

**Topic - In your opinion what is more effective for a teacher - being a practical educator or a sensitive friend?**

Building a strong relationship with the students is one of the most important things a teacher can do. The role of a teacher is multi-dimensional. There should be a balance between being a practical educator and a sensitive friend. In my opinion a combination of both is an effective way to foster a healthy and happy learning environment.

**A Practical Educator** – As per my personal experience I have observed being a practical educator my approach to teaching is efficient, well-structured and emphasis is always laid upon the academic performance of my learners. I can state here that my classrooms are well structured with clear expectations and goals. It is easy for learners to acquire necessary skills required for their course of education.

However, as a practical educator it becomes difficult to connect with the learner's personal level. This might lead to a lack of encouragement, engagement and thus the approach can be rigid and impersonal. Also, there is a little room for addressing the socio- emotional needs of the learners. In this case learners might not have a good image of their teachers.

I have always tried to first make my learners comfortable as this is the first step towards a fruitful learning.

**A Sensitive Friend** – Being a friend who can sensitize with their learners, teachers can build strong bonds and emotional connections with their students. I remember a student Rohan Satti (session- 2018-19) diagnosed with ADHD, being a friend and empathetic to him helped me a lot understanding him and making him ready to learn. When he accepted me as a friend, he felt more comfortable to share his feelings and this was also evident with his behaviour and attitude. Being a sensitive friend to my pupils has also made me realized that education is not just about facts and figures but also about nurturing personal growth. There are many benefits of being a sensitive friend such as learners are more likely to get engaged and motivated .They feel more comfortable to express their thoughts , concerns, and feelings. This has a long-lasting impact on their socio- emotional well-being.

However, this approach too can have challenges such as maintaining discipline , classroom management, etc. It is not always good to get too personal with the student's lives. So, I believe an effective teacher is the one who can maintain a balance between being a practical educator and a sensitive friend. Furthermore, our approach should be based upon the needs of the learners, we need to be flexible enough to modify our teaching strategies so as to maximize the potential of our learners.

**Conclusion** – Ultimately the best teachers are the ones who can combine the practical approach with sensitivity to create an environment that fosters happiness, academic growth and of course the emotional well – being. As an educator we should be able to help our learners navigate the complexities of their lives.