

THE ART OF EDUCATION:
KURT HAHN'S SIX DECLINES OF VALUES IN MODERN SOCIETY

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As Adolph Hitler was taking control of Germany's government, the nation's last Imperial Chancellor, Prince Max von Baden, was establishing the Salem School in a castle owned by his family. The man he chose to be its Headmaster was his good friend Kurt Hahn (James, 2000). Today, the name Kurt Hahn will always be associated with Outward Bound, but before Outward Bound, he was a distinguished Headmaster in Europe. During his thirteenth year as the Headmaster at the Salem School, the German native was exiled from his country by Hitler and the Nazi regime. Hahn had committed a crime against the Nazi Party; he sent a letter to all Salem alumni insisting they choose between Salem and Hitler. A friend of his described this act as "the bravest deed in cold blood that I have ever witnessed" (James, 2000).

Before his exile, Hahn and Prince Max would often discuss the declining ethics and morals of the German public that they had observed. Shortly thereafter Hahn identified and publicized what he thought were the six most destructive declines of his society: Physical Fitness, Self-Discipline, Initiative, Imagination, Skillfulness and Craftsmanship, and above all, Compassion (James, 2000).

Although he worked extensively in education, Kurt Hahn was never an outstanding student; but this never limited his thirst for knowledge. He was exceedingly curious of the work of Plato as well as other Greek philosophers. Plato said "virtues of the soul" are "implanted by custom and habit" (Plato, 2000, p. 224). Plato's pupil, Aristotle, took this concept a step further by saying those virtues are implanted through continual practice of the desired behavior until it becomes a behavioral habit (Boylan, 1999, p. 52). Aristotle's theory of learning, along with theories proposed by many highly-esteemed philosophers and facts from a variety of sources, will play a vital role as we compare Hahn's six declining values to our modern American society.

PHYSICAL FITNESS

The first of these values is physical fitness, and Hahn quickly established a program that promoted physical well-being at each of his schools, Salem and Gordonstoun. The focus of Hahn's physical education program was to instill in his students healthy life-sustaining habits and (James, 2000, p.3). He along with each of his students individually, would set-up programs that

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gradually became more challenging (James, 2000, p.3) so the students would continually push themselves and avoid complacency; a practice that was beneficial both physically and mentally.

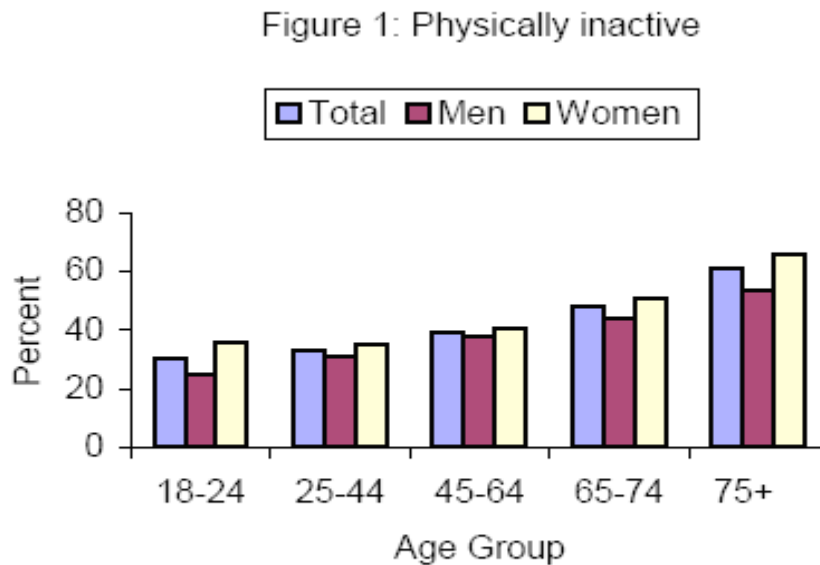
One component of Hahn's physical education program was a daily run around the facility (James, 2000). Unfortunately, this practice has been discarded by current publicly-managed education programs. Of these programs, only eight percent of elementary schools, six and a half percent of middle or junior high schools, and under six percent of high schools supply students with daily structured physical activity, or its equivalent (The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2005, p. 26). A fraction of students receive structured physical activity through programs like marching band, ROTC, and organized interscholastic sports. However, twenty-seven states allow these students to substitute their respective activity with their physical education requirement (NASPE & AHA, 2006). By doing so, we are losing an opportunity to teach students the value of physical fitness on a personal level, outside the realm of their particular activity. That is, of course, assuming that students who participate in the offered physical education classes are, indeed, learning the value of physical fitness on a personal level. Unfortunately this is difficult to do, not only because of the insufficient amount of structured physical activity that is offered, but also because the importance of the value of physical fitness is grossly underestimated within schools; this is exemplified by the fact that twenty-two states do not include a physical education grade as a part of their high school student's grade point average (NASPE & AHA, 2006)

