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Perfecting Personal Talents

Developing Self-Esteem: Targeting Your Students…and Their Teacher

Building self-esteem in children and developing self-esteem for teens, building parents' self-esteem, building self-esteem for the teachers who interact with students and who model mature self-esteem for them…esteem building is a "Team Sport."Creating activities that build and strengthen self-esteem in children, teens, parents and teachers requires a "Player-Coach."

There are millions of articles (in print books and on the Internet) that focus upon helping children and their families develop the positive traits that, collected together, are referred to as "self-esteem."

These traits coalesce around concepts such as confidence, esteem, a positive attitude and the mentality of a "winner." But, self-esteem is more a "state of consciousness" that the teacher wishes to "alter" in a positive direction, than a static set of traits.

And, while improving self-esteem is a process that is hidden from view and difficult to measure, it is observable and changeable (improvable) for students, parents and teachers. Methods of Observing Self-Esteem Self-esteem is measured by the tangible behaviors that teachers can observe, and by intuitive and subjective "assessments."

Self-esteem is related to (meshed with) Interpersonal and Intrapersonal Intelligences, and lots of other variables.

Splitting self-esteem into traits results in a three-dimensional matrix

But this "trait-splitting approach" is apt to leave teachers with a splitting headache…hundreds of variables across 20 to 200 students… "data fodder" for the most robust supercomputer.

Fortunately, teachers modeling positive self-esteem functions better and streamlines the process.

All a teacher has to do is observe their own internal esteem landscape, improve the "scenery" there; and draw student along to positive self-esteem. This process is called "entrainment."

The process of improving students' self-esteem involves the teacher improving his or her self-esteem. Sidebar For a description of how teachers establish rapport and bring students to a stronger and more mature development level, see the Classroom Toolkit article, Rapport Building: How Personal can your Professional Persona Be? Methods of Changing Self-Esteem In order to change children's and teens self-esteem; the teacher/ coach must change themselves. (You had to know that was coming.)

But first you have to ensure that students' basic needs are being met. This is a teacher's responsibility because, even in this land of plenty, minimum basic needs of food, shelter, clothing, nurturing and love can be scarce for some.

Sidebar Teachers have a team that can help with these basic needs, school nurse, child protective services, local charities, etc. "States-person-ship" and empathy are necessary in communicating with families that don't or can't deliver adequate care for their children. Intend to help and remain open for opportunities to do so. Expect creative, rather than stock solutions.

But, once students' basic needs are met, teachers launch lessons that meet children's' higher-order needs. These include the need for:

- Acceptance by Others
- Adventure and Excitement
- Community Membership and Belonging to Groups
- Competence in Building Skills
- Freedom to Create, to Act Independently, to be Spontaneous
- Personal Power and Autonomy
- Security and Feelings of Personal Safety
- Self-Expression through Personal Choices

Sharing, especially sharing Information, Knowledge and Skills Teachers work these needs into lesson planning and classroom management to ensure that students strive for the rewards of these intrinsic motivations.

Tangible rewards pale in appeal as compared to satisfying these innate personal needs of students.

Teachers who facilitate these needs and prompt students towards the achievement of these needs enjoy an "easy time" in directing students toward positive academic goals. More than Meets the Eye…Also the Ear, Tongue and Lips Self-esteem is more than the observable, measurable traits that can be sensed with the Five Senses.

Self-esteem centers upon IntraPersonal dynamics; and factors such as beliefs, habits, values, aspirations, and each person's spiritual quest.

Love, caring, sharing, belongingness and the response of others play a part in esteem building.

And, these self-esteem components must remain congruent with behaviors, communication and InterPersonal interaction; otherwise other people will react negatively to dichotomies, polarities and "out-of-snyc" personality patterns. (Others will believe that the incongruent person is lying, faking, being deceitful or is being manipulative, and the others always level social pressure against an "out-of-congruence" person).

So, external and internal honesty is a foundation for self-esteem. Remember that Self-Esteem is a

Constellation Self-esteem is complex, multi-faceted and powerful.

And building, maintaining and supporting better esteem in each student is an important goal for teachers.

Teachers must also focus upon building and maintaining their own level of esteem.

Self-esteem benefits from caring, sharing, love and respect…qualities that teachers must hold and communicate in a congruent and professional way as they work to build and nurture the esteem of their students and themselves.

Positive self-esteem is contagious (easily entrained), and evidence of collective esteem building is found in the classroom of every Master Teacher.

And, leading the way, then drawing everybody to higher levels of esteem is that Master Teacher who keeps polishing, shining and harmonizing his or her own esteem. Resources To satisfy the "left-brain hunger" for cognitive content, here are links to several professional-level research-based sites.

Kids and Self-Esteem

National Association of Self-Esteem

Kids Health

Posted by Classroom Toolkit Newsletter in Perfecting Personal Talents at 01:00