


A Safety Net for Mental Health

Edit and Issue


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Schedule a counseling appointment

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Monday through Friday 10:00~20:00
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※We will reply to you within two business days
after receiving your message.

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You can also schedule a
counseling appointment
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(*Reservations only.

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"Search", choose "ID", enter
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Improve Your Non-cognitive Skills.

Non-cognitive skills have been a much-talked-about topic, and they seemed to be drawing general attention lately. In the past, Japanese school report cards only had a numerical grade for each subject on a scale of 1 to 5: 1 is the lowest and 5 is the highest. However, the current report cards assess each subject based on three categories: "knowledge and skills", "thinking, judgment and expression", and "taking initiative in learning". Each category is rated as ◎(Excellent), ○(Good), or △(Poor), and an overall numerical grade is given. "Knowledge and skills" and "thinking, judgment and expression" are cognitive skills, while "taking initiative in learning" is a non-cognitive skill. Many of you may find it greatly different from the report cards that they received at their schools.

Non-cognitive skills are, to put it simply, abilities that cannot be measured by test scores. These skills are not immediately visible and are associated with mind and social nature of an individual, including traits like motivation, perseverance, cooperativeness, and self-control. They are getting much attention now because nurturing non-cognitive skills that guide us to value both ourselves and others is essential for navigating the current fast-changing society. Although our society places emphasis on tangible accomplishments, people are also expected to demonstrate non-cognitive skills. Some people may find it difficult to meet the expectation, wondering how to respond to it and feeling at a loss.

How do non-cognitive skills develop? Plays in early childhood are known to promote various non-cognitive skills. Children have numerous opportunities to enhance non-cognitive skills when they play with friends. Simple interactions such as saying "Please" and "Thank you" help cultivate sense of consideration to others and cooperation. Childhood plays present many opportunities to nurture non-cognitive skills such as positive feelings, willingness to try more or try harder, a sense of accomplishment and self-confidence, and curiosity to learn new things feeling excitement and joy.

Also, it is considered that non-cognitive skills can be enhanced with appropriate interventions even in adulthood because the skills are amenable to surrounding environment. Therefore, it is important to establish a work environment where individuals can set realistic goals and gain successful experiences while paying attention to emotions of their own and others, just as they did during their childhood play.

Reference: Excerpt from the article written by Masumi Hoshino (Lecturer, Faculty of Letters, Meiji Gakuin University) for Asahi Shimbun Online Terakoya Asahi for Teachers

Counselor's Oasis

Resting, as for me, means having a time by myself and doing whatever I want without worrying about time. It may be sitting in a comfortable chair, looking around the garden, eating what I want when I want, taking a nap when I get sleepy, playing the piano, listening to the music I like, stretching while walking, doing whatever comes to my mind, and spending time without thinking about anything other than myself. When I spend time like this, I feel refreshed, and once again can feel like "I can take it easy and do my works at my own pace."