

The Way to Happiness: Caring Education and Dao De

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Abstract

This article argues that focusing too much on intellectual development and economic goals makes the aim of education too narrow. It is urgent to shift more attention to the broader process of moral education. As caring education is one of the focuses of moral education, this article provides insight into Noddings's caring and Laozi's Dao De, and then attempts to strengthen caring education by the ethic of Dao De. On this basis, our students' happiness is expected to be improved.

Keywords: Nel Noddings, caring, Laozi, Dao De, happiness

Introduction

Driven by the pressure of economic goals, it is unsurprising that education is lost in the fever of measuring up to an academic standard. The humanistic care of education is overshadowed by the emphasis on academic achievement. Admittedly, in educational settings with a lack of humanistic care, it is hard to imagine the effectiveness of moral education. However, this is not an excuse for not trying. To the contrary, our motivation to find the way to improving moral education is greater than ever. In the long run, moral education takes effect gradually, and will bear fruit someday and benefit our students for a lifetime. For that reason, while the contribution of intellectual education must be acknowledged, moral education as integral to advancing our students' holistic development deserves more immediate attention.

Noddings argues, in *Caring: A Feminine Approach to Ethics and Moral Education*, that 'the primary aim of every educational institution and of every educational effort must be the maintenance and enhancement of caring' (Noddings, 1984/2003a, p. 172). However, in the practice of moral education, the emphasis on caring need not weaken intellectual aims. What Noddings is concerned about is the priorities of today's education:

In pointing to the maintenance and enhancement of caring as the primary aim of education, I am drawing attention to priorities. I certainly do not intend to abandon intellectual and aesthetic aims, but I want to suggest that intellectual tasks and aesthetic appreciation should be deliberately set aside -- not permanently, but temporarily -- if their pursuit endangers the ethical ideal. (Noddings, 1984/2003a, p. 174)

Caring, as the first priority of education, provides us with a new perspective on moral education. Learning to care and be cared for brings a new opportunity and challenge to moral education.

Many philosophers of education have debated Noddings's views on caring, but few look at the important connection between Noddings's caring and Laozi's Dao De. However, caring and Dao De are similar in the emphasis they both place on relationships. The two models both deal with interpersonal relationships. But at the same time, given the essential difference in their cultural roots and theoretical background, there are significant distinctions between the two ideas in solving practical problems.

Therefore, in this article, I attempt to strengthen caring education by the ethic of Dao De. This article begins with an overview of Noddings's caring and Laozi's Dao De. Following a comparison between the two models, my focus will turn to how to enhance the ethic of care by Dao De. At the end of this article, I will discuss the implications of Dao De in contributing to our students' happiness in caring education.

What is Caring?

As Noddings suggests, '[i]n order to establish a firm conceptual foundation that will be free of equivocation, I have given names to the two parties of the relation: the first member is the "one-caring" and the second is the "cared-for"' (Noddings, 1984/2003a, p. 4). The 'one-caring' refers to the carer/caregiver, and the 'cared-for' refers to the recipient of care.

Caring, as an adjective, often refers to a virtue. For example, we often use caring to describe people 'who attend and respond to others regularly and who have such a well-developed capacity to care that they can establish caring relations in even the most difficult situations' (Noddings, 2002, p. 14). We can understand Noddings's meaning in this way: The caring virtue can be cultivated and enhanced in the exercise of caring capacities, but caring capacities in a broader sense also make it possible to establish and maintain caring relations. As Noddings clarifies:

Both of these comments [on caring as a virtue, an individual attribute] capture something of our broader notion of care, but both are misleading because of their emphasis on caring as an individual virtue. As we explore caring in the context of caregiving -- any long-term unequal relation in which one person is carer and the other cared-for -- we will ask about the virtue that support caring. But for now, it is important not to detach carers from caring relations. No matter how much a person professes to care, the result that concerns us is the caring relation. (Noddings, 1992, pp. 17-18)

The main difference between caring as a virtue and caring as a relation is pointed out more clearly as below:

