

The Inner Person of the Teacher

Exploring the importance of self reflection for meaningful and effective teaching.

“Teaching holds a mirror to the soul. If I am willing to look in that mirror and not run from what I see, I have a chance to gain self-knowledge- and knowing myself is as crucial to good teaching as knowing my students and my subject”(Palmer, 1998, p. 2, The Courage to Teach).

The Teacher In Me

Self reflection is foundational to growing professionally, psychologically and in social spheres.

As an educator, the teacher needs to engage in self reflection at every phase of teaching from acknowledging one’s strengths and weaknesses to knowing and understanding the scope of the task at hand.

I. Likes and dislikes about yourself (be honest with yourself)

i) List a few attributes/things you seem to like about yourself.

Example: I like that I can analyse situations as a deep thinker. I like that I enjoy the company of new people as I am interested in meeting people from various social cultural backgrounds.

ii) List a few attributes/things you do not seem to like about yourself.

Example: I do not like that when I take a walk , I walk slowly. I do not seem to like that I can be quick to judge other people’s actions.

“Your word is a lamp to guide my feet and a light for my path” (Psalm 119:105).

Your turn:

- I. Likes and dislikes about yourself (be honest and kind with yourself)

What you like (what can you lean into?):

What you dislike (what can you improve in?):

II. Areas of strength in teaching (be honest with yourself)

i) What do you enjoy and do well in regards to teaching?

Example: I enjoy engaging my students and watch them respond to my questions with interest.

ii) What things do peers/others say you are capable of doing well in teaching?

Example: I have been given credit for implementing creative ways of getting students attention and helping them to be interested in learning.

iii) What personal life experience(s) help you connect with teaching? Any acts of compassion you can recall?

Example: The care and love that I received from an outstanding Christian teacher in my early primary school years.

My father was a good listener and guided me in acquiring knowledge about some practical daily life things.

Your turn:

II.Areas of strength in teaching (be honest with yourself)

What are your teaching strengths?

What are teaching strengths others have noticed in you?

Your turn:

II.Areas of strength in teaching (be honest with yourself)

What is a core memory, personal moment in your history that inspires you to teach?

III. Your professional desires/aspirations (be forward looking)

List a few teaching goals that you have, to enhance your teaching career.

Examples:

1. I want to be more creative in planning instructions for my teaching through diverse teaching methods.
2. I would like to integrate diversified assessment strategies into my lesson plan.
3. I am interested in managing my time in the classroom to allow for one-to-one interactions with my students at least once a week.

Your turn:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

How do you intend to achieve some of the teaching goals?

Example:

- I would like to explore the integration of teacher, learner and content focus methods.
- I am going to look into formative assessment for engaging students' knowledge of content over a period of time. It could be for learning, evidence, feedback and motivation for active learners (e.g. open-ended questions, feedback form portfolio etc.)
- I will add extra time in each lesson plan to make room for adjustments. I can use my extra time in some of the days to talk with a few student individually while others are on extra activity worksheets/ silent reading time. (See my action research on silent reading as an effective classroom transition.)

