

Education

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Sunday, 30 October 2016

Schools are places to learn



WHAT are becoming of our schools? Are we progressing or regressing in the world of knowledge and wisdom? It is a mind boggling question which needs every individual to reflect as we go on with our day to day activities.

When parents send their children to school, they have hopes of wanting their children to be successful, live a good life, secure a good job and the list goes on. But do they realise that the children learn so much at home and from them, the children's first teachers in life. Many a time, teachers are faced with multiple situations where values brought from home needs to be unlearned and reengineered in the school.

In my years of teaching Moral Education in secondary schools, I had one issue of students using "swear" words or inappropriate phrases on their friends and even at teachers' indirectly. I try to create awareness that using such 'swear' words and phrases is neither acceptable nor encouraged in a social environment. Some students reflect and try to refrain from using such words at least not in the Moral Education class but others keep using them and tend to think that it is acceptable. When I further researched on some of my hard core students, I found that parents have been using such words and phrases on their children and now their children are using it on their friends and teachers.

The point I am making here is school is not just a place to learn knowledge and practice values, but also to unlearn and reengineer one's inner values especially if such values are not appropriate for communal living and creates disharmony in society. It is pretty difficult when the home or social environment is not supportive. It is essentially important for teachers to understand the home environment that each of their students is coming from. Spending several minutes each day with

each student, talking to them and understanding their background builds a notion of trust and mutual respect.

From my years of teaching experience even the most hard core students are soft and compassionate deep inside. These groups of students need the support of school and the school community to help them realise that they need to unlearn and learn again.

The process of unlearning and learning again is a lifelong skill and as students become more matured in their intellectual process, the task becomes feasible. It is the process that equips the students with the skills and knowledge to reflect and know themselves.

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