

## Care Compassion and Concern Quotient (Cccq)

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### Abstract

*Teachers are arguably one of the most potent factors in the growth and development of children across the world. Teachers often spend much more time with children than their own parents. However, there is concern about suicide, drugs, alcoholism and negative behavior. This paper explores some relevant issues regarding the amount of care, concern, compassion that is expressed by teachers and the resultant impact on student mental health. Teachers permeate the lives of children. From kindergarten to university, the adult in the front of the room has an impact on all children- be it good or bad. While the impact of teaching is typically measured in student achievement growth scores, one ultimate factor that is often not assessed or evaluated is the mental health of the child. The teacher is a role model, often a mentor, on occasion a coach, and still at other times, a confidant and confident. The teacher observes, listens, and on occasion expresses the fact that they are concerned about the short term and long term doings of their students.*

However, in recent years, attention has turned from the mental health and well being of the child/adolescent to standardized test scores. Attention has shifted from social skills to the use of the internet. Students are now preoccupied with their cell phones rather than with other students and library research and learning. There are certainly good variables that reflect good teaching, and exemplary styles of teaching. But this paper will simply explore what the authors refer to as "the care quotient".

As indicated in the beginning of the paper, it has been said that "People do not care how much you know, until they know how much you care". The quote was attributed to Theodore Roosevelt, and is certainly appropriate and needs to be examined in the realm of teacher training, and classroom management. Certainly teachers provide or attempt to provide a safe environment, although, on occasion, there are school shootings and other violent acts.

Teachers should be fostering and nurturing a safe environment and communicating to student that they take their responsibility seriously and that they are serious about the health, and well being of all students. Care Intensity- A teacher can manifest their "care intensity" by providing one to one attention and giving the student their utmost respect and attention. Teachers have to "switch gears" from teacher of math to "listener to student" who may have some serious concerns.

Care Allocation- While it is important to try to listen and care about all students, teachers also need to prevent burn out. There are some students who are just "needy" and dependent and want gargantuan, inordinate amounts of attention. Teachers need to realize that there are a number of students in their classes, and that not every student is as needy as others. In some instances, it may be better to refer the student to a guidance counselor or social worker or to simply indicate the need for an extended conversation to address their concerns in depth. Mitch Albom (1997) has indicated that we should "pay attention when our loved ones are speaking as if it were the last time that you might hear them (p. 190)

Carl Hiassen, on his web site, who lost his brother to a senseless shooting, has indicated that "we should hug them as if we will never see them again". Care Quotient- Teachers- be the first year teachers or second or third year teachers or 20 year veterans may do well to reflect on their capacity to care. There is a moral, ethical element to teaching- in that teaching is in fact an interpersonal skill that requires patience, listening and interacting, hopefully appropriately with a number of children, adolescents and other professionals.

It should be noted that often teachers do consult and collaborate with other teachers- and the teacher who excels in different realms may find themselves sought out by other teachers for advice, guidance, and assistance. All too often, parents come to teachers for "advice" but in reality, they just want a listening ear.

Students often want a listening ear because they have something to say- something to say to a teacher who they hope will care enough to listen. Because:

"The most important things are the hardest things to say. They are like things you get ashamed of because words diminish your feelings- words shrink things that seem timeless when they are in your head to no more than living size when they are brought out.

But it's more than that, isn't it? The most important things lie too close to wherever your secret heart is buried, like landmarks to a treasure your enemies would love to steal away. And you may make revelations that cost you dearly only to have people look at you in a funny way, not understanding what you have said at all or why you thought that it is was so important that you almost cried while you were saying it. That's the worst I think. When the secret stays locked within not for want of a teller, but for want of an understanding ear (King, 1982) and who is the famed psychiatrist or psychologist who has given us these words-? Stephen King. Students often have important things to say. Teachers often have important things to say. Parents often have important things to say. And often teachers are the only ones available to listen- and care. And let us not forget the impact that teachers (and parents) can surreptitiously have. Here is a poem of sorts that can exemplify this:

When you thought I wasn't looking  
Submitted By: mom2tynkobe  
When you thought I wasn't looking,  
I saw you hang my first painting on the refrigerator,  
and I wanted to paint another one.

When you thought I wasn't looking,  
I saw you feed a stray cat,  
and I thought it was good to be kind to animals.

When you thought I wasn't looking,  
I saw you make my favorite cake for me,  
and I knew that little things are special things.

When you thought I wasn't looking,  
I heard you say a prayer,  
and I believed that there was a God to talk to.

When you thought I wasn't looking,  
I felt you kiss me goodnight,  
and I felt loved.

