

# ARE YOU A SELF-CONFIDENT TEACHER?

The **Archdiocese Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries** provides weekly resources via its **Youth Worker Pulse eMail ListServ**. Each month has a theme, and the **Archdiocese Center for Family Care** offers a monthly contribution. Archives begin with April 2002. Go to <http://www.goarch.org/en/archdiocese/departments/youth/> to join the ListServ and/or read archived articles. The Youth Ministry Department offers valuable information about today's youth for all who work with young people. The following article appeared on the ListServ on 10-26-2006 under the title "The Teacher's Self-Esteem."  
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*Great is my confidence in you, great is my pride in you: I am filled with comfort, I am exceedingly joyful in all our tribulation. 2 Corinthians 7:4*

Dear Youth Workers,  
Greetings in Christ!

10/26/2006

As we finish our discussion on the Journey to Self, it's important to reflect on our own self-worth and self-esteem as it relates to our ministry. A strong sense of self-knowledge and self-confidence are vital to any teacher. For many adults, the prospect of teaching class of young people can be very nerve-racking, but it's important for us as Youth Workers to know what students are looking for in their mentors and how they respond to them.

## How is self-confidence important to me as a teacher?

"Because they are teenagers, most of our students' most painful trials are in finding their own selves, in gaining proper self-confidence, and they look to us as people who have learned to control the ambiguities, pressures and restrictions of life rather than having them control us. A fine teacher is not particularly one who exudes self-confidence from every pore -- a superperson (more likely, a hypocrite!). Far from it. A fine teacher does have confidence, but the honest confidence that flows from a fair recognition of one's own frailties as well as talents and which accommodates both joyfully. The lack of assurance that typically marks adolescence and that takes observable form in pettiness, distortion, scapegoating, over-reacting, or withdrawal ideally is balanced in a school by the presence of adults who have grown to channel and control these sturdily persistent human traits."



Excerpt from "Good Teaching" by Theodore R.Sizer

<http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/goodteac.htm>

## Tips for developing confidence in teaching

- You may need to "act" for the first few minutes to convey a feeling of calm.
- Relaxation exercises such as controlling breathing and visualization can help with this.
- Avoid stimulants like coffee.

- Remember you are probably your worst critic when you need to be your greatest fan.
- Body language is powerful.
- Instill confidence by moving slowly, taking your time, and speaking in a reflective way.
- Others are very tolerant of you, especially when you first speak, as they are often not focusing on what you are saying but rather on the *way you say it*.
- Observing others who are confident in situations that you find daunting can be worth a hundred descriptions in a book. Ask them to help you by giving feedback. Be prepared to learn from what they say and not feel threatened.

### Online resources

- 1 "Confidence for Teachers" by Jane Bluestein, Ph.D. offers helpful hints for new teachers.  
[http://www.positivelymad.co.uk/pd/conf\\_teachers.htm](http://www.positivelymad.co.uk/pd/conf_teachers.htm)
- 2 "Developing confidence and overcoming shyness" by Corinne Abisgold offers tips on how to develop confidence and transmit confidence to your audience.  
[http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/resources/articles/GoodPractice/classroom/Special\\_needs/Overcoming.asp](http://www.schoolzone.co.uk/resources/articles/GoodPractice/classroom/Special_needs/Overcoming.asp)
- 3 Strategies for developing confidence  
<http://www.studentaffairs.cmu.edu/counseling/documents/confidence.htm>
- 4 Five steps for effective public speaking  
[http://wps.ablongman.com/ab\\_public\\_speaking\\_2](http://wps.ablongman.com/ab_public_speaking_2)
- 5 10 Days to More Confident Public Speaking (Princeton Language Institute)  
<http://www.toastmasters.org>

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