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THE COUNSELLOR — AN AFFECTIVE EDUCATOR*

ABSTRACT: Today's education must be relevant, and towards this end guidance counsellors and teachers should join forces in providing students with more than the traditional familiarity in various disciplines, and the acquisition of technical skills. This paper deals with the collaboration of counsellor and teacher in this concern with the development of "whole persons." It suggests a variety of intervention strategies counsellors may use to improve classroom learning environments, and concludes with a program which exemplifies these tactics.

This paper focuses on the role of the guidance counsellor in his efforts to influence student learning and to provide opportunities for the personal development of students. The introduction provides a review of current thinking. The second section presents models of counsellor involvement in education. A variety of intervention strategies and tactics counsellors may use to improve classroom learning environments are described in the third section. Finally, a program designed to meet student needs is outlined.

The counsellor is an affective educator. That is, he influences the development of another person by helping him to explore new fields, to augment his perspectives, and to become more aware of his surroundings. However, by affective we do not mean an educator merely of the emotions, but a person concerned with the non-cognitive factors involved in learning such as attitude and motivation, and such elements as the need for esteem and for competence. Therefore, the counsellor must be an educator who can contribute to designing learning environments which are satisfying to both teacher and student. Students are asking that someone in the schools become more interested, more concerned, for their general well-being rather than just focusing on their "heads." Teachers and counsellors are being asked to expand their role to include the developmental needs of students.

Students are stating, along with many popular writers, that the process of education is not relevant to their needs. They are saying that what's being learned now will be out-dated very soon, as does Charles Silberman in his book *Crisis in the Classroom* (1970). He emphasizes that students need to learn far more than basic skills, because adolescents just entering high school will be in the labour force beginning late in this decade and continuing into the next century, and for them nothing could be more wildly impractical than an education and counselling designed to prepare them for specific vocations or professions or to facilitate their adjustment to the world as it is. To be practical, Silberman states, in order to adjust to our rapidly changing technology, an education should prepare a person for work that doesn't yet exist. Therefore, in addition to teaching basic skills, teachers and counsellors must prepare people for unknown tasks. If we are concerned about the quality of human beings who enter adulthood, we will have to look further than to new ways, for example, to teach mathematics or French, or to make more than minor adjustments in such administrative arrangements as individualized scheduling.

What is learned in school is not only subject-matter oriented, but also includes the whole process of the "silent curriculum" (e.g. Coleman, 1961; Friedenberg, 1959; Holt, 1964). Traditionally, the emphasis of the educational process was placed on course content and the student's ability to master it. Now, however, educators must concern themselves with teaching students to cope with constant change, that is, to be flexible within and adaptable to one's environment.

As the educational program becomes a blend of intellectual and personal development activities, the roles and goals of today's counsellors take on new perspectives. These trends have been the subject of much recent writing (e.g. Holt, 1967; Jones, 1968; Rogers, 1969), all of which suggest that counsellors must re-examine their basic educational objectives.

Traditionally, the question of whether or not the cognitive and non-cognitive dimensions of an individual could be isolated was treated affirmatively. However, we know from our everyday interaction with people, as we eliminate or reduce concern for personal problems, more effort and time is available for cognitive pursuits. Assuming the cognitive and noncognitive cannot be isolated, if we are able to reduce the psychic energy expended on personal concerns, a student should have more energy available for intellectual activities. Consequently, our goal becomes one of helping students in their personal and social interactions. As they develop more competence in facing most tasks, their increasing self-worth enables them to meet the demands placed upon them.

Models of Counselling in Education

The traditional counsellor in the school has often been a blend of two or more of the following: a nice guy, a vocational director, disciplinarian, an ombudsman, a director of testing, an advice-giver, an

information source or, more simply, one of the resources within a school to which troubled and troublesome students might be referred. His basic task has often been to suggest remedies for a wide range of difficulties experienced by individual students. His specialty is the one-to-one relationship.

This brief sketch of the traditional model is, of course, filled with stereotypes and generalizations. Having been involved in the traditional model, we are perhaps overreacting. In part, this is because we are excited by a newer model for counsellors of all types. This newer model is a result of the convergence of several recent developments in the human service professions.

