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SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRIMARY CHILDREN

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SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRIMARY CHILDREN

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Olive Holsapple
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APPLICATION OF THE
PRINCIPLES OF MENTAL HYGIENE TO
THE SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT OF PRIMARY CHILDREN

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I. Introduction

At the present time the concept of mental hygiene has a broad meaning. In the early period of interest in abnormal behavior the term was being applied to mental illness or insanity. At present the concept of mental hygiene is in no sense concerned exclusively with the causes and correction of abnormal behavior but places emphasis upon the prevention of mental disorders.

D. B. Klein submits two meanings for concept of mental hygiene to which he applies the medical terms prophylactic and meliorative. Prophylactic mental hygiene is intended to prevent the development of mental illness. This aspect of mental hygiene is concerned with the enlightenment of the public in regard to the causes of a mental collapse so that preventive methods may be used. Meliorative hygiene is intended to improve the mental health of the individual, and to aid in his social development.¹

Meliorative mental hygiene, on the otherhand, is concerned less with actual disease and more with improving mental efficiency, learning how to cope with mental difficulties, injecting more zest in one's daily living, teaching people how to get along with one another and with their work . . . Its task is that of working out techniques of better living for all of us and not merely those who are potentially threatened by the specter on mental disease. This phase of mental hygiene is consequently interested in such varied questions as: the relationship of discipline to a child's

1 D. B. Klein, *Mental Hygiene*. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1956), pp. 17-18.

life at home, in the school, and on the playground; the influence of religious beliefs in meeting bereavement; the effect of monotony and bleak routine of housewife or factory worker; friction between parents and its effect on the distressed children; the relationship between ethical ideals and moral or immoral urges; the place of such emotionalized attitudes as jealousy, envy, and bitter competition in a well-ordered mental household.²

Klein recognizes the fact that the individual is not alone, that he is a member of society, and that he must have social security in order to be a well adjusted person.

Mental hygiene, as used in this paper, is concerned with the study of the causes of behavior problems of normal school children with the purpose of helping the teacher to avoid situations that may hinder the emotional development of a child.

Mental hygiene is concerned with the establishment and maintenance of mental health. The maintenance of mental health among children requires that they make the necessary social developments needed to have a happy and satisfying school life.

Social development includes the growth made by a child through all of his experiences in terms of his growth in social adaptation. Evidences of this growth are to be found in his attitudes toward sharing his possessions with other children, his co-operation with his school mates, his ability

² Ibid., pp. 18-19.

to win and keep friends of his own age, his willingness to wait for his turn, and his acceptance of responsibilities.

Therefore mental hygiene in the primary grades is intended to aid the normal child to make the necessary adjustments needed when he steps into a new phase of life. A little child is making a big step when he leaves home on his first day of school, enters the schoolroom with its strange environment, and finds himself surrounded by strange children. How each child adjusts himself to the situation is important, if he is to feel secure in his school life.

Mental hygiene intends to aid the child in developing his personality to its fullest extent. It seeks to give him confidence in his own ability, to give him a feeling of security, to help him develop a respect for his own person, to help him develop respect for others, and to help him gain the respect and acceptance of other children.

II. A Brief Resume of the Mental Hygiene Movement

The principles of mental hygiene have entered into the thinking of educators for more than a thousand years. Basically, many of the present ideas of developing a sound mind and body are identical with those found in the writings of the ancient Greek and Roman philosophers, Aristotle, Plutarch, and Quintilian. Today these principles are operative in the behavior of the members of present day.

The modern movement in mental health began with the publication of the book, A Mind That Found Itself, by Clifford W. Beers in 1908.³ Beers, a Yale graduate, was himself a mental patient in private and state institutions for a period of three and a half years--from 1900 to September, 1903. Upon his release, Clifford Beers was determined to launch a campaign to improve conditions in mental institutions. He recognized the importance and necessity to arouse the interest of the public. To arouse public concern for the mental unfortunates was his chief purpose in publishing his autobiography, A Mind That Found Itself. How well this book served his purpose is proved in the fact that it has been reprinted almost thirty times, and has been compared with Uncle Tom's Cabin because it aroused indignation over the mistreatment of human beings.⁴

3 W. Carson Ryan, "The Emerging Concept of Mental Health in Education," Review of Educational Research, (December, 1956) Vol. XXVI, p. 417.

4 Klein, op. cit., p. 26.

Beers received both moral and financial encouragement in his work from the renowned psychologist, William James. Dr. Adolf Meyers, Director of New York State Psychiatric Institute at Wards Island, suggested the term "mental hygiene"⁵ for the organization which was founded on May 6, 1908, according to Beer's plan, under the name of "The Connecticut Society for Mental Hygiene." The objectives of the Society were not only to raise the standards of care given to the mentally ill, but also, to conserve mental health, and to aid in the prevention of mental disorders.⁶

In 1909, Beers helped to found the National Committee for Mental Hygiene. When first organized, the National Committee for Mental Hygiene was mainly concerned with the eradication of abuses suffered by the mentally ill. At the present time, the organization has the fourfold purpose of treatment, prevention, education, and demonstration. The National Committee for Mental Hygiene has sponsored surveys in mental health, established child guidance clinics, and promoted psychiatric education.⁷ Also, the Committee has published quarterly, the "Mental Hygiene Journal" since about 1921.⁸

5 Clifford W. Beers, A Mind That Found Itself. (New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company, Inc., 1939), pp. 263-273.

6 Ibid., p. 304.

7 Ibid., p. 334-335.

8 Ibid., p. 409.

The American Foundation for Mental Hygiene was established in 1928; and in 1930, the First International Congress on Mental Health was held in Washington. At the third meeting of the International Committee in London, in 1948, the World Federation for Mental Health was formed in order to have co-operation with all nations in the mental health movement.⁹ President Eisenhower's proclamation of February 20, 1953, set aside May 1 as Child Health Day, urging people "to increase their understanding of emotional, social, and spiritual growth of children, so as to apply this understanding in their day-to-day relations with the rising generation."¹⁰

Since the mental health movement has changed gradually from emphasizing mental illness to the prevention of mental illness, which includes protection against hazards to mental health, and raising the mental health level of those who are well, it has focused attention on the inner life in its relation with the outer life. Churches have long sought this method of dealing with souls but did not have contact with scientific methods to discover what makes up the inner life.¹¹

9 Klein, op. cit., p. 38.

10. Henry C. Lindgren, Mental Hygiene in Education. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1954), pp. 22-23.

11 John R. Seeley, "Social Values, the Mental Health Movement, and Mental Health," Mental Health in the United States. (Philadelphia, The Annuals of the American Academy of Political Science, 1953,) p. 21.

