Mental Health in Our Schools

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Because members of ASCD and many other interested persons have asked for copies of the address given by Dr. William C. Menninger at the fifth annual meeting of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development in Denver, February 12, 1950, we are happy to print that speech in its entirety. Dr. Menninger is General Secretary of the Menninger Foundation, Topeka, Kansas.

"MENTAL HEALTH for Better Living." This succinct phrase—the theme of this meeting—could well summarize the life purpose and practice of all of us in psychiatry, that specialty of medicine concerned with the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of mental illness. For the curriculum planners and supervisors of the schools of America to choose it as their theme for a meeting gives us a thrill. Sometimes we feel a bit lonesome; our task seems so great and workers so few. It is, therefore, as if we suddenly discovered a numerically large and enormously powerful ally—the teachers of the elementary and secondary schools of America. Could this meeting theme be adopted with deep conviction and resolute determination as one of your major working aims, the dawn of a new era for better mental health and with it better living—would be America's blessing.

Because of these feelings and hopes, I accepted the invitation to participate in this meeting with you as a special privilege and simultaneously a heavy responsibility. Psychiatry and education have much in common. Both have the primary aim of helping the individual to adjust to life. In a physician-patient relationship, there is much teaching and learning. In the teacher-student relationship, there is much need for skill in harnessing emotional drives. I suspect that psychiatric treatment methods could be greatly improved by the more effective use of educational techniques. It would seem equally probable that educators might gain much from the psychiatric knowledge about the personality and treatment approaches.

As a psychiatrist, I am aware of the increasing interest in mental health that is evidenced by many different groups of educators. Your year book of 1940 and the elaborate one prepared for this year are both concrete testimony of this interest.¹ This development in the field of education is somewhat paralleled by an increasing interest on the part of psychiatrists in academic education. Three years ago, under what was then the International Committee for Mental Hygiene, twenty-two separate commissions in different parts of the world, composed of psychiatrists, educators, and social scientists, conducted a series of study seminars on various aspects of academic education in relation to mental health.² Currently there are


²The "Working Papers" briefly summarizing these commissions under the auspices of the World Federation for Mental Health have been published by the National Committee for Mental Hygiene, New York, 1949.
at least three committees of psychiatrists whose major focus is on the relationships between psychiatry and education.

At present there are some twenty psychiatrists who are devoting full time to finding the solutions of problems of mental health in as many universities. Unfortunately, they are still concerned chiefly with the mental health status of the students and are not often consulted about curriculum planning. A few secondary schools are availing themselves of part-time assistance of psychiatrists, in some instances for consultations with or about “problem” students and for consulting with the faculty.

In the course of arriving at a diagnosis and giving treatment, the psychiatrist places the life of his patient under a kind of psychological microscope. An examination of the school record is a part of this study. In many, many cases, the patient’s problem is related to unhappy experiences in the schoolroom. Some of these experiences were disturbing events; more often they were disturbing because something that should have happened, did not happen.

As a result of his special training and experience, the psychiatrist acquires some very definite convictions regarding the educational experience of an individual. First among these is that intellectual growth can and does take place without a proportional emotional or social growth. Stated in the extreme, we can produce adults who are intellectual geniuses and at the same time emotional infants and social morons. Educational systems have specialized in developing and training of the intellect and have tended to neglect the emotions.

Second, the school, for better or for worse, is second only to the home in its influence on the development of the child’s personality. It, therefore, should and must automatically assume the responsibility for making up the deficiencies in what the child has learned or has failed to learn from the parents and at home; and the responsibility for doing what it can to correct the undesirable influences from the same source. In every instance the school continues to shape the plastic immature personality that comes into its doors at the age of five or six.

And third, the teacher, next to the father and mother, has a greater responsibility and opportunity to facilitate the development of good mental health of the child than any other person.

EducatioNal DeFicienCies and Mental IllNess

Mental illness results when the personality is faced with demands from the outside world that he cannot meet. It also may result because of unresolved conflicts within the personality. In our highly competitive and yet democratic society, it is essential that an individual have a modicum of information and a capacity to use that information. Therefore, it would seem accurate to state that education can increase the capacity for adjustment and provide a resourcefulness in finding security and satisfaction for those who can have its benefits as compared to those who do not have such an opportunity.

