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# **I Am, Because We Are**

Intersubjectivity and the Ethics of Care in Student-Teacher Relationships

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**Course:** EDUC 215

When we examine the system of education that appears to prevail across the globe today, we come to understand that it is a rather masculine construction, founded on the promotion of individual mastery, autonomy and zero-sum competition. In an educational culture of standardization, assessment, and ranking, there remains little place for the development of authentic relationships, for the expression and understanding of subjectivity and humanity, and, above all, for care. What, we ask, might a more caring and connected model of education look like? For answers, we can turn to the propositions of care theorists and psychoanalytic theorists, who have long believed that our existing pedagogical models no longer serve to affirm the personal and interpersonal identities of our children.

To care theorists, the heart of the educational system must be characterised by connection and relationship, percolating from large scale goals down to daily interactions and decisions. This feminist approach, based on a reciprocal relationship between the “one-caring,” or the teacher, and the “one-cared-for,” or the student, forms the basis of an “*ethic of care*”(Noddings, 1984, as cited in Owens and Ennis, 2005, pp. 393). This ethic of care manifests in the classroom in a tripartite manner: one, as a series of characteristics embodied by the teacher, two, as a set of tangible activities carried out by the teacher and three, as an expression of reciprocity from the student (Noddings, 1988). These three components of care will form the basis of analysis for this essay. Simultaneously, to psychoanalytic theorists, teaching and learning is necessarily dependent on the relational worlds of both students and teachers. The goal of such an education would be to effectively use the experience of existing in relation to others, or *intersubjectivity*, in order to sustain a sense of self across the lifespan (Cohler, 2006).

Drawing on elements of relational psychoanalysis and care theory, this paper will seek to answer the research question “*To what extent is the development of an intersubjective space between student and teacher vital to the creation of an ethic of care?*” In the first section of this essay, I will explore the psychodynamic processes by which the intersubjective space between student and teacher is first constructed. I will then examine the vital importance of this space in the teacher’s ability to demonstrate “engrossment, motivational displacement and commitment,” the three characteristics of a caring teacher outlined by care theorist Nel Noddings (1988). In the second section of this essay, I will look at the concept of reciprocity, or the idea that students

must respond in demonstrable ways in order to truly classify a teacher's activities as caring (Noddings, 1988). For the purposes of this paper, I will explore the development of selfhood in students as a measure of reciprocity. Most importantly, however, I will examine the ways in which the construction of an intersubjective space is a prerequisite for the activities of "modeling, dialogue, and confirmation" that Noddings (1988) claims are essential to the practices of a caring teacher. In the third section of this essay, I will underscore the importance of intersubjectivity to caring relations by attempting to understand what happens when the intersubjective space fails to develop. I will examine the subtractive nature of Haberman's pedagogy of poverty (Haberman, 1991), and how it precludes the possibility of authentic caring. In the fourth and final section of this paper, I will explore the profound lack of care that teachers experience in their professional lives, and the impact of this apathy on their ability to form caring relations with students. I will end by looking at the vital importance of communities of care for teachers, and the practical changes that need to be made in order to make the formation of these communities possible.

## **1. Will You Be There?: Transference and the Characteristics of Care**

In this section, I will explore the process by which the intersubjective space between student and teacher is constructed, and the conditions under which it serves to promote connection and understanding between student and teacher. In order to understand this process, we must consider the teacher as a transference figure, in relation to whom children re-enact the dynamics of their early relationships with their primary caregivers (Bibby, 2011). We will then explore the vital importance of this intersubjective space in the teacher's achievement of engrossment, motivational displacement and commitment, outlined by Noddings (1992) as the "characteristics of care" (Noddings, 1992, as cited in Owens and Ennis, 2005).

The infant's primary relational dyad, that which is formed with her mother, is characterized by a state of "unified twoness," wherein the experiences of the mother and child are tied inextricably to one another (Bibby, 2011, pp. 120). In this position, the infant is entirely unable to experience herself discretely; instead, she believes that the external world, including

her mother, is a mere extension of her own being (Bibby, 2011). In order to promote the development of selfhood in the infant, the mother must be able to perceive, empathize with, and “hold” her child’s early emotional experiences without becoming overwhelmed or turning her back to the difficulty of this task (Bibby, 2011, pp. 120). In balancing between her “identificatory oneness” with her child and this “observing function,” the mother spurs the formation of a “third space” where the experience of intersubjectivity can begin to develop (Benjamin, 2004 as cited in Bibby, 2011, pp. 121). This third space belongs fully to neither the mother, nor the child. Instead, it is theirs together; it “exists between [them]” (Benjamin, 2004 as cited in Bibby, 2011, pp. 121). It is through this simultaneous synchrony and distancing that the child is able to recognize herself as distinct and autonomous from her mother. At the same time, it is through attending to the communications in this space that the mother is able to interpret her child’s needs.

