DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 132 444   CG 005 589

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TITLE   Understanding Self and Others: A Relevant, Purposeful
                Experience.
PUB DATE   70
NOTE   13p.; Best Copy Available

EDRS PRICE   MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS   Affective Behavior; *Developmental Psychology;
                *Educational Objectives; Emotional Development;
                *Humanistic Education; *Relevance (Education); *Self
                Concept; *Student Centered Curriculum; Student Needs;
                Teacher Role; Values

ABSTRACT
        This paper is a plea for humanizing and personalizing
education to enhance understanding of self and others, as opposed to
focusing exclusively on intellectual gains. The author addresses
himself to the contextual approach towards education which allows the
individual to become intrinsically involved with the curriculum,
through involvement of the total being: intellectual and affective.
The teachers is seen as a catalyst and facilitator, promoting self
discovery and interaction, and enlarging the child's horizon with
alternatives. Developing Understanding of Self and Others (DUSO), an
educational program developed by the author, is described. It focuses
on helping the child become goal-and process-oriented via eight
developmental tasks. These tasks focus on self-understanding,
awareness of self and others, and resultant purposeful motivational
involvement in the tasks of life. The author insists that the
adequate personality will not emerge by chance, but by design, and
therefore emotional development needs must be noted in establishing
educational priorities. (KS)

UNDERSTANDING SELF AND OTHERS: A RELEVANT, PURPOSEFUL EXPERIENCE

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Educators are traditionally concerned with exploring new approaches for more effectively transmitting material to students. The focus is on improved methods for presenting mathematics, language arts, social studies, and other subjects. The assumption is made that if we build a better mousetrap, we will catch the mouse; paraphrased--how can I entice my students into meaningful contact with the content I am teaching? Educational technology and curriculum revision have focused rather intensively on methodology.

Educational objectives have included social and emotional goals; but progress in developing programs directly concerned with these areas has been limited. It appears that we acknowledge our intellectual awareness of the importance of emotional and social growth, while our curriculum, programs, and schedules do not reflect commitment to affective education.

The lack of concern for educational experiences which involve consideration of the feeling and attitude areas of life has been pointed out by a number of educators including: Earl Kelley in his _Education for What is Real_ (1947), and Richard Jones in _Fantasy and Feeling in Education_ (1968). We have also witnessed the development of programs by Ojemann (1958), Bessell & Palomares (1967), and Long (1970). A major professional group, The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) has devoted its 1970 Yearbook to the topic (1970).

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The Contextual Approach

We can only facilitate the child's development as a person if we become involved with the child's total being: intellect, feelings, attitudes, purposes, and behavior. Any continuation of the false dichotomy between beliefs, feelings, purposes, and behavior promulgated in practise by the current emphasis on methods and evaluation will not meet the need for educational experiences which are relevant. Failure to plan for experiences which are designed to produce the fully functioning person can only promote educational bankruptcy. This is currently seen in the lack of response to real needs and the lack of answers for real questions.

We must reconsider the value of students mastering the symbols of mathematical computation and language, while remaining essentially retarded in their understanding of self and others. Where does the child have the opportunity to examine critical questions such as: Who am I? Why do I behave as I do? What do I value? How can I relate more effectively with others? There must be experiences for all children which help them to know, understand, and accept themselves. A humanized approach which focuses on learning as applied to self, personalized learning, if you will, assists the person to become responsible for his choices and behavior. It enables him to become intrinsically involved with the curriculum.

In our zealous attempts to avoid preaching and moralizing, perhaps epitomized in the McGuffey readers, we have at the same time left a void in training for life.

The curriculum has expanded at a rapid rate, but we have studiously avoided permitting the child to explore, except by chance or informally, human behavior and human relationships. Learning about a subject is carefully planned, learning about self and persons is haphazard. Could this account for under-achievement, searching for excitement in drugs, rebellion, and complaints about the irrelevance of education?

The contextual approach believes that human behavior problems are best studied in the concrete, not the abstract. The contextual theory understands behavior as the product of the interrelationships between the behaver, his perceptions, and the meaning of the stimulus complex or the total field (Bevan, 1968). This is a holistic approach which acknowledges the contributions of Gestalt psychology and the field theory of Kurt Lewin (1951). Perception is a product of the person and his environment.

