

Teachers: unsung heroes of the world

[People](#)



DEDICATION * * * This reflection paper is dedicated to the unsung heroes of the world—TEACHERS; To all morally upright and just individuals whose sense of integrity and humility are rooted deeply within them; To Mr. Books who never fails to inspire me with his words and wisdom; To my parents and my mentor, EXPERIENCE, for making me understand at an early age the essentialities of life here on earth; And to my Creator, You are beyond the superlative degree of adjective. You are the Minerva and the hair of Samson in my life.

You have always been there leading me along the path that I have chosen! I salute you all! - K. A. P. C. * * * Introduction The writing technique that I used in this paper was a little different than those that I have written before, specifically during my undergraduate studies. In here, I made use of chapters instead of uninterrupted, paragraph by paragraph account. The reason is as simple yet complicated as to how a raindrop is able to produce rainbow with different colors from a single beam of sunlight or how a prism bends white light into different colors.

As to this paper, each chapter reflects the unforeseeable and offensive truths that The Story of Teddy Stoddard implies, which are often hard to swallow by many people maybe because of pride or blindness. These paper includes both reactions and reflections. Commonly as it has always been, the story of Teddy Stoddard was no different with a lot of movies that I have watched and stories that I have read and heard before—all of which had communicated the same genre as the former. It is but an ordinary ripped page, no rarity or unfathomable terminologies, existing behind the great literary masterpieces of the world.

But with its simple approach and language to whomever the reader may be, paired with its emotional quality, is like one of my favorite movies—Titanic. I can watch it over and over and cry to my hearts' content time and again. On a profound understanding of the story, I was able to nod my head as each word of the story mumbled deeply within me as if letting me know that there is more to teaching as there is more to life. The story does not only happen in real-life teaching where some teachers tend to act like Mrs.

Thompson but as well as in many other fields of profession and even in congregation of ordinary people. Let me discuss first, in a broader perspective, the story's implication to human and life before I discuss the minutest details of its implication to the teaching profession and to me as a teacher. Chapter 1 Myths of the World Ever wonder why the world is becoming evil? Or why in spite of many sound philosophies and theories of education the world continues to move forward to its downfall? Why almost all men, especially educated men, are more foolish than a beggar on the street? Simple.

A beggar is the happiest man in the world when somebody drops a coin in front of him, but to a man who knows a thing, a coin will do him no good unless that coin happens to be gold. We only worry on things that concern us or have direct effects in our lives. Those that do not seem to matter in their diminutive, powerless forms are taken for granted—consider Teddy's case for instance. Nero, Alexander the Great, Hitler, Stalin, Mao Tse Tung, Hussein, Bin Laden and many others who are like them—weren't these men, who had been leaders of their own dominions, able to earn a degree in college?

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Unfortunately, none of them was able to show genuine compassion towards their subjects, was able to leave something behind that future generations can make use of. It is not very often that people thank Hitler or Hussein for what he did because not many are born with mental retardation. (But of course, Teddy's gratefulness to Mrs. Thompson was a different matter.) It is very obvious to notice that only a few people in the past —Jesus Christ, Mother Teresa, Gandhi, Mandela, and others—were able to show what real compassion means. As for Einstein, he's a genius. Yet there is a fine line between genius and insanity.

Had he only made use of his common sense, world leaders of today will stop accusing each other on issues about the use of nuclear weapons. Einstein's actions were enough proofs that, even to genius, common sense is not very common. Thus, our first myth is: Not everything that glitters is gold. 1 Even other metals or "rusty" metals can reflect light and can have shiny appearance if furnished well. What and whom am I talking about? Find it out The Story of Teddy Stoddard. When I heard the news of Osama Bin Laden's death, I did not believe it in an instant.

What if it were a mere propaganda of Obama's administration? What if Bin Laden's look-alike were the one who got killed? Or did he really have a look-alike? From the book that I find no time to finish reading, entitled The Road Less Traveled, Scott Peck discussed what he termed as scientific tunnel vision—that is, according to him, "patients [people] are able to see only a very narrow area directly in front of them. They cannot see anything to the left or to the right, above or below their narrow focus. " I would strongly

agree that, too often, a lot of people in this world, including I, have this kind of vision.

We find it too difficult to look beyond the surface of things. Our perception of the world is no more than skin deep or subjective like that of Mrs.

Thompson's. Thus, the second myth is to see is too believe. 2 We are realists or materialists most of the time in the sense that what we see is independent to what we think. An object continues to exist independently of the mind.

