

IDEAS 33

**International Online Teachers Society
Debate
Educational Materials For
Advance and Upper Intermediate
Students**



**International Online Teachers Society
Publishing Committee**



CONTENTS

THE 33rd INTERNATIONAL ONLINE TEACHERS SOCIETY ESSAY CONTEST

DISCIPLINE THE ART OF DISCIPLINE Kathlyn Barrozo 2
DISCIPLINE DISCIPLINE IN ITS VARIOUS FORMS Kathlyn Barrozo 3
DISCIPLINE DISCIPLINE IN THE E-LEARNING ERA Kathlyn Barrozo 4
DISCIPLINE THE UNFRIENDLY ROAD TO SELF-DISCIPLINE Kathlyn Barrozo 5
DISCIPLINE INSTILLING DISCIPLINE – A BIG RESPONSIBILITY Alex Badian 6
DISCIPLINE A DIMENSION OF DISCIPLINE – Vital To Success Marian Baltazar 7
DISCIPLINE WHY SELF-DISCIPLINE IS NEEDED Marian Baltazar 8



THE ART OF DISCIPLINE

Kathlyn Q. Barrozo
Class of 1991, University of Santo Tomas
B.S. Medical Technology

Discipline, in its broadest sense, is the concept of training by which a follower is taught to act or behave in a manner acceptable by the organization he belongs to. In this sense, discipline is often taken in the context of punishment, given in times when an infraction is committed. In another sense, the punishment is used before any violation is even committed, such as those we often see in martial arts training. This system teaches behavioral orientation and other modifications to enable the follower to act, think, or react in an expected manner.

We all have undergone discipline even in infancy. If we consider how our mothers trained us to feed at specific times of the day, that alone constitutes the earliest form of discipline we have ever had. Once we begin our schooling, we already have a domestic framework of discipline which is further enhanced by the rules and regulations we are taught to obey in our learning institutions. The role that parents play in the system is so essential that the context of a child's social behavior is often equated with the kind of discipline he has received at home. What a child exhibits at school is a clear picture of how he has been taught at home.

During my elementary years, my teachers often reminded us to leave the undesirable traits we had at home and act as we were expected in school. The funny thing about the whole set-up was, could we perhaps take up those bad traits once we got home and then take them off like clothes once we left for school the next day? With all due respect to our great teachers of yesteryears, they always had our interests at heart. This is why I often tell my own kids about how different we all were when we were younger. And then they'd laughingly remind me that they sprang from me, and the fruit never falls far from the tree. Evil laughter all around.

It can be difficult to enforce discipline in the home. The fact that our kids possess diverse personalities, with very few common points between them, is a considerable factor altogether. They are not miniature versions of us, no matter how people say they look like us when we were the same age. Such is the beauty and wonder of discipline in the home---you never quite do it the same, identical way with all your kids. There will always be something different in how they grow up to be.

The only common thing we can give to our kids is the kind of love we have for them. Love them equally but fairly and differently. Now that takes a certain kind of discipline in itself, don't you think?

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. How has parental discipline affected your present life?
2. What is your own concept of discipline in the home?
3. Explain what is meant by "Love your children equally but fairly and differently."
4. How do you think children in today's times differ from children of earlier times? Do you think the difference/s is/are significant?
5. Discuss how discipline is enforced in your school. Be able to evaluate how effective the guidelines are.



DISCIPLINE IN ITS VARIOUS FORMS

Kathlyn Q. Barrozo
Class of 1991, University of Santo Tomas
B.S. Medical Technology

When I think of the eerie concept of discipline, I am reminded of the albino Silas in Dan Brown's novel, *The Da Vinci Code*. As his way of atoning for his mistakes and perceived sins, Silas takes a "heavy knotted rope" called *The Discipline* and uses it to whip himself over and over again. This is the manner by which he purges himself of his day's sins, through self-flagellation. One cannot help but wince at this manner of self-punishment.