So it is not surprising that a study by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education and the American Heart Association revealed over a third of high school students who do not exercise regularly, and eleven percent who are not physical active at all (2006). Nor is it surprising that the amount of overweight and/or obese people increases exponentially from sixteen percent of the population between the ages of six and nineteen (NASPE & AHA, 2006), the majority of whom are enrolled in our public education system, to sixty-five percent of the population of people twenty or older (The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2005). Perhaps this dramatic increase could be prevented if people were instilled with an adequate value of their personal physical fitness; the National Association for Sport and Physical Education and the

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American Heart Association recommends an hour of daily “moderate to vigorous physical activity that is developmentally appropriate, enjoyable, and involves a variety of activities” (2006, p.9).

The United States Department of Health and Human Services reports that obesity can be prevented and/or improved with regular physical activity (2002, p. 2). Due to the increase in the prevalence of obesity, which can be prevented and/or improved with physical activity, we can conclude that physical inactivity increases with age, as seen in **Figure 1**.

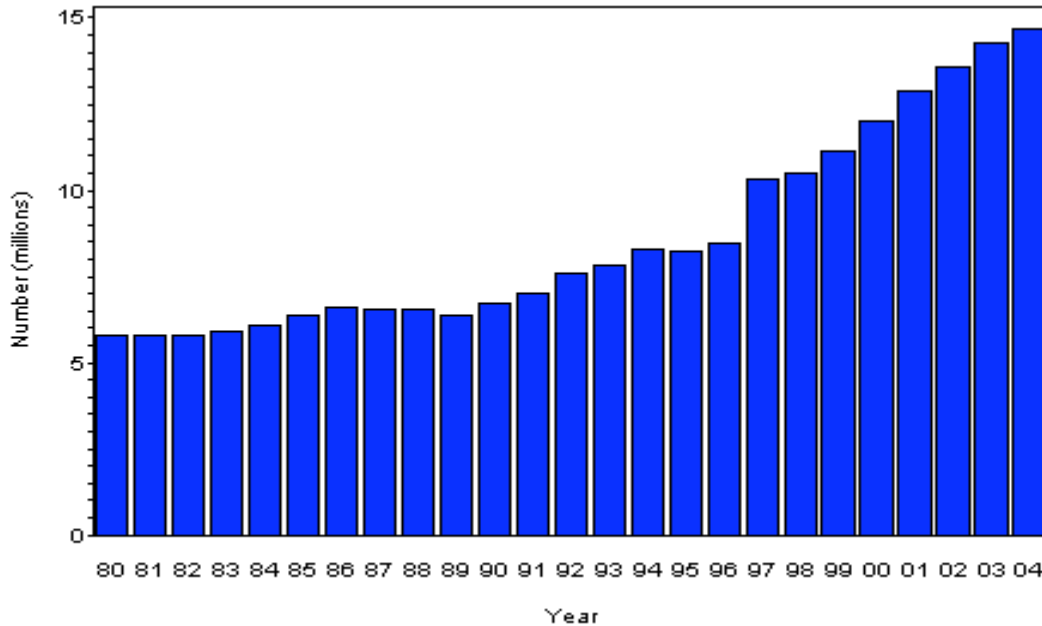


SOURCE: 1997-98 National Health Interview Survey

(Figure 1, courtesy of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2002, p. 3)