The mental health movement also brought about a change of attitude toward children. Educators became more concerned about the emotional health of children, rather than the techniques of instruction for physical health. According to earlier theories, a certain series of techniques produced a certain type of learning. Now mental hygienists realize that this is not true.

Mental hygiene doesn't solve problems. In contrast to the traditional schools of psychological thought, mental hygiene provides a different approach to the study of human behavior, an approach which may serve as a starting point for learning of more effective methods. The traditional approach assumes that a child knows why he acts as he does and can control his action if he wishes. The emotional approach assumes that the cause lies deep within the emotions, and that the child usually does not know why he acts as he does.¹²

Good mental health is directed toward acquiring more energy, vigor, activities, recreation, keen appetities, and the joy of living. The promotion of this positive type of program of mental health for the future generation can be carried out best by those in close contact with the children, which suggests the family and the school. Therefore, the schools became the chief instrument for the spread of the newer ideas. Nevertheless, the schools were slow to adopt this

¹² Lindgren, op. cit., pp. 1-8.

approach. In 1913, the Harvard University offered courses in Mental Hygiene, but these were soon dropped. The Johns Hopkins School of Hygiene and Public Health recognized the need but did nothing about it until 1934.¹³ Through the efforts of the National Committee on Mental Health, there were, in 1931, as many as fifty-two training schools that offered some type of course in Mental Hygiene.¹⁴

Since 1930 there has been an increasing number of textbooks written for the education of teachers, stressing the mental health point of view. Also there has been an increasing number of child guidance clinics established. Psychiatrists and mental hygiene social workers, in increasing numbers, have been trained to deal with the greatly disturbed children, who are the end result of a long series of errors made by the child, home, school, and society.¹⁵

A study of the problem of mental delinquency shows the facts that ten million Americans, one for every sixteen persons, are in mental institutions; that in 1955 over two and a half million people were treated for some form of mental disorders;

13 Paul V. Lemkau, Mental Hygiene in Public Health. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1949), p. 36.

14 Beers, op. cit., p. 409.

15 Harry N. Rivlin, "The Role of Mental Health in Education", The Fifty-fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1955), p. 9.

that in 1954 the care of the mental patients cost the taxpayers three million dollars a day.¹⁶ All of these facts point to the need of early recognition and the correction of malbehavior in childhood so that clinical treatment may not become necessary. This work is part of the responsibility of the school.

16 James J. Cribbin, "Mental Health of Pupils: A Teacher Responsibility", Teachers College Record. (April, 1956), Vol. LVII, p. 463.

III. The Role of the Teacher in Mental Hygiene

If the schools are to aid in the correction of mental disturbances of the future generation, the largest part of the responsibility falls upon the classroom teacher. It is the teacher's responsibility "to develop and maintain a classroom situation which shall be conducive to continuous growth. He will attempt to provide an atmosphere and setting in which success, security, understanding, mutual respect, and opportunity to attain worthy educative goals are all-prevailing."¹⁷ In order for the teacher to accept this responsibility he must be a well adjusted person.

Mental health is sometimes difficult for the teacher to achieve and maintain because of factors such as crowded classrooms, inadequate materials for instruction, too little recreation or physical activity, or anxiety. Other factors that interfere may be due to conflict within the teacher. A woman teacher may be thwarting the normal instincts of home and family; however, this should be less in the present time than formerly when there was a taboo against married women teachers. The teacher may feel inadequate and thus look upon teaching as a drudgery; he may be a victim of fears such as of old age, failure, loss of youthfulness and buoyancy; he may

17 Paul Witty, "Role of Feeling and Emotion," Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction, Thirteenth Yearbook. (Washington: National Education Association, 1941), p. 43.

let worry and discontent upset his nerves;¹⁸ or he may be a perfectionist--the goals of a perfectionist lead to strenuous life for both teacher and pupils.¹⁹

The personality of the teacher is important to the mental health of the children as he has a continuous and intimate contact with them. If pupils are industrious, cheerful, energetic, confident, and co-operative, the teacher will no doubt be a poised, happy individual who knows "where he is going and intends to get there."²⁰ Since happiness is one of the basic human goals, it is necessary that the teacher be a happy, cheerful person with a sense of humor. "A sense of humor which can rise to the occasion . . . is an asset far more precious than wealth. It serves the mind as health serves the body, and carries a person through many an obstacle right to death's door."²¹ Another factor that contributes to the happiness of a teacher is that of satisfaction in the work. The teacher must be suited for the task of teaching, and must firmly believe in his commitment to the task, and receive a

18 L. A. Averill, Mental Hygiene for the Classroom Teacher. (New York: Pitman Publishing Corporation, 1939), pp. 10-21.

19 Harold H. Punke, "Social Philosophy as a Tool in Mental Health," Progressive Education. (January, 1957), Vol. XXXIV, p. 1.

20 Harold W. Bernard, Mental Hygiene for Classroom Teachers. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1952), p. 130.

21 James A. Magner, Mental Health in a Mad World. (Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1953), p. 173.

thrill from the work. Economic security also aids in the teacher's contentment in his work and life.

Emotional stability is also essential to the mental health of the teacher. A well-adjusted, satisfied teacher is usually patient, calm, and adaptable. To achieve emotional security it is necessary for a teacher to examine his own thoughts and attitudes, so that he might gain insight into his own self in order to understand and accept himself, and to know his own strengths and limitations.²² Above all, he should be honest with himself for "self deception is poor mental hygiene."²³

Other principles that contribute to good mental health include the art of relaxation and the need to accent the positive. "With determination and practice, everyone can achieve a positive mentality and improve upon it. The results in joyous living, and straight thinking, and conservation of energy are tremendous."²⁴

W. C. Menninger suggests that teachers make a serious effort to find better ways of doing their main jobs better, do something out of the way once in awhile, recreate and refresh themselves, develop the art of friendliness, and set up worthy

22 Barney Katz, G. F. J. Lehmer, Mental Hygiene in Modern Living. (New York: The Ronald Press Company, 1953), p. 281.

23 Klein, op. cit., p. 447.

24 Magner, op. cit., p. 64.

goals of life.²⁵ The teacher should also have power to focus attention on the present situation, develop the habit of facing reality objectively, have an orderly association of ideas, and possess the ability to inspire confidence.²⁶ He should be able to make suggestions without offending and receive them without taking offense. The teacher should have the ability to keep calm in spite of those disturbing incidents that are certain to occur in the classroom. He should not become frustrated or emotionally upset because a child didn't do as he was expected, or another child spilled a bottle of ink, or the principal was in disagreement with his ideas. He should be patient, impartial, fair, and consistent, and above all he should love and understand children.

