Intellectual Virtue Formation: a philosophical, psychological, and pedagogical perspective

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1. Introduction

When it comes to the formation of virtues, whether moral or intellectual, we know something of the nature of the process. We know, for instance, that genetics and one's upbringing have a significant influence in predisposing and shaping a person's intellectual proclivities. As Aristotle puts it, "we need to have had the appropriate upbringing – right from early youth, as Plato says— to make us find enjoyment or pain in the right things."[1] This suggests that a good part of the process of intellectual virtue formation occurs before children show up in the classroom. But we also know that there are things people can do as they go through life to cultivate virtue and discourage vice and that others, including educators, can work to create the conditions that stimulate and foster virtue formation. Indeed, educating for intellectual virtues presses us to investigate more thoroughly the psychological dynamics of virtue formation and, in light of that examination, the conditions that stimulate and foster virtue formation.

Our presentation addresses what we refer to as the "standard model" of intellectual virtue formation, according to which intellectual virtues are formed through pedagogical methods like direct instruction in intellectual virtues, exposure to exemplars, the "practice" of intellectually virtuous behaviors, and a supportive classroom culture. In particular, we consider how we should understand cases in which the standard approach to intellectual virtue formation *fails*—when students exposed to this approach do not experience any appreciable growth in qualities like curiosity, open-mindedness, and intellectual courage.

We argue, first, that in a significant number of such cases, this failure is due at least in part to certain internalized "representations of self" that are inhibiting the student's progress in intellectual virtues. Drawing on research in interpersonal neurobiology, attachment theory, object-relations theory, and related theoretical frameworks, we then propose a way for teachers to challenge these inhibiting self-representations, thereby increasing the probability that the standard approach will have its intended effect. We refer to this approach as a kind of "intellectual therapy," which we define as *careful and sustained attention to another's mind in the attempt to understand this person's internalized representations of self that hinder virtue formation with the goal of providing a reparative relational interaction that will help bring about virtue formation*. After defending this approach against a pair of objections (viz., that it is too invasive and that it is not practically feasible), we revisit the standard approach to intellectual virtue formation, situating this approach within a broader psychological context. Finally, we discuss some ways in which the basic principles and practices central to "intellectual therapy" are being implemented in the advisory program at the Intellectual Virtues Academy of Long Beach, a charter middle school in Long Beach, California, whose mission is "to foster meaningful growth in intellectual character virtues in a thoughtful, challenging, and supportive academic environment."

2. The Standard Approach to Virtue Formation[2]

In discussions of the nature of virtue formation, at least four dimensions to inculcating virtue can be identified: (1) direct instruction in the nature and importance of the virtues; (2) exposure to exemplars of the virtues; (3) practice of virtuous behaviors and the resultant habituation of virtuous dispositions; and (4) crafting environments that enculturate virtue. These four dimensions

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[1] Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. T. Irwin (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1985): 37 [1104b10–13].

[2] A good deal of what is contained in several of the sections that follow is taken from Steven L. Porter, "A Therapeutic Approach to Intellectual Virtue Formation in the Classroom," in Jason Baehr, ed., *Intellectual Virtues and Education: Essays in Applied Virtue Epistemology* (Routledge, forthcoming).

are not mutually exclusive and, in fact, should be seen as building on one another. Let us refer to the utilization of this set of activities as the "standard approach" to virtue formation.

Clearly, the standard approach to virtue formation often successfully inculcates virtues. In some cases, all that is seemingly required is direct instruction on the virtues.[3] A student is given the language of intellectual virtues, this language and the virtues it picks out (e.g., open-mindedness and curiosity) immediately resonate with him, and he is thereby enabled to identify in himself virtues that are already in bloom or, alternatively, in need of cultivation. In this situation, mere exposure to the language of intellectual virtues and a delineation of their value allows a conceptualization of one's intellectual life that draws attention to a facet of how one attends to the world and makes possible a conscious commitment to fostering that in one's life. While direct instruction does not necessarily form the virtue, it provides opportunity for the identification of various intellectual traits, the recognition of their value, and awareness of standards by which to evaluate one's own thinking habits. This, in turn, makes possible the decision to pay attention to one's thinking and to look for opportunities to practice the intellectual virtues that have been identified.

Notice that direct instruction is simply a trigger of a deeper psychological and behavioural dynamic involved in virtue formation. So, in addition to direct instruction, the standard approach commends exposure to exemplars of the virtues.[4] In this situation, the student is attracted to an exemplar's display of an intellectual trait (or pained by the absence of a trait) and is thereby inspired to approach a subject matter with the disposition that has been exemplified. Due to the virtue being embodied in an exemplar, there is a cognitive apprehension of the virtuous trait that goes beyond the more abstract apprehension available through merely verbal, direct instruction. In the exemplar we see what the virtue looks like in action and because of this the value of the virtue is more vivid, which increases the attractiveness of the virtue and therefore one's desire to acquire the virtuous disposition.[5]

Of course, both direct instruction and exposure to exemplars must eventually include practice of the virtue in question. Mere cognitive comprehension of a virtue coupled with a desire to act accordingly will not bring about a habituated disposition without actualizing the virtue through embodied practice. By practicing behaviors characteristic of the virtue, the student will experience the satisfaction of acting virtuously and the disposition will be reinforced by repeated action.[6] Of course, practice of virtuous behaviors as a means to habituate virtuous dispositions can occur even without direct instruction in the virtues or exposure to exemplars, but in educating for virtue formation the best-case scenario brings these three dimensions of virtue formation altogether.

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[3] For an analysis of intellectual virtues that would be helpful for direct instruction, see Robert C. Roberts and W. Jay Wood, *Intellectual Virtues: An Essay in Regulative Epistemology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[4] For the role of exemplars in virtue formation, see Linda Zagzebski, "Exemplarist Virtue Theory," *Metaphilosophy* 41:1–2 (2010): 41–57.

[5] For discussion of the role of emulation in virtue formation, see Kristján Kristjánsson, *Aristotle, Emotions, and Education* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007): 100–111 and Nancy Sherman, "Character Development and Aristotelian Virtue," in David Carr and J. W. Steutel, eds., *Virtue Ethics and Moral Education* (New York: Routledge, 199): 36–38.

[6] For a helpful discussion of this Aristotelian process of virtue formation, see M. F. Burnyeat, "Aristotle on Learning to Be Good," in Amélie Oksenberg Rorty, ed., *Essays on Aristotle's Ethics* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1980): 74, 76–78, 87–88. On Burnyeat's reading of Aristotle, through the repeated performance of the virtuous act we: (1) learn how to do the act; (2) perceive the goodness of the act (that it is indeed virtuous); (3) experience appropriate pleasure in doing the act; and (4) develop the desire to do the act for the sake of the goodness of it. See also, Kristjánsson, 23–28, 34-42; Nancy Sherman, *The Fabric of Character: Aristotle's Theory of Virtue* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991): 158–200; and H. J. Curzer, "Aristotle's painful path to virtue," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* 40 (2002): 141–162.

