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I. INTRODUCTION

The educator seeks to stimulate the development of the student's knowledge and discipline of mind. The educator is also interested in facilitating the development of the student as an individual in our society. Much of the conflict in modern education stems from the effort to achieve a genuine synthesis of these two goals.

Psychiatry, in addition to its concern with prevention and treatment, is likewise concerned with individual development. It is increasingly interested in mental health in order to reduce the wastage of our human resources and to aid in a fuller realization of each individual's potentialities.

The fostering of mature personalities can be regarded as the main promise of modern psychiatry. Psychiatrists are often impressed by the individual's resiliency and unused potentialities and his capacity to overcome formidable external and internal obstacles. They are also becoming increasingly aware of how much can be accomplished through cooperation with parents, educators, and other key persons in the daily life of the individual. Contrary to the beliefs of some, psychiatry does not assume that everyone is unbalanced or dominated by sex, and it does not approve of or condone misbehavior and wrong doing, "coddling", or complete permissiveness. The psychiatrist does not believe that human beings are frail and so delicate that they must be overprotected; nor is he an advocate of adjustment through conformity.

This report, intended primarily for educators, defines some of the problems of the college student. It tries to indicate some means for recognizing and releasing his strengths and aspirations. Many of the points emphasized here have long been recognized by educators. Much of what is suggested or advocated has been done intentionally or more often intuitively by good teachers for generations. Today it is important for our future society that colleges undertake to do, in a more knowing way, what these good educators have been and are doing.

Each college in its own way and at its own pace defines and clarifies the needs and problems of students as members of the college community and, when it is deemed necessary or desirable, reshapes and reorients its operative practices. This report discusses the kind of approaches and understandings, which, it is believed, may be helpful to colleges as they strive to meet changing conditions and needs. It offers some remarks on personality development in the student and on opportunities for the college administration and faculty to aid in this development. In addition, it discusses the relationship of the college with the student's family and how the services of the psychiatrist can be utilized in the college. Although we are concerned with each student as a unique personality, we are simultaneously mindful of the similarities among students as a group.

II. PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE COLLEGE STUDENT

It is our conviction that colleges will be in a better position to facilitate individual development if the characteristics and problems of their students are considered in terms of the processes of maturation. Problems arise in connection with the basic drives which motivate human behavior when there are conflicts between these drives and the environment and also when there are inner conflicts between the various contending drives themselves. The structuring of these drives is influenced by a multiplicity of external factors deriving from home, school, religion, and other social experiences. A dominant factor in the life

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of the college student is how he relates to his fellows. The role of the student's peer group is therefore deserving of greater attention. It is through his group membership and through the specific role in the group which becomes his own, that the student is able to reach for additional reassurance and support in his strivings toward maturity. It is also through such group life that he becomes better able to satisfy his desires to be like others while he timidly explores the possibilities of finding himself.

There are various aspects of personality development which may give rise to some psychological vulnerability in the student. The following, although of importance throughout life, are of particular significance during the second decade.

a. Dependence-Independence

Many young people who come to college have not completely relinquished the dependent, protected position of earlier years. Our society, with its pattern of prolonged education, together with the occasional over-protectiveness of parents, tends to foster dependency. This clashes with the growing urge toward independent, self-directing activity, a type of activity upon which our society also places a high value.

This conflict, as well as others, may be manifested in rebellious behavior or submissive compliance. The former may become evident in defiance toward parents or college authorities, student riots, excessive drinking, and resistance to learning. Submissive compliance can be expressed in seeming exemplary behavior and attitudes both in and out of the classroom, excessive politeness, and over-considerateness. Some students, driven by such exaggerated need to please, achieve formal scholastic success without genuine understanding or intellectual satisfaction.

b. Love and Hostility

Whether one receives love and understanding in the early years of life, other things being equal, determines in large measure one's capacity to love and be loved and to adjust constructively to other people during later years. The nature of the student's childhood helps us understand why he does or does not make friends with his classmates, or why he gets along well with members of the faculty or administration who, in the student's mind, temporarily may take the place of parents. Feelings of guilt and discouragement or rebellious behavior resulting from frustrations and resentments originally experienced with the parents and siblings may find renewed expression in the course of the student's daily contact with members of the faculty or administration.

c. Sexuality

Sexual urges lead to conflicts and frustrations of greater or lesser degree during the teen years. This is true regardless of whether these urges are restrained or find expression in any one of several ways. Even the control and channelling of sexual urges into socially acceptable forms of behavior are apt to be accompanied by some degree of stress. This is a time in life when drives are strong and the restrictions of society are burdensome. The changes in moral codes and the increased opportunities for privacy confront the college boy and girl with frequent stimulation and opportunity. Sometimes young people are driven into sexual behavior by what they believe to be expected of them. Even in the college years they may continue to have difficulty in accepting their masculine and feminine feelings, and in integrating the mixture of these feelings effectively in order to attain their roles as men and women in our culture.