Certainly, people who care in given situations exercise virtues, but if they begin to concentrate on their own character or virtue, the cared-for may feel put off. The cared-for is no longer the focus of attention. Rather, a virtue -- being patient, or generous, or cheerful -- has become the focus, and the relation of caring itself becomes at risk. (Noddings, 2002, p. 14)

It is because of broadening the focus from the one-caring to both the one-caring and cared-for, Noddings warns that 'at the bottom, the ethic of care should not be thought of as an ethic of virtue' (Noddings, 2002, p. 14). In focusing on the effect of care from the one-caring on the cared-for, caring as a relation has been greatly emphasised. Whether to emphasise caring as a virtue or as a relation depends on what the purpose of caring is. In some cases, when our aim is to advance the one-caring's moral development, caring as a virtue is stressed; in other cases, when our focus is the cared-for's need, caring as a relation is emphasised. As a result, caring as a virtue and caring as a relation are not mutually exclusive. Those who have the caring virtue are often able to establish and maintain caring relations; again, in caring relations, their caring virtue is cultivated and enhanced. Or rather, where the emphasis is put results in their different views of caring.

Caring, as a noun, often refers to a medium of relationships. The caring either given or received links two parties in a relationship. Obviously, the meaning of the two different parts of speech are internally related. There is a similar emphasis on relationships in the implied meaning of both parts of speech. Although Noddings does not directly discuss the meaning of caring as a noun, if we try to look at its meaning from Noddings's relation perspective, we would put more emphasis on the relationship in which the caring medium is situated rather than the nature of the medium itself.

From above conceptual description, we can see that Noddings's caring is relational. Strictly speaking, the maintenance and enhancement of caring in itself is the maintenance and enhancement of caring relations. Noddings defines a caring relation as below:

A caring relation is, in its most basic form, a connection or encounter between two human beings - a carer and a recipient of care, or cared-for. In order for the relation to be properly called caring, both parties must contribute to it in characteristic ways. A failure on the part of either carer or

cared-for blocks completion of caring and, although there may still be a relation -- that is, an encounter or connection in which each party feels something toward the other -- it is not a caring relation. (Noddings, 1992, p. 15).

In Noddings's view, the relation of caring is one of the most common relationships. She insists that 'to care and be cared for are fundamental human needs' (Noddings, 1992, p. xi). In other words, we all need to care and be cared for. But what are the sources stimulating us to enter into caring relations? Noddings has indicated that the sources are two feelings: the sentiment of natural caring and the sentiment of ethical caring.

There can be no ethical sentiment without the initial, enabling sentiment. In situations where we act on behalf of the other because we want to do so, we are acting in accord with natural caring. [...] The second sentiment occurs in response to a remembrance of the first. [...] This memory of our own best moments of caring and being cared for sweeps over us as a feeling -- as an ['I must'] -- in response to the plight of the other and our conflicting desire to serve our own interests. (Noddings, 1984/2003a, pp. 79-80)

Noddings (1984/2003a) asserts that caring is a human instinct. Our spontaneous feeling either 'I want' or 'I must' is the prerequisite to entering into caring relations. Spontaneity means occurring as a result of an impulse. Without spontaneity, it is not a caring relation. However, we cannot demand that this spontaneity always occurs. Noddings (1984/2003a, 1992, 2002) notices that a relation fails to be a caring relation if the two parties (i.e., the one-caring and the cared-for) or the conditions under which the parties interact in a relation prevent completion of caring. More specifically, the interruption of a caring relation may happen at three stages: receptivity, relatedness, or responsiveness.

A relation may fail to be one of caring because a carer fails to be attentive, or having attended, rejects the ['I must'] and refuses to respond. Or, it may fail because the cared-for is unable or unwilling to respond; he or she does not receive the efforts of the carer, and therefore caring is not completed. Or finally, both carer and cared-for may try to respond appropriately, but some condition prevents completion; perhaps there has been too little time for an adequate relation to develop[,] and the carer aims rather wildly at what he or she thinks the cared-for needs. (Noddings, 2002, p. 14)

Although the failure of a caring relation has been noticed, there is no explicit suggestion for rebuilding the uncompleted caring relation. Putting forward solutions to complete an uncompleted caring relation is necessary and helpful to supplementing the ethic of care.

