Teaching as Facilitation

REFLECT ON YOUR EXPERIENCE

Consider your favorite teachers. Really take a moment to sort through the various people that spring to mind. Savor these people who had a big impact on your life. Stop reading this book for a few minutes and see if you can pick out one teacher.

Once you have "found" this memorable mentor, remember what she or he looked like. Hear her or his voice. Can you see and hear other students or the classroom, or other people and places that were important at the time too? Do you remember how old you were and what you looked like? Notice the feelings you still have about your experiences with your favorite teacher.

What, in particular, do you remember learning at that time? Was it fun? Challenging? Did you have a sense of joining with the teacher or with the class? Did you grow as a person during the time you spent with this teacher or shortly after? Pause again to consider your answers to these questions. Use your journal, or share stories with a peer.

❖ Characteristics of Facilitation

This chapter will describe what makes up a facilitative teacher–student relationship. In contrast to many approaches to instruction, the focus of this chapter is not about student change and development but on helping teachers develop and change themselves (Palmer, 1998; Rogers, 1959). The main point of the chapter is describing a way of being that is observably warm, trusting, empathic, and authentic in words and actions. Warmth refers to a foundation of care and acceptance of learners. Trust is an attitude of high expectations, which leads to sharing power, control, and choice with learners (McCombs & Miller, 2007). Empathy is a means of honoring students' voices

In This Chapter . . .

❖ Develop your disposition and skills to facilitate learning.

❖ Learn how students can better see that their teachers care for them.

❖ Discover how high expectations and nondirective teaching fosters trust in students' capacities to learn.

❖ Practice perspective taking, and encourage student expression and development.

❖ Confront and accept your own vulnerabilities as a teacher, particularly with regards to diversity issues.

❖ Consider the significance of attending to every teacher–student relationship you have.

through perspective taking of their feelings, motivations, and learning processes. Authenticity, or realness, refers to teachers' self-awareness and ownership of communications that express opinions, evaluations, and requirements. The chapter concludes with a section that explores how the aspects together form facilitative relationships and are supported by meta-analytic results (Cornelius-White, 2007).

Warmth: The Foundation

> *What I like about school is one of my teachers. It's the way she says things like "dear" and "sweetheart." . . . I also like the way she talks to me like I am a human. My other teacher, I can't think of a thing I like. She looks over my shoulder when I am working. I can't stand it.*
>
> —Middle school student, *Voices From the Inside*

Showing you care about your students is the first step toward building a facilitative teacher–student relationship. Granted, most all teachers have positive intentions. They go into teaching to make a difference in students' lives. However, learner-centered caring means more. Caring involves warmth (C. H. Patterson, 1973). The research on warmth is probably the largest of the single teacher–student relationship variables (Cornelius-White, 2007). Warmth refers to positive regard, unconditionality, respect, and acceptance. Ideally, warmth is more than just charisma or something a teacher feels: Warmth is a way of being, something the teacher is and does, a true valuing of each student as a person (Noddings, 1984; Rogers & Freiberg, 1994; Valenzuela, 1999).

Although fostering the underlying disposition toward care can be a rich and lifelong endeavor (Noddings, 1992), there are several means to help teachers convey warmth they may already have. Students need to recognize how a caring teacher is really "walking the walk," not just "talking the talk." Warmth is conveyed by moment-to-moment, small actions that form a relational foundation. Observable behavior conveys teachers do not just care about students' futures, but that they care now.

It is all too common for teachers to care about their students in general but, in the moment, to be focused upon something unrelated, like getting students to sit down, listen, or memorize facts from the lesson. Also common is that teachers seem to think about warmth and caring in abstract ways, not the kind of concrete ways that are more likely to make it through to students. A third common assumption is to equate care with soft or feminine characteristics rather than a full spectrum of teacher engagement. For example, teachers report feeling that they "feel" care or that they care "because" they sacrifice or work hard.

In contrast, students report teachers care when they directly say so to students, laugh with students, trust students by telling them personal stories or asking for their opinions, give students "high fives," hug students, or write students letters (Poplin & Weeres, 1992). Additional examples of warmth include greeting each student, making eye contact, having a welcoming posture, and reducing the amount of teacher talk to allow students time and opportunities to talk. Teachers can also convey warmth by facing students when teachers talk, using open body language (e.g., arms not crossed), smiling, and matching pitch, pacing, and word choice. Though students report perceiving warmth with touch, teachers should use caution as touch can convey disrespect even more strongly than respect when undesired or inappropriate. Becoming aware of and utilizing distance between instructors and students can also help. Teachers may move closer to students when teachers ask questions, and acknowledge what students say in response, assuming complexity rather than dismissing when answers are vague or tangential. Providing students with positive attention is also important (Gazda et al., 2005). In a study with African American children, students who reported good relationships with their teachers received almost half the ratio of reprimands to positive comments than students who were dissatisfied (Baker, 1999).

Trust: Optimism and High Expectations

Never do for a child that which he can do for himself.

—Gary Landreth

Although warmth describes the caring foundation of facilitative relationships, trust communicates optimistic, high expectations for students to learn and develop. Learner-centered instruction (LCI) recognizes students are naturally active learners, not passive recipients. They want to explore, learn, and grow.