The needs which people have to feel secure, to prove their adequacy, and to demonstrate their competence in meeting the demands of their environment may stem from a sound desire to master difficult situations. Such needs may also be an expression of a defense against conscious or unconscious fears of an irrational origin. Thus the college student may devote his energy and efforts to inappropriate attempts to "belong" or to conform in ways which threaten his integrity and compromise his individuality. He may follow the lead of others, strive for over-achievement academically or indulge excessively in extra-curricular activities. An awareness of the motivations or needs of these and other types of students can help the educator guide the individual student toward a constructive redirection of his energies. Such an awareness, for example, may help to reduce the high frequency with which students who have exhibited their capacity for college work do not measure up to academic requirements because of their needs to engage in non-academic activities.

e. Development of Standards and Value Systems

While growing up a child begins by taking his parents as his ideal and builds his value systems in their terms. As the child develops, his horizons expand and he is influenced profoundly by other people. During the college years his standards and value systems are apt to be modified by the members of the college faculty with whom he associates with the result that earlier assumptions and frames of reference are often replaced or modified. In this way he is apt to develop new expectations and new goals. There can be powerful influences in play between student and faculty member, quite apart from the subject matter of a particular course, which may lead to important effects in terms of choice of a career and manner of life. Faculty members or administrators may be able to understand the behavior of their students better if they realize the roles they play in their students' lives, whether or not it is their intent to do so. If, too, they can see changing standards and value systems in terms of
the students' new experiences at a time when their impulses are strong and not yet well regulated, the enthusiasms, impetuosity, and inconsistencies of adolescence become more understandable.

**Implications**

The special problems of college students are determined in large part by the stages in the process of emotional maturation at which they find themselves, by the methods they use in seeking solutions to conflicts, and by their particular environments both past and present.

Each student with his individual heredity and environmental conditioning has progressed at his own rate of development and maturation in his own particular way. Depending on the degree to which earlier problems have been resolved, each student struggles with personal conflicts and concerns. If these cannot be managed they may interfere with the productiveness of the academic experience. Some students may be fairly mature and adequately functioning in one or more areas of living and working but still immature in others. Thus, students come to college with different expectations and aspirations and with different degrees of readiness for the opportunities and responsibilities they encounter.

The adolescent, undergoing a difficult transition from childhood to adulthood, must give up the familiar and reassuring, make choices and decisions, learn new patterns of conduct and of thinking, break off old and establish new relationships, and above all develop a valid concept of himself and sound goals for the future. These processes were going on prior to adolescence, but now take on added urgency. Although certain patterns of personality have already been determined, the entering college student is still capable of much change. The college has many opportunities for guiding these constructive processes.

**III. THE COLLEGE ADMINISTRATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE STUDENT**

The college community is a place where students are not only studying but where they are also living. Everything in college is of consequence to their maturation. Thus the policies of the college or university, its organization as an institution, and every aspect of its character are significant in the development of the student. Every American college has its distinctive way of operating, and this, to the observing and experiencing student helps determine his conception of social order and what the grown-up world stands for.

Much of the student's time may be spent in exploring this order and authority. He may test the limits of rules and requirements, seek special privileges, or even openly rebel. The student's questions and problems may be merely a means for determining the response of college administrators and for discovering inconsistencies and conflicts among those dealing with his "case". Evidences of discord between administration and faculty are often sensed by students who may then react in various undesirable ways. The student's experience with the administrative machinery may wholly neutralize endeavors of teachers to orient the college student to adult living.

The student's response to college administration and to the academic program is related to the process by which the student selected the college and the college selected the student. Every college is burdened with students who have come there merely because of parental insistence or pressure by secondary school guidance. Often such educational guidance is dictated by stereotypes for each college which may be at variance with what the college actually is. Many state colleges are compelled to admit all students above a minimum high school grade. Many of these students have to be weeded out as soon as possible regardless of the meaning of such a defeat to the student. It is in the interests of both the student who is dropped and the college that more attention be paid to the method and consequences of this procedure so that its possible constructive aspects should not be lost.

