

Giving and Receiving advice

When giving advice to other people, you should be careful not to hurt their feelings; if you fail to use the right words, people are more likely to react in negative ways. How to say what you wish to say is sometimes more important than what you actually say. For example, if someone is fat and needs to lose weight; you should not tell him or her that he is overweight and needs to eat less or exercise more. You cannot change people and therefore, you should not try. If you make people feel that they look ugly, they might start hating themselves as well as the people around them and, therefore, ignore whatever advice they may get even if they need it.

What you should do in such a case is to try to help people think differently about themselves; you should try to provoke them to ask themselves questions like, am I healthy? Am I as healthy as I should be? Am I able to do things people in my age are normally able to do? If you succeed in doing so, you will lead them to ask the right questions and seek the right answers. People asking the right questions and getting the right answers are more likely to do what it takes to change what they need to change. Programs to lose weight seldom work because they are often designed to help people look pretty, not to be healthy. The same approach should be used when advising people against smoking, against wasting time, and against looking at education as a tool, not a goal.

Students need to learn how to learn, and how to keep learning. To gain command of this tool, students need to learn how to regularly evaluate what they had accomplished and how much progress they made in light of the time they spent learning. Students putting things in perspective are more likely to recognize what they do not know, what they need to know, and what they need to do to get to where they ought to be. Students who do these things will feel good about themselves, and about the pace of progress they are making, and about whatever they accomplish later on in life.

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