

The Courage To Grow

Hyde Lesson: Boxing With A Teacher

By JOSEPH W. GAULD

WE NEED to completely overhaul education; especially correcting the mistake of thinking academic growth is the key to help kids find themselves.

The mind cannot lead the body, heart and soul, it can only interpret our deeper understandings. Think of what is meant by "soul-searching" and "straight from the heart." But instead, we teach knowledge without understanding and breed new words like "hang-up" and "con-artist."

Phil was a classic example. He came from a broken home, of parents who were distinguished educators. While both may have been intellectual giants, they were emotionally childish. They hadn't spoken to each other in 14 years and had vowed never to so speak again. No wonder they agreed—separately—they had botched the job with Phil and were now ready to learn.

Phil himself had the "moves" of a young professor. Called a master con-artist in a tough interview, Phil smoothly agreed, with an engaging smile, that he needed to change.

We got off to rocky start. Phil promptly spoke out at the first school meeting like a sea-

soned veteran. Parent counseling ended in each discussing the "atrocities" of the other, ignoring why Phil couldn't live with either one of them. The sins of 17 years of mismanaged growth began to seem insurmountable.

But I have learned: "Don't listen to what people say, watch what they do."

In spite of their vowed silence, both parents did come for a conference in the same room with Phil. This gave me hope they would sacrifice personal pride for Phil's future. Later, Dr. P. had tears streaming down his face as he told me how moved he was by our graduation exercises.

PHIL CONTINUED to survive at Hyde by his intellectual wit and "cool moves," disguising his true growth. He gave one performance where he publicly confessed to smoking and almost convinced me of his sincerity. But the school kept chipping away at his intellectual armor and finally following a run-in with a female teacher, the dam broke. And did it break! He insulted several teachers, physically threatened another then had to be forceably brought into my office by trainees.

"I'm not going to lecture you, Phil, in spite of



the deepest insults to a faculty I can remember. It's just too late for that. Frankly, I am neither surprised nor sorry by your actions, for you played the same game here you have played everywhere else."

"Simply decide if you think you really need our help. If not, just leave and live your own life. But if you decide yes, you are going to grow up. No words, just deeds. First, your apology to the faculty will be to box the teacher you physically threatened. Secondly, you will get a shaved haircut and begin to look like the boy you are. Then you will dig a very deep pit to figuratively bury your old image. Finally, you will work on the grounds and live by yourself until you are proven ready to join the Hyde community again."

Phil decided he needed our help. His bout in the ring taught him a new respect for his teachers, and to his credit he did not quit. After a haircut, he came to get me to inspect his pit. I jumped down to admire the six foot depth and neatly trimmed sides, then I looked back at Phil. He was smiling down at me, hands on hips, sweat glistening on his face and newly shaven hair. Sweat he proudly didn't wipe away. As I told him the story of a pit in my own childhood, I knew I was finally talking to a boy.

PHIL EARNED his way back and then felt compelled to speak to the school community. For the first time, his words were disjointed, his voice cracked as he told them how he was really afraid of people, and tears came when he said how much it hurt to say so.

It was his first speech as a man.

78. Exchange
premium
79. Horse's
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82. Dis-
mounted
84. Plucky
86. Move
88. Matures
90. Rich per-
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92. Dregs
94. Necessary
to a wed-
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95. Rival
96. Biblical
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98. Steeples
100. Black
night-
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101. Lath
102. Weary
103. "Maria"
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105. Ham
it up
107. Spry
108. Loco-
motor
staxia
109. "— You
Glad
You're
You?"
110. "— Side
Story"
112. The drill
113. Serf
115. Delinquent
116. Angela
Lansbury,
on Broad-

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