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What it really means to be a tutor

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When it comes to tutoring someone considerably younger than you, the experience can be quite rewarding yet simultaneously difficult and rather strenuous. Ultimately, it really depends on you as a tutor to find the right approach, suitable for each student. This can involve matching the student's personality and ability to grasp concepts to your teaching methods.

Tutoring can be nerve-wracking, especially for first-timers. However, even seasoned tutors face a lot of struggles from time to time, which is absolutely normal. To mitigate the waves of doubt that may surge within you, remind yourself that teaching is truly an admirable pursuit. Furthermore, know that you're positively impacting someone's life by guiding them personally.

Now, meeting your student for the first time can seem tricky. One might feel a bit lost about where and how to start, but trust me when I say that it's really simple to detangle those worries in your head. The first day is mostly about getting to know each other a little bit. Talk to your student like they are your friend and they will slowly open up to you. Making sure both of you are comfortable with each other is key.

It is also important to establish that the effort should come from both sides. This makes sure the teaching and learning process goes as smoothly and efficiently as possible.

As you teach them, you will get the opportunity to brush up on the long-forgotten basics of the subjects. Even so, it is advisable to familiarise yourself with the relevant materials beforehand. If you are not well-versed in a particular topic, please don't shy away from saying, "I don't know this" or "I'm not sure." There is nothing wrong with mentors admitting that they might not know everything in this world. In fact, it is rather admirable to own up to it and learn with your mentees as co-peers.

Learning should be fun and encouraging, rather than being all about getting good marks. Let your students know that they are so much more than just grades and letters. One of my favourite teachers once said, "Study because you want to learn. Not only because you want to get good grades." Not only is this quote applicable for students, but as teachers, we should always remind ourselves of the joy of learning.

Apart from academics, try to understand your student as a person as well. Get to know their strengths, weaknesses, hopes, and dreams. This will enable you to understand them better, which will help to teach them in a way that suits them the most. Most importantly, having patience and kindness can be some of your greatest tools as a mentor. Additionally, treating your student with respect, instead of considering them to be "lesser," can aid in building lifelong confidence in them.

A good rule of thumb to follow would be to try to be the kind of teacher that you've always wanted to have. As a teacher, you're going to learn a lot from your students too. In the process of teaching, you will end up learning new things about yourself as a person and also a student.

Ayra Areeba Abid's favourite word is 'serendipity' and she's a sociology geek. Connect with her at areeba.ayra@gmail.com

It's time to stop being online all the time

NAMREEN SHAIYAZ

Do you have a social media account that you use primarily to aimlessly scroll through your newsfeed for hours on end? Do you use this aimless scrolling to avoid forming meaningful connections with your loved ones? Is your idea of unwinding defined by poring over online discourse regarding topics that you would never hear anyone fret over in your offline life? Do you maybe even engage in said discourse? Are these petty fights with faceless people online your way of having a good time?



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If you answered yes to any of these questions, then chances are you're chronically online.

Once you have accepted that you are indeed chronically online, which can actually be the hardest stage, it's time to learn how to break out of it.

One of the side effects of being chronically online is that it can rewire someone's brain into changing the way they interact with information. This usually results from the exposure to a torrent of news and information, which is presented in a way that limits any kind of critical thinking or nuance.

In this case, the best course of action is to avoid using social media to stay updated on current events, and rather opt for more credible news sources. Instead of finding out about major news from a popular account with no credibility to their name, try to get it from an unbiased source so that you can think critically about it yourself and not be swayed by others' opinions.

Depending on how chronically online someone is, this can take some time to unlearn. But the more you distance yourself from questionable opinions from popular internet personalities, the further you will progress. If this feels like too much work at first, maybe start by setting limits that reduce the amount of time you spend on social media, as this might discourage you from

overusing these apps.

Another thing that chronically online people do is deliberately post controversial opinions or instigate petty fights with strangers just for the attention. Many people also like having the reputation of being "problematic," which is just another label for individuals who get attention by being a bully or riling others up. The attention they receive is addicting, so it becomes difficult to give it up once they get a taste of it.

The most effective way to wean off this addiction would be to delete all forms of social media and stop engaging with strangers completely. However, quitting cold turkey is easier said than done. So, a more effective way would be to use a private account with only close friends added to share your thoughts. This can kill the urge to post for views and clicks, as many people will no longer see what you're uploading. Additionally, it might even suck out the "fun" of posting on social media, and help you to phase out of it.

The advice above may not work for everyone for a myriad of reasons. But in any case, this can be a callout for how you interact online and provide a guideline on how to break out of it.

Namreen is sick and tired. Send a reminder that life goes on at namreen.shaiyaz@gmail.com