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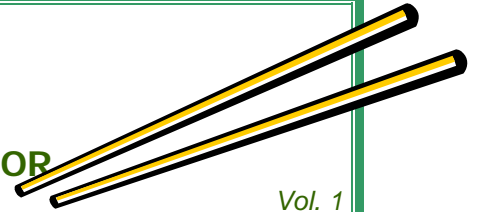
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# EDUCARE NEWSLETTER

.....FOOD FOR THE EDUCATOR



Vol. 1

The Institute of Sathya Sai Education is a non-religious charitable organisation concerned with supporting teachers and parents

- ❖ To bring out human excellence at all levels in character, academics, and "being"
- ❖ To bring out the all-round development of the child (the heart as well as the head and the hands)
- ❖ To help children to know who they are
- ❖ To help children to realise their full potential
- ❖ To develop attitudes of selfless service

Through .....

### EDUCARE

Creating a caring education environment, in which we as teachers elicit the good qualities inherent within our students.

# 12

## QUICK TIPS FOR BRINGING EDUCARE INTO YOUR TEACHING

### TIP 1: MOTIVATE AND INSPIRE STUDENTS

Dear Teachers, remember as a 'teacher' you are the authentic voice of Truth that is setting forth the platform of Human Values for millions of boys and girls to be values literate. One of the first tenets of being an

inspiring teacher is that we need to, in Jacque Delors (UNESCO) words 'firstly discover the treasure within us and then our consciousness will connect to the treasure within our students.'

Our students will be motivated when they know and feel not only how much we know and what experts we are in our field but, equally important, how much we care about them. Our response to students

should reflect our feelings for their welfare and progress. From personal experience as a classroom practitioner, I have had the reward of seeing 'beacons of lights in students come alive' and blissfully enjoying my 'Eureka' moment.

**TIP 2: LIFT YOUR LEVEL OF SELF-CONFIDENCE AS A TEACHER**

Our self-confidence grows when we as teachers engage ourselves in the five D's of teaching namely: Duty, Devotion, Determination, Discipline and Dedication. When we as teachers look upon our role as a vocation or calling to serve our students and community, our outlook to our role changes from that of a 'paid job' to one of 'duty'. Just as the unseen underground spring feeds the roots below the ground, our self-confidence gets fed and grows with our devotion, discipline, determination and dedication to serve our students and the wider community. The five D's are innate to our nature, our thought, word and deed and will have a symbolic meaning for each one of us.

**TIP 3: TEACH ABOUT CHARACTER WHILE TEACHING THE LESSON CONTENT**

The ultimate objective of our lesson is to be instrumental in lighting the flame of knowledge in our students that cannot be extinguished. Our lesson must involve the principles of inclusiveness and transparency, giving 'breathe' for students of different culture, race or gender. The five teaching techniques of story telling, quotations, silent sitting, group activities and music are practical details of the lesson planning. However the planning and content should relate to its relationships with the objective world, worldly activities and the

students' daily lives, as echoed by Dr. Kanu of Zambia (*winner of International Goldstar Award for Quality Commitment*)

"Let us take transpiration from how plants transport water. The function of the roots is to hold the plant firm and to give it a solid base while it searches for water. The roots will go to great lengths in search of water. If the root comes across a



boulder it does not give up; it goes round it - that is endurance, a sense of duty and persistence. While teaching

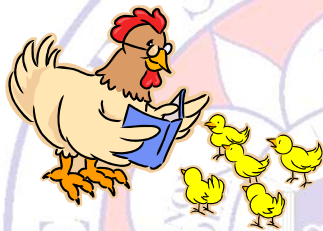
children about the function of roots, the values such as persistence, endurance strong sense of duty, cooperation etc. can be brought out at the same time. You can also bring in other traditional values."

Mr. Kanu continues to explain, "The human values approach is really about *transformation* whereas the subject content is about *information*. So we are going to blend information and transformation to bring about the desired attitude changes in the young, who will become the future utility managers and future leaders of the world."

**TIP 4: USE STORY-TELLING TO ENHANCE LESSONS**

A good story is like a precious gemstone, giving its luster of meaning for students and teachers to consider, concentrate and absorb its meaning. The story is like a link coach, with 'through coaches' allowing the thoughts of the students to reach the destination without having to make any changeover. It is the bridge that links received information with student transformation. The nature of a good story can be likened to a fire that warms you up when you shiver from cold. However it can only help you keep warm if you approach it and at the same time use your discrimination to keep a safe distance. The story creates space for students to contemplate, gather elevating experiences, ruminate over the real and the unreal and transform themselves.

An example of a good story is that of the late President of the United States, President Abraham Lincoln, who displays characteristics of a person of good character.



take refuge in music, and that would usually resolve all his difficulties." Cartoonist Charles Schultz credits music as the inspiration behind many of his insights that came to life though Charlie Brown, Lucy, and Snoopy in one of the world's most famous cartoon strips – 'Peanuts.' Schultz describes going to a concert and says, "Your mind begins to travel from one thing to another, and all of a sudden you're inspired by the music and the emotion and from that I will get some of my very best ideas."