When teachers demonstrate trust, they share power with students and guide rather than direct students' meaning making. Students are invited to share their own views and take initiative in developing and completing their own individual or cooperative learning endeavors. Using phrases like "I would like to . . ." or "I am going to . . ." rather than "You have to . . ." or "You are going to . . ." conveys trust and trustworthiness (Howes & Ritchie, 2002). Encouraging students to ask and answer other students' questions further conveys trust that students are capable learners. Trust instills in students a sense of responsibility for their own (self-regulatory) and their peers' (co-regulatory) learning. To learn to self-regulate, students need opportunities to take on more responsibility and see the relevance of the tasks set before them. One example of

a nondirective method that often conveys trust is to solicit preferences and offer choices in assignments. Designing evaluation experiences that challenge students and teachers alike to think, create, and revise is another example.

Having high expectations for students does not mean criticizing students when they appear to be learning slowly. It means believing in students especially when they are struggling. Trust is built through consistency but also includes a willingness to digress or adapt curricular plans, even if the digression may seem simplistic or initially off base. Teachers must have the expectation that students will be able to "make it" and what students want to learn is worth learning.

The presence of high expectations without warmth is not effective (Howes & Ritchie, 2002). Although accountability standards have been growing in the classroom, it is important to remember there are many paths to success, and a learner-centered classroom can meet performance standards. In LCI, content is a means to the end of learning rather than the end itself. Sometimes, the how, why, where, and when in learning is more valuable than the what in learning. For example, students might advance their reading skills by picking up a magazine about rap music better than they could learn to read by reading about the Revolutionary War (though it is more likely they will do both once you have formed a meaningful relationship with them).

Nondirectivity refers to an attitude and associated behaviors that help teachers' absorption (Noddings, 1992; Raskin, 2005) and ethical stance to respect the autonomy and developmental potential of learners (Bozarth, 1998; Brodley, 2005; Cornelius-White & Cornelius-White, 2005). In counseling research, the more resistant the client, the more effective nondirective methods are (Beutler, Rocco, Moleiro, & Talebi, 2001; Cornelius-White, 2003a, 2003b). Both direct and nondirect methods work when people are compliant. In other words, if you tell a cooperative, average-achieving high school student to read a chapter from a textbook and write answers to the essay questions at the end of the chapter or ask the same cooperative student to brainstorm possible assignments in response to the chapter, rank order them, and then mutually agree on one, it is arguable the student will learn either way. However, if you ask a student who is struggling with understanding the content, has not been consistently doing assignments, and says he or she thinks the questions at the end "are stupid," to read and answer the questions, it is more likely he or she will learn if you offer and support him or her through the nondirective process.

A trusting teacher honors and focuses on what the learner is saying and doing instead of what the learner is not doing. A learner-centered teacher does not force a student to learn something he or she is not ready to. By avoiding a struggle for compliance, the teacher and student form an alliance, and work progresses faster and smoother than if a power struggle ensues through immediate confrontation of the resistance. Like the sayings go: "If you can't beat 'em, join 'em" and "You catch more flies with honey." It kind of works like reverse psychology, where paradoxically you can get further with some students (of all ages) when you give in, than when you keep pushing against them. From this perspective, such resistance is not really resistance at all. It is simply difference. This is a difference in which, if the teacher can trust the student, the student may likewise be able to trust the teacher and they can progress with shared goals.

Trust sometimes comes from having a progressive view (Dewey, 1910/1997) about the purpose of teaching as one to foster the holistic socialization and actualization of learners consistent with the idealism of the vast majority of teachers-in-training (Rubalcava, 2005). However, a traditional purpose of teaching (to impart knowledge) remains the norm in practice and continues to be prioritized by policy makers (e.g., Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas's concurring opinion in the "Bong Hits for Jesus" case denying students a right to express and teach and confirming only their right to be taught). Lecture remains the most common form of interaction students experience. In fact, multiple studies have shown that in an average classroom, only 1 out of every 40 minutes of time involves student participation (Weimer, 2002). Although lecturing may have its place, particularly to convey what, when, and where more than how and why, it is rooted in a teacher-centered, not learner-centered, model. Freire (1968) described lecture and other teacher-centered methods as the "banking" system, where knowledge is deposited in students by teachers as if students were banks and knowledge were money. LCI values lecturing but advocates its use wisely, when it is requested or is the most efficient and useful way for students to learn specific content.

Having learner-centered beliefs can help lead to better learner-centered practice, as it is the alignment of beliefs and practices from both teachers' and learners' perspectives that leads to success (McCombs & Miller, 2007). However, simply believing you are trusting of students is not enough (Cornelius-White, 2007). Teachers' own personally held learner-centered and non-learner-centered beliefs have virtually no direct correlation to students' success with engagement or achievement. To help students learn, understanding and agreeing with learner-centered ideas must be transferred to behavior inside the classroom perceivable by students, such as through fostering of positive relationships and the use of diverse, authentic inquiry and cooperative methods. Likewise, teachers need to work through conflicting beliefs that are both learner-centered ("All students are capable of engaged learning") and non-learner-centered ("Students won't learn unless I spell it all out for them") to show more consistency in realizing their beliefs within relationships and instruction (McCombs & Miller, 2007). Elsewhere, the first author explores the element of trust in education in more depth (Cornelius-White & Cornelius-White, 2005).