Those who have had to kneel down on the floor scattered with scattered mung beans or salt, and then weighed down by books on outstretched arms and on the head know how discipline can truly hurt. I have never been subjected to such kind of discipline, thank God. However, when my own kids get to be a bit too much for me, I sometimes contemplate on doing this kind of punishment to them. Fortunately for my kids, I have never seriously acted on those musings. There's just something about today's generation that makes you wish you could do more. But don't get me wrong—I love my children to bits. It's just that they can get a bit too... undisciplined at times.

Maybe, parents can have the option of military discipline, the kind that teaches soldiers to be more afraid of their superiors than their enemy. Perhaps, we could also shave our kids' heads when they fail to toe the line, or have them clean the floor with their toothbrushes, or have them do push-ups. Is there anybody out there who already does those to their children? I don't think so.

Our work organizations have specific systems of discipline which they enforce. Disciplinary action is taken when a certain company policy is violated. This can range from verbal reprimand to a written memo and on to suspension or termination. Memos are good, since they remind the employee when he steps out of bounds, and thereby invites him to explain himself. Suspensions are a real pain, but more so are terminations. The workplace should always be a venue of justifiable discipline in whatever form it may take. As long as there is a clear policy of how the investigation of the infraction undergoes due process, there shouldn't be any real problem.

The church also has its own policies of discipline, the most common of which is excommunication (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discipline>). In the Philippines, as early as the Spanish era, excommunication was already practiced. Nowadays, it still is basically implemented through the spiritual condemnation of the erring individual. Wow! You get banished from the spiritual community, technically.

No matter what form discipline takes, the essence is still the same. Those who get disciplined are reminded of their obligation to stay true to the set standards of the organization they belong to. That's right, children included.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What do you think of the way today's society enforces discipline? Use your own society as an example.
2. Why is it important for children to be taught about discipline while they are young?
3. What are the dangers of not disciplining children properly? Be as specific as you want.
4. Share your thoughts on the concept of disciplining children by taking a less punishing approach, i.e., sitting down with them to talk. What are its advantages and disadvantages?
5. In your own family, how is parental authority asserted?



DISCIPLINE IN THE E-LEARNING ERA

Kathlyn Q. Barrozo
Class of 1991, University of Santo Tomas
B.S. Medical Technology

It was American novelist and short story writer Edith Wharton who once said, “There are two ways of spreading light: to be the candle or the mirror that reflects it.” In plainer words, this simply means that we are only able to discover our truest potential once we learn to discipline ourselves the best way we can. Otherwise, we only end up with potentials but no achieved goals. Discipline is difficult to enforce at the onset, but when it becomes our way of life, it eventually leads us to success.

Every time a certain new standard is imposed or a policy is freshly adopted, people protest. You might call it the inherent fear of the unknown: untried, therefore undesirable; unseen, therefore unnecessary. Technology used to be disdainfully considered that way. Those who have found their comfort zones do not wish their lives to be complicated by the advances in technology.

Where teaching used to be kept within the confines of the physical classroom, modern day technology has made it possible for teachers to reach the farthest corners of the globe in their imparting of knowledge. No longer is education a matter of chalk-on-board structures: the computer can serve just as nicely.

When I first ventured into online teaching, I had many apprehensions: how to illustrate a point on the board; how to create rapport through the internet lines; how to make the student truly master the lesson to be learned. My first few months were a genuine learning experience, highlighted by oftentimes funny moments. I have learned to type as fast as I speak, oftentimes misspelling words in my haste and at which my student would ask me what I had written—gibberish, basically. I point at the computer screen with my finger, only to find out that my student is not in the same space as I am. I ask my student to show me her book, only to end up squinting uselessly at the monitor and not actually making out what is in my student’s book. I argue with my student on the color of objects in my e-book, only to realize that my student has the hard copy of the material and therefore is looking at the actual color of that particular object pictured in question. Such moments I still consider precious, and have taught me to have a certain kind of discipline in my teaching: never to point to the screen but use screen share; remember that the computer screen sometimes fails to display actual book color, etc.

