

# GUIDANCE

## as the Philosophy of Philippine High Schools

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The most important single phenomenon in education is the fact that every individual student has a unique personality with its own structural make-up and its own behavior and reaction patterns. Each individual student needs a distinct type of instruction suited to his peculiar personality. Ideally speaking, therefore, there should be as many types of educational procedures as there are individual students.

We should realize as teachers that the student is a whole personality if we are to forestall the error of regarding the education of the individual as divisible into parts. The imparting of information and the training of students in a certain specific branch of study is not the whole of education; it is only a part of the picture. The other part, which is just as essential, is that of equipping the student with specific techniques of making easy, effective, and desirable adjustments in the social setting in which he lives. These two phases of education should be regarded together as a unity, as belonging to a complete whole. An integrated personality is the end of all education; it is the goal of our educational endeavors.

The individual personality acquires certain characteristics and equips itself with certain abilities as a result of education. In the case of the Filipino student, these characteristics and abilities spring from and take root in the educational objectives of the Philippines Constitution, which are as follows: "To develop moral character, personal discipline, civic conscience and vocational efficiency, and to

teach the duties of citizenship." These objectives form the basis of all our educational endeavors.

To realize the objectives set forth in the Constitution, we must do effective teaching as well as guidance work proper. Guidance, of course, includes three phases: (1) educational guidance, which concerns itself with enabling the learner to get the most out of his studies; (2) vocational and economic, which concerns itself with the discovery for each student the use that can be made of his talents and capabilities so that he can be prepared for some occupational work for which he has some fitness and thus enabled to secure the best possible adjustments in his economic life; and (3) personal guidance, which endeavours to help the student secure adjustments in his health, his emotions, and his social contacts. All of these phases of guidance are important.

Guidance is of course not to be considered as broken up into parts. The phases of guidance here indicated should be considered as belonging to a whole program—that of securing the best possible adjustments between the student and his school and environment. The student cannot be considered as being apart from his social environment. He and his environment should be considered in their combined totality. Education is therefore most effective and complete if it effects student growth as it takes place in the reality of his environment.

Since we are concerned with the development of individual personality, the



problem of guidance really resolves itself to "seeing through George and then seeing George through," as some wag has put it. We must know the individual student thoroughly and well. We must not regard him merely as a name on our rolls, a mere shadow that flits on the stage of school life. We must try to find out what he is good for; what his interests and desires are; what emotional and other handicaps he is laboring under; what efforts he is exerting to attain his objectives; what success he is making toward this end; in what way the curriculum fits him and ministers to his needs; and what attitudes and reactions he is forming toward his studies, his school, his fellow students, his teachers and the people around him. In a word, we must try to discover him. In each student there might lie some hidden spark of genius; we must catch that spark and make it glow and spurt into flame. We remember, of course, what the poet Gray has said about the hidden gem or beauty:

"Full many a gem of purest ray  
serene  
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean  
bear;  
Full many a flower is born to blush  
unseen,  
And waste its sweetness in the  
desert air."

Only after knowing the individual thoroughly may we discover the hidden sparks of genius. Only then may we be able to train and direct him to develop himself into a useful and happy being.

Guidance is a part of the regular school work; it permeates every phase of school activity. In fact, it can be truly said that all school work is guidance. We must provide the time and the opportunity for the teacher to know the student well, and to secure the best possible adjustments for him. Perhaps this could be done if we realized that much of what we now consider as teaching is not really attaining the ends of education. If we have students "occupied" in things that they do not really

need, if they have to study subject-matter that is not functional, if they take part in activities that only accentuate the ver-studies, perhaps our endeavors are being wasted. It should be possible to pinpoint certain essentials in the work of the high school which we consider absolutely necessary knowledge and skill for effective citizenship and for laying ship. We should be able to limit these firm foundations for training in leadership to a very few so that students can really attain mastery of fundamentals. What is now being wasted in the "teaching" of non-essentials could be better spent in real guidance work and in securing personality adjustments, by having the students participate in activities that are practical applications of the things that are learned in the classroom.

The curriculum is the chief vehicle of guidance. An effective curriculum is one that anticipates and removes some of the persistent problems of guidance. If it ministers to the needs, interests, and abilities of students; if it provides activities in which the students can find things of real worth, things which are really functional in their everyday life, if it contains opportunities for the application of book learning, many guidance problems are then taken care of. If school work is regarded by the student as really vital and necessary to his growth, if school procedures are natural and he sees in them real opportunity to learn how to live more abundantly, then we have done guidance work effectively and we have given the student true education.

The successful teacher is he who takes real interest in the individual personality which is the student, who tries to know him and his problems, who keenly watches how the student is growing, and who is ever anxious to direct and guide that growth toward the development of the effective, helpful, and happy citizen. And the teacher can do this task only if he is given sufficient time and facilities to do so. All of us who are concerned with the work of education are charged with the duty and the responsibility of making these things possible.