

Education as Relationship Between Persons

Stephanos P. Vassilopoulos
Alexandros V. Kosmopoulos

University of Patras, Greece

“The person of the educator is what counts more than his/her
knowledge, more than the methods used.”

C. R. Rogers (1984)

“We are going to seriously take into consideration an educational reform,
only when we see that the training of the educator is its first article.”

Ardoino (1963)

Abstract

Relational dynamic education and counseling is a developing approach that views education as (1) a process that targets the emergence and establishment in the individual of a unique identity and (2) an act, not static but dynamic and fluid, greatly influenced by the quality of the relationships. The fruits of this pedagogy depend heavily on the transformation of the educational relationship into a genuine, person-centered one. It has application in every field of human endeavor where the healthy psychological and spiritual growth of the individual is a goal. In this article, the basic concepts and tenets of this approach are presented. A new teaching model is put forward, based on the quality of person-centered relationships between the student and the teacher.

Author Note: Dr. A. Kosmopoulos is an educator, psychologist, and philosopher. He developed the relational dynamic education of the person. Dr. S. Vassilopoulos studied pedagogical sciences in Greece and England. He is currently a lecturer at the University of Patras and may be contacted at the Department of Primary Education, University of Patras, Patras, 26 110 Greece, +30 2610 969724, or stephanosv@upatras.gr. The authors would like to thank Jef Cornelius-White, Bruce Allen, Carol Wolter-Gustafson, and Peggy Natiello, Maria Hess and Lora Kahn for their valuable comments and suggestions.

The Person-Centered Journal, Vol. 16, No. 1-2, 2009
Printed in the United States. All rights reserved.

The Need for a Relational Approach to Education

It is becoming widely acknowledged that the educational system in its current form is failing to meet the real needs of modern societies, let alone the real needs of the students (Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010; Kosmopoulos, 1990; Moffet, 1994; Rogers & Freiberg, 1994). Despite the various social changes and the major progress made in the human sciences during the previous century, which generated the “movement of new (or progressive) education” and the “school of action” (e.g., Dewey, Kerschensteiner), our schools worldwide appear to be the least affected by these new ideas. As Rogers and Freiberg observe, they still “...constitute the most traditional, conservative, rigid, bureaucratic institution of our time” (1994, p. xxi), and the power of inertness seems too difficult to overcome. But how much progress would have taken place if contemporary principles and accumulated scientific evidence were seriously considered by reformers and policy makers?

In our view, our schools are increasingly becoming isolated islands surrounded by indifference. Our future generation of children represent a dwindling population of healthy, happy, self-motivated individuals who are willing to learn and develop within the school system. If educators or policy makers attempt to investigate the prime causes of the students’ reluctance to learn, they might identify the lack of coherence, connection or relation between the student and the school process. Fifty years ago, it was home and families, culture, religion, and the community that supported the education of students. Nowadays, the high rate of divorce, multiculturalism and community destabilization has made this support problematic (Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010; Rogers & Freiberg, 1994). But if this is the case, what is it that could connect students with schools today? We believe that the only effective and permanent solution to the problem with schooling today is the development of personal motives, which could internally connect the school learning environment with the students’ deep interests and needs. It is the abolition of the “nonrelational” attitude that reigns over schools today, replaced with an immediate and functional “relationship” between the students and their school

community. Such a relationship could give meaning to their studies and aid the developmental trajectory of the child or adolescent.

It is important to point that voices from inside schools themselves appear to stress this need for meaningful and authentic relationships. For example, Cornelius-White (2007) reports a powerful qualitative study carried out by Poplin and Weeres (1994) that attempted to investigate the question “What is the problem with schooling?” According to their research, the main problem identified was relationships. The authors conclude, “Students desire authentic relationships where they are trusted, given responsibility, spoken to honestly and warmly, and treated with dignity” (Poplin & Weeres, 1994, cited in Cornelius-White, 2007, p. 116). Other studies carried out in Greek schools appear to have arrived at similar results (e.g., Kaila, 1999).

The educator as a person has a major role to play here. According to a recent meta-analysis (Cornelius-White, 2007), person-centered teacher variables (e.g., empathy, genuineness, nondirectivity) were found to have above-average association with positive student outcomes. Additionally, regarding the link between the educator’s personality and the development of self-perception or social attitudes in students, a report by UNESCO (1997) says that the poorer the self-image teachers have and convey, the less favorable seems to be the students’ trust in the authorities or confidence in their own sense of political ability. Furthermore, in this climate, the students’ attitude toward the values of multiculturalism, active involvement in community life, and confrontation of every authority with personal freedom and autonomy, appears to be restricted. In his first public speech in Paris in 1966, which influenced the way many French intellectuals thought, Rogers said, “It is urgent to devote as much money to the liberation of the person, as we do to nuclear power.” This statement emphasizes the empowerment of an educational system that promotes the development of persons who will create the societies of the third millennium.

