Moral Intelligence

Moral Intelligence is the capacity to understand right from wrong. It is the ability to control our impulses and delay our gratification, which in our era of "instant gratification" is a huge undertaking. Instilling moral intelligence provides our children with strong ethical convictions and teaching to act on them in the right and honourable way. It is crucial to build moral intelligence so children can develop a deep inner sense of right and wrong and this knowledge used to protect them from outside influences. It is imperative to understand that moral intelligence is learned, we must consciously teach, model and nurture **the seven essential virtues** in our children.

1. ***Empathy*:** This is the core moral emotion. It allows us to understand how other people feel. It is the moral emotion that urges a person to do what is right because we can recognize the impact of emotional pain on others.

2. ***Conscience*:** This is the strong inner voice that helps us to decide right from wrong. It is the corner stone for the development of crucial virtues of honesty, responsibility and integrity.

3. ***Self-Control***: This virtue helps us restrain impulses and think before we act. It will help us become self-reliant because we know we can control our actions. This virtue enables us to put aside immediate gratification and stirs our conscience to do something for someone else instead.

4. ***Respect*:** This encourages us to treat others with consideration because we regard them as worthy, as a result we will possess greater self-respect.

5. ***Kindness*:** The virtue of kindness helps us show our concern about the welfare and feeling of others. By showing kindness, we become compassionate and less selfish. As well, treating other kindly is simply the right thing to do.

6. ***Tolerance*:** This virtue helps us appreciate the different qualities in others. It allows us to stay open to new perspectives and belief; we can respect others regardless of race, gender, appearance, culture, belief, abilities or sexual orientation. We respect people based on their character.

7. ***Fairness*:** Is the ability to treat others in a righteous, impartial and just way. It increases our moral sensitivity.

Together these seven virtues will become your children's moral compass, guiding them toward responsible living and ethical conduct. They are the tools they will use to chart their moral fate. The goal is for our children to become less and less dependent on our moral guidance by incorporating these moral principles into their daily lives and for the child to take ownership of them. Providing our children with consistent, repeated, short lessons of the seven virtues is what is required for them to master the virtue. Please remember that telling our children is never as powerful as showing what the quality looks like by demonstrating it in our lives.

-Michelle Watt