

# Citizenship Education in the UK and examples of the wider application of citizenship, human rights and genocide education

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## Introduction

Before I start I think I should do two things; the first is to say how honoured I am to be here and the second is to outline a little about who I am, and how I have come to be here today. I am assumed you have all had a quick read of my biography which covers the main points, but I think I should say right from the outset that I do not consider myself as an expert in anything, and that includes what I am talking about today. I am what we might call in the UK a 'Jack of all trades and a master of none', by this I mean that I have had a very diverse life in my 32 years including specialising as a forensic archaeologist during my undergraduate degree, serving as a British Army infantry officer and now as the Head of Human Rights and Genocide Education at one of the top state comprehensive schools in the UK. I am passionate about helping people and consider myself first and foremost a servant; I am an agnostic Humanist who teaches over 500 children a year about two of the world's most important religious traditions, namely Christianity and Buddhism. I have been fascinated by the Abrahamic traditions of Judaism, Christianity and Islam for as long as I remember but I have never taken any steps towards the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. I could have become a teacher of any of the Humanities subjects of History, Geography or Religious Education (RE) given my undergraduate background of Archaeology, but I trained as an RE teacher mostly on economic grounds since the training grant was considerably larger than in other Humanities subject areas due to RE being a shortage subject at the time. I had to consider the fact that I had a small baby at the time with another on the way; as the provider of the only income in the household I had to be sensible. I had always had a drive to understand the Holocaust since I watched the film *Schindler's List* when I was at school but I got in to the area of Holocaust and Genocide Education almost by accident really. I was approached by the then Head of Citizenship at my school, who knew I had an interest in the area, about attending a play about Janusz Korzack put on by the now UCL Centre for Holocaust Education. It was for me like St. Pauls conversion on the road to Damascus, I was immediately invigorated by the story of Korzack and knew that his example was the one I wanted to follow.

I believe that Korzack is well known in Japan but for anyone who doesn't know of his story please

allow me to outline him in a couple of paragraphs. He was a Polish paediatrician who was also a huge radio celebrity and author of very loved children's books. Think the most skilled and respected TV doctor, crossed with the most beloved of children's authors, crossed with your favourite talk show host, that is about half of what 'The Old Doctor' was to the people of Poland. He set up orphanages in his native Warsaw which were established as the ideal children's republics. My favourite quote of his is that 'children are not people of tomorrow, but are people of today, and are entitled to the respect we all expect'. He was a thinker very ahead of his time and continues to have a huge impact on the lives of children, now though his ideas help every single child on the planet in that the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is largely, for lack of a better word, plagiarised from the ideas of Korzack and the rules of his orphanages. The real issue for Korzack was the fact he was Jewish. Even in Poland, the most tolerant country for Jews in Europe in the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, anti-Semitism was a big problem, Korzack even had to change his name from the Jewish Henrik Goldschmidt to the much more presentable, and more Polish, Janusz Korzack, in order to be published and attain the respect he deserved. His life became changed forever when Nazi Germany invaded Poland in September 1939 and started to establish ghettos across the Reich, but in Poland in particular which had the highest concentration of Jews on the continent. His mixed Catholic and Jewish orphanage in Warsaw was closed, Korzack never cared what background children were from, in fact like most Poles at the time he considered himself a Pole first, and a religious identity second. His work as Director of an orphanage became increasingly important as conditions in the Warsaw ghetto worsened and more and more children were left without parents. He was a man of great integrity, even when he had three chances to escape during the short walk from his orphanage to the Umslagplatz where the SS deported Jews to Treblinka extermination camp 100km north east of Warsaw, he refused to leave his children. I visited Treblinka Extermination Camp, or at least the site of it, 3 years ago and I am due to return there hopefully next year to excavate the remains of the gas chambers as part of an ongoing need to challenge Holocaust denial. There are still many far right historians and politicians who say that Treblinka was simply a transit camp.