In ideal caring relations, first, the one-caring is required to empty his or her own soul and place attention to the cared-for in order to receive the cared-for's reality. This capacity is called as engrossment. When the one-caring feels the desire to help the cared-for and steps out of his or her personal frame of reference and concerns the cared-for's reality as if that is his or her own reality, this is motivational displacement. Engrossment and motivational displacement characterise the person as the one-caring. Second, if the concerns received by the one-caring are similar to the one-caring's concerns, i.e., the one-caring and the cared-for have the same concerns, and there are sufficient conditions for help the cared-for, relatedness is established. Third, to complete the caring, the cared-for also needs to reciprocally respond to the one-caring that he or she has received the care. People who are able and willing to show reception, recognition, and response characterise themselves as the cared-for. In doing so, the one-caring and the cared-for are mutually dependent, and a caring relation is established, maintained, and enhanced. Noddings summarises:

A caring relation requires the engrossment and motivational displacement of the one-caring, and it requires the recognition and spontaneous response of the cared-for. (Noddings, 1984/2003a, p. 78)

But in the process of engrossment and motivational displacement, the conditions and situations the one-caring faces are various. As Noddings explains, 'conditions [in situations] are rarely "sufficiently similar"... to declare that you must do what I do' (Noddings, 1984/2003a, p. 5). Therefore, from Noddings's perspective,

dealing with a particular relation has to be considered in a specific situation on a case-by-case basis, instead of following a universal ethical guideline.

What is Dao De?

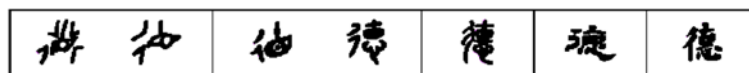
To discover the original meaning of Dao De, it may be useful and interesting to look at the ancient Chinese character for Dao De.



Road + Eye + Foot

Figure 1: The ancient Chinese character for Dao

From Figure 1, we can see that the original form of the ancient Chinese character for Dao contains three main components: road, eye, and foot. Thus, the original connotation of Dao can be understood as the Way that we choose and walk. Walking in a right direction is close to the Dao; but walking in the opposite direction is away from the Dao.



Road + Eye + Heart

Figure 2: The ancient Chinese character for De

The ancient Chinese character for De is illustrated in Figure 2. In the Chinese Oracle (16th - 11th century B.C.), De originally implies looking straight ahead. In the Chinese Bronze Inscription (11th - 7th century B.C.), the main connotation of De is emphasised by an additional component -- heart. De is from the heart -- the straight heart, the good heart. The ancient sages, through the two characters Dao and De, inspire us that to keep walking in the right direction, always look straight ahead and follow the good heart.

When we talk about the meaning of Dao De, it is necessary to have a look at the meaning of Dao De in the Daodejing. The author of the Daodejing is controversial. But in order to avoid involving irrelevant discussion, in this article, I default that Laozi was the author of the Daodejing. Laozi's Dao De is used to refer to Dao De in the Daodejing. There are different editions of the Daodejing. The most popular edition was compiled by Wang Bi. The 81 chapters are structured in two parts. The first 37 chapters are known as the Daojing; and the remaining 44 chapters are known as the Dejing. The Daojing focuses on ontological and epistemological issues. It tells us that Dao is the origin and ontology of everything. Dao is also the law of nature and the code of conduct. The Dejing concentrates on ethical issues. It advises us that everything should be done following the Dao. De refers to following the Dao. Today, in Chinese language, De often means virtue. In translations of the Daodejing, De is often translated as virtue. This is misleading. Virtue is an extended meaning but not the original meaning of Laozi's De. In the Daodejing, Laozi never aims to talk about virtue. Instead, he talked about the law of nature and following the law of nature. We can cultivate virtue by following the law of nature. But following the law of nature in itself is total different from virtue.

