

To teach the joy of learning

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translated by Shawn Provost

Time goes on and it has become necessary to take on—as adults, parents, professors, directors and educators—the difficult challenge of reviewing both our own knowledge and **the way in which we pass on** this knowledge. Moreover, it has come time to revisit the place and function of the school, not only as a place of acquisition and accumulation, but also as one of discovery, respect, improvisation, and adaptation.

With regard to respect, this means reviewing the role of the teacher, or any educator, as an open bridge between the school and the home, that is, between teachers and parents. This means dialogue, not between two, but three shores—including the child or adolescent. This must include the experiences, traumas, challenges, anxieties, and even the learnings of the three parties involved—to respect, as such, the proposals, but also rhythms and even limitations that each brings or proposes, because humans have distinct, unformatted internal geographies that can and must be valued as such, outside of the “factory” format.

Discovery has to do with the appreciation of these individual or collective proposals, giving space for **social improvisation** and the **cultural adaptation** of each place.

A school in Luanda may not be the same or equivalent to one in São Paulo or Lisbon. And even a school in downtown Rio de Janeiro does not have the same challenges as a school on

the peripheries of Rio de Janeiro. Therefore, it is not a matter of seeking a singular “model.” Perhaps the model is a non-model, and the opportunity for “local creation” including children, parents and educators; home, street and school.

Rethinking the concept of 'freedom' does not imply the absence of rules. It does imply, perhaps, assuming that the human being must have room to act and think. These spaces are allowed to breathe as we learn how to engage in dialogue and discover new ways of teaching. This cannot occur around obsolete processes of accumulation. The child no longer identifies with this, and quickly rejects the passing of knowledge that is not in dialogue with the modernity imposed by the world around him. Freedom would entail a review of the concept of learning and teaching.



Learning can be based on theoretical and structured knowledge of books and the current “technical” configuration of teaching, but it must also include a profound pedagogical review that encompasses, as much as possible, the new and current “forms of knowledge.” Some of these forms (and formats) are beyond the scope of what already exists. Yes, they are yet to be invented, yet to be discovered, and this will involve modern technology and other ways of experiencing social and even sensory experience. Children respond to direct contact with nature, not just direct contact with books, as seen in the appreciation, for example, of family experiences for teaching and for the prevention of new collective problems. This is also true of the value of art in the process of learning theoretical content and how it intersects with elements of the student's daily life, and of the exchange of experiences and knowledge between home and school, between parents and teachers, between the community and the educational institution. Some of these examples pose a challenge to the organization and practices of the 'School', but it is in this review of the institutional practice that I think there may be new paths.

Finally, and very closely related to this work that has to be done with art and nature, with the more palpable and less theoretical experiences of each family nucleus, there remains

the need to invest in something subjective but available and close to all: joy. The pure joy of seeing in school and, if possible for teachers and especially children, the joy of “being in school.” This is of course, in a school with a pleasant atmosphere and no shootouts, a school with the possibility of reconstructing not only the knowledge we have, but the people we are or want to be, and where there is the joy of teaching and the (joyful) possibility of learning, teaching the joy of learning to those who teach as well.

In short, I believe we must take on the difficult challenge of reviewing the knowledge we want to pass on to others, discovering a more sensitive way of passing knowledge, and encompassing affection in this process.
