



## **Prapapat Niyom**

Associate Professor, Founder and Licensee of Roong Aroon School,  
President of Arsom Silp Institute of the Arts,  
Bangkok, Thailand.



After graduated the Master of Architecture from the University of Pennsylvania, in Philadelphia, 1976, Prapapat has teaching at the Architecture School, Chulalongkorn University for almost 20 years and three years later, serving as a Deputy Governor of Bangkok (City Planning, Building and Infrastructure, Community Development and Waste Management) during the year 1996-1998. Assoc. Prof. Prapapat Niyom founded the Roong Aroon School in 1997 and Arsom Silp Institute of the Arts in 2006, under the support of the Roong Aroon School Foundation. In the year 2011 she was given the Honorary Doctor in Education for local development from Rajapat Phranakorn University, Bangkok. In 2014 she was posted to be a member of the National Reform Council, focused on the educational reform agenda. During those few years she was an advisor to the Minister of Education. In this year 2019 she was given the encouragement of Education for Peace Award 2019, Thailand from The Foundation for Education for Peace.

Basing on Buddhist principles, she continuously paved the way for the Holistic Education during the 20 years of direct experiences in both Roong Aroon School (K-12) and Arsom Silp Institute of the Arts (3 higher education programs of study: Holistic Education, Architecture for community and environmental development and Social Entrepreneur). The value oriented curriculum was created by applying Buddhist principles and concept of learning such as "(human) Life is Learning or Learning is Life" from Buddha Dharma (Phra Bhramagunaporn, P.A. Payutto) into the education achievement goals as well as its mindful learning process.

Thus, Roong Aroon school and Arsom Silp Institute represented the unique characteristic of holistic learning approach. All round dimensions of learning have been identified such as from the inner self actualization to the proper relationship with the others and the world. Many different learning methodology or innovative patterns of learning are able to be applied in the school/college platforms as long as they focussing or resulting on the human core values development.

Prapapat herself continuously practices mindful meditation and regularly delivers the mindfulness training activities to both inside and outside school personals. She initiated Holistic learning culture through the Community of Practices, wise reflection practices, contemplative arts, zero-waste management, green environmental caring, authentic self-preparing food, social voluntary services, people mapping, community photo essay, sociable architect and designer and etc..

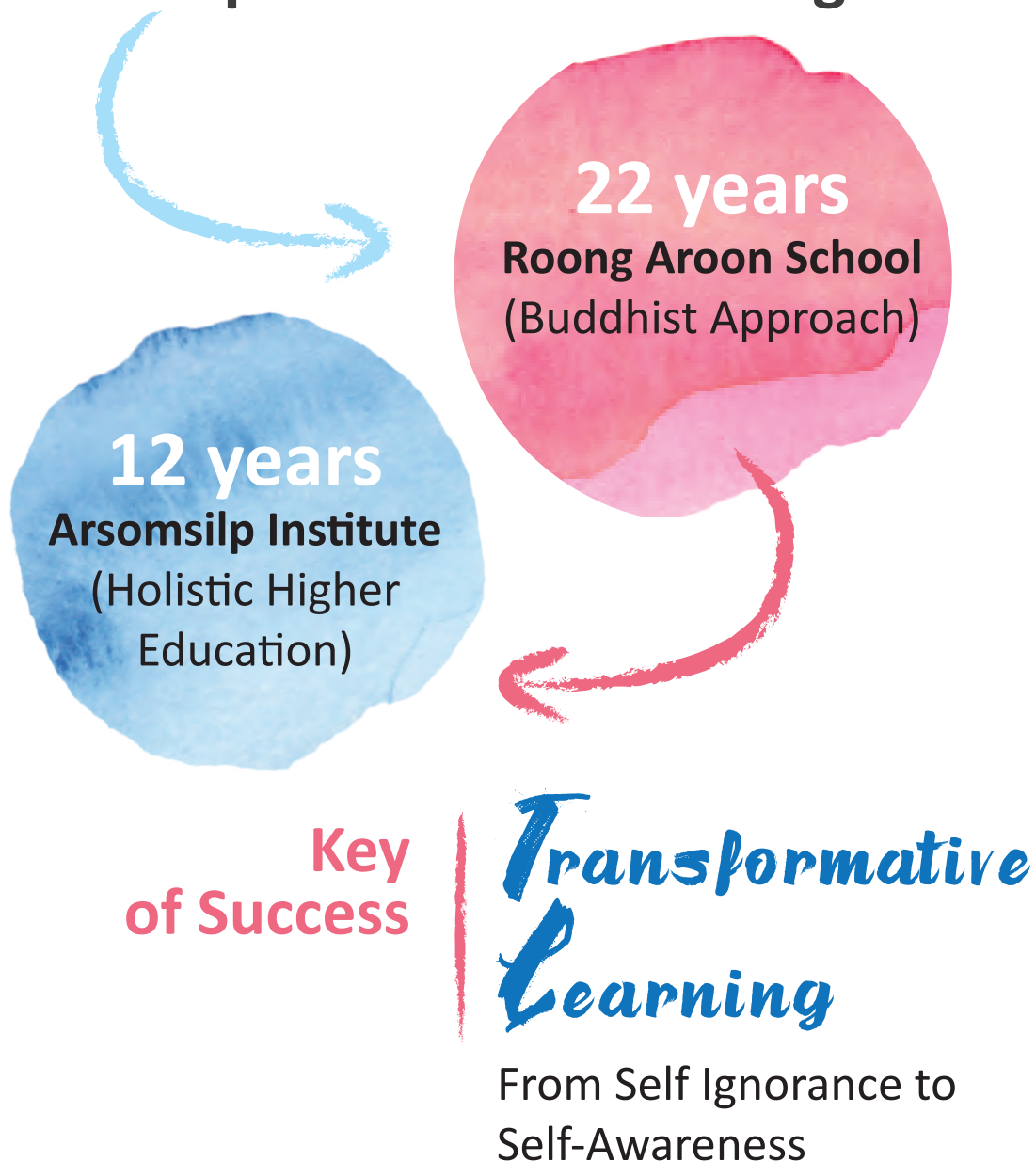
Besides the value oriented curriculum, she also created the template for value oriented lesson plan design from kindergarten to high school/college in order to ease the teachers to organize the more inspiring classroom with active learning visibility in each individual student. The "Head-Hand-Heart" spirit of learning are most possible for students to bring out their utmost capacities and potentialities to learn to reach their achievements. This expertise was applied to several training courses served for many different practitioners and Holistic learning networks such as the coaching team for public Buddhist approach schools, the monk teachers and their coaches, whole school development in Papua New Guinea, and etc..