If you would enjoy good mental health--keep your mind from worry, your emotions free from anxiety and hate. Take into your life as many simple natural pleasures as possible. Ask but little, give much. Face the world with dignity, poise and confidence. Forget self. Think of others. Try it for a day, a week; it works. You can inherit a great fortune without price.²⁷

There are many factors in the teacher's personality that tend to have a bearing on the pupils' behavior. Good grooming not only adds to the teacher's feeling of confidence and

25 Paul Witty, "The Mental Health of the Teacher," The Fifty-Fourth Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part II. p. 331.

26 Ruth Strang, The Role of the Teacher in Personnel. (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1953), chapter 1.

27 Witty, Fifty-Fourth Yearbook, op. cit., p. 332.

self-respect, but it also helps to gain the admiration of the pupils. Cleanliness and color help to generate a feeling of cheer. Comfort and confidence in the style and quality of clothing adds to a feeling of self-confidence and personal worth.

Careful training of the voice is also necessary. A low pitched, well-modulated voice is soothing and pleasant to hear, and it reveals poise and confidence in self and in pupils. A harsh rasping voice creates tension and irritableness. Causes of a poor voice may be due to difficulty in making adjustments, lack of understanding of children, poorly prepared work, friction with staff members, or the pressure of personal conflicts.

A smile is contagious and does much to establish a more pleasant feeling between the teachers and pupils. Children are more likely to respond favorably to a kind, courteous, and friendly smile. It also does much to ease the tense feelings of the shy, timid child.

The teacher who uses the positive method of instruction whenever possible does much to promote individual well being, and gives hope instead of discouragement. "Praise instead of criticism, stimulating suggestions in place of sarcasm, a smile substituted for a scowl"²⁸ are means by which a child may be inspired with confidence in his ability to solve his own problems.

28 Bernard, op. cit., p. 136.

For best results the teacher should establish good rapport among her pupils. Sometimes it can be done through warmth and responsiveness. Sometimes it helps the child to build rapport just by the fact that the teacher is listening to him. Listening provides catharsis for the child--gives him a chance to release his emotions and provides insight into the pupil's innermost self.²⁹

Ethel B. Waring gives some advice to parents about training children that might well be applied to the teacher of the primary grades. First, watch and wait until the child needs help before giving it; second, ignore undesirable behavior, and in the meanwhile direct the child to what is wanted; third, share with the child socially; fourth, approve what he does well, even though only done in part; fifth, if the task is especially difficult or disliked, give more help than is needed, thus making the task more pleasing; and last, prepare for success and direct the child toward that success when he shows momentary interest in what is expected.³⁰

Careful and thoughtful planning of lesson material is the most essential way to stimulate the interest of the child, to make the goals in school work clear and desirable, and to keep a healthy mental attitude of the group. When the lesson

29 Ibid., pp. 153-155.

30 M. C. Elmer, The Sociology of the Family. (University of Pittsburg: Ginn and Company, 1945), p. 481.

is ill-prepared, the students are uninterested and irresponsible. Some of the techniques for stimulating growth of interest are to provide a worthy example, make sure that the pupil knows what is expected of him, provide a clear goal, relate the new to what is already known, use the information that is acquired, and scale the activities to the individual capacities so that each may achieve some success.³¹ The child who achieves mastery and enjoyment in the work he is doing, and who is working toward a desired end, will not be a discipline problem.

A healthy situation for learning may be created by Averill's plan of instilling healthful mental attitudes in the teaching and learning of each subject.

Among these positive and hygienically desirable mental attitudes and convictions may be mentioned the following: confidence; self-control; consciousness of skill; carefulness and pains; mastery; sympathies, tolerance--oneness with life, appreciations; new view points, ideals, enthusiasms; new materials; new openings of brain tracts; interests and hopes; determination; initiative; the will for energetic achievement; individuality; self-expression; and the like.³²

In the teaching of reading it is very important that the child obtain pleasure and enjoyment in reading. Much can be done to promote interest by the selection of materials that are fascinating to children, and within range of their reading ability. Interest in reading may also be stimulated through dramatization and play.

31 Bernard, op. cit., pp. 203-223.

32 L. A. Averill, The Hygiene of Instruction. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1928), p. 220.

Children may be helped to develop hygienic attitudes of study that will lead them to attack a situation with eagerness, determination, alertness, and with a definite purpose in mind. Averill relates an incident of how a boy who disliked history was helped to change his study attitudes from passive to active. Noting his boredom, his instructor asked him to prepare a paper on how he, as a character who might actually have been present at the time and place, have helped General Wolfe capture Quebec. The boy became enthusiastic about it, did a great deal of reading, and wrote a realistic account about the capture of Quebec.³³

Some subjects lend themselves in such a way as to give a special approach to mental health. Art gives opportunities for self-expression through drawing, painting, or modeling. Art often reveals the emotions of the artist. It enriches the core curriculum, and gives aesthetic pleasure.

Physical Education and athletic activities contribute to the attainment of mental hygiene goals in many ways. Physical Education provides suitable channels in which the non-reader may excel or achieve success, thus satisfying a basic need. The physical education program provides for a wide range of activities so as to meet the individual skills, abilities and interests. The physical education class

33 Ibid., p. 281.

furnishes a means by which the child can fulfill his desire for bodily activity and exercise. Pent-up emotions may also find release through physical activity. The modern creative dance and folk dancing are of real mental hygiene value, as the dancer can move and skip about with freedom. Anger finds an outlet in the "fighting spirit" of individuals and in teams taking part in competitive games. Physical Education provides release from strain. Fears tend to lessen as motor skills improve. The physical education teacher has a more informal relationship with the pupils and is often in the position to serve as a counselor to them. The pupils are placed together in a more natural social group than in other classes. Here the pupils learn to understand such terms as "fair play", "sportsmanship", and "team work."³⁴

In order that teachers may be able to recognize symptoms of mental problems in child behavior which need to be corrected or prevented, to gain a better understanding of child behavior, and to give guidance to pupils who are in need, a certain amount of training is necessary. This was proved by the study made by Wickman in 1928. He showed that the kinds of child behavior which were listed by teachers and mental hygienists differed greatly in what each tended to be concerned as primary behavior problems. Stouffer made the same type of study again in 1952, and found that the difference was still large, but

34 Emma Laymon, Mental Health Through Physical Education and Recreation. (Minneapolis: Burgess Publishing Company, 1955), pp. 190-204.

that each group placed cruelty or bullying, and unhappiness or depressed attitudes among the top ten most serious behavior problems among children. Recent surveys by Ullman, Mitchell, and Sparks show that teachers and clinicians are much closer today in their appraisal of children's problems than they were in 1928. Sparks found that teachers who had received education beyond a bachelor's degree were closer to psychiatrists in their evaluation of children's behavior than were teachers with less education.³⁵

Teachers may gain professional growth in understanding the basic needs and behavior of children by enrolling in college courses, such as Educational Psychology, Mental Hygiene, Psychology of Childhood, Guidance, and Counseling.

