

SPECIAL ARTICLES

Sex Education *

By

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Last year at the Chandigarh Conference the present speaker read a paper in which he stressed the parents' duty of imparting sex education to their children. This year at the Bombay Conference it may prove useful to sketch the psychological background of sex education and to point out some of its guiding principles.

I Psychological Background of Sex Education :

Freud has made several major contributions to our present knowledge of personality development. Some of these contributions which bear more directly on the present subject will be outlined here :

1. The discovery of the dynamic unconscious. After Freud, the mind is no longer limited by the boundaries of consciousness. Beneath a person's awareness there are mental forces at work, and their pull in a given direction becomes at times compulsive and irresistible. Freud labelled such forces "repressed libido" and "aggressiveness".

2. The discovery of connections between personality development and childhood experience. Freud stressed the role of the Super-Ego in the personality development of the Child. By super-ego he understood moral and social principles instilled in the mind of the Child, authoritarian attitudes of parents, and in general the influence of the social and ethical environment in which the child grows.

3. Freud insistence that sex has much to do with the personality development of the child and with the formation of psychoneuroses. For Freud, personality development springs from the sex instinct. It is only through an adequate solution of the Oedipus Complex by a process of identification that personality can evolve in normal and effective way.

These three contributions, together with the discovery of unconscious mechanisms and of means to explore the unconscious, compel us to acknowledge the genius of Freud. But this does not mean that everything that Freud said was correct. Freud himself expressly said that he had thrown out many suggestions and that he did not know how far he believed in his own views. (Cf. Freud, S. Beyond the Pleasure Principle, P. 9. London : International Psychoanalytic Press, 1922).

Freud's weak point was to base his formulations on data secured from patients and to apply his conclusions to all men, both normal and

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abnormal. Again, Freud used a faulty empirical procedure and placed too much weight on heredity and too little on the socially acquired features of personality.

However, discarding Freudian exaggerations and broad generalizations, the fact remains that sex and one's attitudes towards sex play a major role in the development of one's personality. Psychiatrists and psychologists agree that many mental cases involve sex problems, and that many married people are not happy because of faulty attitudes towards sex. It is distressing to hear young people say, "if my parents had given me sex education, I would never have contracted this habit of masturbation," or as a girl put it, I was violated by a boy because I did not know anything about sex.

U In a survey conducted for 695 College students, 376 Boys and 319 Girls, 88% of the Boys and 58% of the girls declared that they had received no sex education from their parents.

Many distressing anxieties and many personal problems could be avoided if children were properly educated in what concerns sex. Hence, the tremendous importance of education for children.

Today, more and more people begin to realize the need of sex education. Yet when their views and suggestions are examined, it all boils down to sex information. They say that since most parents are ill equipped to fulfil this duty, the school is their best substitute. And therefore they propose that a team of experts give a series of lectures on sex physiology, the facts of life and on venereal disease etc., and thus, they maintain, young people will get clear ideas about sex, and in particular girls will be spared some shameful consequences of their experience.

Such schemes fall short of the target of sex education. One point should be driven home to parents and educators, and it is this, that sex education is not just sex information. Information is just one item in a sex education programme. An adequate biological on sex should be had by every one, but that does not constitute what is meant by sex education. Sex education means the formation of healthy attitudes towards sex in the minds of young people together with the creation of habits of self control and self sacrifice. Such habits cannot last long unless they rest on deep convictions rooted in the understanding of the real purpose of sex and knowledge of what is right and wrong; and also on an unswerving loyalty to God our Lord and Master.

To stand faithful to God in the midst of temptation is not an easy task. Unless one worships God to the best of one's ability and humbly prays to Him, one will easily yield to one's passions and evil desires. The child must be taught the real meaning of sex and how to build good habits by exercising his will power and by praying to God for assistance. Thus, it is evident that sex education is very lengthy process, and therefore a few lectures cannot do justice to it.

It may be suggested here that school and college counsellors, a feature of the near future in India, who deal with the same students

for a number of years, might prove the best substitute for Parents. Yet, one can hope that the future generations will be more enlightened on the importance of this subject, one must insist on the fact that it is the parents' important duty to educate their children in what concerns sex.

II. Some Guiding principles of Sex Education :

Young people should be taught the rules of true friendship and how to distinguish it from emotional fascination, or blind passion, or a selfish companionship. A true friendship according to Kelly, bears these marks :

1. It is morally helpful to both parties. That is, it should not lead to a weakening of faith in God, to a lowering of one's ideals, to the neglect in the practice of one's duties. But rather, it should be uplifting and inspiring.

2. There is a genuine basis of agreement between the parties. That is, the agreement should not spring from a strong emotional attachment, but from a basic harmony between the two likes and dislikes, in feeling and thinking. Then friendship will be lasting and will help to live and work together.

