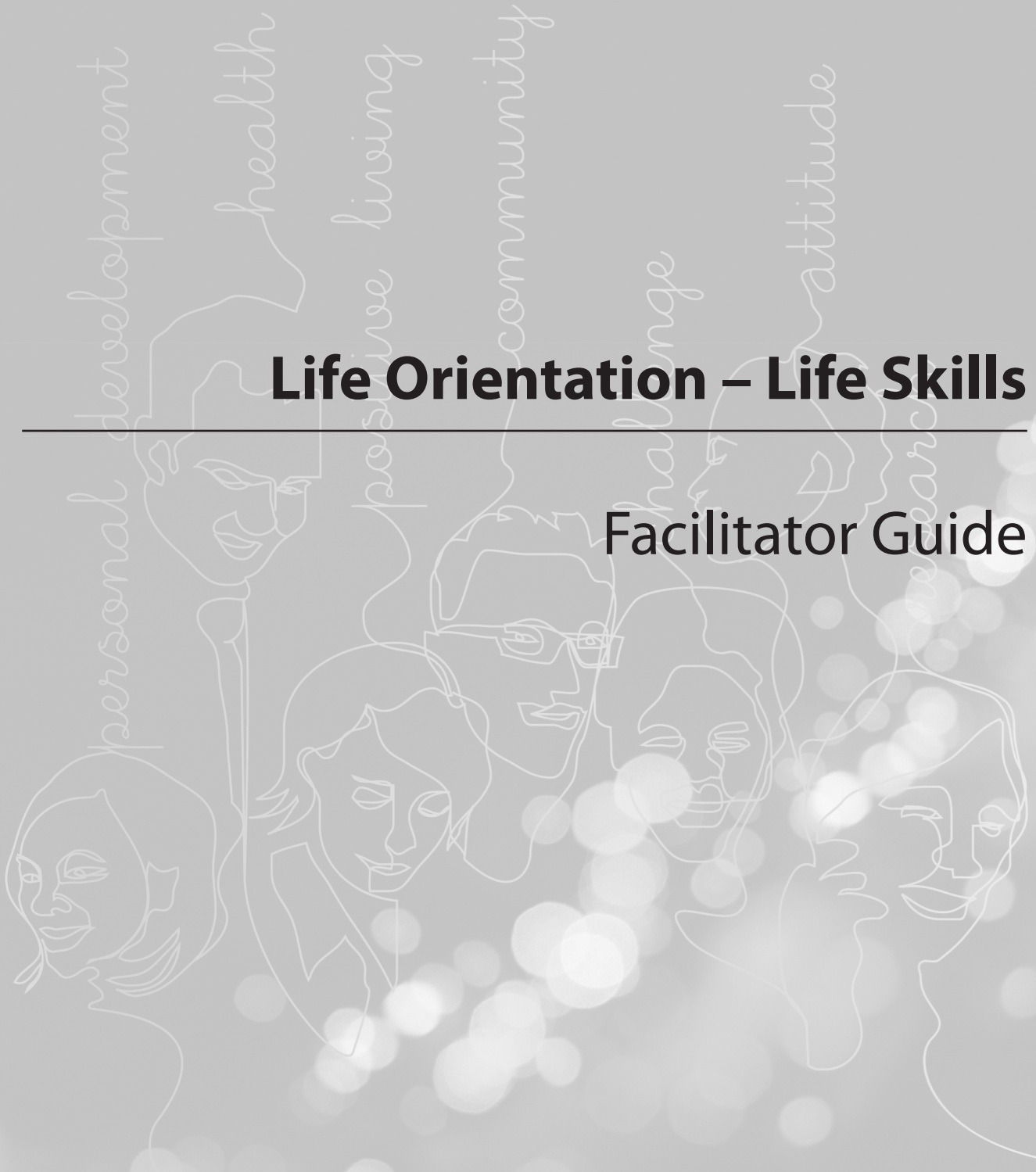


# **Life Orientation – Life Skills**

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## **Facilitator Guide**



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## Introduction

You have taken a journey with us since Level 2 and we sincerely hope that your discoveries have been insightful and enriching. The purpose of Life Orientation is to help the student to be fully prepared and skilled to deal successfully with life – to become a well-adjusted individual who contributes to his/her community and who understands the complexities of modern day living. You should have developed and instilled in your students the desire to embrace every opportunity to learn and experience life. We have tried to assist you with additional notes in every guide to turn the Life Orientation learning experience into a real life experience and an opportunity to grow and learn. This life-long journey of learning and teaching is a rewarding one for both the learners and yourself if you embrace it with passion and dedication!

The main focus areas are: Personal Development, Health and Wellness, Research Skills and Creative Problem Solving.

May you complete this final journey successfully and never forget to have fun and joy while teaching!!!

*The Authors*

## How to use this Guide

*It is important that you remember that that the material presented here is by no means prescriptive and is only a recommendation or suggestion.* Ensure that you have a thorough understanding of the rationale for Life Orientation and the methodology that is outcomes-based. Note: In Outcomes-based Education your starting point is the *assessment* of the outcomes to be facilitated.

The second part of the Guide focuses on the four modules which correspond with the 4 Topics in the Subject Guidelines. This part consists of the following:

- A table with the *Subject Outcomes, Assessment Standards and Learning Outcomes*
- *Tips for the Facilitator* which explain what your key focus for learning in the *Module* should be.
- A *Mapping Plan for Facilitation* which guides you in planning your facilitation. This is not your lesson plan.
- *Guidelines for Activities* which should assist you in facilitating the activities. Remember that in the *Student Guide* there are two kinds of activities: Learning activities (*Discover and Learn*) and Assessment activities (*Assessment Activity*). This does not imply that for continuous assessment you cannot use the Discover and Learn activities. Again, this is a suggestion and does not exclude the development of your own CASS (Continuous Assessment). You should utilise every opportunity to facilitate and record learning.
- The *Module Assessment* comprises of a portfolio activity and a knowledge test (ready to be photocopied) – both these are summative assessments.