However, as Rivilin states, the teacher is not a trained psychotherapist, nor is he expected to be, but that the teacher who understands the basic emotional drives that underlie all behavior, and is aware of how these drives are present in certain stages of development, is in a much better position to help children to achieve adjustment.³⁶

Other ways in which teachers may improve their understanding of children are through professional reading, in-service training, working with groups of children with the aid of a specialist, attending off-campus classes, or by taking correspondence courses. A teacher may also do much to achieve

35 Lindgren, op. cit., pp. 14-20.

36 Rivilin, The Fifty-Fourth Yearbook, op. cit., p. 21.

greater understanding of pupil behavior through personal experimentation, by observation of children in free play, by sociometry, and by creative writing.

The teacher should realize that it is his duty to accept the child the way he is, and where he is, and guide him with the least possible conflict to attain the required standards of education and society.

The condition and attractiveness of the classroom have much to do with the maintenance of the individuality and the joy of living. Such a school environment that seemed to be created for children was described by Mary Reese and Dorothy Oldendorf. Colored rugs added a cheerful note to the room; shelves were filled with attractive books; maps, globes, and reference books were placed within reach of the children; aquariums, terrariums, and nature collections helped bring the science of nature to the attention of the children; a work center was equipped with work benches and tools, easels with paints and brushes, and an oilcloth covered table for working with clay; a small stage and puppet stages helped promote dramatic interests; primary typewriters and ditto machines were an aid in creative writing; and rhythm band instruments gave opportunities for musical experience.³⁷

37 Mary Reese, Dorothy Oldendorf, "Social Living at Highcrest," Thirteenth Yearbook, op. cit., pp. 132-133.

An attractive environment sets the stage for healthy mental attitudes, but a democratic climate is an ideal situation. The teacher and children must work together in a co-operative manner, in which the teacher plans and guides the children in their activities, but allows opportunity "for free and active creating and constructing."³⁸ In such a room, one group of children might read, while others work with clay at the table, or make papier mache dishes, or rearrange the doll house, or engage in other schoolroom activities. These children are learning to work together, and share with one another. "They learn to think, to make their own decisions, and to live happily with other people."³⁹

38 Hazel F. Gabbard, "New Mental Health Insights, Implications for the Schools," School Life. (March, 1955), Vol. XXXVII, pp. 90-92.

39 Estelle D. Suits, "Here I Am, A Six Year Old," Childhood Education. (September, 1953), Vol. XXX, p. 22.

IV. Mental Hygiene Devices for Primary Grades

It is necessary, in order to help the child to become well adjusted, to try to understand why he is behaving in the way he does, for whatever a child does is a means by which he attempts to fulfill some need within himself. This need may be a physical need, an emotional need, a social need, or a need in which he can gain a certain degree of achievement.⁴⁰

After the behavior patterns have been analyzed, then should begin a process of helping the individual overcome his problems. In most cases the real cause of mental health problems originates in the home. Elizabeth Hurlock states that calm parents are likely to have calm children, and that probably emotional parents will have emotional children.⁴¹ The school cannot hope to erase all of the disturbing factors from a child's mind, but it must assume its share of the responsibility in aiding the child to adjust his primitive impulses to the restrictions of the physical and social order in which he finds himself, and to help him develop a certain degree of motor and intellectual independence.⁴²

The timid, shy, self-conscious child who is always rigid with fear, the child who is always by himself and is unable

40 Herbert A. Carroll, Mental Hygiene, The Dynamics of Adjustment. (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1956), p. 38.

41 Elizabeth B. Hurlock, Modern Ways with Children. (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc.), p. 122.

42 John J. B. Morgan, The Psychology of the Unadjusted School Child. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937), pp. 31-40.

to make friends, the child who is withdrawn and absorbed in daydreams is often the one that is in need of help to adjust himself. While these children are hardly ever considered behavior problems by their teachers, they are ranked first by the mental hygienists.⁴³

These emotionally fear-bound persons frequently develop a chronic mental disease known as dementia praecox.⁴⁴ Even if they escape a mental breakdown, it is very likely that they will be deprived of a happy, successful life because of worry, fear, and their inability to make friends.

This shy, bashful child is afraid to ask for what he wants, never volunteers, cries easily, avoids decisions, and needs urging to keep at his work. He is a fearful and physical cringing creature, avoiding contact with people. These symptoms are especially serious if found in a boy, as more young men than women suffer from dementia praecox.⁴⁵

Fears and phobias are learned reactions. They may begin at birth and continue to be acquired throughout adult life. Often the incident that instilled the fear in the person has been forgotten. Fear may be learned in many ways. Fear of dark may be caused by being shut in a dark room, or by some other unpleasant experience that had occurred in the dark.

43 James Bossard, The Sociology of Child Development. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1948), p. 472.

44 Clara Bassett, The School and Mental Health. (New York: The Commonwealth Fund, 1931), p. 30.

45 Norma E. Cutts, Nicholas Mosley, Practical School Discipline and Mental Hygiene. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Company, 1941), p. 100.

A person may adopt fears by imitating attitudes of others.⁴⁶

An older sister is afraid to go outside in the dark, therefore little sister is afraid too. Mrs. M. becomes almost hysterical during a storm, so her children developed a fear of storms.

Adults may unconsciously develop fears in little folks by telling them stories about the big bad man that stands around outside ready to grab children that do not obey. Or adults often frighten children with threats such as, "I'll cut off your tongue if you don't stop talking like that." A child may learn to be afraid of his father, then it is very likely that he will be afraid of all men.

Some children may be so overprotected by their parents, especially by their mothers, that they are filled with fear the minute mother gets out of sight. Fear develops from a feeling of lack of security. For instance, a little girl who had never been permitted to go down stairs alone was afraid to go down the stairs alone even after she entered school.⁴⁷

Fear can be caused by a sense of guilt. If a child has stolen, lied, cheated, or has done something of which he is ashamed, he may develop an emotional fear. This quotation from Preston Bradley shows how fear is the penalty of misbehavior. "I must pay and pay, in fears and uneasiness of mind for every ignoble thought I have ever had, for every

46 Harry N. Rivlin, Educating for Adjustment. (New York: D. Appleton-Century Company, Inc., 1936), pp. 37-38.

47 Ibid., p. 40

unkind thing I have ever done, for every hurt I have ever given my fellow men."⁴⁸

Most of these fears have been acquired before the child entered school. Therefore, the school must start a program of re-education with the purpose of correcting as many childhood fears as possible. The teacher must organize the room on the first day of school in the best possible way to create a pleasant atmosphere, and be careful that by means of punishment, or by reprimand, the school doesn't add to the fears of the child. Consider the extent to which a first grade teacher might add to the fears already present in the little beginner if she were to paddle two pupils on the first day.