Mrs. Thompson were aware of the presence of Teddy. He comes to school, takes exams, et cetera. Yet, Mrs. Thompson ignored to use her mental faculty to the most logical and sensible manner that she could to diagnose the problem of Teddy.

It's like when a man and a woman were seen by somebody moving out a motel. It is not hard to imagine what would immediately come in the mind of the observer. It is a prejudice akin to judging the book because of its worn-out cover. Having been explained that 'seeing is believing' is not always reliable, it is to be rejected. What we hear or see is not what we should always believe in. At times, we need to be idealists. There are times when we need to be rationalists, or skeptics or moralists, so on and so forth. There are even times when we need to be generalists.

Remember this overused line: "Together we stand, divided we fall"?

Adopting only one philosophy in life is discriminatory but it surely will lead us somewhere although our vision will be much like that of a tunnel. As for me, too much is enough. If these "too much" ideas being introduced to us at any given time anywhere in the world will solve human strife, it should have

started a long time ago. Sadly, it did not. Sometimes, I feel disoriented into thinking how men, through the ages, are able to move forward, leaving the world behind at its deterioration.

Or how a teacher is to be promoted whose responsibilities to his pupils he failed to accomplish. Nonetheless, everything comes and goes, and all that remain are unfinished businesses. At the end of the day, when exhaustion from every day work pays me a visit, I just sit and try to remember one thing that I learned from *The Little Prince*: “ What is essential is ‘ invisible’ to the eye. ” It amazed me how Mrs. Thompson was able to realize her mistake and was able to understand the concept of “ invisibility” on the latter part of the story. He that never changed any of his opinions never corrected any of his mistakes; and he who was never wise enough to find out any mistakes in himself will not be charitable enough to excuse what he reckons mistakes in others. ” -Shakespeare- No matter how intelligent, how good, how rich or how respected a person is, it is an undeniable fact that he often commits false accusations and hypotheses. It’s our nature as humans. Even philosophers and men of God cannot escape this inevitable “ offense” because whatever their beliefs are, they too, commit mistakes.

Luckily, we can bail out of this “ offense” because of Alexander Pope who once wrote metaphorically, “ To err is human. . . ” but it didn’t just end there. He further added, “ To forgive divine. ” Thus, forgiveness itself cures mistakes. But there is an exemption: Laws are created because not every mistake can be excused by a simple sorry. Here comes the concept of pride. From this, the third myth arises: “ Everybody can forgive”. Why is that? The

sentence seems to be lacking. Nobody forgives unless he forgets. We will remain prisoners of our own hatred unless we forgive and forget.

But doing both things is as hard as judging oneself. The good things about the story were Mrs. Thompson's humility as a teacher to correct what she had done wrong and Teddy's disregard of anger towards Mrs. Thompson. In all of these things that I have written, one thing in life, for sure, is universal that applies to all men: We see unrighteousness when we are right; we do not see righteousness when we are wrong and, there is no such thing as "between right and wrong". It is a necessity, therefore, to evaluate ourselves continuously. It might appear as a science-related issue as to how Mrs.

Thompson metamorphosed from unrighteousness to righteousness. An "ugly caterpillar" once she might have been, she later transformed into a "beautiful butterfly" who was able to touch the life of a unique wild flower named Teddy. Thus, we can never tell what type of impact we may have on another's life by our actions or lack of actions. Whatever and whoever we are, let us not stop remembering that the best gift we could give or receive is touching a life and making a difference on someone's life. As Gandhi said: "We must become the change we want to see in the world."

So the last myth is: Butterflies are beautiful to look at especially on their colors. It's a paradox. Why? Because a butterfly is a camouflage of a caterpillar that it once had been. A caterpillar can live without being a butterfly, but it is impossible that a butterfly will appear without being a caterpillar. The underlying fact about it is that it CHANGES—from ugliness to beauty (like Mrs. Thompson). Same principle applies to humans. But most of

the time, the reverse happens. “ Are we caterpillars who get fat by obtaining nourishment from leaves until they finally run out r are we butterflies who add beauty to flowers every time we perch on them? ” -Kristel- Like a butterfly, each of us has/had bones in our closet and we act according to norms as a camouflage of our little “ secrets”. True? Hell, right! Freud was a genius with his concept of id, ego and super ego! “ All humans have behavioral problems. A person with behavioral problem is not normal. If you’re normal, then you’re not human. ” (Kristel, 2011) Chapter II “ What Does It Take To Be Human? ” In light of my twenty-one years of existence, the world has shown and taught me so much that it can offer.

