

TEACHING TOUCH FOR HEALTH:
AN EK PERSPECTIVE

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Teaching TOUCH FOR HEALTH is great fun and excitement. Once students discover their own ability to bring positive changes for themselves and others, they want to learn more in order to become even more effective agents of self- and human improvement. As teachers of TOUCH FOR HEALTH, we are the catalysts for this change in people's lives. I define "teacher" as someone who inspires their "students" to become better than themselves.

In EK FOR KIDS, Paul Dennison, Ph.D. lists the following characteristics of an integrated teacher:

- "1. I give my student tasks with which he can succeed, so he can experience many "wins" every day, and is not afraid of new challenges!
 2. I enjoy my students' high energy. I seem to anticipate events so that I feel I am making the right choices and am challenged to guide overall situations when the stress level is intense.
 3. I guide my student to discover the work he loves and to experience the intrinsic reward of personal achievement.
 4. I allow myself to be vulnerable and a real person in front of my student, teaching him that even adults continue to learn and to grow. I expect that my student will use my learning as a step to his own growth, and that he will become greater than myself.
 5. I love to teach and learn so much from my student! My relationship with him keeps my ideas flowing. My daily life takes on renewed meaning as it is transformed through the magic of human exchange."
- (EK FOR KIDS, Dennison & Hargrove, p.64, 1985.)

In the first principle, the main idea is that success is learned. In TOUCH FOR HEALTH, we teach people how to become successful in their ability to take care of themselves. This is why Dr. Thie has promulgated TFH as a teaching system, to provide people with a gentle, caring, and effective method of self care. When we show someone how to improve their body response by stimulating specific reflex points, we have shown them how to have success. In TFH classes, once the students begin to have successes in their practice, we then show them a new level of practice and awareness, thus creating a new challenge for them. (NB: CHALLENGE is that which compels us to use our creative energies. OBSTACLE is something which frustrates our creative energies.) Thus we teach Fix-As-You-Go in the first class, then Mid-Day Mid-Night and the Clock the next class, then Five Elements, etc. Each of these is a challenge to a new level of understanding.

PRACTICE #1. Demonstrate how easy muscle testing is by having the students press on a solid surface with just enough pressure to feel its' solidity. Now have them apply the same pressure to a soft surface so they may feel the difference. Once they have all felt the difference, lead them through the 14 muscle tests. As they find muscles that they feel as "not working"; show them the correction points used to "fix" the muscle. Go through all 14 muscles in this way. This takes 1 - 2 hours to do. At the end of this particular practice, announce to your students that they have done their first TOUCH FOR HEALTH balancing. This practice gives all of your students their first level of success and teaches them how to rely upon their own judgment as to what constitutes a muscle in need of "fixing".

The next EK characteristic is, "I enjoy my students' high energy..." Think back to the very first time you discovered your ability to test a muscle and correct it so it worked better. Remember the confusion, excitement, dim understanding, hope, and concern you had at that moment? How later this same feeling became curiosity as to how did TOUCH FOR HEALTH work, so you became involved in learning more? In teaching, the difficulty does not lay in getting students excited and curious. When allowed to discover for themselves, your students will generate their own excitement and interest. A teacher facilitates the learning process by providing general guidelines which help their students acquire their own particular level of skill and knowledge. When you sense a student becoming frustrated over something during class, this is the time to gently step in and provide assurance that they are OK. Discover what is frustrating them, then demonstrate what they need to change, either at the skill level, or, the understanding level, to become successful. DO NOT OVER-BURDEN THEM WITH UNNECESSARY DETAILS AND INFORMATION! Just provide them with general guidelines to get them out of their frustration. This then allows them to again feel their excitement at learning something new.

PRACTICE #2. You are about to present to your students an aspect of TOUCH FOR HEALTH you find complicated. Your challenge is to summarize the process into the least amount of "guidelines" that will allow them to practice the particular technique so they can learn it. The trick here is be concise and informative. No one explanation should be any longer than 20-30 minutes. Give your students "rules of thumb" to follow. These allow them to "do" right away, and allow them to discover the process for themselves.

In the third principle, the challenge to teachers is to discover just what excites our students. I had a student ask me if I ever got bored teaching the "same thing" year-round. My response was, and still is, every class is different, so there is no way I could possibly teach the "same thing". The excitement and joy of teaching comes from discovering anew the principles of TOUCH FOR HEALTH with your students. While the general content is the same, each class determines the emphasis of the "curriculum" which it wants to learn. We provide the general information for our students, but it is in response to their own level of interest and excitement that we continually shift the emphasis of the course. Some of your students will find emotional stress release of interest, while others will find the muscle work interesting, and still others will be fascinated by the principles of acupuncture. Each will find their own way as long as we provide general guidelines which enhance their ability to discover for themselves.

