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ED-D 301 A02

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**Assignment #3**

**Emotional Development**

**What do course materials say about how a teacher’s own emotional development can influence students’ learning? (i.e., if a teacher has low emotional intelligence, then…)**

If a teacher has high emotional intelligence, they can validate student feelings, actively express their emotions, and demonstrate emotional regulation (Yan et al.). If teachers demonstrate emotional awareness, students will learn, through watching, how to regulate and discuss their feelings (PPT). In the NVC video, the teacher utilizes an extensive feelings inventory and speaks with a substantial emotional vocabulary to share her emotions and inquire about her students’ feelings. The ability to include emotional language in her classroom stems from her emotional intelligence. She teaches her students, through explicit and non-explicit instruction (i.e., demonstration of her emotional regulation), how to be emotionally aware. Yan et al., and Farmer et al., both explain that teachers must develop emotional skills because it can help them be emotionally present, provide a high level of emotional support, and understand the need to include conversations about emotion in the classroom, which can influence peer interactions and emotional growth.

  If a teacher has low emotional intelligence, they may have difficulty understanding the value of creating a classroom community. Yan et al. explain that students must know they are cared for in their learning environment for an effective learning experience. In the case study, Mr. H does not understand the detrimental role emotions play in the classroom climate, and he does not have the emotional skills needed to demonstrate emotional warmth or effectively respond to Jake’s actions (Diana’s Feedback). With low emotional intelligence, teachers cannot successfully teach students how to regulate emotions and they may have trouble contributing emotional support (Diana’s Feedback).

**What would you do to foster emotional literacy in your classroom?**

To foster emotional literacy, we would primarily build personal connections with our students, so they feel cared for regarding their wellbeing and learning experiences (Yan et al.). A personal relationship contributes to building respect and trust, as well as making sure our students know we will support them (Davis). We will also foster emotional literacy by modelling it for our students. We must demonstrate emotional awareness by explicitly labelling our feelings and encouraging our students to share their emotions (Labelling Emotions Article, NVC). To do this, we will ask how they are feeling and why they are feeling that way (NVC). This allows them to consider and describe their emotions to understand potential reasons for those feelings. Along with this, we will emphasize that their emotions are valid, and it is normal to have these feelings. We will highlight that by sharing our feelings, we can work towards meeting our needs, which is the ultimate goal (Class Discussion).

We will also use various tools to expand our students’ emotional vocabularies and teach our students about emotions. For example, we may use a feeling wheel (Wilcox) and a feeling inventory (CNVC). By expanding our students’ emotional vocabulary, they will develop the ability to share how they feel concerning their needs (Class Discussion). We will also use feeling cards, so when our students are having difficulty explaining how they feel, they can point to the image they relate to. This would be used for them to show how they are personally feeling, not necessarily how other students experience the same emotion, because emotions are not always presented in the same way (NVC, PPT).

**Spiritual Development**

**What do course materials say about how a teacher’s own spiritual development can influence students’ learning? (i.e., if a teacher is unable to create a space for spirit to exist in the classroom, then…)**

To create a space for spirit in the classroom, teachers must first be in touch with their own spirituality. Nurturing spiritual connections looks different for everyone. In our case, we would focus on acceptance of ourselves and others (Class Discussion), incorporating the idea of continuous wonder (Vokey), and slowing down (Kat’il - Tanaka et al.) to create meaning (Vokey). Vokey explains the most crucial step to creating a space for spirit is to lead by example. Thus, teachers must understand their stance on spirituality in order to create a welcoming environment for their students to share their spiritual beliefs (Amethyst Discussion Group).

  If a teacher is unable to create a space for spirit, students may not feel welcome sharing their spiritual beliefs. As Stonechild explains, practicing spirituality may fill a critical void for some Indigenous youth, and it is our role as teachers to make sure students feel comfortable discussing their beliefs (Vokey). By understanding the important role spirituality plays for some students, we can focus on creating a safe environment to listen to students’ feelings about spirituality (Class Discussion). If a teacher is unable to create a space for spirit, they may also face what Vokey explains as the “deadly dull.” Vokey explains that students and teachers tend to lack enthusiasm and energy for their learning when they disregard creating a space for spirit, as being in tune with spirit allows for us to engage in wonder and restore our enthusiasm to learn.