3. Their mutual love is characterized by a spirit of self-sacrifice. That means self-gift, giving in, seeking the good of the other, giving sympathy and encouragement.

Girls should be taught the difference between feminine psychology and male psychology. While girls seek admiration, affection, and friendship, boys easily aim at carnal love and complete satisfaction. Hence, the importance of modesty in the manner of dressing, of restraint in showing affection, and of checking advances right at the beginning. Special precautions must be taken when a couple is alone, and one does not know the intentions of the other.

People want the best kind of family life where happiness, mutual trust and life-long loyalty are found. The best guarantee for such a coveted prize is pure mind and strong will to refuse certain invitations. One can enjoy the company of the opposite sex in a social context without getting involved in emotional attachments. One should distinguish between ordinary friendship which one has with many people, and friendship with a view to marriage. Thus for example, a College girl meets a fine boy and begins to foster an affection for him. When both are deeply in love, then they hope that certain foreseen difficulties to their marriage eventually vanish. Unfortunately for them it is not so. Their parents object strongly and threatening terms to their union, and big problem sets in. They are not happy at home, cannot concentrate their mind on their studies, and their future looks uncertain. It becomes, then extremely difficult to sever bonds of love so unwisely forged and strengthened. Young people must be taught to control their inclinations at the beginning, and not to decide on marriage partner until they are in a position to consider seriously the married state. They should be encouraged to enjoy social life in groups, and

to make friends without getting emotionally involved. Now, this is impossible without sex education.

Sex education does not mean stressing the negative side of sex, speaking only self control and of avoiding danger. Such negativism may produce disastrous results. A person brought up in this atmosphere will see red lights everywhere, and will be incapable of facing life as it is. He may try to suppress all interest in sex and thus he will read a vicious meaning into wholesome occurrence. He will never learn to deal with the opposite sex with ease and comfort, and will feel threatened at every step. Sex education must stress the positive side of sex.

Sex is God's idea. It enables parents to co-work with God in the creation of human being. It is sacred and wonderful when used for the purpose intended by God. In this light, young people can look forward to sexual satisfaction. Yet, this pleasure is not the only thing worth living for. There is the enrichment of one's personality derived from the social relationship between the sexes, and beyond all this there are higher and nobler goals. And therefore, sex education should not be isolated and unduly stressed but should be integrated in the larger pattern of total education. It is through this type of sex education that young people will be helped to become normal and efficient human beings.

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Preventive Aspects of Moral & Social Hygiene*

By

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When we talk of moral and social hygiene the problems that pass through our minds are those of social diseases and their manifestations. Their origin, spread, cure, prevention, the people engaged in traffic which makes use of the brothels, the brothel keepers, the pimps and the rest that goes with it. Year after year the many causes of immoral traffic, social and psychological are enumerated, enunciated and evaluated in many different ways by scores of experienced persons. But the *root causes* are generally lost sight of as the signs and symptoms of the disease often mask the root causes. I am sure we all believe prevention is better than cure but in practice we generally head towards curative measures rather than search for the root causes. This is perhaps so because curing is often easier and speedier and generally more spectacular. Preventive measures need planned and persistent efforts in educating people for bringing about the necessary change in thoughts, attitudes and behaviour patterns amongst the people in the society.

Moral and social hygiene in its broadest sense affects the entire society as it concerns the preservation of the health of the society through the practice of duties in life. The word moral relates to the doctrine or practice of the duties of life; social is that pertaining to the society; and hygiene is the science of preservation of health.

Health has three equal components — physical, mental and moral and the three are so intricately woven together that it is difficult to say where one ends and the other begins. However, we shall confine ourselves to the problem of the moral health of the society as it is created by the lack of morals or in other words short comings in the practice of the duties of life:

If we try and summarise the causes of this lack in the performance of these duties we find that they mainly result from :

1. Lack of discipline in the family;
2. Ignorance;
3. Poverty;
4. Traditional lenient attitude towards the profession;
5. Emotional and psychological or extra physical causes.

But the most important one to my mind is the first one namely lack of discipline in the family. However if one tries to analyse any single case of moral turpitude, it would be difficult to pin it down to any one single cause but to many causes perhaps varying in degrees at one and the same time.

While tackling the problem of social ill-health we are generally inclined to lay stress on the curative aspect rather than the preventive

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side as the former is spectacular, sometimes yields quick results which are more satisfying to the worker in the field. The preventive aspect on the other hand needs more and continued patience and perseverance and the results though more lasting and may be even permanent are not seen in a decade or perhaps a generation. The present being an era of speed, short-cuts, show and easy returns hence generally the tendency is to take the line of least resistance to handle spectacular things.

