EDUCATION FOR ALL WALKS OF LIFE
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In the Philippines, the government, through the Department of Education, promotes free education for all because it aims to help most Filipinos to have their diplomas in elementary and high school education levels. To have diplomas in basic education are equivalent to the attainment of a functional literacy. To be literate means more opportunity to improve one’s life. And improved life means development or growth in the society because every individual will be able to contribute something useful to the government. In short, the government and the individual will benefit reciprocally by improving the literacy problem in the country.

To make the vision possible, aside from the formal schooling or regular classes conducted in school, the Department of Education develop a system of education that will cater those who are elementary and secondary school dropouts, youths and adults although in school but over-aged for Grade 6 and 4th Year, unemployed or underemployed out-of-school youths and adults, industry-based workers, housewives, maids, factory workers, drivers, members of cultural minorities or indigenous people ( IPs), persons with disabilities (PWDs) or physically challenged and inmates, rebels or soldiers. This system is called the Alternative Learning System (ALS). The ALS will benefit those who cannot afford formal schooling. Also, it will benefit the participants for they will be able to finish the learning program since the learning schedule is based on the participants agreed available time. Through ALS, the illiterates will become literates and the literates will be able to complete the 10 years of basic education mandated by the Philippine Constitution.

Through the ALS, the learners can make difference in their lives for they will be given wide opportunities once they passed the education system. Some of the opportunities are: they can enroll for college, they can enter TESDA, Meralco Foundation, Technical Schools, they can enter formal training programs and other non-formal training programs, they can look for work opportunities, and they can enroll or re-enroll in formal elementary or secondary education.
With ALS, those people who are underprivileged because either they are illiterates or skilled but do not have diplomas will now have a fighting chance to compete with others and to promote themselves to a higher level. In short, with ALS, an individual can improve his life.

In ALS, every person who is qualified with the system may avail of it whether he or she is already successful in his or her career or not. Being successful in career is not an assurance of being fulfilled in life. Most of the undergraduate successful persons do not consider themselves successful and fulfilled without their diplomas in basic education so they tend to avail of the ALS. Some of the ALS graduates were Manny Pacquiao, Angel Locsin, Anne Curtis and Kim Chiu.¹ These personalities were already successful, influential and popular when they took up ALS.

Thus, ALS will not only solve literacy problems but also discrimination problems against those who are well qualified to a position but do not have a diploma. Through ALS, one can also feel fulfilled. Surely, ALS can make the life of a learner better.

¹ http://balita.ph/2012/03/23/deped-on-als/