Rivlin gives these points for the re-education program to eliminate fear. First, discover the cause of the fear, then explain the nature of that fear so that the child can understand why he should not be afraid. Second, help him change to a response that will help him to overcome his fear. Third, this new response should be more pleasant to him than the old one.⁴⁹

If fear is caused by a feeling of insecurity, then the teacher should be careful to make the child feel that he is a part of the group, and is essential to its progress. The

48 Preston Bradley, Mastering Fear. (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1935), p. 100.

49 Rivlin, Educating for Adjustment. pp. 39-40.

work that he is given should be within range of his ability, so that he can achieve success on mastering it, and thus establish self confidence.

The task of getting acquainted with the timid, secluded child in order to discover his attitudes and feelings will require time and patience.

Because, psychologically, the child habitually runs in and slams and bolts the door, so to speak, against anyone who approaches him, he must be coaxed out of his shell. He must be surrounded by such a warmth of love and approval, that he will venture to open the door and peek out, and later even step out in the open for a few minutes at a time.⁵⁰

The child's self confidence must be carefully cultivated. His preoccupation with books, daydreams, and solitude must be discouraged while at the same time contact with other children must be provided. He should be encouraged and assisted to gain friendships, to take part in active exercises such as games, swimming, dancing, and other social activities, and to get into play groups. The process of getting a timid child back into a group is not easy, as he will tend to draw back at every step.

Bradley states that suffering caused by fear is unnecessary; that if a person faces his problems he can master his fear, as fear is the result of one's own thoughts; and we should not let fears lie in the mind and grow. This

50 Bassett, op. cit., p. 34.

is especially true, if fear is the result of bad behavior. These evil thoughts and deeds must be exposed, and then cast away. Next, substitute faith for fear, and thus create a positive attitude toward life.⁵¹

There is valid reason to assert that stammering is due to an emotional disturbance, providing the cause is not due to a physical defect. When the stammerer essays to speak to another person, he will become affected by emotions of fear and guilt towards the person with whom he is speaking, although he may not be conscious of such emotions. These emotions block or inhibit the free spontaneous flow of speech. Some persons excite these emotions in the stammerer and some do not.⁵²

The stammerer may be helped to overcome his fear of speaking before a group, by giving him numerous opportunities to speak before the class.

Many discipline problems that arise in the schoolroom develop from frustration. The concept of frustration is usually applied to the blocking of some bodily desire that gives satisfaction, but it may also be defined as a deprivation which is a threat to the personality, especially to the self-esteem or feeling of security.⁵³

51 Bradley, op. cit., p. 93.

52 M. Bevan, Brown, The Sources of Love and Fear. (New York: The Vanguard Press Inc., 1950), p. 70.

53 A. H. Maslow, Bela Mittelmann, Principles of Abnormal Psychology. (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1951), p. 61.

Frustrations may be either internal or external. They may be caused from environmental conditions, or they may be caused by the mental and emotional state of the individual.⁵⁴ External frustrations cannot be avoided. There are usually some factors that will keep a person from obtaining all of his desires. For instance, a little girl may become frustrated because the pretty red shoes that she wants mother to buy are too little for her feet.

Internal frustrations come from within the individual. They are the result of an incapability to satisfy a need, either because of fear, inhibitions, or conflicts. These are more serious, and often less apparent than the external frustrations.⁵⁵

A frustrated child is uncomfortable. Frustration arouses the child's anger, and he feels that he must do something about it. He may try to annoy the teacher, destroy his books, or throw objects about the room. If thwarted in efforts to reach his goal, he may strike out against his environment.

Frustration results in aggression. A study made by a Yale group showed that children, five years of age, became more aggressive when placed in a situation of repeated frustrations.⁵⁶

54 Carroll, op. cit., pp. 182-183.

55 Ibid., p. 183.

56 Nancy Baker Otis, Boyd McCandless, "Responses to Repeated Frustrations of Young Children Differentiated According to Need Area," The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, (1955), Vol. L, p. 353.

Fenton names two types of aggression--the active type expressed in hostile acts, as when a child attacks the one who is thwarting him, and the passive type expressed by apparent outward acceptance, but accompanied by inward resentment, hatred, and fantasy.⁵⁷

The normal way of maintaining self-esteem when frustrated is by the active or direct method of striking out against the one who caused the frustration, but if prohibited from making the direct attack he may find an outlet for his feelings through aggressive behavior at home, or release of his tensions as a substitute. For instance, a child who has been thwarted in some desire by his father may manifest his resentment toward a doll that represents the father.⁵⁸

When a goal has been set so high that it cannot be attained, the child often resorts to escape mechanisms in order to achieve an indirect satisfaction of a need, so that he can reduce the tension and maintain his self-respect. Among the most common of these are compensation, rationalization, negativism, daydreaming, and repression.

Compensation may prove to be a satisfactory way to adjust to frustration as when the child realizes that he cannot excel in one field, he applies his efforts toward some field in which he can gain success. For instance, the child who cannot excel

57 Norma Fenton, Mental Hygiene in School Practice. (California: Stanford University Press, 1943), p. 210.

58 Carroll, op. cit., pp. 184-187.

in music may seek compensation in the field of art. All methods of compensation are not good, for too often the child resorts to fighting, a show of superiority in physique, in order to compensate for some feeling of inadequacy within himself. Morgan states that:

Compensation is being improperly used when the child is excessive in his compensatory behavior, when he is self-conscious about his deficiency, when he is using some substitute behavior which is second-rate in his estimation, when he is compensating without awareness of what he is doing, or when he is driven with an urge to surpass everyone else in his achievements. When it has none of these characteristics it may be used with good results. We all have deficiencies; and the child must be taught to evaluate himself honestly, and to take a suitable place in the social order, without being driven by an abnormal urge to hide any trait or to outdo all of his fellows in some particular.⁵⁹

By the process of rationalization the child invents excuses, or hunts for some kind of justification for his socially unaccepted acts. It often leads to placing the blame on someone else.