This brings us to enculturation, the fourth element of the standard approach to virtue formation.[7] The enculturation of virtues is really the attempt to strategically immerse the student in an ethos containing the best of direct instruction, exposure to exemplars, and the practice of virtuous behaviors, as well as other supporting conditions. In their discussion of enculturation, Tishman, Jay, and Perkins write:

> In any sustained cultural context, be it a third grade classroom, a family setting, or the culture of the workplace, it is useful to think of enculturation as occurring in three mutually reinforcing ways: through cultural exemplars, cultural interactions, and direct instruction in cultural knowledge and activities. These three aspects of enculturation – exemplars, interaction and instruction – suggest three straightforward guidelines for organizing teaching: For each thinking disposition one aims to enculturate, one wants to (1) provide exemplars of the disposition; (2) encourage and orchestrate student/student and teacher/student interactions involving the disposition, and (3) directly teach the disposition.[8]

More than simply virtue posters on the walls and an intellectual virtue word of the week, enculturation is the systematic attempt to harness the power of socialization within an embodied, relational context with the aim of embedding the conditions that stimulate and foster the virtues into the daily rhythms of school life. If enculturating the virtues is done right, we can easily imagine the standard approach to virtue formation succeeding.

Consider, for instance, the following imagined scenario: Susie is a less-than-naturally curious child. Her third grade teacher, Mrs. Johnson, begins a new unit on insects and Susie has been *hearing* from Mrs. Johnson about what it would it would mean and why it would be important to exhibit curiosity, wonder, and awe towards the world of insects. Moreover, Mrs. Johnson herself is fascinated with insects, and so Susie can *see* and is intrigued by Mrs. Johnson's exuberance about studying insects. Next, Susie is encouraged along with the rest of her class to *pay attention* in a fascinated kind of way to insects. The great Aristotelian hope— perhaps even the likely response— is that the practice of outward curious behavior towards insects by the child who is largely void of the inward virtuous disposition to be curious about them will trigger within this child her own experience of wonder and awe as she discovers the fascinating world of insects.

Let us imagine that the standard approach works, and Susie has an experience of fascination and awe with insects that manifests a growing curiosity. Soon after, Susie is hooked on bugs and, if Susie is your daughter, you have tiny little containers all over your house filled with dead spiders and bees. Posters on Susie's bedroom wall breakdown the various developmental stages of maggot larvae, bedtime reading turns from princesses to butterflies, an ant farm shows up as a birthday present, her favorite movie is *Bug's Life*, and visits to the natural history museum end up with inordinate amounts of time staring at dung beetles. The child is surrounded by a culture of curiosity regarding insects that stimulates and reinforces this budding intellectual virtue.

Mrs. Johnson, or perhaps Susie's parent, pauses and steps back. She wants to proclaim success, and yet she secretly wonders whether curiosity has been formed or a bizarre obsession. The answer comes in a few months time when posters of the solar system begin to replace the insect posters, time spent at the dung beetle exhibit is exchanged for time at the lunar exhibit, and the parent or teacher sees Susie's eyes light up time and time again with wonder and awe as each element of the natural world is introduced. The virtue of curiosity is on the rise.

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[7] For a discussion of enculturating intellectual virtues, see Shari Tishman, Eileen Jay, and David N. Perkins, "Teaching Thinking Dispositions: From Transmission to Enculturation," *Theory Into Practice* 32 (1993): 147–153.

[8] Shari Tishman, Eileen Jay, and David N. Perkins, 150. See also Ron Ritchhart, *Intellectual Character: What It Is, Why It Matters, and How To Get It* (John Wiley and Sons, 2002): 44–46.

This is an idealized scenario and in the ideal scenario perhaps we know all we need to know about virtue formation. The standard approach to acquiring virtue often works and when it does work we have very little reason to wonder about the deeper story of why it is that these formational processes *do* work. While there is much more to be said about the "best practices" of integrating direct instruction, exposure to exemplars, habit-forming practices, and enculturation into educational environments, the standard approach more or less leads us aright when attempting to foster intellectual virtue.[9]

3. When It Works and When It Doesn't

Of course, the standard approach does not always succeed. And when it does not work, we might wonder why it did work when it successfully inculcated virtue, and thus, why it is not working in another situation and what can be done about this.

To carry on with our hypothetical case, while little Susie was developing the virtue of curiosity, right beside her was little Johnny, exposed to the exact same approach to virtue formation. And yet, little Johnny's eyes never lit up with fascination and awe. He shrugged his shoulders about insects and headed out to recess. What should Mrs. Johnson do here?

It seems that in cases where virtue is not forming and where vice might be deeply entrenched, continuing direct instruction, exposure to exemplars, formative practices, and enculturation are a shot in the dark. Mrs. Johnson is left to keep trying the standard approach over and over again hoping that one of these times the lights will come on for Johnny as they did for Susie. Cases like this can force us realize that we do not understand precisely why it is that the standard approach works when it works and why it does not work when it does not. We have practical knowledge of virtue formation but our theoretical knowledge is lacking. Without a more thorough understanding of the actual psychological dynamics of virtue formation (i.e., why virtue is formed in some cases and why it is not in others), a culture of fostering the virtues can easily lose its theoretical grounding. That is, educating for intellectual virtues can begin to take on an overly pragmatic cookbook or formulaic feel in which teachers end up going through the motions of trying to enculturate intellectual virtues but do not have much insight into the deeper dynamics of change. This, then, can begin to create frustration when the recipe or formula does not produce the expected result.

Moreover, a limited understanding of the dynamics of virtue formation isolates teachers from adapting formational strategies to different topics, students, and learning contexts. For instance, what unique practices and conditions are required to develop the virtue of intellectual attentiveness in the student with attention-deficit disorder or the student attempting to remain focused on her studies in the midst of problems at home? In each of these cases, there is an understandable distractedness that has a distinctive grip on the student's mind that needs to be taken into account in the attempt to foster intellectual attentiveness. A more thorough treatment of the nature of virtue formation could provide insight for the teacher to creatively approach unique virtue-learning situations.