The importance of this third space in the teacher-student dyad is underscored when the teacher is understood as a transference figure, in relation to whom children play out the dynamics of their early relationships (Bibby, 2011). In the realm of the classroom, the teacher must be able to “hold” the full range of children’s emotional experiences, providing both the empathy and the distance required for the child to form an independent sense of self as a learner. In creating this intersubjective connection, the teacher is better able to perceive and respond to the intellectual and emotional needs of the student. It is precisely this high level of attunement that Noddings (1992) labels “engrossment.” In being present to children’s experiences without diminishing, ignoring or judging them, teachers show students that their feelings, and, by extension, their selves are valid and worthy of care (Noddings, 1992, as cited in Owens and Ennis, 2005). When provided with this deep acceptance, students develop trust in the positive intentions of the teacher, and grow increasingly likely to receive her communications not as intrusive demands, but instead as collaborative efforts “proceeding from the integrity of the relation” (Noddings, 2005). In this way, the tenacity of the intersubjective relationship forms the basis of all future learning, and where “hope and love” in the student-teacher dyad is born (Bibby, 2011, pp. 121).

The mutuality that entails from a sense of seeing and being seen in one's entirety constitutes what Belenkey et al (1986) identify as "connected teaching" (Belenkey et al, 1986 as cited in Rodgers and Raider-Roth, 2006). When students and teachers are engaged in authentic connection, they are able to communicate to each other their "feelings, experiences, memories and hopes," the very bases of their subjectivity and humanity (Rodgers and Raider-Roth, 2006). In providing the opportunities for such conversations to occur, the teacher allows herself to undergo what Noddings terms a "motivational displacement," or a shift in focus from herself to her students (Noddings, 2005). As the teacher strives to see the world from each student's point of view, she becomes able to identify what motivates the individual child. Upon obtaining an understanding of what her students seek to accomplish, or how they experience subject matter as relevant to their lives, the teacher is able to provide a sense of purpose and vitality to the act of learning. By attending to these points of connection, the caring teacher directs her "motive energy" towards the cared-for student (Owens and Ennis, 2005, pp. 394). In this manner, the need for coercive methods of discipline and control is obviated, and students become guided by an intrinsic desire to learn.

Learning is not, however, always an easy process. Each learning experience necessitates the acceptance of both one's ignorance, and the need for its destruction in order to acquire new knowledge. This process, psychoanalytic theorists argue, is represented and experienced in the unconscious as a "loss of a beloved object" (Mindoljević Drakulić, 2014, pp. 86). As children navigate the feelings of "helplessness, insecurity, confusion and dependency," inherent to this exercise, their experience of learning becomes tinged with pain and frustration (Mindoljević Drakulić, 2014, pp. 86). It is in the handling of these negative, and often overwhelming, emotions that the teacher's 'holding' role, as discussed previously, becomes most salient. In this capacity, it is crucial that teachers are capable of tolerating and containing the student's frustration with the knowledge that it will pass. Children must also be assured that the negative emotions that they experience in the learning process are normative, endurable and, eventually, surmountable. Furthermore, the teacher must be able to hold children's negative, complex experiences without becoming overwhelmed or fleeing from them by setting easier tasks, handing children over to teaching assistants or relying on stringent measures of control (Bibby,

2011). This determination to maintain motivational displacement in the face of adversity is what Noddings defines as “commitment,” or the conviction that nothing must take priority over the caring teacher’s “responsibility to care” (Owens and Ennis, 2005, pp. 394). Without the strength and attachment afforded by the intersubjective connection between student and teacher, it is difficult to see how commitment can be sustained. Intersubjectivity, in this sense, becomes a powerful antidote to negative emotions in the student-teacher relationship, thus allowing an ethic of care to be sustained.