Two teachers of Grade 3 classrooms used Thinking and Concentration CDs during independent work sessions. They reported:

- ❖ "Calming, students more focused, there appears to be more concentration, room quieter."
- ❖ "Better focus. Students seem to attend to task longer. The students ask for the music."

**HOW TO USE SOUND HEALTH IN YOUR CLASSROOM**

Remember that playing any music at an excessive volume can be a distraction. Follow these simple rules:

1. Select a CD to fit the project your students are engaged in doing:

- ♪ Learning, concentration, and thinking at 50-60 b.p.m.
- ♪ for study, testing, group work, and computer time.
- ♪ De-Stressing, Relaxing at 30-60 b.p.m. for settling the class after high energy activities, or disruptions, and rest times.

**TIP 5: MUSIC AND SONGS IN THE CLASSROOM**

Albert Einstein's solution to struggles with complicated formulae was to pick up the violin, an instrument he began playing at the age of six, and to play Beethoven and Mozart sonatas. Einstein's oldest son remembered that "Whenever he felt that he had come to the end of the road or into a difficult situation in his work he would

🎵 Inspiration, at 60-90 b.p.m. for creative work.

🎵 Motivation at 120-140 b.p.m. and Productivity at 70-130 b.p.m. for task completion and for other kinesthetic activities.

🎵 Keep the volume low. This means you should still have the ability to speak at a conversational level without raising your voice. The music should be in the background creating a filter for unwanted noise in the classroom throughout the day. This relaxes the body and keeps the mind alert.

🎵 For a break after 45 minutes or more of studying, you may increase the volume a bit so that students may listen for a few minutes to the music. This technique is recommended in the book *Learn with the Classics* by Anderson, Marsh and Harvey. It is meant to relax students and let their minds reflect on what they have learned.

**TIP 6: GET ACTIVE WITH GROUP ACTIVITIES**

**T**he social skills of cooperating with others in a group have to be deliberately taught:

- ❖ each group needs to have at least one member who can explain the topic to others
- ❖ all members of the group must be responsible for the welfare of every other member

- ❖ the teacher needs to demonstrate how to help another child without just giving the answer
- ❖ students need to be genuinely dependent on each other to be able to complete the task
- ❖ students should discuss what they did in the group

To help students monitor their contributions, develop a check-list named "What Did I Do In the Group?" which can include such skills as listening, taking turns to speak, encouraging others, asking questions, explaining ideas and checking each others' understanding. Students may complete these and discuss them, as part of their own self-assessment as group members. This analysis of the group's use of interpersonal skills and overall function as a group is essential.

**TIP 7: TEACHER SURVIVAL**

**W**e cannot change a lot of the stress-causing factors that are happening around us, such as time and curriculum pressures and students' bad behaviour. But we can change how we see these situations and how we react to them.

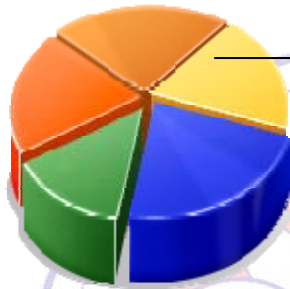
# HOW?

- Say something positive regularly or at least smile once a day to the most difficult child in your class, or the most difficult colleague in your school.
- Observe your feelings while doing this. What is needed to make your smile a true smile?
- Try to implement this over a longer period of time – at least one month.

**TIP 8: MAINTAIN A BALANCE IN LIFE**

**M**ake a pie graph showing the different dimensions of a healthy life (time for school, quality time, health/fitness time, time for chores, time for friends, family time, time for helping others, sleep time, time for developing my own special strengths and talents etc.)

Ask the students to brainstorm about what should be in their circle then ask them to draw their own pie graphs showing what proportion of their time is spent on each aspect. Discuss whether they need to change anything to have a more balanced life.



**TIP 9: HERE'S ANOTHER HINT ON EDUCARE**

**E**ducation should not merely be for earning a living. It should enable one to lead an exemplary life. The right teacher is one who is an embodiment of love and teaches the students to love all, to cultivate right relationships, and to develop human qualities. Teachers who will promote qualities of mutual love and regard in their students are sorely needed today.

**TIP 10: DISCIPLINE**

**E**ncourage students to take responsibility for their own decisions and the consequences of their

actions. One way to do this is to have class meetings on a regular basis.

Teacher or students present a problem. Each student in the class suggests strategies. [No comments or suggestions are made until every child who wishes to do so has made a suggestion].

Each suggestion is evaluated from the *heart* point of view – i.e. with the aim of encouraging students to use the heart/conscience as a filter.

**Example:**

**Problem:** Being bullied.

Students' ideas might include:

- ❖ Hit back
- ❖ Tell somebody in authority
- ❖ Ask if they want to join in and play with us
- ❖ Run away and hide
- ❖ Get your big brother to hit him back
- ❖ Hide behind a tree and throw stones at them
- ❖ Pretend to be sick
- ❖ Share something with the bully
- ❖ Use the "I feel..." message
- ❖ Invite the bully to play with you at your house/come to your birthday party

Ask students to sit silently and tune into their own hearts and decide which solution/s would be the best.