According to the distinguished learning culture of Roong Aroon and Arsomsilp basing on Gallayanamitre (right guidance) and the Yonisomanasikara (wise reflection), nowadays, ASI and RAS are well known as the Holistic teacher training academy, social service workers and social architects whose self-actualization can be revitalized wisely.



# Holistic Education

Experiences of Practicing





## Current Results & Functions

- 1. Supporting Self-Awareness Behavior Building**  
(by practicing mindfulness meditation)
- 2. Creating Galayanamitre Learning Community**  
(by collaborating and serving the common goal of human value development)
- 3. Engaging and Networking**  
(with several varieties of local and global partners)
- 4. Applying of Transformative Learning through Training**  
(to different workshops on demand)

# Application of Transformative Training (Tangible processes and practices)

Mindfulness Meditation  
Fundamental, Typical practices  
For Nurturing Body and Mind Total Awareness

Application

## Basic Training Activities

- Wise Reflection
- Contemplative Arts
- Nature Quest
- Pilgrims through villages
- People & Community Mapping
- Creative Learning Space Photo Essay
- Zero – waste Management
- Group Reflection
- 4 – side mirror (Character Reflection)
- Fish Bowl Reflection

# Application of Transformative Training (Tangible processes and practices)

Mindfulness Meditation  
Fundamental, Typical practices  
For Nurturing Body and Mind Total Awareness

Application

## On Demand Training Activities

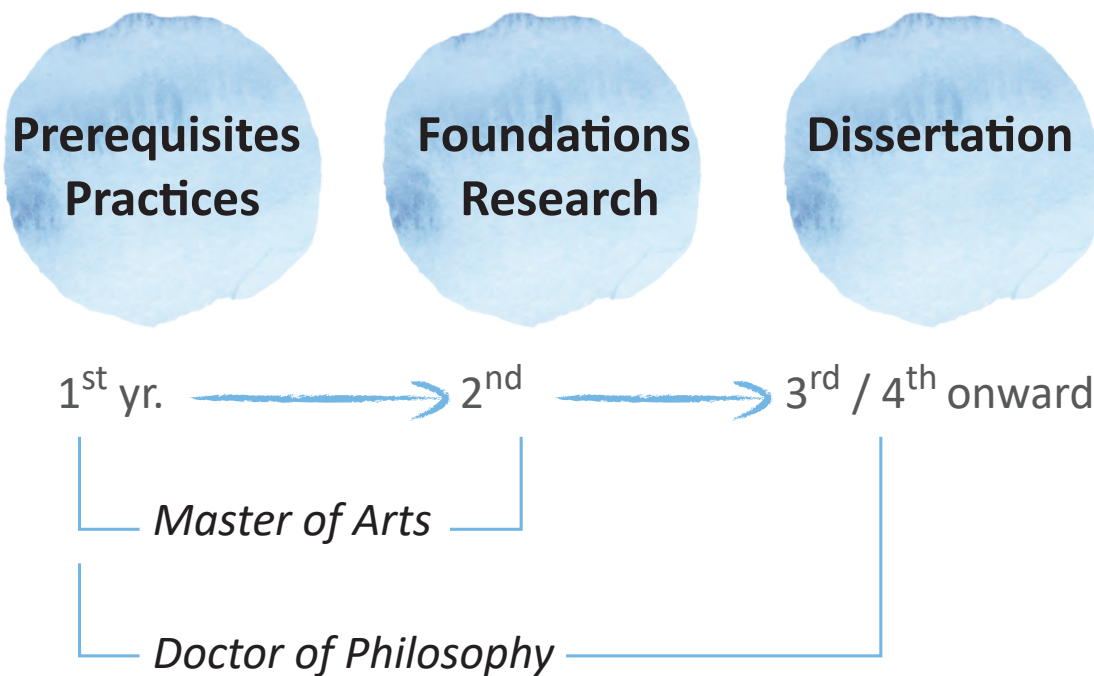
**Community & Others** + **School/Institution**  
**Whole School Transform**

### Inspiring Change Agents

- Integrated Old-Town Development
- Integrated Natural Resource Development and Conservation
- Innovative Area-based Education (75 schools / 2 provinces)
- Partnership Schools (38 schools across country)
- Monk Teacher Training (600 monks 45 core coaches PLC on-line system)
- Early Childhood Center Development
- School Directors = Super Coach
- Teachers – Learning Experts
- Value Oriented Curriculum and Lesson Plan Design
- Active Learning Classroom
- Creative Learning Space
- Phenomenon Integrated Project
- Formative Assessment
- Classroom Reflection to Change
- Galayanamitre Learning Community

# Global Online/Offline Collaborations

Transformative Learning  
International Doctoral Program: Individual Study  
in Total Self Awareness



# **Wise Reflection; understanding the interconnectedness and value-based learning in schooling system.**

by Associate Professor Prapapat Niyom,

President of Arsom Silp Institute of the Arts, Bangkok, Thailand.