Further, without a deeper account of virtue formation, there are limited explanations available as to why virtue fails to come about in some circumstances. One might be tempted to prematurely conclude that some persons are not hardwired for some of the intellectual virtues, or that certain personality types tend to gravitate towards some virtues and not others, or that some early

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[9] One recent discussion of best practices in higher education is Ronald Barnett, "Knowing and Becoming in the Higher Education Curriculum," *Studies in Higher Education* 34:4 (June 2009): 437–438.

environmental deficits make virtue formation nearly impossible in some students. On any of these ways of explaining the matter, the options available are to either give up on fostering virtues or to persevere with the hope that eventually the standard approach will break through. But, are there other moves available? Might a more in-depth theoretical understanding of virtue formation that specifies some of the underlying psychological dynamics open up ways to purposively engage students beyond the standard approach?

This paper argues that understanding some of the psychological preconditions for virtue formation does open up additional and more focused classroom interventions. The first main tenet is simply a reminder that when the standard approach to virtue formation succeeds it is in part due to an underlying psychological readiness in the student such that a virtuous disposition is triggered under the right conditions. For instance, Nancy Sherman writes, "to say that we become just by doing just actions is to abbreviate a whole series of steps…We misconstrue Aristotle's notion of action producing character if we isolate the exterior moment of action from the interior cognitive and affective moments which characterize even the beginner's ethical behavior."[10] Indeed, these "interior cognitive and affective moments" that are connected to the production of character need to be in place before virtue formation will click.[11] It is clear that some minds are primed for the inculcation of this or that intellectual virtue in a manner that other minds are not primed. And certainly this is at least partly due to the underlying psychological features (or neurobiological structures) of the human mind.

The second major tenet of this paper is that seeking to bring about such psychological readiness in cases when it is not present is an important and legitimate part of intellectual virtue formation in the classroom. We know that there are all sorts of underlying needs of children that must be met in order for learning to take place: students need decent sleep, nutrition, a stable home life, special accommodations for learning disorders, etc. But when it comes to fostering intellectual virtues, what are the potentially unmet psychological needs that need to be addressed in order for the student to acquire a particular virtuous disposition? Or, to put the question differently, what are the unique intellectual character disorders that impede taking on intellectual virtues?

These questions bring us to the third main tenet of this paper which is the claim that on one understanding of what constitutes psychological readiness for virtue formation, a fundamental element that often stands in the way of a person's acquiring virtue is an internalized representation of one's self that is psychologically incompatible with the formation of virtue. Such internalized representations undermine the formative power of the standard approach such that what is needed to prepare some students for virtue formation is a relational experience that repairs the otherwise distorted, internalized representation. The bringing about of this sort of relational experience is what we are referring to as intellectual therapy.[12] The remainder of the paper will attempt to clarify this notion.

4. Intellectual Therapy: An Idealized Case

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[10] Sherman, *The Fabric of Character*, 178.

[11] For further development, see Sherman, "Character Development and Aristotelian Virtue," 39–46. See also, Robert Adams, "Can Virtue Be Taught?," in Adams, *A Theory of Virtue: Excellence in Being for the Good* (Oxford, 2009): 222.

[12] Of course, we are not the first to suggest that what is really required in education is a form of therapeutic engagement. Referring to a different sort of therapy than what I suggest here, Paul Tough describes a classroom interaction between teacher and student as follows, "what is going on in a moment like that isn't academic instruction at all, or even discipline; it's therapy. Specifically, it's a kind of cognitive-behavioral therapy…[it] involves using the conscious mind to recognize negative or selfdestructive thoughts or interpretations and to (sometimes literally) talk yourself into a better perspective." Paul Tough, *How Children Succeed: Grit, Curiosity, and the Hidden Power of Character* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012): 91.

First, by therapy, we do *not* mean the sort of work that can only be done by a professional, licensed counselor. Though, certainly some professional, licensed counselors are well trained to do the sort of work we will describe and perhaps, at times, it best happens within that sort of structured context. But, in general, intellectual therapy can be engaged by anyone who cares about how a child's mind is working when it comes to the intellectual virtues; what Sherman refers to as a "psychologically minded parent or teacher."[13] In this sense, then, intellectual therapy is *careful and sustained attention to another's mind in the attempt to understand this person's internalized representations of self and other that hinder virtue formation with the goal of providing a reparative relational experience that will help facilitate virtue formation.* As an illustration of what intellectual therapy might involve, allow us to carry on with the hypothetical example and describe how this might look with little Johnny. We will then attempt to present this therapeutic approach to virtue formation a bit more formally.

Perhaps Mrs. Johnson catches up with Johnny at recess and engages him in a game of handball. Mrs. Johnson begins to inquire as to Johnny's disinterest in insects.

> *Mrs. Johnson*: "I noticed you did not find the insects very interesting"
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> *Johnny*: "Yeah, I don't like bugs."
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> *Mrs. Johnson*: "Why don't you like them?"
>
> *Johnny*: "They're ugly and they creep me out."
>
> *Mrs. Johnson*: "Yeah, a lot of people feel that way about bugs, but they are actually fascinating creatures. Do you know that if we didn't have bugs, humans would eventually die?"
>
> [No response from Johnny]
>
> *Mrs. Johnson*: "So, what do you like?"
>
> *Johnny*: "I don't know."
>
> *Mrs. Johnson*: "Well, you like handball, you're pretty good at it."
>
> *Johnny*: "Not really. The other kids beat me all the time."
>
> *Mrs. Johnson*: "Video games?"
>
> *Johnny*: "Nah, not anymore."
>
> *Mrs. Johnson*: "How about superheroes, movies, candy!?"
>
> [Johnny shrugs his shoulders to all three]
>
> *Mrs. Johnson*: "It sounds like you *used* to like video games."
>
> *Johnny*: "There was one I kind of liked."
>
> *Mrs. Johnson*: "What did you like about it?"
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> *Johnny*: "In this game you build worlds and had to defend them from threats. I liked designing the buildings, mountains, lakes, trees.
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> *Mrs. Johnson*: "That sounds fun. Why did you quit playing?"

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[13] Sherman, "Character Development and Aristotelian Virtue," 46.

Johnny: "I had the early version of the game and all the other kids played it too, but then a new version came out and pretty soon all the other kids could do more cool stuff than I could, so I quit playing."

Mrs. Johnson: "Did you ask your parents for the new version?"

Johnny: "Nah."

Mrs. Johnson: "Why not?"

Johnny: "By the time I figured out I was using the old version, all the other kids were ahead of me with the new version. I would have never caught up."

Mrs. Johnson: "So, it was easier to quit playing than to feel behind the other kids and have to catch up?"

Johnny: "I guess so. I'm always behind the other kids, and I'll never catch up."

