

Loosening the education-delusion: the nature of alternative ways of child-learning

The current education system is based on an adult view of the world. What occurs is that within its “self”-based delusion of the world, the adult has a child and then tries to make this child conform to the adult world. This is fundamentally flawed because the adult’s ideology is of course based in dualism and therefore it immediately educates the child in dualistic ways of thinking which are completely corruptive to the natural psychology, the instinctive way of living and sensing the world. This is the main problem and difficulty and is total blindness commanding the child.

Believing that the adult is the one who knows and the child who does not, that the adult needs to augment the nature of the child in order for it to understand something, is a colonialism of nature which simply doesn’t work in today’s society. The alternative view is to say maybe the child actually has their own way of understanding something. Alison Gopnik (<http://www.alisongopnik.com/default.htm>) has spent many years looking into the nature of how a child learns through play, which is spoken of in the article called “Wild-Child’s Play” on the Health-Instinct website. In this process we look at the way the child learns and understand that it is learning in its own way, and to some extent we step out of the way of the education system, not trying to order it or make it into something, but to actually do less. That’s the fundamental thing that the alternative methods of child-learning actually does.

Today there are manifold methods of this, but the main two are the work of Rudolf Steiner and of Maria Montessori, both combined have several thousand schools worldwide. They are involved in a child’s education from infant stage throughout its development all the way up to about eighteen years old. Interestingly these two methods share many similarities, but their main commonalities are that especially in the infant, kindergarten stage of development there is a non-interventional approach to the child, who essentially leads itself and allows itself to move towards a particular direction. Especially with Steiner’s approach there is a realisation that a child can be categorised according to upon their innate nature, rather than based on myriad adult-world ideologies such as “we need more scientists or engineers” or whatever. Instead it’s asking what is the child, looking from another perspective, it’s child-based education. This means the child is directing the process, observed by the adult who is allowing the child to simply expand and express the way that it is, noticing and following the child’s process of being drawn in a particular direction instead of another. There is a watching and an encouraging of the child to follow the natural path of least resistance, right through until the end of that child’s education within the school.

This is the nature of both Steiner and Montessori practices, which are at best where there is a loosening-off of the delusion of education as being something the adult has to impress upon the child. However, intertwined with the Rudolf Steiner education system is what he called anthroposophy, which is Steiner’s philosophy of the world based on his studies and intuitive ideas and his work as an educator. The problem with Rudolf Steiner, as with Carl Jung and many different philosophers including Maria Montessori, is that whilst there is to a certain realisation of the importance of the letting-go of the child’s

nature to do what nature wants to do, in their own philosophy of life there is enormous complexity and a huge seeking process. For Steiner it was a seeking for knowledge, also for Jung in a therapeutic sense. The approaches of these people are very similar, based on their own individual ways of viewing the world, which then turn into formalized into systems and eventually become cultist ways of thinking. Luckily with Steiner education, especially today, the anthroposophic content doesn't play as much of a part in Waldorf/Steiner education, basically you can choose whether to engage with anthroposophy or not.

The difficulty with anthroposophy is that while it does touch on many aspects of Eastern philosophy and ancient Greek understanding, there is also a highly personalized ideology of "self" blending into that, which is encountered, as this is one man's philosophy. There is a constant process around the forming of the individual in Steiner's work and the belief, for example, that as a child forms it is in fact a very natural process that it becomes more and more of an individual. Similarly with Jung, who felt there was a process of forming the ego, which was very important in order for there to be a situation of it letting go. This is fundamentally incorrect, we know this from tribal peoples all over the world, the "self"/ ego doesn't have to form at all, and in some cases never forms and there is simply a universal liberated sense from the beginning. The infant child is within the natural-reality of Eden, it doesn't have "self" ideology.