## **2. Me, Myself and I: Care and the Construction of Selfhood**

When we talk about the activities of teachers, we must recognize that the functions that they fulfill do not exist in isolation. Fundamentally important to the understanding of whether teachers are acting in ways that are being received by their students as caring is the concept of reciprocity, wherein students express and embody demonstrable growth and gratitude flowing from being seen, heard and valued (Noddings, 1988). In this section, I will explore students’ growing experiences of personhood as a measure of reciprocity, focusing on the teacher’s ability to fulfill the three needs that are vital to the construction of the self: idealization, twinship and mirroring (Finlay, 2015). Crucially, however, I will examine the ways in which the construction of an intersubjective space is a prerequisite for the activities of modeling, dialogue and confirmation that contribute to this burgeoning personhood. These are three of the activities that Noddings (1992) claims are essential to the practices of a caring teacher (Noddings, 1992 as cited in Owens and Ennis, 2005).

Children have a deep-seated need for ‘idealization,’ or the desire to look up to their parents as figures that are protective, loving, powerful and perceptive. As the child admires these qualities in her parent, she absorbs these values into her own moral schemata. These values then become the basis of the child’s independent sense of morality, and, ultimately, her sense of self (Finlay, 2015). It is easy to understand how these processes transfer to the ethical context of the educational institution. Students seek to idealize and internalize the values of an all-powerful teacher. In this manner, the qualities that the teacher chooses to embody set the moral tone of the

classroom. Developing the capacity to act in caring ways, for instance, appears to rely on individuals' experience in being cared for (Noddings, 1984, as cited in Owens and Ennis, 2005, pp. 395). Caring teachers seek to inculcate in students an ethic of care not through detached instruction, but instead through the very nature of their relationships with students (Noddings, 1988). In this manner, the attunement and responsiveness that results from the intersubjective space between student and teacher provides opportunities for what Noddings (1992) deems 'modeling.' In embodying the sensitivity and attentiveness that that serves as the goal for their students' own moral development, teachers cultivate an "ideal" of the ultimate ethic of care (Owens and Ennis, 2005, pp. 395).

The second need that characterizes the child's development of self is that of 'twinship.' As children grow, they set out actively to form and maintain a broad range of affirming relationships. As children learn that they share characteristics of their own identity with other individuals, they begin to develop a vital sense of connection to those around them (Finlay, 2015). By constructing and interacting within a wide variety of intersubjective relationships, children come to realize that others, like themselves, are comprised of opinions, emotions and experiences; it is through these connections that children begin to develop interpersonal understanding and empathy. The caring teacher, who appreciates the immense importance of this developmental task, provides opportunities within the classroom for this kind of interaction, both among students and between the students and herself. This shared quest for "understanding, empathy, and appreciation" characterizes 'dialogue,' framed by Noddings (1992) as the second essential activity of the caring teacher (Owens and Ennis, 2005, pp. 395). The iterative process of communication, achieved through tuning in to the intersubjective spaces between oneself and another, serves both to advance and maintain classroom relations of care. When language is thus used to draw on and express shared experiences, students are able to see themselves in others, and, ultimately, come to the affirming realization that they are not alone in their endeavors (Owens and Ennis, 2005). The intersubjective space, in this manner, becomes both productive of caring, communicative dialogue, as well as a product of it.

The child's ability to see herself reflected in the Other in this manner is a prerequisite for 'mirroring,' the third and final need that self psychologists deem essential to the experience of



personhood (Gölbaşı and Önder, 2017). At the center of the developing child's quest for selfhood is the need to be seen, recognized and acknowledged by the people that matter to her (Bibby, 2011). The child constructs this sense of personhood through a "layering of identifications and disidentifications" derived from their contact with others in the world. When a child identifies with the Other, striving to see herself reflected in this individual, she becomes subject to the judgments that the Other is qualified to make through its "location in language and culture" (Bibby, 2011, pp. 35). Taken in the context of the classroom, where the Other is represented by the teacher, the student becomes subject to the judgment of the myriad roles that the teacher embodies; not only is the teacher an individual, but she is also representative of "adult femininity," reminiscent of the child's parents, and "expert" in the activity upon which the student is being judged (Bibby, 2011, pp. 35). When a teacher suggests, therefore, that a student is not performing up to mark, the child experiences a fragmentation of self. Not only does she feel that she has not measured up in the eyes of her teacher, an important transference figure, but she is also made to feel inadequate by the entire system of judgments that her teacher embodies (Bibby, 2011).