In the present article, a relational pedagogy is proposed, called *relational dynamic education (RD education)*, which meets the real needs of young people and modern societies. This approach to educative relationships was developed by A. Kosmopoulos in the 1960s

(Kosmopoulos, 1967, 1983, 2000). Within common European practice, it supports a school that does not simply conform to the various *curricula*, but targets the development of a “fully functioning” (Rogers, 1961) student. In such a school, the students (as well as the teachers) are trusted and assisted to assume full responsibility for their own learning. This is realistic only if the educational system fully accepts and reinforces the tendency toward *self-actualization* as part of each person’s *organismic* nature. “This is the inherent tendency of the organism to develop all its capacities in ways which serve to maintain and enhance the organism,” defined Rogers (1959, p. 196). Additionally, in a school that adopts the RD approach, students’ (and teachers’) personal development is enhanced by the establishment of genuine, person-centered relationships, which need time to be established, as well as a fertile climate of trust, caring, and positive self-regard. Finally, in such a school, teachers feel free and secure to relate to their students in a person-centered way. Both teachers and students are creative in their relationships with each other as well as in their relationships to their individual selves and to the subject matter.

It should be stressed on this point that, although the synthesized theory presented in this paper may share common aspects with other humanistic and holistic approaches to education (e.g., holistic education: Palmer, 1993; Miller, 1993), we believe that it is unique in the synthesis it provides as well as in the emphasis it places on the authentic and educative person-centered teacher-student relationship. This emphasis stems from a core assumption of the RD education that the essence and core of education lies not in the teacher’s personality, neither in the subject matter, but in the high-quality relationship developed as a third entity between the student and the pedagogue. This positive teacher-student relationship can further develop students as persons by facilitating the establishment of an inner relationship between the student and the student’s self as well as with the essence of the teaching subject, which we believe is the ultimate goal of the education. This can only be accomplished by a teaching approach that involves the whole presence of the educator as well as the facilitation of an experiential, meaningful type of learning.

But what are the qualitative characteristics of a genuine, educative, dynamic, and person-centered relationship? We hope that

they will soon become evident after a brief introduction of the basic concepts and tenets of the RD approach, which follows.

The “Person” and the “Relationship”

The “person”

According to the RD education, the current educational system has (or should have) as its primary mission facilitating the development of students as persons. First, the concept of “person” includes elements that have been attributed to the concept of personality by Caruso (1964), Allport (1968), Frankl (1985), and Sullivan (1954). It also includes the characteristics assigned to it by the French philosophical-psychological school of the journal *Esprit* (Mounier, 1952) and phenomenology (Merleau Ponty, 1976). Most importantly, it includes the characteristics of the “fully functioning person” as defined by Maslow (1987) and Rogers (1961) and further analyzed by Schmid (1998) as well as Patterson and Hidore (1997). The most basic of these characteristics are the belief in the uniqueness of the individual, a sense of personal continuity and purpose in life, and a feeling of inner freedom and personal power.

Further, the term “fully functioning person” also refers to the qualitative characteristics of a healthy and effectively functioning individual, and thus the term appears to be close to G. Allport’s “personality.” However, it seems that the “person” is beyond the mere functions and expressions of “personality” and constitutes a core of bottomless depth, which is not further analyzable. “Person” is the source of originality, sociability, and inner freedom, offering inner information about “Who am I?” and “Where am I going?” Thus the “person” feeds the individual’s self-image and self-esteem—an image that may not necessarily be consistent with other people’s opinion of that person. We assert that “person” is the core of personality, which, as a “hypostasis,” has touched the outmost boundaries of being. It is exactly that psychological (and spiritual) entity through which the Rogers “person” is able to function properly. Finally, the “person” is the being who feels and handles the ineffable existential freedom and goes beyond and above the mere egocentrism and the logic of self-conservation. The “person” consists of potentiality, which is often

hidden and sometimes unrealized. It emerges in the first years of life and needs the welcoming and accepting behavior to be actualized and safeguarded. Therefore, an emotionally supportive family, as well as a person-centered school, may help find a way to successfully navigate the opposing forces of “freedom” and “law” through a nondirective, person-centered climate, which respects and reinforces the emergence of the “person” in the young child.

The relationship

When two or more people establish a sharing, genuine affective bond between them, this bond has the potential to further develop into a deep and intimate relationship. As a result, persons who form a relationship of such a high quality tend to share a common frame of reference called the *relational dynamics context (RD context)*. According to the theory presented here, the “relationship” indicates first of all the sharing of a psychic “topos” (“place,” “lieu”) of deep knowledge and empathic understanding that functions as a common frame of reference (Kosmopoulos, 1999; 2001).

What actually does this psychic topos or RD context contain? On an affective and intellectual level, the RD context serves as the place of semantic references and is decodable and interpretative in a similar—but not identical—way by the persons in a relationship. This context remains “present,” “alive,” dynamic, and intervening in the communication between the persons involved. The RD context, which in the first stages of the interpersonal relationship is continuously being explored and decoded by the participants, is now expanding itself more and more and contributes to the further deepening of the relationship.

The RD context involves the sharing, not only of experiences and affective life events, but also of other elements of life. All these experiences constitute the common place of semantic references, which allows the accurate understanding and interpretation of the social/relational occurrences and contributes to the establishment and deepening of the relationship. Furthermore, this context is so powerful that it can make verbal communication unnecessary or redundant. Therefore, it could be held responsible for the phenomenon we sometimes observe when persons—in relationship—manage to communicate effectively in the absence of verbal exchange, in silence.

