What is Relational Pedagogy and why?

Relational Pedagogy is curious, creative, critical, communal and compassionate enquiry and practices based on the science and humane-ness of relationships with all of Nature and the human family, whose purpose is to build an egalitarian Nonviolent Relational Peace.

Relational Pedagogy developed in Afghanistan out of multiple crises. The Afghan education system that’s ‘copied’ from today’s global mainstream pedagogies is not able to resolve the many pressing challenges of Afghans or humanity. We’re all facing the life-threatening crises of climate change, socio-economic inequalities and violence with its nuclear-risk wars. Mainstream pedagogies were established in previous epochs before humanity’s relational consciousness was sufficiently developed and have been based primarily on ‘things’ which the bronze, iron, industrial, information and digital ages have been manufacturing, ‘things’ like money, weapons, and sophisticated gadgets. Our pursuit and addiction to these ‘things’ under the ‘old’ systems have distracted us from developing our relational consciousness of a borderfree, shared existence with Nature and humanity, and has driven us to crises which threaten our very survival and well-being.

Even in Albert Einstein’s time, he had said that it had “become appallingly obvious that our technology has exceeded our humanity”. Fresh approaches to learning and education are urgently needed, approaches that can help us, especially new and future generations, to nurture and learn from relationships with everyone and everything.
Nonviolent Relational Peace of egalitarian relationships and alternatives

#Earth! GEN (Green, Equal and Nonviolent) world without war

Relational Pedagogy

Learning by Relating

Human Relational Development

Nature’s Learning Circles – permaculture

Relational Learning Circles

Relating with all of Nature and the human family

Curious
Creative
Critical
Communal
Compassionate

Relating everyone and everything to one another: ‘connecting the dots’

Relational Science, Skills, Analysis and Application

Human Relations Project 2018
1. Relational Pedagogy is education that builds egalitarian Nonviolent Relational Peace, helping to care for all of Nature and humanity.

Today’s education does not include nonviolent peace education in its curriculum and is hierarchical, elitist, for-profit and militarized, with a purpose that is primarily economic-driven. It therefore maintains elitist socio-economic, political and military violence and war, causing harm to all of Nature and humanity.
2. Relational Pedagogy is curious, critical (evidence-based), creative (imaginative), communal and compassionate education in which student-teachers learn to enquire and think scientifically & relationally. They learn practical aspects of Relational Science, Relational Skills and Relational Analysis and Application.

In today's education, students are overloaded with impractical information that is not relevant to their daily lives and problems. They memorize this information for standardized tests & exams, with undue focus on math, the physical sciences and language literacy, while neglecting other equally important aspects of learning. As such, some unquestioningly & 'obediently' accept & get co-opted into today's non-evidence-based, unequal and violent status quo systems, eventually maintaining them.
3. Relational Pedagogy is learning by relating directly and personally with all, including with self, community, the human family, Nature (living and non-living things), Mother Earth, the cosmos and the universe. Through Relational Learning Circles and Nature’s Learning Circles, student-teachers learn from others and from Nature. These become their ‘live books’ in a large, inter-related and inter-dependent family.

Today’s education is disconnected from direct, personal relationships with all, leading to the dehumanization, demonization and exploitation of ‘the other’ as well as the loss of relational, empathetic, emotional and psychosocial skills. Students see themselves merely as individual economic machines & don’t recognize the inter-related qualities, needs and values shared by all.
4. Student-teachers ‘connect all the dots’ of knowledge, people and life. They learn how everyone and everything in any particular subject matter of study is connected with everyone and everything else. Upon analysis and with a sense of humane responsibility for the well-being of all, student-teachers apply nonviolent solutions which benefit all and harm none.

Today’s education is one in which students don’t ‘connect all the dots’ nor how everyone and everything can complement, cooperate with or hurt one another. Therefore, they solve problems in isolation without considering all angles, elements, root causes & effects and aren’t sufficiently working together across all causes and borders. Many don’t acquire a sense of humane responsibility for the well-being of all.
Nonviolent Relational Peace

Relational Pedagogy builds Nonviolent Relational Peace.

Nonviolent Relational Peace is founded on love. It is egalitarian, according equal value to all of life, Nature and the human family.

The individual person, all members of the human family, all of Nature (living and non-living things, the Earth, the cosmos and universe) and all societal structures and services (environmental, economic, sociopolitical, justice, security, education, healthcare, cultural and other societal services and structures) enjoy green, equal and nonviolent relationships with one another, protecting and caring for the Earth, ourselves and future generations, and abolishing war.

