

Personal Reflection - Reaction

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Motivating Teaching

“Motivating teaching requires hope; hope comes from understanding, and understanding comes from empathy. To be able to reason objectively about pupils, teachers need, first to feel good about themselves as teachers” (McLean, 2009, p. 88).

I completely agree with this quote. Teaching can be a discouraging and thankless profession. Thankfully, the positive emotions that this profession offers when a student perseveres, improves, or succeeds are incredibly rewarding.

“Motivating teaching requires hope; hope comes from understanding, and understanding comes from empathy”. I have hope that my students will persevere, but I understand that the material is difficult to understand. I also understand that my subject is not the only priority my students are balancing, so when they fall short of my, or their own, expectations, it is important that I continue to support and believe in them. When I discuss the disappointing performance of a student, I generally address the effort they have put in first. This way, if a situation is influencing their performance that they have no control over, we can discuss it honestly and attempt to make a plan together. This is important for rapport between me and the student, but more importantly, it shows them that I support them as people first and as students second. This is the basis of my empathy for my students.

As I’ve talked about before, it is difficult to continue supporting students with genuine empathy because teaching can wear a person down. However, “to be able to reason objectively about pupils, teachers need, first to feel good about themselves as teachers”. This part of the quotation becomes relevant when teachers feel defeated or discouraged by their students. The lesson materials stated that research shows that “teachers account for 30% of the variance” in the lives of students (Penn State World Campus, n.d., p. 3). The potential impact that teachers can

have on their students is important to remember because impact or “variance” can be positive or negative. It’s a choice to be empathetic, kind, and to leave a positive impact. This quotation truly summarizes how motivation in the classroom initially comes from a teacher, but can also cyclically come back to the teacher at the end of the course when the students have grown personally and academically.

References

McLean, A. (2009). *Motivating every learner*. London: Sage Publications.

Penn State World Campus. (n.d.). Lesson 11: Motivation to Learn. In HIED 806 Canvas: Fall 2021. <https://psu.instructure.com/courses/2146499/modules/items/32872168>