

Teaching as a Moral Profession

Professor Kirsi Tirri
University of Helsinki
Finland



Holistic education

- Holistic view to education: development of the whole person
- Intelligence and character
- Excellence and ethics
- Life-long learning: learning to know, learning to do, learning to be, learning to live together (UNESCO 1996, 85-97)
- Spirituality: purpose and meaning of life

Holistic Education

Communication



Languages

Manners

Etiquettes



Talents

Skills

Techniques

Qualifications



Diploma

Degree

E G O

Virtues

?

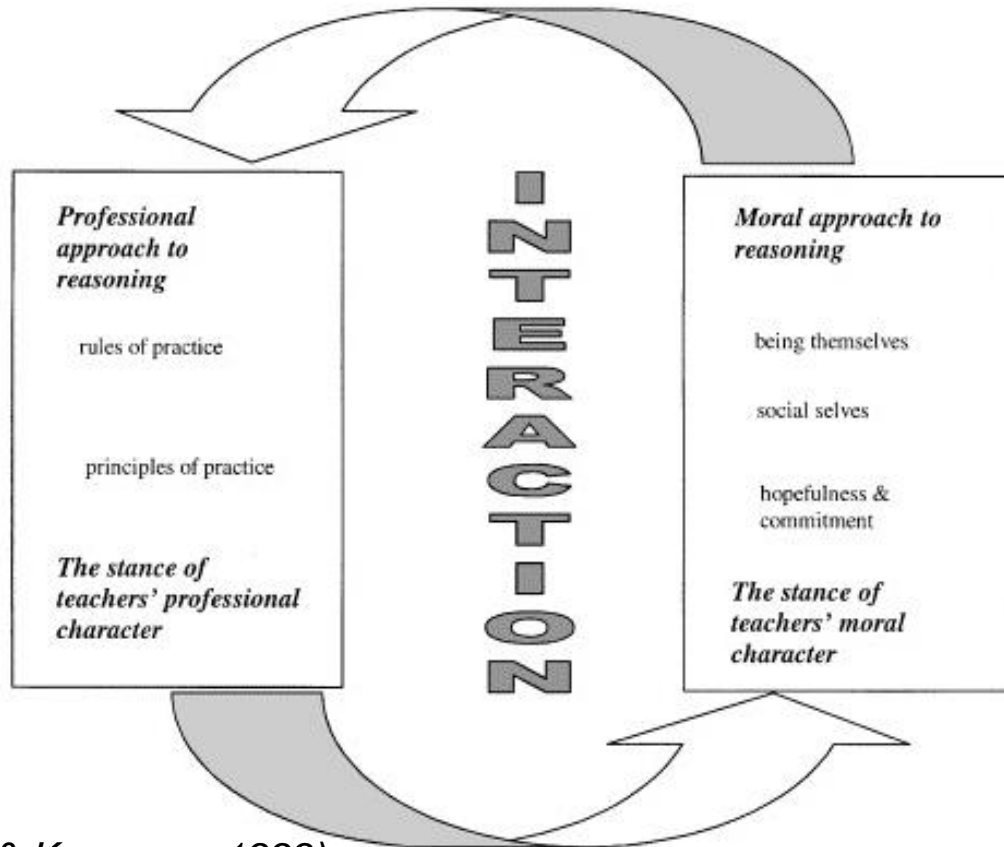
What kind of teacher is a good teacher?

- **Effective teacher:** good students' learning results (Tirri, 1993)
- **Pedagogically thinking teacher:** aware of his/her values and goals underlying his/her teaching practice (Kansanen, Tirri, Meri, Krokfors, Husu & Jyrhämä, 2000).
- **Virtual teacher:** mentor and facilitator (Nevgi & Tirri, 2002)
- **Inclusive teacher:** education for all, gifted students (Tirri & Laine, 2017)