All these elements are directly or indirectly related and connected to one another in a large interdependent community, which cosmologists and biologists understand as the ‘tree of energy and life’. Their actions and inactions affect one another. When any one of these elements is exploitative and violent, Nonviolent Relational Peace is disrupted.

Nonviolent Relational Peace includes work to mitigate today’s inter-connected global crises of global warming, inequalities and violence with its nuclear-risk wars. All the different individual and community efforts, causes and struggles to build a better world are directly or indirectly related to one another and share common root problems. There is an urgent need for all these efforts to relate and connect with one another.

Of priority, Relational Pedagogy and its student-teachers seek to practise a nonviolent, non-military economy in which the human family equitably and justly meets the basic needs of all of Nature and humanity.
Methodology and Curriculum of Relational Pedagogy

1. Relational Learning Circles and Nature’s Learning Circles

A key method of learning in Relational Pedagogy are Relational Learning Circle and Nature’s Learning Circles. In Relational Learning Circles, student-teachers learn from other student-teachers in the same or different locations across the world by relating with them in person or via online conversations. Student-teachers also participate in Nature’s Learning Circles by spending an hour observing, studying, noting questions and working cooperatively with Mother Nature and Mother Earth. All members of the human family as well as Mother Nature become the student-teachers’ ‘live’ books (more than 7 billion ‘live’ books).

2. Relational Learning

Student-teachers learn to enquire and think scientifically and relationally by being curious, critical (evidence-based), creative (imaginative), communal and compassionate.

3. Relational Sciences

In a letter to the New York Times in 1945, Albert Einstein quoted the words of ex-U.S. President Franklin Roosevelt: “We are faced with the pre-eminent fact that if civilization is to survive, we must cultivate the science of human relationships - the ability of all peoples, of all kinds, to live together, in the same world at peace.”

4. Relational Skills (Relational Literacy and Intelligence)

Skills that are needed to build green, equal and nonviolent relationships and societal structures include: Organic Farming/Permaculture/Agro-ecology Skills, Renewable Energy Skills, Social/relationship/networking/people skills, Psychological and emotional skills including trauma healing skills, Listening and Empathy Skills, Sharing skills, Consensus building/Cooperative/Participatory Community Skills, Social Work Skills, Basic Skills in Social Economy and Worker Cooperatives, Scientific and Relational Enquiry Skills, Nonviolent Action Skills, Nonviolent Communication Skills, Nonviolent Conflict Resolution Skills, Mediation and Reconciliation Skills, Restorative Justice Skills, Basic Music and Arts Skills, Play/Sports skills

5. Relational Analysis & Application

Step 1: List as many ‘root’ questions around the subject matter, paying attention to questions about relationships with the Earth, the Natural World, the self and the human family.

Step 2: Note short, immediately-available answers

Step 3: Find and research for evidence-based answers

Step 4: Understand the compiled information and knowledge, and grasp the connections and relationships

Step 5: Brainstorm and make lists of possible personal and societal nonviolent applications and solutions.

Step 6: Arrange for and participate in a Relational Learning Circle to relate and learn from others.

6. Relational Pedagogy in Mainstream Curriculum

Relational Pedagogy focuses on practical knowledge that is related, relevant or useful to every-day life and realities, cutting down on the number of subjects and amount of information student-teachers use and de-emphasizing memory work. There is no standardized testing and no ranking. Students and teachers are considered learners and teachers. It is a non-profit method. Finland’s education phenomenon may be a good mainstream case study.

- Languages – focus on communicating, relating with, understanding and helping others
- Physical and natural sciences – focus on concepts and on interacting with ‘every-day’ natural & material world
- Math - basic mathematics, algebra, fractions and geometry that’s related to every-day life is taught. Higher math is not included. Economic literacy is included.
- Values and ethics, music, arts, humanities and sports is valued.
1. We have a relational consciousness based on increasing scientific evidence that we’re connected to everyone and to everything. As relational beings in a relational age, we ‘connect all the dots’ and learn through relationships.

2. We value relationships & universal virtues, not Money or Power.

3. We value scientific and relational enquiry.

4. We learn to nurture Nonviolent Relational Peace with all.

5. We learn to build a critical mass of green, equal & nonviolent relationships and societal structures.

6. We have a humane responsibility for the well-being of everyone and everything.