- A *Bibliography and Websites* that can be a starting point towards building your own resource database for your learning environment.

As authors we wish you exciting lesson hours while using this publication. Life Orientation is not only vital for your students' and your own development, but it should also be mountains of fun!

## Notes for the Facilitator

### Spiritual and Moral Development

#### Introduction

Now more than ever our society should be much more concerned about the moral and spiritual development of our youth. Educators, where possible in conjunction with parents, can make a distinctive contribution through the process of education to provide foundations for the responsibilities of adult life.

#### Spiritual development

The potential for spiritual development is open to everyone and is not confined to the development of religious beliefs or conversion to a particular faith. The term needs to be seen as something fundamental in the human condition which is not necessarily experienced through the physical senses or expressed through everyday language. Spirituality has to do with relationships with others and, for believers, with God. It has to do with the search for identity and our responses to challenging experiences such as death, suffering, beauty and encounters with good and bad. It has to do with the search for the meaning and purpose of life and for the values by which we live. There are many aspects to spiritual development:

- Beliefs: The development of personal beliefs, including religious beliefs; an appreciation that people have individual and shared beliefs on which they base their lives; a developing understanding of how beliefs contribute to personal identity.
- A sense of awe, wonder and mystery: Being inspired by the natural world, mystery and human achievement.
- Search for meaning and purpose: Asking “why me?” at times of hardship or suffering; reflecting on the purpose and meaning of life; responding to the challenging aspects of life.
- Self-knowledge: An awareness of oneself in terms of thoughts, feelings, emotions, responsibilities and experiences; a growing understanding and acceptance of individual identity; the development of self-respect.
- Relationships: Recognising and valuing the worth of each individual; developing a sense of community; the ability to build relationships with others.
- Creativity: Expressing one’s innermost thoughts and feelings through, for example, art, music, literature and crafts; exercising imagination, inspiration, intuition and insight.
- Feelings and emotions: The feelings of being moved by beauty or kindness; hurt by injustice or aggression; a growing awareness of when it is important to control emotions and feelings and how to learn to use such feelings as a source of growth.

