Michele Borba

- Former teacher and Recipient of the National Educator Award
- Educational consultant who has presented keynotes and workshops on moral education and other topics
- Been on The Today Show, The View, The Early Show, and MSNBC among others
- Articles published in Parents, Redbook, and Family Circle
- Author of 21 books including Building Moral Intelligence, Parents Do Make A Difference and Nobody Likes Me, Everybody Hates Me: The Top 25 Friendship Problems and How to Solve Them
Moral Intelligence

Borba’s approach to helping students grow in moral intelligence is based on 3 concepts:
1. The ability to distinguish right and wrong
2. The establishment and maintenance of strong ethical beliefs
3. Willingness to act on these beliefs in an honorable way

Increase in moral intelligence = self direction and improved classroom behavior
Seven Essential Virtues

Borba believes moral intelligence consists of 7 essential virtues

- Empathy
- Conscience
- Self-control
- Respect
- Kindness
- Tolerance
- Fairness
9 Reasons for Building Moral Intelligence

1. Good character - foundation to good character consists of the 7 virtues. These virtues form students’ character and are the principles that guide their behavior.

2. Ability to think and act appropriately - moral intelligence teaches the specific moral habits that help students think and conduct themselves ethically.
9 Reasons for Building Moral Intelligence

3. Protection against “toxic” influences in society- cruelty, drugs, and self-centeredness are such a big part of society that it is impossible to shield students from them.

Moral IQ = Life Compass

4. Crucial life skills- Moral IQ incorporates skills students need…
5. Good Citizens—the most important measure of a nation is the character of its people—
the 7 virtues provide the foundation for good citizenship and responsible living.

6. Resistance to Temptation—moral intelligence allows students to resist the appeal of hazardous behavior such as dishonesty and gaining an unfair advantage.
9 Reasons for Building Moral Intelligence

7. Prevention of violence and cruelty - Moral intelligence will protect you from violence and cruelty.

8. Good behavior - Moral IQ results in decency, caring, and respect.

9. Shaping moral destinies - Moral growth is an ongoing, developmental process. Beliefs and habits promote the ethical foundations of behavior.
Fostering Moral Intelligence

- Borba believes the schools offer the best venue for developing sound character in the young.
- Moral intelligence grows as improvements are made in students’ character traits.
- Since character traits are learned, they can be taught.
Fostering Moral Intelligence

- Accentuate a Character Trait or Virtue
- Tell the Meaning and the Value of the Trait
- Teach What the Trait Looks and Sounds Like
- Provide Frequent Opportunities to Practice the Moral Habits of the Trait
- Provide Effective Feedback
Fostering Pro-social Behavior

- As students conduct themselves in accordance with the essential virtues of moral intelligence, they naturally display good manners and improved behavior.
- Believes there are 85 important manners kids should learn. Some are:
  - Polite words (please, thank you, excuse me)
  - Meeting & Greeting (smile, shake hands)
  - Sports Manners (share equipment, play by the rules)
The Relation of Moral Intelligence to Classroom Discipline

- Successful discipline depends on creating a moral learning community in the classroom.
- Teacher connects with students, shows care for them, and models essential character traits.
- Emphasizes that teachers today cannot assume students know how to behave properly.
- Teacher must target the specific behaviors that damage respectful classrooms and student character and replace it with acceptable behavior.
- Respond, Review, Reflect, Make Right.
Empathy

- Being able to relate to the feelings of others
- Without empathy, moral intelligence cannot develop fully
- Societal conditions hinder the development of empathy
- Teacher should counteract negative influences
- Empathetic People often say things such as:
  - “You look upset”, “I think I understand how you must feel”, and “I’m happy for you”
Conscience

- Ability to comprehend the right or wrong of one’s actions
- Crisis of conscience evident from rise in youth violence, peer cruelty, stealing, cheating, substance abuse, and sexual promiscuity
- Teachers can help reverse the decline in public and individual conscience
- People with a conscience often say things such as:
  - “You can count on me”, “This isn’t right, let’s do something else”, and “I’m sorry. It was my fault.”
Self-Control

- Lack of self-control evident in today’s society
- Conditions that can promote growth in self-control:
  - Adults giving priority to and modeling self-control
  - Encouraging students to be leaders and do the right thing vs. “following”
  - Control emotions and “stop, think, act right”