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The individual and their commitment to learning the most that they can about the virtues of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness remains solely their decision to engage in this dialogue of inquiry and the valuable understanding they can comprehend by working with other individuals with different and common beliefs. Gardner believes that Truth is the one “focal” virtue, while Beauty and Goodness remain the “incidental” virtues. Gardner’s way of inquiry for the psychology of education focuses on the mentality of the individual fighting a constant battle of Nature vs. Nurture. Since the individual must discover what virtues to be incidental and focal, the person must be able and willing to establish grounds for their lifelong learning in order to decipher which virtue holds the most weight in their own personal lives.

Gardner’s way of inquiry examines what the individual already has engrained inside of them and what responses have been elicited by particular virtues. Truth is nurtured by multiple areas both in education and the real world. Some of these nurturing facets are: formal education (the teachings of or about science, history, journalism, psychology, ethics, etc), postmodernism, and the digital age itself. Truth itself must be tested by numerous people, concentration areas, and a person’s inner beliefs. Gardner (2011) states, “With adolescents, the challenge is to recognize that there are indeed several truths, not just one truth; that each truth is subject to alteration, in the light of new knowledge or new understandings; and yet that the search for truth is important, worth pursuing over time, and ultimately leading to more authoritative accounts of the world” (pg. 149). The quote exclaims how the mind and individual must constantly test and challenge themselves in order to discover the truth in its multiple forms. In order to go against the instinct of the mind it remains crucial that the individual challenge their thought process by exposing themselves to multiple forms of so-called truth. Once challenge has happened, then that individual can decipher what to be truthful and what false. The discovery of truth is aided by unique spheres in order to contribute to a solid understanding of what is “focal” in one’s life, but this discovery should never be settled on by the individual.

The “incidental” virtues of beauty and goodness resemble the natural assembly of inquiry. Since beauty remains the most difficult of the virtues to comprehend and apply in one’s lifelong learning capacities, the individual must expose him or herself to what is beautiful in the new digital world in order to gain an understanding of what is classified as beautiful besides just solely art. Beauty and goodness are both established in the individual to a certain degree. In particular, goodness has already been established, whether it is in what Gardner refers to as “neighborly morality” or the “role of ethics.” For example, if the community of the individual models certain moral or ethical behaviors that the child is exposed to at an early age, that child

usually mimics and adopts the types of behaviors and understands from an early age what is right and wrong. Even though beauty and truth seem incidental, according to Gardner, it is still up to that individual to diversify their understandings of these broad, but vital, virtues in order to gain an understanding of how to construct their own personal inquiry.

The individual, whether in childhood, adolescence, or adulthood, must challenge themselves to seek what is indeed true, beautiful, and good. Gardner (2011) writes, “ Whether the realm of truth, beauty, or the good, one must be leery of retaining old habits of thought and action, even if they are comfortable, and remain open to new lines of thought and action, even if they are initially uncomfortable and threatening” (pg. 174). The quote echoes the importance of the person and how he/she must challenge their mind and thought process in order to gain a further understanding of the virtues and all of their sub-spheres. Constant pursuit of these virtues from birth to adulthood will truly lead to a better grasp of one’s own inquiry and what one holds dear in their own personal life.

Whether it is virtues that we are born with or that we develop throughout our life, these mindsets must constantly be adapted, especially living in a postmodern and digital world. The individual must be selective in accepting what is truthful, beautiful, and good. If the individual is able to use the tools around him/her, that person will be well equipped to construct their own inquiry from a variety of older natural sources and ones that are newer nurturing.