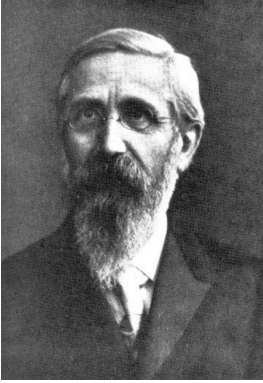


Social Pedagogic Thinkers

Paul Natorp (1854-1924)

'The main purpose of school must be to awaken the humane in humans or to educate humans for humanity'



Paul Natorp is one of the first *social* pedagogic key thinkers and has played a vital role in shaping social pedagogy in Germany. Born to a Protestant minister in Düsseldorf/Germany in 1854, Natorp lived at a time when the Industrial Revolution was changing society in many ways. Industrialisation was leading to increasing urbanisation as people moved from rural areas with the aim to find work in factories. As urban areas grew, so did social problems.

Having studied music, history, and philosophy, Natorp soon became an influential social philosopher during his time as professor for philosophy and pedagogy at the University of Marburg. Together with his colleagues, Natorp became known as part of the so-called Marburg School, which gradually established social pedagogy as an academic

discipline in its own right. While the term social pedagogy was first used by Diesterweg and Mager in 1844, Natorp is often considered the 'birth father' of social pedagogy (Niemeyer 2005) as he was the first to develop social pedagogy in any significant way.

Influences and Ideas

In his philosophical perspective Natorp was influenced by Plato's ideas about the relationship between the individual and the *polis*, the city-state. Plato imagined the polis as an organically constructed human society, an organism that aims towards justice and follows reason. In Natorp's understanding it 'is geared toward the spiritual life and the complete educational development of each person in it. The person, after being educated, will want to serve the state as his/her community', Saltzman⁽¹⁾ notes. This means that, for Natorp, all education is social education, or *Sozialpädagogik*.

A further vital source of inspiration was the German philosopher Immanuel Kant and his works on reason and morality. One of Kant's central maxims, the *categorical imperative*, demands that we treat people as subjects in their own rights instead of treating them as means to an end. While religion had previously argued that human goodness is something that God commands, Kant argued that reason commands this too. We should not merely treat others with respect out of fear of a higher power, but because this is reasonable if we want to be treated with dignity ourselves, according to Kant's *moral imperative*. Kant thus helped explain social interaction in a way that saw intrinsic value in good respectful human behaviour. Kant's work on social ethics resonated with Natorp and impacted on his perspective on morality within society.

Natorp was also influenced by Pestalozzi's concepts on community education, outlined in the Swiss pedagogue's 1819 popular novel *Lienhard & Gertrud*. In this he described an oppressed village community, morally and economically impoverished as a consequence of the corruption and greed of the squire. The novel also outlines how, through re-structuring and a series of socio-economic and pedagogic interventions, the inhabitants are gradually enabled to live in justice, realise their intrinsic potential and live their lives as their own creation (Thiersch 1996). Pestalozzi's views on educating for humanity and on improving societal conditions reinforced Natorp's perception that 'all pedagogy should be social, that is, that in the philosophy of education the interaction of educational processes and society must be taken into consideration', according to Hämäläinen (2003, p.73).

Building on these philosophical perspectives, Natorp published a monograph in 1894 titled *Religion within the Boundaries of Humanity: A Chapter for the Establishment of Social Pedagogy*. In what was the first major work on social pedagogy, he aimed to find an answer to the intensively discussed 'social question' in the late 1900s, when the industrial revolution, secularisation and urbanisation were causing massive social change, new inequalities and destitute living conditions for the increasing working class. In Natorp's view the central issue was how to overcome the legally established rule of power by capital over poor labour, with its destructive consequences for the morality of the entire people (Natorp 1894).

Natorp argued that these social issues were not about material poverty but about impoverishment of social existence, that a lack of social cohesion in Germany had caused many of the social problems. What was needed was therefore a clearly pedagogic answer to the social question, one that reconceptualised the relationship between the individual and society. This *social* pedagogy should aim to encourage a strong sense of community (*Gemeinschaft*), educate both children and adults to ensure positive relations between the individual and society, and fight to close the gap between rich and poor. Natorp realised that as social pedagogy is about the individual in relation to society, social pedagogy has to address both sides – rather than only working with the individual it must also attempt to influence the social system and to optimise it.

