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RADIO PROGRAM

PHYSICAL EDUCATION FOR HEALTH

February 17, 1938

"The Philosophy of Physical Education"

- Allen Dean Schwegler, I would like for you to tell me your philosophy or your reactions to the real function of physical education, as you see it. Certainly after a man has taught young men and women for over 40 years he should be a competent individual to judge the worth while things in human existence. Do you agree with me that activity is the real objective of life, the only method of obtaining happiness? Many psychologists and philosophers see happiness as a by-product of living, rather than the chief purpose. Is this your idea, Dean Schwegler?
- Schwegler My answer to that question is that activity is only one phase of life. Life involves the maintenance of equilibrium between the organism and its environment. Activity is a phase of the attempt to maintain equilibrium or to re-establish it when it has been disturbed. Physical activity needs to be approached from that point of view in order to be properly evaluated.
- Allen By some it is generally agreed that activity leading to further activity is called growth. It is further generally agreed that health is the first requisite for growth, or indeed for happiness, satisfactions, service or progress. Other aims of life are social, cultural, and economic efficiency. These constitute the greatest common divisors in the list of educational aims of many educators. Each of these aims seems to satisfy the philosophical criterion because each is a phase of growth and because each is essential to the greatest happiness of particular individuals. Would you agree or disagree with this theory, Dean Schwegler?
- Schwegler The term "growth" has a number of connotations, some of them involving desirable changes, others involving undesirable changes. For instance, in physical growth there may be pathological developments. So in the development of mental life it is perfectly thinkable to conceive of growth of an undesirable sort. If you will restrict the term "growth" to the development and expansion of desirable elements, to wholesome increases of capacity to function, then I would agree that growth is one of the fundamental objectives of all true education, and that it unquestionably underlies any adequate concept of education, whether that be from the physical angle or from the purely mental angle.
- Allen Dean Schwegler, is it not a fact that objectives in education are aims broken up into their component parts? One of these, I assume, would be health. I should like to ask your opinion concerning health and physical activity as they relate to each other.
- Schwegler The common experience of mankind tested out in the crucible of many centuries of living proves clearly that physical activity is under ordinary circumstances directly related to the maintenance of the