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GROWING-UP CONSISTS OF CLOTHING THE KING

is suddenly aware that he is an individual who is free, responsible, and decisive. This "Moment" is extremely crucial for the future of this individual for, it will bring to awareness that he must be something in terms of his own unique individuality. This he, and he alone is responsible for; and he is free to do so. However, if he has been cajoled into playing roles determined by others, he may not realize the significance of this "moment" and, consequently, will be retarded in his response to the significant "Moment".

MATURE GROWTH

The implications here for educational reform are radical. Some of these implications are: Resist at all costs any attempt to place the child in a role. I will elaborate at length here.

The infant is utterly dependant upon others for the gratification of its every need. The parent must continue to provide for his needs until he is able to gratify them himself. This means that the parent, always watching for the moment when he can give the child some responsibility, must encourage some independence from the parent. To smother the child with affection and care when he really doesn't need it, is to rob him of that precious experience of responsibility and self-direction so necessary in his later years. This kind of affection, though probably well meant, will stifle him, and consequently, would appear not to be affection after all. As he grows and develops he will signal (to the watchful, loving parent) when and where he is capable of assuming independent responsibility however small. As he acquires experience of the world and others he also acquires a more extensive repertoire of experience or, rather, capacity for handling experiences. He is to be given freedom when he is capable of using it to his advantage. To

prevent him from using it when he is ready to is to cultivate an ambivalence and frustration which may have the detrimental effect of distorting its proper use. On the other hand, to force him to accept freedom when he is not yet ready

to resolve emotional conflicts of this nature, he may develop a persistent aversion of freedom in future years. This would be especially tragic for one with this fearsomeness when

he experiences the "moment". This applies not only to freedom but to responsibility, and decision-making as well. The child must grow at his own rate, both physically and psychologically.

The child is usually very influenced by those in his immediate environment. Not yet sure of who or what he is he may attempt to acquire an identity by identifying with someone close. This is usually the parent, since he is the one who is generally the closest. It is therefore extremely important how the parent presents himself to his son. Children tend to observe very closely whether parents are consistent with their views. The inconsistent parent may instill ambivalence in his child if (especially if) that child has already introjected some aspects of that parent. In that case the child would be aware of self-doubt since his "Self" is to considerable degree that of the parents.

That the parent possesses a meaningful goal to which he is committed is also very important, for the child will one day be faced with a similar situation, that is, of choosing a meaningful goal. Courage, truthfulness and honesty are important in the parent (I might add at this point, that these qualities are desirable for all who come in contact with children: indeed, everyone!) for they will determine the nature of the man and how he will interact with others. The presence of these attributes and parental attitudes with regards to them, will not go unperceived by the child.

I by no means mean to imply that the environment must be structured so as to evade all negative (if they can be called that) aspects of human existence. Quite the contrary; tragedy, pain, suffering are very much a part of human existence and because they are the child must be allowed to "feel" them as well. I believe life is both good and bad so far as our experiences are concerned, and to be healthy is not to have the one to the exclusion of the other. How the parent reacts to tragedy will not go unnoticed by the child - do not try to hide it from him. If he is protected from reality - whether good or bad - how can he be expected to deal with it when he is called upon to do so? When he is still under the parent's care he must be allowed to

"test" tragedy; this experience will extend his repertoire.

It is crucial therefore in my opinion that the child acquire those qualitative predispositions with which he can deal with life and its situations.

Although it is important what is chosen among alternatives presented, what is of most importance to the growing child is the choosing itself. Teach him to choose - let him feel choice making; and, what is most important of all, encourage him to see these concepts (freedom, responsibility, choice, etc.) in terms of his own unique "Self". (How do I respond to choice and its implication? What does choice itself mean to me? etc.) You must first choose out tentatively. You can choose not to be free and, to some degree, get away with it; you can do the same with responsibility but you cannot choose not to choose since that is a choice in itself. If you cannot evade choice, then why the argument? Because it is how you choose. It is choosing with subjective passionate commitment.

TRUE LEARNING

This philosophy applies not only to the child, but to any and all who have not experienced the "moment" since, without it, the significance of those concepts discussed above are of little value so far as cognition goes; but he will be psychologically and spiritually predisposed to their significance at the "moment" of awareness.

After the "Moment" has been experienced, it is then up to that individual to determine his goals, values, beliefs, and the means by which he will realize them. The school (university) and its curriculum exist as a possibility he may or may not accept depending on his goals, etc. Those existing institutions, indeed the world at large, contains innumerable possibilities from which he may choose to actualize his potential.

The ideal "teacher"- "Student" (Self-Self) relationship is, in my view, the Socratic method of question and answer. The teacher and student together may pursue the truth; not as on authoritative "teacher" and inferior "student", rather, together as equals pursuing a common goal during which time one benefits from the other in an atmosphere of freedom, respect, and love.

This is not the only

method however; the teacher must encourage independent study by the way of projects, assignments, etc. A great danger that must be avoided is student dependence upon the teacher. It is part of the teacher's role (in so far as he functions as a "teacher") to assist his student to exist independently of him; an element so necessary in his life as a whole.

I do not mean to imply that each individual must separate himself completely from others; rather, he and he only can live his life and must therefore stand on his own. To some degree he is dependent on others, but in a way which stimulates growth - dialogue, exchange of ideas, etc.

This essay thus far seems to indicate that true reform must necessarily begin in the home. That is, of course, very true. But this is by no means suggests that we cannot affect significant change at the university level - we most certainly can.

We might begin by demanding that each candidate for admission be not required to prove high school proficiency but rather, be able to state quite specifically what his purposes for coming to university are; how he intends to use the university as a means to his goal, etc. I doubt very much that the "qualified" students at UPEI could do that - their reasons are determined by their roles and as such would prove superficial on questioning.

I do not mean this in any pejorative sense - it is a fact.

If I may suppose for a moment just how this would affect the present system and how it would appear -

THE READY LEARNER

The mature, self-assured, committed individual who knows his purposes would, without difficulty, outline his plan to attain his goal. Let us assume his goal is to develop an understanding of himself and others. He knows that he must study the historical and contemporary thought on this matter. He must go then to those who can articulate these ideas and point to other possible areas for study. None of this is authoritative on the part of the individual who serves as the instructor. On the contrary, the instructor exists to serve the needs of the individual as he requests. In most areas the instructor will have a better grasp of

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