

The Power of Self-Directed Education

(Original)

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I have a dream that one day children do not go to school. Just the opposite – they are free to learn what interests them wherever they can and want to learn it.

People are learning through living. Children are curious by nature, and if the educational system would not cut off their wings or suppress their creativity and true identity, they could learn to improve their talents, and they would find out what they are good at through playing – the most powerful learning skill we are born with. Children do know what they would like to learn, and all they need is some guidance instead of strict rules and restrictions.

In my dream world everyone helps others in the fields they are good at. Children are not pushed into kindergartens and schools from young age – they stay with their parents, who have found jobs which support their lifestyle, and let them keep their children by their side. Families with similar outlook on life can form communities, where they live and work in harmony. Family and community have a big role in children's lives, teaching them how to live in mutual cooperation. Being a part of a community teaches respect for others, gives children a sense of who they are, and helps to see what they can do for the society.

Children are given the lead role in their lives from a young age – they are the ones deciding when to wake up in the morning, what to eat and what to learn, which skills to improve, and who they would like to learn with. In that way children learn that they are responsible for their own education. It is essential that children could communicate with people of different age and social groups. People, who have had the opportunity to direct their own education, know that their thoughts and actions matter. Therefore they do not fear taking on big decision, or making a change in the world.

Children have the opportunity to turn to teachers, if necessary, but it is essential that a teacher does not treat children as students – children are the ones leading the way, and a teacher follows and instructs where and when needed. Teachers are not there to judge, bring out the mistakes or grade children's actions. Instead of criticizing, they stand by, observe, and step in when needed or asked.

People have formed lifeschoolers' learning centres, where people with knowledge are offering their guidance to everyone who is willing to learn. I believe that without the fear of failing or giving wrong answers, everyone would improve, really enjoy the process of learning, and quit doing things they really do not like. If everyone is doing things they love, then this is going to make the world a better place, so we all could make the most of our talents, as well as feel loved and appreciated.

Travelling and voluntary work also have a great role in this kind of life education. It is essential to see other cultures, not from the pictures and text paragraphs in books, but to really experience them. How could a student learn a language in a class, with no experience in real life? He could not. Learning requires communication and interaction with various types of people from all over the world. Voluntary work teaches people helping others with no greediness, just for the pure joy of helping, and getting to experience different fields of life to help figure out what could be the things they feel passionate about, and what they are good at.

The children, who have the opportunity to guide their own education, will have the habit and power of learning all through life. They have a clear understanding of who they are, and what are their strong sides. They know how to improve themselves and help others, how to make their strengths work for the community. It is time that the educational system gives children the lead role in their own education, so that they would grow up to be open-minded, self-confident people, who have passion for learning throughout their entire lifetime.