

THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A PHILOSOPHY IN EDUCATION: JANUSZ KORCZAK'S EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES AS APPLIED IN SPECIAL EDUCATION

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Over the past decade, quality services for the mentally retarded have been guided by the 'ideology of normalisation' (Wolfensberger, 1972). The principle of normalisation can be applied to all aspects of life — education, living arrangements, life styles, work, community integration.

In spite of the all-inclusive nature of the ideology of normalisation, many mentally retarded young adults have not achieved the intended social integration. *This has led to feelings of loneliness and rejection by the mentally retarded who find themselves in the midst of a hostile or indifferent environment. Staff, on the other hand, feels disillusioned and disappointed.*

The ideology of normalisation has several inherent difficulties (Rosen, 1986). It presents an ideal, which does not take into account social reality and processes. Though 'society' has been called upon to change its attitudes, and consequently its rules and regulations concerning the disabled, and persons with developmental disabilities have been educated in new behaviours and social skills, there has been no internalisation of new values on either side. Thus, we witness the physical integration of disabled persons in regular education and in the community, but without meaningful social integration.

Experts and practitioners have lately begun to regard the principle of normalisation as a 'necessary but not sufficient' aim of special education. In order to achieve quality of life and personal satisfaction for people with mental retardation, we need a clearly stated philosophy that will guide our educational programmes (Brown, 1988, Reiter and Asgad, in press).

The important contribution of a guiding philosophy was well stated by Kephart already in 1971. In his foreword to Kelly's book on philosophical perspectives in special education (Kelly, 1971). Kephart wrote: "In particular, we need to re-examine our relation to education in general for, in our eagerness, we have tended to stress the **special** and underplay the **education**. We need to reorganise our thinking and our practice in terms of a well formulated long range goal. Such a reorganisation can only be successfully accomplished if we can develop a **philosophy** of special education." (p. vi).

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The normalisation principle narrowly defined as leading a normal life, has enabled subjective interpretations of what is 'normal'. Philosophy on the other hand, demands precise meanings to concepts such as 'normal', 'social order', 'meaning of life', the 'individual', or the 'person'. Philosophy provides a clear and definite conceptual framework for understanding life. Indeed, there is no "one philosophy" and each has its own general and specific implications to human conduct. Thus by choosing one philosophy, and its implications, one forsakes all other possibilities. Though we should maintain the basic philosophical attitude of 'eternal scepticism', in order to act, we should make our choice and follow the consequences of our choice.

Bertrand Russell in his book 'A History of Western Philosophy' (1945) proposes a threefold classification of philosophies into:

"... philosophies of feelings, inspired by love of happiness, theoretical philosophies, inspired by the love of knowledge; and practical philosophies, inspired by the love of action."

(page 791).

Science, in modern times, according to Russell (1953), has an impact on our philosophical thinking. It is a "... means of getting to know the world; ... it is conceived as showing how to change the world" (page 78).

The aim of the present paper is to demonstrate how an educational philosophy can be applied, and scientifically recorded, in special education. This will be done through the description of the philosophy of Janusz Korczak and its implementation at Even Hen, a special residential school for the mentally retarded in Israel.

The crucial role of a guiding philosophy in special education and in rehabilitation has emerged from numerous follow up studies. Research findings on the adjustment of disabled and mentally retarded adults in the community, conducted in Israel, the U.S.A. and Canada (Bryen et al., 1987, Brown, 1988) have revealed several dimensions relating to the evaluation of services as enhancing, or limiting, the ability of developmentally disabled people to lead a life of quality. These dimensions underly the importance of a guiding philosophy. They are as follows:

1. **A clear presentation of the agency's philosophy from which aims and goals are derived and which is made known publicly.**
2. **A mutually accepted belief among all staff involved in the basic philosophical attitude of the agency and the feasibility of its implementation.**
3. **Integration of strategies — expectations and styles of response — derived from the basic philosophy, among home/residence, social community, and educational and vocational programmes.**
4. **The outcomes of the education and training in accordance with the agency's philosophy as measured in clients' progress.**

These dimensions will serve as our major criteria in the analysis of the programmes at Even Hen, a residential special education school for the mentally retarded.

