

Positive Education

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Abstract: In modern times, the word “positive” has been given a new shade of meaning with its significant use and benefits in different fields, sweeping across the whole world in a powerful way leaving its footprint everywhere and has clearly stricken a chord with people who yearn for a better and virtuous cycle for our life, our future and the world.

And today I want to apply this “positive” in our education field. Ever since the ancient times, people have been paying a lot of attention to education and how we can achieve a truly good education system that can be approved and recognized by the greatest number of people has always been a dream many generations work arduously for. And here I want to use a metaphor to put forward this “positive education” idea.

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1 Introduction

As we know, if we want to hammer a nail into the wall, we probably need to make sure several preparations and procedures are right. For example, first, we have to make sure the direction is right, say, we are going to apply strength on the head of the nail instead of anywhere else. Secondly, we may need to make sure we use the right tool, say, a hammer instead of, say, a piece of thin paper or other improper ones. And thirdly we need to make sure the strength we apply on the nail is of the reasonable amount, neither too much nor too little but of the right amount of strength. So, for this stage, balancing the strength seems to be important, for too much strength may break the nail or too little strength

may not be able to hammer it into the wall successfully. And lastly, this whole hammering the nail into the wall is like an experiment we are doing seriously, after which, it is hoped that we do some assessment and self-reflection. In this part, it is expected that we can apply a confident as well as modest mindset.

2 Direction: Safety and health come first. Be independent and cooperative in a good way not only with each other but also with our Mother Nature

And here I want to use these four stages of hammering the nail into the wall metaphor in our education. That is, first, the right direction is the most important thing. Secondly, the right tools or ways used for achieving this goal is critical too. Thirdly, we should balance everything, like in this metaphor, we know the importance of balancing the strength. Lastly, it is like an experiment that we need to reflect upon and assess so as to make greater progress next time. And the attitude to this reflection and assessment is also of great significance. We hope we can have the mentality of confidence as well as modesty; we can approve of our own values and efforts for one thing and for another we can admit that we also have our flaws and weaknesses though we are sure of our merits and strong points, so that greater progress can be expected in the future.

But here comes a very crucial question: Since we know these four procedures: the direction, the way, the balancing and the assessment and the attitude to the result matter greatly, but to be specific what are these four aspects indicating? What are they in detail regarding “positive education”?

Let’s analyze it one by one. First, let’s look at the first procedure, the direction. What would be the positive direction for our ideal education system? Here I want to say, safety and health come first. What do we work

or study for? Many of us would say for a better life and a better future and a better world. True. we mainly work for them. But to have all of them, the most basic things that we need to have in order to ensure them is to be safe and healthy both physically and mentally, or spiritually.

Just think what we could do or achieve without these two?

And of course, learning something useful that may help support us to live on the earth well is also important. In a word, we want to be safe and healthy physically and spiritually and learn something that may help us find a proper and suitable job in the future, to help us become good and responsible citizens for the world that in the end I win, you win and the world wins; Not only having mutual beneficial win-win situation, but more, we want the world, our Mother Earth wins too, of which I mean while we learn to be independent and cooperative both materially and spiritually, we should also make sure we protect the Earth, from which we come, upon which we live. It is of great importance that we should try our earnest efforts to protect Her to ensure our sustainable development.

So, for the first part, following the right direction is important, and we want us to be in a win-win-win situation, to be independent and cooperative with each other as well as with our Mother Nature.

3 Ways: Positive ways to ensure an education of virtuous cycle are also important

For the second part, positive ways or tools are important too. As we hope, positive ways such as encouragement, support, motivation, understanding, communication, cooperation etc. would be more likely to be welcomed by the students. As the saying goes, do to others as we would be done by. We hope we can be treated by the world in a positive way, and therefore we are supposed to treat our students the same way too. But as the saying goes, the exception proves the rule.^[1] The “rule” of “applying the positive ways in education” means there might be the “exception”, for example, we may use some moderate “punishment or criticism” ways, which of course are supposed to be grounded in a context where students are explained to that we do this for hoping they could use this as a reminder for themselves that they can avoid making this same mistake in the future. And more importantly, we hope all these are undertaken with good state of mind and mood so that

the probability of this being understood and accepted well would supposedly be higher.