The individual with limited or no educational experience certainly has a more difficult life because of the demands that our civilization places upon him. The educational deprivation limits his capacity for understanding and for par-
participating. These in turn cheat him of potential opportunities for finding security and satisfaction. Lack of basic education strongly mitigates against the best of mental health and, therefore, better living.

Some of the deficiencies in the educational program in the United States were dramatically summarized by Norton and Lawler who raised the question as to whether or not America is the land of opportunity.³ In reading the following statistics we should be alert to the mental health implications.

1. Three million adults living in the United States have never attended any kind of a school.
2. Ten million adult Americans have had so little schooling that they are virtually illiterates—they cannot read or write well enough to meet the demands of modern life.
3. Half the brightest and most talented youth of the nation leave school prematurely—before they have had the kind and amount of schooling which would be justified by both their ability and the demands of our way of life.
4. Two million children, aged 6 to 15, were not in any kind of a school in 1940—and this number substantially increased during the war.
5. The schooling provided millions of American children who are in school is so inferior and brief that it leaves them unprepared to meet the demands upon them as citizens and as individuals.

Another indication of our educational deficiency is that of every 1,000 pupils who reach the fifth grade, only 453 are still in school in the twelfth grade.¹ This is the more disconcerting to the educator because the chief reason given by the drop-outs is that they just did not like school. Why?

The course subject matter was dull and uninteresting; they became discouraged over failure to perform as expected by the teacher; teaching was poor and indifferent; buildings and equipment were inadequate. A much smaller percentage of the dropped students gave explanations such as problems in finance, lack of support from home, health reasons, or marriage. The fundamental cause of the majority of the cases of dropping out is probably a maladjustment in some degree. These figures are, therefore, of special significance in terms of mental health. The students who fall by the wayside most assuredly do not have the chance to discover the way of “better living” that should be theirs.

There is a commendable emphasis on providing special training for the 20 or 30 percent of students whose vocational choice requires it.³ Desirable as this may be, vocational training itself is not the entire answer. Repeated investigations indicate that the great majority of failures in business and industry are not due to lack of skill but to personality inadequacies. More than thirty years ago E. E. Southard, a psychiatrist, found that among 4,000 discharged factory workers, sixty-two percent of those dismissals were because of personality

² Twenty percent prepare for college and approximately 60 percent neither go into college nor into occupations for which specific vocational training is given in the high school. These facts resulted in the famous Prosser Resolution, at the meeting of the American Vocational Association in St. Louis in 1945. Later the committee rewrote the resolution and eliminated the figures.


¹ “Five Hundred and Forty-seven Have Gone,” prepared by Research Division of National Education Association, Washington, D. C., Federal Aid Series #1, March, 1948.
problems and not for lack of skill. Very similar figures were disclosed by the psychologist Brewer in his study of causes for discharge including such problems as insubordination, unreliability, laziness, trouble making, drinking, carelessness, fighting. Bixler reporting on 4,000 cases of discharge in seventy-six companies, found 85 percent due to personality problems and only 10 percent to lack of specific skill. Perhaps the significance of these figures for educators is that a very high percentage of people lose jobs because of deficiencies that might have been but never were overcome, nor formally considered of particular importance in their educational experience.

We need not look afar to see the many disturbing evidences that even though many persons have learned to make a living, they either do not know how to make a life or are prevented from doing so. We ought to be concerned about the fact that for the past several years, the number of crimes in America has continued to increase, reaching an all time high of 1.7 million in 1948. The ratio of divorces to marriages has increased from 1 to 17 in 1888 to approximately 1 to 4 in 1947. Last year was the next to the worst year in our history for forced unemployment, when we had 3,600 strikes and 53 million man days of idleness. The war cost us 157 million dollars a day to fight and now, four years later, we are still spending 32 million dollars a day as an aftermath to the last one and a defense against another.