Since its inception in 1973, life and education at Even Hen has been guided by the philosophy and pedagogical writings of Janusz Korczak (1878-1943). Following a short exposé of his basic ideas (Hyams, 1969, Wolins, 1967) we will demonstrate methods and processes whereby personality development can be enhanced and values can be internalised by mentally retarded children and adolescents. Progress will be shown on the scores obtained by children and graduates on the "Even Hen Scales" (Reiter and Asgad, 1988a).

1 PHILOSOPHY AND PRACTICE

Janusz Korczak dedicated his life and work to the education of orphan children (Sachs, 1980, 1981). A physician by profession, he saw his vocation in educating children who were socially deprived. He was also a prolific writer, his works including stories for children, philosophical papers, pedagogical writings and reports of his detailed observations of the children who were in his care (Wolins, 1967). The "child" was the focus of his attention and his writings. He strongly criticised the society and education of his times for depriving children of their basic rights. He was an educational and social reformer.

Nowadays, the problem of orphanage has been largely solved. However, a large number of children have become a major new challenge for educators: children with mental retardation and/or other developmental disabilities.

Korczak's educational and philosophical attitude maintains the acceptance of the child who is disadvantaged as first of all a "child", a developing person. This is a basic tenet of Korczak. However, this child requires special assistance. The child's difficulties become a challenge for the educator to meet with special means and thoughtful pedagogy.

Therefore, Korczak states that all children are entitled to be educated, all children should be helped to develop their competencies and potentials for coping with everyday life. Korczak's emphasis is on the necessity to develop in the children a value system and basic attitudes that will guide them and assist them in dealing with life. He did not view it as 'training' them in specific skills, but essentially as developing those personality traits and habits that would enable them to be autonomous and productive.

Korczak emphasised the importance of values and their place in education and the importance of developing in children an internal set of values. This corresponds with the major shift occurring today from the concept of normalisation narrowly defined as leading a normal life modelled on the standards of normal society to an emphasis on the concept of 'quality of life'. Since the latter depends on the subjective experiences of the individual as a unique person, the internalisation of values becomes one of the major aims of education. Normalisation means knowing 'how' to perform, quality of life means choosing 'when' and 'what' to do and philosophy is imperative for knowing 'why'.

The aim of education, according to Janusz Korczak is to provide children with meaningful personal and interpersonal experiences through which they can express their competencies, interests and inclinations in daily life. This, along with an emphasis on respect to the individual person, whether child or adult and along with an emphasis on a meaningful involvement with the community. His assump-

Though Korczak emphasised values, he was a realist. Indeed, he seemed to have been impressed by his contemporary the philosopher Henri Bergson (1859-1941). In order to understand life, one has to observe the changing reality. Pure intellectualism does not provide us with answers to life.

To demonstrate the application of Korczak's philosophical attitude to the practice of special education we will focus our discussion on two areas of values: respect for self and others, and work.

Respect for the individual with developmental disabilities in present-day education is expressed by the emphasis on individual programme planning. In many countries this has been enforced by legislation. The disabled individual is thus regarded as entitled by law to receive certain services from society. The legislator has the power to give, and also the power to withdraw rights from the individual.

This concept of the individual is not identical with the definition of the individual as a person as applied by Korczak and others (Mounier, 1952). The idea of 'person' emphasises the uniqueness of the individual. The person is regarded as having an intrinsic value, of being the source of all other values. It is the concept of the person as a free agent, as a rational and creative being, able to achieve self-control, to make decisions, choose between alternatives and follow the line of action he has decided upon.

In this sense, a 'child' is no less a person than an adult. Every child is unique, every child is different, each has his subjective experiences. The present is no less important than the past or the future. Korczak emphasised that childhood was not just a preparation for subsequent adult life. He called for respect for each child and for childhood as an intrinsically significant period of life.

Korczak refers to the 'weakness' and 'limitations' of children, which underlie the misunderstanding by adults of children and childhood. The weakness of the child lies in his difficulties in communicating, verbally and otherwise, his ideas, wishes, opinions and feelings. The limitation of the child lies in the lack of access to an 'address' where he can express his feelings and describe his experiences. Too often adults judge children rather than talk to them, disregard them rather than listen seriously to what they wish to say. It is most important, according to Korczak, to encourage the child, to support him, and to pay special attention to the child's positive characteristics and to his efforts to overcome his weaknesses.