Since it is common for physical activity to decrease with age, then, ideally, the rate at which adults become obese should remain relatively constant over time. However, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation reports a seventy-five percent increase in the amount of obese adults since 1991 (2005, p. 4), thus indicating that American adults are more sedentary now compared to years past. This indication is reinforced by the four out of ten American adults who are completely inactive during their free time (The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2005, p. 25). Furthermore, the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (2005-A) reports the amount of people in the U.S. diagnosed with diabetes, another medical condition that can be prevented

and/or improved with regular physical activity (U.S. Dept. of Health and Human Services, 2002, p. 2), has drastically increased from 5.8 million people in 1980 to 14.7 million people in 2004, as seen in **Figure 2**.



(Figure 2, courtesy of the Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2005-A)

Figure 2 displays a relatively constant rate of people who are diagnosed with diabetes until roughly 1990-91, which is approximately the time obesity began its rapid ascent amongst adults. So we can assume that both obesity and diabetes begin increasing in prevalence at roughly the same time and since they are both medical conditions that have long onsets, the correlation between the two must be found somewhere in the years before 1991.

Kurt Hahn theorized that the cause of the decline of physical fitness was his time period's "modern method of locomotion" (Hahn, 1958) and the society's "impetuous lust for quick results" (Hahn, 1940, p. 9). A quick look at the two decades before 1991, which made up the childhood and adolescence of people who reached adulthood (20 or older) around 1991, reveals that they witnessed the emergence of the nation-wide fast food chain of restaurants (gloaled.org), as well as the rise of the totalitarian supremacy of the television over the majority of American living rooms (High-Tech Productions, 2006). Furthermore, the years between 1977 and 1995 saw the amount of trips made via car increase by ninety percent (The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation,

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2005, p. 25). Fast food and television can be considered means of satisfying those “impetuous lust(s)” that Hahn described, while the increase in car trips deprives people the physical activity of walking, as Hahn had insisted. It appears as though Hahn’s theories on the cause of the decline of physical fitness are consistent with today’s increasing prevalence of medical conditions and the factors that led to it. The overabundance of time spent interacting with society’s advances in technology has been seducing people to forego physical activity for years, and continues to do so now more than ever. Youth, ages eight to eighteen spend six hours and forty-two minutes of an average day watching television, being on the computer, playing videogames, and reading (The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2005, p. 27). When that is combined with today’s subpar efforts to instill in our youth the value of physical fitness, it is apparent that our efforts are ineffectively competing against our easily obtainable “lust for quick results.” If this trend continues, the future of our nation appears grim.

IMAGINATION

Not only does society’s advances in technology allow individuals to forego physical activity, but it also allows them to avoid using their imagination (White, 2003, p. 32), which, according to Banner, Jr. and Cannon (1999, p. 74), is one of the most natural and universal of human qualities and can be a powerful learning tool (Banner, Jr. & Cannon, 1999, p. 77). Imagination gives the learner the ability to combine seemingly dissimilar concepts together (Banner, Jr. & Cannon, 1999, p. 70). In addition, imagination allows the learner to give significance to the otherwise lackluster material and/or skills they are learning by making it applicable to life (Banner, Jr. & Cannon, 1999, p. 75). Furthermore, imagination can provoke initiative in learners by allowing them to visualize themselves conquering a particular skill (Banner Jr. & Cannon, 1999, p. 74) as well as imagining the benefits from accomplishing a task.

Unfortunately today, individuals have no need to formulate individual opinions when television, radio, films, and computers constantly enlighten them of what is and isn’t attractive, entertaining, and artistic (White, 2003, p. 34-40). In addition, viewers do not need to choose between consumer goods when modern interactive technology persistently tells them what is and

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isn't desirable (White, 2003, p. 34-40). Furthermore, modern interactive technology allows viewers to avoid generating their own opinions concerning national and global political issues as it is the means through which most political propaganda is conveyed (White, 2003, p. 91-93).