In this case, it is possible to watch silence becoming a form of communication during discussions of sensitive issues or at high levels of the relationship.

Other elements of the context are, according to person-centered theory (Rogers, 1961), the positive and unconditional regard and trust in the person as an organismic being moving toward growth and self-actualization.

Preliminary evidence supports the existence of this shared frame of reference in persons in a relationship. In one psychometric study, the authors of this study and a colleague (Vassilopoulos, Kosmopoulos, & Konstantinidis, 2004) found that persons in relationships they considered as intimate (a) share unique things with their relationship partners, (b) have deep, personal and direct knowledge of their partners, (c) are more capable of empathic understanding regarding their relationship partners, (d) find the relationships with them developing, deepening more and more, (e) are always conscious of these relationships, and (f) feel emotionally secure in the relationships. In another study, we investigated the link between the RD context and the meanings ascribed to hypothetical interpersonal interactions (Vassilopoulos & Kosmopoulos, 2003a). We found that this shared frame of reference influences the interpretations of ambiguous or apparently negative social events. Specifically, participants in intimate relationships (scoring high on the Relational Dynamic Context Inventory developed by Vassilopoulos, Kosmopoulos & Konstantinidis, 2004) tended to produce more positive and less negative interpretations of ambiguous social events and interpreted negative events in a less negative or offensive way. For example, they were less likely to interpret a conversation partner's yawn as indicating boredom (negative interpretation) and/or more likely to interpret it as indicating exhaustion (benign interpretation). Similar results have been reported in another study (Vassilopoulos & Kosmopoulos, 2003b). Therefore, there is indirect and preliminary evidence suggesting that the context of the relationship is intervening in the communication between the relationship partners.

The helping, educative relationship

The educative relationship, in order to help students develop, should be characterized by:

(a) Psychological health, a core characteristic of which is *genuineness*. The “relational health” refers to the maturity, a readiness of the person to develop relationships that are life-enriching and creative (for both the person and the other). The interpersonal relationship is also psychologically healthy when the individual has the ability to develop and create without oppressing or manipulating the other. Finally, the relationship is healthy when the individual is not distancing himself or herself from the other by resorting to mechanisms of defense or manipulation due to hidden motives, as we will see below.

“Relational genuineness,” on the other hand, refers to the intentions and attitudes of the individual, which are not only congruent with his inner experience, but are transparent to the relationship partner. No doubt, this transparency, harmony, and consistency with one’s inward experiencing can become the catalyst for the further development of the relationship. However, these interpersonal qualities presuppose the function of a relational climate that leads the educator to advanced levels of self-awareness, self-acceptance, and positive self-esteem.

b) “Pedagogical” quality. Ancient Greeks first conceived education as a relationship. According to Marrou, education in ancient Greece was more than teaching; it was actually the efforts of an older man, who took care of a younger man in order to facilitate his development (Marrou, 1965, p. 68). However, it is J. H. Pestalozzi (1746-1827), the great Swiss educator and forerunner of the “*l’Education Nouvelle*” and “*Arbeitschule*” educational movements, who should be regarded as the “father” of the relational dynamic education. His contribution to the field of pedagogical sciences was innovative because, for the first time, pedagogical conception and practice was based on his warm and authentic pedagogical relationships with the children in his institutes.

Nevertheless, this innovative conception of education as a qualitative interpersonal relationship, highlighted in both Pestalozzi’s work and the child-centered pedagogical movements of the “new

school” or the “school of action,” was not given the consideration it deserved by the scientific community until the appearance of C. R. Rogers. In the middle of the previous century, Carl Rogers revolutionized the field of psychology by suggesting that the outcome in psychotherapy depends on the quality of the relationship developed between the therapist and the client. The RD education draws on Rogers’ clinical and research work, especially with regard to the conception of the person-centered dimension. However, Rogers did not further analyze the helping relationship (Sanders, 2006, p. 33), especially the educative relationship. Fortunately, other colleagues have undertaken this line of research (e.g., Aspy & Roebuck, 1976; Cornelius-White & Harbaugh, 2010; Hargreaves, 1972; de Peretti, 1972; Palmer, 1993; Postic, 1995; Tausch, 1978) and shed light on the phenomenon from different perspectives (psychoanalysis, sociology, social psychology, holistic and person-centred education).

According to the RD education, the “pedagogical relationship” is not simply a powerful tool for motivating and effectively educating students, but rather an end in itself. However, the pedagogical relationship differs from other, equally healthy interpersonal relationships, in two ways. First, the educative relationship has a double mission: facilitate the healthy development of the student’s personality and provide educational benefits. The educator must be his or her “real” self in interaction but not deny or forget for a moment the pedagogical role to facilitate and simultaneously guide indirectly the student to self-actualization.