Negativism in response to frustration is an aggressive withdrawal. It may be presented in various forms, such as a refusal to speak, to co-operate, to obey commands, or negativism may result in the child doing the opposite of what had been requested.

59 Morgan, op. cit., p. 201.

Negativism might well be called the "balky-horse mechanism." The balky horse asserts himself against his master by stopping in the middle of the road. There he stands until he chooses to move. His owner may cajole him, may whip him brutally, or may break a sled stake over his back. He still stands there, sullen, unperturbed. A human being can and sometimes does, behave in the same manner.⁶⁰

Daydreaming is also a means by which a child may gain satisfaction when he is frustrated in his attempt to achieve his goal, whether intellectual or social. It is through this outlet that he can imagine himself as a hero, the center of attraction. If these dreams of glory inspire the dreamer to duplicate such feats in reality, then daydreaming can be considered a healthy form of mental play; but too often these dreams are used as a substitute for achievement; then they represent a withdrawal pattern in which the dreamer loses all interest in reality. If carried on to the extreme, this flight from reality may develop into schizophrenia, in which the dreamer no longer realizes that his fantasy is subjective.⁶¹

Repression is another undesirable means of making an adjustment. In this connection, the child attempts to force the unpleasant experiences that he may have had out of consciousness into the unconscious. This method is more likely to produce tension instead of to reduce the amount of tension.

60 Carroll, op. cit., p. 199.

61 Wayland F. Vaughan, Personal and Social Adjustment. (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1952), p. 57.

Children should not be taught to force back their desires, fears, and guilty feelings; but to face their needs and work out socially accepted ways to satisfy them.⁶²

One of the best ways of making a proper adjustment is to discover what caused the frustration and to meet the frustration directly. Should the cause of frustration lie in an inability to master the subject matter, then the subject matter should be adapted to the pace of the pupil in order to assure him a certain degree of success.

Peter Bloss claims that a child must experience some anxiety over a problem in order to develop devices to master the problem; that a teacher need not be afraid to create conflict in a child's mind as long as the conflicts are within reach of his ability. Then it is the task of the teacher to help him arrive at a satisfactory solution.⁶³

Another way of meeting displays of anger, jealousy, hostility, and aggression is to recognize the child's actions, then indicate to him a means by which he may find release for his anger. Such emotional tensions might be released by pounding clay, tearing paper, driving nails into wooden blocks, sawing wood, hitting a clay image of a rubber doll, or perhaps by just talking about the feelings.⁶⁴

62 Carroll, op. cit., pp. 204-205.

63 Peter Bloss, "Mental Health in Teaching and Learning," Mental Hygiene. (October, 1953), Vol. XXXVIII, pp. 555-569.

64 Betty Shuey, "Social Living in School," Thirteenth Yearbook, op. cit., p. 119.

This method of helping a child to find other outlets for his temper is illustrated in a case related by Caroline Tryon.

The teacher sees Johnny as he raises a shovel to strike Susan. She is likely to say something of this sort: "I know you are angry at Susan because she knocked down your sand house. But you can't hit Susan. It would hurt her. Come with me and we will find some nails and wood; we can pound them into the wood over there at that work bench." This teacher has acted in an effective way. She has recognized and accepted the feeling; it is real and, in that sense, valid. She has set social limits and given reasons for those limits. She has offered a socially acceptable way of releasing tension.⁶⁵

There are many behavior patterns by which a child strives to gain attention and social status. This behavior may be the result of lack of affection in the home, so the child seeks attention elsewhere, and in different ways. A child needs to feel that he is loved even though he is naughty. A boy was discourteous to his classmates without any apparent reason. He threw dirt on girls, purposely annoyed his teachers, pushed a well dressed girl down and broke her glasses, and did many other disagreeable acts. It was discovered that he had been adopted by kind-hearted people, but who made such exacting demands upon him, that the boy could not meet them. The only way that he could gain affection was by being good, and that seemed beyond him. Finally, when the

65 Caroline Tryon, "Some Conditions of Good Mental Health," Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, 1950 Yearbook. (Washington: National Education Association), p. 7.

foster parents were persuaded to give the boy affection regardless of his conduct, and the teacher was induced to change her attitude toward the boy, his conduct improved.⁶⁶

One of the basic causes of a child's craving for attention is the fact that he is being rejected at home. Reasons why the child is rejected may be the result of an added financial burden, a sacrifice of a public career or some material possession, interference with the parent's social life, or it may be because of an unhappy marriage. Whatever the cause may be, the parent or parents, while providing physical security for the child, are depriving him of the emotional security which is necessary for the proper growth, development, and adjustment of the child's mental life.⁶⁷ The unloved child, unable to gain the affection he needs, often seeks attention through disorderly conduct. "Emotional starvation is a factor of primary importance in production of youthful criminals."⁶⁸

This feeling of rejection by a child is often closely associated with the jealousy of a sibling, usually brought about by parents, especially the mother, showing favoritisms toward the sibling. Such actions on the part of the parent cause the neglected child to seek attention in various ways. He is stimulated to acts of retaliation against the sibling

66 Morgan, op. cit., pp. 139-141.

67 C. M. Louttit, Clinical Psychology of Children's Behavior Problems. (New York: Harper and Brothers Publishers, 1947), pp. 44-49.

68 Vaughn, op. cit., p. 117.

toward which the jealousy is directed. The hatred of a child for his sibling may not be apparent until some overt act is committed. For example, a boy of five first attempted to show off, hoping thereby to gain some of the attention from his mother that was being shown to his younger brother, but he only received a scolding. He then sought pleasure in getting his young brother into predicaments. Once he took his brother on a climbing expedition over the scaffolding of a new building, daring the younger child to climb to the most dangerous spots. Punishment and reproach brought him to the center of attention, which to his way of thinking, was better than being ignored. At school, he also sought attention through misconduct. The boy admitted that he often had the urge to do something bad. This urge occurred at such time when the child had been snubbed or had felt left out of social situations. Again, improved behavior was brought about when the mother and teachers gave him legitimate ways to gain recognition, and at the same time ignored, to a certain extent, his misbehavior.⁶⁹

A child may be overprotected at home and expects the same treatment and attention at school. Overprotection, however, is sometimes a compensation for a feeling of hostility on the part of the parent toward the offspring. Often the teacher is regarded as a parent substitute, and the child's attitude toward the teacher is a reflection of his attitude toward his parent.⁷⁰