In this obviously manufactured scenario, Mrs. Johnson has acquired vitally important information about Johnny's mind. At some level, Johnny has internalized a belief about himself—what attachment theorists would call an internal working model of self and others—that he is problematically inferior to his peers and always will be.[14] Little Johnny's sense of self has been, in one way or another, defeated and he has given up on the possibility that things will ever be different. Of course, this experience of himself will likely continue to be reinforced as long as he continues to exert little effort to try to understand new things, whether those be new versions of popular video games, dividing by fractions, or the fascinating world of insects. What is clear in this example is that direct instruction, exposure to exemplars, the practice of virtuous behaviors, and enculturation will most likely never break through to Johnny. As long as his internalized representation of his self to himself implicitly encodes the meaning that "I'm always behind and I'll never catch up," any spark of intellectual curiosity, or, for that matter, intellectual carefulness, tenacity, humility, and so on, will be immediately suffocated by Johnny's internalized representation. We maintain that Johnny does not need another assignment to practice intellectual virtues. Rather, Johnny needs intellectual therapy.

Thankfully, the teacher in our imagined scenario has made a good start. Such a teacher will surely bring to her emerging understanding of Johnny's mind numerous other strands of evidence regarding how he lags behind the other students in reading, writing, math, science, and history and perhaps how she herself has wondered if he will ever catch up given his lack motivation and what she now recognizes as a view of himself that at least partly explains his lack of motivation. Mrs. Johnson might also consult with other teachers who have had Johnny in class and discover various instances of failure that sound a lot like Johnny's description of what happened with the video game. One teacher might say, for instance:

> He was doing just fine with math last year, and then I had him up at the board one day and he could not get multiplication by multiple integers. Some of the students laughed at him, but I immediately corrected them and I encouraged Johnny. But his face turned red and his

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[14] In this paper we will be drawing off converging evidence from attachment theory, developmental psychology, affective neuroscience, and relational psychoanalysis that persons develop implicit understandings of self in relation to others out of which they interpret future experiences. See, for instance, John Bowlby, *Attachment and Loss Vol 1–3* (New York: Basic, 1969, 1973, 1980) and Daniel Stern et al., "Non-Interpretive Mechanisms in Psychoanalytic Therapy: The 'Something More' Than Interpretation," *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 79:5 (1998): 903–21. For a discussion of attachment theory and education, see Marilyn Watson, *Learning to Trust: Transforming Difficult Elementary Classrooms Through Developmental Discipline* (San Francisco: Josey-Bass, 2003): 265–286.

confidence was gone. I tried to get him to persevere, but I finally realized that having him up at the board in front of the class put too much pressure on him. I meant to get back to him that day and do some one-on-one work, but we were on an early release schedule and I don't think I ever followed up. I do remember that he failed that unit of math and while he eventually passed it later, from there on out, it seemed he only did enough to pass. He didn't excel anymore.

Much more of Johnny's story could no doubt be told. But perhaps our hypothetical Mrs. Johnson has enough information to begin to design an opportunity for Johnny to experience a different relational interaction regarding learning new information that will serve to challenge and possibly repair Johnny's distorted internalized representation of his self. For instance, let us imagine that the next day Mrs. Johnson asks Johnny to stay behind during recess and she brings out her digital device with the recently downloaded version 1.0 of Johnny's previously favorite video game. Mrs. Johnson says to Johnny:

> Your description of that game sounded so interesting to me that I wanted to learn to play it. So, I downloaded the first version but I don't have a clue how to play this game. I was wondering if you might be able to teach me a bit. I tried to play and I just couldn't figure it out.

Mrs. Johnson is giving Johnny an experience of being ahead and in so doing has, for the moment, removed the defeating power of Johnny's internalized sense of self and other. That is, Johnny's representation of being behind and never catching up cannot really come into play here as a defeater of his engagement with this game because in this instance he is not behind. Of course, Johnny could think to himself: "Mrs. Johnson will just move on like the other kids did and then I'll be left out again." But, it is Mrs. Johnson, after all, and perhaps Johnny can barely imagine a *teacher* doing very well at this game. With the threat of his internalized message neutralized, Johnny is able to take up the opportunity of being "ahead" and experiences once again the fascination, the wonder, and the awe of creating a world of his own choosing in this digital landscape. As well, he notices that Mrs. Johnson is genuinely enthralled with the game. Johnny experiences a sense of connection with Mrs. Johnson in this commonly loved subject matter and perhaps they discover together some feature of the game that Johnny never noticed before. Johnny, knowing more about the game, excitedly discusses the possibilities that arise with this newfound feature. Mrs. Johnson, struggling to keep up, eventually catches on to some of the excitement that Johnny is experiencing, but more importantly, Johnny is enthused again, wondering about what else he might have missed with this game, and even thinking that maybe, just maybe, version 2.0 would be exciting as well.

We can imagine various ways things move on from here. Perhaps Johnny and Mrs. Johnson continue to play the game at recess, perhaps they explore version 2.0 together, perhaps at times the teacher understands things about the game, surprisingly to Johnny, that Johnny does not. She is now ahead of Johnny. But in that crucial moment enough trust has been built between Johnny and Mrs. Johnson that Johnny is able to handle the anxiety created by being behind and he quickly gains the understanding the teacher possessed first. Johnny has what might be called a "reparative relational experience" of being behind and catching up. Being behind did not prove to be the end of the world or the source of embarrassment and, in fact, it felt good to get caught up. Johnny begins to believe about himself at a deep level that he can catch up and that he is not always behind. And perhaps Johnny then, on the basis of this newfound orientation, takes a risk with one of his classmates and discusses some feature of the game he does not understand. The classmate explains it to him and Johnny struggles for a moment to comprehend and begins to tell himself that he will never understand, but then the student explains a little differently and Johnny

immediately understands and even sees an application that his classmate had not seen. Johnny's former internalized representation of his self is being challenged by these new relational experiences and is, we might say, breaking down. In its place a new internalized representation is taking hold that communicates a different sense of self and other to Johnny. He is now representing his self to himself as competent to make progress in learning new things even when he doesn't understand right away and even when others understand more than he does.

Then the day comes when a new unit in science is being introduced. It is a unit on the environment and how various elements of the natural world work together to create an ecosystem. Johnny finds himself somewhat intrigued and he asks a question in class about the topic. He then reads the unit a little more carefully than he typically would and is even thinking about ecosystems as he walks home from school that day. At home he asks his mother about global warming and they find an informative video for kids on the problem. The next day at school Johnny is the first one to raise his hand when the class discusses ecosystems. He obviously knows more than some students but is also comfortable that others know things about the subject that he does not. This newly embedded view of his self allows Johnny's mind to be curious, engaged, and thoughtful.