Laozi believed that opposites can produce each other, complement each other, off-set each other, incline towards each other, and harmonise with each other (please see examples in Lau, 1963, Ch. 2). On this basis, Laozi pointed out '[t]urning back is how the Way moves; / Weaken is the means the [W]ay employs' (Lau, 1963, Ch. 40). He believed that two opposites of the unity can transform mutually (see also Lau, 1963, Ch.22, 36, 45, 63, 76, 78). Laozi saw the law of unity of opposites as an universal law in nature and human society. It can be applied in the field of social ethics as the code of conduct. A core issue of social ethics is the loss-to-gain relationship between people. The ethic of Dao De emphasises benefiting others without contending with them and settling where none would like to be. Laozi argues that the sages's highest good is like water, and water comes close to the Way (see Lau, 1963, Ch. 8). First, Laozi advocated altruism. Benefiting others means to nurture others. Water provides the myriad creatures with one of the necessities. It is like a mother who nurtures her children out of caring for them. Therefore, the goodness of water can be metaphorically understood as a mother's caring. Second, Laozi suggested not to have too many desires. Laozi warned us, 'there is no crime greater than having too many desires; there is no disaster greater than not being content; there is no misfortune greater than being covetous' (Lau, 1963, Ch. 46). Due to too many selfish desires, we compete against with others to win what we want. Laozi advised us not to compete against others. As he explained, 'It is precisely because he does not compete that the world cannot compete with him' (Lau, 1963, Ch. 22, please see also Ch. 66, 68, 73, 81). In this way, the loss of personal interests is a gain in personal interests. In the Chapter 7, Laozi made this point clear: 'the sage places himself in the background, but finds himself in the foreground. / He puts himself away, and yet he always remains. / Is it not because he has no personal interests? / This is the reason why his personal interests are fulfilled' (Lau, 1963, Ch. 7). As opposites of the unity exist relatively, Laozi believed that at the time of loss we also gain. It is a choice between loss and gain, between what we loss and what we gain. To gain via loss is the sage's mutual-benefit wisdom.

The ethic of Dao De provides both an universal principle and concrete solutions. On the one hand, Laozi suggested us to follow the law of nature. This is the universal principle. On the other hand, the law of nature is manifested in the nature of everything and relationships among everything. Dealing with concrete relationships requires us to practice the law of nature on a case-by-case basis. Laozi's claim is helpful to establish harmonious interpersonal relationships. As Roberts (2012, p. 945) comments, Taoism [or Daoism] 'promotes peace-fulness among people, harmony with nature, and respect for all things. The Tao Te Ching [or the Daodejing] warns against activities that encourage people to desire more than they currently have; this, it is suggested, will lead to unhappiness and disharmony'.

Enhance the Caring by Dao De

In Noddings's ethic of care and Laozi's ethic of Dao De, how to deal with relationships is a common theme. Noddings focuses mainly on educational contexts and her ethic of care concentrates on caring relations. Her research provides useful suggestions on how to establish, maintain, and enhance caring relations. Besides caring relations, uncompleted caring relationship and conflicts are inevitable. How to rebuild uncompleted caring relations and solve conflicts should also be considered. Laozi's ethic of Dao De can provide some reference to supplement the ethic of care. In the Daodejing, we can see advice on how to deal with the interpersonal relationships between the ruler and people. Laozi worried about social conflict under the background the class struggle. He suggested an ideal interpersonal relationship between the sage and people as an alternative. More importantly, Laozi put forward a direct solution to solve the conflict. Based on the law of unity of opposites, Laozi recommended the water-like highest good to the ruler. The wisdom of water-like highest good is a relativism of loss and gain. It is helpful to establish mutual-benefit relationships. Laozi's ethic of Dao De provides both a universal principle (i.e. following the Way) and concrete solutions (i.e., the specific applications of the law of nature). In this point, Noddings would agree, there is no code of conduct which can be applied in every case irrespective of situations. However, dealing with a particular relation does not have to be considered in a specific situation on a case-by-case basis. In general, the ethic of care and the ethic of Dao De have their respective scope of application and model framework. However, Dao De can supplement to the ethic of care. In moral education, learning to care and be cared for is only one aspect of caring curriculum. Learning to solve conflicts is also important in dealing with complicated interpersonal relationships. Laozi's suggestion based on the law of unity of opposites has its positive meaning in solving conflicts. In Laozi's point of view, everything is