Whether the college is selecting from a large number of applicants or whether it is compelled to recruit, it has an obligation continually to examine its criteria for selection and to evaluate its admissions in terms of what the college actually is. Many state colleges are compelled to admit all students above a minimum high school grade. Many of these students have to be weeded out as soon as possible regardless of the meaning of such a defeat to the student. It is in the interests of both the student who is dropped and the college that more attention be paid to the method and consequences of this procedure so that its possible constructive aspects should not be lost.

Even though selection and admission are well done some of the promising students admitted may be damaged or blocked in development by their experience in the college community. Coming from family homes or from prep schools, where they have been under varying types of adult supervision, entering students have widely different readiness for living "on their own", for bearing the burdens of freedom in dormitories, in fraternities and sorority houses and in the college community generally.

Students may suffer from excessive or inadequate restrictions and supervision. Either of these policies may adversely affect the student's learning to become an adult. Frequently one or two students set the pattern for others to rebel against authority as a reaction against what they regard as being treated like a child. Or, one or two students who have not learned to manage their own lives in the free atmosphere of college will try to lead others into disorderly activities. It is the very immaturity of students away from family life which so often makes them susceptible to these attempts by a few "problem" students who wish to gain a following in order to reinforce their rebellious impulses. One question facing a college is how many of these "problem" personalities, who may have an unfavorable influence on fellow students, they should admit.
It is desirable to provide flexible but consistent supervision and guidance for the total student body as well as special treatment of the few. The student wants to know that there are policies to guide him. He wants to know that the college has an active but not interfering interest in helping him to discover himself through the patterns of living, studying, and playing of the college community. These give him the definition of the situation he must learn to cope with. These give him the promise of an understanding officer of the college who will not only recognize his mistakes, but will appreciate his strengths.

Some colleges take it for granted that entering students are well acquainted with college regulations. Thus, when a student blunders, he may be treated as a willful offender rather than as a person needing orientation. There may be no systemic procedure to help the entering student to learn how he is expected to live and work in the college and what the common hazards and mistakes are to which he is liable. Under such circumstances the "bull session" with other students becomes his main source of orientation. This student type of orientation, although often helpful, may misrepresent the picture through pleas, for example, for a spurious college spirit which emphasizes the supreme importance of conformity to the college stereotype, for the primacy of athletics over academic work, for disdain for college authority and the importance of "pull" in escaping the consequences of one's actions.

These and other faulty items of college lore are familiar to every college administrator but need to be reviewed as obstacles to the attainment of college objectives. Furthermore, they interfere with the young student's attempts to establish himself on a more mature level in the college community. Many disciplinary problems originate with those students who have been persuaded by such stereotyped accounts, innocently or maliciously offered, into ignoring the college rules and regulations. This can lead not only to such obvious results as expulsion but may help perpetuate a sophomoric way of life. Many of the instances calling for disciplinary action arise from the behavior of those students who are easily persuaded by these folk tales of the college into taking chances, into running the risks of academic failure and expulsion because they do not believe the college means what it says in the handbook of rules and regulations.

In colleges the attitude toward discipline varies from the traditional, legal concept of violation of the law to the more recently developed viewpoint that an offense represents a symptomatic act by a student. He may, for example, be overburdened by expectations of self direction of which he is not yet capable, or be upset by his personal problems. The qualities of the demands and prohibitions of the college, of the administration and enforcement of its codes, of the evaluation of student performance are all inevitable ingredients in the student's developing concept of himself either as an emerging adult or a perpetual juvenile. Because he is engrossed in learning a way of life in the college social order his experiences in everyday college life are much more influential than are his courses in government or in similar subject areas.

A college may emphasize in all of its teaching the primacy of human dignity and the worth of the individual personality. It may present the eloquent testimony of great writers to the crucial significance of human freedom and the vital spirit of inquiry. It may be vigorous and outspoken in championing freedom of expression in and outside of the college in the face of undemocratic political pressures. However, if at the same time some students have the impression that these are but empty exhortations that are contradicted by their personal experiences with classroom and administrative practices, they may become disdainful of their college and, perhaps, of society at large.

Dismissal or public expulsion of a student for flagrant misbehavior may seem not only unjustified but necessary to protect the college community from offenders. Nevertheless, listening to the sentiments of students frequently reveals student beliefs and feelings that are far from accepting the official adjudication of such cases. Students generally know who are the "real stinkers" among them. They know how often the one who is caught and fired is much less culpable than others who are too clever to be caught. Belief in justice and order may be seriously undermined in such cases, with a consequent impairment of morale in the student body, especially if the cases provide grievances upon which all manner of other resentments can focus.

