For Youth: Acts and Tacts besides Facts

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Abstract:

Change in environment and society not only needed to be an alert youth but also need us to be
effective teachers and faculties. Apart from the facts written in the text books and prescribe course
work we should also teach life skills to our students. On one side during adolescence the mind of the
students start maturing and their cognitive thinking starts analyzing the happenings around them, on
the other side social and societal demands are prevailing. This paper will follow the past original
researches establish the link between external changes in the environment and internal changes at the
cognitive level in the youth. This paper will describes how the external environment will affect the
behavior of the youth. Emotional, Social and Cognitive behavior of the youth can be managed by
teaching the adaptation of life skills to them. This will also help the students to tackle liberty and
freedom given to them. Being teachers it’s our duty to make our youth full of social and adaptive skills
as they are future of our nation.

Key Words: Life Skills, Emotions and Stress Management, Adolescents

From the school to college life, there is not only the physical change that occurs in students but there
are a lot of hormonal, psychological, psychosocial and biological changes that takes place. In the
transition period from childhood to adulthood, adolescence is the most important age of growth and
development. During this students not only leave the school with their uniform but their whole
environment extends its boundaries. Apart from parents, family their relationships also gets maturing
and their cognitive thinking process starts analyzing the happenings around them. This liberty and
independency lead to the birth of their own independent ideology. At this turning point of adolescence
the students need to tackle the liberty and freedom given to them.

Now a days, youngsters just “over hip” with a high level of awareness without the abilities and skills
to act on their awareness. As a teacher it’s our moral responsibility to not only teach our students the
facts written in the books only, but also tell them the tacts to tackle with the situation with the
appropriate action.

Adolescence is a time of great stress and strain on our body, mind and emotions .During this time youth face a lot of unsatisfaction. G.Stanley has referred these periods as a time of
“strum and drang” or “storm and stress” (LeFrancois, 1996). Adolescents experience more life
changing external and internal factors and situations than pre adolescents (Mullis,et al, 1993)
Buchanan, Eccles and Becker reexamined the work of G.Stanley Hall and found the supposition that
adolescence is a time of stress and stress and strain because of stress and strain because of flood of
hormones biologically ,external events and relations non-biologically .Some Scientists call this
problem as “generation gap” but more accurately it is termed as assumption gap(Hansel,1969).Some
examples of curricula designed to develop interpersonal skills in Youth are –Alshuler ,Tabor and McIntyer; Anderson ,Land and Scott;Bessell and Palomares; Crutchfield & Davies for general
relationships improved programmes --Hawkins and Ojemann HR laboratory Training Lippitt,et al
;Wells & Canfield; Williams etc. The young have inherited the “missed social changes” of our society
(Goodman.P.1960, chapter11), Many actions have been left uncompleted resulting in a weak root base. The basic social changes fail to take place at the appropriate time then the succeeding are burdened and confused.

MAIN ISSUES OF ADOLESCENTS:

**Emotions Management:** Frequent mind swings and mood changes is the main trait of adolescence. There is a lot of emotions work frequently like anger, sadness, guilt, shame, fear, happiness, love etc. These emotions need to manage by the adolescents. But due to lack of counseling and supportive environment they not able to manage that.

**“Self” Search and Identity Development:** They need to search the aim and objective of their life and establish their personal identity. But again due to lack of information and skills they are not able to explore their potential and career perspective.

**Relationship Building:**
During all these transition phases adolescents redefine their relationships with family, friends and members of opposite sex. communication gap between parents and adolescents, fear and hesitation with teachers is a matter of great concern.

Now a days mutual respect of relationship is diminishing and it need to maintain. We need to introduce curriculums which help the students to build positive and healthy relationships.

**Peer pressure and Stress management:** While this age the adolescents have high desires and expectations and they get ready to do anything. They cannot be able to manage situations and undergo stress which lead to drug addiction etc.

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**Figure: 1 Influencers of adolescent’s behavior**

**Life Skills – A need**

“The abilities for adaptive and positive behavior that enable individuals to deal effectively with the demands and challenges of everyday life”

- *World Health Organization*
UNICEF (2001) defined life skills as a behavior development approach designed to address a balance of three areas – Knowledge, Attitude and Skills.

Most definitions of life skills include “livelihood skills”, which means basic abilities needed to pursue, individual and household economic goals (e.g. – technical, vocational skills, job seeking skills, and entrepreneurial skills)

But these definitions are for general population but when we talk about young people it means adaptation and positive outcomes in terms of cognitive, emotional and social perspective.

These are the abilities that enable them to tackle the challenges of their lives in a manner. It should facilitate healthy, positive and productive personal development and contribute in society.

