

Teaching Caffeine

Listening changes everything in Class.

At a time like this when learners are focussed on the final examinations, the tendency is that fear, anxiety is mounting up stemming from societal pre conceived ideas and our tendency to project our mind-set to the learners.

It is simple, you become what you think about all day long. Thoughts held in mind produce their kind. Teaching today demands planned communication strategies to manage the thoughts of the learners and ensure their mind-set understands that whatever we are facing in life is not as important as the attitude we have.

If as teachers we are to interact effectively with our learners, parents and colleagues to influence them – we first need to understand them. Fundamentally we should understand that Philosophy drives attitude, attitude drives actions, actions drives behaviour and behaviour drives outcomes. We need to examine the philosophies of our learners and seek to influence them. Such an approach demands that we seek first to understand our learners, a paradigm shift from what we have become accustomed to. Having accumulated a lot of experience in teaching, layers of barriers to listening have involuntarily emerged which we are not aware of. We don't listen to our learners with the intent to understand, but we listen with the intent to reply sometimes unaware, we have trained ourselves to be either speaking or preparing to speak, a selective listening technique.

Empathic listening gets inside another person's frame of reference, seeing the world the way they see the world, understanding their paradigm and how they feel. If as teachers we seek to deeply connect with our learners, our listening should focus on sounds, body language and words. The power of empathic listening is that we get accurate data to work with. The listening skill is imperative because we adopt the view of a doctor seeking to diagnose the absolute symptoms and signs of the behaviour of our learners in classroom. Put in other words diagnose before you prescribe. Poor listening compels us to prescribe the wrong advice for our learners culminating in all side effects and plethora of mismatch between medication and illnesses observed through the behaviour of our learners.

Learners are locked in a vicious cycle of thinking patterns. They feel as victims of their circumstances and are involved in a rigorous fight. The mind is a battlefield. The turning point is to ensure that the thinking is aligned to positive behaviour and understanding that man makes every circumstance. That every result we conceive start with thinking. Thoughts are tangible things. If you want to examine and see what an individual is thinking look at the results. To unblock and unleash the learners from tormenting thoughts of defeat. Let's go back and **LISTEN**.

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