

Effective Affective Education: Managing the well being of teachers, students and pupils

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As a teacher, pupils constantly came to me with problems, which at time I felt ill prepared to deal with. After doing a one year course in Person Centred Counselling, I felt I needed to learn a more directive form of therapy and did a four year training course in Transactional Analysis. This proved to be invaluable both in understanding my own behaviour, thoughts and feelings and those of others.

“A theory of personality and a systematic psychotherapy for personal growth and personal change”.

Transactional Analysis (TA) as defined by the International TA Association (ITAA)

The concepts have helped me to manage pupil behaviour effectively in school, develop and maintain positive relationships with colleagues and students in University and counsel those pupils and student teachers experiencing difficulties both in school and in their lives.

I have co-written a book “Behaviour Management in the Classroom: A Transactional Analysis Approach” (David Fulton 2002) which received positive reviews in the TES (21/6/02), Young Minds Magazine 59 (2002) and ITA News (December 2002). It was also recommended as reading in the GTC magazine “Teaching” (Autumn 2003) and “Pedagogy and Practice: Teaching and Learning in Secondary Schools Unit 20 Classroom Behaviour”. (DFES 2004)

I have delivered sessions on Transactional Analysis to a range of students in University and more recently to a group of staff in the Institute of Education. These have all been well received.

I co-delivered a workshop on working in groups at the Institute of Transactional Analysis annual conference in Edinburgh. Much has been written about the dynamics of groups and working with groups is challenging because each member has their own agenda. Those involved in education have to work in a variety of groups. I feel that groups are a microcosm of society so it important that people learn to cope well with being in a group situation.

My MA dissertation focused on Stress in Teaching, prompted by the growing numbers of teachers who demonstrate the physical and psychological symptoms of stress. It involved a total of 58 teachers, 30 experienced teachers and 28 student teachers. It set out to explore what stress is, where it comes from, including external and internal pressures, when it becomes negative and what can be done to prevent or deal with it. In the dissertation I looked at how personality adaptations as defined in TA can have an impact on the way people handle stress.

Hastings explored the issue of teacher workload and whether teachers really have a worse deal than most other workers do. He quotes Cooper (Professor of Psychology at UMIST) in defining workload as **"volume of work, intensity**

of work and the intrusiveness of work into your private life. It's not just about hours- it's how these hours affect you."

HASTINGS, S. (2002) *Workload*. Times Educational Supplement. 24th May, 202

I found out that stress is the result of both external and internal factors. Support in school for stressed teachers is minimal. Supervision groups can help teachers to explore issues in a safe environment. As a result of my findings about the stress which student teachers are under, I ran a one year supervision group with students on their second placement in schools.

I have also attended a conference at which Daniel Goleman was the key note speaker. At the time, he had just published his book "The New Leaders" about the importance of Leaders having Emotional Intelligence. This interested me as teachers are in effect leaders.

"...the leader has maximal power to sway everyone's emotions....Followers also look to a leader for supportive emotional connection-for empathy..."

(Goleman 2002:5)

The conference helped me to develop my interest in the idea of Emotional Intelligence and I have delivered sessions to students on this aspect of education as part of a programme of inclusion workshops.

The new Secondary National Strategy materials on Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning (SEAL) have also formed the basis for my research and teaching.

"A comprehensive approach to promoting the social and emotional skills that underpin effective learning, positive behaviour, regular attendance, staff effectiveness and the well-being of all who learn and work in schools"

http://bandapilot.org.uk/secondary/pages/introduction_12.html (accessed 3/1/08)

I have recently delivered a session on SEAL as part of a programme of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) workshops.

To conclude, the courses I have been on, research I have done and conferences I have attended have all contributed to my teaching and my ability to help those involved in education to manage their own well being.

"Teaching is fundamentally a social activity – staff need high levels of social and emotional skills to do their job effectively, and having higher levels makes the job more enjoyable and manageable. These skills contribute to staff well-being, and thus to staff retention; they help to lower levels of stress, and reduce time off work and premature retirement".

Social and Emotional Aspects of Learning for secondary schools (SEAL) Guidance booklet DFES 2007