Yes, the road to learning is filled with challenges, and it takes a special kind of teacher to master them all. Discipline is the key, and the fruits are immeasurable as well as beautiful in a certain kind of way.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What are your study habits? How did you pick them up?
2. Do you believe you can reach your goals with those study habits you have acquired?
3. How is online learning different from other types of learning?
4. Why is it important to have discipline in reaching your study goals?
5. How can we make online learning more effective?



THE UNFRIENDLY ROAD TO SELF-DISCIPLINE

Kathlyn Q. Barrozo
Class of 1991, University of Santo Tomas
B.S. Medical Technology

Time was when discipline was considered the only way to go in as far as learning was concerned. Our older relatives had no scientific calculators to speak of, which was why they had to use acquired math skills to derive their mathematical functions and other stuff. But take a look at how they had erected those buildings that seem to withstand the very forces of nature itself. Today, we have technology at our disposal. Stress factors are easily tested with special programs, and our buildings are touted to virtually “sway” in the event of an earthquake. We have indeed gone a long way in as far as creating disciplined technology is concerned. Or have we, really?

The price we pay for newer technology is the fact that we have to unlearn or relearn what we have come to know. Imagine, we have invested time and effort in the current disciplines we have, only to later on let go of them with the introduction of more updates.

Our children have been more exposed to the creation of ever newer technologies in their daily lives. Honestly, I sometimes feel “ancient” beside today’s kids. They seem to take to new technology like fish to water, while I chug along in my comfortable corner with my good old props. How easily our children adapt to changes!

During my senior moments, I laugh at myself for not being able to have the kind of discipline my children have, specifically at keeping updated with these times’ changes. They don’t spend much time on those developments; they just watch their peers and are able to go as they are expected. I myself have never learned how to drive, mainly because I felt genuine fear the first time I bumped into a poor atis tree and never found the discipline to go back to learning how to drive better. But children nowadays are more daring, more disciplined maybe?

Learning to channel one’s fears and apprehensions is the first inroad towards genuinely enduring discipline. Unless a person manages to curb his inhibitions and learns anything new minus the fears, he will never imbibe what is being imparted. The old concepts might be wiser, but it is the new ones which make a greater impact now. That is one type of discipline we all must learn to adapt to and adopt.

Self-discipline is probably the hardest we can have, but it is also the most essential. Perhaps, those of us who belong to the wiser and definitely older generation have much to learn on discipline from our own children.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. How do children of today compare to children of yesteryears? Be as specific as you want to be.
2. Why is it difficult to obtain self-discipline?
3. Do you believe that your greatest enemy is yourself? Why?
4. How can we enforce self discipline upon ourselves? How can our home and school help in the process?
5. What specific areas of your character do you want to change? How do you propose going about it?



INSTILLING DISCIPLINE – A BIG RESPONSIBILITY

Marian Baltazar
Class of 1980, University of the Philippines College of Manila
AB Political Science

We are all borne of a family and like our parents; someday we will have our own family and raise kids of our own, and instilling discipline to the children is a tall order because it entails a big responsibility. Both parents have to ensure that their children will grow up to be responsible and respectable individuals. Raising children is not a joke for married people because they face a huge challenge from the time that their kids start their schooling until they acquire a degree of their own. They should be very well aware to instill the right discipline to their off-springs. There is no excuse to being ignorant of this matter for this is where the future character of your children will be based.

We know very well that we cannot impose our own rules and regulations in a society where norms and values prevail, but we can teach our kids how to live in it. Actually, we are trying to do them a big favor so that they would be able to adjust when the time comes for them to go on their own. Moreover, they can also be taught to survive in this world that we live in. When we talk of discipline, it's got a lot to do with setting rules which will serve as the guidelines of these children not to be led astray and follow the right path. Of course it doesn't necessarily mean that this would be followed to the letter. The consolation of it is at least they will know, have in mind and be aware of what should and should not be done.

