

FOR PEACE+EDUCATION

VANCOUVER PEACE SUMMIT 2009

Tuesday, September 29, 2009 – Orpheum Theatre, Vancouver, BC

Educating the Heart – Heart-Mind Education

Panel: His Holiness The Dalai Lama, Clyde Hertzman, Kim Schonert-Reichl, Stephen Covey, Adele Diamond, Mairead Maguire. Moderator: Martha Piper

Dialogue Contributors: His Holiness The Dalai Lama was accompanied on the panel by: **Clyde Hertzman**, Director of the Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP) at UBC and the Canada Research Chair in population health and human development; **Kim Schonert-Reichl**, UBC education professor and former teacher of troubled children and youth; **Stephen Covey**, one of *Time* magazine's 25 most influential Americans, a respected leader, family expert, and author of *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*; **Adele Diamond**, one of the founders of the field of developmental cognitive neuroscience and the Canada Research Chair in that field at UBC; and **Mairead Maguire**, co-recipient of the 1976 Nobel Peace Prize and co-founder of the Peace People Northern Ireland.

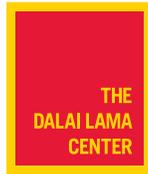
Moderator **Martha Piper** is a recipient of 16 honorary degrees, an officer in the Order of Canada, a member of the Order of British Columbia, the 2004 Learning Partnership Educator of the Year, and an Honorary Fellow of Merton College, Oxford University.

“Human beings are all the same. They all do not want suffering. They want happiness. So they also deserve to achieve happiness, and when they are passing through difficulties, we must respond, we have a sense of concern for them. That is genuine compassion.”

His Holiness
The Dalai Lama

Martha Piper opened the discussion by reminding us that, at the 2006 meeting about Educating the Heart, His Holiness The Dalai Lama presented a challenge. “We now know why we must do it. We have to get on with how we’re going to do it.” Martha Piper said she hoped this panel would help answer the how.

His Holiness said that compassion enables human beings to work together. He spoke about the two levels of compassion. The first has to do with “biological factors” and needs no training or wisdom; it is spontaneous. One example is mother/child compassion. The second is the genuine compassion that arises in the face of difficulties; it is an unbiased response to others. We develop this kind of compassion through training and reasoning. Our future depends on this level of compassion, and education has a very important role in helping to develop it.



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Samantha Walker photo

"[B.C.] schools promote things like contributing to classroom and school community, solving problems in peaceful ways, practicing democratic rights and responsibilities, and valuing diversity and defending human rights."

Kim Schonert-Reichl

Martha Piper then asked Clyde Hertzman to speak about the role schools have in educating the heart.

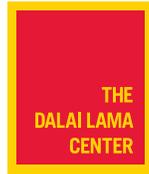
"Only 5% of children have a worrisome state of emotional development by the time they reach school age ... and it's totally avoidable." – Clyde Hertzman

Hertzman said that, since His Holiness "challenged us to stop talking and start acting," he has directed his efforts toward mobilizing British Columbia's schools to begin "educating the human heart" through social and emotional learning.

It is most effective to start this process right from the beginnings of life. Children who grow up in emotionally accepting environments become compassionate citizens. Children who grow up feeling threatened in any way show symptoms of being disadvantaged in this area of their development. Therefore, Hertzman has worked with B.C.'s kindergarten teachers to help them learn to recognize the state of children's development.

He has also worked with families and child-care programs to help embed the early development of social and emotional learning and compassion. He mentioned that people like Kim Schonert-Reichl are helping to transition these ideas into mainstream schools.

Martha Piper asked Schonert-Reichl to explain how she encourages that transition to take place and to describe what types of school experiences make a difference.



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“Both levels of compassion that the Dalai Lama talked about are developed through empathetic listening and trying to understand deeply what a person says and what they feel about what they say.”

Stephen Covey

“It’s very nice to tell them things in school, but what they learn is from the examples of the people around them. So we need to start with us, and it doesn’t have to be big things. ... There are any number of... little things you can do that help you and help the child.”

Adele Diamond

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“There are a lot of things that happen by educating the heart and educating the mind together.” – Kim Schonert-Reichl

Schonert-Reichl described how B.C. has responded to His Holiness’s 2006 challenge to begin educating the hearts of children. One new goal of B.C.’s education system is to promote social and emotional learning. In addition to reading, writing, and math, the now-established fourth goal of education in B.C. is social responsibility.

The Dalai Lama asked Schonert-Reichl what differences she has found between children who have had that kind of education and those who haven’t. Schonert-Reichl said that children in these programs “develop empathy, altruism, compassion, and even do better in school.”

Martha Piper then turned to Stephen Covey, who has nine children and 51 grandchildren, and asked him to expand on what is the role of the family in educating the hearts of children.

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“The family is the most fundamental and most important organization in the world, and that’s where most of the real fundamental education takes place.” – Stephen Covey

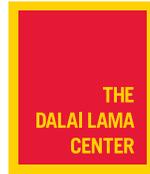
Covey spoke about his family’s mission statement, which was developed cooperatively between all members of the family. Having a family mission has helped each of them to subordinate “me” to the idea of “we”. It has encouraged interdependence and collaboration.

Covey then described the Iroquois Indian concept of the talking stick. Using it in discussion allows each person to be fully heard and understood. This unleashes creativity and alternative solutions: “Not my way, not your way, and not a compromise, but a new way that we have created together.” Like their family’s mission statement, this type of discussion develops interdependence, collaboration, cooperation, and a “profound respect for other peoples.”

Martha Piper then changed the discussion focus to how the individual learns. She asked Adele Diamond to share her ideas about how individuals can learn without necessarily going to school or counting on their family.

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“If we want to educate the hearts of children, we need to start with you and I, because children learn what they live.” – Adele Diamond

Adele Diamond responded with a practical challenge for the B.C. school system. She proposed an annual competition that would get children to creatively think outside the box



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to come up with ways they could help other people, to make the world a better place. After the generation of ideas, there would be a collaborative vote among all students and staff in the school to find the winning idea. Then they would develop a plan to accomplish it. Beyond the school, the provincial government might grant awards for children and adults who are “doing things to make the world a better place”. Universities, including UBC, could develop scholarships for winners of the awards.

Martha Piper asked Mairead Maguire what we must seek within ourselves in order to become compassionate, joyful, and to be able to learn in the moment.

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“Kindness is the greatest thing and the greatest virtue we can teach our children... because kindness develops compassion.” – Mairead Maguire

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Maguire said that “our first calling in life is to be happy, fulfilled, joyful human beings.” She said that there are steps to learning to be happy. Happiness begins with parents accepting and loving their children and allowing them to develop their own potential.

Maguire recognized that we all have strong emotions revolving around our need to fit in. Our school systems do not yet teach children how to deal with those emotions. We must help children understand that everyone has these same emotions.

She concluded by saying that this must begin with very young children through their families and then through the school system and that we must help children learn “to be happy, fulfilled, honest children.”

“Perhaps the hardest thing for any parent is to accept their child and love their child with passion exactly where they’re at, and not wanting to control and to dominate and to form them into being successful in the world ... the greatest gift we can give them is to allow them to be their selves.”

Mairead Maguire