

For Parents and Teachers: Becoming a Teacher of Creativity

By Eliane Leao Teaching itself is a unique invention. The process of becoming a creative teacher is like the process of thinking creatively. If you count on your education courses, the classes you've given, your students contributions, you'll be disappointed. You may learn about the subject being taught, the children's nature, the learning process, the methodology, and institutional materials; however, all of this will never be sufficient. You may inform yourself about the gifted student, or the one with special needs. Even then, you will not have unveiled everything. Added up, all these will not prepare you to teach. They will need to be combined with your own abilities and potential, plus the needs of your students in such a way that they'll lead you to your very own invention: your unique way of teaching. This unique invention is tremendously important to teach creativity or to teach creatively, leading the students to the discovery and use of their own potential. The search for a pre-established goal - the invention of your own way of teaching - emerges from you own creative process. If you fail, you will gain consciousness of your deficiencies and defects; you will know the existing gaps in your strategies and techniques; and you will discover the holes in your knowledge. You will base yourself on your life experiences and you will seek out indicators of how to improve your performance over the next try. You will have to read a lot. From then on, you study what you read and your questioning evolves increasingly. You will come to see things never before realized. Therefore, you will come to formulate and bet on hypothesis, and to search for solutions. You will become creative for you will be problem-solving. You yourself will be trying to become a good teacher through the experience of Methodology of Creative Action. Through your attempts, from the ecstatic successes and the acceptance of mistakes plus the very exclusion of these in the process, you will be vivifying the occurrence of your own invention – it'll be you being the teacher you've always wanted to be! Paul Torrance used to say: "Your own personality resources, your intellectual resources, your needs and abilities and those of your students, plus the expectations of the community to which you'll be teaching interact to determine the most effective materials and methodology. It is possible, however, to derive some general principles from the experience and research that'll increase the chances that your teaching will increment and promote the potential of talented children. It is possible to create teaching methodology and materials that will be based on already tested principles. It is the teacher's creative task to combine them to answer to the needs and abilities of the students, maintaining the harmony with their own needs and abilities. TOP 10 REQUIREMENTS FOR A TEACHER TO CREATE To teach creativity it is required that a teacher be greatly receptive to activities of listening, feeling and seeing the world. S/he needs to be, on his/her own, of upbeat personality, polite, curious and excited about the students' learning, completely free of hostile attitudes and punishment when it comes to the students. A teacher can never have tendencies to punish. S/he has to be able to let one thing or a fact lead to another thing or yet another fact. There exist some teachers who are used to placing the responsibility for not being creative on facts and things in the environment, accommodating as such over the years. Of course, in the environment, within society, and the educational system, there also exist many forces which inhibit the individuality of the creative teacher, which leads him/her to conform. In the search for our very own best way to teach, an analysis of the most common inhibiting forces is the least we should do. They are:

1. Random thinking versus absorbing thought

2. Lack of time to think and to dream

3. Lack of intellectual honesty

4. Desperate mind

5. No more investigation and exploration

6. No more in-depth investigation of new things

7. Deterioration of imagination reserves

8. No more jotting ideas down

9. Fear of individuality

10. Not being yourself anymore When we analyze each and every one of the 10 items considered obstacles for the creative teachers, we have:

1. When you try to be the only inventor of your very own way of teaching, there are times in which you have to concentrate on the problem. Some people incorrectly associate invention and discovery with mere chance, with random behavior. It is true that many good ideas seem to occur when the person is relaxed – in the tub, during religious services, by the pool. However, these occurrences are ALWAYS preceded by attentive concentration during which the mind maintained itself occupied with the problem in question.

2. The absorbing thought takes up your time. The clock is a tyrant and much can be done to soften its tyranny. The activities have to be developed with authenticity. Don't freak out. Set aside a part of your day for some free time, don't be reserved about daydreaming occasionally, and don't be embarrassed if someone catches you floating outside reality, thinking and concentrating on something that interest only you.

3. We are rarely honest with ourselves when it comes doing things that truly interest us. To become the creator of your own manner of teaching, you have to free yourself from all the coverings and masks that hide you inside your won work; from all your beliefs that are false; and from all conventions and forms that are outdated.

4. Some people think that the more you know, the less you are capable of invention and discovery. That is false. According to Pasteur, the chances increase for the prepared minds. But there is a paradox here. Familiarity along with existing knowledge is necessary to attain more knowledge; however, the existence of previous knowledge about a certain problem can become an impediment to its solution. Pre-concepts are accused of hindering discoveries.

5. For the teacher, there can never be one single period in which the experimentation process and that of testing will cease.

6. In general, the students complain about studying and having to repeat certain topics, thinking that the emphasis causes discouragement. This

occurs because the students have not dominated the ability of looking to the subjects approached with neither different things nor great depth. From studies on perception, however, it is clear that an object's meaning changes as we change the point and perspective through which we object it. Previously forgotten details can suddenly become extremely important. After we change the goals or after we obtain additional information, the meaning of something changes as well. Many are the inventions and discoveries through the deliberate use of certain methods, which made the familiar strange and the strange familiar. 7. The person will have difficulty in thinking creatively if her brain isn't rich in memories. Mental reserves filled with images will be useful to the creative teachers when s/he is searching for his/her own invention. One way of enriching the imagination is through the developing consciousness of the environment followed by detailed experimentation. This will be possible through sensory experiences, first-hand experiences, through personal identification with other professionals, through involvement with life. Another effective way is through immersion within world literature. 8. We feel deprived of ideas until the day in which we decide to write them down. Then our lives change! We frequently stop fixating on our own ideas, failing to capture them more so because they occur in inappropriate and uncommon places than because they occur where we'd like them to. Even the children have to be guided regarding the importance of "holding" ideas, taking notes to be used in the future, or to develop them when the opportunity comes. 9. It is difficult to free ourselves from the opinion that people formulate about us. We are always trying to adjust to the expectations of others, to the fact that we shouldn't harm nor offend. This causes us to severely reduce our potentialities. Very few of the creative who contributed magnificently to society were popular or well-accepted by others. In fact, many of them were hated. The creative person always has something urgent to say and is constantly searching for new aspects of the truth. 10. Perhaps the best advice to be given to the teacher who's being capacitated in creativity is: "Be yourself if you wish to contribute with any original thing that you believe to be worthwhile." This is a piece of advice difficult to receive because we are hindered by our pretension and/or shyness, our doubts and weaknesses, beyond the confused self-concepts. Seek to know the value of your intuitions. Treat them with care and cultivate the conditions to give them the means to sprout and grow. The process of becoming a creative teacher is, finally, an exciting adventure which brings unexpected returns. Trust in your dreams and from them, build your reality.

About the Author

Dr. Eliane Leao is a native of Brazil, South America. She has a background in Education from Purdue University (Masters) and a PhD in the Department of Educational Psychology from the State University of Campinas (UNICAMP)/Purdue University (Ph.D.). Dr. Leao has also three Bachelor's degrees, one in Piano, another in Musical Education, and a third in Voice. Dr. Leao is currently a professor of Music Education and Music Therapy conducting research on the influence of Music in Early Childhood Learning. Dr. Leao hopes that the trials and successes of her family may inspire and convince other parents to stimulate their children during early childhood so that they may enjoy a rich, stimulating, integrated, and happy life always. Visit our site at: <http://www.baby-can-read.com> for free articles, ebook and free giveaways! Article Source: http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Eliane_Leao

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