

Affective Education:

Sound
Investment

Affective education is
not a luxury; it can
save schools money.



In this conservative era, we think there is a case for spending resources on affective concerns. Our first argument rests on common sense.

From our own experiences we know that people do better when they are at least moderately content. Of course, this does not mean that students should be placid; they need to be aroused. However, that arousal should be positive in the sense that it creates an expectancy of success. Selye (1956) and his colleagues provided a theoretical base for this position by differentiating between stress and eustress. The former paralyzes while the latter motivates. In school settings where affective concerns are attended, the student works in a climate of trust, respect, and expectancy of the highest possible individual achievement. Learning is, therefore, maximized and high standards are perceived as eustress rather than distress. Thus productivity is increased because greater outcomes are achieved without greater inputs.

What's Good for General Motors...

Another argument for spending money on affective concerns is that other groups in our society—especially the business community—are doing it. In Japan, "Quality Circles" (Zemke, 1979), which increase production-line workers' involvement in the manufacturing process, have received credit for that nation's high levels of productivity. Likewise, the Motorola Company (1981) implemented the Participation Management Program (PMP) to improve productivity:

In PMP, teams of employees meet frequently, sometimes daily, among themselves and with support groups to tackle the basics. Everyone is encouraged to define problems and suggest solutions. The management listens, contributes, acts. Each team operates to high, published standards which it participates in setting. The teams measure their improving performance to these standards daily, weekly, monthly. And everyone benefits (p. B16).

Zemke (1979) quotes Jackson Grayson, father of productivity and Chairman of the American Productivity Center, as follows:

The people who do the work must believe that their contributions to improvement are wanted, needed, and will be rewarded. That could mean a whole re-education for first-line management. Supervisors who aren't comfortable with experimentation have to encourage trial and error instead of rule and policy following. Supervisors, like parents, dislike "why" questions. But nothing can shut down the process faster than antagonistic supervisors. They need to learn to relate to people in new ways (p. 20).

DAVID N. ASPY AND FLORA N. ROEBUCK

By spending resources on affective concerns, education would confirm the model of industry in which interpersonal training is considered a sound investment.

Research Results

A third argument for affective education is based on research indicating that a school's productivity is increased to the degree that the principal, the teachers, or the students have better interpersonal skills—an important aspect of the affective domain.

For example, research indicates that when principals possess high-order interpersonal skills, students and teachers benefit directly. Bruce Middlebrooks, now of Georgia Southwestern University, demonstrated high levels of physical, intellectual, and emotional functioning when he served as principal of an elementary school. During a one-year study, the teachers on his faculty made significant gains in interpersonal functioning and none applied for transfers even though the school was in an economically depressed neighborhood. In that same period, students were absent significantly fewer times than the previous year and also made significantly greater progress on achievement tests. Additionally, discipline problems decreased throughout the year. Thus, a positive relationship between the principal's interpersonal functioning and the performance of teachers and students was evident (Aspy and Roebuck, 1976).

The positive effect of the principal's interpersonal skills was replicated in a study of James Kenney of Montgomery County, Maryland. Kenney, a high-level functioner, was the principal of three elementary schools and conducted interpersonal skills training at each one. In each school, the teachers' levels of interpersonal skills improved; in two of the three schools, those improvements were positively related to student gains in achievement test performance. The students in the third school were in an accelerated program and, thus, were already scoring high on achievement tests. Additionally, all three faculties improved in attendance and requested fewer transfers (Aspy and Roebuck, 1976).

In a matched school comparison, the faculty taught by Kenney made signifi-

cant gains while the teachers taught by a principal who was a low-level functioner deteriorated slightly in interpersonal functioning. Apparently, principals can teach interpersonal skills to teachers if they model them as well as deliver the appropriate substantive content (Aspy and Roebuck, 1976).

Larger studies involving 6,000 students at both the elementary and secondary levels support the smaller studies (Aspy and Roebuck, 1977). Furthermore, the findings reveal that the principals' levels of interpersonal functioning are positively related to students' attendance and achievement test performance. Fortunately, these same studies indicate that principals can be trained to higher levels of interpersonal functioning.

