

Increase on Task Time through:

Caring

Connections

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Contributors

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Caring

Building Communication and Teamwork in the Classroom

Research shows socioemotional leaders focus their efforts primarily on building high-quality relationships (Morler, 2006). They strive to build and affirm the self-esteem of their subordinates. Schol (2003) identified trust building as a crucial aspect of socioemotional leadership. This type of leader is highly skilled at recognizing and managing conflict.

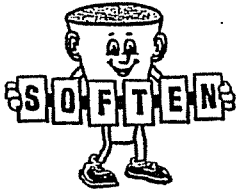
Research shows a relationship between teacher self-disclosure and student participation in college classrooms (Goldstein & Benassi, 1994). Mendes (2003) advised teachers to use appropriate self-disclosure to strengthen positive relationships with their students. Hartlep (2001) found that instructors' personal examples in lectures improve students' retention of the content. Mawhinney and Sagan (2007) concluded that teachers develop positive relationships with their students by constantly exhibiting respect, courtesy, fairness, caring, and understanding.

Research shows individuals vary widely in their ability to provide emotional support to others (Burlison, 2003). Good intentions alone are insufficient in helping those in pain. Training in effective helping skills can greatly improve the ability to successfully provide emotional support (Egan, 2009). Noddings (2003) urged educators to make the development of student happiness a prominent goal.

CREATE CARING

**A TEACHER'S ABILITY TO RELATE TO
STUDENTS AND MAKE POSITIVE,
CARING CONNECTIONS WITH THEM
PLAYS A SIGNIFICANT ROLE IN
CULTIVATING A POSITIVE LEARNING
ENVIRONMENT AND PROMOTING
STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT.**

SOFTEN



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CLASSROOM CLIMATE

**"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 MOODS THAT MAKE THE
WEATHER.**

**AS A TEACHER, I POSSESS TREMENDOUS POWER
TO MAKE A CHILD'S LIFE MISERABLE OR BE 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."**

-DR. HAIM GINOTT

CREATE CONNECTIONS

***WE SPEND A LOT OF TIME IN OUR
CLASSROOMS,
AND WE WANT THEM TO BE SAFE,
COMFORTABLE,
PLEASURABLE PLACES TO BE. THIS IS
ESPECIALLY
IMPORTANT IN A WORLD WHERE MORE AND
MORE OF OUR STUDENTS LIVE IN
IMPOVERISHED,
UNSTABLE, SOMETIMES UNSAFE
HOME ENVIRONMENTS.***

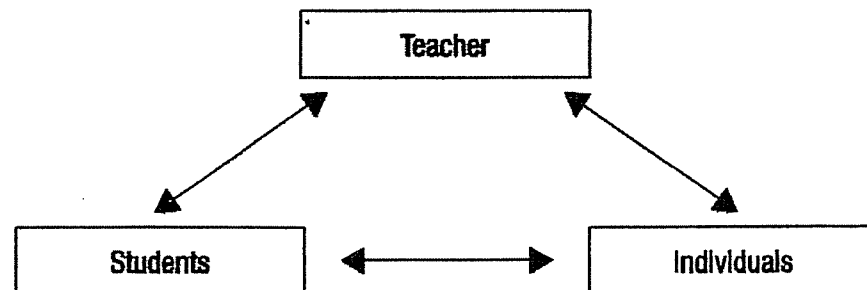
Connecting

Connecting involves going out of your way to show a personal interest in students. It requires gathering a certain amount of information about students in order to really understand and relate to them. It's finding out what makes them tick. Learning this information about students tells you who they are—what they value, enjoy doing, and are good at. A large part of *connecting* involves observation, gathering data on students, caring about them as individual human beings, and looking for opportunities to connect or bond. *Connecting* is the basis for building trusting relationships and emotional connections.

Connecting also means devoting time to helping students connect with, support, and respect one another. A Relational Leader builds a relational classroom community. This involves developing interactions that draw everyone in class together.

Connecting involves helping your students get to know you—the Real Person that you are. This means disclosing information about yourself to your students.

Connecting bridges the gap between teacher and student and among students. It means doing the types of things that leave students feeling confident that the teacher knows them, cares about them, and treats them with respect. You can see from the graphic below that connecting is a mutual exchange.



