



Relationship with teacher

The persons in the street get in my way because I collide with them as possible rivals. I shall like them as soon as I see them as partners in the struggle. Teilhard de Chardin

Evidence that mutuality needs to be built:



Student is disrespectful, verbally, with body language, may be confrontational.



Makes snide remarks or does passive aggressive behaviors to belittle the teacher.



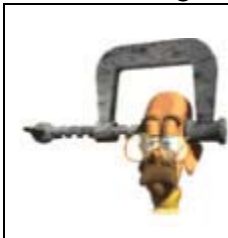
Baits the teacher to put him or her in a bad light; calls attention to mistakes.



Intentionally disobeys the teacher, openly refuses to comply.



Ignores the teacher when s/he comes forward to talk with him or her.



Think about someone you really dislike, who has it **coming**, by the way.... They've earned your enmity. Now wrap yourself in the disgust, the anger, the anxiety of running into them..... because you would like to do something to hurt them or shame them, and you may not be sure you will be able to be civil, or control yourself --- in fact you are not sure you even want to. Some students feel that way about some of their teachers. Some of your students may even feel that way about you. Ouch! What we tend to do is feel hurt, then justify our position, feel hurt and then lash out.



Solutions

- The easiest way out of this is to take the situation in hand. It doesn't feel easy, because by now there are slights, and it feels awful to bend around, lose face and approach the person, and a student, no less, but as long as there have been people, it has been the most effective strategy. There are classic stories about it, sayings, even poems, like the one that ends "heretic, rebel, a thing to flout; he drew a circle that left me out.... but love and I had the wit to win, we drew a circle that took him in."
- Find out about the youngster - favorite colors, hobbies, and develop ways to genuinely connect with him -- as an adult, but with concern and genuineness. Few people can resist that.
- Stop the confrontations by getting in the adult posture. That means you can say. "I don't like to be called that." Then turn around and take care of other things in the class rather than getting even or "calling out" the student.
- Remind the students (not in a pushy, authoritarian voice, but in an authoritative manner) of the respect rule, and if you do not have one in the class, consider creating one. Respect is the way we treat each other, regardless of our feelings for a person, because we are human and have self-control. **Good rules: Respect one another; Be Fair; Be Real; Give -- you can share yourself and your time.**
- The adult is the responsible person. Respect is not about how others treat you, it is much deeper than that. It is about how you feel about yourself. Anytime we put another person in their place, we have a backlash effect. It ought to work, but instead, we spend hours thinking, rethinking, hashing, blaming. That means we no longer respect self and are trying to reframe what happened so we can and can put it to rest. Best not to do it in the first place. Want respect? Give it. Want to be put down? Demand respect. It is just that simple.
- Teaching respect is a complex process. It is wrapped around how we feel about ourselves and how we control ourselves. To help youngsters gain this as a way of behaving, many lessons, communications, self soothing, self control, ability to see how others are feel, all have to fit into place --- a life long pursuit. Start small, by modeling, and each week add new elements to what it means and looks like. By the time students leave our learning community, they should be practiced at this, and ready to initiate it with others.
- Relationship is about love. Find a way to love and appreciate what your students can do -- especially the one who is being difficult and disrespectful. Perhaps the key is to find a way to enjoy being with each person. Everyone wins when that is the way the classroom is configured.

Teaching and Modeling Respect

Self-empowerment - that's learning to respect other people's music, but dance to your own tune as you master harmony within yourself. - Doc Childre

Self-respect n. Respect for one's self; regard for one's character; laudable self-esteem.

Teaching respect requires the ability to **1) respect self** and **2) value others** enough to believe students are worthy of the time and attention required to help them be the best of who they are and find a way to offer those gifts to others.

Children begin life with a sense of self, a passion for self preservation. They also begin life with a need to depend on others. It does not take us a few moments to walk, a year or two to reach maturity. We need support, love, guidance and education to mature, and we need it for many years.

We need modeling to learn to be fully human. Those who teach need to master self control.

As teachers treat others with the respect, they provide a vision of what it means to be fully human.

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Children are not born with manners any more than they are born reading. We are born with the capacity to read and genes that allow us to speak, but it takes years of instruction. We have a sense of goodness in our genetic structure, our DNA, but it takes years to hone that goodness and help the child focus those gifts and talents for self and society.

