

Helping our Young People to Think for Themselves, and More.

In response to a blog about young people self harming despite their parents trying to do everything right, and questioning if there is too much stress with lots of homework and other things they have to do - another person wrote that young people these days seem to be given things on a plate and organised too much. I made a further response to this:

Most people I know of my generation did have very bad things going on when they were kids, but somehow we were tough enough to deal with them, although they do still affect us, obviously. We never expected to be given things on a plate, we were brought up to think for ourselves, and to be versatile, and figure out our own ways of coping.

Yes, children now are often organised so much - to fit into a system - but it is becoming obvious that there are things wrong with that system, so perhaps we should be helping our young people become more able to cope with challenges and changes instead of channelling them into specialised paths quite so much.

By the way, we had 2hrs of homework every day right through high school - because I was boarding, there was no choice but to go to the homework period between supper and lights out - not to say that I actually DID homework though - I mostly wrote poetry!

I used to swim 50 olympic lengths before school and before dinner every day, and do long distance running - but it was all very definitely MY choice to do these things. I think I still had some time to muck about with my friends, but I only got to see my parents one weekend a month from age 11. When I was home, I used to wander about in the wilderness most of the time though, so it must have been when I was very young that the free thinking and versatility stuff was instilled in me - unless I was just born that way.

There is a lot more that I wanted to say though :

We know that giving kids things on a plate tends to make them self-centred, and less able to cope, yet this still happens. 'Love' so often then becomes a sort of 'cupboard love' which depends on the visiting relative or friends giving gifts or providing really fun days out, so it also teaches them to be devious! This can especially apply when couples have separated - the children can soon learn how to get things from each parent by turning it into a sort of competition if you aren't careful. If one parent, or a friend, decides not to play this game they can find themselves 'dropped' just like that.

And yes, children are organised so much - to fit into the system - study hard, get a job, get a mortgage, have a family, accumulate things, and continue the cycle into the next generation. Do we ever question whether there could be another way - of not being slaves to the 'system', which we can easily see has its problems if we stop long enough to think. So many people are not really thinking though, because in their limited spare time they seem to be sucked into the TV, which tells you a carefully concocted version of

reality that's very different from the real thing (newspapers too), or the pub where they can numb their thinking with drink and superficial conversation, or more business deals.

I suspect that some of our young people are having trouble understanding why we go on round and round in these meaningless circles, and this could be a source of much emotional distress. When I was a teenager my poems were all about the terrible things humanity was doing to our natural world, and I know for sure that a lot of our youngsters are very concerned about these sorts of issues. Even those who have an outlet for their feelings such as writing poetry or writing and playing music, still struggle with the huge chasm between their understanding, and the world where people seem to be switched off, just working and drinking and acting as if the most important thing on earth was to be rich enough to both socialise and compete with people who have the same priorities.

Basically the system gives the message that if you comply you will be given some of the 'sweets', just the same as spoilt kids – and once you start going down that road it is very hard to turn back, so you end up turning a blind eye, and doing all sorts of compromising things to ensure the sweets keep coming – particularly if you have now got a partner and kids to answer to if the supply stops. Have you asked them though, what they really think, do you actually know?

Not everyone wants to be like that. Many young people are much more grown up and aware than that. **If we don't encourage our young people to think for themselves, seek alternatives, or at least let them know that we accept their need to do so, then they are going to feel very trapped,** and also probably worried about disappointing us.

Those benefiting from our current systems are not our young people at all - unless of course they really *are* brainwashed enough to want to be the next big business magnet. Our system perpetuates specialism rather than versatility, which means that you then tend to rely on others to provide the services and things you cannot do or produce yourself, and thus are relying on the continuing system whether we like it or not. We tend to be left thinking that we can't break out of it, but this isn't really true at all. In fact, once the oil runs out, we will probably have to survive at more of a local level anyway, so we need to all be learning to be more versatile really.

However, if we went off now and did our own thing, or local community thing, then the big boys of the banking and business world, and the governments, wouldn't be making money out of us; so they are constantly seeking more ways to shackle us and herd us dumbly forwards.

They want to keep us deeply entrenched, with our mortgages and other debts, and our taxes and other commitments. But they also keep quietly adding more rules, regulations, restrictions, and requirements to tighten the hold – to be able to take more from us, and to stop us from doing much for ourselves. Many of these threaten our freedom and health.

They also want to keep us blindfolded, concealing the truth about just how incredibly awful they have been in their manipulation of events in their attempts to grab everything they value, and control the world, because of course they are afraid of retribution.

However, most people, and organisations, who are awake to what has been going on are quite spiritually mature, and are more interested in putting things right than in retribution or revenge. We just want to see everybody in with a fair chance of survival – with our freedom and health intact. We want to find sustainable ways of living, helping each other and yet continuing to be our unique selves, and continuing to evolve consciously into a species capable of living in harmony.

So let's re-assure our young people that we are prepared to go for this, or at least enable them to do so. Let's talk about it in families – there should be no taboos. Let's give them something to identify with, hope for, and help carry through. It's not the first time that we will be making some big changes, as history will show, so they had better believe that we are capable of it. There is already so much good stuff going on that they should take heart from that too – thankfully the internet has proved to be an amazing tool for sourcing information and co-ordinating efforts. Let's do this – let's pull this team together now.



Our website is www.backtothegarden.org.uk and

“Back to The Garden” facebook group is open for anyone to join,

We are building links to useful sources of information & inspiration, and co-ordinating global meditation link-ups for positive input into the collective consciousness – the compost bed from which our new garden will grow.