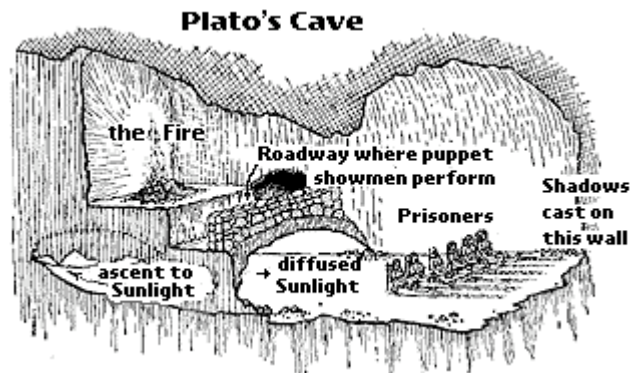
On the other hand, people are not forced to engage in the periods of non-cognitive leisure that modern interactive technology offers; the frequency of its use is determined by the user. However, interactive technology like television, films, and computer games allow the user to experience thrilling, yet false emotions almost instantaneously and, according to Hahn's theory of our "impetuous lust for quick results", the majority of people will choose to use modern interactive technology as a means of experiencing those emotions. Curtis White (2003, p. 110) agrees by insisting that people relentlessly decide to use modern interactive technology and he goes a step further by claiming that our children's first social interactions are with television and computer games. This claim of America's addiction to modern interactive technology is validated by The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (2005, p. 27) who reports youth between the ages of eight and eighteen spend three hours and fifty-one minutes watching television and one hour and two minutes using the computer daily.

If society's youth is persistently using modern interactive technology instead of developing their personal cognitive capacity, then, according to Aristotle's theory of learning (Boylan, 1999, p. 52), their cognitive processes will be severely limited because of its neglect through the early stages of development.

In his writings about legal paternalism (laws restricting people from possibly harming themselves), political philosopher John Stuart Mill believed that people would eventually become dependent on the government's decision-making and no longer be able to make their own decisions (Leighton & Reiman, 2001, p. 84-101). So if we can be dependent on one structure than it is possible that we can be dependent on another if we are restricted to it. In this case if we view society's addiction to modern interactive technology as restricting in the sense that, due to its fast-paced nature, users no longer seek periods of self-reflection (White, 2003, p. 103) which, as Hahn believed, were a vital part of self-development (James, 2000, p.3; Flavin, 1996, p.16 & p.153-154).

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This concept may be better illustrated when compared to Plato's (2000, p. 220-225) allegory of the cave found in the beginning of the seventh book in *The Republic*. Plato asks Glaucon to imagine a set of prisoners within a cave who have been restricted from leaving and even turning their heads side to side for as long as they can remember. There is a fire burning above and behind them which projects light on the wall in front of them. Between the prisoners and the fire is a small stone wall that prohibits the shadows of men walking behind it, but not the tools or puppets they carry, from being projected on the wall. After establishing this imagery, Plato and Glaucon proceed to determine that the extent of the prisoner's knowledge, reality, and imagination is limited to the shadows they see before them. An artist's interpretation of Plato's imaginary cave is depicted, in **Figure 3**, below.



(Figure 3, from http://rivertext.com/images_weil/platoscave.gif, 2006)

Plato continues his discussion with Glaucon by asking him to imagine what would happen if one of the prisoners was removed from the cave that had been his only known reality. The two decided that the prisoner would be reluctant to believe the new reality because of his dependency on the cave and his lifestyle within it.

The prisoners in Plato's cave are similar to our modern American populace who are restricted to television sets and computers by our own addiction to thrilling emotions that they provide. Like that of the prisoners, our society's imagination is limited to the "shadows" that we are engulfed in. Unfortunately, this limitation creates within us the dependency that Mill theorized about.

