

Title of Session: Benkyoukai - Exploring Classroom Management

Moderator: Keiko Schneider

Guest Speaker: Junko Lowry

Title of File: 20031114benk

Date: November 14, 2003

Tapped In transcript for 2003.11.14 17:01:30

Room: After School Online

KeikoS: Welcome to Junko sensei's benkyoukai.

KeikoS: I like to introduce Junko Lowry of Hawaii.

KeikoS: First I would like her to introduce herself and everybody says little bit about yourself..

JunkoGst4: Aloha everyone. My heart connects with yours with great aloha.

VennyS: Aloha!

TiffaniRN: hello

KarenCh does the hula

JunkoGst4: I am a Japanese language teacher at Kamehameha Schools, a school for Hawaiian students. Doozo yoroshiku.

AnnaGst6: G'day

AdaA waves

KeikoS: Aloha, I am Keiko Schneider, the organizer of benkyoukai.

TiffaniRN: how cool

KumahatGst7: howdy from Texas!

KeikoS: intro please... everybody

MikaW: I'm from Oregon,,

VennyS: I'm Venny from Taipei, Taiwan. My first time to join this session. Nice to meet you.

TiffaniRN: Hi, I am from Houston, Texas

JohnF: Hi, from El Paso, Texas.

KarenCh: teacher of grade 9 Japanese in Creston, BC, Canada. Yoroshiku.

AnnaGst6: Anna Elk from sunny Brisbane Australia

AdaA: Hi, I am from Houston , Texas

KumahatGst7: I'm from Houston, 2

KeikoS: Today's presentation is based on Junko sensei's paper.

KeikoS: Is everybody familiar with it?

AnnaGst6: yes

AdaA: no

VennyS shakes his head.

TiffaniRN: no

JohnF: Yes, very impressive.

KeikoS: I will paste the URL, it will become clickable.

KeikoS: <http://kapalama.ksbe.edu/faculty/julowry/>

MikaW: it was very nice website

KeikoS: Very...

KarenCh: yes, gorgeous

RYoungGst8: Yes. Hi, I'm from NY - H.S. level

KeikoS: I would like to ask Junko sensei to touch a few points to get us going with the conversation, if you could, sensei...

JunkoGst4: Sending you blessings, Tiffani san.

TiffaniRN: I am a student at the university of Houston

TiffaniRN: thank you

JunkoGst4: I'm here to have a heart-felt conversation about non-judgmental teaching and how it works in the classroom.

TiffaniRN: how long have you been teaching?

JunkoGst4: There are outer manifestations and inner work which occur simultaneously. To have classroom management which engage all students at various levels of readiness we have to step back and take a look at a lot of elements

KeikoS . o O (let us talk Junko sensei for a while...)

JunkoGst4: The elements which is most important is remembering the heart and its intention. As we deal with students, we also have to understand the elements which detract from it.

RYoungGst8: Detract from using/responding with the heart?

TiffaniRN: could you explain

JunkoGst4: They are unclear intention, the role of the inner critic, our automatic reactions, our understanding of the student readiness...

TiffaniRN: thank you

JunkoGst4: It seems so simple to say, we have to know what our intention is when we do anything in the classroom, yet this is not such an easy practice.

JunkoGst4: My intention in the classroom is for everyone to learn. This intention impacts on the way I talk, the words I choose, the activities and the sequence of activities,

...

KeikoS nods solemnly

TiffaniRN: no, it is not. I have been observing at an elementary school and the teachers are very careful on they word things

TiffaniRN: ..on the words that they choose

JunkoGst4: Yes, it is extremely important. For example, when students make errors, do we say thank you and place that error in the context of stage of understanding

TiffaniRN: I think that it is extremely important not to focus on the negative

JunkoGst4: Or do we say, no it is not correct. Everything we do is a process. If students understand that whatever they say or do makes sense in the overall scheme of things, they feel more at ease.

JunkoGst4: When fear is taken away from the interactions in the classroom, something magical happens.

RYoungGst8: I am struggling recently with an extremely needy child (of teacher attention) whose "demands" for attention make it very hard for the others to learn.

TiffaniRN: what methods have you tried with this student

JunkoGst4: We all have students who are needy. If we go straight to finding the solutions, we might lose something in translation. With everything, it is important to remember to speak from the heart, speak the essence of what seems to be happening and get clarity.

