



For the second half of the day, attendees first were shown an excerpt from *Door Number One*, a film made by students from Chabot College. The excerpt delves into the emotional and affective dimension that students bring with them when they first arrive at college and enter the “labyrinth.”

- [Door Number One: http://vimeo.com/channels/778films#3522935](http://vimeo.com/channels/778films#3522935)

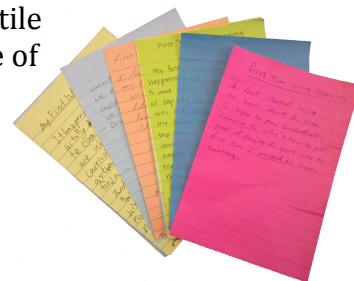
Tom then lead the attendees through a Live-Learning exercise that explored the following questions. Attendees worked in groups, sharing ideas and experiences; they then collaborated to create written responses. You can link to the responses here.

—Prompts for Live Learning Assignment

1. What do you need to do to bring your discipline, learning into the classroom so that it can be fallen in love with?
2. How will you constructively leverage the labyrinth, with some lovin’?
3. What are the conditions for love to flourish?
4. This is about claiming your own learning; everything we will discuss is already in you and we are going to honor you by creating a space to bring it out...

Prompt Supplements

- “To be sensual, I think, is to respect and rejoice in the force of life, of life itself, and to be present in all that one does, from the effort of loving to the breaking of bread. It will be a great day for America, incidentally, when we begin to eat bread again, instead of the blasphemous foam rubber that we have substituted for it. (43).
- “All of us know, whether or not we are able to admit it, that mirrors can only lie, that death by drowning is all that awaits one there. It is for this reason that love is so desperately sought and so cunningly avoided. Love takes off the masks that we fear we cannot live without and know we cannot live within. I use the word ‘love’ here not merely in the personal sense but as a state of being, or a state of grace—not in the infantile American sense of being made happy but in the tough and universal sense of quest and daring and growth” (95).





Responses

The passion for learning is a bird in a cage that soars to wide horizons unseen.

The Touch Stone Treaty

We the students and teachers commit to a relationship of respect, responsibility and dialogue for this classroom as a battlefield of learning.

I am committed to love the students by getting to know them as a real person as they grow. I am willing to forgive and forget about rules and barriers to the touchstone, and see them as builders, thinkers and leaders of our universe.

I commit to trust myself in the classroom, no matter what is going on in my life, to be present and real so that I can see what is present and real. I commit to entering the labyrinth, no matter how scary it is, in order to reach the truth.

Connection

Trust

Personal relationships

Connection with teachers

Fear of writing

Hook students with relatable teaching style, hook them with topics

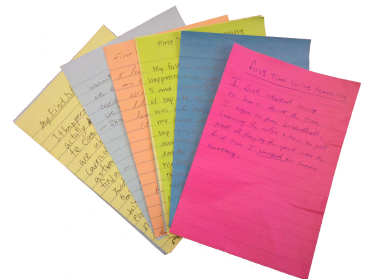
Distrusts himself—the discipline, the person

Use technology

Joy for learning--games

Confidence

I commit to be...eager and willing to learn to be open minded. Not challenge the authority above me but embrace it and work with it. To be active and not passive. Trust and to love my professor and go on a quest through the labyrinth of knowledge and life with them hand in hand.





I struggle to define my job: I teach “English” and that is already so broad, from literature, to creative/ expressive writing to academic language, to the personal growth/ development that can come about through the process of writing. And we need to choose materials—what students will read, that will give them ideas of what to write about. Context, content, process. Add to this my growing sense that I need to be somewhat of a “homeroom,” an orientation counselor, a teacher of “this is what it means to be in college.” O.K. confession, I’ve been resisting that role. I’ve been resisting the roles of getting involved more deeply in the students lives, in fully contemplating, considering, learning and caring about what is really going on in students’ real lives beyond the classroom. I get tid-bits here and there and I offer my support when students come forward to let me know what in their lives is affecting their learning, what might be keeping them from coming to class regularly, or getting assignments in on time.

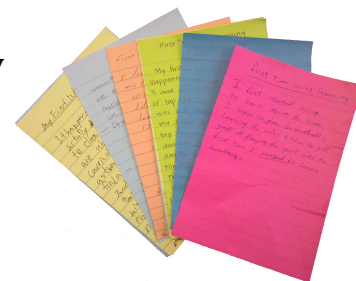
I’m afraid I’d be overwhelmed if I actually exercised my full capacity for empathy. If I began to feel the students’ fears, if I knew too much about their lives, I could be knocked dangerously off balance. So I’ve set boundaries—that go something like this: I focus my attention on those who step up—who show me their commitment by getting to class, by approaching me with their questions, by contacting me when they have personal issues that make study difficult. I think of myself as friendly and approachable and because it’s hard for me to imagine anyone being intimidated/ offended by me, I figure that if they don’t approach me, then they just don’t care and well, just aren’t ready for the work we are doing in class.

So now I’m ready to move these boundaries, and be the teacher, maybe that student’s only teacher who approaches them when something isn’t going well, even if that takes the form of apparent passivity and apathy. At least open the door for them to explain what barriers they might be facing, and to be sincerely willing to absorb the balance. Threatening answer they may offer. I’d like to be the teacher who does help students to link up to the resources on campus—not just when they ask. After all, the ones who need the most support are the ones least likely to ask.

So I have some students I must communicate with this very quarter. Even though it’s nearly completed. Few individuals may just be waiting for that communication.

“the person who distrusts himself has no touchstone for reality—for this touchstone can only be oneself. Such a person interposes...”

Classroom as a battlefield—touchstone “treaty”—the students can write a treaty statement.





