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### **The value of health – educational implications**

The forming of health consciousness (cf. Kasperek, 2001, pp. 203-208) is an important task for the Polish education (cf. Szewczyk, 2005, pp. 337 onwards), both in the quantitative and qualitative aspect (cf. Krupanek, Krzyżak, 2005, pp. 28-33). All the more so given the fact that health is not only an individual good, an own, subjective value. It constitutes also a social value dependent on the culture and formed by behavioral patterns ingrained in the European culture – the politeistic cult of Asclepius (cf. Kałamacka, 2006, pp. 371-378), who was a god of medicine in the ancient Greek religion. This cult was developed already in the 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C. in Greece. Temples of Asclepius were built in the vicinity of mineral water sources. In areas known for their favorable microclimates, asclepeions were built (cf. Rachert, 1998, p. 54) to become places where people's sufferings were soothed, spiritual and physical pain was alleviated, fears were cured and various healing, life-affirming rituals were applied.

However, the symbolic "father" of European medicine is Hippocrates of Kos who created medical ethics. In his work "On Airs, Waters and Places" Hippocrates explained the meaning of natural environment for a healthy human development. He considered health (a sense of well-being) and illness (malaise) dependent on the quality of balance between what surrounds the human. By this he meant the physical health determinants such as climate, seasons, quality of drinking water and individual lifestyle, socio-cultural health factors (cf. Syrek, 2000, p. 54), such as dietary habits, free time etc.

It is worth mentioning that in the Polish educational historiography a lot was written about the value of health. The meaning of education for "health matters" was described in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by, among others, Józef Dietl – a doctor and education activist who developed balneotactics, sanatorium treatment on the Polish territory during its partitions (cf. Hensel, Pazdur, 1979, p. 464). According to Dietl, human body has got self-healing abilities in optimal living conditions (cf. Szpilczyński, 1977, p. 606). He claims that a healing stay in health

resorts such as Krzeszowice, Swoszowice, Szczawnica, Krynica, Iwonicz, Busko or Solec results in psychophysical well-being due to the impact of medicinal water sources (cf. Dietl, 1858, pp. 3-363). They are valuable especially considering the fact that they are gifts of native nature, that heal impotence and enrich the country.

When explaining the educational implications for the value of health it should also be noted that healthy development of a human depends on his genetic predisposition (congenital), socio-natural environment, socialization/education process and also on the activity of the given individual. The processes inside a human body are not easy to be recognized and ascribed to rules expressed numerically nor to be subordinated to a scientific determinism – the only research concept, because every human has a unique personality. According to the newest direction of education development, one should support student's progress while methods and rules applied in the educational process shall be adjusted to the student's aspirations, education possibilities and educational situations.

*Homo sapiens* is a research object in many scientific disciplines. And so the psychological determinants of stress are being examined and described by psychologists, medical determinants – by doctors, in terms of sociological occurrence – sociologists, in terms of educational processes – educationalists. Scientific research enables an extensive recognition and understanding of problems concerning the social reality, also within the scope of educational implications for the value of health. Moreover, it is connected with the holistic human concept (holistic education), explained thanks to the newest achievements of humanities and social sciences (cf. Skulicz, 2004, p. 71; Szyszko-Bohusz, 2002, pp. 42-43).

As already stated in this article, along with the rapid development of civilization in the general trend of the post-modern culture, education for adaptation is no longer sufficient. Therefore, education shall be adjusted to the new, entropically developing qualities in the promotion of health as a value (cf. Gmerek, 2001, pp. 225-242), which is recognized and implemented in the educational practice. The socio-ecological health model emphasizes the individual responsibility for one's own well-being (health). Health education (see Woynarowska, 1995, p. 9) is an educational process aimed at preventing unfavorable occurrences for health and for understanding that every individual is a co-creator of his own well-being, considering the meaning of health as a value (resource/wealth) and a precious means for everyday life of a given person. This

idea constitutes also an implication of a salutogenetic health concept (A. Antonovsky).

Among factors conditioning health it is the lifestyle that constitutes the determinant (about 50-53 %), while genetic predisposition (about 16-20 %) and natural environment (about 20 %) have a smaller impact in health (cf. Gawel, 2003, pp. 11-18; Wolski, 2009, p. 7). This is why in 1992 a network of schools promoting health was created, among others in Poland (cf. Woynarowska, 1995, pp. 23 onwards; Woynarowska, 2000, *passim*; Zajączkowski, 2001, pp. 10 onwards). Those schools create a real partnership between school, home and local society; they also strengthen the self-esteem of students, their parents and the staff; various teaching methods are applied and the stress level is adjusted to the individual abilities of a given student (positive stress). The concept of education humanization is thus being implemented (cf. Struzik, 2007, part 1 and 2, *passim*) and so is the ecological lifestyle (cf. Struzik, 2007, part 1, pp. 150-152). Students learn how to “manage” the gift of life and the spiritual health culture (cf. Gałazka, 2006, p. 103).