Things to Think, Talk, or Write About

1. What are some greetings students use to show affection or trust with each other? Write down at least five. Which of these would likely be perceived as disrespectful or welcome if coming from you?

2. Think about a time when it was easy to like and show caring for a particular student. Contrast this with another time when a student was difficult to care for. Can you identify any feelings or beliefs that may have been behind your reactions? Discuss or write down thoughts and feelings that help and hinder conveying warmth and caring to all students.

Empathy: Getting to Know Students

If I talk to my parents sometimes they get mad at me because of what I say to them. Or maybe they're too busy. If I talk to teachers I can't tell them that I said a bad word or something because they suspend me. So I guess the only people that understand are gangsters. They always understand and they always help me solve it too.

–Middle school student, *Voices From the Inside*

Arguably, it is a human right to be at least minimally heard and understood. Equally important, students learn in their own particular ways. Perspective taking connects teachers to students but also provides a continuous mutual assessment of students' learning. How does a particular student understand the material? On which part does he or she get confused? When does he or she understand the content creatively in a way a teacher does not? What does the student feel when he or she asks that question? The research on teacher empathy shows large effects on both cognitive and affective/behavioral student success (Cornelius-White, 2007).

One of the most salient features of all educational innovations is that **instructional feedback** is pivotal (Hattie, 1999; Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Although perhaps most important, empathy is a means of conveying compassion, it is also a means to providing feedback that is accurate and student specific. It is a means to "connect while you correct" (Landreth & Bratton, 2006, p. 98). If teachers really understand each of their students, then they can scaffold or help them with the next step. Rather than teaching in a way that students may feel is beyond their capabilities or without any challenge, empathic teachers can teach right to, or just ahead of (Carkhuff, 2000; Gazda et al., 2005), their students. Students can more easily accommodate or assimilate in empathic environments.

When teachers are empathic, they model learning. Empathy is inherently a learning process. Empathic teachers listen closely and ask clarifying questions to better understand where their students are, implicitly encouraging students to do the same with teachers' lessons and with each other. When classroom lessons are really flowing, teachers and students propel each other in an energetic manner.

Empathy allows "negative" feedback to be perceived as it is without it having to be judged as bad. For example, if a student complains he loses his pencil to another student after repeatedly poking another student with it, a traditional response might be to scold the student, "Stop that!" or "Don't misbehave!" If the student is lucky, while scolding, the teacher highlights the specific behavior and highlights the natural or logical consequences resulting from his actions, "You teased Jenny with your pencil, and she took it." In contrast, a teacher who empathizes can put words to the sequence while conveying a respectful understanding. "Juan, you are upset that you lost your pencil after teasing Jenny. You wish you had a pencil because it's not fair to have to do work when you don't have one." The empathic response incorporates the student's perspective to build a relationship for the student's success and can keep the focus on the learner and learning.

In addition to re-humanizing education, modeling active listening skills, and providing effective feedback, empathy builds students' self-concepts. Reviews of the literature on counseling have consistently found no other subcomponent of counseling contributes as much as empathy to clients' positive change (Bohart, Elliot, Greenberg, & Watson, 2002; Cornelius-White, 2002). Reciprocal empathy is a key feature to why cooperative learning has been definitively shown to be more effective than individualistic

or competitive learning (D. W. Johnson & Johnson, 1989). Not just helping relationships, but good family relationships and friendships are also characterized by mutuality, or reciprocity (McFarlane, Bellissimo, & Norman, 1995). Also, walking in the shoes of another is central to moral development (Hoffman, 2001; Noddings, 1994). Being able to grasp and value the significance of another person's emotions, opinions, and thoughts allows one to treat that person as a fellow human being and follow the less well-known **platinum rule**—do unto others as they would have you do unto them. We cannot expect our students to follow this tenet unless we ourselves do.

Students experience a multitude of feelings when learning something, particularly when either very engaged or really struggling. Two common emotions with which teachers can often do a better job empathizing are frustration and confusion. Often educators ignore, try to reassure, or lessen the feeling, which is often unintentionally offensive (e.g., "Don't get frustrated now, it's really not that hard" may be interpreted by the learner as "I think you're stupid"). Reassurance tends to be less helpful for learning than people expect, except when associated with trying new behaviors for the first time (D. W. Johnson, 2006). When learners get confused or frustrated, teachers sometimes vocalize thoughts internally that suggest impatience ("I don't care how you feel, just try it already"), righteous indignance ("I'm trying to help him, who is he to get frustrated with me?"), or a non-learner-centered, judgmental attitude ("This student just is not too bright, is he?" or "He needs to develop more frustration tolerance or he'll never make it."). An empathic response would convey compassion and understanding for the student's feelings but also invite self-regulation, offering the student feedback for what might help him or her accomplish the task ("I appreciate that you are struggling to understand this. How can I help?" or "You are really working at this despite your confusion. Would it help if Lisa shared her example with you?"). Especially before cooperative learning is normalized and a degree of social connections and self-regulated learning is built, students often resist seeing themselves as struggling. Students sometimes believe "good" students do not have to exert effort to learn. Teachers need to be prepared to understand and accept these reactions too.