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Although Hahn's theory of a declining value of imagination is not proven, it is reinforced and revalidated by theories put forth by highly-esteemed philosophers such as John Stuart Mill, Aristotle, and Plato.

SKILLFULNESS AND CRAFTSMANSHIP

Along with the deficiency of physical fitness and imagination, Kurt Hahn credited the decline of craftsmanship to modern youth's "impetuous lust for quick results" (Hahn, 1940, p. 9). It is probable that our youth developed this "lust" through, what Curtis White (2003, p. 118) describes as, the recent advancement of technology and its ever accelerating ability to provide information, entertainment, and results instantaneously.

Nevertheless, Hahn insisted that everybody master at least one craft (Hahn, 1958, p. 6) that "demands victorious patience" (Hahn, 1940, p. 9). Unfortunately, Hahn's belief seems unattainable in this age where 4.4 million youth in America are diagnosed with Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2005-B) and that number is growing rapidly (Nigg, 2006, p. 5). Dr. Joel T. Nigg (2006, p. 4) reports ADHD hinders an individual's ability to stay focused on the task at hand because of neurological impairments. Therefore, ADHD limits the individual's ability to learn skills and practices. Since ADHD limits an individual's ability to learn skills and practices and it is emergent within our society, than our society's ability to learn skills is declining.

Today, the origin of ADHD is a controversial topic, but the majority of medical practitioners agree the disorder stems from a neurological impairment (Nigg, 2006, p. 4). However, in his book documenting the time he spent with teenagers in an adventure therapy program, Gary Ferguson (1999) vividly recalls a teenager diagnosed with ADHD spending hours learning how to make a fire using a Bow Drill, a practice which requires "victorious patience". NOLS instructor Morgan Hite (1998) backs Ferguson's claim when he states skills like thoroughness and the ability to learn how to use new tools and techniques can be learned, and transferred into society, through expeditions. Since students diagnosed with ADHD are able to

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learn skills through adventure-based teaching methods, then perhaps the impairment is not neurological, rather it is the teaching method used.

According to Joel Nigg (2006, p. 84), individuals with ADHD do not display “excessive vigilance decrement” (a rapid loss of the ability to keep oneself focused) unless they are in certain situations, many of which are described as “slow event rates”. Today’s most common teaching method of information assimilation (Priest & Gass, 2005, p. 15) in lecture format is more likely to be classified as a “slow event rate” than experiential learning (as well as many other activities) and therefore may be responsible for the prevalence of ADHD within our society. This accusation is reinforced when applied to Aristotle’s theory of learning (Boylan, 2000, p. 52). In this case, a student who spends their school years continually losing focus of their teacher and the material that they are being taught through lectures, and other teaching methods that qualify as slow event rates, becomes accustomed to tuning out their teacher and the material and, thusly, displays this behavior habitually.

Instead of stunting a student’s hyperactivity with medication, educators must embrace it and challenge their students to pursue knowledge when they establish initiative. Kurt Hahn (1960, p. 6) told a story to the Outward Bound Trust about an experience he had had with one of his troublesome and hyperactive students who, by today’s standards, may have been a candidate for ADHD. He recalls the student being distraught about a cow who was going to be euthanized because of a wire she had eaten and had gotten lodged in her heart. The schoolmaster told the student that if he could find a surgeon, then the cow may live. The student proceeded to hunt for a surgeon for the next twenty-four hours and once he found one he proceeded to help him remove the wire. That experience prompted the student into the world of medicine and eventually he became a highly distinguished surgeon in Europe, a field which “demands victorious patience”.

SELF-DISCIPLINE

It is possible to end, and even reverse, the declines of physical fitness, imagination, and skillfulness and craftsmanship, but that would require us, as a society, to break away from our “impetuous lust for quick results” and our addiction to technology and “modern methods of

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locomotion”. In order for us to do this, we must zealously practice another of Hahn’s proposed declining values, self-discipline. However, since these values, which require self-discipline, are apparently declining, than we can conclude that self-discipline is also declining.