March, 2018.

## **Introduction**

Nowadays, many neuroscience studies have been explaining and supporting the understanding of how the human brain learns. Subsequently, the development of better learning processes or innovations have been created day by day. The closer the learning method was focused, the more the inner core perception and reflection were discovered. Likewise, the right mindfulness practice and its application into the school learning and teaching system has been developing more and more, ranging from being an individual activity to the value integrated subject learning. In 1997 Roong Aroon School in Bangkok, Thailand was founded on the basis of Buddhist Principles. It aimed to nurture and cultivate the utmost learning capacities for young people from Kindergarten to grade 12, to develop their inner wise reflection. Actually, the wise reflection practicing in RAS was applied from the Yonisomanasikara interpreted by Somdej Phra Buddhagosacariya, P.A. Prayudhto, in his book *Buddhadhamma*, 1998, which revealed how important the inner positive factor to learning process impacts one's utmost learning achievement. This article will describe details of the definition, function and methodology of Yonisomanasikara or wise reflection, the application of it into the school pedagogy and evaluation system and its results of interconnectedness among the school community; students, teachers, parents, school personnel and other school networks and will conclude with a discussion of further different applications and their beneficiaries.

### **Principles: The clarification of Yonisomanasikara or Wise Reflection,**

According to his distinguished book; Buddhadhamma 2012, (page 776 -778), Somdej Phra Buddhaghosacariya (P.A. Payutto) clearly presented the special factor or element which promotes the prompt emerging of "Panna", the highest competence / wisdom in practicing Vipassana. It is Yonisomanasikara or "Wise Reflection" (interpreted by Weismann, 2011,) which represented the inside factor to learning as the impact to the true learning state. It helps foster the right angle of matters for mindfulness observing to be properly realized. This form of dharma plays a significant role in differentiating Vipassana (recognizing the whole current situation in each observed object, ranging from emerging, changing and vanishing) and Samadha (a deep single point concentration of mind). The former needs more wise reflection than the latter in order to cultivate Panna (wisdom). He stated that "In Vipassana, Yonisomanasikara is the most important stage to cultivate wisdom. It is connecting to wisdom or a pathway to wisdom" (p 777). In other words, Yonisomanasikara bridges mindfulness to wisdom. "When mindfulness reminds of one thing to be recognized, Yonisomanasikara will move that object around in order to present different angles necessary for wisdom to contemplate and liberate" (p 778). Moreover, he synthesized and identified in the same book, p 627, the 10 chief methods for applying wise reflection which are based on one major initial function of Yonisomanasikara in eliminating greed. This is the moral cultivation stage for those who are preparing for the higher stage of Vipassana.

### ***Definition;***

The definition of Yonisomanasikara (wise reflection) was clearly explained in the Buddhadhamma (Somdet Phra Buddhaghosacariya, 2017) as follows: "The compound term yoniso- manasikara is comprised of the two words yoniso and manasikara. Yoniso is derived from the word yoni ('origin,' 'place of birth,'



‘womb’) and is translated variously as ‘cause,’ ‘root,’ ‘source,’ ‘wisdom,’ ‘method,’ ‘means,’ or ‘path.’ Manasikara is translated as ‘mental activity,’ ‘thinking,’ ‘consideration,’ ‘reflection,’ ‘directing attention,’ or ‘contemplation.’ As a compound term, yoniso-manasikara is traditionally defined as ‘skillfully directing attention.’

There were more commentaries and sub-commentaries which elaborated on this definition and explained the nuances of this term by presenting four synonyms;

~ Upaya-manasikara: ‘methodological reflection’

~ Patha-manasikara: ‘suitable reflection’

~ Karana-manasikara: ‘reasoned thinking’

~ Uppadaka-manasikara: ‘effective thinking’

It was also stated that, “These four definitions describe various attributes of the kind of thought referred to as ‘wise reflection’ (yoniso-manasikarn). At any one time, wise reflection may contain all or some of these attributes. These four definitions may be summarized in brief as ‘methodological thinking,’ ‘systematic thinking,’ ‘analytical thinking,’ or ‘thinking inducing wholesomeness.’ It is challenging, however, to come up with a single definition or translation for yoniso-manasikara. Most translations will only capture limited nuances of this term and are not comprehensive. The alternative is to give a lengthy definition, as presented above.

***Function: The significance Yoniso-manasikara or wise reflection plays is a core function within the Vipassana meditation process and its application to generate deeper thinking skills;***

According to Buddhadhamma, page 1111, "the function of wise reflection is to cut off ignorance and craving (or in an affirmative sense, it summons wisdom and wholesome qualities). Generally speaking, when a person encounters the sense

object, the process of thinking begins immediately. At this point two distinct forces vie with one another:

~ If ignorance and craving are able to seize control of thinking, the thought process will be subject to these factors and shaped by mental formations based on likes and dislikes and on pre-established concepts and ideas,

~ If wise reflection is able to bar and cut off ignorance and craving, it will lead thinking in a correct direction, resulting in a thought process free from these negative factors. The corrupted thought process is replaced by the process of knowing and seeing (Nana-Dassana) or of true knowledge and liberation (Vijja-vimutti)."

On page 1112, "Generally speaking, when ordinary, unawakened beings encounter a sense object, their thinking follows the course of ignorance and craving. They overlay the experience with their likes and dislikes, or with their pre-established ideas. This is the point at which thoughts connected to the experience or sense object begin to be shaped and molded by ignorance and craving, a process which occurs because of a person's accumulated habitual tendencies."