5. Intellectual Therapy: A Theoretical Basis

While this is an imagined and highly idealized case of intellectual therapy, the essential theoretical underpinnings of this perspective are supported by research and theory in various schools of thought within contemporary developmental and clinical psychology. For instance, such theoretical frameworks as relational psychoanalysis, interpersonal theory, object-relations theory, psychodynamic psychotherapy, attachment theory, and affective neuroscience support the fundamental point that children construct representations of self from perceived patterns of early relational experience and that these constructed internal representations become an internalized, implicit, emotional framework or "internal working model" out of which children interpret future experiences.[15] While there are certainly different theoretical understandings of the etiology of these implicit, internalized representations, as well as how they might best be conceptualized, the basic functional point that human persons experience the world through such representations of self and others seems well-grounded. For instance, attachment theory is a theoretical framework that builds on other psychological research and theory and maintains that from infancy, one learns to survive in relationally deficient contexts through the development of adaptive ways of thinking about one's self, others, and the world that enable one to defend against future loss and pain. These ways of thinking about self, others, and the world become habituated as internalized, often implicit (or unconscious) representations of self such that persons with these representations tend to interpret their ongoing experience from within this internal working model. Based on John Bowlby's understanding of attachment theory, a person's internal working model "incorporate[s] two discrete yet interrelated cognitive schemas: a self model containing basic perceptions of one's own worth, competence, and lovability and an other model embodying core expectations regarding the essential goodness, trustworthiness, and dependability of important others in one's social world."[16] It is important to note here that the cognitive schemas of self and other are

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[15] For helpful overviews of the research supporting this fundamental point, see Steven Stern, "Needed Relationships and Repeated Relationships: An Integrated Relational Perspective," *Psychoanalytic Dialogues* 4:3 (1994): 317; Jay R. Greenberg and Stephen A. Mitchell, *Object Relations in Psychoanalytic Theory* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983); Stephen A. Mitchell, *Relationality: From Attachment to Intersubjectivity* (Hilsdale, NJ: The Analytic Press, 2000); Daniel J. Siegel, *The Developing Mind: How Relationships and the Brain Interact to Shape Who We Are* (New York: The Guilford Press, 2012).

[16] Frederick G. Lopez, et al., "Internal Working Models, Self-Reported Problems, and Help-Seeking Attitudes Among College Students," *Journal of Counseling Psychology* 45:1 (1998): 79–83. Cf. Ross A. Thompson, et al. "Early

developed in response to interpersonal experience. In other words, according to these theories, early relational interaction is the primary medium through which one's sense of self is formed.

These internalized representations of self are perceptions of one's self that are initially encoded sub-symbolically in an infant's emotional experience. That is, infants have subsymbolic, pre-verbal emotional experiences in relational interactions with others (e.g., feelings of fear, comfort, neglect, warmth, etc.) and these experiences (especially repeated ones) are encoded and stored emotionally in the implicit memory system.[17] Implicit memory, apparently tied to the functioning of amygdala, involves a process of encoding and storing the emotional feel of past experience that then impacts future experience without any conscious, explicit memory of the past experience.[18] Evidence suggests that infants are only capable of implicit memory due to their neurological developmental stage.[19] But as the child's brain develops, this sub-symbolic, emotional information can be retrieved, interpreted cognitively, and articulated symbolically (in words or images).[20] For instance, repeated relational experiences of neglect can leave a child feeling lonely, frightened, and anxious. This emotional experience is encoded and stored in implicit memory carrying with it information about the child's relational environment (e.g., that help is unavailable). The child might eventually come to retrieve and interpret this stored information as the unavailability of care that was the result of his own unworthiness.

Based on this understanding, the child might internalize a representation of himself (a cognitive self-other schema) that he is "unworthy of care" in order to make sense of the neglect and in some way manage the feelings associated with his neglect. In this way, the child takes control of his world to some degree by attempting to make sense of it in a way that, in this case, actually protects the child's caregivers from negative evaluation. In other words, it might be less unsettling for the child to view himself as unworthy of care than to view his caregivers as uncaring. The developmental problem arises when this view of himself as "unworthy of care" goes unchallenged and is perceived, and thereby reinforced, in other interactions at home, in the classroom, or on the playground. Since the child has internalized the idea that he is "unworthy of care," it will be difficult for him to accept the care of others who are in actual fact available to care for him. For instance, such a child is likely to rebuff the attempts of a teacher who takes special interest in his academic progress or a fellow student who attempts to help him understand a problem. The child will struggle to experience their care *as* care because he filters these interactions through his

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Understandings of Emotion, Morality, and Self: Developing A Working Model," *Advances in Child Development and Behavior* 31 (2003): 137–71 and Bowlby, *Attachment and Loss Vol. 1–3*.

[17] For a brief treatment of this developmental model, see Todd W. Hall and Steven L. Porter, "Referential Integration: An Emotional Information Processing Perspective on the Process of Integration," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 32:3 (2004): 170–174. For more detailed treatment, see Alan Schore, *Affect Disregulation and Disorders of the Self* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003) and *Affect Disregulation and Repair of the Self* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2003); Wilma Bucci, *Psychoanalysis and Cognitive Science: A Multiple Code Theory* (New York: Guilford Press, 1997); and Seigel, *The Developing Mind*.

[18] For instance, amnesiac patients who had significant impairment in their explicit, long-term memory system showed improvement at solving puzzles they had solved in the past without any conscious awareness that they had experienced the puzzle previously, which demonstrates that information was stored in an implicit memory system. While unconscious cognitive processes are widely accepted in cognitive science, there is now substantial evidence of unconscious affective processes. See Carolyn Rovee-Collier, Harlene Hayne, and Michael Colombo, *The Development of Implicit and Explicit Memory* (Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 2000) and Seigel, *The Developing Mind*, 46–90.

[19] For a brief overview of this evidence, see Mauro Mancia, "Implicit Memory and Early Unrepressed Unconscious: Their Role in the Therapeutic Process (How the Neurosciences Can Contribute to Psychoanalysis)," *International Journal of Psychoanalysis* 87 (2006): 83–103.

[20] For a discussion of "emotional information processing," see Bucci, 128–137. This view of emotional information seemingly fits well with Bob Roberts analysis of emotions as "concern-based construals" that have intentional content. See Robert C. Roberts, *Emotions: An Essay in Aid of Moral Psychology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003): 60–179.

internalized view of himself as "unworthy of care." So, on this way of viewing identity-development, we can speak of internalized representations that possess representational content whether that content is ever formulated in explicit propositional terms (e.g., "I am unworthy of others' care") or whether the content actually corresponds to reality.