For me, Korzack is the ideal example of a national and global citizen. His thinking was revolutionary, changed the lives of millions of children, not just in Poland but across Europe and now the world. He didn't care where a child was born, who to, what they had done or even why they had done it. He simply wanted to help others to help themselves and that is what I see my role as. I have seen and done much, my outlook is different to many others because of the rich diversity I have experienced in my life. The world is wonderfully diverse and rich in people, cultures and societies. I don't agree with many ways of life, politics or world views, but I will never think those who I disagree with any less worthy of my respect and sense of humanity. Nor does it stop me working with them as part of an open conversation about the way the world should be. Children, in my opinion, must become free thinking and open national and global citizens if there is to be real progress in the world. As a side note, it is actually quite fitting in many ways my talking about Korzack here as I wrote most of this

paper during my frequent periods away on military service in various command posts. Korzack wrote some of his most well-known books whilst serving as an Polish Army Doctor during 2 military campaigns.

Last year I was fortunate to visit Fukushima, Kyoto and Tokyo as part of a small set of seminars which aimed to open up a dialogue between UK and Japanese teachers looking at areas such as achieving greater science engagement amongst girls, the importance of diverse communication, use of innovative ICT in the classroom and my own area of using human rights education across the school spectrum. I speak as an individual who has seen and done much, I speak not from an institutional perspective, but that of a keen and passionate observer of people. Citizenship education, I firmly believe, and this is how I practice my profession, is not simply confined to an hour or so a week or every two weeks. It is, or should be at least, a fully integrated system of holistic education that transcends the academic agenda and is incorporated into all areas of study, ideally through cross curricular project based assessments, some examples of which I will cover later.

### Citizen or subject?

The first thing to say about Citizenship Education (CE) in the UK must be, I think, that strictly speaking we are not *citizens* but rather *subjects*. We are, for the time being anyway, citizens of the European Union (EU), but we are subjects of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 2<sup>nd</sup>. I mention this because it does somewhat start to show the very conflicted nature of the UK consciousness at times. The UK is, as far as I can tell, the only country to sell things in supermarkets in kilograms and litres as per the EU rules on the use of the metric system, but we still all measure our height in feet and inches by the old imperial system rather than metres and centimetres. We also have all of our road signs telling us how far we have to travel in miles rather than kilometres, and as for ordering drinks, we still ask for a pint of beer rather than 568.26125ml of beer as we really ought to, but that is far too difficult to say, especially after too many millilitres of beer! We do have a little line on glasses that say in very small text '568ml' but no one pays attention to this as far as I am aware. I can only imagine the confusion visitors to the UK must have at times with our national desire to have the best of both worlds with our desire to be modern and up to date world leaders of industry and innovation and our almost obsessive need to keep things the way they were. There is a saying in the UK which is 'if it's not broken, don't fix it', the thing is that sometimes, things might not be broken, but they sure might be outdated and could do with modernising.

Citizenship Education in the UK is a bit like this in the fact that it has no single holistic objective or set of outcomes, no set ideas that it follows and is never practiced in the same way. There are common themes like understanding how the UK parliament works as a way to try and enhance political engagement amongst the young. Interestingly, the group that will have to live for the longest time with the result of the recent Brexit vote to leave the EU, the group that were, according to all the research, most likely to vote in favour of remaining in the EU, the 18 – 24 year old bracket, had the

lowest turnout of voters of any other age range. There was a massive outcry on social media in the days after the vote to leave the EU was made that old people had ruined things for the young and that the 'Baby Boomers' who were born in the early post World War 2 years, who had benefited for decades from lower interest rates, no university tuition fees and the social liberation of the 1960s had yet again made life difficult for the young with their decision. In real terms though the 18 – 24 year olds on have themselves to blame, if each of them had been bothered to vote they would have certainly got the remain vote they so desperately wanted apparently. It would seem as though despite a primary theme of CE being political education and enhanced engagement, young people who had received the most formal CE of any generation in fact have the least desire to take an active role in the political future of the country.