Empathy includes both the cognitive and emotional. It is an intellectual task of bracketing one's own views to go inside the mind of a student and see that student's view of the learning task and eventually of the world. Empathy also means capturing and communicating the moment-to-moment experiences, emotions, and meaning structures students convey in their learning. When a student asks a question, an empathic teacher can answer the question, but also grasp the meaning of the question to the student. For example, if a student asks, "So which people died during the Holocaust?" an empathic teacher appreciates not just the content of the question but attempts to understand the implications to the student, which might mean he is sad for those lost, scared that someone from his cultural group was brutally killed, or guilty for having a German ancestry. When a teacher is empathic, she or he really gets to know each person in the classroom, as do the other students. Noddings (1984) termed this *engrossment* (feeling with or receiving the other). The empathic classroom becomes filled with people who are interesting and real to each other.

One reason empathy may be so broadly successful is it can effectively prevent loss of instructional time due to "behavioral problems." Like those who are trusting, teachers who are empathic do not view differences in priorities as resistance, but instead as valuable information with which to provide their students with valuable feedback.

This is consistent with Williams's (2003) argument that teachers must become more aware in their day-to-day practice how to adapt to learners' worldviews, with a potential benefit of reducing the achievement gap between racial minorities. To facilitate learning, probably no other skill is as important as empathy. Empathy involves discrete and teachable skills, is easier to measure, and has one of the largest literatures on relationship building (Bohart et al., 2002; Gazda et al., 2005).

Things to Think, Talk, or Write About

1. Practice active listening. Pair off with another student or another person, and pick a topic where you are both guaranteed to have an opinion and strong feelings. This could be a TV show you have both recently watched, a current news event, or a controversial topic from religion or politics. Take turns as the speaker or active listener, and empathize for alternating periods of 2 minutes each. Use a watch to keep time, and do not shift roles until after the 2 minutes have passed. To practice active listening, aim to get the speaker's feelings, meanings, and overall point. Do not ask questions or repeat details. Active learning takes substantial practice to master and is often approached as a long-term task with weekly practice and feedback from observers to fine-tune listeners' skills (Gazda et al., 2005).

2. Having a vocabulary of frustration or confusion words at the ready and practicing saying these words out loud and with tact can improve the likelihood that when your students feel frustrated or confused, you will respond empathically rather than ignoring or minimizing their feelings or being defensive. Therefore, brainstorm as many synonyms as possible for frustration. Do the same for confusion. In the spirit of brainstorming, it is important to allow all ideas that emerge to be validated, even if they are not the best. Write in your journal or work cooperatively. Next, pick out words that might fit well in different circumstances and with different-age students. Consult a thesaurus if needed.

3. Read the following student statements. Consider how you would have responded to such statements prior to reading this chapter. Write or say out loud a response you might have made. Next, consider how you could respond to the statements to convey empathic understanding. Write or say out loud an empathic statement. Consider these questions to help you empathize: What feelings do the students have? What are they trying to express? What do they want? What reasons might they have?

    Roger: Tests are stupid.

    Jamie: I don't want to wear my coat outside.

    Leroy: I like addition okay, but division sucks.

    Becky: I think that George is not nice.

    Madison: Why do we have to do this?

    Stephen: My mama said she can't even understand the homework.

    Delmar: Jay keeps hitting me.

Realness: Keeping You Honest

I cannot be a teacher without exposing who I am.

—Paulo Freire

Students learn by example. As actions speak louder than words, teachers need to be self-aware, even to the point of becoming aware of what they did not know they were teaching, such as their own biases and societal norms. Realness involves learning about one's self, especially one's identity as a teacher and one's experiences as a student. Realness is also about being transparent and authentic in interactions.

Realness means openness to sharing one's own feelings, not hiding behind conventions, politeness, or personal shyness. Authentic teachers are willing to learn and humbly express their own opinions. They utilize their perceptions as information, not "the truth," which in turn can help deepen their relationships in the school. Realness refers to sufficient self-regard for teachers to be vulnerable, trusting one's self and the students with authenticity to promote a safe and fertile learning environment (Bozarth, 1998; Cornelius-White, 2007). Though many learners and teachers alike tend to believe capable teachers do not make mistakes frequently, an authentic teacher is capable of admitting when they occur and can often use these mistakes as learning opportunities.

In today's classroom, diversity issues are common areas where many teachers have difficulty being real. Teachers often hide their feelings about certain students from the class and sometimes even from themselves. Teachers may believe they "treat all students equally" or are "color-blind." However, feelings have a way of emerging whether one intends for them to or not. Studies have consistently shown that boys are attended to in class more than girls (Wellesley College, 1992) and that actions of students of color are often interpreted more negatively than similar actions of White students (Williams, 2003). Although at first, teachers may respond, "Well, maybe that's true of some teachers, but not me," it is actually not hard to understand how we are acculturated to pay more attention to boys and interpret people of color negatively. Just open any newspaper and one is likely to find the first three people mentioned and pictured are male and there will be more positive or neutral images of White people relative to the images of people of color. Although diverse, the United States is frequently segregated at the physical level (different living, schooling, and socializing locations), which is often underacknowledged in news and other media, leading to a lack of awareness. It is better to learn about racism or sexism and discover the degree to which we unknowingly participate rather than just react by getting frustrated or ignoring certain students. McKenzie and Scheurich (2004) discuss the concept of **equity traps**, thought and behavior patterns outside educators' awareness that limit possibilities for equitable school practices for diverse students and their families. These traps include the deficit view, racial erasure, and paralogical beliefs and actions.