PRACTICE #3. Review your curriculum for your class. Is it the same as the first time you taught? If it is, do you teach in the same way? Discover for yourself how many different ways there are to teach the same basic content. How does it feel to know so many different and successful ways of teaching? Stop for a moment and make a list of possible ways of teaching muscle testing.

The fourth statement on the integrated teacher begins, "I allow myself to be vulnerable..." This may be difficult in that it requires we step out of the role of "teacher", "mentor" or "expert". As long as we are playing a role, we can be "too perfect" for our students. Such a role leaves very little room for us to learn and grow with our students. In teaching, it is difficult not to teach everything we know! To teach "everything" puts a straight-jacket on our students' minds. It puts us in the position of "authority" which does not allow them to discover their own "inner authority". For example, the "authority" model of teaching is like giving a starving people food to eat, thus creating a reliance upon your ability to provide. The model of teaching I am suggesting, teaches people how to grow their own food so they can become self-sufficient. Thus, giving guidelines utilizes this second model. Guidelines point the way, they do not tell the student how to get there. This is exciting in a very positive manner. Now your students have the way open to them to become even greater than you. This is truly wonderful, for your students will honor you and respect you for having made it possible for them to grow. This is the greatest accolade any teacher can hope for.

PRACTICE #4. Review your course outline and your general explanations. Where is it appropriate to "teach less"? Give your students some general guidelines and provide them with a bibliography with which they can begin their own

voyage of discovery.

The fifth characteristic of the integrated teacher allows for the teacher to grow. "I love to teach and learn so much from my students!" It is too easy to stay in the role of "teacher" or "mentor" because we find it "comfortable". Being "comfortable" is a homolateral attitude. Comfort is not growth! There was an experiment done several years ago on the growth of algae. In one tank the researchers put everything they could think of that was conducive to the growth of algae (proper temperature, nutrition, etc...). In another tank they provided little in the way of support for the algae there. As expected the first tank showed a rapid growth of algae, while the other tank had a very slow growth rate. Yet, the longer the experiment lasted, the first tank began to die out, while the second tank began to thrive! Human beings are not too different from these algae in this respect. If we are teaching for our own sake and comfort, then more than likely we will develop a "comfort zone" around our teaching, outside of which we do not go. In teaching the goal is not to teach what we already know, it is to learn something new! The most successful teachers I have known were those willing to learn from their students. Martin Buber once stated, "All life is meeting." From the very first moment we step into our TOUCH FOR HEALTH "classroom", we meet a completely new situation unlike any other we have been in before. In that moment, be open to learning just what is "new" about TOUCH FOR HEALTH.

PRACTICE #5. As you walk around during your class practice sessions, look to see the "new" ways your students are doing things. Thus, if a student is holding the neuro-lymphatic point lightly and the muscle responds, do not tell them this is "wrong". They got a positive response from the muscle! Try out their "method" yourself to see if it works for you. Demonstrate for the student how we do the neuro-lymphatic in TOUCH FOR HEALTH, thus giving them valuable information. However, remember you are only "correcting" information, not the student.

The thing I find most exciting in using EK in my TOUCH FOR HEALTH classes, is that it opens new avenues for the student and myself. In all levels of classes, ITW, TFH I, II, III, "special" workshops, etc., it is the willingness of the students to learn that impresses me most. How then can I be willing to do less? There is no "right" knowledge, or "wrong" knowledge. There are effective ways and less effective ways of doing things. Just as we teach in Food Sensitivity testing the three broad categories of food (Bio-Genic, Bio-static, Bio-cidic), but not what foods fall into which category, thus our teaching of TOUCH FOR HEALTH provides broad categories for people to fill in for themselves.

PRACTICE #6. This practice is for you as a teacher. First have someone test your supraspinatus in the clear. Now do a few cross crawl and be retested to make certain you are OK with cross crawl. Now think about being a successful* TOUCH FOR HEALTH instructor at all levels. Have your supraspinatus re-tested. Did it "switch off"? Cross crawl. Are you still OK with cross crawl? If not, do the homolateral crawl. Does your supraspinatus "switch on" after the homolateral crawl? If thinking about being a successful teacher has caused you to "switch off" to the cross crawl and to "switch on" to the homolateral crawl, then you are going to enjoy the correction. Keeping a definite image in mind of being a successful teacher, cross crawl 25 repetitions with your eyes up to the left. Once this is complete, turn your eyes down to the right and do homolateral crawl counting aloud to 10. Reinforce the cross crawl by thinking of what a successful teacher is, cross crawl and re-test the supraspinatus. Does it now "switch on" for successful teaching in the cross crawl state? Great! Now to complete the integration of this image for yourself, extend your arms out to the side and slowly bring your hands together interlocking the fingers. Hold the image/feeling of successful teacher throughout. Now go out and teach!

(*successful... includes how you view yourself as an instructor, how much you want to make monetarily, how many students you want to teach, your level of effectiveness, etc. In other words, include as many different levels as possible to your image of "success".)

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