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Mental Health and Education

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Abstract

Mental health is an index of mind. It symbolises mental readiness and willingness with one identifies oneself with one's work or is found to be indifferent towards it. Mental health implies a satisfactory relationship to one self and to one's environment as well as the possession of problem solving technique for establishing a satisfactory relationship.

Mental health and education are closely related with each other. For any type of education sound mental health is the first condition. If children are not in sound mental health, they cannot concentrate in learning and retain the knowledge received in the class room. Learning is dependent on sound mental health. Mental is an essential factor to the learning process. Mental health is an indispensable part of education.¹

Introduction

To be an effective ideal teacher, the teacher must be the custodian of a sound mental health. If the teacher is with sufficient degree of a mental situation i.e. (i) healthy interaction in classroom and (ii) healthy participation by children. Therefore, the teacher needs to be a man of calibre and high moral character who should feel really contented with his lot in the satisfaction of his needs while working in the teaching professionally competent, skilled, mentally, healthy teacher who is in a position to contribute his bit to the development of a sound mental health of his students.

Mental health governs the feeling of an individual about others and rooted in his activity to balance feelings, desires, ambitions, ideas and competency. The individual's state of mental health is not static, but is continuously changing depending upon his actions and the factors acting upon him. WHO (1962) defined health as the balanced development of the total personality which enables one to interact creatively and harmoniously with society. To quote WHO (1973), "Mental health is a condition which permits optimal development physical, intellectual and emotional of the individual, so far as this is compatible with that of other individual's." Goldenson (1984), defined mental health as a state of mind characterized by emotional well-being, relatively free from anxiety and disabling symptoms and a capacity to establish constructive relationship and cope with ordinary demands and stress of life. Mental health is an important aspect of one's total health status.²

"Mental health may be defined as the adjustment of individuals to themselves and the world at large with a maximum of effectiveness, satisfaction, cheerfulness and socially considerate behaviour and the ability of facing and accepting the realities of life. The highest degree of mental health might, therefore, be described as that which permits an individual to realize the greatest



success which his capabilities will permit, with maximum of satisfaction to himself and to social order and minimum of friction and tension".

The concept of mental health may be quoted in the works of Dana Frans worth from his paper entitled "Mental health Implication for teachers" contained in Torrance (1965)

Mental health entails freedom with responsibility self-reliance and a genuine concern for the common welfare. It is nor freedom from anxiety and tension not from dis-satisfaction, not conformity, or constant happiness or a lessening of accomplishment and creativity or the absence of persona idiosyncrasies. Furthermore, not is in any way opposed to religious value.³

While the Physician's primary focus has been on the deviant or the illness, much of the Psychologists interest in "Mental illness" has been generated by the utility of data on mental patients for formulation principles about psychological functioning in general. Psychologists find in necessary to order persons along a continuum. When a sick- well continuum dominates the medical orientation, a normal continuum characterizes the psychological approach. Because of the influence of medicine there has been pre-occupation with "illness", Health, In general has been defined as the absence of illness. There is an increasing effort among Psychologist, however to come to grip with a "positive" definition of mental health. Most of the effort measure mental health has ended up as attempts to operationalize medical mental health have ended up as attempts to operationalized medical criteria of mental illness (Curin, veroff & feld 1960). Nevertheless the work of Johada (1958) provides sets of psychological statements that embrace the current thinking regarding positive definition of mental health. According to her, measures of defining health are many including an individual's attitude towards himself, realization of potential, unification of function, independence of social influences, Conception of the world and mastery of life.⁴

Hobbies have a greater value. Very few of us would have understood the psychological value of having a hobby for one's own general mental health. In addition to our major duties in life the adoption of some side interest would offer pleasant opportunities spending our extra time and energy. It is an important thing to learn how to use the time. If we can fill our leisure time in pursuits that fully satisfy us and at the same time offered a healthy distraction from our main duties and responsibilities, our mental health will be well preserved.

Mental hygiene

Mental hygienic is the means to achieve mental health. Health hygiene is the science that creates a personality in every individual in society that makes for good adjustment with the environment that attains a proper synthesis between the intellectual, emotional and physical aspects that is satisfied and optimises that experience with a minimum of tension and conflict in its conduct with other individuals in society. The aim of mental hygienic is the evolution and development of a properly adjusted and balanced personality. According to D.B Klien mental hygienic prevents mental aberrations and advances mental health. Mental hygiene consistently stresses the development or creation of such qualities in the individuals as optimum confidence, co-operation, emotional adjustment and maturity etc. It points out the means of improving the adaptability and efficiency of individuals. In the encyclopaedia of modern education the definition



of mental hygiene has been gives as that approach to human adjustment and achievement which is related to the prevention of emotional maladjustment and preparation of the individuals for skilful working.⁵

In a book entitled mental hygiene in public health P. V. Lewkan has written that a mentally healthy individual is one who is himself satisfied, lives peacefully with his neighbours, makes healthy citizens of his children, and even after performing their fundamental duties have enough energy left to do something for the society.⁶

Mental growth

People continue to learn and improve as long as they live. Mental development is a continuous process which continues throughout life, though mental abilities differ at different periods of life.⁷ Mental development includes such functional abilities as attending, perceiving, desiring, remembering, imagine, thinking using language or solving problems. These grow and mature with age and also decline in old age.

Mental health and learning

Mental health and success in learning are very closely related. There is a complex cause and effect relationship between them and between their Opposites, emotional maladjustment and intellectual Inefficiency. Mental health is essential for effective learning and zest for the discoveries and self enhancements of learning is a sign mental health.⁸ Mental health implies well integrated personality. Mentally health children learn as they mature through a problem solving approach to life's problems. As they grow they accept their responsibilities, make their own decisions, plan ahead, set realistic goals for themselves and do react in problem solving situations.

Mental health is the full harmonious functioning of the whole personality. There are various urges namely impulses, motives, tendencies, interests, attitude etc., some of which are inborn and some the acquired. When these urges are allowed to function harmoniously in co-ordination with each other and getting full expressions we have personality which may call as wholesome and which is essential for healthy mental life. Such a co-ordination is possible only when the potentialities are directed towards a common end or goal.⁹

Conclusion

Mental health and education are closely related with each other. For any type of education sound mental health is the first condition. If children are not in sound mental health, they cannot concentrate in leaning and retain the knowledge received in the class room. Learning is dependent on sound mental health. Mental health is essential to the learning process as intelligence. Mental health is an indispensable part of education.



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