In their study, the **deficit view** existed when "teachers perceived as inherent or endogenous student deficits, such as cultural inadequacies, lack of motivation, poor behavior, or failed families and communities. That is, the teachers said the students were deficit because the students, their parents, and/or their communities were deficit" (p. 608). Strategies for addressing this trap include reframing to an asset model; organizing "neighborhood walks" where educators get to know the families and settings in

which students live; tearing down negative, preconceived notions in subsequent debriefing sessions; asking students to gather oral histories to share with teachers and classmates; and positively oriented three-way conferencing with teacher, student, and student's family member.

Racial erasure is derived from hooks (1992), who described it as "the sentimental idea . . . that racism would cease to exist if everyone would just forget about race and just see each other as human beings who are the same" (p. 12). The comic news personality Stephen Colbert satirically makes this point: "I don't see color, but people tell me I'm White." McKenzie and Scheurich (2004) suggest forming book clubs to learn and value how people of color view Whites within literature and White identity studies and conducting equity audits (such as counting the number of persons of different groups) for gifted classes, financial expenditures, or other variables to expose existing inequities to help highlight that race does exist and cannot be erased by "color blindness."

The final equity trap discussed by McKenzie and Scheurich (2004) is that resulting from other **paralogical beliefs and behaviors**, which are conclusions and resulting actions that do not logically follow from premises. Paralogical beliefs are a form of self-deception that results from accepting common or traditional ideas without critical examination. For example, educators sometimes rationalize or project their own behaviors of losing control or screaming at students illogically, claiming these actions were caused by how learners treated them. In other words, in stressful situations with students, educators sometimes forget to take responsibility for their own actions.

Deficit views, racial erasures, and other paralogical belief and action patterns contribute to harmful lack of self-awareness, or realness, on the part of educators. Learning about the "invisible veil" (Sue & Sue, 2003) between teachers and students that these equity traps form is important to form relationships with students of color, girls, students with disabilities, and other historically and currently disenfranchised groups. Working out one's hidden biases and behavior patterns is a challenging but important part of preparing teachers for developing democratic, equitable practice in today's and tomorrow's diverse classrooms.

Although realness does not refer to saying everything that comes to one's mind (i.e., there are limits, like one should probably not publicly discuss the details of one's divorce, depression, or sex life), realness does represent a willingness to consider sharing thoughts and concerns, rather than an immediate and enduring censorship resulting in contradictions between actions and words. Real teachers appreciate conflict is inevitable, but realize some conflicts can be prevented and resolved easier and faster through honest communication. Many teachers have conflicts with students that are never aired with honest, shared vulnerability and never resolved. Authenticity creates a livelier, engaging classroom, where teacher responsibility is balanced with teacher expressiveness (Aspy & Roebuck, 1977; Aspy, Roebuck, & Aspy, 1983). A real teacher promotes authenticity in students through modeling, where students learn to value their own feelings and reactions and learn to tactfully assert needs while understanding others. Compromise and negotiation characterize teachers who are real, while denying and avoiding contact characterize teachers who can improve their realness.

An authentic way to build interpersonal relationships in the classroom is the practice of **"I"-statements**. Teachers, like parents and other leaders, often force their hand

by attempting to control learners when "I"-statements that simply convey teachers' intentions, feelings, or preferences work better (Gazda et al., 2005). Perhaps even more important than not portraying realness, controlling statements inhibit students from perceiving the even more potent teacher warmth, empathy, and trust. For example, if a teacher says, "Steven, I told you not to turn your paper in late" while another says, "I am glad to accept papers on time," Steven may be upset either way. However, the first statement shames him and may be perceived as controlling, denying the teacher's role and position on the issue, and likely leading to either no communication or conflictual communication. On the other hand, the second statement is not dismissive, usually avoids an argument, and offers an explanation. The teacher owns her intentions for herself and is explicit rather than hiding what she wants.

Observation can also help build realness. Many studies in the meta-analysis (Cornelius-White, 2007) asked teachers to record their classrooms and then listen or watch the recordings in a discussion or supervision group. Functionally, this allows a teacher to see themselves more like observers or students do. Observation can help teachers see their instruction as it actually occurred rather than how they remembered or intended for it to occur (Gwen-Paquette & Tochon, 2002). We are all familiar with how odd it feels to listen to oneself on a recording, and doing so reminds us it is impossible to hear how one's voice, intonations, and inflections actually sounds to others. With recordings, teachers themselves get that pivotal learning tool: feedback. The next step is to make the corrections necessary to get their behavior in line with how they would like to be through a process of continued observation and practice. Gazda et al. (2005), McCombs and Whistler (1997), and McCombs and Miller (2007) offer learner-centered feedback systems to help teachers self-observe better.

Improving one's realness takes practice and awareness about one's triggers for blaming and what alternative behaviors exist before and right after the trigger. Realness is the process of learning about one's self in relation to others and becoming sufficiently aware and honest with oneself to be tactfully genuine with students as a result, a process that can be more complicated in cross-cultural situations.