The alternative to summary punishment appears to be more time consuming and costly, but, in the long run, one can expect considerable benefit to accrue to both student and college. We suggest that an effort be made to discover what a particular offense means in the life of the student. This procedure is conservative, like medical care which tries to understand the patient's illness and to invoke his strengths for recovery. Such an approach has especial significance for college students not involved in a particular episode. Many of them are struggling with similar impulses and may be greatly helped by seeing how a fellow student has been able to recover and again assume the burdens of freedom. Students learn that mistakes and misconduct are not irremediable. This is the hardest lesson for student government to learn since it sometimes tends to resort to extremely punitive treatment or become the passive agent of college authority. Participation of official student government leaders in all the deliberations surrounding possible disciplinary action serves both to keep the student body informed and to avoid the feeling that the rights of students are not being considered.

The approach which regards an offense as a symptomatic act may lead to difficulties because, at times, there is only a subtle difference between (1) a firm, strong action by the college which may be necessary and constructive in reaffirming standards, and (2) summary action with no explanation. The former is experienced by the students as basically friendly and
helpful. The latter may appear to them as an expression of disguised weakness which is compelled toward an exercise of power and authoritarian pronouncements.

This Committee believes that the focus of all disciplinary action should not be the student breach of the rules and the imposition of punishment, but rather the discovery of the underlying problems of the student for whom constructive help should be provided. At the same time, the individual student’s difficulties may reveal where and how the college can provide some helpful guidance or some alteration in the college community which may reduce the liability of similar occurrences. In other words, a student “break”, for whatever reason, could serve to illuminate some hazard of college life to the college, including the students, just as public health uses the incidence of various diseases as indication of potential danger to the community.

This suggested approach shifts the customary preoccupation with the “case” to a concern for the health of the individual and the college community. The health or morale of the college community is governed by that intangible, but all-embracing atmosphere, accepting or rejecting, beneficial or destructive, in which the late adolescent personality is striving to attain adulthood.

While the number of non-residential students has grown rapidly in recent decades, not enough is known about their problems in order to provide needed help. There is a necessity for experimental programs designed to study the non-residential student, especially in our large urban universities. Students attending non-residential colleges experience alternations of attitudes, feelings and relations as they shuttle between home and college. It is to be hoped that through such study some solutions may be found for the lack of continuity of non-resident college living as well as for other problems associated with such college experience.

In their own homes students learn how to live responsibly and become increasingly mature, or fail to develop, largely according to the ways in which they are regarded and supervised by the adults about them. Correspondingly, each resident college has its own climate. If students are regarded as irresponsible children they will be likely to live up to those expectations and continue to be children in various ways. On the other hand, if they are to be considered as young men and women, with potentialities and latent strengths, they are more likely to respond not only with increasingly mature conduct, but with a growing self-respect and self-confidence because of such treatment.

Obviously many students are not ready for this responsibility at entrance, or even after a year or two of college living. These persistently juvenile students, as indicated earlier, often frustrate the strivings of other students. The latter may feel helpless unless the college offers them some assistance. Here formal student government may be less effective than informal mobilization of the dynamics of the group. We are just beginning to recognize and to utilize planfully the resources of the group, although every society has relied upon them throughout the ages to evoke and maintain a “we-feeling” through every individual’s concern for the integrity of the group.

There is a growing body of evidence that groups have latent potentialities of much promise. The exploitation of youth by cynical leaders, as shown in totalitarian societies and occasionally in this country, though reprehensible, does suggest the possibilities inherent in the management of group living. With the passing of many of the traditional sanctions and the rejection of older controls, it seems imperative that our colleges, with all possible assistance, should seek to develop understanding of these increasingly important processes of group living for the benefit of the student community. The potentialities of a group of late adolescents for establishing and maintaining good morale (in the broadest meaning of the term) may be seen in some specialized student activities, such as athletics, especially when not dominated. They can be found in some sororities and fraternities. In these student-run groupings we can see resources for self-discipline, loyalty, devotion, and self-sacrifice, all of which can be invoked for college living.

As evidenced by growing observation of college students, all too often we do not make enough demands upon youth, do not genuinely challenge them in terms that are meaningful, do not provide occasions where they can exhibit their strengths and gain in self-respect and self-confidence. If they do not accept the demands and limitations of adulthood we sometimes assume that they are lazy, irresponsible and lacking in respect for our society values as essential to human living. But such attitudes are often expressions of their boredom, their self-defeating demoralization when they find little that is meaningful to their own personal concerns, and helpful to their overwhelming desire to grow up and prove their adequacy.