Again, while much has been said about what sort of relational environment children require for healthy identity-development, the basic point is that if children feel consistently safe, comforted, understood, emotionally engaged, supported, accepted, and so forth in their early relationships, then they have a good chance of developing a largely secure representation of themselves and thereby bring to their experience of the world a desire to explore and take appropriate risks, a tendency to trust others as sources of important information, an ability to regulate their emotions in stressful situations, a realistic optimism about the future, and other emotional and attitudinal tendencies that are conducive to inculcating intellectual virtues. For example, Kenneth Barrish writes, "In optimal development, parental responsiveness to the child's distress establishes an expectation, or internal working model, of the availability of relief…This expectation reduces the child's arousal and allows the young child to explore his environment with greater confidence and freedom."[21]

The problem, of course, is that early relational environments are often deficient in some way, leaving children with insecure representations of self. The children thereby they experience fear and anxiety about new situations, a reluctance to trust others, a lessened ability to regulate emotions, pessimism about the future, and other emotional and attitudinal tendencies that stand in the way of virtue formation. Again, Barrish writes:

> For all children, even the most fortunate, some form of emotional injury—experiences of loss or rejection, criticism and disapproval, failure or defeat—are of course, inevitable. And all injuries evoke in the child a complex emotional experience. The child suffers first, a painful affect—comprised, in almost every instance, of feelings of shame, mixed with sadness and anger. At the same time, every injury leads to an intensification of the child's instinctive self-protective responses—some form of withdrawal or retaliatory response (in most cases, some form of both withdrawal and retaliatory response).[22]

Barrish goes on to refer to the "demoralization" of the child as a result of these sorts of relational injuries:

> A child's demoralization may be openly expressed as conscious self-criticism or feelings of low self-esteem; or, when these feelings are denied, reflected instead in his implicit self-attitudes…In childhood, and especially in adolescence, we recognize demoralization in the form of discouragement, in the child's or adolescent's inability to sustain effort toward goals (or to imagine goals worth working for), in avoidance and giving up, and in diminished affective aliveness, excitement, and joy.

Barrish's utilization of the concept of demoralization is germane to the argument of this paper in that children that are *de*moralized appear to lack the requisite psychological preconditions (moral emotions, we might say) for virtue formation. Indeed, "demoralized children are likely to seek pride and acceptance in activities that provide an immediate good feeling—a good feeling that does not have to be worked for."[23] Pursuing the "immediate good feeling…that does not have to be worked for" is incompatible with the standard approach to intellectual virtue formation.

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[21] Kenneth Barish, *Emotions in Child Psychotherapy: An Integrative Framework* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 32.
[22] Ibid., 49.
[23] Ibid., 53.

While the conceptual connection between these sorts of demoralized representations of self and intellectual virtue formation is clear, it is worth tracing out a few examples. Consider, for instance, a student who has internalized the notion that "If I fail, I will be shamed and rejected by others."[24] Such a student will struggle mightily to take on intellectual perseverance or tenacity when it comes to learning situations in which she might fail. Either she will persevere in these situations motivated by her fear of failure and the shame and rejection it brings, or she will refuse to persevere in order to avoid the negative feelings. As more than one student has said: "If I don't even try to get the answers right, then I haven't really failed." Or, reflect on a student who has internalized the notion that "Anything less than perfection means I am worthless." This student might be obsessively careful in his mathematics, but this carefulness is certainly not a virtue. Indeed, the formation of virtuous intellectual carefulness is impeded by this child's perfectionism. Or, take a student who has an internal working model that includes the entrenched representation of self that "If I am wrong about something, then I am the stupidest kid in class." Assuming the student wants to avoid the consequent, she will work hard to maintain being right against all evidence to the contrary (closed-mindedness) and will not want to admit that she is wrong (intellectual pride) or treat an objector's point of view fairly (a lack of fair-mindedness). And lest we think that the distorted representations are always negative views of self, the internalized working model that "I am always right because I am the smartest kid in the class" will equally stand as a barrier to intellectual open-mindedness, fair-mindedness, and humility.[25]

The examples could go on and on, but what seems evident is that in these sorts of cases, no amount of direct instruction in the virtues, exposure to exemplars of the virtues, the practice of virtuous behaviors, or enculturation in the virtues is likely to overcome the long-held, deeply internalized view of self that has developed through repeated relational interactions with significant others. It would be wonderful if a teacher could simply tell a child that, for instance, "even if you fail, you are still accepted and valuable" and that such a direct statement would instantaneously undo any feelings and thoughts to the contrary. But we know all too well that persons do not have direct control over their own desires, beliefs, attitudes, and emotions such that the mere exhortation to desire, or believe, or feel otherwise is insufficient to bring about change.

Thankfully, various lines of evidence suggest that such internal states can be challenged and adjusted by salient, reparative, relational experiences that can occur throughout life.[26] Just as early, interpersonal interactions occasion the development of a view of self in response to those interactions, so too later, reparative interactions can occasion the alteration of one's view of one's self. A relational experience of actually being accepted and valued in the midst of failure is quite different than the mere exhortation that one is accepted and valued. Given the theoretical basis for thinking that relational interactions form human identity at the earliest stages of life, there is coherence to the claim that later relational experiences can have a similar effect on identity *re*formation. While later reparative interactions are more difficult for the child to receive (due to

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[24] The presentation of internalized representations as having propositional content of the sort envisioned is, of course, a kind of "folk psychology." While the actual neurobiological architecture of an internalized representations can be isolated, at some level of analysis placing a declarative meaning to the representations aids in making connections to other emotional and motivational states. No doubt the declarative meaning is often an approximation of the felt experience and the information stored in implicit memory.

[25] Notice that these sorts of internalized representations are examples of fixed mindsets rather than growth mindsets. See Carol Dweck, *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success* (New York: Ballantine, 2006).

[26] See, for instance, Jonathan Shedler, "The Efficacy of Psychodynamic Psychotherapy," *American Psychologist* 65:2 (2010): 98-109; Everett Waters et al., "Attachment Security in Infancy and Early Adulthood: A Twenty-Year Longitudinal Study," *Child Development* 71:3 (2000): 684–89; Bowlby, *Attachment and Loss Vol. 2*, 367; Barrish, 32–34; 49–51.

the emergence of defense/resistance), once received these experiences might actually prove to make quick amends for earlier relational deficiencies due to the fact that the child is hardwired to connect in these sorts of positive ways.[27] That the teacher-student relationship can offer opportunities for reparative interactions is not surprising given that for many students the adult culture of the school is the second most powerful adult-relational context to which they are exposed.[28]

Indeed, an empirical study of early adolescent students' relational representations of teachers, parents, and peers found that the students who perceived both teachers and parents as safe, available, supportive, and worthy of emulation had more positive educational outcomes than those that did not. The investigators state:

It appears that the quality of both teacher and parent relationships uniquely contributes to school functioning such that students who feel more secure with, and more able to utilize these adults also report more positive attitudes and motivation in school…It appears that for adolescents a sense of emotional security with teachers and utilization of teachers as emotional and school supports is associated with a greater sense of control, autonomy, and engagement in school. In this sense, the study emphasizes how much schooling is an interpersonal as well as a cognitive enterprise and, more specifically, the real-world importance of students' underlying beliefs that teachers represent sources of interpersonal support.[29]

The students' "underlying beliefs that teachers represent sources of interpersonal support" indicate that these students possess internalized representations of self and self-other that yield a psychological readiness for virtue formation. They feel positive, motivated, in control, autonomous, and engaged. The investigators write, "In virtually every domain of human endeavor, there is mounting evidence that a network of supportive relationships facilitates an individual's motivation, self-reliance, and relative achievement. As John Bowlby once stated, 'Human beings of all ages are happiest and able to deploy their talents to best advantage' when they experience trusted others as 'standing behind them.'"[30]

So, the notion of intellectual therapy as an important part of cultivating intellectual virtues in classroom has wide-ranging support in the social sciences. But no doubt this sort of engagement with students is easier said than done. For one, it may seem overly intrusive for teachers to engage students in reparative ways. And, second, the therapeutic approach would appear overly demanding given typical teacher-student ratios and other important educational goals.