As Niemeyer (2005) explains, Natorp argued that at a theoretic level social pedagogy must research how education is related to the social conditions people live in and how social life in the community is affected by educational conditions, i.e. the lack of educational opportunities for the working class (Natorp 1894). But while a theoretic understanding of the problem is important, it has to be complemented by practical action. Natorp thought that a practical level social pedagogy must find means and ways to design these social and educational conditions. Through this he aimed to create educational opportunities for those who don't have them and to educate or renew the community so as to develop people's morality. Thus Natorp combined the person-centred and community-centred aspects of education in his concept of social pedagogy.

Niemeyer (2005) concludes that as a result social pedagogy was seen by Natorp as contributing to shaping the social, the community and its circumstances. Where previously the influence of religion had meant that the concern was with salvation of man from a sinful world, Natorp argued for creating a world worth living in, because and as long as man does not become his own and other people's opponent but finds human community.

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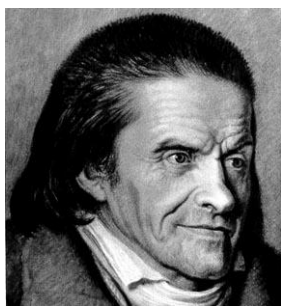
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Pedagogic Thinkers

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827)

'I wish to wrest education from the outworn order of doddering old teaching hacks as well as from the new-fangled order of cheap, artificial teaching tricks, and entrust it to the eternal powers of the hearts of fathers and mothers, to the interests of parents who desire their children grow up in favour with God and with men'



Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi was born in 1746 in Zurich, Switzerland. He was one of the first and most important pedagogic philosophers who described education as a holistic process. His emphasis was not on teaching children ready-made answers, but on educating them in a way that they are able to arrive at answers themselves. This means more than intellectual education, which was for Pestalozzi only part of a wider plan – it means 'cultivating' the children's own powers of seeing, judging and reasoning and encouraging their self-activity and spontaneity.

Pestalozzi's father died when he was five. From then on he was brought up by his mother and a maid. With both he experienced a close and loving relationship. At the University of Zurich he associated himself with the party of reform. His earliest years were spent in schemes in improving the conditions of people in general. The death of a friend turned him from politics and induced him to devote himself to education. His initial influence on the development of thinking about pedagogy owes much to the book 'How Gertrude teaches her children', which he published in 1801, and the fact that he carried his proposals through into practice.

He founded orphanages in Neuhof, Stans and Clindy where neglected and poor children were educated and instructed how to work, for example weaving and spinning. Because of various reasons these 'projects' unfortunately never existed for a long period of time. In the years between running the orphanages he started publishing stories in which he expressed his views of society. Later he turned to teaching and founded the 'Pestalozzi Institute' in Yverdon. This existed for twenty years and at last Pestalozzi was able to put his approach in to practice and prove its worth. But unfortunately also this project came to an end while he was still alive. Due to quarrels among the teachers the good reputation was spoilt and the institute was closed two years prior his death in 1827.

Pedagogic ideas:

It was Pestalozzi's aim to establish a 'psychological method of instruction' that was in line with the 'laws of human nature': 'where nature has influence and the child is well and truly guided by her, she develops the child's heart, mind and body in harmonious unity'. Pestalozzi saw it as one of the key roles of the pedagogue to keep the three elements of the 'head, heart, and hands' in equilibrium. Today this holistic approach is known as the 'Pestalozzi Method'.

Education of the 'head', or intellectual education, did for Pestalozzi not consist of 'teaching pupils about thought, but to forming their capacity to think'. Instead of imposing knowledge on the children, pedagogues should stimulate the children and arouse their curiosity of world around them. The 'heart' and its moral education were for Pestalozzi of



the highest importance, 'for, without it, the other types would lose their sense of direction'. Pestalozzi saw the education of the heart as the basic aim of education: 'the elevation of ourselves to a sense of the inner dignity of our nature, and of the pure, higher, godly being, which lies within us. This sense is not developed by the power of our mind in thought, but is developed by the power of our heart in love.' For Pestalozzi, moral education aimed to convey Christian values to the children, which meant that the pedagogue had to live these values. Consequently, Pestalozzi abolished caning in his institution. Pestalozzi also realised that children learn through physical activities, as 'physical experiences give rise to mental and spiritual ones'. Consequently, his method paid special attention to the 'hands' – or more exactly the whole body – as understanding the world, being in direct contact with the world and grasping things. He emphasized the importance of tactile perception and pointed out that physical education also contributed to a healthy development.