**What would you do to create space for spirit to exist in your classroom?**

We will teach our students about accepting and respecting spirituality in the classroom. This includes working on accepting themselves through their spirituality, as well as respecting others’ spiritual beliefs. Not all of our students will be interested in this, so we will teach them that even if they do not want to participate in any spiritual practices, they must respect those who do (PPT, Vokey).

  We will also incorporate wonder into our classrooms by having students ask the bigger questions (Vokey). We will encourage our students to engage in their wonderings and delve deeper into their interests (Vokey). We will support and guide this learning by encouraging our students’ natural curiosity (Vokey) and reflecting on what they would like to further inquire about (Breakout Room Discussion). When students lose their sense of wonder, they also lose their enthusiasm for learning, and we do not want this to happen to our students. Creating a space for spirituality in our classrooms will help spark our students’ interests and therefore assist in keeping them enthusiastic about learning (Vokey).

  It is also important for teachers to slow down (Kat’il - Tanaka et al.) when teaching, and not rush through the material. We will give our students the time they need to take in and understand what we are learning. Simply encouraging our students to slow down (Vokey) will help our students focus on exploring their own life inquiries to be in tune with their spiritual connection and discover what spirit means to them (Amethyst Discussion Group, Vokey). Stonechild further discusses the importance of taking time to focus on our spirituality. Encouraging students to slow down and take time to wonder, inquire, and question their learning experiences is a way to achieve this.

**Listening Skills**

**What do course materials say about how a teacher’s listening skills can influence students’ learning? (i.e., if a teacher has poor listening skills, then…)**

If a teacher has good listening skills, they can create a space for listening in the classroom. For example, they may remove distractions, such as their tendency to over talk, and instead focus on listening to their students with intent (Gagnon). With good listening skills, a teacher can also focus on becoming still and slowing down. This reflects Kat’il, a salient theme that allows people to be present in the moment, as opposed to getting distracted by other thoughts (Tanaka et al.). By listening to understand, opposed to replying, we can focus on satisfying peoples’ desire to be truly heard (PPT). People yearn to be listened to (Gagnon), and if students know that their teacher is there to listen, they will more likely share what they are thinking (PPT). If a teacher demonstrates good listening skills in the classroom, their students will develop the same level of reciprocity. For example, when a teacher shows they are focused on what the student is saying (PPT), their students will soon develop the ability to effectively listen as well (Diana’s Feedback).

  If a teacher has poor listening skills, they may have a difficult time connecting with students. After engaging in the resources, we both considered our experience with listening and concluded that when we recognize someone is not fully listening, we find it difficult to share our thoughts. It is crucial to develop our own listening skills so we can listen to students with intent (PPT). Karyn Gagnon explains that listening is the foundation of a meaningful relationship. We must apply effective listening during classroom interactions to connect with our students.

**What would you do to foster listening skills in your classroom?**

To foster listening skills in the classroom, we will model for our students by listening and showing respect when they are speaking. This includes giving our students our full attention, making eye contact, and listening to understand what they are saying (PPT). By modelling effective listening, our students can understand how being listened to makes them feel. We will foster listening skills by teaching our students why it is important to listen and how to do it effectively, so they can understand and learn from it (PPT). We will also teach students that listening does not necessarily mean you must provide a response. Instead, you can listen solely to understand (PPT) and to fuel others’ internal desire to be listened to (Gagnon). Another way we would foster listening skills in our classroom would be by growing students’ attention skills, because paying attention is crucial to listening. This could happen through games, such as the telephone game, along with a debrief to demonstrate the importance of prior knowledge when listening to others (PPT). This is a way to teach effective listening skills while still making it enjoyable for the kids. Another method we would use to foster listening skills in our classrooms would be through storytelling, which is common in Indigenous teaching practices (Tanaka et al.). Our students can engage in listening by partaking in read-alouds and focusing on understanding the message or theme. They can also tell personal stories to understand the value of listening and how they feel when others truly listen to them (PPT).

\*Note: The word count for our answers to the questions is 1,582. However, when taking the citations into account, the information itself fits within the word count limit of 1,500.