Considering educational implications for the value of health it should also be noted that, both in education theory and practice, various models of conduct are available (cf. Palka, 2006, pp. 21-22): the praxeological and technological model (focus mainly on the effectiveness of the educational process) and the humanistic model (focused mainly on individualization, healthy lifestyle). One of the demands, not only in the area of education science, is promoting the value of health as an attitude – in the cognitive, emotional and application aspect. The process of teaching a healthy lifestyle on the basis of health value is very complex. Thanks to socialization (cf. Sztompka, 2002, p. 110; Szczepański, 2000, p. 71), which is theoretically identified with education in the wide context/ meaning, a human being gradually, physically mature and ready for the social competencies and participation in the social life in institutions of natural education (family, peers), institutions of direct education (kindergarten, school), institutions of indirect education (cultural institutions, mass media).

Socialization is a lifelong process (cf. Szacki, 2002, p. 932). What is, however, of high importance for the individual development, is the primary socialization (Berger, Luckmann, 2000, p. 157), related to the first interception of culture codes and social standards during the period of childhood. According to the new socialization model (paradigm), a person should not become a “victim” of the society in the process of natural, direct or indirect education. Therefore, the theoretical demand of holistic education should be implemented, the antinomy of individual goals and community goals in the area of education for balanced

personal fulfilment should be reduced, just as in the area of a reasonable self-esteem and spiritual autonomy, then also in the area of harmonized relations with society and natural environment, in a constructive defeat of cultural barriers and in the awareness of dangers resulting from social pathologies (addictions, violence).

According to the co-creator of humanistic psychology, A. H. Maslow, personal fulfilment (Cudowska, 2002, pp. 219 onwards) is an important feature of creativity. A constructive personal fulfilment is focused on the foundation of three values: truth – good – beauty and it becomes an affirmation of mental maturity on the way to full humanity (putting “to be” above “to have”). The characteristic of schools educating for healthy relations with social and natural environment is not only a healthy (balanced) emotional climate in interpersonal relations that contributes to the sense of security, but also a good infrastructure supporting the creative expression, cultural and educational activity as well as the use of practical knowledge in practice – which serves the humanization of social life and good mental health of the students. The idea of such humanization of the educational process shall be implemented in the education practice by teachers with a well-developed communicative and emancipative rationality (Kwaśnica, 1987, *passim*; Szymański, 2000, p. 42) over the adaptive and instrumental rationality (Kwieciński, 1992, pp. 125 onwards).

Trips to open-air ethnographic museums – heritage parks – have a positive influence on healthy lifestyle learning (cf. Wolter, 2001, p. 36). Open-air museums have an educational function, not only thanks to the exposure to cultural monuments, such as country cottages, urban quarters and tasting of healthy regional dishes, but also thanks to the exposure to and explanation of the bonds between humans and nature. When promoting a healthy lifestyle, international partnership aimed at developing educational programs is also of great importance. Such programs address ecotourism and preservation of natural resources and cultural heritage. This is valid especially considering that the issue of recreation, renewing physical energies and mental strength is a cultural phenomenon, a component of the educational process. The goal of recreational tourism, serving the renewing of body's energies (cf. Turos, 1996, pp. 13-15), is the cognitive, emotional and application activity in various organizational forms of common, team education. Therefore, also active leisure combined with sightseeing improves the geographic, ethnographic and even historical, in case of broader cognitive aspirations, exploration. The development of aesthetic feelings during contact with the socio-natural environment and cultural monuments as well as of the creative expression can be supported by educational, cultural and

integrative animation. Such activity aims at a balanced/healthy personal and interpersonal/common development.

Education for leisure and healthy lifestyle is a process serving good health (cf. Kossakowski, 1997, p. 10), because it serves the development of desired attitudes as components of personality (cf. Denek, 1996, p. 27). According to Kazimierz Dąbrowski, spiritual health is an intrapersonal homeostasis enabling a harmonious coexistence with the social and natural environment, of which humans are an integral part (cf. Dąbrowski, 1974, pp. 20 onwards). Therefore, on the mental maturity process, on the way to full humanity, one should create harmonious relations in the family, school and work environment. For the personal well-being of the student (and consequently also for the well-being of the community), following teachers' competencies are advantageous: practical and moral, interpretative, communicative, praxeological and pragmatic competencies (cf. Popławska, 2005, pp. 245-249).

Healthy interpersonal relations coexist with intellectual, emotional and social maturity – as components of mental maturity. They have a constructive influence on children and youth in overcoming natural development crises in particular stages of cognitive development and socialization. Especially when in the social interactions communication is not limited solely to the content, but it also includes personal experiences of the student. Art is another positive stimulus for the personal fulfilment/self-creation, because it inspires to an abundance of aesthetic experiences as well as to emotional, intellectual and social experiences derived from creative output such as writing, painting, dancing and performing, doing handicrafts. This inspiration can also be derived from indirect, symbolic relations, e.g. a film work, musical composition, literary work, theater play. It is also worth emphasizing that the basis for the process of education for healthy lifestyle is the understanding of cultural existence codes (material, technical), societal (social) and symbolic (intangible/spiritual) culture, and the educational task is the effective help in constructive development of aspirations and individual abilities, which are formed in a given space, place, at a given time.

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