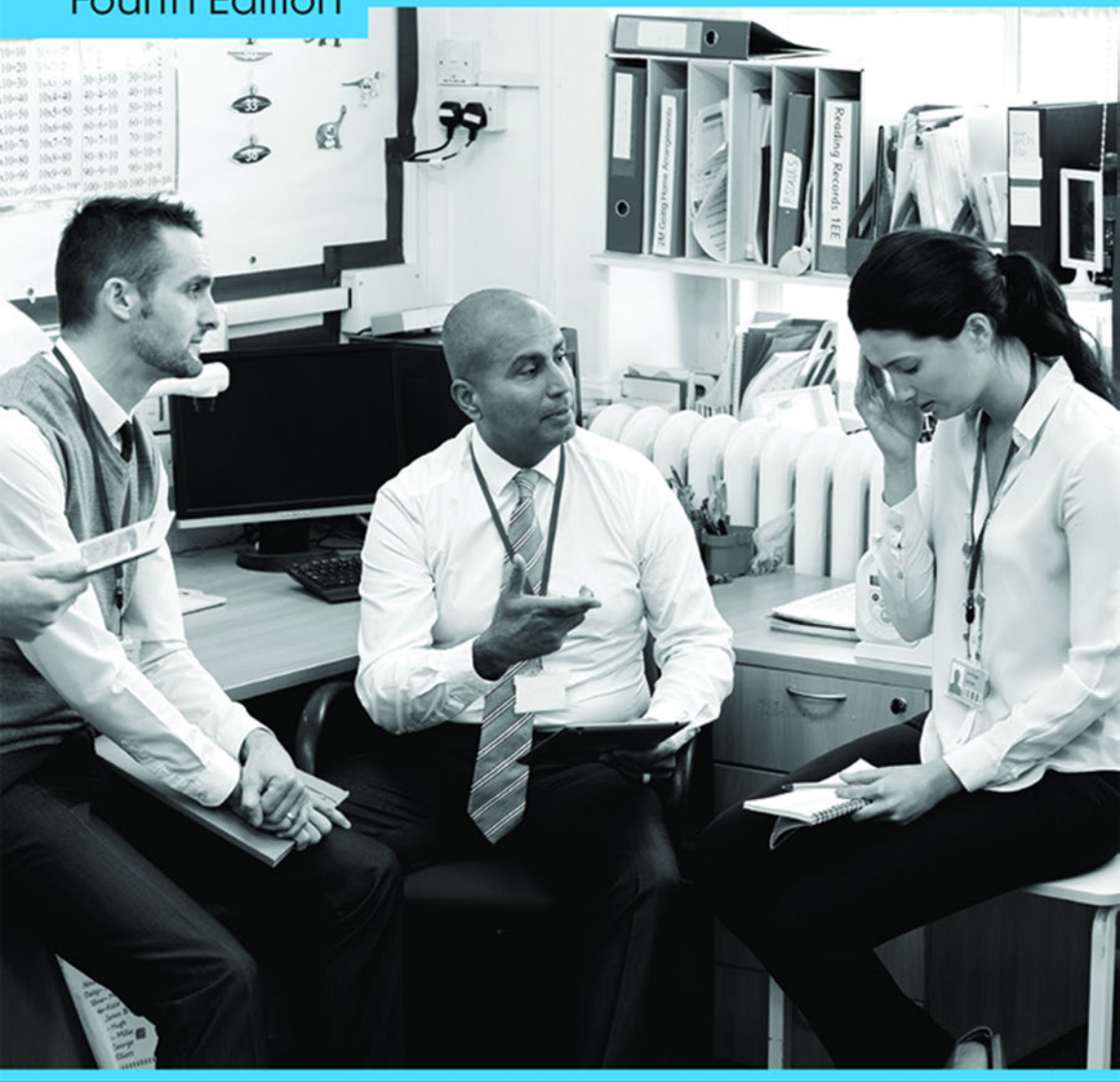
CONSULTATION

Creating School-Based Interventions

Fourth Edition



Don Dinkmeyer, Jr., Jon Carlson, and Rebecca E. Michel

ROUTLEDGE

Consultation

The methods presented by Don Dinkmeyer Jr., Jon Carlson, and Rebecca Michel in *Consultation* are based on the assumption that problems in the home and classroom result not only from the direct actions of disruptive students, but also from the expectations of teachers and parents. This newly expanded fourth edition continues the tradition of encouraging change in supposed "problem" children by helping authority figures recognize and alter the part they may play in exacerbating negative behavior. New additions include: two all new chapters on assessment and mindfulness, multicultural and diverse case examples, as well as access to online video sessions that accompany the text.

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Creating School-Based Interventions, 4th Edition

Don Dinkmeyer Jr., Jon Carlson, and Rebecca E. Michel

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To Don Dinkmeyer Sr.

For his dedication to Individual Psychology.

For his leadership, encouragement, and modeling of consultation skills.

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Foreword

It was a great pleasure to have been asked to write the foreword to this book on consultation, as consulting has occupied more than half of my career, beginning in 1956 when I consulted with the Ventura School for Girls, a California Youth Authority School for older adolescent girls, and then continuing for the next 11 years. My last major consultation was with the Schwab Middle School in Cincinnati, Ohio, where I spent about 95 days of the 1994–1995 school year working in the school.

As I read through this book, my whole career as a consultant flashed through my mind. Although I am not an Adlerian, the reality therapy I practice is reasonably close. I can easily relate to everything Dinkmeyer, Carlson, and Michel have explained in this book. Here, in a short book, are explanations of all the things I have learned the hard way over almost 50 years of consulting.

If you are asked into a school to help teachers and counselors deal with students who are not doing as they are told, and this will comprise 99 percent of the people you will be asked to help schools deal with, here is a book that will take you through the process for almost any kind of situation you will encounter.