At Even Hen this philosophical approach is expressed in several ways. For example, there is no staff member assigned as the school counsellor. Instead, every child can approach any member of staff according to individual inclination with any personal question, problem, or request. Relations between children and staff are based on spontaneity and reciprocity. A small room called the "secrets room" provides a private area in which a child can talk privately with any staff member.

Korczak called for respect for the child as a unique and whole person, and respect for childhood as a unique and special period in life. Korczak did not idealise the child or the period of childhood. He was a humanist and a realist at the same time. In his highly realistic descriptions and stories of children he refers

to the 'spoiled child', the 'aggressive' child, the child who tries to get attention by flattery. The educator has to show respect for these children too, has to show genuine interest in them and relate to them with the same sincerity as shown to the pleasant, social, willing child. Korczak emphasised an empirical approach, not a judgmental one, which was at the same time warm and interested.

Childhood, for all its unavoidable pains, should be made an exciting and emotionally fulfilling period. Korczak's view was that children who grow up in an educational milieu that emphasises personal relationships, mutual respect and recognition of the limitations posed by reality on life, will grow up to become adults who will create a better society. Korczak, who experienced two world wars, had the vision that through such an education a social reform could be effected and a new society based on solidarity and mutual help among autonomous persons will evolve.

Together with his emphasis on the present, Korczak regarded childhood as the period in which the set of values that will guide the child throughout his life is developed. The most important aim of education is to assist the child to internalise a set of values that will enable him to function autonomously. This should be accomplished not by indoctrination, nor by fear and punishment, but through the development of the personality and potential of each child. The values which Korczak regarded as most important were: productivity, truthfulness, responsibility, self dignity, respect for others and honesty.

Korczak gave special attention in his writings and practice to the value of work. According to him there is no 'preferred' or 'dirty' work. Any activity that is productive is valuable. In work, the child, and later on the adult, can express his unique personality. Through work one can enhance a sense of responsibility, regard for others, self-respect and independence. In his orphanage, the broom and the trash can were placed in a central place as symbols of the dignity of work.

At Even Hen these values are emphasised as the basis for everyday educational practice. It is best exemplified by the weekly group dynamics session called "the house of the good children" (Reiter et al., 1989).

In brief, this process involves all the school children, who assemble once a week for that event. All the children's names are written on a board shaped like a house, which has a ladder painted on it from the ground to the roof. Children sit in a spontaneous way in a group on the floor and on benches around the room. The sessions are conducted by the headmistress of the school in the same manner every week. Indeed, similar terms are used every time for opening and for conducting the process. The meetings last about two hours. After a brief opening, children are encouraged to describe their good deeds during the past week. They also tell of moments of "weakness". A child who did something 'good' is placed on a higher scale on the ladder. For 'sad' occurrences he remains in the same place, or even goes down a step. Children refer to each other by name, they look at each other when they speak, they share emotions of happiness with the children whose names 'go up' and sadness with children whose names 'go down'. It is empha-

sised by the school staff that everyone is basically "good" and wants to do good deeds and help others. There is no bad behaviour, but rather "sad" deeds. Though the children in the group differ in ages, in mental functioning, in developmental age and in the number of years they have been in the school, they all take an active part in the process. No child is left out. It is the children, with adult assistance, who decide together with the child in question whether he will 'go up' the ladder, remain in place, or 'go down'. The atmosphere is pleasant, the pace is slow, children have time to think and ponder. The child who talks is listened to patiently by staff and children alike.

The ultimate reward for going up the ladder to the top is the "privilege to work", or the privilege to be given a responsibility in Even Hen, such as assisting other children in everyday tasks, helping in the kitchen or in the maintenance of the buildings and the school grounds. In this way work becomes a special value and is associated with social approval, social status and with respect. The concept underlying this approach is that every child has the right to play by the mere fact that play is part of childhood. Work is different, it has to be earned, one has to show some responsible behaviour, or the ability to care for others to achieve the right to work.

Korczak did not idealise work. He regarded other activities, like the arts, music and drama, as no less important for leading a meaningful life. He also valued play and games as activities which provide children with opportunities for self expression, for imagination and creativity. For Korczak the child embodies in himself both the 'poet' and the 'scientist'. In nature these two can be expressed and fulfilled.

