

2016 International Essay Contest for Young People

[Youth Category – 3rd Prize]

Wisdom Education is the Key to Better Future

(Original)

Pitou Keo

(Age 19, Cambodia <Living in UK>)

Cambridge Tutors College

Humans have the aspiration to be moral and build a sustainable world for all beings with whom we share this home planet. Throughout history, we always attempt to perfect our educational system because we believe that education is an effective tool to actualise this dream of ours. Yet, we have placed great emphasis on being intelligent, particularly in the areas of technological know-hows.

Our intellectual based society still faces challenges, from local to international scale. Wealth distribution inequality, conflicts, resource exploitation and unsustainable development practices are the evidence of the fragmentation of humanity. We have adopted drastic tactics of violence and discrimination against one another, lost sympathy for our fellow human beings. We seem to have forgotten the purpose to share this planet for thousands of years to come and instead, intensively focus all our might and potential on the now. Even though through education we manage to bring about technological advancement, it is obvious that we still lack in human affairs. My image of an ideal education is that which focus on fostering wisdom in the mind of people in order to direct people's aspiration for the right causes.

Aspiration is a very dangerous force. It drives the individual to accomplish tasks and it is the fuel, when accepted by the mass population, bring about social change. Aspiration is what saints and warriors share in common, the motivation to commit to a cause greater than them. Therefore, it is crucial for wisdom to integrate in education system to direct the efforts and time of commitment to the right cause.

In order to achieve wisdom, education should foster the self and surrounding awareness and the empathy toward one another.

Self and surrounding awareness enable the individual to make better decision on their actions. From early age, children should be encouraged to observe the action of themselves and others and analysis the impacts of the consequences on themselves as well as the society as aggregate. They ideally should ask questions and exchange their insights with their educators. This insightful nurturing will develop intrinsic curiosity and compassion for our world's issues in the hearts and minds of the next generation.

Similarly, empathy would enable people to better understand each other's actions and reasons for such deed. Interestingly as we get older, we would inevitably be exposed to so many stories, opinions and ideology. We can sometimes become too involved and absorbed in our own belief that we find it hard to listen to their reasons. It also happens to be the age where we get to make impactful decision for our aggregate future. Therefore, it is crucial that people are able to listen and understand one another, see the world from each other point of view without the temptation of ignorance. Empathy will help us embrace the freedom of existence of others as much as we would like ours to be. By discovering suffering we all have experienced, we will be able to come to common agreement and solution and seal the fracture in our perception of each other.

Through awareness and empathy, we would be more efficient in understanding our world's limitation and formulate wiser aspiration for life. I believe we will be able to set more sensible and righteous life purposes, which we know, will benefit ourselves and our world as aggregate.

The next step I believe is to diversify wisdom education to larger population of the world. Some are trapped in hunger, poverty, discrimination and warfare and are obviously prone to anger, fear, grief, revenge and pursuit of the demerit short term satisfaction. However, deep within our unconscious minds, I firmly believe that there are innate hopes of many souls longing for a wise, peaceful and sustainable future. And the fact that we come together to explore this matter of education would initiate our journey toward a better world for all.