Most people can relate to these concepts but they differ in their interpretation of them and in the meaning they ascribe to them.

#### Spiritual development and education

Spiritual development is an important element in a child’s education and fundamental to others areas of learning. They need curiosity, the need to ask questions, and develop their imagination, intuition and insight to motivate them to learn. They need self-understanding and the ability to understand others so that they can co-exist in a social environment. They need to be moved by feelings of awe and wonder at the beauty of the world in which we live or the power of artists, musicians and writers to avoid living in a spiritual and cultural desert.

The steps to spiritual development might include:

- recognising the existence of others as independent from oneself;
- becoming aware of and reflecting on experience;
- questioning and exploring the meaning of experience;
- understanding and evaluating a range of possible responses and interpretations;
- developing personal views and insights;
- applying the insights gained with increasing degrees of perception in relation to one's own life.

### **Moral development**

Moral development can not be defined by one simple statement. It involves several elements:

- The will to behave morally as a point of principle: This attitude is fundamental to moral development
- Knowledge of the codes and conventions of conduct agreed upon by society: both non-statutory and those prescribed by law.
- Knowledge and understanding of the criteria put forward as a basis for making responsible judgements on moral issues.
- The ability to make judgements on moral issues: as issues arise, apply moral insights, principles and reasoning.

A moral issue is one which involves people in making decisions on the basis of what is right and wrong. The decision will often require actions which, it is hoped, will promote the good and minimise evil. Children need to be introduced to what is wrong and what is right from a young age so that moral behaviour becomes an instinctive habit. Personal morality combines the beliefs and values of individuals, those of the social, cultural and religious groups to which they belong and the laws and customs of wider society. Educational institutions should uphold those values which contain moral absolutes. (Almost "practise what you preach")

Institutional values should include:

- telling the truth;
- keeping promises;
- respecting the rights and property of others;
- acting considerately towards others;
- helping those less fortunate and weaker than oneself;
- taking personal responsibility for one's actions;
- self-discipline.

Institutional values should reject:

- bullying
- cheating
- deceit
- cruelty
- irresponsibility
- dishonesty.

Young people will always question why things are the way they are and will test the boundaries. However, there should be some form of value system which provides help and support to enable them to reach their own judgements. Young people are part of a society which permits, even if it does not promote, a range of behaviours which are considered wrong by some of its members.

Examples are drinking alcohol, smoking, abortion etc. Students have to make up their own minds on these and other issues, some of which will arise as part of the curriculum and others as a result of immediate events. The task of the educator is to furnish the student with the knowledge and the ability to question and reason. They should be able to develop their own value systems and make responsible decisions on such matters.

### **Moral development in an educational context**

Moral development in educational institutions builds on the students' experience at home. Institutions should insist that students behave in an acceptable manner towards staff and towards each other. They need to know that there are rules which are acceptable to a wide range of individuals and that infringing these rules will result in consequences. They should understand why rules are important and should follow them from conviction rather than fear of getting into trouble.

Morally educated students should be able to:

- distinguish between right and wrong
- articulate their own values and attitudes
- take responsibility for their own actions
- recognise the moral dimensions to situations
- understand the long and short term consequences of their actions for themselves and others
- develop a set of socially acceptable values and principles and a set of guidelines to govern their own behaviour
- recognise that their values and attitudes may have to change over time
- behave consistently in accordance with their principles.

### **Conclusion**

The spiritual and moral development of students implies the need for a variety of learning experiences which provide the opportunity for them to:

- discuss matters of personal concern
- develop relationships with adults and peers
- develop a sense of belonging to a community
- be challenged by exploring the beliefs and values of others while deepening their knowledge and understanding of their own values and beliefs
- discuss religious and philosophical questions
- understand why people reach certain decisions on spiritual and moral issues and how those decisions affect their lives
- experience what is aesthetically challenging
- experience silence and reflection.

