**Children counselling: A neglected aspect**

[Imtiaz Ali Mirani](https://www.nation.com.pk/columnist/imtiaz-ali-mirani)

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As parents, we fail to rightfully treat our children regarding their upbringing. Success and happiness do not necessarily have to mean raising children as high achievers who push for accolade after accolade. The true form of success, however, is one that instills in a child a sense of self-satisfaction. Parents around the globe wrongly picture this phenomenon. Today, children around the world are more anxious, stressed, depressed, and even more suicidal than any previous generation. Failing to meet the sky-high expectations of parents, children are predated by social fears of sarcasm and ridicule, which balloon to an extent that their minds are locked in isolation.
Children exist in a hyper-competitive environment where success is all about better grades. The fact that a child’s achievement is linked to his or her struggle for recognition is horrendous, to say the least. Psychologically, isolated minds of children, due to their underachievement, begin to label themselves as missing pieces of society; they try to fit into the world but fail to do so. The missing piece, it turns out, is character – a bundle of qualities like self-confidence, perseverance, empathy, and creativity – which allows individuals to navigate setbacks and uncertainties of life.
If you want happy children with thoughtful minds, you have to nurture their true talents. Instead of throwing a bunch of career options at children to choose from, parents should help them identify and hone their talents. It is reported that those children who do not chase their passion miss out on the chance to improve and gain self-confidence. Even though grades are conventional markers of achievement, pushing children to focus on nothing else is downright counterproductive. Most parents rely on their children to fulfill their unfulfilled dreams; the emphasis needs to shift, however. Thriving is all about helping children develop their true strengths; not the strengths their parents wish they had but the ones they already possess.
In this competitive race of being the best, children are raised to be “products” designed for the workplace, and things like how to be a person, or get along with others, handle mistakes, and cope with stress are barely given any attention by parents. It goes without saying that competition has, indeed, eroded the element of empathy among today’s young generation. Empathy, social psychologist Sara Konrath explains, is like a muscle: the more you use it, the stronger it gets. It is necessary to be able to empathize, as noted by Psychology professor Norma Feshbach, because it helps children recognize and relate to the perspective of others which, in turn, enables them to break free from isolation and imbue positivity in their minds.
Positive minds are bound to change the world by emitting positivity around others. Suicide is the fourth leading cause of death in 15-19-year-olds because most parents fail to boost their children’s empathetic behavior early on. Prior to committing suicide, an individual finds himself in a “weak moment;” a moment in which his or her brain is unable to think straight. And if somehow that weak moment passes, a person can change his or her mind. One must have someone to talk to, someone who will listen in that weak moment, someone who can tell the person wanting to commit suicide that their death will make no difference to this world. Wouldn’t the world be a much better place then?
Nurturing plays a vital role in the evolution of human beings in possessing rationality. The sociological case study of Genie, a feral child, who was socially isolated and abused, shows that children, though being human, cannot even walk a step like one if they are not taught how to. This is the power of primary socialization which is in the hands of parents. Parents have the power to shape the future of their children; this power should therefore not be misused in creating depressed minds that start to isolate only to end up quitting on their lives one day.