Things to Think, Talk, or Write About

1. Take each statement in the following list, and decide what the teacher is feeling. Next, say out loud an "I"-statement that would be more effective, here defined as genuine and self-expressive, not controlling or shame inducing. Unfortunately, we have all made similar statements at one time, even if not to students, and we have all heard teachers say them, so even if you think you would never say them to a student, practicing alternatives is still a useful exercise in developing your realness.

"Sit down and shut up."

"If I gave students a pencil every time they forgot one, I would have to spend my whole salary on pencils."
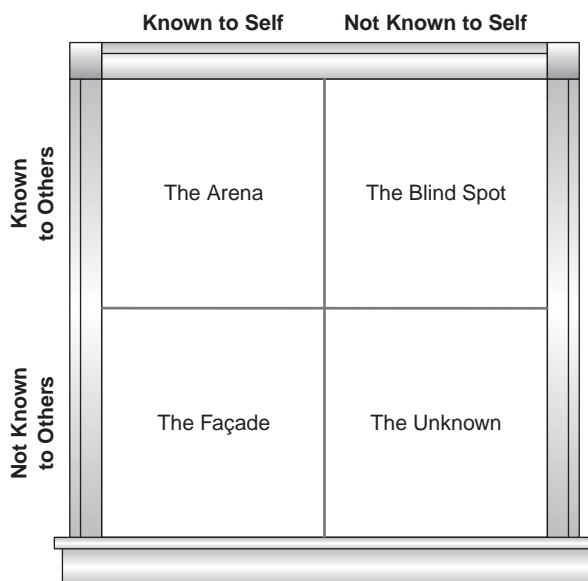
(Continued)

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"How many times do I have to tell you to stop bugging McKenzie?"

"You'll understand when you grow up."

"Because I said so." Or *"Because I am the teacher and you are the student."*

2. Jo Luft and Harry Ingham (1955) *c*reated a classic self-awareness tool, named from their own first names, called the Johari Window (see Figure 3.1). The tool depicts how one's traits and behaviors can be viewed from various perspectives, including the arena known to others and self, the blind spot known to others but not self, the façade known to self but not shared with others, and the unknown, including traits and behaviors not known to either self or others. Consider what you don't share in the classroom with your students, what your students don't share with you about your instructional behavior, and what might be only gleaned from another source, such as an observer or teaching assessment. Include issues related to cultural and gender diversity. Ask your students, a peer, or supervisor if they would be willing to share one positive and one negative aspect of your teaching behavior they think you may not have considered. Do the same with them, self-disclosing from your façade quadrant. Consider creating additional ways to use the tool to expand how you, your students, and colleagues can be more self-aware and authentic in the classroom.

Figure 3.1   Johari Window—A Tool for Increasing Realness

	Known to Self	Not Known to Self
Known to Others	The Arena	The Blind Spot
Not Known to Others	The Façade	The Unknown

❖ Positive Relationships: The Facilitative Characteristics Together

Warmth, trust, empathy, and realness together form a core relational stance and way of interacting that facilitates comprehensive student success (Rogers, 1969, 1983; Rogers & Freiberg, 1994). Facilitative relationships balance high expectations for student self-regulation with supportive scaffolding that aims to be in the learner's zone of proximal development (ZPD) (see Figure 3.2). When teachers have high expectations without much warmth or expect more self-regulation than a learner's maturity allows, learners may feel anxious and perceive their teacher as critical or unsupportive. In contrast, when teachers have low expectations or do not allow opportunities for learner self-regulation, learners may feel bored and perceive their teachers as apathetic or not authentically interested in them. An optimal balance of support and expectations aims to interact and adapt curriculum and instructional methods to learners' ZPD. Interacting in learners' ZPD leads to increasing self-regulation and less need for perpetual support, which in turn optimizes the potential for student development and success.

Figure 3.2   Balancing Expectations for Self-Regulated Learning With Learner-Centered Scaffolding "Built Under" the Learner's ZPD
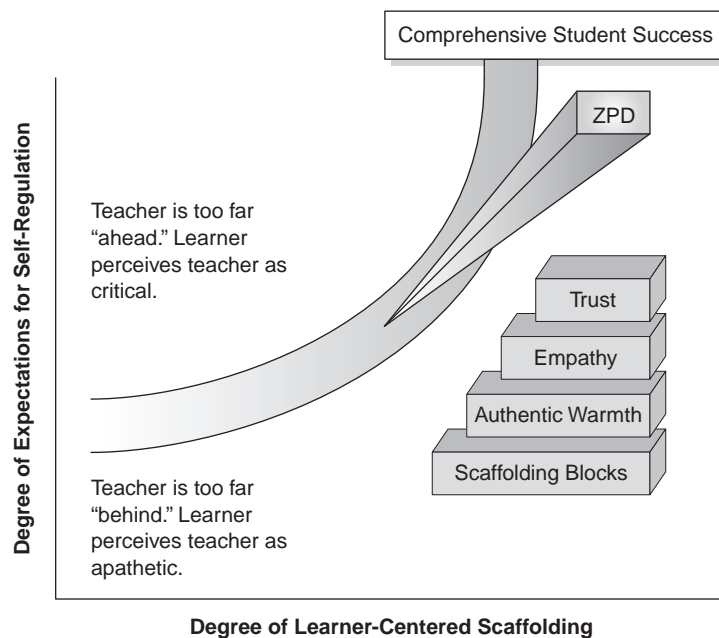
Likewise, teacher facilitation and learner development toward self-regulation is not as straightforward as Figure 3.2 suggests. McCombs and Miller (2007) summarize, "Research underlying the LCPs [learner-centered principles] validates that learning is non-linear, recursive, continuous, complex, relational, and natural in humans" (p. 25). In other words, facilitative relationships seek a dynamic balance between the high expectations of trust and the caring support of authentic warmth to astutely and empathically interact within learners' ZPD to engender student success.

