



## Media Information

Speech by two young adolescents, 24 March 2007

Good Morning Everyone,

I am Nishant, Year 7 student. I hope you all had a good walk. We'll try to not to keep you too long from your food because, well, I'm hungry too. We are speaking today on human values and how it affects our everyday lives.

I am Sri, year 9 student. There are many human values in our world which enrich our lives. The ones we have chosen to focus on today are love, truth, peace, right conduct and non violence. Firstly why are these values called human values? This is because they do not belong to one group, religion, faith, class or race of people; they belong to all humanity.

Could you imagine a world where values didn't exist? Do you think people could survive in a world like that? Would you want to? In a world where everybody lies, cheats and even steals **all the time!** Imagine the stress and the chaos!

So why are human values important? I'll tell you why. Human values are what make us human! It makes us a community that can build, learn and grow together in harmony!

My understanding of Truth is being honest. Honesty is the best policy. Lies lead to more lies and results in loss of credibility. In fact no one believes you when you are really in trouble; like the case of the "boy who cried wolf". Confucius the Chinese philosopher has said, "Three things cannot be LONG hidden, the sun, the moon and the truth". So the best aspect is that speaking the truth makes me feel light hearted as I need not remember the lies to cover up. However Truth in practice really needs courage. My limited experience indicates that being sensible and sticking to rules makes it easy to practice Truth. Honesty keeps me and my parents happy.

To me Peace is about being calm and happy. I am more productive when I am at Peace and things get done more smoothly. I aim to achieve this by being patient, organised and completing my tasks on daily basis. Eating a healthy meal and a good sleep have a calming effect. Another aspect I have noticed is that I am not at Peace when I get angry, when I am selfish and when things don't go my way. I have also found that in such situations caring and sharing brings in Peace. Sports and related teamwork has taught me good lessons. My view is that if individuals aim to be peaceful, family will be

peaceful which in turn helps society and the nation to be peaceful. Let Peace be on Earth, as Benjamin Franklin said, "There was Never a Good WAR or a Bad Peace".

Right conduct as a very important Value. Right conduct means that we should naturally behave in a way that is right and proper. It means we should be respectful, kind, compassionate and helpful. Right conduct affects us all, whether it is my giving a seat to an elderly person in a crowded bus or a soldier helping a wounded civilian in Iraq. As Mark Twain beautifully put it and I do quote, "Laws control the lesser man... Right conduct controls the greater one." Doing the right thing all the time is hard, but we must all try, if we all started to try to do the right thing, starting with being polite and helpful, the world and our lives would definitely be great.

Love can be interpreted in many different ways, and means different things to every person. To some it may mean romantic love, while to others it may mean love between family and friends.

Mother Teresa once said that "Love is a fruit in season at all times, and within the reach of every hand". I believe that love is not only affection, as a value Love means respect, tolerance and kindness. Love is treating everyone with justice and warmth, no matter whether they are your best friend, or a stranger on the street. True love doesn't have any boundaries and doesn't discriminate. To me, love is also the ability to love your self and have a sense of self respect. It is important to me to have a sense of self esteem and self worth, because if you can't love yourself, you will find it very hard to love others.

In the words of Thomas Edison, "Non violence leads to the highest of ethics, which is the goal of all evolution. Until we stop harming all other living beings, we are still savages."

In less complicated words, we are not civilised until we stop causing harm to other beings.

I believe non violence isn't just about not being physically violent, but also about not being prejudiced or disrespectful to another person. To me, an act of non violence is as simple as standing up for a friend being bullied at school, or not arguing unnecessarily with my family. Although these might only be small actions, they may make a huge difference to someone else.

Violence is any behaviour involving physical force intended hurt, damage or kill. This means that by polluting and damaging our environment by littering, wasting water, cutting down trees and burning fossil fuels we are in fact carrying out a form of violence against our earth. Being non violent could be as easy as picking up rubbish, using less water and walking instead of driving car. Not that hard is it?

As you may have noticed, all the values are interconnected, if we just practiced one and made one value a part of our lives, the other values will naturally follow. Now without further ado! I would like to thank you all for allowing us to take your precious time! I would also like to thank all the honoured guests for coming today. I hope to see you all here for the Walk for Values next year. Thank you!