"Reflecting wisely entails seeing things according to the truth or according to causal relationships, not according to ignorance and craving. In other words, one sees things according to their own nature, not according to one's wishes and desires."

"Wise reflection allows people to make good use of thinking, to be a master of their own thoughts, to call upon thinking in order to solve problems and to live at ease. This is opposite to unwise reflection, which allows thoughts to manipulate and enslave the mind, to drag people into difficulty, oppress them in various ways, and take away their independence. Note also that in the course of wise reflection, mindfulness and clear comprehension are constant factors inherent in the process, because wise reflection constantly nourishes these factors."

**Methodology 1. : Ways of reflecting wisely and its application,**

On page 1113 it is written “The ways of reflecting wisely here refers to the practical application of Yonisomanasikara. Although there are many methods for applying wise reflection, technically speaking they are divided into two main categories:

1. Wise reflection aiming directly at the cutting off or elimination of ignorance
2. Wise reflection aiming at the cutting off or reduction of craving.”

**“The chief methods for applying wise reflection”** contained in the Pali Canon can be classified as follows:

1. The method of investigating causes and conditions.
2. The method of analyzing component factors.
3. The method of reflecting in accord with the three universal characteristics (Samanna-lakkhana).
4. The method of reflecting in accord with the Four Noble Truths (reflection used to solve problems).
5. The method of reflecting on the relationship between the goals (attha) and the principles (dhamma) of things.
6. The method of reflecting on the advantages of things, and on the escape from them.
7. The method of reflecting on the true and counterfeit value of things.
8. The method of reflection in order to rouse wholesome qualities.
9. The method of reflection by dwelling in the present moment.
10. The method of reflection corresponding to analytic discussion (Vibhajja-vada).”

The above definition, function and methodology 1, including the ways of reflecting wisely and the 10 categories of primary methods for applying wise reflection were elaborated on with more details and examples in this book for one to imagine how the wise reflection functions within real situations. These practical applications of Yonisomanasikara revealed the understanding of how to support one to contemplate their learning greater than being taught without engagement. Thus the holistic learning especially in the schooling system could appropriately apply these processes into their curriculum and pedagogy. Especially, teachers who practice and understand this wise reflection method should play their role of spiritual guide or companion to their students beyond the content based teaching.

## **Methodology 2. The role of wise reflection in the Path Factors of wisdom, applicable for wisdom-based education;**

Referring to another book of "Thinking methodology according to Buddhaddhamma's principle, 2006, Somdej Phra Buhhdagosacariya mentioned of Samma-ditthi or Right View, the origin of the true education which will directly lead to ones' wisdom development. Its definition is further elaborated in the Buddhaddhamma p. 1192, that "To know both wholesome and unwholesome qualities, along with their root causes." The more important was the explanation of the 2 levels of the right view. The first level of mundane right view stems from social conditioning and external transmission. Therefore, it is a result of external teachings (paratoghosa) or of social factors, and it relies on faith as a link or guiding force. The second level was explained to be the transcendent right view, the knowledge and understanding about life and the world which accords with truth: an understanding of the nature of reality; an understanding of nature. It was further stated that, "This kind of right view results from wise reflection, which is an internal factor." The next explanation is clearer; "Beneficial teachings by other people or

having virtuous friends can help only to the extent of encouraging people to apply wise reflection and to see for themselves."

In order to clearer visualize this second kind of right view, he presented in the following paragraph: "This second kind of right view, transcendent right view, refers specifically to clear knowledge relating to the stage of path and fruit, resulting in awakening.

Having said this, right view connected to path and fruit is a consequence of the same kind of right view belonging to unawakened beings. Therefore, I suggest defining the right view in this second classification that still belongs to unawakened beings as "right view conforming to transcendence."

The fruits of transcendent right view (or even right view conforming to transcendence) are much more profound than those of mundane right view, and they are able to utterly transform a person's personality; completely uprooting negative qualities in the mind.

Only this level of right view is able to eradicate the defilements (not merely suppress them), and is able to create true stability in regard to virtue. One is not swayed by the values and perceptions instilled by society because one has penetrated through the level of conventional truth and seen the underlining reality.

This subject has an important bearing on spiritual development: here, one needs to consider the proper relationship to both human society and to nature, to recognize how to properly benefit from these two sources."

At this point, Somdej Phra Buhhdagosacariya mentioned again that "Right view conforming to transcendence stems from wise reflection, which plays an essential role. Generally speaking, the behavior of an unawakened person is dictated by values instilled by society, for example to abstain from specific kinds of bad deeds and to preform specific kind of good deeds, according to model teachings, instructions, transmissions, edicts, etc. Whenever an unawakened person is not governed by such socially instilled values, they are prone to falling subject to

craving, which in today's parlance may be referred to as 'negative emotions.' Wise reflection helps to free people from the influence of social values and from the enslavement by mental defilement: it engenders a freedom of behavior guided by wisdom."

Looking carefully at the above paragraphs of methodology 2 can assist in grasping the whole picture and creating the imagination of how to apply the delicate process of nurturing wise reflection onto one's practicing experience. The direct experiences of entering and investigating into one's own view in relation to society and nature should help people to truly understand the underlining truth of all things. Thus, one important role of education, especially in the school system where our young people spend at least 12 years from their early golden ages, should be to lay the genuine foundation of learning for life as much as those basic standard subjects or content based learning. Moreover, the deeper learning attitude of wise reflection could foster their learning in most every subject matter to accomplish the most valuable benefit.