TEACHING PROFESSION

*Teaching
competence*



*Moral
competence*

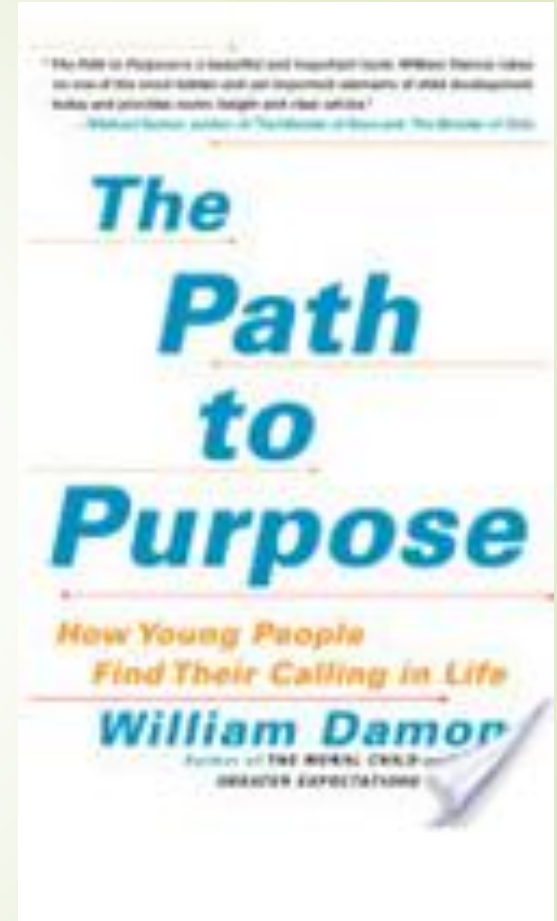
(Tirri, Husu & Kansanen, 1999)



TEACHERS' MORAL COMPETENCE

Purpose in life

- ▶ “Purpose is
- ▶ a stable and general **intention to accomplish**
- ▶ something that is at once **meaningful to the self** and of consequence **beyond the self** over time”
- ▶ (Damon, Menon & Bronk, 2003; Damon, 2008)



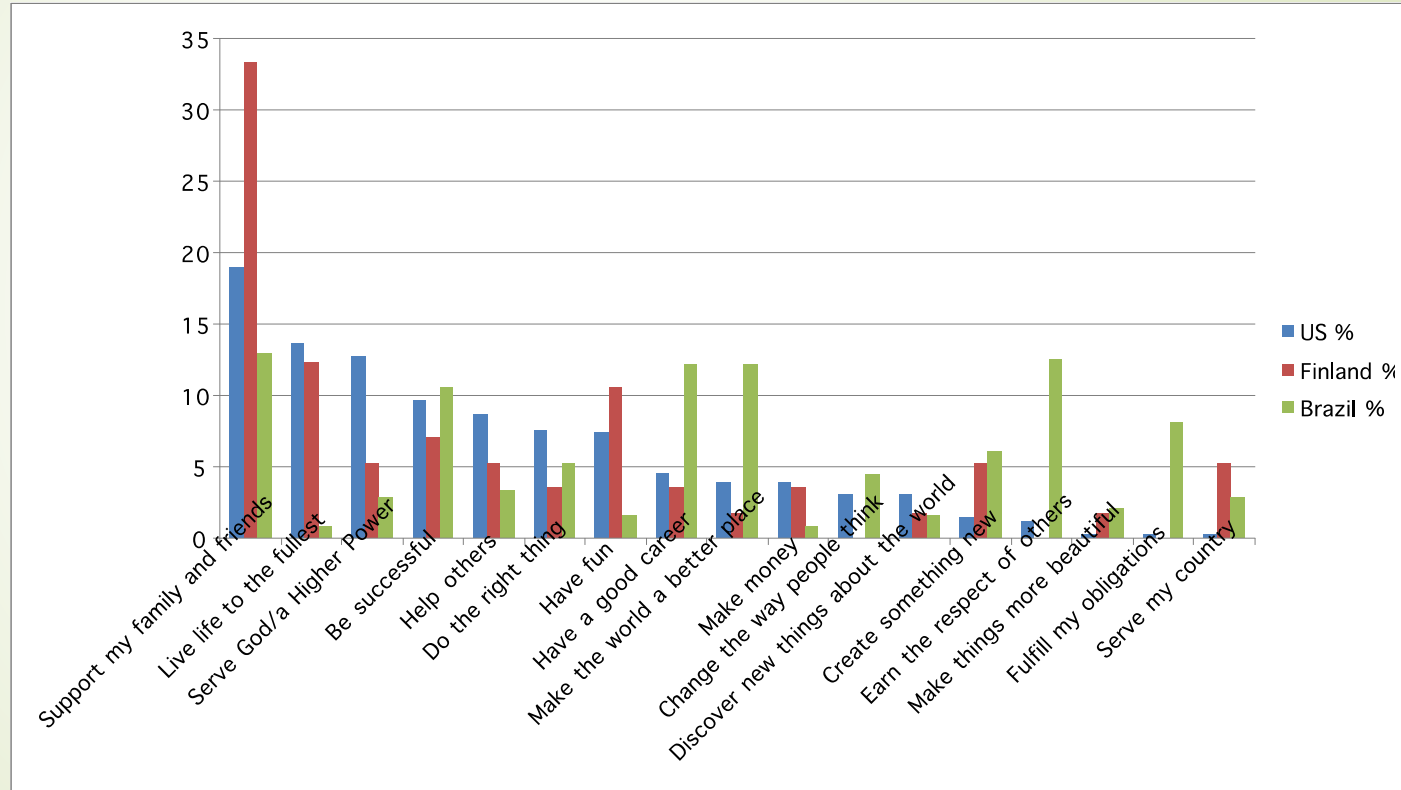
The role of purpose in teaching and learning

