

Leisure Serves to Build Confidence among Adolescents

Montaigne said in substance that education is more influential on human beings than nature. Thus, when we speak about what contradicts the natural law of human delinquency, we speak about education and the role of the family in taking care of children especially in their adolescence, which is one of the most important period of life.

In this line is our interview today with the Hanane Atallah, teaching member in the Education Faculty Psychiatry Department at King Saud University, Saudi Arabia.

In this interview, we tackled several issues on the most important category of society: the Adolescents, emphasis on their behaviour and needs.

Adoonline: Much has been said about adolescents, their needs and the role of the family in dealing with them. However so far there are no clear methods that help deal with children in their adolescence. According to your clinical experience can you tell us about ways and means to deal with teenagers?

There is a social impact that distinguishes adolescents in the different societies, especially the Arab Islamic ones that have their own religion traditions and heritage that often disapprove the adolescents' behaviour. It is unfortunate, to say that although adolescents are an important category that in society we scarcely take care of them.

Indeed, there is no medical field for adolescents. In general, they face many problems such as the conflict between the values of society and those broadcasted by the satellite channels and the Internet.

In this crisis, there is no ideal or single method to deal with the adolescent, but there is what is called frankness, transparency and the family's acknowledgement that these feelings are natural.

Besides, we should provide the opportunity for these feelings to be expressed, because adolescents yearn to see the society in which they live admits their existence as individuals and respects their feelings.

Adoonline: The educational method in the Arab societies tends to separate between boys and girls, can we consider this as one of the causes that leads to the creation of a gap between female adolescent and their families?

Parents set special criteria for boys that are different from those for girls. Boys' behaviour if conducted by girls will be refused. Boys are given rights and chances that are forbidden for girls. This separation between boys and girls influences their relations with each others, which leads to girls' jealousy. According to my experience as a psychiatrist, I note that most of the complaints of girls who used to consult psychiatrists revolve around their misunderstanding by the family and a feeling of inequality with their brothers.

Many families set conditions and obstacles to girls when in it is a question of leisure activities.

Mostly, the family also ignores this period and the fear is negatively reflected on girls who become psychologically affected.

Consequently, we should lay emphasis on the fact that leisure is an effective educational means to build up confidence among adolescents. I think that leisure is an extension of childhood games.

Adoonline: Can you tell us some stories on the life of female adolescents?

Most of the stories that shocked me are those relating to violence perpetrated by the male family member such as the father, the brother or the husband.

For instance, my female students who are prevented from studying for the simple reason that their fathers want to defy their divorced mothers. I listened to many problems through telephone conversations and in my radio programme.

Recently, three sisters called to tell me that their father prevents them from finishing their studies, because he divorced their mother and wanted to harm her. Why using his daughters as a means of revenge? Females are weak while males will leave the house for a simple problem. What is even worse is that girls had asked the so-called "Sheikhs" who answered that they should abide to their father's will.

I personally contacted many personalities asking them to find a solution with the father and convince him to let the girls finish their studies but the answer was: "these are family matters."

Adoonline: Do you find in these problems some sort of adolescents' rebellion or coming out of men's control? What is your analysis of some women's submission to men's injustice?

I note among the adolescents some sort of wish to find a solution or getting rid of a harmful situation even without finding good solutions to their

problems. Among the tragedies we come across, we find that some people tend to consider the situation is a normal can happen in any family and there is no need to talk about women's rights. As regards women who refuse to admit the injustice inflicted on women, they are afraid of the change, or that they are stable and there is no room for justice in their life, or that they can not feel others' tragedies.

Some categories are afraid to talk about women's rights and suppose that claiming this right mean rebellion and breaking the Islamic rules.

In another connection, I think that addressing this issue individually will raise the number of victims and this will influence the family's role and the mother's taking care of their children and the whole feeling of injustice. Yet, we should admit that any effective solution should be on the level of society at under the rule of institutions and law. Hence, the need for the creation of a women's committee which would be annexed to courts whose role is to help women and study their problems without the presence of parents. This along with an information office to be..... this committee. I also hope that a hotline connected higher commission women's affairs in order to lend a listening ear victims problems while trying to bring the parents if they are parties the problems. Sometimes, parents need a psychological treatment. Our problem is that we always suppose that all parents are tolerant but some of them end up in prison or are addicted to drugs.

Adoonline: We know that women are exposed to physical or verbal violence, according to you what are the worst situations you have ever come across through your different studies?

The worst situations I came across were rapes and most of them are caused by relatives. I remember many cases where the brother, the father, cousin or the uncle are the perpetrators. What is striking in these cases is that girls say nothing. Sometimes things went badly, when this rape does not stop and ends up with