

ED PHILOSOPHY

I'll refer to phenomenology. This terminology is perhaps a bit over used these days, but I do like its approach that concentrates on the study of consciousness and the objects of direct experience. I consider this to be a "now" and applicable process that's needed for both teacher and student to truly develop a meaningful experience and consequently, a significant learning curve. In other words, just delivering the subject matter is not enough. This should be secondary to the all-important approach of enhancing the student's interest and confidence/self-worth to be able to absorb and use the subject matter ... hands-on, if you will, and as much immersion as possible.

I truly believe young people "do" as they see "done." They imitate with the feeling of wanting to emulate [match or surpass], which brings what a teacher does in the classroom towards "critical mass" or a turning point for the students to truly comprehend through a gain of confidence/self-worth and application ... or not. The positive side is called productivity in my mind, and if the teacher is nonproductive, the same can probably be said for his/her students ... the unfortunate, negative side.

And having said the above, love ["everybody needs a hug"] ... without sounding too much like "Dr. Love" ... is of utmost importance and in the context of caring for and nurturing the child in the classroom. And when I say this, I mean a concern for understanding the student and his/her situation in life as it pertains to the ability/desire to learn. Participation begets learning, and encouragement/guidance by the teacher begets participation of the student. This not only applies to the teacher-student relationship, but also to the parent-child relationship.

This brings up the "parent" factor that sometimes makes the formal education of the student almost insurmountable, and I know this for a fact in my dealings with at-risk youth in the States and Africa in the past. So, it's extremely important to be in close liaison with the child's parents in order to parallel and convey this student's educational activities and progress. If there seems to be little to no interest ... which unfortunately, is more frequent than we would desire ... from the parental side, then the teacher also becomes the "parent" in the sense that it's even more paramount to nurture and guide the child/student.

On a personal note, my passion for life and creativity/productivity is at the forefront of how I live. Having self-worth is extremely important for me and those around me, and I would nurture this as a part of the life/learning process. Being a productive member of society is utmost, but conveyed in the sense that one has to develop or grow within societal guidelines and mores and at the same time, not selling out in terms of having individual thoughts and desires as they pertain to self-development and maturity as a human being. I was fortunate enough to receive a great deal of love and guidance from my family and teachers, and this is probably a big reason why I've managed to do [still doing] so much for so long.

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