69 Morgan, op. cit., pp. 163-164.

70 M. Bevan, Brown, op. cit., p. 66.

Agnes came to school the first day. As soon as her mother left she began to cry and wanted to go home. The teacher, Mrs. Benson, knowing that this would not do, told Agnes that she could stay near her. After that Agnes would not let Mrs. Benson out of her sight. The other children began to wonder why they, too, could not have the same privileges. Finally Mrs. Benson decided to put an end to the unpleasant situation, so she directed Agnes to sit at one end of the table. The girl looked offended but obeyed. When Mrs. Benson left the room, Agnes threw a temper tantrum. Mrs. Benson did not enter the room until the temper tantrum was over. Then she again calmly directed Agnes to sit at the end of the table.⁷¹

This method of treating a temper tantrum is also in accordance with the advice given by Elizabeth Hurlock, except she states that complete ignorance is best. The child should not even have the other children as an audience. She suggests that the children's attention be diverted to some other interest.⁷²

Other methods of gaining attention may take the form of habitual tardiness, restlessness, going to the waste paper basket, sharpening pencils, being a show-off, bullying, teasing, boasting, noisiness, and laughing and giggling.⁷³ Of

71 Fritz Redl, William Wattenberg, Mental Hygiene in Teaching, (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1951), pp. 5-6.

72 Hurlock, op. cit., pp. 126-128.

73 Percival M. Symonds, Mental Hygiene of the School Child. (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1935), p. 52.

course these actions may not always be the attempt to gain attention. The teacher must determine the intentions of the actor, then recognize that within the child that strives to attract attention to himself by misbehavior is harbored a hungry little soul, so eager for love, that he seeks recognition in the only way he has ever gained success--that of misconduct. If the teacher understands this mode of behavior, he will be able to help that child satisfy his need in a more effective method.

Bossard believes that a child's desire to be accepted by his peers is so keen that less than ordinary success will lead to any one of the following types of response:

1. He will seek another child world in which special privileges will be given. For instance, he will choose a smaller child for a playmate, or he will choose a child of lower status, different color or race, or perhaps he will seek the companionship of another lonely child in the neighborhood.

2. He withdraws from the group and spends his time developing certain skills to a perfection. He seems to take an "I'll show you" attitude. Judy thinks that if she can jump the rope better than any of the other girls, she will win their admiration and acceptance.

3. He transfers his activities to the opposite sex. A boy will play with girls, and in order to gain and retain their approval, he will perform antics and even resort to buying treats. A girl will play with a group of boys, and rather than lose esteem with this group she allows certain privileges.

4. He will seek to buy recognition into his peer world by use of special favors, such as lending or giving away his toys and other possessions, or by passing out candy and chewing gum. This method requires the need of additional possessions and funds, which often leads to petty thievery.

5. Many children who are not successful in the social life of their peer world seek compensation with success in their school work.⁷⁴

Ruth Ann, a plump little girl in the second grade, was left out of games on the playground by her classmates, and was sometimes called "fatty" and "snotty". She did very well in her school work, and received recognition by her peers as she was sometimes chosen to lead in some of the classroom activities.⁷⁵

The fact that Ruth Ann did succeed in gaining acceptance by her peers in the classroom probably made her over zealous to display her knowledge. However, Ruth Ann needed help to adjust herself to the group on the playground. Perhaps she needed to acquire more skill in the games the children were playing. Or perhaps she needed to follow the advice of the boy who said, "When people poke fun at me, I laugh with them. The best way to make them stop is to ignore them."⁷⁶

74 Bossard, op. cit., pp. 420-421.

75 Class Case Study, "Gerald and Ruth Ann", (IAL, Education 551)

76 Elizabeth Hall Bradley, "Children Bring Their Families to School," 1950 Yearbook, op. cit., p. 51.

The mental health problems that grow out of the child's effort to gain the acceptance of his peers are more difficult to correct. The rejected one must be taught how to get along with his classmates. A teacher must try to help him discover why he isn't accepted, and then help him correct his undesirable habits.

The belief that social adequacy is related to the severity of maladjustment is justified in the fact that psychotic individuals habitually show a lower level of social adequacy than do normals. Reports from a schizophrenic group show that these persons tend to have had few friendships in childhood and still fewer as adults. The Rorschach technique, administered to workers, showed that those having a low social attainment score also had a high maladjustment score.⁷⁷

A child soon learns the methods by which he can gain attention from adults. Therefore, he should receive attention for doing worth-while things. Praise and attention are effective tools in establishing acceptable behavior patterns and standards of work.

A child seeking attention by misbehavior should receive as little attention as possible. Sometimes ignoring his conduct can be effective, especially when a child is trying to show off, or when he is constantly tattling.

77 Harold J. Fine, Samuel C. Fulkerson, Leslie P. Phillips, "Maladjustment and Social Attainment," The Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology. (1955), Vol. L, pp. 33-35.

If the child's disturbance is interfering with the activities of the group, and he pays no attention to their disapproval, it may be necessary "for a calm, immediate removal of the recalcitrant from the group, indicating that this form of behavior cannot be tolerated."⁷⁸ The return to the group should have no hang-over. The child should be given careful recognition so as to give him "a measure of satisfaction that will go far in cementing him to the group and undermining any tendency to withdrawal or antagonism."⁷⁹

Moral transgressions in children, such as lying and stealing, are usually the result of an improper adjustment to environment. Parents and teachers often unwittingly work against wholesome development of the child's mind by making moral issues from conflicts that should not be included in the moral realm. For instance, a boy is told that he is bad if he spills soup, lies in bed too late, stays up too late, tears his clothing, hits a sibling, fails in his lesson, or forgets to brush his teeth. A child should be controlled in such trivial acts by proper motivation, and leave the use of moral law for the prevention of acts that are harmful to society, such as murder, vandalism, and the like.⁸⁰

Exacting promises that are easily violated by children is a practice which can lead to falsehood and deceit. A mother

78 J. D. M. Griffin, S. R. Laycock, W. Line, Mental Hygiene, Manual for Teachers. (Chicago: American Book Company, 1940), p. 23

79 Ibid., p. 231.

80 Morgan, op. cit., pp. 76-77.

exacts a promise from her boy that he will not climb trees, cross a street, or swim. Now if the boy does violate the promise, he has a feeling of guilt. If he keeps his promise to his mother he has to battle the conflict between desire and obedience. Really the boy should be taught caution to avoid harm, and then permitted to participate in those activities pertaining to a boy's world.

Parents are sometimes the direct cause of a child learning to lie. For example, a small girl came home late from school. She truthfully told her mother that she had gone home from school with another child. She received a whipping, which she interpreted as a punishment for telling the truth. The next time the girl went to her friend's home, she told her mother that she had been kept after school. This time she received no punishment, which to her was a reward for telling a lie.

