

In *Truth, Beauty and Goodness Reframed* Howard Gardner details these titled virtues and discusses their importance within human education. Gardner opens his book with a discussion of each virtue. He states that “truth is the property of statements. Any statement can be judged as true, false or indeterminate. No truths - not even mathematical truths - can be considered secure for all time. But over time, with the openness afforded by the internet, we have a greater likelihood of establishing truths than during any previous era of human history.” He foreshadows his belief on what the ever-connected technology has done to our moral compasses. Gardner hypothesizes that with so many different sources of information and the lack of drive to learn what is actual “truth”, we may lose sight of reality as a whole. Next, Gardner describes beauty as a property of experiences and explains the criteria to which the experience must be tested. He says, "Beauty reveals itself in the course of an experience with an object." Gardner argues that truth is an ideal built on convergent thinking whereas beauty is defined through divergent thinking. He coyly points out in a page of illustrations that there is a somewhat consensus on what is aesthetic: landscapes are pleasing and geometric-based modern art is unappealing. Because of this, he states, “once defined by idealization, regularity, harmony, balance, fidelity to the appearance of the world—is no longer the exclusive or even the primary calling card of the arts.” Finally, Gardner touches on the idea of goodness, stating that it is most importantly “...about the property of our relations with other human beings—individuals whom we know well and also those who are unfamiliar; groups, both close and remote...” Gardner postulates that we have been given all the training we need to be good neighbors, but we are far less prepared to be good workers and good citizens.

These pillars are the basis for which we create our system of beliefs and values. They are also the foundational elements for all learning. While our educational system does not devote specific time to them like we would with English and Mathematics, Gardner stresses that the three are indeed carefully embedded in the content areas found in classrooms. Students attend school to learn rigorous content from subject-based teachers, but, while there, they are also continuing to develop their virtuous skills. More and more schools are buying into the idea of building social-emotional education into a student’s day. Gardner believes that educating for the virtues means helping a succeeding generation to become active and contributing members of society. The young need to be educated in virtues to continue the expectations set out by their elders. By educating young people in these three particular virtues, you can help the next generation to stay engaged in their world and own their role in it. While traditional academics are important, Gardner identifies that students will not forget the beauty that was found within literature or poetry or goodness when it is embedded into History. Finding any of these virtues within their “traditional” coursework will help create appreciation and creativity. The type of divergent thinking needed to understand the beauty of it all.

However, Gardner does understand the importance of including these virtues as a part of lifelong learning. While they are important in the development of young adults, they should be embedded in our life past school since they are foundational to our own beliefs. Just as he discussed that the idea of beauty is fluid, so are the interpretations of our virtues. As we evolve and grow, our interpretation of these three virtues will as well. However, Gardner believes that while these beliefs may evolve, it is important to sustain the original meaning of the virtues.

In modern society, Gardner finds it increasingly important to continue to educate with these virtues in mind because of how deeply rooted they are in our culture. As a whole, we must remember that goodness is most important of all. We must remember our impact, particularly as

adults in the workforce. We can climb on those beneath us at the expense of distant relationships, if it benefits us immediately or we could lead with the virtues outlined throughout the text. With the advancement of technology, it is important to maintain these virtues, because it is with these virtues that our society is blossoming. Maintaining truth, beauty and goodness is what keeps us afloat. We need to sustain a society that is rooted in kindness, compassion, and empathy as well as intelligence and curiosity.