



Passion and Desire True Components of Education

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When we consider **education**, it is best to know something of the word's history. By knowing it derives from Latin, meaning **to bring out; to draw forth** we better understand the method of teaching offered by Greek philosopher Socrates¹.

He believed true knowledge resides within each of us and with proper teaching we can realize or recall it.

Socrates deemed the primary job of a teacher was to ask questions that would **bring out** or **draw forth** a student's natural ability to think, to reason and to participate.

What a beautiful philosophy; with it students were encouraged to *look, observe, ponder, research* and *apply to life* what they discovered.

Oh, what a far cry from today's dreary educational system that forces students to memorize vast amounts of information. Insistence that data be crammed in a student's skull and spit back out on an exam paper is detrimental to reasoning power and one's ability to consider and extrapolate. This method often leaves children hating school; it leaves them unable to think with the subjects they study, unprepared for the inconsistencies of life. What a swindle!

But education **can** once again have the status it deserves. It can be elevated, simply by posing questions that intrigue, excite and stretch the imagination: *What can I invent to make this idea happen? Is there a way to triumph over that barrier? How can I align this new idea to what I already know?*

Present challenging problems and ask students to think up solutions. Invite them to dream, to imagine, to think outside the box — let them know that with enough creativeness **anything** is possible.

For education to regain its original roots, students must also be allowed to question what is “known” or written in books. Teachers should give examples from history that show what is “true” today may be false tomorrow.

Students must be given an opportunity to explore their own passions — for passion and desire **are** vital components of education. And, students should always be encouraged to tap into their own ingenuity. This **is** the way to awaken or keep alive that **love of learning** that resides deep within us.

One new idea — no matter how small or seemingly insignificant — can become massive and brilliant; it might even take a whole planet from ignorance to truth. Such possibilities, after all, **are** the rightful legacy of education!

1. Socrates: ancient Greek philosopher (470-399 BC). Socrates was the teacher of Plato (who in turn became the teacher of Aristotle) and Xenophon (Greek general and historian).

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