



BEING A MOTHER=BEING A TEACHER

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

The work of a teacher does not end with the final grade. In fact, a teacher's work continues far beyond the student's graduation. It extends to the student's life, his lifelong principles, and his field of expertise. Many of us have been inspired by the knowledge that we have gleaned through the years from our teachers. But what probably creates the greatest influences in our daily choices and interactions are the teachers we have had.

I distinctly remember getting inspired by a classroom adviser I had in my elementary years. She was intelligent yet modest, wise but unassuming. I will always admire the simple and silent way she inspired discipline among us, her advisory class. She never raised her voice nor took a heavy stick to hit any of us, despite the times when we openly disobeyed school rules. She knew her stuff, adequately providing the answers to questions we raised and being the mother/big sister to us all.

Unfortunately, although I have acquired my love for reading from her weekly book report requirements, I can never hope to duplicate her silent strength and discipline enforcement. I get mad like there's no tomorrow when my own kids do not do their homework, and become an incoherent, babbling monster when I am shown a failing mark/grade. I see the bad grade as a direct assault to my being a mother: I have not been doing enough; I have not paid attention to my children's guidance and supervision requirements. But I soon balance that with: Hey, I've got seven kids, so cut me some slack.

I sometimes fail to see that grades only quantify the knowledge that my children have learned in school but they do not completely qualify the knowledge they get from studying. Memorizing all sorts of information is essential, but it is the kind and degree of knowledge that a student retains that counts. Unlike my grade school teacher who had seen the unique potential in all of us, I as a mother often miserably fail at recognizing the innate gifts that my children possess. Because of my busyness and inhibitions about being both mother and father to them, I often fail to see that they are my offspring who exhibit various aspects of my own self in relatively surprising ways.

I can only hope that by knowing and acknowledging my inadequacies as a mother, I will be able to help my children see the infinite possibilities laid out for them to discover and explore.

Hopefully, my knowledge as a mother, with my grade school teacher's and my own sweet mother's wisdom as my inspiration, can be enough to support my kids throughout life and to guarantee a good grade come my graduation time as a mother....if that were ever to come.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION:

1. What is your personal opinion on school grades/marks? How important are they?
2. What has been your usual reaction to failing grades/marks? How do you take them?
3. Give some suggestions on how best to get good grades.
4. Aside from school, where else can a student obtain knowledge?
5. How best can one use in life the knowledge he has gained from studying?