

MOTIVATION-VS-INSPIRATION

In the book 'Art as Therapy' (2013) Alain De Botton argues, "that the problem is not primarily located in the individual. It lies in the way that art is taught, sold and presented...Our relationship with art has been weakened by a profound institutional reluctance to address the question of what is Art for" (Botton, 2013:4).

There seems to be a great disconnection between what art is and what art can mean. Consequently, this can cause a misunderstanding between art as a creative process and as an education. Unfortunately, this can be seen with the students that I teach. Often confused and disengaged; not really sure why they are there. The students are unmotivated; reluctant to even participate. More interested in clock watching than getting involved.

Teachers can look to external factors such as the Covid 19 pandemic but I fear it is something more internal, something that educators have greatly undervalued: What are we actually teaching our students?

Starting my placement, I was excited and motivated to inspire the students that I will be teaching, but as time went on it was quickly revealed how much the students have lost their confidence and motivation. I was faced with a general unwillingness to participate. This became a challenge; I remember thinking, how can I inspire these artists again? Anything I tried, I was faced with the same result. That was until I started to change my attitude towards teaching instead of trying to focus on their abilities to positively react in the lesson, I started to approach it in a different way (PS01,12).

Personally, Art is a way to question; to unpack one's truth and meaning. For me, art education is also an extension of this it can become "a tool to investigate ourselves" (Botton,2016:72) and as an educator I believe my primary role is to support our students to unlock their truths and creativity.

I started to teach them through the power of art, through the way I understood it as; Art as therapy. It seemed that once I changed, so did the students. Once I relaxed, so did the students. Once I started to enjoy myself, so did the students. It seemed that it comes from you (teacher) first and then transcend to the students. Once I let go of my fear of failing, I started to teach.

Motivation comes from the teacher; the inspiration comes from the way it is communicated. Educators have responsibility to the students to not only teach them for a day but teach them how to learn for a lifetime (Kaiser-and-Yuan,2018).

Something that I believe in for and in; for why we become teachers is "... to plant trees; under whose shade you do not expect to sit" (Sreechinth,2016:14). To inspire, develop our students into individuals. To pass down our knowledge, failures and lessons, in hope that they will take from it these insights and grow from it in their own lives. "... Every human is an artist and the supreme art is the expression of the beauty of our spirit" (Ruiz-et-al.2004).

Creating a culture of learning that allows the students to express themselves openly and directly through the parameters of assessment of learning through the guise of creative briefs and assignments. To bring forward the notion that, 'every art communicates because it expresses. It enables us to share vividly and deeply in meanings' (Dewey,1934). Presently, the students are

not encouraged to develop their own meaning through the arts. We have a responsibility to facilitate the students to 'learn the specifics of a particular subject and to also create a space for the students to learn about and develop their own learning process' (Kolb, 1984). Petty (2017) poses that mindset is one of the main difficulties for creative people due to the way in which the individual approaches the creative process. This is due to the way in which the creative individual interprets and interacts with the creative process. Petty (2017) further outlines some key considerations the creative individual must develop through their work; inspiration, clarification, evaluation, distillation, incubation and perspiration. The creative individual "needs to switch between continually between these...different mindsets...some individuals find that they are stronger in some than others" (Petty, 2017:20). As art educators working with our students, we must facilitate a pathway to enabling exploration, experimentation and development with their own creative process.

The challenge that educators face is maintaining a balance between creating and sticking to guidelines and policies around what the content must be and how it should be delivered set by external boards and government, but also trying to facilitate and create an environment which is conducive to effective teaching and learning. An environment that focuses more on the process rather than the product which is more appropriate to an art education.

Another challenge that I have noticed with my experiences at placement, is the role of the teacher in facilitating and nurturing the student's motivations and inspirations and creating a space for them to realise and develop within themselves and through their work. For me, I understand motivation to be a primarily an intrinsic factor; whereas, inspiration can be both extrinsic and intrinsic (Watt et al. 2014) this means that it has to be treated accordingly when facilitating students (PS01,02,04,06,10,12,13).

Albers advocates that "our central and consistent effort is to teach method not content; to emphasise process not result" ([The-Josef-&-Anni-Albers-Foundation](#),n.d). In an education system that is primarily based around the product curriculum model rather than the process curriculum model, it, consequently creates problems with attitudes towards failure and individual development. A student who is afraid of failure is afraid of trying, but something that I have experienced from other teachers at my placement is that the motivation to try comes from the attitude of the teacher. As educators of Art, we must realise that Art in practice and in education is a process and thus we must treat it as such (PS01,04,06).

"It is not the critic who counts...The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena...who strives valiantly, who errs, who comes short again and again... If he fails, at least fails while daring greatly..." (Brown, 2012:1). Entering the arena is intimidating. But the students are not alone, the teachers are there to guide them through it teaching them the tools to achieve and grow. At first, I wanted to teach to give back to the teachers who inspired me. Then I started to teach; I realised that I wanted to teach so that if any students are struggling, they will also know that I have also struggled and found a way through Art to overcome this.

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