

I think modern educational theorists are inclined to attach too much importance to the negative virtue of not interfering with children, and too little to the positive merit of enjoying their company. If you have the sort of liking for children that many people have for horses or dogs, they will be apt to respond to your suggestions, and to accept prohibitions, perhaps with some good-humoured grumbling, but without resentment. It is no use to have the sort of liking that consists in regarding them as a field for valuable social endeavour, or what amounts to the same thing as an outlet for power-impulses. No child will be grateful for an interest in him that springs from the thought that he will have a vote to be secured for your party or a body to be sacrificed to king and country. The desirable sort of interest is that which consists in spontaneous pleasure in the presence of children, without any ulterior purpose. Teachers who have this quality will seldom need to interfere with children's freedom, but will be able to do so, when necessary, without causing psychological damage. Unfortunately, it is utterly impossible for over-worked teachers to preserve an instinctive liking for children; they are bound to come to feel towards them as the proverbial confectioner's apprentice does towards macaroons. I do not think that education ought to be anyone's whole profession: it should be undertaken for at most two hours a day by people whose remaining hours are spent away from children. The society of the young is fatiguing, especially when strict discipline is avoided. Fatigue, in the end, produces irritation, which is likely to express itself somehow, whatever theories the harassed teacher may have taught himself or herself to believe. The necessary friendliness cannot be preserved by self-control alone. But where it exists, it should be unnecessary to have rules in advance as to how "naughty" children are to be treated, since impulse is likely to lead to the right decision, and almost any decision will be right if the child feels that you like him. No rules, however wise, are a substitute for affection and tact.

The title: The importance of affection for children

The contemporary educational theorists ignore the charms of children's company. If one loves children, then the latter will happily obey the former. Thus, it is useless to consider children objects for exerting power. Besides, one can have great pleasure in the company of children if he does not have any materialistic goal. When it comes to great teachers, they only disrupt children's liberty when they find it necessary. Therefore, children are not mentally disturbed. Regrettably, over-burdened teachers cannot love children. In fact, education should not be one's solely profession, but those who have to be away from the children, must secure 2 hours a day for this profession. Given all that, affection is more important to children than anything else.

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