interrelated with each other. In the interpersonal network, an individual is not merely in a bilateral relationship, but rather in multilateral relationships. In multilateral relationships, to gain via loss requires a wisdom of choice. To gain via loss is also a basis to establish mutual-benefit relationships.

Contributions to Happiness in Education

Noddings argues, in *Happiness and Education*, that, 'happiness should be an aim of education, and a good education should contribute significantly to personal and collective happiness' (Nodding, 2003b, p. 1). In *Happiness and Education*, Noddings's ethic of care is throughout. The ethic of care as a relational ethics, as Noddings argues, is useful in contributing to students' happiness. Laozi's ethic of Dao De as an ethic involving relationships can also provide important implications for happiness in education.

No Action and No Words:

Therefore the sage keeps to the deed that consists in taking no action
and practices the teaching that uses no words.

The myriad creatures rise from it yet it claims no authority;

It gives them life yet claims no possession;

It benefits them yet exacts no gratitude;

It accomplishes its task yet lays claim to no merit.

It is because it lays claim to no merit

[T]hat its merit never deserts it.

(Lau, 1963, Ch. 2)

In Chapter 2, Laozi mentions two key concepts - 'no action' and 'no words'. Non-action is not a passive attitude toward life, but rather, as Roberts (2012) points out, a form of action. In order to let students develop fully, we need to first recognise their individual differences and respect their demand for personality development. Based on their characters and needs, good teachers do not control students (i.e., claim no authority and no possession); rather they support and guide students to develop better - this is the highest achievement of education. Besides knowledge, students also acquire an attitude toward life from teachers. Most of the time we try to persuade students by using such words: 'that is wrong', 'listen to me'. But it is hard to say that students can understand our caring for them in this way. Laozi offers an alternative to us - instead of persuading by preaching, a better way of moral teaching is to act as a successful example to students (i.e., teaching that uses no words).

No Rule:

The best of all rulers is but a shadowy presence to his subjects.

Next comes the ruler they love and praise;

Next comes one they fear;

Next comes one with whom they take liberties.

When there is not enough faith, there is lack of good faith.

Hesitant, he does not utter words lightly.

When his task is accomplished and his work is done,
the people say, 'It happened to us naturally'.

(Lau, 1963, Ch. 17)

From Chapter 17, we can see that measuring up to a standard will make students fear testing and learning. Good education requires the art of teaching. In this way of teaching, students concentrate on their learning but do not know the underlying good intentions.

Not Meddling:

In the pursuit of learning one knows more every day;

In the pursuit of the way one does less every day.

One does less and less until one does nothing at all,

and when one does nothing at all,

there is nothing that it undone.

It is always through not meddling,
that the empire is won.
Should you meddle,
then you are not equal to the task of winning the empire.

(Lau, 1963, Ch. 48)

