CURIOSITY AS THE SWORD FOR BATTLES IN ACADEMIC PURSUIT

by:

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Putting things in context, let us first define curiosity. Dr. Berlyne (1978), a renowned psychologist, defined curiosity as “an internal state occasioned when subjective uncertainty generates a tendency to engage in exploratory behavior aimed at resolving or partially mitigating the uncertainty”. Here, we will put emphasis on the words, exploratory and uncertainty, because when we are curious, we tend to imagine the unusual, explore world’s most people does not have the courage to dive into.

Do you remember when you were a child, questions never seem to stop coming from your precious little mind? And the adults around you were both amused and amazed. “Why is the sky blue?”, “Is the moon following me?”, “Why do I need to eat vegetables, mama?”, “Where is really the end of the rainbow?” These inquiries were only just the tip of the iceberg, beneath those queries are hundreds more questions you are eager to find an answer for. You are curious as to how the world works, finding the reason about everything around you, questions that never seem to stop – questions that excites you and ignited your childhood.

But then things changed dramatically over time, we no longer have questions, right? All answers are laid before us, answers that were built on the foundation of time and culture. Those adults who were very pleased to hear our questions are now those who stopped our parade of curiosities. Constantly reminding us to, quoting their spiteful words, “Stop asking questions and just do your job. There is no time to engage in recreation around. Face reality.” It is like the transformation of a butterfly; we started
out as a larva, and then evolved into a majestic one. As years go by, as we enter the jungle of life, our wings are being clipped, cut down to pieces. And whose scissor was used? The scissor of life.

That is where we lost the battle in academic pursuit. You see, curiosity has its own magic. Our human brain is the most advanced among all the species, able to think rationally and logically. Through those advantages we are able to innovate not just our lifestyle, but improve the world we live in. Do you think the greatest minds aren’t curious? Do you think Thomas Edison magically invented the light bulb? Einstein guessing his Theory of Relativity? Da Vinci painting the Mona Lisa absent mindedly? All these legends are curious, curious as to how things work, curious as to how a simple thing can change the lives of millions. And do you know how it all started? By asking the right questions.

You see, questions are the foundation of everything. A thought cannot be born simply by memorizing things. A thought is born through deep understanding and wanderings of the mind. A revolutionary idea does not come from the same old routine; it comes from the risk of asking new questions. Most people are afraid to ask questions, the fear of being rejected, embarrassed or simply the thought that their questions are dumb. It’s sad why they feel such isolation. What can be the possible reason? Our misguided idea that we should just accept things laid before us and to never question things.

What makes a curious person unique? As said in the preceding statements, their never ending questions. Questions we have never thought of thinking, questions we found trivial are really those questions that can change our age old foundations. Curious people are also open-minded. They keep a sense of things, they never see the world in mediocrity; they see the world infused with vibrant colors, never in black and white. Curious people are those we label as “deep thinkers”, for the fact that they have a continuous wander in the things around us; they are those who dig deeper into
things, never accepting answers in surface. Most importantly, curious thinkers often changed the world. They bring new ideas, they present topics that are both idealistic and practical; they create new worlds we have never thought of delving into.

What we think as little actions to our students indeed play a significant role in their lives. That is, character strengths, a great indicator for young people's success are not innate, cause of luck, nor a result of good genes. Such are stemmed in brain chemistry, and that the environment which the child grew, plays a huge factor. Putting things in context, we, as a society greatly influence the development of our children. Therefore, we should never stop the wanderings of our children’s minds; we should not cut their wings. Our classroom is not just for memorizing things, but a room for revolutionary thoughts and personal growth. Academic pursuit is not all about repeated use of our age old foundations, but testing them, challenging its roots and most importantly, to create a new foundation. The world is a one big labyrinth. We can’t expect to get out if we use the same tactics over and over again, if we take the same routes over and over again. Curious people will serve as our light, our guide. We should not stop them from doing so. Who knows, one turn lead by them can lead to our escape.

References:

