

THE DAY YOU SET YOUR OWN RULES

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WHEN we hear the word 'discipline' what occurs in our mind, is the enforcement of discipline, infact punishment which has contributed to make the word sound unnecessarily dirty.

Discipline is the structure, the scheme which is designed to facilitate the smooth working of some activity, whether this is the acquisition of knowledge by the student the skill of the craftsman, the training of the professional soldier or the rearing and education of children.

In order to reach the best possible end in each of these, energy has to be harboured and canalized, time must be measured and allocated and many of the normal impulses temporarily curtailed the student will have to spend more time with books and less time with companions or games.

The craftsman has to learn to overcome natural merits to ignore distraction and to practice, often with little encouragement, the technique which is a necessary part, of his art. The soldier has to be taught to ignore his inner instinct for self-preservation at all costs, as well as his disinclination to murder. In the same way since babies are without exception a social demanding, selfish little egoish, discipline is needed to subdue their natural egocen-

trism so that they can line in and with society.

Discipline is tolerated when it is self imposed. The trouble begins when the pressure is all from without. It is the idea of one person disciplining another that seems to be objectionable in this socialistic, democratic age, even when the person on whom discipline is imposed is too young or for that reason, unable to administer it himself. Because most of us want to retain society more or less in its present form, we reluctantly agree to the enforcement of laws which protect it and us, and it is easier to do this because in most cases we do not have to take a personal part in the business. In smaller society like family and school, hospitals where we are involved exhaustion and self-defence drives one to formulate some sort of structure of discipline on which group life is run.

Disciplinarians are for rules. Rules serve time, to know what you may or may not do in given circumstances allows great economy of energy and removes a lot of destructive indecision. Rules represent order. One reason for the dissatisfaction of the young today with the society and family pattern in which they have grown up is that there have not been enough hard and fast lines to give them security. They have formed themselves growing up

in an atmosphere of adult uncertainty which leaves them confused. Growing up is never an easy business and one essential factor in it is a re-assessment of the standards of one's elders. If these standards are indefinite, the adolescent feels cheated. How can she define her own position in relation to something which has so little form and which shifts from moment to moment?

Parents make arbitrary rules for their own convenience, rather than to promote the child health or well being. What a modern parent can not accept is the longer view which might show them that immediate gratification can be less important than an equilibrium in which not only the children but also the adults have rights to discipline one means to learn how to live with others in the first place with ourselves.

Rules are made as they say to be broken but only if they have generally been kept.

Where the student has operating choices in the work undertaken, she needs to learn to respect the choices made by others. What she wants to do may be restricted by what others want to do. Then she needs to learn respect for corporate authority and accept the social discipline; that render collaboration practical. So it does not become a matter of each individual doing what she

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likes, when and if she likes, but rather of working out, where necessary enforcing, the natural accommodation of a community.

The only form of discipline which is lasting, effective, and creative is that which stress from within the person. Externally devised structures, routines and tradition only serve to take away from the student the sense of choice. Only when the student becomes aware that she has choice, she begins to realise that she has responsibility for herself and being aware of that sort of responsibility leads to the road of self-actulization.

It is only when the students decision-making responsibility is taken away the student is deprived of the feeling of purpose. The student who lacks the sense of purpose becomes apathetic and readily disrupts the learning process. We may say the discipline of the school as being good, when teachers find that they enjoy and are stimulated by what they do. When the students are growing strong and vigorous. When they are learning fast and well what they themselves want to learn. When they are reaching new levels of sensitivity about themselves and others. When the parents see the school staff as colleagues in their work. When pupils attend classes only because they are

forced to. When problems of discipline are always to the forefront of staff discussion. When teachers talk is peppered by word and by examples of misdeeds. When the teacher refer to the parents as people of inferior culture when they call parents into school only in time of troubles.

Where discipline is good it is because both teacher and students are deeply pre-occupied and happy in their work and because the work has purpose for them. It does not mean that instances of indiscipline do not occur but they are seen in perspective as something to be looked at and deal with rationally. They do not distort the attitudes and relation within the school.

Good discipline results in any sphere, when everyone concerned is engaged in doing something that she wants to do using methods that she accepts as suitable to the taste and for purposes that are her own, which she identifies closely.

The real purpose of discipline is not to impose rules and regulations upon us for a long period of time. It is hoped that with experience and understanding we shall become a self-disciplined persons setting up our own rules and regulations of our behaviour. This is the highest purpose of discipline.

Attention SNA Members

SNA Delegates to the 17th quadriennial Congress of the International Council of Nurses have to be selected to represent Student Nurses Association. This Congress is to be held in June 1981 at Los Angeles, California, U.S.A. The TNAI Head Office will conduct an all India test and interviews at State level and the Students who get the top position at the State level will be called for an interview at the national level. Two or Three students will be selected out of top scorers from the States depending upon the availability of the funds to participate in this congress.

A detailed letter giving information about the State level test and interviews has already been despatched to each Unit Secretary, State SNA Adviser and TNAI Branch President. The members are requested to study this letter carefully and those who wish to take part in the Contest must register with TNAI, Head Office by paying a sum of Rs. 5 as registration fee by July 30, 1980. The Registration forms are also available with each Unit Secretary. Please send the completed form along with the fee i.e. Rs. 5 Postal order, Payable to the Trained Nurses Association of India, New Delhi.

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