

PART ONE

Teachers and their Relationship with Students

In order to succeed in the very difficult task of effectively educating young people, a teacher truly must possess certain qualities.

Seriousness Seriousness comes through faithfulness to self-control. It is impossible for teachers to be truly serious unless they are able to control their exterior selves. Seriousness, however, does not force a person into pedantry or affection. Teachers should carefully avoid mean and threatening looks, gloomy and scowling faces, angry voices, and bitter, biting, and satirical words. The aim of seriousness is not to intimidate students, to keep them from showing themselves as they really are, to make them afraid of making mistakes, or to hinder the development of good qualities that might exist in them. Seriousness does not in any way exclude kindness, tenderness, or an affable way with students, which can win them over and lead them with docility.

It will give you the dignity in attitude that inspires respect, commands attention, and enables you to exercise the authority and leadership that you need.

Seriousness is a virtue that assumes a mental maturity and wisdom in the one who possesses it, along with a real faith in the presence of God. It is a virtue that requires noble sentiments and true humility. It will give you the dignity in attitude that inspires respect, commands attention, and enables

you to exercise the authority and leadership that you need.

Although seriousness does not rule out affection for young people, neither does it permit too great a familiarity with them, and it doesn't allow unseemly clowning, childish pranks and jokes, and ridiculous punishments that will discredit the teacher and earn the dislike of students. Teachers who wish to maintain this virtue in their lives guard against giving any particular student too great attention. This is the way one most often loses this virtue. It is the responsibility of a young teacher especially to develop this virtue in order not to lose the dignity of the mission of teaching and the respect that the teacher is owed by students.