When we believe in the potential of students, we are obligated to help them achieve that greatness. Anything less strips us of our teaching mantle. When we allow students to grow without guidance, to be rude, undisciplined, out of control, we are cheating them of the tools needed to become fully human and we are cheating society of the gifts that person could share. We have failed.

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- Step One** Gain control of self and do not allow students to destroy that discipline, regardless of what they say or do. True self respect can only be lost by your own behavior.
- Step Two** Have high expectations of students, believing in their ability to learn, to change to grow, as a function of your effectiveness as a teacher.
- Step Three** Make a list. . . Decide what skills are essential for basic human interaction, not only in the classroom but to support a useful life, maintain employment, live in a family.
- Step Four** Develop practices you will teach and model that show respect to self and others. Start a systematic method for teaching those skills and develop a way to let students know you are excited when they gain proficiency in respectfulness.

Examples of Respect Practices

- 1) Say please and thank you when asking for and thanking others for their help.
- 2) Learn how to make an honest apology and practice using it when in error.
- 3) Learn how to greet others and introduce them.
- 4) Say "excuse me" when interrupting others by speaking or moving.
- 5) Offer to share things when there are not enough to go around.
- 6) Use a hanky and privacy when clearing nasal passages.
- 7) Ask someone to repeat a statement when you did not hear clearly, rather than saying "Huh?"

** * * * Your DNA structure is designed so the choice to function in love is the only choice that brings you fulfillment. Stress is inner biofeedback, signaling you that frequencies are fighting within your system. The purpose of stress isn't to hurt you, but to let you know it's time to go back to the heart and start loving. - Sara Paddison * * **



Unclear or uncertain

Evidence that lack of clarity is an issue:



Student stares at the page instead of starting.



Does one or two items and then stalls - starts talking, looking around,



Instead of starting, the student wanders around the class or turns to someone and begins chatting.



Begins with a purpose, and then fizzles out, or starts doing the wrong thing.



Student tells you s/he will do it for homework



Student asks one question after the other, often with an exasperated tone.



Remember how you put off doing taxes? It was partly because it isn't much fun, because it consumes a lot of time and because there are always places that you get stuck. Ah-ha! What did you do about it? Well students feel this way about many of the tasks we give them. They get stuck, they lose heart, they decide to put it off, and hope it will disappear. It isn't just taxes we do this with. It may be a household chore, fixing something like a leaky toilet that is going to get complicated, grading that mountain of papers. If you can get into the middle of how this feels you may better understand how the student who is uncertain is feeling.



Solutions

- We do funny things in education. We say that everyone learns from the mistakes they make, but every time an item is wrong or the student makes a mistake, grades go down. If we don't try, we get a zero on the assignment, if we try and don't have it right, we may still fail. This irony is not lost on students.
- Consider changing grading procedures so that trying and working hard counts as success. More students will try, and the momentum for finishing work will increase.
- Use peer mentoring to help students talk about and make meaning of the things they are doing and allow them to share insights and short cuts .
- Ask a student who is not working, to explain the assignment. Remember that this is done best one on one, with teacher and students sitting down together. Sarcasm shows irritation, not desire to support and help.
- Once directions are given, ask students to tell each other where to begin..... and refocus the students, and start.
- Be available - circulating around the room, and watch for signs that a student is stumped.
- Encourage, rather than threaten, if a student is not initiating work, and that includes helping with the first one, and checking back to keep the momentum going.
- Have a student get up, do something physical and a change of pace for a few minutes, then have a "go" again.
- Use music to set the tone -- upbeat and fast paced may give students extra energy.
- Consider the time of day and if a student is weary --needs a snack to build blood sugar up. Good snacks can be painless --crackers, dry cereal, hard candy, fruit, peanut butter on bread, milk or juice.
- If the lack of clarity continues, consider looking into hearing, sight, and memory problems through the special education process.
- Offer structured choices -- would you like to use these twenty words in your unity vocabulary or add some of your own? Will you do your illustrations in mural form or in a flip through book? Would you prefer chalk for the mural or try acrylic paints? Do you need a partner for this part or will my support be adequate?
- Discuss interests and passions with the student, making a list of best options, then have the student narrow it.



Making meaning **That's the way things come clear. All of a sudden. And then you realize how obvious they've been all along.**" -- Madeleine L'Engle

Evidence that the directions, verbal or written are not clear to the student:



Student can recite surface facts but is not able to discuss ideas.



Information is keyed to the subject and is not used in other areas of learning.