Besides this, it is difficult to measure the amount of practiced self-discipline within a society, but it may be possible to measure incidents that occurred due to a lack of self-discipline. Self-discipline helps individuals abstain from using drugs, as well as controlling one’s temper (Eyre & Eyre, 1993, p. 108). The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (2001) reports that there were fourteen million people who used drugs at one point or another in 2000, but there are no other statistics to compare this number to. Moreover, the number was determined through a government issued survey, which leaves the honesty of the clientele and, thusly, the reliability of the data in question.

The U.S. Department of Justice – Federal Bureau of Investigation (2006), however, provides reliable statistics on the amount of violent and property crimes reported in the United States from 1986 to 2005. In 1986, there were 1,489,169 violent acts and 11,722,700 property related crimes committed in the U.S. (Dept. of Justice – Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2006). In 2005, those numbers decreased to 1,390,695 violent crimes and 10,166,159 property crimes (Dept. of Justice – Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2006). Yet, even with our declining amount of violent and property related crimes, the amount of incarcerated prisoners in the U.S. has multiplied by approximately six times since 1972 (Mauer, 2003). One of the most predominant reasons for this increase in prisoners, according to Mauer (2003), is due to the rapid influx of prisoners incarcerated for drug offenses, which increased “more than ten-fold” between 1980 and 2003. Since the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ data was unreliable and incomparable, Mauer’s observation reveals an area of concern within our society that would be non-existent if the individuals involved had learned and practiced appropriate self-discipline.

Kurt Hahn specifically designed teaching methods that focused on instilling the value of self-discipline within his students. For instance, Hahn’s students not only benefited physically from their daily run around the school facility, but they also enhanced their self-discipline by continually practicing it; and as Aristotle’s theory of learning (Boylan, 2000, p. 52) tells us, that is

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the best way for people to develop character traits because it is basically programmed into the individual's behavior through repetition. In this case, Hahn's students continually practiced physical activity everyday during their tenure at the school so that they may habitually push themselves to maintain physical activity after their graduation. The direct correlation between a student's self-disciplined effort and their improved physical fitness may have been transferred other aspects of their life through proper facilitation, isomorphic framing, and/or the student's period of self-reflection; a practice that Hahn insisted on because he thought it was necessary for self-development (James, 2000; Hahn, 1940, p. 9). Other strategies utilized by Hahn included establishing a strict policy concerning drug use as well as setting a good example of proper self-discipline, which Linda and Richard Eyre (1993, p. 109) insist is the above-all best way to teach it. If this is the case, then it is disturbing to think of the virtues that our youth is learning from today's role models; actors, musicians, and athletes who frequent the news headlines because of undisciplined behavior like drug abuse, promiscuity, and various acts of violence.

INITIATIVE

Another way Hahn helped his students develop a value of self-discipline was by helping them establish initiative because an individual with initiative finds it easier to forego seductive yet distractive activities if they keep their goals clear in their conscious thought (Banner, Jr. & Cannon, 1999, p.82-83). Hahn built his curriculum "so as to build on children's curiosity" (Flavin, 1996, p.153) and allowed his students to assist in choosing certain projects because he believed it propelled the student to pursue the project "with purposeful tenacity to a well-defined goal" which allowed them to "tap the hidden reserves of [their] mind" better than common methods, like examinations, could do (Hahn, 1960, p.7). This method is congruent with the Goal Theory of motivation, introduced decades after Hahn's era, which asserts that individuals who take part in creating their own "specific and well-defined" goals are more committed to attaining them and, therefore, "perform at higher levels of competence" than those whose goals are "general" and/or "vague" (Priest & Gass, 2005, p.54).