The increasing recognition that most people who are labelled as "troubled" represent only the more visible failures in the process of coping with human conditions, and that the issues faced by these individuals are inherent in living and must be confronted by everyone (Bennis & Slater, 1968; Goldstein, Heller, & Sechrest, 1966; Schein & Bennis, 1965) led to the suggestion that mental health professionals broaden their role from one of "people patchers" to one of specialists in human growth and development (Foulds & Guinan, 1969, 1970; Morrill, Ivey, & Oetting, 1968).

One source of this newer model has been the community mental health concept (Glasscote, Sanders, Forstenzer, & Foley, 1964; Klein, 1968) and the development of new sub-disciplines, such as social psychiatry and community psychology. Both of which are concerned with the impact of social factors on individual emotional health and behaviour (Hollingshead & Redlich, 1958; Smith & Hobbs, 1966). These sources emphasize the importance of the environment on individual behaviour and place a greater emphasis on assisting the person to cope with personal difficulties than does the traditional "doctor-patient" model.

A second source has been the development of a theory and technology which favours a "systems approach" to behaviour change (Fairweather, 1967). Thirdly, the "disease model" of psychological abnormality is being replaced by behaviouristic models (Bandura, 1969; Ullmann & Krasner, 1965, 1969) and models that describe emotional disturbance as the result of a failure to solve "problems in living" (Szass, 1961).

A final source, within education itself, has been an increasing recognition that effective education must include more than a concern for the transmission of information about a particular subject or an exclusive focus on cognitive processes (Borton, 1970; Bradford, 1961; Cantor, 1953, 1961; Grambs, 1968; Hamachek, 1968; Rogers, 1969; Thelen, 1954). This emphasis is important, since it provides an opportunity for counsellors and classroom teachers alike to share common interests. They are both basically change agents attempting to influence student behaviour. A classroom teacher broadens his interest to include more than cognitive development and the counsellor broadens his role to include more than personal adjustment. Both become concerned with the development of whole persons. Each, of course, retains

his special interests and his professionalism, but now there is greater room for collaboration.

Strategies and Tactics of Intervention

In order that a counsellor may be of help to a classroom teacher he first must be seen as useful. That is, he must be seen as a source of willing and capable assistance. For example, some teachers are unaware of the potential value of discussion groups in the classroom. Many of them have had disastrous experiences with such groups early in their teaching careers and have avoided grouping ever since. Yet a properly conducted discussion is an excellent means of motivating students, of improving attitudes toward learning, and of learning subject matter (Barnlund & Haiman, 1969; Bergevin & Morris, 1965; Hill, 1969; Lifton, 1966; Leypoldt, 1967; Thelen, 1954).

Many teachers are only slightly aware that the classroom is a social environment which they have an opportunity to design in such a way that it will enhance learning (Amidon & Hough, 1967; Amidon & Hunter, 1966; Fox, Luszki, & Schmuck, 1966; Jensen, 1969; Mial & Jacobson, 1970; Schmuck, Chesler, & Lippitt, 1966). Also, some teachers are unaware of innovations that have taken place in other classrooms and the possibilities of innovation in their own classrooms (Emmer & Millett, 1970; Gage, 1963; Harris & Bessent, 1969; Johnson, 1970; Miles, 1964; Trow, 1971).

Moreover, the counsellor can assist his colleagues in setting learning goals for their courses and then evaluating the degree to which these objectives have been achieved (Bloom, Hastings, & Madaus, 1971; Gronlund, 1970; Popham & Baker, 1970).

A teacher who is concerned primarily with his teaching and not with learning is bound to have many frustrating moments in the classroom. The counsellor may not be knowledgeable about the subject matter taught by his academic colleagues, but he should be able to provide them with assistance on variables involved in student learning.

In these and a variety of other ways, a counsellor can share with his associates his belief that the best education is the education of persons, not of disembodied intellects, by communicating the notion that noncognitive factors such as motivation, emotion, attitudes, and the needs for self-esteem and acceptance, enhance learning rather than interfere with it. By assisting colleagues with their classroom concerns the counsellor will have extended his reach to students inasmuch as others will be creating classroom environments that provide for both intellectual and personal development.

A Program for Student (Human) Development

What are we attempting to achieve in our everyday work with students? What effect are we having on another's life by what we are doing? These are two questions that should be reviewed periodically.