The contrasting, pathological relationship

It is not easy for anyone to establish and maintain healthy interpersonal relationships. The relationships developed in schools run the risk of turning out to be corrupted. Below we present four broad categories of pathological interpersonal relationships that can be found in school environments and other social milieus. These types of relationships relate to the teacher, the student, or both. The intent is to help the reader conceive, *a contrario*, the elements of purity and genuineness we seek in every educational relationship.

a) The relationships of escape

The title encompasses a variety of *defensive relationships*, that is, those established out of fear of the interpersonal relationship. These are the “negative-passive” relationships, where the individual “withdraws” from the social environment because he is afraid of it. This individual (student, teacher, or both) either resorts to communications that are simply monologues (with himself or herself, since that person is unable to “listen” to the other) or, in the individual’s relationships, surrenders himself or herself totally to his imaginative world and avoids any contact with reality. Social phobia, defined as the person’s inability to relate to others due to the extreme fear of negative evaluation (Alden & Taylor, 2004), belongs in this category.

We also encounter “negative-active” relationships or relationships of hostility and aggression, which conceal deep feelings of weakness and inferiority (Bauduin, 1956) as well as feelings of rejection and abandonment by others. The individual does not feel at ease in relationships and escapes the situation by resorting to an aggressive behavior. This aggression may be expressed directly or indirectly. It can also be generalized or circumscribed. Thus, the individual may direct aggression against the world, against certain individuals, or against certain elements of a single individual’s behavior.

b) Oppressive relationships

These are established by a person who has a *great need* for dominance and manifests it by imposing himself or herself on others (Fromm, 1966) by exercising power over others. The motives could be several: narcissism, where feelings of omnipotence give pleasure to the individual; shame, where the individual attempts to hide feelings of loneliness or compensate for perceived inferiority; and/or low awareness, where the individual is not in contact with his or her inner experiencing. In schools, there is a great chance of coming across this particular type of relationship due to the great differences that exist in such an environment (differences in age, status, social power, and knowledge between teachers and students).

c) Relationships where the other is treated as an object

This type of relationship is the most frequent and dangerous to pedagogy and actualization and is not to be confused with psychoanalytic “object relations.” The individual who establishes

object relationships appears “relational” to others but, in fact, is not actually responding to other people’s needs, is not genuinely other-centered, but is a prisoner of egocentrism. Additionally, the person is not genuinely accepting the relationship partner, nor sincerely believing in the mutual growth that the establishment of a healthy relationship could bring. In fact, the person exploits the other, having only the person’s own “trivial” interests in view. Therefore, the other serves simply as an object for that person, a mere “tool” the person utilizes to achieve his or her purpose.

d) Relationships of dependence

Relationships of dependence are generally established among parents and young children and are biologically necessary. However, such relationships become less healthy in older children or in adults. As Fromm (1956) and Horney (1945) point out, it is the weak and vulnerable persons who prefer to establish “relationships of love” with others since they are *unable* to hate them. In other words, these neurotic and masochistic personalities resort to relationships of dependence because they fear direct confrontation. They literally become part of the other person (or an institution) in order to escape from the unbearable feeling of isolation and separation. In school relationships, it is the student who is usually psychologically dependent on the teacher. However, we can observe teachers becoming dependent on the educational authorities, or teachers being (almost unconsciously) dependent on their students, not because they love them but because they dread to confront them.

The two fundamental catalysts for authentic, educative relationships

“The connection among souls is ultimately what education is about. There is no single right way to do it, no blueprint. But there are paths to the souls of students that are open to every teacher, in every classroom, in every school.”

R. Kessler (2000)

At the “heart” of the relational dynamic being of the teacher is his or her *dialogical* ability and establishment of “*agapetic*” relationships

with the students. What follows is a brief description of these two key concepts that shape the teacher's relational attitude.

The dialogue

The "dialogue" is more than a verbal exchange or discussion; it is the movement of one soul to meet the other, an attitude of the soul, the highest expression of the relational quality in human beings. If we closely observe the pedagogical process, we will realize that dialogical effectiveness depends on the personality, mental state, and culture of the interacting persons, but mainly on the person of the teacher. The person's readiness is a product not only of the person's mental health, sociability, and maturity, but also of the person's humanistic cultivation and philosophical armament.

Dialogue without motion cannot be considered as such, since it constitutes a movement initially toward the depth of one's self and, next, toward the other, the co-speaker, or the fellow human being. The person "submerges" into the depths of his or her soul and attempts to "in-dwell." The person then becomes aware of his or her deep needs, of his or her need for extensionality (Cornelius-White, 2007), completion of the distance that separates persons from their fellow human beings and the truth. Such a person cannot stand this separation and is motivated to decrease distance through authentic dialogue. Therefore, dialogue is born and maintained by the existing differences between persons and represents an attempt to overcome differences and reach a synthesis, which is often a superior truth. Dialogue is also maintained by communication breakdowns.

Dialogue is actually an exit from the "I," our egocentrism and direction toward "You," which is multidimensional, united, and continuous. It is a movement toward persons, objects, ideas, or facts. The motion that is observed in authentic dialogue has deep roots in the internal, the "basement" of each person. Our personal, deep cultivation as human beings and frequent in-dwelling are basic conditions of productive dialogical motion.

The agape (Love)

"What is hell? The inability to love."
Dostojevsky

But, what else mobilizes a person's dialogical movement, apart from the person's need for completion? We cannot find a better term to describe this fire burning deep inside the educator than the word "agape." Unfortunately, the word "agape" is rarely mentioned in educational circles. As Miller correctly observes, "The word (love) seems out of place in a world of outcome, accountability, and standardized tests At the very least, our culture doesn't seem comfortable with the word" (2000, p. 31).

