

Expectational Education, Part 5 | The Moment of AH!

I. The AH Moment

- The AH Moment is the first step in that process of helping a child understand that they really can be more than they thought they could be. They really can be smarter, cooler, more skilled, more successful, and—Lord willing—more godly than they thought was possible. As our employees and students and children and friends have their first AH Moment—hopefully followed by many more—it will light a fire under them to try and accomplish more.
- The AH Moment always comes in two phases. Too often educators and parents and pastors never push for the second phase and so they hit a wall with the people they're supposed to be leading.
- It's the exclamation we make when we overcame and achieved something we thought was impossible. The "A" stands for "appropriately" and the "H" stands for "high," and the AH Moment is the moment of exhilaration that comes from seeing the student on the right track.
- **The First Phase**
 - The first phase of the "AH Moment" comes when the authority identifies and establishes the *correct* Appropriately High Expectations. They have a biblically and historically accurate understanding of what the people in their lives should be able to accomplish, they've identified as best they can the person's Cognitive and Spiritual Maturity, they've implemented the High Expectations they believe are appropriate, and now they are seeing that the individual is actually capable of growing into those expectations.
 - Please understand that this process is a marathon. Sometimes we quickly and correctly identify the right Expectations and they immediately start thriving, but sometimes the individual fails for one of two reasons.
 - Our expectations may be too high, and we finally realize they're not actually capable to achieve them.
 - B. The individual's attitude is still wrong, and they're still immaturely pushing back against the expectations.
 - The heart is far more important than what some people would call the "head." The Spiritual Maturity is more important than the Cognitive Maturity, and if we can only focus on one—if there's going to be a hill on which we die—it will need to be the Spiritual Maturity.
 - Just remember, the AH Moment is the result of not merely prior research, but also realtime experience. The research persuades the authority of what is possible, and the realtime experience helps us test the expectations to see how appropriate they are.
- **The Second Phase**
 - The next phase of the AH Moment will not be fully achieved until the educator helps the student experience the same AH Moment for themselves. Despite the fact that the student may be growing and experiencing verifiable successes, sometimes the weight of the new system distracts them. It's like the feeling you might have in the middle of a marathon. You're not comfortable, you're not happy, the runner's high is a myth, and you're wishing it were over. Since most people have no idea what their best really is, and since they've only ever had people giving them low or moderate expectations, then legitimate goals will be more than they've ever undertaken before.
 - The AH Moment represents the first time the individual starts to believe that they really are capable of doing much more than they thought was possible to the glory of God and through the power of God. It's a really exciting moment for the student, and it's an even more exciting moment for the teacher.

- And there should be many of these moments. That which is an Appropriate High Expectation now, will likely be too low later. We always have to be reevaluating what our best is and growing into the next challenge. Therefore, there should be multiple AH Moments all throughout our lives.
- It's the moment the student is realizing just how much they have to learn and experiencing—maybe for the first time in their lives—a deep desire to learn it to the very best of their ability.

II. The AH Moment

- These questions are all geared toward the various dynamics that must be understood in order to successfully achieve this AH Moment for all students involved. These questions are a big concern to those who are dealing with more than one child, more than one student, more than one employee, more than one counselee, and more than one church member.
- **Academic Dynamics**
 - “How do I create a curriculum that has all the Appropriate High Expectations?”
 - “It's still early, how do I know if the student is going to thrive and mature?”
 - “How can I know if I'm simply demanding failure, reinforcing complacency, and/or forcing failure in a new way?”
- **Academic Dynamics**
 - “How do I prepare Polite, Antagonistic, and Destructive students to thrive and mature?”
 - “How do I protect the Polite, Antagonistic, and Destructive students from themselves while I'm trying to prepare them to thrive and mature?”
 - “What if a student has the ability to be Influential but is Polite, Antagonistic, or Destructive by choice or conditioning? What's the balance?”
- **Classroom Dynamics**
 - “How do I implement all the different appropriate high expectations with a classroom full of students?”
 - “How do I juggle preparation and protection of a classroom with Influential, Polite, Antagonistic, and Destructive students?”
 - “How do I prepare and protect the students from Antagonistic and Destructive students?”

III. Conclusion

- This is more about you recognizing that your kids are capable of so much more than the world has admitted. God has amazing expectations for them, and they could have truly blessed and enriching life experiences if we only give them to our kids.
- If nothing else, please continue to do your research. Look at the biblical and historical expectations for young people. Carefully consider your children's cognitive and spiritual maturity. Make their salvation and conformity to Christ preeminent in you parenting.
- Become an intentional, premeditated, disciple-making Ambassador Parent for God, and you will one day reap the harvest of your faithful worship to God.