

Socialization and is it all that important?

Socialization is extremely critical for human beings, without it life would be dull. In 1938 it was an unfortunate but true case study of this. A girl named Anna was born to a mentally impaired woman that lived with her father. She was sent countless of places but was then returned home due to financial restraints. She was then forced into the attic and was given only enough milk to live on and lived there until she was five. She wasn't given no affection, no smiles, no hugs, or anything else, just coldness. Luckily, social workers saved the girl and sociologist Kingsley Davis went to see the girl immediately once he heard of the tragedy. The girl was completely unresponsive, he reported and she did not laugh nor speak.

However, with some help and guidance the girl did learn how to walk, speak a little, and even care for herself. However, she died at the young age of 10. This is an example of how lack of socialization can harm someone both physically and mentally. The term socialization refers to the way humans adapt to their surroundings and learn their culture. Unlike animals that behavior is biologically programmed, humans learn and adopt over time. Social experience and interacting with people is what helps forms an individual's personality or an individual's consistent pattern such as emotions, thoughts, and behavior. Animals generally tend to act similar such as a cat. A cat in America will usually act the same as a cat in Egypt, but the same can't be applied to humans. We build a personality it just doesn't come automatically to us, and we build it by our surroundings but as the case I mentioned earlier, without socialization a personality doesn't form. In Anna case it is defiantly clear that humans depend on other people to not only mature physically, but mentally. About a century ago it was believed that people was born with certain instincts that would form personality and behavior. An example is Charles Darwin's theory of evolution that led people to think this. The US economic system led some people to believe that some behaviors just occurred "naturally," such as some people are born criminals, or women tend to think more emotionally while men think more rationally.

People also used this thinking for centuries to justify their "ethnocentric" view on society. They claimed that members of a technologically inadequate society were not as biologically evolved as they were so they were viewed as being less human. Why not exploit others if they seem to be less evolved and not as human as us? You can obviously see the flaw in this. In the twentieth century a psychologist who helped explained behavior clearer is known as John B Watson, and developed the theory of behaviorism. This refuted the theory mentioned above and stated that behavior was not something that people are born with, but more learned by their surroundings. He also stated that people around the globe are equally human beings, just they share different cultures and that behavior can be correlated to not nature, but more with nurture. However, that does not mean that biology does not play any part of behavior. Most people usually share biological traits with their parents such as height and hair color, and their parents genetic makeup could influence their intelligence and artistic talents such as art or music. But, as again it deals with socialization, and individual can't develop a personality without interacting so children tend to pick up habits from their parents through years of socialization. Also, it's interesting to note that people brains can't fully develop if they didn't utilize it when they were a child. So yes, it's quite important to get mysterious games and puzzles for your children so you can help them develop a more elastic brain. So avoiding people is not good for numerous of reasons. An interesting and classic study was conducted by psychologist Harry and Margaret Harlow using monkeys.

It would be illegal to use human beings for a study like this. Since monkeys show the closest correlation to human beings than they were used for this experiment. The experiments included testing monkeys in various environments and comparing the results to one another. When a baby monkey was placed in complete isolation (except for food and nutrients) for six months they reported some deformities in their development. They found that when they returned to their group that they were extremely fearful and subservient. They then placed a baby monkey in cage with an "artificial mother," and this mother was made of wire and had a wooden head, and a feeding tube for a nipple. These monkeys also showed some deformities because when they were placed back in their group they were unable to interact properly. However, for the last experiment a baby monkey was placed in a cage with an artificial mother made of "soft cloth," than the monkey held on to the artificial mother very closely and show very little sociological deformities. So what was the difference between the artificial mothers? Well, with the hard wired one the monkey was unable to hold on to the mother because it was rough and didn't give back.

However, with the soft artificial mother the baby monkey held on to it very deeply because it was soft more like the way a mother is and it developed a bond with it. So, this experiment confirms how important it is for infants to receive love and hugs so that they can develop properly. It's also interested to note that the psychologists studied that the infants can recover from as much as three months of isolation, but around six months the behavior was noted to be "irreversible." Like the story I mentioned earlier with Anna, after ten days the sociologist visited her she showed immediate improvement and even smiled. A year later she show some slow but steady progress showing some interest in objects and people and even teaching herself how to walk.

About six months later she could take care of herself such as feeding and even played with toys. Even though she showed drastic improvement by the age eight she showed the mental development of that of a two year old, and at the age ten she died of a blood deformity. This is evidence that some things are irreversible but this statement can easily be argued. As noted earlier she was born to a mentally disabled mother so that could have stunted her developing process even greater and the mystery remains unsolved even to this day. A more up to date case of child isolation took placed when a California girl was tied up in a dark garage in a basement. The girl name was Genie and when she was saved at the age of thirteen she weighed only

about sixty pounds. She had the mental capacity to that of a one year old, and her language remains that of a young child. Today she lives in a home of mental disabled adults. This is evidence that socialization is crucial for the development of humans and animals for that matter. Human beings can sometimes recover from damage but to what extent is the answer, and I will assume it will remain the same because every individual is different.

About the Author

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