As an experienced consultant, I would like to consult with you, the potential reader of this book: Pay attention to what is written here. You will still have to learn a lot the hard way, but not nearly as much as I struggled to learn over the years because I did not have access to what is so clearly explained in this book.

William Glasser
President of the William Glasser Institute in Chatsworth, California

Preface

Consultation: Creating School-Based Interventions is for school personnel who work with teachers, students, parents, and administrators in our school systems. We believe that school counselors and psychologists are most likely to be in this role. All four populations expect service, and consultation is an effective means to meeting their needs. A consultation relationship has become the relationship of choice.

Consultation has been a "mandated" function of school counselors and school psychologists for many years. The American School Counselor Association (ASCA) and the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) have included consultation as a major function in their policy statements. The recent movement by the ASCA to redefine the school counselor's role absolutely emphasizes consultation skills. Yet decades later, consultants still seek effective ideas for this essential role.

This book gives mental health professionals a set of consultation skills for working with these populations. We have focused a skill into each chapter, and expect the reader to be unfamiliar with many of our ideas. These ideas come from Adlerian or Individual Psychology, and we are grateful to those who preceded our works in this field of psychology. Individual Psychology has a rich tradition of working in the schools and with parents. This book represents a new synthesis of the ideas for all these school populations.

The authors are profoundly grateful to Don Dinkmeyer Sr. He served as the first author in the first version of this book (Dinkmeyer, D. & Carlson, J. [1973]. *Consulting: Facilitating human potential and change.* Columbus, OH: Charles Merrill), coauthored the second (Dinkmeyer, D., Carlson, J., & Dinkmeyer, D., Sr. [1994]. *Consultation: School mental health professionals as consultants.* Muncie, IN: Accelerated Development), and was an inspiration as we created the third edition.

We collectively bring more than 100 years of experience, including work in literally all 50 states, Canada, and internationally, to this book. Wherever we teach, we are increasingly impressed with both the severity and similarity of the needs to be achieved in schools. Although our

schools are increasingly challenged to meet the needs of our society, we believe they have a major influence on the way generations are learning to cooperate, collaborate, and compete.