Some children steal because of a lack of appreciation of property rights. Respect for other people's property can be learned very early if properly guided. One child found a hammer on the sidewalk. When he told his father where he had found the hammer, the father asked the boy if he didn't sometimes leave his wagon on the sidewalk, and would he want someone to take the wagon, and say that it was found. After a little study the boy took the hammer and dropped it where he had found it, and was perfectly satisfied.⁸¹

81 Morgan, op. cit., pp. 298-302.

Other children steal because of a keen desire for some object of which they may have been deprived. Some children take money in order to increase or maintain their social prestige by treating friends to candy and other favors. Danny was a boy who was unable to make friends. Finally he began to take money to buy treats for the children hoping to gain their friendship.

The problem of children taking money and other articles occurs frequently in the first grade, but usually by the time the child enters the second grade he has developed the correct idea of ownership, and has learned to respect the property of other children.

Teachers should be aware of overemphasis in young children. Such behavior is more likely to be a compensation for the thing overemphasized. Exaggerated honesty may mean a struggle against temptations to be dishonest.⁸²

For the treatment of such moral transgressions most teachers favor the use of conferences, in which the advantages of abiding by the Golden Rule are stressed; the attitude of society toward stealing and lying is explained; and the child is warned of the danger involved by bad ways.⁸³

82 Ibid., p. 192.

83 Cutts, Mosley, op. cit., p. 95.

The child must learn that if he steals, everyone has an equal right to steal, and if everyone steals he, too, will lose his treasures. He should be honest because he does not want people to steal from him. This understanding will make him genuinely honest, for he will have no sneaking desire to steal. Convince him that he is the greatest loser when he disobeys the moral law and he will be moral. If this is not done he may be forced to obey the law but he will not be kept from wanting to break it. If a child is taught from the beginning that morality is a social, co-operative scheme organized for the benefit of each individual, he will refrain from being immoral, not because someone has demanded it, nor because he is afraid of being caught, but because he does not desire to be immoral. He should be taught that he is really the loser if he is immoral. He will then not possess any hidden notion that bad acts are fundamentally pleasant. He will have learned that they are not.⁸⁴

Another moral transgression is that of cheating. Fenton points out that children who lie or cheat in their studies, may do so because of fear of punishment promised them by their parents if their school marks are low. Cheating may also be a result of a need to impress classmates so as to maintain self esteem. The desire to succeed when incapable tends to cause an emotional conflict.

Cheating as a form of adjustment in some children has a basis in motivation somewhat similar to that of other children, who are doing their lessons conscientiously and in compliance with school regulations for the achievement of their own ambitions, and also for the recognition and approval of parents, teachers, and classmates.⁸⁵

84 Morgan, op. cit., p. 312.

85 Fenton, op. cit., p. 143.

Rivlin admits that cheating could be the result of an emotional maladjustment, but states that it is doubtful in many cases whether or not this is the reason. Children cheat frequently. They do not think it is wrong to copy school work from someone's paper. At the same time, many of these same children feel that it is wrong to cheat in a game, as they can see how one team lost because another team cheated.⁸⁶

Cheating cannot be eliminated from the school work as long as the school thinks only in terms of academic success and uses marks as a major incentive. Doing away with the marking system alone will not stop cheating altogether, but it might reduce the pressure to do so.

It is necessary to teach the child to be honest with himself; and to help him to realize that by cheating he is only cheating himself.⁸⁷ It is also necessary to teach the child the habit of success; to help him to get a taste of satisfaction that comes from real achievement; and to help him to realize that the main and only thing that counts is what he himself can learn.

In order to achieve these goals of mastery within the child, it is first necessary to present the subject matter in as interesting and appealing way as possible; and second, it is necessary to plan the assignment within range of the

86 Rivlin, op. cit., p. 364.

87 Charles Elmer Holley, An Introduction to the Psychology of the Classroom. (Boston: D. C. Heath and Company, 1930), p. 24.

child's ability so that he can be successful in at least part of the work. The child should not be held responsible for all of the assignment if he has made an honest effort toward achieving what he could do.

Ronnie, a second grade boy, could not succeed in spelling so he copied from his neighbor's paper. The teacher noticed Ronnie's difficulty, and began giving him special help in associating word sounds with the letters. Finally Ronnie learned that he could spell a few words by himself, and was happy with the result. While Ronnie is still classed as a poor speller, he did develop some confidence in his own ability.

There are a few other evidences of malbehavior that tend to be disturbing when they occur at school. One of these is talking out of order in the classroom. Usually this may be controlled by a look, or by quietly calling the name of the offender. The children may be led to understand that sometimes talking might be permitted, especially during the planning period; but that it is impolite to talk when the teacher is explaining something to the class, or when a child is giving a report, or when talking will disturb another person who is trying to concentrate on his work.⁸⁸

A typical behavior of pupils, such as running in the halls, running up and down the stairs, and pushing one another

88 Cutts, Mosley, op. cit., p. 81.

while waiting for a turn at the drinking fountain may be improved by the use of monitors.

If the children are restless, the teacher should check the room temperature and ventilation, and give the children a chance to relax.

A child should not be scolded for some mishap that he might have had in the schoolroom. Accidents are often caused by nervousness on the part of the individual, by circumstance, or possibly carelessness. Straight forward recognition of the fact makes teachers more patient or tolerant in correction. The child should be encouraged to clean up any mess that might result from an accident, such as will happen in the spilling of paint.

Some serious emotional upsets are apparent in children having physical defects. If these physical defects are of the type that cannot be corrected, as in the case of a deformity, the child should be helped to face his condition, and take a realistic view of the situation. Only then can he rise above his deformity and live a happy, well-adjusted life.

V. Conclusion

The purpose of mental hygiene in the school is to help the child to make the right and necessary adjustments to live satisfactorily, and to cope with problems in a changing world.

The understanding of mental hygiene will aid the teacher in treatment of the problems already present within the child.

The understanding of factors that tend to lead to the onset of mental hygiene problems may aid the teacher in preventing problems of maladjustment before they might occur.

In the context of mental hygiene, fear, timidity, shyness, unhappiness, and withdrawal are to be considered undesirable behavior patterns that may lead to serious results. Therefore it is the task of the school to seek ways of transforming those behavior patterns into a more wholesome, satisfying, and social way of life.

There will be fewer discipline problems as a result of frustration, if an individual is not placed in a situation with which he cannot cope.

Children can be encouraged to seek attention in the right way, by giving them attention for doing worth while things.

An environment best suited for the development of positive mental health attitudes is in a schoolroom with an

attractive setting, and equipment adapted for the use of the children.

The teacher, who is the key figure in the schoolroom, should have an understanding of children, and be able to start them on the way toward the development of sound and emotional maturity.

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