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Personal Educational Philosophy

When looking over the five educational philosophies—Idealism, Realism, Pragmatism, Social Reconstructionism, and Existentialism—I can only see one that would fit me best and that is Pragmatism. It blends some of the best aspects of idealism and realism. Students are active in their own learning, while the teacher acts as a praising facilitator. The goal of Pragmatism in education is to provide a wholistic, continuous learning that combines experience, reason, and problem solving. It creates a non-competitive environment where students can thrive on their own accomplishments.

These ideals suit me because I plan on going into Conductive Education (CE), where the students have varied physical disabilities. Much of CE is teaching self-care activities so that students can find ways to have a greater control of their own bodies. Conductors facilitate the child’s movements to assist. They cannot just tell or show the students how to do it or do it for them. It is a team effort and the student must be fully involved in his or her own learning. I believe that a pragmatic view on educational philosophy would not only be the best fit for me as a conductor, but also for the students of conductive education.

Because this philosophy does give students some control in their own learning, the teacher must use a classroom management style that allows for it, but does not let the students get out of control. Discipline would be difficult to figure out. A role of the teacher is praising success, and too much of the opposite could confuse children. In my situation, the teaching and leadership style are very close to the same. The teacher is the leader of most activities throughout the day.

Developing a personal educational philosophy is an important part of creating the best environment for students to learn. Neither the teacher nor the students should feel uncomfortable in the learning situation. If either does, it will not allow for the teacher or the students to do their best. Even if a teacher has found a philosophy that works for him or her, it might not work at all for some students so it may need to be revised each year. There is so much work that goes into providing the best learning environment, but having a working educational philosophy is a very important aspect of it.