Then there are figures which reveal the high incidence of mental illness. Insofar as all of us are subject to immaturity, prejudice, anger, depression, anxiety, and overt hostility, we are to that degree maladjusted. It is reliably estimated that 8 million persons are actually incapacitated because of personality problems. Over 1,700,000 men who came to our draft centers during the war were regarded as unsuitable risks for military experience because of personality disorders. To be sure military service in war time required well-integrated, stable personalities as recruits. Even so, more than 700,000 had to be discharged for the same reason.

Just how much one believes teachers and curricula can do to meet social failures depends upon one's conception and vision of education. It is very reassuring that this powerful section of the National Education Association is focusing on the responsibility of the schools for mental health. Our students need more than the facts about life; they have to learn to apply them to themselves and in relation to other people. We cannot be satisfied to give them merely the information to make a living; they have to be taught how to make a rich and satisfying life.

The Teacher's Contribution to Mental Health

Education to further mental health for better living is an enormous responsibil-

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ity for the curriculum builder and the supervisor; it is an even greater one for the teacher. At present not more than a small percentage of our school systems has crystallized its thinking about making mental health a major objective. One survey showed that not more than 10 percent of schools give priority to, and not more than 30 percent are even aware of, the importance of mental health subjects. Sixty percent were described as having a "pedagogic neurosis"—a strong resistance to change. Unless leaders among the educators agree that mental health should be a primary aim, because it does lead to better living, traditional educational policies and methods will not be changed. The great multitude of teachers cannot go ahead on their own.

The leaders must convince teachers that the main object of their efforts is to help the individual develop a healthy personality. They must also assume the responsibility for the development of curricula that will more effectively accomplish this aim, along with the provision of necessary materials and equipment. The teacher's own personality can be his greatest asset and it can also be his greatest handicap in carrying out such a program. The capacity to form warm interpersonal relationships, the ability to love and inspire, the quality of feeling and sympathizing with the student—these are the special abilities of the most successful teachers. They are of far greater importance to a child's mental health than are great funds of knowledge and excellent pedagogic skill.

If we would but listen, the students would tell us so. In one interesting survey of the opinions of 12,000 students as to the most important traits of a good teacher, they listed them in the following order: cooperative and democratic attitude, kindliness and consideration for the individual, patience, wide interest, pleasing personal appearance and manner, fairness and impartiality, sense of humor, good disposition and consistent behavior, interest in pupil's problems, flexibility, and the use of recognition and praise. Final on the list was "unusual proficiency in teaching." It is significant that all of the first eleven items are descriptive of personality.

It is not sufficient, however, merely to list personality traits even though these are helpful guides. It is more important to consider the teacher's motivation, his adjustment capacity, the nature of his personal and social problems. One can be certain that every teacher does have problems. Therefore, one of the most important services that should be available to him is a personal counseling program. The supervisor and the principal often can assist the teachers under their jurisdiction. However, many problems require skill and knowledge that the average supervisor and school principal have not had an opportunity to gain.

Ideally, careful consideration should be given to an evaluation of the teacher's personality before his acceptance for teacher training. Just the desire to be a teacher or the choice of that method for earning a livelihood are not in themselves valid justification for entrance into the profession. Similarly, an evaluation prior

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to employment would be an additional safeguard to the effectiveness of the school system. Current requirements of academic credentials, experience records, endorsements by former teachers are grossly inadequate criteria. There is a pressing need for a measurement of personality integration, emotional maturity, the capacity for personal adjustment, and freedom from neurotic character traits. We do, however, now have some interviewing techniques and personality tests which give helpful data on selection.

Second in importance to the teacher's personality is his possession of a body of knowledge about the psychological growth of the child that should be provided in his training. Unfortunately, this has been given him only rarely and inadequately. This training should include an understanding of the psychological dynamics and the multiple roles that the teacher must play. Primarily, he is a parent surrogate, not merely substituting for, but perhaps also correcting, supplementing, and modifying the influence of the real parent. He is an expediter of growth—intellectual, emotional, physical, and social. He automatically represents a set of moral and ethical values with which the student may identify. By his example he establishes interpersonal relations which serve as a pattern for the student to follow. Finally, he is the imparter of certain specific information. To play these roles, the teacher must have a thorough knowledge of psychological dynamics. Those roles cannot be handled effectively merely on the basis of intuition plus one's personal life experience.

