

Self-Reflection Essay #2

In the following paragraphs I will discuss an interaction with some children and how their actions caused me to be negatively emotionally aroused. I will discuss what emotional competency skills I used to successfully manage the situation and how I can grow as an individual.

One afternoon at the Early Learning Center, I was asked to manage the blow up bubble. The children were told that they could not touch the fan or the sides of the bubble because we if we did do those things, someone could get hurt. It was my duty to ensure that the children followed the rules and keep the children safe. I climbed into the bubble and waited for the children to enter the classroom. After a few minutes, Andrew, Peter, Charlie, and Finch entered the bubble. After they explored the bubble and leaves, they started to get excited and began jumping around and hitting the sides of the bubble. I asked them to stop and remind me of the rules about the bubble. They told me that they could not hit the sides or touch the fan. I proceeded to tell them to please follow the rules so no one would get hurt. For a couple of minutes they did not touch the sides of the bubble or the fan but they soon got excited again and began to jump around, hit the sides, and Andrew was attempting to touch the fan. I began to feel my heart racing and my jaw clenching. At this point, I recognized that I felt frustrated and angry because they all knew they rules but were not following them. I was particularly frustrated and angry with Andrew because no matter what I said to him, he would not stop trying to touch the fan. I also felt nervous because I did not want any of the children to get hurt and was not sure of how to handle this situation. I wanted to force Peter, Charlie, and Finch to sit down so they would stop hitting the sides of the bubble and I wanted to grab Andrew's arms so he could no longer try to touch the fan. At the same time, I immediately wanted to leave the situation because I felt inadequate and didn't think I could handle the situation without my emotions getting the best of me. Instead of acting on what I wanted to do because I was frustrated, angry, and nervous, I attempted to handle the situation without letting my emotions get in the way.

By being self-aware of my physiological signals (increase in heart rate and clenched jaw) I knew that I had become frustrated, angry, and nervous and needed to calm myself down. Before addressing the situation, I took a five deep breaths and counted to ten. In a loud and stern voice, I asked them to stop moving their bodies and look at me. At first they did not stop, but after asking a second time they stopped and looked at me. I asked them to please sit down. I told them, "I know that we are all having fun playing with the leaves in the bubble but remember how we talked about following the rules because we did not want anyone to get hurt?" They shook their heads up and down. I then said, "If we hit the sides of the bubble, we could break the bubble and all the air could get out. Also, if we touch the fan, our fingers could get hurt. What do you think we could do to make sure no one gets hurt and still have fun?" Charlie said, "How about we jump like frogs so we don't hit our heads on the top of the bubble?" Finch exclaimed, "That's a great idea, Charlie!" I then asked them to jump like frogs and explained that if we jump like frogs, we would be following the rules. By regulating my emotions (identifying what I was feeling and using breathing and counting techniques to calm myself) and controlling my impulses, I was able to address this situation in an appropriate manner.

In the future, I want to possess a better sense of self confidence and label the emotions I may feel at that time. I felt inadequate in the situation and wanted to flee but I was capable of handling the situation. I hope to have a feeling of confidence when handling similar situations in the future by knowing that I can manage my emotions and create a learning opportunity for children. It was difficult for me to think about the emotions I was feeling at that point in time but handling the emotions was much easier for me.

In order for me to grow as an individual, I must practice labeling my emotions in different experiences, both good and bad. I often focus on my weaknesses, by shifting my focus towards my strengths and capabilities, I will gain self-confidence. By practicing these methods, I will develop stronger emotional competencies and can better help children.