RYoungGst8: We speak privately. I've given him a notebook so that when he has questions, he can write them down if they don't relate to the lesson.

AnnaGst6: Me too. I know that this student behaves and speaks the same way at home so it is a learnt behaviour but it is very emotionally draining not to snap and be calm and be positive

TiffaniRN: is the notebook working?

RYoungGst8: On and off. He forgets. Like you say, it seems a learned behavior.

JunkoGst4: It also has to do with how we treat every student. When we focus on a single student, the energy gets magnified.

JunkoGst4: Building trust can happen inside the classroom and outside the classroom.

kanakok: That's right. and other students will be out of control. (it happened on me....)

TiffaniRN: I agree, there must be trust inside and outside the classroom

JunkoGst4: Building trust takes a long time. It usually takes my classes one quarter to understand where I am coming from, that it is not a punitive class, that everything is focused on learning.

TatsumiGst10: How do we build trust, then?

TiffaniRN: how can you not focus on the student that is having trouble? doesn't the problem need to be solved?

kanakok: when and how do you build up trust? Some students do not think this teacher is Ok because she is young, ..whatever.

JunkoGst4: Understanding how each individual student's mind works is the key. Before that, we have to cultivate our virtues.

AnnaGst6: I agree with that too. I tend to tactically ignore some low level behaviours and have ques that I require their attention or silence without saying anything like clapping patterns for younger classes and a stop look and silence signal

KeikoS . o O (OK, let Junko sensei breathe for a moment...<grin>)

TiffaniRN: I have also observed the stop and look, clapping patterns, and quiet sign and it seems to work for some but not all students.

kanakok: Anna, I use silence signal whenever I want my students be silent and pay attention to me.

JunkoGst4: Each of us carry with us triggers which give us classroom management challenges. When we understand that it is a trigger, we can step back and take a different look at the situation.

TiffaniRN: does it work

VennyS . o O (cultivate our virtues!)

kanakok: But I always wonder "does it work? and does it last? not only classroom but also outside classroom?"

AnnaGst6: You can't miss my stop look listen. I look ridiculous. I picked up off my 8th grade math teacher.

RYoungGst8: (aside: Can someone explain what o O means? Sorry.)

TiffaniRN: what grade do you teach Anna

VennyS . o O (o 0 means thinking)

RYoungGst8: Thanks

AnnaGst6: I teach only year 8 this year but I have taught K-12

TiffaniRN: what is your favorite grade?

AnnaGst6: Challenges. They keep me on my toes and thinking. I find the younger grades a challenge as I am not always on their wave length

kanakok: Do we need to change or modify classroom management in different grade levels?

JunkoGst4: I find that it isn't so much what we do, but the state we hold. When we include everyone in our awareness and makes sure that each of them know I care, the atmosphere changes.

AnnaGst6: agreed. But it is very difficult in classes of 30 plus students

AnnaGst6: How do you manage to create awareness in very large classes Junko sensei?

JunkoGst4: This chat sounds a lot like my elementary 2 classroom. Each person has something that needs fixing. It isn't so much that students need fixing. It is more that each of our relationship to each of the things need to shift.

KeikoS giggles

TiffaniRN: how can we shift them

kanakok: I want my students integrate with me a lot. I like to discuss with my students. so students are getting noisy. I do not like students just sitting and are very quiet.

kanakok: How can I handle with this situation?

TiffaniRN: I agree, I like to see students involved and interacting with the teacher and other classmates

JunkoGst4: One time, the students were adversely affected by the memory of previous teachers. I asked them what is it about their experience that give them so much grief. Each of them yelled out, some hurt, others expressed positive experiences. After I heard all of them I thanked them and said I understand. They have not returned to that place.

RYoungGst8: Sounds wonderful

kanakok: Junko, so you build up trust in that way?

JunkoGst4: When we understand how our minds work, it also helps students manage their minds.

KeikoS nods solemnly

TiffaniRN: I agree

RYoungGst8: Sometimes it's hard to decide whether that type of exchange is worth our precious little time. Seems in this case it was very helpful

kanakok: I am teaching 4 th grade now. Does it work to my students?