Ask a teacher in almost any public school why a particular child cries in class, why another seems fearful or rebellious, why still another fails in spite of his "smartness." One will probably receive a sincere but superficial answer to the effect that "she is just another child." "He doesn't apply himself." "He is spoiled," or "He is lazy." The teacher does not really know that he does not know the real why. How could he find that out in the course of most of our training programs?

Teacher Training for Mental Health

If the maintenance of good mental health becomes a major objective of academic education, then the teacher needs training in addition to the well-formulated courses in educational psychology, pedagogy, administration, and the specialty subject which he proposes to teach. From the point of view of the psychiatrist, it may be helpful to specify certain courses in which training, and, if possible, practical experience, should be not only helpful but in many cases essential.

Personality Development. This is basic to an understanding of human behavior. The subject matter of such a course would include the psychological stages of development, the factors that come into play in each stage, and their effect upon the shaping of the personality.

Personality Structure and Function. Some psychiatrists refer to these subjects as the anatomy and the physiology of the personality. It would include instruction about unconscious forces, their modification by the conscious ego and the conscience. It would include discussion of the mental mechanisms. This would permit a better understanding of the irrational and emotional aspects of behavior.

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Types of Personality Deviation. The teacher needs an understanding of the major and minor deviations from normal personality, particularly as they enter into his problem of coping with unusual behavior in students. This would be more than a course in abnormal psychology in that it should orient the teacher to causative factors. It should present not only the evidences of maladjustment, but also the indications of excessive strain on a particular child's personality.

Therapeutic Methods. The teacher should not be expected to provide treatment for serious maladjustment. He does, however, have the responsibility of managing many minor problems in behavior that are regularly observed in "normal" children. Feelings of inadequacy, inferiority, tension, mild anxiety, crudities, lying, quarrelling, unusual sexual activity, and many other types of misbehavior can often be dealt with satisfactorily by the teacher. Therefore, it should be helpful if the teacher could be informed about some of the newer scientific data regarding the causes and methods of management of these difficulties. He would be better equipped if he had some general knowledge of the treatment methods used by the psychiatrist and the work of the clinical psychologist and social worker.

Psychological Testing. Our understanding of the personality has become enormously enriched by the use of tests of many types which give us information that cannot be obtained as satisfactorily by any other method. Knowledge about tests which are used more commonly and the significance of their scores should be valuable to the person who is as vitally concerned with the unfolding personality as is the teacher. Some of these have a special value in understanding the many factors that hinder or aid the learning process.

Family Life. Types of relationships within families which assist or interfere with the child's school adjustment are of special interest to teachers.

Social Dynamics. An extensive body of knowledge is now available on the role of leadership, group dynamics, the psychological significance of the social forces of group motivation and identification.

Experience Through Observation. If at all possible, an experience of three to six months as an observer in a child guidance clinic would be of an enormous value to any teacher. Similarly, attendance for several months at a psychiatric case study seminar either in connection with a guidance clinic, juvenile court, or social agency, could be of great educational value.

In addition to the information and experience gained from these courses, the teacher who is focusing on the mental health of the individual student needs two other sources of information about his students. The first of these is a personal history and a picture of the current life situation of each of his students. The feeling and behavior of each of us is dependent entirely on the combination of our past experiences and the immediate situation in which we live. Behavior is so highly individualistic that it is impossible to understand, and therefore interpret, except in terms of the life experience of each individual. The teacher, therefore, cannot be expected to understand the psychological needs and reactions of any particular student without such knowledge.

The second body of data desirable for the teacher is information on the problems of youth as youth sees them. It is granted that youth may not see some of its more important problems. However, a young person will usually itemize his many doubts and minor anxieties when systematically questioned. A recent poll by the Division of Educational Reference of Purdue University covered a wide range of questions which were submitted to 15,000 high school students. The findings should be of particular interest to teachers. It was found that 54 percent of these students wished that they knew...
how to study more effectively; 56 per-
cent reported they wished they were
more calm when they recited in class;
59 percent asked "how much ability do
I actually have?" Nearly 50 percent felt
an active concern about how they were
going to earn a living; 35 percent said
they worry about "little things"; 54 per-
cent said that they want people to like
them more. Nearly half of both sexes
had questions and problems related to
the other sex. 15

The unfortunate fact confronting
educators whose aim is mental health
through education, is that very few of
our teacher training schools provide
more than a meager amount of the above
information. In a survey of twenty
schools in two of our more populous
states, only one reported any required
courses dealing with these subjects; one
reported 6 elective credit hours and none
of the others reported more than 3 se-
mester hours. 16 Such subject matter is
often taught as units in various other
courses so that it is difficult to specify,
but it is apparent that no school begins
to approach what the mental health
worker would regard as minimal.