Though most of the time, asking how and why things behave in ways I cannot understand is like dragging myself into a labyrinth. My own logic often convinces me that doing such a thing is just putting myself into a dilemma. People and books can give answers but their answers often lead to another chapter which makes it become very obvious that life really is an indecipherable puzzle. A lot of life’s opportunities, difficulties, persons who are dear to me have come and gone in my life—opportunities that caused me to have regrets, challenges that taught me the importance of humility and loved ones who made me cry.

Through all of these I realized that whether we take life seriously or not, it has never been easy to take. Life is difficult and it will always be that way. But once it is accepted, the fact that life is difficult no longer matters. Life, aside from its being difficult, is finite as well. This is the greatest truth in the world. Because of this truth, we, humans, have tried everything to outdo earth’s rotation by shortening ten years of men’s consistent labor to its half.

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This was made possible because the birth of industrialization gave humans the need to invent. Destiny dictated our triumphs.

But is it a triumph or a failure that the birth of machineries is able to overpower Time? The answer is evident. Because of our obsession to change the world, we forget to change our attitudes. I guess the reason why a lot of people, specifically people in the past who often “defy” and critique norms, die poorly and unlamented is not because their beliefs are right but because society’s attitude towards them and their attitudes towards society fail to have a point of tangency (like in Geometry) thereby they are excluded in the “system”. Human weakness is power and too often, as power strengthens responsibility weakens (in Physics, it is termed as inverse proportionality). Spider Man said: “Great power comes great responsibility” but when one is greater than the other, there arises masters and slaves. After I read The Story of Teddy Stoddard, I came into deep deliberation of what it takes to be human and trust me, I do not know if people would agree, for we all have our own way of thinking, that to be human is to become conscious that we are not in power to rule but we are responsible to serve. This would be more realistic if action would speak louder than words. CHAPTER III

What Does It Take To Be Teachers? First and foremost, teaching had never been in my list of one-of-many things that I dreamt of doing someday. Well, truthfully, I believe that none of them really have been brought into realization. My first love was architecture but my true love is writing. Life really is not everything. Things that we do not expect happen as if they were to tap our backs to say “Hey, learn from us!”. When I was just a little girl,

though living was as tough as it is now, I was always wondering what I would be someday. First, I dreamed of becoming a teacher.

I was in grade school then when I thought of it. My sister and I used to pretend that we were teachers. We used to write on a mini chalkboard that our mum bought for us using varied colors of chalk. I have always been the one pretending as teacher and she was my pupil. As years past, when I finally entered fifth grade, I thought of becoming a journalist instead. My classmates often think of becoming like that so I decided to do the same. The feeling was similar when at one time I terribly ached for sweet candy because my playmate happened to have one.

Things happened too swiftly before I realized that I was already a high school student. A year before my senior year, I was so sure of taking architecture in college. I discovered that I have a talent in designing houses and decorating their interiors. It has always been my passion to draw houses and appreciate the beauty of them whenever I go to places. It was on my last year in high school when I wished of becoming a writer and at the same an architect, and a teacher, and . . . and . . . well, I wasn't quite sure right on that very moment. I lost my momentum.

Perhaps I have been so engrossed of thinking over what I would be like. It was like trying to become ten different persons all at once though I knew that I was just an average. I mean, I was just a nobody way back in high school and up until now. Thin. Pimpled face. Shy. Unpopular. Out-of-style. Hermit. And other disgusting adjectives that one would happily attach to my name. I found that my previous 'detention centers' were too tight and were '

pains' in my ass. College life was different. I found freedom, comfort, appreciation, and friendship. I have the difficulty liking my course because I was forced to take it.

I mean, nobody forced me to. It was I, myself. During that time, I feel like there's nothing else to choose from so I took it anyway. My parents were not able to send me to prestigious college or university in the city because of lack of money. Architecture was, thus, forgotten. But in spite of that, I was learning wonderful things each day in college. I was beginning to be comfortable with the new environment and the people around. But I still could not accept the fact that I would soon be graduating despising the course that I have taken. But, but . . . things really happen for a reason, you know.

God has His way of sending blessings in disguise. Even though I failed to fulfill my greatest dream, I somehow feel that I am leading on the right track though too often a few destructions shake my momentum. Sometimes I think that God put me into this profession because He wants me to learn and unlearn things in life. Or why I took the life that a few people in the world would buy. Or why I am making life difficult when on the other side is a greener pasture to walk on. Mother understands me for the decision that I have made, though father is not as understanding as her.

I know that deep within them they want to see in me the daughter that they wanted me to be —happy, the one that would take them out of poverty, earning a much higher salary, self confident, and candid. I do not know. All I know is that when we hold on to our principle, we will be like a tree fixed on the ground—full of nourishment to give away yet never moving forward up to

its death. Up to this day, I as well do not know the reason why I teach until I read The Story of Teddy Stoddard. I admire Mrs. Thompson because she was able to make a big difference on Teddy's life.

