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Teacher Relationships: Key to Satisfaction and Success

At the beginning of our careers as teachers, we concentrate our efforts on mastering our subjects and creating a classroom environment where students can learn and develop Christlike characters. Slowly, we discover that we are not alone in this task, but that our work connects us with a broad web of relationships that impact our ministry.

After decades of teaching and interacting with colleagues in many countries, I am convinced that in order to achieve satisfaction and success in our sacred vocation, we must cultivate constructive relationships at multiple levels. Here are eight major areas that deserve our attention and can lead us to a healthy self-assessment:



Humberto M. Rasi

With God

- Maintain daily connection with God through Bible study, reflection, and prayer.
- Seek His wisdom, trust in His guidance, and obey His will.
- Pray for the Holy Spirit to be present in your classroom and in your students' lives.
- Be motivated by God's unselfish love in all relationships.

With yourself

- Cultivate a healthy lifestyle in diet, exercise, work, and rest.
- Establish clear goals in life and take advantage of opportunities to grow.
- Manage well your own time, money, and other resources.
- Have a hopeful outlook on people and on the future.

With your students

- Establish a personal relation with each student, leading him or her to Christ.
- Provide a wholesome learning environment where all can grow at their own pace.
- Foster the balanced development of each student.
- Act professionally in class preparation, instruction, and assessment.

With your peers

- Relate ethically with fellow educators and strengthen team spirit.
- Avoid criticism of peers or administrators in front of students, colleagues, or parents.
- Take the initiative in clearing misunderstandings and encouraging your colleagues.
- Be willing to share ideas, techniques, and materials, especially with new teachers.

With your supervisors

- Understand the school's mission and take satisfaction in supporting it.
- Manage yourself well and fulfill your duties without close supervision.
- Think independently, communicate courteously, and be a problem solver.

With parents and guardians

- Work cooperatively with parents and guardians for the sake of their children.
- Communicate regularly with them regarding students' achievements and challenges.
- Participate in parent-teacher conferences and, if possible, make home visits.

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With the church

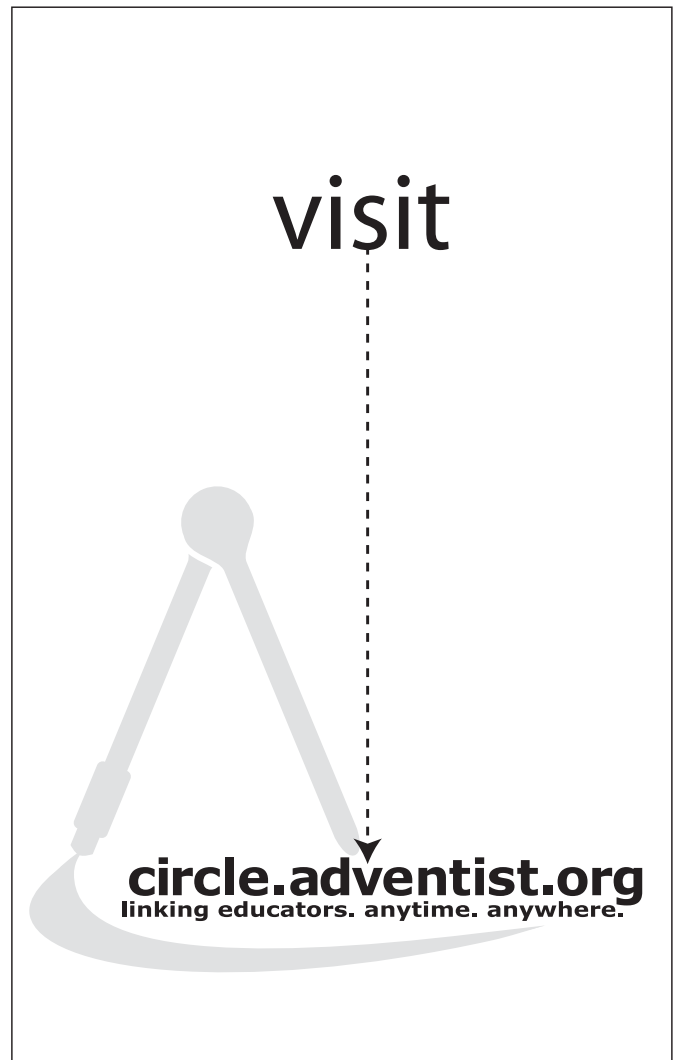
- Set an example in church relationships and responsibility.
- Actively participate in the programs of the local congregation.
- Observe the Sabbath in ways that honor God, nurture your soul, and help others.
- Manifest loyalty to God by contributing a faithful tithe and freewill offerings.

With the community

- Be recognized as a law-abiding citizen who is ready to help others.
- Expand your circle of friends beyond the Adventist community.
- Be known as one who fulfills promises and meets all financial obligations.
- Exemplify the qualities of an ambassador of God's kingdom.

In his masterful autobiography, Henry Adams (1838-1918) wrote, "A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops" (*The Education of Henry Adams*, p. 20). Fortunately, we are not alone in our noble task. We labor in the company of divine and human agencies that can help us achieve educational objectives that only eternity will fully reveal.

Humberto M. Rasi served as Director of the General Conference Department of Education from 1990 to 2002. Now in active retirement, he continues to support Adventist education through publications, lectures, and seminars in many countries.



Year of Evangelism Statement of Support From NAD Education Leadership

WHEREAS the year 2004 has been designated by the Seventh-day Adventist World Church as the Year of Evangelism, and

WHEREAS the Adventist education ministry of the North American Division is committed to the larger evangelism mission of the Church,

IT IS RESOLVED by the North American Division Office of Education and the Union Directors of Education Council that education institutions at all levels within the NAD support and actively participate in the 2004 Year of Evangelism through student-focused programming on campus and community-focused activities in the broader community.