In order to surmount the moments of failure that are inevitable in the process of learning, the child must have adequate experience with positive, connected and constructive mirroring. The anxiety created by the question of 'Who am I?' quickly becomes replaced in the developing child's mind by the concern 'Is who I am good enough?' (Bibby, 2011). Children harbor a crucial need to be shown that they are loved and wanted by the people that they see themselves reflected in. In the classroom, the teacher can help to alleviate these anxieties in two ways: first, by celebrating the achievements and progress of each individual student, and second, by demonstrating to students that their failures will not cause her care to waver (Finlay, 2015).

The caring teacher, drawing on both overt communications and unconscious projections into the intersubjective space between the student and herself, continuously strives to understand the person that each child hopes to become. Informed by an intimate knowledge of the child, the teacher becomes adept at knowing which behaviors to encourage, which behaviors to disapprove, what level of achievement to expect, and how to understand children's failures to meet their own ideals (Noddings, 1988). What results is a form of mirroring that holds the

student's sense of self as central to its mechanisms, and, in doing so, keeps the child's self image intact even in the face of failure. It is this profound knowledge of the individual child and the ability to keep in mind what she is capable of despite her present failings that Noddings calls "confirmation" (Noddings, 1988). Through this process, the child is shown an achievable image of herself that is "lovelier than manifested in [her] present acts" (Noddings, 1984, as cited in Noddings, 1988, pp. 224). In this manner, intersubjectivity is not merely a tool of care and connection in the here and now, but is used to create an enduring sense of self in the child that links smoothly to a future ideal. It is in the development of this sense of personhood that the teacher's care is confirmed and reciprocated, and the ethic of care complete.

### **3. Another Brick in the Wall: The Pedagogy of Poverty**

Valenzuela (1999) investigates in her research the common refrain among students that "nobody cares." Where she details the process of schooling as subtractive in specifically a social and cultural sense, it can be argued that the teaching practices that are most common today leach from *all* students a sense of agency and personhood. In this section, we will explore the subtractive teaching acts that have come to be understood as the "pedagogy of poverty" (Haberman 1991, pp. 290). We will trace the roots of this methodology to a failure to adequately construct the intersubjective space that underlies connected, caring teaching, bolstering its vital importance. We will then examine how a lack of intersubjectivity makes impossible authentic caring.

Modern school culture has become defined by a series of dehumanizing and punitive teaching acts that, when taken together, have been denounced as the "pedagogy of poverty" (Haberman, 1991, pp. 290). By burdening teachers with the responsibility of performing functions such as "giving information," "giving tests," "punishing noncompliance" and "monitoring seat work," schools foster an environment wherein teachers struggle to maintain control over hostile students, children feel absolved of responsibility for their own learning, and both teachers and students alike feel burnt out, disparaged and berated (Haberman, 1991, pp. 291). Psychoanalytic accounts of the learning and teaching endeavor understand these dynamics

as a response to underlying feelings of fear in both the student and the teacher. The emphasis of teachers on discipline, for instance, is representative of a “haunting fear” of losing control, which in turn masks unconscious, yet immensely powerful, impulses of aggression (Mindoljević Drakulić, 2012, as cited in Mindoljević Drakulić, 2014). The compliance, begrudging as it might be, of students to a system that does not fully acknowledge their humanity and subjectivity is similarly symptomatic of larger fears of disconnection and loss. The student who does not comply, and therefore does not achieve, fears a loss of affection from her parents and teachers and, eventually, a loss of self respect (Bettelheim, 1969).

This need for teachers to maintain hierarchical stances in relation to their students may also be understood as a failure to adequately construct the intersubjective, or ‘third’ space described in earlier sections of this paper. Teachers who are unable to hold their students’ frustration and discomfort risk adopting what is termed a “position of complementarity” (Bibby, 2011, pp. 122). Such a relationship assumes the teacher and student to be one, compromising the more objective, observatory function of the teacher that is so vital to the creation of an intersubjective space. Within this pattern of interaction, the teacher either “swamps” the student, rendering her unable to think independently, or abandons her altogether, leaving her to struggle with her negative emotions in solitude (Bibby, 2011). Where the shared, or intersubjective, third is received by the student as instrumental to a dynamic of cooperation (Benjamin, 2004 as cited in Bibby, 2011), a position of complementarity necessitates a unidirectional pattern of cause and effect, flowing from “the one in control to the controlled, from the doer to the done-to” (Bibby, 2011, pp. 122). In such a dynamic, the ‘done-to,’ or student, is stripped of agency, and feels entirely unseen by a persecuting ‘doer,’ or teacher. (Benjamin, 2004 as cited in Bibby, 2011). It is this feeling of helplessness in the face of the teacher that spurs the breeding of resentment in the student. As the teacher receives this hostility, she becomes increasingly insecure about losing control.