Consider two recent developments in schools which influence students: the increase in student population or institutional size, and the use of computerized scheduling which was developed for meeting individual student needs, but can create a loss of student self-identity. Both contribute to a loss of community feeling which has been defined as "... patterned interactions within a domain of individuals seeking to achieve security and physical safety, to derive support at times of stress, and to gain selfhood and significance throughout the life cycle (Klein, 1968, p. 11)." Community in this sense is not a physical space but the space that accompanies man wherever he moves. It appears from the definition that most of the natural groupings of young people we observe in schools probably represent an attempt to provide for the three elements in this definition. It is to this concern, our need for a sense of community to foster our personal well-being, that we now provide one example. That is, what can we do as counsellors to influence the system in order to meet student needs?

Without basic operational changes we can provide for emotional support and development in special in-school or after-school workshops. These workshops might focus on the development of leadership skills, personal problem-solving, improved study skills, or increased communication skills. These are only a few of many possible ways that counsellors can contribute to what may be seen as purely non-academic programs.

The following is an account of such a project in which a fair amount of success was achieved in conducting one group-oriented program in a secondary school. Two counsellors met with 11 students for approximately 10 weeks in a problem-solving group. These group meetings were an attempt to provide a setting which would enable the participants to express and share their concerns and develop effective ways of meeting their problems.

Specifically, through the group process the objective was to assist the students in becoming more decisive, self-directed, and responsive in their interaction with others. The goals sought were:

> to enable the individual to listen to people, to their ideas;
> to enable the individual to understand himself, who he is at a given time;
> to enable the individual to express feelings of his own;
> to enable the individual to respond to other people's feelings;
> to enable the individual to relate to others, to develop more complex, more profound relations with them;
> to enable the individual to act in behalf of a personal value;
> to assist the individual to perceive and articulate whom he wants to become;
> to assist the individual to utilize the resources of other people as he works through his problem(s);
> to enable the individual to begin to change in the directions he chooses by suggesting ways:
>> to see and formulate personal problems,
>> to make personal decisions,
>> to achieve;

to enable the individual to formulate a set of personal meanings, a personal philosophy (Mosher & Sprinthall, 1970, p. 918).

The program ended after one term with a great deal of desire being expressed by group members to continue. However, the program was deliberately terminated in order not to create dependence, while the issue of coping with non-group persons was handled with the suggestion that some of the skills learned could be utilized in their interactions with other people.

Somewhat later, one of the participants wrote an article for the city newspaper describing the group experience. The following is an excerpt from that report.

> As the group sessions progressed, and people lost their inhibitions, a sense of togetherness and trust developed. People spoke freely of their problems to other members of the group. Topics discussed included home life, drugs, authorities, parental aggravation, ambitions, and others. Students soon overcame their lack of faith in their ability by helping others.

The report included comments by some of the students after permission for their inclusion had been obtained from the students involved.

A Grade 10 student said:

> Before the group, I really never appreciated myself. I always thought of myself as somewhat of an introvert, following the crowd. I never realized this before, but I was unhappy with myself. Now, I am doing my own thing. It's my thing and I'm learning by myself, not by someone telling me.

The student reporter, in Grade 11, stated:

> I myself had the opportunity of taking part in the group, and I felt it taught me to accept people as they really are, not as I wanted them to be.

A Grade 12 student said:

> The group taught me how to solve problems within the family, at school, and with my friends. I feel I can now get along better with the people around me.

And finally, in summary the same Grade 10 student said:

> People like me for what I am, not for the role I was playing. I have at last found the real me, and you know, I actually like what I've found. It's kind of hard on a person to live two lives. Now, I've come together.

In summation, then, it is suggested that the role of the counsellor in the educational process is one of supplementing the efforts of the classroom teacher by providing opportunities for the personal development of students. The counsellor can assist students to "come together" by enabling concurrent growth of their intellect and their emotions.

The primary contribution the counsellor can bring to the collaboration with subject teachers is his knowledge of the human dynamics of education, of the learning processes and human motivation, and the impact of social and environmental factors on student learning.

The end result of such joint endeavours should be a positive step toward making relevant the education of today's student.

RESUME: Afin de donner une signification à l'éducation, les conseillers et les enseignants devraient concerter leurs efforts pour procurer aux étudiants autre chose que l'acquisition d'habiletés techniques et une sensibilisation traditionnelle aux diverses disciplines. Cet article traite de la collaboration de l'enseignant et du conseiller et de leur contribution au développement intégral de la personne. On propose une variété de stratégies d'interventions que les conseillers peuvent utiliser pour améliorer les conditions d'apprentissage dans les classes. L'article se termine par la présentation d'un programme qui illustre ces diverses interventions.

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