There are also many attempts to make young people active citizens through the use of community volunteering projects as a way to make young people think of others before themselves, to increase empathy, tolerance, community spirit and cohesion. There is however a general rising amount of hate crimes and crimes of intolerance against immigrants, especially Islamic immigrants. These xenophobic statistics took a sharp upturn in the days following the Brexit vote with hundreds of Britons of Asian, African and European decent telling of verbal and physical abuse most of these cases including people being told to 'go home' despite them being often third or fourth generation 'immigrants' to the UK and therefore fully fledged British citizens, or should I say subjects?! I'm not even sure what we are! A thing that the rising number of far right nationalistic groups should remember is that the UK has ALWAYS been a meeting point for other nations. Our own Anglo-Saxon identity is not British, it's German and Dutch! The much beloved Saint George, the archetypal example of chivalry who slew the dragon and saved the princess, and the one that English football fans so proudly wear his cross on their t-shirts, wasn't in the slightest bit British, he was Albanian! By the way, most British school children in my experience have no idea when Saint George's Day is! It's 23<sup>rd</sup> June in case you were wondering, oddly enough though, if you were applying for British Citizenship you probably would know that, as it is one of the questions on the citizenship exam! As is what does the Latin term 'Magna Carta' mean? The Magna Carta was the document that established a set of standardised laws, conventions and basic rights that applied to all people, even the King. It was drafted in AD1215 by the Barons of England who made the King sign it or else he would have a hard time ruling the country. The ironic thing about this whole situation is that this is also used as a source of national pride for the more nationalistic sorts since it established the rule of law, the right to due process, laid the foundations for the French Revolution and the US Declaration of Independence of 1776 and eventually the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a sign of the UK being far ahead of the times and a world leader in all good things. But the people who wrote it were not even British; they were mostly of French or Viking heritage!

The UK has always, absolutely always, been open to external influences, the UK has been invaded and taken over so often that if genetic identities could have a Facebook style relationship status it

would almost certainly read 'it's complicated'. Most of the things that the UK is world renowned for are not British. Fish and Chips; the Eastern European Jewish tradition of fried fish meeting the Irish tradition of frying potatoes. Tea with sugar: Far Eastern herbal infusion mixed with a by-product of Caribbean agriculture. The only thing the British did with this is put them together and for some reason add milk to it! More people in the UK drink coffee actually; the British Empire just made lots of money from exporting tea and sugar from its colonies and therefore the association was made. Curry is the most widely eaten food in the UK. Most of our biggest industrial and retail companies have been started by immigrants to the UK, often from current EU countries. Saville Row tailoring and the tradition of high quality gold-smithing and shoe making comes from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century influx of French and Belgian protestant refugees called the Huguenots. Before the Huguenots British clothing was appalling and consisted of 2 kinds of wool, itchy wool for the rich and really itchy for the poor. Interesting thing about the Huguenots actually, they were refugees because the French and Belgian Crown's at the time were trying to win more favour with the Catholic Church in Rome and therefore tried to forcibly convert the protestant heretics or mostly just burn them at the stake! Shortly after the Huguenot arrival in the UK there was the beginning of a long period of war between Britain and France. But, the British Crown had no money, or at least not enough to wage a successful war, so it decided to borrow lots of money from wealthy and high status groups, the biggest of which was the Huguenots because they were making so much money providing better clothes made of silks and cotton, also as a result of the British Empire. After the wars, the Crown couldn't pay its debts back and so the bank the Huguenot donors started stayed around and became heavily linked to the British Government, and so the Bank of England was born. Yes, the Bank of England is not even British. The thing is, if you were studying for the citizenship exam I mentioned earlier you would probably know all of this, and more because they are apparently all essential bits of information for all British people to know. However, former British Prime Minister, David Cameron, who was educated at Eton College and Oxford University didn't even know what Magna Carta meant when he was asked on an American talk show!

The question I pose to all my citizenship classes first of all when I meet them is 'what does it mean to be British?' and none of them can give me a sound answer, I think this is mostly because we don't know in ourselves. The national identity of the UK seems to have no single identity and I actually love this, but I really do think that we in the UK need to have an open discussion about what it means to be British and how citizenship is gauged. Should we in fact make everyone sit the citizenship exam in order to qualify for a passport? If the information contained in that exam is so important for newly made Britons to know, then surely all Britons should know it? The former coalition government established the concept of 'British Values', which are said to be: Tolerance, Respect, Liberty and Democracy. These are held up as the things that Britain stands for and has always embodied. But up until 1947 Britain had the biggest, mostly undemocratic and intolerant, Empire the world has ever seen which did some truly horrendous things to many countries across the world. I fully ac-

cept that these values are what we as a developed world nation should be actively promoting, but I think a country must also fully face up to its mistakes and errors of the past if it is truly to call itself 'advanced' and be able to lead anyone. The only country that I have seen this idea of national identity shaped in full acceptance of past mistakes is the Republic of Rwanda in central Africa. Rwandans have a very clear idea about who they are and what it means to be a Rwandan citizen. The main benefit of having unifying national concepts relating to what it means to be a citizen is that it transcends religion, ethnicity or race. Certainly in Rwanda where the issue of ethnicity led to the genocide of 900,000 people in 100 days in 1994, abolishing the concept of ethnicity in favour of historically based, traditionally African concepts have had remarkable success. The idea of the promotion of British values is a sound way to create a unified community through the framework of big ideas that relate to people's lives directly. The ideas of tolerance, respect, liberty and democracy do not depend on being born to a certain class, religion, culture or sexuality. They are universal concepts that all can associate with and all can work towards for the greater good.