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[27] This is very similar to Mezirow's notion of "acquired frames of reference, through which meaning is construed and all learning takes place, and by the transformation of these habits of expectation during the learning process" (4). Jack Mezirow, *Transformative Dimensions of Adult Learning* (San Francisco: Josey-Bass, 1991). While Mezirow is focused on adult-learning, his work highlights the need to attend to the meaning-making that takes place in childhood. For a discussion of the similarity of Mezirow and attachment theory, see Ted Fleming, "A Secure Base for Adult Learning: Attachment Theory and Adult Education," *The Adult Learner: The Journal of Adult and Community Education in Ireland* 25 (2008): 44–45.

[28] See, for instance, Marvin Berkowitz, et al., "What Works in Character Education: What Is Known and What Needs to Be Known," in D. Narvaez and L. P. Nucci, eds., *Handbook of Moral and Character Education* (New York: Routledge, 2008): 414–431.

[29] Richard M. Ryan, Jerome D. Stiller, and John H. Lynch, "Representations of Relationships to Teachers, Parents, and Friends as Predictors of Academic Motivation and Self-Esteem," *Journal of Early Adolescence* 14:2 (May 1994): 244. For a study that similarly links adult culture with ego-identity and successful educational outcomes, see Marie Good and Gerald R. Adams, "Linking Academic Social Environments, Ego-Identity Formation, Ego Virtues, and Academic Success," *Adolescence* 43:170 (Summer 2008): 221–237.

[30] Ibid., 226–227

6. Overly Intrusive and Overly Demanding?

A central objection to intellectual therapy as I have described it is that it appears to turn the classroom into a therapy session, which can make the approach seem both overly intrusive and overly demanding. The model could easily encourage an inappropriate meddling with a child's inner world or end up exposing emotional wounds the teacher is unprepared to deal with. We are sympathetic to these sorts of concerns and suggest a modest approach to intellectual therapy. What we have in mind is presumably not much different than what caring teachers already do. Teachers who care notice when little Johnnies or Susies are coming to school without adequate sleep, or are overly distracted by events at home, or are struggling with learning particular concepts, or are inordinately shy, and so on. These teachers come alongside their students in ways that are supportive given the particular issue with which the child is dealing. Intellectual therapy suggests nothing different, except to go a step further in the attempt to identify how little Susie or Johnny views her or himself when it comes to learning. Some training in different ways persons tend to view themselves might be helpful (e.g., attachment styles), but often careful observation of a student's behavior can shed enough light to have a decent sense of at least a dimension of the child's internal working model. Once that is in place, the teacher can be on watch to avoid reinforcing a student's internalized representation and intentionally pursue interactions with the student that counteract that representation. Ted Fleming makes a similar point in reference to adult educators:

> Though the suggestion is not being made that adult educators are therapists or indeed that educators provide therapy, there is a tradition in our discipline that pays attention to the counseling and therapeutic process…Of course key to the use of therapy is the way Rogers, for example, explicitly sets out to create a relationship with the client and in a context of that relationship moments are produced that are insightful, developmental and that we could describe as learning. The adult educator too is neither a mere conduit for information (though that is important) nor a therapist, but there is a way of looking at teaching as having an emotional dimension.[31]

But perhaps there is an even more modest approach to intellectual therapy that would make any sort of psychological analysis of the child unnecessary so as to be unobtrusive and largely undemanding. On this even more modest approach, the teacher consistently relates to her students in such a manner that reparative relational interactions are the natural by-product of their interactions. In other words, in light of a general understanding of the internalized representations that make-up a readiness for intellectual virtue formation and the sorts of internalized representations that impede virtue formation, teachers go about their relational interactions with their students in ways that embody what it would be good for their students to internalize and ways that counteract problematic views of self that some may have internalized already. So, for instance, some of the internalized representations of self that appear to prime the human mind for intellectual virtue formation are the following:

> I know some things, but I have a lot to learn.
>
> There is nothing shameful about not knowing things or getting an answer wrong.
>
> If I try hard to learn, I often succeed.
>
> If I don't succeed, I am still accepted by others and have worth.
>
> We all make mistakes sometimes and that's alright.

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[31] Fleming, 42.

What I have to offer or say is important.

Others have valuable things to say and want to help me understand.

When it comes to learning, I have both strengths and weaknesses.

This is a safe place to take risks in my learning.

People are there for me when I need help.

While it is difficult to put language to these internalized messages (typically they are more felt emotionally than known propositionally), it seems we could get the gist of many of them and begin to see how teachers might intentionally relate to their class in such a way that these messages are powerfully and regularly present in the teacher's interactions with all of his or her students no matter what particular reparative relational experience a student is in need of. Since the teacher is consistently relating with his or her students in these sorts of attuned and supportive ways, reparative interactions occur without much focused effort on understanding a particular student's internalized representations. While fostering such a global, supportive relational environment is no simple task, it would not require the teacher to play the role of therapist for each and every student in the classroom.

It is important to remember, though, that it is not enough for the teacher to merely announce to the class that, for instance, "Remember class, we all make mistakes sometimes and that's alright." This would be to revert to the resources of the "standard model." Rather, what is required is for the teacher to be emotionally attuned to her students in a manner that helps them *feel the truth* that even when a mistake is made in class, things are alright. Because our sense of self is developed through relational experiences, what is needed is a relational interaction between the teacher and student(s) that helps the student(s) emotionally experience that intended meaning.[32]

We have seen that the standard approach to virtue formation works many times and in those times the human mind is already psychological poised cognitively and emotionally to take on one or more intellectual virtues. What precisely the prior readiness of the human mind for virtue formation amounts to would involve a more detailed and complex investigation into various domains of experimental psychology, developmental psychology, cognitive psychology, and neuropsychology, not to mention a robust philosophical theory of intellectual virtue and virtue formation. The discussion has directed our attention to the role of internalized representations of self as a fundamental precondition for intellectual virtue formation and has recommended intellectual therapy as a purposive approach to help students experience themselves in relation to others in ways that prepare them to be educated for intellectual virtues.