Teacher's levels of interpersonal functioning were investigated in research studies ranging from small groups to groups of 300 or more teachers and thousands of students (Aspy and Roebuck, 1977; Aspy and Roebuck, 1979; Roebuck, 1980). Across all studies, the research findings support the following conclusions:

1. The levels of the teacher's interpersonal functioning are related directly to pupil achievement, attendance, self-concept, attitudes toward school, and behavior in school.
2. Interpersonal skills are different from positive reinforcement and are not a means of manipulating students.
3. The levels of interpersonal functioning are independent of demographic variables.
4. Teachers can learn to enhance their levels of interpersonal functioning.
5. Most teachers can benefit from interpersonal training programs of 18 hours.
6. Interpersonal skills can be taught economically.

In a third approach to research on the effects of interpersonal skills training, these skills were taught directly to students. One interpersonal skill is the interchangeable response, which communicates to another person that "I hear and understand your viewpoint." The "teachability" of this skill was illustrated by a study in Dallas where a group of gifted middle-school students

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learned to make interchangeable responses after 30 minutes of didactic instruction and supervised practice (Aspy and Aspy, unpublished).

Another study examined third-grade students' learning of interpersonal skills and found that they could be taught to make interchangeable responses to each other in two hours of didactic and experiential training (Aspy, 1972). Their teachers also began to make more interchangeable responses to the students as the students made them to each other.

Results of both studies of the effects of training students in interpersonal skills indicate that students who acquired the skills also increased their attendance and their academic achievement. These studies are interesting and suggestive but undertaking this type of program needs to be considered carefully in light of the reluctance to implement values training and similar efforts in many communities. Perhaps naturalistic studies would be the best approach to this question, at least in the near future.

Even if the studies of student training are disregarded, the research evidence forming this plank of our case remains incontrovertible—a *small* expenditure for interpersonal skills training of administrators and faculty yields *big dividends* in both student outcomes and teacher morale and job performance. Thus, attention to this affective concern increases the school's productivity.

Dollars and Cents

A fourth argument is the type of payoffs to be expected from investing in affective concerns. In one study of third-graders, higher levels of teacher interpersonal functioning were related to an increase of four days attendance per student (Aspy, 1972). In a class of 25 students, this would mean a total increase of 100 days of attendance. If the state reimburses the school \$5 per day of attendance, the school will have gained \$500 for just one class.

A study of disruptive student behavior in 276 classrooms found that the number and type of disruptive incidents were related to the teachers' levels of interpersonal skills (Aspy and Roebuck, 1979). Students of teachers with higher-level skills generated significantly fewer disruptive incidents and significantly less severe problems. The strength of the relationship indicated that about one-third of all disruptive behavior in classrooms can be accounted for by the variance in teacher levels of interpersonal skills. Translated

into concrete benefits, this means that if all the teachers in a school had high levels of interpersonal skills, the time spent by teachers and principals in dealing with behavior problems could be reduced by one-third. The time saved (and the salary dollars represented by that time) could then be devoted to more productive teaching and leadership endeavors.

In this and other studies, researchers also found that better than 25 percent of the variance in vandalism, and lack of care-taking for school property and materials is related to the interpersonal skills of the school's faculty and staff. In real terms, this means that a school with high-functioning personnel can redirect to more productive uses 25 percent of the monies previously allotted for repair of broken windows, repaint-

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ing of defaced walls, and replacement of broken fixtures.

As noted earlier, teachers whose principals used high levels of interpersonal skills were less apt to transfer to another school. In one urban district in 1981, the bookkeeping and secretarial cost for each teacher transfer was estimated as \$100. If ten teachers do not transfer, the school has saved \$1,000. This is independent of the costs of administrator and computer time which, doubtless, would add at least another \$100 to the cost of a teacher transfer. Other related costs of recruitment, orientation, retraining, and effects of disjunction escalate the savings made for each teacher retained. Furthermore, in schools with high-functioning principals, teacher absenteeism is drastically reduced with consequent savings of salaries for substitutes. In an 18-teacher school, just two days fewer absences per teacher results in savings of approximately \$2,000.