Our existing programmes are entirely curative. It is not too early to think, plan and pursue preventive measures side by side with the curative measures and with greater vehemance if we want to give the right lead to the society. The disease is at the root and if we want to keep the tree of the human society healthy we have to feed the roots with the right kind of food. Unless this is done no amount of pruning at the top is going to make the tree healthy. I feel sure there cannot be two opinions in this matter. If we want a morally healthy society we must teach morals to the coming generation at the proper place and time, by proper persons in appropriate ways and in adequate measures.

The roots of the Society are embedded in the home and the most pliable, formative and impressionable age is the span of the first twelve or fourteen years of life. If this is accepted, it would mean that on the preventive side of the programme we have to begin with and concentrate on the children.

If we try and examine what is being done for the child in the home we will unfortunately have to come to the sad conclusion that though all parents are expected to do their very best for the welfare of their children, today the moral training so necessary to live a healthy, peaceful and contented life is sadly neglected. The results are evident every day in all walks of life. A stock taking is therefore very necessary. A comparative table indicating the past and present influence in education and a few suggestions for training at different stages throughout life in the home, school and the community are appended.

One of the objects of the Association is to raise the standard of character and conduct — and to uphold the highest family traditions. The real cause of social diseases is one's own internal cause of moral weakness which can be corrected only by spiritual uplift. The principle that continence is the larger virtue and not indulgence has to be accepted and society has to work towards its achievement. Parents must know and be aware of their total responsibility for the up-bringing of their children, the next generation which is the trust of the nation in their hands. We are perhaps still in the dream state of national awakening after a very long slumber in slavery. To enable the parents to understand their responsibility fully, a national parent adult education programme is necessary. In a Welfare State the State's responsibilities are great. The State's educational programmes can and have to influence the home, school and community. In days by-gone the home influence was the greatest and the firmest like a rock. Today this rock has been severely shaken up by what goes to make the modern civilization. As a result, it would perhaps not be an exagger-

ation to say that today the family force has become the weakest force, a 'bed and break-fast force' and the community forces have taken its place which used to be the weakest in the good or bad old days. These reversals in modern times and the strong community influences of unnatural, exciting, pornographic literature and films, hideous advertisements, shop window dressings and footpath exhibits are slowly, surely and subtly undermining the worthwhile human moral values in life.

The human animal is different from other animals only on the moral plane as his other reactions, activities and needs like those for food, sleep and self preservation are common with the other animals. If we agree that these influences are bad for human morality and life we cannot afford to spare any pain in putting a stop to those at any cost. We women particularly are expected to be the preservers and nurturers of human values and culture as these are passed on by the mother to the children. So we must take the lead in creating public opinion against these evil community influences which are subtly eating in to the human values and vitals. Shall we rise to the occasion and work or shall we go down with the modern influences? Some will say how can we put the clock back? Some will say how can we fight against the current and general trends? But good things are earned the hard way for which brave and not timid soldiers are needed. We must create public opinion and force Government's hands to put a stop to the prevalent wrong practices which slowly, steadily, surely, consciously and unconsciously tend to weaken morals individually and collectively and blunt the finer ethical tastes, values and attitudes. Shall we and can we rise to the occasion?

SUMMARY

1. Stress must be laid on preventive aspects of the programme and work started for preventive measures.
2. Present home, school and community influences are fast deteriorating.
3. Moral education of the society at all levels is necessary for prevention of these social diseases and vices.
4. Public opinion has to be created in this matter.
5. A national educational programme has to be planned and executed at State level for which the Association can give the lead.

LENGTH, BREADTH AND DEPTH OF TRAINING INFLUENCES IN LIFE.

PAST :	Influence in training :	PRESENT :
HOME—Strong - throughout life		Weak - begin to wane further progressively after school going.
SCHOOL— 1) for a small community 2) Was good and strong. Started with spiritual training and ended with ephemeral.		1) Expected for the entire community. 2) Expected to be good but at present very indifferent and weak. Ephemeral only.
COMMUNITY—Good.		Bad:- 1) Books, 2) Cinemas, 3) Advertisements, 4) Window exhibits in shops, 5) Tendency of extravagant, loud living.

A - Programme for home training by parents:—

1. Spiritual training in:

Simplicity	Self restraint	obedience and discipline	Respect for elders	Consideration and sympathy for weak and needy
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2. Take interest and supervise children's home work.
3. Take adequate interest in creative recreational activities of the school and at home.
4. Encourage sports and physical culture.
5. Encourage and guide in reading good books.
6. Inculcate love for plants, animals and birds.

B - Training in Schools by teachers:—

1. To continue the pattern of home training enunciated above.
2. Moral training.
3. Help children to cultivate taste for reading of good books—
 - (a) Biographies of great men and women.
 - (b) Discoveries.
 - (c) Travel.
 - (d) Poetry etc.
4. Creative recreational activities and hobbies—
 - (a) Producing dramas of social value and not merely for entertainment and excitement.
 - (b) Training in useful hand work.