Students of a century and more ago in this country were much more destructive of property and disdainful of the rights of others, possibly because there were so few approved channels of activity through which their aspirations could be satisfied and their tensions relieved. Today, not a few of our college students, and sometimes the very gifted and most promising, give expression to their feelings of insecurity and confusion through such activities as drinking, reckless driving, daredevil escapades, vandalism, and sexual adventures. These unhappy students usually are lacking in self-respect and are frequently rebellious against their status as dependents on their parents. They resent being compelled to accept a way of life which involves a type of supervision that continually violates their need and desire for autonomy. Academic study may in such cases be something to be tolerated, or even resisted, because neither the subject matter nor the tasks that they are required to perform have any meaning for them.

We must learn more about the human costs and wastage which occur in college and also more about
student potentialities upon which the college can build for continual improvement. With such new knowledge the college administration and trustees will be in a better position to fulfill their responsibilities to the students, the faculty, and the nation.

However strongly we emphasize the foregoing, the college is and always must be concerned with teaching and research and increasing the student’s capacity to master fields of knowledge. In the following section the faculty, the classes, and the curriculum will be discussed from the point of view of fostering knowledge and personal development in the student.

IV. THE FACULTY IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COLLEGE STUDENT

A. The Faculty Member As Educator

The college teacher can reach maximum effectiveness only after the establishment of good rapport and communication with students in the classroom. Teachers come to the classroom with different assumptions about learning and students vary considerably in their ability to assimilate new material. The failure of rapport and communication may be due to the teacher, the student, or both, although it is often attributed to the student alone. Further study is necessary in order to ascertain more definitely how such failure comes about.

Learning is a complicated process, and there are many gaps in our knowledge about it. However, we do know that, in part, it is modified by various emotional interactions occurring between the student and his total human environment. The college teacher with whom the student is in almost daily contact plays an important role in his emotional as well as intellectual growth. The teacher’s moods and attitudes, his ways of viewing problems, and his general philosophy of life can have considerable impact on the student. If the teacher is aware of this he may be able to improve upon his capacity to stimulate intellectual growth. There are no set rules in this relationship because each teacher makes use of his individual experience and philosophy in evoking a student’s interest. Enthusiasm and genuine participation by the student in any area of endeavor are more often developed by indirect means or by example than by forceful or authoritarian methods. Identification with the instructor’s interests and enthusiasms is one of the most powerful motivating forces.

Some teachers are more effective using the lecture method while others arrive at equal or better results by methods which stimulate the student to do his own thinking and arrive at his own conclusions. A student accustomed to the lecture method might continue to prefer it, while another student trained in more independent ways might find it deprives him of the main excitement of learning. Excellent teaching has sometimes been criticized by students because the teaching style was unfamiliar or did not coincide with what they had come to expect. Since individuals differ rather widely in their ways of learning and understanding, it is obvious that a considerable variety of materials and methods of presentation is essential.

If we appreciate and respect individuality, then it follows that flexibility in the classroom should be encouraged. The use of varied classroom techniques permits students to learn in their individual ways, without running the risk of failure because of an inability to perform according to one pattern or standard of achievement. The capacity to accept, to understand and to live with others may be better strengthened by procedures of this kind than by didactic references to democracy or to the desirability of individual difference.

Good teachers have always used their subject matter, their knowledge and trained judgment to help students develop. Each teacher knows best the resources of his discipline for these purposes. However, not all teachers are aware of how much they can contribute to students through a fuller recognition of individual differences. This recognition can help the student to achieve a productive reconciliation between the discipline, its specialized materials and methods, and his own personality make-up.

The basic enthusiasm for a subject which makes a first-rate scholar effective in research and publication also tends to make him a first-rate teacher. For the most part such a teacher is not apt to be intimidated by prevailing political taboos which often carry with them a loss of freedom of expression in the classroom. Unfortunately, the ease of evaluating documented professional contributions and therefore of rewarding it tends strongly to create the illusion that “good teaching is not rewarded” and thus to inhibit its development in a staff member’s formative years. The difficulty for the administration is that this illusion is often fostered by the incompetent who considers himself a good teacher in order to justify his failure to himself. Every effort should be made to discover means of encouraging distinguished teaching especially in those instances where it is not coupled with research and publishing.

A one-sided concentration on the doubts and conflicts about the central assumptions of our culture may foster in the individual student who is not as yet ready for such considerations a feeling of insecurity or even anxiety. In this way it may handicap his abilities to mature emotionally and intellectually. Thus it is possible that the ways in which the subject matter of the Liberal Arts curriculum are presented may offer students either additional confusion and frustration or opportunities for personal integration and motivation. Good scholarship on the part of the teacher may lead him to raise an issue of disturbing personal concern to the young student, whereas at a later period the same student may be able to approach such subject matter more constructively.