JunkoGst4: Each student level is different. They have different needs. But when students feel they are heard, their minds become quiet.

kanakok: wow! sounds great. I think I got an idea. So talk to each student to identify his/her needs.

JunkoGst4: I am going to drop a bomb. I feel that our classroom is a reflection of us. When we understand this, then we know that sometimes we just need to let out and other times we feel very creative.

AnnaGst6: It is very important to let students to vent their frustrations sometimes. I was ill and wasn't with my class when for a 8 weeks and when I returned they were very angry. After letting them talk about the experience they were happier and felt that I hadn't ignored their frustrations

JunkoGst4: It's simple. Creating space to ourselves and align with the goal of instruction.

JunkoGst4: space to be ourselves

KeikoS: Wow, that's deep, Junko sensei.

TiffaniRN: it is

JunkoGst4: It's like taichi. You create your movements. If you are not there to receive the blow, the energy dissipates.

JunkoGst4: If love is there, students understand.

kanakok: Making space to be ourselves have students integrate with the teacher and other classmates?

VennyS: . o O (do you play taichi? :)

JunkoGst4: yes

TiffaniRN: I agree

RYoungGst8: To play "devil's advocate" - There are some students who need to be heard a lot and frequently and will set a Japanese lesson completely off-course if they can How do you strike a happy balance?

TiffaniRN: good question

JunkoGst4: Encouraging interaction and remembering the goal of instruction is a balancing act.

JunkoGst4: I do not allow students to go on. I respect them and they respect everyone else back.

TiffaniRN: sometimes that may be difficult to do

kanakok: Could you tell me what exactly [what] you did to keep balance?

JunkoGst4: It is only difficult when we are in the river and trying to catch fish here and there. Get out of the river and remember the whole of the instructional goal.

VennyS: think balancing on a rope? :

KeikoS: . o O (my, that is deep, too)

TiffaniRN: that is deep

JunkoGst4: But there is always someone who catches you.

JunkoGst4: Trust the students to do the right thing.

JunkoGst4: Move away from control.

JunkoGst4: Reward the best behavior, the creative thinking, the enriching comments. Students immediately line up.

RYoungGst8: That's always worth remembering!

TiffaniRN: positive feedback

JunkoGst4: When there is a lot of confusion in the class, I look around for the best practice of being a student and I thank that student.

TiffaniRN: students like to know when they get a correct answer or a make good effort

kanakok: How do you reward the best behavior? just saying something? or give them stickers? (actually, I do not like giving stickers.)

KeikoS: Junko sensei, you seem to do a lot of thanking.

JunkoGst4: It takes no time for everyone to want to support each other in good behavior when I appreciate goodness in each person and I allow that to show.

TiffaniRN: students like to be rewarded, the classes that I have observed use a jar filled with marbles, once it is full, they can have a party

RYoungGst8: That reminds me of my first elementary school - the "Lee Canter" method.

TiffaniRN: do you think comments are better than giving stickers or having a party

TiffaniRN: what is the lee canter method

RYoungGst8: Behavior mod

JunkoGst4: I give bonus points. Since everything they do is evaluated, earning 20 bonus points do not skew the overall grade, but it helps students.

TiffaniRN: good idea

RYoungGst8: It's OK but I've come to feel that heart-felt appreciation sincerely given beats a jar of marbles

JunkoGst4: I've had students say I don't need bonus points.

kanakok: where can I find that method? Do you know any websites or books?

RYoungGst8: regarding Lee canter?

TiffaniRN: then what do you do with those students?

kanakok: some students do not care the rewards

JunkoGst4: I thank them.

RYoungGst8 -)

JunkoGst4: Truly speaking, it's love in the eye that does all the work.

AnnaGst6: Most students like being acknowledged even the quiet ones. Everyone likes feedback, even teachers from their bosses. Same for students. If they feel appreciated

kanakok: If you find students who do not care what teacher says, do you research any problems such as emotional or home environment problems of these students?

AnnaGst6: They are happier in themselves.

kanakok: I have my students "apologize letter" whenever they made teacher mad.

kanakok: It does work some student especially, girls. They are asking me "are you mad because of our behavior?" but not work for boys.

JunkoGst4: When we can turn our attention from the students toward ourselves and begin to examine what we do and how we speak, we find out that the kernel of the outer behavior may be inherent in what we do.

