

**Book Review. Gerrit de MOOR's *The sacred sanction* (2016, Mauretania Publishing, Wetteren, Belgium)**

**By Mihai Predescu**

The reward and punishment system is so deeply embedded in modern educational system that we rarely reflect on it. The book of Mr. Gerrit de Moor brings a new perspective in a field that is so researched that new ways of understanding seems improbable.

The central idea of education, according to Mr. de Moor, is to fulfill the natural need of connectedness, a need that not only defines us as humans, but it is also essential for a good social functioning.

Punishment always disrupts the connectedness, because it is imposed to each person by a higher authority in an arbitrary manner. The individual feel helpless, treated unfairly and without control. Or, the way the adult respond to the disruptive behavior is to restore the connectedness with others, not to engage in a cycle of punishment and misbehaviors.

In contrast, sanctioning an unwanted behavior has a positive effect due to the fact that it allows the children to learn new, more appropriate behaviors, and, in the same time, is strengthening the relations between the child and the adult in working relationships.

The book is structure in two parts. The first part is a historical analysis of punishment from philosophical, educational and ethical point of view. The second part, more technical, presents effective ways of sanctioning unwanted behavior using a range of techniques from positive education, life space crisis intervention and positive behavioral intervention.

The book is easy to read, accessible to both teachers and parents.

The value of the book is undeniable. It offers a solution of managing disruptive behaviors in a humanistic, positive manner, based on a clear set of values, with clear guidelines.