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If the Goal Theory is accurate, then today's strategy of using grades as a goal seems inadequate since grades are universal for multiple subjects and can be considered both "general" and "vague". Without a strong degree of commitment or personal significance, the material with which the student is being taught, through lecture format, lacks the physiological arousal necessary to generate the maximum performance level as described by the Optimal Arousal Theory (Priest & Gass, 2005, p.46-47). This under-aroused performance, in turn, results in poor evaluative assessments, which, combined with the student's already low physiological arousal, diminishes their self-efficacy (Priest & Gass, 2005, p.55), or in this case their belief that they can successfully overcome a challenging academic endeavor. According to the Expectancy Theory (Priest & Gass, 2005, p.54), a student's diminished self-efficacy can be a deterrent from even attempting a challenging task; hence Hahn's assertion of a declining value of initiative.

As an avid student of the philosophers of ancient Greece, Plato and Aristotle, Hahn had a firm understanding of their belief that risk-taking was a fundamental component in the development of character traits in youth including self-efficacy, initiative, and tolerance in adversity (Priest & Gass, 2005, p.13; Banner, Jr. and Cannon, 1999, p. 130). He noticed the absence of risk-taking activities and accused the pre- and post-war British education system of "[failure] to introduce activities into a [student's] life likely to make [them] discover [their] powers as a [person] of action" (Hahn, 1947, p.4). So Hahn, along with Lawrence Holt, established a short course that used expedition as a means of exposing students to challenges involving risk with which they can persevere and overcome; they dubbed it Outward Bound (Hahn, 1965, p.1). The expedition environment provides participants with "sufficient training, emotional support, proper resources, and [an] understanding of benefits" which, according to the Expectancy Theory, increases the participant's confidence in overcoming a challenge which would otherwise seem insurmountable (Priest & Gass, 2005, p.54). Once accomplished, the participant is more apt to attempt other challenging endeavors due to their increased sense of self-efficacy (Priest & Gass, 2005, p.55).

Using expedition, Kurt Hahn proved to his students that they could overcome overwhelming contests which instilled in them the belief that they could learn, and do, anything.

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At which point, his academic curriculum, which was partially inspired by his students' intrinsic curiosity, gave his students the opportunity to enhance and practice their values of skillfulness, imagination, and self-discipline through their enterprising efforts in accomplishing the goals before them. Hahn's ability to prove to his students that they "[possess the] power" of learning, along with his guidance through academic projects and setting clear and precise goals, indicates his mastery of, what Plato (2000, p.224) calls, *The Art of Education*:

"Education, then,' I said, 'would be the art of directing this instrument, of finding the easiest and most effective way of turning it round. Not the art of putting the power of sight into it, but the art which assumes it possesses this power – albeit incorrectly aligned, and looking in the wrong direction – and contrives to make it look in the right direction."

- Plato, *The Republic*

COMPASSION

Along with the use of expedition and personalized academic endeavors to establish initiative within his students, Kurt Hahn utilized the motivating power of compassion (Hahn, 1960, p. 6) to direct the "learning instrument". He attributed its motivating power to compassionate, or Samaritan, service's ability to fulfill an insatiable longing for action honorably and captivate "every normal boy" (Hahn, 1958, p. 6). Samaritan services generally require each of Hahn's other five declining virtues: physical fitness, self-discipline, initiative, imagination, and skillfulness (Hahn, 1940; Hahn, 1958; Hahn, 1960; Hahn, 1965). For this reason (but not limited to it), Kurt called the decline of compassion the most destructive declining virtue within society (Hahn, 1940; Hahn, 1958, p. 4; Hahn, 1960, p. 8; Hahn, 1965) and found himself emphasizing the importance of it more than any others. He blamed the decline on the new fast-paced lifestyle (Hahn, 1960, p. 8).

Today, as it did during Hahn's time, people seem to be too busy for compassionate service, yet this is merely an observation and by no means an accusation of a change in the level of compassion within our society. Unfortunately, compassion is nearly impossible to measure within an individual, much less a society. Incidents that necessitate compassionate service are also immeasurable. For instance, the rescue work at Ground Zero in New York City did not receive much criticism, while the rescue work in New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina did.

