

The Negatives Impacts of Ordinary Educational Violence (OEV) on Physical and Psychological Health and Behaviours

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“All of us have been children, but few of us remember about it”.

Antoine de St-Exupéry

Throughout the world, the law of the strongest has been prevailing on the law of the wisest in adult-child interactions.

Adults seem to have forgotten how they had to face the grown up demands placed upon them as children. They do not remember about all the unfair punishments and humiliations they had to undergo at that time, for things they had done or said innocently. And as they were small and the others bigger, as they were young and the others older, as they didn't know about things and the others knew, they have progressively integrated OEV as being something normal.

But let's ask ourselves the following question: “What does Ordinary Educational Violence actually mean?”

These terms refer to the usual type of education every parental figure is applying. It is the kind of education that nearly all of us had to undergo and that parental figures in turn spontaneously reproduce from generation to generation.

Alike a computer software, our brains have been programmed with these archaic ways of interacting with children. In order to stop this unconscious transmission, we can make the choice to take time to think about this issue and make the conscious choice of changing our way of functioning in this area.

The OEV appears to be quite different from mistreatment, which is fortunately less frequent. In the particular case of battered children, no consideration is given to any educational reflection. People who beat their children have been mistreated themselves as children. They regularly pass of their negative energy imprinted from their own experiences with weaker human beings than themselves. This represents of course a certain form of cowardice. This behaviour is driven in part by the need of revenge for the violence they had to undergo themselves and in part by the need to submit others to their own thirst for power.

On the contrary, OEV is naively meant to give children a strong and solid character and teach them good behaviours. Parents and teachers simply do so because they are convinced that what they are doing is in the best interest of children. Most of us have experienced OEV during childhood and integrated it day after day. This is the reason why we will always reproduce it, until we realize, not only intellectually but emotionally as well, that children are not miniature adults.

Since the first day of our life, we were already not supposed to cry too long or too much and understand why our parents or other adults wouldn't save us immediately when we felt insecure. We didn't know that adults expected us not to behave like babies.

Without the concept of time passing, we were not able to imagine that somebody would come to help us within the next 5 or 30 minutes. At that stage of brain development, each second equals eternity!

Adults have also forgotten that a newborn's brain only weighs 350 grams and is completely immature. It is obvious that we all had to learn what we know and that this learning process takes time. They don't take into consideration that it is not possible to be quicker than the natural growth and normal development of the human brain. Thus, this lack of awareness leads to this huge and everlasting misunderstanding between children and grown-ups.

OEV potentially starts as soon as the babies begin to cry. Some people will let them cry desperately with the purpose of teaching them who is in command, while others will shake them in order to make them stop crying. Later on, as the toddler discovers his new motor skills and gains autonomy, more violence might take place.

Moreover, as children repeatedly hear thousand and thousand times the word "no!" between the age of 12 to 24 months, they will naturally begin to repeat it as well. They will therefore enter in this particular well-known stage of systematic opposition. The original misunderstanding will grow further on, along with the OEV, because adults will interpret it as being provocation or whims. Unwittingly, parents and children will fall into a vicious circle of misunderstanding each other.

OEV encompasses as well physical than emotional punishments. Whichever method is used, all of them have four common denominators which are pain, fear, anger and humiliation. As adults are more powerful than children in all aspects, adults will always win by subjugating the children to their will.

Let us make a very clear statement : OEV is totally inefficient according to the millenniums since it has been applied on a daily basis throughout the world.

The only way the children have learned to survive is by blocking their emotions in order to experience less pain. This stated, we have to keep in mind that emotions are essential for us as human beings to feel well. When this emotional circulation is hindered, the body will get ill physically and psychologically. Moreover, the persons who underwent such difficulties will develop behavioural disorders. Some of them adopting a victim attitude and others an abuser's identity.

As OEV is carried out every day throughout the world on nearly every child, we become aware that its consequences represent a huge public health problem. The purpose of this presentation it to open a reflection in this particular field, where most of us act automatically, based on conditioned reflexes. Rather than blaming people who exert OEV because of a lack of knowledge, it is above all an attempt to search for prevention tools in order to improve health in future generations.

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