The inability of the teacher within a pedagogy of poverty to recognize the child as having a subjectivity independent of and different from her own precludes her knowledge of her students, and, by extension, her ability to care for them in an authentic manner (Bibby, 2011). Noddings (1984, 1992) explains the tendency of schools to be framed around an “aesthetic”

manner of caring, the focus of which is centered on “things and ideas” instead of interpersonal relationships and expressions of genuine affect (Noddings, 1984, 1992 as cited in Valenzuela, 1999, pp. 22). Aesthetic caring necessarily prioritizes “technical” discourses over “expressive” discourses of education (Prillaman and Eaker, 1994, as cited in Valenzuela, 1999, pp. 22). The former refers to a use of detached and objective language mobilized in “decisions made by one group for another,” while the latter comprises an “ethic of caring” that lends itself to situational adaptability and factors in “human affections, weaknesses, and anxieties” (Noddings, 1984, as cited in Valenzuela, 1999, pp. 22). While the latter lends students a voice and allows them space for negotiation and fallibility, the former tears this voice away and demands unrelenting compliance. It is evident that the current system of schooling cannot continue to exist if teachers are to adopt the ideals of authentic caring. Noddings (1988) posits that such a method is likely to require a refashioning of “almost every aspect of schooling,” ranging from hierarchical management structures to methods of assessment and evaluation. We will explore some of these changes in the following section, paying close attention to how schools must change to better enable teachers to develop the connected, intersubjective relationships with their students that are vital to defending against a pedagogy of poverty.

#### **4. Somebody to Lean On: Communities of Care for Teachers**

Thus far, we have explored how vitally important the creation of an intersubjective space between student and teacher is to relational teaching. We have delineated the ways in which this requires a teacher who is attuned, sensitive, tenacious and, above all, selfless. When these attributes are examined, however, it becomes clear that what we expect of teachers, even in the progressive model of relational teaching, continues to be informed by the view of the teaching profession as “women’s work” (Teitelman, 2015). Women have historically been framed as naturally suited to teaching; they are assumed to bear innate tendencies towards nurturance, towards the prioritization of the growth and needs of others over their own (Teitelman, 2015). An important corollary of these assumptions is that teaching, much like the rest of women’s work, is grossly under-compensated, under-appreciated and under-supported. Ilana Teitelman

(2015) summarizes the crushing expectations underlying the teaching profession in an impassioned blog post:

“And therein lies the crux of the issue: the fact that women are expected to do this job out of love or biology. The work is seen as “fulfilling” for us; satisfaction the only reward we should need” (Teitelman, 2015).

Satisfaction, as it turns out, is not the only reward that teachers need. Mere months ago, thousands of teachers took to the streets in the United States following precipitous cuts in overall school funding and inhumane drops in the salaries and benefits accorded to teachers (Karp and Sanchez, 2018). Arizona teacher Rebecca Garelli, cited as claiming “here you have to have two or three jobs or you can’t have a family,” was echoed by hundreds of other teachers who have been forced to take increasingly extreme measures to make ends meet (Karp and Sanchez, 2018). Low salaries, however, are only symptomatic of a larger lack of care for the well being of teachers. In an age of standardized teaching and testing, constant evaluation, inadequate preparation time and an obsession with administrative paperwork, teachers feel “overwhelmed, demoralized and paralyzed” by a system that renders them inefficacious, burnt out, and resentful (Karp and Sanchez, 2018).



Educator's strikes in Oklahoma, April 4, 2018 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Scott Heins/Getty

These devaluing systems do not stop at the immediate administrative and governmental influences on schools, but instead reflect the paradoxical position held by society at large on the roles of teachers. On one hand, public schools are revered as institutions of hope and upward mobility, where teachers are seen as omnipotent actors with transformative powers. On the other hand, society's priorities appear less and less directed towards schooling for all, mirrored by a direction of resources away from public schools and a framing of teachers as incapable and inadequate. In a sense, children, teachers, and the schools that simultaneously bear the aspirations, fears, desires and insecurities of society are conveniently 'split' from the rest of it (Bibby, 2011). By casting schools out as sites of imperfection, where behavioral and ideological resistances are to be ironed out in the name of civilization and education, societies become able to convince themselves that they require no reflection, that their priorities and values are immaculate and enduring. This is a potent and crippling defense mechanism. In failing to see schools and the actors within them as part of society, we fail to recognize that the dynamics at play at these sites are actually reflective of the difficulties of society, and are not independent of them (Bibby, 2011). This leaves teachers isolated and disproportionately burdened with the contradictory tasks of both preparing students for an imperfect world, and equipping them with the skills to change their environment, to approximate a little more closely the hopes and dreams of society for a better future.

With such little support from their own administrations, the local and central governments that are responsible for them, and society at large, how can we expect of teachers the levels of attunement, effort and care required in relational teaching? If it is impossible for students to be able to act in caring ways until they have had the experience of being cared for, must we not assume that teachers too need spaces where they feel held, heard and valued in order to truly care?

It is precisely the construction of these spaces, and their motivational potential, that forms the center of educational theorist Sonia Nieto's research. Teaching, posits Nieto, is a "lonely profession," one where the creation of communities among teachers is vital to maintaining connections to "their profession, their students, and one another" (Nieto, 2003, pp. 124). When teachers are given the opportunity to come together, to learn from one another's

experiences, to share their burdens, and to feel truly heard and validated, they no longer feel as alone (Nieto, 2003). It is in these spaces that teachers can experience the joy and affirmation of intersubjectivity for themselves, to replenish their own hearts and minds with care in order to be able to do the complex work of caring for their students. For these communities of practice to be established, however, there is a need for change at a larger scale. Firstly, teachers cannot be expected to do the work of collaboration, of sharing, holding, and supporting on their own time. It must become the responsibility of schools to make development of teaching communities a fundamental part of what it means to be a teacher (Nieto, 2003). This cannot, however, be done in a vacuum. So long as the obsessive focus on assessment and standardization continues to exist, and the professional development of teachers continues to be framed as inefficient, or a waste of teaching time, schools cannot provide meaningful experiences for connection and collaborative learning to their teachers.

What becomes essential, then, is a shift in societal attitudes regarding the nature of the teaching profession. It is only when the nuances and complexities of the teaching profession are better understood, when teaching is viewed as an “intellectual endeavor” requiring constant cultivation, that teachers will be able to occupy a place of honor and value in society (Nieto, 2003, pp. 123). As these shifts in attitudes occur, we can expect to see a shift in priorities and resources towards the development of teachers, allowing them the time and support to remain conversant with the latest developments in both the field of education in general, and their subjects of expertise in particular (Nieto, 2003). Furthermore, we must also begin to make a concerted effort to show those on the ground that their voices are valued in large-scale decisions. Restructuring the decision making processes of schools to reflect the concerns and propositions of teachers echoes the message that what they do in their classrooms matters, that their reflections on their daily practice matter, that their desire to do better by themselves and their students matters, and, ultimately, that they themselves matter. Without these alterations to education policy and the disruption of the top-down nature of schools, we cannot hope to institute the changes that will help teachers feel more valued and connected and less drained and unappreciated.

We can begin to understand the vital importance of sustaining teachers and their ability to care by examining the profound impacts that relational teaching has on the development of students. While the creation and maintenance of intersubjectivity requires of teachers tremendous emotional and practical effort, we can trace the course of this paper to understand that the intersubjective space between students and teachers is indeed vital to the creation of an ethic of care. I began by arguing that the development of intersubjectivity is a prerequisite for the teacher to meaningfully engage in the characteristics of care, that is, engrossment in the student, a motivational displacement towards the needs and ideals of the child, and commitment, or the prioritization of care even in the face of adversity. I then looked at the centrality of the intersubjective space to the caring activities of modeling, dialogue and confirmation in the classroom, and the radical effects this has on students' experiences of selfhood. Later, I examined the detriments of a lack of intersubjectivity between student and teacher through an analysis of the pedagogy of poverty that prevails in most schools today. In examining these findings, we can truly begin to argue that there needs to be a fundamental shift in the educational system towards providing deep, authentic care for students and teachers alike. It is only when we tune into the relational, into the intersubjective, that we can hope to understand the world around us, connect more deeply to ourselves and others, receive and provide care, and create a world where we fully recognize our interdependence. There are, in my view, few educational goals more worthy of pursuit than this.



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