Korczak was a practitioner and a pragmatist as well as a theoretician. Indeed, he expressed criticism of any ideology and any theory of education that might become a set of unmodifiable rules of behaviour. Though Korczak provided in his writings numerous examples of and suggestions for practice, he emphasised that only the underlying principles should be adhered to. Specific methods and contents should be chosen and applied by each educator and according to each educational set-up and the individual needs of the pupils.

It is difficult to separate theory from practice, and vice versa, in Korczak's writings. However, we find many practical examples and suggestions in two major areas: the relationships between educator and pupil, and the educational force of the children's community.

The educator has the responsibility to develop each child's individuality and autonomy. He should therefore invest his energies in getting to know the children in his care. Children grow and change; the educator should be constantly open to reappraisals of his pupils. Korczak himself kept very methodical diaries of his observations of children. The educator should not rely on others testing the child, but be involved himself in getting to know his pupils. The educator should never label children. Korczak called for hesitation in making judgments and a repeated check of oneself and repeated modifications of ones evaluations of children.

At Even Hen teachers and supervisors fill in individual social and academic assessment scales — the Even Hen scales, twice a year.

Though these serve as an important basis for individual programme plans, it is emphasised by teachers that the assessment scales are only one additional source of information regarding each child. The scales are regarded as an instrument applied by the teachers for the systematic observation of children. In their considerations regarding the programme plans for each pupil, teachers take into account their own general and specific observations and knowledge of the needs of each child, as well as the scores obtained by the child on the Even Hen Scales. Thus teachers have the responsibility to get to know each child individually.

Intuition is necessary but not enough, says Korczak, and love is not enough either. 'Love' expressed in sentimental care or in a patronising attitude is not educational. The loving educator shows sensitivity and insight into a child's individuality and a genuine interest in his potential, limitations, feelings and inclinations. Such an educator will assist the child to develop his personal style of life, his own solutions to everyday problems, and the initiative and motivation to become involved in meaningful activities. Both educator and child participate in a special relationship of mutual respect as two whole and unique persons.

One practical example of respect shown to each child at the Even Hen school is the personal private bags/drawers of children. In this bag/drawer, every pupil can put anything he/she wants and no one, not even teachers or supervisors have the right to interfere or comment. New arrivals soon learn that this is a very personal area to be highly respected by all.

In this kind of relationship the centrality of educator-child dialogue in the process of education is emphasised (Sachs, 1988). Dialogue serves as a good example of the importance of everyday — even trivial — activities in the educational philosophy of Korczak. Indeed, the educator should show equal respect to the simple 'childish' behaviour of children, such as collecting "things" and having a secret hiding place. Meaningful dialogues between educator and child could centre around these. Such dialogues are no less important than formal teaching. Korczak introduced story-telling as a way of encouraging children to talk about the things that preoccupy them and about their own experiences and the method whereby values can be developed. Korczak himself wrote children's stories, which he read to the children and around which discussions were conducted. The stories were short and exciting, so that children would be stimulated to respond.

The meaningful dialogue between educator and child need not be only verbal. *Non-verbal communication is no less effective if the educator is clear in transmitting to the child the message that he is interested in whatever the child has to express, is responsive to the child, does not judge the child but is willing to provide support for whatever the child needs.* Furthermore, in genuine dialogue the child will become emotionally attached to those around him, whether other children or adults. This will give the child confidence and develop his self-esteem. Korczak emphasised that in the educative dialogue the educator should try to raise questions, make the children think and contemplate, rather than provide answers.

According to Korczak, individuality and autonomy cannot be developed in social chaos, and the value of respect for others cannot be developed in a social void. Korczak devoted much attention to the way the children's community can

be organised. In his orphanage there were numerous formal and informal gatherings. There were childrens' committees, frequent celebrations, meetings of the whole community to discuss general issues, individual tutors and mentors for newcomers, and a newsletter. Korczak had a deep insight into the dynamics of the childrens' society and the forceful effects of the group on the individual. The educator has the responsibility to participate in the group dynamics and to foster democratic norms that will enable the expression of the individuality of each child.

At Even Hen this is highlighted in the dynamics of the "house of the good children" where teachers sit among the children, express their views as equal participants and do not judge or criticise pupils or each other.

