



## PRESENTATION

---

### What happened to *paideia* and *scholê*?

In the work titled « Definitions », often attributed to Plato, **education** or *paideia* in ancient greek, refers to the **care provided to the soul**. 'Paideia' was the process of educating individuals, in a way of moulding or raising them up, thus enabling them to reach their « true » nature, that of the genuine human being. The first meaning of **school** according to its Greek etymology (*scholê*) was «**leisure**», especially that dedicated to the study of the **free man**<sup>1</sup>.

Nowadays low literacy skills are a concern globally, including in middle and high incomes countries. About 20% of adults in Europe lack the literacy skills they need to fully participate in society. Adults with poor literacy and numeracy skills face numerous sources of disadvantage (**UNESCO** report Education 2030)<sup>2</sup>.

Yet what concerns the Swiss pediatrician **Remo H. Largo** the most, is the fact that more and more children are suffering from burnout, a term usually used for adults and related to overwork. Largo also raises the point that many children are also suffering from low self-esteem which he claims is an unintentional by-product of the traditional school system. Largo suggests that this forced system of education does not sufficiently fulfil individual and emotional needs of young people. He is an advocate for enabling **self-determination**, which he connects with **self-directed learning and free schools**. All this implies a radical rethinking of our society<sup>3</sup>.

The educationalist **Sir Ken Robinson** promotes a similar argument, as he said: "We need to look at the alternatives. The alternatives work. The great challenge for the alternative and democratic school movement is to take these alternatives from the fringe to the mainstream! When we do that we'll find we don't need alternatives because we will have implemented principles that actually work!"<sup>4</sup>.

**Haven't we gone astray too much and isn't it high time to give the ethical meaning back to « education » and « school »**

---

<sup>1</sup> [Wikipedia Paideia Scholê Definitions](#)

<sup>2</sup> [UNESCO Report Education 2030 \(EN\) p.47 col.1](#)

<sup>3</sup> <http://mobile2.tagesanzeiger.ch/articles/59299abaab5c370ec3000001>

<sup>4</sup> [Talk at IDEC 2017 www.youtube.com/watch?v=IALCagywibc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IALCagywibc)