Every tub has it's own bottom

Paragraph #1—Historical College Experience to contemporary: going to college is about attitude.

Dear Niece,

As your Great Aunt I would like to tell you about college from a historic standpoint. You are fortunate to have had parents with college experience. Even though my father attended college—he did not graduate.

I would like to tell you about going to college in the 1950's. I was the first in my family to go to college. I attended a private Methodist College and happened to be in a class with Dr. Joyce Anne Elders. The college was a formal place, with a religious background. Certain things were expected of everyone. Among them were: honesty, timely (being on time), women wore hosiery, men wore ties and jackets if the weather was not too hot, politeness was expected, all work was turned in on time, addressed professors by title: no first names for a professor, professors addressed students by Miss, Mr. and Mrs. Hats and gloves were worn on dressy occasions (i.e.) church, football games, social events, except formal events. To plagiarize could get you thrown out of college—books were cherished there was no public showing of affections on the campus.

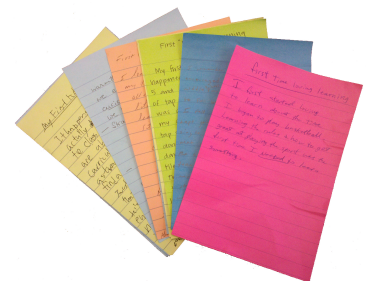
Slangs were frowned upon. Proper grammar was expected. One was responsible for his or her action. Students were taught to be independent. Do your research before you spoke.

Some of the "isms" I had learned before going to college were: never allow anyone to tell you what you could achieve or not., politeness is to do and say the kindest things in the kindest way.

Study hard, remember that you are responsible for your education.

Paragraph #2 (contemporary college experience)

Paragraph #3 (self awareness)





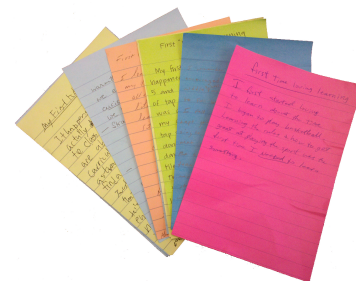
Paragraph #4

Baldwin tells us that “the person who distrusts himself as no touchstone for reality,” and by association, no touchstone for dialogue, community, education, or love. A student or a teacher who does not trust his abilities, skills, and awareness when he comes to the classroom maybe stuck looking in mirrors, believing only what he thinks, for better or worse. This narcissism doesn’t do much to spread love! It is a failure to love beyond the self. To bring love to the classroom, you’ll need to find your real self, trust that you are sufficient beyond your failure and faults. Teachers have all been student, for better or for worse. Sharing one’s failure makes a teacher vulnerable, and maybe if I share my failures, you will know you can too. I failed classes, I fell asleep in classes, I didn’t read every book I was assigned, I composed essays in the wee hours of the night, never looking back for revisions. I’ve fallen on my face—I’m not the first and won’t be the last. Some of my struggles are the same as yours, some are yours alone. But I’m still here—I’m still sufficient. You are, too.

“Get over your bad self so you can feel the love”

Paragraph #5 (researching intelligently)

It is good to see that you can stand on your own two feet. You think and you react and that is refreshing to see. You do not automatically accept what others say. You have your opinions. That is inspirational. But you must realize that opinion is not the end of the road. The world does not stop turning because you express your opinion. You must learn to backup those opinions with research. See what other thinkers have to say on the subject. The dialogue then continues. You continue to think and grow and so do the people with whom you communicate. This is not just reacting, it is reacting intelligently. And it is a process of continued growth. It is a way of gaining and giving respect. It is a process of love through which everyone grows. This does not mean that we have to agree with each other, we have to realize that thinking is a continuing process.





Paragraph #6

To our daughters and sons,

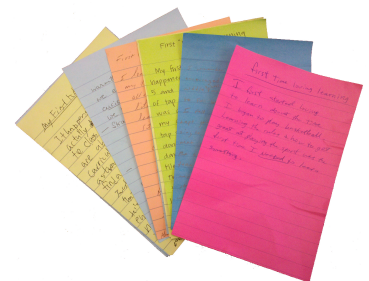
Love, as Baldwin defines it, is a sense of quest, daring and growth.

Trust yourself. Know yourself. Love yourself. Be daring. Take risks. Dare to grow. Protect yourself, but also let yourself be vulnerable.

There's a way in which we are all the same; we are all One. When you can allow yourself to just be, to be still, you can be centered in that connection. Love is like that.

“What do you need to bring to your discipline into the classroom in a way that students can fall in love with it?”

Paulo Freire wrote that people's primary task in life is to “become fully human.” To be fully human means to me to touch into--to recognize, value, and even champion--all the dimensions of our human experience, perhaps more succinctly captured by the native American Indian Medicine Wheel. The Medicine Wheel includes not just the Mental dimension of our being, but equally important the Emotional (Social) dimension, the Physical dimension, and the Spiritual/Cultural dimension of our human experience. The task as teacher/ learner then becomes to create a space that invites and welcomes all these dimensions of our being into the room, and I believe we do this best by using the power of authority almost inevitably ascribed to our role, by showing up from our own heart. The most basic way to show up from my heart is to be willing to make myself transparent and vulnerable in every interaction, every story, every example that I use to engage all the dimensions of every individual and of the group as a whole.





May the understanding
which we might discover
amongst our collective selves
sooth the world-inflicted wounds
our fragile feelings must endure
that we might learn
more of our collective truth,
and grow
For while we may be the victims
of the outcomes of our ignorance
we have the capacity to learn.
Please, let us learn from one another
for twice the pain
may need to be...