The three elements 'head, heart, and hands' are inseparable from each other in Pestalozzi's method. 'Nature forms the child as an indivisible whole, as a vital organic unity with many sided moral, mental, and physical capacities. Each of these capacities is developed through and by means of the others,' Pestalozzi stated.

To be educative in a holistic sense, Pestalozzi demanded that learning be based on the individual child's understanding, on 'close observation of children and on deep insight into the way a child's mind works and develops'. This form of reflective practice is stated in his doctrine of *Anschauung*, of direct observation. Through observation, the pedagogue aims to 'find out the capacities of each individual child' and to support him in his unique natural development. Hence observation is needed, because it is not the pedagogue who forms the child; the potentiality of each child is implemented by nature as 'a little seed contains the design of a tree'. And the pedagogue's role is to take care 'that no untoward influence shall disturb nature's march of developments'.

Pestalozzi's child-centred approach especially emphasises the relationship between the pedagogue and child. Describing love as 'the sole, the everlasting foundation' for education without which 'neither the physical not the intellectual powers [would] develop naturally', Pestalozzi assumed that without a satisfying, especially emotional, acceptance of the child all pedagogy would fail – something we would nowadays call 'openness', 'empathy', and 'affection'.

Nearly two centuries after the death of Pestalozzi his formulated method of the 'head, heart and hands' can be found in other definitions of holistic education. Studies with Danish and German pedagogues show that these terms are still key words used to describe a pedagogic working style – and they also demand that pedagogues work with 'head, heart, and hands', use their cognitive, physical and emotional skills.

Pestalozzi is also relevant for current practice, because he fought for social justice and was committed to working 'with those who have suffered within society. He saw education as central to the improvement of social conditions'. This shows that there is much brilliance and relevance to be found in Pestalozzi's thought. Pedagogues, and among them youth workers, must not forget his initiative; moreover they should cherish his ideas by applying them in everyday-practice. Surely, these ideas cannot be put into the contemporary context of pedagogy without reflection – but then, it was Pestalozzi himself who demanded reflective practice.

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Pedagogic Thinkers

Maria Montessori (1870 – 1952)

'The essential thing is for the task to arouse such an interest that it engages the child's whole personality'
(Maria Montessori in 'The Absorbent Mind', p206)



The figure of Maria Montessori stands out above most of those who were involved in the New Education movement, and her pedagogic method is still being followed today. Born in Chiaravalle, Italy, Maria Montessori was the first woman to obtain a degree in medicine at the University of Rome. During her work for the University's Psychiatric Clinic, where she was responsible for the care of mentally disabled children – the 'ineducable' – she developed a coherent method in order to educate them. A main source of her inspiration was Itard, who famously tried to civilize the savage boy found in the forests of Aveyron in France by stimulating and developing his senses. Her principle for educating mentally disabled children – first the education of the senses, then the education of the intellect – also informed her general educational programme, which she developed and tried while running the Casa dei Bambini, the first Children's Home, built as part of the development of a Roman slum quarter, San Lorenzo to educate the neighbourhood's children. This house in San Lorenzo was the beginning of a kind of renaissance movement that served to renew belief in the betterment of mankind by means of education. The home and those that followed were designed to provide a good environment for children to live and learn, where everything was adapted to the children and their specific attitudes and perspectives: cupboards, tables and chairs, but also colour, sound and architecture.

With Rousseau, who had strongly argued for educating in harmony with nature, Montessori shared his criticism of education and the general treatment of children by stating: 'It is essential to let nature have its own way as far as possible; the more freedom children are allowed to develop, the quicker and more perfectly they will attain higher forms and functions'.

Pedagogic Concept:

Maria Montessori built her pedagogic concept upon the idea that children develop and think differently to adults; that they are not merely 'adults in small bodies'. In her eyes they were competent beings capable of self-directed learning. She considered infancy as the sensitive phase and thus as a unique opportunity to encourage positive development, as children under six possessed an 'absorbent mind' – limitless motivation to achieve competence within their environment and to perfect skills and understandings.