Also included with this edition are supplementary Online Video Sessions depicting actual individual and group interviews with teachers and parents. To access this material please visit www.routledge.com/9781138910256.

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1 Introduction and Overview

In this chapter you will learn:

- how changes in society and school make consultation essential
- how we learn and why that is important
- the importance of self-esteem
- the three components of consulting
- guidelines for and effectiveness of consulting in schools

A shift from working directly with individuals to consultation has taken place in schools. Direct intervention with students is often a luxury that research and budgets may not support. Consulting has now become the treatment of choice for school counselors and psychologists. It has been deemed important and effective by both the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) and the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP). Consultation is an integral component of the ASCA (2012) National Model and has been integrated into training programs accredited by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP, 2009).

We wrote *Consulting: Facilitating Human Potential and Change Processes* (Dinkmeyer & Carlson) in 1973. Much has changed in the past four decades. When the second version, *Consultation: School Mental Health Professionals as Consultants* (Dinkmeyer, Carlson, & Dinkmeyer, 1994), was published, consultation was becoming part of a class in counselors' training curriculum, convention presentations, journal articles, and Continuing Education Unit (CEU) workshops. By the time the third version, *Consultation: Creating School-Based Interventions* (Dinkmeyer & Carlson, 2006) was published, ASCA had redefined the school counselor's role to emphasize consultation skills. Research studies continue to show the power of effective consulting, but despite this history, counselors still do not often use these consultation strategies.

Our ideas have been used in U.S. schools since 1967. The approach is skill based, with its roots in Adlerian or Individual Psychology. Adlerian psychology is a goal-directed approach that emphasizes that people have choices

and that therapy interventions need to build on individuals' strengths. This approach is holistic and focuses upon the total system or milieu.

We targeted interventions toward parents, teachers, and students. The Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP) program has influenced millions of parents raising children at various stages of development such as, *Parenting Young Children: Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP) of Children under Six* (Dinkmeyer, McKay, Dinkmeyer, Dinkmeyer, & McKay, 2008), *Parenting Teenagers: Systematic Training for Effective Parenting of Teens* (Dinkmeyer & McKay, 2007), and *The Parent's Handbook: Systematic Training for Effective Parenting* (Dinkmeyer, McKay, & Dinkmeyer, 2007). For over 35 years, teachers and students have learned strategies through *Systematic Training for Effective Teaching* (Dinkmeyer, McKay, & Dinkmeyer, 1980), and *Developing an Understanding of Self and Others* (Dinkmeyer & Dinkmeyer, 1982). These programs stood the test of time and continue to impact parents, teachers, and students today.

Five Specific Foundations

In this book, five assumptions are made:

1. The consultant in a school is often the school counselor.
2. Every consultant has a specific, personal set of beliefs about human behavior.
3. These beliefs, coupled with an effective consultation theory, will guide consultation.
4. Consultants must be able to create specific, practical consultation strategies.
5. Examining case studies and commentary can increase your consulting skills.

The Consultant Is Often a School Counselor

We assume school counselors comprise the baseline consultation profession in schools. Other professions also may be consultants—school psychologists, social workers, special education teachers, and practicum and internship students, for example. This book is equally appropriate for these individuals. School counselors have advantages and disadvantages when consulting in the schools, which we shall discuss. The role of the consultant, regardless of job title, is presented in Chapter 2.

Every Consultant Has a Specific Set of Beliefs about Human Behavior

Your personal beliefs about behavior have a strong influence on your consulting ability. The key to effective consultation is practical understanding

of behavior, motivation, and discipline. You may, as a result of this book, expand your thinking, change some of your beliefs, and, thereby, increase your effectiveness.

An Effective Consultation Theory Is Necessary

Our theoretical approach, based on Individual Psychology, is presented in Chapter 3. The Adlerian approach complements and integrates most other theories of consultation.