7. Intellectual Therapy in Action

In this final section, we add some additional flesh to the notion of intellectual therapy by briefly describing several ways in which its core principles and practices are being implemented at the Intellectual Virtues Academy, a charter middle school (ages 11-14) in Long Beach, CA, that opened in the fall of 2013 and that the two of us were instrumental in founding. The mission of IVA is "to

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[32] Intellectual therapy puts a demand on the teacher to attend to his or her own emotional-relational health. For instance, if the teacher experiences his own lack of knowledge as shameful, it will be difficult for him not to communicate that message nonverbally to his class. This means that we as teachers need our own intellectual therapy before we can be very effective in offering such reparative experiences to others. For an application of attachment theory to the adult learner and teacher, see Fleming, 33–53.

foster meaningful growth in intellectual character virtues in a thoughtful, challenging, and supportive academic environment."[33] This goal is taken very seriously at IVA. Every element of the school—from the hiring of administrators and teachers to the selection of curriculum to the adoption of school-wide practices and rituals—has been designed with students' intellectual character development in mind.

The advisory program at IVA also strongly reflects this commitment. The primary goals of the program are as follows:

> 1. To ensure that each student experiences a caring and supportive relationship with an adult figure at the school.

> 2. To provide students with a firm understanding of intellectual virtues and why they are important for learning and living well.

> 3. To help students develop a rich and specific understanding of their own intellectual character strengths and weaknesses.

> 4. To create ongoing opportunities for intellectual exploration and adventure in a safe, lowstakes setting.

The advisory program has the following general structure. Each week, students meet in groups of eight for one hour with a trained adult advisor. The first half hour of the meeting is devoted to one of three activities: (a) a general check-in time (e.g. "highs and lows"); (b) selfreflection exercises (e.g. reflection on one's intellectual character strengths and weaknesses); or (c) direct instruction in intellectual virtues (e.g. watching a video or reading an article that addresses one or more virtues). The second half hour is devoted to a student-led exploration of a particular question or topic that the student is naturally curious about. Here students are tasked with identifying a video or article that addresses their topic and a specific "thinking routine" suitable for engaging with it. On the day of their presentation, students use the video or article and the selected thinking routine to lead the other members of the group in a thoughtful, structured investigation of their topic.

These advisory goals and activities lend themselves to the practice of intellectual therapy in several ways. First, as we saw in the previous section, foundational to the process of intellectual therapy is the formation of a meaningful relational connection with the student or students in question. For intellectual therapy to work, students must feel cared for and supported by their teachers or other adult figures at the school. The advisory program at IVA presents an obvious opportunity for forging this kind of relationship. Again, a principal responsibility of all advisors is to get to know their advisees (to make their advisees feel known) and to be a supportive and caring presence to them.

The advisory program also facilitates the practice of intellectual therapy by equipping students with knowledge and concepts that can help them make progress on the developmental path central to this process. Again, a central aim of the program is to provide students with an understanding and appreciation of intellectual virtues and related concepts. One such virtue is intellectual humility, which involves a disposition to "own" (rather than to ignore, justify, or feel undue anxiety about) one's intellectual limitations and mistakes.[34] Now, imagine that Johnny had

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[33] http://www.ivalongbeach.org/about/mission-and-vision.

[34] See Dennis Whitcomb, Heather Battaly, Jason Baehr, and Daniel Howard-Snyder, "Intellectual Humility: Owning our Limitations," *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research*, published in Early View on August 15, 2015, DOI: 10.1111/phpr.12228.

been introduced to the idea of intellectual humility, been shown some compelling and relevant examples of it, and found himself attracted to this way of acting and feeling. This background knowledge, and the affective states involved with it, might have been useful to Mrs. Johnson as she sought to help Johnny reengage with the learning process. For, it is clear that Johnny is disengaged partly on account of a certain discomfort with and an apparent desire to ignore or avoid some of his intellectual limitations and setbacks. Had Johnny viewed the honest confrontation and acceptance of these limitations as an opportunity to grow in the virtue of intellectual humility, it might have been easier for him to experience the kind of progress that Mrs. Johnson is trying to effect. Thus the advisory program supports the practice of intellectual therapy by equipping students with certain cognitive "tools" that can facilitate this process.

A third aim of the advisory program is to help students deepen their understanding of their respective intellectual character strengths and weaknesses. This includes giving them opportunities to reflect on and discuss (in a safe and supportive environment) some of the beliefs they possess about themselves as thinkers and learners, including beliefs that might be inhibiting their intellectual growth. Indeed, in the back of the notebooks given to all advisors there is pasted a list of educationally-relevant "fixed mindset" messages that students may be tempted to tell themselves along with several corresponding "growth mindset" messages. Periodically, students are given an opportunity to identify the "fixed mindset" messages they tell themselves, to reflect on and question these messages, and to consider replacing them with corresponding "growth mindset" messages. Above we saw that central to intellectual therapy is the identification and shaping of students' "internal working models." Self-reflection exercises like the one just noted provide an excellent opportunity to do just this.

Finally, the Johnny case illustrates that another integral aspect of intellectual therapy involves helping students tap into their natural sense of curiosity. Mrs. Johnson realizes that to nurture Johnny's interest in math or science, she must begin by nurturing his interest in something he is already curious about. Doing so provides her with some psychological "resources" with which to begin to address Johnny's sense of self. This aspect of intellectual therapy is also central to the advisory program at IVA. Again, each week, students spend a considerable amount of time engaging in thoughtful explorations of topics that they are naturally curious about. Our experience suggests that getting students (or adults, for that matter) to identify their natural curiosities is no small challenge. The advisory format addresses this challenge head on: it helps foster in students a habit of wonder and curiosity that can, under the right conditions and with the right support, be taken into their regular academic courses.

We have briefly described four ways in which the principles and practices of intellectual therapy can be—indeed are being—implemented in the context of a weekly school-based advisory program:

> 1. Laying the foundation for "reparative relational experiences" by placing a high priority on forging caring and trusting relationships with students.

> 2. Equipping students with concepts (e.g. intellectual humility or growth mindset) that can help them overcome certain psychological obstacles to robust intellectual engagement.

> 3. Providing opportunities for self-reflection, wherein students are encouraged to reflect on and consider revising some of the (growth-inhibiting) messages they tell themselves as thinkers and learners.

4. Helping students tap into their natural sense of curiosity by asking them to identify and lead thoughtful, structured explorations of topics they're naturally interested in.[35]