- Lack of purpose causes addictions, depression, unsocial behavior and letarcy among the youth (Damon, 2008)
- Finding purpose promotes pro-social behavior, moral committment, achievement, and good self-esteem
- Both American (N=386) and Finnish (N=336) students (13 to 19-year-of age) need teachers' support in finding purpose in their studies and in their lives (Bundick & Tirri, 2014)

LIVING AND TEACHING WITH *Purpose*



Top Purposes



General purposes in teaching (Tirri, 2012; Tirri & Ubani, 2013)

- Both pre-service and in-service teachers in Finland identified some general purposes in their teaching
- They all viewed themselves as responsible professional whose task is to teach the basic knowledge of their own subjects
- Holistic educators who are responsible of their students' personal and ethical development
- In-service teachers emphasized more their students than pre-service teachers

Subject matter-specific purposes in teaching (Tirri, 2012; Tirri & Ubani, 2013)

- Both pre-service and in-service teachers in mathematics emphasized the importance of meeting the needs of different learners, especially the gifted and girls.
- Both pre-service and in-service teachers in religious education viewed religion as a very personal subject that required kinds of personal reflection different from those needed by many other subjects in schools.

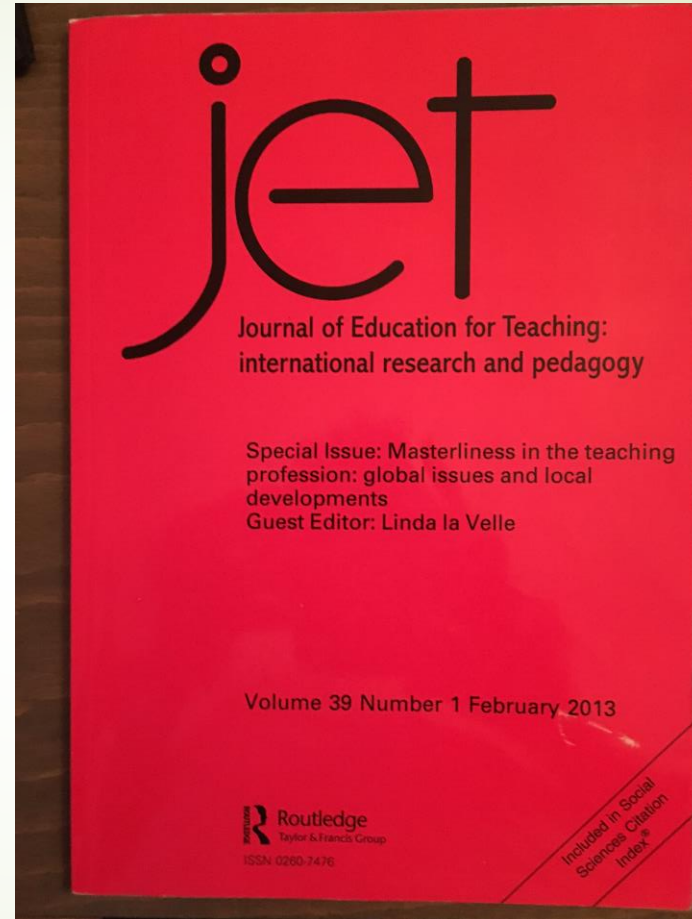


Education for purposeful teaching around the world

► Edited by Kirsi Tirri, Seana
Moran & Jenni Menon
Mariano

► *The Journal for the
Education for Teaching*

► 42 (5), 2016





Purpose profiles of Finnish teachers (Tirri & Kuusisto, 2016)

➤ **Disengaged** (n=84; 23%)

➤ teachers who express neither purpose to their teaching nor do they show any signs that they are seeking purpose

➤ **Dreamers** (n=54; 15%)

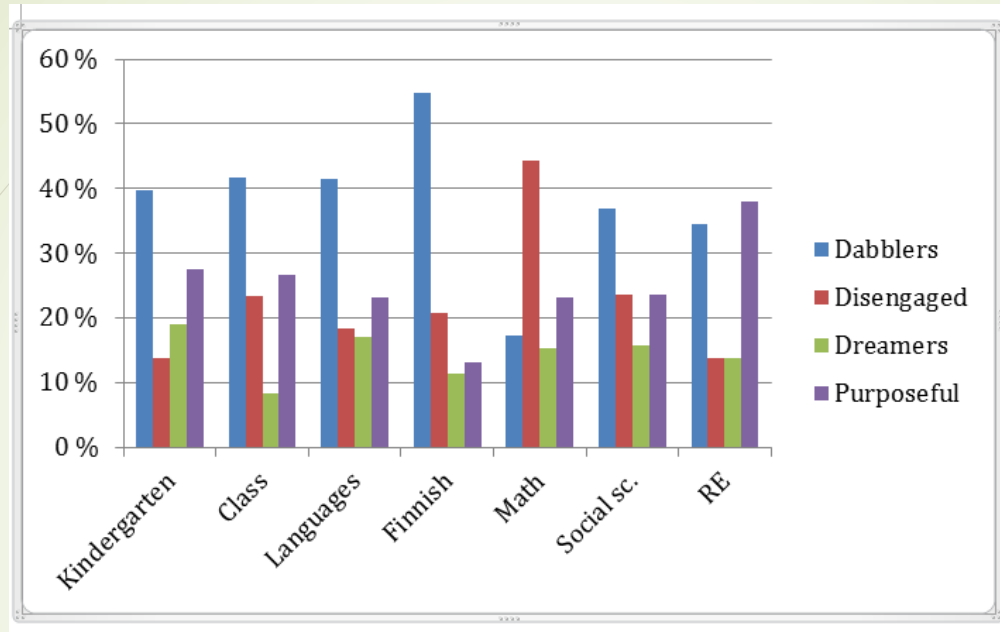
➤ teachers who express ideas about purposes that they would like to have, for example, imaginative educational ideas, but who have done little or nothing to try out their ideas

➤ **Dabblers** (n=144; 39%)


➤ teachers who have engaged in activities that appear to be at least potentially purposeful, but who show little awareness of the meaning of these activities beyond the present

➤ **Purposeful** (n=90; 24%)