Chapter 48 shows us the relation between intellectual education and moral education. In the first sentence of the original, Laozi does not explicate ‘knows what’. As Roberts (2012, p. 950) discusses, ‘What we need, a Taoist [or Daoist] might say, is to relearn the process of connecting with nature. There is an ambiguity in the Tao Te Ching [or the Daodejing] over the meaning of “nature”... A better way to understand this [nature/a type of learning], I think, is to see the Tao Te Ching as advocating alignment of all we do with the natural harmony of the universe - with the way things ‘naturally’ are, always have been and always will be’. I think, on the one hand, Laozi acknowledges the benefit of learning subject knowledge, because leaning subject knowledge is helpful to one’s intellectual development (i.e., it conforms with human nature). On the other hand, Laozi opposes ‘knowing how to “meddle” or govern others’, because this is a cunning behaviour. Laozi prefers the state of innocence, like infants; so he counsels, one ought to do less and less [cunning things] (i.e., decrease one’s desires, get close to the nature of the universe) - this will finally get close to the way. The sage rule does nothing at all, but everything gets done. We can see that Laozi prioritises moral education, but that does not mean abandoning intellectual education. Today’s education, while it places emphasis on intellectual education, should also pay more attention to moral education and students’ holistic development.

Holistic Happiness and Good Education

In *Happiness and Education*, Noddings has explored various views on happiness that have an effect on education. Based on Noddings’s discussion on happiness, I suggest that, according to the direction from which we seek happiness, there are at least three ways of thinking: (i) the objectification of happiness; (ii) the internalisation of happiness; and (iii) relational thinking. If we believe that happiness is from the outside towards the inside, and that happiness as a temporary good mood is dependent on external factors (e.g. a high score/ranking, a high-paying job, personal material wealth), that is the objectification of happiness. In this way of thinking, a rich material life is considered as a form of happiness. This is a very common view of happiness. For example, some research in happiness economics (please see Frey & Stutzer, 2002; Kahneman, Diener, & Schwarz, 2003; Richard, 2004) has discussed the positive correlation between incomes and happiness. However, happiness is also thought as a long-term state of mind, especially a mindset of contentment -- being content with what we already have and not asking for more. According to this view, happiness is contingent on internal factors which are typically tested in psychology, or in other words, happiness is from the inside towards the outside. However, material basis and mind state are two inseparable elements of happiness. If the lack of a necessary material basis is too great, happiness is too far to reach. The basic material needs can help to maintain our basic living standard. Without the necessities, we cannot survive, let alone decide how to live and how to live happily. But without a healthy state of mind, the excessive pursuit of material wealth will not enhance happiness. Always seeking to satisfy endless desires can only make us feel transient pleasure at best. Never stopping to appreciate what we already have keeps us far from long-term happiness. Happiness is neither a rich material life nor a good state of mind, but rather the harmony of desire and reason. Furthermore, beyond the level of inner harmony, from a relational view, each of us is not an isolated individual but also a part of an interpersonal network. Relational thinking, according to Noddings (2003b, p. 35), puts more emphasis on ‘moral interdependence’ and ‘creating the conditions under which people are likely to interact with others in mutually supportive ways’, because ‘the domain of human interaction’ is ‘the principal arena of happiness’. Interpersonal harmony and social harmony are also important sources of happiness, because personal happiness and collective happiness are not separated: Personal happiness as a part of the whole influences collective happiness; again, collective happiness as the whole contains personal happiness. Therefore, to say there are three ways of thinking is not to suggest that the sources of happiness are mutually exclusive. In most of the cases, more than one element of happiness (i.e., external factors, internal factors, and relational factors) may coexist at the same time. For example, a student feels happy in the school because he/she not only makes progress in study but also gets on well with others. Combining various perspectives on happiness, I conclude that happiness at least includes a

necessary material basis, a good state of mind, an inner harmony (i.e., the harmony of desire and reason), virtuous activities, a harmonious interpersonal relationship with others, and a harmonious interrelationship with nature -- this is a holistic view on happiness.