### **Challenging questions for the lecturer to ask him/herself and even colleagues:**

- How would you describe the ethos of your institution? Do you think it should change and how?
- Where in the curriculum are there opportunities for moral and spiritual development?
- How does your institution take into account the religious background of students?
- How does your institution define and publicise its core values? If not, how can this be changed?
- What are the strategies for answering students' questions which might have spiritual and moral implications?
- How can staff involve parents in these issues?



**Additional issues which may confront a Life Orientation lecturer:**

As a Life Orientation lecturer you are possibly in a position where you get to know students on a different level than lecturers in other subjects. Other lecturers may even see you as someone who should have answers to some of their questions. Here are some tips on common issues:

**Tips on how to win an adolescent's trust:**

1. When a student begins to challenge your knowledge and thwart all pressure to behave, you should recognise that you are now dealing with an adolescent. They are undergoing tremendous biological changes.
2. Adolescents like to be given information, explanation and justification for everything they are asked to do. By accommodating this need, you build rapport with them.
3. Always be consistent. Let them know the consequences of their behaviour. This will give them some control over the outcomes of choices. E.g. if you do not hand in an assignment on time, you will get no marks.
4. Try and listen to them. Resist the urge always to give answers and know better.
5. Be honest. Be fair. Be patient. Be a wholesome role model.
6. Apologise if you have treated them wrongly or unfairly. This will teach them something about taking responsibility for their own actions.
7. If you do not know the answers, admit it and offer to look up the information and get back to them. This will earn you their respect.
8. Show an interest in what interests them. Try and remember names of top bands or sport stars. This will open the door for more communication.
9. Give them room to make their own mistakes. They learn more by self-correction. Failure can strengthen them.
10. Always be truthful and do not make promises you cannot keep. This will make them feel valued.

**Remember**

- Tone of voice has impact. Impatience, anger, frustration and disappointment will be communicated automatically.
- Use humour gently, never mock or embarrass a sensitive developing teen.
- Lead with positive, complimentary comment, refraining from criticism as much as possible.

**Suicide warning signs in teenagers:**

An alarming number of teenagers attempt to or actually do commit suicide.

Keep your eyes and ears open for the following signs:

- Talking or joking about committing suicide.
- Saying things like "I would be better off dead" or "there is no way out".
- Speaking positively about or romanticising death.
- Writing stories or poems about death, dying and suicide.
- Engaging in reckless behaviour.
- Giving away prized possessions.

**Signs and symptoms of teen depression:**

Depression in teens can look very different from that in adults. The following symptoms are fairly common:

- Irritable or angry mood: Irritability rather than sadness, is often the predominant mood in depressed teens. A depressed teen may be grumpy, hostile, easily frustrated, or prone to angry outbursts.
- Unexplained aches or pains: Depressed teens often complain about physical ailments such as headaches or stomach aches.

- Extreme sensitivity to criticism: Depressed teens are plagued by feelings of worthlessness, making them extremely vulnerable to criticism, rejection and failure. This is a problem for “over-achievers.”
- Withdrawing from some, but not all people: While adults tend to isolate themselves, depressed teenagers maintain at least some friendships. However, teens with depression may socialise less than previously, pull away from their parents or start hanging out with a different crowd.

**Untreated depression can lead to:**

- Problems at school such as poor attendance or a drop in marks
- Running away
- Substance abuse such as alcohol and drugs in an attempt to “self-medicate”
- Low self-esteem – feelings of ugliness, shame, failure or unworthiness
- Eating disorders such as anorexia, bulimia or yo-yo dieting
- Internet addiction – excessive computer use
- Self-injury like cutting or burning themselves

## **Bibliography**

**Publications:**

1. *School curriculum and assessment authority*. 1995. London, Great Britain.

Websites to consult:

[www.healthline.com](http://www.healthline.com)

[www.helpguide.org](http://www.helpguide.org)

[www.wikihow.com](http://www.wikihow.com)