Who would then be the disciplinarian in the family? Actually, both parents can assume equal roles in the aspect of discipline. More often than not, it's the father who takes the post of being the disciplinarian. Fathers are the one who has that more authoritative figure when it comes to marriage. They are expected to have that say whether the children should or should not do something. Definitely, it would be different for those who single-handedly raise their child or children because it would entail a bigger responsibility in instilling the discipline needed. He or she should be strong emotionally and physically, so as to carry out his or her responsibilities with success. Of course, a stable support system would prove to be very helpful too.

One thing we have to remember in instilling discipline to our children is to treat all of them fairly and equally. It is not only them who would have to follow whatever do's and don'ts that we try to promulgate but it should also be applied to us parents. Above all, we should be setting the example for our children. We should be doubly sure that as parents, our actions should mirror the expectations we would like our children to achieve. Regardless of whoever holds the higher role in the family, both of them should be role models to the best that they could. But at the bottom line, what matters most is that you are able to mold them. Instilling discipline is a difficult task, a big responsibility bestowed on us, but whatever the cost is, it sure is very rewarding!

Questions for discussion:

1. Do you agree that our children should be disciplined at a younger age? Why or why not?
2. Would you prefer to be the one to discipline your children? Explain your answer.
3. How important is it for parents to instill discipline to their children? Justify your answer.
4. How can you be an effective disciplinarian as a parent?
5. Have you experienced to be disciplined during your younger days? How did you take it?



A DIMENSION OF DISCIPLINE

Alex Badion

Class of 2001, Eastern Visayas State University - Tanauan Campus
Bachelor of Science in Industrial Education

Discipline is a kind of training. It is a training to improve strength or self-control. It is designed to develop behavior by instruction and practice. It is a fact that parents must discipline their children. Parents are the ones with the great responsibility to impose discipline for their children. They are also warned that if they fail their children, those children will bring shame upon them. This fact is based in today's society, as it was in the past. Parents are given options on how to discipline their children. Ultimately, the parents must make the choice. There are many different ways to do the process. And each process requires a particular approach to bring out discipline into use. How do parents discipline their children? A famous proverb says "Spare the rod and spoil the child". This implies about spanking. Some parents use spanking as a form of discipline. They punish the children whenever they failed to follow a command, an order or a rule in the family. Inflicting punishment to children causes fears. Some children are afraid to make mistakes again because they fear to be punished. Does it sound fair? We find that discipline and knowledge will keep children from bringing shame upon the family. If you discipline your child, he will behave always and be a child with whom you can be happy.

According to Manish Rajkoomar in his essay, "The Importance of Discipline", discipline is the process of training oneself in obedience, self control, skill, etc. The controlled and ordered behaviors are the results from such training. Discipline is the basis of the whole universe. The solar system is governed by certain laws to maintain perfect harmony and beauty. Without this order, there would be completely chaos. Discipline is a basic requirement of a civilized society. Citizens of a disciplined nation work with a spirit of cooperation and unity. Aristotle has rightly said, "Discipline is obedience to the rules formed by the society for the good of all. It should be inculcated from a very young age. Talented people and geniuses alone are not enough to achieve the so called success. Discipline has an equally important role to play. Because it balances how a person carry his tasks towards his journey in life. If you lack discipline, you are typically incomplete. Talents blossom in a disciplined person. Discipline is not only desirable but indispensable. Wherever discipline and regulation of human conduct are absent, moral and material deterioration has set in. Absence of discipline means decay. To prevent decay, discipline has to be imposed in the common interest and for the common good.

Why is discipline important in school? Students are tasked to acquire education in school. There should be a favorable place or productive learning institution which is necessary. The educational institutions should have a peaceful and calm atmosphere to enable the students to acquire knowledge. There are times of growing discontentment among the students. Because of this discontentment, we notice that discipline in our schools and colleges has considerably declined. Students are disrespectful to their teachers. They misbehave in the classrooms. They organize strikes and take the law into their hands. The government as well as the educational authorities should undertake necessary steps to improve the atmosphere in the educational institutions. Discipline in schools may reduce the violence and vandalism and help the students to focus well on their studies and career. It is important even in the family. Parents must raise their children in a pleasant and disciplined atmosphere. They should teach them the right values. They should lead an orderly life so that their children can learn from their examples. Children growing in disciplined and happy homes become responsible adults.