Meta-analytic research (Cornelius-White, 2007), introduced in Chapter 1, shows the robust associations between relational variables and comprehensive student success. Figures 3.3 and 3.4 present each relational element's association to cognitive or affective/behavioral success: The greater the size of the bar, the greater the degree of association between the learner-centered variable and student success. Cognitive success includes grades, achievement tests, increased aptitude, critical and creative thinking, and improvement in specific skill areas like mathematics, reading, and writing. Affective and behavioral success includes participation, positive motivation, self-efficacy, social skills, attendance, student satisfaction, and reductions in disruptive behavior.

The first bars in the figures are broad benchmarks from the educational literature supported by approximately 150,000 studies, 200,000 correlations, and more than 50 million students (Fraser et al., 1987; Hattie, 1999), which show the relative success of LCI. Fraser et al. asserted that any correlation greater than $r = .20$ is above average and "well worth pursuing" and any correlation greater than $r = .30$ "should be of much interest" (p. 208). Figures 3.3 and 3.4 convey the strength of association between

Figure 3.3   Relative Strength of Relational Stance and Interaction for Cognitive Success
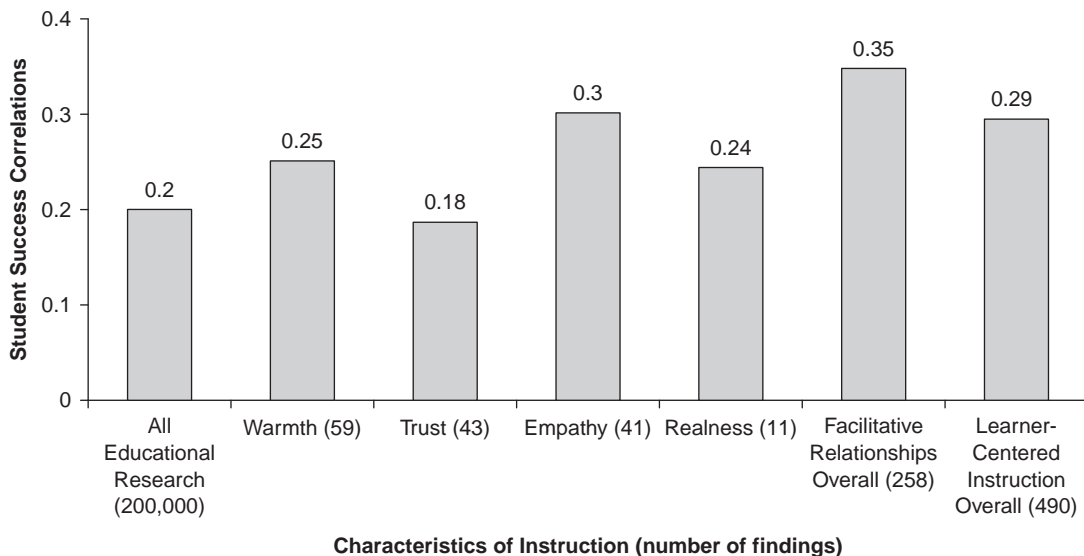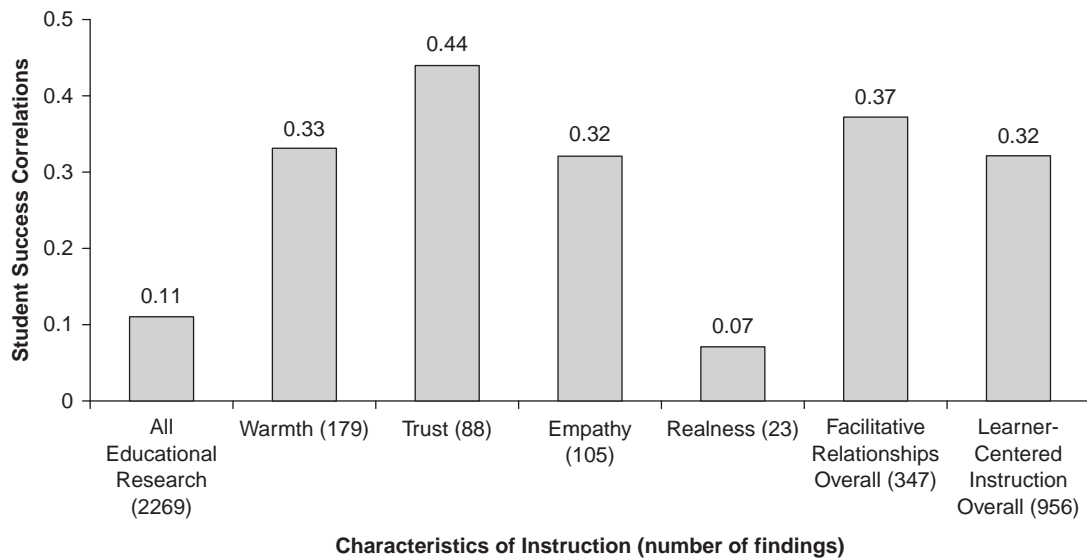
Figure 3.4   Relative Strength of Relational Stance and Interaction for Affective and Behavioral Success

warmth, trust, empathy, realness, facilitative relationships overall, and learner-centered instruction overall and student cognitive success and affective and behavioral success, respectively. The number of findings upon which each average correlation is based is given in parentheses after each item.