Aims, Methods, and
Concepts in Teaching

There are many indications that the
aims, methods, and concepts of the edu-
cational program are being re-evaluated.
Many educators are describing the pres-
ent situation not merely as a challenge
but as a crisis. One of them states, "Pres-
ent-day educational and training agen-
cies are found utterly inadequate to
meet the changing requirements of
happy and successful living. A lack of
coordination between educational insti-
tutions and the work-a-day world is ap-
parent in nine out of ten schools and
colleges investigated." 17 This belief is
similarly stated by several others. 18

Education, like every other major
field of human activity, becomes filled
with traditions, many of which become
impediments. Not only are the teacher
and the school system handicapped by
these traditions but they produce situ-
tional realities which make changes dif-
ficult. This would include the compla-
cent public attitude towards the inade-
quate salary scale for teachers so that it
becomes difficult if not impossible to re-
cruit and hold superior persons in cer-
tain types of jobs and in certain geo-
ographical areas. Surveys 19 indicate the
over-crowding of facilities and the ex-
cessive student load per teacher which
make it impossible to do the most ef-
fective job. Because of the number of
students, most schools still cater to the
average student; both the fast learners
and the slow learners are thereby penal-
ized. Inadequate facilities and outmoded
equipment are the rule.

In part, these problems may be indica-
tive of increased need for public edu-
cation. The current effort in this di-
rection is highly commendable and the
attention of the general public is ar-

15 Examiner Manual for Science Research Asso-
ciates Youth Inventory, Chicago: Science Research
16 The survey reported was conducted by the Com-
mittee on Relation of Psychiatry to Academic Edu-
cation of the Group for the Advancement of Psy-
chiatry in 1949.
17 Edgerton, A. H.: Readjustment or Revolution,
18 Hutchins, R. M.©: The Good News of Damna-
tion, an address before the Publicity Club of Chi-
gaco, January 8, 1947; Jones, H. M.: Education and
World Tragedy, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard Univer-
sity Press, 1946, pp. 78-79.
19 Teacher Load in Kansas, Topeka, Kansas State
Teachers Association, May 1949.
rested by statements such as that of General Omar Bradley who called upon Americans everywhere to wake up to the fact that the U. S. population is outgrowing the U. S. public school system. He bluntly stated that "Year by year, in community by community, we are watching one of the great strongholds of democracy be weakened."20

Within the system, some concepts need to be re-evaluated. One of these is student failure. Every student who fails is in some degree also a teacher failure and a community failure. Furthermore, failure on the playground may have far more social significance than failure in the classroom.

Few educators are satisfied with most grading systems, so many of which lead to the mentally unhealthy effects of student competition, odious comparison, unrealistic evaluation of student ability, perfectionists working for grades and not knowledge, the assumed air of resignation and don't-care-attitude of the D and F student. Another problem is the student who comes to hate a subject because of his dislike for the teacher. Unfortunately, he is likely to continue on through life hating the subject.

The chief aim in education is, of course, to impart information. This audience has undoubtedly participated in many discussions about the various specific goals. There are those who believe that education should aim chiefly at inculcating "culture"—the so-called "decorative theory." There are many who subscribe to the principle that the high school student should take algebra because of the disciplinary value of such learning. They believe that the ability so learned can be transferred to other more pragmatic subjects—the "disciplinary theory."

A considerable number of educators believe that high school training is one step in the educational process which should prepare for the next step into college—the "college preparatory theory."21 (This is in spite of the fact that less than 20 percent of high school students go to college!)

