**SCULPTING THE STUDENTS TO BE LIVE WIRES**

**Sr. S. Antony Mary**

*Department of Mathematics, Holy Cross College (Autonomous), Nagercoil.*

**INTRODUCTION**

A sculptor possesses the insight to foresee what image emerges from the stone. Once he visualises the image, he begins to chisel, to realise his dreams. Similarly it is an important work of a teacher to see a beautiful, positive image inside every student. A teacher allows the image to emerge, with the same sensitivity and delicacy which the sculptor possesses. Students may look rough or tough or difficult or closed, but the teacher has to be the tolerant, persevering and responsible, allowing this image to take its destined shape. In the raw material of students, the teachers perceives the element that turns out to be live wire in her. Chipping is a painful process. Dust comes out and waste is being chipped away. Students and teacher must be ready for this painful but highly rewarding process. Gold when heated becomes attractive jewellery; Copper when beaten, become useful wires; stone when chiselled, becomes beautiful statues; likewise, when human beings undergo pain, they become valuable people.

 Sculpting students to be live wires means making them powerful at all levels. Teaching is a vocation, and as teachers, it is our moral obligation to empower the student community- that is, to unleash the awesome power within them. We need to concentrate on all the levels such as emotional, physical, spiritual, mental, psychological, intellectual and moral. If they are deficient in any aspect, their integral development does not take place. We need to listen to the depth of their inner ocean and help them discover their mind power.

 The vision, mission and goal of our college totally cover this process and its outcome. Our vision is to be empowered by divine help so as to establish the kingdom of God on earth. Our mission is to form well integrated persons; and our goal is “total liberation and development of the whole person of the student in order to prepare them to take their rightful place and responsibility in society”.

**IMPORTANCE OF THE ROLE OF TEACHERS**

 Students need to possess a hundred mirrors in which to see what is happening deep within them. It is history that chisels continuously the incomplete, uncertain youth. A teacher has a major part to play as students spend a lot of their active time in the classrooms. Teachers have their share, a very big share, in giving shape to the future of the world by their involvement with the youth.

To quote the words of Gandhi, “No country has ever risen without being purified through the fire of suffering. The mother suffers so that her child may live. The condition of wheat-growing is that the seed grain should perish. Life comes out of death.” Will the students rise out of their slackness and imperfections without fulfilling this eternal law of purification? Students should be like a swan able to segregate milk and water. In this world of technology our students need to take in the things which are productive, fruitful and life appealing.

 **THE GREAT TEACHER**

“The mediocre teacher tells;

The good teacher explains;

The great teacher inspires.”- William Ward

 Normally students say that a great teacher is someone who provides classroom entertainment and gives very little homework. But, what is it that really makes a great teacher? Teaching is one of the most complicated jobs today. It demands broad knowledge of subject matter, curriculum and standards; enthusiasm, a caring attitude and a love of learning; knowledge of discipline and classroom management techniques; and a desire to make a difference in the lives of young people. Thus great teaching seems to have less to do with our knowledge and skills, than with our attitude toward our students, our subject and our work. Jo Palmer-Tweed, course director at the Thames Primary Consortium says, “You wouldn’t put someone in an orchestra, give them an instrument and expect a virtuoso performance. You’ve got to learn how to play that instrument first and then teach the other.” Teacher is to be trained first and then the actual shaping of students becomes easier. Teachers need to have a style which is perfect for their purpose of communication. They need to develop a dynamic interplay between lecture and content so that students enjoy attending the lectures and are eager to learn. Always a study or a course should be linked to the practical life. This creates a feasible atmosphere and a greater interest for learning. A positive reinforcement is a better way to motivate students to learn the material. As teachers have a great role in the formation of the students let us see the nine characteristics of a great teacher:

* She /he respects students
* Creates a sense of community and belonging in the classroom
* Is warm, accessible, enthusiastic and caring
* Sets high expectations for all students
* Has her own love of learning
* Is a skilled leader
* Can “shift-gears”
* Collaborates with colleagues on an ongoing basis
* Maintains professionalism in all areas

