



WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A TEACHER

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To be a teacher means not being stuck in an impersonal office all day. It gives you the opportunity to relate to children in a variety of ways, learning from them and at the same time teaching them. There is never a “sameness” in your job from day to day but it has endless variety. Not only that, you also have the opportunity to constantly learn, research and better your own skills and knowledge too. Apparently, the teacher is the most important person in school (being the second home of the students) for the main reason that he/she helps students to know life and opens the door to the unknown world.

Nowadays, a teacher is like a friend or adviser of students who shows or advises the students how to study, learn or to do something. Metaphorically, they say that they are like actors because “they are always on the stage” or they are like gardeners because “they plant the seeds and then watch them grow”.

Aside from the fact that teachers can do a lot of innovative things in his/her job, it also has a lot of advantages and disadvantages. This is what makes teaching a multi-faceted profession. Moreover, the teaching profession is profoundly unique for teachers are not only educators; they are very unique professionals too. Teachers embrace the field of education as a calling and not as a job. Let’s face the fact that teaching is a very complex and demanding career that requires teachers to be managers of people, analyzers of data and researchers of best practices and instructional methodologies, wherein these skills are utilized each day. These educators are unique for there is no other professional group that manages so many people and is so responsible for individual progress.

As for me, the task of being a teacher is certainly not only confined to peeling back the student’s scalps and pouring in the knowledge, but it is rather an on-going struggle to help them make sense of material. You have to try to find means and ways in your approach in which it will connect lives and this is a process that never stops. If I happen to read something of interest in the paper or on-line, the first thing that enters my mind is “how can I use this for my students?” When I happen to encounter a prominent or a well-known personality, I become brash, approach them, trying to drop a compliment or two and then ask if they are willing to come and talk to students. Their answer will almost always be yes and this enables me to extend the world of my classroom to a larger world (one that I can bring into the building). At times it will lead to internships and other relationships for some students and for all it has been meant to be a learning experience beyond what I can personally provide for them. Thus, I am able to push my students outside their comfort zones, to have them challenge themselves and become a better person.

To me, that is what is meant to be a teacher. It’s not an easy task; it’s not being pretty and playing intelligible in front of your students, not being a braggadocio, but it is working shoulder to shoulder through unimaginably tough times to make the lives of young people better. Lastly, I am hoping and praying that teachers will always be a role model, an advocate for positive change and will always encourage students to do what is right. I also hope that I am on the right track of trying to influence these students to become mature, responsible and knowledgeable young adults of tomorrow.

Questions for discussion:

1. Is being a teacher an advantage or a disadvantage for you? Why is it so?
2. How can we be a role model for our students?
3. Do you teach just for the sake of teaching alone?
4. What does it really entail to become a teacher?
5. Has teaching enhanced you as a whole person?