Poor schooling affects productivity both directly in the quality of the product (failed students) and indirectly through increased costs for remedial courses for students. In one large urban district, 3,000 students were retained

for a second year at the same grade level. If the learning of just 5 percent of these students had been made more effective by better affective responses to them, there would have been a savings of \$100,000 per year. This is a reasonable assumption since the studies cited earlier indicate that the affective climate accounts for at least 5 percent of the differential learning outcomes between high and low facilitative climates.

The effect of the interpersonal classroom climate is especially great for the educationally handicapped student. Roebuck, Buhler, and Aspy (1976) studied 296 slow-learners in 75 classrooms in grades two through six. Educationally-handicapped students in the classrooms of high-level functioning teachers made significantly greater gains in math, reading, self-concept, and IQ scores than similar students of low-functioning teachers. In particular, these slow-learning students had mean gains (from September to April) of a year or more in reading and math achievement when their teacher had high interpersonal skills but only made about a half-year's progress when their teacher had low interpersonal skills.

Looking at our total society, we find a tremendous cost from the *decreased* learning of students. When students do not learn essential skills, they are more apt to drop out in other aspects of society. The principal reason people are in prisons may be that they do not have marketable skills they should have learned in school. For many students, failure begins in the first grade partially because teachers do not respond to their affective needs. Our data suggest strongly that many teachers, like most other people, do not have minimal interpersonal skills (Aspy and Roebuck, 1975). Most teachers, for example, cannot make effective interpersonal responses until they are trained to do so. Thus, significant amounts of money invested in detention homes, jails, and prisons could probably be saved if schools paid more attention to affective concerns.

Evaluation

Affective education interacts with many other factors to produce the total impact of schools. Fortunately, eminent scholars have outlined procedures to investigate the various components of this complex interaction. Ralph Tyler (1954) proposed a three-part model for evaluation of education with structure, process, and product as the three phases of

total assessment. Interpersonal skills were included in the process variable. Goodman (1979) presents a process that allows us to pinpoint the effect of various elements, including interpersonal skills, upon the school's outcomes. Thus, it is not necessary to believe or disbelieve previous studies. Every school can evaluate the effectiveness of its program for enhancing the interpersonal skills of school personnel. Additionally, levels of interpersonal functioning can be related systematically to the school's outcomes.

You can quickly carry out a simple evaluation to determine whether an investment in affective concerns would pay off for your own school or school system. It takes just three steps:

1. Match the schools in your system on the Socioeconomic Status (SES) composition of the students served.

2. Within each SES category, identify the school that consistently produces the desired outcomes: higher achievement results, better attendance, more competitions won, fewer drop-

outs, more teacher retention, or other factors of concern to you.

3. Compare that school to the others in its SES category to determine the respective levels of interpersonal functioning of principals and staff and the attention paid to affective education.

When you find (as we are confident you will) that the most productive schools are also those in which affective concerns are well attended, run a balance sheet to determine the immediate cost benefit ratio of an investment in upgrading the interpersonal skills of your school personnel. Figure 1, a worksheet

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for such an analysis, is based on the benefits identified earlier and documented by research results. (See also Lorin W. Anderson and Jo Craig Anderson, "Affective Assessment Is Necessary and Possible," in this issue.)

One Last Thought

This case for affective concerns has been based strictly on financial considerations. Surely we can assume that even the toughest penny-pinchers have some consideration for just plain human decency. Perhaps we can estimate that minimal concern for human decency would be to devote 1 percent of the school's total resources specifically to this effort. Thus, if the school's budget is \$1,000,000, then \$10,000 should be specifically designated for human decency, and within this category, there should be some resources for interpersonal skills training.

One thing that makes interpersonal skill training so exquisitely consonant with conservative schools is that the most effective methods for teaching

Figure 1: Worksheet for Identifying Immediate Cost/Benefit Ratio from Upgrading Interpersonal Skills in a School.

