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Carl Rogers: three quotes on training

Humanistic psychology on learning.

Although he originally practised as a psychotherapist, Carl Rogers was intensely interested in education. His 1969 publication Freedom to Learn is now considered a classic of education. It was certainly required reading during my own teacher training. Rogers' approach to both psychotherapy and education was humanistic and thus person-centred. His view on learning was that children needed to be fully engaged rather than passive in the classroom:

"*It is most important to me to make learning experiences meaningful and personal by encouraging the children to use their minds rather than simply accept information. I want to challenge the one dimensional viewpoint and offer alternative ways of experiencing the world. In this way, I hope each child can feel in part responsible for his or her own learning experience*".

Note also, the idea that children should be encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning, rather than act passively as receptacles to be filled with knowledge. His searing criticisms of conventional education systems pervades his writing, his concerns expressed clearly and succinctly:

"*When we put together in one scheme such elements as a prescribed curriculum, similar assignments for all students, lecturing as almost the only mode of instruction, standard tests by which all students are externally evaluated, and instructor chosen grades as the measure of learning, the we can almost guarantee that meaningful learning will be at an absolute minimum*".

This clearly resonates in today's state funded education systems, where all of the above elements combine to make create environments that militate against quality learning outcomes. Yet Rogers does not leave his readers bereft, but offers several alternatives that promote engaged, meaningful and above all, holistic learning:

"*Education has traditionally thought of learning as an orderly type of cognitive, left-brain activity. [...] But to involve the whole person in learning means to set free and utilise the right brain as well. [...] Significant learning combines the logical and the intuitive, the intellect and the feelings, the concept and the experience, the idea and the meaning. When we learn in that way, we are whole, utilising all our masculine and feminine capabilities*".

Article taken from eLearningIndustry