### **Application of the concept of wise reflection into the school system: holistic curriculum and pedagogy;**

According to the conventional education system, the outside factors are enormously provided and well prepared, such as the pleasant school buildings and environment along with good learning materials, well prepared learning process and crucially, the best teachers and even good support from parents. Although the provision of those outside factors are considered necessary for education, it is more and more accepted that they should dedicate to the learners' ability to learn. Moreover, new innovations for improved learning achievement have been created based on the learners' inside factors. Those well-known innovations such as Neo-humanist, Constructivism, Montessori, Rudolf Steiner's anthroposophy, the brain-based learning, problem-based learning, those 21st century learning skills and the

recent approach of the brain's executive function were concerned with how students or learners respond to the most efficient learning state. Especially due to the rapid change of digital technology, communication skills are certainly competing with the old mode of teaching and learning using one way communication.

Concerning the above trends of “learning from inside”, or self-directed learning and actualization, Roong Aroon School (RAS) has put much effort to study and understand how to nurture the wise aspect of learning from within the children’s hearts. RAS has long recognized the benefits of contemplative and self-directed learning methods that can help promote a value-laden learning process to achieve the school's main goal, the well-rounded development of students. It has been almost 20 years that the 2 principles of Gallayanamitre (virtuous friend) and Yonisomanasikara (wise reflection) have been applied and integrated into the learning system to foster the learners' wisdom and aspects of 'learning is life.'

### **Ways which RAS chose for applying Yonisomanasikara in the school;**

During the beginning years, besides the school's main goal of being a Buddhist learning community and the concept of “learning is life-life is learning,” the actual implementation of value oriented curriculum and pedagogy began from each single lesson plan design which intended to integrate the value oriented learning process into every learning activity so that the learners could achieve their inner development simultaneously and continuously.

In addition to the 4 major basic subject matters which were also required to be value oriented learning, the integrative or holistic learning unit was introduced to be the open platform for RAS teachers to design the broader learning issues so the students would be able to expose themselves in connection with the real situation of different local communities, their cultures and habitats along with natural resources and environments.

Moreover, the other body-and-mind development activities such as visual arts, music, physical exercises and even routine activities were all asked to be more contemplative than only training a technical skill . These kinds of holistic learning tasks had to be well prepared and implemented to include exercising the heart-hand-head of students while aligning with their accomplishment.

**Entry point: the school leaders, teachers and designed tools,**

'The school leaders' needed to be the virtuous friend of teachers. Obviously, the teachers needed to be trained through this preparation of value laden lesson plan focusing on exploring and interpreting the right meaning of the true value objective in each single lesson in order to offer the active learning opportunity for learners to comprehend in depth in any kind of subject matter or activity. In such an approach, the school leaders, realizing the importance of the outer factors to encourage the learners' inner eagerness to learn, could directly play their role to enhance those opportunities including the management of providing the appropriate personnel, space, time and materials. Even the classroom environments were changed to be more contemplative learning spaces. Therefore, the learners' learning habit could also be developed through Yonisomanasikara, the inner factor to the higher competence in order to be self-interacting with what they are learning.

'The teachers' should also be developed to be virtuous friends to the students. Actually, at the beginning, several experiments were applied onto the teachers' practices aimed at the final result, the students' learning competencies. During the early years of RAS, the teachers were first encouraged to "de-school and re-learn" themselves before leading the classroom. Otherwise, they could not fulfil their new role of being a coach or a learning partner to their students. During a few years of such changes, RAS developed a template called 'one-page backward designed lesson plan' in order to assist the teachers in an easier way to imagine and prepare delicate learning processes and activities which could embrace the value objective in conjunction with the knowledge and skills objectives. However, even with the



template, it was not easy for the teachers to comprehend or interpret the value from the subject matters they were dealing with. The evidence found from 'on the job training for teachers' was that they lacked skills of contemplation. Thus, in the practice of interpreting the value oriented objectives, they faced the challenge of Yonisomanasikara or skillfully directing necessary attention to the design process, ranging from investigating causes and conditions to reflecting on the true and counterfeit value of the subject matter.

This way of interpretation reflected how meaningful the lessons were to the learners or how they challenged their inspiration to learn. This task could remark the teachers' character of being a virtuous friend to their students.

### **'The designed tools' for teachers' transformative practices**

#### *Tool no.1: 'One-page lesson plan'*

Eventually, the template of the value oriented lesson plan was created to be the teachers' guideline for practicing their thinking system in order to precisely carry out value learning objectives, in addition to the knowledge and skills, and to provide the deeper learning opportunity for the students through the tangible learning activities for student participation, as well as the authentic assessment plan. Though this template helped assist teachers to more easily prepare their lesson plan, they still faced difficulty grasping the value aspect from each subject matter. It was found that their skills of interpreting value were not enough to contemplate and reflect clearly. In other words, they needed the practice of Yonisomanasikara or the skill of wise reflection.

#### *Tool no. 2: 'Integrative learning unit'*

During the time of lesson plan design, it was suggested to some RAS teachers to try out the integrative learning unit in order to provide more space and time for students to learn by doing and share collaboratively with their classmates through the project/problem-based learning, especially through the sites of authentic situations. Teachers had to more greatly develop their vision and open-minded role than previously. Since the open-ended projects were difficult to manage in advance, they had to assist their students simultaneously in the real situations of the learning platform. The teachers needed to upgrade several skills to handle their classes in order to face and solve any kind of problems which occurred unexpectedly on the field-work study and project processes which they could not anticipate in the lesson plan. The essential skills they needed were how to face incidences or problems and how to interpret them into the learning aspects suitable for the students to learn intelligently. Meanwhile, the teachers had to align those issues of 'learning opportunities' with the expected objectives stated in the lesson plan. These types of integrative learning units were the most impactful tasks for teachers to practice necessary skills, particularly contemplation and wise reflection, which resulted in the teachers' vision and attitude in holistic learning transforming and enlarging their capacity to involve the whole parts.

