“GROWING TOGETHER”: A SYSTEMIC-EMOTIONAL EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR FAMILY, SCHOOL, AND COMMUNITY.

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Achievement of educational objectives is one of the main concerns of all those involved in education, motivation being a main variable related to it. An effective approach to the topic requires an approximation that can focus on the relations, human bonds, interrelations and interdependencies between the protagonists, with a systemic and situated viewpoint (Boekaerts, Pintrich & Zeidner, 2000; Diaz Barriga, 2006; Madariaga & Pastor, 2007). In order to provide research and tools to this end, we have, since 2003, successfully applied the “Growing Together” Systemic-Emotional Education Program (Pastor, 2007, 2009). Since the 5th ERNAPE International Conference was held (Olvera & Pastor, 2005), we have been improving our methodology through several projects which increasingly include partnerships.

The main goal of “Growing Together” is to create collaboration (family, school, community) aimed at contributing to the emotional and motivational development of all those involved in the educational process. In order to promote their interrelation, we consider the parents as the main strength, the schools and municipal services as the main contexts in which to provide training opportunities to grow together, and the parents associations and the local administrations as the main financial sources for the development of the program.

The innovative methodology of the program is based on systemic viewing of the bonds and relationships established between protagonists, which generate organised and disarranged relational patterns (exclusion, systemic loyalty and entanglement). Having characterised the participants, the relational structures are phenomenologically analysed by means of experiential representations of the dynamics of interaction with a view to organising them. This is possible because representation is an analytical tool and a troubleshooting process which allows conflicts to surface and become unblocked when associated emotions are stimulated. This approach looks for solutions that incorporate elements from positive psychology and brief strategic therapies (resiliency, the flow experience, NLP, positive optimism), all of which are aimed at promoting motivation towards life, teaching and learning, and also at producing attitudinal and cognitive changes (Pastor, 2006).

In our paper, we will present the program, as well as the results of the current project that we are putting into practice in Pozuelo de Alarcón (Madrid). This big municipality has more than 16,000 students, from primary to secondary school, and 25 public, semi-public and private schools. The program is offered to all families,
teachers and students. Qualitative and quantitative results reveal that the program contributes to the improvement of motivation towards life and its transitions, and towards the task of teaching and learning, the difficulties of which being the result of some systemic disorders.

Keywords:
Home/school communication - barriers and facilitators; primary/secondary transition; parental engagement.

References:


