

PROPER TEACHER ATTITUDES

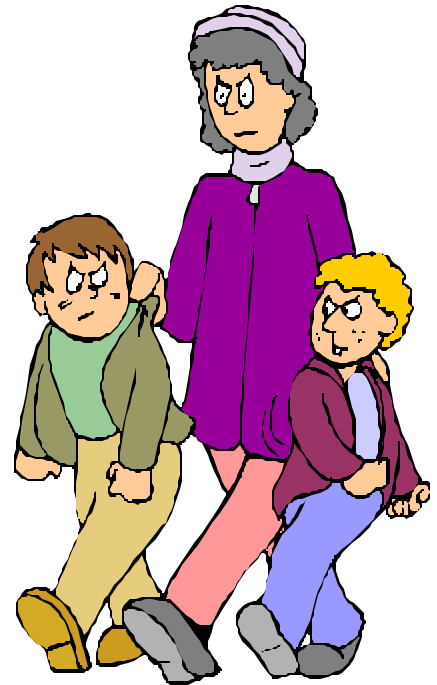
Most students will readily open up in counseling if we use the right approach. Such an approach breaks down the walls of mistrust, but not respect.

But how can we approach our students in a right way? We must first deal with our own attitudes because what we feed our own minds about the situation will come through to flavor the counsel room. If we think, "Here's a spoiled child who needs to be brought down several notches," that will affect our attitudes—and the child will sense it, too. Perhaps the child is spoiled and really should be brought down some notches. But it is also true that he is a child worthy of our love, even more so than we deserve Christ's love. He is a child who is easily molded, and what he finds in us will influence his character.

One basic attitude we need to check ourselves on is, "What do we see as the reason for this child's misbehavior?" Often, deep down inside, we feel, "He acts this way because he doesn't like me; he wants to make life miserable for me." But that is rarely true, and we cannot expect to feed our minds with that and come out with proper attitudes. Children misbehave for many reasons, but basically because they are human (as we are). They misbehave for attention, for something to do, for acceptance among their peers, and for other human reasons. Adults may carry personal grudges and act because of them, but children rarely do. As we approach the counsel scene when problems have arisen, we must sort all of our feelings and be sure they pass the Christ-conformed test. The child will then sense these attitudes and unconsciously think, "He really loves me." Once this is established, teacher and child are no more enemies, but fellow workers: the child is trying to overcome his problem, and the teacher is trying to help him.

Life is rarely this rosy with troublemakers, though, and at times children must first be convinced that what they have done is wrong. Again, the counsel session is an excellent time to help this individual understand the "why" of certain rules.

"Those who deserve love the least need it the most."



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By Connie Wade

Have you ever felt unappreciated, unloved, and unhappy? Most of us have at some point in our lives. It's a normal occurrence and unfortunately, when we're feeling like this, it shows on our countenance and usually, in our behavior. Like "Eyeore" in *Winnie the Pooh*, we find that our day is clouded with a negative spirit that kills our hope and clouds our happiness, satisfaction, and peace of mind.

Luckily for me, I don't find myself feeling like Eyeore very often. I do, however, encounter Eyeore's attitude often in people who just can't seem to see the positive in anything. Their attitude can quickly influence my day if I let it. I read somewhere that a negative attitude can become a stumbling block for others to climb over. I also read of a top executive that wouldn't keep a person with a bad attitude no matter how talented he might be because bad attitudes affect and poison other employees. I believe it!

How important is attitude? Attitude is more important than facts, circumstances, what others say, your past, your education, or money. Attitude is your disposition, your outlook, your very character. The Bible says: "As a man thinketh, so is he" (Proverbs 23:7).

I find myself gravitating toward the people in my life that, by a word, look, or deed, make me feel like I am one in a million. Their sunny, positive attitude is "catching" and makes such a difference in how I perceive my job, friends, interruptions, and inconveniences. They point out the rainbows in the rain, the positive in the negative, and just the thought of them can make me smile. In the book, *The Awesome Power of Your Attitude*, by Dale E. Galloway, there was a certain fellow who was explaining to a friend about his days in college. He said, "I never actually was in the top half of my class, but I can say that I was in the group that made the top half possible." Guess what? I would like this type of person around me as I work. How about you?

There are two of my high school teachers who stand out in my mind when I think of positive and negative attitudes. One was definitely an Eyeore and I'm sorry to say that I (along with a lot of other students) hated her class. The other was totally opposite. He was happy, witty, and had a waiting list to get in his class. I don't think this was because he was such a great teacher, because I've had better, but because he had such a positive attitude. He made me feel like I was something special. We all looked forward to his class.

I can hear you say, "But you don't have Rodney in your class!" Quite honestly, I don't remember a time when there wasn't one or two mischievous kids in class when I was a student or when I was a teacher. (Actually, the number of disruptive students grew in number as the years progressed!) As teachers, not only do we juggle all those personalities, learning styles, and behaviors, but every class seems to have at least one student who can take a perfectly good day and in a matter of minutes turn it into a nightmare. Your leadership as a teacher becomes positive if you choose to offer praise instead of condemnation, suggestions rather than demands, and look for the good in every bad situation (or person)!

Attitude affects relationships. Attitude has a direct effect on how we get along with other people. There will always be people with negative attitudes in our lives and how we react CAN make a difference. I'd like to think that the person who coined the phrase "grin and bear it" was a teacher working desperately to overcome a negative attitude!