Both tools discussed above were reflected on the same template of value-oriented lesson plan as shown below. This template became the most effective practice for teachers' on the job training, not only within RAS but at other schools including the specified Buddhist Approach Schools.

Scope of content	Value based Objectives			Process of learning	Evaluation
A subject matter	Knowledge (Head)	Learning Skills (Hands)	Value (Heart)	Learning by Doing & Reflective Share & Learn	Process / Tools Formative Assessment & Summative Evaluation

Figure 1 : Template of Value-Oriented Lesson Plan design

*Tool no. 3: 'Share and Learn Reflective Platform'*

RAS teacher teams have put their efforts into developing several tangible value-oriented lesson plans or integrative learning units which enabled them to design the more effective and easy to organize meaningful classroom for their students. In accordance with that kind of value oriented lesson plan, the teachers had to consider the delicate learning processes closely, as well as the teachers' role of Gallayanamitre (virtuous friend) or wise guides to engage the students' eagerness to learn. Nevertheless the big question was still reflected from the teachers of where and how to start changing their mindset to either visualize the students' ability to learn or have the right view to interpret the value aspect of whatever subjects challenging enough for the students to learn independently. It was not easy to nurture this changing attitude of the teachers from their existing mindset of maintaining the teachers' teaching role to the more open mindset to include facilitating the learners' ability to acquire knowledge by themselves; to discover or have visible learning moments and to interpret the value aspects underlining each lesson. One of the tools regularly used to open their mindset and comfortably share the real livable situation and learn from each other was the open dialogue platform. The idea was inspired by RAS leader of academics, Prof. Doctor Vicharn Panich, who introduced the Before Action Review-After Action Review (BAR-AAR)

activities. This reflective platform has been scheduled into suitable working hours as chosen by each working team. Therefore, the teachers were easily able to share and learn from the teamwork through this review platform whether they were grouped by class level or subject matter. The skill of open dialogue and reflection was required and applied into this activity among teachers of sharing experiences. Consequently, teachers found themselves being more open-minded good listeners without judging others. They realized that their friends' stories reflected like a clear mirror, their own images. At the beginning of each academic term, the teachers gathered in each team to help prepare their lesson plans to be presented to the whole school teacher meeting. During the term, they held weekly meetings for AAR and BAR to monitor the situation in each class together and developed each lesson plan according to the remarked findings from their classes. This kind of platform can be referred to as a Professional Learning Community (PLC) in some aspects. However, it should be mentioned that the key to the success in implementation was the mindful dialogue and positive or creative enquiry including encouraging comments. Otherwise, the teachers would not be able to discern the real situation of their classes, especially of both the students' visible learning and the teachers' role of Gallayanamitre or virtuous friend.

*Tool no. 4: Yonisomanasikara: Application for teachers' practices*

The consequences observed from those value-oriented lesson plans, integrated learning units and the reflective share and learn platform being remarkably applied resulted in the interrelationship between teachers, students and people in the local community including those who were involved in each learning unit. That small success helped deeply inspire teachers by what they had accomplished from working hard. However, the greatest difficulty behind those guidelines still challenged the teachers' capability in interpreting the value aspects from the lessons together with the students' outcomes. This was due to their conventional understanding of the content matters being viewed merely as instant knowledge, far removed from recognizing its value. Even though they were

occasionally practicing mindfulness meditation and were able to realize their own feeling and emotion to some extent, the teachers were still easily trapped in unevolved 'like or dislike' judgment of their thinking mode.

In order to solve this difficulty, the Yonisomanasikara or wise reflection practice was initiated for opening the deeper learning and dialogue space for the teachers to touch and experience the different method of learning from the direction of inside-out by themselves. Accordingly, wise reflection practice has been primarily considered to be integrated into the teachers' special training activities to develop their inner competencies of value mindset and become effective change agents or Gallayanamitre to the students. Certainly, the application of wise reflection practice was initially implemented to promote the right view conforming to transcendence. It was clearly realized that the well trained teachers, as such Gallayanamitre, were able to inspire, encourage and nurture students' ability to contemplate what they learn by themselves so that they could engage with any lesson and be successful self-directed learners.

Since then, year by year this kind of practice has been continuously introduced onto the teachers' training program either in RAS or other schools especially for the government Buddhist Approach Schools' Coaching Team. It was found that this activity of practicing wise reflection was appropriately and widely applied to many different training courses concerning the right view of value-based education. No matter what aspects or how the process of learning innovations were selected for the classroom development, they were able to reach the true value of learning regarding the right view conforming to transcendence or wise reflection practice.

### **Application of wise reflection practice;**

The process of this activity must be through a simple, step-by-step and clear sequence. Moreover, the purposeful conditions are designed to support the easy share and learn atmospheres among the small group of fewer than 10 participants.

Firstly, the selected sense object to be shared and learned should be any single object which they are familiar with from daily life. Secondly, each participant could be allowed to interpret the character of that object through only one meaning at a time during each round of learning while the facilitator needs to write down every word presented from the participants onto the flip chart by grouping those words into a mind mapping graphic pattern. Thirdly, the most important thing is that the facilitator must check the clear understanding of each meaning among the participants and they agree to have them corrected and written down on the board. At the same time, the facilitator continues to ask questions necessary to draw the direct responses from every participant.

Referring to those 10 chief methods for applying wise reflection by Somdej Phra Buddhagosacariya, RAS adopted those categories and integrated them into this application. This group dialogue activity is organized through the pattern of three stages of applying wise reflection on one sense object by observing and providing for participants to share their learning with dialogue together. The 3 stages are as follows:

First stage: reflect the thorough identification through the fact based and element stratification of inspecting, sorting, separating and categorizing,

Second stage: reflect the interconnecting or causal relationship from the different sources or origins to comprehend to the emergence of the thing and its benefits towards ourselves.

