

Socio-Emotional Learning in Schools

“Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education”

The world is full of ifs and buts and uncertainties lie in everyone’s life. This is because GOD has kept everything in his own hands based on our karmas(actions) of previous life. The man, when encounters any difficulty tends to ‘react’ instead of ‘responding’. To function better in this world and excel in our interpersonal skills, we need to understand ourselves first, know what triggers us, know how we respond and why we react to situations.

Despite their importance to education, profession and family life, major educational and school reforms catering to K12 generation over the last few decades have not focused sufficiently on the socio-emotional factors that are crucial to learning.

True education is not to fill the minds of learners with information and data but to develop in them the desire and ability to critically reflect upon the circumstances around them. This calls for growth of character and a sense of self in learners so that they can manage resources themselves to solve their own problems and of the society at large. The purpose of Social and Emotional Learning is to train our mind, to apply knowledge, embrace attitudes and skills necessary to understand and manage emotions, empathize with others, establish and maintain cordial inter personal relationships, set and achieve positive goals and make responsible decisions.

Nowadays, children are prone to emotional isolation due to decreasing attention of working parents at home, psychological violence in the form of bullying, peer violence and sexual harassment. While organizations such as the UNICEF are working on providing innumerable measures to

curb this growing problem such as introducing stringent laws for the safety of school children, it has also highlighted the greater need for change within the school setting itself. This is where the role of Socio Emotional Learning (SEL) in schools is paramount. For pre-teen students, it is also imperative for the parents to collaborate with the school in helping them gain the inner confidence to face their other emotional challenges. Most importantly, SEL provides students the skills necessary to handle all kinds of challenges that they may face in future.

We need to train our students in schools to make them emotionally intelligent milenials. This calls for sensitizing our children about the Emotional Laws as most of the emotions affect us immediately and we tend to react instantly.

Emotions arise out of situations. Generally same type situations arise of the same emotion. Any loss will always make us sad, any success makes us happy and scary things make us fearful. This Law, if taught to the students will make them empathetic as they will learn how emotions work and how these can be practiced.

Our concerns for self or others result in emotions. When we are not concerned, we don't feel anything but when we are concerned, we tend to get affected. Hence, we need to observe what's catching our concern so that we can control our feelings accordingly. Prior information of the arising situations and pro-active planning for solutions can help us in tackling ourselves.

We react to reality as whatever seems real to us can elicit an emotional response. When we lose our near & dear ones and we see the situation in front of us, the grief sinks in. We should make our students and teachers so strong that they can differentiate between reality and stories. They should not become emotional on the stories created by the

surrounding people. They should learn to base their facts on reality and not imagination.

Emotions are generated by the happenings around us. This means any change will call for reaction. The greater the change, stronger is the emotion. So, we need to train our learners to accept any change positively. Negativity should be shunned in case of any change. Its rightly said “Change is a constant factor in life and we need to adapt to the changes in a positive way.”

Some major events in our life can retain their emotional power for years until we choose to get rid of them. Some people take years to come out of a bad relationship or any academic failure. They can't let things go and damage themselves completely. We should teach our children not to conserve any negative event of life. If they hold grudge from the past, its bound to affect our lives till the time we untangle ourselves from that web.

In case of any panic in life, we need be vigilant. The feeling of being hurt arises out of the fear which we may or may not be able to identify. Once we identify the source, the fear tends to disappear. When we are happy, we see ordinary things as beautiful and vice versa. Its important to take an objective view when emotions are heightened.

It's proved that “Social and Emotional Learning can improve positive attitudes towards self and others and increase students' academic progress by 11 percentile points.” Research says that the implementation of social and emotional learning as an integral part of K-12 curriculum leads to reduced violent tendencies in children, improved academic achievement and a greater ability to tackle social challenges. Students feel secure in their learning environment and can easily thrive in educational environments and the wider world. It helps to break

stereotypical thinking and challenge the prevalent social-cultural bias that has proven to be destructive to world peace.

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