Consultants Must Be Able to Create Individualized Consultation Strategies

The ability to create or "tailor" strategies to specific situations is the hallmark of effective consulting. The changing demographics within the U.S. educational system will require you to find ways to meet the unique needs of culturally diverse students. Your broad knowledge base is used for different populations, hence the need for individualized strategies. Specific techniques for working with teachers, students, and parents are presented in Chapters 4 through 7.

Case Studies and Commentary Can Increase Your Consulting Skills

Consultation examples are presented throughout the book. These realistic, contemporary examples show how we can change behavior when the consultation model is applied. Readers can also observe us in genuine consulting sessions by accessing the companion website.

Society Has Changed

Consultants need to operate systematically. The environmental and societal influences on teachers, administrators, parents, and students continue to evolve. Society continues to change, and though many changes seem beneficial, they often have a tendency to dehumanize people. In this section we will look at how society has changed, the importance of meaningful learning, and how self-esteem is a key ingredient in learning and growing.

Schools do not operate in a vacuum. They reflect America's efforts in the 21st century to prepare future adults. Therefore, it is significant and relevant to examine recent changes in our society. Fluctuations in the financial market have impacted job growth and school funding. As a result, educational reform initiatives such as Race to the Top (U.S. Department of Education, 2014) were implemented to measure and reward student and educator progress, improve failing schools, and prepare students to be competitive in the global economy. Since a high school diploma is no

longer enough for most people to earn a living wage, most students enroll in training or educational programs following high school. Programs such as The White House Reach Higher initiative (2014) and Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID, 2014) have been designed to encourage all students to complete some level of post-secondary education. School counselors must serve as consultants to parents/guardians, teachers, and students in order to help them make career and educational choices in the changing economic landscape.

There have also been other substantial changes in our society. Passive acceptance of unequal treatment of women, minorities, and children is almost nonexistent. In the classroom, autocratic procedures used in past decades are less effective. Students challenge demands for compliance, while techniques that encourage cooperation are increasingly effective. A profoundly simple societal change has occurred. In the 1950s, our society was autocratic. A few people were in charge and all others were expected to obey. In the family, fathers were most often in charge. In schools, the teacher was in control of the classroom. But the pendulum has swung to the other extreme. Permissiveness or chaotic relationships have often replaced autocratic relationships. Society has shifted from an autocracy to a permissive orientation as women, minorities, and others have asserted their rights. The autocrats lost control. In the family, parents tried to give their children "everything we didn't have as kids." This often meant material possessions. Although these "good" parents were well meaning, their efforts often created more harm than responsible growth. Many of these solutions are satisfying in the short-term yet unhealthy in the long-term. In today's drive-through, fast-paced society, we rarely look at the longer-term implications of our actions.

The permissive society did not solve problems. In fact, it created new ones. It confused equality with entitlement. The shift in parent–child and teacher–student relationships can be illustrated in the following example. In the past, when an adult said, "Jump," the child would ask, "How high?" In today's society, when an adult says, "Jump," the child asks, "Why?"

We do not advocate autocratic or permissive relationships. Democratic relationships are more effective. (Although there is increasing use of the term "authoritative" to describe democratic relationships, we choose to use the term "democratic." There is no political connotation to the use of the term in this text.) Many are confused about the meaning of "democracy." In democratic relationships, children are taught both freedom and responsibility. In a democratic relationship, someone is in charge. The person in charge guides others through choice making and encouragement. Consultants want to be aware of this process in order to bring about change in themselves and to guide others in order to create a democratic system. Therefore, children have a say within a democratic classroom or family, but they may not always get "their way."

Children do not learn about democracy vicariously; they must live it. Similarly, teachers cannot practice democracy in the classroom if they fear autocratic supervisors who are not trained in procedures that enable teachers to provide democratic leadership. As we shall see in later chapters, teachers will not move toward democratic classrooms if they confuse "democracy" with "chaos"; or, if they do not believe they can improve their classroom atmosphere. Democratic classrooms can help teachers achieve greater accountability and increased academic performance.