Montessori understood that internally motivated learning required other than traditional measurements of achievement, such as grades or tests – negative competition that is damaging to the inner growth of children. Feedback and qualitative analysis of a child's performance were generally provided otherwise – in the form of a list of skills, activities and critical points, and sometimes a narrative of the child's achievements, strengths and weaknesses, with emphasis on the improvement of those weaknesses.

The basic concept behind Montessori's method was that of providing children with a suitable environment in which they would gain self-determination and self-realization. Her hands-on approach to learning encouraged children to develop their observation skills by doing many types of activities, including use of the five senses, kinetic movement, spatial refinement, small and large motor skill coordination, and concrete knowledge that lead to later abstraction. Important part for the self-directed learning at a child's individual pace



were didactic materials which allowed for the activities to be methodically coordinated so that the children could easily see their success.

Montessori designed her method to encourage independence and freedom within limits and responsibility. Freedom and discipline interacted, and the basic tenet was that neither one could be achieved without the other. In her view, discipline was not something imposed from the outside, but a constant intrinsic challenge to become worthy of freedom. She systematically developed exercises in patience, exactness and repetition that were aimed to strengthen the powers of concentration. It was important that these exercises be done each day within the context of some real 'task' and not as mere games or busy work. They were rounded out by practice in being still and meditating, so that they would serve the development of attitudes instead of just practical abilities.

The Montessori Method states that satisfaction, contentment and joy result from the child feeling like a full participant in daily activities. As a children's right advocate, Montessori had her children participate actively in the shaping of their environment as well as of its rules and principles of order, and in this way justice was thoroughly done to the idea of moral autonomy.

Montessori was among the first to try and establish a true science of education. Her approach was to introduce the 'science of observation', of observing the natural phenomenon of development. Montessori's faith in man's potential, which is increased by means of the 'absorbent mind' when the correct educational methods are employed, is one of the cornerstones of her theory of education. The second important aspect is the attempt to mould this process in a spirit of scientific responsibility and to discover the weaknesses and turning points of human development in order to direct it better. This 'development is a series of successive births', as Montessori wrote.

She sought to influence the world in a controlled way through the harmonious combination of theory and practice; she looked for the confirmation of her theories in practice and shaped her practice according to scientific principles, thus achieving perfection.

Montessori's method has been criticised as being too restrictive and not adequately emphasising social interaction and development. John Dewey believed that the Montessori Method stifled creativity. However, current science has proven many assumptions and beliefs of Maria Montessori right, and her method is still highly successfully practiced in schools around the world.

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Pedagogic Thinkers

Janusz Korczak (1878 – 1942)

'Children are not the people of tomorrow, but are people of today. They have a right to be taken seriously, and to be treated with tenderness and respect. They should be allowed to grow into whoever they were meant to be – the unknown person inside each of them is our hope for the future.'



Janusz Korczak was born in 1878 as Henryk Goldsmit in a wealthy Jewish district of Warsaw, Poland. Although Korczak never developed a coherent pedagogic concept, his ideas and thoughts about educating children and recognizing them as equal human beings with own rights have reached many people through his popular books for children and adults – hence his style is often referred to as 'narrative pedagogy'.

After his medical studies, Korczak worked as the residential doctor in a Jewish children's hospital, treating children with warmth: it was not so much the medicine as the magic of Dr. Goldszmit's way with children that made them well. But he recognized that as a doctor he could only treat symptoms, not the cause for social illnesses.

Influenced by Johann Pestalozzi and Sigmund Freud, who promoted the new thinking about children – the recognition of their worth, the need to regard them for what they were – Korczak took on the post of running a children's home for Jewish orphans. Together with his companion Stefa Wilczyńska he turned the home into the Children's Republic: in the Children's Parliament children were making decisions about the everyday-life, the orphan's newspaper was their forum to express their thoughts and ideas and learn about the development in the orphanage, and the Children's Court ensured that nobody – not even staff – was above the Code of Law, a code that stressed forgiveness. This created an atmosphere of joint responsibility and self-responsibility, where children cared a lot about the opinions of their comrades and staff. In 1940 the Jewish orphanage was forced to move into the Warsaw Ghetto, where Korczak took on the everyday-fight for food and survival. On August 6, 1942, the Nazis deported the orphans to Treblinka extermination camp. Declining various offers to save his own life, Korczak went with his children into the gas chambers, guiding them in their darkest hour, when they needed him most. As the famous Polish writer and journalist Marek Jaworski wrote, 'the bodies of Janusz Korczak and his children were burned. All that is left of them is a handful of ashes and clouds of smoke, which the wind has scattered to the four corners of the earth. However, with this smoke Korczak's ideas circulate around the world – ideas which nothing can destroy or consign to oblivion now'.