 **A GREAT OPPORTUNITY**

 To be a teacher is a great opportunity, and the noble act of sculpting the students to be live wires could be achieved only when we concentrate on them individually as a unique person endowed with latent potentials and power. Each student is available to us during peak and fresh moments of the day. She/he is like a black board and a plain paper in which we are free to write the matters required and the matters we desire. That is, we are free to instil and inculcate in each student values, virtues, moral, character, knowledge and discipline, failing which results in the entering of the unwanted matters by the influence of peer group, family members and strangers. Teachers need to encourage the students towards acquiring meaningful moral and character formation. It is important for teachers to be role models, and live the same things they teach. Students’ personality is to be built up by means of relentless effort that involves immeasurable patience and perseverance. And every input that students receive need to sink deep into the recesses of their mind, go through a process of revaluation, and then rejected or accepted or modified or even subtly transformed. Education can be influential in framing the meaning individuals will give to complex social situations. They in turn formulate ways of constructing “societies” that are non-discriminatory, just and safe. Students should be given opportunities to assume roles that entail moral responsibility. Opportunities for students to build a sense of themselves as moral beings, such as actively participating in meeting the needs of their own institution and local community, if coupled with opportunities for meaningful reflection, can provide content for students to construct a moral sense of self.

**CONTRIBUTION OF TEACHERS**

 Life is a succession of lessons which must be lived to be understood. Abdul Kalam says, “If you keep waiting for the right time, you may never begin. Begin from where you are, with what you are and with what you have.” Realising the importance of their greater responsibility, teachers need to grab the opportunity and make students realise the beauty within them. Antoine de Saint-Exupery says, “The entire world will make way for a man who knows where he is going.” As a great deal of talent is lost to the world for want of a little courage, students are to be trained as goal oriented, courageous and better citizens.

**A BETTER UNDERSTANDING**

Teachers especially are constantly engaged in the shaping and moulding of young people’s character. A student is not passive digester of knowledge elegantly arranged for him by superior artists of curriculum design. He listens, reads, thinks, studies, writes, and at the same time feels, worries, hopes, loves, and hates. The aim of education is to focus more on developing a student's potential holistically to create an individual who has high intellect and is balanced emotionally and physically. Education should reaffirm our commitment to the virtues of truth, justice, honesty, trust and sense of duty. Students should be made to realize the fact that present striving leads to future unfolding. Our students are at the cross- roads of their lives. They need more freedom to grow and they have to be understood in the changing context. Discipline should come from within and not be imposed. We help them to be more compassionate and understanding only by showing compassion and by treating them with due respect and understanding. They should imbibe values naturally and they shouldn’t be pressurized into anything.

 Let teachers be counsellors, leaders and constant role models who inspire and encourage students to strive for excellence, live life to the fullest and make the world a better place. Let teachers be good mentors who shape priceless pearls in the shell of education. Let them be a dynamic force and ignite the divine spark within young minds.

**REFERENCES**

* Bhattacharya, Bhabani. *Mahatma Gandhi as a Writer* -Arnold- Heinemann. Delhi.1982. Print
* Thangasamy, Dr. Kokila. *Sirantha asiriyaraha*. Pavai publications.Chennai.2006. Print
* Moral Development in childhood | Everyday Life - Global Post. 11/09/2013. Web
* What makes a great teacher? – Quality Teaching| Great Schools. 12/09/2013. Web
* Nucci, Larry. Moral Development and character Formation. University of Illinois at Chicago. 13/09/2013.Web
* Oxtoby , Kathy. How to make your presence felt in the classroom| TES New Teachers. 15/09/2013. Web
* Nine Characteristics of a Great Teacher| Faculty Focus- Higher ED teaching strategies/ from Magna publications. 16/09/2013. Web
* Twenty ways to make lectures more participatory – Derek Bok Centre for Teaching and Learning, Harvard University. 17/09/2013. Web
* THE School-Based Assessment programme (SBA), which replaced the exam-oriented teaching methodology, will move into its second phase next year with the introduction of tests, projects and workshops for students. 18/09/2013. Web
* Decoster, David. A .Associate Director of Housing.University of Georgia, Educational Role in College Student Housing. 19/09/2012. Web
* Revell, Dr. Lynn. In partnership with the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation Professor James Arthur. Canterbury Christ Church University College