Bruner (1960) has indicated that the process is more important than the content. Any topic in which the child is totally engaged is totally educating; there is no hierarchy of preferred subjects. Bruner has suggested that in a number of cultures learning is acquired without formalized "teaching." He observed:

> "One virtually never sees an instance of 'teaching' taking place outside of the situation where the behavior to be learned is relevant. Nobody 'teaches' in the prepared sense of the word. There is nothing like school...nothing like lessons. Most of what we would call instruction is through showing....We tell out of context rather than show in context." (Bruner, 1966)

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Support for the contextual emphasis is also found in the
discovery approach used in science and the social studies.
In contrast to telling students about an event, they are
encouraged to invent the possible alternatives. This involves
creativity, spontaneity, and the utilization of simulation.

Learning is always conducted in a social context. Success
rests not only upon self-evaluation, but teacher evaluation and
peer and parent recognition.

The value of a learning experience and the resultant
motivation of a pupil is always dependent upon the child's
perceptions and the context of the learning experience. Learning
and involvement are dependent upon the pupil's perceptions of
the meaning, worth, and purpose of the activity.

Designing Learning Experiences About Self and Others

The basic approach is experiential with an emphasis upon
learning through involvement of the total being (intellect-affect-
behavior). The concern is with developing genuine interaction
and dialogue that reveals to self and others not only what is
known but how one feels, and his personal beliefs, purposes,
and values. This would contrast with the classroom which is
mistake-centered and overly concerned with right and wrong answers.
When one presents himself and his feelings, there are no wrong
answers! The opportunity to reevaluate one's beliefs, attitudes,
and experiences with persons, however, is always present. This
experience opens and frees the channels of communication in
contrast to closing or restricting them.

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In this approach, one begins with experiences which precede discussion and generalization. The stress is upon process rather than content. The content of the experience is the behavior of the children reacting openly, honestly, authentically, and personally to the experiences. An experience is presented, i.e. (open ended story, role playing, puppetry, a picture designed to facilitate discussion, etc.) and we work with what the children produce. Their beliefs, feelings, attitudes, perceptions, and values become the content of the course. One goes in the direction of their perceptions, feelings, and values. This contrasts with approaches which have narrowly specified goals and seek to motivate the learner to accomplish the teacher's objective. Students become partners in the educational establishment and responsible for their learning. Incidentally, this reduces the negative interaction between authority and the child.

In experiential learning there is no preconceived, right answer. Instead, there is the opportunity to explore and consider hypothesis and alternative courses of action. The lack of one correct answer adds excitement, involvement, and challenge. It encourages listening to others to see if they stimulate your thinking and expand your ideas. It values the contribution of each child; children become involved with each other and not merely with the teacher.

The experiential approach is cognizant that children are always studying behavior informally, and that it is a major preoccupation for their psychological survival. Meeting the basic need to belong necessitates understanding peers. Understanding and cooperating with parents and teachers is essential to receive the necessary cultural acceptance and rewards.

Margaret Mead sugg ts that man uses but 6% of his creativity! Should we expect more, though, if we realistically inspect the limited goals of traditional teaching? The experiential approach then is concerned with engaging the child's wisdom, creativity, and spontaneity which may have been stifled by rote learning and a limiting question and answer approach which seeks to elicit one correct response.

The teacher is not a dispenser of knowledge. In contrast, she is a catalyst, skilled in promoting self-discovery and interaction. The role is one of facilitator who seeks to promote interaction, feedback, and genuine dialogue. The goal is to expand contact between the children and their total beings in contrast to contact with a subject or a type of limited teacher-child communication. The experience is operating best when the children are involved with communicating with each other, in contrast to seeking to impress the teacher or validate themselves by "That's good, Johnny; That's the right answer, Susie." Rewards and reinforcement come from the joy of communication, the support and acceptance of the group. Excitement and motivation springs from the activity and its implications for life and their personal development.

The teacher has a mirroring, reflecting, function in facilitating discovery of self (Randolph & Howe, 1966). This type of learning, intrinsically inspired, in contrast to being contrived for reward, becomes internalized, relevant, and permanent.

It should be apparent that there is no guaranteed response to the stimulus. The lesson may focus on a specific developmental

task such as developing feelings of adequacy or self acceptance, but the opportunity to follow a genuine interest of the group to learn how to relate more effectively with peers is a cue the teacher will follow. If we look honestly at learning, we can never specify the outcomes of any learning process, i.e. children confronted with modern math may be consumed with curiosity, involved and interested. However, in the same class-room we will find children who are bored and rebellious. They are also learning. They are learning to hate and fear mathematics. The variables involved in learning are too complex for present research designs to fathom. The possibility of adequately control-ling for the truly significant variables of feelings, attitudes, values, goals, and emotional energy does not appear to be possible at present.