Pedagogic ideas:

Underpinning Korczak's pedagogic ideas is a concept of children as human *beings* instead of human *becomings*: 'children don't become human beings, they already are'.

Consequently they are entitled to own rights. Giving children rights meant for Korczak primarily to respect children's experiences, their difference, their individuality, and their being a child. Hence the overarching right in Korczak's declaration, the Magna Charta Libertatis (1919), was the right to respect.

Under this frame, he formulated three key rights – 'perhaps there are more, but I have found these to be the principle rights':

- 1) The right of the child to die.
- 2) The right of the child to live for today.
- 3) The right of the child to be what she or he is.



As Korczak said, out of fear that death could snatch away our child, we deprive him of life; to avert his death we don't really let him live. In this sense, the right to die puts the right to a self-determined life, with all its risks and hazards, out of adults' hands and in the hands of the child. He pointed out that overprotection disregards the children's right to freedom, self-experience and self-determination; hence the right to die is ultimately the right to take responsibility for one's own life and death.

Korczak's formulation of the child's right to the present day means that 'we should also respect the present hour. How can we assure a child's life in the future, if we have not yet learned how to live consciously and responsibly in the present?' It is not the pedagogue's task to influence the future fate of the child, but to ensure that the present day is 'full of happy efforts, child-like, carefree without a responsibility that exceeds the age and the powers'.

Korczak's demand that children be allowed to be who they are is also linked with this concept of children as full persons, and his notion that we cannot expect from children to be perfect. This right also calls for a relational approach, as it is our responsibility to get to know the child.

A little later Korczak added that 'the primary and indisputable right of the child is to pronounce his thoughts and to take actively part in our considerations and decisions about his person'. Characteristic for Korczak's pedagogic approach is the radical involvement of children: self-governing structures are at the heart of his education system, ensuring that the basis for a discourse between child and adult is independent from the adult's humanistic attitude.

Korczak's pedagogic ideas were based on his high interest in everything children did; he was a practitioner-researcher with his whole heart. He emphasised how studying, observing and asking children can lead to a better understanding of them. His constant observations and reflections also enabled him to experiment with new structures and to analyse where they needed improvement. 'Thanks to theory, I know. Thanks to practice, I feel. Theory enriches intellect, practice deepens feeling, trains the will'.

Korczak always emphasised the individuality of each child, stating that there is no recipe for rearing children: 'it is impossible to tell parents unknown to me how to rear a child also unknown to me under conditions unknown to me [...] There are insights that can be born only of your own pain, and they are the most precious.'

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Pedagogic Thinkers

Kurt Hahn (1886 – 1974)

'I regard it as the foremost task of education to ensure the survival of these qualities: an enterprising curiosity, an undefeatable spirit, tenacity in pursuit, readiness for sensible self denial, and above all, compassion'



Kurt Hahn was born in 1886 into a cultured Jewish industrialist family in Berlin, Germany. Here he was educated at the stately 'Wilhelm Gymnasium' (private college) where he experienced an education – typical for this time – with a very strong focus on learning facts and being diligent. Hahn saw this mainly cognitive orientated method of education as inefficient in preparing the pupils for life after school and the demands of society. He himself developed a pedagogic concept of learning which emphasized on the forming of a personality as a whole, instead on learning strictly by and with books. Furthermore, he was convinced that education be designed to develop the deepest qualities

of character and compassion. He believed in the need for real, hands-on, practical challenges for the development of character. Another aspect he wanted to promote with his concept was to enable pupils to become responsible, thinking and acting human beings who reflected themselves and their social environment.

Hahn decided early to become a school master and studied at the Universities of Göttingen, Germany and at Christ Church, Oxford. During his studies in Oxford he learnt more about the English schools and in particular the boarding schools. Here he found an educational concept which saw pupils as persons who will take over responsibilities and leading roles in their later life. The task of gaining knowledge of facts seemed to be seen as equivalent to being enabled to cope with crises and emergencies.