Another time of shared experiences is mealtimes. In Janusz Korczak's orphanage these were made into a special daily event. In order to enhance a family atmosphere, children of different ages were sitting around each table, educators joined them and conversations were allowed and encouraged.

At Even Hen meals are a social event. Teachers and supervisors sit among children for a pleasant experience. Manners are taught and adhered to as behaviours which enhance interpersonal communications and not as rigid rules of conduct to be followed as being 'proper'. In all of these the teachers participate on an equal footing to the children. They can express their opinions and thoughts and are regarded as experts, but not judges. Democratic procedures lay at the basis of these social processes and they include adults as well as children.

2 STAFF'S KNOWLEDGE AND IDENTIFICATION WITH THE PHILOSOPHY AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION IN PLANS

As shown above a clear philosophy should lead to practice. A philosophy without practice is sterile and, practice without a philosophy is ineffective. This was phrased in a more poetical way by Shakespeare in Hamlet at the end of scene v when the king rises and says: "My words fly up, my thoughts remain below: words without thoughts never to heaven go". To achieve the application of a philosophy in practice, it is important for staff members to know and internalise and truly believe in the basic orientation. At Even Hen, during staff meetings and during ongoing in-service training, staff members have the opportunity to discuss their opinions and attitudes towards the child, the aims and goals of their teachings and their daily practice.

The programmes at Even Hen focus on developing the individual autonomy of each child to the utmost. The message to the children is that each one has the capacity to be responsible for his behaviour. The school's motto is that:

"It matters not how strait the gate,
How charged with punishments the scroll,
I am the master of my fate:
I am the captain of my soul",

William Ernest Henley (1849-1903), *Invictus*.

Several principles correspond with this general aim and underly the education at Even Hen:

- To enhance the independence of each child as a unique person. The individual is a **subject** and not an object of treatment or of manipulation. The individual is entitled to a meaningful life — a life of quality based on his needs, his potential and according to circumstances in reality.
- To effect the internalisation of a set of values in the pupils in order to enable each individual to attain dignity and maximum independence according to personal ability and within the existing social reality.
- To engender a grasp of the mutual obligations of society and the person: a person is entitled to assistance in developing at his/her own pace. Society is entitled to expect each person to adhere to its norms and adapt to contemporary norms. An important objective here is to teach mentally retarded people to stand up for their rights in society while at the same time fulfilling their own obligations to the community.

To achieve these aims and objectives, the education at Even Hen seeks a balance between emphasis on achievements and on processes, on the person and on group life and group cohesion. Cutting across these are the two values suggested by Korczak: 'respect' for self and others and 'work'.

Janusz Korczak's philosophy presents a holistic view of the child. The individual programme plans at Even Hen express this view. Each pupil is offered opportunities to develop his potential to the utmost. The school encourages creativity, personal initiative, artistic expression and the expression of self in any other activity. The individual programme plans are based on the teachers' personal knowledge of each child and on scores given on the "Even Hen Scales" (Reiter and Asgad, 1988a).

The individual child, however, is not isolated from other children. In fact he is at all times part of a significant group of classmates. From an organisational perspective the educational programme at Even Hen is as follows:

In the dayschool all children are grouped into classes of 8-12 pupils. In addition, there are numerous centres for math, reading, speech therapy, occupational therapy, handicrafts, music, physiotherapy, sport and psychological counselling.

The children in each class split every morning into two groups of approximately 5 pupils each. One group remains in the classroom. The other pupils attend various centres according to individual programmes. This procedure is repeated the next day with the first group joining different centres and the second remaining with their teacher in the classroom. On Fridays the whole class meets for a joint activity.

Creativity, self expression and an outlet for personal taste and style are further enhanced in an outdoor programme called "the children's street".

A special area in the schoolyard has been set aside as the "children's street". This is the area of the children's "apartments" — a row of sectioned-off booths, where individual children, or two friends, create their own little homes. (Reiter, et al. 1989). The "children's street" provides pupils with a private place of their own. It enhances self expression and creativity without control or criteria or "right or wrong".

Teachers and other staff do not judge children on the way they make use of their apartments. The "children's street" provides a rich source for conversations between children and adults. It is here that many informal conversations and dialogues can take place.

