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Qualities of a Teacher

"I have come to a frightening conclusion.
I am the decisive element in the classroom.
It is my personal approach that creates the climate.
It is my daily mood that makes the weather.
As a teacher I possess tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous.
I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration.
I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal.
In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis
will be escalated or de-escalated, and a child humanized or de-humanized." ~ Haim Ginot

This poem is a good reminder of the responsibility we have to lead our classes by setting a tone where students feel safe, appreciated, and accepted. The best teachers aren't just interested in their subject, they are passionate about it. They are passionate about life and approach things with a sense of challenge over routine, and encourage sharing ideas and thinking outside the box. They want students to learn and apply what they learn. Good teachers are glad you are doing well, and celebrate accomplishments.

A teacher can be a great source of support, and may be able to see more clearly the places that you are stuck. The best teachers believe everyone is able to do well if they have the right guide. Teachers are able, in the deepest sense, to direct us to the ultimate teacher who resides inside, the teacher within our own heart-mind and innate goodness. Reflecting on what makes a good teacher, here's a list of thoughts and ideas around the qualities of a good teacher.

Positive - Thinks positively and enthusiastically about people. Sees the good in any situation and move forward when confronted with obstacles. Encourages others to be positive.

Communicative - Share with others in a manner that encourages effective two-way communication. Communicates personal thoughts and feelings on a wide spectrum of issues and can listen to students in an empathetic manner

Dependable - Honest and authentic in working with others. Consistently lives up to commitments to students and other relationships. Works in an open, honest, and forthright manner.

Personable - Establishes and maintains positive mutual working relationships. Likes to be with others. Has many ways of getting to know students as persons while building trust and appreciation through personal interaction and involvement.

Organized - Makes efficient use of time and moves in planned and systematic direction. Knows where they are heading and is able to help students.

Committed - Demonstrates commitment to students and is self-confident, poised and personally in control of situations. Has a healthy self-image. Encourages students to look at themselves in a positive manner, careful to honor the self-respect of students, while encouraging them to develop a positive self-concept.



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Motivational - Enthusiastic with standards and expectations for students and self. Understands the intrinsic motivations of individuals, and knows what it is that motivates students. Takes action in constructive ways.

Compassionate - Caring, empathetic and able to respond to people at a feeling level. Open with personal thoughts and feelings, encouraging others to do likewise. Knows and understands the feelings of students.

Flexible - Willing to alter plans and directions in a manner which assists people. Seeks to reason out situations in a manner that allows all to move forward in a positive direction. A thorough understanding of subject provides ability to consider different ways.

Perceptive - Sees each student as a unique and valuable individual. Looks for the differences among students. Quickly diagnoses difficulties and assists in the management of individual situations and want the best from students and themselves.

Values - Focuses upon the worth and dignity of human beings. Is sensitive to community values. Strives to work in an environment consistent within own belief system. Recognizes the importance and power of modeling constructive behavior.

Knowledgeable - Is in a constant quest for knowledge. Keeps up in specialty areas, and has the insight to integrate new knowledge. Takes knowledge and translates it to students in a way which is comprehensible to them, yet retains its originality.

Creative - Versatile, innovative, and open to new ideas. Strives to incorporate techniques and activities that enable students to have unique and meaningful new growth experiences.

Patient - Is deliberate in coming to conclusions. Strives to look at all aspects of situation and remains highly fair and objective under most difficult circumstances. Believes problems can be resolved if enough input and attention is given by people who are affected.

Humour - Knows how to take the tension out of tight situations. Uses humor, spontaneously, in a tasteful manner. Builds togetherness in the classroom.

Understanding - has a true understanding of how to teach. Flexible in teaching style, and adapting to the things affect ability to learn; they had an understanding of human nature

Learning without thought is naught; thought without learning is dangerous.

To keep old knowledge warm and get new makes the teacher.

~ Confucius