Evaluation questions:

- ❖ Do you think that would really help - **you /the bully /all concerned?**
- ❖ Does it feel right in your heart to do this?
- ❖ What would happen if .....?
- ❖ Which class/school rules does this idea fit/break?

**TIP 11: INVEST IN YOURSELF -  
SOMETHING YOU CAN DO FOR  
YOURSELF AS A TEACHER**

**T**hink calmly and go within yourself for the answers to your problems:

We all have within us the capacity to find solutions to our problems – but sometimes the stress of our busy lives prevents us from making full use of this capacity. When you have a problem, sit for a few minutes in a quiet place and do the following visualization:

Take a deep breath and as you breathe in, draw a light into your head. As you breathe out release your stress and tension. Draw the light in a line from your head to your heart and let it settle there for a few moments, opening your heart like a flower bud. Now let the light pass through your feet and your hands so they will lead you to meet with good people and do good things. Next take the light to surround your mouth and tongue so you can speak wisely and with compassion. Then take it to your eyes and let it fill your eyes so that you can see only the good qualities in your students. Let it fill your ears so you will hear the truth in what they are saying. Now bring the light to the top of your head and allow it to fill your mind with peaceful thoughts, then imagine that you are sending it to your pupils – particularly the ones who make your life difficult – your colleagues and then to the whole universe. Say to yourself:

*“I am in the light. The light is in me. I am the light”.*

As you say this, hold your problem in the light for a few moments and trust that the

illumination will bring a successful solution and then release the problem.

**TIP 12: SILENT REFLECTION/  
CREATIVE VISUALISATION THAT  
HAS WORKED WITH STUDENTS**

**V**isualisation for the start of a lesson

Close your eyes and imagine that there is a candle burning inside your head. Let the light get brighter and brighter until it fills your whole head. Let it light up your brain so that you will be able to think clearly and well. Imagine that the same light is going from you to everyone in your class, so they will be able to think clearly too.

After this visualization the following points can be discussed with pupils:

- ❖ You have the knowledge and ability inside your head already.
- ❖ Regular use of this kind of visualization will help to improve your concentration.
- ❖ Wishing for classmates what you wish for yourself (i.e. to do well) is healthier than feeling envy or jealousy.

*Some comments about this activity:*

- ❖ Sometimes students give up when facing difficulties but, after silent reflection, they are more persistent. *(Teacher)*
- ❖ It is quicker to think of answers than with eyes open. Time slows down when my eyes are closed, so there is more time to find a solution. *(Student)*

# The End of Education is Character

## DOES EDUCARE WORK?

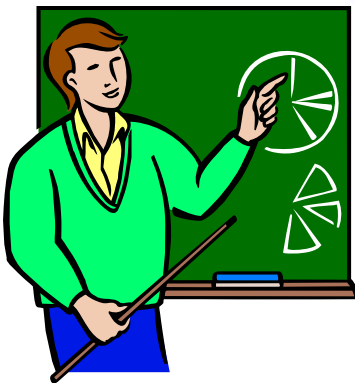
I feel it has lit a heart lamp, has illuminated my chest! Teaching has become happiness! Under the influence of the traditional ideas, I thought I was a good teacher as long as the students were getting results. Therefore in my teaching I would always strive for perfection and always thought the students had grasped the complete knowledge as long as they obtained good test results. But the fact is not so. You pay so much, but the harvest is actually very little. Facing this fact, I had become excessively sad, excessively disappointed and very tired. My teaching did not have any meaning. Then I started to incorporate Educare and I became aware of the theory:

- ❖ to awaken the child's innermost feelings, thoughts and values
- ❖ how to help the children know they all have special qualities and
- ❖ that the deepest impression the student has is of the teacher's personality, not the knowledge that she teaches.

All of this touched me in a very big way and I blushed with shame when I recalled the past. Though I had thought myself to be a good teacher, only pursuing the academic score was really superficial. I have learned the "humanist" side of the work, to "take love as the starting point" even if the student's outcomes are not so good. I try as much as possible not to look at the superficial things but to discover the students' true intrinsic selves. As a result my own values have changed and I now always set out to try to discover the students' happy side, maintain a happy mood in the classroom, and I have finally found my work to be a joy, and my teaching to be one of sheer happiness.

(Teacher)

Regarding the students' physical and moral integrity development, Educare has been like a beacon light illuminating the students' paths, improving their quality, and their behaviour and habits have made very big progress.



The students have changed from being quarrelsome to peaceful, from liking fighting to becoming loving, caring schoolmates.

Even those who did not like studying have come to like it.

Those who did not understand politeness have become civil, and their academic records have also slowly improved.

Their behaviour has changed and they now show compassion and filial piety. It has built a solid foundation for the students' future.

(Teacher)