The power and strength of a nation lies in discipline. It certainly helps the nation to make progress, fight external invasions and maintain unity. The Government provides laws to maintain peace and order in the country. The laws are enforced to discipline the citizens and to maintain peace and harmony in the country. History has shown that dictators are firmly opposed to the grant of basic rights and liberties to the people because they wanted blind, unflinching obedience. That was Hitler's technique in Nazi Germany and Mussolini's technique in Italy. They thought that discipline was very necessary for a nation to develop.

Questions for discussion:

1. Why do parents discipline their children?
2. Why is discipline important in a country?
3. How do you practice discipline?
4. When do we say that a person has no discipline? Give an example.
5. Why is discipline a basic requirement in a civilized society?



WHY SELF-DISCIPLINE IS NEEDED

Marian Baltazar
Class of 1980, University of the Philippines College of Manila
AB Political Science

With the rise of globalization, the sophisticated life that we are faced with and what we have right now, we will not wonder why self-discipline is needed in a person's life. For us to get hold of ourselves and be able to control our mind, we should therefore develop discipline. A way to control our mind is through the practice of self-discipline. Nobody can prosper in life without it. We first learn discipline in our homes because our family serves as our first training ground for us to learn this craft.

Discipline does not only mean to adhere or abide to certain rules or norms of social life but it is also what a person imposes on himself. This doesn't only mean to himself but it also means that it is his duty to God, society and to some other institutions. This means that you could succeed in life if you have discipline for it demands strict control over one's rights and privilege. Without discipline, our social life would be chaotic; therefore it is vital to a successful life. Even Mahatma Gandhi has stressed the need of its importance in people's lives.

We can find it anywhere, everywhere, and even in the simplest thing that we do. Like for instance when we walk or cross along the road, when we ride a bus or buy tickets over the counter, with whatever we are doing or getting a work done in the office, and as citizens we are obliged to show some discipline. It is not only of prime importance in every sphere of a man's life but it also serves as the backbone to the political life of a nation. In this society that we live in right now, we love to satisfy or gratify ourselves right away that is why everywhere you go, everything seems to be instant, like the Fast Food, instant noodles, instant coffee, instant food, all to our heart's desire. Then, you will ask yourself, why do we still need self-discipline?

There can be a thousand and one reasons why self-discipline is needed but I guess we can come up with some reasons that can be of help to us. Probably, these reasons are the most basic that we can come up with. Self-discipline helps you build your character and your inner strength for it helps you control your instinctive drive and even your appetite too. More importantly, it helps you build your integrity and credibility as in you are able to resist temptation. You can achieve anything when you have self-discipline because when you keep on practicing this, you will achieve mastery in using your skills and attain success in life. Actually you can live a better life with self-discipline for the simple reason that you can manage your finances better and know your priorities in life. Lastly, with self-discipline, you can maximize your happiness because with delayed gratification, success is sweeter and happiness can be deeper. All these rational can make you conscious of the inner awareness of why self-discipline is needed in our life.

Questions for discussion:

1. Will you be credible enough knowing that you can discipline yourself? Explain your answer.
2. Do you think self-gratification can serve as a hindrance for you to attain self-discipline? Why or why not?
3. How do you define self-discipline? Elaborate on your answer.
4. Do you think you can attain anything when you have self-discipline? Why is it so?
5. Do you believe in self-discipline? If yes, do you practice it? If not, why don't you practice it? State your reasons.



International Online Teachers Society(IOTS) is an independent non profit international organization committed to improving the state of online and offline education in the world by engaging all kinds of language teachers with fluent English speaking skill in the world to shape global, regional and education agendas.
www.iotsonline.com