Someday, I wish I could do the same thing not only by being a teacher but by being human on this planet that I am living in. Now that I'm in the teaching profession, I am beginning to realize what it's like to be human and to be a teacher. Some people may raise their brows on us making us feel so sick, others may say bad things about us as if they had never been bad all their lives. As for me, humility really matters. Within the four months of being in my line of work, I can say that there is more to teaching than meets the eye. Teaching is difficult. So far, it is what I can say.

Difficult to the point that aside from everyday teaching, I meet a lot of people with different personalities wherein sometimes a person who doesn't know how to control emotions or does not comprehend right from wrong may probably just burst out. Thank God, I am learning a lot with people who are as imperfect as I am. (Am I this bad??? Sorry. Hehehe! Peace! I'm not just in good mood today. OOO) I guess you have heard someone said: " Politics is not dirty. The ones who make it dirty are the people involved in it. " Same thing happens in teaching even with Mother Earth, but I do not want to discuss it further.

For crying out loud, I am too judgmental! Peace every one! I, too, make mistakes! A lot of moral lessons can be taken from the story. I am beginning to have an extraordinary motivation to write as many pages as I can though my time is running out (it's not that I'm going to die soon . . . L. O. L! just

busy). I believe that there are many Mrs. Thompson in the world who transformed from being caterpillars to being butterflies. Some may even remain as caterpillars. I, well, I do not know what I am. Sometimes I am a caterpillar, sometimes a butterfly. I cannot run away from being a caterpillar especially when anger hits me.

Anger is a state of mind. How can I escape from anger without losing my mind? But I am the type of person who, most of the time, does not speak out what I want to say (In teaching, we must be careful with the command of language. Everyone has his own interpretations). As an escape, (heheh) I write everything down on a sheet of paper. At least, through it, there's an indirect communication. I can even delete words that seem not quite good to the reader. It's not because I want to please everybody because that is hypocrisy. It's just that people will not be satisfied unless they have scrutinized every inch of us.

If enough were not enough, trust me, scrutiny won't end. (What am I doing right now? Am I not scrutinizing? L. O. L! OOO) From time to time, we must weigh things up. We are never always right neither always wrong.

Acceptance is a key to a contented and harmonious living. The Story of Teddy Stoddard tackles the concept of acceptance. In connection to teaching, a lot of teachers say, and too often I try to agree, that once we are in the system, we have to face facts, to accept things as they are. No but's, but that's how the world works. Many people have tried to reverse its working, but they all ended being ridiculed and condemned.

What's the relevance of all these things that I've written into taking Master's degree units? I do not know, but one thing for sure is I know: as I continue learning, I am 'knowing more and more about less and less'. It's a cliché, but literally cleared my mind up (deep sigh). . . Thanks be to God! You're my everything! Chapter IV Insights Gained From Mrs. Thompson and Teddy: Relevance to My Growth as a Teacher and as a Person Today, teaching for me is perceived as art with passion. It has its intricacies that a truly devoted and passionate individual can only see. It is mastered so as to get the best out of the worst from the learner.

It is not merely an act of inculcating ideas to young learners that may turn these young individuals to become mere copycats of the indoctrinator. Asking thought provoking questions elicits active and creative reasoning. Teaching is not telling the individual the what's, the why's, and the how's of life. Teaching is just giving the learner facts that will guide him to find the answers for himself. "Teach with passion," this I heard several times from a former teacher. Love to teach. Be passionate. Let the child feel you are a part of the process. With your guidance he will discover the facts of life.

Be enthusiastic in teaching no matter how insignificant the topic may be. Passion and love for teaching make one an effective teacher. No amount of master's degrees can equal a committed teacher who has loved to teach and has mastered the art of teaching. It is not in the amount of accolades or recognition a teacher received that define success. It is through the eyes of these young minds that benefited from your guidance. A tyrant teacher is remembered indifferently but a good teacher is admired forever. We pass

this life only once. Leave an impact so others may continue the work started like what Mrs.

Thompson did! Chapter V My Philosophy in Life My philosophy in life is simple: Life itself is a philosophy. Never take it easy. *** End “ It is hard to fill a cup which is already full. ” “ A little learning is a dangerous thing: -Mother of Neyteri, Avatar- Drink deep, or taste not the Pierian spring: There shallow draughts intoxicate the brain, And drinking largely sobers us again. ” - Alexander Pope, An Essay on Criticism