



01

A Pair of Colourful and Brilliant Wings A Harmonious and Congenial Teacher-Student Relationship

Education is the hope of rejuvenating nation; teacher is the hope of rejuvenating education.

A good teacher-student relationship is the key for effective education. If teacher knows how to communicate with student; how to satisfy the needs of student and guide the student to satisfy the needs of teacher; how to build up a teacher-student relationship with trust, respect, acceptance and understanding, every educational activity can arouse the interest and acceptance of student. On the contrary, in teacher-student relationship, if the student feels that he is being jeered or sneered at by his schoolmates or not being trusted or understood, no matter how he likes his curriculum, he will not have enthusiasm for his learning and will not have a sense of belonging to school. Therefore, if teacher and student can build up a harmonious and congenial relationship, it is just like to have a pair of colourful and brilliant wings flying in the sky.

1. The importance of good teacher-student relationship

Before a student begins to work in society, he needs to learn how to think; how to communicate with people; to learn different kinds of knowledge and to build up different kinds of conducts in the period when he was educated. During a student's grow-up, teacher is requested to take heavy responsibilities. That is to guide students in the period of education, to remain eager and interested in education. In order to help student to learn in relax, to be effective and happy in his learning, effective communication between teacher and student is most important.

In the short period of my ten years' teaching experiences, I discovered that student often liked the teacher first and then liked education provided by this teacher. Student paid great attention to the complete feeling of "like" or "dislike" for the teacher and then decided whether to "accept" or "not accept" this teacher's teachings. This phenomenon complied with the rules of general interpersonal relationship. When a teacher communicated with student and hurt student's self-esteem and affection, their interpersonal relationship became rigid. So no matter how good and attentive the teacher was, student did not accept him and rejected the teacher from heart deeply. When student liked his teacher, he deeply accepted educational influence from his teacher. He would understand positively teacher's words and action and accept any request with good affection. Therefore, student first liked teacher and then liked his teaching and accepted educational influence from this teacher.

2. To break the mythology of "Good Student"

In our life of learning, we often encounter this phenomenon. That is in the hearts of many teachers and students. They have a standard for good student. This standard is more or less the same. We always expect a "good student" to have the following characters:

1. To respect teacher unconditionally, never retort the orders and requests of teacher;
2. Never be tired of learning and able to learn attentively for a long time;
3. To be all things to all men, never offend schoolmate;
4. To keep quiet in class;
5. To be all around in skills.

In fact, if we request student always to meet these demands, student easily feels these demands unreasonable and harsh, teacher feels disappointed and down. Therefore, as a teacher in this new era, we may adjust our demands and reset targets to be more practical, concrete and corresponding to values of new era, helping each other to release some unnecessary pressure. For example, to request students to be more interactive in questions and answers; to change skill request to all-around skills, allowing students to work the best of their ability; when dealing with people, request students to respect others and be happy to cooperate with others. Of course, we expect students to be humorous, optimistic, frank and sincere in character.

3. To promote effectively the basic condition of communication between teacher and student

1. Teacher need to have empathy

In a graduation ceremony, Mr. So Chi Fai, Director of Education and Youth Affairs Bureau, encouraged the graduates to have empathy. In fact, empathy is a must condition which cannot be missing for building a harmonious and congenial teacher-student relationship. It is also the principal condition for building good communication between teacher and student.

Continuing on P. 7





Empathy is different from compassion. In psychological compassion activity, there are differences of high and low in rank and noble and humble in status between the two parties. Whilst in psychological empathy activity, the two parties are in the same level. There is no difference in rank. The gives and givens are equal in status. We can try to put ourselves in the position of a student to understand and experience same feeling with him. In the meantime, we are helping student to carry out self expression, self exploration and self understanding. All in all, it is the basic condition of communication between teacher and student that this student is willing to express the affection in his heart. We shall find that teacher who has richer and broader life experiences is easier to carry out empathy with students of different eras and types. The more we do not understand the different changes of society, do not understand that students are in a rapidly changed society, fall into a specific character of values, have our structure of knowledge outdated, the less we shall have true empathy with students. If both parties, teacher and student are able to communicate from angle of empathy and to sense each other's feeling, belief and attitude and lastly transmit feelings effectively, both sides will sense that they are being understood and respected and feel warm and comfortable. These warm and comfortable feelings bring out a communication atmosphere which is full of forgiveness, concern and love.

2. To arouse student's trust by sincerity

In teacher-student relationship, we always hear student says: "I like this teacher, because he is good to me"; "I am willing to listen to this teacher, because what he did is all for me." Only if students accept teachers' care that they will accept their teachings. In schools, almost every teacher cares about students. But not every teacher's good wish and good will are accepted by students. Therefore sometimes we find that some teachers try all the ways with their whole hearts, but only to achieve little or even the opposite with great efforts. One of the reasons is that when teacher communicates with students, student senses differently on teacher's sincerity or teacher senses differently on students. Teaching effectiveness is totally different. Therefore as a teacher, we need first to have love for students in order to bring effective results on our teachings. To understand from this angle, teacher is a person with sincerity when getting along with students. He teaches with heart sincerely and pays great attention. When student gets along with teacher, only if he senses that he is being trusted he will fully show out his true meaning and be willing to respond and accept the true meaning of his teacher. Therefore, "Intrinsic Quality of Life" is included in our educational reforms. It complies with the above-mentioned educational characteristic. The purpose of this kind of education is to inspire the intrinsic quality of life (intrinsic quality of life is born with love for learning). Having this stimulation, we can do "all for the sake of student, highly respect student and depend wholly on students." This kind of sincere teacher-student relationship is two-way which grows and gets cultivated interactively. The extent of student's trust in and acceptance of the teacher correlates with the teaching influence from their teacher. It is this teacher-student relationship that education can elaborate its hidden ability and play a beautiful school melody.

3. To accept and respect student

In the communication between teacher and student, respect and acceptance from the student towards the teacher have specific meaning.

As a teacher, my values on life incline to "people are good in nature". That is I believe that each student has unlimited development potential and each of them can develop in beautiful direction through the influence of education and society and teacher's good communication with student can bring out good effects-- no matter how long. Base on these values of life, we have deeper recognition on why we have to respect and accept students. Then we can truly respect and accept students in our educational work. Otherwise, we can also imagine that in our values of life, if we do not believe that each student has unlimited good development, we cannot truly respect and accept them from heart deeply.

To respect and accept student is the manifestation and realization of teacher's love to student. When a teacher truly loves his student, it is the time that he believes that his student has the possibility of unlimited developments. Very recently, in the earthquake of Wenchuan in Sichuan, the school houses collapsed in a very short time. People's teachers, Tan Qian Qiu, Wu Shong Hong, Song Bo evidenced the greatness of human being's glory. They sacrificed their lives to save students. This great love demonstrated the outstanding facet of Chinese nation.

It is praised that teacher is the engineer of soul. He has ideals for his own sake, self-skill and unique character which cannot be replaced. Teacher is not only the educator of knowledge; he is the leader of moral, the one who inspires thoughts and the developer of spiritual world. He needs to know what kinds of knowledge to teach and how to teach. We expect that each teacher can create a harmonious and congenial teacher-student relationship; put on a pair of colourful and brilliant wings and fly in the educational sky.

Lam Lun Wai (Assistant to Principal of Lau Hou Secondary School)

Excerpted from:《Teacher's Magazine》The 22nd Issue, September 2008