The student gets stuck on step after step. So, though they can carry when adding, they can't seem to do it when working an equation.... or the student can do the times tables by rote, but does not respond correctly when trying to do long division.



Student, reads, but comprehension is poor, showing that decoding is occurring, but understanding is not. The chapter gets read, but the student cannot answer the questions in the book or cannot answer the question, put a little differently on an exam.



Assignments feel hard, burdensome, and the student says so.



Homework is seldom completed.



Being able to recite the facts is not the same as understanding. Learning to drive is an example. You probably passed the test the first time through. When did you really understand all the nuances? It probably took years. When I was a girl, we had a jump rope song. It went like this: "Postman, postman, do your duty. Here comes a big fat American beauty. She wobbles, she wobbles, she does the splits. She wears her dresses, up to her hips." I sang that for years, and then one day, I realized what it meant. The light bulb came on. Wow, was I embarrassed! This is the way learning works. We can memorize and repeat something, even a string of things, like solving algebraic equations, without understanding. Making meaning is about ownership.



Solutions

- We need to light the spark of excitement with students. It may take something different for each youngster. We are truly spinning our wheels when we are the engine and the student is sitting on the sidelines having to be pushed and pulled every time.
- Grades are not powerful with students who are not achieving. Working on topics that fascinate the student is!
- Examples of alternative activities that encourage understanding: diorama, round-table discussion, crossword puzzles, murals, notebooks, collections, presentations, one-page summaries, movie making, role-playing.
- Lectures are comforting and we believe they are efficient in passing on information. In fact, it is the least powerful unless it is followed up with practice, discussion, application and analysis.... ah, Bloom's taxonomy!
- For many students, art is a good way to work out ideas - to take them from bits and pieces to the whole picture.
- Controversy can be a useful tool in getting students to think about ideas and make them their own.
- If a student isn't working on current assignments effectively, we have nothing to lose by finding new ways to get the student involved.
- Many things, like how to teach, cannot be taught, but can better be learned through modeling and by feeling like one must succeed. Years of math can be converted to instant understanding when a student has to keep from being cheated when getting change for \$20.00. That same concept applies all through the curriculum.
- A good way to teach, when lecturing is to get a concept described, then have students turn to a peer and talk about it, followed by making lists of the ideas generated.
- Individual white boards or chalkboards can keep students involved because they will need a response. It is much more effective than asking questions from those raising their hands.

Bloom's Taxonomy

This is one way of seeing the development of thinking. Most of us are able to know or say facts when we learn something in school, yet real learning comes from being able to use that knowledge to create, evaluate, and apply to other situations and concepts. Benjamin Bloom developed this material. It is also a very useful set of verbs for writing lesson plans and behavioral objectives.

Competence	Skills Demonstrated
Knowledge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . observation and recall of information . knowledge of dates, events, places . knowledge of major ideas . mastery of subject matter . <i>Question Cues:</i> list, define, tell, describe, identify, show, label, collect, examine, tabulate, quote, name, who, when, where, etc.
Comprehension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . understanding information . grasp meaning . translate knowledge into new context . interpret facts, compare, contrast . order, group, infer causes . predict consequences . <i>Question Cues:</i> summarize, describe, interpret, contrast, predict, associate, distinguish, estimate, differentiate, discuss, extend
Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . use information . use methods, concepts, theories in new situations . solve problems using required skills or knowledge . <i>Questions Cues:</i> apply, demonstrate, calculate, complete, illustrate, show, solve, examine, modify, relate, change, classify, experiment, discover
Analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . seeing patterns . organization of parts . recognition of hidden meanings . identification of components . <i>Question Cues:</i> analyze, separate, order, explain, connect, classify, arrange, divide, compare, select, explain, infer
Synthesis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . use old ideas to create new ones . generalize from given facts . relate knowledge from several areas . predict, draw conclusions . <i>Question Cues:</i> combine, integrate, modify, rearrange, substitute, plan, create, design, invent, what if?, compose, formulate, prepare, generalize, rewrite
Evaluation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> . compare and discriminate among ideas . assess value of theories, presentations . make choices based on reasoning . verify value of evidence . recognize subjectivity . <i>Question Cues:</i> assess, decide, rank, grade, test, measure, recommend, convince, select, judge, explain, discriminate, support, conclude, compare, summarize

Adapted from: Bloom, B.S. (Ed.) (1956) *Taxonomy of educational objectives: The classification of educational goals: Handbook I, cognitive domain*. New York, Toronto: Longmans, Green.