inspires faith in others. For progress to be sustained requires purity of motive and consistency of effort.

An honest person is one who aspires to follow the highest codes of conduct, who is loyal to the benevolent and universal principles of life, and whose decisions are based clearly on what is right and wrong. Such an individual maintains standards which provide guidance and courage to understand and respect the subtle connections of the world in relation to his or her life. An honest person appreciates the interconnectedness of the natural world and does not misuse, abuse, or waste the wealth of resources provided for the well-being of humanity. An honest person does not take for granted his or her own resources such as mind, body, wealth, time, talents, or knowledge. Honesty means never to misuse that which is given in trust. There would always be the concern that resources be used in a worthwhile way - for the basic human, moral, and spiritual needs of all people. Well-used resources create well-being and are a means for those very resources to multiply. The individual who is deeply committed to development and progress keeps honesty as a constant principle in building a world of peace and plenty, a world of less expenditure and greater splendor.

"Our discussions must be full, they must be thorough, and they must be courteous. The votes which we take must be free. It is essential, above all, that decisions, once taken, should be accepted loyally, and we must all of us do our best to implement them to the full."

**Mr. P. H. Spaak,
President of the First Session of the UN General Assembly,
January, 1946**