THE EMPATHIC TEACHER

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One who learns, teaches. One who teaches, learns. - Dalai Lama

Empathy is sharing and understanding what others are feeling. It is a skill that is essential in teaching our youth because it allows them to make an emotional investment in their education.

Being empathic in how we teach allows us to appreciate the efforts that our students put in their learning. It also opens our mind in recognizing that our students may see and experience education in a different way, therefore we as educators can also learn from our students’ perspective. When we feel where our students are coming from and respect their uniqueness, we develop in us a sense of compassion and understanding. So, what sets an empathic teacher apart?

An empathic teacher practices altruism. Kindness towards students can be a motivation for them to do their best. An empathic teacher is attentive. She focuses her energy towards her students, pays attention to their actions, and listens to what they say. An empathic teacher practices mindfulness. She is always in the present, with awareness of how her students behave inside the classroom. An empathic teacher imagines what her students go through. She places herself in her students’ shoes to better understand the circumstances that affect their learning abilities. An empathic teacher does not jump to conclusions. She does not judge easily which allows her to recognize whether a student is deliberately behaving badly or really struggling through difficulty. An empathic teacher respects her students’ opinion. She has humility to know that she as an educator
can also learn from her learners. An empathic teacher uses body language. She shows empathy through facial expression, eye contact, and tone of voice.

To be empathic in teaching teaches us to step back and consider when we feel frustrated towards our students. Empathy should be used as a tool to create a two-way learning system which both the teacher and the student benefiting from it. Always prioritize empathy, because the best kind of learning feeds not only the mind but also the heart.

References:

The Empathic Teachers
https://www.neojungiantypology.com/empathic-teachers