In 1918 he worked as private secretary in Germany for Prince Max von Baden, a scholar and humanist. Both shared the passion for education and upbringing. In 1920 they co-founded their first boarding school at the castle of the Prince of Baden, the 'Schule Schloss Salem', near Lake Constance. This initiative and being the headmaster of this school was the first significant involvement of Kurt Hahn as an innovative educator in a school.

Due to his opposition to the rising Hitler regime, Hahn fled to England, where he was asked to open a school similar to the one at Salem in the Scottish Gordonstoun. The 'New Salem' opened its doors in 1934 with the support of his English friends. Out of Hahn's Gordonstoun activities grew also the 'Outward bound trust' and its 'expeditionary learning'. For this the first Outward bound school was opened in Aberdovey, Wales in 1941. The background for this initiative was the recognition that, during the sea war, older seamen survived the sinking of their ship, rather than the young, physically fit. Hahn related this to the advanced experience the older men had already gained in dealing with crises throughout their working life. To even out the lack of experience, self confidence, strength of character and endurance, Hahn developed a concept which was based on expeditionary orientated activities.

Apart from this and the founding of many other schools with the same approach and idea across Europe and even the USA, he developed the 'County badge', which later in 1940 became the 'Duke of Edinburgh's Award'. He retired from the headmastership at Gordonstoun in 1953 after a severe illness and returned to his home at Hermannsburg in Germany. In 1974, Kurt Hahn died in Ravensburg, Germany and lies buried in Salem.



Pedagogic ideas:

Hahn believed that every child is born with innate spiritual powers and the ability to make correct judgments about moral issues. However, in the progression through adolescence, the child loses these spiritual powers and the ability to make moral judgments due to the 'diseased society' and the impulses of adolescence. Hahn summed this up in the 'Six declines of Modern Youth':

1. Decline of fitness due to modern methods of locomotion (moving about);
2. Decline of initiative and enterprise due to the widespread disease of 'spectatoritis';
3. Decline of memory and imagination;
4. Decline of skills and care due to the weakened tradition of craftsmanship;
5. Decline of self-discipline due to the ever-present availability of stimulants and tranquilizers;
6. Decline of compassion due to the unseemly haste with which modern life is conducted or, as William Temple called it, 'spiritual death'.

To ameliorate the social declines/diseases, Hahn prescribed 4 antidotes and developed the 'Seven Laws of Salem' in 1929, on which everyday life was and still is structured in his schools. With these approaches he wanted to promote a pedagogic concept and learning which would lead pupils to become persons who would be able to act kindly, righteously and take over responsibility for themselves and the community. In this sense the four antidotes can be understood as the four areas in which the main activities and 'new learning' take place. All four elements should be seen under the motive of experiencing, as Hahn suspected a subconscious effect of these experiences on the behaviour, the attitude and the values of the concerning person:

- Fitness training (e.g., to compete with one's self in physical fitness; in so doing, train the discipline and determination of the mind through the body)
- Expeditions (e.g., via sea or land, to engage in long, challenging endurance tasks)
- Projects (e.g., involving crafts and manual skills)
- Rescue Service (e.g., surf lifesaving, fire fighting, first aid)

The 'Seven Laws of Salem' on the other hand describe the approach in which these activities should be put into practice:

1. Give the children opportunities for self-discovery.
2. Make the children meet with triumph and defeat.
3. Give the children the opportunity of self-effacement in the common cause.
(*See to it that they get the chance to forget themselves in the pursuit of a common cause*)
4. Provide periods of silence.
5. Train the imagination.
6. Make games important, but not predominant.
7. Free the sons of the wealthy and powerful from the enervating sense of privilege.

Hahn did not consider his schools as new. He claimed that his educational philosophy was simply a pastiche from a variety of other sources. Hahn's argument was that he preferred 'material' that was already proven to work rather than to experiment. The secret of success, however, lay in the unique selection and combination of the principles that Hahn had decided to borrow, combined with Hahn's charismatic energy and persuasive ability to put his ideas into action. One phrase used to sum up the philosophy of his educational programmes was that 'there is more in you than you think'. Today strong traces of Hahn's holistic and society-oriented educational approach can be found in many fields of social work as it has outgrown the schooling system a long time ago.

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www.kurthahn.org

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