So if we want to summarize the nature of what we have with Montessori, Steiner, Gurdjieff and with Jung philosophies, which we could collectively call Western alternative philosophies, they all have the sense of people who have touched the edges of a different way of thinking. That different way of thinking is about the ancient world, which understood total Oneness and energetic seamless of the whole Universe. It is touched upon by these people but with the Western mind-set of individualism, so one therefore gets a very skewed point of view because one gets a partial image of the background philosophy and only accesses it through a narrow straw, lacking the bigger picture. In order to get the complete picture you have to completely drop your previous deeply-entrenched ideas, which Steiner, Jung, Montessori and various others of that time could not do, they kept the basis of their philosophy and carried on looking through that at everything they were doing. Therefore in their system of education you get an exact replica of that, child-learning based on a slightly less aggressive, more peaceful adult point of view, an adult with more yin, less yang. While there is a healing process going on, that does not mean "healed", those two things are completely different. So when the education system is healed, is cured, it will actually be that there isn't a system of education...from the Tao Te Ching:

Chapter 3:

Not exalting an "individual's" way prevents competitiveness/contention

Not exalting items of "value" prevents thieving

The Natural-human draws towards relaxing and letting go of the mental-process, and an interest in the abdomen and body,

Softening forceful wilfulness, so sinking into and strengthening the bones.

*If most people are not focused in intellect and desire, Naturally those within intellect and desire have no influence
If there is no pre-intended action, all will be well.*

Chapter 48

*In the pursuit of intellectual learning, every day something else is acquired.
As Naturalness is perceived spontaneously, every day something drops away
Less and less is done through pre-intended action, until no action is derived this way.
When nothing is done through pre-intended action, nothing is left un-done
Left to take its own course, Nature's direction is without resistance.
Resistance cannot "rule" Nature.*

Chapter 57

*To govern a state/country requires legality
To wage a war requires intellect
But alignment with the Nature of the universe does not require taking this kind of action.
How is this known to be so?
Through it being so.
The greater the number of prohibitions and restrictions applied to people
The more suffering they endure
The sharper the weapons of the people of a state/country are
The more suffering in the land
The more intellectually ingenious the people are
The more bizarre and obscure their products become
The more laws and regulations
The more there are thieves and robbers.
Therefore Natural-human says:
When the "self" takes no action, people align with Natural-order
When Stillness is acknowledged, people align with innate authenticity
When there is no pre-intended action taken, people thrive
When there is no seeking/desire, people return to simplicity.*

Chapter 65

*The ancient Natural people knew Naturalness, they knew it could not be "used" to "do" anything, especially to make people more intellectual.
Naturalness allows people to be more simple
Why is it that Natural order does not arise?
Because people are restless and individualistic as they are taught to be intellectually active.
The nation's tyrant is the one who uses his intellect to govern
The nation's true ruler is the one who uses no-thing and allows Nature to govern.
Knowing both these principles and seeing them both
Is known as Innate-perfection
Innate-perfection is profound and far-reaching,
It draws things to turn back and return to their Origin.*

Chapter 81:

*Truthful words are rarely embellished;
Embellished words are rarely truthful.
That which is Naturally-virtuous cannot argue
That which argues cannot perceive Innate-perfection.
Wisdom is not found in extensive intellectual learning
The extensive intellectually-learned are not wise
The Natural-human does not hold back.
Expressing outwards in the world there is great fulfilment
Expressing outwards in the world there is great contentment
Naturalness nourishes all and cannot separate
Naturalness of the Natural-human is awesome and cannot contend.*

These 5 chapters are essentially expressing that when humans have not been educated in any of the adult ways of believing and thinking, they revert to a state of peacefulness. For children who have come from Rudolf Steiner and Montessori education and spent all their life in that situation there is a constant fear that they won't be able to engage with the "real" world. Steiner educated people will often enter a therapeutic situation saying they can't engage with the adult world as it is now because they are ridiculed for being very open-hearted, sensitive and expressive of their feelings. The Steiner and Montessori education systems are revolutionary in that they are, albeit partially, opening up the natural expression of the human being, the children actually come out and say they enjoy and want to go to school and engage with their friends, unlike many people's memory of how school was. However, the difficulty is that those children are coming out of this very social, parent/teacher connection and lifestyle, with a high level of kinship and family involvement in their classes, almost devoid of bullying, basically a true community, and are moving into an autistic society that doesn't understand human relationship and connection. So the Steiner-educated, more open person is really the cure for the nature of society, but society isn't necessarily going to listen to what they have to say or how they express themselves, although eventually these people will help instigate change.

So Steiner, Jung and other Western expressions were on the way to an understanding but it isn't yet completed and it may be too radical a shift for there to be an immediate movement back to simply Tao Te Ching-based, non-education. But today there is a transitional alternative educational process towards a situation where there's actually no requirement for education because there's a realisation that all which is known and required is already innately within. This is the way the natural world functions and there is a gradual movement of human beings back to that place, through a breaking down of all systems, including that of education, which simply ends with the natural state.

David Nassim
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