Most recently, there has been an increasing awareness of the need for vocational training, although again, only 20 to 30 percent of high school students require special vocational training for their future choice of livelihood.22

To be ruthless and perhaps undiplomatic, all of these aims seem to me as a psychiatrist to be "decorative." Certainly they seem very secondary. Undoubtedly my vision is deeply colored by my daily life work of seeing an unending stream of people who are afraid, distraught, anxious, tense, and lonely. The psychiatrist's contacts with patients make him sensitive and alert to the extensive psychopathology on all sides—unhappiness, suspicion, greed, fear, hate. From my point of view, the only conceivable primary aim of education should be to prepare the individual for social living. The training for culture, college, or making a livelihood—important though each may be—are only single aspects of a much larger opportunity.

The fact is, this has not been, and in very few educational systems now is, the

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primary aim. Our concepts, methods, and curricula attest to this fact. It is doubtful if more than a very few educators have thoughtfully considered the implications of so radical a change—a change not only in the direction, but in the orientation of our administrators and their teaching staffs. It almost surely would call for a major overhaul of the curriculum. It might be helpful to be somewhat more specific about the implications of such a change in emphasis as viewed by the psychiatrist. A primary objective would be to help the student understand himself, his capabilities, abilities, and limitations. The faculty would pay particular attention to the emotional development of the student. Very direct efforts would be made towards resolving existing psychological conflicts in students, from the first through the twelfth grades, eliminating insofar as possible the bases for anxiety. Development of varied abilities in order to find satisfaction in socially approved constructive outlets would be included. A teacher’s most important training qualification should be his ability to understand and apply the dynamics of behavior to himself and his students. As the result of a much higher degree of consideration of the individual needs of a student, a greatly increased emphasis would be placed on all the interpersonal relations of teacher and student.

The approach of life adjustment education as outlined by the Educational Policies Commission is excellent and, if implemented, would go a long way toward the primary goal of aiding the child to solve the problems of social living. As this audience probably well knows, the Commission included the subjects of home living, vocational and civic life, leisure time, and physical and mental health. Suggestions for specific methods of implementing each of these areas and others in life adjustment education have been made by Dan Hull. These could well be applied by any school system seriously interested in following this program.

In outlining specific measures to be used, however, educators should not lose sight of the focus on personality development. Thus, in vocational training the over-all aim might well be to aid the student in developing a capacity to work in addition to the subject matter, and with it, the attendant attributes of the emotionally mature individual, such as a sense of responsibility, initiative, dependability, happy personal relations, good economic judgment. In learning about citizenship, the student needs not only an informed awareness and understanding of the social needs and problems in the community, the nation, and the world, but a recognition that these problems are his problems.

If the aim of education were to be the preparation of the individual for effective social living, it would require that educators take cognizance of the basic requirements for the healthy development of personality. Psychiatrists have become convinced that the personality is well along in its development by five or six years of age when the

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child comes to school. But its development is far from complete by those ages and the further progress is a heavy responsibility of the teacher.

Among the basic requirements for healthy development of personality, probably the most difficult lesson that every child needs to learn—and many adults should, but have not learned—is how to love and to be loved. Perhaps this should be thought of as a technique of living. Equally essential abilities for successful living are learning to tolerate frustration and making and gracefully accepting compromises. This is related to the universally necessary ability to face reality without resorting to destructively fighting it or taking flight.

Essential to individual happiness is the ability to develop personal and environmental security. In this troubled world, perhaps the most needed lesson is to learn how we can sublimate our primitive impulses to hate into socially approved activity. These lessons are all basic to a subsequently satisfactory adjustment in home life, vocational and civic life, leisure time, and so on. Failure to learn them is the cause of mental illness, prejudice, greed, selfishness, hate, and war.

**Carrying Out This “New Aim”**

Were it agreed that education should have as its chief aim the preparation of an individual for social living, no one could currently say how this could be done. It might become the goal of a nation-wide research project with various aspects being developed in different school systems. This would have to start in our teacher training schools. It would require the leadership of some courageous educators who would experiment radically with the curriculum. It would certainly involve offering many new courses, which means that some subjects currently taught would have to be dropped. It might necessitate changes in the requirements for admission to the vocational school and the university.