Sometimes it is said that college students exhibit such immaturity that they cannot or will not respond to the opportunities and requirements of the academic program. In the opinion of this Committee, suitable
modification of the human climate and the various educational approaches at a college will lead, in time, to a decrease in the frequency of the complaint that today's college student tends to be too immature. The young student needs a carefully developed environment in which he can gradually learn to replace the older familiar patterns of action suitable to his earlier life with newer, more complicated patterns appropriate to adult life.

As we devote more energy and research to the development of better teachers in adequate numbers for our primary and secondary schools, it is likely that this will also contribute to a decrease in the complaint about the immaturity of our students. We believe that the student should be held to high intellectual standards but with enough flexibility as to how those standards should be met so that his interests and curiosities will be developed rather than inhibited.

An experimental program for the Freshman-Sophomore years might include the following objectives:

1. An understanding of human growth and personality.
2. Opportunity for experience in the creative arts.
3. Insights and understanding in human relations, such as marriage, family living, and employer-employee relations.
4. Awareness of the problems of living in the college community. The hazards, mistakes, and sources of conflict to be discussed not as moral issues but as the normal hazards of the social environment.

In such a program many of the difficulties that students face and are often not resolved could be presented and discussed in a framework of seemingly impersonal objective material which, however, would be meaningful to the student. The group discussion would help the students to deal with emotional topics on a cognitive intellectual level where they can resolve some of their problems. Some students are too disturbed for such a self-corrective procedure and would require individual counseling or professional treatment. It is clear that such a program would make heavy demands on the teachers and students, intellectually and emotionally. Programs of academic work along these lines would, however, probably prove helpful to many students. Moreover, it is likely that a forthright recognition of the student's need for this kind of program would increase his ability and willingness to utilize in the later college years the rich opportunities offered for intellectual development.

B. The Faculty Member as Counselor

As the process of education has become more complex various systems of advising or counseling have been developed to help the student. The choices that a student may be required to make become more numerous and of more consequence as society becomes more highly developed. These decisions may be in the fields of course or career choice, inter-personal relationships, or in the attempted resolution of some other conflict either in the environment or within the personality. It has been found helpful in many schools to devise a system whereby any student may be certain of knowing some older person to whom he may feel free to talk. The term "counseling" is here used to cover practically all types of person-to-person relationships wherein one individual is in a position to benefit from the wisdom or experience of the other. It is not intended to include specialized attention such as is offered by a trained psychotherapist.

Unfortunately, counseling has many different meanings today. It may mean the specialized guidance by a person trained in counseling to provide educational, vocational, or more personal types of guidance. Sometimes these various types of counseling are regarded as separate and distinct, requiring a variety of personnel; sometimes they are combined in the person of one college officer. Often the student visits a counselor, who may have one of a number of different titles, only when in difficulty or when referred by a teacher for specific reasons such as failing in school work or over-cutting. In some colleges there are faculty counselors or advisers who regularly have a group of students under their supervision. These faculty advisers may also deal with non-academic questions including personal problems of students.

In some colleges every teacher is expected to be a counselor with a range of responsibilities according to his own readiness and willingness to serve in different capacities for students. In such colleges there may be available some professionally trained counselors and part or full-time psychiatric services to advise the faculty and to see individual students when this seems to be indicated.

Some teachers, by reason of their experience and background, do not care to give other than strictly academic advice and guidance, and do not want to deal with students on any other basis. Sometimes this very detachment and aloofness has a special value for the student, but it may be unfair or even unfortunate when a student who needs more than intellectual guidance is assigned to such an adviser.

The assumption that teaching and counseling are essentially one process brings up a number of fundamental questions that are sometimes rather disturbing. For instance, an occasional teacher may be somewhat concerned because he feels that he has agreed to teach mathematics or physics and has not included in his thinking the idea that he is probably going to teach students as well. The idea that a counselor is a specialist in indirect education violates some of the traditional concepts of teaching. Some may feel that attention to the individual means less emphasis is going to be placed on the subject matter. The concept that attention to the individual is designed to help free him from distraction in order that he may work more effectively is not accepted by everyone. It may come as somewhat of a shock to some faculty members to realize that what they do, say, read, wear, enjoy, and
every aspect of their manner and behavior may affect their students. For the first year or two a counselor may get more out of his new activity than the student he counsels. The great majority of college faculty members operating under such a system not only find that they can perform counseling functions adequately, but that such experience enriches classroom contacts and causes their whole teaching routine to become more enjoyable.

