

Ignorance Is Not A Form Of Protection

Relationship and Sex Education in Schools is a MUST

By Frank Kermit, Relationships



A question that I get a lot from my clients when coaching is, “Why don’t they teach about relationships in school?” Many of my clients are in their 20s, 30s and even 40s, and struggle with basic fundamental principles about how to relate to other human beings through romantic intentioned relationships.

The reason I give them, is that if they were to teach relationship skills in the classroom, they would then also have to teach about S-E-X because sex is part of having relationships. Unfortunately, the topic of sex education in schools pushes a lot of people’s buttons, such that the only thing most education systems and parents want taught is abstinence, if anything about sex is taught at all. Teaching abstinence, when some of the students are already sexual active and or are constantly bombarded with sexual influences including media, images, pop entertainment, and email links to porn sites does not prepare young adults to be able to cope with sex and relationships.

Why do we need relationship and sex education now, when we did not seemingly need it before? Actually, we have always needed it. It is just that society has now changed in ways that make relationship and sex education a “must have.”

Once upon a time there were social norms that dictated what each person was expected to do, and what roles people were brought up to perform based on their gender. Social norms simply told people what they could and could not do, if they were too seek out careers, hunt, provide, tend to the children, manage the home life, and what was expected of everyone sexually, including when sex was to occur, with whom, and under what conditions it was considered righteous.

Today, those social norms have been removed. People have CHOICE. The power to choose: who they partner with, what gender to partner with, how many to partner with over the course of their lives, if they want to terminate a partnership, and if they even choose not to enter partnerships at all. Nowadays, people even have a choice if they want to live as, or transform their bodies into, a gender opposite the one they were born into. Concepts like “til death do us part”, the natural expectation of producing children and gender roles have been affected by legal divorce, birth control and human rights. Today’s singles and couples have unlimited choice as to how they can manage their relationships and sex lives, but as I teach it, the power of choice, without the knowledgeable skills to know what to do with that power, can lead to a misery so great, it can sometimes be worse than living in a system of oppression that meets human beings basic needs.

There was a time when ignorance was considered a form a protection. Some elderly adults I have spoken too talk about when they where children how discussions on the topics of puberty and menstruation cycle were never mentioned; At least not until AFTER a young lady had her first period. By then the poor girl had to be reassured she was experiencing a normal process, even though the young lady was traumatized by the site of her own blood without a previous explanation of why it was happening to her. The question remains: “Who” exactly was being protected? The children kept ignorant of their own bodily processes? Or was it the parents and authority figures that were perhaps too embarrassed, ashamed, or fearful of what having those kinds of “talks” would represent?

Then came the great enforcer. There is one thing that no one factored in: How the Internet would make access to information, including pornography, so readily available.

According to a documentary entitled *Your Brain on Porn*, the author Gary Wilson, pointed out that what makes pornography addiction different from other forms of addiction is that porn addicts do not have to possess any addiction predisposition characteristics to become addicted to porn.

Pretending that sex and, in this case, pornography does not exist, nor not teaching teenagers what pornography is, will not in any way protect them from the potential threat of porn addictions or online predators. That is just one aspect.

It is not just teenagers that need relationship and sex education. Studies show that 10% of all newly diagnosed AIDS cases in the USA are in heterosexual women over the age of 50. Yes, they too are at as much risk of sexually transmitted infections as anyone else.

Ignorance about sex and relationships is not a form of protection. In the opinion of this author, it never was. However, ignorance has always been proven to be a key element in what perpetrators seek to identify in their potential victims. There is nothing endearing in keeping our people, young and old, naive about sexuality. In fact, you are potentially sentencing them into the clutches of those individuals that would happily take advantage of it, or have them engage with others who are just as ignorant.

When my coaching clients ask, "Do you think that status of relationship and sex education will change?" all I can say is, "I hope so."

If you would like to help support relationship and sex education in high schools, you might want to consider supporting the *Sexual Health Network of Quebec*, which is a provincial non-profit organization, dedicated to supporting sex education. For more details please visit: <http://www.shnq.ca>

Frank Kermit is a relationship coach, best selling author and educator, columnist for The West End Times Newspaper and also appears regularly on 800 AM CJAD's Passion radio program. Frank can be reached through frank@franktalks.com

Frank Coaching Rates can be found at: <http://www.franktalks.com/rates/>