High stakes testing has impacted the classroom environment. Schools are placing more demands on staff and students as curricula and knowledge bases grow. The increase in knowledge, however, is not always accompanied by commensurate increases in learning *enthusiasm,* or in the ability to see how the knowledge can be used or processed in daily life, especially for culturally diverse students. This lack of inclusion or empowerment makes it far more difficult to reach performance goals.

A close inspection of educational practices and methods indicates a great disparity between objectives and accomplishments. Unlike business, which fires the unsuccessful salesperson, schools believe that when the teacher does not "sell" or motivate the child, the child is the failure. We believe the teacher's responsibility is to teach and to take responsibility for helping each individual to learn. Most children seem to follow a prescribed path, while others need individually guided instruction. In reality, each child decides where to fit in the classroom. Children are never failures, and therefore educators must take responsibility for their schools' learning atmosphere.

Is Control the Priority?

The single most important characteristic that our schools often have in common is a preoccupation with order and control. Teachers become disciplinarians with a goal of the absence of noise and movement. Children sitting silently and motionless is unnatural and unlikely. Schools also assume that all students will be interested in the same topic at the same moment for the same length of time. Educators often expect virtually perfect copies of the "ideal" student. Teachers smile in recognition at the well-worn phrase, "Don't let them see you smile until October." Although most teachers do not act this way, some believe its underlying assumption.

Our economic and political systems appear to reward material gains. Social responsibility, spiritual values, and character are discussed and verbally lauded, but they are seldom prized and rewarded. Additionally, teachers and parents do not model what they preach. Individuals are engaged in talking about equality while demonstrating inequality at all levels. The administrator feels superior to the teacher, the teacher feels

superior to the parent, the parent feels superior to the child, and the child struggles to have his or her voice heard. The result is that we are becoming more selfish and remaining unconcerned for others.

Schools are often more concerned with preparing students for annual achievement tests. This is important, and so is cooperation, but rarely if ever is a student able to make a transition to a successful future through reliance upon authoritative leadership. In fact, successful learning is best accomplished in an underlying atmosphere that includes a cooperative relationship between teacher and student. In practice, our goals and objectives appear to be limited to acquiring facts. We tell children that democracy, cooperation, peace, and brotherhood are the goals of a happy and successful life. Yet, we introduce, train for, and demonstrate these concepts in an authoritarian and competitive manner—the direct opposite of the stated objectives. Students learn from what we do rather than from what we say. The model of the benevolent autocrat who fosters competition is internalized.

To meet the challenge of our times we must truly live as equals. This ideal recognizes that we are equal in value even though we might not be equal in social position. The basic social conflict involves a struggle for control: the overambition to be more than others, and the resultant nagging feeling of inadequacy and alienation. Equality does not mean equal intelligence, responsibility, or commitment. It means the ability to treat one another with mutual respect. This goal is best accomplished in a democratic, firm, and fair atmosphere.

Consultants must become familiar with democratic procedures. The democratic system is often new to consultants. Therefore, we have people attempting to operate a system who have not experienced a functional democracy. Their experiences with people at home and at school were superior–inferior relationships. Democratic procedures require that each person must choose and become responsible for his or her own behavior, and as a result be self-reliant. There is still a need for someone to take control and be in charge.

The Importance of the System

The school of human behavior, which had its origins in the work of Sigmund Freud, concentrated on the individual and the intrapersonal. In contrast, Alfred Adler stressed the importance of the context, environment, and system in which the individual lives, as well as the interpersonal. The emergence of family systems theory has validated Adler's ideas. This approach holds that if an individual has problems it is because the social system is unhealthy or disturbed. The sick or troubled individual is actually viewed as the "identified patient" from the system.