For all the talk about Her Majesty the Queen being the Supreme Governor of the Church of England and this making Britain a Christian country, the UK really is not a religious country. Christianity and Islam are the two largest world religions followed but the amount of people now identifying themselves as atheist, agnostic, and humanist or of no particular classification are rising. Many people would identify themselves as culturally of a particular religion or denomination but a decreasing amount are truly active in those traditions. This does lead to an increasing divide in some parts of the UK however, where there are very devout communities either culturally or religiously which has in turn led to an increase in tensions. In parts of Bristol, about two hours' drive from where I live, for instance there are places that non-white people dare not go. These areas are cauldrons of hatred where low education, high unemployment and economic hardship have created very dangerous areas. This is not hatred on religious grounds however, it is hatred fuelled by media driven prejudice and xenophobia.

As it stands, in my opinion, despite all the best efforts of academics and politicians from the first Blair Cabinet in 1997 to today with the Citizenship Foundation the National Citizen Service (NCS), Citizenship Education in schools doesn't really do very much of real value, it is often added in to timetables to fill gaps and to comply with success criteria for schools inspections. It is often taught by people who don't want to teach it and therefore somewhat resent it being on their schedule, certainly in my school that is sometimes the case, it is normally the subject leader who is the passionate one who has to deal with the staff they are given for that year. Citizenship Education is sometimes cut altogether from formal school curriculums as it takes up valuable time for other, more 'important' and valuable time for 'proper' subjects like mathematics, science and English. In my opinion, from everything I have been able to achieve at my school, and one of the reasons why my school was during its last inspection judged to be 'Beyond Outstanding' is because things like CE are not simply confined to an hour or so a week, it doesn't just fill up a timetable and it certainly isn't cut from the

programme. When CE is done correctly education forms an integral part of student development and allow students to develop as people, just as Korzack would say it should, and not just academics, this does however move into what is known as 'Character Education', something which I will deal with later but something that I think is integral to the success of Citizenship Education. Below I have duplicated a list from a National Curriculum document detailing the potential for cross curricular links and development in the sphere of CE:

### Art

Art provides opportunities for pupils to:

- \* appreciate the work of others and understand the world through visual experience;
- \* recognize ideas of right and wrong in paintings;
- \* develop their own mode of expression;
- \* understand the cultural achievements of other people and societies; and
- \* explore the diverse ways that artists working in different cultures.

### Business and vocational education

Business and vocational education provide opportunities for pupils to:

- \* reflect on the choices available to them about work and leisure and consequences of such choices;
- \* analyse and understand alternative and different lifestyles and employment priorities;
- \* improve the community through an understanding of employment as service to others;
- \* understand their human and statutory rights as employees; and
- \* develop a notion of a worthwhile job in society.

### Craft, design and technology

Craft, design and technology provides opportunities for pupils to:

- \* discuss the design of environmentally safe technology;
- \* understand the consequences of technological advancement for society;
- \* consider the underlying values and morality of the use of certain technologies;
- \* recognize the social impact of markets and goods;
- \* understand the needs of individuals and groups from different backgrounds in product design; and
- \* explore the political conflicts between the technological needs of individuals and groups.

### Drama

Drama provides opportunities for pupils to:

- \* collaborate and cooperate with others in performance;
- \* understand and tolerate the points of view of others through role play;
- \* examine and explore relationships within community; and
- \* discover how they relate and fit in within their own community and society.

### English

English provides opportunities for pupils to:

- \* understand the views, beliefs, opinions and feelings of others;
- Express their own views, beliefs and opinions in an appropriate style;
- \* develop a sense of right and wrong by exploring the experiences of others;
- \* understand the sociability of human nature;
- \* understand and take account of audience and context;
- \* read how literature treats moral and political themes; and
- \* understand how literature contributes to the creation of a cultural identity.

