

MY TEACHING LEARNING PHILOSOPHY

By

NEELAM SALEEM PUNJANI

Aga Khan University School of Nursing and Midwifery.

ABSTRACT

The heart of teaching learning philosophy is the concept of nurturing students and teaching them in a way that creates passion and enthusiasm in them for a lifelong learning. According to Duke (1990) education is a practice of artful action where teaching learning process is considered as design and knowledge is considered as colours. Teaching learning process should be flexible that gives opportunity to the learners to think critically and learn things according to their own curiosity and interest. Therefore, teachers must use a variety of strategies so that to make the teaching learning experience an exciting one. Moreover, learning environment should be such that promotes diversity and a positive learning environment. In this paper, the author has attempted to describe teaching learning philosophy from multidimensional perspectives, as being a teacher as well as being a student. In the end, she has shared her views on what fosters enabling Teaching Learning Environment.

Keywords: Philosophy, Teaching, Learning, Teaching Learning Process, Teaching Learning Environment

INTRODUCTION

Back in 1990's, there was a little girl always admiring her teachers and aspiring to be a teacher herself one day. In her initial years, she quenched her thirst for teaching by helping her young cousins in their studies. Years passed by, tide of events took her into nursing profession but that passion for teaching never died and she kept on accepting every opportunity here and there, voluntary or professional, to teach. The underlying motivation for this passion was to ensure maximum output of her knowledge and skills by sharing it with others and to venture into unchartered territories of learning in the process. This experience to unpack her philosophy is yet another booster to that passion for teaching and helped herself fulfil both the purposes.

The author is teaching philosophy has developed through the her experiences as a student, as a clinical teacher, from her teachers, colleagues, from readings, discussion with peers and the mission and vision of Aga Khan University School of Nursing and Midwifery. In this paper the author would elaborate her teaching philosophy in the context of student, teacher, teaching-learning process, and the learning environment.

Student

Every student is unique and has different learning styles and each student should be treated as an individual. The author believes that each student gain some prior knowledge from their families, friends, cultural, spiritual or social environments. Therefore, in author's point of view teacher should be like candle wax, which has the ability to mould to any shape. Similarly teacher should be flexible enough to articulate her teaching strategies that cater to the individual needs of learners.

Being a student, the author, strongly believes that students learn best in the environment where they feel secure, listened to and respected. They learn with challenges and feel encouraged when rewarded with success. Every student should be treated with respect and dignity, this helps in building rapport with the students. Respecting students also builds trust in student-teacher relationship and boosts the confidence and self-esteem in students (Billings, & Halstead, 2005). The author also believes that teacher should attempt to learn and address every student with their names. Student these days are technology friendly, hence they have access to the bulk of information. They are more sharp and intelligent. Therefore, the teacher should be open with the feedback

of students and have an optimistic attitude to learn from their students (Billings, & Halstead, 2005).

Teacher

Teachers assist the transformation and conversion of learning (Jarvis, Holford & Griffin, 2003). The philosophy of teaching can be described as a lifelong learning. The author believes that the teacher should be a role model for their students. For this the teacher should practice what she preaches. In order to have continuous learning teacher should learn and develop her knowledge from past experiences. A teacher should have the capability to polish the critical thinking, decision making and problem solving skills in their students so that to prepare them for their bright future. This can be done by utilizing innovative teaching strategies like use of multiple technologies (Billings, & Halstead, 2005; Bastable, 2005). The author sees a teacher as a candle, who consumes itself to light the way of others (students). Just like the light of candle is spread in all dimensions, the impact of a teacher over society is also beyond any measure. A teacher has a power to transform the society in all dimensions.

The author strongly feel that a teacher should keep herself updated with new trends in the field of education. She should be intellectual and knowledgeable enough in her field and pertinent to the discipline relevant to her teaching. Moreover, a teacher should have curiosity to learn things and gain new experiences. She believes that a teacher should serve as a mentor or guide to her students to influence them positively and motivate them towards learning and pursuing their endeavours. The teacher should help their students grow professionally as well as help them to grow as a good human being.

The Teaching Learning Process

The Teaching Learning philosophy in regard to teaching learning process revolves around the thoughtful conviction of Duke (1990). Education is a process of artful doing where teaching learning practice is regarded as a design, and knowledge is regarded as colours. The author believes that teaching is a two way process where teacher as well as learner both learn with collaboration. Teaching is one of the most honourable professions in

which a teacher transforms values and knowledge to the learner and while doing so she also acquires a great deal of experience (Brophy, 2010). Everyone initiates their amateur teaching careers in a very early age by imposing superior knowledge on friends or siblings. In author's personal opinion, teaching learning process must inspire students to become active learners rather than passive receivers of knowledge and regurgitating knowledge in the exams. Students should think critically and explore things by themselves (Freire, 2000). This teaching-learning philosophy is to nurture students and teach them in a way that creates love and enthusiasm in them for a lifelong learning.

