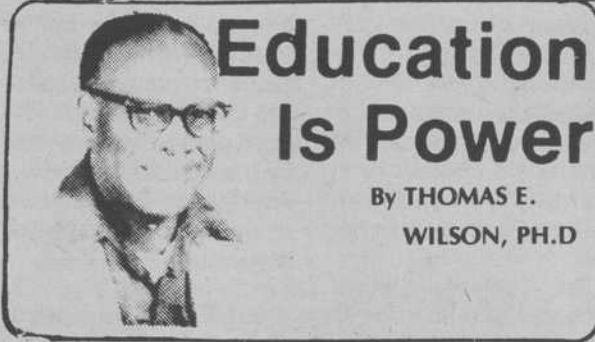


Education



Education Is Power

By THOMAS E. WILSON, PH.D

Everyone has problems. Children as well as adults have problems. It is up to us as adults to find ways to help children with their problems. We have to know how to help them, otherwise our best intentions may result in more harm than good.

In order to guide children in the best methods of problem solving, we must first know how to solve our own problems. As we grow older, we find that our earlier experiences in solving problems help us over and over again. The problems may grow more complicated and varied as life itself becomes more complex. Today our problems may involve a troublesome neighbor, whereas last year it was a temperamental in-law. But the particular problem is still one of getting along with difficult people, and we can recognize it for what it is.

Whatever the problem is, mulling over it endlessly

or worrying about it constantly or rushing headlong into the first course of action that presents itself is not likely to result in a satisfactory solution.

If we analyze the processes we may have used in solving some of our own most difficult problems successfully and with a minimum of wasted time and energy, we will probably find that we thought through each possible solution before making a final decision. We will probably find, too, that the method involved six steps: 1) recognizing and stating precisely what the problem really is and why it is important; 2) recognizing the obstacles that stand in the way of a solution; 3) recognizing available assets to work with; 4) recognizing various possible solutions; 5) evaluating each solution; and 6) choosing the best solution and putting it into effect.

Underlying these steps is one's attitude toward problem solving. Successful problem solvers take the view that problems should be reasoned out. They break down a problem into its parts and solve the easier parts first. They recognize their prejudices and try not to let them influence their decisions.

Of course, not all problems require the same amount of thinking through. With simple problems, the process can generally be reduced to three steps:

1) recognizing what the problem really is; 2) listing various possible solutions; and 3) choosing the solution that will work best.

The three-step process usually works best for young children, too. A young child does not need to analyze in detail the causes and obstacles in his or her problem, nor do they need to list the available assets.

analysis of the six-step process mentioned above will include the following: Usually the individual recognizes his problem. Sometimes, however, the problem is not easily discernible. It may be apparent only in a sense of dissatisfaction or tension or anxiety. After we know what the problem is, the next step is to see what stands in the way of a solution. When one or more solutions to a problem do not readily come to mind, it is a good idea to make a mental or actual list of all facts, skills, sources of information, sources of personal advice and help, and any other factor that might be useful in solving the problem. As a result of the preceding steps, several solutions may suggest themselves, and then it is a good idea to try to determine just how each one would work out in actual practice. Our final action would be to decide upon the solutions with the most in its favor and the least against it.

GOVERNOR RELEASES EDUCATION DRAFT REPORT

LAS VEGAS—Governor Richard Bryan Thursday said Nevada must toughen its standards for both students and teachers and it must also provide, in effect, a "report card to the taxpayers" on how those standards are working.

Discussing the draft report of the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education, Governor Bryan stressed the need to improve the state's education system to ensure that future generations of Nevada workers are competitive in an increasingly diverse marketplace.

"Both national and state statistics indicate that more and more young people emerge from high school without adequate preparation for either college or work," the governor said. "In Nevada this is particularly important as the state embarks on an aggressive campaign to diversify its economy."

The draft report of the Governor's Commission on Excellence in Education recommends increasing high school graduation requirements. Specifically:

A. Four years of English (up from three under current requirements.)

B. Three years of social studies to include world history, U.S. history and government (up from two).

C. Three years of mathematics (up from two).

D. Two and one-half years of science to include one-half year of health (up from one in science).

E. One-half year of computer science (where there are now no graduation requirements).

The Governor's Commission for Excellence in Education study also calls for strengthening teacher qualifications by requiring that "recertification classes

have a direct effect on or specific relationship to the teacher's assignment."

Another key element in the report is a call to develop a comprehensive system for evaluating schools' effectiveness.

"Nevada's schools represent the single largest investment of public funds," Governor Bryan said. "The purpose of a 'report card' on schools is to establish accountability to the public and encourage strong community involvement to increase the ratings of schools."

The proposal calls for the gathering of comparative data within Nevada schools, comparisons to schools in other states, a state program for recognizing

outstanding schools and use of a diagnostic team to help schools with lower ratings boost their scores.

That diagnostic team would probably include a school administrator, a teacher and a member of the state Department of Education.

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