Agape is a dynamic psychological state that expresses the person's strong tendency to enter in reciprocal, sharing, and positive relationships with everything. In this pedagogical agape, which manifests itself in many ways according to each particular case, we find immersed the whole personality of the educator. Agape has its origin not only in the individual's attained sociability, but also in cultural and spiritual cultivation. The *pedagogue of agape* lives in direct relation and solidarity to everything; one is a deeply "political" being (with the meaning that ancient Greeks ascribed to the word, i.e., a public-spirited person) and is continuously concerned about the societal and social problems, as well as about the students.

Agape is surely a personal sentiment, but as Buber highlights when he describes the meaning of love, it is not a sentiment that clings to an "I," as if the "You" were merely its "content" or object. In reality, love exists *between* I and You; "Whoever does not know this, know this with his being, does not know love, even if he should ascribe to it the feelings that he lives through" (Buber, 1996, p. 66). The pedagogue who finds himself or herself in this condition of agape is characterized by a positive perception of the world. Moore claims that "love allows a person to see the true angelic nature of another person, the halo, the aureole of divinity" (1992, p. 122).

The person's perception (active and passive at the same time) is transformed, purified, and "baptized" in the unmediated, personal relationship the person establishes with persons, objects, or ideas. Furthermore, this pedagogue of agape is also characterized by "voluntary weakness" (but he is not a weak personality), i.e., being so convinced of the value of love's tranquil and transforming power that the pedagogue does not have to resort to violence or exercise authority in order to be accepted by the students. On the contrary, he or she

deeply believes in the pedagogical and therapeutic effectiveness of the authentic relationships established between the teacher and the student. Relational dynamic teachers are particularly characterized by their nonviolent, nonauthoritarian, tranquil, and *silent* attitude or way of being.

The practice of RD approach demands that the teacher is in constant relationship with self, with the surrounding conditions or persons, and with the students. The latter need the discrete but integral “presence” of the educator in their lives. “Present” is therefore proved to be the educator who becomes conscious of and is affected by the students’ presence in his or her life. “Only as the You becomes present does presence come into being,” says Buber (1996, p. 63). And he adds, “Love is responsibility of an I for a You: In this consists what cannot consist in any feeling—the equality of lovers...” (Buber, 1996, p. 66).

Regarding the various manifestations of agape, we could also say that the “agapetic” relationships have an extremely active character indeed. They are not characterized by passivity and immobility; on the contrary, the establishment of these active, multifaceted, and deep relationships touches the present of the student and positively influences his future. These agapetic relationships constitute an action, born deep inside us, which benefits society as a whole and in the end returns to us. In practice, it is difficult to distinguish the actions of dialogue from the actions of agape, since both functions appear to have common origin, are closely interconnected, and feed one into the other.

Agape, in order to be pedagogically fruitful, has to spring from a person with maturity and balance, a fully functioning person who has accomplished a high level of “asceticism” and deep personal refinement. The educator who accomplishes this is free from various dependencies, passions, or obsessions. Educators achieve this when they have some beneficial experiences, and especially when they have lived through various “death experiences” (i.e., the experience of relational failures and the subsequent pain they entail). Because of these experiences, the educator or counselor becomes capable of being deeply calm, serene, and “distant” (i.e., affectively detached in order to rescue his or her pedagogical perspective and role) but always in

relation to the other. This relationship, which in our opinion is largely the relationship that the counselor or therapist also ought to establish with clients, is potentially teachable and practicable, thus, attainable. We are talking of course about a teacher's education developed in accordance with relational dynamic and person-centered philosophy and methodology, an education that closely follows the steps of the psychotherapists' and counselors' training. For we believe that, without the former qualitative characteristics, the interpersonal relationship, sooner or later, becomes degenerated and its pedagogical and therapeutic outcome is often canceled. We are talking about a form of education which, unfortunately, is not in line with the prevailing training in our schools of education.

The Relational Dynamic Teaching Model

In order to transform RD education into everyday action in school settings, a teaching model is needed relevant to application within an hour, a week, or a semester. In this model, the positive relationship established between the teacher and the student functions as a *bridge* that leads the student to the development of a better relationship with the subject matter. Although it is a teaching model, it is important to remember that the teacher functions mainly as a "facilitator of learning" (Rogers, 1983; Rogers & Freiberg, 1994). The charts below represent the *relational dynamic teaching model*. This article has aimed to describe the background and rationale for the model. The following depiction of the model may create additional questions for the reader, which the authors hope lead to further engagement and/or articulation with the model in the future.