So it is hoped that we mainly follow the rules and principles of “applying the positive ways on education”, and on the basis of all these, certain flexibility can also be taken into consideration.

4 Balancing the different resources to have an education of sustainable development is vital too

Thirdly, the balancing of the resources, as in the metaphor, the balancing of the strength, in achieving the goal is also important. So, there are some important balancing in education to help us get an ideal state. The examples are as follows. First, it is the balancing of our material and spiritual wealth. The knowledge we learn can be called our spiritual wealth, or our spiritual food and for a healthy virtuous and sustainable development of education, the amount of the positive spiritual food we take in is supposed to be supported with the similar amount of the material food or material wealth we have, and one of the most important forms of our material wealth is our physical body, our physical health, to be in a balanced state with our spiritual health. So, the first balancing would be the balance between our material food and our spiritual food, or our physical health and our spiritual health.

The second balancing would be the balancing of our either material or our spiritual input and output. It is like our eating. We eat food and digest it and pass out the waste matter from the system. Likewise. we take in, input all kinds of energy, therefore, we are supposed to output them in all kinds of different forms, so that things would work out in a positive and virtuous cycle.

The third important balancing would be the balancing of the development and the ethics^[1-2]. As we all know, in the process of development, in this age of advanced technology, positivity can multiply in an incredible way, and actually so does the negativity if the development doesn't go with the good ethics.

So, the ethical challenges are also one of the main difficulties that we of modern times need to face and overcome.

The fourth critical balancing would be the balancing between work or study and, relaxation or play. As the saying goes, all work and no play marks Jack a dull boy. That means we need to find a balance between these two to adjust ourselves or getting some inspiration or insight from the rests we take every now and then,

so that we may have a better and clearer idea of what direction we are supposed to follow.

There are some other types of balancing that we also need to give some attention to, for example, work-family balance, the balance between theory and practice. We learn so much theoretical knowledge on one hand, but how well do we put it into practice? It is like learning to drive, learning the theory in the book is one thing, but what is more important is how well we can apply the knowledge or the theories we know into practice, to make sure what we have learnt is of good effect and use.

And when it comes to looking for the reason for a problem, it is hoped we can also balance the way we try to find out the reason from the internal and from the external side. Also we are in an information explosion age with all kinds of advanced technology, such as computers, mobile phones that can also function as the modern time teaching aids, working alongside with the traditional way of teaching, so the balance between the modern and traditional way of teaching seems to be also vital too.

5 The confident as well as the modest attitude matters greatly

And for the last part, our evaluation and assessment of the result of the whole process and our attitude towards it matter greatly too. For one thing we need to be confident that our values and our efforts in the contribution to fulfilling this dream of developing an optimum educational system that brings the greatest good for the greatest number should be recognized. And being confident also means we know from our heart that we must have done something good which is a kind of valuable experience that we can use again in the future. But there must be something that we need to make improvements to, for nothing in the world can be 100% perfect and there is always room for improvement and

that is why we, on one hand, are confident with our values and efforts; on the other hand, we need to be modest, to work harder in the future to keep making improvements.

As we reflect upon the past, we sort out the good from the bad, and for the good, we maintain and strengthen it; for the bad, we adopt the modest attitude to correct it and change it for better. So confidence and modesty go hand in hand to help us strive for a better and positive education system, from which we hope that we, just as we discussed above, can gain a better life, a better future and a better world, slowly but surely, to ensure a virtuous and sustainable development for the future generations.

6 Conclusion

As someone said, education is one of the most powerful things in life. It allows us to find the meaning behind things and helps improve our lives in a fabulous way. It gives us a better understanding of the world and offers us great opportunities to use the knowledge that has been positively imparted to us in a wise way. Overall, education is the platform that makes it possible to defeat all kinds of difficult barriers to make our life more fulfilling, our future brighter, and our world a better place for all of us to live in. We all hope that with everyone contributing efforts together, we will be on the way to steadily achieving a more positive education system that suits our time with a virtuous cycle and a sustainable development that goes hand in hand with the wisdom that the world endows us with, that we receive and share with a grateful heart.

References

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