



# NATIONAL WALK FOR VALUES ADELAIDE

**Saturday, 12 April 2008 – Adelaide**

**Values as a dynamic compass for living**

**Speech given by  
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This address will contain brief pauses for reflection between each of the ideas. Values combine energies of the heart and mind in outer expression. Let us align our hearts and minds as one. (Gong)

At their highest, values are eternal, universal and transcendent qualities, magnetic attractors which inspire humanity to strive, to lift, to refine, to transform in dignity and freedom.

Yet values are a two-edged sword. Those who would play God may use values to impose standards and conditions on others. Holy wars and inquisitions can result. Misdirected values can destroy. More personally, valuing truth means speaking the truth and upholding the truth. This requires us to search our motives and consider, with compassion, those to whom we direct our truth. I have learnt from painful experience the importance of gathering the courage to speak the truth plainly, without camouflaging it or speaking only a part truth, out of fear of being rejected or causing hurt or anger in others. There may be times when immediate speaking of the truth is important. At other times right timing may be important. For both parties to benefit from the truth it is wise to search for mutuality. We also need to let go of a self-righteous attitude. Thus, painfully, I have found that self-discipline and integrity are required, in speaking the truth

When values are embodied they are potent, they become rivers of living water flowing from our inmost being. They become a dynamic compass, impelling us to live out our uniqueness in coherent, directed ways that enhance our life journey and our society.

Education is society's investment in generating a humanity which is proactive and creative for the good of the greater whole. Educators value the pursuit of knowledge and human development as instruments for this greater good.

There is perhaps a foundational value in educating others. It is the valuing of the inmost quest for personal truth which brings integrity. This quest is at the heart of life-long learning. Educators achieve well if they can generate and nurture this

quest in their students. Educators achieve best when they live as life-long questors and learners themselves.

The work I have done in the past few years has been to learn and present values models in the education and business sectors. These models demonstrate that values unfold developmentally, parallel with the stages of development of our mental skills and personality. These models enable us to track our own values, as well as values on a global level. This tracking gives us the opportunity to engage in our own values development in a dynamic and creative way over the years.

Values are caught, not taught. We are apprenticed to each other and learn from the example of quality living and being in those around us. In this way we are all educators. Let us now pause to recognise the people who have shaped our own values, those who have inspired us and encouraged us to strongly value and invest in something in our lives. Let us send a silent "thank you" to each of them in gratitude for their influence.

Elders traditionally have demonstrated and modelled the essence of what our society offers, to be passed on to the next generation. They set a standard and, at their highest and best, infuse society and civilisation with a savour, a perfume, which sweetens and lifts the way of life. Yet it is the young who take up the baton of values and add something fresh and evolved, expressing the spirit of the times.

What we value is what we are. What we value can limit us through the narrow horizon of our world view. Or what we value can stretch us to invest time, thought, money and energy into patterns of living that are woven into the fabric of our day, our life, our society. Some years ago, in my own life, I felt strongly for the plight of people with a particular mental disorder which was largely unrecognised and often misdiagnosed. In valuing the truth about the disorder I was able to sustain a long journey which came to fruition. Through my profession as a psychologist I was able to gather a group of people with the disorder and, together, we started the first government subsidised self-help group for the disorder.

To educate well is to direct students and equip them to unfold patterns of living which flow out as blessing into their surroundings and relationships. Each person can become a national treasure through the beauty, harmony, dignity and wholeness which they uphold and live out.

The values which we celebrate and espouse here today, in this "Walk for Values", make up an organic whole in their interplay. Right conduct comes from speaking the truth in love, and living our truth in right relations. Peace and non-violence arise from living thus.

The truth we speak with loving intent can spread around the world in a few seconds, uplifting global consciousness. In this way, the critical mass transforms.

Here, today, we celebrate the wonderful ideals of values which call us to be our best self in communion with each other and with all creation.