

# WHAT IS HAPPENING TO THE MINDS OF OUR YOUTH

*The surest way to corrupt a youth is to instruct him to hold in higher esteem those who think alike than those who think differently.*

Friedrich Nietzsche  
German philosopher (1844-1900)

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The above quote was penned almost a century and one half ago. It appears the corruption of the minds of the youth was a topic for consideration way back then. I can't help but wonder what Friedrich Nietzsche would have to say today about our young people?

Our youthful years are perhaps the most important in our lives. That is when we transition from being a child to becoming an adult in both body and mind. It is a period when our sex hormones, estrogen for girls and testosterone for boys, kick in.

Coupled with the final maturation of our musculo-skeletal, visceral and neurological systems, puberty can be a difficult time. During that transition, many are not sure who they are, or how they are meant to cope with the newness of adulthood, but most do succeed.

Greek philosopher and polymath, Aristotle, lived during the Classical period in Ancient Greece, dating back to 385 BCE. Taught by Plato, he was the founder of the Lyceum, the Peripatetic school of philosophy, and the Aristotelian tradition. His writings cover many subjects including physics, biology, zoology, and metaphysics. In the *Philosophy of Aristotle*, he wrote:

*'Give me a child until he is 7 and I will show you the man'*

.... proving beyond all reasonable doubt that this concept was known, not just 150 years ago, but as far back as 2,500 years. More recent research supports Aristotle in this regard, accepting that it is the first seven years in the life of every young person that defines who they will be for the remainder of their lives.

There is an old saying (how I love old sayings) that goes...*You can't put an old head on young shoulders*. Nor should we try. Experiencing youthful development is a very important time in our lives. It is a time when we develop, not only acceptable social graces, hopefully demonstrated to us by our elders, but more importantly, our own particular personality.

We are all different, or certainly should be by genetic design, but we are now witnessing a frightening level of cloning of young minds to believe in the agenda set by some of those who are older, and should know better. Actually, they do know better. These intellectual pirates are aware of just how vulnerable young minds are to brainwashing, and maliciously set out to steal their youth and their personal development in order to recruit them into their distorted fold.

Italian actress Sophia Loren said it so beautifully with:

*There is a fountain of youth: it is your mind, your talents, the creativity you bring to your life and the lives of people you love. When you learn to tap this source, you will truly have defeated age.*

The antithesis to what Sophia so eloquently said is to let someone else steal your youthful creativity, and in its stead, program your mind so that you lose out on tapping into the fountain of youth by becoming a robot to their warped agenda.

Nobody has the right to do that! But, it is not going unnoticed. Patricia Schroeder, the first female U.S. Representative elected to represent Colorado, stated:

*Clearly this business of treating minds, particularly this big business of treating young minds, has not policed itself, and has no incentive to put a stop to the kinds of fraudulent and unethical practices that are going on.*

Former U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson, joined in the defence of young minds being free to learn from life's experiences with the statement:

*Our society will not be great until every young mind is set free to scan the farthest reaches of thought and imagination. We are still far from that goal.*

Yes, we are. What we are allowing to happen is the very opposite by corralling young minds and restricting their thoughts and imaginations by lobotomizing them with mindless drivel that is precluding the process of natural cognitive development through life's experiences.

But, this is not the only problem our young people are facing. Addiction to iPhones and social media is stunting the development of immature minds. We are in the process of developing a society of human robots without the ability to think for themselves.

Instead of thinking a problem through, and researching various and sometimes conflicting opinions in order to come up with an answer, our young people are relying on such programs as:

- Ask Reddit
- Wolfram Alpha
- Blekko
- Quora, and
- Aardvark...to name but a few.

The scary bit is how quickly this list is increasing in term of numbers of new websites, which can only happen if people are using them. What we will end up with is a society that no longer remembers how to think for itself in which everyone will have the same answer to any given question or on any subject. We need to think for a moment and question the source of these answers, the authors, their specific skills, and their motivation.

What a wonderful tool for taking control of young people's minds, with the guarantee that they will all take their close-minded and pre-programmed responses with them when they progress into adulthood. Away will go individual thought, cerebral innovation, inventiveness, and incentive, just the way those who embrace this modern concept of socialism and communism have been planning for over a century.