There are a few leads. Some extensive, even though only beginning work, has been done in indoctrinating an entire grade in the public school with the dynamic approach wherever human behavior is discussed in the curriculum. Professor Ralph H. Ojemann of the State University of Iowa has for the past six years been developing material to incorporate in the traditional content of the primary and secondary schools. This material has for its goal the improvement in interpersonal relations and thus the improvement in the mental health of the students. Its principal aim is to substitute a dynamic understanding of what the student learns, in contrast to merely a static description; an understanding of motives and causes rather than merely facts. The hope is that this understanding will lead to changed attitudes and personal behavior of the child.

One example, selected from a discussion in civics, will illustrate the approach. A standard textbook presents the problem of crime in a very matter-of-fact descriptive way—in terms of the organization of a police force, its functions as prescribed by law, methods for detecting and apprehending the criminal, the organization of courts and their function, training schools in prisons and their function during detention.

In the Ojemann method, an attempt is made to reconsider these in terms of
dynamics. Thus, there is added the consideration of the motivations underlying criminal behavior, how the police and courts take such understanding into account in dealing with the criminal; the methods of rehabilitation of the criminal into a self-respecting, cooperative citizen; the part of the community in providing real protection through redirection and correction of the forces producing the criminal. The discussion would include reasons why some persons living in the same home or same neighborhood become criminals while others do not. This series of experiments at Iowa University was the object of close investigation by a group of psychiatrists who were interested in the preventive aspect of their specialty. They were very favorably impressed with its potential value.

A different type of experiment was inaugurated some years ago by H. Edmund Bullis in the Delaware schools under the title of “Human Relations in the Classroom.” The philosophy behind this program is the assumption that children must come to a better understanding and accept their individual emotional strengths and weaknesses and, through insight, progress towards emotional maturity. The plan is to have a discussion by the children of their own emotional experiences in a classroom session, led by the teacher. Outlines have been prepared for the leaders which can be included as work units, integrated into the existing curriculum, usually in the English or Social Science classes of the 7th and 8th grades. In Delaware, this program now involves 135 teachers and approximately 5,100 pupils.

Programs are also under way in West Virginia, Louisiana, North Carolina and, to a lesser extent, in several other states. Mr. Bullis estimates that there are currently a total of about 7,000 classes a week with 200,000 children enrolled.

Another possibility is the establishment of a special course dealing with various aspects of social living. Many schools make use of the series of Life Adjustment Booklets published by the Science Research Associates in Chicago. Having contributed to this series, as the author of two booklets, it has been my privilege to receive reports from schools which have used such material, either in a separate course or incorporated into the English or social science courses. The teachers and school officials are enthusiastic about the acceptance of this material by the students.

Still another approach has been made in a few high schools where courageous and far-seeing superintendents have established special opportunities for certain groups of students, most frequently in the senior class. These have included not only discussion groups about the student’s personality but also courses on the family, community activities, special

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27. Bullis, H. Edmund: Human Relations in the Classroom. Wilmington, Delaware: Delaware State Society for Mental Hygiene, 1948 Course I and Course II (two volumes).

problems, as well as on-the-job training
and other very promising experiments. 20

**HOME—an AID
OR DETERRENT?**

Philosophically and in reality the
school is a continuation of the home.
The teacher is an extension of the par-
ents. Responsibility for the child's de-
velopment through his first five or six
years rests entirely within the family.
From then on the teacher exerts a very
great influence—a grave responsibility
in an increasingly disturbed world.

Commendable as the few experiments
are in the way of guidance for further
development of the school curriculum,
they are a far cry from the School of
Tomorrow 30 that will give our children
or grandchildren a better understanding
of themselves, aid them in getting along
with other people, and help them to as-
sume more intelligently the individual
and group leadership that our nation and
world must have if they are to survive.
May we not hope that the school and
the home will work much closer to-
gether in their mutual assumption of
responsibility to aid youth in learning
social living. Some parents are mentally
insecure and emotionally immature.
Others provide no happy parental rela-
tionship. Housing conditions prevent
the provision for a mentally healthy en-
vironment for too many children. But
many parents are doing a good job and
are eager and willing to assist the schools
in any way possible.