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However, to Kurt Hahn if something could have gone better, then it should have because “on this issue there is no room for honorable neutrality” (Hahn, 1940, p. 11). Therefore, Hahn’s unrelenting advice that many people within society be trained for Samaritan service (Hahn, 1965, p. 4) must be accepted and applied to modern society. If his advice falls upon deaf ears, then according to Aristotle’s theory of learning (Boylan, 1999, p. 52) society’s level of compassion will wither because it must be continuously practiced so that it may become habit.

Kurt Hahn insisted youth are willing to practice compassionate service skills, but they need direction and motivation (Hahn, 1958, p. 8). Hence the third law of the Salem schools: “Give the children the opportunity of self-effacement in the common cause” (Flavin, 1996, p.16). He stated three ways of motivating youth to engage in Samaritan service, they are: preaching, which he called a “hook without a worm”; coercion, which he said was the devil’s method; and telling them they are needed, which he said never fails (Hahn, 1958, p. 6; Hahn, 1960, p. 6). This was the method he used to motivate his students to participate in the Fire Brigade for surrounding communities at Salem (James, 2000) and the Coastguard Life-Saving service at Gordonstoun (Hahn, 1960, p. 5-6).

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These examples of Samaritan service provide the students opportunities to practice each of these essential values regularly, which according to Aristotle’s theory of learning (Boylan, 1999, p. 52) means the values will be engrained in their behavior in the same way that Aristotle’s theory of learning is engrained in you, the reader’s head.

It is obvious now that Hahn’s six values are not isolated; rather they are intertwined within each other, like nylon fibers in a rope. Since the values are deteriorating, society is weakening. To misquote Kurt Hahn, “These findings put a clear choice before us: Neglect and console or heal and train. On this issue there is no room for honorable neutrality” (Hahn, 1940, p. 11).

Unfortunately, one of the reasons Hahn’s contributions to the educational community have been overlooked is because of his Platonic influence, which was associated with heathenism by the predominately Christian population as indicated by Hahn (1940, p.3). Today

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the work of Plato and Aristotle are accepted and used regularly. Alas, Hahn's exceptional work is still underappreciated and often ignored by scholars of education who ignorantly neglect his extremely vital contribution because of their incapability of comprehending a different style of education. Yet they continue to struggle because these essential core values have not been established.

Hahn identifies yet another factor in the opposition of his call for an educational reform in his *Address to the Liverpool Cathedral* in 1940 (p.3):

“The first say: What can be wrong with an education system that has produced ourselves: This is a very natural reaction on the part of those who owe their important stations in life to purely academic distinctions.”

However, the “education system that has produced ourselves” was founded generations ago and is now out-dated. At the time of its origin the majority of people in America were farmers living off of the land, a job that is twenty-four/seven and requires physical fitness, imagination, skillfulness and craftsmanship, self-discipline, and initiative. Maintaining a farm is not a one-person job, it is a family's responsibility, and if it is not done well, the consequences are immediate and devastating. Since students were also responsible for work around the family farm, they would practice these traits daily and inherit them throughout their childhood and adolescence. Therefore there was no need for the school system to design curricula specifically to develop those character traits.

Today we are many generations removed from living off of the land the way our grandparents and great-grandparents had, yet we continue to rely on the same out-dated education system that they had used; which assumed that character traits were being learned outside of school. However this assumption is unfulfilled by today's overwhelming abundance of seductive activities that lack challenges of endurance, critical thinking, patience, and restraint. Instead of practicing and developing character traits like physical fitness, imagination, skillfulness and craftsmanship, self-discipline, and initiative by encountering multiple daily challenges, our youth are developing laziness, dependency, complacency, and self-indulgence.

It is time that we accept the fact that, with today's need for dual-income households, our youth are not developing these vital character traits at home. That being said, we must recognize

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our responsibility as experiential educators to design curricula that develop and enhance character traits because we know that methods and strategies like expedition are conducive for doing so. Please remember:

“If it be true that Education can heal the State, then indeed we educators have a grave and anxious responsibility.” – Kurt Hahn, *1940 Liverpool Cathedral Address*, p. 1

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