When you thought I wasn't looking,  
I saw tears come from your eyes,  
and I learned that sometimes things hurt,  
but it's alright to cry.

When you thought I wasn't looking,  
I saw that you cared,  
and I wanted to be everything that I could be.

When you thought I wasn't looking,  
I looked....  
and I wanted to say thanks for all the things  
I saw when you thought I wasn't looking.  
Author: Mary Rita Schilke Sill

When students know that teachers (and parents) care, much can be accomplished. And it is important that teachers take the time to care- and take the initiative to reach out and try to care, show compassion and caring. Buscaglia (1982) has a poem that also exemplifies this, that shows the importance of taking that step and showing that people care:

"Remember the day I borrowed your brand new car, and I dented it? I thought you'd kill me- but you didn't  
And remember the time I dragged you to the beach and you said it would rain and it did? I thought you'd say "I told you so" But you didn't

Do you remember the time I flirted with all the guys to make you jealous and you were? I thought you'd leave me, but you didn't.

Do you remember the time I spilled strawberry pie all over your car rug? I thought you'd hit me, but you didn't.  
And remember the time I forgot to tell you the dance was formal and you showed up in jeans? I thought you'd drop me, but you didn't Yes, there were lots of things you didn't do. But you put up with me, and you loved me and you protected me. There were lots of things I wanted to make up to you when you returned from Vietnam- but you didn't.

### ***The Importance of a Good Teacher***

The vast majority of teachers are dedicated and well trained, overall. But Album questions: Have you ever had a teacher? One who saw you as a raw but precious thing, a jewel that, with wisdom, could be polished to a proud shine? If you are lucky enough to find your way back to such teachers, you will always find your way back. Sometimes it is in your head...The teaching goes on ( p. 192) and the learning goes on.

### ***Teachers Tend to Prompt***

Good teachers cares enough to prompt, push, encourage and mentor students. There is a poem by Guillame Apolonaire:

"Come to the Edge: he said.  
"We are afraid" they said.  
Come to the edge.  
And they came.  
And he pushed them.  
And they flew.

Some teachers push themselves. Some teachers push other teachers, and younger colleagues and mentor them. We may not see them fly until many years later- if at all. Teachers may never know if their charges have become doctors or lawyers or dentists or simply good well adjusted individuals. Teachers need to be keenly aware of the impact they have on children ( and parents also, sometimes need to be taught or told about the influence they have. Dorothy Law Nolte explains:

If a child lives with criticism- He or she learns to condemn  
If a child lives with hostility, he/she learns to fight  
If a child lives with ridicule, he/she learns to be shy  
If a child lives with shame, he/she learns to feel guilty  
If a child lives with tolerance he/she learns to be patient  
If a child lives with encouragement he/she learns confidence  
If a child lives with praise, he/she learns to appreciate  
If a child lives with fairness, he/she learns justice  
If a child lives with security he or she learns to have faith  
If a child lives with approval he or she learns to like him or herself  
If a child lives with acceptance and friendship, he or she learns to find love in the world  
Teachers need to post this in their classrooms and insert the words pupil or student and consider it in their daily lives.

For teachers really do not know their long term impact- I would encourage teachers to visit the following web site about Teddy- a student--and understand that teachers can have a long term impact.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pRz8WB-rsvQ>

Yes, teachers have to discipline and socialize students and this is an emotionally draining aspect of the teaching profession. But, in addition, peers can also provide much, care, concern and support for their contemporaries. Please visit the link below:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I0wUsp2a1ic>

Yes, children and adolescents can be difficult and obstinate at times. But we have to remember to “love them anyway” as emphasized in the following poem:

People are unreasonable, illogical, self-centered  
...love them anyway  
If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives  
...do good anyway  
If you are successful, you win false friends and true enemies  
...be successful anyway  
The good you do today may be forgotten tomorrow  
...do good anyway  
honesty and frankness will make you vulnerable  
...be honest and frank anyway  
People love underdogs but follow only top dogs  
...follow some underdog anyway  
What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight  
...build anyway  
People really need help but may attack you if you try to help  
...help people anyway  
If you give the world the best you have you may get kicked in the teeth  
,,,but give the world the best you have ANYWAY !!

The above is attributed to Mother Theresa although it's publication source is not clear.

### ***Summary and Conclusions***

Teachers, parents, even counselors need to be keenly aware of the impact that they have on children and do their utmost to express their deep care and concern and compassion for them , while at the same time attempting to teach them and also socialize them and educate them about the world. It is hope that some of this paper will communicate about some of the deep emotional issues that are involved.

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