➤ teachers who have found something meaningful to which to dedicate themselves, who have sustained this interest over a period of time, and who express a clear sense of what they want to accomplish in their teaching and why



Purpose profiles: Finnish Student Teachers (N=372) (Tirri & Kuusisto, 2016)



Teaching purpose: How can purpose be taught ? (Tirri & Kuusisto, 2017)

- Teachers around the world should be educated in the specific competencies that make purposeful and purpose-oriented teaching possible.
- A case-study approach to promote purposeful teaching in different contexts.
- A didactic approach to purpose education adapted from moral education for teachers (Toom, Husu, & Tirri, 2015)
- Theoretical bases and concrete suggestions for educating students for purpose

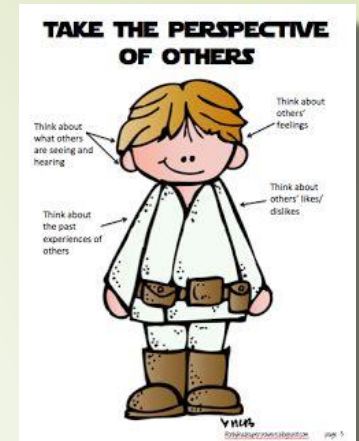
Ethical Sensitivity



Darcia
Narvaez

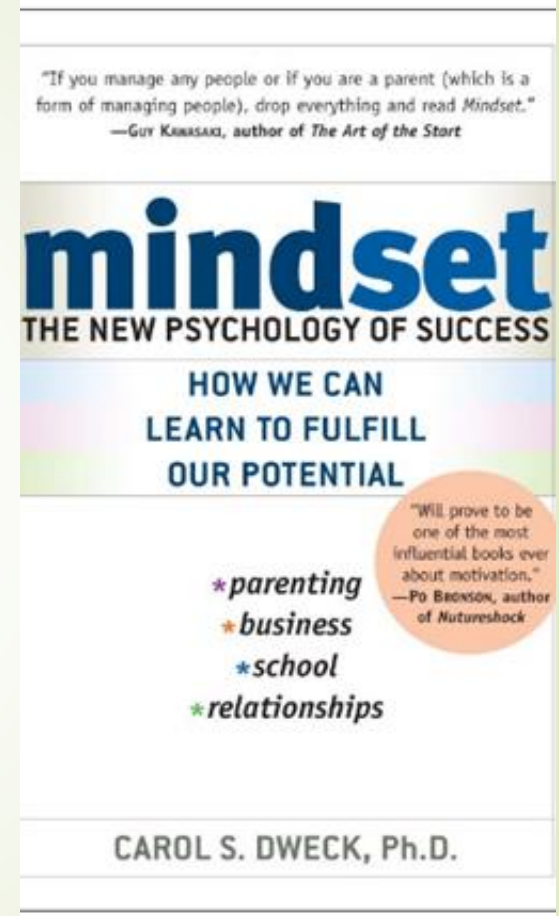
- 1 Reading and expressing emotions
- 2 Taking the perspectives of others
- 3 Caring by connecting to others
- 4 Working with interpersonal and group differences
- 5 Preventing social bias
- 6 Generating interpretations and options
- 7 Identifying the consequences of actions and options.

(Narvaez 2001, Tirri & Nokelainen 2011)



Growth Mindset for Purposeful Teaching

- ▶ Purposeful teaching is possible with hard work and effort
- ▶ Teachers need failures in teaching to learn how to be purposeful and how to teach purpose
- ▶ The goal is to guide students to purposeful life
- ▶ What can I do to find more meaning in my teaching for the years to come?



Tirri, K. (Ed.) 2008.
Educating Moral
Sensibilities in
Urban Schools.
Sense Publishers:
Rotterdam/Taipei.

MORAL DEVELOPMENT AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Educating Moral Sensibilities in Urban Schools

Kirsi Tirri (Ed.)



Kirsi Tirri and
Petri
Nokelainen
(2011)





Kirsi Tirri
and Elina
Kuusisto
(2019)

*Thank
you*