How does this relate to schools? Students with problems need to be viewed as living with "sick" or dysfunctional families and classrooms. When interventions focus on changing the system through work with

parents, teachers, administrators, and the curriculum, dysfunctional behavior is reduced. Healthy systems are those that allow all members to belong with positive and constructive places, and they in turn have or create methods of effective problem solving.

Consultants need to view their clients within the larger systems in which the clients reside. Rather than asking, What is wrong with this student?, they can begin by asking questions like: What is wrong with the system? What needs to be improved? What is oppressive? How is negative behavior being maintained? or Are we providing equitable access to education for all students?

Daniel Goleman and Peter Senge (2014) emphasized Systems Thinking in their book *The Triple Focus: A New Approach to Education*. The model inspires individuals to focus energy developing ourselves, others, and systems in order to improve the educational environment for student learners. Educators use the latest research and technology to help students develop skills in self-awareness, self-management, empathy, social skills, and good decision-making to improve Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). This approach relies on engaged educators, families, and communities, who consult and collaborate to create lasting educational systemic change.

The Importance of Learning

Two components of learning are information and meaning. When we fail to learn, it is because we have not discovered the meaning of the information we have. Nothing is learned until it has become personally meaningful. Then it influences our perceptions and behavior. We know we should listen to feelings and beliefs of our students, but the additional pressures of high-stakes testing tell us that we have so many "pages to cover."

Teachers do not fail because they do not know their subject matter. They fail because they are unable to make this information meaningful to students. The information component of the learning process lies outside the learner. The meaning aspect lies within the learner. Educators often want to change learning by altering the information component. This paradox is rarely discussed, much less understood, by educators.

The rationale follows these lines: If a little information is a good thing, then considerably more information must be significantly better for the student. Subsequently, we may be drowning students in information with the following approaches:

- longer days and longer semesters at school
- more academic courses
- less physical education or "extra" courses such as music, drama, or art

Most of us do not need more information. More important than the giving of information is helping people understand the personal meaning of that information. For example, individuals who have dropped out of school did not drop out because of a lack of information. They were not, however, helped to see the relationship between the information and their personal needs. Involvement and meaning were not developed. An important difference exists between knowing and behaving. Knowing results from acquiring new information. A change in behavior comes with the discovery of meaning.

Students are most engaged when they construct their own meaning, rather than having information fed to them. They also need to feel safe and secure before they can feel challenged. If they are not safe, they feel threatened. Threat deters learning, while challenge fosters learning. Yet *we* continue to threaten children in order to motivate (e.g., you need to do better or no recess today, if you don't listen I'll send a note home).

These outdated ideas do not support student learning. The demands of the 21st century require educators to consider different approaches to teaching and learning. The Whole Child Initiative (ASCD, 2015) was developed in 2007 to support educators to meet the growing needs of diverse students. By applying practical and data-driven strategies, this approach advocates for school environments where students are healthy, safe, engaged, supported, and challenged. It encourages educators to provide engaging learning strategies that require students to solve real-world problems through creative critical thinking and collaboration. Project-based, service-learning, and experiential-learning instructional approaches help students thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. The Whole Child Initiative emphasizes collaboration among students, families, schools, and communities to meet diverse student needs. Intentional school counselor consultation with these stakeholders can help expand the reach of the initiative in order to make a greater impact on student learning.

The evolution of an effective consultation process may require changes as radical as the technological shifts of the past decade. These changes will require boldness, imagination, and hard work. Change requires optimism and a belief in the intrinsic worth of each person. Change requires changing the people who set the policy, make the decisions, and facilitate the growth of students. This change can occur only by dealing with the person's beliefs.