The good counselor has contact with the student as he is in the process of making important decisions, and is therefore in a position to reflect with him upon the meaning of knowledge and the subtle but significant considerations that are weighed when choices must be made. He looks at the academic scene through the student's eyes and tries to understand it from the student's viewpoint without getting too identified with him. He is a catalyst in the self-understanding of the student. He is the center of communication and knows who possesses or has access to special skills or knowledge that the student may need. He cultivates the judicious mind, thinks of other possibilities, shares perplexities and grows with those who seek his aid.

The good counselor helps the student formulate his problem. He does not "solve" the student's problem, seldom gives direct advice, and does not feel obligated to help every student since there are no solutions to some problems. In such instances a friendly and understanding attitude may be of the greatest aid to the student in tolerating a difficult situation. He does not pass moral judgment but helps the student to do so for himself. Most important of all, he does not probe into the student's private affairs but lets him divulge what he chooses in his own way and at his own rate. He must always keep in mind that what the student comes to consult him about may not be what is really worrying him, but that the student is trying him out, seeing what kind of a man he is and trying to judge whether or not his counselor will be able to handle confidential material comfortably.

In the field of problem solving there are a good many situations which come up that can be handled for the most part by the faculty member himself, possibly with the aid of some of his associates. These include cutting class, minor instances of plagiarism, choice of course or career, courtship problems, lack of interest, feelings of insecurity, homesickness, and a host of other minor interferences with the accomplishment of good work. In somewhat more serious disturbances consultation by a counselor with a professional, whether he be a physician, clinical psychologist, chaplain, social worker, or psychiatrist may be in order. Such disturbances include persistent anxiety states where the cause is not clear, bodily symptoms, mild mood swings, sleeplessness, panic in examinations and errors in judgment exemplified by the student who attempts to do more work than he can accomplish successfully. Finally, there are some very serious symptoms that always call for referral without delay to the physician or psychiatrist. These include bizarre behavior that "just doesn't make sense", overactivity with excitement and increased irritability, exhibitionism, suicidal threats or acts, homicidal threats, acts indicative of extreme hostility, or any persistent form of behavior that indicates a deep degree of emotional instability.

The relationship between counselor and student should continue unchanged while the student is receiving help from a specialist in psychotherapy or counseling. The counselor is not an amateur therapist of any variety, hence does not need to feel threatened by anyone. The counselor is the person in a student's life who is available as a friend during the awkward period when the student has not had the occasion to form his own friendships.

The counseling process by teachers is not always clearly or consistently applied by the faculty, members of which may have very different conceptions and methods. Some continuing faculty program of discussions, interchange of experiences and comparison of procedures is desirable as a way of improving the counseling function and relating it more effectively to teaching and administration. In addition, a faculty discussion group on counseling might be able to suggest some administrative policies on admissions, discipline, etc., based upon their direct contacts with and understanding of student needs and problems, and closer articulation with the curriculum and actual teaching procedures.

V. THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE COLLEGE WITH THE STUDENT'S FAMILY

Attitudes of colleges toward the families of students reflect the institution's interest in the student's struggle toward adulthood. College policies toward parents can be an important factor in the student's ability to increase his capacity for independent judgment and to accept responsibility for his own decisions and actions. A college policy which recognizes with wisdom and tolerance the needs and limitations of both students and their parents may be a useful example for the student in his attempt to learn more adult ways of handling relationships.

College students are in every stage of dependence on their parents. Parental attitudes vary from dominating control over a nearly adult son or daughter to almost complete withdrawal of interest except for financial support, and even that may be lacking. No matter how rebellious the student feels toward his parents, he needs some assurance of their confidence and continuing concern for his welfare and achievement.

While the student is trying to gain independence from his own parents, he tends to see the college in loco parentis. His attitude toward the college may be the same as his view of his parents, or, equally important, he may see in the college only the attributes which he wishes his parents had. The maternal or parental role unconsciously assigned to the college by the student becomes part of the total educational situation. The actual role of the college is further complicated by the
fact that parents and the surrounding community may regard the college (sometimes legally) as surrogate parent. It is in the context of these often conflicting expectations that the college has to work out relationships which are effective with the parents and will also assist the student in learning to recognize and deal with his parents’ particular blend of adult flexibility and fallibility.