Focus in experiential learning is on helping the child become more aware of self, sensitive to others, and able to generate hypothesis and questions. The program provides experiences which can lead to many possible reactions and interactions. We trust the psychological homeostasis of the organism to know best that which facilitates personal, social development (Maslow, 1954). The teacher's sensitivity to individuals and the group enables her to develop a climate for real learning. The teacher does not preach or moralize, but through involving the child's feelings, beliefs, and values, encourages him to draw his own conclusions. Course content in this sense is not something to be returned to teachers, or stored--content is to be used! This learning is valued and internalized.

The facilitator recognizes that productive interaction does not come about by chance. The leader is skilled in group discussion leadership (Dinkmeyer, 1970). He is educated to observe psychological interaction, and is trained to hear not only what is said, but to understand the affect, perceptions, purposes, and values that are implied in the dialogue. One recognizes that what is not said may be as important as what is said. Certainly, the nonverbal message present in facial expressions, the eyes, posture, and gestures, help clarify personal meanings.

The teachers' verbal leads would not merely focus on the content stated. They would also deal with feelings accompanying the expression of a belief. Leads would be open in contrast to closed, i.e. "Tell me more about that" in preference to "What is the....(eliciting a fact)? This necessitates being able to restate or reflect feelings--"You are pretty disappointed. It seems there is no change." The reflection of feeling may come from the restatement of what has been said or may emerge from an attitude that is apparent non-verbally but not stated. The leader at times helps develop a tentative hypothesis, "Could it be we do that to keep people busy with us?" "Is it possible he does that to be excused from working?" It is emphasized hypotheses are tentative, and are always stated as hunches and guesses. They become a way for children to experiment with ways of understanding human behavior. The activity in general focuses on permitting choice and enlarging the child's horizon with alternatives.

Developing Understanding of Self and Others (DUSO)
(Dinkmeyer, 1970) is an educational program which focuses on
helping the child become goal and process oriented. Experiences
are designed which help him to become more aware of himself
and the transactions between people and his goals. It is the
purpose of the program to help the individual increasingly
understand the causal and consequential nature of human
relationships. As he becomes aware of his own purposes and
goals, and his self awareness develops, he becomes able to
function more effectively with others, and he becomes involved
in the educational process.

It is the philosophy of the DUSO program that developmental
tasks provide the goals for the guidance and educational process.
This material evolves around eight developmental tasks which
confront the normal individual in the process of his development.
All children need assistance with these tasks, some more intensively
than others. The purpose of the program is to provide some
primary experience in understanding and coping with the following
tasks:

1. Self-identity, self-acceptance, developing an adequate
self image and feelings of adequacy.

2. Learning a giving-receiving pattern of affection.

3. Learning to develop mutuality, moving from being self-
centered to effective peer relations.

4. Learning to become reasonably independent, to develop
self control.

5. Learning to become purposeful, to seek the resources and
responsibilities of the world, to become involved, and to respond to
challenge with resourcefulness.

6. Learning to be competent, to achieve, to think of self as capable of mastery.

7. Learning to be emotionally flexible and resourceful.

8. Learning to make value judgments, choices, and accept the consequences of one's choices.

This program is based on a set of lessons and experiences for the total classroom. It focuses on normal developmental problems. The lessons are designed to be conducted in a democratic atmosphere which encourages full participation from the children. Each child is encouraged to present his feelings, attitudes and reactions. It is vital to stress there are no right or wrong answers. The teacher must be capable of hearing the feelings and perceptions of the individual, in contrast to emphasizing judgmental transactions and evaluations of pupils' contributions.

The program is designed to reach children with unique learning styles through varied media and modes. The program includes recorded stories, music, open-ended stories, discussion starters, puppetry lessons, role playing activities, art, discussion stimulated by large class size, action pictures, and experiential activities.

A typical week in the program provides some acquaintance with each of these types of activities. However, plans for the use of the material are flexible. Each teacher knows her class. There are individual and group needs and the type of activity which appears to be most interesting and productive. Thus, the order of activity and the amount of time spent on a particular

facet of the lesson is determined by the feedback derived from the class.

The focus of the material is on enhancing self understanding, awareness of self and others, and resultant purposeful motivational involvement in the tasks of life. The experiences are designed to facilitate building a positive self concept and feelings of adequacy. The child becomes aware of the feeling area of his life and the purposeful, causal nature of human behavior.

Recognition of the necessity of education in the affection domain dictates an investigation of education priorities. Our value system suggests that the next generation deserves the opportunity to learn to become fully functioning persons in the school. The adequate personality will not emerge by chance, but by design.

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