### Geography

Geography provides opportunities for pupils to:

- \* develop moral and ethical awareness in issues of equality, people, gender, race, culture and opportunities;
- \* understand cultural diversity exercise respect and empathy for other peoples and societies;
- \* understand how societies work and appreciate our global interdependence and our need for sustainable development;
- \* experience field work outside of school to appreciate the physical and social context of communities;
- \* evaluate the consequences of actions for people, places and environments;



- \* understand the reasons for large-scale human migration; and
- \* explain and interpret social events among people and evaluate the political claims they make.

### History

History provides opportunities for pupils to:

- \* broaden their experience of different peoples and cultures and appreciate the pluralist nature of our society;
- \* understand how values and human rights emerge within a society;
- \* analyse a variety of societal perspectives at both national and international levels;
- \* discuss the validity of evidence, motivations and opinions of people in different social, economic and political contexts;
- \* develop the ability to make value judgements and be familiar with the moral aspects of studying history;
- \* learn about the development of British democratic processes; and
- \* trace the development of citizens rights.

### Information, communication and technology (ICT)

Information, communication and technology provides opportunities for pupils to:

- \* broaden their understanding of the global perspective; and
- \* link technology and its value to different ways of life.

### Mathematics

Mathematics provides opportunities for pupils to:

- \* use logic in seeking proof for answers;
- \* compile, analyse and interpret statistical data, especially that relating to electoral systems and opinion polls; and
- \* use mathematics to solve real-life problems.

### Music

Music provides opportunities for pupils to:

- \* experience emotion and a moral purpose;
- \* enjoy an expressive art within a social context; and
- \* develop the social skill of listening.

### Modern language

Modern languages provides opportunities for pupils to:

- \* learn social interaction in a new medium;
- \* study difference cultures and lifestyles;
- \* explore alternative perspectives; and
- \* compare our society with different states in Europe, especially their institutions and political systems.

### Personal, social and moral education

Personal, social and moral education (PSME) provides opportunities for pupils to:

- \* experience a range of different value perspectives on society and ethical issues;
- \* develop strategies for community involvement and service learning;
- \* enhance personal dispositions and positive attitudes; and
- \* understand the importance of tolerance and respect for others in a pluralist society.

### Physical education

Physical education provides opportunities for pupils to:

- \* participate in games teamwork which enhance collaboration and sociability; and
- \* work together for cooperation and responsibility.

I fully believe however that schooling can form only a small part of the wider CE development and that is what I think we don't have in the UK. We do not have an over-arching social responsibility to collaboratively strive for success as a nation and to develop young people. For most people it is a case of YOU work hard, so that YOU can get a job, and YOU can have lots of money, so YOU can have a nice house and car, so that YOU can go on holidays with YOUR children and so YOU can



enjoy retirement. There is little real community cohesion or sense of national unity. There is a massive mistrust of politicians, as there is globally to be fair, and the pace of life in the developed world seems to, in Britain anyway, be leading to an increase in severe mental health problems in the young. An increasing amount of public examination institutions are beginning to stop offering courses in Citizenship as they are more widely seen as not worthwhile. The National Citizen Service (NCS) is a wonderful organisation for engaging young people in community projects and volunteering opportunities but from my experience the young people it attracts and works with, are those who already have that sort of strong citizen mind-set from their parents and it misses the majority of the population. The NCS has such potential but organisations like it are not seen as an integral part of a young person's development, just an additional extra-curricular activity opportunity to look good on university and job applications much like the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

Citizenship is not valued highly enough in the UK by students, parents, society in general or government. It is viewed as a bolt-on subject for developing what is called 'soft skills' rather than as a critical part of a young person's development. The things which are valued are the traditional academic subjects, the sciences, mathematics and English. There is even an increasing tendency for schools to be reducing or abolishing altogether the arts and design subjects. This worries many of us in the teaching profession greatly, not just because it risks putting colleagues out of work but because it jeopardises the fully rounded development of young people. It also will have the consequence of narrowing creativity and self-expression which is economically ridiculous, since if we educate children as a way to secure national economic success we need children to be creative and innovative individuals. It is also potentially rather dangerous for society since if you dehumanise people's thinking they will not be positive, active, free thinking and creative citizens.

