

TRAGEDY AND EDUCATION

How do we prepare ourselves for the tragedies of our time? A major part of the curricula of any good school is literature. Young people often wonder, “*Why are we reading this stuff?*” Then, the sky falls and a nation mourns. Adults and young people alike need the vicarious experience of tragic events to prepare ourselves for such days.

“All life is suffering.” The Buddha said it well. And we live for the “*joie de vivre*” . With quantum thinking we can live easily with those two axioms. Life is not a pleasure quest only. Who does not suffer? Literature takes us to that place of pain and it is a joy to be there whether in an opera, or a novel, or theatre, or film. *Hold the opposites!*

Education cannot take away the pain of these days of loss or of fear of the unleashing of the dogs of war. It can be conscious enough to not flinch, to demand excellence in performance of young people and of teachers, it can offer a sound congruence between philosophy and action. It can use the teaching moment to challenge us all to dare, as the men and women on *Columbia* did.

We are all astronauts in our own life and work, reaching if we dare, for the stars; reaching for the source of life and love.