The "childrens' street", the "house of the good children", and the "secrets' room" provide ample opportunities and stimuli for dialogues between children and children, and children and adults. These methods seem to be effective in enhancing the internalisation of values in children and young adults with moderate levels of mental retardation.

3 UNIFORMITY OF STRATEGIES

"It seems likely that agency services will not greatly enhance quality of life unless they become directly involved in individual clients' lives on a much more comprehensive and personal basis and that this involvement includes more than time in a day programme" (Brown, 1988, page 129).

From the outset, it was felt at Even Hen that it was important for the education of children with mental retardation to provide them with an environment in which the home, the school and the neighbourhood overlap and provide similar expectations and responses (Reiter and Asgad, 1988a). Every child grows up in at least three different environments, each representing different expectations and reward systems: the home (family), the school, and the child's peers. In each there are different norms and rules for behaviour, each has a different set of criteria for excellence and for "accepted" or "deviant" behaviour. This is expressed, for example, in the way children address and talk to others: they speak in one way to their mothers, in a different way to their teachers and in yet another way to their friends. This diversity can affect negatively the child with mental retardation who tends to respond in an undifferentiated way; this is at times fitting but not at other times. Thus, sometimes he is rewarded for his behaviour and sometimes, he is reprimanded or even punished for similar behaviour. This results in a feeling by the child that the world has no rules or stability. Rewards seem not to be based on his behaviour but on the moods of others. This can lead to a learnt helplessness and to a negative self concept, and in turn it will alienate the child from society. We can prevent this vicious circle by providing a residential programme in which the different programmes of education, daily living, and social interactions are all implemented in the same educational milieu. In a residential school a therapeutic milieu can be created by means of a unified atmosphere of demands and rewards.

Such a unified surrounding is also most suitable for education based on an holistic view of the child, as emphasised by Janusz Korczak. The areas in which this view is best expressed may be that of aesthetics. Here, at Even Hen the children and graduates are personally involved in the decoration and arrangements of their common and individual study and living areas. An especially talented graduate painted some of the outside walls of the school. Children are encouraged to give a personal touch to their rooms.

4 CLIENTS' PROGRESS

A holistic view of the person is expressed in the education provided for the graduates of Even Hen too (Reiter and Asgad, 1988b)*. Like the children, young adults with mental retardation need an environment in which education and training are provided for different aspects of life: personal, social, academic, vocational. As noted by Brown (1988) and by others (Reiter and Levi, 1980, Edgerton, 1984), "vocational training may not result in employment, but individuals who master home and community skills possibly have greater prospects for employment" (page 130).

When the first group of children were due to leave Even Hen, not all of them could go back to their original families. In 1980 a special transition programme was initiated for those who remained in Netanya. Twenty nine graduates took part in it, living in a halfway house, the "graduates home" (Reiter and Asgad, 1988b). The rationale for the programme was to prepare graduates for domestic and vocational independence.

The transitional programme was based on three principles: normalisation, developmental orientation and respect for the individual as both a unique person with unique needs and as a significant member of the group. The curriculum included three main areas: 1) Training in self help skills and competencies such as doing one's own laundry, arranging one's own cupboard, using public services such as the post office and public transport etc. 2) Developing social competencies such as receiving guests, going on visits, using the phone, relationships between the sexes and enhancing relationships with one's own family. 3) Exploring meaningful and gainful occupations for the graduates by matching personal competencies and inclinations to realistic vocational opportunities.

In 1986, towards the end of the transition programme, and in order to monitor progress, all school children (N = 41) and all graduates (N = 29) who took part in the transition programme were assessed on the Even Hen Scales. Comparisons were made between the achievements of the schoolchildren and those of graduates.

In the analysis of the results it should be noted that the criterion of "normal performance" is based on the highest standards of normative behaviour, which is not necessarily the average performance of the "man in the street", nor is it the average performance of the schoolchildren or graduates. This high criterion, or expectation from children and young adults, is derived from following a philosophy of values and not merely an assessment of normal behaviour.

Table 1 shows mean scores obtained by the two groups on each of the Even Hen Scales (on the basis of these scales the more concise present-day scales were constructed) and the significance of difference between them.