Regardless of us being citizens or subjects, what I think we are all trying to achieve from the teaching of 'citizenship' in schools is the idea that young people will grow up understanding the past, prepared to be able to face an uncertain future and be ready, will and able to help others when needed so that all can thrive in life, not just survive. But this is too big for just a citizenship curriculum; it needs a whole school approach and a whole society to support it. This is where I think, Britain, Japan and the rest of the world in fact could take a lesson or two from Rwanda, and it is Rwanda I would like to give some details on now.

### ***Umuganda, Agashiro, Itoreo and Kwibuka – Four Rwandan concepts with one single goal***

For many like me who have the rather odd interest of studying genocide, the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi in Rwanda was completely preventable. The UN Security Council knew three months before the genocide started that there was the deliberate intent to exterminate all Tutsi in Rwanda by the Hutu extremists and nothing was done despite the 1947 convention on genocide stating that the Security Council is obligated to take deliberate action to prevent genocide if one starts or there is strong grounds to believe one is going to take place. The UN Assistance Mission In Rwanda (UN-

AMIR) peacekeeping force that was sent to Rwanda in 1993 under the command of Canadian General Romeo Dallaire was dramatically understaffed, under resourced and under supported. The bulk of the force was provided by the Belgian army which was very unusual given the Belgian colonial history in Rwanda and Burundi, in fact it is not unfair to say that the Belgians must take partial responsibility for the situation in Rwanda in 1994 given it was they who created the strong ethnic division out of nothing but racist eugenics in the 1920s when what is now Rwanda became a Belgian colony after it was taken away from Germany following World War 1. It was Belgium who gave support to the Hutu nationalists after independence was given to Rwanda in the 1960s and it was Belgium along with France that supported, gave training and resources to the Interahamwe, the mobile killing squads who did the much of the killing during the genocide. Belgium though was the only member of the UN however who was prepared to provide any reasonable level of staffing for the mission and even that was much too low given the severity of the problem.

After the genocide the Rwandan government abolished the distinction between the ethnicities of Hutu and Tutsi and changed the primary languages from French and Rwandan to Rwandan and English. French was a symbol of the colonial past and although many people still speak French, the Government hasn't banned it by any means, the preference, certainly in Government is that Rwandan is spoken with English as the international language of choice. They are a very outward looking people and they are very globally active, during the recent UN mission to fight genocide in Darfur in the Sudan it was Rwanda that provided the most peacekeeping troops. Given that Rwanda is about a third of the size of England it is hugely impressive what they have stepped up to the plate whilst the rest of the world sits back and watches. Again there are issues about prejudice and racism that surround these choices.

Post genocide Rwanda was a mess, 900,000 people confirmed dead in 100 days of slaughter. 1:4 people in the country directly impacted upon by the 100 days of madness and 1:10 people directly involved in the killing. How and where does a country begin to repair itself after such a period? The government's response was to begin a process of reconciliation and social healing through the application of traditional Rwandan concepts, concepts that predated the arrival of the European colonists in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. These concepts are: *Umuganda* (Community service), *Agachiro* (Civic education), *Itoreo* (Dignity) and *Kwibuka* (Remembrance). Each and every Rwandan is expected to participate in all of these concepts from a very early to a very old age as much as possible. The Rwandan government after the genocide took the opinion that the rest of the world turned its back on Rwanda when Rwanda needed them most. It was eventually the Rwandan Patriotic Front that stopped the genocide and the war that covered it. It would be the Rwandan Patriotic Front, as a political party, who would lead the dignified rebuilding of Rwanda from the ashes of self-destruction to be the phoenix of Africa, which it really is now. It has the lowest crime rate in Africa, one of the lowest in the world, it has a revolutionary view on environmentalism in that they see the rainforest which covers most of the country as essential not only for their own success, but for global success. They see themselves

as the guardians of the rainforest and the fragile ecosystem which has developed over millennia and that they have a responsibility to preserve it for the future. They are developing a system of medical drones which now puts the whole of Rwanda in approximately 20mins from essential medical supplies. Rwanda has completely banned plastic bags, you cannot take them into Rwanda, you cannot use them or buy them.