Now a days as parents over pamper their bids and just, they don’t know how to tackle liberty when they come in outer world & face realities of life. Life skills need to be introduced as it will help to balance the knowledge, attitude and skills among adolescents. According to WHO Ten core skills are -

- Self awareness
- Empathy
- Critical thinking
- Creative thinking
- Decision making
- Pro-effective communication
- Interpersonal relationship
- Coping with stress
- Coping with emotions

Self awareness in Youths:

In today’s challenging environment the adolescents should be equipped with tools like self awareness to tackle the prevailing social and emotional challenges in their life. “Once you see a child’s self image begin to improve, you will see significant gains in achievement areas, but even more importantly you will see a child who is beginning to enjoy life more”

- Wayne Dyer

Le Francois (1996) define self awareness as –

Self Esteem - Positive and negative way in which an individual views himself/herself. It also consists of want to be need in high esteem by others.

Self Concept – What concept an individual has himself or herself. Notions of self are generally linked to an individual’s belief of how other perceive them.

Self Actualization- Act of developing ones potential achieving an awareness of ideas and fulfilling themselves.

![Model of Self awareness](image)

As discussed earlier WHO has defined core skills which we need to incorporate in our youth so that they can adapt in the environment and face the challenges of life swiftly. One should first analyze
his/her “self” as it is the one who is confronting the situation. Then one by one try to tackle the emotions, peer pressure, family, relations etc. after analyzing the weak area one should move ahead with the plan how to improve that.

### Table 1: Model of three life skill education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Skills</th>
<th>Year level 1</th>
<th>Year level 2</th>
<th>Year level 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self awareness</td>
<td>Learning about “me as a special person”</td>
<td>Self Control</td>
<td>My rights and responsibilities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Empathy</td>
<td>Understanding how people are alike and how we differ and learn to appreciate the differences between people</td>
<td>Avoiding prejudice and discrimination of people who differ.</td>
<td>Caring of people with AIDS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal relationship Skills</td>
<td>Learning to value relationship with friends and family</td>
<td>Forming new relationship and surviving loss of friendships</td>
<td>Seeking support and advice from others in a time of need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Basic verbal and non verbal communication skills</td>
<td>Assertive communication in the face of peer pressure</td>
<td>Using assertiveness to resist pressure to do potentially health demanding activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Thinking</td>
<td>Learning on the basis process in critical thinking</td>
<td>Making objective judgment about choices and risks</td>
<td>Resisting media influences on attitudes towards smoking and alcohol</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creative thinking</td>
<td>Development capacities to think in creative ways</td>
<td>Generating new ideas about things that are taken for granted</td>
<td>Adapting to changing social circumstances</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision making</td>
<td>Learning basic steps for decision making</td>
<td>Making difficult decision</td>
<td>Decision making about important life plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>Basic steps for problem solving</td>
<td>Generating solutions to difficult problem or dilemmas</td>
<td>Conflict resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coping with stress</td>
<td>Identifying sources of stress</td>
<td>Methods for coping in stressful situations</td>
<td>Coping with situation of adversity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coping with emotions</td>
<td>Recognition of the expression of different emotions</td>
<td>Understanding how emotions affect the way we have</td>
<td>Coping with emotional distress</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WHO Report

The environment plays a very important role in the life of a youth. Their communication at all levels leaves deep imprints on their mind. There is various life skills need to be adopted for various dimensions at each level of communication. Their interpersonal skill should be tried to be developed in such a manner so that they should be made mentally strong from inside. They should be made able to cope with the unfavorable circumstances.
Table: 2: Life skills at various Communication Levels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Levels of communications</th>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Life skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intrapersonal</td>
<td>Critical thinking and</td>
<td>Self reflection; autonomous, flexible and creative thinking; problem solving; decision making.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cognitive skills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Coping and Self</td>
<td>Self awareness and self confidence; Self esteem; emotion regulation; Stress management.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal</td>
<td>Social and Moral skill</td>
<td>Social responsibility and cooperativeness; empathy and caring for others; establishing and maintaining relationships; respecting and appreciating others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Adequate expression of thoughts; emotions motives and values; assertiveness.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Recommendation:** There must be a life skills development group placed in the educational organization which includes experts and advisors form multidisciplines so that they can understand the various problems of youth and suggest them the way to come out of that. The life skill development group should include the professionals from health education, school curriculum development, educational psychology, social services etc. The group should work in a planned manner like formulating objectives, making strategies, designing skill programmes, training sessions for trainers, educators and teachers and executing the plan at each level. Some sessions should be frequently organized including role plays, case studies; brainstorming related to real life incidents etc. Regular classes should be incorporated with their schedule.

**Conclusion:** There are various studies now a days going on this topic. Youth on one side are indulge in socially unacceptable activities but on other side there is no proper place for them where they can consult or go. So being teacher and parents this is our moral responsibility and accountability to make our youth/child equipped with such tools from their childhood, which can make them aware about these kinds of activities. This awareness not only forbid them but also spread this among their friends.

**References:**

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