Many students come from broken homes. The unresolved conflicts of such a situation may continue in college to distract the student from his work. Even if the family is intact and well disposed, many students are troubled about their parents and need understanding counseling in order to deal more adequately with family situations involving illness, financial reverses, emotional disturbances, or simple parental disapproval of healthy adolescent curiosity and rebellion. The usefulness of counseling will be enhanced if the institution’s official attitude and policies reflect a genuine understanding and tolerance of the usual tensions between parents and students.

Often students feel guilty because they conceal from parents innocent and even laudable interests and activities (including college courses which they know or fear will provoke parental criticism), even though these pursuits may be personally rewarding. A student may also fail academically, break rules, or otherwise get into trouble, sometimes as an expression of strained relations with his parents, worry over his family, or resentment against constant parental interference. If the college arbitrarily notifies the parents or summons them for a conference, it invokes the very authority from which the student is using childish means to escape. It is highly questionable whether this kind of college action benefits the adolescent in his attempts to become an adult.

If the college views the parents as responsible for the student it may send home report cards, call upon families to put pressure upon a son or daughter to do better work, and consistently involve the family in the student’s career. Some students like and may need continued family involvement, but fostering this kind of relationship defers their maturation. The crucial question is how the college can strengthen the student’s capacity for adult conduct and help him relinquish the remaining childhood patterns which get in the way of his growing up.

A college concerned with this goal may treat the family with cordial interest, answer inquiries about students, but conscientiously refrain from volunteering information except in real emergency. The basis of this policy is that the student is expected to manage his life, meet obligations, and accept the consequences of his actions including failure and misconduct. Students generally thrive on these opportunities to be grown up, but the college must be prepared for the occasional student who is expected to assume more responsibility than he is ready for. A college pursuing this course must also be aware that the more a student is expected to be responsible and autonomous, the more the college must assist him to discover the satisfactions of assuming responsibility.

While younger adolescents appear to be obsessed with the wish to be like everyone else, most of them soon become eager to escape teen age patterns and be accepted as young men and women. They try to appear more grown up than they are, and are ready to respond to an invitation to assume a more mature role. As the student makes progress in his efforts, the college can help parents recognize the emerging young adult. Parents often fail to see the new identity because of the persisting image of their “child” whom they still want to guide and protect out of affection or because of various other, often more irrational, reasons.

Visits home from college may be difficult for both the student and his parents. After the first real break from home parents may find their child returning with decidedly changed attitudes and strong reactions against parental solicitude and interest. Parents may be hurt or indignant, feel betrayed or repudiated, as the child continues to pursue his own interests and make his own decisions. With his enthusiasm for new ideas, he may lecture his parents on their old-fashioned views, reactionary politics, and life-long prejudices, or try to convert them to the latest fashion in music, art, or literature, using the college as his new authority.

Wise parents recognize this kind of behavior as a part of their child’s development, but some parents may become exasperated or embittered toward child and college. The intensity of adolescent-parent conflicts and its effect on the student’s ability to learn, increasingly draws the college into the area of student-parent relationships. A college attitude toward both students and parents which encourages a healthy, mutual respect between them will help the student learn more adult ways of behaving. Such approach by the college will also increase good will and understanding of the college on the part of the parents.

VI. THE PSYCHIATRIST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE COLLEGE STUDENT

This Committee believes that the focus of education can no longer be upon the mind or intelligence alone. We are aware of the inextricable relation of thinking, feeling and action as they function in the student and are becoming increasingly concerned with the way disturbance or retardation in any one of these can handicap and even defeat the other two. Thought can be stunted and distorted by feelings, and feelings can be rendered rigid and self-defeating by warped perceptions and confused, immature ideas. These insights, developed long ago but more recently enlarged and confirmed, are giving to education a greater significance than ever before.

For these relatively new and difficult tasks there are workers from various professions who can be of assistance, especially if they are permitted to work as members of a team involving administrators, teachers, and other academic staff. In such a team the
psychiatrist can make his most useful contribution to education by applying his specialized knowledge to the many different problems involving interpersonal relations and human maturation. The psychiatric viewpoint is appropriate whenever there are human strivings and rivalries which must be dealt with in order to advance toward the objectives sought.

A previous report by this Committee entitled The Role of the Psychiatrists in Colleges and Universities outlines more fully how professional personnel could contribute in a direct clinical sense. Facilities for the diagnosis and treatment of the individual will continue to be important. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that the goal of mental health for all must be sought in and through daily working and living.

SUGGESTED READING LIST


Ibid.: Considerations Regarding the Loyalty Oath as a Manifestation of Current Social Tension and Anxiety. GAP Symposium No. 1, 1954.

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