Rwanda has made more economic, social and industrial progress in the past 22years than much of the developed world has made in the past 40years. They have achieved this by developing a very strong sense of purpose and mutual dependence, all Rwandans are needed for the success of the country, they are required to treat each and every human being with the dignity and respect so many have been denied in the past. Each Rwandan, from the President down to the youngest child is required to participate in Umuganda (community service) during the fourth Saturday of each month. This community service includes building projects, cleaning streets, cooking for an elderly neighbour anything that is helping other people in the community. It is a fully reciprocal system of co-dependency that brings and binds the community together for mutual gain. There are civic education programmes that go on for various age groups and dynamics including a governmental annual conference which is about installing and demonstrating full democratic transparency and accountability in all aspects of government. Kwibuka or remembrance is directly linked to the genocide, each year there are events around the world amongst the Rwandan diaspora that commemorate the victims of the genocide and serve as a clear reminder about the importance of maintaining a strong sense of humanity in all aspects of society.

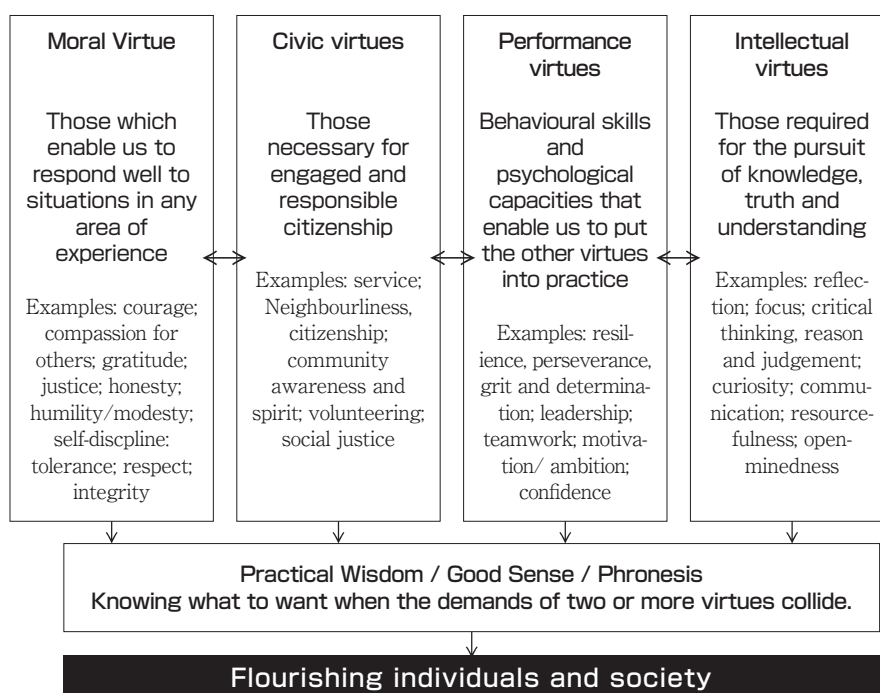
## Character Education

*One essential aspect of what I think education should be about that I think is missing from most education systems is that of Character Education. The Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues at the University of Birmingham is a pioneering interdisciplinary research centre focussing on character, virtues and values in the interest of human flourishing. It promotes a moral concept of character in order to explore the importance of virtue for public and professional life. The Centre is a leading informant on policy and practice in this area and through its extensive range of projects contributes to a renewal of character and virtues in both individuals and societies.*

*Character is a set of personal traits or dispositions that produce specific moral emotions inform motivation and guide conduct. Character education is an umbrella term for all explicit and implicit educational activities that help young people develop positive personal strengths called virtues. Character education is more than just a subject. It has a place in the culture and functions of families, classrooms, schools and other institutions. Character education is about helping students grasp what is ethically important in situations and to act for the right reasons, such that they become more autonomous and reflective. Students need to decide wisely the kind of person they wish to become and to learn to choose between already existing alternatives or to find new ones. In this process, the ultimate aim of character*

**KEY PRINCIPLES**

- Character is educable and its progress can be measured holistically, not only through self-reports but also more objective research method
- Character is important: it contributes to human and societal flourishing
- Character is largely caught through role-modelling and emotional contagion: school culture and ethos are therefore central
- Character should also be taught: direct teaching of character provides the rationale, language and tools to use in developing character elsewhere in and out of school
- Character is the foundation for improved attainment, better behavior and increased employability
- Character should be developed in partnership with parents, employers and other community organisations
- Character results in academic gains for students, such as higher grades
- Character education is about fairness and each child has a right to character development
- Character empowers students and is liberating
- Character demonstrates a readiness to learn from others
- Character promotes democratic citizenship



