

Some Recommended K-12 Curriculum Additions

IMO the conventional K-12 educational system does not adequately address several key ingredients necessary for a happy, productive, successful life. Some examples of additional information that should be properly taught in K-12 schools:

1 - Critical Thinking is a skill that should be properly taught, so that it comes naturally. In all aspects of life, thinking people will be happier and more successful than those who are not. ([Critical Thinking](#) should be utilized in all subject areas, but Science is the most appropriate subject to teach this invaluable skill.)

2 - Teach effective conflict resolution (problem-solving) skills (e.g., change perspective). Adults with better problem-solving skills will be more productive in any and all areas of life. (Science – think the [Scientific Method](#) – is a good area to instill these skills.)

3 - Techniques to deal with stress. Everyone will be faced with varying degrees of stress, so certain basic techniques should be explained. An example would be [Cognitive Behavior Therapy](#).

4 - Time management. We all have a limited amount of time at our disposal – and many demands on us. Learning how to more efficiently use the time we have is *extraordinarily* important.

5 - True financial management. Most schooling focuses on career preparation, or how to earn a living. Without a thorough knowledge of how to *save, spend, and invest* the money earned, there will be a great deal of *waste, anxiety and disappointment*.

6 - The importance of mentoring. No matter what area a student gets involved with, they will be better off if they reach out – and are open to – learning from others who are more experienced. Retired seniors are a valuable, untapped resource for this assistance.

7 - Communication is the lifeblood of our interrelationships. Without the ability to communicate effectively, adults will be harnessed with a substantial challenge in every part of their life. There are some advanced communication ideas (e.g., [here](#) and [here](#)) that schools should teach and encourage.

8 - Our beliefs determine our actions. However, most people don't know what their beliefs are, or critically evaluate their accuracy. A sample of what should be taught is in this brief [discussion](#) of beliefs.

9 - Ask the richest person in the world how important good health is. Invariably they say that they will trade away all of their wealth in exchange for good health. Students need better education as to what constitutes good health habits, the pros and cons of Western and Eastern health perspectives, being knowledgeable enough to understand their health options, etc.

10- In the last generation, self-esteem has become a holy grail. The reality is that we have [gone way too far](#) in this direction. A good education process will **uninstall the entitlement mentality** and substitute a focus on **responsibility** of our own efforts.

[If students had a better grasp of real self worth (rather than a pretend one), there would be less tendency to use drugs or other bad behaviors to make them feel better.]

Note – Some of these topics are long enough (and important enough) to warrant their own course. Others can be combined in conventional courses. The remainder could be melded together into a *Life Skills* course.

– john droz, jr