Immediate* Benefits From Upgrading Interpersonal Skills

- | | |
|--|----------|
| 1. Reduction in substitute pay (Multiply number of teachers x 2 days x average cost per day for a substitute.) | \$ _____ |
| 2. Increased State/Foundation support for attendance (Multiply number of pupils x 4 days x support rate per day of pupil attendance.) | \$ _____ |
| 3. Decreased cost of schooling retained students (Divide the number of students retained at grade per year by two; then multiply by average cost per year of a student's schooling.) | \$ _____ |
| 4. Decreased expenditure for vandalism and breakage (Divide by four the school's average yearly expenditure for repairs and maintenance due to vandalism, lack of caretaking by students.) | \$ _____ |
| 5. Savings in productively-redistributed administrator time (Estimate the percent of administrative time spent dealing with disruptive student behaviors; multiply that percent times the administrator's salary; divide by four.) | \$ _____ |
| 6. Savings in productively-redistributed instructional time (Estimate the average percent of time spent by teachers in dealing with disruptive student behavior; divide by 4; multiply by mean teacher salary; multiply by number of teachers.) | \$ _____ |
| 7. Decreased cost of teacher transfers (Multiply average number of teacher transfers each year x cost to school of teacher transfer x .85.) | \$ _____ |
| 8. Total Estimated Immediate* Benefits (Add Items 1 through 7) | \$ _____ |

Cost of Upgrading Interpersonal Skills

- \$ _____ 9. Cost of a three-day workshop and three follow-up half-days during school year. (Estimate on basis of fees you generally pay for a top inservice trainer for 15 participants. Include stipends for teachers if you normally pay them to attend inservice training and allow \$15 per participant for materials.)

Cost/Benefit Ratio:

(8) _____

(9) _____

***Note:** Many long-term benefits such as higher student achievement, better teacher morale, fewer drop-outs, and so on are not represented on this worksheet.

them are couched in conservative, technological terms. This is particularly true of Carkhuff's (1981a) materials for teachers. Carkhuff's system is conservative and fiscally sound. He demonstrates how his interpersonal skills technology relates to a more effective society in general. Any educator can use Carkhuff's materials for interpersonal skills training and present the case effectively to the most conservative board of education. After all, a big part of each of us is our affect. ■

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PEOPLE SKILLS Help Build a Better Organization

School District No. 12 (Adams County) in suburban Denver, Colorado, emphasizes the need for professional and personal growth in its staff development program. In order to maximize its human resources and build a better educational organization, the district uses two 15-hour courses to help employees develop "people skills." Both courses use video cassette tape presentations, small-group discussions, and related activities through which participants may receive district inservice and recertification credit.

Achieving Your Potential

"Achieving Your Potential"¹ was first offered in District No. 12 in the summer of 1979. Since then, nearly 300 district employees have completed the course, which aims at developing better human relations skills and self-image through goal-setting techniques. Participants become aware of their habits and attitudes while learning communications and motivational skills to change negative habits and attitudes into positive ones. The course also offers guides for goal setting and ways to achieve goals on and off the job.

The district has several administrators who are trained to facilitate

"Achieving Your Potential." After viewing the videotapes, participants discuss the ideas presented in them; charts and thought-provoking activities help reinforce those ideas.

Management and Motivation

First offered in the fall of 1980, "Management and Motivation" is a comprehensive training program developed by industrial psychologist Leo F. McManus.² It was originally designed for business executives, and School District No. 12 is one of the first in the country to use it in a school setting.

The course emphasizes that the key to understanding yourself and others lies in identifying four basic personality types or management styles:

Dominance—active, positive response to a challenging environment

Inducement—active, positive response to a favorable environment

Steadiness—passive, agreeable response to a favorable environment

Compliance—passive, cautious response to a challenging or antagonistic environment.

During the course, participants identify their own management style by filling out a self-perception sheet

and graphing the results. Participants can identify their own specific characteristics and learn how to build on their strengths and compensate for their weaknesses. *The course emphasizes that no particular style or personality type is better or more effective than another.*

Participants also analyze the behavior patterns of others and learn how to relate better to students, other teachers, and administrators. Administrators and supervisors learn how to manage, supervise, and work with others in a humane and effective way.

¹"Achieving Your Potential" is produced by Pacific Institute, 100 W. Harrison Plaza, Suite 500, Seattle, WA 98119. Phone: (206)282-9840.

²"Management and Motivation" is available from the American Management Association, American Management Building, 135 W. 50th St., New York, NY 10020. Phone: (212)586-8106.

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