Education should prepare people not just to make or earn a living, but to live creative, humane, and sensitive lives. The purpose of education is to educate educators to turn out men and women who are capable of educating their friends, their communities, and most important, themselves. Education is not a spectator sport. It is life, and each individual needs to get involved. The problem is larger, as Rudolf Dreikurs and colleagues (1971) indicated when they stated:

> Today husband and wife cannot live separately with each other if they do not treat each other as equals. Nor can parents get along with their children if they assume that children can be subdued. There can be no harmony and stability in the community unless each member of it has his safe place as an equal to all others. There can be no cooperation between management and labor unless each group feels respected and trusted by the other. There can be no peace on earth unless one nation respects the rights and dignity of another.
>
> (p. xiii)

The lack of change and quality of "sameness" in our schools is illustrated in one of the few video tapes that captured Dreikurs. He listens as teachers share concerns about the challenges of teachers, stating, "We have to compete with the media." "They expect us to be entertainers." "Formerly students complied, now they challenge." These comments were made more than 40 years ago. Hairstyles and fashion have changed, but the challenges spoken by the teachers of the 1960s are equally appropriate today.

Self-Esteem

Self-esteem, believing you are of value, is a key trait in successful living. Individuals vary considerably in their level of self-esteem, which typically increases from adolescence to early adulthood. Self-esteem is related to mental health and life experiences. Low self-esteem predicts both depression and anxiety (Sowislo & Orth, 2013) and impacts affect and relationship satisfaction (Orth, Robins, & Widaman, 2012).

A number of factors in schools have a negative influence upon self-esteem. As one passes through school, an increasing emphasis is placed upon memorizing if one is to achieve the typical rewards of the school.

Schools also discourage students from developing the capacity to learn by and for themselves because schools are structured in a way as to make students dependent upon teachers. Students' curiosity, spontaneity, and courage are not reinforced. Their ability and desire to think and act for themselves are diminished rather than increased.

A stated educational goal is to help children develop responsibility for the direction of their lives. In our society, we do not let children assume responsibility for their futures until they reach the late teenage years. At that time they are expected to make reasonable decisions and choices. Yet prior to this time, they have had little training and no experience in decision making, often having parents that still wake them up in the morning, remind them to do their homework, and generally enable them; thus, the resulting high dropout rate and high divorce rate. A child cannot become a successful learner only through the experiences of others. In order to

become successful, one must experience success. The student must get involved, including the ability to evaluate his or her performance.

Technology has had a tremendous impact upon U.S. education. The launching of the Russian *Sputnik* in 1957 is recognized as the time when the United States first felt challenged by the scientific achievement of other cultures. As this effort continued through the 1960s, emphasis on science, math, and other academic subjects conformed accordingly. What became increasingly apparent was that a greater amount of information was available than one could readily master through traditional methods. Thus, U.S. education providers had to decide whether they should emphasize facts and information or, instead, attitudes.

The decision was made to place an emphasis on acquiring knowledge. This resulted in placing college subjects in the high school curricula and moving high school subjects to the elementary level. One might only speculate on the results if instead we had focused on developing positive attitudes toward learning and a desire to become involved in the educational process as a lifetime task.

In response to the Soviet threat, the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) poured millions of dollars into the schools. In fact, the elementary school counseling profession was created through NDEA. Teachers were paid stipends to increase their teaching skills. In some cases, teachers were also paid to train as school counselors. If education is to stress humaneness, there must be a systematic emphasis in the following areas:

1. New life patterns emerging in response to changing knowledge and technology will require schools and colleges to function decreasingly as primary sources of knowledge and increasingly as developers of capacities to process information and reorganize experiences obtained in family, community, work situations, and a variety of complementary institutions.
2. Vigorous measures are needed to strengthen the knowledge base from which education operates. The emphasis needs to be on making current information meaningful rather than on giving more information.
3. Greatly increased effort must be directed toward establishing the essential preconditions for effective learning.
4. Continuous curriculum adaptation is necessary in order to receive new inputs which reflect (a) the current state of knowledge in each subject of instruction, and (b) the behavioral knowledge applicable to teaching and learning.
5. Education needs better processes for helping individuals order their values so as to help them make better choices as to how their energies and eventually their lives are spent.
6. New skills in the workplace must include exploring alternatives, making successful transitions, and developing the ability to function in a democratic environment.