

Chapter-by-Chapter Study Guide

Eight Habits of the Heart for Educators

by Clifton L. Taulbert

Chapter 1. Building Community . . . The Foundation for Excellence

Summary

The premise of building community for educators and students, to obtain the goals of academic initiatives set forth, is welcomed at all levels. However, many have left themselves out of the community building process, imagined it would happen automatically, and have forgotten the importance of building community for the overall success of the student, not just the accomplishment of the academic goals. Educators have the lead in building the type of community they would like to work in and, more important, they would like the students to be a part of, for their betterment. Community must become the foundation from which all goals and initiatives are set and our youth learn and grow out of. This chapter will look at the importance of envisioning a community where positive behavior and healthy relationships exist, not only among the faculty and staff, but among the students as well, as they see community built in front of them and incorporate it into their daily lives for lifelong success.

Discussion Questions

1. Why did you first enter into education?
2. Who do you see when you look at your students?

3. Do you believe the phrase, "Your students will do what they see you do?"
4. How do you look past the demographics of each student?
5. What does 'Building Community' mean to you?
6. Do you view 'Community' as a crucial piece of the education process?

Activity

● *Defining Your Ideal Community*

Time: 15 minutes

Materials: Handout 1:1, pen/pencil, flip chart paper, markers

Ask participant's to use Handout 1:1 and to write down ONE WORD, in the first box, that represents an IDEAL community to them. (2 minutes)

Next, have each participant share their word out loud, while you write each word down on the flip chart. (3 minutes)

Then, using the words provided from each individual, create a group-wide consensus definition starting with: Community is. . . . Have participants copy this definition into the second box on Handout 1:1. (10 minutes)

Facilitator's Note: Be sure to point out that the majority of thought was the same, as it applies to what an IDEAL Community engenders. Remind participants that this definition will travel with them to each learning session.

Journal Writing Prompts

Referring to page 7 in Clifton L. Taulbert's book, *Eight Habits of the Heart for Educators*, read the list of barriers and roadblocks. Write your thoughts on how these barriers can be circumvented or completely removed through building the type of community previously defined.

Practical Application

Before adjourning the session, ask each participant to pull out Handout 1:2, *Personal Strategies to Implement—Community*, and to write one ACTION SPECIFIC strategy they will implement within 24 hours to make the ideal definition of Community come to life, for themselves, others and most importantly their students.

Close the session by challenging participants to make Building Community a primary focus each day, not only for their benefit, but also for the benefit of their students.