

Expectational Education, Part 4 | The Individuality of Expectations

I. The Individualized Approach

- **Cognitive Maturity**
 - One's cognitive ability can and should be assessed using traditional means of measuring retention and recall, systemization and problem solving.
 - If your children or students are scoring very high in Cognitive Maturity, then it would be appropriate to have higher expectations for their performance than you would a person who legitimately scores lower because they are not as cognitively mature.
 - And this is where it becomes very hard to definitively say whether or not a person's cognitive scores are a good reflection of their abilities. Just because a person scores low doesn't necessarily mean they couldn't have scored higher. There could have been any number of factors that resulted in their scores, so to take the final product as the gospel truth is foolish at best.
 - I Samuel 21:10-15 - David didn't want anyone to know what he was really capable of doing, so he put on a show. Other people are very competent, but they're lazy. Others are equally capable, but their lack of desire motivates them to not perform to their peak. And often each of these people will claim, "I did my best!" That's why the spiritual metric is so important.
- **Spiritual Maturity**
 - The Operational Maturity Quotient, or OMQ, is simply a measurement of the individual's practical utility and is scored on one of four metrics.
 - Webster's 1828 dictionary defines utility as "usefulness; profitableness to some valuable end." Merriam-Webster defines it as "fitness for some purpose or worth to some end, something useful or designed for use."
 - We should *want* to be valuable in our relationships. To that end we will have utility, and we will be useful within the relationship. And that's what the Operational Maturity Quotient measures.
 - Through extended observation we want to determine not only how he or she responds to the positive influence offered by each authority, but also the quantity and quality of influence the student has on their peers and the authorities themselves.
 - First, parents should be the ones spending the most time with their kids. Therefore, they should be able to identify the child's spiritual maturity far better than an individual who rarely interacts with them.
 - Second, this metric is a measurement of *influence*. And it's important to recognize that influence is a *two-way street*. Lord willing, you are positively influencing the people in your life, but they too should be positively influencing you regardless of their age or relationship to you. That's what mature people do.
 - **Influential Maturity** means that the student not only consistently benefits from the positive influence of her authority, but she also consistently benefits her peers and authorities.
 - Academically speaking, when you teach the child, he benefits from the teaching. That's the easy one. But these individuals also benefit you, the teacher in their interactions with you. They may ask a challenging question or present a valuable point of view. They add to the experience in the classroom, and—to that degree—they're also benefiting the other students.
 - If the individual in question has Influential Maturity, then I can double down on identifying their Cognitive Maturity in order to formulate what their Appropriate High Expectations are.

- **Polite Maturity** refers to someone who though the student does not consistently benefit from the positive influence of his authority, he does consistently benefit his peers and authorities.
 - These kids seem to have the relational qualities down, but they appear to lack the requisite smarts to excel in their education.
 - This is where analyzing their Cognitive Maturity can be helpful. Are they genuinely not capable of performing at certain levels, or have they never learned how to learn well? Are there certain subjects that are harder on them than others, or do they simply not like the subject in which they underperform? The question we're trying to identify is the "why" behind the "what." Sure, the grades are low, but *why* are they low.
 - Barring an actual biological impediment—which will manifest itself in more than just grades—if a person is performing poorly, we have to at least consider they're not as spiritually mature as they could be.
- **Antagonistic Maturity** refers to people who consistently benefit from the positive influence of their authority, but they also consistently *harm* their peers and/or authorities alike.
 - These are the ones who are not obedient in class, they don't respect their teachers or classmates, but they are still really smart and seem to perform well in their academics.
 - This is a difficult group because everyone can tell they're not spiritually mature, but for some reason they rise to the expectations put on them by their learning. If you've been listening to this show for any amount of time, then you know they excel in their academics because they want to. It's their act of self-worship . . . which is the same reason they don't relate to other people well. They don't want to.
 - You need to start by trying to figure out the lies they're believing about God, His Word, and themselves, in order to set the right expectations for their behavior. Then and only then will we see them increase even more in their academic performance.
- **Destructive Maturity** refers to students who consistently reject the positive influence of their authority, and they also consistently harm their peers and authorities.
 - They have very poor academic performance and—on top of that—harmful relationships. And it's not just at school; they're this way at home as well. That's not to say that birds of a feather don't flock together and get along pretty well when they do, but even in those contexts the relationships aren't really valuable because they've created an echo chamber of unbiblical thinking.
- When it comes to the Polite, Antagonistic, and Destructive individuals, you can have Appropriate High Expectations for them, but the chances they will meet those expectations is very low because they're not spiritually mature enough to do so. Even when they're cognitively capable like the Antagonistic students, they're still not going to live up to the relational expectations without maturing spiritually.
- Some kids will need to grow in their relational maturity, some will need to embrace a different academic paradigm. It's when we identify and start addressing the student's spiritual maturity that we will be able to accurately identify the right expectations for their learning.
- After understanding what all trees are capable of, we need to look carefully at the individual trees in our care and identify why they're struggling. Maybe they are immature in how they relate to people, and maybe they're immature in how they approach learning, or maybe it's both.
- Remember what we learned in the Merest Christianity Series. You do what you do, say what you say, and feel what you feel because you want what you want, and you want what you want because you believe what you believe about God, His Word, and yourself.