The author also believes that, teaching learning is a meaning making practice where theories are transformed into practical experiences despite memorizing facts which are understood only for the immediate situation (Kerr, & Lloyd, 2008). It is proven fact that using variety of instructional methodologies enhances the retention of key messages. Therefore, a teacher should use various strategies so as to make the teaching learning journey an exciting one. The important part of it is lesson planning; it helps the teacher and the students to follow an organized and well planned session (Rebecca, 2003). According to author's point of view, she believes that a well-planned lesson is a well delivered lesson. Because she believes that learning takes place best when people interacts with each other. Students learn a lot by healthy class discussions which help in developing new ideas and think critically through multiple dimensions. Moreover, small group activities are helpful in engaging students and share their ideas. This enhances the learning process in constructive manner. Role plays and simulation can also be utilized especially in nursing field so as to give real picture to the learners. The technique of direct questioning enhances critical thinking and deeper knowledge in learners and also helps in building confidence (Billings, & Halstead, 2005). Also, case studies and creating examples help students to understand abstract concepts. Therefore, it is essential to use varieties in teaching learning strategies so as to create a beautiful teaching learning philosophy.

Teaching requires innovation and flexibility to deal with different circumstances and it is not dominated by defined rules (Bastable, 2005). Moreover, learning does not take place within the boundaries of classroom, but it can take place anywhere. It starts since a child is born; at home first teacher is mother. Learning can also place from the nature and environment; which plays a vital role in the learning process. Teaching learning process should encompass flexibility; it offers a prospect for the learners to learn things in regard to their own curiosity and requirements (Somani, 2012). The teacher should consider the formative assessment as important as summative assessment. Formative assessment helps teacher to assess students' progress on an on-going basis, and clarifies the gaps and promotes healthy learning.

The Learning Environment

On the author's view learning environment should be such that it promotes diversity and a positive learning environment. This requires extensive planning by teacher. Favourable atmosphere should be provided to students which include clean, comfortable, and bright appearance (Marton, Tsui, Chik, Ko, & Lo, 2013). The seating arrangement should be such that it favours teachers as well as students and help students to engage in class discussions. It should be one semi-circle instead of linear set up. Moreover, it should be such that it gives liberty to each and every student to express their ideas and views freely.

The ground rules should be set on the initial encounter so that to make the comfortable environment for student and teacher and this should be positively reinforced (Marton, Tsui, Chik, Ko, & Lo, 2013). The class objectives and expectations form student and teachers should be cleared so as to reduce fear and anxieties. The teacher should have the proficiency to make intellectually powerful atmosphere by discussion and questions nurtured by higher order thinking skills.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the author states that, her philosophy about teaching, learning, teaching learning process, teachers, learners and learning environment have entirely

transformed with the passage of time and particularly during author's graduate program. The author expresses that this is just the beginning of her philosophy, yet many things are to be explored. In order to live her philosophy, she will continue to learn and grow. The ultimate goal of this study in teaching is to motivate the inquisitiveness in her students in their struggles of pursuing success and to provide them essential knowledge and develop critical thinking skills. By achieving this goal the author will fulfil the need within herself to somehow make a difference in her immediate surroundings and society at large.

References

- [1]. Bastable, S.B., (2005). *Behavioural Objectives. Nurse as Educators: Principles of Teaching and Learning for nursing Practice* (2nd Ed.) Sudbury: Jones and Barlet.
- [2]. Billings, M.D., & Halstead, A.J., (2005). *Teaching in Nursing. A guide for Faculty*. Philadelphia: Elsevier Saunders.
- [3]. Brophy, J. E. (2010). *Motivating students to learn*, Routledge.
- [4]. Duke, D. L. (1990). *Teaching: an introduction* (pp. 89-106), McGraw-Hill.
- [5]. Freire, P. (2000). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*, Continuum.
- [6]. Jarvis, P., Holford, J., & Griffin, C. (Eds.). (2003). *The theory and practice of learning*, Routledge.
- [7]. Kerr, C., & Lloyd, C. (2008). Pedagogical learnings for management education: Developing creativity and innovation, *Journal of Management and Organization*, 14(5), 486-503.
- [8]. Marton, F., Tsui, A. B., Chik, P. P., Ko, P. Y., & Lo, M. L. (2013). *Classroom discourse and the space of learning*. Routledge.
- [9]. Rebecca, L. (2003). *Language Learning Styles and Strategies: An Overview*. Online publication. Retrieved November 20, 2012 from web.ntpu.edu.tw/~language/workshop/read2.pdf
- [10]. Somani, R. (2012). The Teaching Learning Process and Its Requisites, *International Journal of Nursing Education*, 4(1).

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Ms. Neelam Saleem Punjani is currently an MSc Nursing student at Aga Khan University School of Nursing and Midwifery, Pakistan. She has obtained BSc Nursing from School of Nursing and worked in AKUH for two years as Registered Nurse.