Concluding Remarks

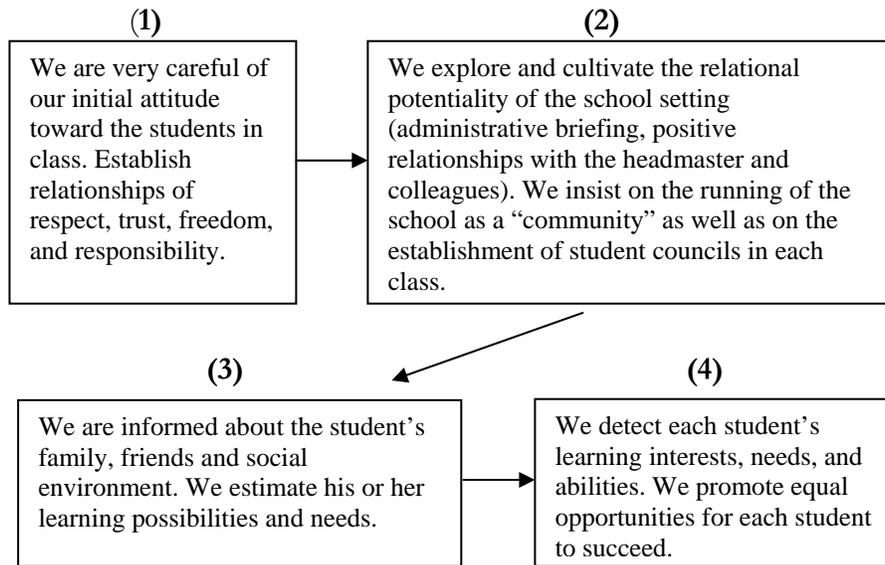
We hope that the importance of "relationship" in the teaching practice and educational process in general has become obvious in this paper. It is essential to define schoolwork as the voluntary, genuine, and educational relationship between equally honored persons who decide and function together complementarily to achieve mutually accepted aims. This kind of pedagogy defines "education" as the

The Relational Dynamic Teaching Model

Phase A:

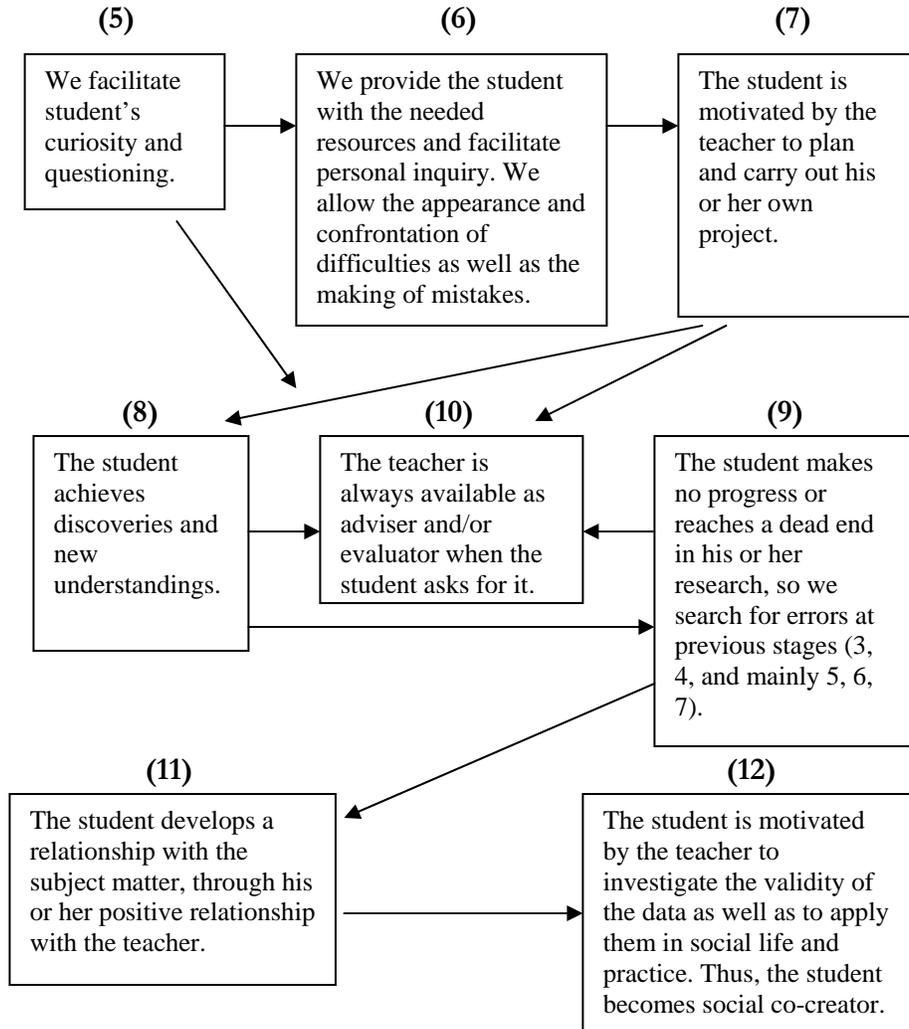
PREPARATION – THE TEACHER IS ADAPTING HIMSELF
TO THE CLASSROOM AS A WHOLE, AS WELL AS TO
EVERY STUDENT INDIVIDUALLY

(Climate of “frugality” and acceptance)



Phase B:

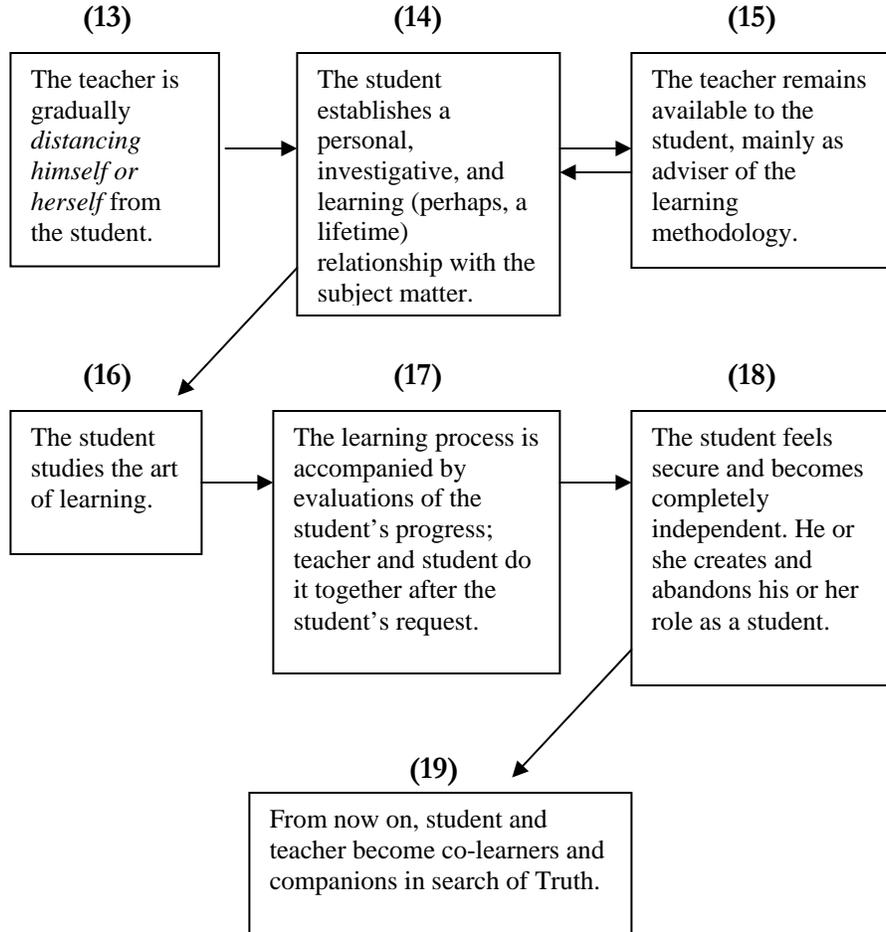
THE TEACHER FACILITATES THE STUDENT'S EFFORT TO COME IN DIRECT EDUCATING RELATIONSHIP TO THE SUBJECT MATTER



Phase C:

THE STUDENT REMAINS IN RELATIONSHIP TO THE
SUBJECT MATTER.

THE TEACHER WITHDRAWS



developmental achievement of the individual who comes into a creative, personal “relationship” with the subject matter.

For this to become reality, modern society needs to realize that the basic and prevailing problem in education today is the low quotient of the affective involvement in school, not only among the students, but also among the educators. A reform worthy of its name is the one that does not turn a blind eye to this problem but studies it and plans an educational policy that gives effective, long-lasting solutions. This is an educational policy that foresees the future and envisages the school of tomorrow. It is a policy that considers the problem in its totality and pursues the constitution of a dialogical school, resulting in many other reformatory consequences.

References

- Alden, L. E., & Taylor, C. T. (2004). Interpersonal processes in social phobia. *Clinical Psychology Review, 24*, 857-882.
- Alport, G. (1968). *The person in psychology*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Ardoino, J. (1963). *Propos actuels sur l' Education. (Regarding education of today)*. I.A.E. de Bordeaux, Collection *Travaux et Document*, Bordeaux.
- Aspy, D. N., & Roebuck, F. N. (1977). *Kids don't learn from people they don't like*. Amherst, MA: Human Resource Development Press.
- Bauduin, C. (1956). Quelques troubles du sens d'autrui (Some problems concerning the meaning of other). *L'Homme et son prochain*, Actes VIII, Congrès de Philosophie, Toulouse, p. 13.
- Buber, M. (1996). *I and thou* (W. Kaufmann, Trans.). New York: Touchstone.
- Caruso, I. (1964). *Existential psychology: From analysis to synthesis*. New York: Herder and Herder.
- Cornelius-White, J. H. D. (2007). Congruence as extensionality. *Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapies, 6*, 196-204.
- Cornelius-White, J. H. D. (2007). Learner-centered teacher-student relationships are effective: A meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research, 77*, 113-143.