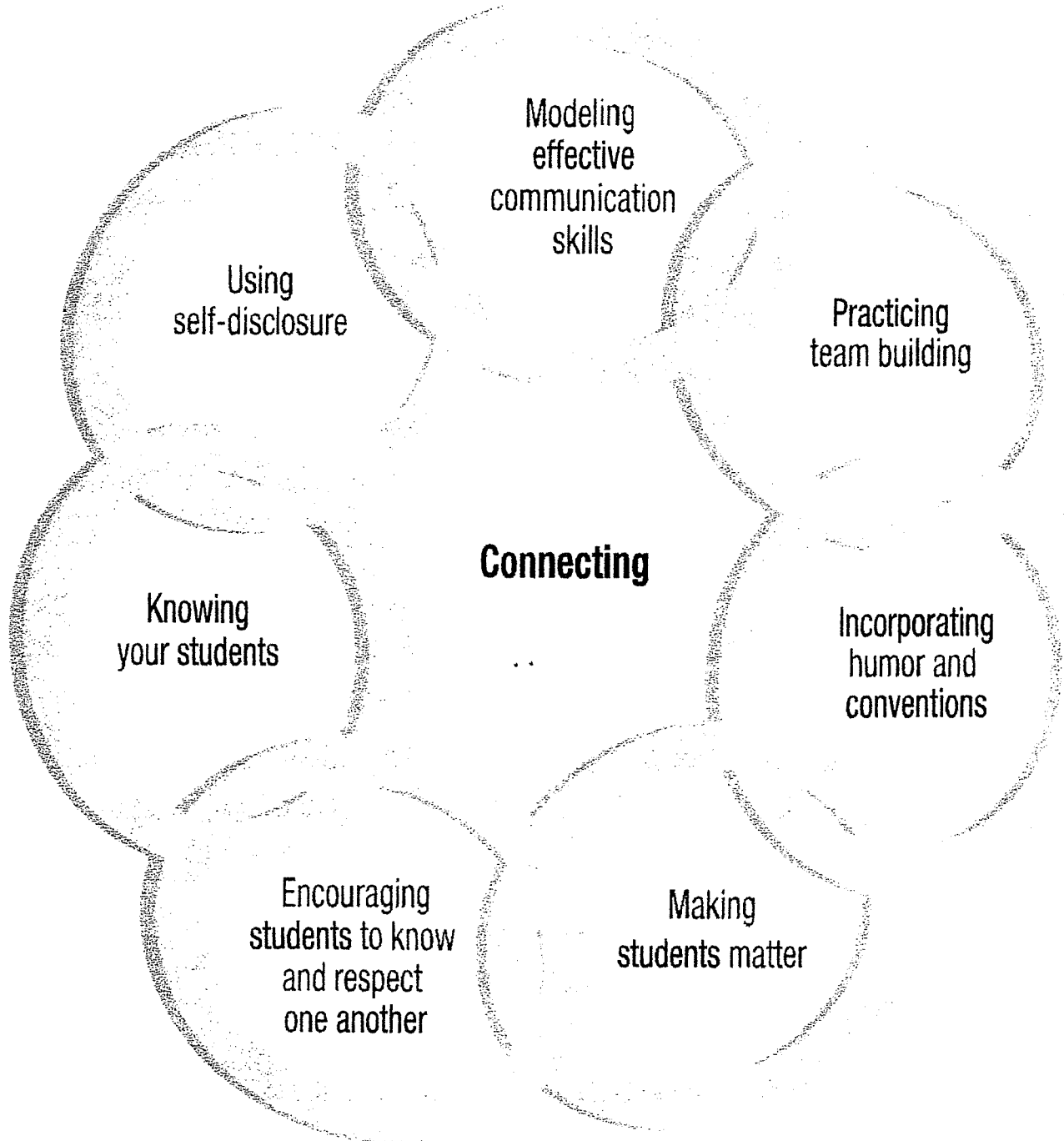
Connecting reinforces our course mantra: Know your students, know your students, know your students.

Direction:

In your own words, sum up what *connecting* means. When you are instructed to do so, share your summary with your triad members.

Visual Overview of Connecting Strategies

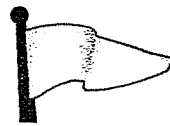
Teachers provide connections in the classroom in several ways.



Ways to Show Students That You Care

1. Notice them.
2. Ask them about themselves.
3. Let them tell you how they feel.
4. Listen to their stories.
5. Laugh at their jokes.
6. Ask their opinions.
7. Give them your undivided attention.
8. Believe what they say.
9. Applaud their success.
10. Accept them as they are.
11. Tell them about yourself.
12. Be honest with them.
13. Make time to be with them outside of class.
14. Help them take a stand, then stand with them.
15. Encourage them to think big.

Reprinted from "Sharing Yourself with Students," *The Heart of TEACHING*, No. 83, by PLS 3rd Learning.



A 2003 Gallup Youth Survey suggests that students work harder for demanding teachers who offer stimulating classroom activities.

When asked why he puts forth more effort for some teachers than others, one boy responded simply, "Because some teachers work harder for me."

—Gallup Youth Survey 2003

Everything Counts

William Purkey and David Strahan, authors of *Inviting Positive Classroom Discipline* (2002), state that there is a signal system teachers use that influences classroom climate and discipline. This signal system indicates either a positive or negative feeling behind what is said or done.

To illustrate this signal system, the authors use the metaphor of giving and receiving cards. Blue cards signal positive feelings, and orange cards signal negative feelings.

Blue cards carry a positive signal indicating that the student who is given the card is able, valuable, and responsible. They encourage students to experience the classroom as a good place to be. Blue cards encourage self-esteem, excitement for learning, and qualities of trust and optimism. When teachers are caring, respecting, and trusting, they are giving students blue cards. Blue cards create an inviting classroom climate.