The school, therefore, has both the
very special responsibility of attempt-
ing to correct or counteract or supple-
ment the situation at home, and of using
parents to supplement the school pro-
gram. Success in these efforts rests
largely upon the understanding and ca-
pability of the teacher. There are va-
rious ways in which the school can and
should supplement the home and vice
versa. Some of these were outlined by
Shane, and I would add others. 31

1. We should postpone exposure of the child
to adult problems which he is too immature

to understand. The child cannot be expected
to assume the responsibilities of a missing par-
ent, to understand the financial worries in the
home, or to be a "little man" when he is a
little boy.

2. The system of values of the parents with
regard to morality, ethics, education, ideals,
may be out of harmony with the community,
leaving the child confused and uncertain.

3. Many homes are relatively loveless, too
often filled with bitterness. In such instances
the teacher has an enormously increased re-
sponsibility to love the child from such a
home and teach him how to love and thereby
be able to learn.

4. Some children are tied too long to the
apron strings. They are held by "binding" or
"smothering" love. The resulting over-pro-
tection always warps them and leads to in-
security in the school situation.

5. The disciplinary problems at home may
have engendered fear. This may be augmented
by partiality to one child. The resulting
sibling rivalry becomes an important emo-
tional problem, often unrecognized by the
parents.

6. Sometimes a problem is created when a
child becomes so enamoured of the teacher
that a schism is produced between the child
and the parents, and the latter are excluded on
the basis of incompetence in the eyes of the
school.

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20 Hull, J. Dan: Primer of Life Adjustment Edu-
cation for Youth, Chicago, American Technical So-
ciety, 1949.

30 Source Book for the School of Tomorrow for
Kansas. The Educational Planning Commission of
the Kansas State Teachers Association, Topeka, May,
1948. This is an excellent outline of the problems
and the program for schools of the future.

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31 Shane, H. G. Moral Security for Mental Health,

Educational Leadership
These illustrations add to the complexity of the school function but, at the same time, focus on the very great need for it to assume more responsibility in aiding the individual pupil to live a richer life.

We have hardly begun to develop the effective liaison that might be established between the home and the school in their joint responsibility of teaching the child about how to solve the problems of social living. The Parent-Teacher Association has done a splendid job but there is a need for much closer working relationship between parents and teachers. Much could be accomplished if mothers could serve for a week as a full time "room mother." Parents might be used much more frequently as project leaders. Some parents would like to cooperate in the planning of the curriculum and many would have opinions worthy of consideration. Too rarely is a teacher invited into a home for a visit. Much might be accomplished were the school system to require a routine monthly meeting between the parents and the teachers during which the mutual problems might be discussed.

As another important supplementary aid, every school system should provide a counselor program. Some of the more progressive schools do so now, some few with professionally skilled help. This should benefit both teachers and students. The teachers should have the advantage of regular sessions with the expert in human relations. They can and should handle the great majority of personality difficulties presented by the students. If the teacher has an understanding of personality structure and functioning, he should be able to deal much more effectively with the personality needs of each student than is possible without such knowledge. Regardless, however, of a new aim, a changed system, or unusually well-trained and capable teachers, there will be those occasional problems which require the expert help of the professional counselor.

Some time in the evolution of our culture we have slipped, and slipped badly. With good reason Dr. Brock Chisholm, Director General of the World Health Organization, has raised the question as to whether or not we can learn, with adequate speed, to become sufficiently mature to prevent our own extinction. Dr. Chisholm is not an alarmist, nor have I had any intention of being such in reviewing the sorry state of affairs in our current world. Perhaps the home has not done and is not doing its job. Perhaps our civic, state, and national leaders are not as effective in their positions as they should be. The educational program of a generation ago is partly to blame for their inadequacy.

Of all groups in our national scene, none exhibits greater devotion to its mission than do our teachers. No other group, except parents, have the direct contact with the on-coming generation. Therefore, some of us have hope, confidence, and belief in our educators as the group that can make the greatest contribution to mental health. "Mental Health for Better Living"—an ideal aim that I plead might become the guiding and motivating conviction of every teacher. Are our educational leaders—this group—sufficiently courageous to implement it before it is too late?