The next question is about what good education is for or what the standard of educational measurement should be. As Biesta suggests: 'One way to develop a framework for discussions about the aims and ends of education is to start from the actual functions educational systems perform' (Biesta, 2009, p. 39). From Biesta's point of view, education generally performs three different (but related) functions - qualification, socialisation, and subjectification (Biesta, 2009, p. 39). Qualification functions to provide students with the 'knowledge, skills and understanding' and to prepare them for 'the workforce', which aims for 'economic development and growth' (Biesta, 2009, pp. 39-40). The socialisation function of education is revealed as 'the transmission of particular norms and values', 'the continuation of particular cultural or religious traditions', or 'professional socialisation' (Biesta, 2009, p. 40). The opposite of socialisation is what Biesta refers to as subjectification. Subjectification is 'about ways of being that hint at independence from such [existing] orders; ways of being in which the individual is not simply a "specimen" of a more encompassing order' (ibid.). However, as Noddings expects, 'we hope that the people produced by our educational efforts will be good people...' (Noddings, 2003b, p. 167). At the level of individual student, education is not only for knowledge acquisition (i.e., the qualification function of education), but also for moral development (i.e., the socialisation function of education) and developing personal strength (i.e., the subjectification function of education) -- a good student should be a student developing all round. At the level of overall education, education is not only for achieving economic growth (i.e., the qualification function of education), but also for inheriting shared values and cultural traditions (i.e., the socialisation function of education) and meeting students' expectation for personal happiness (i.e., the subjectification function of education) -- good education should improve students' holistic development and holistic happiness. Accordingly, it is inappropriate to use any single indicator (e.g., the test score) to measure and judge students' overall potential or education's overall effectiveness, or rather, good education is closely related to students' holistic happiness.

Conclusion

This article argues that while the contribution of intellectual education must be acknowledged, moral education as integral to advancing our students' holistic development deserves more immediate attention. Learning to care and be cared for brings a new opportunity and challenge to moral education. Noddings's ethic of care and Laozi's ethic of Dao De are similar in the emphasis on relationships. But given the essential difference in their cultural roots and theoretical background, there are significant distinctions between the two ideas in solving practical problems. Noddings asserts that caring is a human instinct. However, we cannot assume that this feeling always occurs naturally, and the failure of a caring relation has been noticed. Noddings provides no explicit suggestion for rebuilding the uncompleted caring relation. Caring and caring relations cannot be forced. In this point, Laozi offered solutions to solve uncompleted caring relations, which can be a supplement to the ethic of care. Unlike Noddings's view, Dao De is a universal law of nature and specific applications of the law of nature. Dealing with a particular relation does not have to be considered in a specific situation on a case-by-case basis. Laozi's claim is helpful to establish harmonious interpersonal relationships. Laozi suggested an ideal interpersonal relationship between the sage and people as an alternative of the relationship between the ruler and people. More importantly, Laozi put forward direct solution to solve the conflict. Therefore, the main focus of this article is to strengthen caring education by the ethic of Dao De. In particular, enhancing caring education by the ethic of Dao De requires benefiting others without competition. Noddings shows that the ethic of care as a relational ethics is useful in contributing to students' happiness. Thus Laozi's ethic of Dao De as an ethic involving relationships can also provide important implications for happiness in education.

Based on a discussion on the relation between happiness and education, this article proposes that good education should improve students' holistic development and holistic happiness. Following an introduction of Daoist ideas, this article indicates that measurement in education should respect students' nature (their human nature -- i.e., their individual differences but seen in the light of the universal Dao, and their demand for holistic development). First, one of the important responsibilities of education is to help students develop in a rounded

manner. To support students to develop their potential fully, it is not necessary to control students. We are used to targeting high test scores in standardised testing and high rankings in league tables. In using these artificial standards, we can forget that students are not tools. Controlling students' minds for any selfish desire is not helpful to students' holistic development. Second, the aim of educational measurement needs to connect with the aim of education. Intellectual development is not the sole aim of educational measurement. Today's education needs to pay more attention to caring. Caring for others is important for students' holistic happiness. Third, the standard used to judge the overall potential of students and the effectiveness of education is holistic development, rather than test scores alone. Education influences life. What education delivers now is what the students have in the future. Education also influences our future. In what ways that education can support us to pursue a better future still needs more discussion. I want to conclude with Laozi's saying, 'the way begets one; one begets two; two begets three; three begets the myriad creatures'. Measuring up to the Way, happiness comes along easily.

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