Third stage: reflect the true-counterfeit value judgment, realization of interconnectedness and self-actualization with gratitude through identifying cause-effect and appreciating virtuous inner values.

This group learning activity is similar to a knowledge management process but differs in the source of knowledge which arises from an inner enquiry issue instead of the outer content-based issue. Moreover, it requires the simple reflection from ones' own perception on the same one sense object. Thus, the mindfulness

practice was the first basic requirement to ensure the good and clear observation. Therefore, most of the teachers received opportunities to practice mindfulness meditation to understand the true present moment of observation of one sense object in front of one's eyes. Behind that moment, the clear state of mind will ease the process of wise reflection to be well functioning for contemplation.

Practically, a small group of 10 participants are provided 3 rounds of observing an object and consequently present their perception on that object. In the first round, one by one in the group, individual participants must interpret, reflect and review the objects physical characteristics, then in the second round, they will be asked to clarify the causes which originate, transform, transmit and handle this object to exist in front of their eyes. At the end of this second round the facilitator should help the participants to review or visualize the whole picture collected from their interconnected answers. This will impact their reflections of surprise of how a simple little thing can represent and reveal the whole world interconnectedness. Finally, in the third round they will be asked to be deeply conscience of the true-artificial value of this object's meaningfulness to him or her-self. In this final dialogue, it's usually observed that not every participant is able to enter deeply into their authentic feelings. Those who can, touch their own feelings of the whole world being one. While only a few can reflect compassion or the feeling of gratitude. These different results of reflection reflect the basic requirement of the mindfulness meditation practice, as mentioned above. One needs to have clear observation and self-reflection otherwise they could hardly accomplish the full result.

This activity was firstly designed to provide the platform for teachers to practice the skill of contemplation through those above 3 primary categories for applying wise reflection. The participants had the opportunity to realize the differentiation between identifying, interpreting, reflecting and reviewing derived from their knowing of physical aspect, understanding of the interconnectedness and contemplating or conceptualizing the true value or meaningful relationship.

From many years of direct experiences of being a facilitator handling this activity, one remarkable symptom usually investigated were the difficulties of reflection. Normally, when one concentrates on one object in front of their eyes, their focal point of view is automatically solely governed by their thinking or questions such as the name of that object, what needs to be observed or even which word should be the direct explanation of that object. However, once the facilitator asks them to recognize those difficulties or sometimes telling the story of his or her own similar experiences, most of them then realize that their word expressions are limited by fear of making a mistake or sometimes just simple ignorance. This naturally impacts to a better self-reflection which accordingly generates a more open mind and sympathy among participants as a shared feeling of being in the same mode of learning connected to one another.

RAS teachers who have the experience of wise reflection and understand the true value oriented learning process are not only able to justify the ultimate goal for the students, but help nurture their value thinking systems through the process of heart-hand-head learning as well. Accordingly, the students can easily achieve the holistic goal of value, learning skills and knowledge.

### **The results from practicing wise reflection: the interconnectedness, compassion and wholesomeness,**

This way of practicing wise reflection impacts to the change of attitude and relationship among teachers, students and parents. Particularly, the teachers role along with their well-prepared lessons have been explicitly balanced to the proper wise guidance or coaches and students are encouraged to be active learners. This contemplation skill of wise reflection eases them and nurtures their positive and creative thinking. The teachers found that they can easily open their mind and grasp a more holistic viewpoint of the learners as well as the lesson than when they were concerned with the mere subject content which they intended to teach. The value



aspects behind every subject are clarified to be the student's holistic learning goals. Of course, the learning processes are then designed to be more actively engaged in by the students. The atmosphere of the classrooms increasingly become learning labs or studios, and the relationship between the teachers and students become learning partners rather than the one who teaches onto the ones who are taught.

Consequently, the RAS learning community culture has been formed. The relationship of group learning and attitude of being a self-directed learner among teachers and students mentioned above also impacted on the school staff and parents and students' families. RAS has been successfully building up a close relationship among families, school teachers and staff, creating its distinguished community culture. RAS Foundation was established and supported the school to play the role of social enterprise for the beneficiaries both within and outside the school. Several voluntary activities were created by each active group, especially parents' groups, without intentional or formal fund raising. Public services, school communal events and other sharing activities are joined by a variety of interested and voluntary groups. Additionally, the outside learning partners and networks in all parts of the country are welcomed and joined into the RAS's learning community. The tangible interconnectedness can be recognized in the RAS community, especially the Buddhist approach activities, either through the formal meditation courses or the daily social responsibility activities. The meditation center called "Karu Sati Sathan" was built at a location near the school to ease every interested member, such as teachers, parents and the extended network, to join at their convenience. As well, the "Zero Waste Center" was one of the well-known effective waste management programs which could scarcely be found elsewhere. The reason behind those good performances of the RAS culture, agreed to among the members, was that of the interconnectedness in the deeper concern of compassion and caring with each other and the world as one whole family.

## **The simpler way of practicing wise reflection for wider trainings,**

Many different training courses applied with wise reflection skill have been created to serve for each specific requirement, such as "Coaching Team Training" for Buddhist School directors, "Training of Active Learning" for monk teachers and several school teachers, short course training for different organizations or agencies and assuredly, the general education courses provided for the students in diploma, bachelor and master's programs of study at Arsomsilp Institute of the Arts.