- Cornelius-White, J. H. D., & Harbaugh, A. P. (2010). *Learner-centered instruction: Building relationships for student success*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Frankl, V. (1985). *Psychotherapy and existentialism: Selected papers on logotherapy*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Fromm, E. (1956). *Société aliénée et société saine: du capitalisme au socialisme humaniste : psychanalyse de la société contemporaine*. (Alienated society and healthy society: From capitalism to humanistic socialism: Psychoanalysis of modern society). Paris: Le Courrier du livre.
- Fromm, E. (1966). *The art of loving*. London: Unwin Books.
- Hargreaves, D. (1972). *Interpersonal relations and education*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Horney, K. (1945). *Our inner conflicts*. New York: W.W. Norton.
- Kaila, M. (1999). *O ekpedefitikos sta oria tis paidagogikis sxesis*. (The educator on the verge of educational relationship). Athens.
- Kessler, R. (2000). *The soul of education: Helping students find connection, compassion and character at school*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD.
- Kosmopoulos, A. (1967). *La relation pédagogique à partir de l'œuvre de Pestalozzi*. (The pedagogical relationship according to the Pestalozzi's work). Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Sorbonne University, Paris.
- Kosmopoulos, A. (1983). *Schesiodinamiki pedagogiki tou prosopou*. (Relational dynamic education of the person). Athens: Grigoris
- Kosmopoulos, A. (1990). *To scholio pethane: Zito to sxholio tou prosopou*. (The school is dead: Viva the school of the person). Athens: Grigoris.
- Kosmopoulos, A., (1999, December). *Education as relationship of persons today*. Paper presented at the International Symposium: Education and Educator, Patras, Greece.
- Kosmopoulos, A. (2000). *Schesiodinamiki pedagogiki tou prosopou*. (Relational dynamic education of the person (4th ed.)). Athens: Grigoris
- Kosmopoulos, A. (2001, September). *Hellenic and relation dynamics reading of the person-centered counseling*. Paper presented at the VIII European Counselling Conference, Athens, Greece.
- Marrou, H. I. (1965). *Histoire de l'education dans l'antiquité*. (History of education in ancient times). Seuil.

- Malsow, A. (1987). *Motivation and personality* (3rd ed.). New York: Harper & Row.
- Merleau-Ponty, M. (1976). *Phenomenologie de la perception*. (The phenomenology of perception). Paris: Gallimard.
- Miller, J. (2000). *Education and the soul: Toward a spiritual curriculum*. New York: SUNY Press.
- Miller, R. (1993). *The renewal of meaning in education*. Brandon, VT: Holistic Education Press.
- Moffet, J. (1994). *The universal schoolhouse: Spiritual awakening through education*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Moore, T. (1992). *The care of the soul: A guide for cultivating depth and sacredness in everyday life*. New York: HarperCollins.
- Mounier, E. (1952). *Personalism*. London: Routledge & K. Paul.
- Palmer, P. (1993). *To know as we are known: Education as a spiritual journey*. San Francisco: Harper.
- Patterson, C. H., & Hidore, S. C. (1997). *Successful Psychotherapy: A caring, loving relationship*. Northvale, NJ: Aronson.
- Peretti, A., de (1972). *Liberté et relations humaines ou l'inspiration non-directivite*. (Freedom and human relationships or the non-directive inspiration). Paris: EPI.
- Postic, M. (1995). *I morfotiki schesi*. (The educative relationship). Athens: Gutenberg .
- Rogers, C. R. (1959). A theory of therapy, personality and interpersonal relationships, as developed in the client-centered framework (pp. 184-256). In S. Koch (Ed.), *Psychology: A study of a science: Vol III. Formulations of the person and the social context*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Rogers, C. R. (1961). *On becoming a person*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Rogers, C. R. (1966, March 16). Interview in *LeMonde*, p. 16.
- Rogers, C. R. (1983). *Freedom to learn for the 80s* (2nd ed.). Columbus: Charles Merrill.
- Rogers, C. R. (1984). L' Education une activite personelle. (The education of an active personality). In L. Abraham (Ed.) *L' enseignant est une personne*. ESF, Paris.
- Rogers, C. R., & Freiberg, J. (1994). *Freedom to Learn* (3rd ed.). New York: Merrill.

- Sanders, P. (2006). *The person-centred counselling primer*. Ross-on-Wye, England: PCCS Books.
- Schmid, P. (1998). On becoming a person-centered approach: A person-centered understanding of the person. In B. Thorne & E. Lambers (Eds.), *Person-centered therapy: European perspectives* (pp. 38-52). London: Sage.
- Sullivan, H. S. (1954). *The interpersonal theory of psychiatry*. New York: Norton.
- Tausch, R. (1978). Facilitative dimensions in interpersonal relationships. *College Student Journal*, 12, 2-11.
- UNESCO (1997) Educating for a sustainable future: A Transdisciplinary Vision for Concerted Action, Report of the International Conference: Education and Public awareness for Sustainability, Thessaloniki, Greece.
- Vassilopoulos, S. P., & Kosmopoulos, A. V. (2003a). Relation dynamic context and interpretation of social events. *Scientia Paedagogica Experimentalis*, 40, 47-64.
- Vassilopoulos, S. P., & Kosmopoulos, A. V. (2003b). Relational dynamic context and anticipated reactions to interpersonal situations. *Scientia Paedagogica Experimentalis*, 40, 253-276.
- Vassilopoulos S. P., Kosmopoulos, A. V., & Konstantinidis, G. K. (2004). Ta prosopa en sxesi tinoun na mirazonte ena kino simasiologiko plesio anaforas: Analiontas to sxhesiodinamiko plesio anaforas. (Persons engaged in relationship share a common frame of reference: Delineating the relational dynamics context). *Arethas*, 3, 25-36. Patras: University of Patras, Department of Primary Education