* In 1976 the Even Hen school became part of OMNAH --- a non-profit association for the education and rehabilitation of developmentally disabled people. OMNAH includes a residential home and dayschool for severely and profoundly mentally retarded children, several apartments in the community for graduates and a residential home for the Even Hen children.

Table I
Children and Graduates Mean Scores on the Even Hen Scales.
Standard Deviations and Significance of Difference.

| Scales * Maximum score Indicated in brackets | Children n = 41 | | Graduates n = 29 | | Significance p |
|--|--------------------|------|---------------------|------|-------------------|
| | mean | s.d. | mean | s.d. | |
| Table manners (20) | 11.2 | 4.5 | 10.1 | 1.9 | n.s |
| Personal hygiene (46) | 21.1 | 8.4 | 31.3 | 6.2 | .0001 |
| Care of clothes dressing (18) | 7.6 | 3.5 | 12.3 | 2.4 | .0001 |
| Care of living area (18) | 6.3 | 4.0 | 10.5 | 3.5 | .0001 |
| Orientation in neighbourhood (26) | 19.7 | 3.2 | 24.5 | 2.1 | .0001 |
| Use of the phone (14) | 2.3 | 2.9 | 8.5 | 4.3 | .0001 |
| Money handling (32) | 5.5 | 8.1 | 11.9 | 10.3 | .0001 |
| Time concepts (46) | 20.4 | 13.4 | 30.0 | 9.7 | .001 |
| Words and concepts (28) | 8.7 | 5.1 | 24.0 | 3.2 | .0001 |
| Reading and writing (32) | 17.7 | 6.9 | 21.9 | 5.8 | .009 |
| Number concepts (44) | 26.1 | 13.8 | 36.5 | 11.1 | .001 |
| Use and care of tools (22) | 8.9 | 5.7 | 12.5 | 5.5 | .009 |
| Leisure activities (10) | 9.1 | 3.5 | 3.3 | 3.0 | .0001 |
| Social awareness (45) | 28.3 | 7.6 | 43.4 | 7.4 | .0001 |
| Behaviour and personality (46) | 24.4 | 8.6 | 25.4 | 7.4 | n.s. |
| Work (30) | — | — | 14.7 | 4.7 | — |

* Each item was scored on a 3 point scale:
0 — does not do
1 — partial performance
2 — ideal performance

Table I indicates that in most areas of social skills and academic performance, the graduates show significantly greater progress than the schoolchildren. In only two areas no differences were found between the younger children and the school graduates.

In the area of "behaviour", which is specially developed and emphasised at Even Hen, the children achieved similar levels of performance to the graduates. Both groups were rated as generally showing only partial performance. This could be explained by the high demands made by teachers and staff in this area. A similar finding is in the area of "table manners". Here too even younger children are expected to behave properly, no less than the older ones.

In later assessments, the schoolchildren showed progress as described in a previous paper (Reiter, et al., 1989).

In 1988 a follow up study was conducted of 24 graduates (5 left the OMNAH organisation for different reasons). Their mean age was 31 years (range: 22-47) and their mean IQ scores was 51.9 (range: 38-64). Seventeen among them were involved in full time gainful employment in the open market, 4 graduates were still involved in a transition programme, 3 took part in a special preparatory training for assistants to nursery school teachers. A questionnaire on work skills and vocational adjustment designed by Speake and Whelan (1975) was completed by the direct supervisors of each graduate (Reiter and Asgad, 1988b).

The area in which the working graduates received highest scores was that of 'work personality'. This area included behaviours such as: punctuality, persistence, emotional stability, relations with co-workers, personal appearance, applying knowledge and skills and concentration.

The influence of the philosophical attitude of Janusz Korczak is well demonstrated in these findings. Skills and competencies can be taught, but personality development and meaningful interpersonal relations can be achieved only through long term education. At Even Hen the philosophy of Korczak and the insights into group dynamics which he describes are adhered to in the everyday life of the children. Teachers and staff interact with the children and among themselves, as persons and mutual relationships are based on respect.

Interest in the individual child is expressed in the holistic care for each child, a care that follows him as he grows older. Children grow, their needs change. OMNAH, the non-profit association for developmentally disabled people was initiated to cater for the changing needs of graduates of Even Hen as long as they need it and wish for it. The underlying attitude is in line with Janusz Korczak's philosophy — it is humanistic and realistic at the same time.

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