

Personal Model of Discipline

Throughout our experiences as both students and pre-service teachers, we have encountered different types and levels of discipline. While some models focus on student's emotions and allowing students to make their own choices, other models focus on strict discipline focused around rewards and punishments. One important consideration for teachers to understand is the key elements of their discipline model. While I personally believe that there should be structure within a classroom to provide a safe environment for students, I also believe that students should contribute to the classroom climate. There should be a sense of community within the classroom that only can be built by including students in the important activities that occur throughout the school year.

My model of discipline is focused around high teacher control. I will call my personal model the Organized Discipline with Emotions model. The fundamental elements of my model are based in Positive Discipline coined by Fredric Jones, while some of the additional concepts are based on Discipline with Dignity and Cooperative Discipline. Even though my personal model is based on a mixture of other discipline models, my model still exhibits high teacher control.

Positive Discipline is a high control model that believes that teachers must control student behavior because the assumption is that students are incapable of controlling their own behavior. Positive discipline concludes that student behavior can and should be reinforced and punished. Cooperative discipline and Discipline with Dignity are models that focus on a mutual responsibility between teacher and student. Both of these models believe that student misbehavior is caused by a specific need within the child.

Based on the above foundations and my personal beliefs, my Organized Discipline with Emotion model will focus on creating structure and organization within the classroom. I believe that it is the teacher's responsibility to create the structure that the students will follow. While I believe that students should have control over some aspects of the classroom, there still needs to be an overarching structure guiding the day. In addition, I believe that students should be rewarded for appropriate behavior and punished for inappropriate behavior. This will reinforce the appropriate classroom behaviors that I, as a teacher, expect to see.

As a teacher I have to understand which concepts I want to include in my discipline model in order to effectively control my classroom. First, I would create an overall sense of

structure in my classroom. I believe that students should have a seating chart. While students may want to sit next to their friends, they are often distracted and end up off-task when no seating arrangement is used. In addition, this strategy gives the teacher more control and order in the classroom.

Second, as a teacher and suggested by the Positive Discipline model, I should have routines already in place for transitional periods and group work. There should be specific expectations in place for students to follow. For instance, when students are in the hallway they should be silent and stay in one single line. Having these expectations in place contributes to the high level of teacher control and it gives the students limits in the classroom.

Third, I want to build a strong sense of community within my classroom by allowing the students to participate in building our class rules. Specifically, Cooperative Discipline suggests that teacher should create a code of conduct with his or her students. In my model, I will create a set of classroom rules with my students. I will suggest some rules, like respect one another and listen to the teacher when she is talking. This will help break the ice and get students to talk about rules and consequences. This strategy will create a sense of community within the classroom because it gives students an opportunity to express their own opinions about how the classroom should run. In my model, the teacher will have the final say in the rule and how they are implemented. However, this type of student engagement still creates a stronger sense of community.

Another strategy I will use in my model of discipline is the idea of preferred activity time. This is the idea proposed by the Positive Discipline model and is an incentive program for students. Preferred activity time states that if students behave and cooperate, then they can work on an activity that they enjoy. This is a whole class incentive system. Students will gain and lose points together. At the end of the week, the points can be traded for time to work on activities that they enjoy. In my model, the students will gain points by following all of the classroom rules in place and by participating in class. Jones proposes that these incentives can be earned through class reviews. He believes that teachers are going to review for tests. Instead of the teacher leading the review, he believes that teachers can use review games and make the review more interactive. In order to allow students to gain more points throughout the week and to give them an interactive review of the material learned, I will play learning games with them. For instance, a major component of fourth grade is the Virginia Studies Standard of Learning. As a teacher, I

can prepare review questions for the SOL test. When time permits, I can have a review game with the students. This review can be set up like Jeopardy and students can be placed on different teams. If everyone participates and follows the rules of the game, then the class gets 3 points for their preferred activity time log.

Finally as a teacher, I need to take into consideration how students feel when they are disciplined. Teachers should not purposely try to embarrass students. Discipline with Dignity focuses on this idea and cautions teachers about how they discipline students. As a teacher, I should manage my emotions when I discipline students. I should explain to the student the behavior issue and also explain the desired behavior. If necessary, I should remove the student from the classroom and not embarrass them in front of the other students. For instance, if a student is acting out in class, I should calmly ask the student to accompany me to the hallway and explain why the behavior is disturbing the class. During this conference, I should discuss the behavior issue with the student and determine what can be done to achieve the desired behavior. After this discussion, the teacher will decide on the appropriate discipline for the student. By disciplining this way, the student is given a clear space to talk and makes the discipline more like a conversation.

Organized Discipline with Emotions is my personal discipline model that I will follow in my classroom. It is based on the ideas of Positive Discipline, Cooperative Discipline, and Discipline with Dignity. These ideas have come together to create a model that creates high teacher control. With any discipline model, there are specific strategies and concepts that outline a model. My model considers student emotions student emotions, gives preferential activity time, routines, focuses on specific classroom structures, and builds a classroom community by allowing students to create classroom rules.

References

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