

DARG Data Session 4th of December 2024

Title : Negotiating Perspectives on Cultivating Children's Reverence during Lessons

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Introduction and Focus:

I'm curious whether the ways that participants in a Bahá'í consultation carry out their activities are, or are not, consistent with what authoritative texts say about that activity. For a recent PhD poster presentation, I looked at a deliberation on a treatment method during a Bahá'í consultation: [What Up- and Downgrades tell us about how participants convey their preferences](#). Further analytic insights are welcome.

Elements of Bahá'í consultation:

- Frank, candid, dispassionate, unfettered, and cordial, courteous and loving expression of opinions.
- Detachment from personal views.
- When an idea is put forth it becomes at once the property of the group. Although this notion sounds simple, it is perhaps the most profound principle of consultation.
- A means of harmonizing points of view, promoting unity among community members.
- Aimed at building consensus.
- Consultations do not always require a final decision; often, the objective is simply to exchange views to clarify matters and foster a unified vision.

Session Details: The transcript is part of a 55-minute Bahá'í consultation among three volunteer children's class teachers and Amy, a regional support giver. The extract starts 36 minutes into the consultation and lasts 6 minutes.

Extract 1: 7.4 (li528) 18AP23 (36:39-43:20)

1 (7.0)
2 Amy so how do you(.) how do you for(.) feel the children are
3 progressing in their understanding of eh expectations (.)
4 during cla:ss like what are(.)what are your expectations
5 for them cause it's not just knowledge development it's
6 also: behavior and showing forth the spiritual qualities
7 that they're learning so that's one way to tell that they
8 a:re internalizing what they're learning so it does(.)
9 how does their behavior sho:w (.)that that what they're
10 learning about patience or(.)or respect or fortitude or
11 °what are some other lessons° >anyways the spiritual
12 qualities from class< and what are your expectations and
13 wishes for them to be able to learn(.) in that regard=

14 Kat =it's just been a very on important ongoing topic of
15 reflection for our team lately
16 (2.5)
17 Amy [(...)
18 Mia [can you speak up just a little bit Kat it'[s so:
19 Kat [it's so okay
20 it's it's a it's been an uh this has been an ongoing
21 topic of reflection for team (name) lately
22 (2.0)
23 Kat did you hear that
24 Mia yes I sure did and thank you for speaking a little louder
25 Eli eh hm
26 Mia and I agree with you it's an ongoing (2.0) hahaha eh=
27 Amy =can can someone (h) ela[borate what
28 (...) [(laughter))
29 Mia well Amy you if you were the:re <not so much this time>
30 well I take maybe I take that back u:m ye:s we have a
31 class it's a gymnastics class that harmonizes beautifully
32 with the teachings of Baha'u'lla:h is(.) they do
33 cartwheels and(.) summersalts and my you should see a
34 little (name)((giggles)) right on the couch he can face
35 one direction and totally flip over and land on his feet=
36 Eli =[(giggles, leaning backwards))
37 Mia [and we did some of that um (.)we I think you see this
38 last week(.) um they did that before we started yeah
39 (1.5) let's do it they were doing it so: let's do it and
40 um yeah it's: trying to: (1.0)um get to the point
41 where(.) they show reverence starting with(.) at leas:t
42 during the prayers I mean that's kind of: my goal if they
43 can just (.)show reverence for that little block of time
44 and then they might be let loose again o:r (1.5) have a
45 break where they do some mo:re (.)acrobatics and (1.0) I:
46 (1.5)
47 Eli hm [(giggles))
48 Amy [so your goal is you want them to get to the point so
49 the team right the team's goal is wanting the children to
50 get to a point where they show reverence even if it's
51 just only during prayers [so after
52 Mia [I think that's a good beginning
53 goa[l
54 Kat [no no I think that for me it's a little ((brief audio
55 noise)) different that's part of the challenge
56 Mia yes:

57 Kat I I just wanne clarify that(.) that's been part of the
58 challenge of our(.) consultation is that eh(1.0) I
59 don't(.) I don't see reverence is sitting down and being
60 quiet I mean like that's the bottom line for me (1.0) and
61 um because and so when we're always(.) anyway that that's
62 my my challenge is that for me reverence is something
63 else it's not sitting down being quiet [and sometimes it
64 Amy [ehm
65 Kat is but if the children are be you know being kind and
66 being courteous and being(1.5) but you know just behaving
67 but they're just (stand) they're up and they're kind of
68 being loud and they're moving around for me that's not a
69 sign lack o to me that's not lack of reverence(1.0)
70 because we do we see that happening all the time anyway I
71 don't (wanna) I'm done
72 (1.0)
73 Amy eh ho:w since there's such different approaches(.) how
74 are you guys as a team because really the children will
75 follow your lead >I mean they do need training to be able
76 to do what you're expecting them to do< but they follow
77 the lead of whoever(.) you know is there to: to guide
78 them(.)of course it takes time and patience but they will
79 follow whatever lead is given(.) so how are you as a team
80 working out these these ways these approaches because
81 I'll just share with you from a perspective of education
82 if [if one one person expects one thing and another
83 (...)] ((giggle))
84 Amy person expects ~~fanother~~ thing it can be quite confusing
85 so um maintaining that unity and that consistency is
86 super important so I'm just trying to see how you guys
87 have managed to do that over the over this time
88 (1.0)
89 Mia ueh:: hm I've eh made (1.5)big changes in my approach you
90 know I was a public school teacher so(.) that's pretty
91 structured if you yea::h I've come around I have
92 (.)really I have I made big progress and uh if you wanna
93 call it progress and I mean adjusting to a new approach
94 and eh I'm quite satisfied and content and happy yea:h
95 and uh the kids ehm I keep following I want to keep
96 following that it's not necessarily if that they remember
97 what was taught I mean I know that's important too for
98 them but it's how you made them fee:l and (.) they fee:l
99 goo:d they love Eli and and(1.0) Kat they love each other
100 and (.) they're ha:ppy

101 (1.0)
102 Amy yeah that's that's really important(.)that [they know
103 Mia [yep
104 Amy that they're loved and=
105 Mia =you bet
106 Amy yeah