Orange cards carry a negative signal indicating that the student who receives the card is unable, worthless, and irresponsible. When teachers are racist, sexist, homophobic, ethnocentric, insulting, humiliating, uncaring, or thoughtless, they are giving students orange cards. Orange cards create an uninviting classroom climate.

Teachers are always giving students either blue or orange cards. Sometimes they give these cards intentionally; other times they give them unintentionally. You may still remember some of the orange and blue cards teachers gave to you when you were a student.

The reason the blue and orange card metaphor is valuable is that it serves as a constant reminder that everything people do and every way they do it is either positive or negative . . . inviting or disinviting.

—Purkey and Strahan, Authors



Everything Counts

Orange Card Story

Author Unknown

I had a defining moment on the playground when I was in the fourth grade. During recess one afternoon, I observed a group of sixth-grade boys walk up to a group of first graders and begin harassing them. I felt outraged at the injustice of bigger, stronger boys bullying the younger students, so I stepped in. I confronted the sixth graders only to be punched in the face. I punched back, and soon several others joined in. The result was a big fight with many students getting hurt.

I ended up in the principal's office. While I was waiting, I imagined my teacher coming through the door to tell the principal what a fine boy I was for helping out the little boys. She would tell him about my fine character and say how proud she was of me for defending the first-graders.

I was shocked by what actually happened. When Mrs. X came into the office, she yelled at me for my disgraceful behavior. She said I embarrassed her and humiliated our entire class. I was given detention, but more significantly, I was hurt to the core of my being.

It was at that point that my attitude toward school changed forever. I had learned that teachers didn't understand me and that I couldn't trust them. I decided that school wasn't a place I wanted to be, and I caused as much trouble as I could while I was there.

Blue Card Story

By Eric McDermott

I have always had a lot of energy, and second grade was no exception. In quiet period one morning I was drawing a picture on a piece of paper. I was so excited about my drawing, I wanted to share it with my friend on the other side of the room. Knowing that I dare not get up to walk over to him, I transformed my piece of paper into a paper airplane. Waiting for just the right moment, I threw it to him.

Having seen my launching from her desk, my teacher broke the quiet and said in a stern voice, "Eric, come over here right now, and bring that piece of paper with you."

I walked over to her giant desk, terrified.

"Hand me that piece of paper," she said, gazing into my eyes.

She inspected the paper airplane for several seconds as I awaited my sentence.

“Hmmm...,” she said, never breaking her stern facade. “This is a very good paper airplane. I want you to go to the front of class and teach us all how to fold this kind of paper airplane. Afterwards, we’ll all go outside and see whose flies the farthest.”

She handed paper out to everyone, and being the big ham that I was, I took great delight in teaching the class how to make it.

At the time, I was in awe. Until that point I had always been punished by my teachers for what they viewed as undisciplined disturbances. Instead of scolding me, she had transformed my misbehavior into a learning opportunity. I loved her for what she had done.

Source: Marvin Marshall, *Discipline without STRESS, PUNISHMENTS, or REWARDS: How Teachers and Parents Promote Responsibility & Learning* (2nd Edition), Copyright © 2007, <http://www.MarvinMarshall.com>

***Everything we do in the classroom—
whether it’s the way we say a student’s
name, write on the board, answer the door,
or respond to a PA announcement—sends
either a blue or orange signal.***

— Purkey and Strahan, Authors



TEAM BUILDING

HIGH FIVE RED

GREEN ONIONS

DOUBLE THIS THAT

CREATE CONTRIBUTORS

**STUDENTS VIEW ACTIVITIES THAT ARE
NOVEL AND OPTIMALLY CHALLENGING
AS MORE INTERESTING. TEACHERS
OVERWHELMINGLY FAVOR HANDS-ON
ACTIVITIES (THOSE REQUIRING THE
STUDENT TO BE AN ACTIVE
PARTICIPANT RATHER THAN A PASSIVE
LISTENER) TO GENERATE INTEREST IN
LEARNING**

CREATE CONTRIBUTORS

VARY TEACHING STRATEGIES

- ✓ STORIES
- ✓ HUMOR
- ✓ QUESTIONS
- ✓ STUDENT SHARING
- ✓ STUDENT REFLECTIONS

CREATE CONTRIBUTORS

USE ACTIVE STUDENT PARTICIPATION

- ✓ GAMES
- ✓ SIMULATIONS
- ✓ ACTIVITIES
- ✓ ROLE PLAYS
- ✓ LIVE EVENTS

"Teachers . . . Molders of Dreams" Poem

Teachers

*You are the molders
of their dreams . . .*

The gods who build or crush

*Their young beliefs
of right or wrong.*

*You are the spark
that sets aflame . . .*

*The poet's hand
or lights the flame . . .*

Of some great singer's song.

*You are the god of the young,
the very young*

*You are the guardian
of a million dreams.*

Your every smile or frown

Can heal or pierce the heart

*You are a hundred lives,
a thousand lives.*

Yours the pride of loving them

And the sorrow too.

Your patient work, your touch

Make you the gods of hope

Who fill their souls with dreams

*To make those dreams
come true.*

— Poem read to Guy Doud by President Ronald Reagan