What is the motivation behind this penchant to develop a dumbed-down society that is subservient to self-appointed masters who believe so strongly that they are right that they want to manipulate everyone to echo their mantra. Or, could it be because they know their beliefs will not stand up to rational scrutiny, in which case attempting to stifle intelligent thought emerges as their only weapon of choice?

Let us, the last of the free and intelligent thinkers in this world, become one voice and demand that schools and universities reintroduce history into teaching curricula. Let us further demand that teachers and lecturers offer their students unbiased presentations of subject material, and set exams that require their charges to think and express themselves in written prose, rather than ticking multiple choice boxes that require no special skill other than parroting what they have been taught.

Having served on the faculty of two universities in California, I can attest to the need for all teachers and lecturers to at least learn the rudiments of their chosen profession, and accept unequivocally their responsibility in delivering the information to their students free of their personal bias.

As an aside, when I became a lecturer, I adopted the attitude that in order to get the message across I had to earn and retain the attention of my students; but being a natural born ham, and an extrovert to boot, it wasn't too hard. I never stood at the lectern, nor did I ever deliver my lecture in a monotone. I moved up and down isles, used my arms and my body and my voice modulation to emphasise that which I was imparting, and use analogies to help explain some of the more technical points. The subject in question was radiographic physics, a fairly difficult subject for some.

This was an eleventh quarter class of the twelve needed to graduate. I noticed my audience was growing, with people sitting around the walls on the steps. A student confided in me that the twelfth quarter students were sitting in because they were not comfortable with what they had learned, while ninth and tenth quarter students were trying to get a head start, such was the complexity of the subject matter, and the poor presentation by some lecturers.

I received a message that the Academic Dean wanted to speak with me. In his office, he informed me that he had received complaints from other lecturers about their students cutting class to sit in on mine. He then asked, 'What do you suggest we do about it?' In my inimitable style I responded with... 'Teach them to lecture.'

I was the only Chiropractor on campus who had previously operated a successful practice. I pride myself in my knowledge of clinical practice, especially the art of delivering meaningful and effective treatment to patients. I was approached by a number of senior students, asking me to assist them in defining and developing their clinical skills. I was at the time undertaking a residency in Radiology (the interpretation of x-rays), much of which I undertook hospitals, meaning I and was only on campus two days each week. The only time I had were my two lunch breaks, which I agreed to spend with them.

About three weeks into our arrangement, I was again summoned to the Dean's office and advised that the head of the technique department, who to my knowledge had no prior clinical experience other than during his internship as an undergraduate, complained that I was undermining his authority. My response was that I was there to teach and prepare the students to be the best they could be when they graduated. I became a bit of a pariah among some of the other lecturers, but the support and respect I received from the students far outweighed that.

To the teachers and lecturers out there, this is not about you, and the lectern is not the place from which to spread your own warped agenda. You have a responsibility to teach and encourage your students to think and express themselves, and not adopt the mind-altering techniques used in so-called political re-education facilities as are found in countries such as China and North Korea.

Now, a wake-up call for parents.

It is seldom that we don't see children with an iPhone or an iPad in their hands. This even extends to children in strollers who are not yet sufficiently developed physically to walk and keep up with mom.

You may believe you are contributing to their mental development; but what you are really doing is setting in place a scenario that will interfere with their mental development, and isolate them from social interaction, and the important character-building lessons that accompany it.

Anybody who adopts a pet has a moral and legal responsibility to provide for its wellbeing and welfare. The same applies to children. You decided to bring them into this world, which makes you responsible for nurturing them in preparation to take their place as responsible

adults. Don't take the easy way out by putting a device in their hands because it keeps them occupied.

As a father (before the era of iPhones) and grandfather, I chose to spend as much time as I could with my kids, and was rewarded with some of the most enjoyable experiences in my life. I love being a dad, especially those years when our son and daughter were undertaking their respective journeys into adulthood, and it's still great, but different.

My final reward has been to witness how well they are doing, their ability to think rationally, and to see the positive influence they are exerting on those around them. What I am most proud of, is their work ethic. They grew up knowing there was no free lunch, and it would be by their efforts that they would make their mark. Above all, help others—don't step on them.

I remember once saying to them that if driving a garbage truck was their ambition, go for it—but, strive to be the best garbage truck driver you can be. I also impressed upon them that everything I say, everything I make or build, and especially everything I write, has my signature on it. Don't let yourself down by being mediocre.

Bottom line, it doesn't get any better than this.

You may want to read my paper, *Don't Sell Yourself Short*.

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