These figures show each of the separate facilitative characteristics is associated with student success close to or above the average educational variable, with the exception of realness for affective/behavioral growth. Bozarth (1998) has suggested that lower results for the effectiveness of realness is because it is more within the teacher than in the teacher–student relationship. As such, the effectiveness of realness is harder to see (and thereby measure) from either an observer's or a student's perspective. Regardless, authenticity can be helpful in the personal development process of teacher preparation and continuing education (Darling-Hammond & Sykes, 1999; McCombs & Miller, 2007); realness is a crucial part of how one becomes relationally available and present with students. Interestingly, the average correlations for teacher empathy are similar in size to meta-analytic findings regarding counselor empathy (Bohart et al., 2002).

Overall, facilitative relationships are more effective for improving student success than any of the building blocks of warmth, trust, empathy, or realness alone. Teachers can facilitate relationships by focusing on the learner as a person. Warmth values the learner, trust empowers the learner, empathy understands and communicates feedback to the learner, and realness models learning to make it authentic.

❖ **CASE STUDY: A Facilitative Dialogue in the Classroom**

Ms. Smith: I know that by the end of today some of you will have an understanding of Manifest Destiny as it relates to the plight of Native Americans and others of you won't, but by the end of the week, I think everyone will. Manifest Destiny refers to . . . [Madison raises her hand and the teacher motions to her]

Madison: What's *plight* mean?

Ms. Smith: Struggle.

Jonathan: Why do we have to learn about what happened 200 years ago? Why can't we talk about what's happening now?

Ms. Smith: That's a good question Jonathan. I wonder if anyone can tell us why they think it's important to learn history?

Toby: My dad always says, "Those who don't know history are doomed to repeat it."

Ms. Smith: Ok, sounds helpful, but what does that mean?

Toby: It means that history has lessons to teach so that we are wiser with what's happening now.

Ms. Smith: Uh-huh, so Jonathan, what would you like to talk about that's happening now?

Jonathan: Well, the war in Iraq makes the news a lot.

Ms. Smith: Ok, so you're interested in talking about the war in general?

Jonathan: Well, actually I think it's not fair how people don't support our troops. My dad says it ain't fair how so many people give their life, and don't get no respect.

Ms. Smith: So there seems to be some injustice to you in the way the news covers this current event. Does anyone else share Jonathan's opinion or have another viewpoint?

Hannah: I think that's bad too, but it's also bad how many Iraqis are being killed. Killing and not respecting are both wrong no matter who is involved.

Ms. Smith: I see. I'm sure we all have feelings about this. Maybe we can find a way that we can relate Manifest Destiny to the Iraq war. Anyone have any ideas?

Reflections on the Case Study

1. Find where the teacher demonstrates learner-centered trust, empathy, warmth, or realness. Find where she might do this in a better way.

2. Is there some place in the interactions above where you might have begun to distrust the students' learning process or felt a need to stay on topic?

3. Write down a teacher response that would better demonstrate facilitative relationship building. Practice saying your alternative response with a peer. Discuss the implications of the original and alternative response.

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SUMMARY

To improve teacher–student relationships and reap their benefits, teachers should learn to facilitate students' development. Facilitation begins by trying to care for each student as a person and through practicing observable actions such as attending and valuing through eye contact, nodding your head, and listening. One can demonstrate trust in students by giving choices, inviting reactions, appropriately sharing responsibility, and generally empowering students to become learners. Empathizing with students, valuing their perspective, and communicating it back to them offers valuable feedback for students to self-assess, feel safe, and learn to understand others and the content with the same interest and concern. Finally, teachers should be real so all of the facilitative aspects have a vitality and honesty to maximize modeling and self-discovery. Facilitation involves all of these aspects together, focusing on the learner to best promote learner development, and results in a real increase in success for cognitive, affective, and behavioral outcomes. The next chapter looks at how LCI is associated with an engaged classroom, including improved attendance, respect, participation, satisfaction and intrinsic motivation, social connections, and self-regulation.

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SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Gazda et al.'s *Human Relations Development: A Manual for Educators* (2005) and Carkhuff's *Human Possibilities: Human Capital in the 21st Century* (2000) provide classic texts on human relationships development for teachers, chock-full of useful tools to improve warmth, trust, empathy, and realness.

Counseling training programs and materials, particularly in person-centered or experiential therapies, provide a wealth of videos, articles, and discussion communities for building facilitative dispositions and skills. See http://pce-world.org, www.adpca.org, and www.pfs-online.at for portals to these resources.

There is no substitute for observing, practicing, and getting feedback on one's attempts to be facilitative, whether in entire class discussions or individual interactions with students, administrators, parents, or others. We encourage you to seek out role models and mentors in your area and conscientiously improve your ability to help others learn and grow!