

TEACHING THE HEART: THE CASE FOR EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE IN SCHOOLS

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Schools have emphasized on subjects like math, science and language, in the effort to achieve academic excellence. These are but important topics of study indeed, but there exists yet another critical category that should be given equal concern at the classroom level, the emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is defined as the capacity to identify, interpret, control and express emotions and this foundation shapes how people relate with others, deal with stress and make responsible decisions. In a time where mental health is an issue, where social complexity and change is the norm, the need to educate students on emotional intelligence is not something that is advantageous, but rather it is a necessity.

Emotional intelligence has one of the soundest arguments as to why it should be introduced into the curriculum since it directly influences the general well-being of the students. Well, in the present days, youngsters are under increasing pressure due to academic expectations, social media pressure, family problems, identity construction, etc. Having no instruments to manage their emotions, most of the students end up lost, thus experiencing anxiety, depression as well as behavioral problems. Through educating emotional intelligence, the schools should be able to instill the students with the proactive measures necessary to deal with the stress patterns, the emotional control and the moves to gain resilience. These abilities do not only promote mental well-being but they also contribute to one who feels more self-aware and emotionally stable.

More to this, emotional intelligence improves interpersonal skills in the students. Empathy, listening, conflict resolution, and communication skills come in handy in a school set-up where one has to interact with another, collaborate and work in a team. Students who can develop high emotional intelligence will tend to establish good relationships, exhibit caring and providing leadership. The five attributes not only create good classroom environment but also equip the students with the expectations of the real social and professional world.

Academic success is promoted by emotional intelligence. Studies have indicated that the student who is rated highly in emotional intelligence is in a better position to concentrate, manage time and also get motivated which are among the key factors in academic achievement. Emotional regulation enables the students to cope with a challenge without being imprisoned by frustration or fear of failure. In addition, more collaborative projects based on empathy and social awareness are more effective and inclusive learning activities.

More importantly, the lesson of emotional intelligence prepares the soil of good citizenship. At a time when diversity, moral issues and accelerated change are becoming more a way of life, students need to be taught how to understand others and make sound judgment in a way that will be influenced by their values. Emotional Intelligence develops all these abilities as it motivates the youth to be of a whole heart and does the right thing, respects diversity, and makes a positive impact in the community they belong.

It is not necessary to introduce a radical transformation of the curriculum to introduce the education in emotional intelligence. It can be integrated in the classroom, in reflective writing, group discussions, role plays, and mindfulness practices. Emotional Intelligence can be exemplified by teachers through their dealing with pupils sectorizing an enabling and emotionally secure learning practicality. Besides, schools may ease in

social-emotional learning (SEL) programs that offer scientifically founded and organized courses of action for developing these competencies at all levels of instruction.

What I want to conclude here is that emotional intelligence is not a soft skill, but a core skill in life. Academic knowledge does take a back seat in comparison to its development as that of the future of students. Upon including emotional intelligence in the school curriculum, teachers can help equip students with the power to become not only intelligent individuals, but also good, caring and strong personalities. There are already too many intelligent but inhumane people that the world needs so much more of kind hearts, emotional intelligence education is the move to educate the whole human being.

References:

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