AnnaGst6: I find that my problematic student says I don't care but it's bravado. They do. They are not in a happy place in themselves and I see it as a challenge to help them value themselves again

VennyS: we have a bad name for apologize letter in Chinese and students feel ashamed to write that.

JunkoGst4: Everyone just wants to be loved.

TiffaniRN: I think so

kanakok: Really? my apologize letter in English! I will tell my students tomorrow!

kanakok: How do you motivate and encourage to have students love themselves.

TiffaniRN: good question

JunkoGst4: Teachers can love themselves. It starts there.

TiffaniRN: I think that you must also love teaching

AnnaGst6: If you focus on negative. It seems to reinforce the negative. I always thank problematic students quietly when they are doing the right thing and try to catch them doing the right thing.

JunkoGst4: How wonderful. I do the same.

TiffaniRN: I agree it important not to focus on the negative

JunkoGst4: When we, ourselves, make it a point to focus on the positive without ignoring the negative, students will do the same.

kanakok: I know. But just saying or showing I love my students work? like being friends with my students?

JunkoGst4: Is there something you wish to discuss in this forum?

TiffaniRN: there is a difference in being friends with students and being their teacher

AnnaGst6: A lot my students have problems and have had them for a long time. It is difficult to remember at the chalkface that their behaviour is a learned reaction and not directed at me. You need to help lift them out of that negative well

JunkoGst4: Teachers are different from friends. The power relationship is different.

TiffaniRN: good point

JunkoGst4: Yes! It is not directed toward you.

AnnaGst6: It is important to be supportive and an ear but not emotionally involved. It is difficult but essential

JunkoGst4: When students behave in the way they do, they may be craving love and attention, but it also may mean this is their habitual way of behaving. It is nothing personal. When we don't take it personally, it will remain there.

kanakok: I agree.

TiffaniRN: it is hard not to become emotionally involved because you see these students almost everyday

kanakok: right!

JunkoGst4: You can separate who they are from their behavior and love who they are.

AnnaGst6: But if you get involved it can cloud your judgment. I learnt that through experience

JunkoGst4: You don't have to love their behavior.

TiffaniRN: but you do love them

JunkoGst4: You can use these words to their students. I sometimes do. I say, you know how much I care for you, but how you behave is not worthy of you.

AnnaGst6: I don't love their behaviour but getting too involved in their home lives means you cross the line of being a professional. I did that with a student being abused.

JunkoGst4: Boundaries are very important.

TiffaniRN: sounds like you really cared for the student

TiffaniRN: boundaries are extremely important!

JunkoGst4: Students understand when we speak from the heart. They can hear our truth.

AnnaGst6: agreed

TiffaniRN: I agree

VennyS . o O (how to set the boundaries?)

JunkoGst4: So be courageous. Say what you mean and mean what you say.

TiffaniRN: good advice

JunkoGst4: Be straight with them and remember compassion.

KeikoS: Well, Junko sensei... your words are full of gems!

TiffaniRN: beautifully said

JunkoGst4: I feel very honored to be with all of you.

TiffaniRN: thank you

KeikoS: Do you have any last questions or comments?

RYoungGst8: thank you

AdaA: thanks for sharing your experiences with us

AnnaGst6: Thank you, you put into words very effectively what I have observed from reflection, Junko sensei

TiffaniRN: thank you for sharing the valuable information

MikaW: I learned that there are many challenges there... thank you

KeikoS: I would like to thank Junko sensei and also all of you who came today.

JohnF: `Thank You very much.

VennyS bows to a group of great teachers.

TatsumiGst10: Thank you.

KeikoS: Again there is a paper based on this presentation...

JunkoGst4: Keep on offering what you do. You are all great and have so much to offer.

Thank you, everyone.

KarenCh: thank you

KeikoS: <http://kapalama.ksbe.edu/faculty/julowry/>

TiffaniRN: thank you, goodnight

JunkoGst4: Blessings to you all!

KeikoS: I thank Junko sensei! doumo arigatou gozaimashita.

JunkoGst4: You are welcome!

RYoungGst8: Mou sorosoro osaki ni shitsurei shimasu

KeikoS claps loudly for Junko sensei.

JunkoGst4: The same goes for you, Keiko san! You are so great!