*education is the development of good sense or practical wisdom: the capacity to choose intelligently between alternatives. This capacity involves knowing how to choose the right course of action in difficult situations and it arises gradually out of the experience of making choices and the growth of ethical insight.*

*Character education is not about indoctrination and mindless conditioning. The ultimate goal of all proper character education is to equip students with the intellectual tools to make wise choices of their own within the framework of a democratic society. Critical thinking is thus a vital facet of a well-rounded character. Character and virtue are not exclusively religious notions although they do clearly have a place in religious systems. Almost all current theories of virtue and character education happen*

*to be formulated in a post religious language. Character and virtue are not paternalistic notions. If being 'paternalistic' means that character education goes against the wishes of students and their parents, empirical research shows the opposite.*

The above text and diagrams in this section are directly taken from the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues website detailing what Character Education is, what it is not and the intended outcomes for individuals and society. I am extremely in favour of character education, and I think it should be a mandatory aspect of all UK school inspections to give an 'Outstanding' rating. It is in keeping with all my philosophical views on what education should be for and links well to my comments about the work of Korzack. By developing a person's character with the practicing of virtues you create a person, who is balanced, exhibits a growth mindset and is able to appropriately challenge wrong doing they may find in the world. I have for the last couple of years been implementing a version of this in my school through the cross curricular citizenship work that I do, it is called R.E.I, and that stands for Respect, Empathy and Inclusion.

## R.E.I

The concept of R.E.I comes originally from a friend of mine, Dr. Carl Wilkens, who was the only Westerner to remain in Rwanda during the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi despite receiving a US Presidential order to leave. He eventually saved over 1000 people from being slaughtered. His book about his actions during the genocide, 'I'm not leaving' is a book about choice rather than genocide itself. He details countless times where he could have made alternative choices that would have kept himself safer and would be seen as much less reckless by many. Carl however has an absolute compassion and respect for humanity and was not prepared to sit by whilst there were things he could be doing to help people. He has been called a hero many times but he doesn't like this at all, he is not a hero, just a man who made a set of choices. He is now a humanitarian campaigner and speaker and is very keen to come to Japan to tell his story, he can be contacted very easily and if you would like to contact him, please let me know and I will pass on his details.

R.E.I comes from the perspective of all humans are deserving of respect, regardless of what they do, or what they have done. They are still deserving of respect, and we don't have to agree or even like a person to respect them. This is in keeping with my own personal Humanism but as Christian Adventist Pastor, Carl takes this idea right from the teachings of Jesus. The concept of empathy, the ability to understand and share the feelings of another, is a key part of being able to show an unconditional respect towards people. We must all understand that each of us has emotional baggage and personal problems that affect what we think, say and do, and therefore we should try to be more compassionate with regards to our treatment of people. Inclusion is a fundamental part of social progress, it also teaches individuals about the positive impact others can have on us when we work collaboratively with others. In all the cross curricular citizenship projects that I do I push young people out of their comfort zone and force them to work with others that they often don't know well in

order to make them better understand the value of other people. In the long term what this does is to enhance peoples thinking and communication skills, enables better collaborative working and boosts creativity, it also instills a positive attitude towards the support of other people in a way that can be seen in the umuganda of Rwanda. It is of mutual benefit to develop this kind of thinking, social reciprocity is a powerful tool for personal and social development. The application of R.E.I, I have found, is a far simpler model for students to understand than the full Character Education model listed above.

## Conclusion

In my opinion and experience Citizenship Education must being global and not just national, there is so much that we can all learn from each other we must promote a global outlook. It must be a primary thread of all educational subjects at school from an early age as opposed to being confined to one subject area. Citizenship should not be an academic graded subject, it is an integral social subject that must be valued in itself rather than as an extra-curricular activity. We must develop in our students strong character traits and virtues that enable them to deal with uncertainty and setbacks at the same time as thinking creatively and innovatively. I am in no doubt that the only way this capable of being achieved is through a holistic joint effort between schools, parents, society and government. Ultimately though I believe that it starts with our own selves as professionals, we must model the behaviour, character traits and creativity that we want to see in our students. Governmental support is integral to success but like the people of Rwanda realised after the 1994 genocide against the Tutsi, the only way to get things done for certain is to rely on your own self. Do not wait for others to do for you tomorrow what you can do for yourself today.