In recent years, this activity of wise reflection practice has been designed and developed for a simpler training activity to be applied to different groups of inquirers; for example, the hundreds of monk teachers as well as several school teachers in conventional government schools who intend to develop their teaching style to be more effective for the youth of the digital technology generation. Even though they realized how many difficulties they faced when competing with digital media's influential mode of learning, they could hardly abandon their existing teaching methods as there were not only issues of new technology, but also a mindset and skill they were not familiar with. Therefore, in every training program of the active learning mode, they were inspired through the wise reflection experiences in order to first change their mindset. It was found that among the different training activities in the program, the most powerful one was the wise reflection. Along these processes of involvement with the provided activities for them to have direct experiences, simultaneous reflection and consciousness, it could foster them to contemplate and discover the value achievements by themselves. After realizing their inner power to learn, in turn, most of the teachers gradually paid more respect to the learners' power to learn and were happy to create the challenging lesson and space for their students. Lastly, both teachers and students, also parents in some cases, shared the development of the compassionate relationship which could leverage the betterment of their families. One of the monk teachers returned to his class with a big New Year's gift for his students. He broke the 3 punishing sticks he had previously used and threw them away. He then led the whole class to sit and

learn under the shade of a big tree at the school. He could hardly wait to proudly tell this story to the RAS coaching team with a big smile and shining eyes.

While the application of Yonisomanasikara or wise reflection into RAS practices may initially result in the practitioners' wholesome moment happening during the process, this experience can certainly ensure the possibly of the existence of 'right view' attitude in even the most mundane person. However, the further development from this elementary stage may increase and change them to the next stage of development of being an awakened person who is ready to live and learn in the path of 'Sila-Smadhi-Panna' or 'Tri-Sikha' depending on each opportunity and effort in the fully intentionally self-awareness practices. Actually, the most important purpose of the wise reflection practice with the school teachers and other personnel is the actualization of value oriented vision to all things, even the least significant matter, in order for them to be able to bring this intimate skill to measure whatever subject matter they are dealing with, involved in or are teaching and learning with the true-value aspect. Consequently, they could transmit this vision to the young children to learn more from their own inner capacities, whether with or without a lesson plan. In this process, the teachers have more awareness of their students' learning capabilities than their own teachings or lessons so that they can see how much students respond or react to what they are teaching through 'visible learning'. Then they could be able to adjust their role through actions, speech and thought as a virtuous friend and support the children's learning at the right moment to provide more space and opportunities so the students can learn more by themselves than be totally dependent on teachers' teaching.

Generally speaking, the application of Yonisomanasikara or wise reflection has been used in RAS as the basic practice and foundation of the other tools in order to strengthen the role of Gallayanamitre of both teachers and school leaders to the students at the heart of their relationship. The students are supported to be able to overcome their difficulties to learn by themselves and build their character as active learners. Moreover, through the school culture, this kind of relationship can be

generated among the parents and related personnel. During the past 20 years, the RAS community has naturally formed and gradually expanded to the outer network in the ecosystem of interconnectedness and compassion. The friendly and open atmosphere of the school can easily be touched and spelled out by everyone who visits the school. RAS is neither a standalone business nor a single foundation, but it is recognized as a social entrepreneur which keeps on growing and changing according to the real world situation and greater compassionate network.

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## Curriculum vitae

### Associate Professor Prapapat Niyom,

President of Arsomsilp Institute of the Arts, Bangkok, Thailand.

Date of birth: 13 July 1951.

#### Academic background:

1973	B.Arch, Chulalongkorn Univ.,
1974	M.Arch, Univ. of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, U.S.A.,
2011	Honorary Doctoral in Education for local development, Phranakorn Rajabhat Univ.
2019	Encouragement of Education for Peace Award 2019, Thailand from The Foundation for Education for Peace

#### Experiences:

2014-2015	A member of National Reform Council and Advisor to the Minister of Education,
2006	Founder of Arsom Silp Institute of the Arts,
1997	Founder and Director of Roong Aroon School, and secretary of its Foundation (not for profit organization),
1996-1998	Deputy Governor Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (City Planning, Civil Work, Public cleansing and Community Development,)
1995	Deputy Dean, Faculty of Architecture, Chulalongkorn University.

#### Skill Profile:

A Holistic Educator, An initiator of alternative Buddhist approach School (Roong Aroon School) from kindergarten to high school, and higher education (Arsomsilp Institute of the Arts) emphasizing on ;

- **"Holistic Learning"** curriculum design by integrating value system into the basic standard curriculum, both for basic and higher education levels,

- **Teachers' capacity building** through basic training of self actualization and the special mindfulness meditation,

- **Self reflection operating system** with variety of participatory discussion / dialogue platforms, BAR, AAR, PLC, Peer coaching, lesson study, child study,

- **Integrative lesson plan design** with learning innovations, such as, 21st century learning skills and formative assessment, Project-based or Problem-based and Work-based Learning, Open approach, Voluntary or Public service-based, Zero-waste and wasted water management, community and environmental development, Area-based

projects with practices of social study, documentation-communicative process and public hearing,

- **Special design for Higher Education programs** of study ; Architecture for environmental and community development, Holistic education, Social Entrepreneur.

## Researches and Articles :

### Research:

Niyom, Prapapat.(2005). **Participatory Action Research on People Mapping (A Research and Knowledge Management of Good People in Community)**. Bangkok: Moral Promotion Center.

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Roong Aroon School  
391 Soi Anamai Ngam Charoen 25, Tha Kam,  
Bangkhuntien District, Bangkok, Thailand 10150

[www.roong-aroon.ac.th](http://www.roong-aroon.ac.th)

Arsom Silp Institute of the Arts  
399 soi Anamai Ngamcharoen 25  
Thakham sub-district, Bangkhuntien district,  
Bangkok Thailand

[www.arsomsilp.ac.th](http://www.arsomsilp.ac.th)