

Experts not the answer

Strength is drawn from fellowship

One of the remarkable phenomena of our age is the discovery that the solution of a social problem lies with the very population in which that problem arises.

The following examples are suggestive. Drug addicts are better than psychiatrists at curing addiction in each other, hence the growth and achievement of organizations which sponsor such programs of therapy.

Alcoholics Anonymous, with its proven record of successfully combatting drunkenness, has built an international organization of massive strength and enduring purpose basing its support almost exclusively on those who have suffered with, and successfully overcome, the malady of alcoholism.

University students tend to learn more from each other than from professors. While courses offer fixed and definite subjects it is the challenging and wide-ranging discourse students generate among themselves that often produces the greatest intellectual stimulation.



moral perspectives

Rabbi Irwin Groner

BY WHAT MYSTERIOUS formula is "Weight Watchers" able to exercise such profound impact on the dietary habits of its membership? More effective than the admonition of doctors or the warnings of medical journals are the patterns of influence by which the overweight restrain and discipline one another.

These illustrations point to an important truth. People who are willing to share the task of solving their common problem may be more effective than professionals who assume this responsibility.

Unfortunately, this insight is often ignored. We believe that in order to alleviate our social problems, from fami-

ly ills to poverty, we must train a cadre of professionals and introduce a corps of administrative experts.

THEN WE wonder why they do not succeed. It may be because we are ignoring a major resource — the human resource — and refusing to acknowledge the vital power of participation.

This is not to deny the need for federal spending, the urgent priority of allocating a far greater share of our national resources for rebuilding our cities, for eliminating poverty, for elevating the quality of life for all Americans.

Funds, in massive amounts, are an indispensable element in attacking the grievous ills of our society.

But we dare not reject the claim that has been voiced by the dispossessed, the afflicted, and those in need. "We want to get in the act. We wish to have a role in shaping our future, in ministering to our own needs, in making the decisions that affect our lives, in achieving the fulfillment of our goals.

In assuming responsibility for each other."

THERE IS a great new amateurism pervading America today. If channeled properly, it can become a mighty force for remedying social ills and achieving social progress.

The President's Commission on Education has recently issued a report which decries the deficiencies and weaknesses of public education in recent years. This report, which has stimulated discussion and controversy, serves to focus public attention on improving the quality of American education.

More funds are needed, as well as new strategies to recruit teachers and improve the level of curriculum. Higher standards should be set.

But an essential element should not be overlooked. Concerned and involved parents on the community level should share in the continuing quest for the advancement of education. Matters of war and peace are too important to be left to generals.

Issues of public health are too important to be left to doctors. The training of our youth is too important to be left to the educational establishment. By drawing families and communities into this process educational institutions will acquire a host of partners and will draw strength from their insight and enthusiasm.

Architect Wu speaks at SC

Albert T. Wu, a noted Chinese architect will speak at Schoolcraft College at 2 p.m. on Saturday, May 21. Wu will deliver his message in the Liberal Arts Building (B500). Admission is free.

as their senior architect for six years.

Among his major projects around the Detroit area include the Pontiac General Hospital renovation, Washington Boulevard's redevelopment and master plan and the Top of Troy office building.

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gerontology
A. Jolayne Farrell
Will students accept her?
Dear Jo:
I have decided to take a course at a community college. In our area older persons do not have to pay any tuition. I plan to go to school during the day and I hear the class will be made up of mostly younger students. I am a little worried about how I'll be accepted by the younger students and the professor, who is probably younger than I am too. Do you have any idea on how younger students feel about as elders taking courses with them? And, will I be able to keep up with them?
Mrs. P. Mc. (retired)
Dear Mrs. Mc.:
The average age of a community college student is close to 30 and most of these students have had work experience, so you will be associating with more mature students.
Both professors and students appreciate older students in their classes as they have the ability to live on discussions by drawing on life experiences and seem to have more of an interest in the subject matter of the courses. You will probably find that you will have quite an influence on the rest of the class.
As to your question whether or not you will be able to keep up with the rest of the class, studies done on older students reveal that there is little to no problem with this. Also, older students seem to have a reputation for studying harder.
Dear Jo:
Where can I write to get information on courses in gerontology? I hope to pursue a career in this field.
Miss V.R.
Dear Miss R.:
For courses offered in the United States, write for "Directory of Gerontological Libraries and Information Resources Center, Institute of Gerontology, Wayne State University, Detroit 48202."
Dear Jo:
Why do people delay retirement? According to a study just done by the University of Southern California's Ethel Percy Andrus Gerontology Center, people who delay retirement tend to do so because they consider work to be one of the most meaningful parts of life. They also believe that society in general thinks more highly of people who work.

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See inside May 30.

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